

Reality is Plastic!

The Art of Impromptu Hypnosis



Anthony Jacquin

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Reality is Plastic: The Art of Impromptu Hypnosis.

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Anthony Jacquin

Room 6-8 St. James St. Derby, Derbyshire, DE11RF, United Kingdom

Email: enquiries@anthonyjacquin.com

Web: www.anthonyjacquin.com

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Code of Conduct

Remain disciplined
Conduct yourself ethically as a hypnotist
Practise courtesy and respect
Serve your audience and respect your subject
Love your fellow students
Be united and avoid conflicts
Train diligently
Maintain your skills
Develop tranquillity
Abstain from arguments and fights
Participate in society
Be moderate and gentle in your manners
Help the weak and young
Use hypnosis for the good of humanity
Pass on the tradition
Preserve this hypnotic art and its rules of conduct



The 17 Musts

Right attitude
Right intention
Right effort
Right action
Be firm with instructions
Be clear with suggestions
Be meaningful when communicating ideas
Be artfully vague only when necessary
Be accurate with timing
Be the master of personal space
Be alert with your eyes
Coordinate your words and actions
Unite your actions and intentions
Thinking must be agile
Reaction must be swift
Comprehend the principles of push and pull
Be still
Be grounded
Walk don't run
Pace and lead
Be steady with your breathing and strength
Be commanding with your demeanour
Test your work
Be sure to end clean



About Reality is Plastic:

The Art of Impromptu Hypnosis

This book is a resource for those professing to be or wishing to become hypnotists. It is not a substitute for hands-on training from a professional hypnotist who is accomplished at delivering training. However, if you follow the guidelines in this book and have the right attitude and aptitude, as well as enough front, talent and confidence, you will hypnotise people.

With this ability comes responsibility. Hypnosis can be used for fun, to create laughter and to provoke wonderful therapeutic changes in people. It can just as easily result in confusion, fear and unhelpful changes. If you know what you are doing, then the chances of causing even temporary distress or upset are extremely small.

With this in mind, this book closes with information about how to use hypnosis in a way that ensures the well-being of all concerned. Read that chapter. Use your common sense with regard to health and safety, and decent morals and ethics with regard to your application of hypnosis.

Throughout this book and my other training products and courses, I offer suggestions for words, phrases and in some cases complete scripts that will be useful to you; however, my emphasis when training people is that to be a good hypnotist, you must first become The Hypnotist and think of yourself as The Hypnotist. Your attitude, persona and confidence carry more weight than any script or linguistic trick. Where I have offered suggestions for what to say, please understand that these are the words I use; they work for me. I have belief in them. In some cases they may seem very brief, but I can assure you nothing has been left out, nothing superfluous added.

When hypnotising I use these words and techniques over and over without a huge amount of variation, just some personalisation depending on whom I am addressing. In that sense they have become my patter or script. Do not feel you must repeat them verbatim—although that is not a bad place to start if you are a complete beginner. Use them as a starting point. The words you use to do your work as The Hypnotist must sound right to you. They must be easily understood and resonate with those you address. You are going to use them to focus the attention of your subject and suggest ideas to them. Take these scripts and branch off from them. Develop your own style of patter and you will be more effective. Scripts are not spells and should not be read. It is not the words that do the hypnotising; you do. Even if you use exactly the same words that I do, ensure that you take ownership of them; rehearse over and over until they become part of you.

A number of conventions have been used to make any scripted portions of the book easier to understand:

Throughout we will refer to the Hypnotist as ‘The Hypnotist.’

We will refer to the person being hypnotised as ‘the subject.’ Any words intended to be spoken to the subject are in **bold**.

General text and any descriptive instructions are written in this plain text. These instructions should not be spoken to the subject.

In hypnosis you are primarily going to use words to influence your subject, so you should know what you are saying. Aim to become a master of communication. Reflect upon the words you use and their many meanings and associations. You should pay attention to how you deliver suggestions and how best to instruct your subject. Learn to use your vocal tone and tempo to communicate your intention clearly and understand when to use silence and emphasis.

All of this will improve your communication skills and help you become an excellent hypnotist. You will swiftly begin to develop your own favoured suggestions and style.

There is nothing wrong with imitating. It is one way of learning. Watch shows and clips of the best hypnotists at work. Read around the subject too. The best hypnotists appear totally confident, expecting nothing less than complete success. They appear knowledgeable and totally certain about what they are doing. Ultimately be yourself—just more so.

Contents

Code of Conduct	5
The 17 Musts	6
About Reality is Plastic:	8
The Art of Impromptu Hypnosis	8
1.0 What is Impromptu Hypnosis?	11
2.0 Hypnosis: No Introduction Necessary	15
2.1 Being The Hypnotist	28
2.2 The Approach	29
2.3 The Set Up	33
2.4 How To Tell if Someone is Hypnotised	36
2.5 Hypnotic Phenomena	39
3.0 The Set Piece	43
3.1 Magnetic Fingers	46
3.2 Magnetic Hands	49
3.3 Stiff Arm	52
4.0 Induction	55

4.1 The Rehearsal	59
4.2 Hand-to-Eye Fixation	62
4.3 Magnetic Palms	66
4.4 The Handshake	69
4.5 Jacquin Power Lift	74
4.6 Jacquin Power Induction	81
4.7 Instant Induction	82
5.0 Getting Deep Now—Intensification	84
5.1 Links	87
5.2 Loops	88
5.3 Chains	89
5.4 Bombs	90
6.0 Direction	90
6.1 The Super Suggestion	94
6.2 Encouragement	95
6.3 Procedural Instructions	96
6.4 Navigation Control	97
7.0 Applying Impromptu Hypnosis	98
7.1 Briefest Therapy	99
7.2 Rossi-style Brief Therapy	102
7.3 Gone	104
7.4 Robbed	106
7.5 Cloaked	111
7.6 Fed	113
7.7 Watered	115
7.8 Truth and Lies	117
7.9 Instant Self-Hypnosis	123
9.0 Safety Last	130
9.1 Abreactions and Other Surprises	131
9.2 Morals and Ethics	134
9.3 Final Thoughts	135
10.0 References	135
Appendix: Set Piece Scripts	137
Appendix: Induction Scripts	140
Contact	143
About the author	144



1.0 What is Impromptu Hypnosis?

This book is about hypnosis and how to use it effectively. It will teach you what hypnosis is and how to hypnotise both individuals and groups of people any time and anywhere you choose.

This is not a book on stage hypnosis, nor is it a book on hypnotherapy or self-hypnosis. It is not about accelerated learning, covert speed seduction, persuasive sales techniques or magic. It is not old, original hypnosis nor new-wave hypnosis. Many things can be achieved with hypnosis, but they are the results of hypnosis, not hypnosis itself. The hypnosis you will learn in this book can be applied in all of the situations above and any other area of your life.

No prior experience of hypnosis is required to understand and apply the knowledge in this book. The techniques are deceptively simple yet incredibly powerful. They are entirely practical and have been road-tested over many years, with thousands of people, in my therapy and entertainment work. When you have mastered them you may well find they are all you need. That said, there is always more to learn. Make hypnosis your art form. Put in the time and effort required to master your craft.

To bring this approach to hypnotising into a practical context, this book is focused on how to provide impromptu demonstrations of hypnosis that can be applied in any setting. This could be for the purposes of fun, entertainment and laughter. It could be rapid relief from physical and mental pains or for the purposes of social engineering. How you apply it is up to you.

When you introduce yourself as a Hypnotist, or if people learn that you can hypnotise, very often they will ask if you can hypnotise them. When you say yes, they will often ask if you can do it right then.

This book is an instructional on how best to make the most of these opportunities. It will also show you how to create a context for hypnosis so you can introduce it into any situation you wish.

Far too many people who claim to be able to hypnotise well, especially hypnotherapists, do not feel confident to give an impromptu demonstration of hypnosis and will make an excuse regarding why they would rather not hypnotise at a party or other social setting. This has much to do with many training courses for hypnotherapy emphasising the use of long progressive inductions often with a large emphasis on relaxation and little or no cultivation of hypnotic phenomena. It also has something to do with a little bit of fear—principally the fear of failing and looking foolish.

The progressive approach works fine when delivered well, however it is not the most appropriate induction for impromptu hypnosis or the most effective.

If turning down an opportunity to hypnotise is a professional call, based on not wishing to appear to take hypnosis anything less than seriously, then fair enough. However, if it is based on a lack of ideas about how to proceed, then this book will address that gap in knowledge.

I got into hypnosis by using it for therapeutic purposes and became a hypnotherapist before I started using it for entertainment. I spend much of my working day as a hypnotherapist, using hypnosis to help people change the way they think, feel and respond to things in their life. I specialise in the kind of hypnotherapy that is characterised by being brief and solution-focussed.

This approach does not involve counselling or analysis; instead it focuses on changing the automatic mental patterns or programmes a person uses in their daily life. I hugely enjoy this work.

I also love having fun with hypnosis to entertain people. I perform with hypnosis both on stage and off of it, with close-up, similar to the way a strolling magician might entertain at a party or a function.

My close-up performance might be described as a cross between hypnotism and mentalism, and creates the impression I can force people to act or respond in certain ways, read their behaviour, predict their actions and control my own mind and body. I have also done work with various TV companies that required me to use hypnosis with an unsuspecting public on the street and in a variety of public places including shops, restaurants, clubs and places of work.

I use the approach outlined in this book in all of these settings. It fits whether I am in the therapy room showing someone how to overcome a phobia, in a pub sticking someone's feet to the floor or on stage giving a performance. Hypnosis is hypnosis, whether it takes place in a therapy room, party or sports field. Understanding that your subject does not have to be sitting in a comfy chair in a therapy room listening to whale music goes a short way to helping you be good at impromptu hypnosis.

One of the seemingly unanswerable questions in philosophy is, 'Do we all see red the same way?'

Fortunately we do not need to answer that question to be able to hypnotise.

However it is useful to proceed with the assumption that our personal perception of

reality is just a malleable point of view.

All that exists are pseudo-events and objects, to which we adjust with a false consciousness, adapting to see these things as true and real. (1)

Hypnosis literally changes our perception of reality; it gives us another false consciousness that we adapt to as being as true and real—in this sense, reality is plastic.

Some of my experimental research and performance work has required me to test some common ideas about how best to induce hypnosis and also what you can do with people when they have been hypnotised. Some of that work, although highly questionable from an ethical perspective, offered a great opportunity to test some of the commonly believed limits of hypnosis.

Even as an experienced practitioner of hypnosis and hypnotherapy, I was still surprised to find just how far this relatively well-understood discipline could really be pushed when taken out of the confines of the therapy room or stage performance.

- Is it possible to walk into a shop, talk to a member of staff for a few minutes, and leave with anything you choose, without paying?
- Is it possible to pay people with pieces of rubbish instead of cash?
- Can you make people treat you like a superstar?
- Can you make people explode with laughter on command?
- Is it possible to become invisible?

The answer to all of these questions and many more just like it is yes. The directions in which this can be taken are endless.

The techniques in this book are simple, direct and can be learnt. They can be applied effectively in a real-world setting, well out of the comfort zone of the hypnotherapy room and without the luxury of a stage full of expectant hypnotic subjects. They can be used anywhere. They are impromptu.

2.0 Hypnosis: No Introduction Necessary

Whether someone believes in hypnosis or not, whether they have experienced it or not, they are still likely to have a strong personal concept of what hypnosis is and how it typically proceeds. This may be based on something they have read or seen in a movie or live show. They may have first-hand experience as a subject or spectator or just be relying on ideas from fiction, hearsay or urban myth. Even children under ten often have a concept of hypnosis.

Before we begin, it might be useful to ask yourself a few questions and note what answers you come up with.

What do you think hypnosis is? What images spring to mind when you think of hypnosis, hypnotists and the hypnotised? Which words or phrases would a hypnotist most commonly use? What does it feel like to be hypnotised? How do people act when hypnotised? Do you think you can be hypnotised? Can hypnotists make you do things against your will?

When you have learnt more about hypnosis and accept yourself as The Hypnotist, it is likely that your ideas about what hypnosis is and how it can be used will be quite different from the view of the general public. It is wise not to forget what most people believe it to be, what they imagine the experience will be like and what phenomenon they think they are witnessing. Using your subjects' mental models of hypnosis is fine, even if they are not that accurate, just as long as their model does not leave them afraid of hypnosis for some reason. If it does, then it is useful to remove their fears prior to hypnotising them, and this is simple enough to do. If their fear is that you will be able to hypnotise them that is fine, as long as you can get them to engage.

I have asked hundreds of students of hypnosis, thousands of therapy clients and many hypnotists the question, 'What do you think hypnosis is?'

The answers vary quite dramatically, especially amongst hypnotists. However, several common themes run throughout the public perception of this art.

Sleep, trance, a relaxed state, mind control, swinging watches, stage hypnosis, getting in touch with the subconscious, telling someone what to do, a comfy chair, a slow and sleepy or gravelly voice, a snap of the fingers, spirals, being under a spell and being out of control: these are all common ideas when people try to give you a sense of what they think hypnosis is all about.

Images of people slumped in a chair with their eyes closed, under the mesmerising gaze and command of The Hypnotist might come to mind. A row of empty chairs,

sleeping subjects, people doing ridiculous things or experiencing amnesia for what they have done are also relatively common ideas.

Even in our modern, rather sceptical society, popular belief often still ascribes some significance to the devices and rituals of hypnosis, such as making passes with the hands, spinning hypnotic watches, spirals, the hypnotic stare and the authoritarian command. Several years ago I received a pocket watch on a chain as a present. The first time I got it out to show some friends in a pub, they scattered, turning away—as if looking at it would immediately put them under. It is an iconic object that seems sewn into the history of hypnosis itself and it is to history that we may turn when trying to understand more about the subject.

In the incredibly detailed written study in *Primitive Mythology*, looking back over 40,000 years of human activity, Joseph Campbell sets out the task ahead of him for the benefit of the reader. He quotes Thomas Mann from the opening of his mythologically-conceived tetralogy, *Joseph and His Brothers*: ‘Very deep is the well of the past. Should we not call it bottomless? ... No matter to what hazardous lengths we let out our line they still withdraw, again and further into the depths.’ (2)

To get to the roots of hypnotism prior to the mid-eighteenth century, we face a similar proposition. Once you start to follow the threads of historical influence, the roots seem to run as deep as the birth of civilization itself, right through the development of art, science, healthcare and psychology. This can be seen when we peer into very thin cracks of light in the darkness of time-gone-by and not summarily and sketchily as a mere footnote to the main subject. It is at this point that we must stop just being historiographers and instead adopt the view of the interested psychologist, sociologist, anthropologist, artist and philosopher. This allows a broader understanding beyond ‘what has happened’, and allows greater insight into the mind, the role hypnotism has played in the development of science and psychology, the role it plays in society today and the potential it has to provide a window on some of the most fascinating and entrenched mysteries of what it is to be human.

Documents from the eighteenth century help us understand much about the purported foundations of hypnotism in the Western world, laid by Franz Anton Mesmer (1734–1815). Many historical accounts begin there. However, the practice of hypnosis in the broad sense that we understand it as today did not emerge until the nineteenth century with the work of James Braid (1795–1860).

The theory and approach of Mesmer was very different from that of Braid. If we are going to retrospectively shoehorn the ‘Animal Magnetism’ of Mesmer into a history of hypnotism, why stop there? If we really want to get into the history of the subject, then we should look further back and identify where his ideas originated. When we do this, it seems there is much in the modern, ancient and even the prehistoric record

of man that might represent hypnotism. This may involve broadening our definition of hypnotism—widening our ‘hypnoscope’—to include not just the traditional practice of hypnosis, but also other practices that provoke the common phenomena of hypnosis as we understand it today.

This allows us to assess any parallels in the historical record that we can learn from. It is clear to me that there are many such parallels. In my opinion there is a line of descent that leads from *The Hypnotist* all the way back to the shaman.

It is beyond the scope and remit of this book to provide such a comprehensive history. Fortunately there are several excellent books that you can obtain that do. These make clear to you on whose shoulders you are standing when you learn and use hypnosis. We will address just a few of the key figures.

Although methods of inducing trance may have been used for the purposes of the shaman for healing, dealing with crises and as an aid for creativity for thousands of years, most histories of hypnosis trace the trance that we equate with hypnosis back to the work of an Austrian physician, Franz Anton Mesmer. Mesmer came up with a theory and a way of treating people that by all accounts helped many to health. His ideas were based almost entirely on poorly-tested hypotheses and faulty science, but they led to more accurate ideas about hypnosis in the nineteenth century.

Mesmer believed that among all the fields known to science at that time there was another field, which might be called an animate field or fluid or life force. He defined good health as the free flow of this field or fluid through thousands of channels in our bodies. Illness resulted from obstructions to the free flow of this fluid. Overcoming these obstacles and restoring flow restored health. When nature failed to do this spontaneously, contact with a conductor of ‘animal magnetism’ was a necessary and often sufficient remedy. Mesmer, in other words, believed that he was a conductor of animal magnetism and that this could influence the flow of the fluid-like life force. Mesmer aimed to aid nature’s effort to heal. He treated patients both individually and in groups. With individuals he would sit in front of his patient with his knees touching the patient’s knees, press the patient’s thumbs in his hands and look fixedly into the patient’s eyes. Mesmer also made ‘passes’: moving his hands from the patient’s shoulders down along their arms.

Prior to this it was common practice to do this with magnets. Many patients felt peculiar sensations or had convulsions that were regarded as crises that were supposed to bring about the cure. (3)

In the nineteenth century the idea that there was some invisible fluid, energy or influence travelling from *The Hypnotist* to the subject crumbled under scrutiny. Hypnosis instead began to be described in physiological and psychological terms as

some kind of special or unique state.

Several influential definitions describe hypnosis as a 'state' of some kind. Just what kind of state, however, is not clear. A 'state that is like sleep', 'a unique or special state of mind', 'a trance state', 'a state of fascination', 'a state of focus', 'any altered state' and of course, 'a deeply relaxed state.'

State-based definitions have some value, but upon examination can all be found to be equally unsatisfactory.

We are always in a state of some kind; arguably we are never in the same state twice. Many studies have found little difference between someone in hypnosis and someone in a 'normal' state. Therefore, critics of this state-based view propose that hypnosis cannot be defined in terms of state. Some go as far as to say that because hypnosis cannot be proved to be a unique state, hypnosis does not exist.

Brain imaging can identify physiological markers that mark a clear distinction between someone who is responding to a specific suggestion and someone who is simply acting. However, no consistent and reliable evidence exists for an independent hypnotic or trance state.

It has been argued that in trying to understand hypnosis, state versus non-state theories only offer us a false dichotomy. We might do better to accept the lack of evidence for a unique state, and instead focus on special process, social-psychological or cognitive-behavioural models.

These more modern views of hypnosis can describe its subjective nature as points on a continuum, rather than as a dichotomy. (4)

Another way to define hypnosis is as an art. Certainly it is possible to be an excellent hypnotist without knowledge of psychology or brain function or state theory. Talent, flair and the twin forces of personality and enthusiasm will take you far as a hypnotist. So will accepting that hypnosis is really just the artful application of suggestion to someone who is focused on the ideas The Hypnotist is presenting.

Hippolyte Bernheim (1840–1919), the father of twentieth-century hypnosis, famously said:

'It is suggestion that rules hypnotism.'

Hippolyte Bernheim. (5)

He believed hypnosis was inherently a suggestion-based process. It is a useful assumption though as difficult to get to grips with scientifically as a state known as

‘trance’.

Eventually hypnosis became viewed by many as something which the subject is responsible for—or more accurately, capable of—given the right instruction. This eventually led some to conclude that all hypnosis is in fact self-hypnosis.

In the early twentieth century the social-psychological theory, expressed in the work of Theodore R. Sarbin (1911–2005) and Theodore X. Barber (1927–2005), became increasingly influential. Hypnosis is described in this theory as a peculiarity of the social relationship between the hypnotist and the subject—the hypnotist and the subject ‘playing’ their parts as they believe they should. In other words, social compliance or role-play is considered to be a key factor. (6, 7)

These ideas were developed further in the late twentieth century into the socio-psychological and cognitive-behavioural views of hypnosis, expressed by Nicholas Spanos (1942–1994) and Irving Kirsch (born 1943), most notably.

Spanos argued that many of the actions performed under hypnosis can be explained with reference to social-psychological and cognitive hypotheses.

He alleged that the experience and behaviours associated with hypnosis are acted out by the person being hypnotised in accordance with cues gleaned from the social context, expectations, and setting, although the subject may experience their behaviour with a sense of involuntariness. (8)

This sense of involuntariness, also known as the classic suggestion effect, might well be the key to defining an experience as hypnotic.

Kirsch demonstrated that what people experience when hypnotised, including the classic suggestion effect, depends largely on what they expect to experience. His theory is supported by research showing that both subjective and physiological responses can be altered by changing people’s expectations.

When the effects of a medicine depend on its psychological context, rather than the specific ingredients that it contains, it is called a placebo. Placebo effects are well-documented and point to a basic principle of human experience and behaviour: when people expect changes in their own responses and reactions, their expectations can produce those changes.

These self-fulfilling response expectancies can be a cause of psychological problems or an essential part of psychological treatment. (9)

According to Kirsch, response expectancy is the common ingredient behind both

placebo treatments and hypnosis. Like a placebo, hypnosis produces therapeutic effects by changing patients' expectancies. One legitimate barrier to the use of placebo by clinicians is that their use entails deception. The placebo is presented as a genuine pharmacological treatment when it is not. By contrast, hypnosis is presented honestly as a psychological procedure. For this reason Kirsch has characterised clinical hypnosis as a 'non-deceptive placebo.' (10, 11)

It can be argued that all hypnotic experiences take place in the realm of imagination. There isn't really a balloon lifting up the subject's hand or glue holding the subject's hands together. The hypnotist often begins by providing instructions to the subject to imagine something such as a mental image. There is often a point where the act of imagining something and the response to it becomes automatic or feels involuntary. It is this subjective feeling of involuntariness, not the vividness of what is imagined, that gives hypnotic experiences their hallucinatory quality. (12, 13)

The debate about the precise nature of hypnosis has gone on for decades and will probably continue to do so.

For our purposes we will look at the definitions of arguably the most influential hypnotists that have walked the planet: James Braid, Milton Erickson and Dave Elman.

James Braid caused a paradigm shift from the mesmerists of the eighteenth and early nineteenth century. He not only popularised the terminology we still use, but at a later date rejected it as misleading. Braid was a doctor and after observing a demonstration of mesmerism believed that he had figured out why people went into this peculiar state, and it had nothing to do with an invisible magnetic fluid. He suggested a physical basis for hypnosis. His initial insightful but inaccurate view was that the mesmerised state was caused by the tiring of an optic nerve as the eye fixated—hence the association with focusing on spinning watches, or in his case, a silver cigarette case. It seems he initially missed the fact that his verbal suggestions to his subjects that their eyes would feel tired were also having an effect.

Braid was essentially an open-minded rationalist, inspired with the truest scientific spirit. He eagerly seized upon all fresh facts and altered his theories in accordance with them. Later in his career he shifted emphasis from a physical description to one concerning the subjective nature of hypnosis and the effect of suggestion. Braid noted that it is not just the gaze that becomes fixated, but the mind's eye as well. In other words, when hypnotised the mind becomes locked around a single idea. (14)

'The real origin and essence of the hypnotic condition is the induction of a habit of abstraction or mental concentration, in which, as in reverie or spontaneous abstraction, the powers of the mind are so much engrossed with a single idea or

train of thought, as... to render the individual unconscious of, or indifferently conscious to, all other ideas, impressions, or trains of thought.'

James Braid. (15)

Note that Braid says hypnosis renders the person unconscious or indifferently conscious to all other ideas. This is important. When hypnotised you can still have an experience that you can reflect on as you are having it and it is, as far as you are concerned, a fully conscious experience. For example, if you are hypnotised to believe you cannot remove your hand from your face because it has been glued there, you are still able to reflect on the fact that it is stuck and even wonder why it is stuck. However, the only reality you have is that it is stuck nonetheless. If you are hypnotised to believe that beer bottle tops are coins, then even when it is pointed out that they are bottle tops you will know without doubt or question that they are not bottle tops, they are coins, and will accept them as such. You are indifferent to ideas other than the one your mind has locked onto as reality. The hypnotist directs the subject's perception of reality by locking the mind around ideas.

Braid went further still in his later works and positioned suggestion, not as being explanatory of hypnotic phenomena, but as the artifice used to excite them.

From the time of Braid, right up into the mid-twentieth century, hypnosis was typically induced using a direct and authoritarian approach, encouraging the concentration of attention.

In the twentieth century Milton H. Erickson (1901–1980) caused a seismic shift in the way to induce hypnosis, developing a permissive and indirect approach that is very popular with twenty-first century hypnotherapists. By the end of his career he appeared to simply be having conversations with his patients who would go into hypnosis without any mention of the word hypnosis. Of course, Erickson knew exactly what he was saying, what he was doing and why it caused hypnosis. His insights with regard to personal change have had a profound impact on modern therapy.

I encourage you to read his works and you will discover many incredible ways you can use hypnosis. He experimented with hypnosis pretty much every day from 1920 to 1980. He covered a lot of ground. Because his permissive approach to hypnosis is so popular, it is often overlooked that Erickson was a master of rapid, direct, impromptu hypnosis, too, and would use it just as readily as the more cultivated covert or indirect approach. It is said he used the handshake induction so often that by the end of his career no one actually wanted to shake his hand. Many of his statements have been quoted as his definition of hypnosis—all are worth reading. What follows is just one of them:

‘A state of special awareness characterized by a receptiveness to ideas.’

Milton Erickson. (16)

Two things are worth noting from this succinct definition. He emphasises that the mind becomes receptive to the ideas that the hypnotist presents. This can be interpreted as a person becoming more suggestible or more open to the ideas being presented to them when they are hypnotised. The emphasis Erickson places on awareness, rather than on being unconscious, inattentive or unaware is also interesting. It is in line with his thinking that hypnosis allows you to deal with the bigger beast in all of us—the subconscious mind—what he called the ‘unconscious mind’. When hypnotised, the unconscious mind seems to assume more responsibility or come to the fore. The unconscious regulates all of your bodily processes and manages all your memories, every learning from every experience, and all the mental patterns and templates that allow you to function. This part of the mind is intuitive. It can call up your potential and instantly change the way you think, feel and respond. By contrast, the conscious mind is limited. It is logical and linear in its approach to problem solving. It is the here and now. His model is essentially a dissociative model, whereby the conscious mind is dissociated from the unconscious mind, preventing it from interfering with the functioning of the suggestions.

Erickson was not interested in talking to the conscious mind. You should not be either when you are in the process of hypnotising. Aim to communicate directly with the automatic unconscious.

Finally, consider one of the most well-known and quoted definitions from another innovator and perhaps the most influential hypnotist of all time, Dave Elman (1900–1967):

‘Hypnosis is a state of mind in which the critical faculty of the human is bypassed, and selective thinking established.’

Dave Elman. (17)

Elman refers to a state where ‘... the critical faculty of the human is bypassed ...’

What is the critical faculty? It does not seem to correlate to any physical part of the brain or neurological process. It is more conceptual—think of it as being a filter between the conscious mind and unconscious mind. The conscious mind can be thought of as having certain characteristics. It is rational and logical, it is limited and it is typified by inductive thinking—proceeding from certain facts to a logical conclusion. By ‘unconscious mind’, I mean everything else other than the conscious critical mind—all of your memories, every learning, resource, pattern and template.

It is creative, intuitive and potentially unlimited.

The critical faculty can be thought of as your sense of judgement, or perhaps more accurately, your sense of control. It is the bit of you that thinks it knows what reality is. It thinks it knows hot from cold. It thinks it knows that a mop is not the person you are in love with. It thinks it will hurt if you stick a needle through your arm. It thinks that you could lift your feet up if you wished to. It believes you know your own name.

Bypassing the critical faculty does not establish hypnosis, but it does represent, as Elman put it, the ‘entering wedge’.

When the critical faculty is bypassed, your sense of judgement, inductive reasoning and logical faculties become suspended or inattentive. How inattentive and for how long they remain suspended is reliant on the attitude of the subject and the ability of The Hypnotist. When attitude and ability are both conducive to hypnosis, the unconscious mind of your subject becomes dominant, assumes responsibility and with further direction from The Hypnotist selective thinking can be established swiftly. According to Elman, selective thinking is that which you believe wholeheartedly.

By “selective thinking” I mean a style of thinking where inductive reasoning is suspended and the mind becomes locked around an idea. When this occurs The Hypnotist’s suggestions will be listened to by the unconscious uncritically. They will be acted upon uncritically. Automatically.

That does not mean the unconscious cannot refuse to go in The Hypnotist’s direction; it can. It does not mean the critical faculty will continue to remain bypassed; it can pop back into play. However, as The Hypnotist, understand and be clear that for all intents and purposes hypnotising someone results in their unquestioning acceptance of the ideas, suggestions and directions delivered by you.

Theoretically the critical faculty can be bypassed in a variety of ways quite naturally without hypnosis. Experiencing confusion, shock, high emotion, information overload, being drunk or high, laughter, play and performance are all common instances where a sense of judgement and logic can be temporarily suspended. It is the rabbit-in-the-headlights moment. Whatever follows is generally driven by our unconscious, instinctive, automatic mind. The Hypnotist can create such moments artificially and utilise the result to establish selective thinking. The techniques that follow in chapter three will show you how to do it.

It is useful to note that in none of these definitions is there any mention of sleep or relaxation. This is because hypnosis is not sleep and does not require the subject to feel relaxed. What is emphasised is that when hypnotised the subject’s attention

narrows and becomes fixed around selected ideas or a single idea. They experience their behaviour as a happening rather than an act of doing. Wider environmental stimuli are often ignored.

Recently a fresh model of hypnosis and the mind when entranced has emerged from the Human Givens pioneers Jo Griffin and Ivan Tyrrell. (18)

The model they have presented is not a multiple-minds model and does not require a state. It simply talks of triggering the 'orientation response' which fires up the 'reality generator' to which The Hypnotist provides content in the form of suggestions. What they refer to as the reality generator can be thought of as the dreaming brain, the mechanics of which are responsible for our dreams and are active during the REM (Rapid Eye Movement) phase of sleep. One of the functions of dreaming is to discharge unresolved emotional arousal. In other words, it allows us to complete emotional ruminations of the day through the metaphoric imagery and connections of our dream. Its other key function is to update our instinctive templates and behavioural and emotional responses. The REM phase is when we lay down learnings. Whenever we act without conscious effort we are reliant on pattern matching, going back to an earlier learned response or behaviour that was set in REM. When we act instinctively we are, in effect, acting on a post-hypnotic suggestion. In the same way, when a hypnotised subject acts on a post-hypnotic suggestion given by the hypnotist they will do so with the same effectiveness, immediacy and instinct they do other unconscious behaviours.

When we put someone into hypnosis we are simply activating the same processes that the brain activates during dream sleep, including the reality generator—this is what makes it so effective. Although the Human Givens definition avoids conceptual issues with dissociation and state, it is, in reality, a special-process model of hypnosis. The detection of this special process could be used to distinguish between unhypnotised and hypnotised modes of operation. However, like the state-based view, evidence for such a special process is lacking.

For your purposes as The Hypnotist it is useful to keep these definitions in mind. Revisit them in the light of your experience. Read the works of those who coined them, taking into account that their ideas are a product of their time.

As interesting and desirable as it may be to understand exactly how hypnosis works, as a practitioner there is no need at all to let the absence of consensus amongst theorists stop you from getting started.

What remains important is the subjective experience of the subject. They alone can qualify if the effects of the suggestions were accompanied by the classic suggestion effect mentioned previously. This characteristic sense of involuntariness is common

to many schools of thought regarding hypnosis.

The mind exists as a model. Hypnosis exists as a phenomenon. We must use a conceptual model to describe how it works. Hypnosis may not have the reality of a house brick, but that is of no consequence to you. The fact is that you can hold any of the major views about hypnosis and still be a good hypnotist.

Over the years I have considered many definitions. Currently I define hypnosis as follows:

Hypnosis is a social construct that causes the cognitive processes of automatic imagination. Hypnotic responses are defined by their subjective sensation of automaticity or involuntariness because they lack the knowledge or feeling of intention.

For practical purposes as The Hypnotist, think of it this way:

The Hypnotist presents suggestions to the subject and the subject experiences the effect of those suggestions with a sense of involuntariness.

Understand—your job is to turn a doing into a happening. As The Hypnotist you are presenting ideas and giving suggestions. You are doing this to your subject's automatic unconscious mind and it is receptive to the ideas you are presenting. Believe, want and expect that it will interpret them and act on them with a genuine unconscious response.

2.1 Being The Hypnotist

To be a great hypnotist it is of key importance that you become The Hypnotist. Not a hypnotist. Not someone who knows a bit about hypnosis — The Hypnotist. You must express absolute confidence, congruence and expertise in your skills, knowledge and abilities. In the beginning this can take a certain amount of front. Pretend and master it. Believe you are one of the best. Believe you are a natural. Behave like you are.

Believe your subject is a wonderful hypnotic subject and that their imagination is good enough. Want and expect them to go into hypnosis and do what you tell them. It is often said that close friends and family are your worst subjects because they cannot accept you as The Hypnotist. It is sometimes harder for them to enter into that reality than people who do not know you so well. Do not fret; just have a go at hypnotising everyone and anyone who will put up with you, including close friends and family. It is not that they have to believe in you having special powers. They just have to take you seriously enough to actually engage with your instructions. If they do that, then they will respond as well as anyone else.

It may be that a family member or friend is a superb subject and you will have your own hypno-monkey for life.



2.2 The Approach

As an impromptu hypnotist it is vital that you know how to approach individuals and groups of people and also how to introduce yourself and the topic of hypnosis. In short—what is the best introduction or opener? I know that when I first started doing impromptu demonstrations of hypnosis on the street and in other public places that many hours were wasted standing around, wondering who would be a good subject and trying to think of some way to bring up the topic of hypnosis so I might have an opportunity to hypnotise. I hope to save you that time by setting out the principles and words I use so that you can establish your best opener.

If you are already a performer or simply someone who has already mastered the art of engaging people to get them to pay attention to you or participate in activities you propose, then I suggest you carry on doing whatever works for you. It will likely work just as well in this context. Just add the word ‘hypnosis’.

If, however, you have ever been in the position of wondering what the best thing to say might be, then you may find value in the simple ideas that follow. Studying what people do who are good at this has helped me. The ideas presented here draw upon a variety of such sources, including performers that I admire, as well as people collecting subscriptions on the street and the work of so-called ‘pickup artists’.

To do this well you need to do more than just be yourself. By all means be yourself—just a bit larger. Be your larger self. Be your best self. Be larger than the group or individual you approach. That applies to your attitude and clarity of mind as much as to physically owning the space. Pay attention to your body language. Your job is not as tough as someone who has to collect charity subscriptions in the street, but let’s imagine it is.

To get anywhere with this, before you even speak you must ensure your body language is open. If it is open it becomes much more likely that people will pay attention.

When approaching a group be open physically. Use open gestures. Have your hands out in front of you. Elbows bent. Make good eye contact. Shake hands now and again when asking for names or introducing yourself. Smile. Look for people who are smiling and already paying attention to you. Do not snub those who seem defensive or uninterested. Draw them in. If it is a noisy environment, do not lean in or crouch down or home in on one individual too soon or you will immediately lose the rest of the group. Instead, speak louder and more clearly with more eye contact. Even if someone is really, really keen and putting themselves forward to be hypnotised before even hearing your instructions in full, continue to address everyone.

Sometimes the person who is very keen turns out to be a pain or is not a responsive subject. Sometimes they are a star. Either way you need to be the one in control of the reactions and the focus for the rest of the group. You can acknowledge such individuals of course, even with a joke like, **‘OK, slow down, I can see you are keen’**, or, **‘Cool, you are going to be good at this’**. Pick them off later. Your efforts to encourage eye and attention fixation should have already begun, with you as the focus. Be seen and be heard. Your presence should capture and command their attention.

It should not be arrogant or abrasive. Your aim is to intrigue and fascinate people.

In 2009 I had the pleasure of meeting Docc Hilford, a world-class performer in the mystery arts. I witnessed him using a psychological system he has developed to give readings to members of the public. Just as amazing as the demonstration itself was the way he easily opened up groups and left them wanting more.

The first phase of his system is ‘The Approach’. He simply approaches people and states, **‘By asking five questions I can know everything about you.’**

It is a simple but brilliant line and achieves three things that you as The Hypnotist should also seek to achieve with your opener:

- It should introduce you.
- It should explain what you are offering the participants.
- It should elicit a response.

Another idea that helped me came from a brilliant performer and friend, Paul Brook. He provides mind reading for entertainment purposes. One of his skills involves approaching a stranger in the street and asking them to remove a banknote from their purse or wallet. Without touching it, Paul then proceeds to name the unique serial number on the note. As intriguing as the effect is, I wanted to know how he manages to get a stranger to remove their purse and money from it in the first place. It struck me that getting someone to do this is a similar challenge to getting someone involved in a demonstration of impromptu hypnosis. It is a request so far removed from their normal expectations that it might make them flinch. His simple but invaluable advice regarding his approach is to say, **‘Excuse me. I am a performer’**, and go from there. By stating you are a performer you instantly break down a lot of social barriers regarding what you can ask people to do. I find it works perfectly for me if changed to, **‘Hi, I am performing here today; I am a hypnotist.’**

This can be followed by a straightforward request to the whole group:

‘Who would like to take part in a little mind game, a bit of fun?’, or, ‘Can I show you something amazing about you?’, or, ‘Has anyone here been hypnotised before?’

Within ten seconds to a minute they know who you are, what their expectations can be and they are already on the hook.

Another principle I value comes from the self-styled speed-seduction guru Ross Jeffries. His expertise is the art of meeting women. A few years back he featured in a TV show where the host asked him how to approach people. Ross outlined what he called ‘Compliment, Introduction, Question’ or C.I.Q. His advice was to do all three, in that order. In other words, if you want to speak to someone you have never met, walk up to them and pay them a compliment, then introduce yourself and ask them a question.

For the impromptu hypnotist a compliment to a group could be something as simple as, **‘Right, this looks like the fun / intelligent / smartest / best-looking table’**, or, **‘OK, you guys look like you are up for a laugh / something interesting / fun’**. To an individual just give a compliment, any compliment, just do not be too creepy or personal. Following the compliment, immediately introduce yourself using the principles outlined above. As that elicits a response, respond to it with a question, hooking them into what will follow:

‘Hi, you guys look like you are up for some fun. I am performing here this evening; I am a hypnotist. Are you up for playing some mind games? Excellent, I want as many of you involved as possible.’

If you are in a position where working with a whole group is impractical, unnecessary or you would simply prefer to work with an individual, then you can run the same pattern again on a sub-section of the group to home in on your preferred subject.

‘You two are kind of dressed differently and look like you might be creative. I am Anthony. Is that fair, do you have a good imagination? Good, let’s start with you. Can you place your feet on the floor?’

2.3 The Set Up

When you have decided to hypnotise someone or someone asks if you would, there are five things it is useful to do:

- Remove fear.
- Eliminate misconceptions.
- Increase expectancy.
- Fire up the imagination.
- Take control.

With the promotion of a stage hypnotist's show they will have already fired up their audience's imagination and created a great deal of expectation that something is going to happen. Amongst their opening patter they typically spend a few minutes going over the reasons why everyone can rest assured they are safe, in the hands of an expert and have reason to feel excited and have fun. The audience will certainly know who is in control.

In a therapy room this is all helped by the advertising, hypnotherapy certificate and the ramble about how the subject remains in control of themselves and is still aware of everything.

In the impromptu-hypnosis setting, things need to be accomplished more swiftly, often in a few sentences. Often in a few seconds.

One approach is to just ignore all of the above and take control. This means to rapidly hypnotise the subject in seconds or less, before they have a chance to be afraid. Using a rapid induction such as the Instant Induction, Jacquin Power Induction or Handshake Induction, which are outlined in chapter four, will help you to do that. However, if you are not going to do that, a few simple words will help things along.

There is no point getting into a 30-minute explanation of what hypnosis is all about. A few words will do it. This is in effect your 'elevator pitch.'

Your elevator pitch is what you would say to someone about your idea in a short ride in a lift. In brief clear terms: what you would say to them if you had just a few seconds to sell your idea. (19)

With hypnosis you are selling the idea that you can hypnotise, that your subject can be hypnotised and that there is no need to be concerned, as you will look after them. Tell them you are a hypnotist. They will immediately wonder if they could be hypnotised

or if you are already hypnotising them.

Taking control does not mean being bossy and pushy, but it does require you to become the dominant party. This can be achieved by being an expert and speaking with confidence and authority. It can be helped by instructing your subject to do something:

‘Can you just move your chair to one side slightly. Now can you place your feet on the floor, your hands comfortably in your lap and look at me.’

If they are standing up, then adjust their position and ask them to put their feet together.

Simple requests like these begin to demonstrate who is in control and you get a chance to see how good the subject is at taking instructions. Some of the inductions and set piece exercises in this book are best carried out with the subject starting in a particular physical position and adopting a particularly attentive mental condition, so use this bit of psychological finessing to tidy them up at the same time.

Everything you ask them to do, however small the instruction or request may seem, must be done with one purpose in mind—to get them doing what you want them to do. Remember, your subject probably does not know how hypnosis proceeds. Give them the comfort of knowing who is in control. They will benefit from knowing that although their job is not to pretend, their role is a collaborative one involving them following instructions and using their imagination.

As soon as you have said to someone that you are a hypnotist then their expectation that they might get hypnotised and their imagination about what might happen have already begun to fire up. You should leverage this your advantage.

Fear of hypnosis takes a few forms. It is your job to alleviate those fears, ideally before they are expressed. If your subject expresses a specific fear or doubt, address that immediately.

Your subject may fear the unknown. Let them know hypnosis is a wonderful state of mind. Let them know it will be an enjoyable experience. Let them know it is not sleep and that they will be able to hear you.

They may fear that they will immediately reveal some secret information and embarrass or ruin themselves. Assure them they will not.

They may fear they will get stuck in a trance or never be the same again. Assure them that they cannot get stuck in a trance. Let them know they will find it interesting and

will learn something about themselves. Show you are a professional who cares by letting them know you can only work with people in a good state of health of a certain age. All of this can then be wrapped into your pre-hypnosis discussion, sometimes called a pre-talk. The magician and hypnotist Amit Badiani is an expert at this. He gains trust and engages people fast and has influenced my pre-talk:

‘OK, you guys are up for experiencing hypnosis. Brilliant, I am going to show you something incredible about yourself. Before we start, think: What it would be like if anything you imagined could become your reality? If you were hypnotised and that was the case, what would you want to experience? Now are you all in good health, over 18, not pregnant, epileptic or suffering from any serious health issue? Great. Hypnosis is about trusting me, but also trusting yourself. I know you can do this. Your imagination is good enough to experience hypnosis and I am going to show you how. You have my word you will be looked after and you will enjoy this. No one will be asked to do anything embarrassing or dangerous; you are in safe hands. In a moment I am going to give you some instructions and I want you to follow these instructions. If I ask you to imagine something, I want you to imagine that. If I ask you to find a feeling I want you to do your best to find that feeling. Is that clear? The experience will be different for each of you; there will be times where I speak to you as a group and times when I speak to you individually. If I am speaking to one of you directly, I’ll make that clear and the rest of you can simply relax.’

Get rid of any of your own fears about whether they will go into hypnosis or not, or whether you will look like a fool if they do not. Eliminate your own misconceptions about what kind of subject they may or may not be.

Help these processes along by being genuinely imaginative, animated and excited for your subject. Aim to get them fascinated with you, the process of hypnotising and the idea of being hypnotised.

2.4 How To Tell if Someone is Hypnotised

If you only give your subject suggestions to relax, then the chances are that neither of you will actually know if they are hypnotised or not. In fact if you ask them afterwards they will probably just say that they felt relaxed, but do not think they were hypnotised. This is fine if your mutual goal is to show them how to relax. However, I am hoping you want to take it further than that. Even if you suggest things that draw every type of hypnotic phenomena out of the subject, they are still likely to say they were not hypnotised. This is because there is no such feeling as being hypnotised.

So how do you tell if someone is hypnotised?

By far the easiest way is to give the subject a suggestion and see if they follow it— instantly and to the letter would be great. In other words, test your work. If they appear to be responding, then give another suggestion and so on. Remember, your subject is going to act on your suggestions unconsciously. As well as the objective response of doing what you have suggested, you want them to have the subjective experience of feeling like that response is automatic to some degree. Anything they do that suggests this is the case is welcome feedback.

It is also useful to develop an eye for the signs of hypnosis so you can spot who has gone even before you start giving suggestions that require an obvious physical or emotional response. Someone can be hypnotised and exhibit none of the following signs, but many will do so. They are useful when you are planning to select one or two participants from a group, because you can gain an insight into who your best subjects might be. These signs might occur simply because the subject already associates some kind of state change with being hypnotised, or maybe they are just experiencing a heightened sense of emotion. Either way, watch out for these signs and if you see them, encourage them.

Eyelids flickering and fluttering. Often this is quite pronounced in the hypnotised subject and it should be encouraged as you can suggest it will increase and then it will.

Rapid Eye Movement (REM). This is the same REM observed when someone is dreaming. You might see their eyes moving behind their eyelids. Temperature change. A change in blood flow can be quite visible in some people, depending on their skin tone.

Eyes rolling back up in the head. If you do not see it happen you may spot the whites of their eyes as their eyelids flicker. Some inductions start with the eyes rolled back

up in the head. In this position it is very difficult for the subject to open their eyes.

Breathing shift. Sometimes it speeds up, but most often the breathing becomes deeper and very steady, similar to when someone is sleeping peacefully.

Increased lacrimation. More moisture in and around the eyes. If the eyes are open they may appear glazed.

Heavy head. With the slightest encouragement, such as gently pushing the head forward, a subject's neck can be relaxed and then it becomes quite difficult to lift the head.

As well as just looking for these signs to assess if your subject is responding, it is also useful to use them to enhance the subject's responses. Inductions can use the method of artificially creating one of the signs of hypnosis in order to hypnotise. You could hypnotise someone by getting them to breathe in for a count of 7 and out for a count of 11, using their count or their flow of breath as the focus of attention. You can gently push your subject's head forward as you say 'sleep', encouraging their neck to relax. You can make the focal point of a fixation induction a point inside their head, with their eyes closed and their eyes rolled back. You can also link one of these signs to the development of another phenomenon or the acceleration of existing hypnotic phenomena. For example, if you notice that the subject is exhibiting lots of eye fluttering then you can bring this into their awareness and create a link between it and the next thing you want to happen.

'As your eyes flicker, your hand is getting lighter and lighter and lifting upward. As your arm lifts, you will enjoy a growing sense of well being. The higher it gets the better you will feel.'

Most of these signs will be outside the conscious awareness of your subject until you bring their attention to them. If you notice them, then you can suggest that they will occur. For example, suggest that the subject will begin to feel warmer or that their eyes will flicker. Then, when you notice that these responses are occurring, they attribute that to the influence of The Hypnotist and the phenomena will increase. This is probably because the subject begins auto-suggesting, 'I am getting warmer, am I looking warmer, how does he know I am getting warmer', or, 'my eyes are flickering, I can't stop them flickering. I must be hypnotised'. This unconscious panic creates a kind of feedback loop driven further by their own internal dialogue. Encourage natural signs of any hypnotic phenomena. Build on them. Develop an eye for them. When you have a group of people and are looking for one of them to work with, use those who exhibit signs of hypnosis and those who look fascinated and keen.



2.5 Hypnotic Phenomena

Once you have someone hypnotised there are a number of phenomena they can experience. These include:

- Catalepsy. Loss of conscious control of the ability to move part of the body. Muscle rigidity and lack of response to external stimuli.
- Ideomotor movements. Unconscious movements, like the head nodding, fingers twitching or legs shaking.
- Amnesia. Loss of memory or inability to recall information.
- Hallucinations. Sensing something that is not there or not sensing something that is.
- Dissociation. Sense of separation between mind and body.
- Hypermnnesia. Seemingly improved recall.
- Regression. Reversion to earlier or more infantile patterns of behaviour and memory.
- Revivification. Recall and re-experience of a past event.
- Analgesia. Partial sensory loss.
- Anaesthesia. Total sensory loss.
- Time Distortion. Contraction or expansion of the perception of time.

Catalepsy is one of the foremost examples of the hypnotic phenomena. It is well documented and used in many ways—a classic in the field. First described by Jean-Martin Charcot in 1882, it is a useful and versatile hypnotic tool. (20)

If you have hypnotised someone and you reach over and lift up his or her arm, you will often find it is cataleptic and will just float there—it stays where you put it rather than dropping down as some might expect. This is often combined with

surprise or instant inductions of hypnosis and hence looks dramatic.

Many of the inductions in this book encourage catalepsy. The key is being able to arrest someone's attention in such a way or for long enough that they forget that arm or hand. They forget how it feels normally and may begin to auto-suggest. If they achieve this it is at the very minimum a useful sign that your subject is responding well and is a useful convincer for the subject that something has occurred. It can often be a very profound experience in and of itself. For me it is the most important phenomena a hypnotist should be able to elicit.

It can be used to move to other more advanced hypnotic phenomena and used as a way of encouraging ideomotor communication through movement, without the need for verbal responses.

Catalepsy is a physiological condition where balanced tonicity exists between the agonist and antagonist muscles. That means it stays in a certain position. Muscles that are used to move a body part usually have another 'opposite' that enables you to move it back again—the biceps and triceps on the upper arm, for example. When these opposite numbers are balanced the body part does not move. There is a pair of muscles in your neck working all the time while you are awake. They keep your head up.

When catalepsy is induced in hypnosis and combined with ideomotor movement to make someone lift their arm, the feelings, the kinaesthetics and the proprioceptive sense are quite different from those you experience when you lift your arm voluntarily. Watch someone's arm lift cataleptically and you will see the movement is a bit like being possessed in a horror movie—like a winch is lifting it. 'Waxy flexibility' is a great term for describing the feeling and is a well-known psychiatric term for describing catatonia. (21)

This is also something you can bring to your subject's attention.

'You can notice your arm lifting and notice it is moving in kind of jerky reflex movements. That is because your unconscious is lifting your arm. It allows your conscious mind to lift it smoothly, but your unconscious moves it in this more reflex-like way.'

Catatonia is a term for catatonic schizophrenic patients who live in a permanent state of catalepsy—you can move them however you want and they stay in the position. Years ago I saw a street performer mimic this condition. He stood on a box that had the words 'Move me' written on the front. You put some money down and could move him into any position you wished and he would stay there until someone else came along and moved him. It is quite straightforward to provoke catalepsy in your

hypnotised subject. Understand that a hand on the arm of a chair can be cataleptic; it does not need to be floating in the air, just outside of conscious control.

In the therapy room catalepsy can be used as an advanced form of ideomotor signalling—using catalepsy and subsequent movements of the body as a line of communication. An arm may lift higher for a ‘yes’ signal, perhaps one arm for ‘yes’ and one arm for ‘no’.

Ernest Rossi uses ideomotor signalling as a way of communicating with the subject’s deep unconscious intelligence in the body. (22)

For the purposes of impromptu hypnosis, become an expert at getting your subject to develop catalepsy and ideomotor movement. It is useful for many things, including:

- Convincing. Demonstrate the classic suggestion effect.
- Inducing hypnosis. Use it as a Set Piece or the induction itself.
- As a routine. Turn them into a statue or a coat-rack.
- Communicating. Ideomotor signals.
- Leverage. To springboard to other hypnotic phenomena.

When using catalepsy you could either do an induction first and then suggest eye, hand, arm or full-body catalepsy, or incorporate creating catalepsy as part of the induction itself. All of the methods in chapter three that include catalepsy can be used as a hypnotic induction rather than just the Set Piece. Once your subject has achieved catalepsy they can be thought of as responsive and further suggestions can be given.

If you have made it impossible for your subject to move their arm, then encourage them to try and move it. Encourage them to really try and put all their effort into it. Tell them they can try, but their unconscious is a superpower and it is working for them.

The realisation that they are clearly more than they thought they were is a beautiful one and an experience that will stay with them. At the very least they will have something to say when asked what happened when they were hypnotised. For many it is a mind-blowing experience.

If they are really getting into it, encourage them to open their eyes and look at the part of the body you have made cataleptic. Ask them if it belongs to them. When a subject has their eyes open such a challenge to try and move their arm seems to be made even more potent. Many people will get a little agitated at this point; instruct them to close their eyes, let them know it might feel peculiar, but they will enjoy it, and go even deeper. Their mind is wide open at this point and ready to receive your suggestions.

3.0 The Set Piece

What follows are a number of simple exercises The Hypnotist can ask the subject to participate in. Individually or collectively they can be thought of as ‘The Set Piece’. They typically follow the set-up and precede the induction. They are your first rung on the hypnotic ladder and should be learnt well and their many applications understood. If you have already come across them, please revisit them.

The techniques featured here are often referred to as ‘suggestibility tests’ or exercises in ‘waking hypnosis’. (23)

Both of these descriptions sell these techniques short.

For a number of reasons the value of these classic techniques has been easily overlooked. However, in my experience this is often where the magic begins. This is when the hypnotic deal is struck. You can entertain and give a satisfying demonstration with these kinds of exercises alone, any time, anywhere, to any age group. They can be delivered with or without reference to hypnosis. They tell you everything you need to know about your subject’s potential to be hypnotised. For these reasons, they allow you to relax, knowing the demonstration will be a success, and focus on making sure it is entertaining and engaging. They act as your selection procedure. They can be used with groups of people just as easily as one-to one. They almost always result in a positive and satisfactory demonstration enjoyed by those taking part and those watching.

There are many very good reasons why The Hypnotist should be able to confidently do a Set Piece. Learn them well. Understand the principles and applications. Use them.

The Set Piece is often used to test how responsive to suggestion the subject is. The Hypnotist can observe the subject taking instructions, get feedback and assess their suitability as a subject during The Set Piece.

The subject experiences The Hypnotist’s power of suggestion and influence. If the subject experiences something they consider out of the ordinary they gain confidence in both the skill of The Hypnotist and their own ability to be hypnotised—they let go and become more fascinated with the process.

The Hypnotist gains confidence in the subject.

The Set Piece fires up the imagination, focuses attention and builds expectation in the subject that they are about to be hypnotised or are being hypnotised.

The Set Piece can be used as the induction into hypnosis or as your first routine, rather than just as a pre-runner to it. This is perhaps the most powerful and overlooked application.

Some hypnotists do not use these techniques. One reason given is that if the subject fails to do what is asked of them then it is more difficult to hypnotise them—this is true to some extent, especially if The Set Piece is presented as ‘test’. As your ultimate aim is to hypnotise the subject to accept your suggestions, it is important to see if they are receptive to simple ones early on. Certainly failing a test is not helpful, but it is not the end of the world either. It just passes by as a non-event by the subject unless The Hypnotist makes a fuss about it. Most people will pass the exercises very easily and if they cannot then it might be wise to pick another subject or take an entirely different approach. There is no need to present The Set Piece as a test. That way there is no possibility of failure.

It is fine to simply say:

‘Let’s try something’, or, ‘Let me show you something interesting’ or call them ‘an exercise in concentration’ and proceed.

Another reason they were overlooked or used in a limited fashion is that many of the techniques have some physiological reason why they work. The odds are high that the subject will succeed, so some hypnotists believe they are being dishonest in using them or just miss their value and dismiss them as a playground trick. This is missing the point. Use them and any other ‘trick’ in order to excite the subject’s imagination and make hypnosis easier. Deliver The Set Piece with a tone that is bright and upbeat, a manner that is confident and commanding, and keep things moving along at a fairly rapid pace.

Find your own way and ensure that your attitude communicates that you are confident, knowledgeable and expecting to hypnotise.

It is also important that your subject does not see The Set Piece as something they should be trying to battle or resist. Equally you do not want them to pretend. Make sure they understand this. Your set-up should have clarified what their role is. For example, if you are going to ask them to imagine their hands are like magnets so that they come together and touch automatically, you can say this:

‘I don’t want you to push them together or try to keep them apart; I just want you to concentrate, imagine your hands are magnets and your body will respond.’

If they follow your instructions, concentrate on the ideas you are presenting and genuinely use their imagination, then they are very likely to do well in The Set Piece and be set up perfectly for the hypnotic induction itself.

3.1 Magnetic Fingers

In this exercise you are going to make the index fingers of your subject move together like magnets:

‘OK, let’s try something. A simple exercise to fire up your power of concentration. I’d like you to place your hands out in front of you like this.

Now can you clasp your hands together, palms together and thumbs crossed, nice and tight.

Now bend your elbows like you are making a desperate prayer. You can make one while you are there if you like.

Now put your first fingers, your index fingers, straight up, about an inch apart. Look at the gap between them, because in a moment they will come together and touch, just like they are magnets; that’s it, they are starting to twitch, closer and closer, and as soon as those fingers touch, you can allow your eyes to close and relax. Now take a nice deep breath in and as you breathe out let your hands drift down and relax.’

Now take a nice deep breath in and as you breathe out let your hands drift down and relax.

Open your eyes. Brilliant. That shows me you can concentrate.’

Ninety-nine per cent of people will do this successfully. You should aim to get their fingers together swiftly, as quickly as two seconds and no more than twenty seconds. If they cannot do it within this time, do something else.

The reason this exercise is so easy to succeed with is because the effect of the fingers moving without conscious effort is heavily reliant on the physiology of the hands. Try it out and this time squeeze your hands together as you watch your fingers. As the tendons in the other fingers tighten it causes the tendons in the index fingers to tighten and they come together quite automatically.

The most common presentation of this exercise involves a demonstration and explanation of what is going to happen and a request to ‘squeeze the hands and all of the fingers together except the index fingers.’

In most cases you will get away with this approach. However it does make it kind of

obvious that some physiological principle is at play and takes the fun and surprise out of it. To avoid making it so obvious do not mention squeezing the hands. Just set things up properly and use suggestion.

Do what you are purporting to do and make it happen with your words and influence to give them a real sense of involuntariness. Be The Hypnotist. This is often your first real chance to do something with your subject. Make it count.

You will see from the scripting above that the tension is placed into the hands in the set-up. This is important, because if the subject just has the fingers loosely interlocked it is much less likely they will succeed, so ensure that they follow your instructions. If they have not, then say it again, making it absolutely clear what you want them to do.

Demonstrate with your own hands as you go through the instructions. As soon as the hands are set up there should be a change of pace and a direct suggestion from The Hypnotist about what is going to happen. State the outcome that they will touch first, rather than beginning by describing the magnets, as otherwise they might touch before you suggest that they will do so:



‘...because in a moment your fingers will come together and touch, just like they are powerful magnets.’

You should increase the tempo and forcefulness of your delivery at this point. When

using this technique and any other Set Piece exercise, even though you know it will work your mindset as The Hypnotist should be that you are making this happen with your suggestions. This will make you congruent and convincing in your approach. Your words and actions will create the effect.

Although simple and easy to dismiss as a trick, you will be surprised at just how much some subjects will react to this test. Wide-eyed expressions and exclamations of surprise that what you are saying will happen is happening are common.

Immediately you can go into a stronger test, such as Magnetic Hands or Stiff Arm. Or you can proceed immediately with an induction.



3.2 Magnetic Hands

In this exercise you are going to make the hands of your subject move together as if they were magnets.

‘Now in a moment I will ask you to concentrate just like you did on your fingers, only this time I want you to really use your imagination, so in a moment I will ask you to close your eyes.

I’ll ask you to place your hands out in front of you like this, to close your eyes and imagine you have two powerful magnets strapped to the palms of your hands pulling them together. When they touch, your head can simply fall forward as you relax.

OK, so place your hands out in front of you, look at the space between those hands, get a clear picture of your hands stuck out there; now close your eyes and imagine you have two powerful magnets strapped to the palms of your hands pulling them together.

They are already starting to go; imagine that magnetic force is getting stronger; the closer they get the stronger it becomes, just like when as a child playing with magnets you felt that magnetic attraction, pulling those hands together. I know it is difficult to tell exactly when they are going to touch, but I can assure you they are going to touch.

Now let your hands drop down as your head drops forward onto your chest, and relax. Excellent. Now open your eyes. You have a powerful imagination.’



In this exercise I suggest that The Hypnotist demonstrates exactly what the subject has to do and what will happen before asking the subject to do it. Once you have explained what is going to happen and demonstrated it happening it is highly likely the subject will succeed at this exercise—even more so if they have just passed the Magnetic Fingers exercise.

Magnetic Hands logically follows Magnetic Fingers as again it involves ‘magnetic’ forces and parts of the body moving automatically—without conscious effort. It also builds upon the subject’s successful demonstration that they can concentrate by asking

them to concentrate again and use their imagination. The exercise can be done with the eyes open. However, in saying, ‘This time I want you to really use your imagination so in a moment I will ask you to close your eyes’, you are giving the subject a reason to close their eyes; this gives you an opportunity to observe them responding to your suggestions with closed eyes and makes it easier for them to use their imagination. At this point you can observe them closely for any signs of hypnosis, especially eye fluttering, REM and breathing shifts.

A traditional approach to hypnotic induction was to suggest the eyes would get heavy and close. The task for The Hypnotist is no different to doing magnetic hands. Just suggest the eyelids will become heavy and close. It can look quite dramatic up-close. It can be a little slow, so give them a reason to close them instead—give them an instruction to close them and then do something more interesting.

Magnetic Hands is a stronger test of their powers of concentration and imagination than Magnetic Fingers, because there is much less reliance on the mechanics of the body and much more emphasis on suggestion. There is still some physiological principle in play. If you place your hands out in front of you, as they tire they begin to drop and naturally fall inwards towards the lap. However, just as with the finger exercise, it is important that you as The Hypnotist make this happen, want it to happen and expect it to happen.

Think of the subject’s arms as your arms. They do what you tell them to do. Take ownership of them like they are two objects entirely detached from the subject. They are your props.

When the hands touch there is again opportunity to link what they have achieved to something else. This could simply be an opportunity to let the subject know they can relax or are doing well and will go into hypnosis easily. It could be that as their hands touch then their head will drop forward and they will go into a deep sleep. The choice is yours.



3.3 Stiff Arm

In this exercise you are going to make the arm of your subject stiff so that they cannot bend it. This could follow Magnetic Fingers or Magnetic Hands. Sometimes I use this after I have done the actual hypnotic induction. In that sense it is an early routine.

I present this in one of two ways. The first is done with the eyes open, much like Magnetic Fingers. The second approach is done when you already have the subject's eyes closed. This is the method I normally use with groups.

Method One—Firstly you need to get permission to take hold of your subject's arm. Always get permission from your subject if you are going to touch them. Straighten their arm out in front of them:

‘Give me your arm. Now make a tight fist and the muscles tense.’

Slap the palm of your hand on their fist and poke their muscles with your finger as you say the following:

‘Even tighter in your forearm, your triceps, right into your shoulder.

Imagine you have a steel bar running through your fist through your elbow to the shoulder; your arm is like a steel bar.

Now your arm is getting stiff... make it stiff, stiff... stiffer and stiffer, tighter and tighter... you cannot bend it, try as hard as you will. Try hard and find you cannot bend it; the harder you try, the stiffer it gets. You cannot bend your arm.’

Once the subject has tried in vain to bend their arm you can remove the effect easily by just touching their arm and saying the following:

‘All right, it is all gone now. You can bend your arm now. It is loose, relaxed and normal in every way.’

Alternatively, you can do this without touching.

Method Two—Imagine that your subject is sitting with their hands in their lap and their eyes closed, waiting for your next instruction.

‘I am going to count from one to three. On the count of “one” I want you to make a tight fist with your right hand. On “two” I want you to raise that arm up toward the ceiling and on “three” really make that fist as tight as you can and

listen to my voice.

“One”, make that fist, “two”, raise it up toward the ceiling, now “three”, make that fist tight and feel that stiffness; feel the skin on the back of the hand tightening, the wrist and elbow locking out. Even tighter in your forearm, your triceps, right into your shoulder.

Imagine you have a steel bar running through your fist, through your elbow to the shoulder; your arm is like a steel bar. Now your arm is getting stiff... make it stiff, stiff... stiffer and stiffer, tighter and tighter...you cannot bend it, try as hard as you will. Try hard and find you cannot bend it; the harder you try, the stiffer it gets. You cannot bend your arm.’



This kind of Set Piece is normally met with a slightly baffled, but amused response by the subject. When they have their eyes open and look at their arm their emotional response to the situation tends to get stronger. Again there is a good reason why the Stiff Arm works—you are simultaneously asking your subject to tense their arm and to try and bend it. Clearly if they take the first instruction they will be unable to carry out the second. However, the effect it has on their mind is very real.

Do not dismiss this as a pseudo-hypnosis trick. Instead, use it to move your subject into hypnosis.

If you cannot bend your own arm or keep your hands from moving despite your best efforts to do so, then it certainly feels like your conscious critical mind has been bypassed; it feels involuntary.

Sometimes when you begin to challenge the work you have done by saying, **‘try and bend it’**, the arm will start to bend a little. Even at that point continue with your suggestions. Remind them that it feels stiff and will straighten out or set into place by saying, **‘that’s weird, it bends a bit and then springs right back straight again’**. Tap them on the triceps as you do, encouraging the arm to straighten. There is no point snatching defeat from the jaws of victory.

In any Set Piece it is important that what the subject is being asked to do is not objectionable. Presenting these exercises as a demonstration of the subject’s ability to concentrate and use their imagination is not objectionable. Take the opportunity to congratulate them, flatter them and encourage them. The subject’s mind is easily locked around a single idea.

4.0 Induction

Induction is the generic term used to describe any procedure used to hypnotise. In essence it is a suggestion to become hypnotised. Almost anything you do or say can be used as an induction. A diverse range of procedures have been used throughout the history of hypnosis, from bizarre esoteric practices such as clashing gongs and flashing lights, to simple repetitive suggestions for relaxation. Whether it is commanding someone to sleep, swinging a watch, or waving a cucumber, the common ingredient is the association with the word 'hypnosis'. The procedure, perse, is not that important, but whether or not the subject perceives it as part of an appropriate cue for displaying hypnotic behaviour is. For this reason the number of possible inductions is limitless and that is why they continue to proliferate. There are thousands of them to choose from. Some inductions are direct; some are indirect. An induction can be rapid and instant or slow and progressive. It can be overt or covert, verbal or nonverbal. The inductions outlined here are all rapid, overt, verbal inductions. Most have a physical element to them too.

Although being flexible in your approach is desirable, you will be more effective by becoming extremely accomplished at just a few inductions, rather than simply knowing lots of them. It can be fun to learn more, of course. However, continuing to seek out new inductions in the hope that finding the ultimate induction will make you a better hypnotist is normally a fruitless effort. Ultimately it is The Hypnotist that does the hypnotising, not the procedure itself.

The inductions you decide to master and use should be suited to the setting and circumstances you plan to use them in. If you are performing from a stage you might want something physical, dramatic and visual that clearly communicates to the audience that the subject is hypnotised.

In a large group-therapy session you might want something everyone can do from their chairs that is engaging or relaxing. Working impromptu it might be something you can do swiftly that provides you with immediate feedback from the subject and leads into your first routine.

Although no particular induction is better than another in terms of how the subject will fare on a subsequent test of suggestibility, it is worth considering your subject's unique attitudes, preferences, abilities and expectations as well as their condition. Some of these variables might have an impact on how well they respond to the task you are presenting them with. Often the pre-hypnosis discussion will yield useful information that will help The Hypnotist in refining their induction for best effect without necessarily changing it altogether. Be sensitive to the following variables and flex your approach accordingly:

- Attitude. What is the subject's attitude? Do they think their role is to challenge, participate, or be entirely passive?
- Preferences. Have they expressed a preference for relaxation? Do they fear giving up control?
- Abilities. Do they have the ability to think, visualise, fantasise and absorb themselves?
- Expectations. What do they expect? Have they experienced hypnosis before?
- Condition. Does their condition prime them for or prevent them from doing certain things?

I prefer inductions that contain a mixture of instructions and suggestions. Everyone can follow instructions. They are a request to do something. Suggestions may sound similar to instructions, but they contain a cue suggesting that the response that follows will happen automatically, experienced with a sense of involuntariness to some degree. Suggestions provide The Hypnotist with feedback during the induction itself, showing early on whether the subject is responding by experiencing the classic suggestion effect.

I prefer inductions that provide a novel situation for the subject. It makes it slightly ambiguous how they should proceed and what is being asked of them. Because of the ambiguity in some aspect of their role, they wait for further instructions and suggestions. This situation provides The Hypnotist with options about how best to proceed. I refer to this situation as having leverage. For example, if during the induction The Hypnotist was to lift the subject's arm up by the wrist, this provides options about what might happen next. It could be that the arm feels heavy or relaxed and would drop down if The Hypnotist let go. It could move automatically. It could lock into place. Sometimes the arm will feel naturally more inclined to one of these outcomes. The Hypnotist can then tweak the induction and make suggestions that will exacerbate that condition, such as if it feels heavy to make it heavier. Alternatively The Hypnotist can choose to make suggestions that the arm will adopt some other condition, perhaps the opposite. For example, if it is light, make it heavy. If it is stiff, make it floppy and relaxed. If it is still, make it move.

Keep in mind that if your subject has responded well to The Set Piece then they may already be hypnotised. The bottom line is they are already responding to your suggestions automatically. If you have suggested the subject's arm will move and they fail to stop it from moving, despite looking at it and doing their best to do so, then they appear to have already established selective thinking around at least one idea—they cannot stop their arm moving.

Their unconscious is receptive to the idea you are presenting to it. The effect The Hypnotist's suggestions have created feels out of the voluntary control of the subject.

If the subject's arm is unbendable because you suggested it would be, and you suddenly push it down while delivering the command, 'OK, now relax your arm and Sleep!', they probably will go straight into hypnosis and simply wait for your next instruction. Be ready in case you need to catch them. Even if after making the subject's arm unbendable you were to just touch it and say, 'OK, you can bend your arm now; it is normal', in your head you can still assume the subject is receptive to your ideas. It may not have occurred to the subject that they are hypnotised or even that the effort to hypnotise has begun. In this sense the induction that follows The Set Piece is a way of intensifying the subject's ongoing hypnotic behaviour rather than creating it.

The following inductions are all rapid—meaning they take anything from a few seconds to one minute to perform. They generally involve some physical manipulation of your subject—this could mean taking control of their eyes, arm, wrist, hand, head or balance. This rapid approach is the most effective for impromptu applications of hypnosis. It could be argued that it is the most effective for hypnosis full stop, wherever or for whatever purpose it is used.

It is advised that you use these techniques after you have delivered one or two Set Piece exercises; however, the inductions can stand alone too. It could be you have just been introduced to someone as a hypnotist and they have expressed an interest in being hypnotised and you want to get straight into it. It could be that you are not announcing you are The Hypnotist and are just springing the induction on an unsuspecting subject to- be. My suggestion, of course, is that you get permission. You will find these inductions are flexible and can be adapted to suit all circumstances.

You can only really know if your induction has been a success by following it up with suggestions and seeing if they are followed by the subject automatically to some degree. Ensure you smoothly transition from your induction into what follows it.

Confidence, certainty and a matter-of-fact attitude that the person will get hypnotised go a long way to using these techniques successfully. Some hypnotists can do this right from the start; others develop this skill through practice. It is of course helpful if

there is a sense of trust between The Hypnotist and the subject. The discussion in your set-up should have taken care of this. The Set Piece should have ratified that.

4.1 The Rehearsal

This generic rehearsal induction has been used for many years in hypnosis. It was the first rapid induction I learnt and it works superbly. It is great for the new hypnotist, because it allows you to practise on the subject before doing the 'real' induction. It is suitable for use in therapeutic situations as well as impromptu. This induction has never failed to hypnotise and I still use it when I think it is appropriate. (24)

The Hypnotist explains to the subject in a step-by-step fashion exactly what they are going to say and do and what effect it will have on the subject. This is best presented in the matter-of-fact tone of teaching the subject something.

This version uses rehearsal to create catalepsy in their arm. You literally rehearse, as many times as required, until it is time for the real induction. Normally three or four rehearsals is enough.

Strangely you will never make it to the real induction. The subject will become hypnotised during one of the rehearsals, hence the name:

'Can I borrow your arm?

What I'm going to do here in a moment is... I'm just going to reach over like this... and I'm going to pick up your hand, and I don't want you to go into hypnosis, because I want to explain this to you...'

As you say this, pick up the hand of the subject by the wrist and move it up so that their hand is in the air and their elbow bent at about 90 degrees. Then as you move their hand back down say:



‘...because this is something that will help you later on in getting hypnotised... and then to have you come back out of hypnosis we are going to move that hand back down like that.’

Pick up their wrist and speaking more softly, but still at a regular conversational pace.

‘All you are going to notice is that I’m going to pick up your wrist like this.. I’m going to talk to you in a certain way, and as that hand reaches a certain point... you’ll notice a number of things happening that will let you know you’re going into hypnosis... your eyes close, your breathing will shift and you will go even deeper, and then to have you come back out, wide awake, we’ll move the hand back down like this. OK?’

So I am not going to do it yet; I just want you to get the feeling; so if now is the time to do it, all I would do is reach over like this, I would pick your arm up like that and stop at a point when you would go inside; probably notice then that your eyes would close at a certain point; it’s going to stop all by itself. Then I’m going to move it back down. OK.’

You have just added a few steps, small details. You have begun pacing and leading their experience. In other words, point out to them what is happening and ambiguously suggest what is going to happen, while looking for any signs of hypnosis developing and building that into your patter.

‘Now if we were actually going to do it again, all I would do is reach over. Your

breathing quite at ease now.'

It is likely on the third or fourth time that as you go to lift their arm, it will start to lift up before you even touch it. What occurs as you rehearse is that you train their arm to respond. This is what you want. When it does, all you do is give it the minimal amount of encouragement upwards with your thumb on the underside of their wrist as you concentrate on them developing the other signs that they are responding.



'And as that arm lifts, like that, as your eyes close, and when that arm stops by itself...'

Their arm will probably remain suspended now even if you let go, and tend to slowly release all of the fingers except for the index finger on the back of their wrist.

This gives the message that the hand is still being held in some way and if it is not cataleptic already it means that you can manipulate it a little more if required.

'And you know what to do, all the way in... that's right... eyes closed, deep asleep, deep asleep. And your unconscious mind can follow exquisitely the suggestions with your conscious mind paying attention or going anywhere it wishes. Now the question is, how deeply into hypnosis can you go? How much deeper can you go now? That's right... arm lifting now, even higher... that's right.'

If their eyes are still open, say the following to direct them to close:

'I want you to watch... stay awake, even more focussed until it's time... that's

right... eyes closed... now all the way into a deep state.'

Proceed to deepen their experience or simply give a hypnotic suggestion and bring the hand down only as quickly as is needed.

'That's right, I want that hand to drift down to your lap only as quickly as is needed; this time, your eyes will remain closed, and you can drift down, all the way down, keeping that inner focus; the muscles relax, you can relax; as that arm drifts down, you can drift down. Deeper and deeper to sleep.'

From that point on you can go wherever you wish to. There is no need for any further induction.

4.2 Hand-to-Eye Fixation

This induction is simple, fast and flexible. It is the one I use most often. It involves The Hypnotist showing someone their own hand and fixing their gaze upon it. I tend to use the palm of the hand, but the back of the hand will do. The wording is almost identical to that used in The Handshake Induction, but the delivery feels more permissive. The relative position of The Hypnotist and the subject dictates which hand to use. It does not matter. There is no need to be concerned about hand dominance.



Just lift their arm up by the wrist to a position they would naturally adopt if inspecting their own palm. The palm should be about 30 cm from their face and slightly above their eyeline.

Watch their eyes to make sure that they are zoned in on one spot. If they are scanning around their entire hand or looking at you every now and again, remind them to focus on one spot. Looking at one spot will focus and narrow their attention. Continue to hold their wrist with a light touch, adjusting your fingertips to encourage their arm to take its own weight. Then slowly begin moving it toward their face and pace their experience.

‘In a moment, if it is OK with you I would like to borrow your arm. Is that OK? I am going to pick your hand up by the wrist like this. I want you to look at your hand; look at the lines, and now just find one spot; you can look at and keep looking at that spot. Don’t look at the whole thing, just keep your eyes on one spot, that’s it.’



Some arms will have absolutely no weight at all. They probably went into hypnosis before you took hold of their wrist.

Some arms are really heavy and you will take all the weight. Move their hand around in front of their chest for a bit and wait until you feel their arm lock in place. You should feel it become kind of weightless. As you move it up and down into position with a light touch it will suddenly support itself. If you keep your index finger on the outside edge of their wrist you can test how it is supporting itself by just maintaining contact with your finger. The subject cannot quite tell if you are supporting it or not and this encourages them to dissociate from their hand and arm.

If it is not supporting itself after several seconds, just remind them to focus their attention on that spot. Have positive expectation sewn into your approach as The Hypnotist. Hold it as a core belief of yours that they are a great hypnotic subject. Expect their arm to fix into place.

‘That’s right, keep your eyes on that spot.’

As that hand begins to move toward your face, your eyes will begin to change focus, and as you become aware of those eyes...’

You have choices about how to proceed from this point.

Most often I will simply pass my hand in a downward motion past their eyes as I tell them to close them and say the following:

“... close your eyes and sleep now. Drift inside as you listen to me, because in a

moment I'm going to count down from 3 to 0, and as I count down from 3 to 0, your hand will float back down to your lap, as if lowered on an invisible wire; your head will fall forward onto your chest, and you will go so much deeper into hypnosis. 3 - 2 - 1 - 0. Deep asleep.

All the way down. Deep, deep, deeper asleep.'

Then continue to test your work by giving them further suggestions, or leave their eyes open and say:

'...that's right, with your eyes open, fixed on that point... understand that you have an incredibly powerful unconscious mind, much stronger than your conscious mind. In a moment I'm going to touch the back of your hand, and when I touch the back of your hand your unconscious is going to start pulling it towards your face. Now you could pretend that, but that's not what I want. So when I touch the back of your hand and you feel it start to pull, you can try and stop it. Just like your hand is a magnet, you will find your head is a magnet and that hand is a magnet.

You can try and stop it pulling closer and find you cannot. You're a strong man/woman. Really try to stop it happening consciously, and let's see just how much stronger you are unconsciously.'

Then touch the hand. On its way to their face, usually with a good deal of shaking in their upper body as they fight with their own arm, you can encourage more futile resistance:

'You're a strong man/woman, try even harder and find it continues to move closer; the harder you try the more difficult it becomes.'



You can use the arrival of the hand at the face as the trigger for the deepening of hypnosis:

‘When your hand touches your face your eyes will close and you will go so much deeper into the hypnosis. Profound hypnosis. Complete physical and mental bliss.’



4.3 Magnetic Palms

Hypnotists have used this simple technique for decades. It is a great group induction. The Hypnotist gives suggestions that pull the subject's hands together like magnets and, if desired, sticks the hands together. Good fun when at a party or in a bar, but also very useful in the therapy room. Although technically it barely differs from its use as a Set Piece, here it is used as a rapid induction. It is useful for you for a number of reasons. It gives the subject an experience of their ability to affect their body with their mind, sets up the promotion of catalepsy, creates a moment of wonder or confusion, demonstrates a hypnotic phenomenon and shows your position as The Hypnotist.

‘Have you ever been hypnotised before?’

If they have, then great. There is less need to explain anything and you can use their experience if it was a good one. If not, then let them know they will find this interesting and move on.

‘What do you think hypnosis is?’

After thinking for a moment the subject will likely say relaxation, sleep or something else. Whatever they say, immediately counter with the following, or something similar, that matches up to what they have said:

‘That’s right, it is all about using your mind. I would like you to do something for me. It might feel a little strange at first, but I can assure you everything will return to normal afterwards; if you don’t feel something, you don’t feel something; it takes a little while, but just relax and wait for it; it will happen—it is always different with each person as we all think and feel things in different ways.’

These opening comments do many things. They suggest that something will happen. They suggest it may be a bit odd. They say very little about what the experience will be. You do not have to use them but they create expectation during the set-up. (25)

‘OK, are you ready to be hypnotised? Can you put your arms out like this, about shoulder height, palms facing towards each other? Now in a moment I will ask you to concentrate just like you did on your fingers, only this time I want you to really use your imagination, so in a moment I will ask you to close your eyes. I’ll ask you to place your hands out in front of you like this, to close your eyes and imagine you have powerful magnets strapped to the palms of your hands, pulling them together. When they touch, your head can simply fall forward as you relax. If you imagine exactly what I ask you to imagine, your body will respond.

OK, so place your hands out in front of you, look at the space between those hands, and get a clear picture of your hands stuck out there; now close your eyes and imagine you have two powerful magnets strapped to the palms of your hands pulling them together.

They are already starting to go; imagine that magnetic force is getting stronger; the closer they get the stronger it becomes. I know it is difficult to tell exactly when they are going to touch, but I can assure you they are going to touch, just like when as a child playing with magnets you felt that magnetic attraction, pulling those hands together.

Now let your hands drop down and relax. Sleep.’

This closing-eyes step is not necessary, but I find it helps. It may surprise them when the hands touch. If you keep their eyes open it is also quite surprising when they see their hands moving and this tends to fixate their attention; you could then link the moment the hands touch to eye closure and hypnosis.



4.4 The Handshake

There are various handshake inductions—hypnotising via a handshake. Stage hypnotist Ralph Slater was doing this as early as 1948. Dave Elman outlined a handshake induction. Milton Erickson developed at least two variations. He is known to have used a handshake as an opportunity to induce hypnosis so often that rarely would anyone wish to shake his hand. He would not quite let go of their hand and would use an ambiguous touch until the hand took its own weight and developed catalepsy.

The technique outlined below is widely credited to Richard Bandler, one of the co-founders of Neuro-Linguistic-Pro-gramming. (26)

This is easier to pull off than Erickson's ambiguous touch and I find it is one of the easiest and most effective rapid inductions. It is one of the best inductions for unannounced impromptu hypnosis.



You go to shake the subject's hand and interrupt the handshake by taking hold of their wrist with your other hand and showing the palm of their hand to them. This creates a moment of confusion and you lead the subject into hypnosis. It can all be done in less than 10 seconds. It can be used after The Set Piece or done from cold.

Offer your right hand to the subject as you would if initiating a handshake and say something that encourages them to respond. For example, if they have just completed The Set Piece I may say something like this:

‘Thanks for doing that.’ or, ‘Excellent. Can I borrow your hand?’



As the subject offers their hand to shake yours, pull your hand away slightly and use your left hand to lightly grasp the subject's right wrist and move their palm to a distance of about 30 cm from their face. Point at their hand as you give them their first instruction:

‘Look at your hand.’

Continue at an even pace, speaking with some command:

‘Look at the lines. Look at one spot. As that hand moves towards your face...’

Move it very slowly towards the subject's face while pointing at it with your other hand:

‘...you can notice the changing focus of your eyes and as you do, close your eyes and sleep.’



Simultaneously to the phrase ‘close your eyes’, drop your pointing hand downward and away from their focus, so that their eyes are encouraged to follow. You can snap your fingers to encourage this. You can do both. This is normally enough for them to close their eyes. Then proceed with deepening.

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If their eyes are not closed, I continue with the following:

‘That’s right, as you notice that hand is getting closer and closer to your face...’

The hand is hopefully moving cataleptically now to the point where you could let go of it and it would continue to move.

‘...that’s right, closer and closer... (slow down and soften voice and delivery) until you just allow it to happen... all the way... down... that’s right... all the way down while that hand remains totally fixed there, right there. Now close your eyes.’

It is up to you whether you wish to continue intensifying the situation or just use the existing situation to deliver some other suggestions.



What is happening in the handshake induction?

The key ingredient to making this move a success is often touted as successfully interrupting the automatic motor programme associated with handshaking. It is common for someone to automatically respond to an outstretched hand, which is offering a handshake by sticking out their hand and completing the shake. It is an unconscious move on their part because it is something we are trained to do from childhood. When you interrupt this pattern, by seizing the wrist rather than actually shaking hands, conscious activity is temporarily suspended while the subject searches for meaning in the interruption. They are looking for the next cue about how to proceed—if you wait too long, more than a second or two being too long, they will find the cue themselves—but if you make use of this short window by going straight into the script above, you can keep them suspended there.

The way you do that is to pace exactly what occurs starting with the move toward the face. Of course the eyes will change focus as this occurs; of course they will close at some point. The technique paces these two things and then leads them to close them and ‘Sleep’.

Success with this induction is directly proportional to The Hypnotist projecting confidence the subject will go into hypnosis. Move swiftly after the pattern interrupt, show confidence, keep giving suggestions and hypnosis will ensue. Go and find a traffic warden or someone pestering you with a questionnaire in the street and practise.

From personal experience I have found the emphasis on the pattern interrupt element of the handshake induction has prevented some people from using it. In truth you can use it without shock, surprise or confusion. It still works. Used in this way the hand is just a fixation point that you use to send them into hypnosis as outlined in the Hand-

to-Eye Fixation induction. Despite the dramatic look and ninja-like nature of this induction, it is actually one of the easiest rapid techniques to do. Master it.

4.5 Jacquin Power Lift

This induction combines confusion, rehearsal and a pattern interrupt. It results in catalepsy. It is the wonderful creation of my father, Freddy Jacquin. He is a renowned hypnotherapist and has hypnotised over 30,000 people, the vast majority of them using this induction. It is rapid and direct, reliable and flexible. It can be used one-to-one or with small groups in any setting. Like all of these rapid inductions, success is reliant on your intent and expectation, not the technique itself. This is our preferred induction, especially if the subject is seated or standing somewhere where their elbow can be supported. That said, it can also be done without elbow support.

‘OK, I’m going to take you into hypnosis. I am going to show you what I am going to do, then I am going to do it.’

Point at their hand and say the following:

‘In a moment I am going to borrow your arm. Is that OK with you? I will reach over and pick up that hand, and as I lift it up like this...’

Demonstrate by reaching over with the thumb and first two fingers of one of your hands, taking hold of your own wrist and lifting it up until your palm is facing forward. Close your eyes as you do this to make clear what you want the subject to do:

‘...as it lifts to about here, I want you to allow your eyes to close. As I push it down (demonstrate) your eyes will open and you can just relax.’



Demonstrate again by opening your eyes as the hand moves down. Then give a second demonstration:



‘As I pull your arm up, your eyes will close; as I push it down, your eyes will open and you will relax even more. Is that OK with you? Can I borrow your arm?’

Reach over and pick the arm up by the wrist, bending the elbow. There is no need to pull it up immediately; perhaps pause a moment or two to look for any of the signs of hypnosis as they begin to focus on that idea.



‘As I lift it up you can allow your eyes to close.’

Note the permissive language **‘... you can allow your eyes to close’**. It is an instruction. They will close their eyes.

Hold their wrist in a way that makes them wonder whether you are holding it or not and whether you are lifting it or not. A light touch, sometimes lifting one of your fingers that is holding their wrist, creates a kind of ambiguous touch that creates some confusion.

Attempt to get to the point where their hand is ‘held’ by having just one of your fingers remaining in contact with the back of their wrist.



Then re-grip and push their arm down slowly, almost as if you were meeting some resistance and it was slightly difficult to push the arm down, as you say this:

‘As the arm goes down you can allow your eyes to open and relax even more.’

This added bit of tension is easily achieved by tensing the muscles in your own arm. It gives the impression to the subject that their arm is feeling slightly strange.

Repeat, adding some pacing comments and shifting from permissive language to a more direct tone and commands. This time the instruction is replaced with a suggestion that the ‘eyes will open/close’:

‘That’s right, the arm lifts and your eyes will close. I push it down and your eyes will open as you continue to relax.’

Go to lift the arm up for a third time and use the following shift in your language to suggest that the arm is lifting and their eyes are going to close automatically. Due to the built-in rehearsal it probably will lift automatically or with very little assistance.



‘This time as the arm lifts and your eyes close, feel that wrist getting stiffer.’

As you mention their wrist getting stiffer, squeeze it a little to encourage tension.

With your free hand, poke them in the forearm muscle with the tip of your finger and say the following:

‘Feel the forearm muscle tightening.’

Poke the elbow joint.

‘Feel your elbow stiffening.’

Poke them in the biceps and shoulder as you say:

‘Feel the biceps stiffening... into the shoulder. Every muscle and fibre... stiffer and stiffer as it hangs on that wire...’

As you mention the wire, tap your index finger on the crease of their wrist.



‘Each word that I say and every breath that you take will take you deeper and deeper into hypnosis.’

Repeat the idea that the arm is getting stiffer and intensify the situation. You have created a situation of leverage. The subject is now in hypnosis and in an unusual situation. Their eyes are shut and they have their arm stuck in the air. Link the arm lifting or falling or moving toward their face to whatever you wish. For example, the strongest next step might be to say this:

‘Feel that arm getting lighter and beginning to lift up. That arm is lifting off the chair now, getting higher and higher, just like your head is a magnet and your hand is a powerful magnet. When it touches your face you will drop into a profound state of hypnosis.’



If you do not think you can encourage their hand to their face, then you could simply link their hand falling back to the chair to their going into a deeper state.

‘In a moment I will count to three and on “3” that arm will slowly drift down, all the way down on that imaginary wire. Your eyes will remain closed this time as you continue to relax and drift deeper into hypnosis. As the muscles relax you will relax; as that arm drifts down you can drift down. 1, 2, that’s it, all the way down now, 3. That’s right, drifting down to a comfortable resting position as you drift deep asleep, deeper and deeper.’

4.6 Jacquin Power Induction

Not a lot to say about this other than to remind you that at all times that you are The Hypnotist. This takes confidence, but even more importantly demands absolute congruence in your presentation and expectation. Rapidly establish rapport and lead your subject into complying with the setup so they are ready to be hypnotised.

‘OK, if you could just sit back in the chair, that’s right, feet on the floor and just place your hands on your lap, and relax.’

Expect to see signs of hypnosis. Get their full attention. Make sure you fixate their gaze. You can do that with eye contact. Point to a spot just underneath one of your eyes and encourage them to lock onto it while you look at a single point such as one of their eyes or through their head to an imagined point at the back of the head or the bridge of their nose. If you do not wish to use your eyes, then fixate their gaze on the tip of your pen or finger.

‘Now look at me, right here. In a moment I want you to just hear the word “Relax” four times in your mind. The fourth time you hear that word you are going to drift into hypnosis and your hands will begin to lift up off of your lap. Do it now. Don’t go into a deep state of hypnosis until you hear that word for the fourth time.’

After a few seconds continue as follows:

‘That’s right, keeping your eyes open, look at me... you can focus your full attention there... while your unconscious mind begins to lift your hand up... I don’t know if it will be a finger or a hand that moves first.’

Test your work immediately by using the leverage you have gained by getting that arm up. Take it somewhere. The beautiful thing about this induction is the suggestion to relax is contained within the trigger word ‘Relax’. That is it. Use whatever they present you with and lead it. At any point you can command the subject’s eyes to close if you prefer. If I want to do this with eyes closed, I will typically link the fourth repetition of ‘Relax’ with the instruction to close them:

‘Don’t close your eyes until the fourth time you hear that word “Relax” in your mind. That’s it; eyes closed now. Sleep.’

4.7 Instant Induction

Hold your finger or anything up in front of them and get them to focus on it. Begin moving it toward their face as you get them to take a deep breath.

‘Look at this, take a deep breath; now close your eyes and sleep. Deep asleep. Deeper and deeper asleep.’



Like the power induction this requires absolute confidence and congruency in delivery. It can be delivered immediately following The Set Piece. The Set Piece bypasses the critical faculty and the mind is immediately encouraged to lock around the idea of sleep. Making a pass in front of their eyes or clicking your fingers will ensure their eyes close at the appropriate moment.

Gently encouraging the subject's head forward, chin toward their chest, with a finger-tap on the back of their head as you say 'Sleep' encourages them to physically relax. If you hear that someone has been hypnotised before—especially if they were part of

a stage show—then you can be assured that this instant induction will work if you expect it to.

There are those that say this kind of induction is simply unrealistic and impossible unless you absolutely have a prime subject or you have already warmed them up. This all helps, of course. This is my preferred approach when re-inducing hypnosis. The time will arise when you are standing amongst a group of people and somebody says, ‘I was hypnotised on stage once. I can’t remember much about it.’ Great. You can have absolute confidence you will be effective.

However, this kind of induction will also work with the uninitiated. Maybe not every time, but if you are in the right frame of mind, and they are capable, then it will more often than not work. Do not forget that the common perception of how someone is hypnotised is usually a little hazy, but centres around the idea that it happens very quickly and involves commands and eyes closing. Often your subject just seems to know what to do even though they have not been there before.

Just because there is not much to an instant induction does not mean there must be much more to it. There is not—just the confidence it will work and the intention to ensure it does.

5.0 Getting Deep Now—Intensification

Once you have suggested hypnosis you can intensify the situation the subject is in and make their new reality more vibrant. This process is commonly referred to as deepening. It involves The Hypnotist suggesting to the subject that they can go into hypnosis even more. More deeply. More profoundly. More intensely. Effortlessly. Automatically. Comfortably.

For some time I pondered whether you really have to give the subject time to get comfortable with it all—surely comfort is a subjective enough opinion. If they are ‘in’ surely they are ‘in’. However, in practice it seems to help things along if, after you have suggested hypnosis, you spend a little time ensuring the subject knows they are doing OK, that they are safe and well and that you are happy with them. This gives the subject a chance to get a sense of what this new hypnotic world is like. It gives The Hypnotist an opportunity to shore up their work so far, to give out some procedural instructions regarding ‘Wake up’ and ‘Go into hypnosis’ commands, and to get ready to really begin directing suggestions toward the response that is desired beyond the induction. The easiest way to do this is to tell the subject to ‘Go deeper’.

A common view amongst many hypnotists and the public is that there are many ‘levels’ of hypnosis. It follows that the metaphorical associations of ‘going deeper and deeper’ when coupled with ambiguous ideas about ‘going into’ hypnosis result in much theorising about how deep someone is. Strangely, given all the focus on depth, many hypnotherapists continue in their work without knowing if their subject is hypnotised—the reason being that they do not test for hypnosis, light or deep, instead assuming that because their subject is looking relaxed and has their eyes closed that they are hypnotised.

They might be, but they might not. Rather than risk exposing this potential illusion they do not actually ask for a direct sign that hypnosis is established.

They do not do anything that would evoke the classic suggestion effect. There is no excuse for this—fear is not an excuse a hypnotist should have. Test your work. This is easy to do. Give the subject a suggestion and see if they respond to it—unconsciously. If the only suggestions you give are to ‘Relax and go deeper’, at least look for signs of that happening and ways you might test that.

It can be argued that all this discussion of levels and depth just causes confusion. There is just one level: hypnosis. This is when the subject is responding to a suggestion with a sense of their response being automatic or involuntary. It will make you more effective as The Hypnotist if you think of it this way. The subject is either hypnotised or they are not. You are either having the response to your suggestions

driven automatically by the unconscious mind, without critical inductive reasoning, or you are not. Personally I do not think the idea of levels of hypnosis or depth are valid or necessary concepts to consider when trying to understand how hypnosis works. I simply think of suggestions for deepening like any other suggestion, no different to ‘magnets’, ‘lighter’, ‘stuck’ or ‘sleep’. I do accept that they are very useful suggestions though. They help shape the subjective experience of the subject and this can in turn help improve their responses.

Immediately after the induction, begin suggesting deepening. Look and feel for feedback. By all means suggest and send your subjects **‘Deeper and deeper and deeper’**. Send them **‘Deep asleep’**, **‘Deep inside’** and **‘Ten times deeper’**. When you see signs that this is happening, give suggestions that intensify those responses. If you see the subject’s head dropping forward as their neck relaxes, say, **‘Neck relaxing, shoulders relaxing.’**

Regarding hypnosis, the phrase ‘Deeper and deeper’ is embedded in the psyche of most people, just like the word ‘Sleep’ is. Just because you know hypnosis is not sleep and that they may not be going down through levels, that is no reason not to use these words. Imagine you have a clear line of communication with their unconscious, however you perceive that. There is no need to fuss over what the subject is thinking—they have an onboard model of hypnosis and whether they realise it or not they know what to do! Their unconscious, automatic, pattern-driven abilities are becoming easier to talk to. You are no longer talking to their conscious mind. Ignore it like it does not exist. Your goal is to deliver a suggestion to intensify the condition they believe themselves to be in. There is no need to spend a long time doing this. On stage and in the therapy room I might spend a couple of minutes doing it. In an impromptu situation it might be just a few seconds to a minute. In deepening you begin to direct your subject deeper into the state they are now in and do this in a pleasant way. There really is nothing to fight. The suggestions you are giving them are easy to follow and not objectionable in any way.

You can continue to deepen each time you re-awaken and re-hypnotise the subject. Every now and again just give the subject encouragement to go deeper. If you pull this off properly, then you are ready to move on from intensifying things to directing their unconscious further and shaping their reality however you wish.

There are four main ways of deepening: links, loops, chains and bombs.

5.1 Links

A link connects one thing to another. Use suggestion to connect things with the idea of deepening.

‘In a moment I will ask you to open your eyes and then close your eyes.

When you close your eyes that is your signal to go twice as deep into hypnosis. OK. Open your eyes. Now close your eyes and double that feeling; go twice as deep.’

This approach is known as ‘fractionation’. You first do an induction, then reorientate the subject back to the room, then send them back into hypnosis. You go over this a few times, each time adding more suggestions. It works wonderfully. Do this and manage their gaze with yours, or by holding up something for them to look at.

‘In a moment I will count down from 5 to 0, and with every number I go past you will double that feeling and become twice as deeply hypnotised. Picture a target in your mind’s eye like an archery target in the distance.’ ‘As each number goes past you can drift closer to that target until it is like a giant target, so close you can pass right through the middle of it. On the other side of that bullseye is a profound state of hypnosis you will enjoy. Now, start drifting... 5, closer and closer; 4, deeper and deeper; 3, just the sound of my voice as you drift; 2, deeper and deeper, looking forward to drifting through that bullseye; 1... 0. All the way through; you are going to sleep.’

You could omit the visualisation of a target and simply count down and associate going deeper with each number.

You can encourage the subject to repeat in their mind as they go past each number ‘I am becoming more deeply hypnotised’ or ‘I am doubling my state of relaxation’. Other visual metaphors could be walking down a flight of steps or going down in a lift then stepping through the door into a profound state of hypnosis.

Personally I am not a fan of techniques that require such guided visualisation, but they can work too. There is simply no need to provide a long rambling description of a magic garden then a beach and then some steps descending further. Keep it short and peppered with suggestions that will turn things up a level. Another simple link is to associate going back into hypnosis with going twice as deep as before.

‘Each time I say the word “Sleep” you will return into this state of hypnosis,

going twice as deep as before.'

Here is another example:

'In a moment I am going to touch the back of your hand and it will begin to lift up toward your face. As it (touch hand) begins to feel lighter and lighter and lift up all by itself, you can enjoy a wonderful sense of well-being as you continue to drift deeper into hypnosis. The closer it gets to your face the more relaxed you become.'

This is a little bolder, because you are about to test your work by giving them a suggestion that you are expecting them to respond to automatically. When their hand lifts, associate it with going deeper. Give it a physical target or point-in-space to aim at, like their head or face; this builds some expectation that when it gets there they will go even deeper still. Indeed, when using any technique with some movement or repetitive behaviour, associate the process and completion of the process to something you want the subject to do or feel. In this case that would be depth.

5.2 Loops

These statements create a feedback loop that will intensify hypnosis. They create associations that feed off of each other. Some are short-lived loops and some are continuous.

‘Go deeper as you notice your eyes flickering; as you drift deeper and deeper they will flicker even more.’

‘The deeper you go the better you feel and the better you feel the deeper you go.’

‘Even as you wonder how deeply you have drifted, you can continue to drift down deeper relaxed.’

‘As I rock your shoulder (with one hand on the subject’s shoulder rock their body gently back and forward) go deeper and deeper. That’s right, your legs will support you even as you continue relaxing.’

5.3 Chains

‘Every breath you take will send you deeper and deeper.’

‘Every word I say will send you deeper and deeper.’

‘Every beat of your heart will take you deeper and deeper to sleep.’

‘Every number I go past, every breath you take and every beat of your heart is doubling the relaxation.’

I am sure you get the idea. If you can associate something in ongoing experience that is not going to stop, then you have a chain—a strong loop. This is also a good time to begin giving some procedural instructions that makes clear what you expect of them.

5.4 Bombs

Sometimes immediately after suggesting sleep, a single word or phrase is enough to send the subject flat out into what appears to be a significantly deeper and more profound experience.

‘Sink, drift, melt, bliss; go there now.’

These are typical commands I will give at this point. Often they are all I need. The effect is instant and complete. Combined with some physical encouragement such as a finger-tap on the head, or a gentle rock of a shoulder, or the body or one hand gently applying some pressure to a shoulder, many subjects just get the idea and dive into whatever those words mean to them. It is beautiful when this happens. These short phrases have a similar effect:

‘Drift inside, just like other times and places you have let go completely.’

‘

Let go, now.

There is nobody wanting anything and nobody is expecting anything.

Double that feeling now.

Drift into your own private place of hypnosis, a blissful space, nothing to do for a time.’

6.0 Direction

Words are your major means of giving suggestions, communicating ideas and directing your subject. It is also possible to use actions, sounds and mere hinting at what you want. You want the subject's mind to lock around the ideas you give it. Therefore it is important to deliver all of your suggestions with clarity, complete confidence and absolute assurance, and to do so in a positive manner.

Speak clearly with command and authority without being abrasive or inattentive. You can usher their mind gently in a given direction and also radically shunt it where you want it. Use your vocal tone to texture your suggestions, to excite their imagination. Rambling in a low gravelly tone is not necessary. Be yourself, just a little more animated, as if you were talking to a smart child about an exciting thing they are going to do or somewhere they are going to go. Be descriptive, but not too detailed. Let their mind fill in the blanks.

Understanding the difference between an instruction and a suggestion is important. Everyone can follow instructions. Instructions are often followed by the subject with a sense of being in control. Suggestions may sound very similar to instructions, but contain a tacit cue to experience the result of the suggestion with a sense of involuntariness. Suggestions are, to a greater or lesser degree, experienced by the subject as something that is happening rather than something they are doing. They cause the classic suggestion effect.

Most of the Set Piece and Induction techniques in this approach begin with instructions, followed by a mix of instructions and suggestions and finally just a direct suggestion.

As you get deeper into the demonstration you should aim to get to the point where everything you suggest is being experienced automatically by the subject.

If at any point the subject struggles to experience a suggested phenomenon, The Hypnotist can revert to instructions before again building toward suggestions.

The Hypnotist can instruct the subject to do something or to imagine something:

‘Place your hand on the table. Imagine it is stuck.’

‘Make your arm stiff. Imagine it is unbendable.’

The Hypnotist can deliver suggestions by stating the outcome they want for the subject:

‘You are on a beach.’

‘Your arm will lift off of your leg and touch your head.’

Alternatively The Hypnotist can state the means that would cause the desired result:

‘You can feel the heat of the sun as the temperature rises.

Sweat is running down your forehead.’

The Hypnotist can suggest that something they do will cause an effect:

‘In a moment I will touch the back of your hand and it will begin to lift. Every time I click my fingers it will become twice as hot.’

‘When I click my fingers, your eyes will open and you will no longer be able to see me.’

It is preferable that the suggestions you give do not bring the subject’s critical faculties into action. If you have said to the subject, ‘You are on a beach’ and then followed it later with, ‘Look at the sandy beach’, it might jar them because they are imagining being on a beach covered in pebbles. They then have to make an effort to imagine a new beach or may wonder if they have done it wrong. If you want them on a sandy beach put them on one from the start. Your aim is to put a couple of brush strokes on their mental canvas and allow them to generate a reality from that. Give them just enough guidance. That is why it is important to consider the many possible and likely associations of the words you are using.

Rather than challenging or negotiating with the subject, it is far easier to walk around them. Give suggestions that make your other suggestions easy to act upon automatically.

For example, if I wanted to steal an expensive watch off the wrist of my subject it would be possible to do that by just asking him to give me the watch. This can result in some sign of conflict, as if the subject knows their action is wrong. It is much easier to tell them that the watch belongs to me and it is time to return it.

If I walked up to a policeman and asked him to drive me around town in his car he would likely judge that to be an unrealistic request and one he could not act on. If he was hypnotised to believe I was his Chief Superintendent or the Prime Minister it would be quite a reasonable request that he could act upon immediately.

Try to avoid colloquialisms of language or things that are so dated or of uncommon knowledge that they might not be understood or could be misinterpreted.

In one performance of mine I was assembling a line of subjects who on command would do some kind of bizarre movement or exercise that would trigger the next in line to do theirs. The first did star jumps, another sit-ups, another a moon walk. One of the row was instructed that her 'arms would do the greatest electric wave'—in my mind I was imagining a breakdancer, but her unconscious, a little younger than mine, had not heard of the electric wave—she started rolling about all over the floor with her arms waving about, I assume believing she was a watery wave of some kind. Just because you put the suggestion in does not mean you know exactly where it is going to take the subject. That is half the fun of hypnosis and a good reason to give the subject your full attention.

Make your directions clear. Ensure your suggestions are a statement of fact. If you want someone to bite into an onion believing it is a peach, do not ask just ask them to imagine it is a peach. Tell them you are going to hand them a peach. If you want them to believe you are Denzel Washington, do not ask them to imagine that; tell them they will believe you are the global movie star Denzel Washington.

You are changing their beliefs, therefore their reality—not just asking them to imagine.

6.1 The Super Suggestion

As a child were you ever asked if you found a magical lamp and a genie popped out and granted you one wish what it would be?

Did you ever wish for more wishes?

As The Hypnotist you want your subject to accept your suggestions. By the time you have done your Set Piece, induction and deepening they have already accepted plenty, so it follows that giving them a suggestion that they will accept all of your suggestions from this point onward until you say otherwise is a smart move. Give them the wonderful suggestion that they will follow all of your suggestions. This is what renowned British stage hypnotist Jon Chase calls the Super Suggestion. (27)

A particular attitude must be adopted to deliver these words effectively. They are that strong. This is not the place for doubts. If you have any, keep them to yourself, or better still, flush them out and get rid of them.

‘From this moment, everything I say now is your reality—every single thing. You know what I say you know, you will do what I ask you to do, feel what I say you can feel and see what I say you can see. Everything I say is instantly your reality without doubt, question or hesitation, because you have a super-powerful mind. You will follow perfectly every suggestion I give you.’

Immediately prove this fact to yourself and the subject. Test them. Give them a suggestion that requires a direct hypnotic response and see if they follow it. You could do a stiff arm or a hand levitation. You could ‘magnetise’ or ‘glue’ their hand to something.

I prefer to make the subject’s hand and head magnetic and encourage an irresistible pull between them, and when they touch, stick them together. This is not asking as much of the subject as positive visual hallucinations, but is still entirely convincing to them. You are ratifying the fact that the Super Suggestion has landed. From this point on it should be plain sailing.

The words above are just a suggestion. You can find your own just so long as they communicate clearly that all of your suggestions will be accepted.

6.2 Encouragement

Let your subject know how brilliant they are and how well they are doing. Do this before, during and after your time with them. Everyone likes to know that they are doing well. If they believe that they are a good subject and you hold that belief, then they likely will be.

The stage hypnotist's subjects have the laughter and applause of the audience to encourage them. Working one-to-one you can and should make up for that.

Encouraging remarks, gestures and contact do so much:

- They let the subject know that they are doing things correctly.
- They give a gentle nod to the conscious mind that all is well.
- They ratify and reinforce what they have achieved so far.
- They keep the mood light and creative.
- They suggest that you are on the same side as your subject.

'You have a natural ability to go into hypnosis. You have a super-powerful mind. You are doing brilliantly.'

'You have a conscious mind and a super-powerful unconscious mind. It's a wonderful resource you can learn from.'

'That's right. That's it.'

'Great job. You are an absolute star.'

If you have an audience let them know that when you wake the subject up you want them to show their appreciation with a massive round of applause.

Let the subject know that this will make them feel good.

6.3 Procedural Instructions

Once you have done your deepening it is useful to give some procedural instructions. To begin with, make clear that whenever you say ‘Sleep’ that they will immediately return to the state of hypnosis, going even deeper than before. When you say ‘eyes open, wide awake’, that they will open their eyes and be able to move and speak and act on the suggestions you have given them. Ask them to nod their head if they understand. You can of course substitute these words with your own—just be consistent.

‘From this moment when I touch you on the shoulder and say “Sleep” you will immediately return to this state of hypnosis going deeper each time.

When I touch you on the shoulder and say “Eyes open, wide awake” you will be able to move and speak normally in every way, but will act automatically on the suggestions I have given to you. Nod your head if you understand.’

Consider health and safety and give suggestions accordingly. If you need them to stay within a certain area to be safe, then tell them that. Tell them that if for any reason they had to return to full alertness or leave the building in a hurry, they would do so and feel great, completely normal, free of any suggestions that had been given to them.

Sometimes the subject will experience complete amnesia for the suggestions they have been given. However my experience is that spontaneous amnesia for everything only occurs in around five per cent of subjects. Often it turns out this was their complete expectation or their experience when hypnotised before. Whatever prompts it spontaneously is not guaranteed. If you want amnesia for the suggestion you have given or for the session itself, insist upon it.

Tell them that when you say ‘Eyes open, wide awake’ they will have complete amnesia for the suggestion you have given them, but will act on it anyway. This permits some wonderful mind-reading routines. Use your imagination.

Really get this part of your approach mastered so that you can fire through it quickly. It helps by letting them know who is in control, it communicates to them and other observers that you care and that they are in safe hands, and it generally keeps the whole thing flowing more easily, making it much simpler to keep them in the responsive condition you want them to be in.

6.4 Navigation Control

Once you have got to the point where you have satisfied yourself that your subject is hypnotised, have given and tested the Super Suggestion, and issued the procedural instructions that will help things along, it is time to begin really directing the subject to do whatever it is you want them to do.

It is worth having a plan. Establish at least two or three routines that are appropriate for any place or environment that you are an expert in. Most hypnotists have some 'pet' routines that they use to get things moving.

Keep it simple, see how they respond and then go further.

I tend to start small and build into bigger responses throughout each routine. There is no real reason for this, as by this point the subject should be pretty 'plastic'.

However, it provides some structure to what I am doing and if there is any truth in the idea that the subject is well-served by getting into their hypnotic world gradually, it takes care of that too. Typically I begin by getting some emotional and physical responses from the subject—things such as arm levitation or catalepsy work well. Typical emotional changes that can be linked to these physical responses such as making them laugh or bliss out are easy to invoke. Often I will follow this with my amnesia routine, then something that requires the subject to show off their verbal skills and then hallucinations of some kind. The routines outlined for applying hypnosis in Section Seven will make this clear.

Some of the best ideas develop out of impromptu moments and the unexpected responses of your subject. Give them time to respond, and remember that while they are responding to one suggestion they are still going to respond to more.

They will say what you tell them to say. Help them along, giving their receptive unconscious an absolutely clear idea of what you want from it.

Following any major course of suggestions, should you want to set off down a different path, the easiest thing to do is to simply command them back to sleep.

They are essentially back in neutral then. It makes for a cleaner run into the next set of suggestions. Sometimes you get a slightly confused attitude from the subject if you just keep stacking more and more on top of them without first getting rid of some of the old stuff. My experience is that you do not always have to undo what you just did, but in practice it is a useful rule of thumb to do so. Undo the last suggestion, then give a fresh one. It makes it easier for The Hypnotist too.

7.0 Applying Impromptu Hypnosis

Rather than providing a long list of hundreds of possible routines or ideas about what to do with your hypnotised subject, I have instead written up several in detail. These are all routines that I have done in an impromptu setting.

Some routines are things I do regularly in either therapy or performance. Some are typical ‘stage’ routines done off-stage and finally some are odd impromptu one-off routines that I hope will get your creative mind going about what you can achieve using impromptu hypnosis.

I encourage you to use your imagination in coming up with routine ideas. If almost anything is possible—and it is with hypnosis—what would you want the subject to do? Use your imagination and let your subject use theirs.

I have included everything from the initial set-up right through to the wake-up.

Although some of the routines outlined here involve ‘borrowing’ property or getting free goods and one routine is unannounced hypnosis, I do not suggest that this is ethical or what you should be doing. It was just part of my performance. I always give the subject back their belongings. I do not advocate unannounced impromptu hypnosis. The fact that you can do it is not a good enough reason to do it. Hypnosis should be permission- based and collaborative.

Impromptu does not mean ‘without permission’.

All of these routines have been done in actual impromptu situations and are here to simply give you ideas about what is possible. Nothing has been added or taken away.

7.1 Briefest Therapy

This is a routine I have used hundreds of times. It makes the subject laugh with abandon and allows The Hypnotist to cue that laughter on command. You are essentially going to link the automatic lifting of an arm and its proximity to the face as a sliding gauge of mirth.

I often do this after a session of hypnotherapy when I teach my client how they can do instant self-hypnosis. However, I have also done it midsession and as an impromptu piece in many different settings. On stage this is often the first routine I get into after giving everyone on stage a stiff arm. In an impromptu demonstration it is often the first real bit of suggestion I do after the induction. My wording rarely strays far from what follows. I use it with groups as well as one-to-one. I have had feedback that this was worth the entire cost of a hypnotherapy session—the subject had unexpectedly shifted some huge emotional hang up—even though it was really just being said as a convincer to the subject that they had actually been hypnotised. On a lighter note, once you have set this up it means you can cue someone to laugh with complete abandon on command, which is quite entertaining.

The first step in the routine is to get their hand moving toward their face ‘all by itself’. I will assume you have already done some hypnosis with them, given them a trigger to go back into hypnosis and had some physical phenomena such as arm levitation. This is the ideal place to begin. However, it is not too tough to get a hand moving toward a face from cold, so if you have to work a little harder to get to that point so be it—you

could do this as a Set Piece or from any of the inductions that result in a hand being in front of the face. Of course, once you have the arm lifting it is the same basic thing as magnetic hands from there on in.

There is obvious opportunity for tonal emphasis on phrases like ‘feel differently’, ‘smile’ or ‘laugh’. I have phrased the script to give a gradual buildup so by the time I am saying ‘laugh’ and ‘funny’ I should have already got a smile out of them. Timing and pacing is quite crucial—say what you see and then lead a little; say it with a smile on your face. Try to time the ‘burst out laughing’ to the moment the hand touches the face. They normally continue laughing with the tiniest little bit of work from you, giving you an opportunity to do some general feel-good work. If someone is in pain, they will be laughing their aches and pains away; if in fear, laughing those doubts and fears away—but that is all extra. Just get them laughing out loud with complete abandon. If other people around are laughing—and you will find unbridled hypnotic laughter is contagious—then utilise that too.

‘When you have been hypnotised like that it is easy for you to go back into

hypnosis instantly and immediately at your own command. You might wonder why you would like to do that. Well firstly it is a fantastic tool, a way of deeply relaxing. As well as this it can be used to direct your unconscious resources toward those things you wish to achieve. If you are happy to, I'll show you how to do it.'

Get agreement from them.

'OK, again just place your feet flat on the floor and your hands lightly on your lap or the arms of the chair, wherever you feel more comfortable. I'd like you to just look at the back of your hand and pick one spot, like a hair or a line or something. Now don't close your eyes yet, just focus on that point and when you are ready I would like you to hear the word 'relax' four times in your mind and the fourth time you hear it just allow your eyes to close; that's right, do it now, and as your eyes close you will immediately drift back inside, into hypnosis, deeper and deeper... that's it.

This time I'd like you to pay attention to the small changes that occur—some barely noticeable—in the relaxation of your face, your breathing has shifted slightly, quite at ease now. And in a moment that hand is going to start drifting up toward your face all by itself. That's right, you might notice those sensations increasing, fingers twitching and just like those hands were magnets you will feel that inevitable pull between your hand and your face.

As it lifts you will enjoy a growing sense of well-being, an unusual sense of well-being; the closer it gets to your face the better you are going to feel and the better you feel, the lighter it will get. That's it, lighter and lighter.

Now I came across this funny idea that there is something you would love to feel differently about, something that if you could smile about it, if you could laugh about it, you would be so much better off. And as that hand gets closer to your face for some unknown reason it is going to start to seem funny to you; that's right, for some unknown reason, and as that smile begins to grow, that's it, it is going to turn into a giggle, and the closer it gets the funnier it seems, funnier and funnier; the closer it gets the less serious you become, and when that hand touches your face you are going to burst out laughing and never again will you feel the way you used to; it will be all you can do to try to stop yourself laughing as inappropriately as possible; even when you think about it now it seems hilarious to you.

Now every time I click my fingers it will seem 10 times funnier. Like the funniest

scene from the funniest film you can remember, only now it is 100 times funnier.

Now in a moment that arm will begin drifting down to your lap again, only as quickly as you can drift down into an even deeper state of hypnosis, a state of absolute bliss. Sleep.'

Bring them out with an energetic wake up:

'Eyes open, wide awake. Brilliant, how good did that feel? Now this was something you used to take seriously, was it not?'

When you have a hand in the air it is another opportunity to give it something to do. For example, once the subject's hand is touching their forehead give the suggestion:

'Get ready to Sleep deeply now... and when I say "3" your hand will fall down to your lap and you will be fast asleep. 1, 2, 3. Sleep.'

7.2 Rossi-style Brief Therapy

This is a very simple exercise inspired by Ernest Rossi's seminal work. I have added more suggestion to it and instead of just using it as intended as a diagnostic tool, I try to squeeze quite a lot more use out of it. Do not be fooled by its simplicity. I use it as The Set Piece, as an induction, as a genuine vehicle for content-free therapy, and as a diagnostic and therapeutic tool. (28)

In the example below I am aiming it at an unspecified problem 'x'.

'Please put both hands out in front of you and focus your attention on the space between them.

Now close your eyes and picture those hands out in front of you.

That's right, and focus on that image in your mind as you feel the magnetic force develop between those hands; in your mind you can imagine that force beginning to pull those hands together.

Now, only as quickly as your unconscious mind is ready to deal with this problem therapeutically today, I would like those hands to be pulled together, like two magnets moving closer and closer; that's right, and the closer they get the stronger that force becomes. That's right, you can notice that movement. You can try and hold them steady and find you cannot, and when those fingers touch, your arms will stay out there while you can just relax.

Now I would like one of those hands to drift down only as quickly as your unconscious mind can review all of the memories and experiences associated with this problem.

Only when it has fully reviewed those will your hand will drift down to your lap. That's it, in its own time. All the way down.'

The hand should drift down cataleptically.

'Now I would like the unconscious to move that other hand down toward your lap only as quickly as your unconscious mind can identify all of the resources required to put this behind you today and forever. All the learnings and the resources required, putting this behind you forever. That hand will drift down and touch your lap only as quickly as you have identified all of the resources and

made the changes necessary to put this behind you forever.'

You can then just proceed with a suggestion that they open their eyes and reorientate and then do an induction, or proceed as if they are hypnotised and begin to use other techniques, or alternatively just ask them to open their eyes—in other words leave some ambiguity regarding their present hypnotic condition. It can be useful to do this prior to the 'real' work; do it as a Set Piece. They can listen and talk to you. You do not need to mention trance or hypnosis at all to use this technique.

I suggest you do this early after questions, then proceed as normal with a discussion. It will make it easier to read their unconscious communication and also make your efforts to embed suggestions prior to the overtly hypnotic part of a therapy session more successful.

Of course, this procedure has three steps: hands together, one arm down and other arm down. In the example given, those three steps are for a particular purpose—to deal with a problem. You can change any or all of the steps. For example, link the hands together for the mind signalling its readiness for you to be hypnotised, one hand down for the body to relax and the other hand down for the mind to relax.

7.3 Gone

The first time you make yourself invisible using your hypnotic powers is likely to be a bit of an event. It certainly was for me. It can, unless you suggest otherwise, freak the subject out a bit, especially if you start moving things around the room such as lifting up chairs, pouring cups of water, throwing things at them or scaring them with a puppet. When you realise they cannot see you it might freak you a bit too, so hold yourself together. If you do not want them knocked too far sideways, understand that you can direct how they feel, so tell them that they will find it incredible but will not be afraid, or tell them they will be afraid, very afraid, but will not leave the room or their chair.

‘OK, can I try something with you? Great. Can you make yourself comfortable, feet on the floor, hands resting on your lap? Now look at me, right here.’

Point to just underneath your right eye and look into one of the subject’s eyes and continue.

‘In a moment you are going to go into hypnosis. I don’t want you to close your eyes yet; just keep looking at that spot; now when you are ready, repeat the word ‘Relax’ four times in your mind. The fourth time you repeat that word you can allow your eyes to close and you will immediately begin drifting to sleep, deep asleep, deeply inside.

You will know you are in it because one of those hands is going to begin lifting up toward your face, that’s it. Lighter and lighter just like your head is a magnet and your hand is a magnet—tune into that real or imagined magnetic force developing between your head and that hand and the closer it gets the deeper you will go.

The deeper you go the better you feel. When that hand touches your face you will double the physical and mental relaxation.

Now in a moment I am going to click my fingers and that hand will drop down into your lap like a wet rag. When it touches your lap that is your signal to go even deeper into a profound state of hypnosis.

(Click)

Deeper and deeper. Everything I say now will become your reality.

Every single thing, without doubt, question or hesitation will become your reality. You know what I say you know, see what I say you can see and feel what I say you feel. Everything I say is instantly your reality.'

Next prove that the Super Suggestion has landed by giving a relatively simple idea to latch onto. Normally I go into the Stiff Arm exercise using it as a routine rather than a Set Piece.

'In a moment I am going to borrow your arm. That's right, now make a tight fist. That's right, and as you feel that tight fist, that arm is going to become stiffer and stiffer, every muscle, nerve and fibre, stiffer and stiffer; there is a steel bar running from your shoulder down through your arm all the way to that fist; you cannot bend it no matter how hard you try. Try and bend it and find you cannot. You are a strong man, try and bend it and find it gets stiffer and stiffer. That's it, as it begins to shake it gets stiffer still.'

Push their arm down as you command sleep.

'Now sleep!

In a moment I am going to click my fingers... your eyes will open and you will look up; you will no longer be able to see me or anything I am wearing; everything else will be normal, but you will no longer be able to see me or anything I am wearing. You will be able to hear me and feel my touch, but you will no longer be able to see me.'

The subject will normally just wake up and look forward like nothing is out of the ordinary, because it isn't yet—they just cannot see you. If you look at them when you move, you will notice that they do not give you any attention. Their gaze is not automatically drawn to your movement. Pour a glass of water or wave things in front of the subject—like a set of keys. Throw a chair in the air and catch it.

'Sleep! When I click my fingers... your eyes will open and everything will be back to normal in every way; you will be able to see me.'

Alternatively say they will be able to see your body, but not your head.

7.4 Robbed

In this example I hypnotised a market stall holder at his stall on a busy Friday lunchtime. I gave him a post-hypnotic suggestion that when I tapped him on the shoulder he would immediately return to sleep, and that the next time he saw me he would have no conscious recollection of meeting me before or anything I had said. I awoke him and left. I returned an hour later and went through a three-stage 'stage' hypnosis routine built around a cucumber. (29)

My intention was to get him to give me some of his produce for free. I left with a large refuse sack full of cucumbers. In this example I used each phase of The Set Piece as a hypnotic induction, but did not test it, just observed and then did the Handshake Induction.

'Hi, so are you up for this? Let's see if you can be hypnotised. We are going to start with a couple of simple exercises to fire up your concentration and imagination. I am going to give you some simple instructions and I want you to follow these instructions. If I ask you to imagine something I want you to do your best to; if I ask you to use your gut feeling, then do so. Nod your head if you understand. Great.

So please put your hands out in front of you.'

I then proceeded with the Magnetic Fingers as an induction. As soon as the fingers touched I said the following:

'Now close your eyes and sleep, deep asleep. As I rock your body back and forward just go deep, deep asleep. Notice how good it feels to relax like that, because in a moment I am going to show you how to go even deeper.

When I touch you on the shoulder and say "eyes open wide awake" your eyes will open and you will look at me. When I say "sleep" you will return to this state going even deeper than before. Nod your head if you understand.'

I then immediately got into Magnetic Hands. When the hands touched I went into induction mode again, pushing the subject's head forward as I said 'Sleep' and immediately intensified things, building in everything I had learnt about the subject from the first phase. I then woke him again and went into a handshake induction immediately afterwards, and this time emphasised sleep and deepened the state even more. I gave the Super Suggestion and then a post-hypnotic trigger for hypnosis and amnesia for meeting me.

‘When I return you will have no idea who I am. It will feel like we have never met before. When I touch you on the shoulder and say sleep you will immediately return to this state, instantly and immediately going even deeper than before.’

When I returned an hour later I walked up to the market stall and grabbed a cucumber. I held this up high and pointed at the end of it and asked the subject:

‘How much are these?’

His attention now arrested and mind confused, I continued.

‘How much? Have a look at it, here right at the end of it; come a bit closer, because now an interesting thing is going to happen; let me show you something as you look at it.’

I leant forward and tapped him on the shoulder as I gave him the post-hypnotic suggestion to go back into hypnosis.

‘Sleep; now all the way in; go deeper, deeper, deeper down. That arm can relax, completely relax... you are going to sleep. Every breath you take and every word I say now will take you deeper and deeper into that state. You are drifting to sleep.

Your head can fall forward onto your chest as you go deeper and deeper to sleep. Everything I say now, every single thing I say, will instantly become your reality, without doubt or question. You see what I say you can see, know what I say you know and do what I say you will do.

Everything I say is your reality.

You are the world’s greatest cigar connoisseur. You love fine cigars and I am going to hand you the world’s finest cigar to smoke. Eyes open, wide awake. Here you go; have a go on that. You can bite the end off of it first.’

He bit the end off, right through the plastic covering, and I offered him a light. I encouraged him to comment on the cigar’s qualities, its strength and taste, while he had a few puffs. Then I continued:

‘Sleep and stand. Deep asleep. All the way in. Deep asleep. Your legs will support you as you go deeper to sleep. The next time you open your eyes you will realise you are holding the world’s biggest spliff. It is the world’s strongest

joint. The strongest marijuana and you are going to enjoy smoking it. Eyes open, wide awake.

Have a go on that. Have another all the way down to your toes this time.'

Again I encouraged him to savour the flavour and strength.

'Sleep and stand. When you I click my fingers you will open your eyes and realise the drug squad are about to raid this stall. All of those cucumbers are incredibly strong spliffs. You are going to put them in a bag and urgently insist I take them away from this stall. I will resist, but you will insist. Eyes open, wide awake.

Look. Filth (Police). Have you got a bag?'

He hastily grabbed a bin liner bag and proceeded to fill it with cucumbers.

I repeatedly insisted, **'I can't take them all'**. He of course insisted that I could.

'Quick, load them all in there. That's it. Stash the rest; stash them.'

I walked off with a bag full of cucumbers. This was an experimental one-off and I later returned his produce. I always return and hypnotise the subject again and do a proper wake-up procedure. Ten minutes later he was still in somewhat of a shifty panic to see me returning with the 'drugs' and asked me what I was doing as he glanced about for the police. I simply thanked him and did a handshake induction on him and proceeded to first deepen the experience, do some feel good work and fully reawaken him 'back in the market', everything back to normal.

'Hello, thanks for...'

I extended my hand for a handshake and went into the handshake induction and immediate deepening of the hypnotic state.

'Look at your hand... now Sleep.'

The wake-up procedure followed:

'In a moment I will count up to five and on the count of "five" you will be back completely wide awake and normal, able to move, speak and think freely and normally. All of the things I have suggested to you up here will be gone and everything will be back to normal in every way. You will open your eyes and

stretch and you will feel fantastic and ready for a wonderful afternoon of business in the market. You will feel refreshed and revitalised as if you have woken up from a wonderful night of sleep, but understand, hypnosis is not sleep and the next time you get in bed to sleep you will sleep wonderfully and awake at an appropriate time refreshed and revitalised. So get ready.

One. More aware of your body now. Every muscle, nerve and fibre coming alive.

Two. Feel a surge of energy whizzing in through your fingers and toes into your arms, legs, up your spine, and neck to the top of your head.

Three. Take a deep breath in of cool, clear air sending a surge of oxygen through your body and brain.

Four. Your head is washed through with cool, clear water, the back of your eyes clear, nose clear, throat clear, chest and stomach clear.

Five. Eyes open and wide awake. Stretch.'

Deliver this wake-up call with the same amount of importance and purpose as any other directions, or preferably even more. Just because you will use your wake-up over and over there is no reason for it to become dry because of a lack of delivery.

At this point the subject is still hypnotised and receiving suggestions. Keep it simple and make it count.

Welcome your subject back with a big smile, then distract them:

'Thanks. Feeling good? Is there an electrical stall near here?'

7.5 Cloaked

The aim was to steal a coat from someone. I have used this approach outlined here numerous times. It illustrates how you can create a context for hypnosis and how this approach bypasses the will.

Pacing around Leicester Square I spotted someone holding a huge 'Pizza Hut This Way' sign. I asked him how long he had to stand there and the poor lad said eight hours. I let him know I was a hypnotist and could give him time distortion. I asked him if it would be good if I could make the eight hours whizz by like one hour. He agreed it would. To get started I told him to stare at the screw that attached his sign to the pole and did an eye-fixation induction.

I proved it was working by telling him his hands were going to lift up toward his face. I encouraged him to try and resist, then gave the suggestions. Firstly the Super Suggestion, then a lengthy ramble about time distortion. Finally I suggested that when he opened his eyes he would realise he had my coat on and would give it back to me. He came to, I asked for my coat and he emptied his pockets and gave it to me.

'Hi. Do you mind me asking how long have you got to stand here for?

Eight hours! Wow. I am a hypnotist. If I could make that time whizz by and feel like just one hour how good would that feel? Are you up for being hypnotised? I am not going to make you do anything stupid and I guarantee this will seem like the shortest night of your working life.

Great. Well, using hypnosis it is very common for people to experience time distortion. It's a bit like when we doze off and it only feels like we have been sleeping for a few moments, but in fact it is an hour. So I want to show you how you can recreate that feeling. First of all, please understand that hypnosis is not sleep and in a moment when I say sleep you will understand it is not like the sleep you have when you get in bed; it is just a deep relaxation of your nervous system. You will still be able to hear me and respond when I ask you to. Now what I would like you to do is just look at this screw right in front of you. I will hold the pole. Now look at it; do not look at me or anywhere else. You do not have to say anything or do anything. Just keep your eyes fixed on that point. As it moves closer to your face you can notice the changing focus of your eyes, and when you are ready to be hypnotised, close your eyes, that's right... eyes closing now, and with your eyes closed, all that is important is the sound of my voice and your thoughts that drift through your mind; no outside sound is important to you now, just my voice.

With every breath you take and every word I say now, you will drift deeper and deeper into hypnosis. Your legs will support you as you go deep asleep, as I rock your shoulder letting every muscle relax now going deep asleep, completely relaxed.

In a moment one of your arms is going to begin lifting upwards toward the sky; it will begin to feel lighter and lighter and lift up. As it lifts up all by itself, you can try and keep it steady and find it just wants to lift right up, lighter and lighter; there it goes, up, up pulled up by an invisible force. You are doing brilliantly.

When I touch that arm it will drop back down to your side and you will go even deeper into that state of hypnosis ready to really listen. From this moment when I say the word “Sleep”, you will instantly and immediately return to this state of hypnosis going even deeper than before; when I say “Eyes open, wide awake” you will open your eyes and be able to speak and move normally in every way. You will act upon everything I say instantly and immediately, without doubt or question, fully awake and alert.

When you leave work you will reflect on time having flown by really quickly, as if you had simply been thinking about something else entirely, because you know, standing there, that time changes too; it’s just like other times where you may have stood in a queue and every second seems like a minute, and other times on a return journey from somewhere time just flies by in a flash, and a long time feels like no time at all.

In a moment I am going to wake you up and you will be feeling fantastic, but you will realise that you are wearing my coat. You will remove it and give it back to me and be glad to do so.

Eyes open, wide awake. Great. Feeling good?’

I handed the subject the pole.

‘Shall I take it off of you?’

I took back the pole to prompt him to remove his coat. He began to empty his pockets. I continued to keep him mildly confused with some random comments and questions:

‘Sorry is it this way round? That could confuse you. Which way is it to Pizza Hut? OK. I will get you a fresh one.’

I exchanged the pole for the coat. I walked off in the opposite direction.

7.6 Fed

I approached Tommy—a seller at one of London's East End markets. He told me that he had been hypnotised by his Sergeant-Major during his time in the army 45 years ago.

Suspecting he might be used to being ordered into hypnosis, I first of all flattered him, telling him that anyone who has been hypnotised has a natural ability to tap into their mind and that this ability never leaves them. I adopted quite an authoritarian approach, going straight into Magnetic Palms as an induction. I reorientated him and did a stiff arm, then slammed that arm down and commanded sleep. I gave him a post-hypnotic suggestion for returning to hypnosis and amnesia for meeting me. Following that, I left the stall and returned thirty minutes later.

‘Hi. I would like three kilos of apples. Three kilos of pears please.

Oh, and four cauliflowers. How much?’

He answered £8.00.

‘Sleep.

In a moment your arm will begin lifting up above your head just like it is being pulled up on a winch. There it goes; you may be aware that it is moving, but there is nothing you can do except go deeper and deeper into hypnosis now. As it lifts with every breath you take and every word I say now go deeper and deeper.’

At this point I gave him the Super Suggestion followed by the following set of suggestions:

‘In a moment I will wake you up and you will believe that everything I place into your hand is money. Anything paper is a banknote; anything else is a coin. You will gratefully accept my payment and get on with your day in the normal way, feeling great.

Eyes open, wide wake.

Sorry, how much?

Eight. Here is five.’

I placed a serviette in his hand followed by three bottle tops.

‘That is six, seven and eight. Is that right?’

Great. Bye.’

7.7 Watered

Anyone can get free drinks. It is possible for any of us to beg or cajole someone into buying a drink. It is much, much easier if the barman believes you are his favourite movie star. Buzzing from a prior hypno-attack on a coffee shop and several free espressos, on the last sunny Friday of the summer, I went into a large busy bar in Soho, London. As one of the barmen walked past collecting glasses I stopped and asked him who his favourite movie star was. He looked confused and said he did not know. I persisted:

‘Well, there must be one that you rate, a film star whose movies you like?’

He said ‘Denzel’. I thanked him and off he went, and continued doing his work. At this point I had not introduced myself as a hypnotist—in fact I had not introduced myself at all. I left and then ten minutes later came back in and walked straight up to the bar, mentally primed with the intention to become Denzel.

As I stepped up to take a seat on one of the bar stools I stuck out my hand to shake hands with the barman I had met minutes earlier.

‘Hi, what’s your name?’

I grabbed his hand as he replied ‘Joe’, I lifted it and showed him the palm of his hand.

‘Look at that hand Joe; look at one spot on it; look at that spot on your hand; as it moves closer to your face, notice the changing focus of your eyes; now close your eyes. Sleep. Go deep asleep. Just relax your arms.’

I moved his other arm off of the bar so it could hang by his side:

‘Relax every muscle, every nerve, every fibre; you are drifting to sleep.’

At this point I put my hand behind his neck and applied slight pressure, encouraging his head to drop forward as I continued to give him instructions.

‘Your head can fall forward like a bowling ball as you relax and go deep asleep now, deep asleep, deep, deep, deep, deep, deep asleep.’

His spine started to relax allowing his head to drop forward, the bar was a little sticky so I placed my hand on the bar as a landing mat for his

forehead.

‘Your head will rest on my hand; you are safe; you are well and protected as you go deep asleep. As I rock your shoulders, you can go 10 times deeper. Every breath you take and every word I say sends you deeper and deeper into that sleep.

That’s it, everything I say now is your reality, without doubt or question; every single thing I say will instantly become your reality however stupid or silly it seems; you know what I say you know, see what I say you see, and believe I am who I say I am; everything I say is your reality. Nod your head if you understand.

In a moment your left arm is going to begin drifting up toward the ceiling; it will lift up all by itself and there is nothing you can do about it. As it lifts, you will go even deeper into that state of hypnosis, even more deeply relaxed. That’s right, it is starting to go... fingers twitching, hand moving, elbow bending, lighter and lighter as it is pulled up; you can try and keep it steady and find you cannot; it just lifts up, up, up; try and hold it down and find it lifts even higher.

When I snap my fingers your hand will drop down like a wet dish cloth and you will drop down with it, deeper asleep. (click)

I am going to count “1, 2, 3” and your eyes will open and you will stand up and you will believe I am Denzel Washington, the world-famous movie star Denzel Washington.

You will simply want to serve me exactly what I ask for, on the house; nothing will give you or your manager more pleasure. 1, 2, 3, wide awake. Hi, I am Denzel. I’d like four drinks; I am here with a few friends of mine. Can I come behind the bar? That’s how we do it in the States.’

I went behind the bar and chose my drinks. I considered, but then dismissed the idea of telling him I was the manager and needed him to give me all of the notes out of the till. After getting my drinks I thanked him and got him to advertise his new reality.

‘Thanks, it has been fantastic to meet you; you are an absolute star; just give me your hand again; look at that hand, now sleep and stand, sleep and stand, sleep, sleep, sleep. This time when you wake up you will go and tell everyone you pass that you have just served Denzel Washington. 1, 2, wide awake.’

He did. He gratefully took an autograph too.

7.8 Truth and Lies

My business partner at Head Hacking, Kev Sheldrake, is also a computer security expert. We have enjoyed exploring the potential for hypnosis as a tool for social engineering. In the world of hacking it is possible to target hardware, software or wetware. 'Wetware' refers to the people involved in the security chain. When hypnosis is used to manipulate wetware, Kev calls this 'Hypnotic Engineering.'

Is it possible to get a security guard to let you into somewhere you should not be? Will an employee plug a rogue USB stick into their computer? Can you get someone to tell you the truth about something they would rather keep private?

What follows is an attempt to answer that last question: can hypnosis be used to get the truth out of someone?

Our experience is that it can. This is one technique we developed to do just that. If handled carefully it makes for a powerful routine. It can be played light or dark. Please keep in mind that telling the plain truth has the potential to massively expose someone. It could wreck an aspect of their life. To risk this just for the sake of a performance is clearly wrong. Our research into this was done behind closed doors, and on training courses, without an audience, where the risk of the truth coming out was unlikely to be a problem. When we use it in performance we ensure that the well-being of everyone is taken care of and no damage is done.

Research shows that it is possible for the subject to lie when hypnotised. It is possible for them to experience a false memory which they wholeheartedly believe in. For example, if under hypnosis the subject is asked to state their PIN out loud, they may make one up. That would be a lie.

Or they may make one up, but believe it is their real number. That would be false memory. Many will just state the truth.

Because of the potential for lies and false memory, hypnotic testimony is not valid in court, and perhaps it is for this reason that many seem to have written off the possibility of using it to uncover information. While it is wise to not blindly accept what a hypnotised person says as being true, if you structure your approach correctly there is every chance you will get the truth out of your subject.

Essentially The Hypnotist suggests to the subject that they are a liar and asks them questions. Then it is suggested they are a truth-teller.

Turning someone into the world's biggest liar is a comedy routine, of course. If you

ask someone to tell the truth or simply ask them a bunch of questions, and then when hypnotised tell them they are the world's biggest liar and ask those same questions you will get some laughs. Some of the fun comes from the amusing answers and some from seeing how people behave when they lie.

It is easy to make up ridiculous lies so it is not an especially challenging routine. If you suggest that each lie will be bigger and more outrageous than the last it ramps up the hilarity of their responses.

If you flip it around so that the subject lies first and then subsequently tells the truth this can of course be an anti-climax, because the truth portion of the routine will not be as funny as the lie. However, we play it this way for a reason. First off they lie when answering a series of trivial questions. This is fun. They then tell the truth in response to the same trivial questions. The idea is to build up some momentum and get the answers out of them quickly.

Then the subject is then hit with a much weightier question. The truth simply spills forth.

For example it might run like this:

‘In a moment when I say, “1, 2, wide awake” you will be the world’s biggest liar. Everything you say will be a bigger lie than the last. You are a compulsive liar and cannot speak the truth; nod your head when you understand.

1, 2, wide awake.

Are you feeling good?’

— No

‘How old are you?’

— 84

‘What size feet have you got?’

— 102

‘Do you have children?’

— Yes

‘How many?’

— 17

‘What kind of car do you drive?’

— A Ferrari

‘Sleep. In a moment when I say, “1, 2, wide awake” you will be a truth-teller, totally honest.

You can only speak the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth; everything I ask you, you will answer 100% truthfully. Nod your head when you understand.

Are you feeling good?’

— Yes

‘How old are you?’

— 26

What size feet do you have?’

— 10

‘Do you have children?’

— No

‘What kind of car do you drive?’

— A VW Polo

Then hit them with it.

‘What is your biggest regret?

What is the most expensive thing you have ever stolen?

What is something you have never told your mother?’

In asking for the biggest regret I have had one person answer, ‘meeting Nancy’.

Nancy turned out to be their fiancée. Another answered, ‘sleeping with a prostitute in Amsterdam’, another, ‘not practising the drums enough’.

The first person whom I asked to tell me something they have not told their mother answered, ‘I’m bisexual.’

Others have confessed to stealing.

On each occasion I have had the opportunity to speak to the participant afterwards and they have verified that what they told me is true and that they cannot believe they said it.

Again I am not suggesting you do this in the middle of your act for the sake of getting a gasp or a laugh and risk destroying your participant’s relationship or losing their job. I just want you to know that it works and to open your mind to possibilities.

When I use the scripting above in performance, immediately after I ask the big question at the end, as they draw breath to answer but before they actually answer, I say:

‘Sleep. We don’t really need to know that.’

It demonstrates the power of what is possible while ensuring the subject does not say anything too revealing.

We have found many other uses for this. Firstly, you can use the phase where they lie in order to steal things:

‘Are they your sunglasses?’

— **No.**

‘Is that your wallet?’

— **No.**

‘Do you mind if I take them?’

— **Not at all.**

You can use the phase where they lie in order to get the truth. Asking open questions such as the size of their shoes encourages any number of wacky answers. Asking closed questions that only have two possible answers only provides the option of the

truth or the lie. They have to say the lie, so The Hypnotist and the audience know that the opposite must be true:

‘Have you ever stolen anything from work?’

— **No.**

‘Oh!’

You can use the lie phase to get them to confess to all sorts of things they have never done by phrasing the question as a negative with a tag question:

‘You’re not a thief are you?’

— **Yes.**

‘You don’t steal from your friends do you?’

— **Yes I do.**

This is an example of a generative suggestion, in other words a single suggestion that can be used to generate an endless amount of responses.

Sometimes the truth is too hot to handle. Have fun with it, but be careful.

7.9 Instant Self-Hypnosis

Once you have hypnotised someone, whether it is in therapy or performance, it has always struck me as an opportunity lost if you do not then show them how to use this ability for themselves. Time and setting do not always permit this, but when they do, teaching people self-hypnosis is a wonderful gift to be giving. It is potentially of immense value to your subject. It generally leaves them feeling incredibly empowered, amazed at their own unconscious abilities and often dumbfounded by the possibilities of hypnosis.

Most people who try to learn self-hypnosis do so either on their own with a book as a guide or perhaps join a class. Either way, the focus is often on physical relaxation combined with a guided visualisation or emptying the mind. While this may result in feeling relaxed it is normally less clear whether hypnosis has been achieved. This may be because there is no genuine sense of involuntariness or anything else that might be considered different from normal relaxation. It may be because some people are used to hypnosis being a passive experience and giving themselves suggestions does not match up to that.

It is much easier to learn self-hypnosis if you get hypnotised to your satisfaction by a hypnotist first and are then given suggestions that will facilitate self-hypnosis later.

The following protocol will allow you to do this for others. It is adapted from my father Freddy Jacquin's method for doing this in his therapy work. When he is providing hypnosis training he will often say, 'Never waste hypnosis; always throw in some positives!', meaning if you are going to hypnotise someone, even if in a classroom or for fun, take the opportunity to provide some broad and generic suggestions that might aid the person with whom are working.

In class these may be suggestions to be in the perfect state for learning, absorbing and assimilating information. Adding the suggestion that the subject can hypnotise themselves easily is another such positive suggestion.

In a typical therapy session the client is taken through this self-hypnosis exercise at the end of the session. The therapeutic work is over and this is something extra. People are easy to rehypnotise immediately after a session of hypnosis; any technique will do. However it is made easier still and has value in subsequent sessions if during the first experience of hypnosis you give the subject a post-hypnotic suggestion that they can return to hypnosis and also provide a specific trigger to do that. The set-up work is done. For the sake of consistency, the post-hypnotic trigger that my father and I use is that when the subject repeats the word 'Relax' four times in their mind they will immediately return into hypnosis, any time they wish to,

whenever it is safe and appropriate to do so. Ideally the trigger should be something out of the ordinary that they are not going to inadvertently fire.

If time permits I will get the subject to practise this process two or three times. The first time begins with me assisting them to some degree with the suggestions I give as I set them up to fire the post-hypnotic suggestion, and with the suggestions I give after they have fired it. I also add some helpful suggestions regarding how they phrase suggestions as well as some health-and-safety caveats. After that, with each run through, I say less and less each time, until I am giving them just the lightest of instructions as they take the reins of their own mind.

As we begin the process, I look into one of their eyes with full, meaningful expectancy that this will take them into hypnosis. This encourages their focus on The Hypnotist and the process itself. It also encourages them to close their eyes on cue. If you do not wish to look at them in this way, then simply have them fixate their gaze on a spot on the floor or wall or perhaps the tip of your finger.

You can have your hand gesturing in the air, give them a few seconds and then casually drop your hand downward to encourage their eyes to close. It is equally profound for the participant if you do this entire exercise with their eyes open, fixing their gaze on the back of their hand or wrist.

‘When you have been in hypnosis like that it is very easy for you to return to hypnosis whenever you wish and do it quickly and safely at your own command.

You might wonder, “why would I want to learn to go back into hypnosis at any time?” Well, it is a fantastic ability you have, more than most, where you can access your own unconscious resources instantly, for any reason you wish. Imagine: you can use hypnosis for relaxation and recuperation, like a very real catnap, or even allow it to turn into sleep. Perhaps of more value you can essentially become your own hypnotist and change the way you think, feel and respond to things in your life and do that swiftly. Would you be interested in me showing you how to do that all by yourself?

OK. Sit back in the chair, get comfortable, relax, that’s right. As before, relax your back and shoulders, nice and comfortable; place your hands lightly on your lap, that’s right. Now, in a moment I am going to ask you to hear the word “Relax” four times in your mind; the fourth time you hear that word your eyes will close, and you will immediately return into that state you were in a moment ago. Are you ready to go now?

OK. Look at me, take a slow deep breath in and breathe out even more slowly.

Take another breath and this time as you exhale, repeat the word “Relax” four times in your mind. You can allow your eyes to close only as quickly as you repeat it for a fourth time. That’s it, eyes closed.

Now, you might remember certain elements of your experience before, when you sat in that chair, listening to my voice in the background, as you at times listened to your own inner voice, wondering this and wondering that, just like you can wonder right now if you have really taken yourself into hypnosis, just by hearing the word “Relax” four times in your mind, because this isn’t the sleep you have at night, yet you could continue to drift deeper inside your mind with each breath you take, your breathing quite at ease now, allowing your responses to be driven by the bigger part of you—your unconscious mind—and I am going to show you how to do that now.’

At this point I typically begin suggesting a physical ideomotor response such as arm levitation, and soon after the arm begins to lift I encourage them to begin to fight against it—to try to resist the lifting. This is not strictly necessary, but it provides the sense of involuntariness that will help them ratify that this experience is out of the ordinary. If I created such an ideomotor response in the previous session of hypnosis, I normally start with the same response and build from there. Once it gets started, the challenge is delivered progressively, starting out with encouragement to try and keep it still as it lifts, then to try and put it down, then to do their best to stop it lifting and finally to open their eyes and try to put it down.

‘I would like your unconscious to take full control of your left hand and begin to lift it up toward your head. Up toward your head as if it is lighter than air; there it goes, you will feel it lifting. Fingers twitching, almost as if it is happening automatically. Higher and higher up toward your head. As it lifts, you can try and keep it steady and find you cannot; it gets lighter and lighter. You can try and put it down and find it just lifts up toward your head. I mean what I say: consciously do your best to pull it down and find you cannot stop it from moving up.

In a moment I will clap my hands and when I do your eyes will open as the hypnosis intensifies and you can look at that hand, almost as if it is someone else’s hand and try to stop it moving. Funny isn’t it? Is that your arm? Then try and move it. Now close your eyes and go even deeper.

Now I will count from one to five and everything will be back to normal; on “five” your arm will drift down and your eyes will open.’

At this point I do the full one to five wake-up, as outlined in chapter eight of this

book. I then continue with the following:

‘So now you know what I am talking about. You can use that ability you have, any time it is safe to do. If you are having trouble sleeping, take yourself into hypnosis and tell your unconscious mind to make the adjustments necessary, so that when your head hits the pillow you will swiftly fall into a deep relaxing sleep and awake at the appropriate time feeling refreshed and revitalised.

If after work you are flagging a little and not in the mood to go out but have to, sit in your chair, hear that word four times and take yourself inside. Ask your unconscious to make the changes so that when you open your eyes in ten minute’s time you will be fully refreshed and revitalised for the evening ahead.

You can use it to enhance skills you already have. If you have an important presentation to give, go inside and tell your mind that when you stand up and speak you will speak confidently, congruently and clearly. Visualise that outcome, if you wish. If there is a decision you need to make and are unsure what to do, ask your unconscious, intuitive mind to provide you with an answer that is best for you.

So, in a moment I would like you to take yourself into hypnosis again. This time I will just give you the basic instructions and then show you how you can give yourself suggestions. So again just pick a spot on the wall, and when you are ready, repeat the word “Relax” four times, just in your mind, and the fourth time you will feel yourself drifting back inside, back into hypnosis. That’s it, eyes closing now. You could intensify this experience, drifting deeper and deeper each time you do this, simply by repeating in your mind the words “Deeper relaxed”.

In a moment I want you to use that voice in your head, your own inner voice, and tell your unconscious mind to lift both of your hands up off your legs; tell it, “Lift my hands up”; repeat that command; want it to push them up off your legs; it is waiting for your instructions. I know it is a strange idea, but do not pretend. Do not act or lift them consciously. Just repeat that command in your mind. It may take a few seconds, but there—they are beginning to lift. I know it is an odd sensation, but I want you to notice how that feels as if they are lifting automatically.

Now, in the same way you have told your mind to lift your hands, you can tell it anything you want that improves your life. You will remember to use positive terms and put a time on it. In other words, tell it what you want, rather than what you don’t, and how you will feel, rather than how you won’t.

If you wished to sleep at night you might say, “When my head touches the pillow, I will drift into a deep and relaxing sleep and awaken at an appropriate time feeling refreshed, revitalised and ready for the day ahead”, rather than, “Do not keep me awake”. You will remember to use positive terms and put a time on that outcome.

Now, you will be able to do this any time it is safe and appropriate to do so. It will be easier each time as you begin to recognise your own private place of hypnosis. Understand you cannot get stuck in hypnosis, and should some situation demand that you are at full, conscious alertness, then you will immediately come back to full alertness with your normal capacity to deal with situations intact.

Should you wish to do this for a certain time for a particular reason, then you could simply suggest to your mind that you are going to remain in hypnosis for a specific time, and focus on that outcome; or, alternatively, at any given time to come back to full, conscious alertness. All you need do is count from one to five in your mind, and it will be exactly like when I counted from one to five. On “five” you will be awake, alert and feeling great. You will remember that. So when you are ready to return to full alertness, feeling great, just count in your mind and on “five” your eyes will open. Excellent. You are good at this.

Now, we are going to do this one more time. This time I really do not want to speak as much. So when you are ready, I want you to take yourself back into hypnosis, then give yourself a suggestion; it does not have to be that your hands will lift, although it could be; it could be something else entirely, something you wish to feel. Then when you are satisfied you have tested that, bring yourself back up to full awareness by counting from one to five. Ready, OK. Count to five when you are ready.’

8.0 Back In The Room

After The Hypnotist has taken the subject into hypnosis and done their work it would be negligent if they did not bring the subject out thoroughly, returning them to normal. This is achieved with a wake-up procedure.

If you do not do a wake-up the subject will emerge from hypnosis, eventually, but they might feel a little disorientated.

The subject is taking your suggestions on board, so you can ensure they come out of hypnosis cleanly. It is a great opportunity to ensure that they return to normal awareness, feeling fantastic and ready to go in every way.

You could simply clap your hands and say, **‘Eyes open, wide-awake, everything back to normal’**, but that is not doing the job effectively. A good wake-up ratifies the work you have done; gives an opportunity for them to go back into a hypnosis, instantly if you wish to give them this ability; and ensures they are back to normal in every way.

‘In a moment I am going to count from one to five and on the count of “five” your eyes will open and you will be back at full, conscious, wakeful alertness, everything back to normal in every way. It will be like you have woken up from a wonderful night’s sleep. You will understand hypnosis is not sleep, and the next time you get in bed and sleep, you will sleep wonderfully, better than you have for years, and awake at an appropriate time, refreshed, revitalised, feeling brand new.

One. Feeling less relaxed now, every muscle, nerve and fibre coming alive.

Two. A surge of energy is pouring in through your fingers, toes, up arms, legs, spine to the top of your head.

Three. Take a deep breath, fill your chest with energy-giving oxygen, it spreads to every muscle nerve and fibre.

Four. Take another breath as your head is being washed through with cool clear spring water, your entire body washed through, refreshed and revitalised.

Five. Eyes open, wide awake, back in the room.’

Or alternatively:

One. Feeling wonderful.

Two. To achieve your goals.

Three. With a feeling of freedom.

Four. Feel the force of that feeling.

Five. Eyes open, feeling wonderfully alive.’

I will often clap my hands on the count of “Five” to add to the effect. This tends to

startle the subject a little and helps put some distance between their condition when hypnotised and unhypnotised. In this moment the doors to their hypnotic world close. It encourages amnesia for the experience. You can further encourage this by immediately asking them a question that does not relate to the hypnotic experience they have just had. This could be related to a conversation you were having with them prior to the hypnosis, or just a trivial question. When they then try to recall the hypnotic experience they do so with the same ineffectiveness they might try to recall a dream that seemed vivid just moments earlier.

9.0 Safety Last

Health and Safety is almost completely in control of The Hypnotist. Being The Hypnotist brings responsibility with it. Be the best you can be and treat your subjects with the respect they deserve. Always demonstrate that you care and that they are in safe and competent hands. This makes the job easier anyway. Although hypnosis is unlikely to make an existing health condition worse it is wise to stick to sensible guidelines.

Unless you are competently trained to do so:

Do not hypnotise people under 18 years of age. Do not hypnotise people who have a health conditions, including heart problems, breathing problems or psychiatric problems. Do not hypnotise people who are pregnant. Do not hypnotise people who are epileptic. Avoid people who are very drunk or high on drugs. Always do a proper wake-up.

Do not take silly risks. Giving someone full body catalepsy and balancing them between chairs is an impressive sight, but the subject may have a back condition. The chairs may collapse. Telling someone they are an Olympic swimmer might encourage them to lie down on a tabletop and start swimming, or might result in them diving off a table head first. Do not take unnecessary risks. Shouting 'Sleep' as the subject is running from one end of the room to another could result in them dropping to the floor and smashing a hip. Encourage them to stop running, to stand still; let them know that their legs will support them. Say 'Sleep and stand'.

9.1 Abreactions and Other Surprises

Occasionally when a subject is hypnotised they have a negative emotional reaction that surprises them, and, if unprepared, The Hypnotist, too. Sometimes this can be a large, unbridled reaction known as an abreaction. Be prepared. Fortunately an abreaction is uncommon, and if you do your job properly, extremely rare. The subject may be upset and cry, often with complete abandon. Sometimes they know why they are upset and sometimes they do not. It could be something you have said has acted as a trigger that has reminded them of something traumatic or a memory with which a negative emotion is associated. Sometimes it seems an abreaction is quite spontaneous—without any particular trigger. It is as if emotions we do our utmost to ignore, and outbursts we need to have but suppress, can lurk just beneath the surface of consciousness. Hypnosis might provide an opportunity for them to get out. Perhaps this has to do with the subject's expectations about hypnosis. An abreaction like this is nothing to be afraid of, although it is quite a shock the first time you see one. Managed appropriately you are not going to do anyone damage here and can ensure they come through it better off, if a little shaken.

Keep your directions clean. Do not regress people to places that could have been hurtful or harmful or frightening. Do not regress to their childhood. The stage hypnotist can safely make people act like a six year-old, but should not regress someone to their own life at six—just in case it was awful. My advice is to avoid regression-based routines completely in performance. Avoid routines of a sexual nature, unless you run a show that is open about its explicit themes. Avoid routines where the subject imagines parts of their body are missing. Avoid routines that would cause them imagined pain. The worst thing The Hypnotist can do when faced with an abreaction is to alarm the subject even more by getting freaked out and looking anxious. Stay calm.

If you are not going to start doing impromptu therapy then the best thing is to simply tell them that everything will be okay, that you will spend some time with them, and that in a moment you will bring them back up and they do not need to bring these memories and feelings back with them. Then do a proper wake-up, toning it down slightly from the usual suggestions of feeling absolutely amazing. Everything back to normal. Spend some time with them afterwards to ensure they are okay.

Of course, for a hypnotherapist an abreaction is an opportunity to deal with something. The splinter of a problem has been found and it can be started to be pulled out, but this is not a book on therapy. If someone does appear to have an abreaction during an impromptu session of hypnosis, resist the temptation to start doing therapy with them, but do use suggestion to suggest the reaction away.

An abreaction drill that you should learn, taught to me by Igor Ledochowski, a master of conversational hypnosis, follows. It begins with a repeated command to remain calm and this is followed by direct suggestions that the experience will change, then the subject is grounded back into their physical reality with encouragement to focus on their surroundings and finally they are reminded that they are safe. Repeat each line or the entire process as deemed necessary. Do not touch the person during the process as you do not want them to associate that touch with the abreaction.

‘Stay calm. Stay calm.

The scene is fading, becoming more and more distant, you can leave those feelings behind now.

You can feel the chair. Feel your feet on the floor.

And know you are safe.’

Follow this with a gentle wake-up. Welcome them back with a smile rather than a frown. Do not suggest they have issues to deal with and should seek therapy. They are likely to know why it came up and can make their own decisions.

On occasion a subject may get a little concerned as they feel they are going into hypnosis—if they associate this with losing control. If they have had panic attacks or a bad experience with drugs they may associate it with that. If they still wish to be hypnotised, then it is important to let them feel in control and know that they can manage the depth they go to. This can be achieved by training them to take themselves in and out using the rehearsal induction, associating arm raising with going into hypnosis and the arm lowering with returning to normal awareness.

Even more rarely someone may have a fit—perhaps they suffer from epilepsy or sleep apnoea. If they are not thrashing around when fitting, but have instead become very rigid, it can be difficult to spot immediately. Follow basic first aid advice, ensuring the person does not hurt themselves or choke as they fit.

Basic health and safety training is inexpensive. It will teach you how to save lives and much more in one day.

You should always ask people if they have any serious health conditions so you can make an informed decision about whether to hypnotise them or not.

Recognise that if you are going to have your subject doing things that involve moving around that they should be doing this with their eyes open. Just because you have hypnotised the waitress to make you free coffee does not mean she should risk getting

scalded. Dancing with the eyes closed can be dangerous too.

If you are going to hypnotise someone and tell them you have stolen their voice or favourite fairy and tell them this will make them angry there is nothing to stop them hitting you, unless of course you tell them that they will get angry, but will not actually get violent. If you are going to suggest a disgusting taste into your subject's mouth then tell them they may feel sick, but that they won't actually be sick.

Getting people to eat and drink things when hypnotised is also asking for trouble. Although in the vast majority of cases it will be fine—you never know if they have an allergy to something.

Using catalepsy with people who have arthritic conditions is obviously not advised. I could go on.

Think. Use common sense and a bit more. Look at the surrounding environment. Remove or steer clear of potential dangers. Be safe. Show you care.

9.2 Morals and Ethics

It is often stated by some hypnotists that you cannot make people do things they would not normally do, and certainly cannot make people do things that go against their morals and ethics. I absolutely disagree. Please keep in mind that morals and ethics are just a surface veneer maintained for social acceptance. When a person's conscious, critical thought is out of the equation, it is possible and likely that moral and ethical boundaries are too. In this sense The Hypnotist is responsible for the moral and ethical boundaries. The subject remains human and is capable of a full range of responses. Again, use common sense. Understand that the routines I have outlined in this book are there for entertainment purposes. I am in no way suggesting that you commit crimes or abuse the knowledge given.

When hypnotising, you are not making people do things against their will; you are instead bending their reality so that the subject's will has an interest in following your direction.

I repeat: you are responsible for the moral and ethical boundaries.

You should always get permission to hypnotise. Just because it is possible to do it without permission does not mean you should. Uphold the code of conduct.

9.3 Final Thoughts

On my training courses I emphasise that it is important to look beyond technique and let what you do become your art form. Practise, observe, stretch yourself—there is always more to learn. Then relax and do your work. There is no reason to settle for being an average hypnotist—be the best you can be. At first it is important to get your technique mastered, so work hard to do this. Once it is mastered, let your intuition guide you about how you apply this knowledge.

Human beings are suggestible. Their personal reality is a fiction. Take that understanding and knowledge with you into every walk of life, whether you are speaking to your children, your colleagues or your friends.

The words are not as important as the ideas. The techniques are not as important as your intention. Observe your subject—they will give you all the guidance you need.

Aim to leave your subjects and your audience with a new view of the world.

Give them a positive experience they will still recount twenty years from now.

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Appendix: Set Piece Scripts

Magnetic Fingers

OK, let's try something. A simple exercise to fire up your power of concentration. I'd like you to place your hands out in front of you like this.

Now can you clasp your hands together, palms together and thumbs crossed, nice and tight? Now bend your elbows like you are making a desperate prayer. You can make one while you are there, if you like.

Now put your first fingers, your index fingers, straight up, about an inch apart. Look at the gap between them, because in a moment they will come together and touch, just like they are magnets; that's it, they are starting to twitch, closer and closer, and as soon as those fingers touch you can allow your eyes to close and relax. Now take a nice deep breath in and as you breathe out let your hands drift down and relax.

Open your eyes. Brilliant, that shows me you can concentrate.

Magnetic Hands

Now, in a moment I will ask you to concentrate just like you did on your fingers, only this time I want you to really use your imagination, so in a moment I will ask you to close your eyes. I'll ask you to place your hands out in front of you like this, to close your eyes and imagine you have two powerful magnets strapped to the palms of your hands, pulling them together. When they touch, your head can simply fall forward as you relax.

OK, so place your hands out in front of you; look at the space between those hands, get a clear picture of your hands stuck out there; now close your eyes and imagine you have two powerful magnets strapped to the palms of your hands, pulling them together.

They are already starting to go; imagine that magnetic force is getting stronger; the closer they get the stronger it becomes. I know it is difficult to tell exactly when they are going to touch, but I can assure you they are going to touch, just like when as a child playing with magnets you felt that magnetic attraction, pulling those hands together.

Now let your hands drop down as your head drops forward onto your chest and relax.

Excellent. Now open your eyes. You have a powerful imagination.

Stiff Arm - Method 1

Give me your arm. Now make a tight fist and the muscles tense. Even tighter in your forearm, your triceps, right into your shoulder. Imagine you have a steel bar running through your fist through your elbow to the shoulder; your arm is like a steel bar.

Now your arm is getting stiff... make it stiff, stiff... stiffer and stiffer, tighter and tighter... you cannot bend it try as hard as you will. Try hard and find you cannot bend it; the harder you try the stiffer it gets. You cannot bend your arm.

All right, it is all gone now. You can bend your arm now. It is loose and relaxed and normal in every way.

Stiff Arm - Method 2

I am going to count from one to three. On the count of “one” I want you to make a tight fist with your right hand. On “two”, I want you to raise that arm up toward the ceiling and on “three” to really make that fist as tight as you can and listen to my voice.

One, make that fist; two, raise it up toward the ceiling; now three, make that fist tight and feel that stiffness; feel the skin on the back of the hand tightening, the wrist and elbow locking out. Even tighter in your forearm, your triceps, right into your shoulder. Imagine you have a steel bar running through your fist, through your elbow to the shoulder; your arm is like a steel bar.

Now your arm is getting stiff... make it stiff, stiff... stiffer and stiffer, tighter and tighter... you cannot bend it try as hard as you will. Try hard and find you cannot bend it; the harder you try the stiffer it gets. You cannot bend your arm.

All right, it is all gone now. You can bend your arm now. It is loose and relaxed and normal in every way.

Appendix: Induction Scripts

The Rehearsal

Can I borrow your arm?

What I'm going to do here in a moment is... I'm just going to reach over like this, and I'm going to pick up your hand, and I don't want you to go into hypnosis, because I want to explain this to you, because this is something that will help you later on in getting hypnotised... and then to have you come back out of hypnosis we are going to move that hand back down like that.

All you are going to notice is that I'm going to pick up your wrist like this. I'm going to talk to you in a certain way and as that hand reaches a certain point you'll notice a number of things happening that will let you know you're going into hypnosis... your eyes close, your breathing will shift and you will go even deeper, and then to have you come back out, wide awake, we'll move the hand back down like this. OK?

So I am not going to do it yet; I just want you to get the feeling, so if now is the time to do it, all I would do is reach over like this, I would pick your arm up like that and stop at a point, when you would go inside; probably notice then that your eyes would close at a certain point; it's going to stop all by itself. Then I'm going to move it back down. OK.

Now, if we were actually going to do it again, all I would do is reach over... your breathing quite at ease now... and as that arm lifts, like that... as your eyes close, that arm stops by itself. And you know what to do, all the way in... that's right... eyes closed, deep asleep, deep asleep. And your unconscious mind can follow exquisitely the suggestions with your conscious mind paying attention, or going anywhere it wishes.

Now the question is how deeply into hypnosis can you go? How much deeper can you go now? That's right... arm lifting now, even higher... that's right.

Hand-to-Eye Fixation

In a moment, if it is OK with you, I would like to borrow your arm. Is that OK? I am going to pick your hand up by the wrist like this. I want you to look at your hand, look at the lines and now just find one spot you can look at and keep looking at that spot.

Don't look at the whole thing; just keep your eyes on one spot, that's it. That's right, keep your eyes on that spot.

As that hand begins to move toward your face, your eyes will begin to change focus, and as you become aware of those eyes, close your eyes and sleep now. Drift inside as you listen to me, because in a moment I'm going to count down from three to zero, and as I count down from three to zero your hand will float back down to your lap, as if lowered on an invisible wire, your head will fall forward onto your chest, and you will go so much deeper into hypnosis. 3 - 2 - 1 - 0. Deep asleep. All the way down. Deep, deep, deeper asleep.

Magnetic Palms

OK, are you ready to be hypnotised? Can you put your arms out like this, about shoulder height, palms facing towards each other?

Now, in a moment I will ask you to concentrate just like you did on your fingers, only this time I want you to really use your imagination, so in a moment I will ask you to close your eyes. I'll ask you to place your hands out in front of you like this, to close your eyes and imagine you have powerful magnets strapped to the palms of your hands, pulling them together. When they touch, your head can simply fall forward as you relax. If you imagine exactly what I ask you to imagine, your body will respond.

OK, so place your hands out in front of you, look at the space between those hands, and get a clear picture of your hands stuck out there; now close your eyes and imagine you have two powerful magnets strapped to the palms of your hands, pulling them together.

They are already starting to go; imagine that magnetic force is getting stronger; the closer they get the stronger it becomes; I know it is difficult to tell exactly when they are going to touch, but I can assure you they are going to touch, just like when as a child playing with magnets you felt that magnetic attraction, pulling those hands together.

Now let your hands drop down and relax. Sleep.

The Handshake

Look at your hand. Look at the lines. Look at one spot.

As that hand moves towards your face, your eyes will begin to change focus, and as you notice your eyes, close your eyes and sleep.

Jacquin Power Lift

I am going to show you what we are going to do then I am going to do it. In a moment I am going to borrow your arm. Is that OK with you? I will reach over and pick up that hand, and lift it up like this. As it lifts to about here, you can allow your eyes to close. As I push it down, your eyes will open and you can just relax. As I pull your arm up, your eyes will close, as I push it down, your eyes will open and you will relax even more.

Is that OK with you? So can I borrow your arm?

As I lift it up you can allow your eyes to close. As the arm goes down your eyes will open. That's right, the arm lifts and your eyes will close. I push it down and your eyes will open as you relax even more.

This time as the wrist lifts and the eyes close, feel that wrist getting stiffer. Feel the forearm muscle tightening. Feel your elbow stiffening. Feel that bicep stiffening... into the shoulder. Every muscle and fibre... stiffer and stiffer as it hangs on that wire.

Each word that I say and every breath that you take will take you deeper and deeper into hypnosis.

Jacquin Power Induction

OK, if you could just sit back in the chair, that's right, feet on the floor and just place your hands on your lap, and relax.

Now look at me, right here. In a moment I want you to just hear the word 'Relax' four times in your mind. The fourth time you hear that word you are going to drift into hypnosis and your hands will begin to lift up off of your lap. Do it now. Don't go into a deep state of hypnosis until you hear that word for the fourth time.

That's right, keeping your eyes open, look at me... you can focus your full attention there... while your unconscious mind begins to lift your hand up, I don't know if it will be a finger or a hand that moves first.

Instant Induction

Look at this, take a deep breath; now close your eyes and sleep. Deep asleep. Deeper and deeper asleep. You are going to sleep.

Contact

Anthony Jacquin is one half of the company 'Head Hacking.'
Head Hacking is dedicated to providing the best in hypnosis training,
products and performance.

Please visit their website to learn more about hypnosis.

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Connect via Twitter: [@headhackinglive](#)

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Reality is Plastic: The Interview

Walk Up Street Hypnosis Seminar with Igor Ledochowksi and Anthony Jacquin

About the author

The author Anthony Jacquin runs a private hypnotherapy practice in the UK.

He also provides bespoke hypnosis training and mentoring.

Find out more from his personal website: <http://www.anthonyjacquin.com/>

If you are interested in training in hypnotherapy with Anthony and his father Freddy Jacquin then please visit:

<http://www.ukhypnotherapytraining.co.uk/>

Connect via Twitter: @twitnotist

Contact him direct using email to: enquiries@anthonyjacquin.com

Connect via Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/antonmesmer>

Table of Contents

<u>Code of Conduct</u>	<u>5</u>
<u>The 17 Musts</u>	<u>6</u>
<u>About Reality is Plastic:</u>	<u>8</u>
<u>The Art of Impromptu Hypnosis</u>	<u>8</u>
<u>1.0 What is Impromptu Hypnosis?</u>	<u>11</u>
<u>2.0 Hypnosis: No Introduction Necessary</u>	<u>15</u>
<u>2.1 Being The Hypnotist</u>	<u>28</u>
<u>2.2 The Approach</u>	<u>29</u>
<u>2.3 The Set Up</u>	<u>33</u>
<u>2.4 How To Tell if Someone is Hypnotised</u>	<u>36</u>
<u>2.5 Hypnotic Phenomena</u>	<u>39</u>
<u>3.0 The Set Piece</u>	<u>43</u>
<u>3.1 Magnetic Fingers</u>	<u>46</u>
<u>3.2 Magnetic Hands</u>	<u>49</u>
<u>3.3 Stiff Arm</u>	<u>52</u>
<u>4.0 Induction</u>	<u>55</u>
<u>4.1 The Rehearsal</u>	<u>59</u>
<u>4.2 Hand-to-Eye Fixation</u>	<u>62</u>
<u>4.3 Magnetic Palms</u>	<u>66</u>
<u>4.4 The Handshake</u>	<u>69</u>
<u>4.5 Jacquin Power Lift</u>	<u>74</u>
<u>4.6 Jacquin Power Induction</u>	<u>81</u>
<u>4.7 Instant Induction</u>	<u>82</u>
<u>5.0 Getting Deep Now—Intensification</u>	<u>84</u>
<u>5.1 Links</u>	<u>87</u>
<u>5.2 Loops</u>	<u>88</u>
<u>5.3 Chains</u>	<u>89</u>
<u>5.4 Bombs</u>	<u>90</u>
<u>6.0 Direction</u>	<u>90</u>
<u>6.1 The Super Suggestion</u>	<u>94</u>
<u>6.2 Encouragement</u>	<u>95</u>
<u>6.3 Procedural Instructions</u>	<u>96</u>
<u>6.4 Navigation Control</u>	<u>97</u>
<u>7.0 Applying Impromptu Hypnosis</u>	<u>98</u>
<u>7.1 Briefest Therapy</u>	<u>99</u>
<u>7.2 Rossi-style Brief Therapy</u>	<u>102</u>
<u>7.3 Gone</u>	<u>104</u>
<u>7.4 Robbed</u>	<u>106</u>
<u>7.5 Cloaked</u>	<u>111</u>
<u>7.6 Fed</u>	<u>113</u>

<u>7.7 Watered</u>	<u>115</u>
<u>7.8 Truth and Lies</u>	<u>117</u>
<u>7.9 Instant Self-Hypnosis</u>	<u>123</u>
<u>9.0 Safety Last</u>	<u>130</u>
<u>9.1 Abreactions and Other Surprises</u>	<u>131</u>
<u>9.2 Morals and Ethics</u>	<u>134</u>
<u>9.3 Final Thoughts</u>	<u>135</u>
<u>10.0 References</u>	<u>135</u>
<u>Appendix: Set Piece Scripts</u>	<u>137</u>
<u>Appendix: Induction Scripts</u>	<u>140</u>

