Hypnotic Counselling

A Textbook of Hypnotism

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Other Books by the Author:

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   Microskill Model
   Kinesics & Focusing Included
   Lifespan Developmental & Situational Approach
   Developmental Psychology included
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   A Textbook of Self Psychology
6. Family Counselling (2005)
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12. The Body Never Lies (2011)
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THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS OF HYPNOSIS
Humans are interdependent. No man is an island nor can he grow healthily all by himself. From the time we are born our thinking, feeling, and behaving are shaped by others. How the child is dependent on its parents and is influenced by them is obvious. This influence exerted by the parents or caregivers continues all through our lives. The influence of others is so much that many a time we go for counselling or psychotherapy to extricate ourselves from the influence of those others. How much we succeed in this attempt is another story.

I wonder if there is any area in which we are left all by ourselves. Even the decisions we make all by ourselves are to a major extent influenced by others. One may say that our decisions are made more by our unconscious than by our conscious. We know that our unconscious does not arise just by itself. It is greatly influenced by our childhood experiences. Carl Jung even speaks of “collective unconscious” which is the heritage we have received from our ancestry to perceive our experience and interpret it in a particular mode irrespective of our individual differences.

You were not born with a set of beliefs. But by the time you grow in a society you are indoctrinated (or conditioned) by a set of beliefs. Those beliefs, whether social or religious, are given from your cultural milieu in which you are a part. As you grow, you may understand them as healthy/rational or unhealthy/irrational. How much you can do away with them is not an easy job. These cultural influences are heavy and we carry them without being ever aware of what they are and without critiquing them.

In a way, every interaction with another may range from mild to strong. We influence one another in a subtle way. I wonder when we are free of the influence of others. In this influence the suggestions given either directly or indirectly by others play an important role. We can also influence ourselves by our own suggestions (autosuggestions). Hypnotists say that the suggestions of others eventually become our own suggestions in hypnosis before we carry them out.
The influence exerted by others on us is, in a sense, hypnosis. We may not be aware of it. Nonetheless, it is there ever present just because we are interdependent. Our boastful claim of being independent may not be fully real.

Years back I had a fascination for hypnosis not having read much about it but only by hearsay. There were not enough materials or opportunities to get acquainted with hypnosis. All the same, my interest in hypnosis did not wane but on the contrary kept increasing. Then there came a time when I was deeply absorbed in the writings of Sigmund Freud, the father of psychoanalysis. He made noteworthy contribution to psychology especially psychotherapy. In fact, he too was interested in hypnosis along with his colleagues having seen for himself the astonishing results of hypnosis. Soon he became disillusioned with hypnosis and he went further in his research and landed on psychoanalysis with its cardinal tools of free association and dream analysis.

The reason for Sigmund Freud to abandon the practice of hypnosis was that the changes brought about by hypnosis, though fabulous, did not last long. When I read about the turn of history in the life of Sigmund Freud, my interest in hypnosis too waned until very recently. Of late, I happened to view two short documentary films on hypnosis. They were two invasive surgeries done for hernia. In one, the client was hypnotised by a hypnotist and in another the client hypnotised himself to the point of avoiding chemical anesthesia and completing the operation successfully. I was awestruck at seeing the films. For me, from then onwards, no proof was necessary to convince me of the effect and usefulness of hypnosis. To carry out invasive surgery on persons hypnotised is not a small matter. Indeed it is a big deal with lasting effect. I was wondering which therapy as of now can do such a feat. Was not the result lasting and why on earth such a hue and cry about the use of hypnosis? When we can use simple hypnotic techniques and cure people of their problems and maladies, why are we not making use of them just because there are some negative opinions expressed down through the centuries? Every medicine or therapy may have its own harmful effect if not properly taken or done. An overdose of sleeping tablets can kill you but sleeping tablets can enhance the sleep of patients who do not get sleep properly. For that reason is it justified to decry sleeping tablets? Therefore, if hypnosis is
misused by unscrupulous individuals, then it is not the problem with the technique of hypnosis but with the persons who misused it.

Secondly in the field of counselling and psychotherapy we make use of the techniques of Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP) profusely. NLP is, in fact, part of hypnosis. If you take most of the techniques of NLP, they resort to an “altered state” or trance state. Making clients get into an altered state and making them access their unconscious for cure is done in NLP and hypnosis. Nobody is against NLP but when it is the question of hypnosis the age-old prejudices come to the fore as a strong deterrent. As I am practising NLP for a number of years, I do not see any difference between hypnosis and NLP. Therefore, I am convinced that hypnosis could be a useful, simple, and amazing technique for the cure and growth of people.

These being said, before starting to write this book I had a brush with hypnosis just by chance. There was a young man suffering from Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD). Having listened to him in a traditional counselling way, I wanted to attempt to deal with the issue. Such cases are easily dealt with after some medication by the psychiatrist about which I was contemplating. Then all of a sudden a though struck me prompting me to put the client into a deep relaxation as he was agitated and suggested to him his goals. He was a clean freak. He was suspicious of drinking water anywhere and touching people by chance while transacting and paying money at the counter, for example. He would not leave his sandals along with others lest anyone by chance puts on his sandals and contaminates them. Now the goals for this young man were to realize that water is pure, people are clean, and any object he comes into contact is reasonably clean. While he was in his rather deep relaxation I suggested to him his goals and when he came out of his trance, he grabbed my hands and said that he felt completely all right from that moment onwards. Unwittingly this was the first hypnotism I practiced by chance. It impressed me deeply and with another client who was mortally afraid of death that might happen to him at any moment in his life, I put him in a hypnotic trance during which time I suggested that he is free from those fears of death. This gave stupendous result and the client was wondering what miracle I did in his life.
From then onwards I do not hesitate to use hypnosis and I have been amply rewarded in a short while without wasting much time. Hypnotism is a simple and natural method that can very easily be applied almost to any of the human ailments, either applied by someone or by oneself. The benefits are immense; it is less time-consuming, and practically costs nothing.

You might have heard of hypnotherapy but here I use the term “hypnotic counselling” in an attempt to integrate hypnosis with the standard counselling. Therefore, I presuppose for the effective use of hypnosis, one is familiar with counselling techniques. However, even if one is not conversant with counselling methods, yet one can make use of the hypnotic techniques with success.

With this introduction I would like to invite you to journey with me along the labyrinth corridors of the history of hypnosis learning what hypnosis is and how one can use it for oneself and for others.

For the sake of simplicity, and unless otherwise stated, the use of “man,” “he,” “him,” “his,” and “himself” will apply equally to both genders.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pope’s Approval of Hypnosis</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In 1956, Pope Pius XII gave his approval of hypnosis. He stated that the use of hypnosis by health care professionals for diagnosis and treatment is permitted. In an address from the Vatican on hypnosis in childbirth, the Pope gave these guidelines:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Hypnotism is a serious matter, and not something to dabble in.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. In its scientific use, the precautions dictated by both science and morality must be followed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Under the aspect of anaesthesia, it is governed by the same principles as other forms of anaesthesia.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This is to say that the rules of good medicine apply to the use of hypnosis

2. THE MIND AS A COMPUTER

The computer does incredulous works unheard of earlier. Our brain too is like a computer. I think we cannot just compare human brain to a computer. Computer with all its capacity is limited but human brain is not limited. Therefore, our brain is far superior to a computer. All the same, we can see how our brain works like a computer.

1. The Human Brain

Our unconscious mind works like a computer. Our brain is formed fully at birth but may grow in size over time. It can also change. As learning progresses, neurons make connections with one another. Very clever people do have almost the same number of brain cells like the average person but they have more neural connections. Some areas of the brain can even take over certain functions not originally associated with them (i.e., plasticity). This shows that brain can dramatically change. For example, the brain of those who meditated for long shows great activity during meditation. Good or bad habits will make changes in brain circuitry and these changes in brain circuitry will lead to behaviour modifications. Therefore, we can conclude that hypnosis which is an activity involving our brain can alter not only the psychological mind, but also the structure of the physical brain itself.

2. Ideas from Authority

When fixed ideas are accepted by the unconscious, they are there until they are replaced by new ideas. Fixed ideas in our unconscious continue to influence our attitude and behaviour. With regard to fixed ideas, they can be accepted at any age, but they are more readily and even without critiquing accepted by our unconscious when we are young. As young ones, we lack fully developed reasoning power and we tend to believe things that damage our self-image. There is something interesting about ideas arising from authority. When ideas coming from authority are repeated over and over again having an emotional component, they are more likely to be accepted. (This is called brainwashing, and was and is being done to the prisoners of war and to the spies caught in the other country.) You may remember how you believed that you were stupid.
when some significant individuals told you so. As your unconscious accepted the words of authority in your young age, now in hypnosis the same unconscious will accept the suggestions of authority uncritically and will tend to execute them. Thus your unconscious accepts and obeys the commands (suggestions) of the hypnotist because he is an authority.

Your bad habits and negative feelings can be changed by hypnosis. Hypnosis replaces your bad habits and negative feelings with something new and good. You may still remember your old way of thinking but it will not have any power over you anymore. You can recall a time when you changed some old beliefs and later you never believed in them.

3. Fantasy and Fiction Are the Same

The brain is an organ which is the body’s control centre. In the brain, only a small part of it, the cortex (the outer layer), is devoted to thinking, though it has other functions too. It makes your body work right, controlling your heartbeat and respiration, sending and receiving impulses to and from one’s spinal cord and doing many more activities. Experiences are processed and stored away as memories. The mind on the contrary is an abstraction and it does not necessarily reside in the brain but has some link to the cortex because it requires consciousness and self-awareness. Activity in certain part of the brain is seen during imagining doing something and also actually doing something. This shows that the mind does not distinguish between real and imagined events. This discovery has its bearing on hypnosis. Therefore, suggestions given by the hypnotist can be taken by the subject as real when he imagines them taking place. Thus, change can be effected in the subject.¹
3. THE NATURE OF HYPNOSIS

A fair knowledge of the nature of hypnosis will go a long way in understanding what hypnosis is and how one can practice it. Therefore, this chapter deals with hypnosis in a comprehensive way.

1. Nomenclature

In the proper nomenclature, “hypnosis” is the trancelike state itself and “hypnotism” is the procedure (method) by which one induces a trancelike state in oneself or in another.

“Hypnotherapy” refers to the application of hypnosis for personal and professional development, emotional management, and other therapeutic purposes.

“Hypnotist” is the one who guides the process and direction of a hypnotic experience. A hypnotist is someone who induces the state of hypnosis. He is a person who induces hypnosis to treat physical or mental illness.

“Subject” will mean the individual experiencing hypnosis in collaboration with a hypnotist. The process of hypnosis guides the subject, and the subject participates by following the guidance of the hypnotist.

“Suggestion” is a statement or phrase giving direction or focus within the hypnotic process. For example, the hypnotist may suggest that the subject close his eyes, feel relaxed, and imagine a serene and peaceful place.

“Trance” is a mental state that involves altered awareness and focus. Trance state is experienced as relaxing. All of us feel a trancelike state often especially when we zone out on television, losing track of time when we are absorbed in a hobby or computer, or daydreaming.

“Subconscious” refers to processes, habits, mental patterns which are outside of normal conscious awareness. It refers to the aspect of the mind as below or underneath conscious thought.

“Unconscious” simply will mean “not conscious.” It can also mean actual loss of consciousness as it happens when one faints. In the
literature of hypnosis the words “subconscious” and “unconscious” are interchangeably used. In sum, this refers to the aspect of mind that is beneath or outside of our awareness.

2. The Origin of Hypnosis

The term “hypnosis,” comes from the Greek word “hypnos” which means sleep. It is a special psychological state with certain physiological attributes resembling sleep only superficially and marked by a functioning of the individual at a level of awareness other than the ordinary conscious state.

Hypnosis is not properly a sleep since one is alert to what is going on around and also attentively listens to the voice of the hypnotist. If one is really sleeping, one cannot be aware of the outside world and the voice of someone. It is a conscious state of being fully awake and focusing attention but with a decrease in their peripheral awareness. The hypnotised individual experiences heightened suggestibility and focus accompanied by a sense of tranquillity. The subject under hypnosis seems to heed only to the communications of the hypnotist. This he seems to do in an uncritical, automatic fashion, ignoring all aspects of the environment other than those pointed out to him by the hypnotist. The hypnotised individual has sensory experiences of seeing, feeling, smelling in accordance with the hypnotist’s suggestions, even though the suggestions may be in apparent contradiction to the reality. The suggestions of the hypnotist can alter the memory and awareness of the subject, and the effects of the suggestions may be extended (post-hypnotically) into the subsequent waking life of the subject. Again, the suggestions of the hypnotist can age-regress the subject with the result of being in the conscious state of returning to a specific former age.

3. Towards a Definition

Hypnosis can be described as a social interaction in which one person responds to suggestions given by the hypnotist for imaginative experiences involving changes in perception, memory, and the voluntary control of action.

The Natural State of Mind

Hypnosis is a natural state of mind. Normally many times a day we are in a hypnotic state, as for example, while daydreaming, or you
are so much absorbed in your thought that you had to be shaken out of it, or you were fully involved in watching a movie on television, reading a book, waiting for an elevator, or when one is queuing for tickets or to enter the office of an official or doctor, or you were driving a long distance and you became aware only when you reached the end of your journey ("Highway Hypnosis"). At least twice during a day you enter into a trance state: the time just before entering into sleep (hypnagogic) and the time just before awakening (hypnopompic) from sleep.

**Mind on Two Levels**

Though there had been many attempts to define hypnosis improving on the previous definitions, no clear-cut definition has been formulated since no one can really know what goes on inside another person’s mind during hypnosis. All the same, hypnosis can be described with the latest understanding abstracted from experiences. Our mind works on two levels – conscious and unconscious, or outer and inner states of mind. The conscious takes care of the day-to-day business like planning, making decisions, performing physical activities, and solving problems. The unconscious, on the other hand, is involved in activities like the blinking of the eyes, feeling of pain, and habits. It is the unconscious that comes into play when one is under hypnosis while the conscious is somewhat subdued, not asleep but merely less interested in what is going on. This decreased activity of the conscious permits the unconscious to more readily accept what it is being told and govern the body accordingly. One very important factor of the unconscious is that it is totally objective. The unconscious uncritically accepts any suggestion as fact without any clouding or emotion affecting its outcome.

**The Conscious – The Preconscious – The Unconscious**

To understand hypnosis, it is good to have knowledge of the three levels of the mind. Sigmund Freud divided the human mind into three parts: the conscious, the preconscious, and the unconscious. The awareness part of us is the conscious. Whatever we are currently aware of at a particular moment is the conscious. The preconscious contains all that passed from the conscious to the immediate storehouse. You can easily without any difficulty recall multiplication tables or rhymes that you learned in your kindergarten or some favourite songs that you
memorized. You are not conscious of these materials right now, yet with ease you can recall them. Since these materials are just previous to consciousness, it is supposed to be in the preconscious.

I make you regress to your early childhood and make you remember incidents either good or bad. I can do it while you are under psychotherapy or when you are doing your dream analysis. Where are those materials that you do not remember right now but you can recollect them with effort? They are in a realm that is called the unconscious. Sigmund Freud said that one can access the unconscious by free association (narrating whatever comes to your mind without censoring) or dream analysis. The unconscious contains the repressed materials. In general, the unconscious will represent anything other than the conscious part of the mind.

Thus, there are three levels of the mind. In hypnosis the unconscious is unlocked and imagination and emotions are going to be very active.

In hypnosis the words “the conscious,” “the subconscious,” and “the unconscious” are used. The word “the conscious” is used by every author. The words “the subconscious” and “the unconscious” are used by some authors as two different levels of the mind. The vast majority of authors use either the subconscious or the unconscious meaning one and the same reality interchangeably. Most authors prefer the word “the subconscious.” In hypnotic literature the term “unconscious” is used interchangeably with the term “subconscious” and also often referred to as “subliminal.” In this book I use the word the “unconscious” meaning the “subconscious.”

Your conscious is the alert mind which has short-term memory, will power, reasoning, rationalization, analytical processes, and critical thinking. It is the protective part of your mind during hypnosis. Your conscious mind is always aware of what is going on during the hypnotic process. We can also say that the conscious is more aware during the process of hypnosis. Even though the subject appears to be relaxed and sleeping, he is more alert. The conscious is the protective part of the brain during hypnosis. That is why the subject cannot be made to do things that he is not comfortable with. The conscious is the spokesperson
in our everyday life. In hypnosis the unconscious is allowed to speak. It is a timid speaker. In hypnosis the subject’s five senses are very acute.

Hypnosis is a way to access a person’s unconscious mind directly. Normally one is aware of the thought processes in his conscious mind. One consciously thinks over the problems, chooses words as he speaks, consciously tries to remember where he left something. When doing all these things, his conscious mind is working hand-in-hand with his unconscious mind. The unconscious part of his mind does his behind-the-scene thinking. One’s unconscious accesses the vast reservoir of information, that lets one solve problems, construct sentences, or locate the misplaced things. In a way, it puts together plans and ideas and runs them by one’s conscious mind. When new ideas come all of a sudden, it is because one already thought through the process unconsciously.

The Official Definition

The American Psychological Association Division of Psychological Hypnosis defines hypnosis as “a procedure during which a health professional or researcher suggests that a client, patient, or subject experience changes in sensations, perceptions, thoughts, or behaviour.” Some view hypnosis as an altered state of consciousness, others as a type of focused attention, and still others find a strong correlation between the state of putting someone in a state of trance and his level of suggestibility. The subject under hypnosis becomes more susceptible to suggestion, causing changes in the way he thinks, feels, and behaves, remaining in control of his actions. Some also say that a state of hypnosis does not actually exist, but strong social expectations are being played out by the person who believes that he is in a state of hypnosis. Since hypnosis generally stimulates a feeling of relaxation it developed into a therapy — hypnotherapy.

Medical field defines hypnosis as “a state wherein the subject’s conscious mind stays relaxed and is still aware of what is happening in the environment, but the subject’s unconscious is more active, making that person more open to the suggestions of the hypnotist.”

Hypnosis is relaxing, or the ability to tune into the unconscious. It is a very deep and subtle alteration or distortion of the brain of humans so that it responds in certain ways and not in others. Hypnosis works on
levels that are hardly accessible by the ordinary person. Hypnosis is a special kind of sleep, artificially brought on by “passes,” acute or prolonged sensations, or a sustained attention, or an effort of the will.

4. State vs. Non-State Debate

It is not yet clear whether hypnosis is a qualitatively unique state with some physiological and conditioned response components or only a form of suggestion induced by high motivation, subject expectancy, and a positive relationship between the hypnotist and the subject. There are also cases in which hypnotic deafness, hypnotic blindness, analgesia (pain-relief) and other responses seen in hypnosis were produced without hypnosis. Thus, it is argued that unhypnotized persons can be motivated to equal and even surpass the supposed superhuman physical feats seen in hypnosis.

When James Braid introduced the concept of hypnotism, he was not consistent with his proposal. At one time he spoke of hypnotism as a specific sleep-like neurological state comparable to animal hibernation or yogic meditation and at other times he spoke of it as encompassing a number of different stages or states that are an extension of ordinary psychological and physiological process. Braid seems to have moved from a more “specific state” understanding to a more complex “non-state” orientation.

According to the state theorists, the effects of hypnotism are due primarily to a specific, abnormal, and uniform psychological or physiological state of some description, often understood as “hypnotic trance” or an “altered state of consciousness.” On the contrary, the non-state theorists reject the idea of hypnotic trance and interpret the effects of hypnotism as due to a combination of multiple task-specific factors derived from normal cognitive, behavioural, and social psychology, such as social role-perception, favourable motivation, active imagination, positive cognitive set, response expectancy, and the active use of task-specific subjective strategies. In sum, the non-state description is that hypnotic behaviour is meaningful and goal-directed striving; its most general goal being to behave like a hypnotized person as this is continuously defined by the hypnotist and understood by the subject.
State and Non-State

Comparing these two theories we realize that the older “special state” interpretation emphasizes the difference between hypnosis and ordinary psychological process, while the “non-state” interpretation emphasizes their similarity. Finally, we would understand that between hypnotized and non-hypnotized individuals if the “hypnotic trance” does exist, it only accounts for a small proportion of the effects attributed to hypnotic suggestion, most of which can be replicated without hypnotic induction.

Crossing Thresholds

“Limen” is a Latin word for “threshold.” During indigenous rituals, tricksters and their counterparts cross many of the limen or thresholds. Hypnotic phenomenon is luminal in nature and that the hypnotists share many traits with traditional societies’ tricksters. The ambiguous nature of hypnosis has been evident since the beginning. A person under hypnosis may report hallucinations that confound his ordinary distinctions between reality and hallucination, external and internal processes, and many other binary oppositions including time and space, and mind and body. Hypnosis can also obscure the distinction between fact and fiction in one’s memory which is hotly disputed in “recovery memories” controversy. Imagination plays a central role in both indigenous rituals and hypnosis.

5. Three States of a Continuum

The process of hypnosis from the start till its fully developed hypnotic state can be thought of as a continuum which consists of three stages proceeding from one to the next.

The First Stage: As it starts, there is a progressive elimination of all channels of sensori-motor communication between the subject and the outside world with the exception of the channel of communication between the subject and the hypnotist. Here the hypnotist becomes temporarily the sole representative of and contact person with the outside world. It is something similar to an infant for whom the parents become the contact persons with the outside world during the early life. The onset of the hypnotic state starts with a partial sleep in which active sensorimotor channels are restricted to those between the subject and the hypnotist. As the sensorimotor channels are reduced, the Ego boundaries of the
subject are obliterated thereby making it possible an inevitable psychological fusion between the hypnotist and the subject.

The Second Stage: With this psychological fusion of the subject and the hypnotist, the second phase starts. On account of this fusion between them, for the subject, the words of the hypnotist become indistinguishable from his own thoughts. That is why there is the phenomenon of an apparent possible suggestibility of the subject. The restricted sensorimotor relationship induces hypnagogic (a dream-like semi-conscious state just before falling asleep) reverie in which vivid sensory memories and images are released. These images and memories which are not easily recalled or vividly imagined in ordinary circumstances are from the visual, auditory, kinesthetic, olfactory, and gustatory senses, or modalities, or representations. The vividness of the sensory perception brings to the surface buried memories and particularly the buried affects (feelings) which are related to such sensory memories. Physiologically, the hypnotic process is an extension of the processes of normal attention which is the result of the creation in the central nervous system of a concentrated focus of excitation while the surrounding areas are inhibited. This is due first of all to the relative immobilization of the head or eye, secondly to the influence of monotony. Monotony depends upon the sensory adaptation, which in turn depends upon rhythm. Psychologically, the diminution of alertness through allaying anxiety and other defenses creates the focus of excitation within limited areas. This diminution of alertness is a necessary prerequisite to the suppression of sensory warning signals.

The Third Stage: The final stage of the fully developed hypnotic state involves a partial re-expansion of ego boundaries, and an incorporation of a fragmentary image of the hypnotist within the expanded boundaries of the subject’s Ego. The incorporated image of the hypnotist which echoes the hypnotist’s voice has for the time being becomes a part of the subject’s temporary Ego. And so here the compliance of the subject to the hypnotist’s commands is again more apparent. This final phase represents the development of the infant’s Ego in which its boundaries gradually expand, with the retention of parental images as unconscious incorporated components of the developing Ego of the infant. Just like what the unconscious image of the parental figure does in the
child or adult, the incorporated image of the hypnotist functions in the subject. Here what one sees is that hypnosis is an experimental reproduction of a natural developmental process of a human person. Hypnosis is useful for the complete therapeutic displacement of disturbing superego figures which are retained out of childhood. The mechanisms of dream (such as transference, displacement, and condensation) are evident in the hypnotic process.

6. The Four Levels of Organic Brain

Brain scans have proved that under hypnosis something does affect the brain which does not happen normally. Hypnosis is not a state of unconsciousness or sleep but a trance-like state where your conscious and unconscious minds are equally awakened and aware.

There are four levels of the organic brain. The subject goes through three of the four levels of the brain activity in order to reach the level of hypnosis proper. **The Beta Level** – It is the cognitive state or full awake state in which you have conscious awareness. **The Alpha Level** – This state begins when one relaxes and the brain activity slows down. For meditation and hypnosis this state is required. Most of the hypnotic activity takes place in this level of brain wave. This is the most creative state when we can be closer to the spiritual realm. **The Theta State** – After the alpha level one enters into the theta state which is the state just before losing consciousness and slip into the deep sleep state. **The Delta State** – In this state one loses consciousness and falls into a deep sleep state. In hypnosis, three states of the brain are involved – the alpha, the theta, and the delta states. In sleep as well, we experience the four levels of the brain activity. When we go to bed we are in the beta level being very alert, then we enter the alpha state as we are relaxed, after this we experience the theta state as our body becomes so relaxed and is not moving. Then we slide into delta or deep sleep state. When we get up next morning the whole process is reversed. We proceed from the delta level through the theta level, the alpha level, to the beta level.

7. Goal Based Meditation

Hypnosis is a goal based meditation, a process that can get us to achieve our goals without the struggle and force of conscious thought and will power. If one ever daydreamed, dreamed or used his imagination
to create something in his mind that one once did before or never did, then that person was engaged in self-hypnosis, directing his mind to a certain behaviour or outcome by using his imagination. There are things that you wanted to do but could not do or did not want to do and yet did anyway. This is because your desires are conscious thoughts while your behaviours are created and motivated at the unconscious level. Therefore, the simple process of hypnosis is the natural, safe, and expedient way for behaviour modification. Hypnosis is a guided imagery or visualization, the techniques athletes and successful achievers use in many areas of life. In hypnosis, you can hear everything going on around you, you can hear all of the suggestions you hear from the hypnotist. In hypnosis, your unconscious mind is 88 percent more alert than in a conscious state. Therefore, your unconscious mind accepts suggestions and creates the behaviour changes or body changes in order to achieve the given suggestions.

8. Double Hemisphere Activity

The concept of hemispheric specialization, with the left hemisphere geared to analytic and the right hemisphere to non-analytic tasks suggests that responses in hypnotic state are influenced by right-hemisphere activity. Since the subject responds to verbal suggestions during hypnosis, the role of the left hemisphere of the brain also should be included. Therefore, it can be said that the subject under hypnosis shows great flexibility in using the left and right hemispheres in a task-appropriate manner, especially when they are actually hypnotized. Hypnosis is a process of putting an individual into a state of heightened suggestibility.

9. Hypnotherapy

Hypnotherapy is a combination of hypnosis and therapeutic intervention. The therapist leads the subject to positive change while the subject is in trance which is a deeply relaxed state of heightened suggestibility. Therefore, hypnosis is a trance state in which the subject is in a heightened, more receptive state of mind. In hypnosis the subject is not unconscious, he does not lose control of his faculties, and does not do things that he would be unwilling to do otherwise. The subject decides how deep the trance will be, what suggestions he will accept,
and when to awaken. Even though the subject is awakened by the hypnotist, he is capable of coming to awareness of his own accord. Precisely this is what happens when one self-hypnotizes.

Hypnosis can be thought of as a self-accepted journey away from the reality of the moment. Though apparently the subject seems to be asleep, he is fully awake at all times. He is simply in a heightened, more receptive state of mind to receive suggestions from the hypnotist. This we realize from the open-eye techniques, where the subject keeps his eyes open during the hypnotherapy while he is in deep trance. Hypnosis can be had both with closed eyes and with open eyes. When one is having his eyes open, he is in an alert hypnosis. Often one finds subjects on stage hypnosis with open eyes. Therefore, hypnosis is not going to sleep but on the contrary being in a state of alertness with reduced awareness of the surrounding but highly focused on limited area of interest and being highly susceptible to suggestion from the hypnotist.

10. Focused Awareness

Hypnosis is understood to be a state of focused awareness. Its characteristics may vary. Though there are common elements of hypnosis, it is manifested in individuals differently. The state of hypnosis cannot be pinpointed on Electroencephalogram (EEG). Hypnosis does not have any unique and unmistakable insignia indicating its presence.

Certainly one will not be asleep or unconscious. If one were asleep, then how would it be possible that one has a dialogue with the hypnotist? In fact, one is even more aware of what is going on around one than one would ordinarily be but one can be selective about it which one does and does not do in the waking state. In a way, under hypnosis one is in a very relaxed and pleasant state.

11. Memory Retrieval

Hypnosis can bring back information that has been repressed or forgotten. However, hypnosis cannot be said to facilitate accurate recall of disturbing memories. There are cases of people who under hypnosis are known to fabricate and lie. It is also a known fact that people can lie even after an injection of truth serum (a chemical administered to reduce inhibitions so that the subject reveals freely solicited information). Therefore, if there are some personal information which the subject does
not choose to divulge or if the information is not consciously known, the subject will not reveal it. Therefore, hypnosis is not a foolproof tool that guarantees the factual revelation of the experiences of hypnotic subjects.

12. Hypnotic Arc

We can imagine a hypnotic arc. It is from full wakefulness to hypnotic trance and back again to wakefulness. When you start your hypnosis, you are fully awake and aware. You allow your mind to begin to focus and your body to relax. You close your eyes and allow them to relax more than they have ever been relaxed before. Gradually you enter that state of total ease and relaxation and you will deepen that state through suggestion allowing the body to grow very still and quiet, allowing the mind to grow much focused down to that level we call somnambulism, which is a very deep state of hypnosis. Thus, when you are so relaxed you forget your body and you forget where you are and you are in a little world you create using imagery or whatever suggestions you are using. When it is time for you to come back, you just gradually allow the mind and the body to reintegrate, to become very alert and at a certain point in time you open your eyes on command and sometimes before, if you are ready. Now you are normally alert and conscious once again. A typical hypnotherapy takes thirty to sixty minutes.

13. Suspended Critical Factor

Hypnosis suspends the critical factor. For example, under hypnosis a subject accepts as true statements that he would normally reject. If the hypnotist says that you forgot your name, you forget it. Here the subject seems to accept the authority of the hypnotist over his own experience. With such experiences, the subjects later report that they had known that the hypnotist was wrong but at the same time they felt that it was easier to go along with the instructions of the hypnotist than with their own experience. Hypnotic state is fairly common and at times it cannot be distinguished from intense concentration when awareness of one’s surroundings is lost.

Hypnosis indicates the ability of a person to set aside critical judgment without relinquishing it completely, and to engage in make-
believe and fantasy. It may happen that for some, the make-believe is so vivid that they mistake it for reality. Hypnosis is mainly a matter of the abilities of the subject hypnotized and of the abilities of the hypnotist. A hypnotist who has at least moderate interpersonal skills, and who is able to establish a relationship of trust and an appearance of competence can easily lead a person to hypnosis.

14. The Experience of Hypnosis

One may wonder how it feels like being hypnotized. It may vary from person to person and the type of trance states. In any case, it is going to be wonderful.

The phenomena of hypnosis cannot be easily measured. To a certain extent, they can be measured by some of the psychological tests gauging hypnotic susceptibility, or the aptitude for imagery. There are also tests that center on physiological parameters expressed through the electroencephalogram (EEG), or the metabolism of cerebral pathways. However, the manifestations of the hypnotic phenomena tend to be subjective as much as objective, expressing themselves in the overall profile of the subject.

In spite of the controversy that exists regarding the mechanisms by which the hypnotic phenomenon occurs, there is a fairly good general agreement regarding the psychological and physiological phenomena elicited through hypnosis. There are certain feelings that emerge as common whereas some others are rare and idiosyncratic. Some emerge from hypnosis very much astonished for the type of experience they had while others report nothing extraordinary. In deeper trance of hypnotic experience, if the subjects are asked to talk about or to notice how they feel, they answer in monotone, slowly, and with pauses. If you ask them some questions, they seem to express more details even though they are slow in answering. This indicates that certain level of observing self-awareness had been kindled while under hypnosis. Hypnosis is noninvasive, non-pharmacologic and relatively inexpensive.

1) Physio-Motor Changes

Under hypnosis, the motions and the internal workings of the body often feel decelerated. There is an experience of inertia or a feeling of not desiring to move. If movements are made they are carried out less
frequently having a reduced range as though in slow motion. The subject frequently experiences a pervasive sensation of comfortable heaviness permeating the neuromusculature. This experience of sensation which goes along with physiological appeasement which is looked for and suggested during the induction convinces the subject that some real internal change is taking place.

2) Physiological Changes

During hypnosis the subject may experience various physiological and biological changes. His legs and arms may feel particularly heavier than normal, or lighter than normal and may feel like floating in the air. At times, there may be tingling sensation in legs and arms. It is not strange at times to feel that they are not there anymore. One may experience the heartbeat slowing down, the breathing becoming shallower, the stomach starting to bubble and gurgle and be quite noisy. One may have increased watering of the eyes and fluttering of the eyelids. Some feel as though they have become at-one with the chair or couch they are resting on; there can be reluctance to move and experience distortion of time (often an underestimation of the time spent during the session). When one comes out of hypnosis, one may experience a feeling of wellbeing or euphoria.

Though many accounts of physiological changes associated with hypnosis are reported, there is no physiological variable shown to be systematically or regularly associated with hypnosis. If physiological changes are observed during hypnosis, they are greatly influenced by the nature of the suggestions given. Cardiac variability during the initial phase of hypnotic induction is being observed and that may be due to the feeling of novelty about upcoming hypnotic experience. Reduced bleeding time has been observed in patients undergoing surgical procedures with hypnoanesthesia. Vasodilation and increased circulation to otherwise poorly perfused areas are also reported in response to hypnoanesthesia suggestions. Hypertensive subjects are able to normalize their blood pressure. Under hypnosis breathing is more likely to show less amplitude and to be more abdominally expressed. In deeper hypnotic experience a slowing of the breathing rate is being observed. Metabolic changes like alterations in blood glucose level, basal metabolic rate, calcium metabolism, and oxygen saturation are observed following
hypnotic suggestions. Even body temperature may be raised or lowered depending upon the suggestion given. Gastric secretions, cerebral blood flow, cerebral oxygen consumption, and electrodermal activity are said to be associated with hypnosis. Likewise endocrine studies show release of adrenocorticotropic hormone by pituitary gland and change in plasma cortisol titers. Cutaneous functions have become more sensitive to hypnotic influence. Changes in brain waves also are reported due to hypnosis. However, the hypnotic condition has not yielded substantive physiological correspondence.

One of the characteristics that accompany hypnosis though not always is physiological languor. Though relaxation is suggested, there are hypnotic-like states in which activation rather than relaxation response is experienced by the subject. Such activation rather than relaxation is seen in religious ceremonies. There are cases of individuals who experience physical action in the context of psychological relaxation like the one who wants to undertake intense physical activities post-hypnotically. One during trance may visualize himself actualizing a performance with peak mastery.

3) Time Change

For the subject, the sense of time under hypnosis shifts from external to internal events. Internal events are subjectively slowed. Time is felt less insistently; therefore, the subject experiences a long duration as a short period. It is not uncommon for the subject to feel that time is frozen or stands still.

4) Body Image Change

Under hypnosis, the subject may feel that his body is heavy as if pushing into the cushions of the chair; or the body may feel lighter as though floating. The body could also feel larger, expanded, and macroscopic as though filling the whole room. It may also rarely feel microscopic.

5) Thinking Processes Change

As the physiological processes slow down, the flow of thoughts show variability in its velocity and direction. In normal waking period during the day the rate at which one thought follows another varies. It may be
faster at certain period of the day than at other times. In depression the thought processes slow down. Certainly it will be accelerated in hypomania and in psychostimulant intoxication. Sometimes under hypnosis the flow of thoughts stops completely. At the same time, the subject is alert and aware and is not depressed. He knows that thoughts have ceased coming to the mind. Even though thoughts have desisted in manifesting themselves, the subject is amazed that awareness of his awareness is exquisitely preserved. There is a phenomenon called “Trance Logic” which is a mental mechanism according to which logically incongruous ideas can coexist without clashing.

6) Emotion Change

The word “emotion” indicates a conglomerate body of processes involving the autonomic nervous system and many psychological associations. In hypnosis, emotions may be quelled; certain feeling states may be enhanced as well. A solitary feeling may be presented to the subject for contemplation and amplification. For example, a depressed person may be asked to recall a happy event and contemplate on it or relive it in hypnosis. Thus, the happy feeling once recreated, can be then hypnotically intensified so that it may exert its post-hypnotic ego-strengthening influence. It is encouraging to know that hypnotically induced feelings tend to persist beyond the hypnotic session. Therefore, positive emotions can be revived in a subject by asking him to recall a moment he had such a feeling in his past, and relive it amplifying it through meditative focusing. Then the ability to experience that same positive feeling becomes progressively easier; and he gradually starts to integrate it into his everyday life.

7) Imagination Change

All of us experience the ability to create mental images though at times patients say that they are unable to form mental images. While we are asleep, messages flowing from the sense organs are drastically reduced and awareness is shifted to the ever-ongoing inner mental life. This paves the way for us to create mental images in dreams in a most pronounced way. But in wakeful state, the same thing happens while we daydream. The imagery of daydreams is complex under partial volitional control. Thus, we create mental images in dreams while asleep, or in
daydreams while awake. The mental images may be visual impressions, feelings, some aesthetic sensations, the interplay of dialogue, and intricate scenarios. In hypnosis, it is better to make use of the imageries the subjects enjoy and are comfortable with than to use imageries that the subjects dislike. For example, one may like to enjoy a walk on the seashore than a walk in the interior of a forest. In hypnosis the ability to create, intensify, and sustain images is enhanced. For some subjects, this faculty can be activated to such a degree that the sense of reality recedes and imagery takes precedence.

It is also possible that the process of wakefulness can coexist with the processes of imagery formation. In such situations when it goes to the extreme, we have hallucination in which one has the intensely vivid imagery. Thus, while being awake with wide open eyes, one can see an object as if it were there (positive hallucination) and conversely cannot see an object that is there (negative hallucination). In hypnosis, imagery is turned into a therapeutic tool. Images constructed by the subject can, through his real representations (senses) or the symbol he conveys, point in the direction of creative insight, enhanced self-perception, personal growth, and problem resolution. Thus, imagery can facilitate healing and growth in subjects.

**8) Senses Change**

There are many stimuli that impinge on our senses. This is a constant experience for us. As you are experiencing one sensation, for example humidity, any other thing happening to you at that moment like music from the neighbourhood may change your feeling and the feeling of humidity will be momentarily overridden. This ability to move into or away from sensory experience is utilized in hypnosis. For example, the subject may be made to feel a painful experience more distant, less insistent, less sharp, and more diffuse.

**9) Memory Change**

Our nervous system stores every experience. Though many memories are present, they do not gain entrance to consciousness, because they are connected to too much anxiety or psychic pain. Some memories are cast aside since they do not have much relevance. There are also memories that keep impinging too insistently on us and may be
Hypnosis uses the way our mind already works. In hypnosis, one simply utilizes this natural phenomenon with direction and purpose to get what one wants. Hypnosis is a mental state that happens naturally. It is a very relaxing experience. Here one has a focused and selective frame of mind. It is a condition of heightened access to imagination. Without interference from external stimuli, or internal resistance, hypnosis enhances access to mental resources. It is either a natural talent, or a learned skill. Hypnosis is an effective method to open one’s mind to suggestions. Hypnosis is a trance state which is very similar to daydreaming. There is a shift from external attention and focus to internal attention and focus. There appears a doorway to the unconscious allowing a free flow of information and greater access to internal resources, memory, and imagination. Hypnosis is a process which involves a shift from normal attention and awareness to directed focus on primarily internal processes, imagination, and selected elements. An access is had to the unconscious that is normally beneath awareness.

Hypnosis is the term applied to a unique, complex form of unusual but normal behaviour. It can probably be induced in all normal persons under suitable conditions as well as in many persons suffering from various types of difficulties or bad habits, addictions, mental disorders or abnormality. It is primarily a special psychological state with certain physical attributes. It resembles sleep superficially and is marked by a functioning of the individual at a level of awareness other than the ordinary conscious state which is called unconscious awareness. Functioning at this special level of awareness is characterized by a state of receptiveness and responsiveness in which inner experiential learning and understanding
can be accorded values comparable with or even the same as those ordinarily given only to external reality stimuli.

Hypnosis is undertaken on the important consideration that the subject be willing, cooperative, and interested in learning new experiences. The hypnotist can progressively, persuasively, and repetitiously suggest tiredness, relaxation, eye closure, loss of interest in externalities and an increasing adequacy at the level of unconscious awareness.

The phenomenon of hypnosis differs from subject to subject and from one trance to another. It depends upon the purpose to be served and the depth of the trance to be achieved. Therefore, hypnosis is a matter of degrees, ranging from light to profound trance states but with no fixed constancy. However, there are certain basic manifestations whose extent and clarity vary. Among them the most important thing is rapport. Normally the subject responds only to stimuli from the hypnotist, who may limit or direct the subject’s awareness or responsiveness as desired and needed. However, the subject may remain in or actively establish contact with part or all of the circumstances surrounding the trance depending upon his personality needs or the demands of the situation.

16. The Healing Process

Hypnosis is a natural state of mind that can be used to solve problems and for self-improvement. Stage hypnotism is for entertainment; and stories about gaining control over the mind of others are fiction. There is certainly a medical use of hypnosis. Here we are speaking of self-hypnosis and in fact all hypnosis is self-hypnosis.

Hypnosis is a dynamic and vital healing process which embraces all aspects of mental health care. It is client-centered as it focuses on the discovery of the origin of the subject’s issues. While the subject is regressing, the unconscious goes to the original cause, which gives the subject and the hypnotist the opportunity to process the original feelings surrounding the original experience or cause. The feelings that surround the original event can be healed, thus empowering the subject to live the life he wants to live. Hypnosis is more effective and works more quickly than the traditionally established talk-therapy. Under hypnosis you are more receptive to new ideas and you can effectively process the emotions
linked to the original experiences that created negative feelings whatever they were.

Hypnosis is a special form of communication to the unconscious where habits are established and memory is stored. The language of the unconscious is said to be visual. Therefore, the more detailed one’s image of one’s goal, the faster one’s unconscious will create the changes one desires. It is presumed that once your unconscious accepts new ideas, your conscious automatically accepts them. It allows you access your unconscious, which makes up 90 percent of your brain and stores all memory. Desirable and lasting changes in one’s life can be brought about under hypnosis by reprogramming and releasing thought patterns and habits. Hypnosis is completely relaxing and makes you aware during the experience. The hypnotist helps you to connect with your unconscious, which puts you in control of your unconscious – the most powerful and empowering aspect of your brain. In a certain sense, hypnosis restores your freedom of choice, which you have not enjoyed for a long time.

There are three important ingredients of hypnosis. You should believe that hypnosis will work; you should have a genuine desire for it to work (motivation); and you should expect that it will work. Thus belief, desire, and expectancy work in combination in hypnosis.

As we are victims of our own habits we have both positive and negative habits. We are more focused on our negative habits than on our positive habits. Habits are conditioned responses in our unconscious. The unconscious does not recognize the difference between the good habits and bad habits. In like manner, it does not know the difference between reality and imagination. When we do something for a long time, the unconscious thinks that the particular behaviour pattern is what you really want and so it stores and makes it part of your natural behaviour. Perhaps you want to change that behaviour consciously by will power but your unconscious will not easily yield. Your will power alone will not make permanent changes in your behaviour. The only way to change your behaviour pattern is to change the remembered pattern in your unconscious. This is done in hypnosis by bypassing the conscious and appealing to the unconscious which readily opens up and makes the necessary changes.
17. All Hypnosis Is Self-hypnosis

Ultimately all hypnosis is self-hypnosis. It is a powerful tool for changing your behavior. The hypnotist simply plays the part of directing you to use your power that already resides in you; a power that you may not know is there. Hypnosis is not a state of mind or something that you go into. The hypnotist just gets you to use your own powers. Hypnosis is understood to be a natural function or process that occurs between your mind and brain. The hypnotist through his suggestions directs you to tap into a process that is already there in you. Hypnosis works best when your physical body is in a sleeplike state of awareness. The subject under hypnosis displays all of the brain activity displayed by a person who is in the dream state or sleep. One can actually be both conscious and asleep at the same time. For example, take your dream. While you are dreaming you are perfectly conscious of what is going on in your dream and yet you are asleep. In the same way, while you are under hypnosis you are alert and asleep.

Always in Control

The subject is always in control and about 80-85 percent of the process is his responsibility while 15 percent of the process is the responsibility of the hypnotist. The hypnotist serves only as a guide in the process and has no power or control over the subject. The subject while under hypnosis has the power to open his eyes at any time and end the session.

The Subject Determines the Depth

The subject’s ability to focus, concentrate, and respond to the hypnotist will determine the depth of hypnosis that he will achieve. This is the reason why intelligent individuals tend to be the best hypnotic clients. Twenty percentage of the client population will enter a little to medium depth of hypnosis; Sixty percent will experience a medium to deep level of relaxation; twenty percent will experience profound depths of hypnosis. Behavioural changes like overcoming fear of flying, quitting smoking, and reducing weight can be achieved even in the lightest depths of hypnosis with the proper motivation. I would rather insist on enough motivation before starting hypnosis. One can, after repeated experience
of hypnosis either by someone or by oneself, improve the depth of hypnosis.

The Subject Decides to Enter Relaxation

Hypnosis is a condition of profound relaxation which one allows oneself to enter, during which time there is an altered state of conscious awareness. Children understand as real whatever story they hear. Only when they grow up they acquire the skill of being critical and question. Through the use of language, metaphor, rhythm, and tone, the hypnotist is able to effectively switch off the critical factor so that once again suggestions can be accepted by the subjects as they did as children. Hypnosis is a safe way of accessing one’s natural intelligence and issuing new instructions to enable one to create great miraculous changes in one’s behaviour and body. In dreamlike states one drifts off. In hypnosis, a systematic method is used to allow one to enter the natural dreamlike state and communicate directly with one’s unconscious and issue new suggestions or instructions. While in a trance, one is offered positive suggestions, options, and new ideas to his unconscious, giving it new information so that he can begin to change his mind about things. By repetition, suggestions can also be reinforced. Suggestions are made to one’s unconscious through metaphor (story) that bypasses the conscious logical thinking process.

Experiences or beliefs that are stored in the unconscious can be either positive or negative. Hypnosis facilitates you to identify and release any unrealistic negative beliefs, and use one’s positive knowledge and resources to resolve problems. Hypnosis bypasses the part of one’s mind that limits one’s abilities or undermines one’s confidence. If one believes that it will not help, then probably it will not, because he will resist going into trance or reject the suggestions to prove himself right. One cannot be hypnotized unless he agrees and fully cooperates.

The Subject Decides the Outcome

During the first session and initial consultation one describes in detail what one would like to achieve or change about oneself. The number of sessions one may need will depend on what one wants to make. Usually most people notice a major change after the first session. What one needs to do to be hypnotized is to allow oneself to relax. There is no
special ability required to be hypnotized except to allow oneself to relax. Most people experience a slight drifting sensation while they are gradually relaxing. One will feel very deeply relaxed. One will be aware of normal sounds such as a telephone ringing or the passing traffic but in the trance state one’s mind will dismiss them as of no importance. One may also want to continue relaxing, feeling wonderful, and at the end of the session one will feel deeply relaxed and refreshed.

Though one is deeply relaxed, one is actively involved in the process at every stage. One’s unconscious is continuously processing information. The hypnotist may ask the subject to move a finger or hand, open his eyes, or speak to the hypnotist at some point – this is part of the hypnotherapy and designed to reveal to the hypnotist how one is faring. Once the subject is relaxed, he can start making the change he wants. In hypnoanalysis, the subject will be communicating with the hypnotist much more, speaking to the hypnotist in the trance. At the end of the session one will awaken feeling refreshed and alert. Most people find the experience very enjoyable. As you enter many times the natural state of hypnosis (like daydreaming) and come out of it by yourself, it is the same when someone guides you. You will surely come out eventually even without the presence of the hypnotist.

18. The Exit

As you went into hypnosis you will come out of it, that is, it is you who decided to go into hypnosis and also it is you who will decide to come out of it. There are some people who so much enjoy the trance state that they are unwilling to come out of it. Usually a hypnotist has the means to get you out of it. Even if the hypnotist is missing after you enter into a trance, you will come out of it since you may not hear the voice of the hypnotist. You may, after a while, drift off into a natural sleep and reawaken automatically. Therefore, there need not be any fear of being lost in hypnosis without ever coming out of it by chance.
4. THE MYTHS ABOUT HYPNOSIS

There are a number of false beliefs about hypnosis. These false beliefs have created fears and prejudices in the minds of people. These prejudices come in the way of accepting the validity and usefulness of hypnosis in one’s life. Let us now see what those false beliefs are.

1. Hypnotists Have Mysterious Powers

Franz Anton Mesmer and his disciples believed that they were manipulating a force akin to magnetism when they put people into trances for healing. But since the early 19th century it has become increasingly clear that any “power” resides in the person who is hypnotized rather than in the hypnotist. Of course, the hypnotist uses techniques to influence the subject into particular mental states; but it is the subject who produces the state. The fact that people can be hypnotized, some easily, has been shown to be a stable trait across repeated trials, having little to do with who hypnotizes the subject and how he does it. Since the subject is the one who hypnotizes himself, we have got self-hynosis; and self-hypnosis may be done to oneself by using audio recordings.

2. One Will Get “Stuck”

So far there had never been an incident of a subject who got stuck in hypnosis. No one gets stuck awake or asleep. The states of being awake or asleep are states for a period of time. They are natural states and they give way to other states which also are temporary. Hypnosis is another state for a while. For practical purposes, the hypnotist explicitly ends the trance of the subject. In case the subject is left without being brought to awareness, he will spontaneously either return to full alertness or fall asleep; and if fallen asleep, he will come out of it naturally having been refreshed. One stays in a trance state until one has solved his problem. One might stay, for example, for six hours. Apart from that, one usually wakes up when he wants. On rare occasions a subject may not come out of the trance straight away. This is usually because they are enjoying the relaxing state so much so that they do not want to come out of it.
3. One Will Violate One’s Ethical Code

The subject will not knowingly violate his ethical code. Milton Erickson used to make it clear that the subject was responsible for the consequences of his actions. This he did just because there are instances when the subject can manipulate the hypnotic situation. For example, a subject may do something seemingly unethical if it is all right according to his moral standards. Such a person may take advantage of hypnosis, taking it as a sufficient excuse to do what he wants (unethical thing). In stage hypnosis, the subject may do something contrary to his code of conduct because he believes that what is done on the stage is forgivable and also he experiences a group pressure that makes him do such funny things.

Some believe that the hypnotist has control over your mind and hence he can make you act against your own conscience. It just cannot be done. You are, indeed, suggestible during hypnosis but the hypnotist can never force you to act against your sense of morality and belief.

Sometimes people tend to believe after having seen stage hypnosis or being ill-informed that the hypnotist controls the subject and the subject has no independent will. To all appearance it looks like that but when it comes to unethical suggestions from the part of the hypnotist, the subject rejects it. It only shows that the suject can decide for himself and make up his mind as to what to obey and what not to obey. Connected to this, some also believe that the hypnotist can take advantage of the subject for nefarious activities. This is simply not possible since no one can be hypnotized against his will. Secondly when anything against one’s morality and beliefs are suggested by the hypnotist, the subject forthwith rejects it.

Some think that the hypnotist can make use of the subject for sexual purposes. Here too the subject will not consent against her will. If the subject was already eager to have sex with the hypnotist, then her yielding to the hypnotist is not because of hypnosis, but on the contrary, on account of her willingness to have sexual intimacy with the hypnotist prior to hypnosis. In any intimate interaction like treatment, psychotherapy, and counselling there is a phenomenon called “transference.” A subject projects his earlier emotional experience both positive and negative onto
the hypnotist. There is always a subtle erotic element in transference. In a number of cases, the erotic aspect is very explicit. Thus it becomes an erotic transference. If on account of the erotic transference a subject seeks sexual intimacy with the hypnotist, it is not on account of the hypnosis per se, but because of the relationship that gets established between the physician and the patient, counsellor and counselle, hypnotist and the subject. So, nobody needs to blame hypnosis for that.

4. One Gives Up Control

It is not a question of giving up control of yourself to someone else but rather it is the question of how to take it back in your life. Hypnosis assists you to be more in control and live a healthier life. Hypnosis teaches one how to tap into the power of one’s mind and thus improve the quality of one’s life naturally. By hypnosis, one can learn the process of transformation of one’s life in a short period of time with long-lasting results.

5. Weak-Willed People Are Easier to Hypnotize

The impression that only weak-willed persons can be hypnotized came about in those days when hypnotists were authoritarian — ordering and commanding people. Some people who are averse to authoritarian treatment will resent and will not cooperate with the hypnotist. Being hypnotized has nothing to do with one’s will power but on one’s intelligence, power to imagine, willingness to be hypnotized, and a good ability to concentrate. Being open minded which is different from being weak-willed, is definitely important. Actually intelligent persons can focus easily — which is required for hypnosis. Therefore, intelligent persons are the best subjects for hypnosis. Only persons who are unwilling are difficult to be hypnotized.

6. Hypnosis Is Not Real

One might say that hypnosis is not real. We have ongoing subterranean conversations going on in the mind. The conscious and the unconscious are in constant dialogue with each other. This is at the base of the phenomenon of self-hypnosis. If this dialogue is negative, then the motivational energy one generates will have a negative tinge to it. If this energy is not attended to, or changed, it finds expression as another negative experience in your life. One negative thought quickly
attracts and leads into another. Thus, you hypnotize yourself in this way. You might have experienced being worried about addressing a public gathering. The more you thought about it, the more nervous you got. As you approached the actual moment of addressing, you became a nervous wreck. This is negative self-hypnosis.

Since hypnosis is a functioning trait of the mind itself, wherever there is a functioning mind, hypnosis is there inseparably. One can replace negative self-hypnosis with positive conditioning. Reprogramming our mind can reverse the effects of years of negative conditioning and can help us reconnect with ourselves on a much more natural level. Taking into account the inner dialogue within us, we say that hypnosis is real and we engage in it mostly every moment of everyday. Whenever a negative pattern of behavior has been established through consistent and unconscious self-hypnosis, there we realized hypnosis. Brain scan studies indicate that for some people at least, genuine changes are occurring in the brain as a consequence of hypnosis. Researches show that hypnotherapy is effective for a number of conditions and for behaviour change.

7. Hypnosis Can Give You Abilities You Do Not Normally Possess

Hypnosis will enable you to do things you would not otherwise be able to do. It does not mean that hypnosis can give you abilities you do not normally have. Research indicates that what one is able to do under hypnosis, one can also do it in one’s waking state, but perhaps, not as effectively or as easily as under hypnosis. This is because hypnosis involves selective attention. Parts of one’s mind which are normally used for paying attention in general, can be used for paying very close attention to one thing in particular. This perhaps gives the impression of having unusual powers.

8. Hypnosis Is Sleep

Hypnosis is not sleep. It is a sleeplike state. In sleep proper we do not have knowledge of the surroundings. But in hypnosis one has knowledge of what goes on around oneself. One can hear the voice of the hypnotist and follow the directions and accept his suggestions. These things do not take place in sleep. There are also alert states of hypnosis in the sense that one is fully awake with open eyes to the surroundings while being in a deep state of hypnosis. If hypnosis were sleep, then the subject cannot keep his eyes open and yet be deeply hypnotized.

For making a subject relax, the hypnotist may use the word “sleep.” But that does not mean literally that the subject sleeps. It appears that the subject is asleep but in fact he is aware of everything happening
to him. In sleep, one is not aware of what is happening to him. Therefore, it is not sleep. It only resembles a sleeplike state.

9. One Will Not Remember Anything After Hypnosis

Lots of people remember what happened under hypnosis. Some forget spontaneously. Some forget if instructed to do so, and even in this case, the memory can be recovered later. The memory is not actually lost. The memory is stored where the conscious does not have current access to it. The usual experience for all subjects is that they do remember what went on under hypnosis.

10. One Is Always Aware in Hypnosis

Practically all naturally occurring hypnosis takes place without the awareness of the person. The person realizes only after the hypnosis is over, as for example, one is daydreaming, or absorbed in a movie or not aware of having driven a long distance. Whenever you are influencing others or being influenced by others; even if you are not speaking to someone, your presence influences the other to a certain degree and that is a hypnosis; it may be difficult to demarcate where communication ends and hypnosis starts. But in formally induced hypnosis, the subject is capable of being aware of, far more than they would otherwise be aware of. One can hypnotize another without his knowing it, as for example, when you buy things you might have been influenced by the seller. It is a kind of passive affair.

11. Hypnosis Can Seriously Harm You

Nobody has been seriously hurt by hypnosis. The risk that you can think of in hypnosis is lower than in any type of psychotherapy that may be misused. Nobody considers the danger of physiotherapy or traditional medicine. Any good thing can be misused and in that sense hypnosis may be misused. But hypnosis is meant for cure and health. A subject believes or a hypnotist makes him believe that the feeling of involuntary responding really stems from the power of the hypnotist rather than from the subject’s ability to become imaginatively involved. In that sense, one can speak of the danger of hypnosis.

12. In Hypnosis One Will Not Be Aware of Dangers

A person under hypnosis is as aware of potential danger as any wakeful person is. If, for example, a fire breaks out during the session,
the subject will easily come out of the trance and will deal with the situation immediately and in an appropriate way. Remember the time you drove through the same routine road. Often you would have slipped into a daydreaming trance state. If there is any danger on the way, you would automatically deal with the situation as though you had never been dreaming and were in an altered state. Thus, in every hypnotic situation the subject will come out of it as though he is fully aware of what is happening to him and around him in case of danger.

13. Memory Retrieval Is Always Accurate

There is a phenomenon called “false memories of childhood sexual abuse.” Here an erroneous memory has been implanted based on a faculty theory of the cause of human psychic dysfunction. The imaginative involvement of hypnosis may facilitate the process by which people come to believe that a scripted memory of sexual abuse during their childhood is true memory. This seems to be as the result of the vulnerable subjects trusting a therapist to the extent of believing what they are told during the course of treatment. Here the false memory of childhood sexual abuse is the result of the wrong method of therapy rather than the utilization of hypnosis as a part of that therapy. It is coercive instructions given by hypnotists who are unscrupulous and who believe in buried memories of childhood sexual abuse. Therefore, one need not blame hypnosis but the real culprit is the coercive instructions given by the particular hypnotist.

If one has not learned some skills, or studied something, you will not obtain them by hypnosis; that is you do not learn things magically. It is unlikely that hypnosis can help one to recall repressed or forgotten memories, because of the danger of false memories planted inadvertently by the hypnotist. That is why hypnosis is not accepted as evidence for truth in court cases. It is because the brain often cannot distinguish between real and imagined events so much so you will not be certain that a given memory is a real one. One may use hypnosis by clearing the mind so that one can remember where one misplaced an article but it will not help one to re-enact the time when one misplaced the article. It is unlikely that one may use hypnosis to recall his past life, or moment of his own birth.

14. A Hypnotist Might Pull Some Embarrassing Tricks on You

This myth is due to confusing clinical hypnosis with stage hypnosis. A stage hypnotist will make the subjects do silly and
embarrassing things because that is what is expected of them. The subjects agree to this by stepping on stage and joining the show. In a clinical setting, the hypnotist does not do this. Stage hypnosis and clinical hypnosis are two very different disciplines, though both processes work because the subjects are willing to cooperate with the hypnotist.

15. You Are Not Hypnotised if You Can Hear the Hypnotist

Each subject experiences hypnosis in his own unique way. It is more a choice the subject makes to hear the voice of the hypnotist or not. Therefore, hearing the hypnotist or not does not indicate success or failure of hypnosis. One can allow one’s mind to drift away, or one can choose to listen carefully to what the hypnotist says. There are some subjects who simply cannot resist allowing their minds to drift away, as they gain so much relaxation and pleasure from it.

16. Under Hypnosis You Reveal Your Deepest Secrets

Under hypnosis, our mind is fully aware and awake. Therefore, it is not possible that one reveals his deepest secrets under hypnosis. In fact, the subject can easily lie and be creative with the truth under hypnosis. That is why the testimony of a person under hypnosis is not accepted in the court. So it is a fact that one does not reveal one’s secrets unless one wants to, even in the hypnotic state.

17. Hypnosis Is Occult

Hypnosis is a natural and inherent human ability, which everyone has and which does not involve any mysterious powers or occult forces. It does not take away one’s free will. The subject is not under the control of the hypnotist. There is a certain argument adduced by association – shamans, witch-doctors, and other such healers who use trances. These are considered by some as pagan in the sense any trance state is considered that way. We need to keep in mind that various brands of faith-healing and revivalism also use trances and induce them very much the same way as shamans and witch-doctors. Therefore, the argument of association can be used against any form of healing. So hynosis is a natural technique with no inherent religious content.
5. ANIMAL MAGNETISM

“Animal magnetism” is a term proposed by Franz Mesmer in the 18th century. The term “magnetism” was adopted by analogy, referring to some interpersonal and general effects of reciprocal influence and/or entanglement he observed. Mesmer attributed such effects to a supposed “life energy” or “fluid” or “ethereal medium” believed to reside in the bodies of animate beings (i.e., those that breathe).

1. Mesmer and Animal Magnetism

Mesmer chose the word “animal” to distinguish his supposed “vital magnetic force” from those referred to at that time as “mineral magnetism,” “cosmic magnetism,” and “planetary magnetism.” The theory became the basis of treatment based on non-verbal elements such as gaze, passes (movements of the hands near the body accompanied by the intention of the operator), and mental elements as will and intention, and that sometimes depended also on “laying on of hands.” Some of the practices of animal magnetism branched out into hypnotism, spiritualism, New Thought, the so called “magnetic healing,” and parapsychological research. In modern usage, the phrase “animal magnetism” may refer to a person’s sexual attractiveness or to raw charisma.

2. Meanings of Animal Magnetism

There are several meanings for the terms “animal magnetism” and “mesmerism.” The term animal magnetism has at least four different levels of meaning: 1) a general universal principle, 2) a specific method of vitalistic cure, 3) a specific state of being and of consciousness (the somnambulism), and 4) a cultural aspect.

1) A General Vital Universal Principle

Animal magnetism according to Mesmer is a principle that touches both man and the universe at all levels: psychological, human, and cosmological. It refers mainly to a theory to describe the entanglement between man and the universe. It presupposes that it is something through which everything in the universe is interconnected. It is something before matter. Lacking other terms, he called it a “universal fluid.” This subtle fluid or energy, source of life and health, fills the cosmos and moves in it. This fluid is also the basis of the cosmos as it is the basis of which
matter is constituted. This fluid is also a sort of energy or life force. When this fluid circulates, living beings are healthy. When it is blocked, one experiences sickness.

2) A System of Cure

In a more restricted sense, animal magnetism is the capability present in all men (but mostly developed in those working as magnetists), to use the vital fluid or life force for therapeutic purposes. According to Mesmer, the magnetizer is able to direct his vital fluid toward the sick person, and heal him. This theory was accepted by those who did not accept the first theory of animal magnetism being a vital universal principle.

There is also a variation of this theory with a subjective meaning: Animal magnetism as a subjective sensitivity. Mesmer said that as the fluid (or life force) can only be perceived by the senses in a subjective way, animal magnetism is also this sensibility, and that he calls “a sixth sense.” The senses are neither defined nor described. They are rather felt. Magnetism must be mainly transmitted through inward feeling. It is only feeling that can make the theory of it understandable.

3) Magnetic Somnambulism

“Mesmeric state” or “mesmeric sleep” is used to define the state of somnambulistic consciousness developed through the help of the magnetizer. The term “animal magnetism” and even more so “mesmerism” found in English literature are more frequently used to indicate techniques utilized neither by Mesmer nor his theory, but for indicating this kind of somnambulism and this specific somnambulistic state.

4) A Cultural Aspect

The expression “animal magnetism” is used for defining all cultural phenomena that originated from Mesmer and the reflections about somnambulism.
6. HYPNOTIZABILITY

This chapter deals with the question of how far we are capable of being hypnotized. The experience of hypnosis is not the same for everybody and also the level of the depth of hypnosis.

1. Hypnotizability Is Differential

“Hypnotizability,” “hypnotic susceptibility,” “hypnotic ability,” and “hypnotic responsivity” are terms that are used interchangeably in the scientific literature on hypnosis. They simply refer descriptively to what level a person is able to experience hypnosis. Hypnotic susceptibility is known to be a differential phenomenon and there are individual differences in this ability. Whatever attempts one may make to modify hypnotic ability by training low responsive individuals to become highly responsive, the individual differences are stable and enduring.

2. Can All Be Hypnotized?

The very idea of hypnotizability suggests that not everyone can be hypnotized. If one does not want to be hypnotized, he cannot be hypnotized. In this sense we can say that all cannot be hypnotized.

At the same time it is obvious that anyone with a normal ability to concentrate can be hypnotized if he wants to be. Even we can hypnotize children. A simple exercise for you to test if you are hypnotizable: While sitting or standing, extend your arms in front of you, parallel to the floor. You can turn your right palm up and your left palm down. Now you can close your eyes and imagine a bucket of sand in your right hand while the handle is in your palm and the bucket of sand hangs down. You can also imagine a string attached to your left wrist, and at the other end is a big blue helium-filled balloon. As you concentrate, your right hand gets heavier and heavier and your left hand becomes lighter. You are not supposed to move your hands. Take a few minutes, and open your eyes and see where your hands are. If your right hand dropped and the left hand lifted, your imagination has worked well. If the hands have not moved, then you are putting up some resistance; you may need to spend some
more time with relaxation. A subject communicates his hypnotizability to the hypnotist more by his body language than by anything else.

Do you not know that you are entering into hypnosis a minimum seven to ten times a day on the average. For most people it is even more. Altered state, or hypnosis, is part of every person's life. Even persons can be hypnotized without their knowing. Every influence you have on another is a form of hypnosis. In the same way, others can influence you towards something. These are instances of being hypnotized without ever realizing that one is hypnotized.

In fact anyone can be hypnotized since hypnosis is a natural state and an inherent human ability provided that one understands simple instructions and concentrates adequately. Secondly, if one trusts (believes) the hypnotist and the hypnotist uses the right techniques, one can be hypnotized. All things being equal, not all hypnotists can hypnotize all subjects. Some will be hypnotized much more easily than others. Hypnotizability is a trait and as such there are some who are “highly hypnotizable” and others are “low hypnotizable.” Most therapeutic uses of hypnosis do not depend on hypnotic depth. The only exception is pain control, for which one requires a somewhat deeper trance for a successful result. Therefore, for surgery, hypnosis cannot be used for everyone and only for those who are highly hypnotizable. This inability need not be equated with the statement that all cannot be hypnotized. Therefore, the answer to the question whether all can be hypnotized is yes and no.

3. The Different Depths of Hypnosis

James Braid made a rough distinction between different stages of hypnosis. He first termed them as the first and the second conscious stage of hypnosis. Later he replaced these with a distinction between “sub-hypnotic,” “full-hypnotic,” and “hypnotic coma” stages. Jean-Martin Charcot made a distinction between stages of somnambulism (Somnambulism is used in clinical psychology to describe sleepwalking, but in hypnosis, it is referred to as the deepest level of hypnosis), lethargy,
and catalepsy. There arose different schools with different depth scales. The older depth scales attempted to infer the level of hypnotic trance based on supposed observable signs like spontaneous amnesia. The subsequent scales measure the degree of observed or self-evaluated responsiveness to specific suggestion tests, like direct suggestions of arm rigidity (catalepsy). They also assess one’s susceptibility as “high,” “medium,” and “low.” It is understood that hypnotizability scores are highly stable over a person’s lifetime. The research by Deirdre Barrett suggests that there are two distinct types of highly susceptible subjects who are fantasiers and dissociaters. The fantasiers score high on absorption scales and find it easy to block out real-world stimuli without hypnosis, spend much time daydreaming. The dissociaters often have a history of trauma and their association to daydreaming was often going blank. But both score equally high on formal scales of hypnotic susceptibility. Among the clinical group, persons with dissociative identity disorder have the highest hypnotizability followed by those with post-traumatic stress disorder.

4. Hyper-Suggestibility

In his later writings James Braid said that hypnosis is largely a state of heightened suggestibility induced by expectation and focused attention. Hippolyte Bernheim, a leading proponent of the “suggestion theory” of hypnosis, went so far as to say that there is no hypnotic state, only a heightened suggestibility. There is also a general consensus that heightened suggestibility is an essential characteristic of hypnosis. Therefore, if an individual after submitting to the hypnotic procedure shows no genuine increase in susceptibility to any suggestions whatever, there appears to be no point in calling him hypnotized even if he fully and readily responds to suggestions of eye lid closure and other superficial sleeping behaviour.

It is estimated that approximately 10-15 percentage of the population is highly responsive to hypnosis. They are able to experience
the classical phenomena like analgesia (pain reduction), age regression, positive and negative hallucinations, and post-hypnotic amnesia. Approximately 10-15 percentage of the population is unresponsive, or minimally responsive to hypnosis. They are unable to experience even mild subjective alterations, such as the suggestion (experienced by approximately 90 percentage of the population) like that their arm is light and weightless and is floating towards their forehead of its own accord. The remaining majority of 70-80 percentage of the population is said to be moderately responsive to hypnosis. They are known to experience easy, and in some cases, moderately difficult hypnotic items, but at a certain point they are unable to respond further. Now the question boils down to who can be hypnotized.

5. Who Can Be Hypnotized?

1) From Natural Point of View

We do our daily chores automatically without reflecting or having recourse to a strategy. Getting into hypnotic state is as natural as breathing, sleeping, dreaming, and reading. We get into a light hypnotic state whenever we are in the zone, or spaced out, daydreaming, or having our head in the clouds, being out of the conscious state, or analytical thinking. Many times every day we drift in and out of this light trance state. Therefore, the question “can anyone be hypnotized” is answered by saying “yes.” From the point of view of brain wave activity, we realize that there are four levels: Beta, Alpha, Theta, and Delta. When you leave the Beta level which is the total awareness conscious and analytical state of mind, you drift into the Alpha state which is a light level hypnotic state and a lot of change can be directed in this state. When you drift into the next state of mind (that is Theta) you are in dreaming, asleep and yet conscious because you are able to recollect your dreams since you are aware. Otherwise you will never remember your dreams. Then is the Beta state in which you are totally unconscious. In our daily day to day living we may go through all the four levels. The Alpha and the Theta states are hypnotic states. So everyone can be hypnotized.
Once I viewed a stage hypnotic session in which the hypnotist called out asking if there was anyone who believed that he could not be hypnotized. A volunteer went to the stage. After a while conversing with the subject, the subject suddenly went into a hypnotic state. I guessed that even though the subject claimed that he could not be hypnotized, he became hypnotized; in a stage hypnosis there was the group pressure, the expectation of the group desiring to see by all means that he could be hypnotized. But the fact will remain true that if you do not want to be hypnotized, then you will not.

There is a great individual difference in responding to hypnosis. It has little to do with the techniques of the hypnotist. It has much to do with the individual’s capacity, or talent, for experiencing hypnosis. Most people are believed to be at least moderately hypnotizable. There are relatively a few people who cannot be absolutely hypnotized. In the same way, there are a few people who exhibit the highest level of responsiveness (hypnotic virtuosos) to hypnosis.

2) From Clinical Point of View

There is controversy about hypnotizability. The question is whether hypnotizability can be modified or manipulated. Some believe that if the hypnotist takes the right approach virtually everyone can be hypnotized. Some others believe that positive attitudes, motivations, and expectancies concerning hypnosis can help hypnotizability. When hypnotizability is measured scientifically we get a roughly normal (i.e., bell-shaped) distribution of scores.

There is a belief that persons with a strong will power cannot be hypnotized. On the contrary they are the best subjects since people with a strong will power when they decide to cooperate with the hypnotist, do it well. The success of hypnotism depends upon the cooperation of the subject with the hypnotist and persons with strong will power are good subjects to cooperate. Since hypnotism depends upon the cooperation of the subject with the hypnotist, no one can really be hypnotized against his will. Here we are speaking of formally inducing
hypnosis whereas naturally occurring states of hypnosis is an everyday occurrence in each one’s life and the type of influence which we exert mutually on one another cannot be ruled out.

Therefore, to the question whether all can be hypnotized I would answer in four ways: that is 1) from the natural point of view all undergo hypnotic states at some time or other in each day; 2) from the point of view of mutual influence all can be hypnotized, since we keep influencing one another in our interactions; 3) for the formal induction of hypnosis the cooperation of the subject is absolutely necessary. In this sense one who does not want to be hypnotized cannot be hypnotized; and 4) of course there are some who lack the capacity to be hypnotized like persons who are very young, very elderly, and people of a very low intelligence with an IQ below 70, particularly those who have an inability to concentrate, people having neurological deficiencies, intoxicated people, those with organic brain damage (lack of ability to concentrate and focus), those who have fear or resistance to hypnosis or the hypnotist, all refractory subjects who know that they are being hypnotized and decide to resist, and those who are both suspicious and controlling of others. It is prudent not to use hypnosis for persons with epilepsy, having bipolar (manic-depressive), or schizophrenia.

Hypnosis is a skill. As a skill, some are more talented to achieve it than others. Hypnosis is about allowing oneself to relax and to focus. Persons of average intelligence and better can be hypnotized. If one feels comfortable with hypnosis and trusts the hypnotists he can be hypnotized.\textsuperscript{5}
7. LANGUAGE AND PARALINGUISTICS

The language we use (words), imageries, and paralinguistic behaviours are powerful ways of communication. They can dramatically affect the other depending upon many factors. This chapter considers the power of language and paralinguistics in effecting hypnosis.

1. Three Hypnotic Power Words

1) Imagine/Picture

Firstly, if you ask a stranger to buy something, he may resist and will not buy. Instead if you ask the stranger to imagine the outcome of the sale or the usefulness of the article, then the stranger does not resist. Imagining is like fantasizing which is fun and a mind-game. It is not a task. It is enjoyable as a distraction from life. By asking someone to imagine, you bypass the critical mind of that person. Imagining stimulates the unconscious. The brain literally cannot tell the difference between reality and fantasy or what is imagined. There is no difference in visualizing a beautiful beach and seeing a beautiful beach. In sale and purchase, if you as a salesperson get the other imagine owning a particular article, he becomes as if he already has it, as if you have already given the article to him. Naturally the other will attempt to have it which means he will purchase it. If you give a sense of ownership even in imagination it is better than just offering benefits. Instead of the word “imagine” you could also use the word “picture.”

2) You

The word “you” bypasses the critical factor and thus stimulates the unconscious. There are three most powerful words in sales: “you,” “free” and “guaranteed.” Among them the word “you” is a hypnotic word just because it represents your name; and your name is hypnotic. You may more readily buy from a person who has the same name as yours or same sounding letter in the first or in the last name. Instead of the name of the person you use the word “you.” The name is so powerful that we need to be careful about it. If you use the name of a person too often in the conversation then you annoy him. You may use it in the beginning and at the end of the conversation and this is welcome. But you can
frequently use the word “you” since it does not annoy but makes the other feel delighted and alert. That is why the word “you” is hypnotic.

3) Because

Humans crave for order. We want to know why something is the way it is and what caused something to occur. These things we long for in our lives. The cause and effect relationship is encapsulated in the word “because.” When our critical mind hears this word it understands that it has to let the author go straight to the unconscious bypassing the conscious. Bypassing the conscious and going to the unconscious to achieve our goal is the reason for using hypnosis. Therefore, the word “because” is a hypnotic word since it does the work of hypnosis. Using the word “because” satisfies the brain’s natural search for reason. Even if a flimsy reason is given, the mind is not busy analyzing the genuineness of the reason. It is enough that it got a reason for a particular request or demand. For example, “Because your eyelids are heavy, you are getting into a deep trance.”

By using the causal word “because” which need not be true, the hypnotist makes the suggestion acceptable. For example, “because closing the eyes makes you get into relaxation, you are about to go deeper into relaxation.” The truth is that closing one’s eyes one does not automatically get into relaxation. But here it is well accepted without critiquing because it gives a causal connection.

2. Hypnotic Language Pattern

Hypnotic language is meant to produce a hypnotic trance. Trance is a highly focused state of attention. Therefore, hypnotic language is a language that focuses the attention and turns it inwards. Deliberate confusion and ambiguity, metaphors, puns, analogies, and stories are all ways of delivering the message straight to the unconscious bypassing the conscious which tends to be more critical and analytical.

1) Indirect Statements and Suggestions

A turn in the history of the language pattern occurred when Milton H. Erickson pioneered the “indirect” approach to hypnosis. Before this, hypnotists were using direct methods telling the subjects what they are
to do. For example, telling a subject “you are feeling relaxed” is a direct method and it may work for some people but others will tend to resist such a suggestion. An indirect way of telling the same thing is “and perhaps as you sit there, listening to me here, you might begin to notice a pleasant feeling of relaxation.” Here the subject is not told that he is experiencing something or commanded to do something. Because of the indirect way of telling, one might notice or not notice something. By this you are structuring the language in such a way that the subject’s attention is focused and turned inwards, where it will search for meaning. This of course produces trance.

2) Non-Specific Suggestion

If the suggestion is too specific, it may not match the internal, imaginative reality of the subject. A hypnotist might say, “you are walking deep into a thick forest and you feel very relaxed.” If by chance the subject had a frightful experience of walking in a forest he may not feel relaxed but rather frightened. Therefore, the hypnotist could say something like this, “Now there might have been a time and a place in your life, where you have felt wonderfully relaxed, and excellently at ease. And I wonder if you are able to get a sense of that right now.” Here the reference to “a time and a place” is very generic and the subject can fill it with what suits him by experience. By remembering that time and that place, the subject can relive the feelings he had at that time producing that sense of relaxation in the present moment.

3) “Yes” Set

The hypnotist might use a language to produce permissive, attention-focused effect together with specific language patterns. Here comes the “yes set,” which includes a series of statements which one cannot help but agree with since they are self-evidently true. For example, “as you sit in front of me, listening to what I say, you are making sense of what I say and might begin to relax.” Here what is said to the subject is true and therefore he has to agree by saying “yes.”

4) Tag Question

The hypnotist makes suggestions which are leading questions that might indirectly pressurize the subject to answer “yes” and agree
with what the hypnotist says. For example, “you already know how to deepen your relaxation, don’t you?” has a tag at the end. By this leading type of questions the subject is obliged to agree with you without realizing the pressure exerted on him. It is an indirect method which makes the statement less direct and easier to accept.

5) Illusory Choice

A certain outcome is expected and in that there is no choice but apparently there is a choice given. For example, “slowly and gently you will open your eyes and come back here immediately or in a minute.” Here the subject becoming alert is taken for granted but he is only given a choice between now and a minute later which is not a great difference and it is as good as now. Secondly the other possibilities like for example waking up after five minutes or so are left out.

6) Double Binds

A double bind is an emotionally distressing dilemma in our communication. In it an individual or a group receives two or more conflicting messages. In these messages, one negates the other. This creates a situation in which response to one message results in a failed response to the other and vice versa. When a double bind occurs the person cannot confront the inherent dilemma, and therefore can neither resolve it nor opt out of the situation. The double bind often utilizes a form of control without open coercion – the use of confusion makes them both difficult to respond to as well as to resist. If one says to a child “be spontaneous” it is a double bind. Whether the child acts spontaneously or not in both cases he is not spontaneous. If he acts spontaneously he is obeying the command of his mother and therefore not spontaneous. If he does not act spontaneous, he is not spontaneous. Thus is a double bind.

7) Nominalisation

Nominalisations are abstract nouns that have no one agreed-upon intrinsic meaning in the mind of everybody. As for example, relaxation, calmness, tranquility, security, and peacefulness may be understood differently by different people. When such nominalisations are used, the subject turns his attention inwards to attach individual meaning to them and this produces a trance.
3. Words Shape Reality

Words are one of the factors that shape our thoughts, in turn forming an integral ingredient in the construction of our relative reality. As words make up one’s world, they also make up the world of the people with whom we interact. In the same way, the words one listens paint intricate pictures in one’s mind that influence one’s thoughts, feelings, and actions. Every word one uses and how he uses it, create a picture in the mind. It may create a powerful emotional state in the other. One’s words shape not only his reality but also the reality of all those one influences daily. Therefore, the use of the correct words in conversation and especially in hypnosis is necessary.

4. Transforming Language

There are six powerful tips for transforming one’s language to have the most impact in conversation. 1) It is good to tell brief colourful stories to form a picture of the setting or scene one wants to create when one speaks. 2) The words one uses need to reflect the mood and emotion that one wants to elicit. Therefore, using words that create double meaning may be interpreted too broadly or incorrectly. 3) Since most people have a short attention span, using fewer words is appreciated. 4) It is good to avoid embedded negative commands. Instead of telling “Don’t forget to buy some flowers” you could say “Remember to buy some flowers.” The first way of telling is a negative command and our brain might pick up the negative command. 5) It is good to give a genuine smile with the emotion one wants to convey and subsequently the environment one wants to create. What is seen (observing the body language) by the other is more powerful than what one hears. 6) Match the tone and cadence of your speaking with the emotion you want to communicate and subsequently the environment you want to create.

5. Hypnotic Tone

The play and the modulation of the voice of the hypnotist are very important. Each hypnotist has his own special voice and modulation. On the average, most hypnotists use slow voice, which is clear and normal in tone. You might have experienced in yourself when someone gives a monotonous speech your attention drifts away. At that time, you are in a mild trance state. A monotonous voice can put someone into a
hypnotic state. For stage hypnosis, one needs to use a powerful and strong voice as he will be talking with many people at the same time as he is doing a public show.

The hypnotist has a choice between two types of voices that work for induction techniques. The first one is rhythmic. This lets the subject lull into a sleeplike trance. If for example you were to say: “Now as you are focused, you feel relaxed.” The words “focused” and “relaxed” sound the same. There is rhythm. The second is monotone. This makes sure that the subject is focused with no diversions and distractions. Here you go narrating items with monotone that the subject goes into a trance. As for example you say: “As you concentrate on the muscles of your head you relax deep; at every breath you take you enter into deeper relaxation; you feel so sleepy and relaxed that you doubly become relaxed; as you descend a staircase you are becoming more and more relaxed.” These two voice modulations (rhythm and monotone) are used for hypnotizing. You can also include other elements like raising the pitch for post-hypnotic suggestions and pauses which ensure that the command or suggestions are responded to within a set time frame. You can also distort words for emphasis and desired effect as when you say: You are feeling so sereeeene, peeeeeeaceful, and relaaaaxxeed.\textsuperscript{6}
8. THE USES OF HYPNOSIS

The uses of hypnosis is immense. One can harness the power within the subject for the betterment of the subject in terms of healing and growth

1. Flight Phobia

Phobia is an unreasonable fear of just anything. It is a persistent, irrational fear of a specific object, activity, or situation (the phobic stimulus) that results in a compelling desire to avoid it. This often leads either to avoidance of the phobic stimulus or to enduring it with dread. You need to know what you are afraid of. Then you can create suggestion that will control the phobia. One can also use self-hypnosis to get over fear by creating in one’s mind a feeling of comfort and safety while flying. You may have to use an incremental approach in treating phobias. One must not be in a hurry.

2. Sports Performance

Self-hypnosis is used by most successful athletes. It is said that 90 percent of sports success is mental. What distinguishes the winner from the losers from among a group of athletes is that the winner mentally felt successful and he did everything accordingly without realizing it. Concentration, self-confidence, determination, and rehearsal are part of self-hypnosis with regard to sports. You need to anticipate what will be required and visualize what you will do which is exactly rehearsal. Mental practice is important after having learned and practiced the fundamentals.

3. Weight Loss

Self-hypnosis is ideal for weight loss. The approach you use is not a straightforward one as with most other goals since the problem is multi-faceted; you have to eat the right number of calories (usually less than you normally eat), and do exercises. It is good to find out healthy, low calorie foods and which intake is appropriate to meet your weight loss and also what type of exercise you need to do. Now you entrust the whole thing to the unconscious. Your preparation supplies the unconscious with the right data to work with. Right type of exercise and better eating go together. Once you have done the groundwork with eating less but
appropriate eating and doing the ideal type of exercise, bring your unconscious to the picture. It is good to reduce your weight little by little though there are persons who have reduced their weight all of a sudden a great deal. That perhaps may not work for you. There are also cases of persons who just visualized their weight loss.

4. Self-Confidence

You may want self-confidence believing that you are good and capable; you may need self-esteem thinking you like yourself; you want self-efficacy believing that you can do such and such; these cases can be worked out by self-hypnosis, and of course by a hypnotist as well. These are not exclusive types of beliefs but overlapping ones. Working on self-confidence gives you control over other aspects of your life that are deficient.

5. Smoking Cessation

Smoking can be a behavioural problem (habit), or a true addiction. In most instances both aspects are combined. Perhaps the physiological craving is gone after seven days of not smoking but the psychological craving is strong and may persist. Combining hypnosis with the assistance of the medical professional will be helpful.

6. Stress and Anxiety

There are good stress and bad stress. In popular parlance by the word “stress” we mean the bad stress. Good stress is necessary for progress in our life. Athletes stress their muscles and nervous system to get stronger, faster, and more skillful. When it is overdone beyond a certain limit then you do not allow for adequate recovery it may lead to burn out. You could work hard at your work and learn new skills in order to succeed. Strike a balance in your stress endurance so that it is optimal and leads to success. Hypnosis will help you maintain good stress.

Stress reduction is part of any self-hypnosis programme, because you learn to relax in hypnosis. But reducing stress itself can be a goal in hypnosis without other goals being envisaged. Most of the illnesses are stress-related and they may not respond to treatment. Self-hypnosis will work for these problems. Anxiety, for example, may be reduced by self-hypnosis because by hypnosis you are reducing the level of stress which
in turn leads to anxiety. Nowadays, hypnosis can be an integral part of, but not replacement for anxiety treatment. In self-hypnosis you need not aim at anything. You sit quietly and enjoy the feeling of relaxation. Thus you will reduce the level of stress and anxiety. You may also use hypnosis for other goals.

7. The Let-Down Effect

There is a phenomenon called “let-down effect.” When you drop from a state of high activation to a state of low activation, your immune system slows down thus leaving you open to infection. It is better to taper off, to go from high speed to low speed gradually. One may do this adjustment, for example, taking a brief but brisk walk or you may use hypnosis by getting into a light trance while stimulating your mind and releasing serotonin, a feel-good neurotransmitter. You might have had the experience of getting sick after a very stressful work is over. Usually you get upper respiratory diseases, but could be also headaches, gastrointestinal problems or any other illness you are prone to since your immune system has dropped down. When you are working on a project, for example, you feel a lot of stress since you have to complete the work before the deadline. You may also be enjoying the challenge. You may have both some feel-good endorphins releasing into your body as well as the stress hormones like cortisol. As you are completing your project and look forward to a nice vacation or rest, you get sick. Here comes the let-down effect and hypnosis will help you to tide over the difficulty.

8. General Adaptation Syndrome

Hans Selye developed the theory of general adaptation syndrome. According to Selye there are three states of stress. First, one experiences an alarm with the introduction of stress. After that comes adaptation as the body and/or mind adapt to the new stressor. In the third stage the stressors are high and one feels exhaustion. At this third stage the body and/or mind are overwhelmed and can no longer adapt. Hypnosis can be used to turn down the stress before it reaches the third stage. We realize that stress comes in many forms like physical, mental, and environmental. Stress is a reaction to a specific event, a sort of one-at-a-time phenomenon. The body reacts to any stressor in a generalized way as in a fight-or-
flight mechanism with faster heartbeat, delayed digestion, increase in blood pressure, and decreased immunity. Stress is also cumulative. Not everyone can handle many stressful situations well. When there are many stressors, people may break down. For example, if you are giving up alcohol, smoking habit, and doing dieting, these are all too much to handle at a time. Therefore, it is better to phase things out.

9. Quick Stress Relief

The quick stress relief is a technique like anchoring in Neuro-Linguistic Programming. By attaching an experience to any one of the sensory experiences (visual, auditory, kinesthetic, olfactory, and gustatory) you can evoke the same experience. In the same way, when you are in a deep relaxation you can programme yourself saying: I reach this state of calm relaxation whenever I want by saying “relax.” Then when you really need to be relieved of a stressful situation, you will just say “relax” and you will just experience the original deep relaxation you had (which had been anchored to the word “relax” in the language of the Neuro-Linguistic programming).

10. Pain Relief

Let us take headache. It is common knowledge that the most common cause for headaches is stress. By hypnosis one can get relieved of headache. First, one has to create a calm and peaceful environment either with a therapist or alone by using self-hypnosis. By hypnosis you can reduce headaches, balance the immune system, alter the chemicals released in the brain, and create a different physiological state when one is subjected to stress. Thus you will be relieved of headache. Now let us take chronic pain. Arthritis is the common cause of chronic pain which can range from an occasional annoyance to a debilitating condition. This situation can be managed by Pain Management Hypnosis.

11. Fibromyalgia

It is a condition that involves chronic pain. Pain can be managed by relaxation. Another way to manage pain is by distraction where, you learn to train yourself to shift your concentration to something else. Yet another method is by hypnosis. There are two types of pain: acute and chronic. Acute pain is immediate or short term like you stub your toe or
sprain your ankle; and chronic pain is like arthritis. Hypnosis can be used to control any pain. For the relief of pain, hypnosis works in three phases: First is relaxation since in pain, muscles tense and exacerbate the pain; second is sensory alteration or in other words you change your perception of pain in which you transform the pain into another sensation; the third is distraction in which you simply focus on sensations in some other part of the body thus reducing the attention you pay to the pain.

To reduce pain you can imagine a thermometer on its side. Put 1 at one end and 10 at the other. Place your pain at a spot along the scale. Ten is the worst you can imagine and one being hardly any. Now in hypnosis relax and get into a trance. You can start visualizing your pain subsiding as the mercury level moves slowly down the scale. You need not force yourself to descend beyond where you feel comfortable to stop. Hypnosis can practically eliminate any pain — especially back pain, cancer pain, labour pains during childbirth, dental pain, headaches, migraines, arthritis, and rheumatism.

Brain does not feel pain. It only sends signals to the rest of the body in the forms of pain so that you realize that something is going wrong. By hypnosis your brain redirects your energy away from experiencing pain. When there is severe pain, first seek a medical professional before embarking on hypnosis. Pain is a communication that something is wrong and needs your attention and once your attention is drawn to the pain by seeing a doctor or applying medicine or using hypnosis you do not need the pain any more. Pain threshold is higher when one is relaxed. Therefore, by relaxing while in pain you will prevent pain becoming a chronic pain. It is good to keep in mind that hypnosis can be too successful removing the symptom before the cause is found out. Therefore, it is advisable that one sees a medical personnel regarding pain before using hypnosis. For example, one has brain tumour on account of which he has severe pain. If he uses hypnosis his pain will subside but the tumour will remain and do harm. Therefore, let him first see a doctor and get the necessary treatment and use hypnosis then for reducing pain.

Hypnosis is not just a placebo effect, because there are actual changes in brain function. Whenever pain occurs you could tell the area that is affected to relax. This is a way of having a talk with your body. 
There are actual brain changes when hypnosis is used for pain management. Hypnosis reduces the activity of the anterior cingulated cortex involved in pain, but not the somatosensory cortex that processes sensations. This only shows that using hypnosis for pain management occurs in parts of the brain other than that where the pain is registered. This fact confirms that hypnosis works for pain relief but does not explain how hypnosis works. There is a technique for recovering from injury. For example, if you hurt any part of the body, get into a trance and replay the accident that caused the injury in your mind. The pain will surely get worse when you replay but will quickly subside. You could do it two to three times and when you get out of hypnosis the pain is less and the part involved in the hurt will heal quickly after this mental exercise.

12. Breaking Harmful Habits

One can use hypnosis to break harmful habits and form healthy ones. One can use it to play musical instruments better. One can use it to be better organized and be more efficient at work. You can make use of it to gain self-confidence and excel in activities about which you had been hesitant. You can overcome test/exam anxiety and can use it for public speaking if you are nervous about it.

13. Psychotherapy

Hypnotherapy is the use of hypnosis in psychotherapy. It can be used to treat depression, anxiety, eating disorders, sleep disorders, compulsive gambling, post-traumatic stress disorder, smoking cessation, insomnia, and weight management. Hypnosis can be used in a variety of forms with varying success for age regression hypnotherapy or hypnoanalysis, Ericksonian hypnotherapy, fears and phobias, addictions, habit control, pain management, psychological therapy, relaxation, skin disease, soothing anxious surgical patients, sports performance, and weight loss.

With the help of hypnosis hallucinations, delusions, compulsions, certain types of memory loss, and false memories can be created temporarily. Highly suggestible individuals experience a greater reduction in pain from hypnosis compared with placebo, whereas less suggestible individuals experience no pain reduction. Hypnosis can be effective for treating warts, psoriasis, and atopic dermatitis. For habit control, the
success rate is varied. For weight loss, hypnosis is successful as an adjunct therapy. People who combined hypnosis with cognitive-behaviour-therapy lost more weight than people who used cognitive-behaviour-therapy alone.

14. Psychological Challenges

Hypnosis can address any challenge. The most popular reasons for which people go for hypnotherapy are self-confidence, weight loss, pain control, stress control, smoking cessation, sexual dysfunction, scholastic goals, fears and phobias, any challenge of emotions and habits. Any physical ailment must have medical attention and severe psychological issue need proper psychological attention. Hypnosis is a very powerful tool to enhance healing in physical and mental challenges. Hypnosis is found to be an effective tool in empowering clients in relationships, success, self-confidence, and scholastic goals.

Hypnosis along with proven therapeutic procedures can be a highly effective form of treatment for many mental, physical, and psychosomatic (psychophysiological) disorders. By regression, an adult subject may be mentally traveling back to a point in youth or childhood that was particularly troublesome, allowing the healing of old emotional wounds. Someone can be led to understand that emotional pain has been converted to physical pain, and that the pain can be eliminated once the source has been addressed. A subject suffering from chronic pain can be taught to control the pain without the use of medications. There are a number of techniques to rectify dysfunctional behaviours such as self-destructive habits, anxiety disorders, and managing side effects of various medical treatments. Hypnosis can be used to stop self-destructive and addictive habits like smoking, to curb the urge to eat for overeaters, to stem the disruptive actions of tics, to cure insomnia, to stop bed-wetting, and to minimize anxiety. Stress can generate anxiety. Anxious people usually seek hypnotherapy for public speaking, test taking, job stress, fears and phobias, mild to moderate depression, enhancing quality of life and relieving anxiety and depressive symptoms in terminally ill cancer patients.
15. Advantages of Hypnosis

(1) One can remove his stress and anxiety and control his emotions, (2) One can formulate creative, powerful, and positive suggestions and programme his unconscious mind. For this one can use self-hypnosis, (3) Identify one’s negative blocks and remove them, (4) One can control one’s pain, (5) One can hypnotize others in a short while, (6) One can teach others hypnosis so that they can solve their problems, (7) One can identify the cause of one’s problem and deal with it, (8) One can create one’s own imageries for healing, (9) One can develop a rapport with any person or group within one and half minutes, (10) With the use of “advanced timeline technique” one can set up one’s goals in future, (11) One can gain confidence by way of anchoring, (12) One can start to enjoy the subject one hated earlier in life, (13) One can free one’s fear and become super-confident, and (14) One can easily develop and enhance one’s psychic power.
9. THE HISTORY OF HYPNOSIS

Our understanding of hypnosis is enhanced when we know the history through which the present practice emerged. In the beginning things were not very clear. It is by means of trial and error our forefathers struggled to understand hypnosis and practice it.

1. Synopsis History

Since the dawn of humanity, hypnosis existed. Hypnosis itself has not changed. What has changed is the way in which we are able to harness hypnosis. “Animal magnetism” is an early precursor to hypnosis based on theories by Franz Mesmer (Mesmerism). Animal magnetism refers to an intangible force, a sort of magnetic fluid that exists within living creatures. The word “animal” was chosen to represent that this magnetism exists within all creatures that have breath. An opponent of Mesmerism was James Braid. He introduced a scientific approach when he coined the term “hypnotism,” which is based instead on the power of suggestion. He is generally considered as an influential researcher and a pioneer of modern hypnosis. In the 20th century, Milton H. Erickson is widely considered to be one of the most influential hypnotists. His method uses indirect methods rather than direct methods of hypnotism. He observed that indirect methods could be much more effective than direct methods at times.

2. Ancient History

The origins of hypnosis goes back to the ancient temples of Aesculapius, the Greek god of Medicine, where advice and reassurance uttered by priests to sleeping patients was interpreted by the patients themselves as gods speaking to them in their dreams.

3. Franz Anton Mesmer (1734-1815)

Probably hypnosis has been used since the beginning of time under other names. It has been insinuated that the earliest description of hypnosis may be portrayed in the Old Testament and in the Talmud. It is also believed that hypnosis was practiced in ancient Egypt, some 3,000 years ago. It was around 1770 that western scientists first became involved in hypnosis. Though the phenomenon of hypnosis may go back to ancient,
prehistoric times, modern hypnosis starts with Franz Anton Mesmer, an Austrian physician, who is widely acknowledged as the “Father of Hypnosis.” He was born in Germany and studied medicine in Vienna. He started practicing his theory which he called “Mesmerism” in Vienna and moved to Paris where his work became fashionable.

**Animal Magnetism**

It seems that one day Mesmer watched a magician on a street in Paris demonstrating that he could have the spectators do his bidding by touching them with magnets. From that Mesmer believed that the magnets had power of their own and from this belief developed his theory of “animal magnetism.” He believed that good health depended on having correct magnetic flow and that the direction of one’s magnetic flow could be reversed easily. He said that he could direct this magnetic flow into inanimate objects that would then be used for the good health of others. Later the term “mesmerism” came to be applied to his mystical workings.

**Imbalance of Animal Magnetism — Disease**

Mesmer’s belief was that there was a quasi-magnetic fluid in the very air we breathe and that the body’s nerves somehow absorbed this fluid. The term “animal magnetism” was used by him for a fluid or force within his body that would let him connect with and cure his patients. Franz Mesmer thought that this magnetic force or fluid within the universe influences the health of the human body. He used magnets to influence this field and so cause healing. Mesmer observed that disease was caused by imbalance of a physical force, called animal magnetism, which affects various parts of the body. He also said that cures could be achieved by redistributing this magnetic fluid. This procedure typically resulted in pseudoepileptic seizures known as “crises.” By 1774 he said that the same effects could be created by passing the hands, at a distance, in front of the subject’s body, referred to as making “Mesmeric passes.” The word “Mesmerism” arising from the name of Franz Mesmer was intentionally used to separate its users from the various fluid and magnetic theories embedded within the label magnetism.

As he was concerned about treating patients effectively, he considered that disease was caused via a blockage of the circulation of this magnetic fluid in the blood and the nervous system. Therefore,
correcting the circulation of this liquid is the curing of diseases. In the beginning he used magnets, and later his hand, which was passed over the diseased body in an attempt to unblock the magnetic flow. He passed his hand over the affected area. This procedure was given the name “animal magnetism” and it was referred to as “Mesmerism.”

Mesmer found that, after opening a patient’s vein, letting the patient bleed for a while, and by passing magnets over the wound would make the bleeding stop. Also he discovered that using a stick instead of magnets would also make the bleeding stop. He occasionally brought about complete cures that other medical professionals of his time were not able to do.

The French Royal Commission and Disapproval

King Luis XVI, in 1784 sent a Board/Commission of Inquiry to investigate whether “Animal Magnetism” existed. The French Royal Commission comprised of the great chemist Lavoisier, the astronomer Jean Sylvain Bailly, the physician and inventor M. Guillotine; and the American ambassador Benjamin Franklin was sent by the king to investigate Mesmer. The commission conducted controlled psychological experiments. By the experiments Mesmer’s theory was discredited even though the practice continued. They concluded that there was no physical force but any results were due to imagination, or placebo. They said that the effects of mesmerism, while genuine in many cases, were achieved by means of imagination and not by any physical force. Though the Board accepted the results of Mesmer as valid, their placebo-controlled experiments convinced them that mesmerism was most likely due to belief and imagination rather than to any sort of invisible energy (animal magnetism) transmitted from the body of the mesmerist. The Board said that Mesmer is not throwing or producing anything from his hands that one can see. Therefore, this mesmerism must be a fraud. At this Mesmer left Paris and went back to Vienna to practice mesmerism. Soon he was completely discredited causing him to leave the country. However, Mesmer did awaken an interest in the power of the mind, and many people studied his theories.
4. The Marquis de Puysegur (1751-1825)

A dramatic change took place when one of Mesmer’s pupils and followers, the Marquis de Puysegur, magnetized Victor Race, a young shepherd. The Marquis de Puysegur used animal magnetism on this young peasant who entered into a state of sleep while still being able to communicate with Puysegur and respond to his suggestions. When the peasant woke up he could remember nothing of what had occurred. Instead of undergoing a magnetic crisis, Victor fell into a somnambulistic (sleeplike) state in which he was responsive to instructions, and from which he awoke with amnesia for what he had done in his somnambulistic state. Hence Puysegur thought that the will of the person and the operator’s actions were important factors in the success or failure of the magnetism. This means to say that psychological influences were extremely important in the whole process.

5. John Elliotson (1791-1868)

In the 19th century, John Elliotson, an English physician at the University College London and James Esdaile, a surgeon reported the successful use of mesmeric somnambulism as an anesthetic for surgery. James Esdaile was operating on his patients using mesmeric sleep as his anesthetic of choice in the 1840s. He performed 2000 operations using only hypnosis as anesthetic and with no pain for the patients. John Elliotson was disbarred from the medical profession as a direct result of his demonstrations of animal magnetism. The medical profession was divided on its opinion of the usefulness of mesmerism. Of course, later ether and chloroform proved to be more reliably effective.

6. James Braid (1795-1860)

James Braid credited with the title the “Father of Modern Hypnotism” is a major figure in the history of hypnotism. Hypnosis was not known as it is now before Braid. He freed hypnotism from the occult shadows of mesmerism through his insights into the nature of trance. Braid was born in Kinross, Scotland, and studied medicine at the University of Edinburgh.

Around 1840, a patient in the office of James Braid accidentally entered a state of trance while waiting for an eye examination. Braid, as he was aware of the disfavour of mesmerism and animal magnetism
Braid coined the terms “hypnotism” and “hypnosis” in 1843. And thus began the serious study of this altered state of awareness.

Braid wrote the first book on hypnosis, “Neurypnology” in 1843. Dr. James Esdaile (1805-1859) reported 345 major operations performed using mesmeric sleep as the sole anesthetic in British India. Of course, the discovery of chemical anesthetics soon saw the replacement of hypnotism in this role (of anesthesia). The neurologist Jean-Martin Charcot advocated hypnotism for the treatment of hysteria. The process of post-hypnotic suggestion was first described during this period. Extraordinary improvements in sensory acuity and memory were reported under hypnosis.

**Neuro-Hypnotism**

Braid began to hear reports concerning various Oriental meditative practices soon after the release of his publication on hypnotism, “Neurypnology” (1843). He discussed some of the oriental practices in a series of article entitled “Magic, Mesmerism, Hypnotism, etc., Historically & Physiologically Considered.” He arduously drew analogies between his own practice of hypnotism and various forms of Hindu yoga meditation and other ancient spiritual practices, especially those involving voluntary burial and apparent human hibernation. His interest in these practices stems from his studies of the “Dabistan-i Mazahib,” the “School of Religions,” an ancient Persian text describing a lot of Oriental religious rituals, beliefs, and practices. Though Braid rejected the transcendental/metaphysical interpretation given to these phenomena outright, he accepted that these accounts of Oriental practices corroborated his view that the effects of hypnotism could be produced in solitude, without the presence of any other person. He could show the correlations between many of the metaphysical Oriental practices and his own rational neuro-hypnotism. He totally rejected all of the fluid theories and magnetic practices of the mesmerists.

**Eye-Fixation**

Once he saw a performance in Manchester by a mesmerist Charles Lafontaine whose act involved the use of mesmerism to make his subjects impervious to pain. He demonstrated this by shocking them with a live battery, or by burning them with candles, without ill effect. This converted
Braid to the practice of hypnosis. In the beginning Braid was skeptical and thought that the whole thing to be a system of collusion or delusion, or of excited imagination. But later he saw another performance which involved the inability of the mesmerized subjects to open their eyes. Braid researched on eye-fixation, conducting experiments. Once when he came late for an appointment, he discovered his patient staring in rapt fascination at the flickering flames of an oil lamp. From this he concluded that eye-fixation was the key to mesmerism – a demonstrable physical explanation, completely independent of “magnetism,” the “will of the mesmerist,” or “universal fluid.” He summarily dismissed the idea that trance was achieved through the lengthy ritual of hand gestures and passes current at that time. He induced trance by having his subjects focus their attention on a variety of illuminated objects, such as candle flames or small mirrors, held at different distances from the subjects’ faces. Of course, this automatically produced exhaustion in the eyelids, which would spontaneously close.

James Braid discovered that some subjects could go into a trance if they simply fixated their eyes on a bright object, like a silver watch. He believed that some sort of neurophysiological process was involved and that hypnosis was very useful in disorders where no organic origin to the problem could be identified. He also demonstrated that a single stimulus (a word or an object) was enough to rehypnotize the subjects. At that time no one knew how the process of hypnosis worked. There were many theories put forward to explain hypnosis.

Monoideism

In the early 19th century, an Indo-Portuguese priest, Abbé Faria introduced Oriental hypnosis to Paris. Unlike Mesmer, Faria claimed that hypnosis was generated from within the mind by the power of expectancy and cooperation of the patient. Taking the lead from Mesmer, James Braid developed the procedure known as, “hypnosis.” He realized that hypnosis was not a kind of sleep and he wanted to change the name to “monoideaism” (single-idea-ism). Though this term accurately described the process of trance induction, the term “hypnosis” prevailed to this day. James Braid rejected Mesmer’s idea that hypnosis was induced by magnetism, and ascribed the mesmeric trance to a physiological process resulting from prolonged attention to a bright moving
object or similar object of fixation. He said that “protracted ocular fixation” fatigued certain parts of the brain and caused a trance—a “nervous sleep,” or from the Greek, “neuro-hypnosis.”

James Braid observed that somnambulism (deep trance state) was caused by the paralysis of nerve centers induced by fixation of the eyes on an object. To eliminate the taint of mesmerism, Braid renamed the state “neurhypnotism” (nervous sleep). This term was later shortened to “hypnosis.” Braid concluded that hypnosis was due to the subject’s concentration on a single thought (monoideism) rather than physiological fatigue.

Nervous Sleep

Following the French commission’s findings, Dugald Stewart, an influential academic philosopher of the “Scottish School of Common Sense,” encouraged physicians to save elements of Mesmerism by replacing the supernatural theory of “animal magnetism” with an interpretation based on “common sense” laws of physiology and psychology. In James Braid’s day, the Scottish School of Common Sense provided the dominant theories of academic psychology. Braid revised the theory and practice of Mesmerism and developed his own method of “hypnotism” as a more rational and “common sense” alternative. The term “Hypnotism,” or “Nervous Sleep,” is a peculiar condition of the nervous system, into which one may enter, and which differs, in several respects, from common sleep or the waking condition. Though Braid toyed with the name “rational Mesmerism,” he ultimately emphasized his approach’s uniqueness, carrying out informal experiments throughout his career to refute the arguments of supernatural practices, and demonstrated instead the role of ordinary physiological and psychological processes such as suggestion and focused attention in producing the observed effects of hypnotism.

Psycho-Physiology

Braid worked with the eminent physiologist Professor William Benjamin Carpenter, a neuro-psychologist, who introduced the “ideo-motor reflex” theory of suggestion. Prof. Carpenter observed several examples of expectation and imagination apparently influencing involuntary muscle movement. An example of the ideo-motor principle is the so-called
“Chevreul pendulum” (named after Michael Eugène Chevreul). Chevreul observed that divinatory pendulae were made to swing by unconscious muscle movements, brought about by appropriate concentration alone.

Braid took the idea of Carpenter and applied it to his own theory, realizing that the effect of focusing attention was to enhance the ideomotor reflex response. Braid extended Carpenter’s principle beyond the muscular system and thus referred to the “ideo-dynamic” response and coined the term “psycho-physiology” to refer to the study of general mind/body interaction.

Greater Sensory Awareness

Braid is credited with having identified many key features of the trance state itself. One such thing is “the greater sensory awareness” that subjects display. He estimated that hearing in the trance state is about twelve times more acute than in everyday consciousness. This he proved by demonstrating that a subject can hear the ticking of a watch that could not be heard more than three feet away, was audible from thirty-five feet when the subject was in trance. This feature distinguishes hypnotic trance from ordinary sleep. He also demonstrated that automatic bodily process, such as heart rate and blood circulation, can be controlled to a remarkable degree while in trance. Braid handed down to the posterity an understanding of what hypnosis actually is — a psychological phenomena rooted in a physiological process. This, we can say, is behind all the developments and achievements in hypnosis throughout the 20th century and beyond.

By hypnotism Braid tried to treat various psychological and physical disorders. He had little success with organic (that is, physical, or non-psychological) conditions. There were other physicians who claimed better results, particularly using hypnosis for pain control. There was a report in 1842, that a painless amputation was performed on a hypnotized patient. This was not considered a big deal as there were also other success stories.

7. Jean-Martin Charcot (1825-1893)

Mean-Maretin Charcot, a leading neurologist then, working as head of the neurological clinic at Salpêtrière in Paris, used hypnosis to treat hysterics. He believed that hypnosis was an induced seizure as his
hysteric patients showed epileptic-like symptoms when they were in a trance.

8. Hippolyte Bernheim (1837-1990)

Hippolyte Bernheim who was a professor of medicine at the University of Nancy thought that hypnosis was a special form of sleeping where the subject’s attention is focused upon the suggestions made by the hypnotist. By this he insisted on the psychological nature of the process of hypnosis.

Hysteria vs. Suggestion

The study of hypnotism subsequently revolved around the fierce debate between Jean-Martin Charcot and Hippolyte Bernheim, the two most influential figures in the late 19th century hypnotism. Charcot operated a clinic at the Pitié-Salpêtrière Hospital (known as the “Paris School” or the “Salpêtrière School,”) and had a clinic in Nancy (known as the “Nancy School”). Charcot, influenced more by the Mesmerists, argued that hypnotism is an abnormal state of nervous functioning found only in certain hysterical women. He said that it manifests in a series of physical reactions that could be divided into distinct stages. But Bernheim argued that anyone could be hypnotized, and that it is an extension of normal psychological functioning, and that its effects are due to suggestion. Now as we know, the view of Bernheim dominates the hypnotic world.

9. Clark L. Hull (1884-1952)

The next major development for hypnosis came from the behaviour psychology in an American university. Clark L. Hull an eminent American psychologist published the first major compilation of laboratory studies on hypnosis, titled “Hypnosis & Suggestibility” in 1933. In it he proved that hypnosis and sleep had nothing in common. He did many publications on hypnosis and suggestion and encouraged experiments and research by mainstream psychologists. His interpretation of hypnosis from the point of behaviour psychology emphasized conditioned reflexes and rivaled the Freudian psychodynamic interpretation emphasizing unconscious transference.

Clark L. Hull demystified hypnosis when he said that hypnosis was essentially a normal part of human nature. What was very important
in hypnosis was the subject’s imagination. Some are more responsive or suggestible than others, he said. By the 1920s, hypnosis became the focus of experimental investigation by psychologists.

The therapeutic use of hypnosis in medicine was accepted by the British Medical Association in 1955 and by the American Medical Association in 1958. An international Society of Hypnosis coordinates and assesses the standards and practices of professional hypnotists across the world. It is currently used in dentistry, medicine, and psychology and has proved helpful when used alongside more conventional treatments and therapies. Of course, it received a bad press report due to the unscrupulous practices of some stage hypnotists. All the same, now the professional use in treating both physical and mental disorders continues to thrive. It is seen now as a form of relaxation. It is also seen that individuals can learn to hypnotize themselves through progressive relaxation techniques.


Charcot appointed Pierre Janet as the director of the psychological laboratory at Salpêtrière in 1888 after his doctorate in philosophy, which dealt with psychological automatism. Janet reconciled elements of his views with those of Bernheim and his followers and developed his own sophisticated hypnotic psychotherapy based on the concept of psychological dissociation which rivaled Freud’s attempt to provide a more comprehensive theory of psychotherapy.

11. Sigmund Freud (1856-1939)

Sigmund Freud, the founder of psychoanalysis, studied hypnotism at the Paris school and visited the Nancy school. Initially Freud was enthusiastic about hypnotherapy and emphasized hypnotic regression and abreaction (catharsis) as therapeutic methods. Later he gradually abandoned hypnotism in favour of psychoanalysis, emphasizing free association, dream analysis, and interpretation of the unconscious. Struggling with the great duration of time spent in psychoanalysis, he suggested that it might be combined with hypnotic suggestion to hasten the outcome of treatment. Not many of his followers were sufficiently qualified in hypnosis to attempt the synthesis. Their work had a limited
influence on the hypno-therapeutic approaches known variously as “hypnotic regression,” “hypnotic progression,” and “hypnoanalysis.”

12. Émile Coué (1857-1926)

Coué assisted for two years at Nancy. He developed a new orientation called “conscious autosuggestion.” He founded the New Nancy School, a loose collaboration of practitioners who taught and promoted his views. His method did not emphasize “sleep” or deep relaxation and instead focused upon autosuggestion involving a specific series of suggestion tests. Though he thought that he was not using hypnosis, his followers viewed his approach as a form of light self-hypnosis. Coué’s method came to be known as a self-help psychotherapy technique, which contrasted with psychoanalysis and prefigured self-hypnosis and cognitive therapy.


Dave Elman was a radio host, comedian, and song writer. He also made contribution to hypnosis. He used to conduct many courses for physicians and wrote in 1964 his classic book: “Findings in Hypnosis,” which he later re-titled “Hypnotherapy.” His main legacy is the method of induction, which was originally fashioned for speed work and later adapted for the use of medical professionals. It is reported that his students routinely obtained states of hypnosis adequate for medical and surgical procedures in under three minutes. The first heart operation using hypnosis rather than normal anesthesia (because of severe problems with the patient) was performed by his students while Dave Elman was in the operating room as “coach.”


Milton H. Erickson is one of the most influential post-war hypnotists. He popularized a new branch of hypnotherapy, known as “Ericksonian Hypnotherapy” in the 1960s. His method is characterized primarily by indirect suggestion, metaphor (actually analogies), confusion techniques, and double binds in the place of formal hypnotic inductions. Some even question if he really practiced hypnosis as his method was very different from the traditional one. Milton H. Erickson used both verbal and nonverbal techniques to bypass the conscious mind. His work with indirect suggestion changed the concept of contemporary hypnotism.
15. In Retrospect

From the 1880s, the use of hypnosis passed from surgical doctors to mental health professionals. Charcot took the lead and his student Pierre Janet introduced the theory of dissociation, the splitting of mental aspects under hypnosis so that skills and memory could be made inaccessible or recovered. It was Janet who provoked interest in the unconscious and laid the framework for reintegration therapy for dissociated personalities.

Revival in Europe: In the late 1880s interest was revived in hypnosis by Jean Martin Charcot, a neurologist, who thought that hypnosis and hysteria both reflected a disorder of the central nervous system. As against Charcot’s neurological theories, A. A. Liebeault and Hippolyte Bernheim, two French physicians, emphasized the role of suggestibility in producing hypnosis. Sigmund Freud and Pierre Janet studied with Charcot, and Freud developed his psycho-social theories of mental illness after observing the suggestibility of hysterical patients in hypnosis.

In the United States: Since hypnosis involved change in conscious awareness, William James and other psychologists became interested in hypnosis. The first systematic experimental work on hypnosis was reported by P.C. Young and Clark Hull. Milton H. Erickson too was interested in hypnosis with his provocative clinical and experimental studies. Interest in hypnosis rose rapidly after the World War II. Earnest Hilgard together with Josephine Hilgard and Andre Weitzehhoffer founded a laboratory for hypnosis research at Stanford University. As Hilgard was regarded as one of the world’s most distinguished psychologist, his status helped establish hypnosis as a legitimate subject of scientific inquiry.

In the early 1900s, interest in hypnosis seemed to wane. But during the Second World War, field hospitals often ran short of the drugs needed to treat the wounded soldiers. Under such appalling conditions, some clinicians of hypnosis were able to provide pain relief and alleviation of the suffering of the often severely injured patients. Pope Pius XII gave his approval of hypnosis in 1956 stating that the use of hypnosis by health care professionals for diagnosis and treatment is permitted. The British Medical Association set up an inquiry in 1955 which favourably reported hypnosis as a therapeutic tool. Recommendations were made by it that
hypnosis should be taught at medical schools. In September 1958, hypnosis was also approved by the Council of Mental Health of the American Medical Association as a safe practice with no harmful side effects. From then onwards there has been acceleration in the establishment of hypnosis societies for doctors, dentists, and psychologists. With the growth of communication and technology, accessibility of hypnosis continues and the general public is able to get the benefit of hypnosis.

**Cognitive-behavioural Approach:** In the second half of the 20th century, two factors contributed to the development of the cognitive-behavioural approach to hypnosis. (1) Cognitive and behavioral theories of the nature of hypnosis became increasingly influential; (2) The therapeutic practices of hypnotherapy and various forms of cognitive-behavioural therapy overlapped and influenced each other. Hypnosis was used by early behaviour therapists such as Joseph Wolpe and also by early cognitive therapists such as Albert Ellis.
10. CLIENT INVOLVEMENT

Client results, in terms of cognitive, behavioural, and emotional shifts, can range from disappointing to spectacular. One of the contingencies for success is the client’s internal level of involvement in the process. Knowing how to engage and encourage this critical factor rests in the hands of the hypnotist. The following points will help provide a general approach to integrate into practice, encouraging the client to give his maximum involvement.

1. Professionalism

The hypnotist is a professional. Professionalism comes into play when interacting with the client before and after each session. One should not talk about irrelevant subject matter, or engage into much socialization once inside the office. Joking should be kept to a minimum, and used only for direct purposes of therapy. Create the mindset that everything you do is for the client, never for you. Limit self-disclosure to the point of absolute necessity. Dual relationships and countertransference can hurt your client and your confidence.

2. Outcome Oriented

Let the client know that you expect great things. One of the best ways to do that is to make promises. What is expected tends to be realized. Talk about outcomes and their role in the process. It is good to convey that following the instructions and focusing are the most important parts of the process that lead to great results.

3. Surprise Space

Begin planting suggestions in their mindset regarding what happens in hypnosis to be less concrete and factual, and more about letting things happen. Talk to them about being able to enjoy the benefits without having to know exactly how or why it works. Think conceptually about creating a “surprise space” within the client’s mind for everything that happens in the chair. Some clients may want to play therapist right away because of a preconceived set of thoughts about the cause of the problem. It may be good to tell the clients to have the attitude of the “spectator” and just sit back. Take your lead in whatever you decide to do, which leaves them
with an understanding that anything is to be expected. The attitude of “Let us see what happens,” can create an element of unknown that leaves their mind open to a realm of greater possibility.

4. Greater Responsibility

It is a question of whether the subjects want to have good results or great results. Some have the experience of putting in less effort and having mediocre success. As you work together, the subjects will understand that you cannot do it for them. The hypnotist need not work harder than the subject. It is the subject who has to decide to quit a bad habit if he wants. Hypnosis does not make it impossible not to quit but makes it easy to quit. But the quitting has to be done by the subject himself, of course, with the facilitation of the hypnotist. Therefore, greater responsibility rests with the subject.

5. Each Client Is a Success Story

Each client is a new success story. Subjects are a part of a successful whole within your client base. They need to know that what is happening is standard operating procedure, and necessary. The truth is, that most people do not like opening up. Letting the subject know that they are not alone creates an environment that allows them to be more open with their feelings and fosters compliance.

6. Know the Subject

The hypnotist should know what type of subject he has. Personality psychology definitely plays a role in the relationship between the subject and the hypnotist. Knowledge of personality or temperament types can aid in your ability to profile your subjects. Having a communication strategy in hand adds to your capacity to work with your subjects’ natural disposition, and encourages further participation, both directly and indirectly.

Knowing that your subject has his own level of arbitrary compliance, insight, and commitment, among other things, is something that you must always be aware of. Appropriate application of the above strategies will support the hypnotist to guide the subject toward maximum participation and more frequently. Without your subjects, you could not do what you do. Having their fullest possible cooperation, openness, and involvement can make all the difference in the hypnotic relationship.
11. THEORIES OF HYPNOSIS

Theories of hypnosis are remarkably numerous and divergent. The search for a unified theory has been elusive. To be integrated, such a theory would have to explain the multitude of hypnotic phenomena, from age regression to anesthesia and from catalepsy to hallucination; it would have to account for the wide ranges of individual manifestations and show the reasons for the striking subjective experiences that are often induced.

Since theories are approximations, it is probable that several of them are concurrently valid, each seeing a portion of a multidimensional process involving psychological, physiological, and social mechanisms. The following theories are important currents of thought regarding the hypnotic phenomena.

1. State vs. Non-state Theories

The key debate in hypnosis throughout the 20th century has been between “state” and “non-state” theories whose properties are given below. Of late, attempts have been made to integrate the findings from both of these positions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State Theories</th>
<th>Non-state Theories</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Hypnotic inductions produce an altered state of consciousness.</td>
<td>1 Subjects respond to suggestion almost as well without hypnosis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Hypnotic “trance” is associated with an altered process such as dissociation or other altered states of consciousness.</td>
<td>2 Subjects in hypnosis experiments are actively engaged.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Responses to hypnotic suggestions are a result of special processes such as dissociation or other altered states of consciousness.</td>
<td>3 Responses to suggestions are a product of normal psychological processes such as attitudes, expectancies, and motivation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Hypnotisability is remarkably stable over long periods.</td>
<td>4 Suggestibility can be modified with drugs or psychological procedures.</td>
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2. Ernest Hilgard’s Neodissociation Theory (Hilgard, 1979, 1986)

Ernest Hilgard developed the “neodissociation” theory of hypnotism. He hypothesized that hypnosis causes the subjects to divide their consciousness voluntarily. He says that one part responds to the hypnotist while the other retains awareness of reality. He conducted experiments in which subjects took an ice water bath telling them that the water was of the ordinary temperature. The subjects said nothing about the water
being cold or feeling pain. He then asked the subjects to lift their index finger if they felt pain. About 70% of the subjects lifted their index finger. This clearly indicates that even though the subjects were listening to the suggestive hypnotist they sensed the water’s temperature.

It is a classical state theory. According to it, hypnotic phenomenon is produced through dissociation within high level control systems. The hypnotic induction splits the functioning of the executive control system (ECS) into different streams. Part of the ECS functions normally, but is unable to represent itself in conscious awareness due to the presence of an “amnesic barrier.” Hypnotic suggestions act on the dissociated part of the ECS and the subject is aware of the results of the suggestions, but is not aware of the process by which they came about.

Suggestions from the hypnotist take much of the normal control away from the subject. The hypnotist may influence the executive function and change the hierarchical arrangements of the substructures. In hypnosis this is what takes place; motor controls are altered, perception and memory are distorted, and hallucinations may be perceived as external reality.

Hilgard speaks of the “hidden observer” phenomenon whereby a hidden part of the mind of the subject experiencing hypnotic pain relief could be encouraged to elicit reports of the true pain experience. Hilgard’s amnesic barrier and the hidden observer are controversial.

3. Dissociated Control Theory (DCT)

This theory applies the Norman and Shallice model of executive control to explain hypnotic responding. Originally this model focused on a functional dissociation between executive control and lower subsystems of control. It proposes that when highly hypnotizable individuals are hypnotized, the supervisory attentional system (SAS) has become functionally dissociated from the contention scheduling system (CS) – that is, these two levels cease to work together effectively. With the higher level control system partly disabled when high-hypnotizables are hypnotized, the individual is more dependent on lower-level CS-based automatic processes. Contextual cues and suggestions from the hypnotist influence the contention scheduling system and affect the
hypnotized person’s experience directly. Critics say that current data do not support a simple global shutdown of frontal functioning during hypnosis.

4. Dissociated-Experience Theory

This theory of hypnosis argues that the high hypnotisables execute hypnotic responses voluntarily, but this effort is not monitored correctly and is dissociated from the conscious awareness.

5. Ego State Theory

Ego state theory is connected to dissociation theory and also to concepts dealing with the phenomenon of multiple personality, psychogenic amnesia, and fugue states. This theory states the existence of networks of personality traits, experiences, feelings, and behaviours, which in various degrees of cohesion are bound by common principles. Several ego states may coexist as fairly distinct entities within the same individual, and their boundaries are thought to be loosely defined and malleable, in contrast to the more rigidly constructed demarcations found in multiple personality syndromes (i.e., dissociation identity disorder [DID]). In the hypnotic situation, different ego states may be communicated with, for the purpose of bringing about a more global psychological integration.

6. Hypnosis as a Dissociative Condition

For some, especially Haule, the concept of dissociation was central to hypnosis. Dissociation may be defined as a personality trait, characterized by modification of connections between the affect, cognition, and perception of voluntary control over behaviour, as well as modifications in the subjective experience of affect, voluntary control, and perception. In this process, a body of ideas, emotions, and behaviours is capable of splitting off from the personality to express itself with a certain degree of autonomy. This dissociated material, actively separated from awareness, can be brought to manifest itself through the use of certain techniques — among which hypnosis is one.

Automatic handwriting provides a poignant illustration of this phenomenon. The participant, conscious and alert, can watch his hand write out answers to questions or even produce lengthy narratives, as if detached from the supervision of the self. In this situation, there is an
observing ego and a dissociated ego that is perceived by the observing ego as acting independently. In clinical situations, these two egos can be seen when the participant, during induction with the arm levitation method, for example, is amazed to feel his arm rising, seemingly by itself, to eventually touch his face thus signaling the onset of hypnosis.

Although we do not know the precise nature of the mechanisms of dissociation either in the central nervous system or in the psychological architecture, this theory describes some but not all of the characteristics of hypnosis. The relationship of hypnotizability to the capacity for dissociation needs to be explored further for clarity.

7. Mid-Dissociation

Y. D. Tsai in 1995 proposed the “mid-dissociation” as part of his psychosomatic theory of dreams. For him, inside each brain, there is a programme “I” (the conscious self), which is distributed over the conscious brain and coordinates mental functions (cortices), such as thinking, imagining, sensing, moving, and reasoning. “I” also supervises memory storage. He says that many bizarre states of consciousness are the results of dissociation of certain mental functions from “I.” There are several possible types of dissociation known to occur: 1) the subject’s imagination is dissociated and sends the imagined content back to the sensory cortex resulting in dreams or hallucinations, 2) some senses are dissociated, resulting in hypnotic anesthesia, 3) motor function is dissociated, resulting in immobility, 4) reason is dissociated and the subject obeys the hypnotist’s orders, and 5) thought is dissociated and not controlled by reason, hence, for example, the subject can straighten his body between two chairs – with no support in between. The hypnotist’s suggestion can also influence the subject long after the hypnosis session. In a normal state of mind, the subject will do or believe as his reason dictates. But when hypnotized, reason is replaced by the hypnotist’s suggestions to make up decisions or beliefs, and the subject will be very uneasy in later days if he does not do things as decided or his belief is contradicted. We know that hypnotherapy is also based on this principle.

8. Gruzelier’s Neurophysiological Theory

This theory proposes that the high hypnotisables have better executive function than the low hypnotisables and can thus deploy their
attention in different ways. Gruzelier presents a model of hypnosis characterized by changes in brain function. He describes the process of hypnosis in three stages, each with its own characteristic pattern of brain activity. He proposes that changes in the way the “attentional control system” operates in hypnosis render the subject more suggestible.

In the first stage of induction, the subject pays close attention to the words of the hypnotist: Activity is increased in predominantly left-sided fronto-limbic brain regions. In the second stage, the subject lets go of controlled attention and gives control to the hypnotist: There is a reduction in the left frontal activity. In the third stage, there is an increase in right-sided temporo-posterior systems as the subject engages in passive imagery. By exhausting their frontal abilities during the induction, the highs end up frontally impaired in a hypnotic state.

This model is supported by behavioural and neurophysiological evidence and complements other state-like accounts of hypnotic functioning. Criticism of this model comes from sociocognitive theorists about whom we shall see later in this chapter.

9. Cold Control Theory

This theory considers the distinction between control and awareness in terms of higher order thought theory, which states that we are conscious of mental states by having thoughts about those states. A thought about being in a mental state is a second-order thought (SOT), because it is a mental state about a mental state (e.g. “I see that the rabbit is black”). This theory states that a successful response to hypnotic suggestions can be achieved by forming an intention to perform the action or cognitive activity required, without forming the higher order thought about intending that action that would normally accompany reflective performance of action.

10. Physiological Theories

Those who correlate conditions of consciousness with changes in the central nervous system or those who hold that physiological events may precede all mental events look for physical reasons to explain hypnosis (i.e., variations in the electroencephalogram [EEG], in evoked potentials, in cerebral blood flow, or in neurotransmitter dynamics).
For some, hypnosis is based upon physiological disturbances. For some others, the right hemisphere, with its connectedness to imagery and feeling states, is more involved with hypnotic phenomena. Others have been impressed by behavioural or anatomical capabilities such as the eye-roll sign (the capacity of the eyes to roll backward into the head) as reliable indicators of hypnotic susceptibility. If a particular neurophysiological constellation proves to be a characteristic feature of hypnosis, is it an effect of hypnosis or a cause? This question is yet to be answered.

11. Sleep State Theory

Early hypnotists were misled by the resemblance of the hypnotic state to sleep. It was thought that hypnosis was indeed a variant of the sleeping state. Yet they could not solve the apparent contradiction that their subjects behaved, in many ways, more as if awake than asleep.

Now sleep is understood as a state of aliveness than one of suspended animation. It has been divided and subdivided into stages correlated with a variety of dreaming activities, neurohumoral shifts, neurotransmitter metabolism changes, and chronobiological cycles. Sleep is a dynamic, phasic process with, presumably, several functions, some of which are still unclear.

Ivan Pavlov termed hypnosis “partial sleep.” For him both sleep and hypnosis resulted from the inhibition of certain cerebral areas. In hypnosis, the preservation of “sentinel points” or channels of communication accounted for some limited reactivity to surrounds. Some point out that light sleep can become hypnotic-like by means of establishing rapport through response to suggestion, and that, at times, hypnotized individuals have fallen asleep when left undisturbed or given appropriate suggestions.

When global physiological measures are considered, hypnosis is very close to wakefulness. Reflexes are not altered in hypnosis, whereas in sleep, they are diminished or absent. Moreover, sleep is accompanied by marked modifications in the output of awareness whereas in hypnosis, responsiveness to outside stimuli is preserved. In the current analysis, hypnosis appears to be a condition that is neither the usual waking state nor any of the sleep stages.
12. Hypnosis as Modified or Special State of Consciousness

The view that hypnosis is a special state of consciousness finds many followers. Hypnotized individuals often report experiences outside the realm of their ordinary reality. Many deeply hypnotized participants describe how incredibly relaxed or peaceful their experience was, and how differently they perceived the flow of time, the configuration of their body image, or the experiencing of their awareness.

During hypnosis, this subjective alteration in the personal field of awareness or aliveness is correlated by “state of consciousness” (or state) theorists to depth of hypnosis. State theorists posit quantitative (for example, the substantivity of consciousness), as well as qualitative changes (certain mental processes may be more or less operational, that is, shift to primary process thinking, alterations in ego mechanisms, or redirection to introspective orientation).

A strong support for the state theory is the occurrence of “trance logic” that refers to the ability of deeply hypnotized subjects to experience comfortably the coexistence of logically inconsistent perceptions or ideas. The ability of the subject to mix freely his perceptions derived from reality with those that stem from imagination and are perceived as hallucinations that cannot be done by imitators. However, trance logic is also found in dreams, in primary process thinking, and in schizophrenia. Therefore, one wonders how unique it is to hypnosis.

At this time, we may not have developed the terminology to describe the complex and varied conscious mental configuration in the mind’s repertory. Although theorists often put themselves in state and non-state camps, these divisions may, in the end, be unnecessarily polarizing. A more integrated view would see hypnotic phenomena as occurring within the context of certain mental sets (state theory) and as capable of being intensified and shaped by many relevant influences, such as social communication, cognitive factors, and interpersonal variables (non-state theory).

13. Hemispheric Laterality Theory

For centuries, the roles of the brain were not realized fully. The brain localizationists have worked to find discrete territories for each of the many faculties expressed by humans. Although successful for purely
motor or sensory modalities, this compartmentalizing approach has had many difficulties with the mapping of associational areas and with such psychological dimensions as emotionality, intelligence, and other higher mental functions. This line of research has provided an appreciation for the intricacies and the plasticity of the brain – as seen, for example, in its adaptation to injury – and for the dynamic interrelatedness of both hemispheres as they complement each other.

The left hemisphere in most individuals has more jurisdictions over expressive speech, syntax, writing, reading, arithmetic, and rhythm. The right hemisphere has greater involvement in processing visual, spatial configurations, holistic analyses, melody, imagery, and the proper interpretation of special meaning and metaphors.

It is in this area that hypnosis and hemispheric function meet. Can resistance to induction be considered a manifestation of logical left hemispheric overbearance? By what neurophysiological mechanisms do techniques such as confusion, paradox, double-bind (the simultaneous communication of conflicting messages), or reframing (changing a person’s perspective of events or situations in order to change their meaning), work to circumvent them? How can abilities inherently present in the right or the left hemisphere be best utilized to enhance the effectiveness of therapeutic hypnotic intervention? These are all questions yet to be answered satisfactorily.

14. **Systems theory**

Systems theory is an extension of Braid’s original conceptualization of hypnosis as involving a process of enhancing or depressing nervous system activity. Systems theory considers the nervous system’s organization into interacting subsystems. Hypnotic phenomena involve not only increased or decreased activity of particular subsystems, but also their interaction. In this the central phenomenon is that of feedback loops, which suggest a mechanism for creating hypnotic phenomena.

15. **Social-Cognitive/Cognitive-Behavioural/Response Set Theory**

State theories argue that processes such as “repression” or “dissociation” operate when subjects are given a suggestion, whereas
non-state theories view subjects as active “doers” and observe the suggested effect as an enactment rather than a happening.

Social-cognitive theory of hypnosis argues that the experience of effortlessness in hypnosis results from subjects’ motivated tendencies to interpret hypnotic suggestions as not requiring active planning and effort (i.e. the experience of effortlessness stems from an attributional error). The attribution of volition depends on the kind of response-set which has been put into place, and if a hypnotic response-set is in place then volition is attributed externally. In other words, effortlessness in hypnosis comes about when individuals expect things to be effortless, and “decide” (more or less consciously) to respond along with suggestions.

The socio-cognitive hypnosis theories do not imply that subjects are always “faking,” or not really experiencing an involuntary hypnotic response. Even though these models make use of the terms such as “role enactment” or “self-presentation” they are still entirely consistent with the notion that hypnotized subjects have unusual experiences.

16. Spanos’ Socio-Cognitive Theory

Spanos observed that attitudes, beliefs, imaginings, attributions, and expectancies all shaped hypnotic phenomena. He used the construct of strategic role enactment to explain how individuals transform imaginings, thoughts, and feelings into experiences and behaviours that are consistent with their ideas of how a good hypnotic subject should respond to the overall hypnotic context and specific suggestions in particular. According to him how subjects construe the hypnotic role is a key determinant of hypnotic responsiveness. He says that hypnotic behaviours could be explained by the same normal social-psychological processes that explain non-hypnotic behaviours. Amnesia and the response of high hypnotizables to suggestions for amnesia are often not what they seem but in fact reflect mundane social-cognitive processes such as compliance-induced reporting biases, alterations in attentional focus, and misattribution of experience, rather than such special processes as dissociation.
17. Kirsch and Lynn’s Social Cognitive Approach

This theory emphasizes response expectancies as a determinant of behaviour. It proposes that subjects in a hypnotic situation have generalized response expectancy (a belief) that they will follow the hypnotist’s instructions and will produce behaviours that are experienced as involuntary. A consequence of this is that these subjects attribute hypnotic responses to external causes (i.e. the hypnotist) and experience them as involuntary. But hypnotic responses are initiated by the same mechanisms as voluntary responses; the difference is in how the behaviours are experienced.

18. Conditioning and Inhibition Theory

This theory defines hypnotic induction as the giving of a set of suggestions so that a positive response to a previous suggestion conditions the subject to respond more strongly to the next suggestion. This induction is placed in a conditioning paradigm. A hypnotic induction is explained as the conditioning of an inhibitory set, which increases responsivity to suggestion by inhibiting stimuli and thoughts which would contradict the suggested response.

19. Hypnosis as an Atavistic Phenomenon

This theory holds that hypnosis represents a more primordial style of mentation, a return to an archaic mental functioning, in which suggestion plays an important role. This primeval mental state is normally superseded, but not replaced, in the waking state by logical, intellectual, and critical faculties. In this model, during the antediluvian periods of their mental evolution, humans functioned much more fully in modes of thought in which nonverbal communication, hypnotic-like rapport, and body/mind connectedness were in prominent evidence.

This theory explains several facets of hypnosis. In many hypnotic inductions, critical faculties are placed at bay by giving monotonous, repetitive suggestions. The prestige of the hypnotist is influential, perhaps in the same way as that of important figures long ago in our evolutionary past. Nonverbal communications are well known to occur prominently in hypnosis. Participants often report being able to draw inferences from many subliminal cues and to have increased sensitivity to the meta-meaning and the emotional messages inherent in communications.
In this theory, the depth of hypnosis can be equated to the completeness of regression. Spontaneous pseudo-trance or daydreams could represent a mixture of neotic and atavistic processes. Posthypnotic suggestion phenomenon, the remarkable action by which instructions given during hypnosis are carried out seemingly automatically at some point in the future, and sometimes in the distant future, are explained by a mechanism of introjections. In introjections a participant accepts the hypnotist’s messages as his own and carries them out as self-fulfilling and time-released personal actions. This theory though attractive does not adequately account for hypnotic phenomena such as anesthesia and hallucinations.

20. Psychoanalytically Oriented Theories

Very much similar to the atavistic theory, but much more centered on stages of personal development, are the psychoanalytically inspired theories of hypnosis that see portions of the participant’s psyche as regressing to an infantile ego state, with the hypnotist acting as a parental figure. The concept of hypnotic rapport becomes imbued with notions of transference, the process by which feelings, attitudes, and wishes, originally linked with an important person in one’s earlier life, are channeled onto others.

Sigmund Freud had difficulty integrating hypnosis into his psychoanalytic theory. He saw hypnotic phenomena through the perspective of transference. Ferenczi believed that hypnosis recapitulated the Oedipal situation. He also used expressions such as “paternal hypnosis” and “maternal hypnosis” to further describe the nature of the libidinal regression. If the induction was of the authoritarian or commanding type, the subject would associate the hypnotist with a strong father, and if permissive, with the mother. Implied in this view is a gender-oriented element in the hypnotic condition that, barring some claims by occasional subjects who experience erotic feeling in their trance, is not evident in clinical observations.
In the psychoanalytic view, hypnosis implies a regressed condition in which magical expectations, dependency strivings, and primitive wishes and fears are operational. In this perspective, the hypnotist is placed in an omnipotent position. Many did not accept this particular concept while others pointing to the rich potential of the transference condition implied in hypnosis, have integrated its applications within the psychotherapeutic context.

21. Behavioural Theories

This viewpoint contrasts with state theories of hypnosis, seeking to strip the hypnotic state of its status as a separate entity or as a distinct condition of consciousness. To bolster this position, some authors point out that all the phenomenon said to occur in the hypnotic condition can be produced in ordinary subjects in their normal waking state.

Now the question is if hypnosis is a more or less consciously determined simulation. It is not so. Because, for example, if a major operation is attempted on the hypnotized person and another simulator, the simulator will quickly give up his pretence when the doctor approaches him with a scalpel. Again a simulator cannot truly experience an auditory or visual hallucination. Simulation is a conscious maneuver. Some believe that hypnosis derives from deep motivations to behave like a hypnotized person should. The definition of what constitutes hypnotic behaviour can be overtly or subtly communicated by our culture or by the hypnotist who presents cues, verbal and nonverbal, to this effect. This would explain the varied manifestations of hypnosis in different cultures and during different historical period, but it would not elucidate the deeper intrapsychic mechanisms presumably needed for their creation.

The drive to behave in ways suggested by the hypnotist is related, in this model, to the completeness of the hypnotic rapport. The strength of the motivation to fulfill the hypnotist’s expectations has been proven to be remarkably strong in some individuals. It is felt that the role-taking behaviour of the subject may be so complete, profound, and intense that there is total belief in its consistency and validity. The behavior of the hypnotized individual becomes wholly congruent with self-image. The suggested perception of reality assumes such complete self-synchronicity that phenomena, even phenomena involving the deepest mechanisms of
perception and the participation of the autonomic nervous system, are spontaneously expressed.

22. Social Role-Taking Theory

Theodore Sarbin proposed and pioneered the “social role-taking” theory. He argued that hypnotic responses were motivated attempts to fulfill the socially constructed roles of hypnotic subjects. This theory also led to the misunderstanding of hypnosis as faking. But Theodore Sarbin emphasized the difference between faking and role-taking. In faking there is little subjective identification with the role in question. In role-taking the subject not only acts externally in accord with the role but also subjectively identifies with it to some degree (acting, thinking, and feeling “as if” he is hypnotized). Those who fake cannot undergo a surgery whereas those role-taking can subject themselves for surgery.

He further explained the difference when he spoke of the similarity between role-taking in hypnosis and role-taking in other areas such as method acting, mental illness, and shamanic possession. This theory clearly explains the stage hypnosis in which there is clearly strong pressure to comply with a socially constructed role by performing accordingly on a theatrical stage. So the social constructionism and role-taking theory of hypnosis suggest that individuals are enacting (as opposed to merely playing) a role and that really there is no such thing as a hypnotic trance. A socially constructed relationship is said to be built depending on how much rapport has been established between the hypnotist and the subject.

There are some psychologists like Robert Baker and Graham Wagstaff who claim that what we call hypnosis is actually a form of learned social behaviour, a complex hybrid of social compliance, relaxation, and suggestibility that can account for many esoteric behavioural manifestations.

23. Cognitive-Behaviour Theory

A non-state “cognitive-behavioural” theory of hypnosis was proposed by Barber, Spanos, and Chaves in 1974. This is in some respects similar to Sarbin’s social role-taking theory and building upon the earlier research of Barber. According to this theory, hypnosis is explained as an extension of ordinary psychological processes like imagination, relaxation,
expectation, and social compliance. Barber argued that responses to hypnotic suggestions were mediated by a “positive cognitive set” consisting of positive expectations, attitudes, and motivation. It was Daniel Araoz subsequently coined the acronym “TEAM” to mean the subject’s orientation to hypnosis in terms of “trust,” “expectation,” “attitude,” and “motivation.” Barber also noted that similar factors mediate the response both to hypnotism and to cognitive-behavioural theory (CBT), in particular systematic desensitization. This theory led to the growing interest in the relationship between hypnotherapy and CBT.

24. Ego-Psychological Theory

This theory proposes that the depth of a hypnotic trance is related to the degree to which the participant loses awareness of the distinction between imagination and reality. This distinction is termed the “generalized reality orientation” and is characteristic of normal psychological functioning. It distinguishes between primary processes (emotional, holistic, illogical, unconscious, developmentally immature) and secondary process (affect-free, analytical, logical, conscious, developmentally mature). Whereas normal adult functioning is biased towards secondary processing, the induction of hypnosis makes the subject “let go” of some secondary process activity. This theory is not well-defined and thus not as easily testable or falsifiable.

25. Brown and Oakley’s Integrative Cognitive Theory

Placing emphasis on the nature of perception and consciousness, Brown and Oakley incorporate ideas from both dissociated control and response-set theories. They include the dissociated control theory concept which suggests that responses may be facilitated by an inhibition of high-level attention, and the response-set idea that suggests involuntariness is an attribution about the causes of behaviour.

26. Kihlstrom’s Third Way

This third way in hypnosis research construes hypnosis simultaneously as both a state (sometimes) of profound cognitive change, involving basic mechanisms of cognition and consciousness, and as a social interaction, in which the hypnotist and the subject come together for a specific purpose within a wider socio-cultural context.
12. THE CONSCIOUS

Sigmund Freud divided the human mind into the conscious, the preconscious, and the unconscious. When the word “subconscious” is used in hypnotic literatures, it refers to the “unconscious” of Freud. One is conscious when one is awake; and unconscious when one is asleep (and during certain medical conditions). Planning, decision making, working, studying, and other everyday activities are under the control of one’s conscious. Dreams, for example, come from one’s unconscious.

1. The Beginning

It was only towards the 18th century that studies were done on consciousness. John Locke addressed the issue of consciousness. The philosophers studied the idea of consciousness of self. What distinguishes humans from animals is the fact that humans are aware (conscious) that they are aware (conscious). What is in the unconscious helps us to get along in society. But the conscious defends it. Therefore, there is a problem in positive thinking. It stays in our conscious and does not usually get through to the unconscious. It is in the unconscious that changes take place. Now in hypnosis, we get through to the unconscious and this is the task of self-hypnosis.

2. Levels of Consciousness

The levels of human consciousness can range from being fully alert to being deeply asleep. By the brain wave frequency, each level is distinguished. One need not imagine that there are rigid boundaries for all of them. These states can easily blend into each other.

Beta: It is the normal state. Full consciousness having 13-25 cycles per second (of brain wave frequency).

Alpha: Twilight period between being asleep and being awake. Hypnosis and Meditation having 8-12 cycles per second (of brain wave frequency).

Theta: Deep hypnosis and meditation having 4-7 cycles per second (of brain wave frequency).

Delta: Full Sleep having 0.5-3 cycles per second (of brain wave frequency).

Alpha and Theta are altered states of consciousness. In these states behaviour modifications are likely to take place. If
suggestions are given at these states, they go directly into the unconscious without any interference from the analytical conscious mind. The unconscious has no power of reasoning and will accept the suggestions as they are and will act upon them. Suggestions can be effective under normal consciousness that is Beta level. Research shows that suggestions are more effective under an altered state.

3. Content of the Conscious

In Freud’s psychoanalytic theory of personality, the conscious consists of everything inside of our awareness. It is the mental processing that one can think and talk about in a rational way. The conscious includes such things as the sensations, perceptions, memories, feelings, and fantasies inside of our current awareness. Closely connected to the conscious is the “preconscious.” It includes the things that we are not thinking of at the moment but which we can easily draw into conscious awareness — like the rhyme we learned in childhood which is not in the conscious but is in the preconscious and we can very easily retrieve it into the conscious.

The conscious keeps hidden from awareness the repressed material and pushes them into the unconscious. For Freud, the unconscious has influence on our behaviour. To explain the reality of the conscious and the unconscious, Freud made use of the metaphor of an iceberg. The tip of the iceberg that extends above the water represents the conscious mind. Beneath the water is the much larger bulk of the iceberg, which represents the unconscious. Though the conscious and the preconscious are important, according to Freud, they are far less vital than the unconscious. He said that the things hidden from awareness exerted the greatest influence over our personalities and behaviours.

4. Different Views

In history, hypnotists considered differently about how suggestions are directed and to what region. Some believed that suggestions are a form of communication directed primarily to the subject’s conscious mind. There are others who believed that suggestions are means of communicating with the unconscious or subconscious.
These concepts were introduced to hypnotism by Sigmund Freud and Pierre Janet at the end of the 19th century.

But Braid and Berhheim did not employ these concepts but considered hypnotic suggestions to be addressed to the subject’s conscious mind. Braid considers hypnotism as focused (conscious) attention upon a dominant idea (suggestion). These differences only show that there are different views regarding the nature of the mind. Now it is observed that those who believed like Theodore Barber and Nicholas Spanos that responses to suggestions are primarily mediated by the conscious mind, made use of direct verbal suggestions and instructions.

On the contrary, those who believed (like Milton H. Erickson) that responses to suggestions are mediated primarily by an unconscious mind, made use of indirect suggestions, such as metaphors or stories, whose intended meaning may be concealed from the conscious mind of the subject.

5. Relationship between the Conscious and the Unconscious

It is good to keep in mind while studying higher trance, the differences between the conscious and the unconscious and how they inter-relate and maintain trance states. The predominant school of thought on hypnosis proposes that hypnosis is a way to access a person’s unconscious mind directly. One is aware (conscious) of the thought process in one’s conscious mind. One thinks of the problems that are right in front of him, consciously choosing words as one speaks. But in all these, one’s conscious mind is working hand-in-hand with one’s unconscious mind. The unconscious is behind the scene thinking. Actually the unconscious accesses the vast reservoir of information that lets one solve problems, construct sentences, or locate anything that has been lost.

The unconscious puts together plans and ideas and runs them by one’s conscious mind. Whenever a new idea comes to a person it is because he has already thought through the process unconsciously. There are a number of things we do automatically that are run by the unconscious. Which of us actively works through the steps of breathing minute to minute? All these are done by our unconscious. Typing, driving, or swimming and many other small things are done by the unconscious.
Our unconscious also processes the physical information our bodies receive. Therefore, our unconscious is the real brain behind every operation we do consciously. The unconscious does our thinking, and it decides a lot of what we want to do. Our conscious works to evaluate a lot of these thoughts, makes decisions, and puts certain ideas into action. It also processes new information and relays them to the unconscious. When we are asleep, the conscious mind gets out of the way, and our unconscious has free rein. Hypnotists theorize that the deep relaxation and focusing exercises of hypnotism work to calm and subdue the conscious mind so that it takes a less active role in our thinking process. In the hypnotic state, one is still aware of what is going on, but one’s conscious mind takes a back seat to one’s unconscious. This is precisely what allows the hypnotist to work directly with the unconscious.

6. Dreams Are Communication Channels

Recurring stories that unravel in our brains as we sleep can sometimes be the key to solve or open a variety of roadblocks that may be strewn across our paths during our daily lives. Usually we dream our dreams in peace without being woken up by them. Our dreams are communicating something important. At times ignoring them may cost us much. We can say that difficult and recurring dreams are merely a frustrated or angry voice trying to get our attention to sort out the discomfort that is being experienced at the unconscious. Perhaps running away from the challenges of addressing this type of dreams can lead one into ever increasing spirals of misery, anger, or depression. The unconscious has a way of communicating.11
13. THE UNCONSCIOUS

Our unconscious takes care of all the things we do automatically. We do not actively work through the steps of breathing. We are not aware of every little thing we do while driving. These are done by our unconscious. Our unconscious also processes the physical information our body receives. Our unconscious does most of our thinking and decides a lot of what we do. When we are awake, our conscious works to evaluate many of our thoughts, makes decisions and puts various ideas into action and processes new information and relays it to the unconscious. But when we are asleep, the conscious gets out of the way, leaving our unconscious with free reign.

Whenever fixed ideas are accepted by the unconscious, they stay there, until they are replaced. Once they reside in the unconscious, they influence one’s attitude and behaviour. Let us see how the fixed ideas get into the unconscious. In fact, fixed ideas can be accepted at any age, but they are more likely to take root when we are young since young children lack fully developed reasoning power. It is not that children accept everything they are told, but they are more likely to believe things that damage their self-image than adults. When ideas come from an authority are repeated, and have an emotional component, they are more likely to be accepted even if they are only overheard. Thus a child may come to believe that he is stupid or incapable of doing something, if he hears it often enough.

1. The Unconscious

The unconscious mind (or the unconscious) consists of the process in the mind that occurs automatically and is not available to introspection, and includes thought processes, memory, affect, and motivation. Though these processes exist outside the awareness of the conscious, they exert an impact on behaviour. The term “unconscious” was coined by the 18th century German romantic philosopher Friedrich Schelling and later introduced into English by the poet and essayist Samuel Taylor Coleridge. The unconscious was popularized by the Austrian neurologist and psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud. Empirical research indicates that the unconscious phenomena include repressed feelings,
automatic skills, subliminal perceptions, thoughts, habits, and automatic
reactions, and possibly also the complexes, hidden phobias, and desires.

According to psychoanalysis, unconscious processes are said
to be expressed in dreams in a symbolic form, as well as in slips of the
tongue and jokes. So the unconscious mind can be seen as the source
of dreams and automatic thoughts (those that appear without any apparent
cause), the repository of forgotten memories (that may still be accessible
to consciousness at some later time), and the locus of implicit knowledge
(the things that we have learned so well that we do them without thinking).
Human consciousness is understood to be influenced by other parts of
the mind. The other parts of the mind include unconsciousness as a
personal habit, being unaware, and intuition. Terms related to semi-
consciousness include awakening, implicit memory, subliminal
messages, trances, hypnagogia, and hypnosis. While sleep, sleep
walking, dreaming, delirium, and comas may signal the presence of
unconscious processes, these processes are not the unconscious mind
itself, but rather symptoms. There are also some critics who doubt the
existence of the unconscious.

2. An Historical Overview

Things that originate from outside of our consciousness and
influence our thinking were reflected in the ancient ideas of temptation,
divine inspiration, and the predominant role of the gods in affecting motives
and actions. The concept of internalized unconscious processes in the
mind was also insinuated in antiquity and has been explored across
wide variety of cultures. The unconscious dimension of mentality was
referred to between 2500 and 600 BC in the Hindu texts of Vedas. It is
found today in Ayurvedic medicine. Paracelsus is said to be the first
person to make mention of an unconscious aspect of cognition in his
work “Von den Krankheiten” (About Illness, 1567). His clinical
methodology created a coherent system which is regarded by some as
the beginning of modern scientific psychology. William Shakespeare
did mention the role of the unconscious in many of his plays though he
did not name it explicitly. Western philosophers Baruch Spinoza, Gottfried
Leibniz, Arthur Schopenhauer, Johann Gottlieb Fichte, Georg Wilhelm
Friedrich Hegel, Soren Kierkegaard, and Friedrich Nietzsche
foreshadowed Freud’s theories. In 1890, William James, in his treatise
on psychology examined the way Schopenhauer, von Hartmann, Janet, Binet had used the term “unconscious” and “subconscious.” Therefore, it is not Freud who discovered the unconscious. Now, of course, there is no psychologist or psychiatrist who does not recognize the unconscious cerebration not only real but of the highest importance.

1) Sigmund Freud’s View of the Unconscious

An iceberg is used as a visual representation of Freud’s theory that most of the human mind operates unconsciously. Freud divided the human mind into the conscious mind and the unconscious mind. In this theory, the unconscious refers to the mental processes of which individuals are unaware. Freud proposed a vertical and hierarchical architecture of human consciousness as the conscious mind, the preconscious mind, and the unconscious mind, each lying beneath the other. Freud was of the opinion that significant psychic events take place below the surface in the unconscious mind. He said that such events have both symbolic and actual significance. According to the theory of psychoanalysis, the unconscious does not include all that is not conscious, but rather what is actively repressed from conscious thought or what a person is averse to knowing consciously. Freud saw the unconscious as a repository for socially unacceptable ideas, wishes, or desires, traumatic memories, and painful emotions put out of mind by the mental mechanism called “repression.”

The contents of the unconscious does not necessarily have to be solely negative. The unconscious is a force that can only be recognized by its effects. It expresses itself in the symptom. This view considers the conscious as an adversary to its unconscious, warring to keep the unconscious hidden. Unconscious thoughts are not directly accessible to ordinary introspection, but are supposed to be capable of being “tapped” and “interpreted” by special methods and techniques like free association, dream analysis, and verbal slips in psychoanalysis. Since the unconscious thoughts are normally cryptic, psychoanalysts interpret their messages. Freud thought that psychological disturbances are largely caused by personal conflicts existing at the unconscious level. His theory attempts to explain personality, motivation, and mental disorders by
focusing on unconscious determinants of behaviour. Freud also used the concept of the unconscious to explain certain kinds of neurotic behaviour. The theory of the unconscious by Freud was substantially accepted by his followers chief among whom are Carl Jung and Jacques Lacan.

2) Carl Jung’s View of the Unconscious

Carl Gustav Jung, the Swiss psychiatrist, accepted the concept of the unconscious of Freud as a determinant of personality and took it further by dividing the unconscious into two layers naming them as the “personal unconscious” and the “collective unconscious.” The personal unconscious of Jung corresponds to the unconscious of Freud when Jung said that the personal unconscious is a reservoir of material that was once conscious but has been forgotten or suppressed. The collective unconscious is the deepest level of the psyche, containing the accumulation of inherited psychic structures and archetypal experiences. Archetypes are images with universal meanings that are apparent in the culture’s use of symbols. Thus, the collective unconscious is inherited. It contains material of an entire species rather than an individual. Each one of us shares the collective unconscious with the entire human race. It is the whole spiritual heritage of humankind’s evolution, born anew in the brain structure of every person. Thus Jung differed from Freud in the concept of the structure of the unconscious and also did not accept the belief of Freud that sexuality is at the base of all unconscious thoughts.

3) The Unconscious in Contemporary Cognitive Psychology

The theory of psychoanalysis was the first one to focus on the phenomenon of unconscious mental activity. A lot of research is done in contemporary cognitive psychology on the mental activity that is not mediated by conscious awareness. As against the psychoanalytic tradition which speculates (in the sense of being hard to empirically verify) Oedipus complex or Electra complex, the cognitive tradition of research on unconscious processes is based on relatively few theoretical assumptions and is very empirically oriented (in the sense of being mostly data driven). Cognitive psychology points out that automatically and clearly outside of conscious awareness, individuals register and acquire more information than what they can experience through their conscious thoughts.
3. The Unconscious Is Most Powerful

Hypnosis can be said to be a condition of profound relaxation which one allows oneself to enter, during which time there is an altered state of conscious awareness. In order to understand hypnosis proper it is good to have sufficient information about the unconscious. The unconscious is the part of our mind that is the most powerful, containing infinite wisdom and memory and a very deep level of intelligence. It is our untapped resource for creativity and imagination. Our unconscious is the seat of all our emotions and it directs nearly all of our behaviour. The unconscious is also responsible for maintaining our body in good health and for all autonomic processes like breathing, blood circulation, and tissue regeneration, repair, fight or flight responses. It is estimated that there are over 20 trillion cells in the human body and over 2,000 chemical reactions in every cell every second of every day, all of which happen unconsciously. It is the unconscious that is constantly monitoring millions of bits of information every second and it is making decisions for us about the data. Research indicates that we are able to process 7 unique pieces of data at any one time. Therefore, there are so many processes which happen unconsciously or outside of our normal conscious awareness. It is the unconscious that looks after us and guides us through life.

4. The Power to Change Resides in the Unconscious

Hypnosis is simply a relaxed state of focused attention. By temporarily bypassing one’s conscious, it gives one the power to make behavior changes at a deeper level than when one attempts to make changes at the conscious level. Hypnosis increases the communication between one’s conscious desires (like giving up smoking), and the unconscious (where one’s true power to change exists).

5. The Unconscious Is Faster in Processing

One’s conscious mind is only able to process approximately 50 bits of information a second, whereas the unconscious processes approximately 11 million bits per second. This will mean that our unconscious is about 220 thousand times faster than our conscious. Changes leading to success require changes to one’s beliefs about
oneself, the world, and others. It also involves making real changes in one’s habits, preferences, and behaviours. It stands to reason to imagine that we can make more efficient changes with little interference from the conscious as possible. Thus, one can access the incredible processing power of one’s unconscious without conscious interference. The conscious is concerned about its main role in getting one through the day in the here and now and not with changes.

6. Involving the Unconscious for Change

One may wonder why one cannot just decide to make a change, and stick to it and why one needs to involve the unconscious. Research shows that just one act of self-control depletes one’s ability to have self-control in another unrelated area. For example, one is told not to eat ice cream, but by this his ability to settle a simple solvable problem decreases. We have a limited capacity for conscious self-control. But it is not the case with our unconscious.

7. Controversy

First of all whether there is the unconscious is a disputed issue. Franz Brentano rejected the concept of the unconscious of Freud in 1874. Jean-Paul Satre criticizes the theory of the unconscious of Freud saying that consciousness is essentially self-conscious and repression of Freud is flawed. Erich Fromm says that the term “the unconscious” is a mystification even though we may use it for reasons of convenience. For him, there is no such thing as the unconscious, there are only experiences of which we are aware, and others of which we are not aware that is, of which we are unconscious, one might say. He gives an example saying that if one hates another because of fear, the individual is aware of his hate but not of the fear. One might say that the individual is conscious of the hate and the fear is unconscious as a way of talking for reasons of convenience. Yet his fear does not lie in a mysterious place called “the unconscious.”

John Searle says that the very notion of a collection of thoughts that exists in a privileged region of the mind such that they are in principle never accessible to conscious awareness, is incoherent. It does not imply that there are not non-conscious processes that form the basis of much
of conscious life. But he argues that to posit the existence of something that is like a thought in every way except for the fact that no one can ever be aware of it is an incoherent concept. If you think of something as a thought it either implies that it is being thought by a thinker or that it could be thought by a thinker. Processes that are not causally related to the phenomenon called thinking are more appropriately called the non-conscious processes of the brain. David Holmes says that there is no positive evidence for the concept of “repression.” Some of those who do not accept the concept of the unconscious of Freud posit “cognitive unconscious” (John Kihlstrom), an “adaptive unconscious” (Timothy Wilson), or a “dumb unconscious” (Loftus & Klinger) which executes automatic processes but lacks the complex mechanisms of repression and symbolic return of the repressed.

Current cognitive psychology seeks to strip the notion of the unconscious from its Freudian heritage, and alternative terms such as “implicit,” or “automatic” have come into currency. These traditions emphasize the degree to which cognitive processing happens outside the scope of cognitive awareness and point out that things we are unaware of can nonetheless influence other cognitive processes as well as behaviour.

8. Dreams and the Unconscious

The purpose of dreams is to look into the unconscious urges and unmet needs and seek to fulfil these wishes subconsciously. Since one cannot fulfil such urges in real life, one seeks to fulfil these urges through the process of dreaming. Freud said that the wish-fulfilling aspect of the dream may be disguised due to the difficulty in distinguishing between manifest content and latent content. The manifest content is the plot of a dream at the surface level while the latent content is the hidden or disguised meaning of the events in the plot. The latent content of the dream is what supports the idea of wish fulfilment. It represents the intimate information in the dreamer’s current issues and childhood conflicts.

Opposing Theories

As against the theory of Freud on dreams, Rosalind Cartwright proposed that dreams provide people with the opportunity to act out and work through everyday problems and emotional issues in a non-real setting.
with no consequences. According to her cognitive problem-solving view, a large amount of continuity exists between our waking thoughts and the thoughts that exist in dreams. People who subscribe to this idea believe that dreams allow participation in creative thinking and alternate ways to handle situations when dealing with personal issues because dreams are not restrained by logic or realism. Allan Hobson and his followers came up with the “activation-synthesis hypothesis” which proposes that dreams are simply the side effects of the neural activity in the brain that produces beta brain waves during rapid eye movement (REM) sleep that are associated with wakefulness. They hypothesize that the neurons fire periodically during sleep in the lower brain levels and thus send random signals to the cortex. The cortex then synthesizes a dream in reaction to these signals in order to try to make sense of why the brain is sending them. This theory does not state that dreams are meaningless. It only downplays the role that emotional factors play in determining dreams.\textsuperscript{12}
14. DISSOCIATION

The phenomenon of dissociation is one of the central themes in hypnosis. An understanding of this aspect of hypnosis will help one grasp the full implication of the working of hypnosis in the treatment of subjects.

1. Various Meanings

A hypnotizable person is one who has the ability to dissociate. The problem with this concept is that it has more than one meaning. (1) It is used to mean the ability to perform two tasks simultaneously, (2) It points to the ability to focus upon one activity to the exclusion of all other elements in a situation (in which case it may be formally indistinguishable from absorption), and (3) It involves the notion of processing information at a level that is not accessible to conscious awareness (Ernest R. Hilgard 1977). With all these contrary connotations, the fact that the concept has survived for a long time indicates that this concept is implicated in the hypnotic process. Perhaps to be useful, it needs a reformulation that removes the various ambiguities.

2. Dissociation in Psychology

In psychology, dissociation means a wide array of experiences from a mild detachment from immediate surroundings to a more severe detachment from physical and emotional experience. It is best understood as a continuum. The most distinguishing characteristic of dissociation is a detachment from reality rather than a loss of reality as in psychosis. In cases that are mild, dissociation can be considered as a coping mechanism or defence mechanism in attempting to master, minimize, or tolerate stress, including boredom or conflict. At the non-pathological end of the continuum, dissociation is understood as common events such as daydreaming while driving a vehicle. Going further along the continuum are non-pathological altered states of consciousness. More pathological dissociation involves dissociative disorders, including dissociative fugue, and depersonalization disorder with or without alterations in personal identity or sense of self. Examples of these alterations are:

A sense that the self or the world is unreal (depersonalization and derealization); a loss of memory (amnesia); forgetting identity or...
assuming a new self (fugue); and fragmentation of identity or self into separate streams of consciousness (dissociative identity disorder which was formerly termed as multiple personality disorder); and serious forms of post-traumatic stress disorder. Dissociative disorders are sometimes triggered by trauma, but may be preceded even by stress, psychoactive substances, or no identifiable trigger at all. The International Classification of Diseases - 10 (ICD-10) classifies conversion disorder as dissociative disorder while the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DMS-IV) groups all dissociative disorders into a single category. Some dissociative disruptions involve amnesia while other dissociative events do not. Dissociative disorders are typically experienced as startling, autonomous intrusions into an individual’s usual ways of responding or functioning. Since they are unexpected and largely inexplicable in nature, they tend to be quite unsettling.

3. History

The French philosopher and psychiatrist Pierre Janet (1859-1947) is regarded as the author of the concept of dissociation. He did not believe that dissociation was a psychological defense as proposed in the theory of psychoanalysis of Freud. For Janet, dissociation occurred only in persons who had a constitutional weakness of mental functioning that led to hysteria when they were stressed. He insisted that dissociation was a mental or cognitive deficit. Thus, he concluded that trauma is one of the many stressors that could worsen the already-impaired mental efficiency of a hysteric, thereby generating a number of hysterical (in today’s language “dissociative”) symptoms.

There was a lull in the interest of dissociation until Ernest Hilgard (1977) revived it. Carl Jung says that pathological manifestations of dissociation are special or extreme cases of the normal operation of the psyche. This structural dissociation, opposing tension, and hierarchy of basic attitudes and functions in normal individual consciousness are the basis of his “Psychological Types.” Dissociation, for him, is a natural necessity for consciousness to operate in one faculty unhampered by the demands of its opposite. Interest in dissociation as a clinical feature has been growing in recent years as knowledge of post-traumatic stress disorder, dissociative identity disorder, multiple personality controversy, and neuroimaging increased.
4. Relation to Trauma and Abuse

Dissociation has been considered as one of the constellation of symptoms experienced by some victims of multiple forms of childhood trauma, including physical, psychological, and sexual abuse. Dissociation is correlated with a history of trauma. Dissociation is much more common among those who are traumatized, yet at the same time there are many who have suffered from trauma but who do not show dissociative symptoms. Adult dissociation when comorbid with a history of child abuse and otherwise interpersonal violence has been shown to contribute to disturbance in parenting behaviour. Such behaviour may contribute to cycles of familial violence and trauma. Just like wealth, land and property are inherited to children, the tendency to abuse one’s children may be inherited by the parents to their children – unless the parents are aware of their oppressive patterns, get psychotherapeutic or other help, and heal themselves. An abused child has more chance to become an abuser himself/herself.

Symptoms of dissociation resulting from trauma may include depersonalization, psychological numbing, disengagement, or amnesia regarding the events of the abuse. It is believed that dissociation may provide a temporary effective defense mechanism in cases of severe trauma. All the same, in the long run, dissociation is associated with decreased psychological functioning and adjustment. Child abuse, especially chronic abuse starting at early ages, has been related to high levels of dissociative symptoms in a clinical setup — including amnesia for the abuse memories. The levels of dissociation are found to increase with the severity of the abuse. It is hypothesized that current or recent trauma may affect an individual’s assessment of the more distant past, changing the experience of the past and resulting in dissociative states.

5. Dissociation and Dissociative Disorders

Dissociation is a mental process that causes a lack of connection in a person’s thoughts, memory, and sense of identity. It seems to fall on a continuum of severity. Mild form of it would be like daydreaming, getting lost in a book, or when one is driving down a familiar stretch of road and realizes that one does not remember the last several miles. A severe and more chronic form is seen in Dissociative Identity
Disorder, once called Multiple Personality Disorder and other Dissociative Disorders.

6. How Common Is Dissociation?

Transient and mild dissociative experiences are common. Nearly one third of the population seems to have occasionally experienced as though they are watching themselves in a movie. The incidence of these experiences is highest in youth; and it steadily declines after the age of 20. Seven percent of the population may have suffered a dissociative disorder at some time. It is also true that these disorders go undiagnosed for many years.

7. Forms of Dissociation

The different forms of dissociative disorders are “psychogenic amnesia” (the inability to recall personally significant memories), “psychogenic fugue” (memory loss characteristic of amnesia, loss of one’s identity, and fleeing from one’s home environment), and “multiple personality” (the person has two or more distinct personalities that alternate with one another and it is also known as “Dissociative Identity Disorder” or “Multiple Personality Disorder”).

8. Theories of Dissociation

1) Dissociation (Psychology)

Pierre Janet who was working with hysterical patients originally developed the idea of “dissociation of consciousness.” For him hypnosis was an example of dissociation, whereby areas of an individual’s behavioural control is separate from ordinary awareness. Hypnosis, according to him, removes some control from the conscious mind, and the individual would respond with autonomic, reflexive behaviour. Weitzenhoffer explains hypnosis by this theory as “dissociation of awareness from the majority of sensory and even strictly neural events taking place.”

2) Hilgard’s Neodissociation Theory (Hilgard, 1979, 1986) (pp. 99-100)

3) Dissociated Control Theory (DCT) (Bowers, 1992; Woody & Bowers, 1994) (pp.100-101)

4) Dissociated-Experience Theory (p.101)

5) Hypnosis as a Dissociative Condition (pp.101)

6) Ego State Theory (pp.101)
15. TRANSFERENCE

In general, transference is a phenomenon characterized by unconscious redirection of feelings from one person to another. It can also be defined differently: Transference is the inappropriate repetition in the present of a relationship that was important in a person’s childhood. It is the redirection of feelings and desires and especially of those unconsciously retained from childhood toward a new object. It is a reproduction of emotions relating to repressed experiences, especially of childhood, and the substitution of another person for the original object of the repressed impulses. Transference was first introduced by Sigmund Freud, who acknowledged its importance for psychoanalysis for a better understanding of the patient’s feelings.

1. Occurrence

It is quite common that we transfer our feelings from our parents to our partners or children (i.e., cross-generational entanglements). For instance, you may be afraid of a person who resembles your authoritarian and punitive father or you may like a person who resembles your childhood chum.

2. Rapport as Love

After even one trance induction, subjects tend to feel an intense emotional tie to the initiator of that induction. They feel bonded, approving, and accepting of that source’s point of view and open to his spoken or context-implied suggestions.

Rapport, the automatic tendency of trance experience causes an attitude of respect, affection, and obedience in the subject. Rapport, a French word meaning “harmony” or “connection” is the central phenomenon of hypnosis, rather than suggestibility. Rapport is far more than just a hypnotic phenomenon. Wherever there is charismatic leadership, love, or even close friendship, there is rapport. The line that lies between rapport and other love relationships is fuzzy. Rapport always contains an element of dependence. It often has a subtle (or obvious) erotic element. Anybody who performs well for the public generates rapport. A teenager with a crush on a performer is in its grip. The crowd tends to fall into rapport-love with their leader or heroes – political, religious,
and cultural. Humans naturally bond to, and organize themselves around leaders.

3. Rapport as Bonding

Subjects of the same hypnotist tend to bond. This principle has many applications. Persons influenced by the same leader(s) tend to trust each other, and to behave worthy of that trust. They relate as brothers and sisters. This psychological trait enables the bonding of family, congregation, and community.

4. Rapport as Addiction

Rapport can become an intense, emotional relationship. The subject finds his thoughts fixed on the hypnotist between, as well as during, hypnotic sessions. He begins also to pick up and obey the general context clues from the hypnotist as to what to believe and how to behave. It can be said that rapport is a psychological fusion between the hypnotist and the subject. The subject is hypersensitive to the hypnotist to the extent that he is able to perceive the latter's faintest signs. Through habit and training, a process of mutual understanding by signs develops between them, of which neither is aware. The subject becomes sensitive to the slightest shades of the hypnotist's thoughts without realizing how, and without the hypnotist's awareness.

The development of rapport over a series of hypnotic sessions has two distinct phases. Firstly, the subject feels freed from his/her symptoms and feels much better. Secondly, the symptoms sometimes return (somnambulistic passion) and the subject feels an increased need to see the hypnotist and to be hypnotized again. This urge often assumes the form of passion, ardent love, jealousy, superstitious fear, or profound respect. Somnambulistic passion is a potpourri of possible elements: erotic passion, or the kind of love one feels for a parent, or some other kind of love. One element that never varies however is the patient's need to be directed.

5. Freudian Transference

Freud called rapport between the therapist and the subject as transference. He believed that transference is a revival of the original parent-child relationship. Psychoanalytically-trained hypnosis researchers
believe that trance obedience was rooted in an unconscious longing for, or regression to, a childhood behaviour (or instinctual early programming) of total dependence on, and uncritical love of, the parent figures.

6. Experience of Opposites

Carl Jung says that within the transference dyad both participants typically experience a variety of opposites. Therefore, in love and in psychological growth, the key to success is the ability to endure the tension of the opposites without abandoning the process, and this tension allows one to grow and to transform.

7. Pathological Transference

Transference can become pathological only in a personally or socially harmful context. Dr. Susan Andersen explains how transference occurs in everyday life. It is said that when we encounter a person who reminds us of someone whom we do or did like and who is or was important to us, we infer, of course unconsciously, that this person is indeed like our significant other (whether a lover, friend, relative, or any other person). A number of effects arise from this, including inferring that traits belong to the new person that in fact belongs to our significant other. Thus, we tend to repeat relationship patterns from the past in the present. As against liking, there is the phenomenon of transferring unresolved rage towards previous love or hate-objects onto “surrogates,” or individuals resembling or otherwise calling to mind the original object of that hate.

8. Transfer of Rapport

Rapport can be transferred from one hypnotist to another by a simple verbal command, called “transfer of rapport,” or “shifting the rapport.” A hypnotist tells his subject to obey now a new hypnotist in the same way he has been obeying the speaker. If the suggestion is accepted at the subject’s automatic level of mind, rapport will shift.

9. Transference in Psychotherapy

In psychological counseling or psychotherapies, transference refers to redirection of a patient’s feelings for a significant person to the therapist. Transference may be experienced as an erotic attraction towards a therapist, but it can be seen in many other forms like rage, hatred,
mistrust, extreme dependence, or even placing the therapist in a god-like or guru status. Transference, for Freud, whether affectionate or hostile seems to constitute the greatest threat to the treatment but can become its best tool. Since the transference between the patient and the therapist happens on an unconscious level, psychodynamic therapists concern themselves with the patient’s unconscious use to reveal unresolved conflicts they have with childhood figures.

10. Rapport Impacts the Hypnotist

Rapport flows both ways. The hypnotic subject influences the hypnotist’s behaviour, because a hypnotist unconsciously develops suggestibility to the cues from his subjects. Thus, rapport tends to become a situation of mutual suggestion. The subject gives his hypnotist what the hypnotist secretly expects, and the hypnotist tends to create for the subject what the subject secretly longs for and expects. This unconscious collaboration between the charismatic leader and his followers has, in the historical record, resulted in remarkable elaborations of mutual delusion and absolutistic and costly loyalties.

11. Countertransference in Psychotherapy

Countertransference is redirection of a therapist's feelings towards a patient, or more generally, as a therapist’s emotional entanglement with a patient. It is as important for a therapist to understand his countertranference as he is supposed to understand transference. It not only helps the therapist to regulate his emotions but also gives him valuable insight into what the clients/patients are attempting to elicit in them.

Alfred Adler has a different perspective of these phenomena. Instead of using the patient’s transference strategically in therapy, the positive or negative transference is diplomatically pointed out and explained as an obstacle to cooperation and improvement. For the therapist, identification of countertransference will suggest that his own personal training analysis needs to be continued to overcome these tendencies. If not a continued training at least a consultation with his supervisor is recommended. I think that with all these, it is good to keep in mind that the vulnerability of the human person will always be there in any human relationship. Therefore, it is good to take it along the stride and continue as a wounded healer unless in extreme cases which warrant a referral.
16. THE CLIENT RESISTANCE

In traditional therapy or counselling, the client’s resistance is supposed to be “interpreted.” When the counsellor has no further interpretation to offer, he might rationalize by simply saying that the client is not ready to benefit from therapy.

1. Resistance vs. Reluctance

Resistance is different from reluctance. Among clients one finds both resistance and reluctance. Reluctance is unwillingness to undergo any type of therapy or counselling. Not much can be done with those who are reluctant. But those who are resistant perhaps want to work out their problem but somehow are prevented by unconscious motives.

2. Resistance Is Fear

While it takes a good deal of courage for clients to seek help and to express their desires for change, they will still exhibit signs of resistance. Resistance is basically a manifestation of a fear related to uncovering one’s unconscious material. Some behaviour therapists say that resistance is a rationalization which the therapist uses “against” the client to account for his own inability or his own failure to reach the client. It implies that the client is at fault for not taking responsibility in the process of getting well.

3. Sources of Resistance

One could speculate that any therapeutic failure is due to the method, or the hypnotist, or the resistance of the client, or environmental and other factors but it is important to remember that one does not sit in judgement and that resistance needs to be seen as a motivational factor.

1) Therapy Factors

(1) It could be a failure to recognize that the client is avoiding a higher order anxiety; for example, an overweight client might fear that after the weight loss a new readjustment may have to occur dealing with social and sexual anxieties about dating.

(2) There are some secondary benefits (gains) that clients hold on to, although the discomfort is in their way. Frequently clients prefer not to get well because they do get benefits by being incapacitated.
2) Therapist Factors

(1) Resistance could be created by the incorrect use of the technique which is being applied for the given client – this is usually due to a lack of experience or training on the therapist’s part.

(2) It may be due to beginning therapy without the client’s understanding or accepting the rationale for that particular therapy; giving assignments or homework related to the client’s goal which are not relevant or understood by the client; assignment given to the client is too time-consuming; and the therapist’s lack of sensitivity in recognizing it.

(3) Resistance is often “caused” by the inability of the therapist to get into sync with the client. The client comes in with a certain set of beliefs; one of them being that he is so disturbed or so sick or so uncomfortable, or so miserable that nobody can help him. The therapist may believe that it is important for him to succeed with any client. While the client is entitled to his own attitude, the therapist does not have that luxury but needs to examine the client’s resistance and his own negative feelings about the situation. It is important to recognize that any change is difficult because it requires a relearning process.

(4) The therapist needs to recognize that any therapeutic process is similar to a process of growth and the client will go through a growth curve, which means that progress will be accomplished quickly at first, followed by a plateau, then a possible regression and then a surge towards health.

(5) Resistance may be the therapist’s inability or unwillingness to see the client’s point of view. The client needs to know, before he can accept the therapy, the rationale for the therapy. The client needs to understand, if he requests it, the application of paradoxical techniques, such as prescribing symptoms or encouraging a relapse. Let the client know the law of reverse effect. Thus, a client suffering from symptoms such as blushing or insomnia, can have it pointed out to him that the harder he tries, the less he will succeed. Then the therapy might go into intensifying the symptom in order to reduce it (i.e., paradoxical intention).
3) Client Factors

(1) The client may have some “hidden agendas” that could prevent treatment from progressing satisfactorily.

(2) When a client is referred to by a family member or a physician, he may not really value the desired outcome of the therapy and so not give it the necessary effort.

(3) It may be feeling very strongly about a self-fulfilling prophecy and negative expectation. Thus, a client may come to therapy to prove that his belief of not being able to succeed is going to be correct.

(4) Sometimes clients will exhibit a low frustration tolerance (LFT) which then leads to self-defeating behaviours.

(5) Some of the manifestations of resistance can be seen through the realizations of delay in receiving help. For instance, a client might express all kinds of reasons, such as the therapeutic process being too expensive, too long, and so on.

(6) The resistance on the part of the client is recognition that the discomfort or the pain might represent only one part of a larger problem. That realization can be a very frightening one and some people prefer not to address it and just keep it under control a little bit longer.

(7) Walking away from the problem becomes part of the learned behaviour pattern the client has assimilated. Walking away from the therapeutic experience is an indicator that when fear is greater than pain the result is so intolerable that clients prefer not to address it. At the first contact it is usually revealed that the pain is great and the client seems to focus only on a one-dimensional problem, and yet, through the use of evaluative techniques, the therapist becomes aware that there are several problems and the client may not be ready to address all of them because of fear.

(8) Clients come to the therapist with the myth that they will be put to trance; will experience trance; and they will feel fine after one session. Even with a shortened therapy programme, in order to feel better, one must first feel worse by going through a cleansing process, or catharsis
— as a counseling maxim puts it thus: “The way out of pain is by first feeling the pain fully and going through it, NOT bypassing it.”

4) **Environmental and Other External Factors**

(1) A deliberate sabotage from others (a client might be concerned about his position in the family or in a marriage, should he become more successful or assertive).

(2) There is also sabotage from other family members. In addition to dealing with the problem of the client, the therapist may choose also to work with family members who might be fostering unhealthy dependency relationships.

(3) The therapist may be confronted with direct gains from not getting better. For instance, clients who are experiencing chronic pain and are on disability may consciously or unconsciously hold on to the affliction, for it does bring rewards. In such cases, the therapist needs to establish a differential diagnosis.

(4) Absence of rapport between the therapist and the client could be a cause.

4. **Usefulness of Resistance**

In establishing a therapeutic relationship one must accept the behaviour of the client and facilitate the expression of the behaviour. It is the role of the therapist to indicate to the client that his behaviour can be used in a way that can be of help to him. Thus, the important thing is not for the therapist to agree with his behaviour but for the individual to be able to use the behaviour to meet successfully any situation. Resistance needs to be respected by the therapist. When resistance is exhibited, it means that the therapist is moving too fast or expecting change too soon. The expression of resistance is symbolic of the beginning of change. Perhaps, with any patient there are at least two personalities: One that wants to get well, the other that does not want to get well. Too much of the wrong kind of reassurance to the first might make an immediate enemy of the second, sabotaging the treatment.

Erickson is of the opinion that many therapists who talk about bypassing, neutralizing or turning around patient’s resistance to achieve
a desired end convey an implicit negative judgement against the part that is doing the resistance – the “resistant part” is formally resisting for a valid reason and possibly expressing very potently the life survival instinct that so often appears to be missing in psychiatric patients. The goal should be instead to contact that aspect looking for its positive force and make an ally instead of conceiving it as a resistance.

5. Way to Handle Resistance

1) Judo Method

Resistance can be skillfully used by a therapist when one can compare the handling of resistance with the philosophy used in judo: rather than opposing the thrust, join it and increase it, thus this throws the client off balance. This technique can be applied in hypnosis or any psychotherapy. According to it, the client is encouraged to behave in resisting behaviour, thus by allowing resistance, changes will begin to happen. When one is invited to resist, there are two choices to be made: One can either accept the invitation and resist, or refuse to accept the invitation and thus comply with the hypnotist. In either case the hypnotist succeeds. Firstly, when the subject accepts the invitation of the therapist and offers resistance, he is agreeing with hypnotist and so actually there is no resistance proper or the resistance will disappear eventually. Secondly, when the subject refuses to accept the invitation of the hypnotist to resist, he is giving up his resistance. In either case, the subject complies with the hypnotist and thus resistance per se is weakened. This is what the hypnotist wants the subject to have.

2) Technique Is Custom Tailored

The hypnotic technique to be adopted must be custom tailored to each client. Giving a client choice for selecting his own technique reduces resistance. One can anticipate resistance, especially with oppositional clients, and thus diffuse by predicting what will happen before it happens. For example, telling the client, “I think this will really help you, but you are probably not ready to do it yet” or “you are probably going to think that this is too hard for you to do it right now.” The client either opposes the therapist or does the assignment or the credibility of the therapist is maintained although the client does not accept the assignment.
3) Distracting Technique

There is also a technique called “distracting technique” described by Erickson and Rossi and others. For instance, one can ask the client to count backwards from 999 to 1 by 3’s (999, 996, 993, 990,……). By doing so, the client bypasses consciousness and reduces the likelihood of resistance and thus the client becomes more receptive to suggestion. The therapist needs to be aware that his resistant client is offering in him a very important fund of information, namely it sets already a pattern for the interpersonal relationship between the client and the therapist.

6. To Conclude

Frequently, the therapist can tell when the client resists recommendations or suggestions. However, deep seated unconscious resistance to change is usually beyond the client’s awareness and can usually only be discussed and uncovered in the therapeutic process. The client has a right to be resistant or not. A resistant client is not to be condemned or disapproved of but the therapist must accept the fact that he needs the resistance at this time. Some practitioners feel that a resistance technique is an expression of ill will on the part of the client. The therapist cannot lose sight of the fact that the client comes for help. Resistance is not good or bad. It just is there and needs to be respected for it is the expression of many years of adjustment that the client has had to live with and now he is expected to give it up.

Speaking of resistance Milton H. Erickson said that resistance is an energy, use it, do not fight it. Since resistance is a force it can be directed. So the energy of someone’s so-called resistance can be directed rather than fought against. An example of dealing with a resistant smoker is to tell him, “Of course, not everyone is able to stop smoking from the very first session.” This statement is a bit of a challenge and the smoker is given something else to rebel against. The therapist himself tells the resistant smoker to smoke. Now the resistant smoker will rebel against the statement of the therapist by stopping smoking.15
For practical purpose, we may formulate and follow a format of hypnosis. In this section we shall formulate a format and deal with each step in detail in subsequent chapters.

In short there are four steps: Induction, Trance, Suggestion, and Termination. When you induce a subject he is in trance and during that time you give him suggestions and finally wake him up.

For greater clarity and understanding, the hypnotic format is conceived as having seven steps — which are: (1) Induction, (2) Relaxation, (3) Deepening, (4) Trance, (5) Suggestions, (6) Posthypnotic suggestions and triggers, and (7) Trance termination. Now we shall proceed step by step starting with induction and ending with trance termination.

17. INDUCTION

Hypnotic induction is the process by which a hypnotist puts his subject into a hypnotic state. It is the process undertaken by the hypnotist to establish the state/condition required for hypnosis to take place. In self-hypnosis, of course, the subject will listen to a taped induction or plays the roles of both the hypnotist and the subject. It is argued that hypnotic induction is a necessary process meant to cause the subject to enter a state of increased suggestibility, during which his critical faculties are reduced and he is more prone to accept the commands and suggestions of the hypnotist. This state is otherwise called “trance.” There are others who argue that hypnotic induction is merely a popularly-expected ritual, which is not required for hypnosis to take place. They believe that hypnosis is a process of influence, which is enhanced (or formalized) through expected cultural rituals.

The purpose of hypnotic induction is to focus the awareness on something and gradually move through to evoke the desired results. There are many methods. The focal point is relaxation. Progressive relaxation involves deliberately tensing and relaxing (sometimes just relaxing) each part of the body, paying attention to releasing every bit of tension. Hypnotists also describe soothing surroundings or experiences to produce relaxation.
1. About Induction

Induction is to get you into the state of hypnosis which is the trance. In fact, there are many different inductions. Some are very quick and some others are lengthy. In hypnosis we want to divert the conscious mind so that we can get through to the unconscious, which is where change takes place. One of the ways of doing is through shock or surprise which, of course, you will not be able to do while doing self-hypnosis. The one that is most preferred for self-hypnosis is relaxation and repetition. One gets around the conscious by fatiguing it so it lets down its vigilance. The standard hypnotic induction centers on relaxation and it is lengthy. As you practice more and more you may put yourself quickly into trance by using a method of your choice. Since in hypnosis one is going to divert the conscious, one way of doing it is to bore the conscious. Therefore, it is not necessary that you do something clever or novel for an induction.

The hypnotic induction is the process of transitioning from full conscious awareness into hypnotic trance. In order to enter hypnosis one has to be induced, whether one induces himself or allows himself to be induced by the hypnotist. There are some prerequisites for induction. They are: one has to focus and concentrate; one has to be relaxed; and the brain has to be given something to ponder over. The more things the mind has to ponder, the faster the induction. One has to overload the conscious with information. Usually after listening to a monotonous way of talking, the conscious is tired and shuts off, so to speak, and then one enters that wonderful state of hypnosis. Thus induction is a transition process by which one is led from full wakefulness into that delightful state of trance.

2. Induction Basics

There are many techniques used depending upon the hypnotists but in all of them we find that the hypnotist puts the subject in a very deep state of relaxation. There are some who accomplish it through visualization, some through muscle relaxation, and some others simply talking to the subject. For the optimum result the subject should feel comfortable and safe with the hypnotist.
Inductions may take 10 to 20 minutes. Depictions of relaxation will effect corresponding decrease in tension. When the subject is picturing scenes, it will evoke rapid eye movements. If the subject is asked to speak, his speech becomes quieter, slower, and sloppier. The subject feels more lethargic and may experience dissociation. At this point the hypnotist will make a series of suggestions as smoothly as possible. Choppy sentences create tension rather than soothe the subject. Therefore, flowing sentences encourage relaxation, have good rhythm, and can offer more leverage. For example, instead of saying three choppy sentences separately you may connect them by a conjunction: “You hear my commands and understand their meaning and obey their directions.” The hypnotist also can step up words as: “As you hear my commands and understand their meaning, you will obey their directions.” There is also a powerful way of connecting sentences that has more impact on the subject that is using causal words: “Since you hear my commands and understand their meaning, you obey their directions.”

3. Rules of Induction

Strictly speaking there are no rules of induction. The situation should prompt you the course of action. If something does not work, do something else. One need not slavishly stick to a script.

1. Success breeds success. If the subject is responding to something favourably and well, make use of that as a building block to achieve other things. For example, “Your eyes are closing and as they are closed they are very relaxed.” Closing the eyes will come easily for any person and the hypnotist can build relaxation on that.

2. If something you do does not work, make it seem not to matter. You can expect something unexpected to happen. Therefore, anything out of the way and unexpected happens, find a way to use it, and channel it back into your speech in a positive way. For example, you are proposing that the right hand of the subject will rise automatically. After repeated commands if it does not happen, you could say: “Your hand seems to be saying that it needs some more time and care to rise up and when it is ready we shall come back to it.”
3. Let your suggestions be non-voluntary. You could perhaps say: “Your right hand will rise up” instead of saying “You will raise your right hand.”

4. The manner of saying matters much. The tone you use, the voice you make use of, inflection, pauses, and other features of your speech will make a big difference. These are called “paralinguistic behaviours.” For example, instead of saying “You are going deeper and deeper into relaxation” you could say “You are going d-e-e-p-e-r and d-e-e-p-e-r into relaxation.” Instead of just saying “You are relaxed, calm, serene, peaceful, and tranquil.” You could say “you are relaaaxed….sereeene….. peeeecceeful….and... traaaanquil.”

5. Let your suggestions use as many senses possible. Among the visual, auditory, kinesthetic, olfactory, and gustatory senses each one of us has his own preference. We learn things and unlearn things easily through our preferred senses. Therefore, if you are not sure which sense is the preferred sense of the subject, you can make your suggestions in such a way that any subject will find his own preferred sense. For this, you can make mention of all the five senses. You might say “NOTICE (visual) how relaxation starts from your head, and SOUNDS (auditory) like cascading of a torrent of water spreading to your neck. You SENSE (kinesthetic) a deep feeling of being relaxed. Like the freshness of the FRAGRANCE (olfactory) entering your nostrils you are experiencing relaxation slowly permeating your entire body. Like the taste of a FAVOURITE FOOD (gustatory) spreads over your entire tongue and the mouth, you are experiencing relaxation spreading pleasantly over your body.

6. You can make use of all the positive signals the subject exhibits during hypnosis. For example, the subject has the fluttering of the eyes. You could incorporate that action as though that is what was expected of the subject by saying: “The fluttering of your eyes really signals that you are entering deep into relaxation.” You need not ignore such signs.
7. Repetition of the commands and suggestions are important. Repetition strengthens what you are saying. Only make sure that you make use of different words or tone of voice to deliver it.

8. Let your suggestions be clear, direct and literal, avoiding ambiguity. People under hypnosis tend to take your suggestions literally. Therefore, anything ambiguous will not be understood by the subject. Make sure your message is understood even if the subject does not carry it out.

9. Let not your induction procedure challenge the subject and make him contest. The subject might think, “I am too strong to be hypnotized. Let him try and I shall continue to resist” or he may think, “I am ready to be hypnotized. When is it going to happen? I am still waiting.” These attitudes may sabotage your initiatives.

4. Induction Techniques

(These techniques are used for deepening the relaxation and trance as well)

Usually hypnosis is preceded by a “hypnotic induction.” This is meant to put the subject into a “hypnotic trance.” This is according to the state theory. But the non-state theory says that induction is a means of heightening client expectation, defining his role, and focusing attention. Therefore, of course, there are varieties of induction methods. By far the most influential method is the original “eye-fixation” technique of James Braid, also known as “Braidism.” There are also many variations of the eye-fixation methods.

In all the techniques of induction what is being achieved is the same response that confusion does. Induction elicits a trance state. This trance state makes the attention go internal.

1) Simple Induction

The simplest way of induction is to take a few deep breaths focusing the gaze on an object directly in front of you. At the last breathing out of this exercise let your eyes gently close and begin to focus on your inner experience.
2) Visualization Induction

Visualization implies urging the subject to envision something relaxing for him. It could be anything but for him it is relaxing. Therefore, make sure what you may propose does not give negative feeling. For example, walking in a thick forest alone may be frightening for one; for another walking on the seashore may be threatening. Therefore, check with the subject what type of scene would be relaxing and pleasing for him. Whatever he chooses let him envision it in details of extreme clarity with all the five senses. Visualization makes the exercise real and therefore leads to a deeper relaxation.

3) Deep Muscle Relaxation Induction

This induction technique is ideal for the subject who is slightly less creative. Muscle relaxation implies consciously relaxing separate and specific muscle groups in the body. Most hypnotists begin with the face or head and move downward through all the parts of the body ending with the feet or toes. Here one purposely tenses and releases muscles in succession which has excellent results and leaves the subject in a deep state of relaxation. One can relax deeper if one first tenses the muscles involved and then relaxes them. Using as many increments as you can is effective. For example, you tense the muscles around your eyes first, then your nose, then your mouth, then your cheeks, and then your chin. This is done instead of tensing them all as one unit. While tensing and relaxing you need to breathe. You breathe in when you tense your muscles and breathe out when you relax and take one breath between tensing and relaxing to let relaxation sink in. When you finish this induction, you can survey your body and relax any area or group of muscles that seem tight. With this you can go onto deepening the relaxation.

Personally I found asking the subjects to just relax first the whole body and then asking them to relax each part of the body from the head to the feet very rewarding. Subjects have felt as though I was singing a lullaby that puts them to deep refreshing trance. Particularly I did not find the tensing of the muscles necessary and on the contrary was difficult for some subjects. Just starting to relax seems easier than tensing and releasing. But, of course, for some, first tensing and then relaxing works better.
4) Progressive Relaxation Induction

Progressive relaxation technique is used to create trance-formations. It consists of sets of six statements. The first set has five accurate descriptions of present experience and one abstract or unverifiable statement. These things make the subject feel more and more relaxed and secure. The second set contains four present-experiences and two abstract ones. Thus one goes on diminishing the number of present-experiences and increasing the abstract ones. Finally one has only six abstract statements.

5) Speech as Induction

One may encounter subjects who may not respond to visualization or deep muscle relaxation. In such situation the hypnotist can ease the subject into trance by speaking softly to them, using soothing tone of voice and instructing him to relax.

There can be many forms of hypnotic induction. These methods are a peaceful descent into deep relaxation. Self-hypnosis uses the above general methods, with subjects using pre-recorded instructions. It is good to remember that anything which induces deep relaxation can work as hypnotic induction.

The induction sequence of trance state is to allow both the body and the mind to get into a state of complete relaxation. To induce the mind to start to alter its state of awareness, breathing techniques, relaxation, visualization imagery, use of metaphors or bombarding the critical mind with an overload of information are used.

6) Quick Induction by Regular Suggestion

You can also use quick induction with a regular suggestion. You can sit behind a desk or table. Now you put your fingertips of both hands on the desk. Feel one hand becoming light and the other becoming heavier. It is not important if your hands actually move. If they do so then it is fun. Take a deep breath, drop shoulders, and put your hands in your lap. Now you will experience a tingling sensation in the hands as the energy moves through them. Now you can proceed with the self-hypnotic session. If the inductions are done quickly then you are likely to do them.
7) Quick Induction by Post-Hypnotic Suggestion

There are many ways of doing quick inductions. Quick induction by post-hypnotic suggestion is done this way. You can use the standard induction plus some relaxation. Then give yourself the suggestion saying, for example: Whenever I count backward from ten to one, I enter this wonderful state of relaxation. Use a sentence of this sort which you are not likely to do by accident. You repeat this over several days.

8) Three-Thought Induction (p. 341)

9) Handshake Induction

(1) Dead-fish Handshake Induction

It is a technique of induction introduced by Milton H. Erickson. He gave the name “handshake induction” because of the position of the hand at the beginning. Now extend your hand in front of you as though you were going to shake the hand of someone. It is a kind of dead fish handshake as your wrist is very loose. You may either close your eyes or fix them on your hand. Now you need to pay attention to your breathing. You will also notice how your hand is dangling in midair. You can also imagine how your arm can be suspended in different ways, such as floating in water or being suspended by balloons filled with helium. Imagine now your hand begins to feel heavy. As you may count backward from 20, you feel your hand gets heavier. Any movement in your arm will make you feel more comfortable. Your hand will fall in your lap as you complete counting and you enter a trance. If your hand makes a choice to go up and touch your face that also is a signal of a trance. It may happen that your hand is still extended in front of you. In that case finish the induction where you began it and continue with the rest of the session. This was used by Milton H. Erickson. He was not very strict with the method. Whatever way works for you is the right way according to him.

(2) Pattern Interrupt Induction

Handshake induction is a ‘pattern interrupt.’ Patterns are understood as actions which we carry out every single day of our lives, most often without thinking. Most patterns can be called reflexes, instincts, or automatic responses. Though there are differences among them, their names are used interchangeably. Now shaking hands is a fairly universal
pattern. When someone offers his hand to you, you automatically extend yours to hold his and shake. When you interrupt this pattern it shakes the unconscious opening up a very brief “window” during which one is highly susceptible to hypnotic suggestion. When your chosen subject extends his hand to shake yours, you can briefly shake but then swiftly move his hand to cover his eyes. At the same time, you can place a hand on the back of his head and apply very gentle downward pressure. At this the subject will end up slightly hunched over, his hand covering his eyes. By this procedure you lead the subject into a trance. You can now tell him gently and yet firmly and conversationally that he will remain in this trance until you bring him back to full alertness, giving him a specific cue or word like “come back here.” This method is mostly used for stage hypnosis. It is also good to remember that this method may not work for everyone.

10) Sticky Hands Induction (p. 337)

11) Breathing Induction

While seated, put your feet flat on the floor and your hands in your lap or by the sides, that is in a way you find comfortable and relaxed. You can fix your gaze on the floor, looking down about 45 degrees. Breathe deeply and easily that is from your diaphragm. It is the same as belly breathing. In this your abdomen should move out when you inhale, and in when you exhale. Continue a couple of minutes and you will enter a light trance. Now you can close your eyes and continue with the self hypnosis.

A variant of this above induction is to use rhythmic breathing. You will breathe in to a count of 5, pause for a while, and then breathe out to a count of 7. You may try different rhythms. You may also try just taking a few deep breaths and then go to rhythmic breathing. You need not force yourself. What comes natural to you is good. As we are not used to breathing deeply it is good to take deep breaths and make it a practice even when you are not doing self-hypnosis. This method can also be used by the hypnotist with his subjects by proposing and guiding them.
12) Eye Fixation Induction

In a standard induction one fixes his eyes on a spot on the ceiling. Eye fixation can be part of many inductions. For your eye fixation, you can use anything that works. You may use a candle taking care that by accident you do not burn things around, as you are absorbed in watching it. You may also use a pocket watch suspending it yourself. You may use any interesting, intricate design of a picture or poster; anything with different facets or colours. If you think that you have difficulty in concentrating, you may sit for a few minutes and stare at something. For example, you may take a flower so that you may look at the different shades of colour. You may enter a light trance and you can also easily come out of it. When you are experienced in self-hypnosis you can use eye fixation induction. If you are a beginner, you can stare on a spot on the ceiling.

13) Gazing Above Line of Vision Induction (p. 343)

(1) James Braid’s Original Eye-Fixation Induction

A bright object has to be held between the thumb, fore-, and middle fingers of the left hand. The object has to be held from about eight to fifteen inches from the eyes of the subject at such position above the forehead as may be necessary to produce the greatest possible strain upon the eyes and eyelids, and enable the subject to maintain a steady fixed stare at the object. The subject is to be instructed that he is to keep the eyes steadily fixed on the object, and the mind on the idea of that one object. Then the fore- and the middle fingers of the right hand, extended and a little separated are carried from the object towards the eyes. In all likelihood, the eyelids will close involuntarily. At the same time the subject is to fix his gaze on the object and the mind on the idea of one object held above the eyes. After James Braid, many variations and alternatives to the original hypnotic induction techniques were developed. However, subsequent hypnotists have found later that on average the hypnotic induction technique was not necessary as James Braid himself acknowledged. Yet, it is safely said that nine out of ten hypnotic techniques call for reclining posture, muscular relaxation, and optical fixation followed by eye closure.
The Eye-Lock Induction

The eye lock can be used as an induction or as a process of priming for hypnosis, such as a suggestibility/susceptibility test. It can also be used for doing impromptu hypnosis. The eye lock applies some simple physical laws which are then enhanced with the use of suggestion. It moves the subject’s awareness inwards and has it very focused and attentive. Many of the process involving the use of eyes do tend to lend themselves well to hypnosis.

The hypnotist asks the subject to close his eyes and then point to a position about an inch back from their hairline upon their head. There are some who propose the centre of the forehead. The further backward and upward the eyesight goes, the better is its effect. Some hypnotists place a finger of theirs on the head of the subject. It may be also better that the subject himself places a finger on his head and focuses on it while the hypnotist can keep busy with what he does and connected with the subject.

Next, the hypnotist suggests that as the subject keeps his eyes closed, he looks up at that point. The subject looks back and up to the point on his head where his finger is. The hypnotist then suggests that while the subject is looking at that spot, keeping his attention and eyes focused on that spot, his eyes are becoming locked and sealed into that position. The hypnotist can repeat it a couple of times. When the subject remains focused on looking upward at the spot on his head, then he will be physically unable to open his eyes. The hypnotist suggests that the eyelids are locked as the subject continues to stare up at that point on his head. He may also wonder how his eyes are locked and may think that perhaps it is due to something else.

The hypnotist may say something like this: “As your eyes are locked and sealed into position, try to open them and realize you cannot.” The hypnotist also can repeat that the subject continue to stare up at the spot on his head. This is done for ensuring that the subject actually and physically cannot open his eyes, and then uses the presupposition again telling like the following: “As your eyes are locked into position, you can try to open them, and find that they are locked and tightly shut.”
The hypnotist spoon feeds the outcome to the subject and suggests that the subject cannot open his eyes. By this the hypnotist builds in some element of failure by suggesting that the subject tries to open his eyes which he cannot do.

This method of eye lock can be used as an induction, or to suggest that the subject is already wonderfully responsive and ready for something more exciting with the hypnosis.

A variant of this eye lock technique is to ask the subject to squeeze his eyelids tightly shut and then to suggest that his eyelids were locked and remind him that the eyelids are stuck so tightly together that he cannot open his eyes, try as hard as he will. The hypnotist will notice the subject failing to open his eyes and will tell him to forget about his eyes and go right ahead to sleep as his eyes are closed. It is good to keep the method simple and fairly rapid.

14) Confusion Induction

There is something called confusion induction which causes confusion in the subject and provides him with an understandable option. The confusion is often created by ambiguous statements or plays on words. For example, the difference between a conductor and a teacher is that the conductor minds the train and the teacher trains the mind. This creates confusion in the subject at which he realizes an understandable option which makes the subject silly. The option obtained is an escape route from all that unpleasantness and ambiguity which is desirable. One more example of creating confusion: “If you cannot make a person think as you do, make him do as you think.”

15) Counting Backward Induction

Start breathing normally and close your eyes gently. Start counting backwards from 100 in 3’s (i.e. 100, 97, 94, 91, 88, 85, and so on). When you have lost your track it is a sign that you reached the state of trance.

16) Standard Induction

There is a standard induction technique for self-hypnosis. One can use or revise or replace with another induction. For beginners, this is fine and even later. You need not repeat the same words. Only make
sure that you do not go to sleep. You will use the word “sleep” to enter the state of hypnosis and it works wonderfully.

You fix your eyes on a spot on the ceiling, a spot that does not require you to tilt your head back. You need to look at that spot and nothing else. As you take a deep breath and let it out slowly, you can say to yourself silently: “Sleep now.” After this, take a deep breath, let it out as before and repeat the words: “Sleep now.” As you finish doing it for the third time, close your eyes and breathe quietly and feel your eyelids are growing heavy. Now your facial muscles are relaxing. You are wondering if you will be able to open your eyes even if you tried hard. But you will not want to try. You will feel so comfortable and relaxed; you are sitting there with your eyelids closed and heavy.

To conclude, trance induction is an exploration, an adventure to be enjoyed, rather than a job to be done. The hypnotist and the subject need to be aware that their conscious minds can never be sure of the results. The conscious mind is really the dependent partner. In this process of induction, the subject’s unconscious develops specific skills in relating to the conscious mind. For the subject, the purpose is to gain proficiency in using the unconscious capabilities in ways he chooses.

Make use of all the above mentioned inductions and find out which works best for you. You may also change from one technique to another as you please. You can also make use of music. It is your personal preference for self-hypnosis. If you use a particular music for induction, then you should not use it for anything else. Therefore, keep a particular music for self-hypnosis only.

5. Induction Scripts

1) A Standard Induction Script

“Place yourself in a comfortable position with both feet on the floor. Let your arms rest on your lap or lay by the sides. Begin to focus on your breathing, concentrating on your inhaling and exhaling. As you breathe out, say within yourself ‘relax.’ Relax internally with each exhalation and by saying to yourself the word ‘relax.’ Every time you say the word ‘relax’ you enter into deeper relaxation.
“From now onwards, you will listen with your unconscious to what I am saying, ignoring any other sound, feeling, or thought. Allow yourself to realize that only the unconscious experiences and understands the trance induction. You are entering your unconscious and moving into it. Your unconscious responds automatically and cooperatively with the suggestions I am making. Your conscious is busy by focusing on your breathing and relaxing. Therefore, it does not interfere with your unconscious automatically and cooperatively following the suggestions I am making.

“You will become aware of a response and that is a sign to go ahead and enhance it. Aim at obtaining a complete response, and not just a sign of it. You can feel the expected effect as much as possible. You can also imagine what is to happen as vividly as you can. Let it happen and feel it. You can recall the feelings associated with similar experiences in your past. Re-experience them in your unconscious. You can make use of whatever images, feelings, and ideas help you allow your conscious to go deeper and deeper into sleep.

“As your unconscious is active I am speaking only to it and it can hear me. Let your conscious continue focusing on your breathing and relaxing. As you are within the hearing distance I am speaking to your unconscious only. Your conscious mind is becoming bored and distracted by your focusing on breathing, which leads the conscious mind becoming uninterested, distracted, and going to sleep. As your conscious is concentrating on your breathing, you are relaxing more and more and going deeper and deeper into sleep.

“When your eyes get tired, it will be fine to close them but make sure to keep an alert mental or visual image actively in your mind. Make yourself comfortable as I am talking to your unconscious. I may not care if your conscious is or is not listening to me.

“As your hands are resting on your lap, or on your thighs, or at your sides, I am going to ask you a question. Your conscious should not answer. It is addressed only to your unconscious. Let your unconscious answer my question. Your conscious mind may have an answer to my question but it can never be certain how the unconscious is going to answer my question. Only your unconscious should answer the question.
My question is this: “Is your unconscious going to raise your right hand or your left hand automatically?”

“Your conscious has no idea how your unconscious will answer this question. But let your unconscious tell my conscious what it thinks or understands by simply causing either your right or your left hand to rise in the air automatically. Let your unconscious show me visibly what it knows. Become aware of your hands and see what the answer is. Since neither you nor I know the answer, but as you feel one or the other of your hands lifting, we both will know the answer. You can feel slight movement in one of your hands. You are feeling the beginning of the move upward, and enjoy the sensation of its lifting. Rest contented to learn how your unconscious is responding to the question. Your hand is beginning to rise in the air. It feels as though it is something separate from you. You do not control it. It is acting on its own. When you raise your arm in the air, it is your unconscious answering my question in its own way.

“Notice how your hand is continuing to rise towards your face. As it touches your face, you will go into an even deeper trance state of sleep and relaxation. Fine, now, let your hand relax and return to the place where it was originally before rising.

“It is amazing to discover that your unconscious can communicate with my conscious in this way. Since your unconscious has learned that it can attain a trance state and do it remarkably well, it can learn various trance phenomena. Henceforth, you can go into a deep trance just as easily and quickly as your unconscious answered that question. Now allow yourself to return to a fully conscious wakefulness.”

2) Dave Elman’s Induction Script – 1 (Modified)

The script contains some important steps to be followed. They are: 1) Deep breathing and closing eyes. 2) Testing the heaviness of the arm. This is done by lifting an arm and gently dropping it on the lap of the subject to test for loss of muscle tension. 3) There is eye catalepsy test which involves telling the subject that he is unable to open his eyes. 4) The next stage is “Fractionation” which means that one closes the eyes and opens them. This is done repeatedly. 5) Next the subject loses the track of numbers. This is a deepener for mental relaxation for amnesia.
6) There is something called “elevator deepener.” It consists in making the subject imagine climbing down the stairs. Here follows a script modeled on the script of Dave Elman:

“Allow yourself to take a good deep breath. As you do that, close your eyes. Let the muscles around your eyes relax and the eyes too, to the point where those eye muscles will not work. Your eye muscles are completely relaxed. Let us do it again and when you do it for the second time you are going to be able to relax ten times as much as you are relaxed already.

“Now open your eyes and close your eyes. Now you are greatly relaxed. When you do it for the third time you will be doubly relaxed. Let me now lift your hand and drop it gently. Your hand will plop into your lap like a wet cloth. Now I am lifting it and you need not lift it for me. As your hand is falling down it is a clear indication that you are very relaxed.

“So far you relaxed your muscles and now allow yourself to relax your mind. For this, you can just count from a hundred backward. As you say each number, you double your relaxation. When you count down, after a few numbers, you are relaxed and numbers begin to disappear and vanish in the air. Let me now lift up your right arm and when I drop it then you are ten times relaxed and the numbers also drop out.”

3) Dave Elman’s Induction Script - 2 (Modified)

“Just begin to make yourself comfortable. Let your feet rest on the floor and your hands on your lap, or by your either side. Let your head drop forward slightly as you roll your eyes up and back as though you were looking toward a point in your forehead. It may strain a little but keep it up. Now inhale deeply which fills your lungs to the full. You continue looking up and back. By now you allow your eyelids to grow heavy and close down. You can exhale slowly and patiently. Now runs a deep relaxation from the top of your head to the tip of your toes. Let all the muscles of your body become loose and lump and you are wonderfully relaxed.

“It is time for you to bring your awareness again to your eyes. Your eyes are already comfortably closed; imagine that they are closing down all over again becoming even more heavy and lazy. Just relax those
muscles of the eyes so that they will not work anymore. Since you have
done it well, you can just test and find them shut and unable to open.
Since your eyelids are tightly shut, it is a clear indication that you are
relaxed. Let the wave of relaxation run down from the top of your head to
the tip of your toe.

“Let me help you relax even more. When I count from five to one,
you will be completely relaxed. Five, you are relaxing doubly. Four, you
are entering into a deep sleep. Three, you are relaxing deeper. Two, you
are asleep ten times. And one, you are totally relaxed and sleepy.

“As you are relaxed physically now you can go for relaxing your
mind. As you count down backward from hundred, you will be entering
into deeper relaxation. As you say hundred you are sufficiently relaxed.
Ninety-nine you are deeply relaxed. As you continue to count down, the
numbers disappear and you feel comfortably relaxed.”

4) Dave Elman’s Induction Script - 3 (Modified)

(This is a very powerful technique — widely used, very simple
and effective.) “Take a long deep breath. As you inhale just hold it for a
few seconds and allow your eyelids to close gently over your eyes and
let go of any tension in any part of your body. Allow yourself to relax as
much as you can right now.

“Slowly place your awareness on your eye muscles and relax
the muscles around your eyes. Your eyes are so relaxed that they are
too heavy to open. Even if you try hard they will not open. Let your relaxation
deeper much more. I am going to ask you to open and close your eyes.
When you close your eyes your feeling of relaxation becomes ten times
deeper. Allow it to happen and it will happen very easily. All right. Now
open your eyes and close them and you feel that relaxation flowing through
your entire body taking you much deeper. You are deeply immersed in
relaxation. Now deepen this relaxation much more. In a moment I am
going to ask you to open your eyes and close them. Again when you
close your eyes, you double your relaxation. Let every muscle in your
body relax. As long as you have this wonderful feeling of relaxation your
muscles will not work. I am going to lift your (right or left) hand by the
wrist, just a few inches, and drop it. If you have followed my instructions
up to now your hand will be just loose and limp like a wet cloth and will
simply plop down. Let me do the lifting and when I release it, it just plops down. As your hand plops down you will go much deeper ten times. (If the subject helps to lift his hand you can say that you will do all the lifting and the hand can remain heavy and relaxed.) So far you have relaxed physically. Now you can start relaxing mentally.

“In a moment I shall ask you to begin slowly counting aloud backward from 100. As you call out each number, you double your mental relaxation. When you say each number let your mind become thrice relaxed. As you reach 95 you will be so relaxed that all your body muscles are supple and limp. Your relaxation is so much that even the numbers you will forget and they fly away. Those numbers will leave you as you leave them and you feel so deeply and profoundly relaxed. Now begin with the aim of making yourself very much relaxed. You can say the first number 100 and triple your relaxation.

Subject – 100, Hypnotist – Now you double your mental relaxation and let the number fade away. Subject – 99. Hypnotist – Triple your mental relaxation and see how the numbers leave you. They disappear as you leave them. Subject – 98. Hypnotist – Ten times double your relaxation and see the number disappearing... You are so relaxed and the numbers have disappeared and you do not remember any of them. So you are so relaxed.”

5) The Eye-To-Eye Induction Script
(Sit in front of the subject; instruct the subject to look at your eyes.)

“As you are seated in front of me, look into my eyes without blinking.

(If the subject smiles which might happen, you can tell: It is all right that you smile since what you do is not something serious...)

“Relax and quieten yourself feeling calm, peaceful, serene, and relaxed. As you are focusing on my eyes, take ten seconds and remain there focusing. As I count from one to three, I want you to allow your eyes to close tightly. You will hear me talking and you will be aware, completely aware of everything that is happening to you. One...two...three... your eyes are closing...closing tightly. You feel that your eyes are glued. You experience your eyes are rolling up in your head turning upward as though you are looking at a spot near the top of
your head. (You may place your finger lightly at the middle top part of the subject’s forehead.) No matter how hard you try, you will not be able to open your eyes. (The subject will not be able to open his eyelids with his eyes rolled back. It convinces the subject of the effect of hypnosis.) Now you can stop trying to focus on the spot about your head…and now you go to sleep plunging deeper and deeper…d-e-e-p-e-r and deeper and going farther into deep relaxation. Allow your head to rest on your chest and feel the whole body relaxed and loose. (You may place your hand on the person’s back…and slowly ease him down in the chair with the head into the chest.) With every breath you take, and with every beat of your heart, …you will find yourself going deeper and deeper into relaxation…plunging deeper and deeper and deeper.”

From here you can go into deepening techniques. As you are speeding up the induction process, and rely on the subject responding to you almost without hesitation, there may occur some negative reaction. You can get to know how to handle such negative situations. The subject may not look directly in your eyes, or not holding his stare. You can be forceful and direct him in commanding that he does exactly as you tell. The subject may not close his eyes when asked. In this situation, you can repeat the command a few times gently and slowly. Even after this if he is not closing his eyes, you can extend both your index fingers directly just above his eyes as though you are going to close his eyes while telling that he closes his eyes; this might induce the subject to close his eyes. Even after this if the eyes are not closing, you can gently and slowly place your index fingers on the eyelids and close his eyes telling him: “I want your eyes to close now, and remain there with your eyes closed until I tell you to open.” A variation of this method is to ask the subject as he is seated in front of you to place his hands on his lap with his palms up. You may also turn his hands and turn them over with his palms facing upwards. This also gives you the opportunity to check his resistance if there is any, and also to see how relaxed his hands are. If his hands are resisting, you can say: “I want you to listen to my voice and do as I ask you.” This eye-to-eye technique can also be done with the subject standing upright and you standing in front of him. It may be a good idea that when you do the induction while the subject stands, you
can have a chair handy nearby so that you can gently lead the subject to sit on the chair.

6) The “Special Nerve” Method

This method relies on the false belief that by touching the subject and hitting certain “nerves,” you can induce hypnotic state. One need not worry about this belief since all that you do in any other techniques also is designed for the sake of inducing hypnosis.

With the subject seated in front of you, go through the following or similar ritual. You can rub your hands together vigorously for a few seconds, then open and close your fingers several times. Now extend your hands and shake them for a few times. Again go through the hand rubbing and opening and closing of fingers once more. Now place your fingers on each side of your temple. Now you can close your eyes for a few seconds, tilt it down, as though you are in deep thought, and then suddenly remove your hands. Open your eyes, and stare directly at the subject and say: “We are ready.” You can now place your left thumb and index finger on the bridge of the subject’s nose, and the thumb, index-, and middle finger of the right hand at the base of the neck by the shoulder of the subject. Your both hands should apply moderate and even pressure to these areas.

As you do this you can say thus: “As you sense that I am applying pressure to certain nerves in your body, I am touching those nerves that are directly linked to that part of your brain that controls your conscious mind. As I do this you feel unusual sensation…a tingling sensation…as your feeling extends out over your body, your body relaxes. You are going to sleep with every breath you take and with every beat of your heart getting sleepier and sleepier as I apply more pressure. Notice how your eyes are getting very tired and your eyes becoming very heavy. (From here the rest is the same as the eye-to-eye technique starting “As I count from one to three…” p.157)

7) Progressive Relaxation Induction Script

“Close your eyes and allow yourself to relax. Take a deep breath and exhale it. You can take another deep breath. Imagine your breath
flows out and spreads relaxation throughout your body. As I am talking to you, you can feel the relaxation.

1. Focus your attention on the little muscles at the corners of your eyes. Imagine them relaxing, the muscles easing out and becoming limp and slack.

2. Imagine that relaxation spreading to your cheeks, then your mouth, and the jaw. Imagine all those muscles relaxing, easing out and becoming limp and slack.

3. Allow the relaxation to spread over your forehead and your scalp, down the back of your neck, then your shoulders. See how you are easing out any tension as you feel those muscles becoming limp and slack.

4. Allow yourself to feel the relaxation spreading down your upper arms, down through your forearms, through your hands, down to your fingertips.

5. Experience your chest relaxing and the relaxation spreading down over your abdomen, down through your thighs, all the way down your legs, through your feet to the tips of your toes.

6. As you take your next breath, feel a wave of relaxation moving down your entire body from the top of the head to the tips of your toes.

(people may report different feelings in their body. Those may be numbness in their arms and legs, a tingling sensation such as pins and needles usually in their hands and arms, both numbness and tingling feeling alternatively, lightness of the body or heaviness, buoyancy as though one is floating above the chair, sinking in the chair, need to swallow because of the dry mouth, eyeballs in their sockets and eyelids begin to flicker or flutter ever so lightly, some form of sensory distortion or detachment from the body. If any of these signs are experienced, mention it and continue saying:)

“It only represents your willingness and readiness to allow yourself to let go. As going into hypnosis is very gradual I am going to count from 10 to 1 in a moment. At each count you will notice you are drifting further into hypnosis at your own pace. Imagine you are being transported to a
very beautiful place, a special place in life, a very comfortable place where you will be happy. Allow yourself to be there for a moment as I begin to count. As I am going to count from 10 to 1 you can imagine that you are walking down that staircase becoming closer and closer to that wonderful scene of your choice. As I count down each number, you will feel your pleasant state of mental and physical relaxation simply doubling.

“No. 10: You are on the 10th step on the top. You are relaxed and are moving towards the scene of great relaxation…. No. 9: You have descended to the 9th step. All your worries are flying away making you feel free and light….. No. 8: As you are on the 8th step your relaxation is tripled and you are deep asleep. The more you descend the more you are relaxed and in a deep sleep…. No. 7: As you are on the 7th step you are incredibly feeling relaxed and asleep…. No. 6: As you are on the 6th step you might feel pleasant tingling sensations in your hands and feet. These sensations take you to deeper relaxation and sleep. … No. 5: On the 5th step you are optimally relaxed doubling the relaxation you have already achieved…. No. 4: As you are on the 4th step, let your busy and wandering thoughts take some quiet time as your mind quiets and simply sits back in peace. You go deeper and deeper into sleep redoubling your relaxation….. No. 3: As you are on the 3rd step you may gently notice how regular, deep, and quiet your breathing has become while your relaxation has become ten times deeper…. No. 2: As you are on the 2nd step you feel totally relaxed and entering into deeper sleep than ever before…. No. 1: As you are about to descend you feel a wave of relaxation flooding your whole body and mind…. Now you are on your favourite scene enjoying excellently and experiencing a deep and profound relaxation that is simply optimum. You may just allow yourself to float in this wonderful and peaceful state of relaxation knowing that this state of mind is the place from which all changes and healing begin. Gently allow yourself to enjoy for a while the relaxation you are experiencing. (Pause for a while.)
“Your body and mind are so relaxed, totally relaxed, tranquil, peaceful, serene, and calm. You are now open to receive helpful and beneficial suggestions which I am going to give you. You may use those suggestions and apply now or you may reject those that do not apply to you right now but you may apply at a future time.” (At this moment the hypnotist gives positive suggestions and reinforces them.)

Under the right conditions and in the proper state of mind anyone is capable of being hypnotized. It is estimated that about one in every five persons is naturally somnambulistic, a condition that closely approaches the spontaneous hypnotic state. For them, being hypnotized is almost innate. For others, hypnosis can be induced to varying degrees, with careful guidance if they are motivated. If you find that a subject is not falling into hypnotic state, consider reconditioning the subject to be a willing participant in the exercise. It might even involve starting the process all over again or rescheduling the session.
18. RELAXATION

Relaxation comes after the preparation and induction. The subject will feel pretty relaxed after the induction and now he is going further. The subject totally relaxes his entire body. I usually ask the subject first to relax the whole body and then I use the Jacobson’s progressive relaxation technique. However, as recommended by Jacobson, it is not necessary to tense up the muscles and then relax, because it might make some subjects feel hard to perform and obtain the relaxing effect. It is a total systems relaxation which is cumulative. One who does self-hypnosis can use a recorded script, or have someone read the script for him, or read it over a few times and then go through the routine on his own, without worrying about the exact words.

1. Hypnotically Induced Relaxation

In the neutral hypnosis, generalized relaxation is achieved while in the special hypnotic procedure the amplification of the generalized relaxation is had. Let us take, for example, the treatment of generalized anxiety disorder (GAD). The hypnotist will get to know the anxiety’s signature in a particular patient, that is where the anxiety in the body is and how it can be described, as for example, whether it restricts breathing, speaking clearly, thought, motor performance, or coordination. These words will help the hypnotist to design his words and imagery accordingly. If for example, a subject feels a burning sensation in the abdomen as an anxiety equivalent, he may be asked to imagine sensations of coolness to counteract it. The hypnotist would have explained to the subject beforehand — before the induction itself — that relaxation is both physical and mental. Physiologically the body in relaxation feels slowed down and reluctant to move; the visceral spaces are experienced as comfortably rested; and breathing and heart rate attain natural baseline rhythms. Psychologically the mind progressively feels detached from concerns, worries, and the current stressful emotions. The hypnotist can also ask the subject what he would feel like if he were totally and deeply relaxed. The response of the subject may point to useful avenues for tailoring the hypnotic process to powerful preconceived notions.
2. Effects of Relaxation

If hypnosis is used for improving health, the process can actually affect the way the body functions. For example, by focusing on certain biological and physiological aspects of the body, it is possible to cause blood to flow better, veins to dilate, heart rate to reduce, and white blood cells count to increase. Thus it can improve the immune system. This way the unconscious is reprogrammed, using a variety of techniques — like deep relaxation, therapeutic language, positive imagery, metaphors, direct or indirect suggestion, and post-hypnotic anchors. The unconscious can positively influence the conscious in any given situation or series of events. The subject’s perception of the situation can be altered. He will feel differently about it, and depending on the reason for the hypnosis, he may feel more relaxed, calmer, optimistic, energized, healthier, motivated and more in control of his responses, habits, and behaviours. The control achieved thus increases the subject’s confidence, and with the growing confidence comes the realization that he can actually achieve those goals that he never thought possible. Thus, hypnosis can actually change the way the subject’s body functions, causing blood to flow better by dilating blood vessels, reduce heart rate, increase cell production to improve health, as well as other health improvements. During hypnosis positive language is used to encourage, motivate and reward achievements. Positive confidence building is the building block of the whole process. Contained within the language are suggestions, concepts, and ideas that will help the subject — long after the session is over.

3. Amplification of Relaxation

It is useful that the hypnotist has at his disposal several procedures for the amplification of relaxation. It is by a trial-and-error approach that the hypnotist finds out which technique suits his subject. Among the many techniques, here are a few:

1) Direct Suggestion

To attain desired results, direct suggestion for generalized relaxation is enough. It will bring about a light to medium trance. Suggestion for total body relaxation for letting go of tensions, physical and mental, are good when rhythmically timed with breathing. People experience differently: for example, one may say that he is floating or
drifting. These imageries can be used to induce induction and further deepening.

2) Counting Method

There are many variations of the counting technique. The subject may be told that as the hypnotist counts down slowly from 20 to 1 (or 10 to 1), the subject will experience relaxation more and more profoundly, 1 representing the deepest level of relaxation the subject can attain at one session.

3) Counting with Imagery

Counting can be combined with proposing some imagery. For example, “as I count down from 10 to 1 you will find yourself walking ten steps and you will experience wonderful feelings of total relaxation flowing throughout your body.”

4) Progressive Relaxation (p. 331)

5) Autogenic Training

Some subjects are fascinated by the suggestions or feelings of heaviness and sensations of warmth in the body. Autogenic training is a method of psycho-physiological self-education combining elements both hypnosis and meditation. Its author is J. H. Schultz, a German psychiatrist and neurologist who was influenced by the research on sleep and hypnosis performed by Oskar Voght at the Berlin Institute.

Voght observed that some subjects could produce in themselves states of mind similar or identical to hypnosis. These could be produced by the subjects by performing certain exercises. These exercises were called by Vought “prophylactic rest – autohypnosis.” When Schultz streamlined these exercises he found that the most deeply hypnotized subjects invariably experienced sensations of heaviness and warmth in various parts of their bodies and said that creation of these sensations could bring about the experience of the trance state. In other words, trance state could bring about the sensations of heaviness and warmth and creation of heaviness and sensation of warmth can bring about trance state. For this, a series of exercises was designed in a format of increasing difficulty. In the beginning they were physiologically oriented, focusing
on the neuromuscular and visceral systems. Here the subjects were asked, in exercises of introspective creative imagination, to produce sensations of heaviness and pleasant warmth in the limbs — since it was easiest to produce them initially in these areas — then in the chest and in the abdominal regions. Once the subjects master this technique they move to meditative exercises, which focus on the development of certain higher mental functions. The stages in this exercise are as follows:

**First stage** — Eyes Are Gently Closed: The subject is asked to close his eyes gently. By a bodily introspection, the subject is asked to eliminate obvious internal muscular tension. Now the sensation of heaviness of the dominant arm, as it lies on the lap or by the side, is brought to awareness. The subject may also repeat the sentence “my (left or right) arm feels heavier and heavier” silently. Through a process of generalization, the feeling of heaviness on the dominant arm is extended to the other arm, and then to the legs first, and then to the back, and the other regions of the head and neck. Thus the whole body is experienced as being heavy.

**Second stage** — Warmth: Usually feelings of heaviness is experienced more easily than the feeling of warmth. The process used to create the sensation of heaviness is used to create the sensation of warmth starting from one extremity and moving progressively to the entire body — except for the forehead and temples which are imbued with sensation of coolness. The subject may use the sentence “my arm feels warmer, pleasantly warmer” and the imagery “my body feels like it is resting on the pleasant warm sands of the beach.”

**Third stage** — Regularization of Cardiac Rhythm and Respiration: Here the objective of this part of the exercise is not to seek control of the cardiac rhythm as it may be done in some yoga exercises, but to effect a slowdown and regularity of heart function which is congruent with total relaxation. It is also experienced that deep hypnotic and meditative states are accompanied by lowered metabolic work; decreased oxygen consumption; a slow (50 to 60) beats per minute) heart rate; and slower, more abdominal respiration. Here awareness is centered on the internal sensations of cardiac pulsations — a hand may be placed over the pericardium — and self instructions are given to help these desired results.
Fourth stage – Centering on the Upper Abdominal Region: Now at this juncture the subject is guided to center a relaxed attentiveness on the upper abdominal regions.

During the autogenically induced states there is evidence of autonomic and metabolic slowdown.

6) Pure Imagery

Imageries are powerful ways of inducing relaxation. Which imagery is compelling and attractive to the subject should be found out beforehand by the hypnotist. For example, walking on a beach will trigger a fear sensation of being sucked in by the waves. Once the hypnotist discovers a particular imagery of lying down on the meadow, for example, he can create a very engrossing effect by talking about the sights, sounds, smells, and sensations one is likely to experience in such a setting.

7) Use of Touch

Touch is another powerful modality for bringing about relaxation when used properly and on time. Touch can also be used to induce analgesia in parts of the body. In the same way it can also be used to suggest deep feelings of relaxation. For example, “As I touch your forehead, your entire head becomes deeply relaxed — all the way down to your neck. And now I shall touch your shoulders. As I do these, feelings of deep relaxation begin to drift throughout your entire body.”

8) Jacobson’s Method of Relaxation

As Schultz worked on his autogenic method in Berlin, Jacobson worked towards similar goals but through different routes. He observed that the mere thought of a muscular action brings on electromyographic changes. From this he pointed out the direct relationship between muscular tonus and psychological tension. He developed a methodical technique involving the progressive relaxation of all muscular groups in the body for achieving relaxation at cortical levels. His methodology consists in this:

The hypnotist starts with the tip of one extremity – the right hand, for example – and guides the subject to move his awareness to the wrist, and the forearm. In deliberate succession, he eventually covers the totality of the musculature. To enhance the experience of relaxation, each muscle group is tensed and then released.
9) Using Breathing to Start Relaxation

Often we may be breathing in an inefficient way using only our chest. In this pattern, the shoulders are back, the chest is out, and the stomach is in. This is an unhealthy and shallow inhalation involving only the chest. When we use our chest only to breathe, our ribs cannot expand and so the breathing is quite shallow. If we use our abdomen (and the diaphragm) to inhale, then we have a much deeper and relaxing breath. It is a very good way of beginning the process of relaxation that is helpful for self-hypnosis. When in a situation of “fight or flight” response, our body needs to react and so we take a sharp intake of breath so that more oxygen can get to our muscles. There is a link between the way one breathes and one’s state of mind. When one is anxious or agitated, the breaths are fast, short, and shallow and one uses his chest. When one is calm and relaxed, then his breaths come more slowly, more deeply and more from the abdomen. Just as our state of mind affects the way we breathe, it is also possible that our way of breathing can affect our state of mind. This is called “cause and effect” principle. If you breathe slowly and deeply you are more relaxed. If you take breath by using your abdomen, you create a calmer and more tranquil feeling. Inhaling and exhaling in relaxed way using the abdomen rather than the chest is a key skill to develop.

The Best Way to Breathe

Allow the breath in through the nostrils unless they are blocked. You may exhale through the mouth or the nostrils. Use the abdomen rather than the chest. In this the diaphragm that lies underneath the lungs acts as a bellow, moving downwards as the belly swells outwards slightly, so expanding the lungs by drawing them downwards. Inhale and exhale slowly and steadily, without holding the breath. Breathe naturally. As you relax, your breathing will become slower and steadier and thus you will become more relaxed. As one continues to relax and deepens one’s trance state, then this will happen automatically without one having to think about it. Make sure that the exhalation (out breath) should be about twice as long as the inhalation (in breath). Finally, remember not to concentrate too much on your breathing. Of course, there are meditation techniques that focus on the breath. But in self-hypnosis, after deepening the trance (which may be done by counting breath downwards) the focus
should primarily be on the change one wants to create, rather than on
the breath and allow it to happen naturally.

Three Exercises

Taking Breath Using the Abdomen: “Sit comfortably, preferably
with your back straight and your hands resting gently in your lap or on
your knees. One may also do it by lying down, but it is much better to do
it while sitting. Inhale through the nose by deliberately allowing your
belly to move outwards — while deliberately keeping the chest still. Imagine
that all the muscles in between your ribs have become like floppy elastic
bands that do not work properly anymore and so you cannot expand
your chest. Practice this until you are comfortable with inhaling using
your abdomen. As you continue to practice this way of breathing you will
find it becoming automatic. Breathe in this way for a few minutes and
allow the deeper breaths to help you become calmer and more relaxed.”

Exercising a Little Control over the Breathing: “Sit
comfortably preferably with your back straight while your hands are
resting gently in your lap or on your knees or lying down by your sides.
The sitting position is preferred to lying down. Allow yourself to take one
or two deep abdominal breaths followed by inhalation and exhalation to
be natural for a few breaths. Breathe in using your abdomen and inhaling
through the nose for a count of 4. Pause very briefly. Your pausing is not
meant to be a ‘breath holding’ exercise. Then exhale for a count of 8.
Now pause briefly before starting again with the in-breath to a count of 4.
This needs to be repeated for 10 breaths. Now inhale and exhale normally
and effortlessly for a few minutes and feel the calmness that is being
generated within you. As an addition to this exercise you can also say to
yourself as you breathe out ‘Let go.’ By this you may experience even
deeper relaxation.”

Taking a Deep Breath by Using Both the Abdomen and the
Chest: “Taking deep breaths using both the abdomen and the chest will
completely fill your lungs. This technique fills your lungs with relaxing
breath and as you exhale you will feel a wave of relaxation spreading over
your entire body. Sit comfortably preferably with your back straight while
your hands are resting gently in your lap or on your knees or lying down
by your sides. The sitting position is preferred to doing it by lying down.
Breathe normally for a few moments. Allow yourself to inhale very deeply using only your abdomen. This is done by allowing your belly to expand outwards while keeping your chest still. Now continue to inhale by allowing your chest to expand until your lungs are completely full. Now you can reverse the process. Exhale using only your chest (keeping your abdomen still), then complete the exhalation by pulling your belly inwards. Now inhale and exhale normally and effortlessly for a few minutes and feel the relaxation that is generated within you.”

4. Relaxation Scripts

There are many types of scripts one can utilize for relaxation. All of them will have some common elements in them. Putting together all the essential elements here below you will find a model script one may make use of:

1) Muscle Based Script (Progressive Relaxation of the Muscles) (pp.331, 159 -160)

2) Breath Based Script (p. 335)

3) Favourite Scene Based Script (pp. 337 - 338)
19. DEEPENING

The next level in the hypnotic process is the “hypnotic deepener.” This stage encourages the critical mind to fade into the background and the unconscious mind to come into the foreground. By this a much deeper hypnotic trance is achieved. In this state the subject has a vivid involvement in imagined events, a shift into a context-free literal understanding of words and phrases. There is a removal of the restrictions ordinarily imposed upon conscious abilities and responses. The process of hypnosis takes full advantage of these characteristics. In this stage, the trigger and deepener stages are interwoven with each other, and the subject is taken ever further from the conscious world.

Once the subject reaches a light state of hypnosis, it can be deepened. The concentration or the relaxation can be deepened and made much stronger. Once the subject’s brain has decided to go into hypnosis to let the conscious critical mind shut off for a little while, the unconscious takes over. The deepening techniques allow the brain to get more and more focused, more and more relaxed, and enter deeper into trance. Usually the deeper the trance, the more profound are the results. But it is not always the case. There are certain issues for which like weight loss, for example, lighter state of trance has proven to be more effective. Hence, depending upon what one wants to achieve in a given session, one may deepen or lighten the state several times during the session.

1. Frames

Deepening is a series of techniques that a hypnotist will use to clarify and magnify the trance state and the responsiveness of the subject. There are many ways of deepening. One of them is through “Framing.” A frame is the way you package and interpret the information you receive. Thus there are two parts here. They are package and the receiving of that package.

2. Primary Frames in Deepening

There are a number of primary frames in deepening the trance. Some of them are:

1) Focus Frame

Focus frame is setting a frame of supreme focus. The hypnotist suggests that his subject removes all distractions from his mind while focusing only to the hypnotist’s voice. This helps the subject to move from external awareness to a more internally oriented focus. One of the statements frequently used is, “From this moment on, everything that I say to you, no matter how ridiculous or absurd, will instantly become
your complete and total reality. Everything I say to you will instantly become your reality, no matter how ridiculous or absurd it sounds.” Here the hypnotist uses the exercise of counting down from 10 to 1 or stepping down a staircase. The main reason for this is to create some sense of distance from the subject’s external world.

2) World inside Frame

This is like writing a very descriptive story. The more senses are involved the better it is. As the hypnotist progresses, he can use less and less description in his language and encourage the trance subject to fill in more and more blanks in his own description as the hypnotist uses more and more vague language. The motive behind this exercise is to teach the subject how to build worlds of experience inside and be highly skilled at that.

3) Fractionation Frame

This is done by interrupting a behaviour or thought process abruptly and then immediately following up with a deepener. This type of contrasting creates an opportunity to notice an experience that one might have overlooked in another context. For example, after tightening your muscles of the arm if you relax, you may experience more relaxation. Fractionation which is a specific way of using contrasts creates deep hypnotic states by first bringing the subject into a trance and then bringing him out, only so that you can bring him right back into an even deeper trance. We can also use “confusion induction” to deepen. While doing this it is necessary to tell the subject to “go even deeper into trance.” This is another way of setting a frame.

4) Compliance/Capacity Frame

In this practice the hypnotist increases compliance of the subject by doing some suggestibility/convincer tests or skits to create progressively a frame of compliance and capacity for trance phenomena. When the hypnotist does this, the subject becomes really comfortable performing the trance phenomena and becomes accustomed to taking direction. For example, when the arm rises at the command of the hypnotist, the hypnotist can appreciate it. Here you can applaud and appreciate the subject’s unconscious mind. The hypnotist can positively reinforce compliance and capacity with phrases such as, “That is right,” or “You are doing great,” or “As a reward you can go even deeper into that comfortable state.”

5) Responsiveness Frame

This refers to what the hypnotist builds with his subject. The more the hypnotist positively reinforces unconscious responsiveness the
more profound the experience for the subject. The hypnotist may want to build that expectation that the subject can do these things and will enjoy them.

6) Flexibility Frame

It is a frame which refers to the ability to frame, reframe, behave and communicate in the most creative ways until the hypnotist gets the desired results with himself and with the subject. If the hypnotist is flexible in approach and understanding, he can always be learning and integrating new skills as a hypnotist. When the hypnotist is flexible he can always frame or re-frame the experience a subject is having in a way that is beneficial to both the subject and the hypnotist. The most important frame that the hypnotist is building as a performing hypnotist is that he is the hypnotist, he is the expert, he has seen it, he has done it and everything is going as he planned. He can also have the frame that he is supremely curious, he has voracious appetite for learning, and that he can learn anything. It is good to keep in mind that positive repetition is highly hypnotic.

3. The Depths of the Trance

Trance depth is a subjective experience that is unique to each subject. That is why the hypnotist uses multiple methods of deepening. The hypnotist might say “go deeper, further, or higher into that state where you can easily and effortlessly experience your world inside.” Depth of trance is the ability to associate into that inner world with increasing richness of sensory hues. Everyone has his own frame about hypnosis. The hypnotist can put the subject on task to build his own deepening experiences. One may want to float high above his body or further and further away. The hypnotist can either direct a subject to do this or ask him questions about how he does these things.

Deepening comes after achieving relaxation. You can go ever deeper into relaxation or trancelike states which will help you reach your unconscious. This part is called deepening. The staircase imagery is a common approach to deepening. There are also other imageries for deepening. You can see yourself slowly descending to a landing in a hot air balloon. You can also use a sky writer. Imagine the sky writer writing the numbers from 10 to 1 and see each number fading away as you go deeper into the hypnotic trance or relaxation. Another option would be to see yourself walking deeper and deeper into a beautiful forest. This last imagery is also used for induction. There are subjects who may not like certain imageries as they may bring in memories of fear. For example, one subject reported that she does not like the staircase imagery as she may fall down. Another subject told me that imagining herself on the beach brings in memory of the waves sucking her in. Therefore, it is
better to ask the subject what imageries he would like to deepen relaxation. Here is the way to propose the staircase imagery. (p.161) You can also change the words in the above mentioned process to suit the client and you (hypnotist).

4. Levels of Trance Depth

For practical purposes we can understand the depth of hypnotic trance in three stages – light, medium, and deep. There are several systems of classification; some of them are more ancient than others. The difference lies in the nomenclature. One may encounter the following descriptions depending on the source of information like lethargy, catalepsy, somnambulism or hypnoidal, coma and the like. It is good to keep in mind that the trance depth does not refer to an objective or quantifiable state. It is characterized by the phenomena available in that state. Therefore, trance depth is understood as equivalent to suggestibility. Eyelid catalepsy, for example, is quite easy to obtain and so when this phenomenon becomes available, one can label the trance depth as 'light.' Next, when pain control becomes available in hypnosis, it can happen only when the subject becomes more suggestible. When that happens, one can call this as a medium trance depth. When full amnesia or positive/negative hallucinations are achieved which are extremes of hypnotic phenomena and require the greatest suggestibility, one may call this as a deep trance state.

The description of the three levels of depth can be like this: At the light level of relaxation the subjects are totally aware of the surroundings and sounds. At the medium level which is referred to as Alpha-Theta states, the subjects have all the faculties functioning but are profoundly relaxed and theoretically able to accept and follow suggestions. At this level subjects have the ability to pass tests and challenges. At the deepest level known as somnambulism, the subjects are still aware of the surroundings but are more or less in a vague or detached state of mind. Subjects usually accept suggestions rather instantaneously and without critical resistance. It is also possible that subjects at this level too reject suggestions. Trance depth is largely irrelevant except as a last resort (1) to bypass a stubborn belief system (yet requiring openness to trance) or (2) to encourage physical healing.

5. Hypnotic Depth Tests

When you have led the subject into a trance state, you may want to assess and quantify the depth of trance the subject has achieved. Assessment of the trance state will serve three purposes. First of all, if subjects who are getting ready to undergo a medical procedure without chemical anesthesia, it is very necessary that you find out if they are indeed capable of reaching the necessary depth of hypnosis where total
hypnotic anesthesia is possible. Secondly, by such assessment, the subjects become convinced of the efficacy of hypnosis. Thirdly, for subjects who are being hypnotized for the first time, there is a strong desire to know if they are really hypnotized. Thus, the assessment will prove to them that they are hypnotized or otherwise. When proofs are provided through these tests, the subject is likely to accept and follow through with the therapeutic suggestions of the hypnotist.

There are a few grading systems for the assessment of the depth of trance. Let us see one of them by Harry Arons. It is Arons’ six level depth tests. Arons did noteworthy research on hypnosis and designed tests and refined a systemic approach to analyzing and categorizing hypnotic states. His tests progress from simple to difficult procedures to provide an assessment of the corresponding hypnotic depth. This method is only a guideline for understanding the depth.

<p>| Harry Arons’s Grading System for the Assessment of the Depth of Trance |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|-----------------|</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Test</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Application</th>
<th>Distribution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Eye catalepsy</td>
<td>Hypnoidal</td>
<td>Smoking, weight loss</td>
<td>20% of Population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Arm catalepsy</td>
<td>Catalepsy</td>
<td>Behaviour modification</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Selective amnesia</td>
<td>Full body catalepsy</td>
<td>Psychotherapy, stage show</td>
<td>60% of Population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Analgesia</td>
<td>Total amnesia</td>
<td>Dental work</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Positive hallucination</td>
<td>Somnambulism</td>
<td>Anesthesia, childbirth</td>
<td>20% of Population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Negative hallucination</td>
<td>Profound somnambulism</td>
<td>Surgery</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. Parts of Deepening

There are two types of hypnosis deepening: Physical relaxation and mental relaxation.

1) By Physical Relaxation

When the subject’s body is not relaxed that is being tense, or agitated, or uncomfortable, then the subject will be more aware of his body. His conscious will remain too active, and his trance will not be deepened. When his body is relaxed enough, he will find that he becomes unaware of his body, and he can work more easily with his unconscious. There are two ways of bringing about the body relaxation. One is from top of the head to the heels and another is from the heels to the top of the head. Most hypnotists find it convenient to start from the top of the head to the toes. The procedure is like this: (pp. 159-160)
2) By Mental Relaxation

As you are physically relaxed, you are now ready to continue the hypnosis deepening through mental relaxation. There are two ways of doing this:

(1) By Counting Down

Counting for mental relaxation or for deepening is done by counting downwards. You yourself or the hypnotist count/s down from 10 to 1. You can say something like this: “On each breath, on each count, I drift deeper into tranquil stillness of mind.” Preferably as you breathe out start to count downwards. If you happen to breathe quickly, count on every second breath to slow you down. When you count number 1 finally, you should be more deeply in trance. You may repeat the process of counting until you are comfortable with the level of relaxation you have created.

(2) By Visualization

A. In this process you create pictures in your mind of places, or times, and events in which you can feel tranquil stillness of mind. These can be real or imaginary. It is essential to see that you are there in the experience. It is not just seeing but experiencing the scene or events with your senses. It is as if it is happening to you now. You can create any type of pleasant scenes like a quiet golden beach at sunset, a mountain lake, a meadow, a woodland walk, a mountain path, a gently flowing river and the like. You can also combine visualization with counting by imagining some steps, say 10, and descending to your imagined location (pp. 160-161). You can count yourself down as you slowly walk down the steps.

B. You could imagine yourself going down on an escalator. Imagine that as you descend you drift deeper into relaxation. You can imagine yourself in a lift going down 10 floors. As you proceed from one floor to the next lower floor, you drift deeper into relaxation.

C. You can also imagine yourself overlooking a beach. The number 10 descends from the sky and sinks slowly into the sea. Likewise the number 9, 8, and so on until the number 1 sinks out of sight. As each number is sinking into the sea you become more relaxed. Thus at the sinking of the number 1 you are totally and deeply relaxed. Keeping the main principles, one can create one’s own visualization.
7. Signs of Deepening

There are many ways of getting to know the depth of trance. It can be known by physical signs, by feedback, by fractionation, and by physical tests.

1) By Physical Signs

There are some classic indications of the deepening hypnotic state. Some of them are: 1. Stillness, 2. Change of breathing, 3. Pallid/waxen complexion, 4. Postural slumping, 5. Rapid Eye Movement (REM), 6. Eyelid fluttering, 7. Swallowing/gulping, 8. Increased lachrymation (tearfulness), (9) Redness around the eyes.

2) By Feedback

Through personal experience the hypnotist will know the signs of deepening. From the verbal feedback of the subject the hypnotist can learn at what level the subject is. Hypnosis is a subjective experience even though there are many common elements to it. There will be much that will be unique to each individual.

3) By Fractionation

The hypnotist can gather information about the process of hypnosis and depth of trance by using a fractionation type of induction. By this method, the process is broken into stages and the subject is questioned at each point for a verbal description of his particular experience. The main purpose behind the fractionation method known as “Vogt's fractionation” is to discover the personal experience of the subject as he begins to enter trance and then to “feedback” this information to take him deeper. The subject is relaxed into the early stages of trance and then roused and questioned for his particular experience of hypnosis. This information is used to assist the subject to go deeper still. By this method the subject is describing the best way that he should be hypnotized. This method is not as quick as other methods. But its interactive nature seems to lead to deeper trance states.

4) By Physical Tests

There are also physical tests that can give valuable information to the hypnotist about the ongoing state of hypnosis especially its depth.
(1) Catalepsy

Catalepsy — usually of the eyelids — is the most common test. The subject is asked to relax the muscles of the eyelids deeply in such a way that his eyelids will not open. Indeed it is an excellent test of relaxation, susceptibility, and willingness to cooperate with the hypnosis. There is a physiological trick that is asking the subject to close the eyes, with the head remaining still, and to look upwards with his eyes as if at a point at the top of the head. In this position one cannot open one’s eyes. This might convince the subject of the efficacy of the technique used by the hypnotist.

(2) Hand-Lift Technique

There is the “hand lift technique.” When the subject is relaxing with closed eyes, you can inform him that you are going to lift his hand. Then gently the hypnotist raises one of the arms and lets it go. The relaxed hand will flop limply back. The hypnotist can also add some suggestions telling, “As your hand falls limply down, you will go deeper and deeper into hypnosis,” or “as your hand falls to your lap you will go twice as deeply as before into relaxation.”

(3) Amnesia Technique

Finally, there is a cognitive technique to test trance depth, which does not rely on observation or physical testing. The hypnotist tests for amnesia asking the subject to begin counting backwards from 300. The hypnotist may propose any large number so that it is sufficiently large to be out of the range of “automatic” counting. He suggests that a point will soon be reached when the numbers will be forgotten. If at that time a trance state exists, the suggestion will be accepted and the subject will forget the numeric train of thought. This method has an added benefit. If by chance the subject did not have the correct depth of trance at that moment, the counting itself may well help bring it about.

8. Trance State

The hypnotist will be concerned about having the subject experience trance state rather than concerned about the depth of the trance. Therefore, trance depth need not be an important concern and effective therapy can take place provided at least there is a light stage of hypnosis established. All the same, obtaining a medium to deep hypnotic state has two advantages. (1) A deeper trance inspires confidence in the
hypnotist and it improves the personal performance of the hypnotist. It is also detected at least subliminally by the subject. (2) A deeper trance is a hypnotic convincer. Though it may not be any more therapeutic than a light trance state, it is more of a contrast to normal waking state and so helps to persuade the subject to think that something “significant” has taken place.

9. Deepening Techniques

There are countless ways of inducing hypnosis. All these can be used to produce the deep state known as somnambulism. There does not seem to be any limit to achieving the trance state except one’s own imagination. All can be hypnotized provided one knows the art of suggestion. The eye closure is the first goal and you may use any device that will cause eye closure.

Each person is different. Different induction techniques produce different results with different individuals. Even the same person may respond to the same induction in different ways at different times. Therefore, the hypnotist needs to be competent in many induction techniques and apply them according to the situation. Let us see some deepening techniques.

Remember that for induction, relaxation, and deepening the one and the same exercise can be used. But if you have used one exercise for induction you need not use the same for relaxation and deepening — as you have many options.

One uses deepening techniques following the initial induction and relaxation. The concept “deepening” is a metaphor. No one precisely knows what exactly is happening to the subject at that time. Here below we shall see a few techniques that can be combined to fit a specific subject.

1) Deepening by Realization

It may happen that subjects when they undergo hypnosis for the first time may not believe that they are hypnotized. The use of level one eye-stuck test serves as a convincer when they realize that they cannot open their eyes. If they are encouraged at this point by telling them that they are doing well, they can be asked to relax more and go deeper. The hypnotist can achieve the same effect when the subject
cannot lower his arm in the level two test, or lose tract of his numbers in the level three test.

Those who are hypnotized may not be convinced that they are in fact hypnotized just because they seem awake and alert to the surroundings and can hear what the hypnotist says. For them, the techniques that can make them realize that they are hypnotized are in fact the techniques of deepening the trance. Any of the muscular control experiments would do for this technique. For example, when the subject has been asked to close his eyes, the hypnotist can say that his eyes are glued and they will not open however hard the subject may try and they will open only at the command of the hypnotist. Another example would be to ask the subject to extend his right/left hand saying that the hand has become stiff like an iron bar and he will not bend or lower it. It will become loose or can be lowered only at the command of the hypnotist.

2) Pyramiding of Suggestions

When you build on convincer one after another, the subject is highly impressed. For example, after making the arm stiff and rigid if the hypnotist suggests that the arm goes completely limp and fall loosely at the side, it will impress the subject — convincing him further that he is becoming hypnotized. Impressing the subject with another surprise right after the realization that something is happening will serve to deepen him in his trance. All the same, the hypnotist should be cautious not to go beyond the immediate depth of the subject. The hypnotist should stop just short of failure. Otherwise it will prove that the subject did not reach a depth as deep as the hypnotist wants.

3) Counting Backwards

Counting backwards is a simple and reliable method of deepening. It can be done in many ways: (1) The hypnotist can tell the subject that the hypnotist will count backwards from one hundred. Also he can suggest to the subject that on each count he will go deeper and deeper into hypnosis. (2) As a variation of the above, the hypnotist can also say “deeper” after each number. (3) The hypnotist can also ask the subject to count backwards from one hundred and say the word “deeper” at every number while the hypnotist keeps talking, perhaps, giving the subject relaxing suggestions or another induction while the subject does the
counting which adds an element of confusion to the subject and that takes him into deeper relaxation or trance.

4) The Countdown (p. 151)

5) Rocking

(The subject can be either seated upright or standing.) The hypnotist gently puts his hand on the client’s shoulder and, with small motions, rocks him from side to side saying: “The more I rock you, the more you go deep into relaxation; you go deeper and deeper into a wonderful hypnotic rest, further and further into your inner self. You go deeper and deeper into a peaceful relaxation as I rock you back and forth and from side to side.

6) Deepening by Counting Backwards

Counting backwards is a simple method. It can be done in a variety of ways. (1) The hypnotist simply tells the subject that he will count backwards from 100 and at each count the subject will go deeper and deeper into hypnosis. As the hypnotist continues counting, within a few counts the subject will have gone into deep hypnosis and there may not be any need to reach until the number one. It is good that the hypnotist counts in a monotonous way which usually brings about induction or deepening of hypnosis. (2) Count with Words: As the hypnotist counts, he can add words like “deeper” or “profound” to the count, as for example: One hundred deeper; ninety-nine profound. (3) The Subject Counts: The counting from one hundred to one is done by the subject himself. If the hypnotist instructs him that while progressing the counting, the numbers will disappear since he will have gone into deep trance. Perhaps the subject may not reach the end — that is, Number One. (4) The Subject Counts and the Hypnotist Talks: This method of counting is done by the subject while the hypnotist keeps talking to the subject. Strangely enough, this method works well for a number of people. As the hypnotist talks, the subject concentrates on counting and thus tends to pay less attention to what the hypnotist says. As the hypnotist has instructed, the subject goes into deep trance as he counts.

7) Elevator

Imagine you are in an elevator. It is on the 10th floor and is slowly going down. You are about to descend from the 10th floor. With each number going down, you are going deeper into hypnotic state. Now you
are on the 10th floor – entering into deep hypnosis. 9th floor – You are pleasantly comfortable. 8th floor – You are getting into a deep sleep. 7th floor – All your muscles are deeply relaxed. 6th floor - … etc.

8) The Escalator (p. 343)

9) The Staircase

Imagine yourself standing on top of a beautiful staircase of your liking with ten steps leading down to your most favourite spot you enjoyed in your life. As you descend each step, you are getting into a very deep hypnotic state.

Stairway deepening is something similar to counting down technique. Here the subject stands at the top of a stairway with 10 steps. The hypnotist suggests this imagery to the subject and guides the subject in the following way: (pp. in the induction)

10) Silence

I am going to keep silent for a moment allowing you to drift and deepen your state deeper and deeper. My silence will take you to deeper relaxation and deeper hypnotic state.

11) The Subject Counts Down (p. 335)

12) The Arm Drop (p. 341)

13) Fractionation (The Yo-Yo Effect) (p. 339)

14) Association

(This method consists of tying the hypnotic state to an ongoing natural occurrence. For example: to the rhythm of one’s breathing, or any noise the subject hears nearby.)

“Close your eyes and get into a deep trance state. As you hear the ticking of the wall clock, you will go deeper into the trance state. Well, start now. Go deeper into relaxation and deeper hypnotic state. Fine, well done. Proceed further and enter into deeper trance state twice as before.”

15) Repeated Induction

Repeated induction or hypnotizing seems to be very effective in deepening hypnosis just because the subject is accustomed to letting go; his conscious resistance wanes. Some hypnotists use this technique
by hypnotizing and awakening the subject four to five times during the same period of two hours with five or ten minutes of intermissions to permit the hypnotist and the subject to rest. In most instances the hypnotic session can last anywhere from 15 to 45 minutes of duration, most of which is spent in repetition of suggestions. Usually the hypnotists arouse the subject and re-hypnotize him immediately without awakening him fully. It can be done this way:

“I am going to put you to trance. I shall count five…four…three…two…one. At the count of one, you will enter into a deep trance. Now I am going to count one…two…three. At the count of three you will awaken and open your eyes. As you open your eyes, they will meet my eyes for a moment. Then I shall count slowly from five to one. At the count of one you will quickly become extremely sleepy.” (The hypnotist can pass the hands from the head to the trunk of the body of the subject without physical contact and this will make the subject close his eyes.) As your head will droop, get into a deeper trance. You will go into deeper and deeper sleep than ever before. You will go into the deepest somnambulistic sleep as I count from five to one. Five…four…three…two…one.” (This procedure can be repeated four to five times.)

When a subject is re-hypnotized, he goes into deepening trance compared to previous instances of hypnotizing. The progress of relaxation seems to come in tiers or levels. After each induction by the hypnotist, the subject seems to respond to the suggestion of the hypnotist from a more deeply relaxed state causing him to experience a deeper level of trance than in the previous inductions. This is what the stage hypnotists make use of. Each time the stage hypnotist re-hypnotizes the subject, he then goes on to more difficult tasks and demonstrations. Clinically most subjects are extremely suggestible and very easy to hypnotize again for about ten minutes directly after awakening.

16) Deepening by Placebo Suggestion

Placebo is used in medical language. It refers to giving a pill, capsule, or injection of an innocuous substance to a patient in the guise of medicine. It is intended that the use of innocuous substance will produce the intended psychological effect for the patient. In hypnosis, placebo will mean giving indirect suggestion to the client. For example, instead of
telling the subject to close his eyes, the hypnotist can say: “As you hear my voice, notice how gently and slowly your eyes are becoming heavy and closing in deep sleep.”

17) Utilization of Sensory Motor Reactions

The sensory motor reactions are known as the arm and hand levitation method. This is usually employed in the induction procedure. It can be also used for deepening hypnosis which means that the subject is already in a light degree of hypnosis. If the hypnotist wants to use arm and hand levitation, it presupposes that he used some other method of induction. All the same, the same technique can also be used for induction and deepening. When a subject is in a light hypnosis and there seems to be resistance to go deeper for whatever reason, the responsibility can be put on the subject for going deeper into trance. The hypnotist can address the subject telling that for some reason he is resisting to go into deeper trance. Therefore, he leaves the responsibility to the subject.

At the suggestion of the hypnotist, the subject’s hand will slowly and steadily rise to the point of reaching his shoulder level and there his hand will bend and his hand will slowly touch his face. At that moment he will deeply enter into a profound trance state. The touching of the face by the hand is a signal from his unconscious that it is willing to enter into a deep, sound, and somnambulistic trance. The arm and hand levitation is done with closed eyes so that the subject is not fully aroused.

18) Feedback Methods

Before hypnotizing, the hypnotist will get to know the favourable places or scenes the subject enjoys most. When the subject is hypnotized, the hypnotist feeds back to him in details that appeal to all his senses, a vivid description of all the pleasures he would experience while being at that place or scene.

In feedback methods, the subject is taken on an imaginary walk through an endless, winding corridor, or tunnel, or a lazy canoe ride in a lake or river. During the course of these trips, various imageries are used to lead the subject into deeper trance. The imageries can be from all the five senses, namely — visual, auditory, kinesthetic, olfactory, and gustatory. Not everyone enjoys imageries of all the five senses in equal measures. Each one of us is attuned to certain senses. During the imaginary journey to a meadow, forest, beach, tunnel, corridor, and
anything of that sort, the hypnotist can propose enjoying the sight of things, the feel of things, and the smell of things. The hypnotist literally asks the subject to hallucinate as though those proposed imageries are actually taking place. How far one fared in this exercise can be made out only post-hypnotically by getting a feedback from the subject. As the subject has various types of hallucination, the hypnotist proposes deepening of the trance. It is very useful to make use of many methods of deepening the trance.

19) Post-Hypnotic Suggestion

Before awakening the subject, the hypnotist can give a suggestion that the next time he is hypnotized he will enjoy it more, go deeper more quickly and more easily. This suggestion will be effective when the hypnotist hypnotizes the subject later. Without much effort and formality the subject will almost instantaneously go into trance. I have experienced that if I had hypnotized a person one time, the next time I do not spend much time to induce trance and deepening. Within no time the subject directly enters into a trance. Added to that if I had proposed at the previous instance of hypnosis that the next time the subject will automatically enter into trance at my voice or at certain words, it does take place instantaneously.

10. Deepening Technique Illustration

“Allow yourself to take a deep breath, exhale, and close your eyes. You may take another deep breath and exhale. Let any stress, tension, or irritation fly away. Imagine that being hypnotized is a wonderful opportunity. You may begin to relax your body as if you were a “rag doll.” Let all your muscles sag and become flexible. Allow your whole body to sag. You may drift and dream and float into a deep hypnotic sleep. Allow yourself to feel your body relaxing deeper and more enjoyable. Notice also how easy it is to enjoy hypnotic relaxation. The deeper you go, the more you enjoy it. As every muscle and every nerve in your body is profoundly relaxed, it is time to go much deeper. (Now a Progressive relaxation of the muscles can be used [pp. In the induction] and then go to very effective deepening method of counting down that follows: [pp. In the induction].)

“Now I shall help you go deeper. Allow yourself to focus your attention on the right hand and lift the index finger up for me just about
half an inch. Now you may place your finger down. (At times it may just remain there without going down to rest.) Allow your attention to focus on the eyelids and notice how pleasantly heavy they feel. Of course, it is a nice feeling. As you feel the heaviness in your eyelids, raise your index finger of the right hand for me. That is fine. Now let us make your eyelids even heavier. Imagine that your eyelids are heavy as lead. Again it is indeed a nice feeling. Your eyelids are heavy because they feel like they are made of lead, a heavy metal. As I count from five to one, let your eyelids become as heavy as lead. Five...four...three...two...and...one. Indeed, your eyelids are very very heavy like lead. If they are heavy as lead, raise your index finger of the right hand for me. Very good. As you feel the heaviness of the eyelids, pretend that there is a super-glue between your eyelids and your eyelids are stuck tightly together. Allow yourself to feel the heaviness and the eyelids stuck together. I shall count from one to three and at the count of three you will try to open your eyes, but no matter how hard you try, they will not open. Pretend all that I proposed and when you realize (deepening via realization) that your eyelids are stuck together, you will enter the deepest, most effective and most enjoyable level of hypnosis. One...your eyelids are very heavy....Two....they are stuck together with super-glue....Three...you try to open them but they will not open. Try hard... and they will not open. Now leave trying and sleep now deeper and deeper. (One can really imagine or pretend and the unconscious does not know the difference between real and imagined and so the eyelids are really locked. This functions as a convincer and realization.)

One can very easily hypnotize a person but how deep the trance is, is a question. Some hypnotists are content with leading the subjects to a minimum state of trance for therapeutic purposes. Only a small percentage of persons among the hypnotizable are capable of reaching somnambulistic stage. By deepening the trance state one leads the subject to the somnambulistic state. Therapeutic results are amazing when the subject is in a somnambulistic state. Therefore, it is very essential to aim at the somnambulistic state even though one can work out healing procedures in a minimum level of the state of trance in hypnosis.¹⁸
20. TRANCE

The use of the term “trance” is older than Mesmer from whom hypnotism originates. Now we are dealing with the “therapeutic” stage of the hypnotic trance state. Here the unconscious mind is spoken to. Right now, the unconscious is comfortable and ready to accept more precise language, with either direct or indirect suggestions offered by the hypnotist. The unconscious is encouraged to accept and experience new ideas, thoughts, feelings, and behaviours. The subject will experience the actual event/s that he is struggling to deal with, or the health issue, but this time he will only experience positive sensations. He will see the goal he wants and actually be there. The subject will use all his visual, auditory, kinesthetic, olfactory, and gustatory senses and feelings to experience this achievement. Whatever non-productive thoughts, concepts, ideas, feelings, and behaviours are there, they are reduced. Post-hypnotic “anchors” are introduced to enable the subject to make an instant connection between the thoughts, feelings, and emotions he has experienced during the hypnotic state, to the here-and-now situation he may find himself in later, when in a fully wakeful state.

Hypnotic trance is not therapeutic in itself, but specific suggestions and images fed to a client in a trance can profoundly alter his behaviour.

1. Essence of Hypnotic Trance

The reason for using hypnotic trance is to enter into and learn about the higher consciousness. Hypnotic trance induction is not a matter of a hypnotist doing something to a subject. The hypnotist only acts as a facilitator in assisting the subject to achieve a trance state. The hypnotic state is an experience which belongs entirely to the subject. It is derived from the subject’s own accumulated learning and memories. These are not necessarily consciously recognized but are possible of manifestation in a special state of non-waking awareness. The hypnotist can only proffer stimuli and suggestions that evoke responsive behaviour based on the experiential past of the subject. Therefore, the hypnotist is not doing something, nor compels the subject to do certain things, or merely tells the subject what he should do. When a trance state is elicited, it is still a result of ideas, associations, mental processes and understandings.
already existing and merely aroused with the subject himself. Therefore, we conclude that what the hypnotist says or does serves only as a means to stimulate and arouse in the subject past learning and experiential acquisitions, some consciously and some unconsciously acquired. Inductions are approaches that provide the subject with opportunities for the intense self-absorption and inner experiences called “trance.” The hypnotist relates creatively to this inner experience of the subject.

2. What It Feels Like in Trance (pp. 44 - 48)

3. Meaning of Trance

Trance is a descriptive term used in hypnosis and in other fields as well. In religions, the term is often used to describe unusual experiences reported by devout adepts. The anthropologist Erika Bourguignon (1976), an expert on the so-called “spirit possession” has differentiated between three types of states. They are (1) “possession” in which a “spirit” has produced changes in someone’s behaviour, health, or disposition without an accompanying shift in awareness; (2) “possession trance” in which someone loses conscious awareness, while the invading spirit’s own behaviour, speech patterns, and body movements “take over” and can be observed by outsiders; (3) and “trance,” a so-called “altered state of consciousness” including the loss of conscious awareness but without the presence of a spirit or other outside entity.

If you take the “possession trance,” the intrusive spirit may be quite benevolent, bringing new insights to the “possessed” individual by means of “automatic writing,” “channeling,” or “mediumship.” At times the spirit plays the role of a trickster, teaching the individual life lessons through embarrassment, playful activities, or humour. There are other types of cases in which an invading entity takes over a victim’s body as the result of a malevolent sorcerer’s curse or simply to gratify the spirit’s earthbound impulses and desires. These types of experiences are extremely dissociative. The person manifests experiences and behaviours that seem to exist apart from, or appear to have been disconnected from, the mainstream of his conscious awareness, behavioural repertoire, and/ or self identity. The word “trance” has precise significance in anthropology than in hypnosis.
Now, the hypnotist is not an intrusive spirit or a sorcerer. The trance induced in subjects of hypnosis pale by comparison with the major shifts in consciousness, behaviour, and sense of identity that characterize trance activity in indigenous cultures. Therefore, it is more appropriate to talk of “the hypnotic condition,” “the hypnotic situation,” “the hypnotic process,” or “the hypnotic experience” than about “the hypnotic trance.”

The term ‘trance’ can be applied to any state of mind where that person has a narrow focus of attention. In the trance state induced in hypnosis, the subject has his eyes closed, is very relaxed, has a quiet mind, and is aware of what is going on around him. In the hypnotic trance state, the subject is able to step outside of his ordinary belief system. Thus, he can bypass any limiting beliefs. In stage hypnosis, the hypnotist elicits awe and obedience. If the subject believes that he has to do what the hypnotist says, then that belief functions exactly the same as if he were awake. Besides, the placebo effect is very powerful in hypnosis on account of which the hypnotist often ensures that the subject realizes that he has been hypnotized. The hypnotist convinces the subject’s unconscious to do something the subject has never experienced before like keeping his eyelids closed or lifting his arm up.

4. Conditional Reflex Aspect of Trance State Induction

Hypnosis is the production of reactions in the human organism through the use of verbal or other associative reflexes. Experiments show that words or thoughts act as mechanisms which trigger automatic responses in our bodies. There are experiments conducted on the contraction of the pupil (in the eye). Actually the pupil will contract in the presence of light. But an individual’s pupil (either the right or left pupil only) can be independently conditioned to contract by the word “contract.” Still further, some individuals can be conditioned to say to themselves the word “contract” while others can be conditioned to think of the word “contract” and pupil constriction will take place in either case.

5. Associate Reflexes

This is simply the power of word and thought in human lives. Automatic mental and bodily responses are caused throughout our lives through specific words or thoughts. These responses are called “associate
reflexes.” Words or thoughts act as bells which trigger these unconscious automatic responses. We know that hypnosis is the production of reactions in the human organism through the use of verbal stimuli which trigger associative reflexes. In hypnosis, we take advantage of certain conditionings we already possess. For example, we take the word “sleep.” When we hear the word sleep, we automatically get sleepy. This is a conditioned response we already possess. We can also implant new conditionings by repeatedly speaking certain words and reinforcing responses to those words. For example, you can propose that the subject’s right foot is stuck to the floor; and it happens. Ivan Pavlov used conditioned response.

Skinner showed that reinforcing specifically chosen responses is an even more powerful conditioning technique than classical Pavlovian conditioning. Skinner’s conditioning is called “operant conditioning.” In operant conditioning we select a specific behaviour and by rewarding that behaviour we cause it to occur. When a subject responds to the suggestion of the hypnotist to arm levitation, or whatever, the hypnotist can verbally reinforce (appreciate) that behavior, enhancing its recurrence.

6. Deepening the Trance

In hypnosis, deepening the trance is very important. If the trance is not deepened then the suggestion given by the hypnotist will not be accepted. There are, of course, different ways of deepening the trance. Deepening the trance is undertaken after the hypnotic induction and when the subject is already in a light state of trance.

In hypnosis we speak of deepening relaxation or deepening trance. Though for clarity, different steps are delineated, in fact, after induction one is already in a trance state. Therefore, saying “deepening relaxation” or “deepening trance” are the same.

For deepening a trance, refer to the chapter “Deepening” where you will find different techniques.
21. SUGGESTIONS

Suggestion is the goal which one wants to communicate to his unconscious. This is precisely here you tell yourself what you want yourself to do. The key to successful goal-oriented self-hypnosis is a good suggestion. In self-hypnosis, even without the suggestion one can get the benefits of stress reduction and enhanced concentration. If one wants to get more specific results, one has to use a suggestion. In self-hypnosis, which may not be a deep trance, you can always insert a suggestion. The suggestion should be of at least a few sentences length. Let the suggestion be on one topic and you can work on one goal at a time. After the routine deepening you can insert the suggestion.

1. The Birth of Suggestion

Emile Coue (1857 – 1926), a French psychologist and pharmacist, used to give medicine along with some positive suggestions to his patients. He discovered that positive suggestions along with medicine resulted in better health. He used to tell the patients to say to themselves repeatedly: “Every day in every way, I am getting better and better.” He also formulated the law of suggestions: (1) Whenever attention is concentrated on an idea over and over again, it spontaneously tends to realize itself. (2) The harder one tries to do something, the less chance one has of success. (3) A stronger emotion tends to replace a weaker one. This will mean that if you use repetition, forget about your will power, and engage strong emotion, then that will contribute to the acceptance of fixed ideas.

There was a great controversy between Jean-Martin Charcot and Hippolyte Bernheim about the nature of hypnotism. Charcot ran a clinic at the Pitié-Salpêtière Hospital (also known as the “Paris School” or the “Salpêtière School”), while Bernheim had a clinic in Nancy (also known as the “Nancy School”). Charcot, influenced by the Mesmerists, opined that hypnotism is an abnormal state of nervous functioning found only in certain hysterical women. He also claimed that it manifests in a series of physical reactions that could be divided into distinct stages. Bernheim on the contrary argued that anyone could be hypnotized, that it is an extension
of normal psychological functioning, and that its effects are due to suggestion. Now it is Bernheim’s view that dominates the hypnotic world.

2. Verbal Suggestion

James Braid first referred to the act of focusing the conscious mind of the subject upon a single dominant idea. This technique involved stimulating or reducing physiological functioning in different regions of the body. Later Braid gave greater emphasis on the use of a variety of different verbal and non-verbal forms of suggestion, including the use of “waking suggestion” in hypnosis. Later it was Hippolyte Bernheim who shifted the emphasis from the physical state of hypnosis on to the psychological process of verbal suggestion.

Hypnotism is an induction of a peculiar psychical (i.e., mental) condition which increases the susceptibility to suggestion. Bernheim’s idea of the primacy of verbal suggestion in hypnotism dominated the twentieth century — so much so that he is considered the father of modern hypnotism. Now we make use of a wide variety of different forms of suggestion including “direct” verbal suggestions, “indirect” verbal suggestions such as requests or insinuations, metaphors, and other rhetorical figures of speech, and non-verbal suggestion in the form of mental imagery, voice tonality, and physical manipulation. Generally a distinction is made between suggestions delivered “permissively” and those made in a more “authoritarian” manner. A number of suggestions are designed to bring about immediate responses — an arm rises immediately. There are other suggestions that are hypnototherapeutic suggestions that are usually post-hypnotic ones that are intended to trigger responses affecting behavior for periods ranging from days to a lifetime in duration. To achieve peak effectiveness, the hypnototherapeutic suggestions are often repeated in many sessions.

3. General Considerations

Suggestions can be phrased as positively as possible. Even the heavy words can be made light: “pain” can be described as “discomfort.” Subjects usually take suggestions literally. Therefore, one must be unambiguous as possible and one should be beware of literal translations. Suggestions need to be given at a pace that matches the subjects’ breathing; because it enhances rapport and is an acceptable leisurely
pace. The hypnotist can appeal to the preferred senses of the subjects. In case the hypnotist receives a response that is confusing, he can ask the subject if it is hurting a bit. When something unexpected happens it is good to stay calm. Any disturbing element can be incorporated into hypnosis. For example, if there is a noise from outside that disturbs the subject you could say that as you hear the noise from outside you will get into deeper sleep.

4. Types of Suggestion

**Direct Suggestion:** This is where you say such and such is going to happen. For example, “As soon as I step inside my room I will think of relaxation.”

**Indirect Suggestion:** It is comprised of visualization and storytelling. In visualization you are mentally creating the event. It is not only imagining pictures. You can make it vivid with all the senses. You can imagine a situation with all the senses possible. Most people make use of visual, auditory, and kinesthetic. In storytelling, you relate an event or anecdote which provides a sort of framework for conduct. These are to be related in an appropriately serious manner.

**Subliminals:** When you narrate something, mark out certain words. It could be in the form of certain unobtrusive gestures, change of pitch, or loudness — in a slight manner, glance, things that are small that do not require the subjects’ full attention but designed so, so that they will be able to perceive them.

5. Direct and Indirect Suggestions

The use of direct or indirect suggestion refers to the structure of language. Indirect suggestions come in many ways: body language, facial expressions, tone and volume of voice, gestures, timing, eye contact, and physical contact such as a handshake. Gender, age, bearing, appearance, including health, body type, and clothing are major indirect suggestions that can affect the meaning of our language.

The various personal meanings and connotations each of us associates to words and phrases, the emotional state, mood, and expectancies affect the meaning of language. There are things that function as indirect suggestions like colours, harmony of styles, cleanliness,
temperature, aromas or odours, condition of the office, reception area, facilities, office building and the function, form, style, and quality of furniture.

There are also other additional aspects of location like the size and prestige of the city or town, neighbouring offices and adjacent buildings, section of city or town and immediate neighbourhood, people one may encounter in the vicinity of his office, and noise and immediate neighbourhood, people one may encounter in the vicinity of one’s office, and noise levels.

There are also cultural and semantic factors like the culture and language in which the hypnotist and the subject meet and converse, and each of their backgrounds and life experience. At a particular time, time of day or night, current events and seasonal factors like holiday periods, can be indirect suggestions that affect the way language influences people.

There can be many indirect influences in the written and spoken words. When seeing an opinion or suggestions we are influenced by the venue like whether it is in a book, magazine, newspaper article, advertisement, letter, email or billboard, and whether it is from a friend, a relative, an organization we belong to, a government agency, or spam email. With regard to suggestions or opinions from a book we are also influenced by the quality of writing, the book’s quality and size, the cover, the background and additional writings of the author. All these indeed add a context that can affect the meaning and attention given to suggestions.

When we take into account all these factors there may not be such a thing as a simple, independent direct suggestion; because, the context of a so-called “direct suggestion” always has a great many indirect surrounding influences. Thus, the distinction between the direct and the indirect suggestions become blurred depending upon the situation and moment in time. Therefore, the degree of directness or indirectness of suggestion is far more complex and individualized than what we generally consider them to be. All the same for practical purposes we maintain the distinction between direct and indirect suggestions.
6. Direct vs. Indirect Suggestions

There is a misconception that direct suggestions are inferior; maybe coming from individuals who identify themselves as Ericksonian hypnotherapists. Since direct suggestion will only bring temporary relief, will intensify the transference relationship toward authority, and will increase repression of the conflict, people strive to be artfully indirect in all suggestions and interventions.

But there are certain situations where, for example in gestalt therapy, one cannot use indirect suggestions in the hot chair exercise. For example, instead of telling the client to switch over the role from being himself to being his father, one says, “I wonder if you would feel comfortable to take the role of your father.” Direct methods ensure that any response to a suggestion maybe due to the demands of the situation or to the prestige of the hypnotist. On the contrary, any response to an indirect suggestion will be due to the intervention and not to the situational or prestige factors. Even in indirect suggestions prestige has a part to play. Some hypnotists believe that the way to overcome resistance, or potential resistance, is to use indirect suggestions.

As a conclusion we can say that though indirect suggestions are preferred mostly, there are times when one needs to use direct suggestions as well. There are times when predominantly indirect suggestions may be more effective, and at other times predominantly direct suggestions tend to be preferable. Some subjects tend to respond favourably to one type of suggestion than another. What is needed is the skillful use of a range of styles.

7. Building Suggestion

It is recommended that you put your suggestions together neatly and in order, in order to reach the goal. As such there is no bad suggestion unless one wants to harm some individuals in some way. Only make sure that you have enough details so that what you say is clear and really says what you want to achieve. You need not worry about the grammar. You can be very informal. You could write out your suggestion and sleep over it and polish it later. Meanwhile your unconscious would have given you some hints to better your suggestions. Make use of a language that is convenient to you and to the subject.
8. Delivering the Suggestion

In giving suggestion, you need not be expressive. Actually in hypnosis, we are going to bypass the conscious and the best way to do that is to bring boredom into it. That is why a monotone voice is used in delivering suggestions. First you could write out your suggestion adding a key word. The key word will trigger off the beneficial suggestion. If you want your subject to build up self-confidence, you could use the word “self-confidence” as the key word. At the end of the suggestion, add, “You recall this beneficial suggestion when I say the word ‘self-confidence.’”

In actual hypnotic process of doing the induction, relaxation, and deepening, you ask the client to take a deep breath and say to him “self-confidence” and his unconscious will replay the suggestion. Perhaps the subject does not remember the words of the suggestion initially but after relaxing and clearing his mind for a while, he will have them in his mind. The subject is likely to have stray thoughts, but they will not interfere with the success of hypnosis as long as the subject does not pay attention to them.

9. Rules for Hypnotic Suggestions

There are no very stright rules for suggesting to subjects. However, we can think of some general guidelines which most hypnotists follow. Of course, the followers of Milton Erickson use “indirect” forms of suggestion. Yet, the “classical suggestion effect” is associated with hypnotic tradition stemming from James Braid, the founder of hynotherapy. According to James Braid, hypnotism is a state of focused mental attention upon a dominant expectant idea or mental image, which was capable of evoking a bodily response by means of a neuro-psychological mechanism known as the “ideo-dynamic reflex.” This classical suggestion effect is easily achieved if the hypnotist adops certain principles of suggestions which we consider below.

1) Being Positive

We instinctively obey more the positive commands than the negative ones. That is why we are recommended to use positive suggestions to our subjects and to ourselves as well. The words that contain negative sense are “not,” “don’t,” “won’t,” “can’t,” “never,” “stop”
and conditional words like “if” and “maybe.” Such words may usher in resistance or negative reaction.

One of the cardinal rules of suggestion is that it is formulated in the positive. Instead of saying “I am not tense” one can say “I am relaxed.” Here the word “positive” does not mean “good” but rather it refers to the formulation of suggestions in the affirmative. Suggestions are formulated in the positive so that they directly refer to the experience or response that subjects seek to evoke rather than attempting to do so by means of verbal negation.

2) Using Present/Progressive Tense

Your unconscious perhaps does not understand tenses and does not distinguish between the now and the later. The past is no more and the future is not yet and so the unconscious takes everything as now. When the message reaches the unconscious it is the present. Therefore, it is good to phrase your suggestion in the present. Your unconscious will take things literally. What you are programming for, will have to take place in the future. Even here, you need to phrase your suggestion in the present. For example, if you are saying, “I am going to take a walk in the evening every day,” you may inadvertently allow it to be put off because it implies the future. Instead, if you can say, “I take a walk in the evening every day,” that sounds good to the unconscious and it is in the present. At times certain ways of phrasing may not indicate your decision, as for example, “I am convinced of having a shower after the evening walk,” it does not indicate that you are going to have a shower. Therefore, you could say, “I have a shower every day after the evening walk.” But in post-hypnotic suggestion either giving to someone or to yourself in self-hypnosis you may suggest an action in the future. That is perfectly all right, as for example, “I shall study one hour early morning from 6 to 7.”

When suggestions are phrased in the future tense they create a sense of detachment from the response. Those suggestions are not evocative. They also, in addition, fail to provide any immediate evidence, or feedback that proves that the suggestions have been effective. There is a basic dilemma in hypnosis — namely that subjects seek to make changes in the future but suggestions phrased in the future tense are weak. Suggestion like “On Tuesday as you will be addressing the school
assembly, you will feel calm and at ease” tends to be ineffectual. Instead, the hypnotist can ask the subject to project himself into a future situation, using mental imagery to make present tense suggestions appropriate. Thus, the subject can be asked to imagine that it is Tuesday and picture himself before the school assembly so that suggestions like “On Tuesday as you are in front of the school assembly you feel calm and at ease” will be effective.

Use progressive tense instead of present tense. For a person who is just operated on, it may not be realistic to tell that he is healed. Rather it can be said that he is healing quickly. Here you use progressive tense. Progressive tense means using the present continuous tense.

3) Believable

The hypnotist puts the subject into a receptive state, using audio techniques in combination with calming methodology. Once the subject is in a receptive state, hypnotic suggestions are given. The suggestions will vary depending on the subjects’ goals. Suggestions will work best when the suggestions are believable to the subject. Being in a receptive state is not enough; one has to believe the suggestions. Secondly, the suggestions should be desirable to the subjects. For example, since the subject has already decided to get help with what he considers problematic, he is suggestible.

4) As New Information

While one is in a trance, the hypnotist offers positive suggestions, opinions and new ideas to his unconscious mind giving it new information so that he can begin to change his mind about things. The suggestions that are made can be reinforced by repetition. Suggestions can be made to the unconscious of the subject through metaphors (stories).

5) Effective Suggestions

One achieves one’s objective by the use of hypnotic suggestion and visualization while one is in the hypnotic trance. Formulating effective suggestions is very important. There are two basic rules for creating effective suggestions: (1) keep it short, short enough to remember, and (2) keep it simple, simple enough to handle.
6) Key words

Key words are those that the hypnotist uses as specifics to his suggestions. If, for example, you are speaking of relaxation, you may use the word “deeper” as a key word. If you are speaking of cure, you may use the words “good health.” If you are speaking of experience, you may say “wonderful experience.” If you are doing hypnosis for alcoholism, you need not avoid the word alcohol but integrate such words in your suggestions telling how the subject can walk past the wine shop, and politely refuse an offer of drink.

7) Using Emotional Words

Emotions strongly bind the subjects. Therefore, to connect to emotions it is important that the hypnotist makes use of emotional words in the suggestions. For example, if a subject is frozen at seeing the audience from the stage, he can use words telling that the subject is having a great time and enjoys himself immensely while on the stage looking at the audience. Phrase the suggestions in a way that is meaningful to the subject. Thus, a subject desiring to improve his music talents can have a suggestion like this: “I learn more from each violin lesson and practice every day playing better each day.” For a person who wants to improve his health a suggestion can be like this: “I eat healthy food and continue to improve my diet. I enjoy eating a healthy diet.”

8) Avoiding Perfectionism

Being positive is good but when you aim at perfection you cross the limit of being positive to being unrealistic. When you are a perfectionist it builds up stress. Perfectionism is a neurosis; excellence is good. Aim at excellence rather than perfection. One need not be too hard on oneself or on others. Perfection may work against the goal of hypnosis. For example, we may not have perfect health; but we can aim at good health.

9) Using Action Words

For suggestions, use action words rather than ability descriptions. For example, instead of saying “I can study well” tell “I study well.” You need not say “I am able to be happy and fun-loving” but tell “I am happy
and fun-loving." The first way of telling is ability description and the second one is action words.

10) Negative Positive Words

There are apparently some positive words which the unconscious understands as negative. For example, if you take the word “try” it has a built-in excuse for failing. It only means one attempts and does not indicate one will achieve or do it. It is attempting to do which is not doing. It does not help to change fixed ideas. Another word is “hope.” Having hope will mean that one does not give up. It amounts to saying “maybe.” When dealing with the unconscious one needs a resolution, not an open-ended “maybe.” Even the words “should,” “could,” and “can” let doubt in where one is supposed to be positive.

11) Under the Control of the Subject

Suggestions should be under the control of the subject. For example, “People will accept and applaud my performance” is outside the control of the subject. Instead “I shall perform well and with great confidence” is within the control of the subject.

Yet, others’ actions can be included in the suggestions depending upon the context. For example, it is nice to say: “As you sing you will notice the audience enjoying it.”

12) Deeply Embed

This is done in several ways like: asking the subject to engage his imagination to picture himself having embodied his new desired behaviour; repeating a meaningful phrase over and over again; listening to a recorded message that one has made; and feeling the change. The more the subject can involve all his senses with the positive change he desires, the more powerful the hypnosis session will be. Once the hypnotist is satisfied that his suggestions have been accepted by the unconscious of the subject, he then can direct his subject to come out of the trance and return to the normal waking state. It is useful that prior to coming to waking state to remind the subject that once he is awake he will feel wonderful and refreshed unless you are hypnotizing a person before sleep so that you can suggest that he will have a very deep, sound, and relaxing sleep.
13) Varied and Repeated

Usually suggestions are to be repeated many times to get enough strength. At the same time, when a word or phrase is repeated many times there is a strong, and easily observed tendency for it to become less evocative. They may become meaningless. Therefore, suggestions are to be varied but revolve around the same idea or train of thought. The hypnotist should vary the words while holding the idea constant. Thus it is good to employ different words and phrases based on a single theme, perhaps describing different aspects of a complex response.

14) Achievable

Suggestions usually work by evoking bodily responses. Therefore, they should generally refer to behavioural or physiological changes that could feasibly be evoked psychologically.

15) Realistic

The goals need to be realistic and appropriate. Once appropriate and realistic goals are chosen, one needs to polish the suggestions by saying the same thing in many different ways. Even though you need to be realistic, you can exaggerate. One needs to be careful about using superlatives like “the greatest,” “the most beautiful,” “the best ever,” and “the most intelligent,” because the unconscious may not accept them. One can be creative and use a lot of fun with the suggestions.

16) Meaningful and Evocative

Suggestions should be in the language the subject can understand unequivocally. Words the hypnotist uses may be experienced as personally meaningful and evocative to the subject. Some of the abstract concepts can be understood differently by different subjects. For example, “You are now more assertive” is an abstract suggestion. For some it may evoke specific images, memories, and feelings. For others, it may simply be too vague a concept to stir any specific response. Therefore, abstract concepts are to be defined, fleshed out, by many specific suggestions. Thus the sentence “You are now more assertive” can be made more evocative if associated with a detailed assertive script or specific imagery.
It is good to create a picture of what assertiveness is in the mind of the subject.

17) Delivering Congruently

Research proves that subjects respond better to suggestions which are delivered in a confident and meaningful tone of voice than those which are repeated monotonously and lackadaisically.

10. Helpful Suggestions

The type of words used in suggesting to the subject in hypnosis will have a dramatic effect on the subject’s responses. Here below are some sample hypnotic, post-hypnotic, and imaginative suggestions.

1) Physical Relaxation

You are feeling that every muscle in your body is just loosening up, and just letting go, and lying flat like a limp rubber band, and you are very deeply relaxed.

2) Mental Comfort and Restfulness

You are enjoying this moment profoundly. Although you are aware of my voice and what I am saying, you are even more aware of the wave of comfort enveloping your awareness. As you continue enjoying the restfulness of not having to do anything in particular right now you feel deeply relaxed in every fibre of your muscle.

3) Normal Sensation with Continued Comfort

It is true that you are experiencing normal sensation as usual. All the same you experience extraordinarily more pleasant, more surprising, more comfortable, and more restful than you might expect. It is indeed a profound relaxation.

4) Reinterpretation of Sensation

As you feel the stimulus, you can ever more be mindful of its intensity, mindful of its quality, reminded that there is no other meaning except to be reminded of how comfortably relaxed you can feel. Whenever
you feel the onset of the stimulus, you can feel an onset of great relaxation quickly spreading into your entire body from the head to the feet.

5) Normalization of Analgesia

You have almost forgotten to feel your right hand but now you begin to feel it as before. It is amazing how you could not feel your right hand a moment before and now feel it at my word.

6) Dissociation and Dissociative Imagery

You are surprised to note how your body can be separate from your immediate experience as if you are far away, floating freely lifting yourself right out of your body, and floating like a cloud in a beautiful blue sky with pleasant breeze embracing you.

7) Lowering the Intensity of the Stimulus

Looks like you are overwhelmed by the stimulus. Now you have the possibility and freedom to turn down the dial of your own sensation to the optimum level you want so that you feel really comfortable and relaxed.

8) Numbing and Analgesia

You are feeling like having taken a painkiller; a curious tingling sensation takes hold of you. You might enjoy letting your right hand become more and more numb and you do not feel the pain — even if pressure is applied to it.

9) Creating a Hallucination

As you are deeply relaxed with your eyes closed, I am going to ask you in a moment to open your eyes, lean forward, and look to your right and you see a window and a stranger on the other side of the window. Or, while remaining as deeply relaxed and comfortably hypnotised as you feel now, I would now like you to slowly open your eyes, turn your head to your right, and look through the window and see the stranger.
The first part of the process of hypnosis is the induction of the relaxed trance state. It is a day-dreamy state of mind. This trance state is to allow the body and mind to move into a state of complete relaxation. Breathing techniques, visualization imagery, use of metaphors, or bombarding the critical mind with an overload of information can induce the mind to start to alter its state of awareness. This is to get the conscious critical mind to switch off, to allow the subject to concentrate on what is being said to him and to start to focus on the inner self. Here the hypnotist can give suggestions which are the goals envisaged for the subject. He can also give post-hypnotic suggestion of carrying out certain actions or having certain feelings like self-confidence. To ignite or initiate the post-hypnotic suggestion one uses triggers which should have been implanted during the hypnotic session.

1. Post-Hypnotic Suggestion

A suggestion made to a hypnotized person that specifies an action to be performed after awakening, often in response to a cue given under hypnosis, is a post-hypnotic suggestion.

It is a suggestion that is given to a subject while he is in hypnosis to help effect a change after he comes out of hypnosis. For example, the hypnotist could say, “The harder you try to find the fear of darkness, the harder it becomes. You are unable to find that fear. It is replaced by a feeling of deep calm, centeredness, and peace of mind.”

2. Post-Hypnotic Suggestion with Meaning

Let us take advertisement. In order to connect with a person’s psyche, the advertisement needs to tap into themes and metaphors that have meaning for the target audience. For example, sex symbol such as a scantily-dressed woman or a man, a smiling family with children, display of wealth or opulence, such as a fancy automobile has meaning for the audience. Thus a post-hypnotic suggestion should have meaning for the subject.
3. Effectiveness

The effectiveness of the post-hypnotic suggestion depends on how deeply the subject was hypnotized at the time the post-hypnotic suggestion is given. If someone is deeply hypnotized he is more likely to respond to a post-hypnotic suggestion. Also regardless of the depth of the trance, how much the suggestion goes against the subject’s own beliefs and ethical values determines the effectiveness. Any suggestion against the beliefs and morals of the subject will not be carried out.

4. Literal-minded subjects

At times, subjects literally understand the post-hypnotic suggestions. Sometimes they tend to fill in the gaps or work out what the hypnotist means on their own. It also happens that subjects tend to do exactly what the hypnotist says and only what he says. Therefore, it implies that the hypnotist needs to spell out far more clearly and specifically in his instructions to subjects in a trance.

5. Hypnotic Trigger

The next stage is the process called ‘hypnotic trigger.’ Sometimes a word is offered, or a particular behaviour, such as touching one’s ear or pressing a finger and thumb together. This very trigger can be used in our normal waking state to produce the same state of calmness and relaxation achieved during hypnosis. This stage of trigger can be used to bring back to the conscious mind any imagery or suggestion that the unconscious mind has visualized or heard during hypnosis. Usually the hypnotist will inform the subject that the trigger word or action will only take on this special significance when used in relation to hypnosis and in all other circumstances the trigger will not have that special meaning but only the ordinary meaning it always has.

6. Planting Hypnotic Trigger Words

A post-hypnotic suggestion is a command the hypnotist gives to the subject which is intended to be triggered sometime after the trance, usually by a phrase the hypnotist says or by some other signal. It can also be given to the subject in such a way that it automatically triggers either at a specific time or in certain circumstances.
Hypnotic trigger words are simply words used to cause someone to act on the post-hypnotic commands after he wakes up. This part resembles anchoring in Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP). When one is reliving a past pleasant experience the therapist introduces any one of the five senses, as for example touch. If the therapist touches the subject at a particular place with particular pressure, the relived experience is anchored. Then later when the therapist touches the person in the same way he did for anchoring, the subject will automatically have the same relived past, pleasant experience. Post-hypnotic triggers and anchoring in NLP are the same.

In couple counseling when the couple is having intimacy problem, the partner can make use of anchoring or post-hypnotic triggers. Here, using hypnosis when one of the couple is under even a mild hypnotic state the partner can say, for example:

Whenever I say the word “sleep” you will instantly close your eyes and go into a deep hypnotic trance. Whenever I say to you “Blue Sky” you will immediately feel amorous towards me. Whenever I say “Deep Ocean” automatically you will feel comfortable in being close to me. Whenever you hear me say “Running Stream,” you will instantly want to approach me highly aroused.

Before the partner is woken up out of his trance state, and after having implanted post-hypnotic suggestions, one may also give him amnesia so that he will not remember what had happened.

This process is quite simple, it is simply a matter of giving him another post-hypnotic suggestion that he will not remember. One will say to him at this point: You will follow each and every suggestion I give you. You will not remember that I gave you these commands. You will not remember that you were hypnotized after I awaken you. You will follow all of my commands and you will forget what happened while in this trance.”

One might say that this way one can seduce someone to sexual intimacy. It is good to remember that no suggestions can be given against the subject’s morality and beliefs. The context I speak of is a couple relationship in which both want sexual intimacy but are unable to experience it. One cannot make use of this technique with a stranger.
who does not want to be intimate to you. It can be used only when two individuals want to be sexually intimate but have problem in executing it. It is between consensual partners to enhance intimacy and not with strangers to seduce.

7. Waking Up the Subject

Now that one has finished installing all of the desired commands, post-hypnotic suggestions, and trigger words, it is time to wake him up. The following is the end of the hypnotic script. It is known as the “Coming up” part.

“I will count from one to five. When I reach the count of five, your eyes will open and you will be wide awake. I am counting now. One….coming up more and more, feeling wonderfully good about yourself. Two…completely and totally relaxed…Three….you are excellent in every way, physically wonderful, mentally marvellous….Four… your body now feels as if it has been bathed in pure, fresh spring water, clear, and refreshed. On the next number you will open your eyes, take a deep breath, stretch out and feel refreshed and feel more alert than ever before. Five…eyes wide open, feeling wide awake, alert, wonderfully refreshed. Have the best day you can possibly have.”

8. Instant Trance

One of the very useful post-hypnotic suggestions the hypnotist can give to the subject is one which will put the subject in a trance instantly, rather than the hypnotist having to do a full induction each time. To do this first think of a trigger phrase, action, or a combination of the two which will not ever happen unintentionally. Secondly, while the subject is hypnotized, the hypnotist instructs the subject that when he does or says this trigger that the subject will go into a trance. It is useful to repeat this trigger to the subject over a number of sessions to increase its effectiveness. For example, “When I say three..., two..., one..., trance..., you will stop whatever you are engaged in and will close your eyes and go straight into a trance.”
9. Ground Rules for Post-Hypnotic Suggestions

1) Unambiguous

   The suggestions are to be carefully thought out and worded. They should be completely unambiguous and specific. For example, telling a subject that whenever he hears the cock crow he will do such and such thing. It is rather ambiguous since one may hear cock crowing many times. Therefore, it is not very specific but ambiguous. It is good to combine a physical action and a word or phrase to create the trigger. For example, “In future when I touch one of your elbows and say the word ‘courage’ you will go straight into a trance.” If you touch one of your elbows he will not go into a trance. If someone else touches one of his elbows and says “courage” he will not go into a trance. It will only be when you touch one of his elbows and say the word “courage” he will go into a trance. You need to define when you want the post-hypnotic suggestion to work, when you do not want it to work, and what you want to happen. For example, “At 10 a.m. you will start being assertive.” The problem with such a suggestion is that something might happen and at 10 a.m. and there may not be any need for the subject to be assertive. Perhaps you could consider the following. “When you are with your colleagues at office next time and others try to take advantage of you, you will be assertive.”

2) Limiting the Scope

   The hypnotist should limit the scope of the suggestions. Sometimes you may want a post-hypnotic suggestion to be effective each time you trigger it, or you want it to work once that is just the first time you trigger it after the trance, or you want it to work when you alone trigger it, or you want it to work only in certain locations like in the class room. For example, “The next one time when I say ‘fun’ you will begin to laugh to your heart’s content.” This will work for the next one time only and no more.

3) The Subject Knowing the Details of What He Needs to Do When Triggered

   The post-hypnotic suggestion needs to be precise and not vague. If not spelt out, the subject may do less than expected. For example, “In
future when I say ‘Evening Cycle Exercises in the Garden’ you will perform cycle exercise.” Here in the suggestion, what the subject is expected is not spelt out. Consider the same suggestion put in different words. “In future when I say ‘Evening Cycle Exercises in the Garden’ you will take the cycle, ride on it for about 30 minutes continuously in the garden.”

4) Defining the Termination of the Effect

The hypnotist needs to define when the post-hypnotic suggestions’ effect stops. If the hypnotist were to say, “Just after I wake you from this trance I say the word ‘Olympics’ you will start running.” Here in this suggestion it has not been said when the running will have to stop. Therefore, it is good to put it this way, “Just after I wake you up from this trance when I say the word ‘Olympics’ you will start running for ten minutes and then you will stop.”

5) Post-Hypnotic Suggestion by Association

If the hypnotist wants the subject to feel a certain way as a result of a post-hypnotic suggestion, the hypnotist will get much better results if he tells the subject what to feel like rather than just telling him what to feel. For example, “In future when I say the words ‘mountain top’ you will feel confident and courageous.” Here the type of confidence and courage is not specified. Instead if it is said, “In future when I say the words ‘mountain top’ you will feel confident and courageous as you are feeling in front of this group and in front of me feeling great about looking at us and addressing us in bold, clear, and loud voice.” In the latter example, the confidence and courage are spelt out. Here, the future feeling of confidence and courage are associated with the feeling the subject has right now.”
23. TRANCE TERMINATION

Every good thing has to come to an end. Likewise hypnosis comes to a close — terminating the trance. Trance is an altered state and one does not come out of it all of a sudden. It is doing violence to a person to ask him to come out of trance abruptly. Therefore, the subject has to be brought out of trance gently. There is a way of doing it and we shall see how.

1. Options

In the final stage called “The Termination,” the hypnotic trance is brought to an end and the subject is gently brought back to full consciousness and wakefulness. The subject is offered the option of bringing back with him into his conscious world all the thoughts, feelings, and behaviours that he has experienced during the hypnotic trance, and he can also leave behind anything that he does not want. This proposal allows the subject to decide what feelings, thoughts, and emotions he has found most pleasurable and beneficial that he may wish to hold on in his conscious mind. At the end of the session the subject should be left feeling very calm, relaxed, and peaceful as one experiences in meditation.

2. Awakening ‘Back to Reality’

Awakening is the final stage in hypnosis. Now the subject comes back to full awareness, allowing the conscious mind to come back to its more dominant role. It would be disorienting, inconvenient, and uncomfortable to come back from trance too quickly or incompletely — with the subject’s unconscious still in overall control, and his senses not fully working. Perhaps, it will look like sleepwalking. It needs to be established by informing the subject that he has the possibility of waking from hypnosis at any time either by deliberately bringing oneself back at the end of hypnosis, or during the session due to a disturbance, or distraction, or emergency. If by chance one comes out of the hypnotic state, say for emergency, he can be put back to hypnotic state after attending to whatever brought him out of that state so that the subject is properly brought back to awareness. It is necessary to tell the subject that he is going to be awakened. The hypnotist can use words appropriate to the context.

3. Undo Unusual Suggestions

Bringing the subject back to here-and-now is easy. Before you start awakening the subject, undo any unusual suggestions that you would have made during the trance state so that on waking, the subject does not feel life unpleasant. If for example, you had suggested numbness in any part of the body, then undo it before awakening. If the hypnotist is doubtful of what he had suggested, it is good to do a general “banishing.”
Then it is needed that you inform the subject that you are concluding the session. Before this, make sure that the subject basks in the feeling of relaxation for a while.

4. Simple Termination

Though one can abruptly be brought out from a trance state to full awareness especially at times of emergency, it is more effective and helpful to terminate the trance state gently. This way the subject certainly would feel good for the rest of the day. Let us see a simple trance termination process.

The hypnotist can instruct the subject and conduct the trance termination by saying something like this: “As I am going to count from 1 to 5 you will slowly return to full awareness and will be refreshed and relaxed at the count of the number 5. No. 1, you are totally relaxed, feeling wonderful, and content. No. 2, you are beginning to experience the sensation of your senses and the surrounding. No. 3, you are proceeding to your normal state of awareness with freshness pouring in. No. 4, your eyes feel bright, clear and alert. On the next count you will open your eyelids and be fully aware, relaxed, and invigorated. No. 5, open your eyes, and come back here fully awake and aware. You are feeling great and wonderful.”

Another simple way is to tell the subject that when he is ready, he can return to the here-and-now feeling, wonderfully fine in every way. 1, starting to return; 2, feeling more alert; 3, half way through; 4, feeling fine in every way; and 5, awake.

5. When Not Woken Up

If the subject does not wake up within a reasonable amount of time (a couple of minutes), you can say: “Slowly and gently come back here and open your eyes within 10 seconds.” Even then if the subject does not wake up, make sure that he has not fallen asleep. If you have really made a person fall asleep, it is to your credit that you are capable of making a person sleep soundly. Even after all these the subject does not wake up, then leave it to his responsibility telling that he can come back here when he is ready. Again if the subject delays, suggest that the subject feels alert and his eyes are opening. You may also use a reinforcer by switching back to your regular voice as you conclude calling out the number 5. Perhaps you had been speaking slowly in a low tone and now you can speak louder than usual at the count of the number 5.

6. Integrating

It is important to instruct the subject as to which method of the trance termination will be utilized. The hypnotist might say, “You will come out of the trance when I reach the count of three. One, you are now
becoming more awake. Two, you are more and more awake. You are now fully awake and completely refreshed. Three, you are fully awake and alert as before and refreshed.” After the termination, it is advisable to give the subject enough time to adjust. Adjustment may be assisted through the introduction of a conversation in a normal speaking tone, increased volume of any background music, the turning up of any lighting, or the opening of any curtains.

After awakening it is good to remain relaxed to retain the calmness that the subject would have generated during hypnosis and allow him to be fully re-oriented to reality. It is good at this time to ask for a feedback. If you had forgotten to undo certain things, the subject might remind you of that and you can quickly induce a trance and undo the things that are to be undone. If the subject speaks of some inconsideration on your part, you can clear the air and acknowledge the validity of his complaint.

In fact the end of a hypnosis session is the beginning of a new way of thinking and acting. How the end is brought about and what the subject does next can make all the difference in the effectiveness of the hypnotherapy. During the hypnosis the subject was put into a trancelike state. This allows him to put away the conscious, often over-analytical mind for a short time and allow a spoken message or script to take centre stage in his thought processes. It is here, we can say, that hypnosis is turned into hypnotherapy where suggestions are made that can bring about changes in the life of the subject. For the subject to move from the dreamy state of the trance to real life, the trance is specifically terminated.

There are five basic steps that lead up to trance termination. (1) Review of what was learned during the session. This might also include instructions on what to do with this new information. Making a summary of the learning reinforces the desired changes. (2) Giving instructions to forget to over-analyze the new information. It is part of the amnesia step of the total hypnosis process. In fact, this might reinforce changes that are desired. (3) Awakening. This step is meant to gradually re-orient the individual into a state of awareness. (4) Distraction. The subject is distracted. It is something that either has nothing to do with the hypnosis session or bringing up a topic that may have been discussed before starting the trance. It is similar to amnesia in that it keeps the subject from dwelling too much with the conscious mind on the information from the session. (5) The subject is questioned for the experience during hypnosis. It is to know what the subject experienced. It further fills the gap between the conscious and the unconscious experiences of the hypnosis. This is another way of bringing the subject to consciousness. The subject is mentally moving from the hypnotherapy to a natural state either — full consciousness or sleep (at night when desired).
PART III

TYPES OF HYPNOSIS
24. HYPNOTIC METHODS

There are no different types of hypnosis, but rather different levels of (the state of mind termed) hypnosis. A number of different hypnotic methods are used to achieve the level of mind known as hypnosis, trance, Alpha or Theta level of mind. In trance, one’s focus of attention is directed in such a way that learning, and the acceptance of hypnotic suggestions are easily achieved.

We can identify from the history and practice of hypnosis there are major hypnoses like self-hypnosis, hetero-hypnosis, stage hypnosis, and Ericksonian hypnosis and minor ones like kids’ hypnosis and other hypnoses like therapeutic hypnosis, forensic hypnosis, street hypnosis, and animal hypnoses. A few words are here below about the major hypnosis before we deal with them in detail.

1. Self-Hypnosis

Self-hypnosis refers to the induction of the hypnotic state by oneself. In this one self-induces relaxation. It is a state of heightened awareness and suggestibility, one is more capable of influencing one’s bodily functions, and providing oneself with post-hypnotic suggestions.

Self-hypnosis is also called “auto-hypnosis.” It is a hypnosis that is self-induced. The term auto-hypnosis is a euphemism for the self-hypnosis procedure. Whether understood as auto-hypnosis or self-hypnosis, it is the process of hypnotizing oneself for the purpose of some desired gain or goal.

Auto-hypnosis is usually produced through the previous post-hypnotic suggestion(s) offered by a hypnotist at some previous time. We can say that every auto-suggestion was once a hetero-suggestion. Varying degrees of auto-suggestion and auto-hypnosis are at the base of the religious-healing movements.

Suggestions are easily accepted and carried out if they are understood to originate from the self rather than being imposed by another. If a person has a faith that he will recover by auto-suggestion he develops more motivation. In this, the person feels self-pride in achieving which strengths confidence essential for recovery. Auto-hypnosis makes available
a tremendous reservoir of unrecognized potential strength which is a forgotten asset. Diligent practice is usually necessary to obtain satisfactory depth. Auto-hypnosis, in fact, is the primary phenomenon, and the hetero-hypnosis is a guided self-hypnosis.

The signs of hypnosis will be quite different for someone as an observer and as a participant. The signs will also change throughout the trance, as the level of depth and involvement of the trance progresses. Entering the trance too is different to different people as some may prefer to sit, some others to stand, and still others to lie down.

2. Hetero-Hypnosis

Hetero-hypnosis is also known the “authoritarian” approach to hypnosis. In this induction the hypnotic state is caused by someone else (the hypnotist). Motivation, relaxation, and suggestion are involved in hypnosis. It is the subject who allows the hypnotist to bring about a state of relaxation — because the subject himself desires this state and so he responds to the suggestions of the hypnotist. Some call the hypnotist the “dream weaver.” The idea of authoritarian approach comes from the practice of the early figures of hypnotism such as Mesmer, Bernheim, Charcot, and Freud. Of course, now this method is used by the stage hypnotists.

3. Stage Hypnosis

Stage hypnosis is done by a hypnotist for the general public to entertain them. The subjects may be asked to do silly and amusing things so that the audience is led to hilarity. It is more for show than for healing. A number of things in stage hypnosis are common with other methods of hypnosis. At times people are led to believe strange things about hypnosis which may not be true. Stage hypnosis is to be taken for its fun value and that is all.

4. Ericksonian Hypnosis

The method of Erickson is the “naturalistic or utilization approach.” It helps the subject find his own talents for problem solving and healing in his own unique manner. It encourages and facilitates the subject’s own creative process. The elementary principles of Ericksonian hypnotherapy are (1) accepting the person’s reality, and (2) utilizing the person’s reality. The hypnotist paces the behaviour of the subject and later leads the subject’s behavior to the desired goal.23
25. SELF-HYPNOSIS

Self-hypnosis expands the privilege of autonomy. The link of interpersonal rapport is dissolved as the experience becomes more fully intrapsychic. A more conscious portion of the mind gives suggestions, affirmations, and directives to another, more unconscious part. According to some authors, the autonomy accompanying self-hypnosis may invite disproportionate wanderings of attention and less task orientation than that observed in the more structured hetero-hypnosis.

1. Hypnosis to Oneself

Self-hypnosis is said to happen when a person hypnotizes himself, commonly involving the use of autosuggestion. Persons who practice self-hypnosis may require assistance; some use devices known as mind machines (using pulsing rhythmic sound and/or flashing light to alter the frequency of the user’s brainwaves) to assist in the process; some others use hypnotic recordings.

2. Context of Self-Hypnosis

Self-hypnosis is effectively used to solve many problems that have their root cause in the mental condition. The technique is often used to increase motivation to go on a diet, quit smoking, or reduce stress. Phobias created in the mind due to fear and severe mental depressions can be treated. Those who attempt to control body weight, addiction to alcoholism or drugs, etc. can get quick relief from self-hypnosis. It is fairly acceptable to all — since one need not have to submit one’s thoughts and emotions in front of others. It can also be practiced without anyone’s help whenever one wants it.

Self-hypnosis enables one to control one’s mind. One understands his own problem completely than anyone else. Therefore, one will be a better person to treat oneself after learning the techniques of self-hypnosis. One can also use the process of hypnosis tailor-made to suit one’s needs. Though the process of hypnosis is complex and may require multiple skills, self-hypnosis includes only the fundamental knowledge essential to control one’s mind. That is why it is simpler to learn and practice self-hypnosis.
Usually one’s mind is preoccupied with beliefs and thoughts from experiences in the past. These hidden thoughts in the unconscious are responsible for every decision and action. Self-hypnosis trains the mind to forget the negative thoughts that hinder one’s growth. The negative thoughts are replaced with positive thoughts with a vision of better future. Then the positive thoughts are imprinted in the unconscious through repetition and visualization. Self-hypnosis requires complete relaxation of the mind and the body. One should choose a place which provides absolute solitude and comfort. The relaxation method needs to be learned.

3. Preparation

You can set aside 10 to 15 minutes per day to practice self-hypnosis. You may do it at a convenient time; you need not do it at bedtime as you may fall asleep before you finish, unless your motive is to get a deep sleep. It is good to choose a place quiet and undisturbed. You should feel warm and comfortable without feeling too hot or too cold. There are some who sit in a chair and there are others who lie down while practicing self-hypnosis. Let there not be any disturbance from people or telephones. Unavoidable traffic noise can be integrated into your hypnosis. Loosening any tight clothing you may be wearing makes you feel comfortable. When you lie down it is good to take off your shoes. While seated in a chair, put your feet flat on the floor and place your hands on your lap without interlocking or by the sides next to you if you are lying down.

4. Integrate Distraction

Since in hypnosis you close your eyes, most of the distractions are from sounds. You can actually turn the distracting sounds into your advantage saying: “I will relax more with every sound I hear.” Thus with any annoying sound you will be going deeper into relaxation and trance. Do not fight with the external sounds. You will always come out of the hypnosis if there is a real emergency like any alarm sound, or smell of smoke. Both your conscious and unconscious are programmed for your self-preservation. It is good to practice self-hypnosis at the same time every day. Anyway you need not practice hypnosis within an hour after eating, or when you are hungry, or right before bedtime as you may fall asleep. Though you may lie down on the floor or on a mat, you need not
lie down on your bed as you may be anchored to sleep. If you are afraid that you would miss an appointment if by chance your hypnosis prolongs, set an alarm lest you be bothered about terminating your trance on time. You may not clear your mind of all thoughts other than hypnosis. If thoughts keep intruding, just ignore them instead of paying attention or being worried about them. When you do not fight against the intruding thought they will lose their strength and slowly disappear. Therefore, it is a good strategy not to pay attention or worry about them.

With practice you will be able to enter deeper relaxation and deeper trance. In the beginning it is good not to force it. Learning self-hypnosis takes repeated practice. Though hypnosis is a natural state, it will take some time to enter it voluntarily. Even pieces of hypnosis can be practiced every now and then as you are waiting for something. Relaxation can be practiced whenever you have a small break from your work schedule. Likewise you can practice induction. You may practice pieces of hypnosis until they become your second nature. You can practice it repeatedly, ideally every day to get the full benefits. You should not practice hypnosis while operating some equipments or driving.

5. Accessing the Unconscious

A professional hypnotist helps one to get through to his unconscious. In a way he is a go-between. But in self-hypnosis, one gets through to one’s own unconscious. In this one talks to oneself. One has the ability to manipulate one’s mind and change fixed ideas in his unconscious that keep him from reaching his goals. In short, self-hypnosis is a procedure that helps one change his mind. One’s will power will not do it. If one tries to use his will power, he will end up reinforcing the attitudes that are standing in his way. If there is no deep-seated block in the way of trying something new, often one can “just do it” with will power. Even here, relaxing will let you slide through and do it more easily.

There are some who are able and clever to access the unconscious and enkindle the power of the mind for healing. I know a man who met with a minor accident and the leg was so badly hurt that it began to fester. He refused any medicine and just by self-hypnosis got the leg cured. There was a woman who was highly diabetic. She decided that she would not need any medicine because, according to her, God
will take care of her. In fact she goes about without any medication, eating anything and being very normal. These are examples of people who use self-hypnosis to cure themselves.

6. Approaches to Self-hypnotic Skills

The important ingredients of self-hypnosis are relaxation and the universal ability to construct mental pictures. Relaxation decreases the background noise of the mind. In it the body adopts natural rhythms of repose, and the mind allows its spontaneous creation of thoughts to slow down. Within this tranquility, creative imagination finds opportunities for sustaining mental images that project intensity and therapeutic direction.

Self-hypnosis has greater impact if it involves a variety of senses. It recruits more areas of the brain. Pictorial images correspond to the activity of visual and visual association areas in the occipital lobes. Adding language or music recruits auditory regions around the temporal lobes. Integrating movements invites participation of the parietal lobes. Emotions animate the limbic system and its wealth of connections to autonomic neural networks and to the neuroendocrine system.

Certain techniques have the capacity to deepen relaxation and to heighten the impact of mental images. Hypnosis is a special state of mind permitting the experience of relaxation in its most profound realms. Beyond the dissipation of tension, the body drifts into a state where breathing slows down to become deeply abdominal; heart rate assumes a mellifluous cadence; blood pressure decompresses; and electroencephalogram (EEG) rhythms shift into cerebral harmony. The mind enters layers of feelings that traverse calm and move into peacefulness. Relaxation knows no limits in its depths or in its boundaries.

Self-hypnosis seeks the attainment of experiences similar to those searched for in hypnosis. Deep relaxation is created and the ability to summon mental directives is enhanced. Mental images thus achieve clarity, focus, and steadfastness. Energizing feelings such as self-confidence and self-mastery are more easily conjured. In self-hypnosis, the subject acts as guide and experiences solely through the impetus of self-regulation. It gives the subjects the opportunity to develop a sense of self-determination toward their condition.

The ability to hypnotize oneself is a valuable tool for anyone to possess. To hypnotize yourself, begin with a straight spine. It is advisable that the beginner sits in a symmetrical position in a straight backed chair, taking special note to maintain a straight elongated spine. Take several deep breaths in through the nose and out through the mouth. As you perform this exercise, close your eyes and repeat this simple phrase to yourself: “My body is limp…my body is limp… my body is limp.” Now turn your attention toward your breathing. A simple, relaxing technique is to breathe in through the nose for three seconds, (you should be counting to yourself) hold the breath for nine seconds, release out of your mouth for six seconds, and pause for three seconds. This cycle of breathing should be repeated for several seconds, until you are comfortable, warm, and relaxed. If it is extremely uncomfortable, you may shorten the held breath step. Now that you are relaxed and focused on your breathing, you must attune yourself to your body. Repeat now to yourself: “My legs are limp.” After several repetitions, you should begin to notice the strong sense of weakness in your legs. You will experience brief moments, in which you will lose control of your legs. Do not be alarmed by this, rather let them fall away and turn your attention to your solar plexus (part of one’s stomach, below the ribs).

The solar plexus which is the centre of your breathing, should now be ordered to relax in a way that follows with the cycle of breathing that you have been performing. Repeat “My chest is relaxed,” after every step of the breathing cycle. As your chest becomes relaxed and subsequently detached, let it go.

Now that your body is complexly limp and relaxed, you may begin to visualize. Think of a friend, or the picture of a particular project, or the subject that has been bothering you. Now, begin to describe it in your mind. Describe the colour, dimensions, and features of your picture. This process will yield other pictures that will follow. Describe them all in equal depth. This process should last for five to fifteen minutes, and upon completion you will remember a surprisingly large portion (if not all) of the images, and the order in which they followed. You should not open your eyes, tell your body aloud to “Wake up” and proceed to reflect upon the pictures that you saw. There is always an underlying theme to the
images, and a conscious examining of them will yield an insight into your true feelings concerning a subject. With this newly discovered insight, you may come to terms with an issue or transform it into a work of art, be it poetry, prose, sculpture, or painting. The relaxing sensation that is felt should carry with you for the rest of the day, a sense that comes from unconscious revelation.

8. Self-Hypnosis May Take Some Practice

Trance is merely an altered state of mind, one of many that a person phases in and out of, throughout the day. Altered states are necessary to get us out of preset ideas and habits. In an altered state, facilitating change occurs more naturally. We want to use rationality and logic to solve everything. But in relationships or with emotional issues they have their limitations. Hypnosis bypasses all mental interference. Hypnosis works most effectively for those who can concentrate. Hypnosis can be defined as mindset allowing an unconscious facilitation to change. In this state, the hypnotist can offer a new road map for the unconscious mind to follow. The hypnotist helps the subject access this state and gives useful instructions. One of the problems of self-hypnosis is transitioning from unsettling or negative mindset over to a positive or calming one. Learning self-hypnosis is learning to shift your focus and awareness.

9. The Benefits of Self-Hypnosis

Self-hypnosis is becoming increasingly popular to help alleviate a variety of health concerns. It can be a very useful complementary approach to use in conjunction with any health care approach. It involves placing a subject in a trancelike state often described as resembling sleep. Though asleep, one is aware of surroundings. It places the mind in an altered, relaxed state. While in this state, one’s attention is much more focused than usual. At this time one is more open to suggestions and less critical. It is precisely this particular attribute that makes self-hypnosis so effective in treating a variety of health problems. It taps the inherent connection between the mind and the body. Whether a person eventually succumbs to the suggested altered state of mind ultimately depends upon the person undergoing the process rather than the talent of the hypnotist. Self-hypnosis is a method that quiets and relaxes one’s
body. It places the subject in an altered state like the one achieved in meditation. One important aspect of this technique is mental imagery which helps one to focus inward. The imagery may involve something like descending a set of stairs or visualizing a quiet spot: example, a deserted beach. Even one can visualize walking barefoot through a forest with soft moss gently caressing one’s feet, relaxing by a brook bubbling in the background and even the smell of damp earthiness of the forest surrounding him.

This heightened relaxation is the “alpha state.” It is named this way after the type of brain waves produced under these circumstances. Now one begins to recite positive affirmations like, “I am wonderful,” “I am fit” and the like. Once one is done, one comes out of the alpha state by going up the imagined set of stairs that one descended originally or by slowly walking out of the visualized surroundings.

Some believe that self-hypnosis causes the brain to release natural substances (endorphins, neurotransmitters, etc.) which affect one’s perception of pain as well as other symptoms of one’s health problems. Some others propose that this method allows one to actually control the reactions of one’s body through one’s unconscious mind. Though there are many similarities between hypnosis and self-hypnosis, there are also some differences. In self-hypnosis one is completely in charge. One chooses one’s own time limits that one stays in his alpha state, one chooses what health concerns one emphasizes, and one chooses when one does this. With this freedom, one can adjust his self-hypnosis schedules to fit his lifestyle as well as to discover the most effective time and length of session to be beneficial.

There are many sports persons who use this technique to help achieve their goals and improve their performance. Ideally this technique can be used for just about any health concern that one has – from simple relaxation to the pain management of childbirth. Of course, it is not intended to cure one of any disease. However, many use it quite successfully to alleviate the symptoms of many health problems. Self-hypnosis is also an excellent tool to treat stress – which in itself is the underlying cause of many chronic health conditions. Even if it helps one manage many stressors that itself is a valuable function. Self-hypnosis can help one achieve many healthy lifestyle changes in one’s life. One
Hypnotic counselling can go into one's alpha state to reinforce one's desire to follow an exercise programme regularly. It can also be a boost to help one get rid of unhealthy habits. It is also used to lose weight and quit smoking. Not that everyone can use this technique quite easily. There are some who find that they are not able to overcome their initial prejudices and preconceived ideas about the stereotypical aspects of hypnosis. Some others may not succeed to produce that relaxed alpha state required for the hypnotic suggestions to become fully embedded in their unconscious. Compared to some alternative health methods like exercises, self-hypnosis requires more focus and more practice. But it can be a great choice for a subject who cannot fully participate in exercises.

Self-hypnosis is used in a variety of ways. It can be applied to overcome any psychological and emotional issues that most individuals commonly face. Many use it to change and modify one's behaviour, self-perception, and unhealthy lifestyle. It can bring out one’s inner potential and strengths. It can empower people to change their false beliefs and become successful in life. It also enables people to face their fears and overcome personal struggles as well. Some of the benefits are: increases self-awareness; improves self-esteem and confidence; targets and modifies unwanted, negative behaviours and limiting beliefs; installs positive life-affirming beliefs; manages stress, anxiety, traumas and dietary problems; and attracts abundance to life which includes happiness, love, success, and health.

10. Sharpening Skills

Before one learns to do self-hypnosis fully, it is worth going through a few preliminary exercises to sharpen one's skills and boost one's mind power. There are a few techniques that are very important in the use of hypnosis. They are the key tools like (1) visualization, (2) relaxation, and (3) focus.

1) Visualization Exercises

Visualization is used together with suggestion to create the change you are trying to achieve by using self-hypnosis. In trance you can visualize the results you are aiming for: you can visualize how you would look like after a stress management programme, or after working on your self-esteem. There are some people who may have some physical
reason for not being able to create pictures in their mind. But otherwise, everyone can visualize to some degree. For the visualization skills, we can think of four exercises: one in which you visualize something you know well; one in which you have to visualize something that you know but with a little more creativity; one in which you have to make something happen; and one in which you have to visualize something you have never experienced.

A. Visualizing Something You Know Well (Visualization of Your Home)

   (1) Allow your eyes to gently close, (2) Imagine you are standing in front of the main door into your home, (3) Notice what colour it is, (4) Notice what it is made of, (5) Touch the door and feel its texture, (6) Now open the door and go through the door – you are inside, (7) Walk through into the kitchen – take the kettle – put some water in the kettle – put the kettle on to boil – sit down, and (8) Now open your eyes again.

B. Visualizing Something You Know with Some Creativity (Visualization of Balloons – 1)

   (1) Close your eyes – take three deep breaths, (2) Imagine yourself holding 7 balloons – each on a separate string – a red one, an orange one, a yellow one, a green one, a light blue one, a dark blue one, and a white one, (3) For a moment, hold one of the balloons in your hands – feel its texture – hear the rubbery creaking sound it makes as you run your fingers over it, (4) Now – one at a time – release the balloons – in any order you wish – allow each one to float up and out of your mental sight, and (5) When you have released them all – open your eyes.

C. Visualizing to Make Something Happen (Visualization of Balloons – 2)

   (1) Close your eyes, (2) Allow a red balloon to appear at the right hand side of your mental visual field, (3) Allow this balloon to move across your mental field of view and disappear out of the left hand side, (4) Now do the same with an orange balloon, now yellow, now green, now light blue, now dark blue, and now white, (5) Now bring each one back in reverse order from the left side of your vision to the right side, white, dark blue, light blue, green, yellow, orange, red, and (6) Then open your eyes.
D. Visualizing Something You Never Experienced (Imagined Location)

(1) Close your eyes and take a few deep breaths, (2) Think of somewhere you would like to go – either just to visit or for a holiday – somewhere you have never been, but would like to go, (3) Imagine what that place looks like, (4) Imagine what you are doing there, (5) Imagine how it sounds, (6) Imagine finding somewhere to relax – then imagine how it feels, and (7) Now open your eyes.

2) Relaxation Exercises

Relaxation of both mind and body is another basic hypnosis technique. By using these relaxation techniques you will be able to shift your attention away from your physical and outer world realities and focus on your inside world.

A. Counting the Breath

(1) Allow your eyes to gently close, (2) Begin to breathe gently and slowly using your abdomen, (3) Begin (in your mind) to count your breaths – starting at 10 and working back to 1, (4) When you reach number one, take a deep breath, and then as you breathe gently and slowly again, count your breaths from 10 down to 1 again, and (5) You can repeat this process for as long as you wish – allow yourself to feel the relaxation being generated within you.

B. Following the Breath

(1) Allow your eyes to gently close, (2) Begin to breathe gently and slowly using your abdomen, (3) Just allow your mind to follow each breath without counting – just follow the gentle in and out that happens automatically, and (4) You can follow this procedure for as long as you wish – allow yourself to feel the relaxation being generated within you.

C. Blank Mind

(1) Allow your eyes to gently close, (2) Begin to breathe gently and slowly using your abdomen, (3) Try to imagine that you are looking into your own head. As you look into your head, allow your vision to be blank. Intrusive thoughts will come into your mind – do not worry – allow them to go again and return to your blank mind, and (4) You can follow
this procedure for as long as you wish – allow yourself to feel the relaxation being generated within you.

D. Physical Relaxation

Physical relaxation is another key component of self-hypnosis. There is a progressive relaxation technique that starts from the top of the head and goes to the tips of the toes. (pp. 159 - 160)

3) Focus

When self-hypnosis is done, after creating and deepening your trance, you will need to give yourself the suggestions you created before starting, and you will visualize the results. So, it is important that you remain focused after you have started your trance session.

An exercise to enable you to practice remaining focused on the process:

(1) Allow your eyes to gently close (2) Allow your mind to create a picture of you relaxing in a light trance, (3) As you continue to visualize yourself, repeat (in your mind) the phrase: “I focus on my objective,” (4) Think of the timeframe in which you would achieve your objectives, (5) Then, if you already know what your objective is in Learning self-hypnosis techniques, then you can visualize yourself having achieved your aim, and (6) Then open your eyes.

11. Getting Affirmations into the Unconscious Through Self-hypnosis

1) Affirmations

Affirmations in the language of hypnosis are suggestions. When we do either self-hypnosis or hetero-hypnosis we insert suggestions after deepening the trance state. In the place of suggestions one can insert affirmations and these too are suggestions.

All self-talk or inner dialogue is a stream of affirmations. Every word you say or thought you think is an affirmation. These words and thoughts reflect your inner truths and beliefs, many of which were formed in childhood. They may be helpful or they may sabotage you from achieving what you want. Most of these thoughts arise automatically, a learned response that is a critical part of your survival system. The system calls on strategies/responses that have worked in the past so that you do not
have to re-examine every aspect of things every time something new happens. Of course, this is a generalized response. The problem with this is that the strategies/responses you learned as a youngster are ineffective or inappropriate for succeeding in the adult world. For most people, 80 to 100% of those thoughts are negative. Positive affirmations are short, targeted statements that begin to retrain these responses to ones that support the direction that you want to go and to support the things that you want in your life. They use a combination of positive emotion, visualization, and repetition, which are all proven methods of unconscious change.

2) The Way Affirmations Work

Positive affirmation differs from an ingrained response. The unconscious can either refuse/avoid the statement or it can re-evaluate the response and the belief that lies beneath it. If the affirmation is far removed from reality then the unconscious will reject it. For example, an average looking man says that he is the most handsome person, then his unconscious will reject it. But if the affirmation is believable, and feels good, then, with repetition, the unconscious is likely to accept the affirmation as true, and you can tell when this is working because your response will feel good in your body, and mind, and inspire a sense of joy, or well-being. If continually a good-feeling affirmation is repeated, it will overcome even the strongest resistance. The point is both repeat the affirmation a lot, and to challenge thoughts that bring up that conflict with the affirmation or state that you are trying to adopt. Of course, affirmations can start working immediately, but you will know that your new positive beliefs are becoming a new truth for you when the positive change you seek comes easily and naturally, and you see the effects reflected in both your internal and external life.

3) Creating Your Own Positive Affirmations

Think of a few areas of your life that you would like to improve. You can take a few items as too many changes at once can make the process less effective. You can write a few positive statements for each one of the items. Here are a few guidelines:
First of all, focus on what you want, rather than what you do not want. Your unconscious follows the images and ideas that you present to it. Secondly, make it something that is believable. It is good to remember that too big a leap is likely to be rejected. It is good that you move in the direction you want to go, even if it does not get you all the way there, in one go. Thirdly, make sure that you can feel good about the statement and the direction. Emotions are part of the language of the unconscious. Therefore, when you feel good as you say your affirmation, it shows the unconscious how you want to feel about your desired change. If you have a big leap to make, start with a “releasing” affirmation. For a person who wants to get the first class in the exam, the releasing affirmation will be “I am willing to pay attention to my studies.” Later this will lead one to the desired goal of getting the first class.

Some sample affirmations are: “My body is attuned to good health;” “My broken leg heals quickly and easily;” and “I maintain optimum weight.” You can supercharge your affirmations by saying them while looking at yourself in the mirror, or writing them down and posting them in a place that you will see them regularly, you can chant your affirmations, or put them to music so that you can sing them to yourself. Self-hypnosis is a very effective way to get your affirmations into your unconscious quickly and easily. You may record your affirmations, ideally along with a process that takes you into a light hypnotic state, and listen to it again and again. This ideally works because it allows your conscious to relax so that your unconscious can absorb the affirmations more easily. Once you have gathered eight to ten affirmations ready, you may prepare a script, insert your affirmations, and affirm your way into a whole new self.

12. The Self-Hypnosis Process

The components of the self-hypnosis process are just four: (1) Induction (the creation of the trance), (2) Deepening (making the relaxation deeper and the conscious less active), (3) The therapy, and (4) Awakening. This is a shortened form of the self-hypnosis process. There are many ways of doing self-hypnosis. What follows is one of them.

Preliminaries

Self-hypnosis is a very personal experience. Each one does it in his own way. Therefore one needs to decide about which self-hypnosis
techniques are best suited for one. It is good trying different techniques to find out which are the best and most successful ones for one. There are four preliminaries: 1) Decide how long, 2) Know your suggestion, 3) Make yourself comfortable, and 4) Tell yourself you are doing self-hypnosis.

First — How long are you going to spend in hypnosis? There are two ways to do this: Decide to do hypnosis for a length of time (i.e. fifteen minutes); or decide to do it until a certain time on the clock (e.g. if you start at 8 p.m. continue until 8.15 p.m.). In either way it is not necessary to open one’s eyes and check the time on the clock. One’s unconscious will tell one when it is time to end one’s trance. When one tells himself at the beginning that one is doing self-hypnosis until a certain time (or for a certain time), then when you bring yourself out of trance, most probably, it will be the time one said or at least, very close to it. Your self-hypnosis sessions vary in length. In the beginning you may spend more time just creating, deepening, and experiencing trance spending 15-20 minutes. With practice you may do them quite quickly and can spend more time working to achieve your specific goals, while at the same time taking only 10 minutes over the whole session.

Second — Make sure you know your suggestion and have a good idea of your visualization.

Third — Make yourself comfortable. You can sit down or lie down. It is good that you sit down so that you do not fall asleep. Make sure that you will not be very much disturbed during the self-hypnosis session.

Fourth — Tell yourself you are doing self-hypnosis: I am doing self-hypnosis for 15 minutes or I am doing self-hypnosis until quarter past nine. It is also necessary that you put in a suggestion about coming back to alertness if there is an emergency during your self-hypnosis: If for any reason I need to come back to full awareness at any time during my self-hypnosis, I do so immediately, coming back to full awareness, back to full alertness at once.

1) Induction (Creation of Trance)

Induction is meant to create trance. There are many techniques of creating trance among which four are recommended: two involve eye fatigue while the other two involve confusion techniques. You may also listen to music of your choice.
(1) **Eye Fatigue - 1**: The simplest is to take two or three (even more) deep breaths while focusing the gaze on an object directly in front of you. As you breathe out on the last of the deep breaths, allow your eyes to gently close and begin to focus on your inner experience.

(2) **Eye Fatigue - 2**: Allow your eyes to close as you breathe normally. After closing your eyes allow three thoughts to pass repeatedly one after the other through your mind with increasing speed. Flick through these thoughts repeatedly, quickly flicking from one thought to another until you find your mind wandering off into a deepening relaxation. Now you can focus on your inner experience. The fast thought processing leads to fatigue and the response of the conscious is to shut down a bit. When you are no longer flicking through your three thoughts you will know that you have achieved the shutting down of the conscious.

(3) **Confusion Technique - 1**: While breathing normally, focus on a spot directly ahead of you but slightly above your line of vision. Focus on this spot by raising your eyes, not by lifting your head. Continue to gaze at this spot until you feel your eyes are becoming increasingly tired. When you reach the point at which you find it difficult to keep your eyes open, allow them to gently close, and begin to focus on your inner experience.

(4) **Confusion Technique - 2**: Allow your eyes to gently close. Count backwards from 1000 in 3’s (i.e. 1000, 997, 994, 991 and so on). While doing this, visualize each number in front of you as you keep your eyes closed with each number you visualize being half the size of the one before. You will know this has worked when you realize that you have lost track of your counting.

You may try all of these techniques to find out which suits you. You may also change from one to another occasionally for variety.

(5) **Listening to Music**: It is merely a personal choice. If you can find some music that helps to create a relaxed feeling, then you can go ahead and use it to help you relax. But once you use certain music for self-hypnosis, then it cannot be used for anything else, since you are anchored to that music and that music will put you in self-hypnosis automatically. Now you can start a self-hypnosis session. Basically you are closing your eyes and beginning to focus internally. Now you are
ready to learn the next step – let us deepen that trance and get to the
stage where you can do some useful work.

Here ends the induction process and starts the deepening
process. It is deepening the relaxation or trance.

2) Deepening

The purpose of deepening the trance is to attain a state of mind
at which the therapy will be most effective. Even though there may be
many levels of trance from author to author, a simple categorization has
three main levels: light trance, medium trance, and deep trance (often
referred to as somnambulistic state). Some even refer to deeper level
such as “coma,” “catatonia,” and “ultra trance state.” For hypnotic purpose
a steady light trance state suffices. In all the experiences of hypnosis,
this level is sufficient to carry out work that leads to beneficial change.
The aim of deepening is to ensure that there is a suitable balance between
the conscious and the unconscious so that appropriate suggestions and
visualizations can be used to carry out the therapeutic work. As with
induction, there are a number of techniques that can be used with physical
relaxation, countdown techniques, and visualization being the most widely
used.

Deepening is an important stage in self-hypnosis. You need to
ensure that you are capable of deepening the hypnosis to a level at
which successful transformational work can be done. This ensures that
the conscious has taken a back seat. While in hypnosis, the conscious
should not interfere and analyze everything which will become a hindrance
for the effectiveness of hypnosis. Hence, to switch the conscious down a
little and give yourself the opportunity to work with the unconscious, the
self-hypnosis technique known as “deepening” is used. Everyone
experiences trance in his own way. Actually one need not get into the
deepest trance in self-hypnosis. In fact, it is desirable that one does not
get into too deeply in trance when one does self-hypnosis, because, if
one does so, one probably will not remember his suggestions. There are
two parts of deepening in hypnosis: physical relaxation and mental
relaxation.

(1) Progressive Physical Relaxation (pp. 159 - 160)
(2) Mental Relaxation (This technique is used for induction as well)

When one physically relaxed, one can continue the hypnosis deepening through mental relaxation. There are two ways of doing it that is deepening by counting down and deepening by visualization:

First Way - Deepening by counting down: It is advisable to give yourself the suggestion of relaxation before you start to count: “As I breathe out I count down from 10 to 1; on each breath, on each count, I drift deeper into tranquil stillness of mind.” Then start to count downwards as you breathe (preferably as you breathe out). If you are breathing quickly, count on every second breath to slow you down. When you reach the number 1, you should be more deeply in trance. Once again, your unconscious will tell you whether you need to repeat the breathing and counting. Just keep repeating the process until you are comfortable with the level of relaxation you have created.

Second Way - Deepening by visualization: It is done by creating pictures in your mind of places or times and events in which you can feel tranquil stillness of mind – these can be real places or imagined places. In any case, it is important to see this place as if you are there – not seeing yourself in that place, but seeing the place through your eyes – as if you are there – as if it is happening to you now. There are some imageries that create peace of mind for example, a garden on a summer’s day, a meadow, a woodland walk, a gently flowing river, a mountain path, a mountain lake, a quiet golden beach at sunset. Thus, you can create your own imageries. You can also combine visualization with counting by imagining some steps (say 10 steps) descending to your imagined location. Count yourself down as you slowly walk down the steps.

Another deepening by visualizations: You can imagine yourself going down on an escalator – as you descend you drift deeper into relaxation. You can imagine yourself in a lift going down 10 floors – as you reach each lower floor, you drift deeper into relaxation. Imagine yourself overlooking a beach – the number 10 descends from the sky and sinks slowly into the sea, then the number 9, then the number 8, and so on until the number 1 sinks out of sight. As each number sinks into the sea, you become more deeply relaxed. One can create one’s own visualization but one should keep the main principles in mind.
Counting for induction, relaxation, and deepening should be downwards (counting down) that is, for example, from 10 to 1. Counting for waking up should be upwards (counting back or counting up) that is from 1 to 5.

3) The Therapy (Suggestion)

This makes the crux of self-hypnosis. It is for this that self-hypnosis is undertaken. It is necessary to be clear about what one is trying to achieve – how one wants to be, thinks, feels, and behaves. Therapy is administered using a combination of suggestions and visualization. This is the most important part of self-hypnosis and so it is worth taking time to ensure that one gets this part right – to make sure that the suggestions one creates will correctly deal with the issue one is working on, and that his visualizations are of the outcome he desires.

It is for the sake of therapy, self-hypnosis is undertaken. Self-hypnosis is learned in order to create positive change. After creating your hypnotic trance which follows induction and deepening, you can start to work towards achieving the goals you have set for yourself. It is advisable that you try self-hypnosis before you start therapy. It is in order that you get used to the process, so that you will be better at doing self-hypnosis and thus you will achieve better results when you do start to use your suggestions and visualizations. Before one starts to work on one’s goals, there are a few things one should keep in mind:

(1) Make sure that you are clear about what you want to achieve – make sure exactly how you want to think, feel, and behave. (2) Make your goal or objective, the last thing you are trying to achieve. If your goal involves a significant change in your behaviour, then it is quite acceptable to set intermediate targets. (3) Make sure that your suggestions are short, simple, in the present tense, positive, and believable. You can use words for your suggestions; symbols and images for your visualizations that are specific to you and are meaningful for you.

Doing the Therapy

After the induction and deepening phase of self-hypnosis you will be at the point where you can do your “therapy” – you can work towards the goals you have set for yourself by using the suggestions and visualizations you have already created. After deepening, allow your mind
to drift until you feel to repeat your suggestion. Allow your unconscious to guide you – you will simply “know” when the time is right to do therapy.

It is good to say your suggestion to yourself in your mind slowly at least 5 times. Perhaps any fewer repetitions than 5 will not be enough for the unconscious to accept the suggestion as normality. It is also important not to repeat the suggestion for too long. It is found useful to focus on an issue with positive suggestions and visualizations for at least one minute at any time. When anything more than this is done the focus is lost. It is important to be repetitive while retaining focus and being “present.” One need not just rush through the suggestions in the mind – allow it to be “spoken” each time as if it is the first time you have said it. It is not that you should repeat the suggestion automatically. Repeat the suggestion deliberately and thoughtfully. This makes the therapy more effective. After repeating your suggestion and carrying out your visualization you can allow your mind to drift back into deep relaxation for a while to allow the therapy to begin to take its effect in the unconscious, and to allow the self-hypnosis to create deep peace of mind within you. After doing all these, it is time to bring yourself back to reality.

4) Awakening

Usually it is a simple case of counting back. It is not possible to “get stuck” in a self-induced trance. You might perhaps fall asleep, and you can avoid this by practicing it in a sitting position rather than lying down. In any case, one’s unconscious will tell one when it is time to return to full awareness, even if one has fallen asleep.

Awakening is the last part of the self-hypnosis process. This is the part when you come back to full awareness, allowing the conscious to come back to its more dominant role. It would be dangerous and disorienting to come back from trance too quickly or incompletely, with your unconscious still in overall control, and your senses not fully working – it would be, perhaps, like sleepwalking. It is important that you are able to fully and completely bring yourself out of your self-hypnosis session. You can bring yourself out of self-hypnosis at any time: it may be at the end of the session, or during the self-hypnosis due to a disturbance or distraction. It is important to put in the suggestion about coming back to full awareness in the induction stage itself when emergency happens. If
by chance you had to come out of self-hypnosis urgently to attend to an emergency, and if you have the time and opportunity after dealing with the cause of the disturbance, it is a good idea to return to your relaxed state of mind in order to bring yourself out of self-hypnosis properly – to ensure that you are fully alert and aware by using the following process:

Mostly you will be able to get through your self-hypnosis session uninterrupted, and so you will be able to bring yourself out of self-hypnosis properly and in your own time. For this you just count up; so now you need to count to tell yourself that you are awakening: It is now time to come back to full awareness, back to full alertness. In a few moments' time, I count from 1 to 10. I slowly awaken with each number. At the count of 8 I open my eyes; at the count of 9 I am fully wide awake; fully aware and fully alert at the count of 10. Now you slowly count up from 1 to 10. As you reach the number 8, open your eyes, and as you reach the number 10, say to yourself: Ten – wide awake, wide awake, fully wide awake.

After coming out of self-hypnosis it is advisable to allow yourself to be relaxed, to retain the calmness that you would have generated during your self-hypnosis, and to allow yourself to be fully re-oriented to reality. You have completed the entire self-hypnosis process: induction, deepening, therapy, and awakening.

The first few times you do self-hypnosis, you keep it simple and just get used to the process remembering to include everything. When you are confident about the process, then you can start to use your suggestions and your visualizations to create the change you desire.

13. Various Techniques to Self-hypnotize

1) Self-Hypnosis Routine and Suggestions

(1) Pick a time and place when you will not have any distractions,

(2) Lie, or sit down comfortably wearing loose clothing with your hands at your sides, and your legs uncrossed,

(3) Some may want to put on some soft music; ocean waves are very good, because they help tune the heart rate to about sixty beats/seconds,
(4) You can gently close your eyes, and with your eyes closed, turn your eyes up to about the 10 or 11 o’clock position. At this point take one of your fingers, and lightly touch the back high center point of your head paying attention to the sensation of the touch as you replace your hand at your side,

(5) Take a slow deep breath, and hold it for about three seconds, and slowly let it out as you say to yourself the word “deeper,” while you maintain your attention on the sensation you last felt from the touch to your head, (Repeat this step about five to seven times if you feel you need to relax further.)

(6) During the fifth or seventh breath, tell yourself that upon the complete exhalation of your next breath you will find yourself in a special place. This special place is your place, your place of solitude, your place to relax. You might have a special place in mind, or you might just want to wait and experience what your special imaginary place is like, and

(7) Once you have had enough rest, or finished your internal work, (suggestions, visualizations, or a life challenge) which you set yourself to do, simply state to yourself that after a count of one to five, you will open your eyes fully refreshed, and feeling much better than ever before.

2) Betty Erickson’s Approach to Self-Hypnosis (pp. 264 - 268)

3) A Model Design of Self-Hypnosis for Improving Self-confidence

This exercise is designed to assist you to improve your confidence by learning to focus on the skills and abilities that you excel at and on the personal traits that reflect the best parts of who you are. Confident people focus on the positive aspects of their life whereas non-confident people place their focus on the negative aspects of their life.

You can begin the exercise with a relaxation exercise. You might use a fractionation relaxation method. Start by breathing deeply for several breaths and then focus on relaxing the different parts of your body. Start with the scalp of your head and proceed to the tip of your toe, part by part and slowly and gently allowing yourself to relax more and more deeply.
Once you are fully relaxed, you can think of something you do well and allow yourself to feel good about that particular thing. It could be anything,— even any insignificant thing according to you provided that you feel that you are great in performing that act. For example, teaching, cooking, any sports activity, gardening, and delivering a speech. Appreciate yourself for being good at this. Notice how a feeling of confidence begins to grow within you. You can really feel proud of it.

In the same way you can think of another thing you do well. Allow confidence to spread your entire body and mind. You really feel good about it and you appreciate yourself for this. Again feel proud of this act in which you excel.

Now think of another thing in which you excel. Let confidence in performing that thing expand and spread to your entire body and mind. Sense how good it feels to be excelling in performing that activity. Appreciate yourself for that and feel proud of yourself for this excellence.

Imagine yourself participating in a social gathering where you have taken all these good qualities with you. You may also notice how natural it is to feel good about yourself, to appreciate yourself, to feel relaxed and confident. Feel great about yourself for the way you are, and are experiencing and excelling; and you are pleasantly surprised for what you are. Appreciate yourself for what you have become: all these qualities have become a second nature to you, not to depart.

Continue this exercise for a month and you will realize how good, happy, relaxed, and confident you are.

14. Sample Scripts for Self-hypnosis (pp. 330 - 344)
Hypnosis is a very natural, pleasant and non-drug induced state that almost anyone can attain. In fact, nearly everyone is hypnotized every day. It may be surprising to many to learn that we experience trance states many times in the course of our days and lives. Whenever you “zone out,” daydream, or miss your turn because you were lost in thought – it is a hypnotic state. Even passing into ordinary sleep involves a kind of hypnotic relaxed state.

1. Towards a Definition

Clinical hypnosis is a procedure during which a qualified health professional or therapist (hypnotist) gives a patient carefully worded instructions to follow with the goal of helping the patient enter a state of deep relaxation. The subject is aware of everything that is going on, but becomes increasingly absorbed in using his imagination as directed by the hypnotist. The hypnotist uses carefully worded language to help the subject enter into a state of highly focused, suggestible attentiveness — in which the subject is able to clear away mental clutter and focus on his problem and solutions to the problem. The hypnotist employs a body of techniques to help subjects acquire self-control, self-mastery, willpower, and confidence to visualize, realize, and achieve their goals.

The hypnotist gives the subject suggestions to experience changes in behaviours, feelings, sensations, images, perceptions, thoughts, beliefs, and physical functions or symptoms. Suggestions include relaxation, calmness, confidence, increased self-control and well-being. Instructions are for imagining or thinking about pleasant experiences.

2. Neither Asleep nor Awake

The experience of hypnosis is neither asleep nor awake; it is a little like daydreaming, with a pleasant feeling of deep relaxation underneath it all. It is being completely relaxed and yet aware of what is going on around you. When using hypnosis, your focus turns inward and you become extremely relaxed – physically, mentally, emotionally, and
You gain access to your unconscious, where professionals say 90% of your total mind power resides and positive behavioural changes originate more easily.

3. **Highly Suggestible**

   While hypnotized, one is highly suggestible to statements, imagery, ideas, feelings, emotions, attitudes, and memories that support one’s stated goals. As a result, one meets the hypnotist to discuss his wants, needs, goals, and what is troubling, annoying, or preventing one from having the life one wants.

4. **Predominant Unconscious**

   In hypnosis, one is aware of what the hypnotist says. There may be times when one’s conscious drifts as one’s unconscious becomes more prominent, and one may remember part but not remember consciously everything that was said. Since the unconscious is always present during hypnosis, it hears and remembers everything. When deepening techniques take one to a more profound state, positive suggestions in support of one’s specific goals are repetitively implanted into one’s unconscious where they ultimately take root, develop, and then manifest as desired changes, thoughts, beliefs, attitudes, feelings, and actions.

5. **Objectives (pp. 76 - 83)**

6. **Positive Feeling**

   Naturally, the mind/body system cannot maintain contradictory states simultaneously. One cannot be both angry and content at the same time. So once a relaxed hypnosis state is induced, negative emotional states dissolve — as an overall sense of well-being and comfort replace them during the session. In this state, one’s unconscious, the seat of motivation, is highly receptive to the positive suggestions strongly implanted within it. Benefits can last for weeks, months, years, perhaps even a lifetime, depending on one’s belief in the process and one’s commitment to using the tools and suggestions given.

7. **Creating Positive Mindset**

   From childhood onwards, particularly before the age of 12, one is highly suggestible to unpleasant experiences of the world, criticism from
parents, teachers, siblings, and others, as well as the disturbing events portrayed by the media.

One of the laws of mind is the “law of dominance.” It says that what is presented to the mind more often and more forcefully is generally what the mind comes to believe. It is estimated that for most people, the amount of negative feedback and experiences that go into the unconscious, where the self-concept forms, often far outweigh the positive love, support, and validation provided. The unconscious generally accepts what it is told or given without question. It can develop a negative self-concept that one may carry throughout life.

In hypnosis, one works on sending positive messages to the unconscious to reverse the damage and create a positive mindset and self-image so that one is more likely to achieve one’s goals with greater confidence and enjoyment.

The critical mind (partly conscious and partly unconscious), serves to protect the human being against emotional damage by acting as a filter to screen out what is harmful. It does not fully develop and function until about the age of 12. Therefore, during the first 12 years of one’s life, the negative influences can easily move from the conscious to the unconscious without filtration. Thus, self-defeating fears and beliefs can form. So, held deep in the unconscious, they often exert powerful negative impact on the emotions. When they are triggered by events and experiences of everyday life, these fears and limiting beliefs create uncomfortable feelings, sensations, images, and thoughts. Thus, unhealthy attitudes, habits, and low expectations often develop as a result, which can shape behaviour in undesirable ways. Therefore, these negative forces, when left unchecked, may exert such a powerful influence that a person may go through life sabotaging rather than supporting their own dreams, goals, and desires. Feelings of being stuck or emotionally blocked are common reactions one experiences to unsuccessful conscious attempts to break out of this cycle. Conscious determination and will power may seem to work for a while. But too often the undesirable habits and behaviours return, in full force, perhaps worse than before. Finally the unconscious wins.
8. Pre-Agreed Positive Suggestions

In hypnosis, one is given pre-discussed suggestions and techniques that empower one. One learns how to use the suggestions given, repeated, and stored within one’s unconscious. They will be pre-agreed upon specific positive, supportive, and uplifting ideas, beliefs, attitudes, feelings, and images. With these positive suggestions, one receives the support of one’s unconscious so that one overcomes the blocks, uses the desired behaviours, and reaches one’s goals. Thus doing, one experiences one’s own transformation. Now no longer one is the victim of negative unconscious programming, but one is free to be one’s authentic self.

Hypnotherapy is a relatively brief, interactive, results-oriented therapy that encompasses a variety of hypnotic processes and techniques in a safe, confidential, and structured environment. It offers effective tools for personal and professional transformation at comparatively lower costs than other therapies; and it is an excellent partner to psychotherapy.

9. Experience under Hypnosis

1) In Control

One remains in control at all times; nothing can be suggested that one does not want; one can hear what is said at all times; one may remember everything that is said; one can move around whenever one wishes or adjust one’s position for greater comfort. No one can be hypnotized against one’s will; even when hypnotized one can still mentally reject any suggestion. One will often feel very refreshed as though one just had a power nap. Most people report immediate stress reduction and enjoy a feeling of well-being.

2) Fully Relaxed

Usually one’s mind becomes peaceful and calm while one’s body relaxes fully. This provides a heightened self-awareness, inward focus, expanded creativity, and enhanced imagination. This is the desired, ideal state for creating positive change during clinical hypnosis. Sessions are
customized to the individual’s needs and wants. One’s beliefs are respected at all times.

3) Tranquility

One experiences both mental tranquility and physical relaxation under hypnosis. Changes in perception are also common. Some feel great heaviness coming over their bodies, others feel very light, numb or even disembodied. Subjective floating, sinking, spinning, and tingling sensation are also common. Since changes can take place during hypnotic state, hypnosis becomes a remarkable tool for mental and physical healing and makes the various specialized hypnotic techniques possible.

4) Cooperative

Clinical therapeutic hypnosis is a state of purposeful and confidential cooperation where one discusses with the hypnotist everything one wants to address and one agrees about the suggestions in advance.

5) Not Suitable for All

Clinical hypnotherapy is not necessarily suitable for all people at all times. Some are not suitable for it. Individuals who are both suspicious and very controlling are not good candidates for the therapy. It is not an effort-free treatment. Of course for some people the change process can appear to be almost effortless. One may be given things to do when back at home, relaxation techniques for example, and doing those things that are vital to the overall, long term success. Though it can greatly increase existing motivation, it is not a replacement for motivation. There should be a reasonable level of motivation present.

6) Narrowed Attention

Hypnosis involves changes in a person’s attention and concentration. The focus of attention is narrowed, and the things attended to are experienced more intensely than in the ordinary waking state. What one focuses on holds his entire attention under hypnosis, so he
tends to experience whatever he thinks of, imagines or remembers, more vividly and clearly than he ordinarily can. Things that are outside the narrow focus of enhanced attention at any given time may be forgotten. Therefore, people sometimes temporarily become disoriented under hypnosis.

7) Heightened Awareness

In the hypnotic state — which is an altered state of consciousness — awareness, perception, and suggestibility are heightened. Both conscious and unconscious mind are more receptive to acceptable, therapeutic suggestions than they are in an ordinary waking state. This makes it possible for the hypnotist to provide information to the subject’s unconscious in a form that the unconscious can accept. In reality, all hypnosis is self-hypnosis. It is because in order for a person to enter the hypnotic state, he must follow the hypnotist’s instructions and his conscious and unconscious minds must accept the hypnotist’s suggestions and make them his own. If the subject’s mind wanders, that is perfectly all right. It happens just because hypnosis is a state of controlled daydream-type thinking.

8) Involuntariness

Another noteworthy characteristic of hypnotic state is the subjective sense of “involuntariness.” People might feel that they are like passive observers to whatever takes place. For example, if one is told that his hand is rising, he feels his hand rising like a robot arm.

9) Differently Experienced

People are known to respond to hypnosis in different ways. Most people report that they were not asleep, but instead, felt very relaxed and could hear everything the hypnotist said. Some experience focused attention in which they are calm and relaxed, others experience being detached and deeply inwardly focused, and still others experience sensations and perceptions heightened and more vivid.

10. Stage Hypnosis vs. Clinical Hypnosis (p. 258)
11. Memory Recall

Hypermnesia suggestions are employed in forensic situations, with forgetful witnesses and victims, or in therapeutic situations, to help patients remember traumatic personal experiences or the events of early childhood. Gains in recall produced by hypnotic suggestion were rarely dramatic, and were matched by gains observed even when individuals are not hypnotized. Besides, any increases obtained in valid recollection are met by increases in false recollections. Hypnotized individuals especially those who are highly hypnotizable may be especially vulnerable to distortions in memory produced by leading questions and other subtle, suggestive influences. It is the same case with hypnotic age regression. Although age-regressed individuals may experience themselves as children, and may behave in a childlike manner, there is no evidence that they actually lose adult modes of mental functioning, or return to childlike modes of mental functioning. They do not either retrieve forgotten memories of childhood.

12. Hypnosis in Psychotherapy

There is little evidence that hypnoanalysis or hypnotherapy is more effective than nonhypnotic forms of the same treatment. However, there is a significant advantage when hypnosis is used to complement cognitive-behavioural therapy for a number of problems.

It is likely that many clinical benefits of hypnosis are mediated by placebo-like motivational and expectational processes that are with the ceremony surrounding hypnosis rather than hypnosis per se. Some use hypnosis in non-hypnotic ways and this tends to support the hypothesis that whatever effects they achieve through hypnosis are related to its placebo component.

13. Health Applications of Hypnosis

Hypnosis may not cure physical diseases. It can be used to enhance relaxation and alleviate pain and other physical discomforts, and therefore, it may make a positive contribution to the overall quality of life. It is likely that what is understood as the result of hypnosis may actually be mere relaxation, or a kind of placebo effect attributable to the use of a hypnotic ritual. Hypnosis is most useful for pain relief like pain...
from burns, cancer, leukemia, childbirth, and dental procedures. Research has not proved that hypnosis can enhance human performance. It seems that hypnotic suggestions for increased muscular strength, endurance, sensory acuity, or learning do not exceed what can be accomplished by motivated persons outside hypnosis.

With regard to psychosomatic disorders, hypnotic suggestions can have a specific effect on the remission of warts. All the same, the same effects can be achieved by suggestions administered nonhypnotically.

14. Hypnosis in Medicine

Hypnosis is now widely practiced in medicine, psychiatry, dentistry, athletics, and business. Our bodies in general fight off illness. By using hypnosis we are able to enhance our ability to heal and recover. We can actually manage symptoms with less medication, control our own comfort and level of relaxation and use creative imagery to look forward in time envisioning resolution. What our mind conceives (believes) our body achieves. Therefore, the healing potential of hypnosis lies within. It is not as it were something administered to us from a hypnotist, but rather this power resides in all of us. The hypnotist is the tour guide helping us tap into our own skills and abilities. In fact, we all go in and out of hypnotic trance several times each day. It is a very natural thing. Therefore, hypnosis is just the act of enabling this process and then offering suggestions and imagery supporting the desired change or improvement. It is an effective way to either augment medical intervention or to fine tune and improve many areas of our life. Hypnosis is now perceived as a treatment with the capacity to support a wide range of physical, emotional, and psychological concerns in the healthcare setting.

15. Mental Health and Hypnosis

1) Hypnotic Use for Mental Health

Hypnosis helps people get to the depth of their problems quickly, and brings about solutions in far more pleasant ways than most other mental health methods.
Psychotics make poor hypnotic subjects for many reasons. They are less likely to seek hypnosis as a solution. They do not trust others. They can become violent even toward someone trying to help them. There are occasions when one has stepped over the line from neurosis to psychosis. Under no circumstances, should a hypnotherapist (or anyone) untrained should deal with severe mental illness or attempt to assist, on his own, such a person. We can safely use hypnosis to neurotic persons.

2) Reasons for not Using Hypnosis in Counselling

(1) Counsellors are so ingrained in the traditional counseling process with its general conviction that any mental healing takes a long time. They have great difficulty in making the necessary paradigm shift into understanding the value of hypnosis as a primary tool in the counselling system. (2) Hypnotic training either does not make use of, or encourage the counsellor’s particular abilities and experience. (3) The unconscious belief system underlying the counsellor-counsellee relationship, which implies dependence. (4) The natural lack of confidence in using hypnosis if it is not used immediately and frequently.

16. Hypnosis in Medical Procedures

Hypnosis and self-hypnosis can be used in medical procedures and operations. Hypnosis can easily enhance the well-being and adjustments patients make to their medical trajectories. A patient who is relaxed has a better chance of being a successful patient. Beyond relaxation, the mind through its innate capabilities can proactively contribute to the organism’s response to stress. In this perspective, a successful patient is one who can relax and, in addition, can mobilize special mental processes to gain psychological mastery of medical interventions from the time of their planning to full recovery. These beneficial mental processes borrow from different yet related disciplines, namely hypnosis, self-hypnosis, and meditation. In all these, the mind makes use of special dynamics to activate beneficial intra-psychological communications.

17. The Language of Hypnosis

Hypnosis extends the range of influence of the conscious mind into normally unconscious bodily networks. Hypnosis utilizes
communications to establish contact with deep physiological functions. These communications, because of their special characteristics, can be called the language of hypnosis. Affirmations and mental images are part of communication.

18. Boundless Neural Pathways for the Mind

Mental events are understood to have their corresponding resonance in the circuitry of the nervous system. Each mental event has nervous system ramifications that connect it to all other areas of the brain. Every neuron connects in some way to every other cell in the nervous system and projects its influence into the most delicate tendrils of its outer reaches. It also interfaces with all organ systems from heart and endocrine, to gastrointestinal and immune. Mental images, through these neural pathways, are able to travel from their yet undetermined sites of origin to transport messages into the entire matrix of the organism.

19. Three Phases of Surgical Intervention

First phase: Hypnosis can be applied to any one of the three phases of operative intervention. The first phase starts from the diagnostic search, to the decision to operate, to the actual procedure. In this phase, the main objective is to achieve maximum relaxation. A state of psychological preparedness is aimed at where the patient shows interest about the procedure but is devoid of the anxiety or worry. Hypnosis acts as a powerful relaxant of anticipatory anxiety and a potent enhancer of hopeful imagery.

In the second phase the operation (surgery) takes place. There is a phenomenon called “anesthesia awareness.” It refers to patients recalling events that had occurred during surgery and deep anesthesia. It implies that even though the perception of pain may be absent, portions of mental function remain active enough so that memory traces persist. The phenomenon of post-hypnotic suggestion is known for the ability of the hypnotized individuals to activate mental events, seemingly automatically, subsequent to their hypnotic experience. Thus post-hypnotic suggestion serves to anesthetize the patient making him not being aware of the pain.

The third phase of an operative procedure is the recovery phase. The fact that the perception of pain may be profoundly modified by mental
functions suggests fruitful therapeutic avenues. Those with superior abilities to experience hypnosis can modify their pain and sometimes totally abolish it. Mental processes may accelerate tissue repair. If the patient shows motivation and hopefulness, the rehabilitation process is smoother.

20. Waking Hypnotic State

Hypnosis is a relationship-based process of communication through which the hypnotist induces in the patient an alteration in consciousness and internal perception characterized by increased suggestibility. Sometimes, an informal Waking Hypnosis State may develop before the formal induction of a Hypnosis Trance State. This waking hypnosis state has trance-like qualities that arise from the early experience of relaxation, which naturally develops during the patient’s comfortable interaction with the hypnotist. This comfort, the subject’s growing sense of trust in the hypnotist and the subject’s expectation of eventually entering a formal trance, all help create the experience of relaxation which leads into the informal waking hypnosis state. The communication process that takes place during this waking state is designed to start the process of change that is later further fixed in place during the hypnosis trance state.

21. Threefold Uses

The hypnotist uses clinical hypnosis in three main ways:

1. Encouraging the Use of Imagination: Under a focused state of attention, the mind can use mental imagery to make the things one imagines actually happen. For example, one can be asked to imagine that his pain is fading away.

2. Giving Direct Suggestions for Therapeutic Change: Ideas are suggested to the subject in a form that the subject’s unconscious can accept. This is initially done in the waking state. Then, the hypnotic trance is induced with the goal of fixing the suggestions in place in the subject’s unconscious.

3. Conducting Unconscious Exploration (Hypnoanalysis): It is to promote understanding and insight about the roots of the subject’s problem using a technique called “ideomotor analysis.”
22. Enigma of Hypnosis

Hypnosis is one of the most intriguing phenomena in our mental functioning — filled with seeming paradoxes. It is not sleep, and yet it is not really a waking state either. It depends on attention and concentration, and still is most often characterized by letting go and relaxing. It is most easily induced by a skilled person using specific verbal techniques, and yet it is exclusively the product of the hypnotized subject’s own mental abilities.

23. Successes and Failures

Hypnosis is most effective in the treatment of clinical pain, asthma, and a variety of dermatological conditions (such as warts and hives), and less effective in the treatment of smoking, alcohol excess, and weight loss. It is not precisely understood why hypnosis is effective for some problems and not for others. Hypnotizability is seen as a major factor in the successful treatment of headache and vertigo in skull-injured patients and the reduction of the frequency and intensity of asthma attacks but being highly hypnotizable may predispose a person to phobia. There is no relationship between hypnotizability and successful treatment of cigarette smoking. It is linked to the subject’s motivation. We can only say that sometimes hypnosis is effective and sometimes not and that it is difficult to predict who will benefit from it. Research needs to be done to find out how effective hypnosis is clinically with a variety of presenting problems and for whom. Hypnosis is used for reducing stress through the use of deep alpha breathing, removing toxins and restoring the body. Creative problem solving is also incorporated to help alleviate day-to-day stresses.

To conduct clinical hypnosis (hetero-hypnosis) the hypnotist has to follow the steps of induction, relaxation, deepening, trance, suggestions, post-hypnotic suggestions, triggers, and trance termination.

24. Sample Clinical Hypnosis Scripts (pp. 330 - 344)
We are blissfully ignorant of the way we are being hypnotized in ordinary conversation. Take for example the media which has a rather universal influence on everybody. This is a covert hypnosis of which we are not aware of.

1. All Language Is Hypnotic

Conversational hypnosis is the process of inducing a hypnotic trance during a conversation. All language is hypnotic. When a speaker is too dull you almost fell asleep; he was putting you to trance. Conversational hypnosis is incredibly useful for getting a person to go into a trance and access his inner resources, without having to mention the word “hypnosis.” Hypnosis is quite possibly the most powerful approach to communication ever devised, because it allows you to communicate with a person’s unconscious (whether yours or someone else’s). While the conscious mind enjoys the illusion of control, it is actually the unconscious that is making the important decisions in a person’s life. That means that if you can get in touch with someone’s unconscious, you can be extraordinarily influential with that person.

2. Covert Hypnosis

Conversational hypnosis is also called “Covert Hypnosis.” The general process of conversational hypnosis involves establishing rapport with the subject, creating a state of temporary confusion with statements that the subject is not expecting, and then applying suggestive notions to the unconscious to trigger the behaviour that we desire. The most powerful technique of influence is at play in the rapport building phase and the phase where we trigger behaviour through the unconscious. Much of the communications we are exposed to everyday (especially through the media) are heavily embedded with conversational hypnosis techniques.

3. In-Depth Understanding

In rapport building phase we want to do more listening than talking and we are listening for the signals that tell us what type of personality our subject has and what belief system (that governs actions) our subject operates under. At this level, we are aiming to understand people and the
reasons for their behaviour on a much more in-depth level than stereotypes do. A good conversational hypnotist builds rapport effectively and later offers suggestions that make good sense to us. Once we have used a few provoking and unexpected questions to make our subject reconsider their viewpoints and open themselves to other ideas, we apply the suggestion phase. Here we want to bypass the critical factor (the conscious mind's sense of judgement) and communicate directly with the unconscious. Our unconscious is programmed to act upon expert advice with compliance as this makes sense to our belief system. This powerful conversational hypnosis technique is responsible for directing the actions of others as well as making them believe that the ideas they have come up with, are their own.

4. Professional Procedures

Let us see the conversational hypnosis and its professional procedures. It is the process by which one can manage the mind of the other persons. It takes place when the conversation is going on between the subject and the hypnotist. The conversation is placed in the subliminal mind of the subject. The optimal objective of hypnosis is to alter the view of the individual in different questions as the subject is to be maneuvered in the area of the thoughts. He is to act according to the wish of the hypnotist.

In this method, the hypnotist alters the pattern of thought of the subject, manners, feeling, and awareness of the life onto the subliminal mind. Comparing with the conventional hypnotherapy, the covert hypnosis is not dealing with the closed eyes. It also does not deal with any sort of movement of the pendulum and the peculiar gestures of the hand.

The hypnotist provides the directions or suggestions to the individual to be hypnotized. The directions and suggestions are symbolic in nature — as these are presented in an unknown style. However, these directions and suggestions are provided directly some time. The next step is to make the rapport with the individual to be hypnotized. The hypnotist needs to deactivate the critical mind of the listener. The fact is that the mind of the listener is to be transformed from the usual state of thoughts to the imaginary thinking state.

You can start with some scenarios and ask some questions. This instantly closes the critical mind and makes the imagination control their process of thoughts. When the subject successfully stops the critical mindset, the hypnotist can pass the commands charismatically. The
efficacy of this method relies upon many things that are placed into it. This fully relies upon the ways the hypnotist transforms the mind from the critical state of thinking to the imaginary state. The sort of the statements that the hypnotist makes persuades the subjects to be good enough to execute the task well.

5. Secrets of Conversational Hypnosis

1) Have a Clear Goal in Mind

It is important to have a clear goal in mind. What responses do you want to elicit from the other person? How will you know when you have got those responses? If your goal is to get the person to go into a trance, how will they look when they are in that trance? Make a clear mental image of the person you are working with, having the responses you desire. Your nervous system is goal-seeking. When you set a clear mental goal, you get your entire nervous system working for you to achieve that goal. Your unconscious is your most powerful ally. Creating a clear goal in pictorial form, then adding in sounds and feelings as necessary is one of the most powerful ways to get your unconscious working for you. Pictures are one of the most powerful ways of communicating with your unconscious. So if you create a mental image of your goal, in positive terms, it creates a clear message to your unconscious. For example, if you want someone to laugh, start by picturing him doing so (to really super-charge the process, hear what you will hear and feel what you will feel as well).

2) Believe in Yourself and in Your Subject

Your beliefs about yourself and the world have a massive effect on how you respond. Your beliefs about your client will be communicated to him in everything you say and do. For example, if you believe that your client will not go into a trance, then he will not. If you believe that you have an excellent hypnotic subject, then he is much more likely to be. If you have difficulty believing that your client is an excellent hypnotic subject, then just pretend. The principle involved here is “fake and make it.” You can pretend anything and master it. Your unconscious does not distinguish between a real experience and a vividly imagined one. If, for example, you vividly imagine that your client is an excellent hypnotic subject, your unconscious will start communicating that belief to him. These communications will come out in the language you use, the gestures you employ, and your voice tone. The amazing thing is that these subtle communications are exactly the sort of thing that the client’s
unconscious will pick up. It is actually a far more powerful level of communication than just saying to someone “you are a superb hypnotic subject.”

3) Go There First Yourself

One of the great things about feeling states (like happiness, gratitude, love, and trance) is that it is infectious. So if you want someone else to go into a certain state, just go there first yourself. Whatever state you want the other person to go into, go there first yourself. For example, the quickest way to get a smile from someone is to start smiling at him. Now the question is how to go there first. There are many different ways. As you begin to practice, you will start to discover the approaches that work most effectively for you. Some of them are:

1) One of the quickest and easiest ways to change your state of mind is to change your physiology. Jumping up and down, shaking yourself, and beating your chest are all ways to break out of undesired states. Adopting the postures and stances that you take when you are accessing certain states can activate those states. (2) An excellent way to become skilled at entering quickly into trance states is by practicing self-hypnosis. Those who practice self-hypnosis and related forms like meditation and yogic breathing are usually able to enter spontaneously into altered states very quickly. (3) Fake and make it. Pretend. When you pretend to go into a certain state, your nervous system gets the idea very quickly, and the state soon manifests itself. You can pretend to be in whatever state you like: the more convincingly you do it, the more you will get into it. The more convincingly you are to yourself, the more the other person will follow you into the state. (4) Anchor yourself. An anchor is any representation (any one of the five senses) in the human nervous system that triggers any other representation. You can anchor yourself intentionally, for example: Think of an occasion when you had a highly pleasurable, positive, or enjoyable experience. See what you saw then, hear what you heard, and feel what you felt. As you feel the sensation increase in intensity, squeeze the thumb and forefinger of your left hand gently together for a few moments, and then release them. Now break your state. Wait a few moments. Squeeze your thumb and forefinger together again. The state will return. With practice, you will be able to drop into a trance (and many other states) quickly and easily, whenever you wish.

4) Establish and Maintain Rapport

Rapport has been described as what happens when we get the attention of someone’s unconscious, and meet him at “his map of the
world.” It is simply understood as the sense of connection that develops when you are interacting with someone you trust and feel comfortable with. We are social creatures, and we often need to work with other people to achieve what we want. This means that an ability to communicate influentially is one of the most valuable skills a person can have. An important aspect of influential communication is creating a connection with the other person, and making him feel understood. There are many ways to get into rapport both verbally and non-verbally, using behaviour techniques, vocal flexibility, and internal shifts of consciousness.

5) Highlight the Key Words and Phrases

Once you have rapport, you can highlight specific key words and phrases to communicate directly with the unconscious mind. This means that you can use a seemingly ordinary conversation to mask subliminal messages, and guide a person’s unconscious in a certain direction. This is referred to as “analogue marking.” For this there are some tips:

(1) Decide on the message you want to send to the person’s unconscious. For example, “Allow yourself to relax.” Think about the context you can talk freely about, where that message would not be out of place. Talk about the context, using a sentence that can accommodate the embedded message. For example, “I went to that beach, and I was able to feel really comfortable, because they have created that place where you can allow yourself to relax while accomplishing something beneficial and useful.” When you get to the embedded messages, do something to mark them out for the person’s unconscious mind. For this, perhaps, you can: slightly lower your voice tone, touch their arm, raise your eyebrows, move your head to one side, and slow down your voice.

6) Use a Descending Voice Tone

The pitch and tone of voice you use toward the end of a sentence determines at a deep unconscious level what kind of sentence it is: rising pitch gets processed as a question, level pitch gets processed as a statement, descending pitch gets processed as a command. For making suggestions, make use of a descending voice tone. The descending pitch opens up the “command module” in someone’s brain. Others are more likely to do what you want them do if the request is made with a descending pitch, because their brain will process it as a command.

7) Notice Their Responses

How do you know if the suggestions you are making are having the desired effect? Watch and listen. Hypnosis relies on having the sensory
acuity to notice the effect you are having, particularly in the visual domain. As persons begin to relax into a trance state, certain changes start to take place. For example, their breathing may become slower, their face may relax and become more symmetrical, their blink rate may slow down, their eyes may close, and they may stop making movements and gestures. There are some tips for sensory acuity: develop your peripheral vision. Your peripheral vision notices movement and changes, while your focal vision is good for examining fine detail. Be quiet inside. Internal dialogue significantly hampers sensory acuity, so turn it off. When what you are doing is not working, do something else.

8) Trust Your Unconscious

The conscious is capable of doing step by step thinking, while your unconscious makes intuitive leaps. The conscious can hold a limited number of things in awareness, while your unconscious can track everything that is going on around you. The idea of the unconscious is just a concept – it does not really exist. But it seems to be a useful way of describing a person’s ability to receive, store, access, and influence many things which seem to be outside the ordinary conscious awareness. There are some tips to deal with the unconscious: Your unconscious will always serve your best interest. For example, if you ask a question and do not get a reply, assume that there is a very good reason for that. Then ask a different question. Your unconscious processes negation differently than the conscious. Communicate in positives; leave out the “not’s,” “non’s,” and “no’s.” Start with smaller things then work your way up to the big stuff. Be polite to your unconscious. Say “please” and “thank you.”

9) Give Them Time to Process

Different people process information in different ways and at different speeds. When using conversational hypnosis it is important that you give people time to process (as against stage hypnosis where the hypnotist will often use rapid suggestions to confuse the subject, overload their conscious and make them more compliant). As the person goes more deeply into a trance state, it can be useful to slow down your rate of speaking slightly, and leave larger gaps between sentences. You can even adjust your speaking rate to match their breathing rate. Speaking on their out-breath will deepen a trance, speaking on their in-breath will lighten it. When the subjects respond to your suggestions you will notice involuntary signals such as twitches, blinks, skin colour changes, and minor head nods. You may even choose to acknowledge the signals by saying “That is right” but not too often.
10) Wire in the Language Patterns

Hypnotic language (particularly the indirect hypnosis patterns of Milton H. Erickson) is probably the most powerful tool there is for conversational hypnosis. There are some tips for this: Get a set of the language patterns to study, write out examples of the language patterns to wire them into your neurology at a deeper level, choose a pattern each day, then practice using that pattern in your conversations that day.

6. Distance Therapy (Phone Sessions)

Hypnosis by phone sometimes provides a highly effective treatment alternative to in-office sessions. On phone, one may be guided into a deeply relaxed hypnotic state and then apply the same hypnotherapeutic techniques to achieve those changes. Phone hypnosis works well for some people because it involves an auditory process: the transformation occurs in response to what your unconscious hears and accepts. For those who are auditorily oriented, phone session is helpful. When I speak to the clients over the phone from a long distance, I make use of the techniques of the conversational hypnosis. It is less time-consuming, less costly, and easy to apply. Some clients may even feel more relaxed in their homes than in the therapist’s office, and hence the outcome may be better. Also, obviously, the hassle of travel is avoided.
You might have observed people under hypnosis on stage doing strange things which they normally will not do. It is either because they want to do or they are convinced that they have to do. If you believe that the hypnotist has power over you and so he has control over you, then you feel obliged to do what he says — even strange things. However, you will not go against your moral standards. You are in a way having more control over what you do in a trancelike state than in an everyday state of mind. That is why we say that hypnosis/hypnotherapy is done by you to yourself, not by someone else.

1. Entertainment

Stage hypnosis is a form of entertainment, traditionally employed in a club or theatre before an audience. It is often understood that hypnosis is a form of mind control. It typically attempts to hypnotize the entire audience and then select individuals who are ready and willing to come up on stage and perform embarrassing or funny acts, while the audience watches. The effects of stage hypnosis are probably due to a combination of psychological factors, participant selection, suggestibility, physical manipulation, stagecraft, and trickery. The desire to be the centre of attention, having an excuse to defeat their own fear suppressors, and the pressure to please are thought to convince the subjects to play a role.

2. “Implicit Contract”

Stage hypnosis is the foremost source of the stereotypes. There is a folkloric misconception about hypnosis in the belief that the hypnotized person is an automaton, completely under the sway of the hypnotist. Subjects for stage hypnosis are screened by the stage hypnotist for a high level of hypnotizability. Once this is made certain, the next step is to determine that the volunteer endorses the “rules of the game” of stage hypnosis, which is to entertain the audience. What is perceived in stage hypnosis is the implicit “contract” that the stage volunteer has a mandate to behave in a manner that might, ordinarily, be embarrassing and transgressive of normal social conventions. Hypnotized subjects will be returned rapidly to the audience if they are undemonstrative and do not engage in the antics suggested by the stage hypnotist. In a way the stage context provides a license to “act out” a variety of ordinarily proscribed behaviours in public, without fear of reprisal. Here what appears
to be a demonstration of power exercised by one person over another is, in reality, a willingness on the part of the hypnotized person on stage to abide by the license to entertain an audience by acting silly.

3. Contexts of Hypnosis

To determine what type of hypnosis is being used, one needs to check the context. We can arrive at quite radically different conclusions about the nature of hypnosis, depending upon whether it has been dispensed on the stage for entertainment, in the clinic for therapeutic reasons, or in the forensic context in an attempt to bolster the fragmented memory of a crime victim or witness who may have been traumatized by such an experience.

4. Stage Hypnosis vs. Clinical Hypnosis

Stage Hypnosis

Stage hypnosis is usually performed in a club or at a party with a group of spectators — while clinical hypnosis is induced in a private, professional office setting by a certified clinician. Usually stage hypnosis is to entertain and amuse an audience by directing willing subjects to engage in sometimes silly behaviour or stunts under the direction of a stage hypnotist. Most of the times the subjects are quite willing, want to make an impression and be in the limelight, and very eagerly volunteer to be part of the show. At times stage hypnosis may seem to humiliate its subjects to get a laugh from the audience and thus the credibility and therapeutic benefits of clinical hypnosis may be undermined.

Clinical Hypnosis

Clinical hypnosis is a widely practiced, extensively researched, and a highly successful form of brief-term therapy for treating a variety of psychological, emotional, physical, and spiritual problems. It is understood as a private, confidential, one-on-one, collaborative and interactive therapeutic process that takes place in a safe, comfortable, controlled office setting. During each session, the subject enters a natural state of focused relaxation and calm, intentionally induced for therapeutic purposes. In this process, through directed dialogue and application of various hypnotic suggestions and techniques, the subjects learn to move beyond their fears and limitations to achieve their specific goals for lasting self-improvement. In this type of hypnosis, the subjects cannot be forced to do anything contrary to their will.
The influence of Milton H. Erickson (1901-1980) is immense. The vast majority of hypnotists will use some form of Ericksonian approach. Erickson graduated from the University of Wisconsin in 1928 with an M.A. in Psychology and an M.D. and went on to hold senior psychiatric posts in hospitals across the United States. He was stricken with polio at the age of 17 and again at the age of 51, so that by the end of his life he was confined to a wheelchair.

Milton H. Erickson is the Father of Modern Hypnotherapy. He is considered by many to be the most influential hypnotherapist in history. As a polio affected youth, he set about curing himself by watching and imitating the small babies in his family and the way they began to learn to move their hands and legs. In this way he learned more about sensory perception and non-verbal communication skills. Later he used these skills to develop the non-conventional “Ericksonian Hypnosis.”

1. Three Models of Hypnosis

There are three models of hypnosis: the traditional, standardized, and Ericksonian. Traditional hypnosis has an authoritarian demeanour, demands a high degree of compliance, knows only direct styles of suggestion, does not have an individualized approach to different clients, reacts to resistance through confrontation or interpretation, gives low value to insights, does not recognize the possibility of secondary gains, and has a negative characterization of the unconscious.

The standardized hypnosis too is like the traditional one except that the demeanour may be permissive.

Ericksonian hypnosis uses various forms of indirect suggestions, metaphors, truisms, encouraging resistance, seeding ideas, double binds, use of space and position, implying a deviation, amnesia, emphasizing the positive, and uncommon homework assignments. These were also used by others before Erickson. But Erickson developed some of his
methods in his own way or with greater flexibility than they had been used before.

2. Key Elements

Erickson took to hypnosis as a way of overcoming his physical limitations. Later he conducted many experiments on hypnotic phenomena, such as hypnotically induced deafness and colour blindness. Above all, his interest was in the therapeutic value of hypnosis. His approach to hypnosis was very unique. Therefore, there are some key elements in his practice that can be identified.

First of all, he was supremely flexible, adapting his approach to each individual subject. At times, he would be direct, authoritarian, and even aggressive. There are moments when he would be permissive, indirect, and soothing. At times it would look like that he does not use hypnosis in any recognizable form. Secondly he used to work with symptoms to bring about a change. He saw problems as a process, an unhelpful way of going about things that the client had developed, and symptoms were part of that story. He believed that by changing the symptom – its intensity, frequency or location – it is possible to change the entire pattern of the problem. Just an example in his clinical practice. A person with obsessive-compulsive-disorder (OCD) to wash her hands 50 times a day was advised to wash her hands for 100 times. Here this new instruction changes the behaviour from an internal compulsion to an externally imposed duty, which suddenly becomes much less compelling. Thirdly, he engaged the unconscious by any means available. He believed that the individual’s unconscious contained all of the resources necessary to bring about a cure for that individual in the present moment. Unlike Freud, he did not want to excavate the roots of the problem from the distant past. He was fully aware that the language of the unconscious is imagination, metaphor, therapeutic stories, anecdotes, jokes, puns, and riddles. These are a crucial element of his work. These act like coded messages for the unconscious, which is able to make the connection and see the point of the story.

3. Indirect Method

The “smuggling in” of messages to the unconscious is hypnosis for Erickson. He realized the importance of hypnosis as a therapeutic
tool. He developed his own style of hypnosis, often referred to as “indirect” or “conversational” hypnosis. He moved away from direct instructions to go into trance, to a more subtle approach, based on rapport, trust, and language patterns.

4. Use of Language

In his approach, language is used to direct the attention inwards on a search for meaning or to verify what is being said. After that, therapeutic or trance-inducing suggestions can be made. He used to tack suggestions onto the end of a series of undeniable truths to give an appearance of logical and natural progression. Just an example from his practice is: “As you sit there listening to me here, your arms are resting on the arms of the chair and your feet are on the floor and your eyelids are starting to feel pleasantly heavy and drowsy.”

5. Freedom to Clients

Erickson allowed the client maximum freedom to interpret what is being said in his own way. Thus he would say: “You may begin to find new ways of feeling at ease at parties.” This of course, is better than telling: “You are now more confident in talking to complete strangers at parties.” He went to great lengths to see the world from the client’s point of view, helping him reach his own goals and solutions, rather than imposing his own idea of happiness on him.

Erickson’s life is a definitive break from the past in the history of hypnosis. His approach is the one most often encountered today. His great achievement was to bring hypnosis back to the service of the client, by doing whatever is necessary to make it truly client-focused.

6. Visualizing

If you want to become a good football player, then you visualize yourself performing the skills of a good football player successfully. Thus your mind will be trained to envision you being a successful football player and the results are markedly improved.

7. The Unconscious Is Our Ally

Most of our life experience happens primarily in the waking state in which our conscious is in control. In a deep trance where our
unconscious is in control, we are able to talk without awakening from the trance. In the trance state, we often need to be taught to realize our capabilities to function in supra-normal ways, with both our conscious and unconscious playing their effective parts. We need to look at trance as an opportunity to get to know ourselves at a different level of experience and awareness. We need to learn that the unconscious is intelligent and can operate autonomously.

The unconscious is our ally. In trance induction, the conscious is really the dependent partner. The process is one in which the subject’s unconscious develops specific skills in relating to the conscious. The purpose is for the subject to gain proficiency in using unconscious capabilities in ways it chooses. Braid’s method of helping to induce a trance through having subjects stare at an object just above their line of vision is still a useful technique. It is also sometimes effective for subjects to fix their vision on a moving image while listening to a repetitive suggestion. Most of the induction process should be, to begin with, centered on the Ericksonian technique. The subject is encouraged to focus on breathing, remaining constantly aware of inhalation and exhalation.

8. Ericksonian Hypnosis

The Naturalistic or Utilization Approach, focuses on helping each individual patient find his own talents for problem solving and healing in his own unique manner. Ericksonian hypnosis emphasizes and facilitates the patient’s own creative processes.

1) Cooperation

Erickson’s approach is one of cooperation. Hypnosis should primarily be the outcome of a situation in which intrapersonal and interpersonal relationships are developed constructively. This cannot be done by following rigid procedures and fixed methods or by striving to reach a single specific goal. The complexity of human behaviour and its underlying motivations make necessary a cognizance of the multitude of factors existing in any situation rising between two personalities engaged in a joint activity. The hypnotist can only guide, direct, supervise, and provide the opportunity for the subject to do the productive work. To
accomplish this, he must understand the situation and its needs, protect the subject fully, and be able to recognize the work accomplished. He must accept and utilize the behaviour that develops, and be able to create opportunities and situations favourable for adequate functioning of the subject.

2) Key Ideas Underlying Ericksonian Hypnosis

Each person is unique – which stresses that therapy should be based on the client’s present beliefs, behaviour, motivations, and symptoms.

(1) Hypnosis is an experiential process of communicating ideas. Here the goal is experiential participation by the activation of ideas already within the patient.

(2) Each person has generative resources. Clients are assisted in the utilization of their own skills and resources.

(3) Trance potentiated resources are accomplished by offering an unbiased state of self-receptive awareness in which new understandings and manners of being may unfold.

(4) Trance is naturalistic – the processes of trance are present in everyday states including the hypnotic problematic state.

(5) Ericksonian approaches orient to course-alignment rather than error-correction accomplished by guiding clients towards their goals and interests, rather than restricting self-expressions.

(6) A person’s uniqueness can be appreciated on many levels – expressed as the deep self. These include the unconscious mind, the conscious mind, and the contents of consciousness.

(7) Unconscious processes can operate generatively and autonomously. This utilizes the principle that “whatever the client is doing is exactly that which will allow him to change” provided new understandings are brought forth.
3) Elementary Principles of Ericksonian Hypnotherapy

The elementary principles of Ericksonian hypnotherapy are (1) accepting the person’s reality, and (2) utilizing the person’s reality. To accept the person’s reality, the hypnotist assumes and congruently communicates that, what a person is doing is fine; and is exactly what the hypnotist would like the person to be doing at the present time. To utilize the given behaviour, the hypnotist generally conveys to the client that what he is doing right now is exactly that which will allow him to achieve the desired behaviour.

Ericksonian hypnosis principles in process-oriented terms: (1) pace all behavior and (2) lead the behaviour. Pacing the behaviour means to feedback to the client, the client’s expressions. This is done for the purpose of establishing rapport and developing trust. After establishing rapport, the hypnotist begins to lead by introducing behaviours that are different from, but consistent with, the client’s present state, which moves towards a desired state.

Another principle of effective communication is: Resistant behaviour is a statement by the client indicating that the hypnotist needs to pace some further aspect(s) of the client’s experience. Ericksonian hypnotist should assume that all experience is valid and utilizable. Then he behaviourally paces and leads towards the desired state. Here the traditional concept of resistance is better viewed as behavioural feedback indicating a need for further pacing by the hypnotist.

The utilization principle can be expressed as: a) pace and depotentiate the conscious processes; b) absorb and amplify the unconscious processes.

The Ericksonian hypnotist seeks to depotentiate the recurrent (undesirable) conscious processes and to enable the previously inaccessible resources to be actualized. To circumvent possible objections (resistances), an indirect approach is often used.
9. Betty Erickson’s (Wife of Milton Erickson) Hypnosis Technique

1) Some Basic Premises

This self-hypnosis method is based on the following premises. An altered state of consciousness occurs when you process the information outside of your primary representational system. (Representation system refers to your senses.) Hypnosis is a state of concentrated and focused attention. Going into hypnosis involves turning your attention away from external experience and directing it internally. You can trust your unconscious mind. Understanding by the conscious mind is not necessary for change.

2) Representational Systems and Altered States

We process information (that is, we think) in pictures, sounds, and feelings. In Neuro-Linguistic Programming, these sensory modalities are referred to as representational systems. The visual system – The external things we see and the internal images that we create of them. The auditory system – The external things we hear and the internal sounds that we create of them. The kinesthetic system – The things we feel. These can be actual physical sensations or imagined ones. There are also olfactory system and gustatory system.

Altered state: Most of us have developed great proficiency with one or the other of our representational systems though we may use all of them. An individual who thinks in images will not experience an altered state of consciousness simply by visualizing. If that same individual were to experience a preponderance of feelings or sensations, this would be unusual – an alteration of his state of consciousness. Altered state means processing information in a different manner than usual. Actually focused attention on stereotypical images of hypnotists holding watches or other fixation devices for clients to stare at are the result of this understanding about hypnosis. When we are so involved in television or a piece of music or a book we experience this naturally occurring hypnotic state.
3) Useful Information

In hypnosis we go inside ourselves. At that time, we inwardly focus in which we move away from the environment around us and turn our attention inward.

(1) The Unconscious Can Be Trusted.

Your unconscious is full of resources. It has learned a lot during your lifetime and it can apply them for you in hypnosis. Your conscious can process only limited information at a time. But your unconscious can process unlimited information.

(2) Conscious Understanding Is Not Necessary for Change

In many self-hypnosis procedures, the subjects enter a trance and then give themselves suggestions. In the hypnotic procedure the conscious is kept occupied so that it will not interfere while the unconscious is doing the work.

4) Self-Hypnotic Technique

(1) Find a comfortable position – Get into a position in which you can maintain for a period of time. Sitting is preferred to lying as you may go to sleep. Get yourself centered, just looking in front of you and breathing slowly and easily. Let yourself relax.

(2) Time – Determine the length of time that you intend to spend and make a statement to yourself about it like “I am going into self-hypnosis for 20 minutes…” Your internal clock will keep track of the time for you.

(3) Purpose – Make a statement to yourself about your purpose in going into self-hypnosis. It is good to allow the unconscious to work on the issue rather than giving suggestions throughout, so your purpose statement should reflect that fact. For example, “for the purpose of allowing my unconscious to make the adjustments that are appropriate to assist me in…..” Fill in the blank with what you want to achieve such as “developing more self-confidence in social situations.”
Exit State – Make a final statement to yourself about the state that you want to be in when you complete the process. This statement will be shaped by what you want to do immediately. For example, in normal situation “wide awake, alert, and refreshed,” before going to bed, “relaxed and ready for sleep,” and for doing a project, “motivated and full of energy.” You could simply say to yourself “… and when I am finished, I am going to feel…”

The Process – Looking in front of you, notice three things (one at a time) that you see. Go slowly, pausing for a moment one each. It is preferable that they be small things, such as a spot on the wall, a door knob, the corner of a picture frame. You may also like to name the item as you look at them. “I see the hinge on the door frame.” Now turn your attention to your auditory channel and notice, one by one, three things that you hear. This might allow you to incorporate sounds that occur in the environment rather than being distracted by them. Next, attend to your feelings and notice three sensations that you can feel. It is useful to use sensations that normally are outside of your awareness, such as the weight of your eyeglasses, the feeling of your wrist watch, the texture of your shirt. Continue the process using two visuals, then two auditories, and then two kinesthetics. In the same manner, continue slowly with one of each.

By now you have completed the “external” portion of the process. Now it is time to begin the “internal” part.

Close your eyes

Bring an image into your mind. You may construct an image or simply take what comes. If something comes to you just use it. If nothing comes, feel free to put something there. Pause and let a sound come into your awareness or generate one and name it. Although this is technically the internal part, if you should hear a sound outside or in the room with you, it is all right to use
that. Next, become aware of a feeling and name it. It is preferable to do this internally – use your imagination. If you actually have a physical sensation that gets your attention, use that. Repeat the process with two images, two sounds, and two feelings. Repeat the cycle once again using three images, three sounds, and three feelings.

(6) **Completing the Process** – It is not unusual to space out or lose consciousness during the process. Some people in the beginning think that they have fallen asleep. But generally they will find themselves coming back automatically at the end of the allotted time. It is an indication that you were not sleeping and that your unconscious was doing what you asked of it.

It is likely that most people do not get all the way through the process. It is perfectly all right. If you should complete the process before the time has ended, just continue with 4 images, sounds, feelings, then 5 and so on. What about your goals? You may rest assured that your unconscious is working for you in the background while you are doing the process. If you practice it regularly you will get better results.
Not only you can easily hypnotize your children, they love the experience. Kids have vivid imagination and once they know how to combine relaxation with their imagination, they will have a valuable tool for life. There are a few tips for it.

1. More Easily Hypnotizable

Children move more easily into hypnosis than do adults. Children will generally not keep their eyes closed while in hypnosis, nor do they stay still. This is normal. Do not demand that the child stay still or be completely quiet. When a child makes a comment or squirms, it does not mean that the child offers resistance to hypnosis, or relaxing. It usually means that the child is very absorbed in the process. A simple approach of eye fixation can be useful. Have the child stare at a spot on the wall, or at something interesting. Older children can decide to go on a journey (vacation). Give them a choice.

2. Change Language

Many children may not know the concept of “relaxation,” but they know what “sleep” is. They also understand the idea of “heavy” muscles/limbs. Most children under 12 years old do not need to be taken “deeper” into hypnosis. But if you want, you could have the child imagine a staircase and go down while getting heavier and sleepier with each step. Counting 10 to 1 can also be effective, especially if the child understands the concept of numbers.

There is a script for very young children prior to sleep at night, or before a nap. Have the child in bed in a comfortable sleeping position first. Many parents find that it helps to play a pleasant and relaxing music in the background. Ocean or nature sounds can play all night with the digital machines available.

3. Sleepy Body Script

“Now do you remember what it feels like to go to sleep? (Wait for a response.) ........ Yes, that is right. And it can feel very good to drift off to sleep, does it not?.... And your body really likes to go to sleep because
it feels so good… So, let us think about your toes. Your toes can go to sleep. Your toes know how to go to sleep. Let them go to sleep now and tell me when your toes have gone to sleep…. (Usually the child giggles and there may be lots of squirming – this is ok. Most children will tell you the body part is asleep within one to two minutes. They may speak, murmur, or nod the head. Continue your hypnosis script [above] until the toes are asleep.)…..

“Good… Now your feet… let me know when your feet have gone to sleep…. (You may touch the body part, and sometimes pick it up and gently shake it and then let it drop into the bed. Wait for the response that the feet are “asleep.”) … Very good. You are doing so well! …. Now let me know when your calves/lower parts of your legs are asleep….. (Your child might prefer to do one side of the body first and then another. Some children can do both legs/arms at the same time.)….. Now let your upper legs go to sleep. Sleepy, sleepy legs, let me know when your upper legs are asleep….. (Pause for a response.)….. Now your whole legs are asleep. Very sleepy legs…. nice and heavy…. just sinking into the bed now….. Now let your bum (bottom) go to sleep. Sleepy, sleepy bum (bottom)… let me know when your bum (bottom) has gone to sleep…. (Pause for a response)….. And your tummy… sleepy, sleepy tummy….. (Yawn to encourage your child to feel sleepy. In empathy the child also will yawn. You are inducing mirroring action in the child by which it yawns. Yawning is a prelude to sleep.) …… Take the time you need and let me know when your tummy has gone to sleep….. (Pause for a response.) …..

“Now your chest…. Let your chest go to sleep. Sleepy, sleepy chest… very comfortable… breathing easy… let me know when your chest has gone to sleep….. (Pause for a response.)….. Now let your shoulders go to sleep. Heavy, sleepy shoulders… let me know when your shoulders have gone to sleep….. (Pause for a response.)….. And your arms. Now let your arms, all the way down to your hands and fingers go very deeply asleep. Sleepy, sleepy arms… let me know when your arms are asleep….. (Pause for a response and pick up a wrist and gently shake the arm.) …… See how heavy and sleepy your arm is now!….. And your neck. The neck needs to have a very nice sleep now. Sleepy, sleepy neck… tell your neck to go to sleep and when it is asleep, let me know….. (Pause for a response.) …..
And your head. Your face...your cheeks...your forehead...your eyebrows...your mouth and jaw. Your mouth has been busy all day and now needs a nice rest, so let your mouth go to sleep and as it gets sleepier and sleepier it slows right down...right down (i.e. if the child is chatting) so tell your mouth it is time to sleep.... Do that in your mind now...... And your ears... sleepy, sleepy ears... you can hear my voice but your ears get sleepier as your whole body gets so, so sleepy now...so...so sleepy.

“And your eyes. Sleepy, sleepy eyes.... (Yawn for effect.).... Heavy, sleepy eyes. When they are very sleepy they cannot even open...just let them get heavy and sleepy now......(Repeat until the eyes close – if they are slow to close, tell the child directly to close the eyes)...... ...just close your eyes now...... (Or tell your child to keep the eyelids open as long as he can)......Keep your eyes open as long as you can...your heavy, heavy eyelids, just keep them open... just try really hard to keep them open... and the harder you try...the heavier they get, just try to keep them open... and at some point you cannot keep them open any longer and they will need to close and just let them close... but for now... just keep them open as long as you can...Keep going until the eyelids close..... Let me know when your eyes are sleep......(Pause for a response.).....

“So, as you go sleepier now you have pleasant dreams...pretty dreams in your head...you can tell yourself in your mind ‘I have happy dreams...I have happy dreams...I have happy dreams...’”

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(Add appropriate suggestions at this point – for example:)

“you make new friends at school, or you have a great day tomorrow!, you are so calm for tomorrow’s spelling test, mummy and daddy love you and so feel that love in your heart all day tomorrow.”

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It is nice to end this script with the eyes. When the eyes relax, they are supposed to close, so tell the child this at the appropriate time. Then the whole body goes to sleep.
The child is not usually asleep at the time, but has wound down and much more ready to go to sleep. Some gentle stroking for a few more minutes is appreciated by some children. If you are stroking, you are creating a powerful mind-body connection to this relaxation that hypnotists call an “anchor.” Make sure that you refrain from using any energizing anchors.

This relaxation is about 5-10 minutes but works like magic to get children to sleep a lot faster and easier than the usual process of telling them to go to sleep.

The language of this script can be adapted to suit any category of people and for hetero-hypnosis or self-hypnosis.
31. OTHER HYPNOSES

1. Therapeutic Hypnosis

Therapeutic hypnosis refers to the grafting of hypnotic procedure onto any of the recognized psychotherapeutic techniques. Hypnosis can be used successfully as an adjunct, or ancillary procedure in therapy that is psychoanalytic, gestalt, non-directive, or any of the many varieties of behaviour modification that are based upon learning theory. Taken in this sense, there is no such thing as hypnotherapy. It is only a number of traditional approaches to psychotherapy that amalgamate hypnosis successfully as a part of the treatment. Stage hypnosis is primarily for entertainment while therapeutic hypnosis is directed towards helping a person placed in the role of patient to alter his behaviour by replacing self-defeating habits and patterns with adaptive ones.

2. Forensic Hypnosis

This theory is based on some questionable assumptions that memory is reproductive rather than reconstructive, and that there is a hypnotic hypermnesia effect. Certainly there are seemingly inaccessible memories emerging in a hypnotic context, but there is never any certainty that when this happens in hypnosis, it is caused by hypnosis. Added to this, hypnotically elicited recollections are not necessarily true, no matter how vivid and subjectively compelling they may be to the hypnotized subject or to an observer of his behaviour.

3. Street Hypnosis

Street hypnotists are skilled individuals that have experience in putting people into a rapid trance and make the individual perform fun acts for the amusement of the others who pass by. Street hypnosis was in vogue during the 18th century when mesmerism was used for the entertainment of crowds. Perhaps the practice of hypnosis would have died out but for the street hypnosis which saved it. As with any hypnosis, street hypnosis starts with induction which is one of the fundamentals of hypnosis.
4. Animal Hypnosis

You might have observed a number of shows on TV or YouTube in which demonstrations are done on animals for animal hypnosis. Now the question arises if animals can be hypnotized. Let us see what happens in animals when they are said to be under hypnosis.

Animals can be encouraged to enter a state that, on the face of it bears some similarities to hypnosis in people. This state is best described as motor inhibition in response to restraint but has also been variously labeled as “tonic immobility,” “animal hypnosis,” “immobility reflex,” “Totsellreflex,” or “fright paralysis.” Tonic immobility involves physically restraining an animal, which then becomes immobile for a period of time. The immobility usually ends abruptly “with the animal making an almost immediate transition from the immobile to the mobile state.” The process underlying hypnosis in human and the tonic immobility in animals are very different. Hypnosis in humans is about verbal suggestions which produce changes in subjective experience. Being relaxed and still is sometimes part of hypnosis, but it is not necessary. Tonic immobility in animals is defined by “immobility” and nothing more. Animals cannot inform us about their subjective experience, and may not be self-aware and be able to introspect as humans can.

To conclude, in the proper sense of hypnosis, I think only humans can be hypnotized and not animals. What appears to be hypnosis in animals is the tonic immobility which happens when an animal is restrained. This can also take place as a result of fright in animals. Therefore, there is no animal hypnosis per se. 30
SIGMUND FREUD AND HYPNOSIS

Sigmund Freud grew increasingly interested in the unconscious. He conceived of the unconscious as one of the dimensions of human life — at once inaccessible and important as a source of thoughts and actions. In his effort to decipher the meanings of hysterical symptoms and other neglected mental phenomena that seemed beyond conscious control (such as dreams and slips of tongue), he moved further away from his neurological training. Realizing that apparently meaningless behaviour actually expressed unconscious conflict, he developed techniques for determining what the behaviour might mean.

With hypnotic suggestion, the hypnotist commands subjects to stop having symptoms. With free association, the analyst intends to create conditions in which subjects could grasp the significance of their symptoms and thereby free themselves from illness.

1. Psychological Cause of Hysteria

Freud's earlier works in psychology and psychoanalysis attempted to understand and cure the human mind by means of hypnosis. Freud's initial exposure to hypnosis in a clinical setting was between 1885-1886 when he studied in Paris with Jean-Martin Charcot, a renowned French professor of neurology. Charcot was concerned about the causes of hysteria, a disorder which could cause paralyses and extreme fits. He soon discovered that symptoms of hysteria could be induced in non-hysterics by hypnotic suggestion and that the symptoms of hysterics could be alleviated or transformed by hypnotic suggestion. This discovery, of course, ran contrary to the then-prevalent belief that hysteria had physiological causes. The discovery suggested that a deeper, unseen level of consciousness could affect an individual's conscious conduct.

2. Catharsis

Joseph Breuer applied hypnosis not just to cause or suppress the symptoms of hysteria but to actually find out the root causes. Freud collaborated with Joseph Breuer. Joseph Breuer found in his work with a
client that by tracing her associations in an auto-hypnotic state, he could not only find an original repressed incident, but could actually cure her of her symptoms. When she related an event to a symptom while in a hypnotic state, her symptom would become terribly powerful and dramatic but would then be purged never to trouble her again. This powerful and often traumatic transfer of a memory from the unconscious to the conscious is known as catharsis, an effective method which also seems to corroborate Freud’s theories on the mind. However, Freud soon abandoned hypnosis in favour of conscious psychoanalysis, first for the technique of free association, then eventually for his well-known technique of observational, couch-based psychoanalysis.

3. Freud’s Impact on Hypnotism

Though Freud abandoned hypnosis for psychoanalysis, he maintained an interest in hypnotic phenomenon throughout his work and the questions he posed, as well as some of the solutions he offered, have retained their relevance. Though Freud has often been blamed for his simplistic thinking about hypnosis and for its eclipse, his writings reveal a rich theory of hypnosis and a frank acknowledgement of the debt of psychoanalytic theory and practice to hypnotism. In many respects, he anticipated issues in current research. Though his emphasis on the hypnotist’s skill may have been exaggerated, his insights concerning attention, social expectations, group dynamics, reality testing, and the relationship between hypnosis and sleep have been very useful in empirical investigations.

4. Development of Freud’s Interest in Hypnosis

Freud attended a performance of Hansen the “magnetist,” which made a profound impression on him and convinced him of the existence of a genuine hypnotic state. Then he spent four months at the Salpêtrière hospital where Charcot was conducting his studies of hypnosis. Freud was impressed with clinical demonstrations that hysterical paralyses could be reproduced by hypnotic suggestion. In 1890 Freud travelled to Nancy to meet Charcot’s rival, Hippolyte Bernheim who used hypnosis to treat patients, many of whom suffered from organic diseases. Back in Vienna, Freud’s close friend Joseph Breuer was regressing in time hysterical patients under hypnosis to trace the origin of their symptoms
and evoke normally inaccessible memories. Breuer’s use of hypnosis to investigate and treat hysteria further strengthened Freud’s view of hypnosis as a legitimate and useful therapeutic tool.

5. Freud’s Clinical Use of Hypnosis

Freud’s work provides evidence of extensive clinical experience with the technique of hypnosis. The therapeutic use of hypnotic suggestion was his principal instrument of work during the first years as a physician. Subsequently he adopted Breuer’s cathartic method and when he visited Bernheim he was convinced of the limitations of hypnotic suggestion. He believed that not only functional disorders but quite a number of symptoms of organic diseases are accessible to hypnosis.

6. Hypnosis as Evidence of the Unconscious

While watching Bernheim perform hypnosis, Freud was convinced of the possibility that there could be powerful mental processes which nevertheless remained hidden from the conscious mind. He observed that when Bernheim used suggestion to encourage subjects with post-hypnotic amnesia to recall a hypnotic session, the lost memories could gradually be restored. So, he concluded that post-hypnotic suggestion is a demonstration of the existence and mode of operation of the mental unconscious and as experimental proof of the existence of “unconscious psychical acts.”

7. Freud’s Abandonment of Hypnosis

Freud feared that patients would lose contact with the present situation or become addicted to hypnosis as a narcotic. He was anxious not to be restricted to treating hysteriform conditions. He became frustrated as he could not hypnotize all patients nor put them into as deep a trance as he would have liked. He, perhaps, desired a school of psychology divorced from the simplicity of suggestion since when hypnotic techniques are used, the patient can suggest to himself whatever he pleases. He admitted that hypnotic techniques were easier and shorter to apply than psychoanalysis. Yet he found therapeutic outcomes to be dependent on a harmony between the patient and the therapist, and therefore, capricious and impermanent. He said that even the most brilliant results were liable to be suddenly wiped away if his personal relation with the patient became
disturbed. He believed that symptoms often serve a protective function and that those that have meaning for the patient should not be indiscriminately removed. He said that hypnosis affords no insight into the dynamics of the problem in question. According to him, hypnotic treatment strengthens the repressions, but leaves all the processes that have led to the formation of the symptoms unaltered. Hypnotic treatment leaves the patient inert and unchanged, and unable to resist any fresh occasion for falling ill. Hypnosis, he said, hides the very resistance that needs to be recognized and overcome in psychoanalysis.

8. The Debt of Psychoanalysis to Hypnosis

Since Freud incorporated many of his observations and insights concerning hypnotic behaviour and phenomena into the dynamics of psychoanalysis, he can be said to have circumvented rather than abandoned hypnosis. Dreams and hypnosis both afford access to the forgotten material of childhood and Freud now chose to resort to dreams rather than to hypnosis. Freud abandoned hypnosis only to rediscover suggestion in the shape of transference. The suggestibility of the hypnotized subject, like the transference of the analysand, involves a directing of libidinal energy towards the hypnotist/analyst.

9. Freud’s Stance on the “State vs. Non-State” Debate

It was thought that a hypnotic state or trance fundamentally is distinct from other states of consciousness as the essence of hypnosis. This was the position of Charcot who said that the hypnotic state has identifiable physiological characteristics. Against this came the position of the sociocognitive approach viewing hypnosis not as an altered state of consciousness, but as a product of situational and psychological variables, like expectations and social role-playing. This was the position of Bernheim. Freud initially oscillated between Charcot’s and Bernheim’s positions, and his position was unclear. Freud unquestionably aligned himself with the statisticians and to have claimed on the other hand that hypnosis does not exist as a state. Freud pointed out that there are both psychical and physiological phenomena in hypnotism. Therefore, it would be one-sided to consider only one or the other. There is no criterion which enables one to distinguish exactly between a psychical process and a physiological one. Of course, contemporary research suggests
hypnosis (as Freud did) as a complex phenomenon with biological, cognitive, and social aspects. Freud’s view fitted in somewhere between Charcot and Bernheim as it fitted in somewhere between the altered consciousness and sociocognitivist positions, which have today become less dichotomous and tend to fall along a continuum.

10. Hypnosis and Sleep

Freud said that when hypnosis is most completely successful, it is nothing other than ordinary sleep and when it is less completely successful, it corresponds to the various stages of falling asleep. Empirical evidence indicates that hypnosis has very little in common with sleep. Behaviourally, the hypnotized subjects do not become drowsy or sleepy unless this is suggested during induction. Physiologically, the electroencephalograms (EEG) of hypnotized subjects resemble that of subjects who are awake rather than asleep, unless sleepiness is suggested by the hypnotist. Freud finally said that sleep and hypnosis have in common withdrawal of interest from the external world. This shows a modified position compatible with contemporary research – namely, sleep in hypnosis means nothing more or less than an order to withdraw all interest from the world and to concentrate it on the person of the hypnotist. In the withdrawal of interest from the external world lies the psychological characteristic of sleep and the kinship between sleep and the state of hypnosis is based on it.

11. Hypnosis and Attentional Processes

Freud says that the subject is in reality concentrating his whole attention on the hypnotist and no attention is paid to any but him. Freud is of the opinion that the induction procedures of fixating on a bright object and listening to a monotonous sound merely serve to divert conscious attention and to hold it riveted. It is as if the hypnotist has said to the subject to concern himself exclusively with the person of the hypnotist and the rest of the world is quite uninteresting.

12. Hypnosis, Group Dynamics, and Reality Testing

The hypnotic subject bestows power and authority on the hypnotist so much so that the hypnotist possesses a mysterious power that robs the subject of his own will. The hypnotic relationship is a group formation
with two members. In hypnosis, he says, the function for testing the
reality of things falls into the background. The suspension of reality testing
to which Freud refers is intuitively suggested by the mere fact that
hypnotized individuals are capable of experiencing positive and negative
perceptual hallucinations.

13. Hypnosis as Transference

For Freud transference, the interpersonal aspect of the hypnotic
situation is a fundamental element of hypnosis. He considered therapeutic
success using hypnosis to be dependent on the harmonious nature of
the patient-therapist relationship. Freud noted that the hypnotic state is
like the process of falling in love, with the same subjection, compliance,
and unlimited devotion without the sexual satisfaction. The hypnotist
awakens in the subject a portion of his archaic heritage which had also
made him compliant towards his parents.

14. The Hypnotist’s Skill

Freud said that a successful hypnotist must possess great skill.
The hypnotist’s experience as perceived by the subject appears to have
a significant effect on hypnotizability levels. Freud seems to have intuitively
understood this when he attributed some hypnotic successes to the
suggestive atmosphere which surrounds the hypnotist.

15. Hypnotizability as a Trait

Freud believed that everybody is hypnotizable, but that
hypnotizability is often hindered by resistance and other obstacles that
must be overcome by the hypnotist. Hypnosis is understood essentially
as an ability of the subject and not of the hypnotist. Responsiveness to
hypnosis has been shown to be as stable over time as any personality
trait. This stability suggests an underlying genetic factor, which has
recently been shown to explain some of the variance in hypnotizability.
Yet the issue is not settled. Freud said that the puzzling way in which
some people are subject to hypnosis, while others resist it completely,
points to some factor still unknown. We can never tell in advance whether
one can hypnotize a particular patient or not and the only way to discover
it is when attempting it. It has not been proved that accessibility to
hypnosis is related to any other of the individual's attributes.
For Freud, there is no obvious relationship between susceptibility to hypnosis and the therapeutic outcome. For him it was puzzling to note that the suggestion/s may completely relieve some people from a wide range of organic symptoms, yet fail to relieve others from manifestly psychological ones and the depth of hypnosis is not invariably in direct proportion to its success. It appears that hypnotizability is relevant to the therapeutic process in those cases where the special hypnotic state mediates the cure, while in other cases the non-specific elements of hypnosis mediate the therapeutic effect. Freud could not hypnotize all of his patients nor predict who would prove a good subject and who would not. This fact was one of his major frustrations with the use of hypnosis in his clinical work. Perhaps, this is also one of the factors that made him give up hypnosis.

To conclude, Freud had a lifelong interest in hypnosis and he desired very much to develop a general psychology of mental functioning. He used hypnosis in clinical practice and thus contributed to its general acceptance. He admitted the debt of psychoanalysis to hypnosis. His thinking about the critical nature of the hypnotist’s skill seems outmoded now. But his insight into the therapeutic potential and limits of hypnosis and its relation to sleep and transference has been borne out by subsequent researches. His approach to hypnosis as comprising psychological states, social expectations, attention, and role playing are even now major points for research.31
33. MEDITATION

Meditation and hypnosis resemble each other so closely that we may mistake one for the other. This chapter will clarify in what ways they are similar and dissimilar.

1. Same and Different

Both meditation and hypnosis are the same. With regard to the subjective feeling and the brain waves both are similar but the difference comes with the intent. Meditation stills one’s mind and opens it to the universe. Meditation is not to manipulate for a specific outcome. If one does regular meditation he can lower his blood pressure and there are other positive health benefits. Though meditation is used in many spiritual traditions it can also be used without a spiritual component as in the “relaxation response.” With self-hypnosis, there is a specific goal one wants to support. There is nothing spiritual about self-hypnosis. It is a practical skill that one can learn easily. Ideally perhaps, one does practice regular meditation for enlightenment as well as for its health benefits, and does self-hypnosis for practical results.

In both meditation and hypnosis the subject is relaxed and is in an almost trancelike state, focusing on inner reflection and tapping into his unconscious, focusing entirely on one solitary thought. There are more differences than similarities.

2. Meditation Achieves a Blank Mind

With meditation one achieves a completely blank mind, devoid of any and all thoughts. The goal in meditation is to empty one’s mind and eliminate stress from one’s body through calming thoughts. In meditation, one focuses on his breathing. By focusing only on this, one is quieting his mind. Usually one has a mantra (or mantras) that one repeats throughout the meditation process that brings one to a state of peace. The chanting of a mantra (whether it is out loud or internal) tends to have an almost rhythmic and calming effect on the body and mind.

3. Hypnosis Targets a Result

In hypnosis, one is targeting a singular, defined result, which is one key element that differentiates hypnosis from meditation, such as
breaking a bad habit or ending an unnecessary fear. There are a number of people who use hypnosis to stop binge eating and smoking. For hypnosis, one is guided by a hypnotist to lead one to a hypnotic state. A hypnotist is a highly trained professional employed to lead one into a state of hypnosis before targeting one’s unconscious mind and helping one to remove the barriers preventing one from achieving one’s end goal.

We experience hypnosis more often than we realize. Whenever we zone out for an undetermined amount of time we have experienced a type of self-hypnosis. Meditation is widely accepted as a beneficial practice. It is something many people embrace on a daily basis. It will take a lot of time and practice to achieve a true absence of thought in meditation. Both meditation and hypnosis help us reduce stress and achieve a more well-rounded sense of self; and both can help us reach a predetermined desired outcome. Yet it is the practice and the desired outcome that usually differ, with meditation focusing on lack of thought and hypnosis aiming at change of behaviour.

4. Experiences in Meditation

1) Calming and Slowing Down the Thoughts

Our minds are racing from one thought to another without stopping. But meditation gently slows the mind so that thoughts can be traced and moved about with ease to clearly reveal their source and their conclusions.

2) Relaxing

Meditation relaxes the body and mind, and thus assists us to think and discern better. The relaxation one gets in and after meditation is wonderful.

3) Grounding and Centering

Grounding means moving energy in a downward direction. This can slowly and subtly balance the body, open the energy centers, and can help connect a person with inner guidance. By centering we mean the movement of the consciousness that occurs within the confines of the physical body. Often our attention is outside of our physical body, particularly in children and women. That is why we find women in general are less selfish and care more than some men about relationships, an area that is outside of the physical body and in between people.
5. Relationship of Hypnosis to Neutral Hypnosis, Self-Hypnosis, and Meditation

1) Hypnosis (Hetero or Clinical)

In hypnosis, there is less or no perceived need to move physically; attention is withdrawn from concerns with bodily motion and balance, and there is less or no need to interact socially. In spite of that, in hypnosis the subject still feels a presence and has awareness of the rapport with another person – that being the hypnotist. In hypnosis, the elements of this relationship are intertwined with the experience of the trance. Part of the subject’s psyche is linked to the hypnotist’s psyche, in a process of dynamic communication. The hypnotist is free to communicate with one part of the subject’s self, then with another, but always maintaining a bridge. The subject is not really free although the hypnotist may be very permissive; the confines of the relationship remain.

2) Neutral Hypnosis

If a subject enters a hypnotic state and does not give himself specific suggestions or directions, this is called “neutral hypnosis,” a state marked by relaxation, free-floating imagery, and dream fragments or sequences. In this situation, the sense of control floats, and is undirected. The subject may or may not observe and remember. We can say that it is an unstructured trance state.

3) Self-Hypnosis

In self-hypnosis there is more autonomy. A more conscious part of the psyche gives suggestions to another more unconscious part. Self-instructions are fairly specific and invite or reinforce personal change.

4) Meditation

Here we view meditation in connection with hypnotic phenomena. To the type of neutral hypnosis if you add directed watchfulness then it is meditation. The meditative trance and the self-hypnotic trance are similar in quality. In meditation the subject starts out with no overt trance-inducing signal, but with the resolve to begin and focuses the observing ego on a part of the body (e.g. the solar plexus), a sound (mantra), a symbolic image (mandala), a spiritual feeling, or a universal idea.
Though like most therapies, meditation claims to relieve many somatic and psychological disorders, its clearest and best documented indication is in the treatment of generalized anxiety. Meditation takes dedication, motivation, daily practice, patience, and requires a certain soundness of mind from the subject. It demands an ability to develop a certain mindset of internal relaxed watchfulness, an ability to learn to deal with thought intrusions, and a capacity to accept intermittent progress.

6. Relaxation and Meditation

Relaxation is said to have both physical and psychological components. At the physiological level, the experience is one of repose and calm. Of all the manifestations of hypnotic phenomena, relaxation is the most easily and consistently observed state. It is also observed that in some subjects relaxation is strongly experienced and some even say that they never before felt a relaxation level so profound.

This universal experience of relaxation is already present in neutral hypnosis (i.e., hypnosis without any overt suggestions or the phase of the hypnotic process following induction and preceding the presentation of suggestions). When one adds proper suggestions to neutral hypnosis it becomes hypnosis proper; hypnosis can be amplified many times over. Once experienced by the subject, relaxation can, through the techniques of self-hypnosis (the process by which a trance is brought on by the participant himself) or post-hypnotic suggestion, be applied during situations previously experienced as stressful or anxiogenic. The feeling of relaxation in hypnosis can range from mild, general deceleration to pervasive peacefulness. When one reaches the peaceful state, the parts of the mind that contribute to anxiety are quieted.

Meditation is meant to let go of the anger from the past, events of the past, all the planning for the future and accepting this present moment and living every moment totally with depth. It is the art of doing nothing. The rest one attains in meditation is deeper than the deepest sleep, several times deeper. In meditation you transcend all desires. This brings for one such coolness to the brain. It is in a sense overhauling or servicing the whole body-mind complex. Such a practice will bring in so much of relaxation. Ultimately meditation will lead you to great relaxation.
7. Hypnosis and Meditation

Hypnosis and meditation are not too dissimilar from each other. Both hypnosis and meditation allow one to block out the world around one and to focus on an object, place, or word that will make you feel tranquil, calm, and de-stressed. The main difference perhaps is the way these two are practiced.

True meditation is typically the cessation of all thought. It can be likened to the mind being a clean slate. It is being at peace with who we are and what we do. If one reaches this stage, one ceases the contemplation of what if one does this or what if one does not do this right. Meditation can free one’s mind of all negative thoughts and let one experience an inner peace. Problems do not disappear by meditation but it helps one perceive them in a different light. The rumination process will be less stressful and more productive once one can step back and see things in perspective.

Meditation as a discipline takes steady practice over a long period of time. It aims to clear one’s mind over long periods of time by allowing thoughts to pass by while focusing on a point, a mantra, or some other focus. Often breathing exercises accompany meditation. The goal in meditation is to detach from one’s thoughts, and to experience a deep awareness that one is not one’s thoughts. Meditation is content-less. There is no specific goal aside from the meditation itself. Of course, it can lead one to many health benefits, including stress relief and peace of mind, but it is not goal-driven.

Hypnosis, however, is a state of focused attention where the conscious mind is distracted so that work can be done with the unconscious mind directly. In conclusion, the difference between hypnosis and meditation is that they both bridge the unconscious/conscious interface, with meditation being without content and not goal-driven, while hypnosis has content and is goal-driven.

8. A Model for Clinical Meditation

Take for example an adult who suffers from anxiety and you are conducting clinical meditation for him. Give him the preliminary relaxation exercise – a shortened Jacobson technique (pp. 167) – as he sits calmly,
eyes closed, and ask him to send his awareness into his upper abdominal region and simply to leave it there for a few minutes. Then tell him that thought intrusions are frequent and are best dealt with by noticing them, letting them pass, and returning to the focus of meditation. Now ask him to terminate the experience, at his discretion, by simply deciding to do so. In all probability after five minutes, he will open his eyes. The gnawing burning feeling in his abdomen will have decreased by at least half, and his chest cavity will feel considerably lighter. Give him home work of two 10-minute session a day of this meditation. This form of meditation is more demanding than Transcendental Meditation [TM] because more thought intrusions are usually experienced in this. (Transcendental meditation refers to a specific form of mantra meditation. The TM technique involves the use of a sound or mantra and is practiced for 15–20 minutes twice per day.) After about six weeks he will experience a very satisfactory diminution of anxiety symptoms with frequent periods of total clearing.
34. IMAGINATION

There is a certainly individual difference in hypnotizability. The difference centers on the idea that the hypnotized person deploys his skills of imagination to the point of becoming deeply involved in the ongoing fantasy activity of hypnotic induction. Josephine Hilgard coined the term “imaginative involvement” to explain the hypnotic phenomenon. Sutcliffe spoke of “delusion” in a descriptive sense to point to the manner in which fantasy may take on reality value for some hypnotized subjects, and becomes accepted by them as having happened in actuality. Theodore Sarbin and William Coe spoke of the role of imaginings that become believable. In each case, the thrust is in terms of imaginings that become so vivid and intense that the person in hypnosis may not be able to distinguish them from reality, and may come to believe that they are actual occurrences. Auke Tellegen (1978/79) said that imagination or fantasy is the ability to represent suggested events and states imaginatively and enactively in such a manner that they are experienced as real.

1. Fusion of the Rational and the Non-Rational

Research supports the view that hypnotic responsivity is related to the ability to become absorbed in imagining such things as the setting of the sun, or the smell of a flower. There is a subset of high hypnotizables who are characterized as “fantasy addicts” — that is, a subject who spends as many of his waking hours as possible engaged in fantasy and imagination. There are some hypnotists who emphasize the role of fantasy and imagination, but have placed less stress on the role of absorption, though they all agree that reality testing may be suspended and belief may be altered. Ernest Hilgard (1977) emphasized dissociation, and views hypnosis as involving multiple, overlapping systems of cognitive control, some of which may not always be available to conscious awareness and which may tap into fantasy processes. Martin T. Orne (1980) sees hypnosis as involving alterations, even distortions of perception, mood, and memory. Judith Rhue and Steven J. Lynn (1989) view highly hypnotizable subjects as highly prone to fantasy. Nicholas Spanos and Theodore X. Barber (1974) view hypnosis as thinking along with and experiencing suggestion related imaginings. Their emphasis is upon
hypnotic behaviour as being entirely voluntary and rational, even though hypnotic behaviour at least among high hypnotizables, appears to be an admixture of voluntary and involuntary behavior, in which rational and non-rational components are fused.

2. Social Psychological Influences – Imagination and Absorption

Theodore X. Barber (1969) says that positive motivations, favourable attitudes, and positive beliefs about hypnosis (that being hypnotized is an enjoyable and safe activity) also play an important role in determining the hypnotic outcomes. This being so, such social psychological influences are of little consequence to the experience of hypnosis if the subject lacks such requisite abilities as imagination and absorption. Again a subject with these requisite abilities will not respond to a hypnotic induction procedure if he lacks the necessary motives, attitudes, and beliefs. To illustrate this point let us consider the occurrence in the 19th century about the post-hypnotic amnesia which occurred spontaneously. This stemmed from the shared beliefs of the hypnotist and the subject that this was the nature of the phenomenon. But only a small percentage of subjects responded in this manner. Put it differently, only those subjects who had the requisite ability responded in a manner consonant with the prevailing belief of the period.

3. Changes in Imagination

To a certain degree, the ability to create mental images is present in all of us. It is experienced in the most pronounced way in dreams when messages flowing from the sense organs are drastically reduced and awareness is shifted to the ever-ongoing inner mental life. When one is in the waking state, the escape of mental images surfaces in daydreams. The imagery of daydreams is complex and under partial volitional control, and it is uniquely expressed in everyone; it may contain visual impressions, feelings, some aesthetic sensations, the interplay of dialogue, and intricate scenarios. At times, daydreams may be so engrossing that coming back to reality feels shocking.

In hypnosis, the style of imagery used by the subject is important. Both in hypnotic induction and in treatment, the stimulation of imagery, in any one of its modalities, provides an important vehicle for progress.
For example, it makes little sense to produce relaxation walking on the sea shore with feet touching the water when the subject is afraid of waves. If he likes a meadow he will respond positively while he is said to be walking on a meadow.

The ability to create, intensify, and sustain images is enhanced in hypnosis. In some subjects, this faculty can be activated to such a degree that the sense of reality recedes and imagery takes precedence. It is a situation in which the process of wakefulness coexists with the processes of imagery formation. When it goes to the extreme, imagery can be so intensely vivid that it is referred to as a hallucination. When it happens, for example, a subject with his eyes wide open is able to see an object as if it were there and conversely the subject might also not see an object that really is there, a negative hallucination.

Imageries are turned into a therapeutic tool in hypnosis. Often, images constructed by the subject can, through their real representations or the symbol they convey, point to the direction of creative insight, enhanced self-perception, personal growth, and problem resolution. Of course, through their influence, they exert therapeutic effects.33
Memory plays a vital role in hypnosis. There are some misconceptions regarding the retrieval of memory in hypnosis and to what extent the material recovered is true. This chapter will give you a glimpse of the true nature of the role of memory in hypnosis.

1. Effects of Hypnosis on Memory

Hypnosis has three main effects on memory. (1) Hypnosis increases productivity, but most of the new information is in error; (2) It increases confidence for both correct and incorrect “novel” remembrances; (3) These increases in productivity and confidence are found at all levels of hypnotizability. But these effects are most pronounced in high hypnotizables in hypnosis (as compared to when they are assigned to an imagination or a repeated recall condition), as compared to low hypnotizables who receive either hypnosis, imagination, and repeated recall instructions.

2. Confusing Fantasy as Fact

Hypnosis is known to result in confabulation. It is a tendency to confuse fantasy as fact. The new information elicited may be true, or it could be a lie, it could be confabulated, or it could be pseudo-memory that is manufactured in response to the demands of the hypnotic situation. A century ago, these four alternatives – truth, lie, confabulation, or pseudo-memory were emphasized by French forensic investigators.

3. Hypnotic Hypermnesia Effect

“Hypermnesia” refers to an abnormally vivid or complete memory. When we say hypnotic hypermnesia, it refers to the belief that hypnosis enhances accurate memory for the events that a person is initially unable to remember. There is hardly any evidence to support this hypnotic hypermnesia effect. People are known to produce more information with the use of hypnosis. But it is not necessarily accurate. Since the processes underlying response to hypnosis appear to implicate fantasy and imagination, any novel material elicited in hypnosis needs to be corroborated by independent means. This is of particular importance especially when hypnosis is employed as a part of a police investigation designed to elicit additional leads.
4. Post-Hypnotic Amnesia

Post-hypnotic amnesia refers to the failure to remember most, if not all of the events occurring in hypnosis, until a pre-arranged signal or cue to recall them is administered. This occurrence is confined to the top 10-15% of the population, and typically, these individuals remember mere fragments of what transpired during the preceding period of hypnosis. They are likely to recall, for instance, writing their name, their age, and the date, but not that this request was made within the context of being hypnotically age regressed to childhood. Some high hypnotizables have a “blanket” amnesia for the events of hypnosis. This is more typical of low hypnotizables asked to simulate hypnosis. Generally, the response of simulators to this and other hypnotic items is to respond in terms of the perceived demands of the situation. These persons tend to interpret an amnesia suggestion as meaning that they cannot remember anything at all until they receive the signal or cue to reverse the amnesia.

The fact of the reversibility of post-hypnotic amnesia distinguishes it from amnesias of organic origin like the one from a blow to the head. Memories based on retrograde amnesia (that is, one resulting from trauma of either a psychological or physical character) may become available eventually; the retrieval process is, ordinarily, slow and laborious. But the reversal of hypnotically suggested amnesias is effected by a simple suggestion that the person “can now remember everything.”

5. Hypnosis and False Memories

Recollections obtained during hypnosis can involve confabulations and pseudo-memories and not only fail to be more accurate, but actually appear to be less reliable than non-hypnotic recall, said the Council on Scientific Affairs of the American Medical Association in 1985.

6. Hypnosis May Facilitate False Memory

Hypnosis is understood as “imaginative involvement,” “believed-in imaginings,” and “delusion.” Therefore, the role of hypnosis in creating false memories is likely. Hypnosis facilitates and even hastens a process whereby a suggested fantasy of the past comes to be accepted as a “true memory.” False memories of childhood sexual abuse can develop without recourse to hypnosis. Although hypnosis might re-awaken childhood fantasies, it is in the context of the beliefs and actions of the
hypnotist, an authority figure, that the fantasy might come to be interpreted as historically accurate. Certainly there are some contexts, beliefs, and processes in which hypnosis may facilitate false memories.

7. Causal Connection

False memories of childhood sexual abuse have surfaced in relatively large numbers in recent years. It reveals a consistent pattern of memory creation. This is what happens: A demoralized adult comes to believe that he cannot negotiate life’s current difficulties alone and seeks out a therapist. The therapist might believe that all psychological distress is the product of repressed memories of sexual abuse during childhood. Thus the subject gets a causal connection between his present problem and the supposed repressed memories of sexual abuse during childhood.

8. Double Bind

First of all, the therapist believes in the over-simplification that is all dysfunctions are casually linked to the repressed incest memories. Secondly, he might believe that “recovering” abuse memories will provide the person with insight into his difficulties, and that this will lead to a dissipation of symptoms. A therapist with such a belief will take the disavowal of the abuse as evidence of being “in denial.” This leads the patient into a double bind. There is something wrong with the patient if he remembers that he has been abused. But there is also something wrong if he does not remember – that is the patient is in denial.

9. Mistaken Beliefs about Memory

Some therapists believe that people with multiple personality disorder were sexually abused during childhood even though as adults they do not remember it. Given that “remembering” plays such a role, hypnosis may be recommended for recovering lost memories. It is likely that the therapist and the patient mistakenly believe that hypnosis is highly effective in restoring “true memory” and that there is no need for independent corroboration for reports that emerge with hypnosis. But the fact is that this hypnotically enhanced recall may be highly confabulated.

10. Cult-Like Behaviour

Patients are sometimes urged to confront the alleged abusers, not permitting them (the accused) to refute the accusations. They may
be advised to get strong by suing at the same time as being informed that they are not responsible for proving that they were abused. They are also advised to break off all relations with the family and with anybody else who questions the abuse narrative. They may be also involved in an incest survivors’ group. They conform to a group mores and to “remember” something that justifies their presence in such company.

11. Principles of Memory

There is a growing clinical interest in memory processes as there is a claim that a whole host of problems, including anxiety, depression, and eating disorders, have their origins in childhood experiences of incest and other sexual trauma, abuse, neglect, and deprivation – memories of which have been repressed by the patient. Many therapists attempt to recover these memories, and bring them into conscious awareness, so that the patient can deal with them more adaptively. Here hypnosis too can play a role in this process. The very nature of memory places strict limitations on the degree to which any attempt to recover memories from the distant past will succeed. This will become evident when you read the principles of remembering.

12. Seven Principles of Remembering

Memory processing consists of three stages: (1) encoding, the process by which a trace of current experience is laid down in memory; (2) storage, by which an encoded memory trace remains available over time; and (3) retrieval, the process by which information is recovered from storage and used in ongoing cognitive activity. Here we need to remember that a memory cannot be retrieved from storage unless it was encoded in the first place, or if it has been lost from storage. Even the encoding of a memory, and its availability in storage, does not guarantee that a veridical memory of the original event will be retrieved. To understand this let us consider the manner in which memory operates.

Here below are reviewed seven principles of memory function that set limits on the degree to which any attempt to recover a long-forgotten memory can succeed: encoding, organization, time-dependency, cue-dependency, encoding specificity, schematic processing, and reconstruction. If there is no independent corroboration, there is no “litmus test” that can reliably distinguish the true from the false memories, or memories that are based on perception from those that are based on
imagination. Practicing clinicians should use great caution when using hypnosis or any other technique to facilitate delayed recall.

1) Encoding

The encoding of memory is governed by two principles, “elaboration” and “organization.” The elaboration principle: The memorability of an event increases when that event is related to pre-existing knowledge at the time of encoding.

2) Organization

The memorability of an event increases when that event is related to other events at the time of encoding. Events can be remembered to the extent that they were encoded at the time they occurred, and that proper encoding does not occur automatically, but rather requires active, cognitive effort. On account of this we speak of infantile and childhood amnesia which means that most adults remember so little of childhood because children lack both the knowledge base and the information-processing capacity to encode such memories in retrievable form. There are also other factors like whether the event in question is the topic of conversation between the child and the other people. Such social interactions are likely to facilitate elaborative and organizational processes. Elaboration and organization become highly operative in the case of ostensibly repressed memories, most of which appear to be for events occurring in early childhood, and cover events which by their very nature are not shared with other people.

3) Time-Dependency

If a memory has been encoded, it remains available for subsequent retrieval and use – at least in principle. But in practice, memories seem to fade away over time. Thus we have another principle called “The Time-Dependency Principle:” The memorability of an event declines as the length of the storage interval (i.e., between encoding and retrieval) increases.

4) Cue-Dependency

The memorability of an event increases with the amount of information supplied by the retrieval cue. Remembering usually starts with some kind of cue that provides some information about the event
which is to be remembered. Those cues that are highly informative are more likely to contact the available memory traces than those that are not. Access to well encoded memories generally requires fewer retrieval cues, and lots of retrieval cues can gain access even to very poorly encoded memories. But subjects may remember more correct information on a recognition test than on a recall test, but they also remember more incorrect information.

5) Encoding Specificity

The memorability of an event increases when the information processed at the time of retrieval was also processed at the time of encoding. The manner in which an event is encoded – the meaning of the event, how it is perceived and interpreted and categorized – determines which retrieval cues will be successful in gaining access to that event. Memories that have been processed during states of high emotional arousal may only be accessible if the same affect is reinstated at the time of retrieval.

6) Schematic Processing

The memorability of an event increases when that event is relevant to the expectations and beliefs about that event. Events that are highly congruent with expectations are highly memorable; but events that are highly incongruent with active schemata are even more memorable. Events that are inconsistent with preexisting schemata are surprising and draw more attention, and receive more elaborative and organizational activity at the time of encoding; and at the time of retrieval, the schema provides additional cue information that can facilitate access relevant memories. Therefore, events that are irrelevant to the schema get neither advantage, and so are poorly remembered.

7) Reconstruction

The memory of an event reflects a blend of information retrieved from the specific traces encoded at the time of that event with knowledge, expectations, and beliefs derived from other sources. The notion of memory retrieval obscures the fact that memories can be distorted, biased, and otherwise changed by changes in perspective and other events that occur after the time of encoding. The reconstruction principle means that any
particular memory is only partly derived from trace information encoded at the time of the event.

13. No Internal Criteria

In the final analysis, there are no any internal criteria – that is, standards that can serve to distinguish reliably between accurate recollections and fabrications and confabulations. In the absence of external criteria – the verification of individual statements by objective evidence, we have no means of reliably distinguishing between fact and fantasy. The success of any attempt to exhume a memory will depend on why that memory was forgotten. What is encoded depends on what was perceived, and what is encoded determines what subsequently will be retrieved. If an event is poorly encoded in the first instance, the prospects for its subsequent retrieval and conscious recollection, especially after a long retention interval, are very poor as well.

14. Hypnosis and the Principles of Memory

Hypnosis does not change the rules by which memories are encoded, stored, and retrieved; accordingly, these rules constrain the utility of hypnosis (or any other procedure) as a technique for the enhancement of memory. There is no scientific evidence that hypnosis can improve the retrieval of poorly encoded memories, or those that have been degraded by interference accumulated over long retention intervals. In principle, it is possible that hypnosis can be used to provide an extremely rich set of retrieval cues, overcoming the encoding and storage conditions as for example, age regression could be used to structure an hallucinated environment that returns the subject to the circumstances, both environmental and emotional, of the forgotten episode. The clinical and forensic circumstances in which hypnosis is used to enhance recall are those in which such information is rarely available. Hypnotically refreshed memories should never be allowed to stand alone. They need to be corroborated by independent objective evidence.

15. Memory Changes

The distant and detailed memories of childhood years can be vividly brought back to us as adults. The nervous system stores every experience. New experiences are recorded in its substance, in a sequenced series
of bio-experiential events requiring, for their integrity, the proper functioning of short, intermediate, and long-term memory mechanisms.

Many memories, although indelibly present, do not gain entrance to consciousness because they are connected to too much anxiety or psychic pain. Others are cast aside because, in the priority of things, they have little relevance. On the other hand, some memories impinge too insistently upon daily life experience and may be disruptive. With effort, one can push for the retrieval of a forgotten detail, or, as in suppression, one can consciously coax into oblivion an uncomfortable fact.

16. Hypnosis, Memory, and the Brain

Research points out to specific areas of the brain affected by hypnosis. Hypnosis has long been considered a valuable technique for recreating and then studying puzzling psychological phenomena. One example of this approach is the technique known as post-hypnotic amnesia (PHA) to model memory disorders such as functional amnesia, which involves a sudden memory loss typically due to some sort of psychological trauma rather than to brain damage or disease. Hypnotists produce PHA by suggesting to a hypnotized person that after hypnosis he will forget particular things until he receives a cancellation, such as “Now you can remember everything.” Now PHA typically happens when it is specifically suggested and it is much more likely to occur in those with high levels of hypnotic ability, or high hypnotizable individuals. Hypnotic state actually influences brain activity associated with memory.

High hypnotizable individuals with PHA typically show impaired explicit memory, or difficulty consciously recalling events or material targeted by the suggestion, and dissociation between implicit and explicit memory, so that even though they cannot recall the forgotten information it continues to influence their behaviour, thoughts, and actions. The forgetting is reversible when the suggestion is cancelled. Dissociation and reversibility confirm that PHA is not the result of poor encoding of the memories or of normal forgetting, because the memories return as soon as PHA is cancelled. PHA only reflects a temporary inability to retrieve information that is safely stored in memory.

PHA and functional amnesia share several similar features. Persons with functional amnesia following a traumatic experience such as a violent
sexual assault or the death of a loved one, are unable to remember a part or all of their personal past. All the same, as in PHA, they might still show implicit evidence of the forgotten events like unconsciously dialing the phone number of a family member which they cannot consciously recall.

17. Hypnosis Is Real

Research shows that hypnotic suggestions influence brain activity, not just behaviour and experience. It is proved that the underlying brain processes, which we assume are shared by PHA and functional amnesia. Brain activation seen in PHA reflects a dampening – some form of rapid, early inhibition of memory material – due to heightened activity in the prefrontal cortex.

In PHA and in functional amnesia, the person is unable to explicitly recall certain information, yet we see evidence of this material on implicit measures. For example, a subject given PHA may fail to recall the word “mother” learned earlier, but will have no trouble completing the word “m_t_e_r.”

18. Enhancing Memory Recall

One begins to wonder if hypnosis can help one recall what is needed to pass exams, or get a better grade. The answer is “yes” but the end results depend on the degree of commitment of the individual, and the skill of the hypnotist.

If a student wants to get a good grade he should have the ability to memorize facts. First, teach the person/s how to relax through self-hypnosis, both while learning prior to exam, and most importantly during the exam. Next teach them to enhance their recall during the exam by reading their lectures notes or textbook while in a deep hypnotic state of mind, known as “somnambulistic depth.” Their eyes are open in deep hypnosis whilst focused single-mindedly on the pages of their notes, and all peripheral vision is blocked out. They can turn the pages of the book or notes at the speed of five seconds per page. This is repeated five to fifteen times before the exam, but then it only takes ten minutes to read all the material for a particular subject at that speed. This method can be used not only by students appearing for exam but also persons who have to read masses of information in a fraction of the normal time.
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by speed-reading using a process that employs hypnosis. They can also improve their memory recall of what they have just read by the same process.

Some memories, which are thought to have been forgotten and therefore inaccessible in the conscious state, can be recalled during hypnosis. This phenomenon is called “hyper amnesia.” In deep hypnosis, age regression can be achieved by getting the person to relive experiences in his past — even back to his childhood. There are cases of individuals who recovered the objects hidden by themselves and which they did not remember, but during hypnosis they could remember the place where the object was hidden.

When it is a question of unpleasant or traumatic incidents, it is not unusual for the unconscious mind to deliberately impose amnesia and shut them out completely; however, in hypnosis they can be recalled. It is also good to keep in mind that the unconscious does not always wish to yield up its secrets. Often it may do this to protect the person from having to relive an unpleasant or traumatic situation from the past. The unconscious can also lie in hypnosis. It can hallucinate and fabricate events in hypnosis. Therefore, it is good that the hypnotist does not ask leading questions in hypnosis. Leading questions will be something like this: “You were sexually abused in your childhood; Is it not?” In all likelihood the subject will answer “yes” to please the hypnotist. Besides, the subject visualizes and believes the subsequent images to be real memory. This response of the subject need not be very deliberate but rather automatic or unconscious. This phenomenon is called “False Memory Syndrome,” where a person under hypnosis makes up a tale of a parent, relative, or close friend sexually abusing that person earlier in his life.

That hypnosis can enhance memory is well established now. Hypnosis can also help one comprehend and learn a subject one finds difficult, for example mathematics. In hypnosis, it is to get over any phobia of figures or symbols, and teaching one that figures and symbols are as just another way of telling a story one can understand.34
Age regression in hypnosis is a technique utilized by hypnotist to help the subjects remember the perceptions and feelings caused by past events that have an effect on their present illness. It is done when a person is hypnotized and is instructed to recall a past event or regress to an earlier age. The subject may then proceed to recall or relive events in his life. If the hypnotist suggests that the subject is of a certain age, the subject may begin to appear to talk, act, and think according to that age. This allows for the subject to reinterpret his current situation with new information and insights. Every age regression session can vary based on the hypnotist and the subject.

1. Purpose

The purpose of hypnotic age regression is to reframe the negative feelings and perceptions of the past to facilitate progress towards the subject’s goals. It is meant to allow subjects to find the cause of their current blocks and eliminate their past traumas. When hypnotized, the subject is in an altered state that allows for his unconscious mind to be accessed. It is the unconscious that holds the behaviours and habits that people exhibit to protect them. These behaviours and habits are repeated and held until they are no more necessary. When hypnotic age regression is done, it allows for subjects to reframe and purge their unnecessary behaviours.

2. Levels of Regression

In hypnosis there are three different levels. Each level has a regression counterpart. Depending upon the level of hypnosis and regression, the subject will be able to recall the past events as if it were happening in the present. In hypnosis, a memory can be frozen (as we freeze a scene in our TV) and explored more in depth.

1) Light Level

The first level is a light one and is referred to as the “hypnoidal level.” Its regression counterpart is “recall.” This level is a mental level between sleeping and waking. It is something similar to the state when one begins to fall asleep at night or wakes up in the morning. It is also
similar to the state one enters during meditation. At this level, the mind is still aware of what is happening, but one is much more relaxed and utilizes less logic. At this level of regression, the subject is able to recall the event. Definitely the subject’s memory will be extended compared to his memory when he is not hypnotized. The subject may be able to recall an event from his childhood around the age of 5. Since he is less distracted by the present, the subject will be able to recall more specific details of his memory. We know that when one is not hypnotized, one is constantly distracted by what is occurring in the present, which weakens the ability to recall any past events. Even though the ability to experience the memory may be very blurred in the recall level, yet it is very enhanced compared to the non-hypnotized state.

2) Medium Level

This level is referred to as the “regression level.” At this level, the subject is in a very relaxed level of consciousness and is less aware of his body. The regression counterpart of this level is “viewing the past.” Here the subject is able to focus on specific details of his memories. It can be compared to a person watching a videotape of a past event. Often one is able to see and feel the past experience. Still, he is very much aware of the present moment. The subject is simply primarily focused on viewing the past. At this level, the subject has a lot of control. He is free to spend more time on pleasant memories instead of unpleasant memories. Subjects are known to smell odours or hear sounds related to the specific regression. The subject possesses control of the entire regression experience at this level. Once the regression is finished, the subject is still able to recall everything that he spoke of while hypnotized.

3) Deep Level

This is the “somnambulistic level.” In this state, the subject experiences profound relaxation which is generally a hypnotist’s goal with the subject. The counterpart of this deep level is “revivification,” which means to revive. In this level, the subject’s voice and other characteristics may begin to change according to the time that they are regressing to. Subjects are known even to begin to use phrases that they have not used since they were of that age. There are some who
doubt the validity of this stage saying that it is merely their imagination hypnotized at work, rather than an actual regression to that age and state of mind.

In this level, subjects are unable to recall all of the events that occurred during their regression, similar to a dream. The subject is able to recall certain details, but he feels the emotions as if he had just lived through the experience again. Since subjects cannot recall the details of their regression it is difficult to fulfill the purpose of a regression. All the same, it is still an important level to reach during an age regression.

3. Revivification

Memory retrieval and hypermnesia involve a coming to the surface of specific events and effects. But age regression implies a more complex phenomenon, which is the reliving of a part of the past in the context of the developmental stage of that time. In hypnosis, if the event is emotionally charged, the subject may be asked to act as if he is on the side lines, as an observer, in order to reduce the possible affectual impact and its possible disruptive effects. If it is the question of complete age regression, the episode is relived in all its immediacy and intensity.

4. Historically Accurate Memory?

Let us explore if the hypnotic age regression produces historically accurate memories. Age regression in hypnosis refers to the hypnotized person’s ability to “relive” an earlier period of his life. It is not the same as thinking about the past, or remembering it. A subject in age regression experiences being a younger age in a subjectively vivid and compelling manner, and this is accompanied, quite often, by what appears to be age appropriate changes in voice, mannerisms, and handwriting. Though the age regressed subject’s behaviour can be very convincing subjectively, that is no guarantee of the historical accuracy of anything that a person recalls about his past during age regression. Results of research suggest that the new information, elicited in hypnotic age regression, cannot be taken at face value. It needs always to be corroborated by independent means before it can be considered as factual.

It is also observed that people respond differentially to hypnotic age regression. Approximately 50% of subjects who are able to experience
it report duality. When they are questioned about their subjective experience, they say that they felt both adult and child (either simultaneously, or in alternation). The remaining 50% say that they felt a quasi-literal regression. They state that they really felt that they were the suggested age, and had no sense of being an adult. There seems to be only one hypnotic item with which this differential response to age regression correlates — that is, the “hidden observer” effect which seeks to include dissociation.

From this, it is suggested that dissociation is also a differential phenomenon, at least among those who are able to experience it. It is found almost exclusively among high hypnotizables — that is the top 10-15% of the population. It is becoming evident that more people of moderate hypnotizability will be found to experience milder forms of dissociation.

The “hidden observer” is a metaphor for dissociation to indicate that ideas could be cut off, or detached from the mainstream of consciousness, where they could then fuel symptoms.

5. Age Regression in Therapy

Age regression in therapy will mean increased access to childhood memories, thoughts, and feelings as a part of the psychotherapeutic process. In hypnosis, the term describes a process in which the patient returns to an earlier stage of life in order to explore a memory or to get in touch with some difficult-to-access aspect of his personality. This is employed in hypnosis — allowing the subject to project himself forward to see a desired outcome or the consequences of his current destructive behavior. Age regression for the purpose of “recovering” memories has become controversial with many such cases involving child abuse, alien abduction, and other traumatic incidents subsequently being discredited.

In attachment therapy, age regression is central. It is believed that a child who has missed out on developmental stages can be made to redo those stages at a later age by a variety of techniques. Many of such techniques are intensely physical and confrontational and include forced holding and eye contact, sometimes while being required to access traumatic memories of past neglect or abuse or while being made to experience extreme emotions such as rage or fear. Occasionally
“rebirth" has been used. There are also accompanying parenting techniques which may use bottle feeding and systems of complete control by the parent over the child's basic needs including toileting and water.

6. False Memories

False memories are memories that seem to have occurred, but are not real. They may be created at any time in everyday life. Since in hypnosis, the subject is more susceptible to suggestions, the suggestions may create false memories. This happens especially when the hypnotist uses leading questions or if the hypnotist implies that some event occurred that did not. Some hypnotists argue that suggestions are a positive attribute during age regression and they only suggest a direction to see what the subject reveals. However, one needs to exercise caution in interpreting. Research has proved that if subjects are given warning about pseudo-memories (false memories), it seemed helpful to some extent in discouraging pseudo-memories, but did not prevent pseudo-memories and did not reduce the confidence subjects had in those memories.35
37. ANESTHESIA

There was a time when hypnosis was used as anesthesia for surgery—especially during the world wars. Hypnosis has a tremendous potential for analgesia and it can be harnessed for the benefit of the sick population.

1. “Anesthesia Awareness”

The phenomenon of the possible preservation of portions of awareness during chemical anesthesia is not strictly a mainstream feature of hypnosis. All the same, it presents fascinating theoretical questions and research directions into the dynamics of awareness as they relate to various mental states. The crucial connective thread between hypnosis and anesthesia comes from data suggesting that events occurring during anesthesia may be retrieved by the use of hypnosis, and that the process of anesthesia itself may be beneficially influenced by hypnotic intervention.

It was believed for a long time that a patient in the moderate or even deeper levels of chemical anesthesia was in a state of otherworldliness and had relinquished all semblance of consciousness. Researches done on the relationship between anesthesia and awareness indicate that the coexistence of these is not necessarily incompatible.

Of late, studies have increasingly focused upon hypnotic recollection of the anesthesia experience. Although consciously many of the patients have little or no memory of their surgical experience, some (especially highly hypnotizable ones) are able to reconnect with these buried memories in the context of trance.

2. Preoperative Suggestions

Some patients in situations of anesthesia experience are attuned to meaningful communications by the treating personnel. This occurrence has prompted hypnotherapists to introduce suggestions to patients awaiting operative procedures. These suggestions are designed to protect the patients against inadvertent negative communications, which may be reacted to, physiologically or psychologically, with nefarious stress reactions. For example, in the event of one of the operating personnel mentioning, “there is a lot of blood loss here,” the patient may respond
with a rise in blood pressure and increased heart rate, promoting cardiac instability. In such a situation, affirmative hypnotic suggestions can act not only as a protective buffer but also as an activator to positive adaptation mechanisms, making successful negotiation of the surgical process more likely.

3. Hypnosis and Surgery

Hypnosis is the induction of a subjective state in which alterations of perception or memory can be elicited by suggestion. The application of hypnosis to alter pain perception and memory dates back by centuries. But not much progress has been made to fully comprehend or appreciate its potential compared to the pharmacologic advances in anesthesiology. Since hypnosis seems to complement and possibly enhance conscious sedation, there is a growing interest in hypnosis. Combination of analgesia and hypnosis is superior to conventional pharmacologic anesthesia for minor surgical cases.

There are many cases where an injury sustained during an intense activity or absorbing preoccupation was not noticed until after the excitement had subsided. This proves that the perception of pain and the reaction to a noxious stimulus can be altered by psychological mechanism. There are some anesthesiologists who systematically marshal these central nervous system (CNS) processes to spare their patients pain and reduce the need for drugs. The strongest appeal to the mind can be done by hypnotic suggestions.

4. Entry into Clinical Practice

Use of hypnosis as an adjunct to surgical therapy dates back to the 1830s when Jules Cloquet (mastectomy) and John Elliotson (numerous operations) performed major surgical procedures with hypnosis as the only anesthetic. The Scottish physician James Esdaile used hypnoanesthesia in about 300 surgical patients in India between 1845 and 1851. Almost simultaneously chemical anesthetics (ether 1846, chloroform 1847) were successfully introduced into surgical practice. So hypnosis subsequently became less used as anesthetic. Off and on, interest was shown in the clinical application of hypnosis as anesthetic since the end of the Second World War. Instead of using hypnosis as an
alternative for general anesthesia it has been studied as a complementary
technique. Hypnoanalgesia has emerged as a combination of hypnotic
techniques with pharmacological analgesia and sedation.

Not all patients can be hypnotized, and not every anesthesia care
provider may be willing and able to integrate hypnosis into his practice.
Hypnotic suggestibility is a feature that describes the ability of the individual
to reach a state of hypnotic trance. It is found that patients receptive to
hypnosis will reach a deeper hypnotic trance and attain a greater reduction
of pain perception and operative stress than those who are less receptive
to hypnosis. There is evidence to support that even patients who do not
reach the stage of hypnotic trance benefit from hypnotic suggestions.

5. An Open Future

Now we have data showing physically measurable effects of
suggestion or hypnosis on the nervous system. Imaging and
electrophysiological studies have demonstrated changes in spinal and
supraspinal pain pathways under the influence of hypnosis. Suggestions
and focused attention can measurably alter pain perception and pain
pathways. A similar influence may be expected for the autonomous nervous
system involved in modulating gastric motility, regional blood perfusion,
and the humeral response to stress. Faster wound healing, earlier
postoperative gastrointestinal recovery, and less nausea have been
reported when hypnosis or positive suggestions were part of the
preoperative management.

Now the question is whether we have enough data to elevate
autohypnosis and hypnosis to a clinical routine that promises benefits
for patients and surgeons. Only a few investigators have used hypnotic
techniques in the operating room. Only multi-institutional studies
encompassing large numbers of patients could test the hypothesis that
hypnosis benefits patients and health care facilities by increasing
satisfaction, reducing patient morbidity, and reducing cost. If hypnosis
and autosuggestions provide clinical benefit, they do so without the need
for equipment or drugs.36
38. HYPNOSIS AND NEURO-LINGUISTIC PROGRAMMING (NLP)

Neuro-Linguistic Programming or commonly known in its abbreviated form as NLP is a different method to help the client who does not feel comfortable being hypnotized. NLP is one of the latest and emerging trends in the field of psychotherapy that helps ordinary people transform into successful persons. It causes a metamorphosis in people and helps them in achieving greatness and reaching the zenith of success.

Research has indicated the following recovery rates: Psychoanalysis – 38% after 600 sessions, behaviour therapy – 72% after 22 sessions, and hypnotherapy – 93% after 6 sessions.

Hypnotism is a well documented method for enabling a person to behave in a controlled manner by unearthing the power of the unconscious and goes a long way in curing a lot of mental conditions.

The process of hypnosis will assist you in changing limiting habitual belief structures; release stress and anxiety; develop a deeper awareness of personal emotional responses while releasing emotional triggers, thereby gaining self-esteem and confidence. Hypnosis works by reprogramming the mind like reprogramming a computer. The reprogramming is accomplished through a communication process with your conscious and unconscious to openly receive positive communication for change resulting in your desired goals. In addition to hypnosis, Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP) techniques are used to reframe one’s limiting belief patterns. NLP diagnoses the language patterns an individual uses based on the thoughts and beliefs one possesses — whether positive or negative. Today the use of hypnosis is seen in a variety of fields including medicine, dentistry, law enforcement, professional sports, and education.

1. The Benefits of NLP

NLP encompasses all those tools which help people build a successful career. Attitude and behaviour of people determine their successes. NLP rightly focuses on bringing about changes in their behaviour and attitude. These changes radically transform individuals and
help them achieve success in their life. Since the patients are treated on an individual basis, there are huge chances of success with NLP. People who are helped using NLP reap rich rewards in their personal and professional lives. NLP can help people in various ways and it is up to the individuals themselves to select the choices available, implement them in the right manner, and benefit out of them.

2. Pattern Analysis

NLP is found to provide better solutions to commonly occurring mental problems. It improves the person’s self-determination and dedication to achieve better results with the process of overcoming their known limitations and an emphasized functioning in the right way. It is currently being promoted as an advanced science of technology that is based on modeling and pattern analysis of an individual’s behaviour. It helps people in opening or discovering the channels of success thereby giving them an entirely different outlook to an existing entity.

3. The Focus of NLP

NLP focuses on self-enhancement or self-healing procedures. Everyone’s behaviour is influenced by various factors and the behaviour of a person follows a pattern. NLP techniques are adept at analyzing an individual’s behaviour and deducing a pattern around it. It is hardly interested in what is the action or the reason behind the behaviour exhibited. NLP focuses on finding the triggers behind the particular behaviour, the contextual or circumstantial influence that caused this behavior, and also the person’s idiosyncratic features that are behind the actions of the person.

4. Identifying the Behavioural Pattern

Identifying the behavioural pattern of the individual is the hardest part of the process of Neuro-Linguistic Processing. Once the behavioural pattern, the initiating stimuli behind it, the environmental influences, and the person’s features that affect it are identified, proper analysis is performed to identify those ones that critically affect the behaviour and attitude of a person. After doing these processes, it is not so tough to provide solutions that help to correct the flaws and bring about an
improvement. The process of self-improvement should be allowed to happen gradually and should not be allowed to take place in a hurry.

5. Hypnosis and NLP

Viewing both hypnosis and NLP, I do not find any major differences between them. Both are targeting the same results but in different paths. The paths they follow are not much dissimilar. The outward signs of hypnosis like induction, relaxation, deepening, suggestions, and awakening are not followed in a manifest way in NLP. Those who practice NLP do admit that the protocol of hypnosis is implicitly seen in NLP. I would rather say that NLP is a disguised form of hypnosis. Instead of using hypnosis one can use NLP and get the identical results. I clearly see a set pattern and forward moving to the finality in both hypnosis and NLP. Both in NLP and hypnosis altered states are induced and harnessed for beneficial results. Practically most of the procedures of both disciplines appeal to and communicate with the unconscious. In effect, both are operative on the same level and appeal to the unconscious.”

37
39. SPIRITUAL GROWTH AND HYPNOSIS

Hypnosis has a strong reputation for being an excellent tool for changing habits. It is also a popular stage show activity that results in some fascinating displays of mental manipulation. Some psychologists use it as a means for treating mental dysfunctions. Success coaches will use it for personal development. Hypnosis can be used for even greater purposes including spiritual development. The process of hypnosis is one of distracting the conscious mind long enough to implant alternate suggestions to the inner mind. Hypnosis is not sleep, but rather a form of tightly focused concentration.

1. Hypnosis – Another Tool to Spiritual Growth

Many spiritual traditions use meditation as a vehicle for development. Meditation, as we know, is contentless hypnosis. Meditation is neutral hypnosis plus directed watchfulness. Meditation too, is a process of focusing the mind, but usually at a lower level of intensity. The lower level of intensity makes meditation easier for the individual to attain and control. Once the mind is focused to the degree common in hypnosis, the ability to direct the course of activity is usually lost. This is one of the difficulties in trying to use hypnosis by oneself. To reach a deep level, you need to have an outside source of direction. But this difficulty can be overcome by having another person direct you through the process, or using pre-recorded hypnotic tapes that are being sold on the market, or create your own hypnotic recordings. Now we have inexpensive voice recorders; most cell phones have a voice recording facility.

2. Relaxation plus Focus

For spiritual development, beyond the basics of directing yourself to relax your physical body, focus your mind through a series of steps to attain the level of focus required, and the ending sequence of coming back to normal consciousness. The progression of the working session can follow a number of different formats.

3. Different Forms of Spiritual Growth
Spiritual growth and development take many forms depending on the culture in which one lives. The content of the hypnotic session depends greatly on the belief system of the person.

1) Law-Abiding Type

If you believe that spiritual growth takes place when you live according to a prescribed set of rules without deviation, then you would use hypnosis to instill a “natural” tendency to live according to these rules. This is exactly the same as the habit control usage of hypnosis applied to those habits seen as being spiritual. Perhaps, your recording will be a series of statements such as “You enjoy…” and “you will always…”

2) Connection-To-The-Other Type

If you believe that spiritual development takes place when you are able to make a strong connection to a higher power, then you would use hypnosis to find and control the inner mechanisms responsible for making that connection. In this format, hypnosis becomes a “practice session” for learning how to make that connection better and stronger. Your recording will generally be a guided daydream in which you take the actions which lead to the stronger connection.

3) Fused-With-The-Supreme-Being Type

If you believe that spiritual growth and development happen as you become more like the Supreme Being, then you would use hypnosis to create whatever internal changes that need to happen to bring yourself closer to that state. This format of hypnosis is a combination of the other two formats.

To conclude, it all depends on what type of belief you have of “spiritual growth.” Not all religions and all individuals have the same concept of what spiritual growth means. Whatever type of concept you have of spiritual growth, hypnosis can be utilized and your concept of spiritual growth can be suggested to the subjects under hypnosis as the goal of self-hypnosis or hetero (clinical) hypnosis.
40. LEGAL ISSUES OF HYPNOSIS

The hypnotic pioneer, Dr. James Braid, found that for a power so remarkable and great, hypnosis was unbelievably harmless. But today’s professional stage hypnotist must be mindful of the potential for legal problems arising from his performances. Defending a lawsuit is an expensive and time-consuming proposition even if one ultimately prevails.

1. Commonsense Measures

There are some commonsense measures you can take to help minimize your exposure to potential problems. First and foremost, do not use hypnosis to treat a subject for psychotic disorder or to experiment psychologically in areas, such as past life regression. Avoid all hypnotic tests which could harm a subject mentally or physically, as well as tests that demonstrate invulnerability to pain.

2. Tests on Abnormality

Hypnotic tests that produce symptoms of psychological abnormality, including amnesia, neurotic or psychopathic behaviour are strictly taboo. “Amnesia” in this instance, does not refer to the common practice of suggestion to a subject that he will not remember what transpired while under hypnosis (post-hypnotic amnesia), but rather tests which attempt to erase all memories of a subject’s identity from his mind. The latter should be avoided.

3. Cases of Personality Disorder

Watch out for warning signs of personality disorders in volunteers. It is perfectly natural for subjects to be a bit uneasy when they first come up onstage. However, if any subjects appear to have significantly more anxiety than the others, or exhibits physical manifestations, such as twitching, trembling, profuse sweating, they should be dismissed early from your performance as possible. It is best if they are not sent to their seats alone, but dismissed with a few other people. Otherwise, it may appear as if they were singled out.
4. Treat with Respect

Handle all of your subjects onstage with the courtesy and respect they deserve. When someone volunteers, there is an implicit trust that you will treat him properly while onstage. If you betray that trust by handling them in a rough or abrasive manner or by intentionally embarrassing them, you risk their legal wrath afterward. Always conduct yourself in a thoroughly professional manner, handle your subjects gently and with care, and never expect them to do something which will lower their self-esteem. Rather, make your subjects the stars of your show, praise their remarkable accomplishments to the audience, and finally, let them take the bows.

5. In Contemporary Framework

Put your performance in a contemporary framework. Today’s audiences are more interested in what they can do for themselves; so slant your demonstration accordingly. Emphasize your role as simply one of a facilitator that enables the audience to unleash their own amazing powers of hypnosis. Inform them during the performance that every hypnotic feat is a direct result of a subject’s own choosing and personal accomplishment. Some shows do employ a paid subject for feats, such as suspending a person between two chairs. If so, make sure you get a signed legal release from that person. You can also obtain insurance coverage to protect yourself.39
41. THE SHADOW SIDE OF HYPNOSIS

Every human personality has its own shadow side. Shadow sides are the negative aspects of any reality. Thus, the shadow side of hypnosis will mean the negative implications embedded in the practice of hypnosis. It is good to be aware of the negative side of hypnosis as well.

1. Hypnosis Is Helpful

Hypnosis as a form of therapy is excellent and very helpful. At the least hypnosis is not a dangerous procedure in itself, but complications may occur as the result of faulty technique on the part of the hypnotist, or from misperceptions on the part of the hypnotized person.

2. False Memory and Undiagnosed Pain

Hypnosis may be used to recover “repressed” memories which falsely lead clients to believe that their current symptoms are due to being sexually abused as a child.

Sometimes, hypnotic age regression may elicit traumatic memories of past events (which may or may not have happened); again, there exist straightforward procedures for relieving the painful emotion of such memories, regardless of whether they are based upon fact or fantasy. A further area where care is required is in treating clinical pain with hypnosis. Before embarking upon such a treatment, it is important that the patient undergoes a neurological examination to ensure that the pain is not the product of an undiagnosed organic origin. For example, if there is pain in the head due to a tumor and hypnosis was done to mask it without realizing that it is organic. Then it is an error. Of course, after diagnosing that the pain is due to a tumor and to reduce the pain before the surgery and after, it is appropriate. In this way pain due to organic reason is medically addressed and hypnosis can cope with pain. Therefore, proper diagnosis is required to apply appropriate treatment.

3. Misuse of Hypnosis

People speak of the dangers of hypnotism but they can hardly specify what they are. Hypnosis is as innocent as sleep. We do not
consider sleep as dangerous and in the same way hypnosis is not
dangerous. There had never been any evidence to indicate that hypnosis
damages the nervous system, or weakens the will or cause adverse
effect on the mental and physical health of an individual. The danger may
lie in the misuse of hypnotism. Like any other good thing can be misused,
hypnotism can also be misused.

4. Consequences of Hypnosis

No hypnotist can predict with certainty the reaction of the subject
to suggestion. It is the same case with counselling or any psychotherapy.
In most cases, subjects do not pose any problem in hypnosis. Of course,
there is an appreciable percentage of persons who may react in such a
way so as to cause difficulties. Even the best behaved subjects may
cause occasional difficulties. The difficulties may range from minor
emotional outbursts to full-fledged convulsive seizures. There may arise
post-hypnotic difficulties ranging from mild to severe headaches, with
vertigo and nausea, various degrees of depression, persistent drowsiness
arising immediately or only much later. These may happen in spite of
every precaution having been taken.

5. Regarding Suggestions

Individuals capable of developing very deep trance states may
experience the increase in their responsiveness to the hypnotist as a
result of having been hypnotized. The hypnotist should keep careful track
of all suggestions given to the subject and make certain that their influence
is completely removed before the subject leaves him, unless there is a
specific reason for retaining their influence. For example, if the hypnotist’s
suggestion to a timid subject that he would feel confident whenever he
sees an assembly of people whom he will address, that is a suggestion
which needs to be kept and not cancelled.

There is another delicate situation in hypnosis. If the hypnotist
were to give some instructions like the subject has to keep up his next
appointment, it needs to be given while the subject is under hypnosis.
The subject may connect this instruction with the suggestion he received
and may feel influenced by the instructions of the hypnotist.

Now the question is: to what extent the hypnotist has the right to
influence a subject’s behaviour outside the hypnotic situation. Decision
regarding this situation has to be handled by each hypnotist by himself. It is a good idea that the hypnotist should be circumspective to avoid undue post-hypnotic effect. As for example, while hypnotizing you I give you the instruction that next Wednesday when you come for the individual session, you will automatically go to trance when I say the word “sleep.” This may be a good idea to prepare the subject for the next session and also to put him into trance immediately. But I have used the word “Wednesday.” What will happen if next Wednesday the subject is not able to come for the personal session? Therefore, these kinds of suggestions can be avoided by the hypnotist since he does not know how the subject will take those instructions given under hypnosis. Since the reaction cannot be predicted with certainty, it is good to guard against the instructions always. Again, it is recommended that only the necessary instructions are to be given under hypnosis and the rest should be given in the waking state.

6. Transference

Like in any helping profession of counsellors, psychotherapists, physicians, and dentists, there can occur the phenomenon of “transference.” In some cases some female subjects may come up with the case of “rape fantasy,” that is, a strong conviction that the hypnotist raped the subject while she was under hypnotic trance. It is not a special situation for a hypnotist alone. One must use one’s prudence and caution and follow the protocol necessary in a given situation of this sort. If you know for sure that certain subjects are highly disturbed individuals and may act unscrupulously, it is good to have the presence of a third party with the consent of the subject while hypnotizing.

7. No One Ever Got Struck

The question what would happen if the hypnotist is forced to leave the subject without awakening him. There is no danger at all. Place the hypnotized person on a bed or couch and let him sleep it off. He will awaken by himself after a while. No subject sleeps without a specific command for more than an hour. The hypnotist can also name an assistant or substitute who in his unexpected absence will take care of him.
8. No Extremes

The hypnotist should not communicate any shocking news abruptly to the subject. Also it is not recommended to change the subject’s emotions from one extreme to another. For example, on stage hypnosis asking the subject to laugh hilariously seeing a comedy on a TV and to weep profusely immediately seeing a tragedy is too damaging to the nervous system of the subject.

9. Not Immune to Nature

When you are inducing catalepsy, it should be done gradually. If catalepsy is suggested for the arm, it might turn straight away stiff at times damaging muscles. So, prepare the subject gradually before you propose catalepsy of any part of the body. There are some irrational beliefs concerning hypnosis that persons under hypnosis can withstand the destructive influence of heat, cold, and injuries. Under hypnosis the subject may put his finger in the flame but may not feel the heat by suggestion. But his finger may be burnt. When pocked with a needle the subject may not feel the pain by suggestion but if the needle is not sterilized the subject may suffer infection. Likewise stretching the subject between two chairs which is traditionally done can be endured by the subject, but if he has some organic weakness of the body, that might give trouble though he did the stunt successfully. Therefore, subjects are not immune to the effects of nature just because they are hypnotized.

Any person, whether hypnotized or not, stares at the sun might become blind. If the subject is asked to lift a weight too heavy for him will suffer the strain even though he lifts it. The subject may be made to eat substances that are not eaten in normal waking condition will suffer the damages of having eaten such harmful substances. Just because the subject is hypnotized, he will do what is commanded or suggested but as a normal human person he will suffer the consequences attendant on such actions.40
HYPNOTIC COUNSELING

42. THE FUTURE OF HYPNOSIS

1. Multifaceted Phenomenon

Hypnosis is a multifaceted phenomenon. There is no one hypnotic process but several. There are three types of highly hypnotizable persons, the “positively set,” the “fantasy prone,” and the “amnesia prone.” We are not sure whether these differences actually represent separate dimensions or whether they reflect differences in hypnotic induction and hypnotist-client relationships. Instead of seeing hypnosis as a “state,” many investigators have found terms that are more useful. Some speak of “domain of hypnosis” and its three dimensions: the altered state, its expectation and suggestibility, and the hypnotic relationship. A “domain” is not a unitary phenomenon, and the accumulating data concerning hypnosis reveals the complexity of studying experiences and behaviours occurring on the limen of human activity.

Like hypnagogic states, hypnopompic states, and mystical states, hypnosis poses challenges to those who appreciate it and want to mine its treasures. This is something similar to what Jungians refer to as “psychoid states,” what some Islamic traditions call the “imaginal realm,” and a host of anomalous phenomena (e.g., clairvoyant, out-of-body, near-death, and synesthetic experiences). The concept of a hypnotic domain permits investigators and hypnotists to consider that hypnosis may differ in various times and places, and that there are immense individual and contextual differences in hypnotic phenomena. The situation would not be as problematic if hypnosis were not a multifaceted phenomenon requiring explanation at multiple levels.

2. Solution to Modern Challenges

Some investigators have missed the importance of the interpersonal milieu in which hypnosis occurs, while others have come close to destroying the most interesting hypnotic phenomena under the guise of scientific objectivity. The luminal nature of hypnosis insures that those who study it face challenges and struggles in searching for their elusive quarry. Nevertheless, the struggle is worth it. Hypnosis, or more properly, the varieties of hypnotic experience, can play an important role in alleviating human pain, trauma, and other forms of suffering. Hypnotic experiences can enrich the quality of human life. An understanding of hypnotic phenomena, however partial and fragmentary it may be, is one of the most productive paths currently available for the understanding of human nature and human consciousness. These insights may play a critical role in illuminating the steps that need to be taken by humans to insure their survival.
3. Predominant Role of the Unconscious

Researchers have looked at physical changes in the bodies of subjects in numerous studies, but have found no significant physiological changes while in this hypnotic trance state. It is because the body is relaxed and slowed down during the process of hypnosis. However, there is a change in the brain activity. The researchers noticed a change in the rhythms of electrical voltage by using an electroencephalograph (EEG) to measure the brain waves. Brain waves are different for the normal waking state than they are for deep sleep or a dreaming state. The EEGs from subjects in hypnosis were similar to those of the normal dreaming and sleep states. This corresponds with the theory that the conscious mind steps aside while another part of the mind (unconscious or subconscious) accepts the suggestions during the hypnotherapy.

4. The Active Right Hemisphere

Researchers have also been looking at what is going on in the cerebral cortex of the brain during hypnosis. A noticed reduction in activity of the left hemisphere of the cortex and an increase of activity in the right has been noticed with subjects while under hypnosis. Neurologists say that the left hemisphere is the part of the brain that leads or controls logic, deduction, and reasoning. The right hemisphere is the part of the cortex that regulates or leads imagination and creativity. It supports the idea that the creative, right brain takes the lead during hypnosis from the restraining left brain. Therefore, hypnosis opens the unconscious mind.

5. Open to Creativity

Under hypnosis one is creative. Stage hypnotists say that subjects are a lot like kids under hypnosis. They are imaginative and playful. There are many stories of subjects acting funny on the stage under hypnosis. This may be because the unconscious mind feels free and creative. It lacks the inhibitions that the conscious mind has.

6. Enhancing Natural Ability

There are many emotions, negative thoughts, and life situations that can get in the way of the creative process. Hypnosis can help with those such as the fear of failure and self-criticism. It can serve to release, enhance, support, and encourage a person's inherent natural ability.

To conclude, we can say that hypnosis opens up vast vistas with huge potential for human healing, health, and growth. The riches of hypnosis have not been fully harvested. The usefulness of hypnosis needs to be proclaimed and the near costless therapy of hypnosis has to be made available by competent persons to the general public.
PART V

SAMPLES OF HYPNOGIS
Hypnotherapy is the use of hypnosis in therapy. It is also called “Clinical Hypnotherapy.” It is classified as a “talking therapy” among other talking therapies like counselling, psychotherapy, and specially cognitive-behaviour therapy. Hypnotherapy is one of the mainstream therapies. It is more than just hypnotic suggestion. In many respects, hypnosis is a catalyst or accelerator of therapy. Hypnosis increases the effectiveness of talking therapies. It has been researched that when hypnosis is incorporated into cognitive-behaviour therapy, its effectiveness is increased in 70 percent of cases.

1. Hypnosis Coupled with Other Disciplines

Hypnotherapy can involve many different therapeutic techniques/approaches. In addition to the use of hypnosis for suggestion and analysis, it can be used in conjunction with other interventions including counselling, psychotherapy, psychology, cognitive-behaviour therapy, behaviour therapy, and Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP). Whether the hypnotist uses formal or informal hypnosis, his skills extend well beyond the process of hypnosis. It is a brief therapy usually involving four to six sessions.

A therapy can be undertaken while one is in a deep state of relaxation, allowing the subject to think more flexibly and clearly. This is more effective than just conducting therapy alone. Clinically, hypnotherapy is being used more widely by the medical personnel for the relief of many psychosomatic symptoms which have not responded to medication. It is, indeed, a very pleasant, natural process which allows the mind of the subject to evolve and adapt, creating change on both mental and physical levels.

2. Hypnosis with Counselling

Let us now see how hypnosis can be integrated to standard counselling. For the most part, one proceeds with the counselling method and at a certain point when the problem has been identified, the deficiency of the client is pointed out, and the goal is set, hypnosis can take over. Now let us proceed step by step.
Imagine you are with a client. You will warmly welcome the client according to the custom of your culture and ease the client by engaging him in “small talk.” “Small Talk” will mean talk about neutral topics, like the weather, mode of his travel, and the like. You would get valuable information about the dynamics of the problem one carries with himself if you observe the body language of the client. For, the body reveals more information than the words of the client. Since the body never lies, you will always get valuable information and true information about the client. Now your duty is to attend to the client physically for which you will follow skills like maintaining a distance of three to four feet without anything in between you and the client, facing the client straight, maintaining eye contact with six to eight blinks per minute, maintaining an open posture, leaning forward, remaining relatively relaxed, mirroring in a subtle way the behavior patterns and the vocal qualities of the client, and encouraging him to continue talking.

It is time to let the client tell his whole story without interruption unless it is needed to clarify what the client has said. Then you will proceed to reflect the content of what the client said in order to make him understand that you understood what he has hitherto said. Of course, there are feelings which the client expressed or you find them buried. You will reflect the feelings of the client. If there are strong negative feelings like anger, grief, and guilt, you will help the client emote or discharge them.

Now you are in a position to pinpoint the problem which can arise from a wide spectrum of situations. Then you proceed to make the client accept his contribution to the problem. The client does something or does not do something that becomes the problem. Therefore, the goal for the client for the therapy is the opposite of his deficiency, that is if what the client does is a problem, then the goal will be not to do that, and if what he does not do becomes a problem, then his goal will be to do what he has not been doing. With the goals being set one takes up hypnosis.

3. Hypnosis Alone

From now onwards you will follow the steps of hypnosis. You start inducing the client into trance. It is called induction stage which is
the **first step**. By this one slightly enters into a trance. This is achieved immediately with the **second step** called **relaxation**. By now the client would have reached a sufficient level of trance state. For therapeutic purpose, one would desire a deeper level of trance or relaxation which is undertaken in the **third step** called **deepening**. Now the client is in the **fourth step** called **trance** proper. The next step which is the **fifth step** is implanting **suggestions** into the unconscious of the client. For this, the goal you have already set with the client by counselling before starting hypnosis is made use of. Once you have implanted suggestions proper into the unconscious, you enter into the **sixth step** during which time you give **post-hypnotic suggestions**. Post-hypnotic suggestions are carried out after the client has been roused from the trance. In this step you may also implant some **trigger** words which when used after the hypnosis will bring about the trance state in the client. For example, you can implant a trigger phrase like “white crow” for a particular state of trance. When after the hypnosis is over, if the client were to pronounce the phrase “white crow” he will get into the same hypnotic trance as he experienced when the trigger was implanted. Now comes the final stage which is the **seventh step**. It is the **termination** of trance and the client is brought back to full consciousness.

4. Hypnosis Integrated Counselling

One may start with counselling proper and end up with the hypnosis. Thus one can very easily integrate hypnosis to counseling. The aim of this book is to integrate hypnosis with counselling. One can do counselling separately or hypnosis separately. But it yields rich results if you combine both. In this integrated method, you make use of the conscious and the unconscious of the client. Perhaps, if you do counseling alone, then the unconscious is left out — and it is in the unconscious all changes take place. Therefore, the conscious alone has to struggle in counselling proper. If you do hypnosis alone, then the unconscious is involved but the conscious may be left out. But when you combine both, you get the advantages of both the conscious by way of counselling and the unconscious by way of hypnosis. Thus the client gains more and the goal is attained easily. Both the client and the hypnotist/counsellor will feel better for it.\(^\text{42}\)
44. SAMPLE SUGGESTION SCRIPTS

Here there are some sample scripts. These can be used in self-hypnosis and also in hetero hypnosis (clinical hypnosis) by changing the script from the first person singular (I) to the second person singular (you) and vice versa. These models can be adapted to new situations and cases. You can create your own scripts for yourself or to do hypnosis for others. You can also improve on these models.

1. Healthy Eating

I always choose healthy food. I prefer food that is low in fat. I choose food that is high in fibre. I love vegetables and eat them whenever I can. I eat two or three fruits every day. I make sure that I eat low-fat protein sources. I prefer whole grains and unprocessed carbohydrates. I choose food that has little added sugar. When I eat out, I choose healthful foods. Desserts are for special occasions. I take small portions of all my foods. I stop eating when I am full. I eat slowly so I can enjoy the flavours. Eating good, healthful food makes me feel great. I eat three meals and two healthful snacks every day. I do not eat after eight o’clock at night. I choose vegetables that are of a variety of colours. I use low-calorie salad dressing. I eat vegetables first. I love eating healthful, low-fat food.

2. Sticking to Exercise (pp. 336 - 337)

3. Healing Injury

(For example, for a badly sprained ankle) My ankle is getting better every day. The ligaments are healing. The nerves and blood vessels are returning to normal. The pain in my ankle subsides as the ankle heals. I apply ice to my ankle every day. I elevate my ankle when I am seated. My ankle is getting stronger. My ankle is quickly returning to normal strength and flexibility. I do my ankle exercises. My ankle improves constantly and heals quickly.

4. Self-Confidence

I am in control of my life. I easily organize my priorities and handle every challenge. I take time to resolve my problems. I choose my projects so I always complete them successfully. I am relaxed and focused at all times. Problem solving is easy and fun for me. I set priorities and schedule my activities so I can enjoy my success. I stay centered and focused
when I am working and studying. I make time to enjoy family and friends. I choose activities I enjoy. I am creative. I am productive. I remain stress free. New ideas are fascinating to me. I am creative. New ideas stimulate my creativity. I easily meet every challenge and grow daily in my self-esteem. I am more confident every day. I complete my projects successfully and on time. My creativity increases. I enjoy helping others. I am kind and cheerful. I am becoming a better person.

5. Public Speaking (p. 341)

6. Everyday Problems

(For example having trouble finding your keys) I always put my keys on the key rack when I come home. When I am at home, the keys remain on the key rack unless I am using them. I always know where my keys are. I instantly find my keys when I need them. I always replace my keys on the rack. The key rack is the place for them to be. When I finish using my keys, they go back on the rack. I always find my keys when I need them. I find my keys on the key rack at home. When I get home I replace my keys on the rack. I always find my keys easily.

7. For Weight Loss

Every time before you eat, you will check in with your stomach to make sure that you are really hungry. If the stomach is not hungry you will not eat. You also ask your stomach what you can eat that will make you feel healthy and energized and satisfied 30 minutes from now. This slender eating strategy will be a permanent thought process to attain and maintain your ideal weight in your life. You will stop eating as soon as your stomach is satisfied, before it actually feels full. Your unconscious knows to adjust your metabolism until it is at the appropriate level. Now your metabolism is just where it needs to be. You monitor your metabolism and hormones every morning. They make any necessary adjustments in order for you to attain and maintain your ideal weight, and your own sense of balance. Certainly all systems work in harmony so that you operate always at your fullest potential. You not only reach your ideal weight, you will find it very easy to maintain it. You will find time throughout the day to exercise and release all the toxins from your body and to aid your metabolism to maintain optimum levels. You may be taking a walk, gardening, riding a bicycle, or going to the gym. Exercise makes you
feel healthy, confident, and energized. You will find at least a 20 minute window during the day to move your body in a healthy way. Each time you exercise and make a slender eating choice, you will have a huge sense of accomplishment and pride. You are in control; the slender eating strategy is already in your unconscious and is second nature to you.

8. Dealing with Test/Exam Anxiety

Tests allow you to understand how you are doing. Tests allow you time to relax your muscles as you concentrate on using your intelligence. You will look forward to examinations. You enjoy expanding your mind and all of its abilities. Tests allow you to focus on valuable information and knowledge. Surely someday you may need this knowledge in your life and use the information you are learning to help someone you care about. All of the information you study is recorded for easy access whenever and wherever you need or want it. You can quickly and easily retrieve this information. Imagine your mind is like a video camera. This video camera is recording all of your experiences. Everything you see is recorded; everything you hear is recorded; and everything you feel is recorded. Every event and all this information is being recorded in your brain. All of this information will be readily available whenever you want it. You will review this information before you take each test. As you read over the information many, many times, you will become very relaxed. It looks so easy to quickly learn and absorb knowledge as you feel relaxed, calm, and alert continually.

When you enter the test taking area, you will take three relaxing, deep breaths. As you exhale, you will concentrate on letting all of the tension out of your body. As you first view the test, you will take three long, satisfying breaths, concentrating on relaxing your body. As you more deeply relax, your mind becomes even more fully alert and aware, running at full efficiency. When you reach a difficult question, you will skip it and relax as you answer the easier questions, and then go back to it later with calmness. You will slowly realise that questions that are difficult will help you to prove your improved level of knowledge. In fact you are much smarter than you ever thought possible.

9. Confidence in Company (pp. 330 - 331)
There is no one single way to hypnosis. One can achieve a hypnotic state by different means. Here below you will find some models which may or may not suit you. You may prefer other models or you would like to write your own, for you know yourself better than others. Any method that is ethically permissible is all right for you to make use of, provided that you attain your goal. There are many ways of inducing trance, relaxation, deepening, suggesting, and awakening. Which model suits you, you may make use of it.

The following scripts can be used for self-hypnosis and hetero-hypnosis. For self-hypnosis someone can read the script for you or you can record the script spoken by you or by someone else and play it when you do self-hypnosis.

1. Illustration – 1 (For Self-Confidence in Company)

1) Induction

“Place yourself in a comfortable position with both feet on the floor. Let your arms rest on your lap or lay by the sides. Begin to focus on your breathing, concentrating on your inhaling and exhaling. As you breathe out, say within yourself ‘relax.’ Relax internally with each exhalation and by saying to yourself the word ‘relax.’ Every time you say the word ‘relax’ you enter into deeper relaxation.

“From now onwards, you will listen with your unconscious to what I am saying, ignoring any other sound, feeling, or thought. Allow yourself to realize that only the unconscious experiences and understands the trance induction. You are entering your unconscious and moving into it. Your unconscious responds automatically and cooperatively with the suggestions I am making. Your conscious is busy by focusing on your breathing and relaxing. Therefore, it does not interfere with your unconscious.

“As your unconscious is active, I am speaking only to it and it can hear me. Let your conscious continue focusing on your breathing and relaxing. As you are within the hearing distance I am speaking to
your unconscious only. Your conscious mind is becoming bored and distracted by your focusing on breathing, which leads the conscious mind becoming uninterested, distracted, and going to sleep. As your conscious is concentrating on your breathing, you are relaxing more and more and are going deeper and deeper into sleep.

“You fix your eyes on a spot on the ceiling, a spot that does not require you to tilt your head back. You need to look at that spot and nothing else. As you take a deep breath and let it out slowly, you can say to yourself silently: “Sleep now.” After this, take a deep breath, let it out as before and repeat the words: “Sleep now.” As you finish doing it for the third time, close your eyes and breathe quietly and feel your eyelids are growing heavy. Now your facial muscles are relaxing. You are wondering if you will be able to open your eyes even if you tried hard. But you will not want to try. You will feel so comfortable and relaxed; you are sitting there with your eyelids closed and heavy.”

2) Relaxation (Progressive Relaxation of the Muscles)

“Just relax your entire body…relax the muscles around your eyes…the eyes themselves…relax the muscles of the nose,… lips,… chin,… cheeks, and …ears……relax the muscles of the scalp…relax the muscles of the neck…relax the muscles of your shoulders….relax the muscles of your hands…the fingers….relax the muscles of the chest…relax the muscles of the back….relax the muscles of the stomach and all the internal organs….relax the muscles of the waist…relax the muscles of the genital and its surrounding areas….relax the muscles of the thighs…relax the muscles of the knees….relax the muscles of the legs…relax the muscles of the feet…now relax the entire body with all its parts…breathe easily and let go of any tension in your body. You are now totally relaxed, warm, and comfortable. Every muscle and nerve is totally relaxed and you are calm, serene, peaceful, and content. Take a few moments to enjoy this wonderful total relaxation. You feel serereene, peeeeeeaceful, caaaaalm, conteeeennnted, relaaaaxed, and liiiight.”

3) Deepening

“Now become aware of being on an elevated place from where descends a staircase of ten steps... You stand there relaxed and peaceful. As you watch the steps, the steps will soon lead you to deep relaxation.
The deeper you descend, the deeper you will be relaxed. When you walk down you will land on a beautiful scene of your choice. In a moment I would like you to walk down those ten steps along with me as I count them off. One at a time you will step down and realize how deep your relaxation becomes. You will become so limp and flexible. You may gently place your palm on the rail and start to slowly descend the steps as I count them down from 10 to 1. Ten: On the 10th step you are already feeling comfortable and deeply relaxed... Nine: You are doubly relaxed and doubly comfortable... Eight: Your relaxation and comfort start increasing incredibly... Seven: You are experiencing greater relaxation... Six: You are very relaxed and very comfortable... Five: Your relaxation and comfort double... Four: You are deeply comfortable and deeply relaxed... Three: You are more and more and more relaxed and comfortable... Two: You are very near to the bottom and you realize how deeply you are relaxed... One: Now you are deeper and deeper in relaxation and feeling very comfortable... As you reach the base of the steps you may gently allow the stairs and the ordinary, daily world to go as you go deeper and deeper into relaxation. Now you are standing at the bottom of the steps while feeling very relaxed and comfortable. Your steps are on a beautiful scene of your choice. Comfort and peacefulness cover your entire body and mind. Looks like you are in a very special place you dreamt of. (You may describe to me the place you are in and the surroundings.)"

4) Trance

“Now you are in a deep relaxing trance. Gently notice how pleasant and enchanting it is to be in this state. Perhaps, you have never before experienced such a wonderful state. Take a few moments to enjoy this absorbing state. There is a tremendous feeling of being taken up and totally engrossed in this joyous experience of utmost pleasantness and sweetness. It feels so good to be in this state and you would want that this state should never depart from you. It is all right for you to feel this way. Give permission to yourself to enjoy every bit of this experience.”

5) Suggestions

“You remain more relaxed and calmer whenever you are in the presence of other people both in small and large groups or whether they
are friends or strangers. You learn to be confident in front of other. You are able to express yourself easily and confidently. You learn to speak eloquently and confidently with intelligence and humour when appropriate. Your conversations flow easily and you enjoy talking to people about any subject that arises. You are able to meet people on equal terms feeling great about yourself. You become so deeply interested, so deeply absorbed in what you are saying that you become calmly focused in the conversation. So you always remain excellently relaxed, wonderfully calm, and self-confident when you are speaking to other people whether it is to do with business or pleasure, whether it is on a one to one or to a group. When you are with other people you are much less conscious of yourself and your own feelings. Thus you are able to talk quite freely and naturally. If you should begin to think of yourself, you immediately shift your attention back to your conversation and you remain calm, confident, and self-assured at all times.

“You notice that you get on well with people; you gain their respect easily because you are a good listener and you speak with intelligence and confidence. You like to laugh with people as you know it is a wonderful way to communicate and this makes you feel happy and content. You know that you can communicate easily with people from all walks of life as you draw upon your own experiences of life to make your conversations interesting. You also realize that you enjoy being around other people. As your skills of communication grow more and more refined, you draw opportunities towards you as people respond to your likeable easy-going personality. As you grow more and more confident about your own abilities in the company of other people, you grow more and more confident about yourself and develop an inner calm and strength as the days, weeks, and months go by.”

**6) Post-Hypnotic Suggestion and Trigger**

“Whenever you see someone cynically laughing at you in an assembly, you feel confident and take it easy. You maintain your composure and continue to enjoy the company of others — even in strange groups.”
Trigger

“When you enter a group and find indifferent people, you say to yourself “peace to me” and immediately you feel calm, comfortable, and relaxed.”

7) Trance Termination

“I am going to count from 1 to 5. You will slowly return to full awareness and will be refreshed and relaxed at the count of the number 5. Before that I would like to remind you to decide to bring to your wakefulness whatever experience you would like to carry and leave behind whatever you may not desire. Make your own decision and choice. No.1, you are totally relaxed, feeling wonderful, and content. No.2, you are beginning to experience the sensation of your senses and the surrounding. No.3, you are proceeding to your normal state of awareness with freshness pouring in. No.4, your eyes feel bright, clear and alert. On the next count you will open your eyelids and be fully aware, relaxed, and invigorated. No. 5, open your eyes, and come back here fully awake and aware. You are feeling great and wonderful. Now sit back for a while and relax. You may stretch your body and arms.”

2. Illustration - 2 (For Pain Relief)

1) Induction

(Dave Elman’s Induction Modified) “Just begin to make yourself comfortable. Let your feet rest on the floor and your hands on your lap, or by either side. Let your head drop forward slightly as you roll your eyes up and back as though you were looking toward a point in your forehead. It may strain a little but keep it up. Now inhale deeply which fills your lungs to the full. You continue looking up and back. By now you allow your eyelids to grow heavy and close down. You can exhale slowly and patiently. Now runs a deep relaxation from the top of your head to the tip of your toes. Let all the muscles of your body become loose and limp and you are wonderfully relaxed.

“It is time for you to bring your awareness again to your eyes. Your eyes are already comfortably closed; imagine that they are closing down all over again becoming even more heavy and lazy. Just relax those muscles of the eyes so that they will not work anymore. Since you have
done it well, you can just test and find them shut and unable to open. Since your eyelids are tightly shut, it is a clear indication that you are relaxed. Let the wave of relaxation run down from the top of your head to the tip of your toe.”

2) Relaxation

(Breath Based) “As you sit comfotably and symmetrically in your chair you can hold yourself upright with a minimum of muscular effort. As you have gently drawn your eyelids on the eyes just begin to relax and be aware of your breathing. Take a deep breath and letting it out making your breathing slower and deeper. If you feel your attention is wandering, gently bring it back to focus on your breathing. As you are more relaxed you might notice certain pleasant sensations and things that you normally overlook. You might feel the flow of cool air on your upper lip as you breathe in and the warm air as you breathe out. You may allow your attention to follow each in-breath a little bit deeper down each time; continue to allow this way as you feel deep down inside. Allow yourself to remain there for a while enjoying the relaxation you have achieved. You may pause as long as you like and then slowly return.”

3) Deepening

(The Subject Counts Down) “In a moment you will start counting down backwards from 100. Fine….. When you pronounce every number you will say “Deeper relaxed and deeper relaxed.” When you do each counting you double your mental relaxation. Thus you will be very relaxed as you proceed and the numbers will escape your mind. You will allow your mind to relax so deeply that the numbers will just fade away. If you understand what I say, you can just nod your head. Well done….. Now you can start counting …let the numbers fade away. Push them out of your mind. Are they gone?… Fine, go deeper now. (If the subject counts more than ten numbers you can ask him to stop saying) ‘Well done, that is good enough; stop counting and relax deeper.’”

4) Trance

“By now you have reached a trance state. It is the deepest level of hypnosis you have reached. It is so good to feel the way you right now are feeling. It is marvellously engrossing you in complete and total
relaxation and depth of sleep. You would very much desire to be in this state because it is so very enchanting to you. It satisfies all your senses and takes you to deeper realm of consciousness that is beyond your imagining. Allow yourself to remain here in this state for a while. It is so beneficial to experience this marvellous state of the depth of consciousness.”

5) Suggestions

“Looks like you are overwhelmed by the pain of arthritis. Now you have the possibility and freedom to turn down the dial of your own sensation to a pain-free level you want so that you feel really comfortable and relaxed. Your pain is gone and you feel healthy and whole; even if you want you do not feel the pain.”

6) Post-Hypnotic Suggestion and Trigger

“When you encounter arthritis pain, it will automatically turn into a physical comfort.”

Trigger

“Whenever you experience arthritis you just say “Gone are the pains” and you immediately feel a physical relief and comfort.”

7) Trance Termination

“In a moment, I will count from 1 to 5. At the count of 5 you will open your eyes feeling fully alert and refreshed. You will realize that you had a long period of deep, restful sleep, and awaken to your greatest potential. Look back and check if you need to take any experience to wakeful state. If there is anything you want to leave behind, you do so. Number 1: You are coming up and emerging from your deep sleep. Number 2: Your body and mind are fully coordinated into a harmonious integrity. Number 3: You are experiencing a great self-confidence in all your abilities. Number 4: You have come almost to the brink of the threshold of your awareness, taking a deep breath, wiggling your fingers and toes. Number 5: You open your eyes…Welcome back here, to the here and now, wide awake and refreshed. You may stretch yourself if you like.”
3. Illustration – 3 (For Sticking to Exercise)

1) Induction

(Sticky Hands Induction) “While being seated straight, close your eyes, and press your hands together, in any position you choose. Press the palms of the hands together tightly and tell yourself that your hands are beginning to stick together. You should feel the palms touching each other. You may feel your hands getting warm. You may try to pull your palms apart and you may find they are stuck together. You can also concentrate on your hands and make them feel cooler. When you decide, you can tell yourself that your hands will no longer stick together. As you drop your shoulders and relax your hands, they will fall into your lap. Now you will feel them cooling off.” (Now you can continue your session. For this exercise you can breathe normally. For a variant of this induction, interlace your fingers and try to pull your hands apart and you may not succeed. When you decide, spread your fingers and let your hands come apart. If you are a hypnotist, you can propose this method to the subject.)

2) Relaxation

(Favourite Scene Based Script) “Let your body sink deep into the chair you are in as you become comfortable with yourself. Your muscles may shift and move as you start to relax. You may take twenty minutes to relax fully and come back. Settle back and begin to enjoy the freedom of listening to my voice and what I am saying. You may keep aside any worry or any important projects that may draw your attention right down. Say to yourself that you will pay attention to them as you finish this relaxation exercise.

“Allow yourself to find your body in its most comfortable position. You have allowed your eyes gently close down as they are feeling heavy with sleep. The sensitive muscles around your eyes are closing and will not feel like opening until I ask you to open them. Your eyes are glued together and they remain that way in spite of your attempting to open them. Because your eyes are closed you feel more relaxed.

“Now you can imagine any beautiful and pleasurable scene you had experienced in the past. It could be anything like a beautiful beach on a tropical lagoon, or a green and lustrous meadow in a park, or a deep...
forest with tall trees and crackling dead leaves on the ground, or any imagery that pleases you. Experience the scene with all your senses like seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, and tasting. Let it happen as if you are experiencing afresh the same familiar scene.

“As you are experiencing the scene, imagine also that you are descending a pathway, or a set of stairs of ten steps at the end of which you are getting into that beautiful scene you imagine.

“As I am going to count from 10 to 1 you can imagine that you are walking down that staircase becoming closer and closer to that wonderful scene of your choice. As I count down each number, you will feel your pleasant state of mental and physical relaxation simply doubling.

“No. 10: You are on the 10th step on the top. You are relaxed and are moving towards the scene of great relaxation…. No. 9: You have descended to the 9th step. All your worries are flying away making you feel free and light….. No. 8: As you are on the 8th step your relaxation is tripled and you are deep asleep. The more you descend the more you are relaxed and in a deep sleep…. No. 7: As you are on the 7th step you are incredibly feeling relaxed and asleep…. No. 6: As you are on the 6th step you might feel pleasant tingling sensations in your hands and feet. These sensations take you to deeper relaxation and sleep. … No. 5: On the 5th step you are optimally relaxed doubling the relaxation you have already achieved…. No. 4: As you are on the 4th step, let your busy and wandering thoughts take some quiet time as your mind quiets and simply sits back in peace. You go deeper and deeper into sleep redoubling your relaxation….. No. 3: As you are on the 3rd step you may gently notice how regular, deep, and quiet your breathing has become while your relaxation has become ten times deeper…. No. 2: As you are on the 2nd step you feel totally relaxed and entering into deeper sleep than ever before…. No. 1: As you are about to descend you feel a wave of relaxation flooding your whole body and mind…. Now you are on your favourite scene enjoying excellently and experiencing a deep and profound relaxation that is simply optimum. You may just allow yourself to float in
this wonderful and peaceful state of relaxation knowing that this state of mind is the place from which all changes and healing begin.

3) Deepening

(Fractionation [The Yo-Yo Effect] This method consists of hypnotizing and alternately rousing a person a few times. This in fact causes a compounding of the hypnotic state.)

“All right; now when I say ‘Sleep’ you will immediately close your eyes and let yourself instantly and effortlessly go into a deeper trance state. You will find that it is a wonderful experience to be in a trance state. Each time I repeat ‘sleep’ you will go into deeper than ever before into a trance state. As you have closed your eyes and are in a deep trance I will count from one to three. At the count of three you will awaken and open your eyes. O.K. ‘Sleep.’ You are in a deep trance instantly. One…two…three. Open your eyes. Good, well done. Again ‘sleep.’ You are in a deep trance. One…two…three. Open your eyes and you are wide awake. Again ‘sleep.’ You are in a deep trance as never before. One…two…three. Open your eyes and you are alert and awake.”

4) Trance

“Allow yourself to notice gently how deep you are relaxed and you are in a profoundly deep trance. It is amazing for you and you wonder how you are able to be in such a wonderful state of peace and serenity. Everything looks very calm and comfortable and you feel like resting here for a while and enjoying every moment of your stay in this wonderful state.”

5) Suggestion

“You walk for 30 minutes every day. You look forward to your walk. You enjoy it immensely. It makes you feel great to walk every day. You know you are becoming healthier by walking. You feel energetic because you walk every day. You are invigorated after your walk. You set aside 30 minutes every day for walking. You adjust your schedule to make time for walking. You schedule your walks. Walking helps you control your weight. Your heart is stronger. Exercise is part of the day. You wear comfortable clothing and good walking shoes. You are aware of
your surroundings and always walk carefully. You enjoy the scenery. Walking every day improves your life.”

6) Post-Hypnotic Suggestion and Trigger

“Whenever you realize that you are not willing to undertake your regular exercise and see people doing exercise, you immediately start doing your exercise. For this you say the phrase that I tell you.”

Trigger

‘Whenever you say the phrase ‘up jumps the horse’ you immediately feel compelled to undertake your exercise.”

7) Awakening

“Looks like it is time for you to wake up after the wonderful experience of trance. I am going to count from one up to five, and you will rise with me back to the normal and regular state of awareness fully refreshed. One: You are beginning to rise as though you are emerging from the bottom of a deep lake. You realize that you have done a great job of learning to relax and take yourself to the peaceful place where healing and change take place. Two: You are beginning to return to awareness of the room and the environment having been refreshed after a blissful bath. Three: Imagine you are moving rapidly up toward the surface of the water, feeling amazed at how well you are learning to relax fully and knowing that anything can be changed or healed from a place of calm. Four: You are rising higher and higher and almost reached the surface of the water and you bring some of the peace and calm which you desire so much with you. You have learned to relax well and the skill of doing it is yours now. Five: You have reached the surface of the water and emerge yourself from the water; all your senses have fully returned to you; you are feeling refreshed, wonderfully good; your eyes begin to open and you return to this room and this time and place fully alert and feeling marvellous.”

(It is another version of awakening.) “When you are ready, you can return to the here-and-now feeling wonderfully fine in every way. Your returning to wakefulness will be effected as I count from 1 to 5. It is a good idea to take along with you as you enter the wakeful state whatever you would like to carry from this wonderful experience. You may also
leave behind what you do not like to take to your wakefulness. Let me count now: 1, starting to return; 2, feeling more alert; 3, half way through; 4, feeling fine in every way; and 5, awake. Remain calm and integrate all that you experienced and you may stretch your body if it pleases you.”

4. Illustration – 4 (For Public Speaking)

1) Induction

(Three-Thought Induction) “Start breathing normally and close your eyes gently. Allow three thoughts to pass repeatedly one after the other through your mind with increasing speed. For this, you can picture to yourself anything like your favourite spot at home, a landscape you like, and a beautiful flower. It could be any three items. You can flick through these thoughts repeatedly from one thought to another until you find your mind wandering off into a deepening relaxation. Now it is time for you to focus on your inner experience. What is happening to you is that the fast thought processing leads to confusion and your conscious mind shuts down a bit. From the experience that you no longer flick through your three thoughts is the indication that you achieved confusion and your conscious mind is shutting down partially.”

2) Relaxation

Imagine any scene you like most. You could tell me what it is. … (lying down on the meadow, for example). Just lie down on the beautiful green meadow on a hill side overlooking a lake and a running stream nearby making trickling sound. The water runs jumping down from the top pouring on the stones and running down to the river. You watch the birds that sing and fly about the landscape. You are able to feel the smell of flowers from the bush nearby. As you are observing all these things you are deeply relaxed and you go deeper and deeper into great relaxation.”

3) Deepening

(The Arm Drop) “Now I want to check just how relaxed you are. I shall pick up your right hand and just let it drop down. As I take your right hand and lift it, you will allow it to droop totally and completely relaxed. As I drop your hand into your lap you go deeper into relaxation and deeper into sleep that is a comfortable feeling. You delve deep twice
into relaxation and deeper into relaxation.” (You can drop the subject’s arm into his lap and watch for signs of relaxation or tension.)

4) Trance

“Is it not wonderful to feel a great relaxation and a state of deep trance? It is precisely for this you have been longing. Let your whole body from the head to the toes realize this deep state of relaxation and trance where you feel absolutely comfortable and at ease. Remain for a while here and enjoy the trance state of profound relaxation.”

5) Suggestion

“You enjoy speaking in front of a group. You are relaxed and your mind is sharp. You feel a rapport with the audience. You enjoy making eye contact and speaking directly to someone. You welcome questions. You know you are helping people by sharing your knowledge, and it makes you feel good. Public speaking is fun. You enjoy yourself and look forward to your next opportunity. You easily connect with the group. You accept energy from the audience. The audience likes you and enjoys your talk. You are relaxed and invigorated as you deliver your speech. Ideas come to you effortlessly. You always say the right thing. You improve your skills with each talk you give. Public speaking is enjoyable and fulfilling.”

6) Post-Hypnotic Suggestion and Trigger

“Whenver there is an offer to address the public, you willingly accept the offer and do wonderfully well to your maximum satisfaction. You yourself are surprised how good you are in public speaking and that is a wonderful feeling for you.”

Trigger

“As you climb the podium to address a crowd you say ‘cheer up’ and you immediately feel a surge of courage, confidence, and self-composure.”

7) Awakening

“Now I am going to count from one to three, and then I will say ‘wide awake and energized.’ At the count of three, your eyes are open, and you will be wide awake, feeling calm, rested, refreshed, and relaxed.
You may decide what experience from this session you will take to your wakefulness and what you will leave behind. All right, let me count now. One – slowly, calmly, easily you are returning to your full awareness once again. Two – each muscle and nerve in your body is relaxed, and you feel wonderfully good. From head to toe you are feeling optimum in every way. Physically fine, mentally alert, and emotionally good. On the next number I count, your eyelids open, fully aware, feeling calm, rested, refreshed, invigorated, and full of energy. Three – you are fully aware now, eyelids open. Now you may take a good deep breath, fill your lungs, and stretch.”

5. Illustration – 5 (For Anger Reduction/Management)

1) Induction

(Gazing Above Line of Vision Induction) “Start breathing normally and focus on a spot directly ahead of you but slightly above your line of vision. Now focus your eyes on the spot you have chosen, not by lifting your head. You will continue to gaze at this spot until you feel that your eyes are becoming increasingly tired. You will reach the point at which you will find it difficult to keep your eyes open. When it happens, allow the eyes to gently close. Now begin to focus on your inner experience.”

2) Relaxation

“Just look inside your body and eliminate obvious internal muscular tensions. Become aware of the sensation of heaviness of the dominant arm as it lies on the lap or by the side. Just repeat the sentence ‘my (left or right) arm feels heavier and heavier’ silently. Gently notice how the heaviness of the dominant arm is extended to other parts of the body from the head to the feet.”

3) Deepening

(The Escalator) “Imagine you are standing on top of a long escalator. As you are riding the escalator down you are entering into a very deep relaxing, comfortable, and hypnotic state. As you descend it is pleasantly thrilling and relaxing to a very deep level.”
4) Trance

“You have arrived at a deep state of trance. It is a new experience for you, because up to now you have never experienced a trance so deep and enveloping. You are deeply immersed into it. You feel wonderful about and pleasantly pleased to be in this marvellous state of peace.”

5) Suggestion

“From now onwards you really like and look forward to people who may oppose you and try to irritate you. You remain calm and peaceful in situations where you may be provoked. You gently answer everyone and feel happy about it. This is going to be a new experience about which you are already excited. You are actually looking forward to practice patience in spite of being provoked.”

6) Post-Hypnotic Suggestion

“The next time when you are in your office and your colleagues attempt to provoke you, you gently answer them with a serene face.”

Trigger

When you realize that your colleagues are at you and you realize that you are on the brink of bursting out, you only say, ‘that is fine’ and immediately your anger dissolves and you are calm and serene.”

7) Awakening

“Looks like it is time for you to wake up and come back here as alert as you used to be. When you are awakened you will feel very much refreshed and energized. I shall just count from one to three, and at the count of three you will be wide awake and open your eyes and come back here fully alert. Before coming back make sure that you take note of what you need to bring to your wakeful state and what is to be left behind. Now let me count: One – All your senses are slowly returning to your body. Two – There is a general freshness in your entire body. At the next count you are fully awake and are here. Three – Your eyes are wide open and you are here with me fully alive and alert. If you want you may stretch out.”

When you are composed, you can write your own hypnosis scripts that suit you."
BIBLIOGRAPHY

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ENDNOTES

(Key to Understand the Endnotes: The websites consulted are serially numbered in the bibliography. In the endnotes, after every note you will find a number/s which refer/s to the serial number/s of the website/s. Thus for example, if you take the third endnote, you will find the numbers 1, 33, 36, 80, 137, 138 which means that those numbers indicating the serial numbers of the websites in the bibliography are referred to.)

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