

# Permissive and authoritarian approaches in hypnotherapy

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This essay will explore the difference between permissive and authoritarian approaches in hypnotherapy. Included will be history of the two approaches, background of the way they work and practical examples to show the influence they have on clients. Gathering information through various means (which will be discussed in this essay) will help the hypnotherapist create a personalized induction. The essay will explore this personalized induction and see if it will always be most effective to use a script that is modified or tailor made for the particular client. Its first important to understand how important words are for the hypnotherapist.

Its claimed by studies from University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) that 90 percent of communication between people is non-verbal. Although there no way to confirm this study 100 percent the message is clear that verbal communication such as using spoken words, enunciation, emphasis and words choice, makes up only a small percentage of the message. This issue wouldn't be such a problem in normal circumstances, but the hypnotherapist relies heavily on his word choice because body language (which makes of 55 percent of communication) won't count for much as the clients eyes should be closed throughout most the session!

So whereas in a normal communication experience a person saying a wrong word will not necessarily ruin the conversation, in a hypnotic session each word counts! So if words are the ammunition of the hypnosis how can they use them the most effectively? If the hypnosis is part of a longer therapeutic process, they there a good chance the therapist will have an idea about the clients, likes and dislikes and will able to use a script that will most accurately flow with the client. But if the hypnosis is an independent part <https://assignbuster.com/permissive-and-authoritarian-approaches-in-hypnotherapy/>

of the process then the practitioner will need to work fast to work out what will work best with client.

We all have certain modalities that we will respond better to than others. At one point the education system focused a lot of developing students according to their best learning modalities. These modalities are based on our senses; sight, hearing, feeling, smell and taste. The names of the different modalities include kinesthetic which is feeling, visual which is sight, auditory which is hearing, olfactory which is smell and gustatory which is taste. We will focus on the three most common kinesthetic, visual and auditory.

In the initial interview the therapist could look at certain eye accessions clues after asking questions and see where way the eyes move. For example the lateral eye movement for person who is primary kinesthetic would appear down to the right when looking at the therapist, or for an auditory modality the eyes would be more horizontal. There are other clues to pick up on such as posture and gesture and for example a visual modality person might hold their body in a less relaxed way than kinesthetic and many times thinner.

Also the voice, tone and breathing can be clues to working out quickly a client's main modality. A kinesthetic person might have a softer, deeper voice and speak with pauses in their speech where as a visual might speak faster and in a high clear tone. There are other tools used to assess the clients modality based on appearance, personality and behavior which the therapist could do quite quickly to get an idea of where the client might be holding. Once the therapist makes this initial judgment, what do they do with

this information and how is it helpful?

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Knowing the clients foremost modality will help the therapist in choose words that will take the client into deeper states of relaxation as well as resist less to suggestions the hypnotherapist will be making. So for example kinesthetic person will respond well to words that are related to feeling such as touch, smooth, hot, cold etc. Whereas a visual person will react better to ideas like imagine, perspective, watch, or references to colors. When asking a person to imagine their special place a visual oriented person will thrive from such an activity.

Also when working with visual clients word choose around sight will be helpful such as look, imagine or visualize. Also phrases such as looks good to me or I understand your outlook. An auditory person would be brought to a state of relaxation through music or other sounds with less resistance than a person of a different modality. Using ideas such as harmony and listening to the body will work well with such people. It is important to point out that most people have a strong tendency to one of these modalities but also most people are a composite of the all the different modalities.

With this is mind there is a technique used by hypnotist called compounding where they will try to invoke all the different modalities. For example: Imagine (visual) yourself standing next to a gently flowing waterfall. Hear (auditory) the power of water as it falls miles and miles beyond where you can even see. It looks as though it is falling into infinite abyss. Move closely to water and feel (kinesthetic) the water run through your fingers. Sense the waters calmness and warmth and feel that healing energy from it. Smell (olfactory) the sweet (gustatory) fragrant flowers surrounding this heavenly body of water.

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Another important aspect of induction material is whether you should use a permissive or authoritarian style script. This history of these two approaches is based very much on the Hungarian Sandor Derenzi who referred to these two approaches as maternal and paternal. Again since our mode of communication during hypnotic sessions is only thought word choice getting the right script that will best fit the client and cause less resistance is important. Authoritarian scripts are much like they sounds, very authoritative. The client is going into the control of the hypnotist much more so with an authoritarian approach than a permissive approach.

The hypnotist will say likes such as 'now I would like you to close your eyes' or ' you will close your eyes on the count of five'. A permissive PRM would use a softer language such as ' if you would like you may close your eyes' or ' on the count of 5 you might want to close your eyes'. The traditional authoritarian screeds will not leave space for the client to make choices whereas permissive would.

For example: ' I would like you now to go to your special place' vs. ' many people find going to their special place quite relaxing' or ' now we will move the relaxation down into our thighs muscles' vs.' you may like to continue to the relaxation into the muscles in your thighs. There are many such examples, but generally authoritarian is the more fatherly directive approach while permissive is more motherly and nurturing. Milton H. Erickson's contribution to the hypnotherapy world is renowned. He was a very big believer in using language that permissive as it would invoke less resistance in clients. He would very fluid and in the moment and would use naturalistic language in the sessions. If there was a noise or irritation the clients would

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expertise in the session, he would try to incorporate it naturally using metaphors.

A theoretical example might be something like a phone vibrating, he might say ' just as a phone vibrates, there as vibration of relaxation that envelopes the whole world. ' Erickson was known for his use of indirect suggestions but I think in clear cut cases such as quitting smoking using direct suggestions would clearly be the more appropriate approach. As one can see, the hypnotist has only a short time to work out how to make small tweaks in the scripts that will enable the client to relax as deeply as possible and open themselves up to the suggestions the hypnotist has to offer.

Although everything I have written until now I believe in, I do think there is another side worth mentioning. Maybe none of this matters. Maybe the hypnotist should just be as genuine to themselves and offer the client that. It's possible the hypnotist is spending so much time trying to work out what this person needs they are not even giving over a positive rapport to the client. Personally I think the first impression the hypnotist makes on the client in their initial assessment might even be more important than the preciseness of the scripts.

The counselling relationship plays a huge role in the clients ability to self-heal. The safeness that the counsellor wants to spend his energy creating enables the client to be much more open and trusting in the process. It can't be downplayed how much these points have an enormous effect. I feel very much we live in a very wishy-washy time. What was once expected as fact is now looked down upon and what was once scorned is now praised. There is

an element of beauty in our more open and accepting tolerant society, but personally I believe it has been taken to an extreme.

To be blunt and to the point, all hypnotherapy is authoritative. There is a client who is coming to a therapist for help because whatever they are struggling with, they feel they can't handle themselves. They need someone to be direct with them. Even if you say 'you may like to close your eyes' it is really just a trick to get the person to close their eyes. Maybe just by being direct you are being more genuine and honest. One of the beauties of hypnotherapy is once you get down to the subconscious you are working with more of the essence of the person.

Once you are there, all the craziness of the propaganda stops and you can see a person from much of an objective place. While writing this essay I had an experience that sums up how I feel about all the different aspects of this essay. As a therapist I'm very aware of the uneven power balance in the counselling relationship. Whenever there is an opportunity to help keep the client in control I always try. So I was taking someone to see a therapist in the city and the therapist did a little relaxation with us. He was unique in the way he worked where I felt in charge over myself but he wasn't being permissive in his language.

I think his relational techniques were so good that it enabled him to be an effect authoritarian without invoking internal resistance. In conclusion, yes of course a personalized induction will be more effective. If the hypnotist is able to work out very quickly what kind of person this client is and is flexible enough to change scripts and go with what they feel is great as long as in doesn't come at the expenses of forming a proper therapeutic relationship.  
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But I think in the grand scheme of the therapeutic process it will be a small factor when taking all the necessary components into consideration.