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Pre-Induction Work. How To Ensure The Success Of Your Every Induction and Suggestion Before You Even Begin By William May Click Here To Become A Master Of Covert Hypnotic Influence In the study of hypnosis there are many elements that have been covered thoroughly. Certainly, any well informed student will be familiar with the need for a good pre-talk and the establishment of rapport, will have to be quite familiar with the process of inducing and deepening a trance, and, undoubtedly, with the deployment of the suggestions and commands that are, perhaps, the ultimate purpose for the creation of the trance state. Of course, the focus on the experience of trance itself, on creating, deepening, maintaining and utilizing that state, is the essence of our field, but to truly master this art, one must also understand far more about the creation of trance, and just how our interactions with a subject, even before any formal trance work begins.

Our focus here, then, is on this initial phase of the hypnotic relationship. Now, clearly the pre-talk and rapport development fall into this stage, which we can call the pre-induction phase, but they are only one aspect of the work that can be done within this realm. Even before any mention of hypnosis is made, an informal preparation can begin. The subject can be conditioned towards responsiveness, while we can surreptitiously begin to calibrate to determine the style of hypnosis that will be most productive, and, of course, begin to establish the relationship that will allow this work to be done. Additionally, we might also utilize some basic covert hypnotic techniques to truly pre-induce the subject, such that by the time formal trance work begins, they are already in a light trance state and can easily be lead into a deep trance with minimal resistance. There are many possibilities that a competent hypnotist will utilize at this point in there interaction with a subject, and we cannot, certainly, discuss all of them here, but we shall explore, and in so doing might raise new thoughts to lead us towards discovering further potentialities for just how the pre-induction phase might be utilized to enhance the hypnotic interaction for our subject, while making our job as hypnotist even easier. © William May.

www. masterhypnoticlanguage. com Let us begin with some minor points on what happens when a subject is first greeted and welcomed to our hypnotic arena. While my focus here is on therapeutic interactions, one can easily see how these same notions might translate to other contexts, whether it be on the street, in a theatre, or any other context. So, let us imagine that a client walks into the office for their first session. My preference is to meet them in the waiting room. This may seem, and indeed is, a minor point, but there is a reason for this.

First, it does create a cordiality, as I can walk out, meet them with a warm smile and handshake, and then welcome them to come into my office. Additionally, I might find out a bit about the subject, whether they arrived alone, and if not, just who is with them; how they occupy their time whilst sitting in the waiting room, and their general demeanor. Many small details can be obtained through this simple gesture, whereas a subject might easily disguise some of their feelings upon entering the actual office, or, conversely, might feel an unease that they did not have as they waited. Such minor observations can be of extreme import. As an example, consider just how you might find it useful to know that your subject was reading a textbook onnursingversus a pulp novel. What might it say if they were, instead, playing a video game on there cell phone? These may be small details, but the awareness of such things can offer opportunities for metaphor(if your subject seems to be engrossed in a magazine on sports, for instance, you might weave a story that uses a sporting event as it’s focus), a point upon which to create rapport (“ I couldn’t help but notice you are reading the new book by so-and-so, I’ve not read that, but I really enjoyed his XYZ, have you read that as well? ”). Consider, also, the middle aged man who arrives at the office in company of his Mother, or the subject who sits alone in the corner of the office, not doing anything but purposefully avoiding interaction with anyone else in the waiting room.

Another reason for stepping out of the office to meet the client is that it provides a small opportunity for getting the subject acclimated to following instructions. Even the simple gestures of asking subject to follow you into the office and of telling them to take a seat offer an opportunity to establish a pattern of compliance in an extremely non-threatening way. Again, these are minor points, but by creating a directive aspect in the relationship at this point, we are laying the groundwork for compliance that will be built upon as we move into hypnosis. © William May. www. masterhypnoticlanguage. com At this point, of course, we have our initialinterviewwith the subject, and the main point that I would make in this portion is to discover and accept the client’s frame.

This is extremely Ericksonian, but accepting the frame, no matter its ridiculousness, is an extremely powerful stance to take as a hypnotist. To offer the most extreme example, let us suppose that a subject walks in and speaks immediately of how they have studied hypnosis, know that many hypnotists themselves acknowledge that the state does not exist, and are certain that they cannot be hypnotized. My response would be to say, “ yes, you are quite right. Knowing as much as you do, you certainly are aware that some people have deficiencies that make it impossible for them to enter trance, and it is possible that you may be one of those people who just can’t relax enough to experience the wonderful possibilities of a hypnotic trance. Some people do have that problem, sadly, and it might just be so for you. Of course, until we do begin hypnosis, we won’t really know if you are one of those unfortunate people who just can’t experience this…” Thus, without arguing the point, we’ve established a viewpoint that not being able to enter trance is a deficiency, while creating the possibility that they might be wrong. At this point, we can immediately change the subject to some other matter, letting that idea sink in even deeper.

In this work through the frame rather than against it, and the subject will want to disagree with our viewpoint that they can’t enter trance, since it has been connected to “ deficiency” and “ problems”, and will only be capable of resisting that suggestion through entering trance and changing the frame they entered with. At this point in the interaction, it can also be quite useful to begin using some minor suggestions, both to prime the subject for trance and, perhaps more importantly, to determine just how easily they respond. Simple comments can serve well to do this. For example, while gesturing towards a chair, you might comment, “ that is a very comfortable seat, it’s easy to just sit back in it, take a nice deep breath, and relax. ” The comment can be tossed out offhandedly, and you merely have to note whether the subject does respond or not. This is not intended to create the trance state (though with some subjects it is a good beginning), but it does allow us to begin noting how they respond. This can, for example, alert a savvy hypnotist to the potential for a polarity responder, when the subject responds in a way that is directly oppositional to the suggestion, or, conversely, to the suggestible and responsive subject who will easily respond by relaxing into that chair with a nice deep breath.

Now, it should be noted that the suggestions can be far more subtle than this, but, as well, it’s important to recall © William May. www. masterhypnoticlanguage. com hat the subject often is not aware enough of these techniques to notice even a somewhat overt comment of this sort. However, if you are wary of putting the subject on edge with a comment of this sort, one might use a suggestion that is not directed at relaxation, or by making an indirect suggestion by discussing how some of your other patients find it very easy to relax in that chair. The nature of the suggestion itself is not overly important here, the purpose is, as stated above, to establish a base line for responsiveness, as well as to develop that aspect of the interaction. This process of using small suggestions can be continued while progressing through the initial interview and pre-talk, allowing for calibration towards the type of suggestion that seems most effective.

Some subjects will respond best to direct suggestions, while others seem more compliant when the suggestions are indirect. Learning this before hypnosis actually begins makes it possible for the savvy hypnotist to be far more effective and efficient. Instead of merely following a generic approach and tailoring it to the client during the hypnotic interaction itself, you already have much of the knowledge necessary for creating an impactful hypnotic pattern. Of course, this does not take the place of calibration during the actual hypnosis session, but it can allow the work to begin in a more practical and comfortable way for the subject. Additionally, one might, indeed, begin seeding useful suggestions at this point, a consideration that shall be discussed in more detail as we continue. At this point in the interaction, other forms of calibration can of course begin. For example, one might inquire about when a problem first emerged and make note of where the subject seems to look when referencing the past, and similarly asking questions about the present and future, can gain a notion of the overall timeline; one can determine, of course, submodal preferences, to best determine what type of imagery will be most impactful; indeed, depending upon the nature of your style and preferred techniques, it is possible to craft opportunities for noting various aspects of the clients behavior and perceptual maps which might be useful in cultivating a hypnotic response.

In many cases all this requires is asking a question that accesses a certain process, and noting the client’s response. Additionally, we might find opportunities for creating anchors. The simple suggestion offered above, connecting relaxation to the client’s chair can serve, for instance, to connect the notion of relaxation with sitting in © William May. www. masterhypnoticlanguage. com that position. Additionally, we might notice a certain response during questions about the client’s problem, a response that we feel could be useful to access again, and anchor this in whatever way seems appropriate so that we might recall it while the client is in trance.

For instance, with a subject who suffers panic attacks, it might be that during the interview we share a small laugh, and might choose to anchor this, perhaps by leaning forward and touching the client’s knee. Later, during the trance process, we might fire that anchor while having the client recall a recent panic attack, triggering a response to the experience that can help to move them past the problem. Even anchoring the problem state, so that we can access it in conjunction with other resources can be quite useful. For example, we might anchor the panic response described above, and later build an anchor for peaceful relaxation, then collapse the two anchors to help move past the problem. Thus, we can utilize pre-induction experiences as opportunities for the development of potentially useful knowledge and resources that can easily lead towards success when we do foray into more overtly hypnotic processes. Now, moving towards some of the more direct tactics, let’s consider the pre-talk itself. The purposes of a pre-talk are many, and certainly we should all be familiar with the most basic of these, namely to inform our subject and to develop a level of comfort with the prospect of entering a hypnotic trance.

Of course, the pre-talk, when handled properly, offers other opportunities, and can actually allow us to bridge into an initial hypnotic experience. What we are discussing here is a step beyond the generic use of various hypnotic tests, but instead a more directed approach designed to do precisely what the hypnotic pre-talk is intended for, by actually using the subjects own perceptions of hypnosis to create a light experience of trance. We are essentially going to ask just what the subject imagines trance will feel like, and what they will experience that will make them certain they are entranced. In asking these questions, however, we need to direct the subject’s answers so that they are most useful. Many times, a subject will answer by imagining the responses they imagine they will experience, whether it be arm levitation or some other phenomenon they may have seen performed. This is not the type of answer we are seeking; instead the goal is to direct their imagination towards the sensory experience of what they imagine trance will be like. As you might already guess, this can easily transition into a full trance experience, simply by applying some revivification type techniques, amplifying that sensation that they have already imagined.

Even more © William May. www. masterhypnoticlanguage. com significantly, you are helping to establish a set of criteria that will make them certain that what they are experiencing really is trance. So many hypnotists forget at times that trance experiences are so normal to the uninitiated, so familiar to us all, that we can easily overlook them unless we have some type of deep hypnotic phenomenon. By using this type of technique, you establish a sense of what hypnosis will feel like, so the subject will be setting up the criteria that guarantee they will recognize trance when it happens, and in so doing will begin to experience that feeling for the first time. At this point, you might just choose to let the subject go into a deeper trance directly, by merely amplifying the experience and allowing that sensation to build until it reaches the desired depth, or you can let them come back out, knowing that when you put them ack into trance it will be even deeper.

They don’t even need to recognize that this first experience is a trance, and at times you might even let them stay in a minor level of trance as you continue. Thus, you have many options for how you continue your work. Indeed, if there is one thing that pre-induction work allows, it is the development of new options you might not have considered, and it is this aspect that is most important. So many times you’ll meet a hypnotist who has a way of dealing with this problem, and a tactic for that problem, but when you begin to really explore the possibilities in the way that you can before you ever use any type of formal hypnosis, you allow yourself to learn more about what will really help this individual person. Ultimately, the goal is to discover the structure of a problem, the frames and beliefs that shape it, so that as you approach the real issue, you can do so in a way that will truly impact this subject. To offer an entertaining example, a young man of my acquaintance and I had corresponded for some time online, but had not spoken directly. When we did have our first conversation, he noted all the patterns I use in my speech, and was certain that I was trying to hypnotize him.

No amount of argument on my part, or on the part of others present would dissuade him. He was convinced that my using language patterns was proof that I was hypnotizing him, and that he needed to keep his guard up or he would drop into trance. Now, this was his frame, and whenever I argued contrary to it, he found evidence supporting his belief. So, instead of disagreeing with him, I chose to accept his belief, and said “ okay, since you insist that I am already doing so, I will hypnotize you now. ” © William May. www. masterhypnoticlanguage.

com His response was that he could not be hypnotized as long as he kept his guard up. At this point, my response was again to accept his frame, but to add to it, saying “ yes, you have your guard up, but at some point you will relax, and these suggestions are already waiting inside your mind. Thus, the subject was given the choice to accept the suggestions now, or to do so later, and chose to go into trance straight away. While this example does deal more directly with getting a subject into trance, it points out many aspects that can offer great insight in this process. First, it reinforced how much more can be done when we do accept a subject’s beliefs. If we argue with those beliefs, we demonstrate a lack of understanding that can strain trust within the relationship. When we accept a frame, even a negative frame, we can work to move the subject out of it, or find a way, as in this example, to make that frame useful for moving forward.

Thus, it is important, when doing your initial interview with the subject, to become aware of the beliefs they hold about the issue’s being dealt with, hypnosis, and various other factors you deem relevant to the creation of a successful experience for your client. Listen to your subject closely, noting presuppositions, as well as direct statements about belief. For example, if a person makes a comment “ oh, even I can do that,” it clearly illustrates a limiting belief. Often it is not in the direct statements of beliefs that we uncover the frame from which the subject is operating, but in the implications of what they say that we truly get a glimpse at the client’s belief structure. Knowing a client’s reality, it becomes much simpler to devise a therapeutic intervention that will have success. As mentioned above, my preference is to accept that frame and work within it to create change. Often we can add conditions to that frame, as with the client who has difficulty with giving up cigarettes who acknowledges that they will have difficulty with that process.

We can acknowledge that this is true, while still adding stipulations that will make it easier: “ Yes, a person can have difficulty with quitting cigarettes, until they are taught the right resources for that process. ” Thus, we frame that our interaction will teach the subject resources to make that quitting process easier, without conflicting the knowledge the client has of their current experience. In the end, the real truth is that we need to view the work we do with a client before formal trance as having just as much complexity (and often, just as many hypnotic components) as in the more formal aspects of © William May. www. masterhypnoticlanguage. com our work. By recognizing the client’s resources, apprehensions, beliefs, andgoals, we are far better equipped to create a positive experience for them, while, as well, we can also take advantage of the pre-induction period to frame our interaction, build resources that we will later use, and even egin the use of suggestion.

We can take this even further, by creating mild trance states through informal techniques, and continuing our work with the client already beginning to experience trance as an organic response. When you truly listen to the subject, and pay attention to all the things which occur before the induction, the options that are available expand in ways you might already imagine, and your accuracy in selecting the proper course of action will increase greatly with this new found information and the flexibility it promotes.