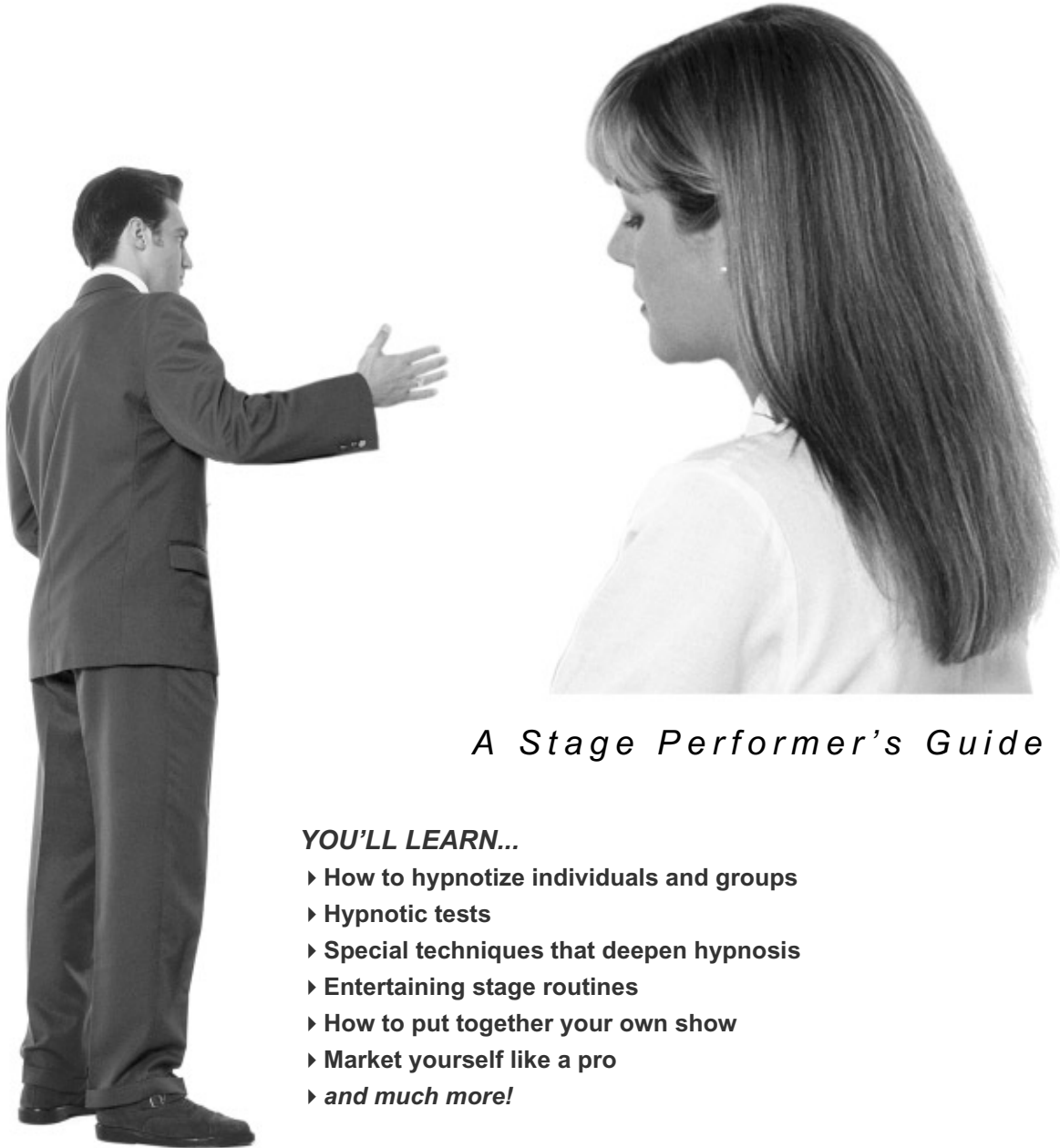


MASTERING HYPNOSIS



A Stage Performer's Guide

YOU'LL LEARN...

- ▶ How to hypnotize individuals and groups
- ▶ Hypnotic tests
- ▶ Special techniques that deepen hypnosis
- ▶ Entertaining stage routines
- ▶ How to put together your own show
- ▶ Market yourself like a pro
- ▶ *and much more!*

MASTERING HYPNOSIS

A Stage Performer's Guide

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FOREWORD

If you're interested in mastering the art and science of stage hypnotism, we're confident you'll find no better guide available today. Written with the experienced stage performer in mind, this insightful, how-to guide will teach you everything you need to know to succeed in this fascinating field—from how to hypnotize both individuals and groups to the closely-guarded professional techniques used to deepen hypnosis and maximize the power of hypnotic suggestions. What's more, you'll learn how to perform many of the same classic tests and entertaining stage routines used by top professionals worldwide, as well as get in-depth advice on putting together and marketing your own show. It's all here.

Good Luck!

MASTERING HYPNOSIS *A Stage Performer's Guide*
is a TRICKSHOP.COM Publication

AN INTRODUCTION TO HYPNOSIS



Chapter One

AN INTRODUCTION TO HYPNOSIS

WHAT IS HYPNOSIS?

Simply put, hypnosis is an altered state of consciousness characterized by heightened susceptibility to suggestion. Under hypnosis, suggestions bypass the critical faculties of normal consciousness and directly enter the subconscious mind—where “if accepted,” they are acted upon. The deeper the level of hypnosis, the greater the subject’s suggestibility.

This entire process is based upon the fact that while our conscious thought processes use inductive reasoning, our subconscious uses only deductive reasoning. Once a suggestion is accepted by the subconscious, it is automatically transformed into reality. It does not matter if the suggestion originates from an internal source (ie. self-hypnosis) or an external one (the operator). Indeed, the distinction between autosuggestion and heterosuggestion is considered to be both arbitrary and superficial.

SCOPE OF HYPNOTIC PHENOMENA

The wide range of phenomena possible with hypnosis was best summed up many years ago by Dr. Bernard Hollander, M.D., in his book, “Hypnotism and Suggestion in Daily Life, Education, and Medical Practice.” His observations are as relevant today, as when his book was first written. Here they are in Dr. Hollander’s own words:

In response to your direct and specific suggestions, your subject may be rendered happy and gay, or sad and dejected, angry or pleased, liberal or stingy, proud or humble, pugnacious or pacific, bold or timid, hopeful or despondent, insolent or respectful. He may be made to sing, to shout, to laugh, to weep, to act, to dance, to shoot, to fish, to preach, to pray, to recite a beautiful poem or to excogitate a profound argument.

The expression of the subject during these responses while in hypnosis is

most important as its very earnestness is profound in its appeal. The attitudes and gestures are equal to, or surpassing, the best efforts of the most accomplished actor, although the hypnotized subject may actually be a person of limited intellectual cultivation, and show no particular talent for acting or mimicry in the waking state.

The hypnotized subject is not acting a part in the ordinary sense of the word. He believes himself to be the actual personality suggested. The subject will impersonate to perfection any suggested character with which he is familiar.

One of the most striking and important peculiarities of the subconscious mind, as distinguished from the conscious, consists in its prodigious memory. In all degrees of the hypnotic sleep, this exaltation of the memory is one of the most pronounced of the attendant phenomena.

One of the remarkable effects of hypnotism is this recollection of circumstances and the revival of impressions long since past, the images of which have been completely lost to ordinary memory, and which are not recoverable in the normal state of mind. All the sensations which we have ever experienced have left behind them traces in the brain, so slight as to be intangible and imperceptible under ordinary circumstances, but hypnotic suggestion, addressing itself to the unconscious (or subconscious) side of the mind, and such being the storehouse of memories can bring into recall these otherwise lost memories at the command of the operator. Everything learned in normal life can be remembered in hypnosis, even when apparently it has long been forgotten.

Of course, false memories can also be suggested, as for example when you say to a subject, "You remember we drove to Richmond yesterday." The suggestion will take effect and he will at once begin to relate all that he believes we did in Richmond. This is an example of a retroactive positive hallucination, because the subject believes that he experienced something that really never occurred.

Memory may also be obliterated. Nothing is easier than to make the subject forget his name and condition in life. This is one of the suggestions which most promptly succeed, even with a very new subject. The subject may forget whole periods of his life at the suggestion of the hypnotizer.

Sense delusions are likewise common in hypnosis; either as hallucinations or illusions. An illusion is the false interpretation of an existing external object, as, for instance, when a chair is taken for a lion, a broomstick for a beautiful woman, a noise in the street for orchestra music, etc. An hallucination is the perception of an object which does not exist as for instance when you say to your subject, "Sit down in this armchair" where there is really no chair at all; yet the hallucination is so perfect that he does put himself in exactly the same attitude as if he were sitting in a real chair, only if you ask him after a time, "Are you comfortable?" he may reply, 'Not particularly,' and ask for a chair that is more comfortable. It seems incredible that an hallucination could be so real that a person would assume an attitude so strained, but it is so.

"Suggest to a person that a swarm of bees are buzzing about him; he will not only see and hear them, but he will go through violent antics to beat them off. Or tell a person that there are rats in the room, and the word will take up a train of imagery in the subject's brain which is immediately projected outward in an expressive display of appropriate gestures of aversion and corresponding movements of avoidance. The fear depicted on the face of a subject when he believes he is about to be attacked by a tiger is more impressive. *Editor's Note: Always avoid any experiments involving disagreeable or dangerous situations.*

Hallucinations of all the senses and delusions of every conceivable kind can easily be suggested to a good subject. Just how real these effects are to the subject is evidenced in experiments where the image of the hallucination has been caused to double by a prism or mirror, magnified by a lens, and in many other ways behave optically like a real object.

In suggesting an hallucination, say that of a bird, the suggested approach of the object causes contraction of the pupil, and vice versa. At the same time, there is often convergence of the axis of the eyes, as if a real object were present.

Subjects will eat a potato for a peach, or drink a cup of vinegar for a glass of champagne. He may be thrown into a state of intoxication by being caused to drink a glass of water under the impression that it is gin, or he may be restored to sobriety by the administration of gin under the guise of an antidote for drunkenness. In these cases, the expression of the face induced

by the suggested perception corresponds so perfectly that a better effect would scarcely be produced if the real article were used.

Various physiological effects can be produced in the state of hypnosis. A subject can be caused to weep and shed tears on one side of the face and laugh with the other. The pulse can be quickened or retarded, respiration slowed or accelerated, or temporarily arrested, and perspiration can be produced—all by suggestion. Even the temperature can be affected. Thus it has been observed that if a subject is told he has a high fever his pulse will become rapid, his face flushed, and his temperature increased. Or, if a person is told that he is standing on ice he feels cold at once. He trembles, his teeth chatter, he wraps himself up in his coat. "Gooseskin" [goose bumps] can be produced by the suggestion of a cold bath. Hunger and thirst can be created, and other functions increased or retarded.

The mind can be so concentrated upon a physiological process as to stimulate that process to normal activity, so as to produce curative effects, and even to super-abundant activity, so as to produce pathological effects or disease. For instance, a blister can be caused on a sound and healthy skin by applying a postage stamp and suggesting that it is a strong mustard plaster; or placing upon the skin a key or coin with the suggestion that after waking, a blister will appear at the spot where the key or coin had been placed, and of corresponding size and shape. The key or coin is then removed and the patient awakened, having no conscious knowledge of the suggestion given, but at the appointed time the blister appears.

On the other hand, blisters and burns have been annulled by suggestion. Mere local redness of the skin is easily produced by suggestion, and can be seen to appear in a few minutes by watching the subject.

Naturally, several organs can be influenced by suggestion at the same time. Tell someone, "Here is a rose." At once your subject not only sees, but feels and also smells the rose. The suggestion here affects sight, feeling and smell at the same time.

When the delusion is positive, the hypnotic believes he sees what does not exist; when it's negative, he fails to recognize the presence of an object really placed before him. An excellent experiment is to suggest to the subject that

on awakening he will not be able to see you, although you will remain in the room so he can feel and hear you, and although he will see everybody else. The subject on being awakened can hear and feel you, but he fails entirely to see you. When speaking to him you will observe his head and eyes turn in the direction of your voice, but you are completely invisible to him. This is a negative hallucination of sight. Similarly, it may be suggested that the subject is deaf to certain words, but not to others.

An entire cessation of the functions of any sense organ can be induced in the same way as a negative hallucination. The sense organ affected is unsusceptible of anything. A command suffices to restore the functions. It is certain that the blindness and deafness induced this way are of a mental nature, for the corresponding organ of sense performs its function, though the impressions do not reach the consciousness. In the same way, the sight of one eye can be suspended, though the other can see as usual.

All such phenomena of suggestion can be produced while the subject is in the hypnotic state and also posthypnotically.

CAN ANYONE BE HYPNOTIZED?

It is generally held that almost any person of average, or above average, intelligence can be hypnotized to some degree or another. In actuality, no operator, no matter how proficient or skilled, ever obtains 100% success. The situation itself may arouse or create psychological barriers that prevent the operator from establishing the necessary rapport. Nevertheless, proper technique and presentation will help eliminate most difficulties.

Since almost everyone is, under ordinary circumstances, suggestible—successful hypnosis is invariably a question of a proper relationship between the operator and his subject(s). This relationship has been defined as one of “Prestige and Faith.” That is to say, the operator must possess sufficient confidence and prestige in the eyes of his subjects, while the latter must have sufficiently firm faith in his ability to influence them. Success in hypnotism depends on the ability to establish and maintain the relationship of prestige and faith.

THE POWER OF SUGGESTION

Suggestion is the basis of hypnosis. It is used to first induce and then, control the hypnotic state. Even in the lightest stage of hypnosis, suggestibility is greatly increased and many remarkable effects can be achieved.

This phenomena is of great interest to the performing hypnotist. Today's audiences demand fast-paced entertainment. There is little room for long, drawn out hypnotic inductions at the beginning of a show. As a result many hypnotists start their performances with a rapid hypnotic induction to a committee on stage and quickly move on to a series of basic tests. The most "suggestible" persons in the group—those who respond favorably to tests while in the waking state or under light hypnosis—are retained for additional tests and progressively induced into deeper levels of hypnosis.

THE SLEEP METAPHOR

Hypnosis has long been associated with sleep. Indeed, the very word "hypnotism," is derived from the Greek "hypnos," meaning "sleep" or "to sleep." While hypnosis and the concentration it requires is actually closer to the waking state than ordinary sleep, it remains the perfect metaphor and one which people have been conditioned to accept. For the subject, sleep puts the hypnotic experience into a familiar context. For the audience, sleep helps explain the phenomena they are observing on stage. And finally, for the operator, the association of sleep provides a framework for his hypnotic presentation.

LEARNING TO HYPNOTIZE

The single most important attribute for an aspiring hypnotist is "confidence." If you are an experienced stage performer, your skills of showmanship and ability to take command of an audience will prove invaluable in stage hypnosis. In this field, more than any other, you must be in full control at all times. Any audience perception to the contrary, or hesitation on your part, will have devastating consequences for your performance. Remember, your ability to establish the prestige and faith relationship with subjects is critical to your success.

In this pursuit, there is no substitute for practical experience. Practice as often as possible on the widest range of subjects you can find. If you do not succeed with the first, second or even the twentieth subject, don't give up! Keep trying. Perseverance is the key. Re-read and rehearse the instructions outlined in the next chapter on "Basic Hypnotic Technique." With each repetition, your skill and level of confidence will grow until the day comes when you hypnotize your first subject. And rest assured, that day will arrive. Soon after, you will successfully hypnotize a second subject and find that you are now able to influence the majority of people you come in contact with.

Hypnotizing your first subject is always the hardest. As discussed earlier, even the most experienced and competent hypnotist will experience difficulty with various subjects from time to time. Sometimes there are situations and factors which are simply beyond a performer's control. Just keep in mind, your overall success in hypnotism will depend on the one factor you "can" control—the strength of your presentation. If you present it properly and with a confident tone of voice, you will be well on your way to success in this field.

CLINICAL HYPNOSIS

The purpose of this guide is to teach you how to present a hypnotic act for entertainment purposes. The skills you acquire should be used solely for this purpose. Leave hypnotherapy to trained psychologists and licensed professionals who practice in a clinical setting.

Often following a show, you will be approached by individuals who wish to be hypnotized for behavior modification, such as to stop smoking, to lose weight, etc. Avoid the temptation. These people, while well meaning, are best referred to a competent professional hypnotherapist. Treating disorders with hypnosis requires formal training and certification so you understand the underlying causes of behavior and how to modify it.

Needless to say, attempts at past life regression or other kinds of psychological experiments are best left to a trained professional as well.

AVOIDING LEGAL DIFFICULTIES

Early hypnotic pioneer, Dr. James Braid, found that for a power so remarkable and great, hypnosis was unbelievably harmless. In the many years since this finding, his contention has remained virtually unshaken.

Even so, today's professional stage hypnotist must be mindful of the potential for legal problems arising from his performances. While certainly uncommon and seldom with merit, defending a lawsuit is an expensive and time-consuming proposition—even if you ultimately prevail.

There are some common sense measures you can take to help minimize your exposure to potential problems. First and foremost, never use hypnosis to treat a subject for a psychological disorder or to modify behavior (hypnotherapy), 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.

Hypnotic tests that produce symptoms of psychological abnormality, including amnesia, neurotic or psychopathic behavior are strictly taboo. Please note, "amnesia" in this instance, does "not" refer to the common practice of suggesting to a subject that he will not remember what transpired while under hypnosis (posthypnotic amnesia), but rather tests which attempt to erase all memories of a subject's identity from his mind. The latter should be avoided.

Although rare, 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 on stage. However, if any subjects appear to have significantly more anxiety than the others, or exhibits physical manifestations, such as twitching, trembling, profuse sweating, etc., they should be dismissed as early on into your performance as possible. It is best if they are not sent to their seat alone, but dismissed with a few other people. Otherwise, it may appear as if they were singled out.

Handle all of your subjects on stage with the courtesy and respect they deserve. When someone volunteers, there is an implied trust that you will treat them properly while on stage. 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.

Put your performance in a contemporary framework. The days of mysterious, dark-eyed svengali's who dominated their subjects is long past. 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. In so doing, you'll take the teeth right out of a legal claim by subjects that they were "harmed by the hypnotist." Even top British hypnotist Paul McKenna was forced to defend himself in a highly-publicized battle in the English courts. McKenna was cleared, of course, however he was still burdened with the responsibility of fighting the charge.

Be aware that some states in the U.S. and foreign countries have laws on the books prohibiting or restricting the public exhibition of hypnotism. Since 1952, the United Kingdom has required a local permit for public performances of hypnosis. While enforcement is frequently lax in most US jurisdictions, it is something which bears consideration in booking shows.

Finally, if you're still concerned about the legal liability of performing stage hypnosis, talk with your legal advisor. 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 a legal release from that person. You can also obtain insurance coverage to protect yourself. The premiums for such policies are often quite high in comparison to the risks, so use your own judgement.

BASIC HYPNOTIC TECHNIQUE

2

Chapter Two

BASIC HYPNOTIC TECHNIQUE

WORKING WITH INDIVIDUAL SUBJECTS

The first step on your path to mastering hypnotism is learning how to induce hypnosis in individual subjects. This is one of the most important skills you will acquire and its mastery is fundamental to your further development as a hypnotist.

The successful induction of hypnosis always begins with consent. The subject may make this acceptance consciously or unconsciously. In either case, the net result is the same, the subject “expects” to be hypnotized.

It must be understood that there are countless hypnotic techniques in existence. There is no one right or wrong technique. All are equally good, so long as they give confidence to the operator and faith to the subject, as discussed in Chapter One. The only purpose of any method of hypnotizing is to concentrate the subject’s attention and thus to eliminate most of the disturbing influences while leaving but a single channel of suggestion, which is usually the voice of the hypnotist and the ear of the subject.

So-called passes—the use of the hands and arms to direct energy toward the subject during the induction—are completely unnecessary. These are actually a holdover from the nineteenth century. Even so, many modern day stage hypnotists still employ such dramatic gestures as a form of showmanship. This is fine, so long as it is understood there is no scientific basis for their use. Nor, is there any need to touch a subject’s forehead, hand, knee, etc.—in general, no bodily contact is required. One’s voice is a sufficient channel of communication for suggestion.

Practice the following hypnotic induction technique, one-on-one, with a wide range of subjects until you are able to successfully influence the majority of them. All external distractions should be eliminated or minimized as much as possible.

In the beginning, be prepared to wait up to ten minutes or longer for a subject to reach a state of hypnosis. Don't worry, speed will come with time. The most important consideration when starting out is learning the proper technique.

REMOVING PSYCHOLOGICAL BARRIERS

The following pre-hypnosis discussion with your subject is designed to take away any fears he or she might have about being hypnotized and losing control. It also puts the experience in the familiar context of ordinary sleep.

Begin the session by informally explaining to your subject that there is no need to fear hypnosis. Explain it's a completely harmless and enjoyable experience that will leave your subject feeling relaxed and at ease. Say being hypnotized feels no different than dozing off on the couch.

Ask your subject, "Are you willing to be hypnotized? This establishes consent.

Some subjects believe they will be difficult to hypnotize because they have strong will power. Tell them this is a complete misconception. Explain that people who are more intelligent, more creative or stronger-willed, actually make the best hypnotic subjects— since their powers of concentration are better than those of the average person. It's people who lack self control or are unable to focus on an idea who are the most difficult to hypnotize.

FOCUSING ATTENTION

One of the key aspects of most hypnotic induction techniques, is the focusing of the subject's attention on an "object of fixation." This object is held or suspended in position about one foot in front of the subject. It should also be just high enough (over the subject's head), so it causes the person to raise his or her eyes slightly upward to concentrate attention. Such placement is conducive to fatiguing the eyes which, incidentally, occupy approximately the same position as normal sleep.

Straining the eyes to concentrate on the object, cramps the subject's attention. At first, the pupils contract slightly in an attempt to focus. Continued concentration leads to a relaxation of the optic muscles and dilation of the

pupils—this indicates dimness of vision. The greater the effort to concentrate on the object, the quicker the subject will succumb to the above effects. Watch for signs of eye fatigue and take them as a visual cue to begin suggesting the subject close his eyes. This process is covered in Phase II of The Induction Script.

You can use almost any point or object to focus the subject's attention on, so long as it is positioned in such a way that the subject is forced to strain the eyes upward to focus on it. This can be a coin, crystal, medallion, ball, or a pocket watch dangling from a chain—as often associated with hypnotic induction in the popular media. Objects that reflect light back toward the subject are best suited to this task.

THE INDUCTION PROCESS

Memorize the three-phase script on pages 21 and 22. It provides you with a general framework for the hypnotic induction of an individual subject. Keep in mind, hypnotism is an interactive process. You must watch for visual cues and be prepared to adjust your presentation accordingly. For example, if the subject's eyes close early, you would not keep suggesting, "Look steadily at the watch." Rather, you would advance to, "Your eyes are closed now. Keep them closed and shut out the light." Similarly, if the subject is not fully relaxing or concentrating at the beginning of the induction, feel free to repeat the appropriate portions of Phase I until your suggestions begin generating the desired responses.

For the sake of simplicity, we will assume you are using a pocket watch as the subject's object of fixation in the following script. If you are using some other object, just make the appropriate substitutions wherever the word "watch" appears.

THE INDUCTION SCRIPT

PHASE I - JUST CONCENTRATE AND RELAX

“Relax back in your chair and look steadily at the watch, as you listen only to the sound of my voice. Nothing else matters...except the watch...and my voice. With each and every breath you take, you will become more and more relaxed...more and more at ease. Let every muscle of your body be completely at rest. You must keep your attention focused on the watch. Look steadily at the watch and do not blink. Everything is beginning to feel comfortable now. It's wonderful to relax and let everything else go. You have no cares...no concerns...just the desire to sleep. A complete sense of relaxation is washing over your body like a warm, soothing ocean wave. You are now completely warm and comfortable in your chair. Everything is very pleasant, warm and comfortable.”

Begin by asking your subject to sit back comfortably in his or her chair with feet flat on the floor, hands on legs, and to concentrate on your pocket watch.

PHASE II - YOUR EYES ARE GROWING WEARY

“Now, as you relax back in your chair, your gaze is growing stronger and more intense. Keep looking steadily at the watch and do not blink. Your eyes are beginning to get tired, very, very tired. It is difficult to keep your eyes open, they are so very, very tired...so very, very heavy. You are concentrating on the watch, but your eyes are growing heavy, very, very heavy. You just want to close your eyes and shut out the light. All you can think of is how relaxing it would be to just close your eyes. Your eyelids feel as if they have lead weights pulling them closed, heavy lead weights. It's getting too hard to keep your eyes open any longer. Let your eyes close so they can relax and shut out the light. They are beginning to close. Let them close now. Go ahead and close your eyes. It will feel so good just to have them closed, they're so tired and heavy. Your eyes are closed now. Keep them closed and shut out the light.”



PHASE III - IT'S TIME TO SLEEP

“Everything is peaceful and quiet now. Your eyes are closed and your body is completely at rest. Now, go to sleep. Go deep, deep asleep. Everything is gently drifting by as if you were floating on a cloud. You are floating down...gently down...deep, deep down to sleep. You are so very tired. Every muscle of your body wants sleep, restful sleep. Sleep that will take away your tiredness. You are so very, very tired. You just need sleep...wonderful, restful sleep. So go to sleep! Go fast, fast to sleep! You can feel that wonderful rest and relaxation washing over your entire body like a warm, soothing ocean wave, and you are drifting...drifting...and floating on down, down to deep, sound, wonderful sleep. Everything is just fading, fading, fading far, far away, down into deep, wonderful, peaceful sleep.”

*Now standing at the subject's side,
whisper into his or her ear:*

“Go deep asleep now! That's it, go deep asleep! Sound, sound asleep! You are floating down and down into a deep sound sleep. Go deep asleep now! Go sound asleep! With every breath you take, you are floating down, gently down into a deeper and deeper sleep. Go deep, deep asleep. Nothing can bother or disturb you. You are completely and totally relaxed. Completely and totally at ease. Everything is quiet, calm and peaceful.”



SIGNS OF HYPNOSIS

One of the most common signs of entry into a state of hypnosis is a brief fluttering of the eyelids. The closing of the eyes—sudden or gradual—while invariably a part your suggestion, is not a requirement for hypnosis. It is quite possible for a subject to enter a light trance with the eyes half or even fully open. Other general symptoms of entry into a hypnotic state include upward eye movement, a deep sigh, a deepening of breathing, and general facial relaxation.

Your subject is now completely relaxed in his or her chair and breathing deeply. To all outward appearances, the person looks to have just dozed off. But this person is not asleep—at least, not in the conventional sense of the word. The subject is hypnotized and even in the lightest stage of hypnosis, his or her willingness to accept your suggestions will be greatly increased.

WHAT TO DO NEXT

Let's try a couple of basic tests in muscular catalepsy—the easiest of all hypnotic phenomena to produce. Even subjects in the lighter stages of hypnosis are generally responsive to tests of this type. Practice both tests, in order, each time you successfully hypnotize a new subject.

One tip before we get started. Always allow subjects ample time to orient themselves after hypnosis is induced and between tests. Think of how it feels to get off an airplane in a strange city. It takes some time to get your bearings. Hypnosis is no different. Psychologically, your subjects are in uncharted territory.

As a result, subjects who are rushed often respond by shifting to a lighter stage of hypnosis. Conversely, hypnosis tends to deepen in subjects who are given sufficient time to process and comply with your suggestions.

EYES WIDE SHUT

Following your suggestion, the subject finds it impossible to open his or her eyes. The subject struggles to do so, but the eyes remain tightly shut.

Suggestion: “Your eyes are stuck tightly together...so tight, you cannot open them. It is impossible to open your eyes. Try to open your eyes. You can't open them.”

Removal: “Relax and forget about your eyes now, they are no longer stuck together. Go back deep asleep.”

Always remove the suggestion following each test. Otherwise, you risk the possibility of a subject trying to respond to different and conflicting suggestions simultaneously.

STIFF ARM

Following your suggestion, the subject's arm goes stiff and the person is unable to bend it. The person may be sitting or standing for this test. Have the subject hold the left arm straight out at a right angle from the body. The hand should be in a fist with the thumb on top—so the bend of the arm is inward toward the body (the elbow points outward). Take hold of the subject's fist with your right hand and stroke back and forth on the inside of the subject's arm with your left, as if commanding the muscles to stiffen.

Suggestion: “The muscles of your arm are tightening and your arm is getting stiff, stiff, stiffer. Your arm is now rigid like a bar of steel and you can't bend it. The more you try to bend your arm, the more rigid it becomes.”

Removal: “On the count of three, your arm will instantly relax and fall loosely to your side and it will send you even deeper asleep. One. Two. Three!”

Please note, this test is important because it will also help you gauge the extent of hypnotic influence. If the subject's arm falls quickly and limply to the side, you can be fairly certain this person is deeply affected. On the other hand, if the subject lowers the arm slowly and seemingly of his or her own accord—the trance is probably too light for more challenging tests requiring deep hypnosis.

AWAKENING THE SUBJECT

The same soothing, suggestive techniques used to induce hypnosis are also applied to gently bring a subject out of it. As with the induction, it is important that this process is handled in a gradual manner. Under no circumstances, should you ever attempt to awaken the subject by startling him or her with a loud clap of the hands or by shouting.

Most hypnotic performers also use this opportunity to suggest posthypnotic amnesia. This phenomena, which sometimes occurs spontaneously in subjects under deep hypnosis, can also be suggested. We will address this topic at greater length in the next chapter.

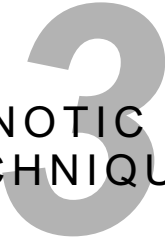
“You are asleep. In a moment, I will awaken you and you will feel full of energy and completely refreshed, however you will have absolutely no memory as to what has occurred while you were asleep. Like a dream, all memories will fade away, far away. It will seem as though you only dozed off in your chair for a brief nap. A very restful and pleasant sleep without dreams.”

“Slowly, you are beginning to wake up now. You will continue waking up as I slowly count to five. When I reach five, you will open your eyes and be wide awake...feeling completely refreshed and full of energy. One. Two. Three. Four. Five. Open your eyes, be awake and feel fine.”

At this point, your subject should open his or her eyes—feeling even better than before being hypnotized. You will rarely encounter a subject who has difficulty awakening from hypnosis. It is very unusual and almost always attributed to a form of hysteria, not the effects of hypnosis. If this ever should occur, stay calm and repeat the suggestions that the subject is waking up, over and over.

Remember, at no time is the subject ever in any danger of not awakening from the hypnotic trance. Even if left completely on his or her own, the subject would soon pass from the state of hypnosis to one of ordinary sleep and then, awaken as the person normally does.

ADVANCED HYPNOTIC CONCEPTS AND
TECHNIQUES

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Chapter Three

ADVANCED HYPNOTIC CONCEPTS AND TECHNIQUES

DEPTH LEVELS OF HYPNOSIS

As you learned from the muscular catalepsy tests in the last chapter, some subjects will experience deeper levels of hypnosis than others. The deeper the level, the higher the degree of influence your suggestions will exert.

As a stage hypnotist, it is important to understand the various depth levels of hypnosis and the associated phenomena of each. There are four basic stages of hypnosis: 1) Hypnoidal; 2) Light Trance; 3) Medium Trance; and 4) Deep Trance—also called “Somnambulism,” a state in which an individual performs actions appropriate to the waking state while actually deep asleep. People who walk or talk in their sleep are exhibiting somnambulistic behavior.

The Davis-Husband Scale on the next page shows the four basic stages of hypnosis. Many stage hypnotists simplify this rating system further into two major states—light and deep hypnosis. Subjects in a hypnoidal state or light trance are considered to be in the former, and those in a medium or deep trance are grouped into the latter.

This simplification is made from a purely practical standpoint, since a subject in a state of light hypnosis is considered to be susceptible to muscular catalepsy (Eyes Wide Shut, Stiff Arm, etc.) and other basic elimination tests (Falling for You), while the entire range of stage hypnotic phenomena (catalepsy, control, role playing, illusion, hallucination and posthypnotic effects) is open to the hypnotist once the subject enters deep hypnosis. The stage hypnotist need make no finer distinction.

As already discussed, the Stiff Arm test in the last chapter provides the perfect tool to gauge whether or not a subject has entered a state of deep hypnosis.

DAVIS-HUSBAND SCALE OF HYPNOTIC SUSCEPTIBILITY

| Depth | Score | Test Suggestion and Responses |
|--|----------|---|
| | 0 | |
| <i>Insusceptible</i> | 1 | Relaxation |
| Hypnoidal | 2 | Fluttering of the eyelids |
| | 3 | Closing of the eyes |
| | 4 | Complete physical relaxation |
| | 5 | Catalepsy of the eyes |
| Light Trance | 6 | Limb catalepsies |
| | 7 | Rigid catalepsies |
| | 8,9,10 | Glove anesthesia |
| | 11,12 | Partial posthypnotic amnesia |
| Start of Deep Hypnosis | | |
| Medium Trance | 13,14 | Posthypnotic amnesia |
| | 15,16 | Personality changes |
| | 17,18,19 | Kinesthetic delusions |
| Deep Trance (<i>Somnambulism</i>) | 21,22 | Ability to open eyes without affecting the trance |
| | 23,24 | Complete somnambulism |
| | 25 | Positive visual hallucinations (posthypnotic) |
| | 26 | Positive auditory hallucinations (posthypnotic) |
| | 27 | Systematized posthypnotic amnesias |
| | 28 | Negative auditory hallucinations |
| | 29 | Negative visual hallucinations |
| | 30 | Hyperesthesia |

KEY FACTORS FOR DEEP HYPNOSIS

While it is true that almost all people can be hypnotized to some degree or another, it is estimated only about 20% are potential somnambulists, also referred to as “hypnotics”—people who have the capacity to enter deep hypnosis. This small, but highly suggestible segment of the population makes the best subjects for hypnotic stage performances.

This is not to say that all subjects who are not somnambulists should be excluded from your training. Indeed, quite the contrary is true. By learning to successfully hypnotize even subjects with lesser hypnotic capabilities, you will become far more adept at handling highly suggestible subjects on stage.

In addition to natural ability, there are two other factors which affect a subject's ability to enter a deep state of hypnosis—cooperation or resistance (either conscious or unconscious) and motivation. This latter factor is usually heightened in an emotionally-charged situation, such as a live performance. The bright lights, music, mystery, audience, and expectations of extraordinary events in a stage show all help to intensify this effect.

One final note, a subject's natural capacity to enter deep hypnosis can grow significantly with each successful hypnotization. This process forms the basis of the “rehypnotization” technique on pages 31 and 32. It is a formidable tool for quickly deepening hypnosis in highly suggestible subjects and further screening out those who are not.

TECHNIQUES FOR DEEPENING HYPNOSIS

As a stage hypnotist, you should always strive to induce the deepest levels of hypnosis possible in your subjects. After all, the deeper the levels, the more influence your suggestions will carry.

However, the depth of hypnosis does not remain constant. Even a subject in a deep trance will tend to drift toward the lighter stages of hypnosis as time passes by. For this reason, the maintenance of the hypnotic state must be viewed as an ongoing process. On the next page, you'll find a number of techniques you can utilize to develop and maintain the deepest possible trance levels in your subjects.

- Whenever possible, use a “compound suggestion.” This means adding the suggestion that the completion of a certain test will send the subject into a deeper sleep. In this way, success triggers deeper hypnosis and with it, the potential for even greater success in subsequent experiments.
- As discussed in the last chapter, allow subjects enough time to orient themselves to both the induction of the hypnotic state, as well as suggestions given afterward—especially complex ones.
- Whenever possible, frame suggestions in the context of a familiar situation. Whatever subjects will do in the normal waking state, they will also do in the hypnotic state.
- Avoid conflicting the subject by always removing the influence of a suggestion before giving a new one.
- And finally, try to integrate a subject’s needs into your suggestions. The more needs that are met, the more likely your suggestions will be acted upon.

These simple techniques will help assure you attain the deepest possible levels of hypnosis in your subjects and as a result, the highest degree of susceptibility to your suggestions.

REHYPNOTIZATION

We know that repeated hypnotizations make it easier for a subject to enter hypnosis. It is like an athlete training the body to perform in a certain manner, except the hypnotic subject is conditioning his or her mind. Every time a subject undergoes hypnosis and awakens, that person’s ability to concentrate more intently and focus on the operator’s suggestions improves.

This concept forms the basis of the rehypnotization technique you are about to learn. It is an extremely effective tool for deepening the level of hypnosis in highly susceptible subjects—especially after a rapid (mass) induction on stage. In addition to this, it gives you an invaluable tool for further screening out those without the capacity to enter deep hypnosis.

Here’s how it works. The group of subjects sleeping on stage are told that in a moment you will awaken them one at a time. As soon as they open their

eyes and look into yours, they will fall back into an even deeper, more sound sleep than before. The operator approaches each subject and commands the person to look into his eyes as he suggests, "Your eyes are getting heavy, very, very heavy. You cannot keep them open any longer, close your eyes and go to sleep. Go deep asleep." If any subject fails to respond and re-enter hypnosis, that person is immediately dismissed. Next, the remaining responsive subjects are awakened as a group and again told as soon as they look into the hypnotist's eyes, they will fall back into an even deeper sleep. Again, unresponsive subjects are dismissed. The subjects may now be given a group test with the added (compound) suggestion that its completion will send them down even further. You get the idea. This technique works—so use it!

GIVING SUGGESTIONS THAT INFLUENCE

As we already know, under hypnosis, suggestions bypass the critical faculties of normal consciousness and directly enter the subconscious mind—where "if accepted," they are acted upon.

The key phrase here is "if accepted." As a stage hypnotist, your success depends upon the acceptance of your suggestions by the subconscious minds of your subjects. Even under hypnosis, this acceptance is not always automatic—but rather relies upon proper timing, repetition and delivery.

Timing is the single most important element in presenting a suggestion.

Always begin by suggesting what "will" happen and gradually work up to reinforcing what "has" has happened. Never get ahead of yourself and suggest that something has taken place, if it has not, or will not in the next moment.

Think of repetition in giving suggestions as the glue that holds your timing together. It helps assure you are able to maintain proper timing with regard to your suggestions. In addition, the persuasive power of repetitive, monotonous suggestions tends to be cumulative in effect.

How you actually deliver suggestions is also fundamental to their success. This includes how each suggestion is phrased, as well as your vocal tone and inflection at the time it is given.

ADDITIONAL STRATEGIES AND TACTICS

In addition to the proper timing, repetition and delivery of suggestions, here are some other ways you can gain an edge in influencing subjects:

- Build early successes. Since the impact of your suggestions grows with each success and diminishes with each failure, always begin with tests which offer you the highest possibility of success and progress to increasingly more challenging ones.
- Get subjects into an early pattern of compliance. Voluntary responses to instructions increase acceptance to involuntary suggestions later. In other words, when you tell a subject to sit or stand, hold out his arm in a certain way, etc., the uncritical way in which the subject complies will often carry over to hypnotic suggestions as well.
- Use counting to intensify the influence of a suggestion. Whenever appropriate, suggest that on the count of three, five, etc., the subject will do such and such. This very powerful technique helps cue the subject as to the exact moment in time a desired response is expected.
- Employ non-verbal suggestions to reinforce verbal ones. Showmanship is an intrinsic component of stage hypnosis. Non-verbal suggestions in the form of physical gestures, body movements, and even breathing, can all help influence the outcome.
- Take advantage of the power of mass suggestion. Suggestions to a group, such as a committee, are always more effective than those to an individual subject. Subjects in a group tend to lose their inhibitions and are also influenced by the successful responses of other subjects.

POSTHYPNOTIC AMNESIA

Most people have been conditioned by popular culture and the media to expect amnesia upon awakening from hypnosis. In fact, posthypnotic amnesia is not a criterion for hypnosis at all. Indeed, its occurrence varies greatly from subject to subject.

If you refer back to the Davis-Husband Scale on page 29, you'll see that the suggestion of posthypnotic amnesia does not even take effect until a subject reaches a medium trance—the point considered by most stage performers to mark the beginning of deep hypnosis.

The majority of evidence on the subject supports the conclusion that spontaneous posthypnotic amnesia (without suggestion) is a rare occurrence. Even so, subjects who do not experience it, often feel cheated and may even doubt whether or not they were actually ever hypnotized. Sometimes remarking, "I was awake the whole time and could have resisted if I wanted to, but I didn't."

For this reason, most stage hypnotists suggest posthypnotic amnesia as a matter of course. This suggestion is generally given just before a subject is awakened by saying something along the lines, "In a moment you will wake up feeling completely refreshed from a wonderful, brief sleep without dreams. All memories of what occurred on stage tonight will fade far away. And when you're friends tell you about all of the interesting things you did, you will not believe them. It will seem as if you only drifted off to sleep for a few brief moments."

In your concluding remarks to the audience say, "Your friends on stage tonight have been living in a wonderful world of dreams where anything is possible. And like all dreams, sometimes we remember them in vivid detail and sometimes we do not. Everyone is different. Let me just say to everyone here this evening, may all of your wonderful dreams come true. Thank you ladies and gentlemen, and good night."

DEEP TRANCE PHENOMENA AND TESTS

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Chapter Four

DEEP TRANCE PHENOMENA AND TESTS

RANGE OF PHENOMENA

In this chapter, we will explore the range of unusual and interesting phenomena you can produce while a subject is under hypnosis. These tests form the basis for ALL of the demonstrations you will perform as a stage hypnotist. They are arranged by their corresponding level difficulty to achieve into six general categories:

- **Muscular Catalepsy**
- **Hypnotic Control**
- **Role Playing**
- **Hypnotic Illusions**
- **Hypnotic Hallucinations**
- **Posthypnotic Effects**

Once you understand the underlying principles at work, you will be able to create new hypnotic stage routines, as well as adapt existing ones to suit your own needs. The outlines for dozens of standard hypnotic routines—classic material used successfully by top performers around the world—are provided for your reference in Chapter Six.

Start by practicing these tests, in order, with a subject who is able to enter a deep state of hypnosis. You will require two sessions with each subject to work through all of the material provided.

One word of advice—don't expect to produce all phenomena in all subjects. You'll discover some subjects who respond very well to certain types of tests and not at all to others. Learning how to work with and successfully influence subjects, as well as accurately appraise their individual limitations and capabilities, is all part of your development as a stage hypnotist. It is something which

cannot be taught, but it can be learned through intelligent observation and experience. Make the personal commitment right now to do so.

Remember, there are no shortcuts to success. You should not start working on the material in this chapter until you are able to successfully hypnotize the majority of people you come in contact with. Then and only then, will you be fully prepared benefit from this next stage in your development.

HOW TO PRACTICE THESE TESTS

Start your first session by hypnotizing a previously responsive subject. Someone who has responded well to the Stiff Arm test in Chapter Two is ideal. Once you are confident your subject has entered a state of hypnosis, begin with the Invisible Shackles (Muscular Catalepsy). This should present little difficulty and provide you with the quick, early success you need to set the tone of the session. The next test, Too Heavy - Too Sticky (Hypnotic Control), represents your first major hurdle in hypnotic testing. If the subject doesn't pass this test, stop testing and awaken the subject. Otherwise, if the Hypnotic Control test was successful, proceed to Hail to the Chief (Role Playing) and then awaken the subject after the test is concluded.

Schedule a follow-up session on another day with any subjects who successfully completed at least the first two tests. After hypnotizing the subject in the second session, begin with Falling for You (Hypnotic Control). After successfully completing that test, move on to, Dream Mate (Hypnotic Illusion). If that test succeeds, proceed to Watch The Birdie (Hypnotic Hallucination) and then conclude the session with Can't Get Up (Posthypnotic Suggestion). Even if the subject fails the second test on Hypnotic Hallucination, you should still try the Posthypnotic Suggestion (Can't Get Up).

After each of these sessions, document what transpired. Analyze what was successful, what wasn't, and ask why! Was it you? Or was it the subject? Most importantly, try to think of any way you might improve your presentation and handling next time. Above all, don't get discouraged. Every session, whether an abysmal failure or a resounding success, will teach you an important lesson about this fascinating field and get you that much closer to your goal.

Session 1, Experiment 1: Muscular Catalepsy

Muscular Catalepsy refers to the range of hypnotic tests where a subject's muscular control is affected by the suggestion of the operator or hypnotist. These tests can be performed regardless of the subject's depth of hypnosis, as well as in the waking state as elimination tests to identify highly suggestible subjects on stage.

INVISIBLE SHACKLES

In this test, a subject is unable to separate the hands. Ask the subject to stand up, clasp both hands together and interlock his or her fingers as if in prayer. Next, the subject is requested to press the palms tightly together. The hands, thus locked together, are extended outward with the muscles of both forearms tightened. The operator may assist the subject, as needed, to find the correct positioning.

Suggestion: "The muscles in your hands and arms are beginning to tighten. They are getting tighter and tighter. Your muscles are so tight now, your hands are locked together. Concentrate on hands and arms, every muscle is locked rigidly in place, like solid steel. You cannot take your hands apart. In fact, the more you try to take your hands apart, the tighter and more locked together they become. You cannot take them apart, no matter how hard you try. Try and pull them apart. You cannot." Wait a few moments to let the effect sink in.

Removal: Clap your hands together with the command, "Relax. You can take your hands apart now. All of the muscles in your hands and arms are completely relaxed." With the subject's concentration broken, the subject will now be able to separate the hands. If the subject seems to be having a problem, touch them and suggest again, "Relax your hands, they are no longer stuck. You can take them apart now."

Session 1, Experiment 2: Hypnotic Control

TOO HEAVY - TOO STICKY

After succeeding with the last demonstration in muscular catalepsy, have the subject sit back down, eyes still closed. Use suggestion to intensify and deepen the subject's hypnotic state before proceeding. You should also give the subject some time for orientation. In this test, the subject first finds it impossible to first lift the chair and then, once released from this suggestion, a second suggestion makes the person unable to let go.

Suggestion: Ask the subject to stand up, and then to turn around and look at the folding chair. "The chair you were sitting on weighs as much as your car, several thousand pounds. You cannot lift it, no matter how hard you try. Go ahead and try to lift the chair, you can't lift it." The subject will struggle in vain to pick up the chair.

Removal: Clap your hands together with the command, "The chair is very light now. It weighs only a couple of pounds. You can lift it up easily. Go ahead and lift it up."

Added second suggestion for male subjects only:

Suggestion (while the subject is still holding the chair up): "The chair is covered with glue and now your hands are stuck to it. The more you try to let go, the stickier the chair becomes. You can't let go. Try to let go. You cannot."

Removal: Clap your hands together with the command, "Okay, all of the glue on the chair is gone without a trace. Your hands are no longer stuck to the chair. You can set down the chair now."

Hypnotic Control tests illustrate how a subject's perceptions and actions can be controlled by the power of suggestion. This test uses a second suggestion (recommended for male subjects only) to shift the subject's "reality" midstream. Success will indicate you are working with a very imaginative individual.

Session 1, Experiment 3: Role Playing

Role Playing is a category of tests whereby, through the power of hypnotic suggestion, subjects assume personalities different than their own. These transformations are often quite remarkable and fun to witness. A subject who wouldn't dream of singing in the shower, will readily take on the persona of a famous rock star. Likewise, someone who knows nothing about music, can be handed a pencil for a baton and asked to conduct an orchestra or play the drums.

HAIL TO THE CHIEF

After successfully completing the previous experiment in hypnotic control, have the subject sit down again and take a few moments to deepen the hypnosis.

Make sure you give the subject sufficient time for orientation as well. In this test, the subject becomes the President of the United States.

Suggestion: "When you open your eyes in a moment, you will be the President of the United States. You will be sitting in the Oval Office and I will be interviewing you for the New York Times. It will be just you and me in the room, and we will be surrounded by many of your favorite pictures and personal momentos. You will remain the President until I clap my hands. At that moment, you will be yourself again and you will immediately close your eyes and go back asleep. Go ahead and open your eyes. Hello Mister (or Madame) President, thank you for accepting my interview." At this point, you may ask whatever questions you like and the subject will answer them in all seriousness as the President of the United States. Of course, you can change this personality to any individual (ie. you are Madonna or Michael Jackson) or type of person or job function (ie. you are a counter clerk at Dunkin Donuts).

Removal: Clap your hands and the subject will respond by immediately going back to sleep. Note, the suggestion was also removed by the hand clapping cue, so no words are needed.

This test should end the first session. Awaken the subject and if appropriate, schedule a follow-up session to work on the last three tests in this chapter.

Session 2, Experiment 2: Hypnotic Illusion

DREAM MATE

Tests of this type have the capacity to make the subject look somewhat silly or foolish, so you must use them with discretion in actual performance situations. Good natured people with high self esteem make the best subjects for experiments of this nature. Extremely shy or self-conscious subjects who might be embarrassed should be spared. In this test, a common household broom becomes the subject's dream mate—either a beautiful girl or a handsome man. Begin by handing the subject the broom, the eyes still closed. Say, "In a moment, you will open your eyes and there in your arms will be, the most beautiful girl you have ever seen (or in the case of a female subject, the most handsome man).

Suggestion: "On the count of three, you will open your eyes and see that you are holding the most beautiful girl you have ever seen. She is perfect in every way. Her eyes, her hair, you will love everything about her. Ready. One. Two. Three. Open your eyes." Allow the subject time to respond to the illusion for a short period of time. The subject will embrace the object and even kiss it as the person would a dream mate.

Removal: "Your dream girl (man) is starting to fade away. Fading far away. Your eyes are beginning to close now. Close your eyes and sleep. Go deep, deep asleep." You can take away the broom now. If this test was successful, proceed to the next test in Hypnotic Hallucination. If not, go directly to the Posthypnotic Effect test.

In tests of Hypnotic Illusion, an illusion or false impression of an object is suggested to the subject. This range of experiments requires an actual physical prop of some type to provide the initial stimulus. It need bear no real likeness to the object it is intended to represent. The amazing power of the subject's imagination will fill in the gaps.

Session 2, Experiment 1: Hypnotic Control

This second experiment in Hypnotic Control can also be used as an elimination test with or without inducing hypnosis.

FALLING FOR YOU

Begin your second session by hypnotizing a subject who has responded well to at least the first two tests in the previous session. Have this person stand straight up with both feet together, hands at sides, and eyes closed. Tell the subject to completely relax. You can see if the subject is still tense by pulling him or her backward towards you slightly. If the subject doesn't move easily or appears too stiff, more relaxation is needed. Explain that the subject is going to feel an invisible force pulling him or her backward and not to resist—you will not let the subject fall.

Suggestion: “Lean your head backward. Relax your body. There is an invisible force pulling you backward. You are falling backward. You are falling backward. Do not resist the force. You are falling backward.” The subject should give in to the suggestion and fall backward into your arms by this point. If not, place your left hand on the subject's forehead and slowly draw it backward across the top of the ear and down the nape of the neck very slowly and suggest: “As I draw my hand away, you will fall backwards into my arms.”

Removal: After the subject is helped to stand up straight again, clap your hands and say, “Stand up straight, the force pulling you backward is gone.”

Session 2, Experiment 3: Hypnotic Hallucination

WATCH THE BIRDIE

Give the subject time to rest and for orientation after the last test and then, deepen the hypnotic state even further. In this test, the subject sees and plays with an imaginary canary.

Suggestion: “On the count of three, you will open your eyes again. This time, you will see a cute little yellow canary perched on your left hand. You will play with the little bird and then it will fly around the room before returning to you. When the little canary comes back to your hand this time, it will slowly fade away and you will close your eyes and sink into an even deeper level of sleep. Ready. One. Two. Three. Open your eyes.” (Thus, this test is self-terminating and requires no removal).

Does the subject actually see the little canary? Absolutely! If you doubt the strength of such a hallucination, you need only think of how real some dreams seem when you are sleeping. The same power of imagination is at work here. Hypnosis just provides us with a window to watch it.

Tests in Hypnotic Hallucination are closely related to the type just covered with one important exception—no physical props or other articles are employed. The subject’s imagination conjures up the entire illusion through the sheer power of suggestion.

Session 2, Experiment 4: Posthypnotic Suggestion

The term, Posthypnotic Suggestion, is sometimes misunderstood. It does not refer to a suggestion given after hypnosis, but rather one given during hypnosis—the effects of which are not felt until a subject is awakened from the state. Audiences find tests involving Posthypnotic Effects among the most fascinating of all hypnotic phenomena to observe. This is probably due to a natural curiosity about the power of hypnosis to work even after a subject has returned to normal consciousness.

CAN'T GET UP

After deepening the hypnotic state even further and then giving the subject time for orientation, you will be ready to proceed with the fourth and final test of this session. Posthypnotic Effects are the most difficult of all phenomena to produce, so your success here will indicate you are well on your way to mastering the power of hypnosis. Upon awakening from hypnosis, a subject feels fine and perfectly normal in every way, except he or she is unable to get up from the chair.

Suggestion: “In a moment, you are going to wake up. You will feel great in every way, except you will be unable to get out of your chair. No matter how hard you try, you won't be able to get up. You'll wake up feeling wonderful, but you'll be stuck to your chair...until I snap my fingers and say you are able to get up.” At this point, proceed to awaken the subject per the standard procedure. The subject will wake up feeling fine, but will struggle when trying to get up. The subject will be genuinely surprised by the inability to rise.

Removal: Snap your fingers by the subject's ear and say, “Okay, you can get up now. You are no longer stuck to the chair.”

As all hypnotists know, this power is very real and must be used with caution and discretion. Always remember to remove or limit the influence of a posthypnotic suggestion—so it does not extend beyond the period of your performance.

SUMMARY

So you have it, a complete series of tests illustrating the full range of hypnotic phenomena. Practice them well with every subject who exhibits the capacity to enter deep hypnosis. And remember to document your progress along the way. Learn from your successes, as well as your failures.

5 ELIMINATION TESTS

Chapter Five

ELIMINATION TESTS

THE PURPOSE OF THESE TESTS

The main purpose of elimination tests is to identify the subjects who are, as well as those who are not, capable of entering deep hypnosis. They are generally used in the early stages of a show, either before or after a group induction is performed. Even in the waking state, subjects with somnambulistic tendencies will be responsive to tests of this type. They are quite entertaining to watch and fulfill a function critical to the success of your show.

CHOOSING TESTS

You have been provided with four excellent tests, which can be used for this process. They are, in the order of the pages they appear on:

- EYES WIDE SHUT, page 24
- STIFF ARM, page 25
- INVISIBLE SHACKLES, page 38
- FALLING FOR YOU, page 42

The easiest test of the lot is Falling for You, followed in order of difficulty by Eyes Wide Shut, Invisible Shackles and Stiff Arm. In a performance situation, which tests you choose will depend primarily on the number of volunteers you have on stage. If you have a large number to work with, you can afford to start subjects off with a more challenging tests, such as Invisible Shackles and Stiff Arm. On the other hand, if the pool of prospective subjects is a bit meager, by all means begin with Falling for You or Eyes Wide Shut.

In most cases, a subject is given one opportunity to make the grade and it's pass or fail. There are important reasons for this. We already know that the effectiveness of suggestion grows with success and diminishes with failure.

So if the subject did not respond to first test, the chances of getting a positive response to the second are even less likely. Why risk it? The first failure can easily be attributed to the subject's own inability to concentrate, the second time it begins to look like the operator's failure, desperation, or lack of judgement. Whatever the reason, your prestige will begin to suffer and no hypnotist can afford that.

This is entirely different than a subject passing one test and failing the next. Subjects who pass each test may continue to be tested, until they fail—at which point, that person should be eliminated. Let's say, for example, that you are in the enviable position of having more than enough subjects to work with, but you're having a hard time thinning the field. By all means, give the successful candidates another more difficult test as a group. Those who fail will not reflect badly on you, since the audience will see many who do succeed. The same goes for the rehypnotization technique explained in Chapter Three. The audience understands this screening process will enable you to give them the best show possible by identifying the "stars" in the group.

INFLUENCING SUBJECTS IN THE WAKING STATE

Influencing subjects in the waking state is always more difficult than working with them under hypnosis—even in a light state. And so, to be successful, you must take a more forceful approach. It begins with eye contact. Whenever facing a subject, you must appear to look directly into the subject's eyes. In actuality, you stare at the bridge of the nose—right between the person's eyes. The effect is almost hypnotic. Look in the mirror and try it for yourself. Next, you must give each suggestion with complete confidence and self assurance. In your own mind, picture the subject carrying out the suggestion (ie. falling backward, struggling unsuccessfully to open his or her eyes, etc.). Never give a thought to failure. It can't happen. The resulting confidence will show on your face and be heard in your voice. Finally, make sure to keep the subject's mind locked around a single idea (ie. you can't open your eyes, your hands are stuck together, etc).

6

PLANNING THE SHOW

Chapter Six

PLANNING THE SHOW

HYPNOTISM AS ENTERTAINMENT

Having successfully completed the material in the preceding chapters, you are now ready to enter the final stage in your development as a stage hypnotist. This is where all of the hard work pays off and the fun begins—the point where you start planning your show.

The tests you practiced in the last chapter illustrated the full range of phenomena used for stage hypnosis. By now, you should be fairly skilled in hypnotizing and successfully influencing subjects in both light and deep hypnotic trances. However, just hypnotizing a few subjects and performing a series of unrelated hypnotic tests does not a stage show make! Stage hypnosis is a form of entertainment and as such there are certain basic elements involved in putting together a show that people will not only want to see—but pay to see.

Like any other type of show, hypnotic shows have a beginning, a middle and an end. As the old vaudeville saying goes, “Open and close and put something interesting in the middle.”

OPENING THE SHOW

The opening of a hypnotic show serves three very important functions:

- 1) It gets and holds the audience's attention.
- 2) It establishes the hypnotist's prestige and faith in his abilities by the audience.
- 3) It gets the audience excited about either participating in, or watching, the show.

With the possible exception of TV game shows, stage hypnosis is the only field of show business which relies on its audience members to provide the entertainment. Therein lies its strength and its weakness. To have a good show, you need good subjects. And to get good subjects, you need lots of highly motivated volunteers to choose from at the beginning of your show. If you don't, you're going to have a long evening.

So what should you do? Well, what you shouldn't do is go into a protracted monologue about the powers of hypnosis. Your demonstrations will do that. Keep your opening introduction brief and to the point. Use music, lighting, and all of the elements of stagecraft to heighten anticipation before the show even starts.

Let's imagine we are taking our seat in the audience for a moment. The curtains are closed, the house lights dim, and suddenly the music begins—it's an orchestral march. Our anticipation heightens as the music slowly builds until it reaches a rousing crescendo. The curtains now part to reveal two chairs in front with several rows of neatly-spaced chairs behind. A spotlight appears and a well-dressed, self-assured man briskly walks out to center stage. He bows and nods to the audience.

"Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. Tonight, we are going to explore the amazing powers of hypnosis. Powers which reside within each and every one of us. My role is simply that of humble guide for this adventure. A trip that will help us reveal a some of the many mysteries of the human mind. I hope you will enjoy it."

From the wings, a young woman with a bright red dress and two men in black, walk out and stand quietly and expressionless behind the hypnotist. At first, he appears not to notice them. Slowly he turns his head and looks back at the trio. Then, he looks forward again and just smiles. "But first, my dear friends, a brief demonstration of the marvels of which I speak."

The young woman is now standing at the hypnotist's side with one of the men in black standing behind her. The hypnotist raises his hand to the woman's

forehead and gazes directly into her eyes. "Go to sleep now. Go deep, deep asleep. Your eyes are getting too heavy to keep open, they are beginning to close. Close your eyes and sleep." Her eyelids flutter momentarily and close. "Your entire body is becoming completely rigid. Every muscle is tightening. Your body is now completely stiff and rigid, like a solid bar of steel."

At this point, with the help of the two men, the woman is now suspended between two chairs—her shoulders at one end and her ankles at the other. Her body remains perfectly rigid.

"This young lady, who I fully hypnotized before the show, is now in a deep cataleptic state. And so, here she could remain—her body completely rigid—for hours on end. But we shall not leave her here this evening. We have an important show to do." The woman is then taken off of the chairs, placed upright and awakened by the hypnotist. She departs with the men in black who remove the two chairs just used.

"If you would like to test your own ability to enter hypnosis, close your eyes. Make sure both feet are flat on the floor and you are seated comfortably. Now place both arms out in front of you with your palms down. A balloon filled with helium is attached to your right wrist. It's pulling your right arm up. It's rising up, higher, higher, higher. Your left wrist, however, has a very heavy weight attached to it. The weight is pulling your left arm down, down, down. Open your eyes now and don't move your arms."

The hypnotist surveys the audience. "Well, it looks as though we have a lot of volunteers for tonight's show!" The audience laughs. "But seriously, what you just participated in was a genuine test for hypnosis. If your right arm was up in the air and your left arm was down at your side, you have passed with flying colors. If you're at least college age or older and will be sincere in trying the experiments, you're welcome to join us on stage. It'll be lots of fun, so hurry on up. The more the merrier. Come on up." After a moment, a legion of eager volunteers files on stage.

So you have it, a look at a very strong and theatrical opening for a hypnotic stage show. It has music, drama, mystery, audience participation, and more. Plus, it achieves everything it is supposed to—it gets the audience's attention and holds it, establishes the performer's prestige, and it brings up prospective

subjects who have already demonstrated a level of susceptibility to suggestion. What more could you ask for?

How you actually structure your opening is up to you. It should suit your own style of presentation and of course, the venue you are working in. Above all else, make it exciting.

SELECTING THE BEST SUBJECTS

As mentioned earlier, good subjects make for a good show. But what constitutes a good hypnotic subject? Young adults to middle-aged persons tend to make the best ones. They often have the highest level of energy and are more flexible and responsive than older people. In addition, you should look for people who are good natured and exhibit the ability to laugh easily at themselves without being show offs. Avoid lethargic or somber individuals, and seniors unless they are bright, fit and alert.

Make sure to dismiss anyone high school age or younger right from the start. They will often be more than willing to perform any hypnotic feat suggested, however they will do little to enhance the quality of your show. It is far better to select adults who are well dressed, well groomed and articulate. Service people, police officers, or others in uniform also make excellent subjects, as do local politicians or celebrities when available. The audience will be far more impressed by their responses, than those of subjects who might be considered less credible.

Exactly how many subjects will you need to start? Get at least four to five times as many subjects as you will require for your committee, since most will NOT have the capacity to enter a deep hypnotic trance. Remember, you are SPECIFICALLY interested in subjects who are somnambulists or hypnotics.

THINNING THE FIELD

Assuming your opening has produced a stage full of eager volunteers and with the criteria just mentioned in mind, you can now begin the process of thinning the field. With a lot of volunteers, the easiest way to do this is to proceed to a rapid hypnotic induction and test to identify the most highly suggestible subjects in the group.

RAPID INDUCTION AND TESTING

The following technique is designed to rapidly induce hypnosis in the most susceptible subjects in the group. Give them some point to focus on, which is correctly positioned to produce eye strain. A stage light or other light is ideal.

“Thank you for coming up. Obviously, there are more people than we can accommodate comfortably on stage, so we shall start with a brief test to find those with the best concentration. This varies from person to person, so if I ask you to return to your seat—please do not get offended. Let’s proceed. Please sit back in your chairs with both feet flat on the floor. Make sure you are comfortable.”

Note: If you have more subjects than chairs, which sometimes happens. Have the subjects without chairs stand behind and hold the chair in front of them for support. In this case, you must use caution that a subject does not let go of the chair before he goes to sleep and falls.

“Concentrate on my voice, listen only to my voice. Let all other noise and distractions fade away. Focus your eyes on the light in front of you. Look steadily at the light. Now I want you to think about relaxing every muscle in your body. First, relax your toes and feet. Every muscle is becoming completely and totally relaxed. Moving up to your legs, now your calf and thigh muscles are relaxing. As you take in a deep breath and slowly exhale, your chest and stomach muscles are relaxing. Now down each arm all the way to your fingertips, every muscle is relaxing. All of the tension in your neck muscles and head is now draining away and relaxation is flowing through every fiber of your being. You feel light, relaxed and totally at ease, and you are listening only to the sound of my voice. Nothing else matters, just my voice. Any other sound just makes you concentrate more intently on my voice.”

“With each and every breath you take, you are growing more and more relaxed, more and more at ease. Your eyes are beginning to get heavy, very, very heavy. On the count of three, close your eyes and keep them closed tightly together. One. Two Three. Close your eyes. With your eyes closed, you can rest now and go deep, deep asleep. You are so very, very tired. It will feel good to go to sleep. Go to sleep now, go deep asleep.”

“Concentrate on your eyes. Your eye lids are closed tightly together, so tightly you cannot open them. They are stuck shut and you cannot open them no matter how hard you try. Try to open your eyes, you cannot. They are shut tightly together.”

You’ll recognize the Eyes Wide Shut test from Chapter Two. This rapid induction technique and test should help you eliminate the vast majority of the volunteers who do not have somnambulistic tendencies. Scan the group carefully and begin dismissing any subjects whose eyes are open or who have a smile or smirk on their face. Just tap them on the shoulder and ask them to quietly return to their seats in the audience, so as not to disturb the other subjects sleeping on stage. At this point, make sure to remove the suggestion but have the subjects keep their eyes closed.

If need be, you can now perform additional elimination tests until you reach the desired number of subjects for your committee. Obviously, if your invitation for volunteers was less than fruitful, you cannot be as discerning in this selection process.

AN ALTERNATIVE APPROACH

It is not necessary to begin with a rapid induction. Some performers start off by putting different groups of subjects each through their own elimination test while still in the waking state. Those who fail are dismissed, while those who respond are kept. If the group is still too large, the hypnotist may use another test to thin out the responsive subjects even further. The choice is yours. Structure your show in the way that suits you and your performance conditions best. In either case, the end result is the same—you will have identified the most suggestible subjects in the group and dismissed the rest.

HANDLING THE COMMITTEE

At this point, make sure to separate any friends or couples who came up together. You can do this by rearranging their seating positions. The seating order should always be stranger next to stranger. Otherwise you run the risk of an ongoing disruption during your performance.

ODD AND EVEN SUBJECTS

One of the most effective tools for managing subjects for various routines on stage is to assign a number to each at the beginning of the show. It's the same technique physical education teachers often employ when picking sides for sports. Each subject counts off in order...one, two, three, four, etc. This number makes it easy for the hypnotist to identify and manage each subject. He can simply say, "Subject three will do so and so." In addition to helping handle subjects individually, they can also be divided into odd and even groups. In this way, routines can be performed where odd subjects are given one suggestion, and even subjects an opposing one—such as odd subjects get hot and even ones get cold. You can imagine the tremendous potential of such a device.

BUILDING AN INTERESTING MIDDLE

The middle of the hypnotic show is comprised of routines. In a routine, subjects under hypnosis are placed in various dramatic situations. It is these situations which are the essence of hypnotic entertainment.

For example, in one classic sketch, a group of subjects is told they are all attending a party. Each is given a glass of ordinary water. However, they are told the liquid in their glasses is straight gin or vodka. The resulting actions and interactions are both hilarious and compelling, as the subjects grow more and more intoxicated drinking ordinary tap water.

This routine, by itself, is strong enough to stand alone. However some hypnotists get even more out of it by expanding on the premise. They start by having a male subject attempt to fill the glasses from a pitcher. However, before the subject tries to lift it, he is told the pitcher weighs over one thousand pounds. A grimace crosses over his face as he struggles and is unable to lift it. A second male subject is brought forward to help. He has no problem lifting the pitcher but—thanks to the hypnotist's suggestion—every time he tries to pour, his hand shakes so badly he can't get the liquid in the glasses! Finally, a third male subject is able to fill all of the glasses seemingly without a hitch—until he tries to set down the pitcher and finds his hand is now stuck to the handle. By combining all of these effects into a single story line, the dramatic tension builds and they become far more effective than if performed alone.

In a smoothly running show—every routine, effect and moment flows into the next. And even though the material may be varied, there is continuity. The audience gets to know the subjects and their unique personalities, much like the characters in a play. However, it is a play in which the plot is constantly changing around the actors, which makes it all the more captivating to watch.

THE STANDARDS

The best way to develop your own material is to see what others have done in the past. What follows are some standard routines which have been used successfully in hypnotic stage shows around the world. Much of this material has been around in some form or another for many decades. While it is constantly being updated to meet contemporary trends, the underlying premises, as well as the subject actions and interactions they produce, remain timeless.

The description for each routine is designed to provide you with a general framework. The final scripting, staging and presentation is up to you. No one can do this for you. You must take this material, adapt to your own style of presentation, and then refine it through performance after performance for real people. Every word, every movement, every gesture, along with the stagecraft of positioning the subjects, blocking, lighting, and music, etc., must all be worked out in advance. A true professional leaves nothing to chance.

Starting on the next page, you'll find over two dozen, audience-tested routines in no particular order. Some use one or two subjects, while others use half or all of the committee. It will be assumed that all of these effects are to be performed while the subjects are in a hypnotic trance, unless the routine specifies it is to be carried out, posthypnotically.

DRUNK ON WATER

Several subjects are told they are at a party. Each is given a glass of water, which they are told is straight gin or vodka. The effects and interactions are hilarious as the subjects grow increasingly intoxicated drinking tap water.

X-RAY SPECS

A male subject is given a pair of novelty store eye glasses (without lenses) to wear. He is told to close his eyes and when he reopens them—the glasses will enable him to see right through everyone's clothing. Everyone he looks at will appear completely naked. This routine will have your audience rolling in the aisles with laughter, though it may not be appropriate for all age groups. Use your discretion.

HOT SEAT

As a posthypnotic suggestion, a subject is told that a minute after awakening, the seat of her chair will begin to get hotter and hotter—until it's so hot the subject is forced to jump off of it. This routine can also be performed while the subject is "under."

HOT FOOT

Here's another posthypnotic suggestion with a similar premise to the last routine, Hot Seat. Only in this instance, instead of the chair, the subject is told his or her right shoe will get so hot, the person will not be able to keep it on. This one can also be worked simultaneously with a group of subjects.

HELLO EARTHLINGS

A subject is told he has just come to Earth from Mars and only speaks the Martian language. A second subject is asked to intercede as an interpreter. The hypnotist proceeds to ask a series of questions which are answered in a language of gibberish—seemingly incomprehensible to all except the two subjects. A truly fascinating demonstration of the resourcefulness of the human imagination.

THE FOREIGNER

Same idea as the last routine, Hello Earthlings. Except this time, the subject is a person from France and doesn't understand or speak a word of English.

SWEEP HER OFF HER FEET

A male subject is handed a broom and told it is a beautiful girl who would like to dance with him. After he dances across the stage with "her," you take the broom back and he waves goodbye to her.

STRONG MAN

A petite female subject is told she's at the health club. She is given a broom and told it's a lightweight, five-pound barbell. She proceeds to lift and curl the barbells with ease. After she puts them down, a male subject who has been told the same "barbells" weigh 200 pounds, comes over and struggles to lift them.

ELVIS LIVES!

A subject is told he is Elvis Presley and proceeds to sing a song like the "King."

CAN'T TEAR IT

A subject or group of subjects are each a given sheet of paper and told no one will be able to tear it, no matter how hard they try.

SHOW ME THE MONEY

While still under hypnosis, a subject is given a wad of (stage) money. He is informed there are some pickpockets around and for safekeeping, he should hide the bills in his shoes. His memory of this event is erased and he is awakened. When the subject is asked what he has in his shoes, he is astonished to find all of the stage money there!

THE HORSE RACE

A subject is told he is a winning jockey. With a backwards chair for a horse, the subject rides in the big race. The hypnotist serves as the race track announcer and calls the action.

MICE ON THE FLOOR

A group of subjects are told there are mice running across the floor in every direction. The reactions of the ladies and even some of the men, is hilarious. Some will even climb on chairs to get away! In days gone by, a swarm of bees was suggested which created an even more intense but distressful situation. It is not recommended.

WHO'S YOUR DADDY?

A female subject is handed a rag doll and told it's a real baby who needs its father in the audience. After finding him, she is to return to the stage. She is told she'll be able to recognize the father, because he has the same eyes as the baby. The subject will register genuine concern and go from man to man in the audience—staring directly into the eyes of each. Finally, when she finds one whose eyes match the baby's, she'll smile with delight and hand him the doll.

TOP GUN

A male subject is told his chair is the cockpit of a fighter jet and he is about to take off from a carrier deck in pursuit of an enemy plane. He is handed a carrot which he is told is the plane's control stick. The plane is launched and the subject maneuvers his plane through the sky as he is locked in a dogfight with the enemy.

GOODFELLAS AND GOODGALS

A group of subjects are told they are gangsters in the mafia and they are meeting the new head of the family for the first time. The new boss is one of the female subjects, who the rest of the group is told they must address respectfully as the "Godmother." They are told they are upset with her, because the Godmother wants to improve the mob's image by having everyone wear more understated, preppy attire. She also plans on replacing the traditional heavy pasta meals with lighter, low fat salads.

FOUNTAIN OF YOUTH

A group of older subjects are told that scientists have discovered the fountain of youth. Each is given a glass of water to drink and told that every sip will make them feel younger and younger. Ongoing suggestions by the hypnotist help guide the transformations taking place in the subjects. Likewise, in the same manner, younger subjects can be made to grow older and older. If there is an equitable division of old and young subjects on stage, these two feats can be performed concurrently to amazing effect.

CAN'T LET GO

One or more subjects are each given a tennis ball or other small object to hold. They are then informed it is covered with glue and they cannot let go.

TOO HOT TO HANDLE

Same set up as the last routine, Can't Let Go. Use this one alone or as a follow up. This time, the subjects are told the ball is getting hotter and hotter. When it gets too hot, the subjects have to let go. Obviously, if you use something other than a tennis ball, make sure it's not sharp or breakable.

BAD TIE

A female subject is given the posthypnotic suggestion that when awakened, she will criticize the obnoxious necktie her husband sitting next to her is wearing. She does this right on cue, except the man she tells off is not her husband at all—but a perfect stranger!

SPACE SHUTTLE

A group of subjects sitting in their chairs are told they are astronauts taking a trip in the space shuttle. You can even have one subject flying the ship, using a paper plate as a steering wheel, and another who space walks with the help of the others on-board—a piece of rope serving as the tether line. Routines of this type need ongoing narration (ie. specific suggestion) by the hypnotist, such as you're taking off, you're leaving our atmosphere and entering space, everyone is now weightless, look out for that asteroid, etc.

ASLEEP IN THE AUDIENCE

A male subject is given a posthypnotic suggestion that when awakened, he will jump from his chair and return to his seat in the audience—where he will immediately fall back into a very deep sleep. After the subject does this, your assistants are sent into the audience to get him. They lift him under the arms and carry him back to his chair on stage. He stays asleep the whole way!

STORMY WEATHER

A group of subjects are told they are on a wilderness expedition in the great outdoors. First the sun comes out and it gets very, very hot. The subjects begin getting very warm, sometimes even removing articles of clothing. Next, they are told the sun has moved behind some storm clouds. The sky is getting very dark and it starts to rain. The downpour gets heavier and heavier. The subjects react as if they are getting drenched and begin scrambling for cover. The rain starts to subside, but the wind is picking up now. It's a very chilling wind and everyone feels cold and wet. Finally, the sun comes back out and dries their clothes. The temperature is perfect now and there is a warm soothing breeze in the air. The routine ends with the subjects feeling completely comfortable.

STUCK ON YOU

As the hypnotist passes by each subject in a row, he "sticks" different parts of their bodies together. He places one subject's thumb on his or her forehead. On another, the palm is stuck to a person's knee or top of the his or her head, etc. Each struggles in vain to get free until the suggestion is removed.

THE PICKUP

A female subject is told she is an obnoxious, "lounge lizard" type of guy in a nite club. Two male subjects are told they are both beautiful young woman just out for a quiet drink at the same club. "Mr. Macho" now tries to pick up the "girls." The role reversal and ensuing banter is always comical.

THE RELUCTANT SMOKER

A subject is given a posthypnotic suggestion that when he awakens and lights a cigarette, it will taste like burning rubber. The subject takes a drag and begins coughing at the foul taste. Other suggestions for smokers include telling them they won't be able to put the cigarette in their mouth correctly or won't be able to light it.

CAN'T PICK UP MONEY

A quarter or other coin is placed on the floor and a subject is told he will be unable to pick it up.

WHO AM I?

A group of subjects are told they cannot remember their own names.

I KNEW I FORGOT SOMETHING

As a posthypnotic suggestion, a male subject is told that after he awakens and you snap your fingers once—he'll suddenly realize that he forgot to put any clothes on this morning and he'll be sitting there completely naked. When you snap your fingers twice, he will be fully clothed. This is a tremendously entertaining bit when used with the right subject (someone who is good natured with high self esteem) for the right audience (adult crowd). For a variation, you can allow the subject to return to his seat in the audience before you snap your fingers. If necessary, you can walk into the audience to "cue" him. Just make sure to direct him back toward the stage, not the exit, when he makes a mad dash.

THE INVISIBLE HYPNOTIST

This routine is a very powerful demonstration of the fascinating effects of negative hallucination. Instead of seeing something which is not there, as in (positive) hypnotic hallucination, the subject DOES NOT SEE something which really exists. This can be the hypnotist, the subject's friend or spouse, or any other tangible item. The subject is told that when her eyes are opened, she will be able to hear and feel the hypnotist—but not see him. He will be completely invisible. The hypnotist is able to move around the subject and speak, clap his hands, etc., but the subject cannot see him. The subject follows the noise at the moment it occurs, but clearly cannot see the hypnotist. The hypnotist even waves his hands in front of the subject's face with no reaction at all. Then, the subject is told when the hypnotist snaps his fingers by her ear, he will instantly be visible again. He does so and the subject is clearly startled to see the hypnotist reappear out of thin air.

BREAKING FOR INTERMISSION

At some point during the hypnotic routines of a full evening show, there will be a brief period for intermission. Most hypnotists handle this by giving the committee a posthypnotic suggestion that they will return to their same seats on stage after the intermission upon receiving a pre-specified cue. This can be a piece of music, like a certain overture, a signal by the hypnotist, or another device, such as the audience's applause. Imagine everyone returning to their seats in the audience, including the subjects. The hypnotist who stands alone on the stage asks, "So have you enjoyed the show so far? If so, please put your hands together for all of the terrific and talented volunteers we have helping us tonight." The applause then triggers the posthypnotic effect. Seeing all of the subjects return to the stage on command, as it were, is an impressive feat in itself.

CLOSING THE SHOW

Ending on a high note is just as important as getting your show off to the right start. You need a climax that will leave a strong impression, since your audience will remember best what they saw last. For this reason, many hypnotists choose a posthypnotic effect as a finale.

Whatever effect you choose, you should always use your best subjects—those who emerged as the stars of the show. This will help remind the audience of some of the special moments during the evening, as well as help assure a good result when it's needed most.

One very effective approach is to allow all of the subjects to return to their seats, as if the show is over. Then, on cue, the specified subjects begin carrying out the suggestions—either by returning to the stage or while still in the audience.

Here's just one example. A posthypnotic suggestion is given to a subject that after returning to his seat, on your signal, he will be a zoo keeper who has just learned that one of the chimpanzees has escaped and was last spotted running around loose on the stage. It is the subject's job to try and catch the elusive monkey. The hilarious nature of the ensuing action of this subject

chasing after an invisible primate should be obvious and it is just one way you can add an exclamation point to your performance.

LET YOUR SUBJECTS TAKE THE BOWS

As covered earlier in this guide, remember to let your subjects take the bows. Make them the stars of your show and you will be rewarded handsomely in return. In addition, always try to position yourself so the audience has an unobstructed view of the subjects in action. Whenever possible, have the subjects directly face the audience and never stand in front of them with your back to the audience.

TERMINATING POSTHYPNOTIC EFFECTS

Every hypnotist uses some device to terminate the effects of all posthypnotic suggestions in his subjects at the end of the show. The great Ormond McGill recommends a whistle. While this may sound a bit abrasive, it is a very effective way of assuring that the signal can be heard above the din of background audience noise.

STAGE EQUIPMENT/CONSIDERATIONS

The equipment requirements of the hypnotic show are few, however the professional hypnotist must be prepared to supply whatever is required. This includes folding chairs, a small folding table, props, a rug (if the subjects will be laying or crawling on the stage), and a portable PA system with tape deck and microphone. Lighting and stage conditions will vary with the venue and may range from a formal stage with proper lighting and curtains to a raised platform in a school auditorium with no backstage area—some performers carry their own portable backdrops for this reason. Be prepared to adjust to the conditions you encounter.

If available, use low lighting with blue gels for the initial induction of the subjects. It will aid in the concentration of the subjects on stage and make it difficult for the audience to see any sarcastic facial expressions by the non-hypnotics in the group. Bright stage lights will inhibit the subjects and their

ability to concentrate on the induction process, so at the very least turn the stage lights down. Afterward, they can be gradually brought back up.

Stage conditions and personnel permitting, a “baby” spotlight can be used to highlight the performer’s face even while the subjects are dimly lit and a front spot light used when the performer is facing the audience or to emphasize a demonstration with an individual subject.

Music and sound effects add a great deal to any theatrical performance, including one in hypnosis. So take advantage of them whenever possible.

PERSONNEL REQUIREMENTS

One or two knowledgeable assistants go a long way in a hypnotic stage show. In addition, to setting up and moving chairs and props for routines, they can handle the music, lighting and PA system. Assistants are also invaluable for directing volunteers at the beginning of the show, as well as helping them leave the stage if dismissed. With the important behind-the-scenes functions in capable hands, the performer is free to concentrate on showmanship and presentation. The result is an effective and smooth running stage show.

CONFEDERATES AND PSEUDO-HYPNOTISM

In any serious guide on stage hypnosis, these topics need to be addressed. While neither has any real place in a full evening hypnotic show, you should be aware of how they operate.

Over the years, there have been poor stage hypnotists who have resorted to planting one or more shells in their group of subjects. These “subjects” are really actors and actresses who perform as if they were genuinely hypnotized. Needless to say, the accomplished professional should have no need for such tactics. While some shows do employ “paid” subjects for use in potentially dangerous feature effects, like suspending a subject between two chairs, these subjects are not passed off as members of the general public.

The same goes for tricks of so-called pseudo-hypnotism. Sometimes used by professional magicians, they resemble some minor effects of genuine hypno-

sis. One of these tricks calls for a subject to close his or her eyes and with the eyes still closed, concentrate on looking upward. The performer then tells the subject, "You cannot open your eyes. Try to open your eyes." The person tries and fails. The experiment, while similar in appearance to the Eyes Wide Shut test, works not because of the power of suggestion—but because it is physically impossible to open your eyes while looking up with them closed.

Still another method of hypnotic fakery is called "Cold Cuing." Globe-trotting magician and illusionist, John Calvert, is an absolute master of this. During his regular stage show, Calvert will invite several men at random to come up from the audience. There is no real selection process. "Hypnosis" is induced in seconds and the men proceed to amuse the audience with an array of hypnotic antics. The phenomena appears to be related to muscular catalepsy and hypnotic control, but in reality is the result of direction Calvert gives to the subjects using a stage whisper. Calvert's sheer presence and commanding showmanship help to assure that the subjects "go along" with his requests and have fun in the process of "putting one over on the audience." It is only a brief segment during his show, but most in the audience walk away convinced they have witnessed genuine hypnotic phenomena.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Remember, as the old saying goes—it is not what you do, but how you do it. The greatest downfall of hypnotists starting out (and this applies equally to magicians, as well) is that they either fail to prepare adequately or they overreach in their choice of material. In either case, the result is the same—disaster, or at the very least, mediocrity.

The experienced performer, on the other hand, knows both his material and limitations. He selects material which is well within the scope of his ability and practices it until it becomes automatic. That's why, when he walks out on stage, he exudes confidence. This puts his subjects and the audience at ease, since both know they are in capable hands. Your audience "wants" to believe in you and "wants" to be entertained. In fact, they've paid for the privilege. Unless you give them reason to doubt you, you cannot help but be a success.

A SUBJECT'S PERSPECTIVE



Chapter Seven

A SUBJECT'S PERSPECTIVE

The following article provides one of the most compelling accounts ever written of a hypnotic stage show from a subject's perspective. It should be made required reading for all aspiring hypnotists.

The author and her friend were subjects in a performance by the world-renowned hypnotist, Peter Reveen. Mr. Reveen has temporarily retired from his stage hypnotism career to manage magician Lance Burton. He and his wife currently reside in Las Vegas, Nevada.

Here is Michelle Rainer's first hand account of hypnosis from a subject's perspective. Her article first appeared in the Arts section of "The Peak," the student newspaper of Simon Fraser University in Burnaby, British Columbia, Canada, on February 23, 1998.

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REVEEN: Look into my eyes

by Michelle Rainer

“**HI**, pleased to meet you,” says the man in the black suit as he strides confidently into a conference suite at the Four Seasons Hotel. Trim and bespectacled, he is below average height and of indeterminate age. His hair has that “Just For Men” sheen. He looks a bit like Bruno Gerussi, but he could be anyone—your friend’s dad, a car salesman, the energetic senior citizen who works at McDonald’s to ease the boredom of retirement.

But he’s not anyone. He’s The Impossibleist. He’s the man they call Reveen.

As a child, there are certain siren songs that drift out of the television set that cannot be ignored. Lego, a pummeling of bratty baby brother, the most concentrated tasks of childhood must be dropped immediately upon their intrusion, and one must turn, youthful eyes glazed with mute obedience, toward the TV screen.

But of all the jingles, catch-phrases, and snappy tunes indoctrinated into my pre-adolescent brain, none was so powerful or long-lasting as the magical strains of Reveen’s promotional ad. Every year or two, my TV would sing to me, teasingly, “You’ll never forget Reveen.”

There's something about Reveen that fascinates. Like a TV commercial that runs for 15 years and still reels in the crowds, he's a winning mix of schmaltz and savvy, showy glitz and keen understanding of the human mind.

At his show the night before, his entrance is a caricature of a Vegas showman or a 19th century carnival barker. The house lights dim, strobe lights bounce and reflect off a giant disco ball in time to the pulsing of suitably high energy music, and the crowd's anticipation grows until you can actually feel it.

But it goes on just a little too long. The music keeps pulsing, the strobes keep flashing, the disco ball keeps spinning, and still there's no sign of the man. Then, after we start to feel a little restless, the curtain goes up and Reveen takes the stage.

Even as a little boy in Australia, Reveen was always interested in theatrics. "At age six—which is a very common age for people to get interested in conjuring or being a magician—I saw a lady magician performing. She produced a beautiful big rabbit out of this flaming dish and I thought that was great," he tells me. "Then she gave us all a little drink out of a bottle and said it was raspberry cordial. Then she broke the bottle and pulled a guinea pig out of it and said it was guinea pig wine."

Reveen was hooked. He began to learn everything he could about magic, haunting the little magic shops, picking up tricks, performing them for whoever he could convince to watch him. By the time he was 12, he was a "semi-professional magician" who made a tidy little profit playing parties and socials in his neighbourhood.

Then one day, he read an article in a magazine about hypnotism. It described an American padre (preacher) who hypnotized some soldiers during World War II to entertain the troops. "It described the whole thing," says Reveen "and I was fascinated."

Like any 12 year-old who stumbles upon such a piece of information, Reveen tried it on a friend. To his surprise, it worked. But the young Reveen wasn't satisfied just knowing hypnosis was possible. He wanted to know why.

Using the money he made with his magic show, he started to haunt second-hand bookstores to find out more about hypnotism. He read medical books about the pioneers in the field who had tried to move hypnotism beyond the quackery of mesmerism, and history books about James Braid, who coined the term based on the Greek word "hypnos", the goddess of sleep (a name he later regretted as too sensational, as hypnosis has nothing to do with sleep).

Still, Reveen never planned to become a hypnotist. Although his true love was theatre, his parents wanted him to be a doctor. After high school he was stalling, trying to think of a way to go to the Royal Academy of the Arts in England instead of going medical school. As fate would have it, his old preoccupation with hypnotism came in handy when the subject came up at a party. "I jumped right in and said, 'Yes, this is a very interesting science,' and they turned on me. They said 'This is dangerous,' and 'You don't know what you're talking about.' And I said 'It is not dangerous, it is purely suggestion. It is not some mystical force.' "I tried to explain it and they argued back and I stormed out of the party."

Piqued, Reveen decided to tune up his hypnosis skills to prove them wrong. He was still doing his magic show, now with a volunteer group that did shows for charity. Reveen went to the producer and asked if he could do a hypnosis demonstration instead, and invited everyone from the party to come and watch.

"To make a long story short," says Reveen, "I walked off the stage at the end of 83 minutes to a standing ovation. The people from the party all came up to me and said, 'Peter, you've got something here. You were telling us the truth. You should make this into a career.' "And I did. That was goodbye, Royal Academy of the Arts and goodbye any other ambitions."

After a couple of tawdry magic and memorization tricks (one of which doesn't work), and a few corny jokes ("How many of you folks believe in reincarnation?—It's nice to have you back"), Reveen finally gets down to business.

"Hypnosis," he tells us, "is the science of superconscious psychology." It involves nothing more than "applying the power of suggestion to the creative capability of the human mind." He then invites those members of the audience who want to be hypnotized to come up to the stage.

For a moment, my friend Michelle and I look at each other. "Should we go get hypnotized?" I ask. "Let's go," she says, and the next thing we know, we're joining the 150 or so other hopefuls on stage with Reveen.

In order to weed out those not entirely susceptible to the power of suggestion, Reveen goes through a process of elimination. The first round involves about half the men on stage. They are to close their eyes and clasp their hands together over their foreheads. They are to listen only to the sound of Reveen's voice as he tells them to hold their hands tighter and tighter together.

They are unable to unclasp them, he tells them, until the touch of his hand sets them free.

To the rest of us in the theatre, these men look ridiculous. They stand trembling with the exertion of their effort, until, one by one, Reveen comes around and grabs their fists, Earnest Angley style, and they are released from their trance. It looks as though they are all faking.

After the test, only about 25 percent of them remain. Next, it's our turn. Reveen tells us to stand up, tilt our heads back, and focus on a point in the distance. "You are feeling comfortable and relaxed," he says, "Your eyes feel moist and heavy."

Suddenly, the blue light I have been focusing on turns misty and dim. My eyelids droop, and I sway gently, forwards and back, still balanced on my feet. Reveen's voice (which sounded like it came from the bottom of a tin can—if one could get a slap echo in a tin can) is all I notice or care about. It is all around me and in my brain, it tells me to close my eyes and I close my eyes. It tells me to close them tighter and I close them tighter and tighter, as tight as I can.

I won't be able to open them until the touch of Reveen's fingers lets me. I can hear the odd peal of laughter from the audience. I can feel Michelle's arm reassuringly close to mine, I can see the purple light against the black and red of my lids. But I cannot open my eyes, even as a part of me wonders how hard I'm really trying.

Finally, Reveen taps my forehead. At first, I don't respond. After all, I'm only supposed to open my eyes for Reveen, and what if that's not him? Then, he taps again, more insistently, and my eyes fly open. A bit bewildered, I'm told to sit back down. Michelle and I have both passed the first test.

When Reveen started out on his career as a hypnotist, the profession was not exactly venerated. He and his wife toured the small cities and towns surrounding Melbourne, crammed into a tiny Peugeot and barely making enough money to survive.

“What I didn't realize was that really, I was on a missionary programme, selling this. Because the conception at that time was that hypnotism was totally fake—and it was, as a stage entertainment.

“A guy would roll into town who may have had a dog act the year before. He would have some posters printed up, saying ‘The Great Hypnotist’ and then he'd walk into a bar and get three or four people and say, ‘jump up and down as if you're hot every time I stare at you,’ and then everybody in that small town would know [it was staged] after the guy had gone. “We didn't really realize the impact our show was having, because every [audience member] on our stage was known to everyone in the town. So, suddenly, when people went up to question them after the show, they'd say, ‘Well, what was it like?’ and they'd answer, ‘Well, it felt marvelous, but I'm not sure what I'd did,” and their friends would have to explain it to them.”

When an American promoter convinced him to go to Honolulu, Reveen took his show on the road. The promoter stole all his money, but Reveen's been touring the world ever since. The 75 or so of us who have proven ourselves hypnotically susceptible sit on stage behind Reveen. The Impossibleist has his back to us as he addresses the full house at the Queen Elizabeth Theatre. The backlighting makes a halo of his gun-metal grey hair, which is feathered out around his head, Bee Gees style. He turns around to face us, and the spotlights catch at the sequins on his vest. I notice he is wearing lifts.

Then, once again, his voice washes over us. We close our eyes, as he pulls us deeper and deeper down into a state of supreme relaxation. He tells us our right arm is growing lighter and lighter, and it floats up of its own accord. He tells us to let it fall, and it drops back into my lap with a thud.

"You are a great musician," says Reveen. "You can play any instrument in the world." I picture myself with two turntables and a mixer with a pulsing crowd going off in front of me. Yeah. "You are in the world's greatest marching band," he continues. Marching band? The needle hits a scratch, then screeches across the record as the crowd stops dancing and looks up in bewilderment. I try desperately to replace my instrument with the jazz trumpet, but it's too late. I've been de-hypnotized.

The word 'hypnotism' is a misnomer," explains Reveen. "It isn't really a sleep state and it isn't really a trance state. If you had someone in a trance that person would be totally under your control. However, if I were to give a suggestion that went against a moral or a religious belief—which I'm very careful never to do—that person would just instantly disobey it."

In all the years he's been performing, Reveen says no one has ever gotten angry with him for the things they did while under hypnosis, mostly because he never crosses the line between harmless fun and potential cult leader. "It's a theatrical experience," he insists, "it's not a degrading experience...I never got into the gutter with the show."

After I snap out of it, I look around the stage to see what every one else is doing. Most people are bemused, blinking, disoriented.

But some of them actually seem to be hypnotized. A girl in her early twenties is playing the drums enthusiastically, keeping time to the cheesy marching band

music blaring out over the speakers. An old man in a turtleneck is playing the piano, standing up out of his chair to reach the farthest keys. There are flutists, violinists, and trombone players. One woman is playing the spoons.

I look over at Michelle for a “can you believe this?” giggle, only to find that Michelle has been magically spirited away, only to be replaced by a mindless clone who sits, eyes closed, mutely smashing two cymbals together. I want to laugh. I want to poke her. I want her to keep going. I want to see what she'll do.

To be hypnotized, you've got to be willing, says Reveen. “I can't hypnotize anybody who doesn't want to be hypnotized.” You've got to be relaxed and comfortable, and you've got to be sane. Got visions of extra-crazy acid trips? Forget it. You can't be under the influence of psychedelic drugs.

“I was able to prove something to my kids which kept them off the drugs pretty well,” says Reveen. “When they used to work with me on the stage, I'd say, ‘Now, see this person? This person's on drugs, you can see it in their eyes. They think they're super, but you watch—their mind will not be worth a damn when they have to concentrate.’ And sure enough, they'll fail it every time. ‘Because one's an artificial, chemically-induced state, the other one requires a mental conditioning and a discipline.”

Reveen and his assistants (who are actually his sons) clear those of us who haven't been hypnotized off the stage. We go back to our seats and watch the 20 or so people left up there, still playing away in their imaginary band. They seem to get more and more involved. A woman in a long khaki dress is playing the violin like a virtuoso. Suddenly, she leaps from her seat and begins to conduct the band, invisible baton waving, arms flapping, body gyrating, blonde

hair flying madly around her, until one of the stage hands guides her back to her chair.

Finally, Reveen tells them to stop playing and get up and take a bow. He tells them the crowd loved them. We clap along with the pretense, and they get up. Some of them are beaming with pride, bowing over and over again.

Reveen tells them we're going to take a break. He says they will walk off the stage and then dance a merry Irish jig down the aisles. After ten minutes, they'll return to their seats. But when the signature Reveen music strikes up again, they'll feel an uncontrollable urge to return to the stage.

Then, with 20 people hypnotized and immobile behind him, he takes the opportunity to make a plug for his three self-help CDs, designed to help you relax, gain confidence, or quit smoking. Dressed in a matching tuxedo and sequined vest, his wife stands beside him, holding up the aforementioned items like a Price is Right hostess.

Finally, Reveen instructs his captives to walk off the stage. Sure enough, as soon as they've gone down the stairs, they break into dance. Suddenly, a dozen Michael Flatleys and as many of his corkscrewed partners are prancing down the aisles and out into the lobby. I get up and try to find Michelle, but she's danced off somewhere. After ten minutes, I see her back in her seat.

She looks dull and dazed, and says she feels weird—like she's on drugs. She doesn't remember anything. The house lights go down again and Reveen tells his subjects, now all back in the audience, that when his signature music starts up again, they will return to the stage. However, they won't want him to notice, so they'll have to sneak up.

The music starts, and instantly Michelle gets up quietly and steps past me. She runs, crouched over, along the bottom of the stage and creeps up to her old chair. Most of the others return too, as well as one man who managed to get hypnotized from his seat at the back of the theatre. The old guy who was playing the piano is the best—he bypasses the stairs, pulling himself up on the ledge of the stage instead, then dropping into a Viet Nam vet roll until he lands crouched below his chair, then springs up to take his seat.

For the next hour, the scene on stage resembles a drama class in which every student is a master of comedic improvisation, and no one suffers from the slightest degree of stage fright or self-doubt. Suddenly, these ordinary people are survivors of the Titanic, tap dancers, mafioso crime bosses, and ballerinas.

Reveen tells a clean-cut blonde guy dressed all in black that he's the world's greatest French lover, and he's going to make love to the microphone. Right on cue, the guy sidles up to the mike, hips thrust forward, eyes intent on the object of his desire. He grabs it, and with a masterful "J'aime. Je ne sais, baby," breathes heavy into its amplifying head. When he starts to run his tongue up and down the shaft, Reveen quickly rushes up and snaps him out of it.

This is what makes it all worthwhile for Reveen: This transformation of the ordinary person into someone who has an entire theatre full of people captivated.

"Very seldom do you really get instant gratification. But in the theatre, we do have instant gratification. We stand on the stage, the audience gives us their emotions, for giving a good show. [The volunteers] are enjoying that..." How many people do you know that go to a party and sit in the corner watching everybody else tell the jokes, and in a way envy it, and think 'I wish I could get

up and get this crowd responding to me like this. Well, they do. I turn them into stars for that time that they're on stage... A lot of people come back to have the experience again. It's good for them. They feel great. They're really amazed to find that they could be that creative."

Reveen also uses his talent to spread a little love around. Before he brings people out of hypnosis, he gives them a kind of superconscious, inspirational pep talk.

"The final part of the show is very important to me," he says. "That little five minutes where you really get the chance to give the people some benefits from it. It's just quiet, it's not preachy, but it's there you will have a great self-confidence... 'hate' is a word that you'll lose from your vocabulary as though it's a process that's beneath the dignity of your intellect... their powers of concentration are going to be better, they'll be able to relax and sleep better."

Curious, I call Michelle the next day to see if she feels more confident and less hateful. While she hasn't noticed a change in this department yet, she says she had a great day at work. "I was completely destressed. I felt really good, really relaxed... I was on a high."

Positive benefits aside, that's still a lot of power to have over people. Hasn't he ever been tempted, just a little, to see how far he could take it? To see just what he could get people to do?

"No, no," says The Impossibleist, shaking his head with a chuckle. "My wife wouldn't allow me to get any pompous ideas like that. She'd say, "Who do you think you are? Reveen?"

MARKETING  YOURSELF

Chapter Eight

MARKETING YOURSELF

MARKETING TOOLS

The most important marketing tool you can have is a good show. Without that, the best promotion in the world will probably not get you booked. And even if it does, you will never get rebooked.

So we'll assume you've put together a great hypnotic show. What next? In the early days, hypnotists relied primarily on posters and window cards to promote their shows. While these items are still sometimes used, they do not have the same significance they once had.

Whether you plan to book yourself or go through an agent, here are some essential marketing tools:

PHOTOS

Place these at the top of your list. You must have professional 8 x 10 B&W and color theatrical photos, not snap shots. Get both a head and shoulders shot and a full length shot of yourself. Wear whatever you normally perform in, whether that's a tuxedo, a business suit, a polo shirt, or a bright red vest. You should also have several photos taken from your show. These should be action shots that really capture the moment and subjects' expressions. Again, pay for professional photography.

STATIONERY

No need to go overboard. A clean layout and black or a single color of ink printed on nice, matching stock will work fine.

THE MEDIA KIT

Once you have some great images, you can put together a media kit. This name is a bit of a misnomer, since this package will be used to market your services to serious clients and agents, as well as to generate publicity. This package usually consists of a pocket folder along with a number of inserts, including:

- B&W and/or Color Photos
- A Bio which tells your background, experience and most notable accomplishments in hypnosis.
- A list of references, including where you've worked and whom you've worked for—especially corporate sponsors, top hotels or venues, etc. Testimonials recommending your show belong here.
- A brochure, flyer or other promotional piece describing your show and why someone would want to book it.
- Copies of any newspaper or magazine articles written about you.
- Your current schedule and availability, along with booking/contact information. If you have a Web site, make sure to include your URL as well.
- A professional video with clips from your show, if available. No video is better than an unprofessional one.
- A business card.

If your budget permits, the folder and inserts can be custom printed. However, this is by no means essential, so long as the presentation looks professional and it compliments your stationery.

WEB SITE

Think of it as a full color capabilities brochure that promotes your show to the both prospective bookers and the media from around the world. And it's accessible 24 hours a day. A Web site is absolutely essential in show business today.

BROCHURE/FLYER

The purpose of this piece is to generate interest in your show. It does not need to be elaborate or printed in full color, but it should be professional in appearance. Make sure it is designed so it can be used as part of your media kit, mailed with a letter, or sent by itself as a stand alone (teaser) mailing piece.

VIDEO

Used correctly, there is no more compelling tool for booking your show. However, you cannot do it on the cheap. It must be professionally produced with quality sound and music tracks, smooth transitions, and good clear footage. Limit it to about 10 minutes in length.

NEWS RELEASE

Have a stock press release written about your show which can be easily updated and sent to the local print and broadcast news organizations along with your media kit. Even if they don't use the release, you may get a feature story or interview out of it. Hypnosis is an unusual enough subject that many editors will consider it newsworthy.

POSTERS/WINDOW CARDS

Okay, the real reason anyone becomes a hypnotist or magician for that matter, is so they can have their own poster. Right? They do serve a useful purpose to promote touring shows and for easel displays in hotel lobbies, club entranceways, etc., so go ahead and create one! Feel better now?

VENUES FOR HYPNOTISM

Once you've developed an hour and a half, or two hour "Concert of Hypnotism" show, it's just a matter of scaling it down and adapting your material to meet the demands of the venue. Here are some of the markets for professional stage hypnosis:

- Corporate Events
- Special Events
- Fund Raisers
- Fairs
- School Assemblies
- Colleges/Universities
- Resort Hotels
- Cruise Ships
- Comedy Clubs
- Lounges and Nite Clubs
- Casinos

SPONSORED SHOWS

In the early days, hypnotic shows often barn-stormed. This means they went on a tour with or without the help of a theatrical agent or advance man and took their show on the road—travelling from town to town. When they arrived, they would rent the local theater or hall, put up some posters to generate interest and sell tickets. They would then do the show and move on. Those were, of course, the days before cable and satellite TV, the Internet, and a lot of other forms of entertainment and recreation.

Today, marketing a touring show requires more sophistication. Selling tickets takes more than just a few posters and window cards put on display—it takes a presence in the community. For that reason, many touring shows nowadays cultivate a business relationship with a local school or civic organization. These groups will often sponsor the show and use it as a fund-raising mechanism. Their students or members are then pressed into service selling tickets to family and friends. This usually assures a good turnout.

If the show is successful, it will usually be booked for the following year. The hypnotist's reputation and drawing power growing year by year, until the show becomes established as a "must-attend" event in the community.

Still other performers retain "boiler room" telephone sales people or organizations to drive their ticket sales. While this kind of an approach may generate revenue, it will often result in lot more "no shows." This makes it a dangerous practice for a hypnotic show that depends upon a good, highly motivated audience for its success.

FINDING YOUR NICHE

Successful people in all walks of life have one thing in common—they find their niche. First, they learn what they do best and then they work hard at doing it better than anyone else. Beginning on the next page, you'll see examples of very effective marketing materials used by three top flight professional hypnotists. Each of these performers understands who their target audience is and what it takes to get these people to book their show.

While all of their concepts are unique and exciting, each message is tailored to their own specific target audience(s). Here are a few things they do share:

- Strong benefit-oriented copy
- Excellent photography/graphics
- Great references/testimonials from clients in the markets targeted

Before you begin marketing yourself take time to analyze your own strengths and weaknesses. Ask yourself what sets you apart from the pack? Then determine who your target audience(s) will be. Once you've answered those questions, you'll be ready to start developing a truly effective marketing package.

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ROBERT IAN

Robert Ian is a Hypnotist, Mentalist and Motivational Speaker.

When you book Robert for your next meeting, convention or special event you get more than a speaker, more than an entertainer and more than a motivator. You get Business Theater™.

Robert Ian's Business Theater™ combines astounding entertainment, inspiring motivation and straightforward information you can use right away on teamwork, leadership and managing change. Your program can feature all entertainment, all message or a mix in-between.

You'll relax with Robert's "no-hassle" booking policy. All travel expenses (except lodging) are included in the fee. You'll never be surprised with an unexpected travel invoice when you book Robert.

Incredible Stage Hypnosis Show and Motivational Talk™ (under good-natured hypnotic suggestion, audience volunteers sing like Elvis, talk like Martians and dance the macarena)

Meetings • Conventions • Special Events • Shows • Speeches • Seminars •
Over 2000 Worldwide Appearances • Audiences of 10 to 4000 • Clients from
Amoco to Zenith

CHRISTINE MICHELE

Are you looking for a HIP hypnotist?! Well you just found her!!! Lady Hypnotist, Christine Michele, is a professional stage hypnotist, workshop presenter and Certified Clinical Hypnotherapist. Her hilarious hypnosis shows are great comedy entertainment! Perfect for holiday parties, colleges, fairs, night clubs, theaters, US Navy ship's parties, grad nights, wedding receptions & other special events!



What makes Lady Hyp so, well, HIP? First of all, she's not your usual lounge act! She's one of the youngest professional stage hypnotists working today (even with her more than seven years of professional experience!) Plus, she's female, she's cute and she's HILARIOUSLY FUNNY!



"Jay Leno did our holiday party last year and your show was every bit as entertaining!"

-Chief of Police, LAPD

"One of the best programs our students have seen yet!"

-UCSD Assistant Resident Dean

"Fantastic! Truly the best event that we have ever sponsored!"

-Bevill State Community College



FLIP ORLEY

Flip Orley (aka "Hypnoman") has been performing stage hypnosis and comedy for over 18 years. He has been seen on Entertainment Tonight, The Today Show, Comic Strip Live, Ricki Lake, Maury Povich, Rolanda, Space Ghost Coast to Coast and many variety programs. Flip is working to reshape the image of hypnosis from something perceived to be of the vaudeville era into something palatable for the MTV generation.

Flip's one man show is setting comedy club attendance records from coast to coast. The Los Angeles Times attests that "...the beauty of Orley's show is that, because most of the humor comes from volunteers, no two performances are alike." The Dallas Morning News reports, "It's difficult to remain skeptical after seeing Flip transform a panel of well behaved audience members into a family of trailer park dwellers from Arkansas, southern accents and all!" Flip performs for comedy clubs, universities, and corporations around the country and around the world.

Rave Reviews + Experience = SUCCESS for you!

PAUL McKENNA

IN A CLASS BY HIMSELF

We will close this guide and chapter on marketing with a look at Paul McKenna, the world's best known hypnotist. He became a household name in the UK and many other parts of the world with the success of his TV specials, "The Hypnotic World of Paul McKenna." No small feat in a country with antiquated laws restricting the public performance of hypnosis without a permit!

McKenna's relaxed contemporary style, razor sharp technique and equally sharp wit have made him a top box office draw on tour. Like the true professional he is, McKenna makes it all look easy. Some news clips from his performances in New York City.



WACKY 'HYPNOTIC' TRICKS MAKE A SPELLBINDING ACT

NEW YORK POST: In the warmly recommended "Paul McKenna's Hypnotic World", running at Broadway's Roundabout Theater, the British hypnotist says the stars of the show are his volunteers from the audience.

He's right. Few forms of entertainment are more sure-fire than seeing audience volunteers come under the spell of as skilled a practitioner as McKenna.

And although such shows tend to be similar in various ways - certain time-proven screening tests, induction techniques and suggestions are routinely employed - no two are exactly the same as there's no telling how any individual volunteer might act under hypnosis.

Monday's audience gasped with delight when the reserved NYU student who McKenna hypnotized into thinking he was Michael Jackson gave an astonishingly apt dance performance. But the hypnotist almost can't lose. If the subject had enthusiastically given the worst possible Jackson imitation, the audience would have laughed just as hard.

McKenna had various subjects become Madonna and Elvis Presley, talk Martian to one another (and then translate); fall in love with a broom; and become naughty school kids.

McKenna ordered one hypnotized college student (whom he'd already gotten to put his pants on backwards) to give a big kiss to the first guy he saw in the audience. The student ran way out into the house, smooching a classically handsome fellow with an eagerness that might give the girlfriend he'd brought something to think about.

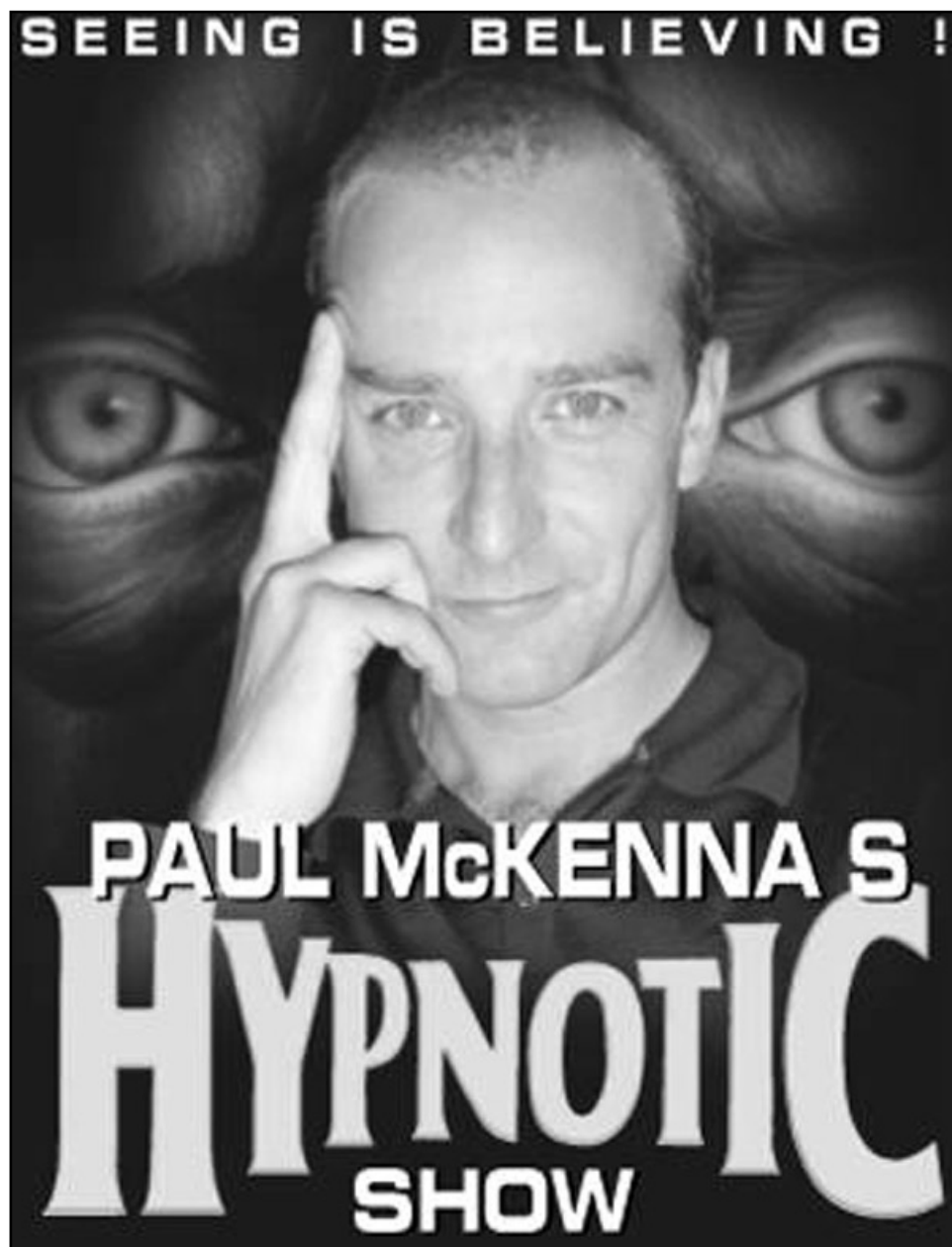
What McKenna is doing is hardly new. In hypnosis demonstrations in the 1920s, Emile Coue began by telling people their hands were becoming locked together like vices, as McKenna did. The arms-rising-and-falling business McKenna used may be found in any standard text like Harry Arons' "Master Course in Hypnosis".

And I've seen hypnotists with greater showmanship. (The cleverest did his trance induction while reading a magazine.) McKenna is matter-of-fact, occasionally even a bit snide (gratuitously calling those who didn't respond to one test "tight-assed"). But well publicized and drawing large enough crowds to guarantee a plethora of excellent subjects, he and his "stars" are giving highly diverting shows. Go!

HYPNOTIZING LEO

DAILY NEWS: Clever that Leonardo DiCaprio. He puts on a nerdy black baseball cap and thick black glasses and thinks he can sneak into "Paul McKenna's Hypnotic World" at the Roundabout Theater without being recognized.

We knew it was Leo right away. Not that he stopped to talk or anything. Instead he joined pal David Blaine and several attractive young women at the show Monday night. McKenna asks volunteers from the audience to get hypnotized, but DiCaprio did not volunteer. The gang invited McKenna to join them for dinner afterward at Piadina in the West Village, before moving on to Moomba. By Larry Sutton and Marcus Bara



The End

