

Scripts
& Strategies
in
Hypnotherapy

The
Complete
Works

Roger P. Allen Dp Hyp PsyV

*Scripts and
Strategies in
Hypnotherapy
The Complete Works*

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Introduction

By way of introducing this work, which contains much of that which is necessary to begin therapeutic practice using the medium of hypnosis, I feel that it is necessary to broadly define the elements that will be covered. Much has been written concerning the 'state' that is termed hypnosis and the attempts to describe it in scientific terms have been many. For the purposes of this book, I would describe the 'state' of hypnosis as an altered 'state' of awareness that will allow access to the subconscious, having reduced the critical analytical interference of the conscious rationalising processes. The process of inducing hypnosis is in effect a focusing of the conscious processes to a point where an altered 'state' of awareness is achieved. In this 'state', those activities can be relaxed to the point where we still 'hear', as our normal physical abilities are not impaired. This is similar to being engrossed in a television programme, whilst overhearing a conversation in the background. Basically, all else just fades into unimportance:

"There are three main components of the process of inducing hypnosis: relaxation, imagination, and enactment." (Hildegard and LeBaron, 1984)

The subconscious part of the mind continues to hear all that is to be heard and in the same manner continues to react to stimuli whether visual, tactile, oral, olfactory, but is not subject to the same degree of rational conscious processing. The subject is not asleep or unconscious. Information presented to the subconscious within this 'state' will not be subject to the alterations of perception that are the mark of conscious processing of information and stimuli. In stage hypnosis, this concept is often demonstrated by a suggestion such as that an onion given to the subject is in fact a juicy apple. The subconscious will accept the suggestion uninfluenced by the rational conscious mind. The subject will taste not an onion, but an apple.

Once trance 'state' has been induced, then a process of deepening can be used, relaxing even more the constant chatter of the inner mind, allowing for therapeutic change to take place at a subconscious level. In order that we can facilitate changes in attitudes and

behaviours, the therapeutic session continues using strategies that, when employed in conjunction with hypnosis, emulate recognised learning patterns. Suggestion therapy is very powerful, using positive affirmations that provide new and more beneficial responses to situations and conditions. The practice of couching meaningful messages within metaphors was widely employed by the father of modern clinical hypnosis, Dr Milton Erickson. He used this technique as further distraction of conscious rationalisation while the important new learning was assimilated at a subconscious level. Hypnotherapy is in fact a teaching process, as we utilise the capabilities and the potential of the subconscious, taking advantage of our ever-increasing knowledge of learning patterns. Whichever of the strategies is employed, they all have value and are effective. It is the skill and experience of the therapist in deciding which of the tactics available are most appropriate for his/her clients which will determine efficacy.

The hypnotherapy session concludes with a reorientation to conscious awareness, usually with a count. 'I am now going to count from one to five and on the count of five you will be fully awake and aware'. Of course, there is here an opportunity to give some suggestions such as, 'On the count of five you will be fully awake and aware, feeling relaxed and comfortable as if you have had a refreshing nap'. Discussion of the content of the therapy session is discouraged with the use of distractions such as, 'What have you planned for the rest of the day?'

Within the scripts and strategies, I have included some italicised text. These items are for the guidance of the reader in his/her use in therapy, and I trust that these and the manner in which the material is presented will allow for easy understanding and utilisation.

Roger P. Allen

P.S. A number of the scripts and strategies employ Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP) techniques. I would recommend that the reader take the opportunity to obtain some of the excellent works by Bandler & Grinder and by Andreas & Andreas on these concepts. I have included some of their works in the

acknowledgements (at the end of this book), and they are available from most good book stores, and from the publishers of this book.

P.P.S. I have referred to my clients in the masculine. This is not in any way intended as sexist, but as a means of simplifying the text.

Nail Biting

Using ideomotor response and anchors. See pages 263 and 265 for more details.

And now as you relax even deeper ... listening to the sound of my voice ... each word that I speak here can be a signal for you to go deeper still as you rest so comfortably and quietly there ... I wonder if you can really be aware now of how much more comfortable you can become ... as you begin now to sense in some safe and agreeable way ... a gentle connection between your mind and your body that has no part to play here ... all that is required is that you continue to allow those comfortable hypnotic sensations ... heaviness of arms ... of legs ... comfortably heavy ... to deepen even more ... as your whole body relaxes ... all tension just draining away ... and you can turn inwards now ... deep inside ... to where that part of you that is all knowing ... creative and perfect ... is ready now to do its best work for you ... to help you make those changes that you want to make ... that you can make and will make.

That's good (*client's name*) ... Now I would like you to allow your subconscious to take you back in time ... back to a time when you were really confident in your ability to take control and to be in control ... a memory of yours ... pleasant and reassuring ... when you really did feel good ... powerful ... assertive ... and allow that experience to develop and those good feelings to expand ... and when you are fully experiencing that event ... I want you to allow your subconscious to lift the index finger of your right hand ...

Touch the finger – ideomotor response.

If you experience any difficulty in recalling a memory that is appropriate ... then that's fine ... you can allow your subconscious to create a scene where you are confident and in total control ... go ahead now ...

Watch for responses including changes in skin tone and breathing as well as ideomotor response.

Now grasp firmly the shoulder or arm of the client and continue for about ten to fifteen seconds to establish the anchor.

That's good ... you are doing this very well ... and now I want you to allow that scene to fade and your mind to become calm and quiet as before. Now I would like you to allow your subconscious mind to show you a scene ... in the future ... at one of the next times when you bite your nails ... your hands staying where they are now comfortably in your lap there ... having no part to play here ... Allow that scene and that experience to develop and become real ... those feelings to expand and grow ... and allow your subconscious to let me know when that is done ... as that index finger of your right hand can lift.

Touch finger.

Watch for responses including changes in skin tone and breathing as well as ideomotor response.

Now grasp firmly the shoulder or arm of the client as before and continue for about ten to fifteen seconds to 'fire' the anchor.

That's fine ... you really are doing this well ... and I wonder now just how you feel about biting your nails ... how you will find it so easy to not do that anymore ... remembering how unpleasant and how bad it made you feel because now you know what you are not going to do ... and how to remind yourself with an irresistible response ... reaching deep into the subconscious of your mind ... that you will never ever be able to do that again in that way or at all ... because if you do then you will be doing it on purpose ... and that's a different matter entirely ... it all belongs to you.

Trance termination.

Confidence and Self-image

When you look in the mirror, what do you see? Is this the real you, or just another visual cue that will prompt your subconscious to deliver a pre-programmed perception of you, a product of past experiences and conditioning?

It is not so much what we see as how we see that commands our feelings of self-worth, and if we have become habituated to seeing ourselves as bad or inadequate then we will perpetuate that perception of self and project it into the world with all the sorry consequences for our quality of life.

The inner image needs to be changed to one that is beneficial and cognisant of all that is good and positive, allowing us to project into the world a person who is confident and aware of his own attributes, capabilities and capacities. Expecting that all will go wrong or that people will not like us appears through our demeanour as an invitation for those things to happen. There is much truth in the adage of the laughing child who receives all the attention.

Using the medium of hypnotic trance, we, as therapists, have an opportunity to implant and then reinforce positive images deep in the subconscious that will play an important part in that process of transderivational search which provides the information to determine that final perception of self which is so important to our ability to successfully interact with the world in a beneficial and positive way.

The suggestions that we, as therapists, deliver to the subconscious mind of the client need to be positive and constructive, without negativity. Language needs to be precise, allowing no opportunity for the subconscious to reinforce any of the old negative thought processes that have been the cause of the discomfort that has brought the client to the office. Scripted material has the added value of being carefully thought through with particular attention to semantics in order to exclude negative suggestion. It utilises

every opportunity to reinforce those elements that will provide the direction for the change required.

Pain and Discomfort

This script is derived from one I found within a pile of material given to me in 1991 by Michael Carr-Jones. It is ideal for the situation when the client is very ill, perhaps with a terminal illness.

And now ... as you become less aware of your physical body ... you become more aware of your own perfect and pure ... subconscious mind that really does know everything about you ... and that subconscious part of you now opens ... like a blossom opening ... to receive ... to accept and to act on all the positive affirmations ... concepts and images that I will suggest for you ... as you drift deeper now.

As you drift deeper with every word that I speak ... your subconscious mind is fully alert ... active and alive both day and night ... creating new energy ... health and healing abilities allowing your body to rest ... repair and regenerate ... allowing you to adopt all those positive outlooks which are for your highest good and comfort.

Drifting even deeper now you allow your mind to become peaceful ... calm and comfortable ... as your body becomes rested ... at ease ... and now you can imagine yourself in a beautiful place ... a place of comfort ... peace and tranquillity ... of safety and of healing ... a warm woodland glade where you can feel comfortable ... your mind and body rested ... a place where you can return at any time ... and you feel that you belong here ... that you are valued and loved here ... and those feelings comfort you so you are pleased to drift deeper now.

As you drift and move deeper into this place ... the ground soft and springy beneath your step ... the sunlight diffused by the branches and the foliage of the trees ... the subtle sounds of the wonders of nature calming you ... causing you to easily let go and rest so deeply now ... you find yourself by a pool of crystal clear water ... The pool is filled with natural spring water that is heated by nature's own forces ... Steam rises from its gently bubbling

surface ... The pool looks so inviting and so comforting ... restful and peaceful and you can begin to see ... sense or imagine yourself easing into the waters of the pool ... You find a convenient rocky ledge that supports you and you feel so light ... weightless here as the soothing waters rise to cover your chest and your shoulders ... You have no concerns or fears ... as the water bubbles around your body massaging and comforting every part of you.

The gentle heat of the waters relax you ... soothe you ... and you sense the gentle stimulation of the swirling waters ... the bubbles massage your skin with a gentle penetrating warmth as the soft sensation surrounds you ... penetrating deep into your muscles ... into your bones ... soothing your nerves ... working on every cell and every fibre of your being ... causing you to relax even more deeply than before as the waters swirl and the gentle heat penetrates deep within you ... releasing all discomfort and pain ... washed away by the gentle healing flow.

You relax even deeper now allowing the massaging effect of the healing waters to concentrate on those parts of you ... joints and muscles that have been causing you pain and discomfort ... and you feel those parts relax as the discomfort is soothed away ... you experience a sense of release ... freedom ... peace and comfort that permeates your whole being.

You settle even deeper into relaxation now as the waters continue to massage ... to calm and comfort you ... every part of your body now is free of discomfort and of pain ... you feel so comfortable now as pain and discomfort continue to flow away from you ... your body becomes calmer ... more peaceful ... allowing itself to repair and to heal ... I am going to stop speaking now ... allowing you some quiet time for yourself to continue to bathe in that soothing ... warming water as it massages you and you continue now to allow all pain and discomfort to simply flow away.

Wait for a few minutes, allowing the client to relax and enjoy the healing forces.

And now ... you are feeling so rested ... comforted ... so completely relaxed ... and you can see ... sense or imagine yourself leaving the warm waters of the pool ... knowing that you can

Client Education

A good place to start is at the beginning, and in this situation this relates to the very first cigarette that your client smoked. Ask him to think back to that first cigarette and tell you exactly how it all happened. Usually peer pressure is the overriding reason why it began.

Whatever the answers, they will invariably point to the association with being grown up, one of the crowd, being more sophisticated and mature, establishing independence.

Often we are in a hurry to achieve adulthood when we are in our early teens. So many changes happen to us during this period when the hormones in our bodies are running riot. Pubic hair begins to sprout, breasts begin to fill out, and the first interest and clumsy encounters with the opposite sex occur. We begin to project ourselves in the way that we would like to be seen, as adults, and can no longer tolerate being thought of as a child, but at the same time lacking the confidence or experience to be a complete adult. So we look for ways to affirm our desired status; means of demonstrating that we really can be adults. It is accepted that adults smoke. With our rational consideration we reject any suggestion that we are anything but that which we aspire to become. Trying to talk sense to a teenager can be a frustrating experience, as any parent will confirm!

The beginnings of addiction

Tobacco companies are well aware of the addictive nature of tobacco and thus target their advertising accordingly to young people, promoting cigarettes to be socially acceptable as an indication of sophistication and maturity.

Heroic figures are portrayed enjoying the pleasure of riches and fame, striding through every situation with that air of confidence and success that attracts the beautiful woman or the handsome

man. At this age fantasy is so easily mistaken for reality and we are so gullible and naïve.

It is so easy to believe as teenagers that we are invincible, and the suggestion that we might become addicted and dependent on cigarettes seems ridiculous. This is the age when we really do know it all, but this is an illusion. The harsh reality is that we are too young to be wise and too old to be told. Parents everywhere will know exactly what I mean as they experience the frustration of watching their sons and daughters making the same old mistakes as they did. And did their parents also try in vain to pass on the lessons that they had learned through experience? In the rush to take on the mantle of adulthood, so many youngsters walk straight into the trap set by the tobacco industry.

Drag and cough

When that first cigarette is remembered, I have yet to meet anyone who, hand on heart, can state that the experience was a pleasant one. As the harsh cigarette smoke is taken into the lungs, the effects are predictable. Dizziness, nausea, coughing and spluttering all accompanied by a foul taste, are what most admit to experiencing, but, determined to be seen as one of the gang and not wishing to become isolated from their peers, these young people strive to endure what is perceived as some sort of initiation into approaching adulthood.

The survival instinct

The reaction of dizziness, nausea etc, to the cigarette smoke is one that is generated by the subconscious mind as it strives to carry out its prime function, that of 'survival'. It is in effect sending a clear message as it deploys its defences against the poison that has been introduced into the body. 'Stop now. You are poisoning yourself', it shouts as it promotes the vomit and cough response in its efforts to expel the substance which it recognises as dangerous.

Dizziness and disorientation are experienced as the brain is suddenly deprived of its oxygen supply. The delicate taste buds in the

“Scripts and Strategies in Hypnotherapy: The Complete Works combines Roger Allen’s previous books into one accessible volume providing an imaginative source of scripts that cover the most commonly met cases. For the newly qualified therapist, it is a useful addition and for the more experienced it is a source of inspiration.”

**Peter Mabbutt, FBSCH, FBAMH,
Director of Studies, London College of Clinical Hypnosis**

“Imaginative, practical and, quite simply, essential for anyone getting started in hypnotherapy.”

Martin Roberts, PhD, author of *Change Management Excellence*

“Allen offers a group of therapeutic scripts designed to work with a wide circle of problems. These include habit control, weight loss, fear and panic management, healing, pain management, sexual issues, loss and bereavement, and smoking cessation. Although they are general scripts, it is very educational to see the many ways in which specific suggestions can be inserted into the trance induction process. ... They provide a framework that can easily be modified to meet the particular needs and concerns of clients.”

“Scripts and Strategies in Hypnotherapy by Roger Allen is easy to read, well assembled and contains over 90 scripts of hypnotic induction.

Eugene Don, Psychologist

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