Hypnotic Susceptibility and Deepening

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Objectives

• Name 3 methods for deepening hypnotic involvement.

• Demonstrate an awareness of the advantages and disadvantages of using formal measures of hypnotic responsivity.
Hypnotic susceptibility is substantially related to absorption: the ability to set aside reality and become totally absorbed in the imaginative experience.
Reality needs way more imagination

• John Lennon
Correlates of Hypnotic

- Absorption
- Perceptual alterations
- Vividness of imagery
- Fantasy Proneness
Standardized Tests of Hypnotizability

- Stanford Hypnotic Susceptibility Scale
- Harvard Group Scale of Hypnotic Susceptibility
- Hypnotic Induction Profile
Stanford Hypnotic Susceptibility Scales

• Devised in 1950s
• Series of 12 tasks
• Score is total number of tasks performed
• Tasks
  • Motor
  • Perceptual/Cognitive
  • Persistent or Post-hypnotic Effects
Scales of Hypnotizability only predict responses to hypnosis 50% of the time

- Hilgard (1979)
Informal Tests of Hypnotic Responsivity

- Age regression
- Hand/arm Magnets
- Hands locked together
- Post-hypnotic suggestion
- Post-hypnotic amnesia
- Positive hallucination
Why do formal or informal assessments?

- Utilize patient’s talents to optimize suggestions
- Modify techniques based on patient’s talents
- Treatment planning
  - sensory modality strengths
  - use techniques to enhance ratification
  - select techniques to maximize success
Deepening:

• The process of increasing the focus and concentration of attention by the patient
Depth not always related to a more positive outcome.
Success of Hypnosis

R - Rapport
A - Aptitude
H - History
T - Trust
E - Expectation
A - Active Participation
M - Motivation
Greater perceived depth may serve a trance ratification function, altering expectancies, and increasing responsiveness.
Patient may determine the depth of involvement deemed necessary for hypnotic work
“I really don’t know how deep you need to go to accomplish what you want to accomplish, but your unconscious mind knows. So continue to allow each breath to take you deeper into comfort until you are as deep as you need to be.”
Depth of Trance

- Light
  - Slow, deep breathing
  - Observable relaxation
  - Catalepsy
- Medium
  - Partial anesthesia, amnesia, age regression and time distortion
  - Dream-like experience
Depth of Trance

- Deep / Somnambulistic
  - Perceptual distortions & body dissociation
  - Anesthesia, amnesia, hallucinations
  - Revivification
  - Very responsive to posthypnotic suggestions

- Stuporous
  - No awareness of physical body or identity
  - Significant decrease in respiration and pulse
  - 2 – 4 % of subjects
Hypnotic responsiveness and capacity for depth in part related to genetic factors and early childhood experiences
Deepening may directly follow induction or may be given from time to time throughout the session
As you continue to relax deeper and deeper, notice how effortlessly you can hear and heed my words in your place of comfort, listening with a renewed sense of clarity and purpose.
Deepening

• A second induction

• Down . . . , Deeper with inflection

• Stairway, Escalator, Elevator, Mountain, Diving, Slide, Wading, Driving, Flying

• Bringing in more senses: visual, auditory, kinesthetic, olfactory, gustatory
Deepening

- Contingent Suggestions
  - “With every sound of my voice, you can drift deeper and deeper. . . .”
  - “With every breath your relaxation increases more and more. . . .”
- Motivation
  - “You are relaxing deeper and deeper
Deepening

- Counting
- Direct Suggestion
- Silence
- Fractionation
- Confusion Technique & Metaphor
Deepening

• Ratification deepens trance
  • An ideomotor or ideosensory experience that convinces the patient that something different is taking place
  • Examples:
    • Arm catalepsy
    • Lid paralysis
Deepening

- Utilizing Breathing
- Imagining Internal Relaxation
- Progressive Muscle Relaxation
- Rapid fractionation – rapid alternating of deepening and lightening creates confusion
- Background distractions
- Dual Tasks / Graduated Tasks
And so when you know that you know everything that you need to know, even though some of it you didn’t really know you knew, but now that you know that you don’t really need to know whether you knew it, you can let yourself know everything that you need to know in order to do this anytime you know you need it.

Kohen