

What's The 'Guarantee' Anyway?

By: Robert Otto

I believe many readers of this journal are familiar with my chosen specialty in the areas of Smoking Cessation and Weight. As near as I can recall, the story I am about to share occurred in New Jersey approximately ten years ago, involving behavioral changes with a focus on the reduction of weight. I've decided to share this story in particular because of the simplistic approach associated with the success of the client. I often hear horror stories from colleagues who for one reason or another encounter challenges when working with a client wishing to shed unwanted weight. Of course the stories vary from person to person as to why the particular approach, induction, method or tool did not work successfully.

For the sake of this article, I'd like to have the readers reflect upon their own career, to a time when they believed to have 'overworked' the process of hypnosis. We've all been there. And in fact, I'll bet when you retrace the process, you can easily identify that the desired results could have been attainable *without* hypnosis intensity. The trouble we sometimes encounter is that we inadvertently get in the way of the clients success by believing that we *need to do more*, to regress to the ISE rather than simply allowing the process of belief and expectation to unfold. Now, I'm not taking a stand that regression is a bad thing, and in fact I personally know of many instances that regression has been used successfully. I am simply stating that it is not always necessary to alter ones behavior, thought or approach by way of regression to shed unwanted weight. Our responsibility as hypnosis practitioners lies in helping our clients to help themselves. With that being said allow me to continue on with my story.

Mr. Jones (*that IS his real name by the way*) strutted into the crowded seminar room. By his demeanor I could easily see that he was filled with questions and apprehension regarding the experience he was about to partake in. I instinctively labeled him as a person of confidence, authority and astutely in control over much of what takes place in his everyday affairs. While it was not in his character to do so, he obediently yet nervously waited in line to register for the seminar. And while doing so, he systematically sized up the room, the other registrants waiting in line and of course, me. I knew his next move was to approach me with questions pertaining to his participation in the event followed by a barrage of 'will it work for me' questions. This behavior was not at all uncommon and something I handled quite regularly prior to the start of a seminar. I've seen it so many times before... participants with a desire to shed unwanted pounds yet can't manage to make it happen. Mr. Jones was earmarked as one of those types and it would be my pleasure to oblige him and put him at ease with his decision to join us. Unbeknownst to him at the time, he would soon become a lead actor in one of my many stories relating to the simplicity of behavioral change.

During our pre-seminar conversation he explained to me that what bothered him the most was that he could take charge of most things in his life, but when it came to shedding weight, he was a miserable failure. At the risk of sounding redundant, I assured him that all of his questions would be answered during the first segment of the seminar. I continued to explain to him that if he believed that hypnosis could work, had a sincere desire to reduce weight, and a willingness to participate and follow instructions during the session, he was a 'slam dunk' for success.

I took my place in front of the room and began my lecture like any other night - beginning with a thorough explanation of what hypnosis is and is NOT. I covered the levels of hypnosis, how habits are formed, misconceptions, and raised awareness. Prior to attending the seminar, most people don't know how to alleviate inner conflict. Which was why the participants sitting in front of me were here in the first place! I continued on to share with them that by using hypnosis they could alleviate that conflict and finally achieve a desirable weight that would fit within the parameters of their belief system and physical framework.

I kept a keen eye on Mr. Jones as I completed my pre-talk. I could tell by his body language exactly when it was that I 'had him'. As soon as I felt comfortably confident that the rest of the group was conforming to a new way of thinking, I took my place in the back of the room.

With the lights dimmed and microphone in hand, I purposefully began my group induction. As we progressed, I reminded the participants to drink plenty of water throughout the day. Urging them that drinking three to four glasses of cool, clear, refreshing water aids in cleansing, detoxifying and hydrating the new thin, slim, trim body they desire. Reminding them that their subconscious mind knows exactly what it needs to do to lose at least four ounces each and every day. Day... after day... after day. Creating an image in their mind's eye of a scale and bringing into focus the numbers on that scale of the weight they say they want to weigh. Reminding them that by using a 'key word/cue card', the feeling, thoughts and images they are presently experiencing will be available to them at any time and in any situation. The more they use the 'key word/cue card' the faster and easier they can access this time and space in their everyday lives.

I am an avid believer in preparing my client for success by whatever means necessary. Beginning from the moment we meet down to my closing statements and farewell. For this reason, I supply my clients with printed material on hypnosis, my qualifications, testimonials, pertinent contact information AND a 'cue card'. What is a 'cue card'? Again, it is a tangible piece of information that the client takes home and uses as a modality to re-enforce the suggestions given during the session.

Eight weeks later I was back in the same area of New Jersey conducting another group session. As the door to my seminar room opened for business, there stood Mr. Jones beaming from ear to ear. What a wonderful feeling of accomplishment it was to see him twenty-four pounds lighter! Although he kindly delivered his heartfelt appreciation in having assisted him to shed weight, he had another agenda that needed clarification. He continued on to explain that it worked 'like a charm' but he wanted to know what the connection was to reading the card. At that moment, he placed the obviously overused 'cue card' in the palm of my hand for review. I was amazed to discover that there had been a printing error on this particular card. One side of the card was blank and the other side of the card had our 'session guarantee' on it. (The session guarantee enabled Mr. Jones to join us for re-enforcement, free of charge for a year.) You see, Mr. Jones achieved a successful weight loss by committing to memory and re-enforcing our session GUARANTEE!

In closing, I believe the lesson learned through this experience is a focus on EXPECTATION. If a client goes into session with doubts about the outcome, they will

come out of the session with doubts of success. BUT if a client goes into session with the EXPECTATION and BELIEF they will succeed – PRESTO!