

TECHNIQUES THAT WORK!

by Robert F. Otto, C.Ht.

It's no secret that in order to produce good effective results in a hypnotic session, there are a few essential rules that need to be adhered to. In my twenty plus years of addressing a "cold " audience for behavioral change, to be more specific, conducting stop Smoking and Weight Reduction Seminars in a group environment, I have found that it is essential to provide a pre-talk that: 1) is easy to understand, 2) informative, 3) not misleading, 4) injects humor, 5) removes fears and misconceptions and 6) contains situations that the client can relate to.



The package of pre-hypnotic techniques that I have ordained are a culmination of subsequent, tried and proven steps that have afforded me great results in behavior modification. They are of non-hypnotic value. However, by sharing them with your client you will be removing any and all apprehension and/or anxiety with reference to their ability to follow through with successful hypnotic trance.

One of the first things that I do when addressing the audience, is to ask if they happen to know the difference between the conscious and the subconscious mind. Once confirmed, I go on to ask if they know what the purpose or function of either one is. Chances are, the majority will not have the answer to these pertinent questions. Consequently, if they don't know what the conscious or subconscious mind is, what it does, or how to get to it, then how could they possibly know how to use such an asset to their advantage? It is important to clarify in a simplified manner that the conscious mind has the ability to look, listen and learn, reason, judge, analyze, criticize, accept or reject suggestions given to it.

I also share with them a concept that I learned while studying in the orient at a very youthful age: undeveloped individuals always have a tendency to look outside of themselves for success whereas a learned or developed individual looks within for permanent and lasting change. Stress the importance of this to your clients.

I like to give an analogy of this as follows: If we had on our property somewhere an abundant oil mine, gold mine or diamond mine, but did not know it was there, would we ever be able to draw success from it? Such is the gift of the subconscious mind that was given to all of us at birth. It's not that we don't possess the "gold mine," there is a rich and wealthy "gold mine" inside all of us. We just didn't know it was there ready to be cultivated and harvested. When your client comes to you for help, what is he or she doing? He's looking outside of himself for success. He hasn't been told that anything he ever was, is, or will be, has been in him from birth. A comparison I share with my stop Smoking audience is that rather than using their own "gold mine" that they have within,

they're looking for a quick fix outside of themselves by using the patch, nicotine gum, and ring in the ear. Etc. For weight loss I address their notion of trying to reduce weight through methods that have proven futile in the past.

Educate your clients by explaining to them that they have been given the power from birth to alter their lifestyle instantaneously, simply by altering their way of thought then reinforcing the altered thought. From birth until death, we as human beings, continually move in the direction of our most dominant thought. Ask your client what their most dominant thought has been concerning the problem they are addressing. This should hit home for many of them.

Give your clients a brief, yet definitive explanation as to the purpose of their subconscious mind. Simply stated, the duties of the subconscious mind are to store all memory, run all bodily functions, and most importantly ACT OUT any image.

For behavior modification, reassure them that there is no need for deep hypnotic trance. Ask them if they were in a deep hypnotized state when establishing the negative behavioral pattern they wish to be free of. If they were not in a deep state of hypnosis at the onset of the problem, what makes them think that they need to be in a deep state of hypnosis to alter it positively? With this analogy, you will be sure to abolish any misconceptions from the person that thinks they need a deep state of hypnosis to be successful.

An explanation of how negative habit patterns are formed is also beneficial in your pre-talk. Explain to them that 21-30 days of doing anything consecutively, on a conscious level AUTOMATICALLY becomes a HABIT. Ask, how long they have reinforced the negative habit on a conscious level. It is a proven psychological fact that any image, idea or concept that is ever consciously repeated to you, by you, or through you for 21-30 consecutive days or more, automatically becomes what is known as a subconscious acting habit, concept or pattern without your approval or acknowledgment. As long as we are breathing, we are always receiving suggestions, either positively or negatively.

I also convey to my clients that a state of hypnosis (by their definition) isn't even necessary to alter their negative behavior. Hypnosis is beneficial and it will also speed the process, however, it's not necessary. By sharing this concept with them I am removing the misconception from the client who thinks he is not a good hypnotizable subject.

If it's not the depth of hypnosis or the ability to achieve hypnosis at any level that makes your client successful in behavior modification, then what is it? It's their own motivation, desire and willingness to succeed at what they say they want to do. Simply stated, "The stronger the want, the easier the how. "

It is only after I feel confident in eliminating the misconceptions of what hypnosis is and is not, from the client that I can continue with my pre-talk explanation. "During the

hypnosis session I will be incorporating what I have named a 'mantra learning system' that, if followed completely, will provide you with the success you wish to accomplish." My 'Mantra learning system' is simply incorporating a key word during the actual hypnosis session. (It could be simply defined to the client as a shortcut back to the actual session itself.) The mantra is to be repeated by them in bed at night as they lose consciousness for 21-30 consecutive nights. (They could use a tape recording of the actual session in bed at night if they choose to do so.) Why use a mantra in bed at night for 21-30 nights or listen to the tape? Simple. Because the last thought or concept that is on the conscious mind at night as we lose consciousness is there all night long.

This is where you make a marriage of all the pertinent information in your pre-talk. If 21-30 days or more becomes a habit and the last thing on the conscious mind is there all night long, and we are continually moving in the direction of our most dominant thought, then using the mantra as we go to sleep at night ensures a positive response without any conscious effort on your clients part!

A good analogy I use when explaining how the subconscious mind works is as follows: Take two clay pots. Fill each of them half full with good inert potting soil. Place a rose seed in one pot and a poison seed in the other. If we place them on our windowsill and reinforce each of them equally with water and sunshine, would you probably agree with me that the pot we planted a rose in, a rose would grow? And the pot we planted poison in that poison would probably grow? The answer undoubtedly will be "Yes." The subconscious resembles the inertness of the dirt in that it does not care what is implanted.

It will yield positive or negative results with just as much effort. Now, if you took the rose pot (the one you say you DO want) out into the desert where it gets no water or reinforcement, I'm sure you would agree with me that the rose seed would probably die. If you took the poison pot, (the one you say that you DON'T want) and reinforce it with water and sunshine on a daily basis, I'm sure you would agree with me that it would probably grow. Our subconscious resembles the inert dirt with respect that it does not care what is implanted. The primary objective of a hypnotherapist is to implant a positive seed like the rose and reinforce it on our window sill of life while burying the negative poison seed in the desert where it gets no reinforcement. The clients job is to reinforce the positive seed nightly with the "mantra learning system' provided.

Hypnotherapy then becomes a very small part of their overall success.

In addition to an effective pre-talk, I contribute the extraordinary successes my clients have achieved to my innovative and pioneering therapy. For a more detailed and comprehensive look at the subject matter, check out the Product section of the website, specifically our Stop Smoking and our Pre-Hypnotic Technique Video.

Footnote: In 1997 Robert F. Otto was awarded the prestigious "Ormond McGill Award" from the National Guild of Hypnotists as Outstanding Faculty Member for his contribution of the lecture discussed above.