

WHO, ME?

HOW TO
CHOOSE
THE
BEST
VOLUNTEERS



WORLD'S FASTEST HYPNOTIST
SEAN MICHAEL ANDREWS

This book is dedicated to my wonderful wife, Stephanie Kiefel Patterson. Your love and support keep me going and you make my life so happy. I Love you!

Preface

Demonstrational hypnosis is a necessary skill for all hypnotists. It doesn't matter if you are a hypnotherapist who is speaking before groups to build your client base or if you are a stage hypnotist or even a street hypnotist. You need to hypnotize people in front of audiences and you need your inductions to work. This book will show you what you need to do to make those demonstrations successful.

Skill in choosing motivated, cooperative, and excited volunteers is not just for hypnotists. Magicians, mentalists, and motivational speakers will also find these concepts extremely useful.

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Getting Started - Wow the Crowd

Now imagine this: you're giving a talk in front of a hundred people, maybe even more, and you want to do a hypnosis demonstration. You call someone up to the stage, you do an induction, and your subject doesn't go into hypnosis. And a hundred or more people are sitting in the audience looking at you.

Can you imagine what that would feel like? Can you imagine how bad that would feel to fail in front of a hundred or more people? It would be **BAD**.

Fortunately, it has never happened to me. Sometimes I worry about saying that because I wonder if I'm jinxing myself, but no. I have a method to make sure that it never happens to me. And I'm going to show you what I do so that it will never happen to you.

Think about that, though. You bring the volunteer up and you fail, what do you do then?

You say, "Oh, umm, well, I guess it doesn't work on everybody," or maybe you blame the person that came up for not going into hypnosis. What can you do? There's nothing you can do. And then you know from the rule of failure breeding failure that if you do not hypnotize your first person, there's an excellent chance that you will fail with the next person you bring up, because the next person has no expectation that you know what the heck you're doing. So that is just an ugly situation which I hope none of you will ever be in and I'm going to show you how to avoid that.

I teach hypnosis and give demonstrations all around the world, but when I am home, I spend my time here in Heidelberg writing and performing basic hypnosis research. Much of the research that I have been doing here has been on hypnotizability. What makes one person more hypnotizable than another? What are the subtle clues that help you recognize the best subjects and what can you do to make them even better? I'm going to share all that I have learned.

How do you choose people? Does age of the subject matter, whether they are young or old? What about the sex of the subject? Does it matter? Are women more hypnotizable than men? Does it matter if the hypnotist is a man or a woman? It does, actually.

What about ethnic and cultural differences? Are people from some countries or some ethnic groups easier to hypnotize than others?

I'm going to show you how to find the people in your audience. Does it matter what part of the room they are sitting in? And if it does, how do you find them and what are the best areas of the room to select your subjects from?

What about jobs? Are people who have certain jobs easier to hypnotize than others? Is it easier to hypnotize a lawyer than it is a doctor, or is it easier to hypnotize a plumber than it is a massage therapist?

How about lifestyles? People who have certain hobbies are more hypnotizable than other people. And I'm going to tell you who these folks are.

There are some religious beliefs that predispose a person to be easier to hypnotize and I'll let you know what they are. There are also some beliefs that predispose a person to be pretty much un-hypnotizable and I'll let you know what they are, too.

What can you do to soften your audience up? Even though everybody's hypnotizable to a certain extent, what can you do during your talk to make the people in the audience even more hypnotizable, even more pliable, even more suggestible, so that your demonstration will work out beautifully? I'll tell you that.

I've got a lot of tricks that I've learned over the years from some of the masters of hypnosis and fortunately, they were all very good about sharing what they knew. I don't keep secrets and I'm going to share everything that I've learned from these guys.

I didn't realize until I started putting this book together how much there is to picking the right people. When you start out in hypnosis, you want to hypnotize people, so if someone agrees to be hypnotized, you just do it. And sometimes it works and sometimes it doesn't.

Once you get into this, you realize that there are a lot of very subtle things that you can do to make yourself more successful.

Does Age Matter?

Let's start out by talking about age. According to Dr. Michael Yapko, renowned hypnosis expert and the author of Trancework, the most hypnotizable people are children between the ages of seven and nine. That's when they're most hypnotizable. Before the age of puberty, the critical faculty of the conscious mind is not fully formed. That also means that children before puberty are very vulnerable. They don't have that critical faculty that allows them to evaluate what happens to them and what is said to them.

And partially because of that they are highly hypnotizable. So seven to nine years old equals extremely hypnotizable.

An induction for a child is very different from an induction for an adult. For a child, all you have to do is tell them, "Close your eyelids and pretend they won't work. Just pretend." I did this recently in Singapore with a little girl, about eight years old, with her parents' permission, of course.

I told her to close her eyelids and pretend they wouldn't work. Then I took her hand and put it on the table and after she tested her eyes to make sure they wouldn't work, I said, "All right now, I'm going to have you open your eyes, and when you do, your hand will be stuck to the table." She opened her eyes, still deeply hypnotized, and her hand was stuck to the table. I told her to use her other hand to try to pull it off, and she tried and she couldn't get her hand off the table. She was deeply, deeply hypnotized just like that. That's how easy it is to hypnotize a child.

Another great thing about children is that they make changes so rapidly, far more rapidly than an adult. Now we know you can't keep them in hypnosis for very long, and you have to do multiple, brief sessions

because their attention span is very short, but kids are very easy to hypnotize. You don't even have to go through a complete induction. Just have them close their eyes and pretend they won't work.

High school and college students are also highly hypnotizable, not as good as a seven to nine year old child, but pretty darn good. Stage hypnotists love to do high school and college shows. The reason why is because the students are very highly hypnotizable. They have no fear. They are anxious to try something new. The other thing about high school show or college students is they are very animated, and when you get them up on the stage and do a skit with them, they are very active. They'll get up. They'll dance and sing and do all sorts of stuff. If you tell them to run around the stage, they'll run around the stage. A high school show or a college show can be great, great fun.

But as we get older, we're not as much fun. We're not as animated as the high school kids. I got talked into doing a talk and a little mini show at a senior adult meeting. In the United States, there's something known as the AARP, the American Association of Retired Persons. Their thing is that as soon as you turn 50, they're on you. They're sending you mail. They're calling on the phone. They're begging you to join their political organization, which is a lobby group for people that are 50 years old and over.

So my only experience with them was their request that I join them when I turned 50. I imagined that they had many people in their group that were about my age, maybe a little bit older. Imagine my surprise when I showed up for the meeting and found that there wasn't anybody under 75 years old. But I resolved to make the best of it and give them a little show. I told them, "Put your walker over here and go sit in this chair," and "Just stay in your wheelchair. That will save us a seat." And I hypnotized them. They went into trance okay, and if you're a good hypnotic subject when you were younger, you'll still be a good hypnotic subject when you're older – not quite as good, but pretty much as good. So they went into hypnosis fine, but they were not very animated. They didn't move around and then of course there was the other issue of me saying, "Look, in a moment, when I snap my fingers, you will do this." And they'd go, "What? Huh? I can't hear him." And another would say, "I can't hear him either."

It was a mess! So age can be a factor. Yes, that was yet another learning experience for me...

Let's Talk about Sex

All right, so now let's talk about sex. Going back to the time of James Braid, Bernheim, Charcot, Liébeault, and all the old hypnotists of the 1700s and 1800s, most of them found that women were more hypnotizable than men. Many of them worked in hospitals and they reported hypnotizing what they called "hysterical" women. I'm not sure, but I think they meant women with emotional problems – but at any rate, the hypnotists found the women to be highly hypnotizable.

Even women without emotional problems were found to be slightly easier to hypnotize than men. There were studies as recently as 1971 when Bowers in Canada found that women were a bit more hypnotizable than men.¹

The mid- to late 1970s brought a lot of turmoil. This was the time of the sexual revolution and a big push for equal pay, equal rights, and an end to sexism, and not surprisingly, during that time a lot of studies

found that women were exactly the same as men when it came to going into hypnosis. It was not politically correct to suggest that there was any difference between men and women. Of course there is, but it was politically more palatable for them to say, “Well, we find no significant difference between the hypnotizability of a woman as opposed to a man.”

Recent studies are back to saying that women are slightly more hypnotizable than men. A study in 2007 from the Department of Psychology at Lund University in Sweden found that women were slightly easier to hypnotize than men.ⁱⁱ

It’s never been thought to be a huge difference, but generally it’s believed to be about a five percent difference – women are five percent easier to hypnotize than men.

Now if it’s a matter of getting up in front of a hundred people and giving a talk and demonstration, I’m going to take that five percent into account to give me a slight edge. I will usually choose a female volunteer, and there are a lot of other reasons for that as well.

The sex of the hypnotist makes a difference too. It has been found that it is slightly easier for a man to hypnotize a woman and slightly easier for a woman to hypnotize a man. There are many reasons for this.

Personally, I would rather hear a woman’s voice, because I trust women more. Think about when you were a boy in school, gentlemen. We would play tricks on one another, right? But the girls didn’t do that. They didn’t participate in that to the extent that the boys did. So generally men tend to trust women a little bit more.

And a woman’s voice also sounds a lot nicer to a man. So opposite sex hypnosis works a little bit better. If you have a man hypnotizing a woman, the likelihood of success has been shown to be higher.

Here’s something else for you to consider. If you hypnotize two people, a man and a woman, and neither one of them goes into hypnosis, which one do you think is more likely to raise their head and say, “It didn’t work,” the man or the woman? – the man, absolutely.

It’s funny, if you hypnotize a woman in a demonstration and she doesn’t go into hypnosis, she’ll come out and say something like, “Oh, I just had some things on my mind. It’s not you. It was me. I was feeling very, **very** relaxed.” Does that remind you of anything? Me either...

So a woman is far less likely to embarrass you than a man up on stage – yet another reason to choose a female volunteer.

The other issue to be concerned about when it comes to sex is scammers. A scammer is a young man, usually between the ages of about 16 and 26, and he will pretend to be interested in being hypnotized. “Pick me! Pick me! I want to do it.” He will insist.

And he’s never alone, he always has a couple of friends with him. As he approaches, he looks to see if his friends are watching and he will pretend to be hypnotized and then later open his eyes and say, “Ha!

I wasn't really hypnotized!" Here is how I deal with a potential scammer. I separate him from his friends and look him straight in the eye. "This only works if you are serious about it. Do you REALLY want to be hypnotized?" If he softens and says, "I really do," I will use him. If he gives me a smart answer I get rid of him.

A woman will never try to scam you. It's always a young man. So that is yet another reason to pick a female volunteer because the women will not do that to you, but the guys will sometimes.

Culture and Ethnicity

James Esdaile was a Scottish surgeon working for the East India Company in the 19th century. I don't know why he took this crazy contract, but he worked for them for 20 years in India.

In the late 1840s, Esdaile decided to use mesmerism so that he could anesthetize his patients. There was no chemical anaesthesia that time. The most you could hope for was they'd give you a shot of whiskey and four strong men would hold your arms and your legs while the surgeon cut you up. It was a really bad time which is why people didn't have operations unless they were pretty certain they were going to die otherwise.

Esdaile used mesmerism, which is just hypnotism by my definition. Some people disagree and claim that the two are very different, but in my mind mesmerism is essentially hypnosis. Esdaile would mesmerize his patients and they would go through their operations pain-free!

He performed over 300 major operations without any anaesthesia and his patients did not feel pain. That was really good. This was in an area about 20 miles north of Calcutta, at the Hooghly Prison Hospital.

The Bengali people who lived there had a tradition of what you could call mysticism and a strong belief in that sort of thing. And people in the Indian sub-continent generally are predisposed to go into hypnosis easier than a lot of other people. As Esdaile found out when he returned to England and tried to do his mesmerism for anaesthesia with the British, it didn't work so well because northern Europeans on the whole are not as hypnotizable as people in the Indian sub-continent.

Now in my experience, northern Europeans aren't really all that hard, but people from India and that area are extremely easy to hypnotize. They go in very fast and very deep. So that's one ethnic group that is better at hypnosis.

Here's another good group. I've only had about five subjects and they've all been female, but it's held true so far that every Persian woman that I've ever hypnotized was a somnambulist. A couple were very extreme somnambulists. So people from Iran, at least the women that I've encountered, have been extremely hypnotizable. I don't know about the men. I just haven't worked with them yet, but all the women were just complete blow-downs. That's a stage term, by the way - they call these people "blow-downs" or "floppers".

Speaking of floppers, I've recently returned from teaching in Singapore. I had an issue in Singapore because almost every member of the class was a somnambulist. I put the first lady in the chair and hypnotized her and she just flopped. Her head went back and she nearly fell out of the chair. This is typical of an extreme somnambulist.

Most people's heads will go forward when they're hypnotized and they'll just slump, but an extreme somnambulist will very often go backwards and it's incredible to see. And their neck muscles are so relaxed that their head feels like it's not even attached to their shoulders. It's just that loose.

The next lady I brought up to hypnotize flopped in the exact same manner. And every one that I brought up almost fell out of the chair. They were that hypnotizable. Now most Singaporeans are ethnic Chinese, but there are also a lot of Malaysians and Indians there.

In general, Asian people tend to be more hypnotizable than Europeans. The Singapore class was interesting because having so many somnambulists actually caused me trouble. The few people in the class that weren't somnambulists wanted to know when they were going to flop. I had to explain that it probably wouldn't happen. "You are not a somnambulist, you are normal."

Somnambulists are normally only about 20% of the population, but in this particular class they represented 80%! So it was really hard for me to explain to the non-somnambulists that they were never going to experience trance that deep.

They were disappointed, but I wasn't -- I love somnambulists and to have a whole classroom full of them was incredible. We got to do all sorts of stuff.

City vs. Country Folk

City people tend to be a little bit more cynical and a little bit less trusting. And therefore they are a little bit more difficult to hypnotize than country people. This is another reason why the people in the UK were harder for Esdaile to hypnotize -- they were very highly urbanized and a lot more cynical. Ask any stage hypnotist and he will tell you that a show in a city is a little bit harder, but out in the farm country people go into hypnosis a lot easier. They're more trusting and it's a lot more fun to do those shows.

What about cultures where people are generally very superstitious. When I was teaching in Thailand last year, there was one fellow who was certain that if he looked into my eyes, he would get hypnotized. He kept shielding his eyes from my gaze.

Finally I caught his eye, pointed to him and said, "Too late!" Instantly he was hypnotized. He had an unflinching belief that with just my stare, I could hypnotize him. And because that was his belief, I could do it. So any place where people are superstitious, they're going to be highly hypnotizable.

Religion

Members of fundamentalist religions can be really good or really bad at going into hypnosis. People who are true believers in a religion, particularly the religions that are cult-like, can be ideal subjects. Often

these individuals are down and out and maybe drinking or doing drugs, and then when they find religion they become true believers. They question nothing. Those people, if you can get them to do hypnosis with you, can be highly hypnotizable. There's something about them that makes them easy to hypnotize because they just give their all for one thing and are very trusting.

A lot of them are very naïve and because they are very naïve they are highly hypnotizable. But they can also be difficult because some of their religions tell them they are not allowed to do hypnosis. They are told that it's the work of the devil. So those people are not going to let you hypnotize them. They won't come near you.

So religious belief can cut both ways, but if you think about people who are zealots and just absolutely committed to the religion as their entire life, they're highly hypnotizable -- and highly susceptible to brain-washing as well.

Some people, even if they're really afraid, can't resist hypnosis. I've met a few like that. Some people are so highly hypnotizable that you can get them even without their consent and they cannot resist it. It's kind of scary for them because they feel like they're a little bit out of control. There was one lady that I worked with years ago and just to see if I could do it, I hypnotized her without getting her permission.

She went deep into hypnosis and it frightened her. She wasn't a stranger; she was a friend of a friend, so I was pretty safe on this one. But I asked her, "Would you like me to fix it so you can resist it when you want to?" And she said, "Yes."

I said, "Well, I have to hypnotize you again..." So I did, I hypnotized her and gave her the post-hypnotic suggestion that anytime someone tried to hypnotize her without permission, she could just press her thumb and her little finger together and she would not go into hypnosis. And then we tested it and she resisted hypnosis. She had never been able to do that before.

So -- some people are so highly hypnotizable they can even be hypnotized against their will. It can be very frightening for them because they feel they're out of control. So don't do this.

New-Age, Yoga, and Meditation

Speaking of religion, people who have a belief in New-Age-type practices tend to be high responders. Many of these people will tell you, "I'm not religious. I'm spiritual." This should cause you to think, "Yes, and highly hypnotizable."

That was one of the things that made it so exciting for me in Singapore because it was a three-day class, but the first day was taught by my friend and all her students were interested in New-Age subjects -- Reiki, yoga, things like that -- so I figured I was going to have an easy time of it, but I didn't know **how** easy I was going to have it. So "spiritual" equals highly hypnotizable.

People who meditate and do yoga tend to be pretty highly hypnotizable. They know how to relax. The only issue with some of the meditation and yoga people is that they may go into a trance all by themselves!

Are Some People Hard?

It has been said that lawyers, doctors, accountants, scientists, and mathematicians are awful subjects. They are supposedly hard to hypnotize because they're so analytical. So if you're giving a demonstration or talk in front of a bunch of doctors or lawyers, that might frighten you.

I was taught that and I bought into that. I thought these people were going to be hard. And because I thought they were going to be hard, some of them were hard – because if you have the expectation that someone will be tough to hypnotize, you may become the victim of a self-fulfilling prophesy.

But one day I was in the office and a fellow came in. I asked him what he did and he said, "I'm a rocket scientist. I work at NASA." I thought, "Well, this is going to be rough and I'm really going to have to earn my money in this session."

He got into the chair and as soon as I started the induction, he went nearly to the coma state. He went so deep! He was one of the deepest subjects that I've ever had. It was incredible! And I had trouble emerging him. He didn't want to come out of hypnosis and so I talked to him afterwards – here's how the conversation went:

- "You're a rocket scientist."
- "Yes."
- "Have you been hypnotized before?"
- "Yes."
- "Was it like this?"
- "Oh yes. It was just like this."

And that got me thinking. He's a rocket scientist, a mathematician, a very analytical person, but he was one of the best subjects I've ever had in my life. So that was when I made the decision that no matter what subjects told me they did for a living, I was going to believe that they were great hypnotic subjects – and that mind-set really helps me.

Nowadays, I rarely ask subjects what they do for a living because I don't want to throw myself off. I just say, "Have a seat and we will do the session," and then afterwards I find out it's a doctor or a lawyer or a mathematician or something like that.

I have not found it to be true that doctors and lawyers and mathematicians and all these guys are necessarily harder to hypnotize than others. People will tell you that they are difficult, but it hasn't been my experience.

Are Some People Easy?

It's been said that people who have a boring job, like factory workers working on an assembly line, are good at going into a trance and highly hypnotizable.

I haven't found that to be true in my research here in Heidelberg. I've had people with very boring jobs and some of them were great and some of them weren't so great. So I haven't found a correlation with boring jobs. It seems right, doesn't it, that they would just daydream and check out, but I haven't found it to be the case.

Daydreaming in general, though, does tend to correlate with high hypnotizability. Some people daydream so well and it's neat because they say, "When I daydream, it's almost more real than real." If you hear that, that means that person is probably highly hypnotizable.

It would be cool to do a talk or a hypnosis show for a group of massage therapists. That would be the ultimate because massage therapists are wonderful subjects. I've never met a bad massage therapist. They all seem to be highly hypnotizable. It seems they all really know how to relax. It seems likely that when you're working on someone's muscles, I can imagine you could easily go into a daydream or a trance state.

So if someone says that she or he is a massage therapist, I know I'm going to have a very, very easy time.

Musicians and artists tend to be highly hypnotizable because two of the things that we always say make for a great hypnotic subject are intelligence and imagination. These people are creative. So artists and musicians tend to be pretty good subjects.

More "Easy" and "Hard" Myths

Another bit of hypnotic lore holds that people in the military tend to be good subjects. I guess the rationale is that they know how to follow orders and so therefore they are going to be high responders. But I have not found this to be the case. People in the military will tend to be younger, so that's a point in their favor, but I have hypnotized a lot of military people and have not found them to be more highly hypnotizable as a group.

It has been said that people who walk in their sleep or talk in their sleep tend to be highly hypnotizable. I haven't found a very strong correlation there either, and that's one of the things that I test for in my research. I ask my subjects if they were sleepwalkers or sleep talkers, or, even better, if they had an imaginary friend when they were young children. I see some correlation with imaginary friends, but not a whole bunch. Some people who had imaginary friends were just ordinary hypnotic subjects. If you STILL have an imaginary friend, though...

My sister had imaginary puppies. One time we went on a car trip -- we went to my grandmother's house but we forgot one of the puppies. We had to turn the car around and go all the way home to get the one imaginary puppy that didn't make the trip. And yes, she's highly hypnotizable.

History of Drug Use?

Now this is kind of interesting. People who have a history of, shall we say, chemically altering their state of mind tend to be great hypnotic subjects. I first became aware of this when I was teaching a class in Maryland years ago. One of my students was a particularly good hypnotic subject and he mentioned to

me that it reminded him of when he used to do drugs. He was a really good hypnotic subject, so then I started looking at people with the same history.

I did some pain research at a tattoo parlor a few years ago. I wanted to see if painless tattoos were possible (they are). A fellow came in who had a history of drug use. He was really easy to hypnotize. He went really deep and he even imagined doing drugs in his hypnosis session. When told to go on an imaginary vacation, he imagined a trip to Amsterdam. So even in his imagination he was a drug user – and a great hypnotic subject.

If you think about it, if someone's going to use drugs, they're taking a risk, so they're a little bit less fearful than your average person. They are also a bit more practiced at letting go. So it makes sense that these people would be pretty hypnotizable.

I have not correlated it to determine if different types of drugs affect hypnotizability differently, but in general, the people who do drugs tend to be really good at going into hypnosis. But understand that this does NOT mean that all good hypnotic subjects have this sort of history!

Cheers! – Alcohol and Hypnosis

A study done in 2012 by Rebecca Semmens-Wheeler, Zoltán Dienes, and Theodora Duka at the Sackler Centre for Consciousness Science and the School of Psychology, University of Sussex, UK showed that alcohol makes you more highly hypnotizable.ⁱⁱⁱ Test subjects drank several pints of lager and then were hypnotized. They found that the alcohol made the subjects more hypnotizable. So if you're going to do a demonstration and you've got people that have had a couple of drinks, you will be more effective. They are going to be easier to hypnotize than if they were stone-cold sober. But you must catch them at that point before they've had so much that they can't concentrate. A few beers, yes, you're going to have an easy time of it. I would recommend that they be seated, though, because tipsy people tend to fall over more than sober people. Someone once asked if tea has the opposite effect. The thinking is that since the British drink a lot of tea, they are more difficult to hypnotize than people from cultures that drink less tea. I must admit that I have not looked into that distinction. Maybe it's the caffeine?

Have You Done This Before?

People who have been hypnotized before are easier to hypnotize. So I always recommend arriving early at the venue where you're giving a talk so you can meet the people when they come in and ask them, "I don't suppose you've ever been hypnotized before, have you?"

Once I was giving a talk at a ladies' gym. Two ladies came in and sat down and I said, "Well ladies, you're sitting up front, so I assume that if I need volunteers, you might volunteer." They said, "Oh, maybe." I asked, "Have either of you been ever been hypnotized before?" They started laughing and the one lady said, "Well, my friend Mary here got hypnotized in a hypnosis show on a cruise ship." I said, "Oh great! Was that fun for you?" And she said, "Yes, and I wasn't even on the stage!" So she was in the audience watching the show and she dropped into trance. Guess who I picked for my demonstration?

The only issue was keeping her on her feet because she wanted to melt down into the floor. She was that hypnotizable. So just ask. Find out who has been hypnotized before and that's a good person for you to use for the demonstration. It makes it so much easier.

Non-hypnotists don't realize that the easiest people to hypnotize are the ones that have been hypnotized before. We know that, but 95% of the general public does not -- so they don't know you're cheating and that's great!

You want to put on a good performance. They're not going to be impressed if you fail to hypnotize that person. But if you do hypnotize that person, they're going to have a good time. They are going to be impressed, so there's nothing wrong with exploiting this advantage. This is all about finding the easy targets. You can hypnotize almost anyone, but in front of a group of people, don't take a chance. Go for the easy targets. It just makes sense!

Something about the Eyes

I have found that people with large pupils, in my experience, tend to be easier to hypnotize than people with very tiny pupils. I don't really know why, it's just that when I see those large pupils, I just know in my heart that that person is going to be easy to hypnotize. It could be a physiological marker.

But there are other things going on here. For instance, if we're talking and you like what I say or you like me, your pupils are going to get larger. They are going to dilate. But as we're talking if I say something that annoys you or something you don't like, your pupils are going to constrict.

So if somebody is looking at me and their pupils are wide, that means that probably that person thinks I'm okay. It might even mean that that person likes me and that's good too because if they like me, they're going to go into hypnosis easier too.

They wear sunglasses in the Middle East not just because the sun is so bright there. They are very attuned to changes in pupil size when they're negotiating, and a lot of them will wear their sunglasses so that people can't see what their pupils are doing during negotiations. Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat, up until about ten years before his death, always seemed to be wearing sunglasses. In every picture of that man he had his dark sunglasses on. It wasn't until about ten years before his death that we started seeing his eyes.

So if I see somebody with large pupils, there's a chance that they are open to hypnosis. There's a chance that they like me, and there's a chance that this is going to work.

The Spiegel eye flash: Sometimes when you're speaking with someone and they have very expressive eyes (I notice it more with women than with men), they'll be talking and describing something visual, and then suddenly you can't see their irises. You see only the whites of their eyes. And it will happen just for a split second.

I call that a Spiegel eye flash because it happens for only a moment, but when I see that, I know, given the research of Dr. Herbert Spiegel of Stanford University, that there's a 75% probability that that person is highly hypnotizable.^{iv} So when I see that of course I will put that person on my shortlist of people that I want to bring up to do a demonstration.

Street Hypnotist Tip – When you see a Spiegel eye flash, this is an excellent opportunity to bring up the subject of hypnosis. Say to the person, “Wow! That was amazing what you just did with your eyes!” “What do you mean?” she will ask. “Well, I’m a hypnotist and the thing you just did with your eyes is a characteristic of people who are good at going into hypnosis. You see, Dr. Herbert Spiegel of Stamford found that blah, blah, blah....” Pretty smart, huh?

Here is how to do the test. Tell the subject to look up as if there was a skylight right at the hairline. Tell her to continue to look up as she slowly closes her eyelids down. If she shows you only the whites of her eyes, you have a high responder – or at least there is a 75% probability that you have a high responder.

Physical Reaction Trick

Here's a quick point about emergency hypnosis. When I was in Spain, they were doing a lot of construction near my hotel. A man was walking along and stepped into a hole. His leg snapped. It was an awful compound fracture with part of his femur sticking out!

Now if you winced or in some other way physically reacted to my description of the compound fracture, that could mean that you are highly suggestible or highly hypnotizable. (That never actually happened, by the way.) Whenever you encounter someone who winces when something painful is described, it means this person has a vivid imagination! I once had a friend who could not listen when someone described something disgusting. She would become visibly distressed and even gag and would have to walk away from the conversation. Of course we exploited this at every opportunity!

Mental Issues and Gullibility

You're not going to see this very often but, there is research that suggests that people with what we used to call multiple personalities, what we now call “dissociative identity disorder,” tend to be outstanding hypnotic subjects.^v They are fantastic. I've only had an opportunity to work with two such people in my career but both were over-the-top subjects. Some terrible trauma happens during childhood to cause this syndrome. The reality of the situation is too awful and these people withdraw; they go inside themselves in order to protect themselves.

It's very easy for these people to dissociate and so if you want to hypnotize them, they will go very deep and be able to perform amazing hypnotic phenomena.

In fact, Dr. George Estabrooks in his book Hypnotism describes some research he did during the Cold War, when he worked for Marine Intelligence. He actually split a Marine officer into two personalities. One personality was programmed to be a Communist sympathizer and was sent off to join the Communist party. The other personality remained a loyal Marine officer and ratted on the Communist personality and also gave the names and addresses of the other members of the party.^{vi} So they actually split this guy's personalities on purpose. But in general, hypnosis has not been found to be effective for military purposes, at least based on declassified intelligence documents.

Was that dangerous? Yes. Could it have had a lasting bad effect on that Marine officer? Yes. But war is heck.

We always say that intelligence makes you a more hypnotizable person. That's true, but do you have any friends that are particularly gullible, that will easily fall for a trick? Yes? Have you hypnotized that person yet? You should. Gullible people tend to be highly hypnotizable. Now it doesn't mean they are not intelligent. I've seen gullible scientists. They can be very intelligent. But you can fool them easily. It's as if they have no critical faculty of the conscious mind. If you think about it, they're a little bit like children in their tendency to trust. And we know children are highly hypnotizable. So I think there's a parallel there. If you have a friend that's gullible, they're probably going to be highly hypnotizable.

Prestige of the Hypnotist

Your confidence in your ability to hypnotize people makes a world of difference in your effectiveness. If you seem a little bit tentative, a little unsure of yourself, you're dramatically hurting your ability to hypnotize people. That's why we practice inductions so much -- because we want to feel confident. If we're confident, the subjects will sense it and will go into hypnosis so much easier. If you're not confident, you can fake confidence, and often that is good enough.

Don't say, "Well, let's see if we can get you hypnotized." No. You should say, "You want to do some hypnosis? Let's do it." When they see that confidence in your eyes, they know that you can hypnotize them. So of course you can.

Another important advantage is your reputation. If other people have told someone about you being a hypnotist, then you have a lot more prestige. Your prestige is important. I got excellent training. I trained with the best in the world and so I was always pretty good at hypnotizing people.

But as I got older and more experienced, and acquired the reputation of being a good hypnotist, I became an even better hypnotist. Maybe not much better than I was five years ago, but because people think that I'm a better hypnotist, I am better. Coincidentally, the farther I am away from home, the more powerful I am.

In Singapore, there was nobody that I couldn't hypnotize. In Heidelberg, there might be one or two that give me trouble. And when I go to Australia, I'm unstoppable. So the further you are away from home and the more well-known you are, the better hypnotist you're going to be because you have that

prestige and they look up to you and they think, “Oh, this guy is good,” and so naturally they go into hypnosis.

When I lecture at the hypnosis conventions and have an instructor badge that I wear around my neck, it gives me what I call “instructor badge prestige.” The conference attendees see the badge and think, “Oh, he’s a speaker. I guess he must be good.”

Geography of the Room and Volunteers

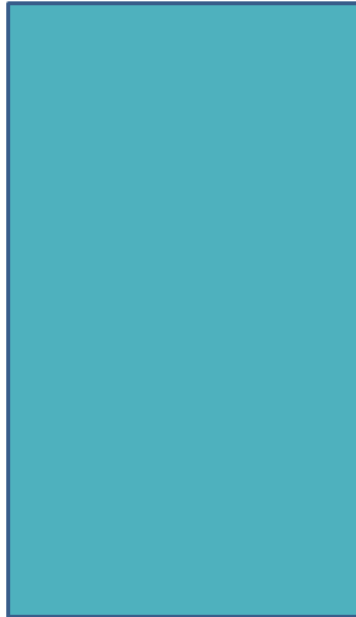
You walk into the venue and the audience is there and you’re sizing them up: who am I going to hypnotize when the time comes?

The first important clue is that your most eager subjects will be seated front and center. People sitting in the front row, particularly towards the center, are the ones who are more likely to volunteer, more so than the people in the rest of the auditorium. The people who are afraid are not going to sit up front. So up front is the best.

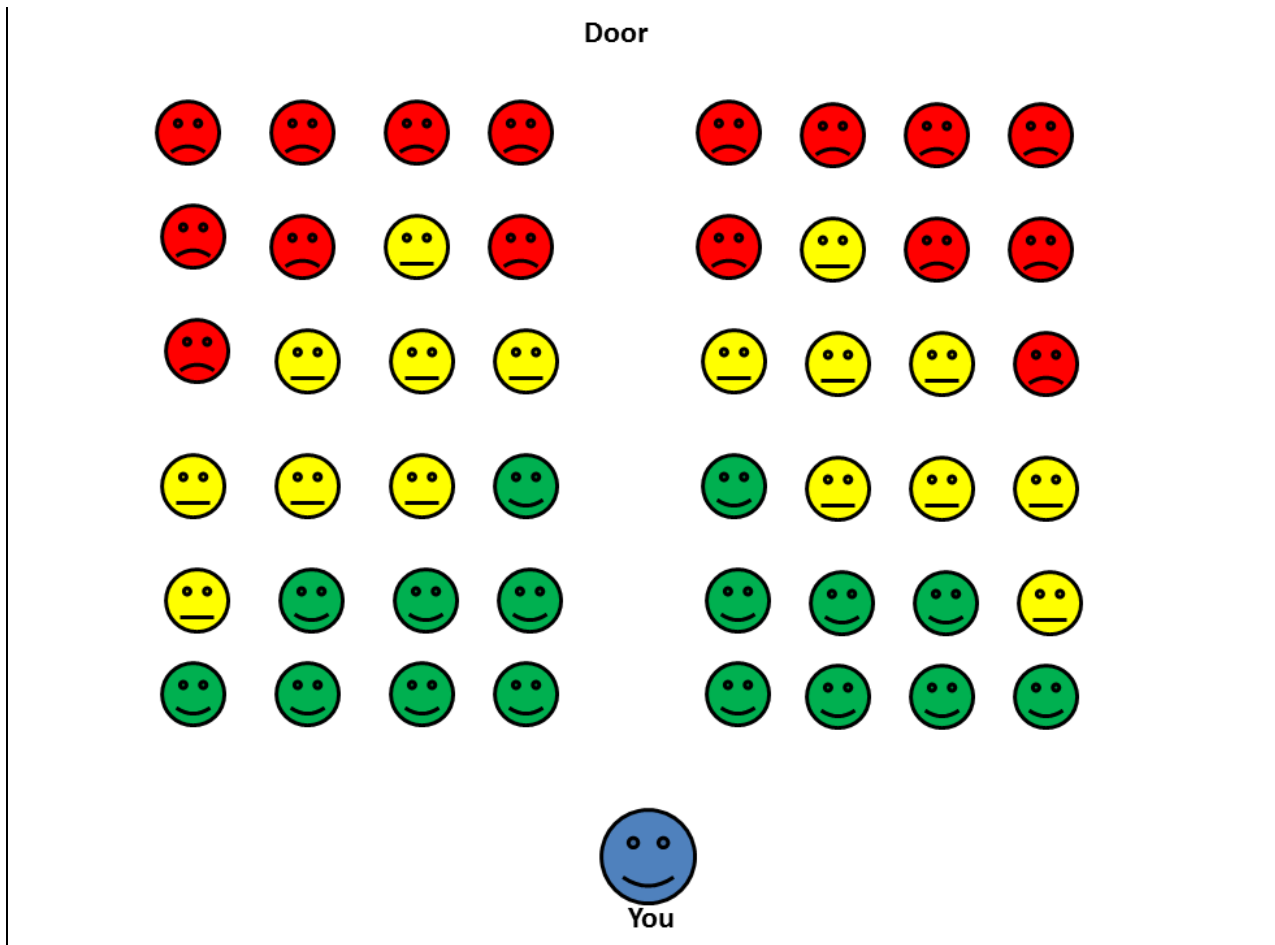
There is something that I learned years ago called “boardroom geography.” It works like this. Imagine you are at a large family dinner. Dad sits at the head of the table and Mom sits at the other end. It works the same in the boardroom or at any other important meeting. (For those of you who have a day job, this can be useful to you.) Sometimes, the person running the meeting will be in the middle of the long side of the table, but more often than not, you find that the President of the organization is going to sit at the head of the table and the second in command, the vice-president, is at the other end.

Table Geography

YOU



Room Geography



Imagine if you will that this is you talking to your crowd -- you're at the head of the table (or room). So where are the people that are going to be your allies? Your allies will be up front and close. These are the people that are supporting you. It works the same way when giving a demonstration. People up front are the ones that are going to support you, they will volunteer for you, and they are going to be more hypnotizable.

But the people that are going to be trouble for you will sit in the back in the far corners and close to the door. When you're giving a talk and you want a volunteer, don't go for those people in the far corners -- they will be more difficult to hypnotize.

I was doing some work with a ladies' make-up company a few years ago that sells cosmetics at parties in customers' homes. The company representative would sit at the head of the table and the lady who was hosting the party would sit at the other end.

I asked them, "The people who usually buy, where do they normally sit?" They said, "The ladies nearest to us. They're the ones that buy the most."

I asked, "Do you ever get people coming to the party who don't really want to be there? People who come to the party just because they are shamed into going or they're begged into going. You know,

people who don't really listen and don't pay attention and don't buy anything? I bet they sit here." And I pointed to the far corners. They were amazed! "That's right! That's where they sit! And they make snide comments and they never buy anything!" So I worked out a strategy for them. I said, "Don't worry about these people. They will never buy anything. They will never listen to you. Forget them. Play to the people closest to you because those people are the ones to whom you have the chance to sell some of your make-up."

It works the same in a boardroom as in giving a talk to people. The people in the corners are there for a reason -- they are not going to be good subjects. Don't even think about bringing them up to hypnotize them because they possibly won't go into hypnosis. The people that are going to go into hypnosis are the people up front.

One more interesting thing about this: if you're ever in a boardroom and the president is one of those mean guys that yells at people, don't sit in the far corners because these are dangerous spots. Why? Because when he gets angry, he's going to yell at those guys down there. Most leaders don't know it, but they have been conditioned to distrust and dislike people who sit in the far corners.

The guys in the seats closest to him, even if they are the ones he's upset with, are **too** close. He'll look at them, he might even make a snide comment, but then he'll start lobbing mortars at the guys in the far corners. If you're ever in a contentious meeting, and the leader is just really mean, sit close to him. Sit as close to him as you can and he can't hurt you. I've done this. I've been in these meetings. I just got nice and close and he'd look at me and then he'd start hitting the guys in the far corners. It's just the way human nature is.

Body Language of the High Responders

So I'm interested in the people that are seated up front and what are they doing? People who want to come up and be volunteers and people who are highly hypnotizable will sit up front and nod and smile as you're doing your talk. They are very engaged. They are already hypnotized. It's too easy.

In my mind I'm thinking, "Okay, well, she's kind of smiling and nodding. I'm going to take her, but this one looks a little bored, so I'm not going to take her and this one looks a little..." So smiling and nodding is always a good thing and I look for that.

There are people who go in to a trance as you're giving your talk and they sit there and vocalize. As you are talking, one of these kind of people will say, "Oh really? Oh, oh yes! Oh, uh-huh, yes." It is almost as if she is oblivious to the other twenty people in the room. In her little world, it's just you and her, and she will talk back to you as if it's a one-on-one conversation. If she does that, she will make a great volunteer. It's so funny.

Here is a body language tip. It's called the rule of the belly button and I learned it from a former Drug Enforcement Agency instructor, Janine Driver.^{vii} Your belly button, or navel, is very important. This little souvenir from your first birthday (whether it's an innie or an outie) can give you away or help you

connect with others. If you ever want to give somebody your undivided attention, and ensure that they know that you're talking right to them and that you are very interested in what they are saying, point your belly button at that person. This makes the connection and they know that you are focused on them, you are present, and they have your full attention. If someone is pointing her belly button away from you, you do NOT have her hooked!

So watch your audience as you're giving your talk. As you walk along, a good volunteer will track you with her belly button, and if she's tracking you with her belly button, she's a keeper. She is yours.

If she turns her belly button away from you, that's a really bad sign. As a matter of fact, going back to the example of the boardroom: the people at the table, look where they're pointing their belly buttons. If they're pointing their belly button towards the president, then they're loyal. If they point it away from the President, they don't like that guy. They don't support that guy.

So, if people turn their belly buttons away from you, there's something not good going on there. You don't have their attention. You don't have their loyalty.

Now let's talk about feet. According to former FBI special agent and body language expert Joe Navarro, a person's feet can tell you a lot about what they are thinking.^{viii} According to him, the feet are the most honest part of the body! Take a careful look at your potential volunteer. Are her feet pointed toward you or are they at least in a neutral position? Or are they pointing toward the door, signalling that she'd rather be somewhere else?

Most body language experts will tell you that the difference between someone touching their nose and touching their mouth is a pretty big difference. It can, although not absolutely, be a good sign as to whether or not they'd be a good hypnotic subject.

If someone is touching her pen or her finger to her lips or even better, if she puts the pen in her mouth, that's a good sign. That can mean that she likes you or it can mean that she is very interested in what you are presenting. But touching the nose can mean the exact opposite. I say CAN mean this. It is never 100%.

A person's body language doesn't always mean exactly one thing, but it's one more clue. If I had a choice between two subjects and one had her pen in her mouth and the other one was touching her nose, I would take the one with the pen in her mouth. Because if you think about it, if she likes you, it's far more likely she's going to cooperate in the induction. If she doesn't like you, she's far more likely to pop out of hypnosis.

Flushing the Prey

This is a trick that nobody taught me but that I saw a really good hypnotist do years ago. When I go into a hypnosis convention, number one, it's easy because in a hypnosis convention, virtually everybody has been hypnotized before, and there are lots of somnambulists all over the place.

But I want to make sure that I'm really going to be successful. So when I begin my talk I say, "I want to thank you all for coming today. I do presentations to a lot of different groups, but I really love giving presentations to fellow hypnotists because there are a lot of people in here who really like hypnosis." I make sure that I'm nodding my head and I'm watching who's smiling and nodding with me. Then I'll say, "This is an afternoon session, so some of you out there have been probably hypnotized two or three times today, haven't you?"

And when they smile and they nod, I take note of who they are. And then I'll say, "I'll be demonstrating hypnosis today..." I check to see if anybody cringes or turns away. "And just for safety's sake, if you are a class-five virtuoso.... Does anyone out there not know what a class-five virtuoso is?" I wait for a hand to go up and then I explain that a virtuoso is a person who when she goes into hypnosis goes completely limp. "So if anybody out there is a virtuoso – and YOU KNOW WHO YOU ARE! – if I call you up for a demonstration, please let me know so that I can be extra cautious."

People will look at those people who are easy to hypnotize and identify them. The people who are highly hypnotizable will bow their head and chuckle and other people will look at them. Now you know who the easy marks are.

I did this once in Chicago and everybody looked at one man and he bowed his head and laughed and I said, "Sir, would you come up here, please." I took a chance because he wasn't sitting up front. He was sitting in the corner, but everybody was looking at him so I chose him.

As soon as he stood up, the audience burst into laughter. It was really loud. I wondered if I'd made a mistake. I might have accidentally picked the one guy who couldn't be hypnotized, but I thought, "What the hell?" So I put him in the chair, did the hand drop induction on him, and boom! Instant hypnosis. He almost fell on the floor! Success!

Laughing is something that can give you information on relationships. When people laugh, they naturally look at people they like because for some strange reason human beings like to watch those whom they like when they are laughing. The next time you're in a group and there is laughter, take note of who is looking at you. This could be a clue that the person likes you! It also can help identify who is romantically involved with whom. You can also see who the friends are that way. It's kind of neat.

This little tip can be extremely useful in business life because it can help you identify who the informal leaders are in an organization. Of course there are company officers such as a president and a vice president. They have titles, but there are other people who really run the company. These are the ones

that everybody else looks up to and takes their lead from. These are the informal leaders and you can find them when you tell a joke.

Everyone will look at that person and if that informal leader laughs really hard, all the followers will think, “Oh that really was funny,” and then they’ll all laugh. But if the informal leader doesn’t think it’s funny, then nobody else will either.

Why would you want to identify informal leaders? Informal leaders are the people you want on your side. If you can persuade them to your way of thinking, the others will follow. It would be nearly impossible to establish rapport with 300 people, but if you establish rapport with the informal leaders, you can win over an entire organization. Does this sound like an easier way to establish rapport with your audience? Yup!

TV and Radio

How about picking volunteers during TV or radio spots? Let me begin with a horror story. In 1987, hypnotist Marshall Sylver appeared on the David Letterman show. Letterman made fun of Sylver, taunted him, and effectively lowered his prestige. Then Sylver made a very big mistake. He let Letterman choose a volunteer for hypnosis. During the induction, Letterman continued to taunt Sylver and distract his subject. In front of millions of television viewers Marshall Sylver failed to hypnotize a subject. It was a disaster, or so it seemed. Somehow – perhaps viewers wrote in and complained about Letterman’s bullying -- but Sylver was invited back on the show several times. But the disastrous first performance lives on almost 30 years later on Youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zTLFzA-JAFA>

So here’s what Marshall Sylver’s mistake was. Actually, there were several mistakes, but this was the biggest. If you’re doing television or radio, don’t go in cold and don’t let somebody else pick your volunteers for you. Tell the station that you want to come in two hours early and ask them to provide you with several interns for you to evaluate to see who’s highly hypnotizable. You don’t want to mess up on TV or radio. It will not be entertaining for the audience if the subjects turn out to be low responders. Interns are especially good because they tend to be college age, intelligent, and eager to please. Identify the best subjects and use them for the show. I am sure that getting an opportunity to be on the Letterman show made Sylver willing to accept ANY format, and if the truth be known, I have gone on camera and “performed without a net” too. But I got lucky. Marshall Sylver got burned.

Somehow Marshall Sylver redeemed himself and even became famous. For a time he was known as the World’s Fastest Hypnotist. So now you know!

“Relaxation” Exercise

Here’s another trick I use to find the best subjects if I’m doing a talk in front of a service club or some other organization. This is particularly fun with ladies’ groups. I’m the only man in the room and I say, “I don’t suppose any of you have any stress in your life, do you?” The entire room full of women will laugh

at this clueless man who doesn't realize that they have stressful lives. Women will always admit they have stressful lives. Men will not.

So if I suggest that they don't have stress in their lives, they'll get a good chuckle out of that at my expense. I'll say, "I'd like to walk you through a relaxation exercise that will make you feel really wonderful. Would that be good?" And of course they all want to do that.

So, I say, "Okay, if you have anything on your lap, just go ahead and put it down and put your feet flat on the floor, hands in your lap."

"The way this relaxation exercise works is, I'd like you all to take a nice deep breath and fill up your lungs and hold it. Now let it out and close your eyes down. Right...and relax. Relax your eyes and the muscles in your eyelids. Relax them to the point where they just won't work, and when you're satisfied they just won't work, I want you to test them to prove to yourself they just won't work. Go and test them hard.

"Good. Now stop testing. Relax them again and send that relaxation all the way down to your toes just like a warm wave of relaxation. Good.

"Now, in a moment, I'm going to have you open your eyes and then close them, and when you close them, just go ten times deeper into relaxation. Let your eyes open and close your eyes down. Good. Go ten times deeper. That's right, and in a moment, I'm going to have you open your eyes and close them again. This time when you close them, just double your relaxation. Let your eyes open and close your eyes down. Good. Double that relaxation. Good. You're doing well.

"And in a moment, I'm going to have you open your eyes and close them again. This time when you close them, just relax even deeper. Let your eyes open and close your eyes down, way down. Good. You're doing great and just listen to the sound of my voice. And the sound of my voice can always help you to go deeper and deeper into relaxation.

"You'll hear other noises. Perhaps you'll hear the birds chirping outside. Maybe you'll hear a cellphone ring. None of these sounds will bother or disturb you. In fact, any other sound that you hear will just help you to go deeper and deeper into relaxation. Good.

"Now, in a moment, I'm going to count backwards from ten down to one. Let each number I say relax your mind so that it becomes relaxed and calm and serene just like the surface of a still lake. So by the time I reach the number one, you'll be even deeper relaxed.

"Ten... nine... eight... that's right, relaxing... seven... six... five... allowing each gentle exhale to take a deeper and deeper relaxed... four... three... two... and one. Deeper relaxed. Good. That's right.

"Now in a moment, I'm going to do the second part of the relaxation. I'm going to count from one to fifteen. When I reach the number ten, let yourself come up just enough that you can gently get your eyelids open. But as I continue counting from ten to fifteen, those eyelids get heavy, droopy, drowsy, and sleepy. They close down and you relax even more.

“One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, eleven, twelve, thirteen, fourteen, fifteen, and deeper. Good, I’m going to do that again. This time, when your eyes close down, just let go of all the surface tension in your body and relax even deeper. That’s right.

“One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, eleven, twelve, thirteen, fourteen, and fifteen, even deeper. Good. Let’s do that one more time and this time when your eyes close down, just relax completely.

“One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, eleven, twelve, thirteen, fourteen, and fifteen, even deeper, good. And now, just allow all the stress to leave. Allow yourself to feel so comfortable, so relaxed. That’s right. Everything is in the past and it’s now just you feeling relaxed, feeling calm and wonderful. And in a moment I’ll count up from one to five and when I reach the number five, your eyes will open. You’ll be very relaxed, very comfortable, and very refreshed, just like you had a nice little nap.

“One, slowly, easily, and gently feel yourself coming up to your full awareness. Two, a wonderful comfortable relaxing feeling now comes up through your chair and into your body, starting to feel really good now. Three, that relaxation grows throughout your body, you’re feeling so good, so content. Four, your eyes beneath your eyelids become clear as if they were just bathed in a crystal clear mountain stream, and five, eyes open. Take a deep breath and stretch and see how good you feel. You feel good, don’t you?”

Now that takes about eight minutes and during those eight minutes, you’re evaluating the audience. For instance, when you do the fractionation with the eyes opening and closing, a lot of people will give a slight Spiegel eye flash when their eyes close down. The face will look relaxed. They may actually look a little intoxicated.

Some will slump over. Sometimes the subject’s arm will slide off her lap. That is always a good sign. Often the head will droop forward, but if it goes back it’s even better. After eight minutes I can identify the easiest people for me to hypnotize. And they don’t even know that it’s a hypnotic induction.

Of the people that come in to me to see me for hypnotherapy, only about 3% of them have ever been hypnotized before. So in a room full of people that you’re talking to, fewer than 3% have ever been hypnotized before. One or two of them in the audience might know it’s a hypnotic induction, but most of them won’t. I never said hypnosis in that induction. All I said was relaxation. That’s what I told them I was going to give them and that’s what I gave them, relaxation. But I only did it so I could pick out who the good subjects were.

The Pre-Brief

When you’re doing demonstrational hypnosis, one of the most important things that you can do is to get rid of any fears the subjects might have about hypnosis. If they’re afraid of hypnosis, you’re going to have a hard time hypnotizing them.

So we dispel the fears with the pre-brief. It takes less than a minute to deliver:

“There are three common misconceptions about hypnosis. The first one is that there’s a loss of control. There’s no loss of control in hypnosis. You’d never do anything in hypnosis that you wouldn’t normally do. You would never do anything against your moral, religious, or personal values, or just something you thought was silly. When you’re deep in hypnosis, if I were to say to you, “Would you stand on your head?” You’d say, “Nah, I don’t feel like doing it.” You wouldn’t be compelled.

“The second common misconception about hypnosis is that people tell secrets in hypnosis and that’s not true either. If you had a secret to keep in your normal waking state, you’d keep it in hypnosis. You’re not going to give me the PIN number for your ATM card.

“And the third common misconception about hypnosis is that people can get stuck in hypnosis, and that’s impossible. In 4000 years of people being hypnotized, nobody ever got stuck. But I’ll tell you though, when you’re deep in hypnosis, it feels so wonderful you’ll wish you could get stuck, but you can’t.

“So, do you have any questions before I hypnotize you?” That takes one minute to deliver. And because I’ve taken care of the three most common fears that people have, they now feel safe. Spend one minute doing this and you will hypnotize so many more people!

Now there’s a little bit going on behind the scenes of this pre-brief and I want to explain those things. We’re setting up three straw men and then we’re knocking them down. In fact, there are many misconceptions about hypnosis. I met a lady once who asked, “Is it true that if you go into hypnosis, your soul is open and demons can come in and steal your soul?” Wow!

In fact there are many misconceptions about hypnosis. Some people, though, are just a little frightened. They don’t know what the misconceptions are, so for them we just pick three of the most common ones and discredit them. This takes away the fear. Don’t bring up having your soul stolen by a demon because she might say, “Oh my gosh! I never thought about that. Now I AM scared!”

Be sure to keep the tone light-hearted when you deliver the pre-brief. Also, when you mention the misconception about telling secrets in hypnosis, do not make eye contact with the subject. You risk getting the “deer in the headlights” look in return! Everyone has secrets! Make the little joke that “You’re not going to give me the PIN number for your ATM card.” They will laugh and you should laugh with them, even though it’s not funny anymore because you’ve said this a thousand times!

So then I finish with, “Do you have any questions before I hypnotize you?”

Notice the presupposition, “I’m going to hypnotize you.” They will almost always answer, “No.” Very, very rarely, one of them will say, “Well, yes. I do have a question. Are you sure that my soul won’t be opened up so demons can come in and steal it?” If they ask you any questions just deal with them and go on. So that’s the pre-brief – do it that way and you will be so much more effective with your demonstrations.

Here’s a secret that makes hypnotizing the subject easier on subsequent meetings. Every time you hypnotize someone for the first time, always give her a post-hypnotic suggestion at the end: “The next

time **you want to be hypnotized**, you'll find you'll go in even faster and deeper, and it feels even better, because that's the nature of hypnosis. You get better at it the more you do it."

But there's a sneaky little thing in that too. You say, "So, I have one last suggestion. The suggestion is, the next time **you want to be hypnotized**," with tonality going down, for all of you NLPers. This is an embedded command that "you want to be hypnotized."

Here's another tip. I always say that imagination and intelligence are the two things that make people great hypnotic subjects. This is sort of a backhanded way of saying, "If I bring you up here on the stage and you don't go into hypnosis, you're not very intelligent. You don't have much of an imagination." So that will help me get compliance. They think to themselves, "I don't want to look like an idiot so I'd better go into hypnosis. I had better cooperate."

Remember to give them the expectation of success. "You're going to be good." "You know what? I love talking to groups of doctors because they all tend to be highly hypnotizable." Truthfully, I don't find them highly hypnotizable. Some people find them hard, but if I tell them that, they are going to have that mindset and they just might be hard. So I don't want that. Give them the expectation.

A buddy of mine named Geoffrey Ronning has taught probably more stage hypnotists than anybody in the world. He said something that I thought was very profound: just have the mindset that everybody there is a great hypnotic subject. It's a really terrific mindset to have. If you just expect everybody is going to be a good hypnotic subject, often they won't let you down.

Danger, Danger

Okay, so what are the bad indicators?

One is, "Sir, would you please come up here?"

"Nah, I don't think so."

That's a clue that you probably shouldn't use that person. People ask me when I go out on the street, why am I successful in hypnotizing almost all of my volunteers? It's because I don't hypnotize people who don't want to be hypnotized. That's what I used to do when I started out. Anybody that didn't run away from me, I would hypnotize or try to hypnotize. That's stupid! It's a recipe for failure.

So if you say, "Would you come up here please, ma'am?" And she says, "No, no, no. I'm not going to do that" – don't use that person. The whole time you're giving your talk, you should be setting it up, laying the groundwork, so when you say, "Ma'am, would you please come up here?" she's ready like the girl on the cover of this book. She's nodding, eye contact, belly button on, everything like that – so I say, "Would you come up?"

"Yes, I'd love to come up. I was hoping you would ask me!"

But if you ask them to come up and they say no, you might fail.

A 2013 study published in the Journal of Experimental Psychology had some really useful information for hypnotists.^{ix} Often a subject will say to you, “I’m nervous!” Say to her, “Don’t say nervous, say excited!” Here is why. Test subjects that were nervous about speaking in front of groups were divided into two teams. The first team was to try and convince themselves they were calm, not nervous. This didn’t work. The second team was told to reinterpret the nervousness as excitement. Because excitement is much closer to nervousness than a feeling of calm is, the second group was able to switch to the more resourceful feeling and overcome the nervousness!

I love that study. As a matter of fact, I’d heard that before -- one of my teachers told me that years ago and I thought, “Wow, it’s such a good line.” And now we actually have scientific studies that say it really works.

This is important. I alluded to this earlier, but it’s really important: success breeds success. If I hypnotize one person, the next one’s probably going to go in too. They have that expectation and so if I hypnotize my first person, my second person has now become more highly hypnotizable.

But failure breeds failure and if you fail on stage, I don’t know how you’re going to recover from that. I guess if that ever happened to me I would say, “Well, you know what? Now you know that this is real. This is not magic. It’s real and real people usually go into hypnosis, but some can’t. Well, thank you very much for coming up here, ma’am.” Then I turn to my second choice whom I’d been sizing up. She probably will go in but maybe not because she just saw me fail.

Now your prestige has been lowered. Her belief in your ability to hypnotize her has been shaken. You’re in danger of failing. If you fail with the second one, go home! So – success breed success, failure breeds failure.

Dave Elman

I’m the supervising instructor for the Dave Elman Institute. Dave Elman was a radio personality back in 1930s and 40s before he became one of the leading hypnotists in the world. He was already a hypnotist, but he didn’t tell anybody. He’d been a hypnotist from the age of about eight.

He was a radio personality on one of the major radio stations. Think of one of the most famous television stars in this country right now – that’s how big Elman was in the 1940s and he had a radio show called “Hobby Lobby.”

It was kind of a cute show. He would have guests with unusual hobbies come on and they would describe it to the audience in the radio station and also to the people listening at home. One guy, for example, had an interesting hobby. He collected woodpecker holes – not the woodpeckers, not the eggs, but their holes – that was his thing.

But one day Dave Elman got a guy on the air and his hobby was that he was a hypnotist. And so they did a little show. They lined the people up in the chairs and he turned out to be a rotten hypnotist. He was really bad. He didn’t hypnotize anybody. Elman was sweating it out because the studio audience knew

what was going on and the people at home were starting to get an inkling that it had gone really badly and nobody got hypnotized.

So Elman said, “Well sir, would you mind if...do you think they’d take instructions from me?” And of course the guy said, “Oh yes. I think so. I think that would work.” And he just got out of the way. He was that guy that I said we don’t want to be when you can’t hypnotize somebody.

Anyway, Elman then hypnotized the group and the show was a big success. And that was when people found out that he was a hypnotist. I have a deal with the Elman family that if they ever do a movie of Dave Elman’s life, I’m going to get a role in that movie. I want to be that bad hypnotist. I want to be that guy that sucked so badly, he couldn’t hypnotize anybody.

But the point is: the guy failed and he couldn’t recover from it. And because he failed, there was no sense bringing other people up because they already knew he was no good. So that’s why we do this stuff so that we don’t fail.

Here’s an interesting thing, speaking of Dave Elman – one of his “five unmistakable signs of hypnosis” was warmth. Remember one of the studies that I was doing was to see if you got warmer or colder in hypnosis? That was because I completely misinterpreted something that Elman wrote in his book.^x He said there were five signs of hypnosis, four of them having to do with the eyes: increased lacrimation (or tearing) of the eyes, eyes rolling up in the head, reddening of the sclera or the whites of the eyes, and fluttering of the eyelids. Then he also talked about body warmth.

I took that to mean that when you got hypnotized, your body got warmer, but then I re-read the section and he actually said something completely different. What he said was that when he met people and wanted to see if they were going to be hypnotizable, he would shake their hand: if their hand is cool, they may be cool to the idea of going into hypnosis. If the hand is warm and dry, it’s a good indication that they are probably warm to the idea of hypnosis.

So if you have the opportunity to meet people at your talk and shake hands, and somebody has a hand that’s like an ice cube, remember that person and seriously consider if you want to choose her or him to come up on stage with you.

It may be that they have just one or two characteristics that are kind of iffy, but they may also have a lot of other indicators that they could be good subjects. You have to average it out. You have to do the math and figure it out. Do they have more things going for them than against them? Sometimes you don’t have the perfect subject but you have somebody who’s better than the others and that’s what you have to go with.

The Perfect Volunteer

I’m just about finished with all my tips, but I wanted to tell you about somebody that I met in Singapore. I noticed when I met her that she was of Indian decent. She was a citizen of Singapore – and Singaporean culture values respect and compliance.

So...she's a woman (one). She's of Indian decent (two). She's a Singaporean (three). She's into meditation (four). She does Reiki (five). She believes in past-life regression (six). When I met her, she had the largest pupils that I'd seen in a long time (seven).

The whole time I was lecturing, she was tracking me with her belly button (eight), smiling and nodding, and was very happy to meet me (nine). When the other instructor was speaking, I watched this lady from the back of the room, and the whole time she was vocalizing, "Oh really, oh yes! Oh? Oh yes!" – as if she was the only other person in the room (ten). Of course she was seated right up front (eleven) and then, during one of the breaks I said, "Let me show you a Spiegel Eye Roll test," and when I showed it to her, she went into trance with just the Spiegel Eye Roll test (twelve).

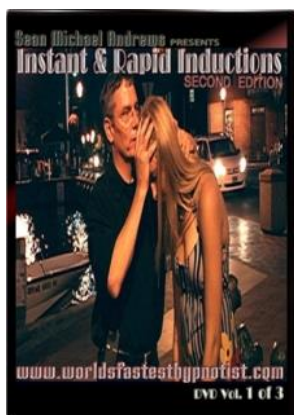
So when I brought her up to be my volunteer, do you think she went? Oh boy, boom! She had twelve things going for her, so there was never any doubt that she was going to go into hypnosis, no doubt whatsoever. The only thing that would have made this woman better is if she was eight years old and had a history of drug use. You rarely find those two together.

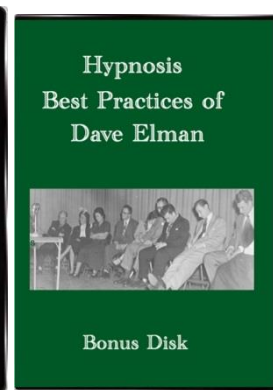
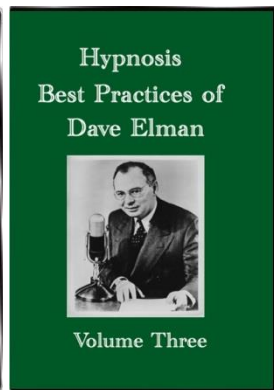
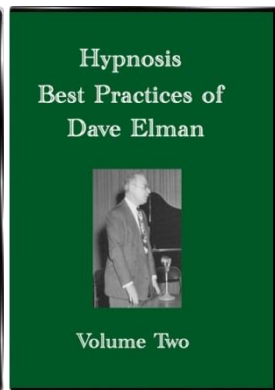
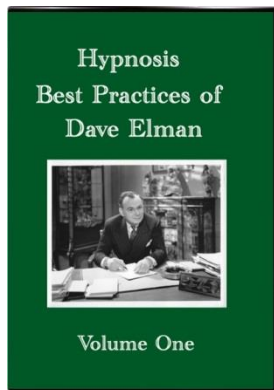
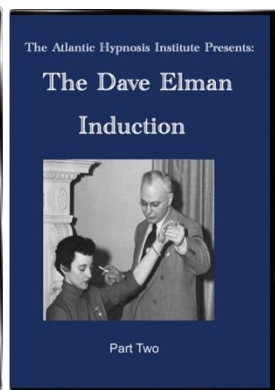
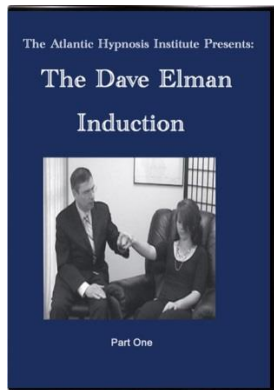
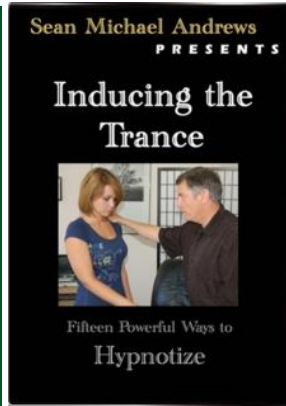
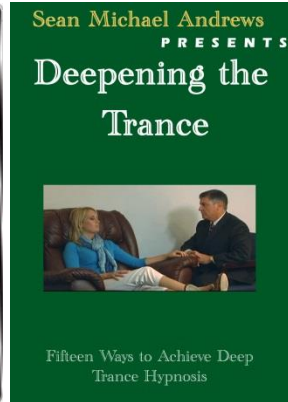
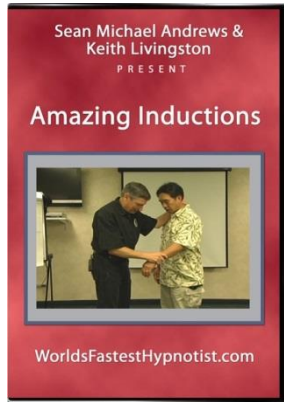
So these are the things that we've got to look for if we want to look good when we're giving a presentation in front of a group. And if you look for these things, and you keep score with these characteristics, and you make sure that you only work with people that want to do hypnosis, it's nearly impossible for you to fail.

I hope you have enjoyed this little book. I wish you many successful, eye-popping hypnotic demonstrations!

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Mid-America Hypnosis Conference 2013 “Hypnotist of the Year” Sean Michael Andrews is a certified hypnotist currently doing hypnosis research in Heidelberg, Germany. He is the Supervising Instructor for the Dave Elman Hypnosis Institute. Sean teaches the nurse anesthetist course for the American School of Clinical Hypnosis International. He is also the Director and Senior Instructor for the Atlantic Hypnosis Institute. Sean is a Master Practitioner of Neuro-Linguistic Programming and he teaches his unique style of instant hypnosis throughout the North America, Europe, Asia, and Australia. Many consider him to be “The World’s Fastest Hypnotist.”

He is certified with:

National Guild of Hypnotists

National Board of Hypnosis Education and Certification

International Medical & Dental Hypnotherapy Association

Society of Neuro-Linguistic Programming

i As cited in Fromm and Nash, Contemporary Hypnosis Research (New York: Guildford Press, 1992) 318-321.

ii Cardeña, Kallio, Terhune, Buratti, and Lööf, “The Effects of Translation and Sex on Hypnotizability Testing,” Contemporary Hypnosis 24(4): 154-160 (2007), 21 Jun. 2014 <http://asociataromanadehipnoza.ro/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/THE-EFFECTS-OF-TRANSLATION-AND-SEX-ON-HYPNOTIZABILITY-TESTING.pdf>

ⁱⁱⁱ Semmens-Wheeler, Dienes, and Duka, "Alcohol increases hypnotic susceptibility," *Consciousness and Cognition* 22 (2013) 1082–1091, 21 Jun. 2014 http://www.lifesci.sussex.ac.uk/home/Zoltan_Dienes/Semmens-Wheeler%20Dienes%20&%20Duka%20in%20press%20hypnosis%20and%20alcohol.pdf

^{iv} Herbert Spiegel, "The Grade 5 Syndrome: The Highly Hypnotizable Person," *The International Journal of Clinical and Experimental Hypnosis*, 1974, Vol. XXII, No. 4, 303-319, 21 Jun. 2014 http://www.drherbertspiegel.com/_html/pdfs/TheGrade5Syndrome_TheHighlyHypnotizablePerson.pdf

^v Spiegel, 303-319.

^{vi} Dr. George Estabrooks, *Hypnotism* (New York: E.P Dutton, 1957) 193.

^{vii} Janine Driver, *You Say More Than You Think* (New York: Three Rivers Press, 2010) 65.

^{viii} Joe Navarro, *What Every Body is Saying* (New York: Harper, 2008) 53.

^{ix} Alison Wood Brooks, "Getting Excited Helps with Performance Anxiety More Than Trying to Calm Down, Study Finds," 23 Dec. 2013, 21 Jun. 2014 <http://www.apa.org/news/press/releases/2013/12/performance-anxiety.aspx>

^x Dave Elman, *Hypnotherapy* (Glendale: Westwood, 1964) 30.