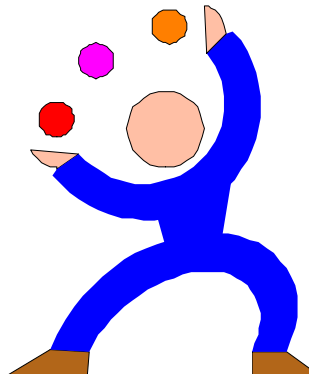


# Hypnotic Language: Indirection, Suggestions and Binds

Stephen Lankton, LCSW, DAHB



Editor-in-Chief – American Journal of Clinical Hypnosis  
Fellow & Approved Consultant – American Society of Clinical Hypnosis  
Diplomate & President Emeritus – American Hypnosis Board for Clinical Social Work  
Emeritus Clinical Member – International Transactional Analysis Association  
Email: [Steve@lankton.com](mailto:Steve@lankton.com)

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## Required Disclaimer

“Materials that are included in this course may include interventions and modalities that are beyond the authorized practice of mental health professionals. As a licensed professional, you are responsible for reviewing the scope of practice, including activities that are defined in law as beyond the boundaries of practice in accordance with and in compliance with your professional standards.”

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## Spoiler-Alert for this Workshop

- There will be too much information in this workshop for you to absorb and remember.
- There will be too many language skills for you to learn in this workshop.
- There will be more types of suggestion shared than you can master today.
- **Keep this handout for further study!**

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### Components of Hypnosis

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Focused attention

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Absorption

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Dissociation

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Suggestibility

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## Hypnotic Language

- In every instance, the goal in using hypnotic language is to elicit experience.
- The goal is *not*, as some people think, to place an idea in the subconscious.
- Again, the goal of language is to evoke a response and elicit *experience*: cognitive, perceptual, emotional, visceral, and/or behavioral experience.

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## Hypnotic Language: verbal and non-verbal

Hypnotic Language refers to *verbal* and *non-verbal* behavior that elicits unconscious response (or responses) in a single listener or in multiple listeners.

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## **Before Using Words – And While Using Words**



Symmetrical and Complementary Matching

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## **Responding to Non-verbal Messages**



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Matching:

1. Role Symmetry  
&  
2. Role Complementarity

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Matching in a symmetrical role



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## Symmetrical Analog matching

- orientation
- forehead
- brow
- gaze
- tilt
- cheek tension
- mouth tension
- movement
- shoulders pitch
- chest posture
- arm positioning
- hand movement
- stance



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## General Rule: Matching any message



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## Symmetrical Non-Verbal Matching

### **Non-verbal component**

- **respond to each channel**
- **respond in the form the message was sent**
- **match the body “attitude”**
- **match the changes in limbs and body of sender**

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## Non-verbal Aspects of Delivery

- **Tone of voice**
- **Speed of speaking**
- **Volume of voice**
- **Pausing**
- **Creating a pace that reflects the client’s actions**
- **Grouping words together**
- **Emphasis on certain words, esp. verbs**

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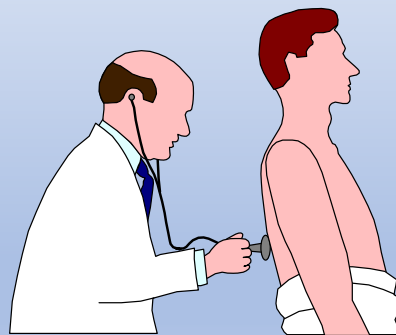
## Matching:

1. Role Symmetry  
&  
2. Role  
Complementarity

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## Complementarity Matching

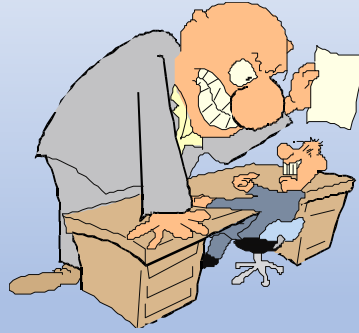
- social role factors
- framing factors
- limited rapport



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## General rule: Avoid Symmetrical Matching



- Generally, symmetrically match the non-aggressive behavior.
- Otherwise, take a complementary role to aggressive behavior.
- Matching aggressive complementary behavior usually results in escalation.

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## How to use language

1

Be positive in your orientation and selection of suggestions

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Presuppose changes

3

Create small changes as incremental stages of the big change

4

Use the client's behavior and experience as much as possible

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## Basic Language Patterns & Options

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The Rule of Three & Yes Sets

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Direct Suggestions

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Presuppositions

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Ambiguity (controlled)

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Indirect Suggestions

---

Therapeutic Binds

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## Rule of Three

1

People process  
information using  
patterns

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2

Three is the smallest  
number of elements  
required to create a  
pattern

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3

Brief patterns are more  
memorable

- Cool, Calm, Collected
  - Stop, Look, and Listen
  - Blood, Sweat, and Tears
  - Good, bad, and ugly
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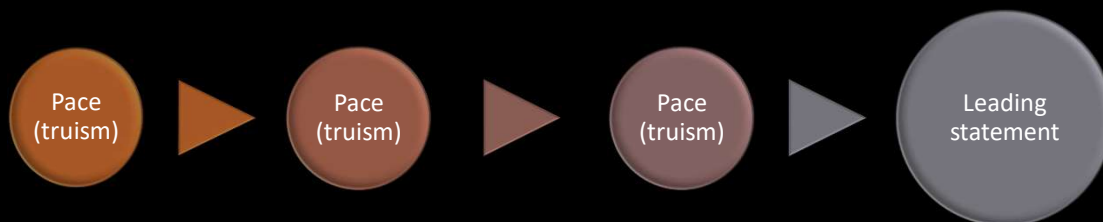
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## Hypnosis Examples – Rule of Three & Yes-sets

- Continue to sit, be still, and breathe comfortably,
- You can close your eyes, hear my voice, and let your mind wander
- You don't need to talk, you don't need to move, you don't need to do anything

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## Yes Set



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## Hypnosis Examples – Yes Set

- You are sitting, breathing comfortably, and relaxing => and you can go back to that memory...
- Your eyes are closed, sitting still, listening to my voice => so you can go deeper into trance.
- You've talked to me, considered your situation, wondered what to do => and now you can let your unconscious do the work.

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## Direct Suggestion

- Direct suggestion is defined as “the language that elicits an unconscious response to a *stated goal*” (Weitzenhoffer, 1957).
- Direct suggestion gets best results when the operator’s *prestige and authority is high* and the principles of *repetition*, along with evocation of ideosensory and ideomotor processes are used (Weitzenhoffer, 1957).
- Sometimes these are *enhanced by goal-directed fantasy* which is often recognized as the basis of direct suggestion (Barber, Spanos and Chaves, 1974).

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## The Goal of Hypnotic Language

- In every instance, the goal in using hypnotic language is to elicit experience in the listener.
- The goal is not, as some untrained people think, to place an idea in the subconscious.
- Again, the goal of language is to evoke a response and elicit *experience*: cognitive, perceptual, emotional, and behavioral experience.

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## Presupposition

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**Existence:** once, sometime, long ago

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**Time:** when, after, as, during, before

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**Occurrence:** since, if, old, present, former

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**Amount:** one of, several, many, one of, only

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**Order:** the first, the last, the next, the 2nd

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**Causality:** due to, because of, will make

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**Change:** become, change, turn into, begin, end, stop, continue, still, yet, anymore





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## Hypnosis Examples - Presuppositions

- As you relax, I can talk
- Since you are continuing to go deeper, I will pause
- After you go into trance, I will continue
- One of the things you do in trance is experience
- I wonder what your relaxation will become

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## Ambiguity

- Words or phrases with multiple meanings
- Words or phrases with vague meaning
- Interspersion of meaningful words
- YOU CAN  CLOSE EYES  RELAX  DEEPER  DREAM

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## Erickson and Suggestion

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- In a 1957 transcript of induction, we find Dr Erickson's repeated use of words like "sleep": "Now I want you to go deeper and deeper asleep". In addition his authoritative approach is seen in, "I can put you in any level of trance" (Haley 1967).
- By 1976 Erickson believed indirect suggestion to be a "significant factor" in his work (Erickson, Rossi et al. 1976, p. 452).
- By 1981 Erickson clearly states that he "offers" ideas and suggestions (Erickson and Rossi 1981, pg. 1-2) and explicitly adds, "*I don't like this matter of telling a patient I want you to get tired and sleepy*" (Erickson and Rossi 1981, p. 4).

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## Indirect Suggestion

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- Indirect suggestion is hypnotic language that is recognized for being *ambiguous* and more *permissive* in nature.
- *Responses* to indirect suggestion are recognized as being a function of the subject's *personal need*.
- And, perhaps because of this, they are frequently more personally effective than direct suggestion at an *individual level*.

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## Characteristics

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- (1) Indirect suggestion invites the subject's individuality, previous experience, and unique potentials to become manifest;
- (2) The classical psychodynamics of learning with processes like association, contiguity, similarity, contrast checking, etc., are all involved on a unconscious level;
- (3) Indirect suggestion tends to bypass conscious criticism and learned limitations

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### Indirect Suggestions

1. Open Ended Suggestions:
2. Implication:
3. Focus Awareness:
4. Truism:
5. All Possible Alternatives:

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## Construction Formulas - Suggestions

- Open-ended suggestion: Increase elements of the sentence one higher level of vagueness.
- Implication: Use a presupposition and state the goal.
- Focusing attention: Use 'wonder' or 'doubt' about goal.
- Truism: Use 'every person' or 'every company,' etc., and state the goal in some manner.
- All possible alternatives: Use 'a, or b, or c, or d, or 'not'' as different ways of reaching the goal.

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## Presupposition

- For example a simple presupposition is,
  - "After you write this down, we'll continue." This example uses presupposition syntax of the word "after," followed by the goal of taking notes by writing.
  - Other simple presuppositions are: "Since this is the first time you've been in trance, close your eyes,"
  - and "After your trance is over, we'll do some talking about it"
  - or "One of the first things you'll want to do in trance may be formulating a sense of comfort."

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## Implication

- An implication requires that the speaker link two concepts together such that one causes the other.
- In addition, the concepts must have exact opposites. That is the concept of 'eyes open' has the opposite of 'eyes closed.'
- The concept of tense has the opposite of relaxed.
- So an implication that links 'eyes open' and tension would be: "Keeping your eyes open can help you stay tense."
- Obviously the implication is that the listener will become relaxed when they close their eyes.

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## Statement & Questions to Focus Awareness

- Statements such as "I wonder if you'll be going into trance soon" or "I don't know if you've discovered how comfortable you are" have the effect of helping clients notice the portion of their experience .
- This form can also occur in questions such as: "Have you noticed how relaxed you are yet?" "Do you think you'll begin thinking about the goal that we spoke of?"

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## Open-ended suggestions

- Open-ended suggestions take the form of increasing the degree of ambiguity for any element in a sentence that would otherwise be a direct suggestion.
- For example, an open-ended suggestion such as, "Everyone can find a way to record information that's important," could have been created from the direct suggestion "Write this down."

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## Truism

- Such sentences usually begin with phrases like "All children" or "all people" or "in all cultures..."
- For example: "All people have their own way of going into trance,"
- "Every child uses imagination to think about ideas,"
- "In every culture, people problem-solve in a unique way."
- In each of these examples a truism was followed by statement of the desired goal.

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## Suggestions covering all possible Alternatives

- “You may relax systematically from your head to your feet or you may relax from your feet to your head, perhaps you’ll discover some portions already relaxed and relax adjacent parts of your body, or it’s possible that there will be a gradual relaxation all over your entire body at once, or possibly random limbs and muscle groups will relax more.

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## Apposition of Opposites

- And the higher your hand lifts the deeper your trance experience can become.
- The simpler your relaxation seems the more complex problems can be solved.
- The longer you have waited the quicker you can come to a solution.

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## Therapeutic Binds

1. Binds of Comparable Alternatives:
2. Conscious / Unconscious Bind:
3. Double Dissociative Conscious / Unconscious

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## Construction Formulas - Binds

- Bind of Comparable Alternatives: Use 'A' or 'B' where both contain a form of the goal by presupposition.
- Conscious/Unconscious Bind: Use the form: "Your conscious mind is/may (some form of awareness) while your unconscious is/may (retrieval of the goal).
- Double Dissociative Bind: Use the form above and then reverse: Your conscious mind \_\_A\_\_ as your unconscious mind \_\_B\_\_, or perhaps your conscious mind \_\_B\_\_ while your unconscious \_\_A\_\_.

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## Bind of Comparable Alternatives

- “You may want to try these ideas in your family before you go to work; however, it may be best for you to try them after work.”
- “You may go into trance by closing your eyes or you may wish to keep your eyes open” also presupposes going into trance regardless of the condition of the eyes.

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## Conscious/Unconscious Binds

- “Your conscious mind may be surprised to discover how your unconscious will bring a feeling of relaxation around your new employer.”
- “Your conscious mind may be relaxed while your unconscious investigates that memory.”

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## Double Dissociative Conscious/Unconscious Binds

- “Your *conscious mind may be comfortable* and relaxed as your *unconscious rehearses how you will conduct yourself* at the job interview or perhaps your *conscious mind will rehearse how you will conduct yourself* at the job interview while your *unconscious* mind is *comfortable* and relaxed.”

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## Pseudo Non-sequitur Bind

- You may go into trance or simply develop a state of therapeutic concentration.
- You can go more deeply into trance or just develop a deep concentration experience.
- You close your eyes or just stare at the back of your eye lids.

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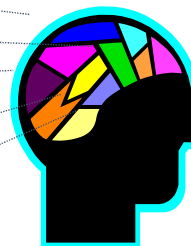
## Comprehensive Demonstration

1. Open-ended suggestion
2. Implication
3. Focusing attention
4. Truism
5. All possible alternatives
6. Apposition of Opposites
7. Bind of Comparable Alternatives
8. Conscious/Unconscious Bind
9. Double Dissociative Bind
10. Pseudo Non-sequitur Bind

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## Stimulating different mentation

- Open-ended suggestion
- Implication
- Focusing attention
- All possible alternatives
- Truism
- Comparable alternatives
- Conscious/Unconscious Bind



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