

## **Ericksonian Inductions**

Erickson used a variety of approaches in inductions. He could be direct and authoritarian or indirect and permissive. He was famous for his permissive, indirect approach that involved “possibility words.”

His approach often used presuppositions that clients would both enter trance and get the changes they wanted. “Would you prefer to go into trance in the black chair or the red one?” “Don't enter trance too quickly.”

Rather than commanding people to enter trance (some strange, mystical state) he might suggest they remember a time when they were experiencing something he might interpret as hypnotic or close to hypnotic. “You can remember the feeling of feeling like you were almost going to sleep, can you not?” He would evoke past trance or trance-like experiences.

An Ericksonian technique that's good many times during a session (including the induction phase) is embedded suggestions. These are suggestions that are messages inside other messages. For instance, if you were to say the words “relax deeply” with a special emphasis, the mind would take that as a separate message. It's possible to *relax deeply* in that chair. Many people just before they enter trance, begin to *slow* the *breathing*, the *eyes* become *relaxed* and the *eyes* may even *close*.

Erickson often used whatever the client and environment offered rather than to try to force an induction along predetermined lines (utilization). “As you sit with your hands in your lap and your feet on the floor you may be aware of the sounds in the room around you. .

## **Contextual Cues**

### **Changes in the Environment (Lighting/Seating)**

### **Hypnotist Behaviors**

- Voice Tone
- Matching Voice to Exhale

### **Permissive Words**

- Can
- Might
- Maybe
- Perhaps
- Possible
- Allow

### **Evoking Hypnotic Phenomena**

- General Relaxation
- Eyes Closing
- Changes in Breathing
- Feelings of Comfort and Warmth
- Dissociation from Part of the Body

- Numbness
- Amnesia
- Carefree/Floating Feeling
- Hypnotic or Unconscious Movements
- Singular Focus on an Idea
- Mind Drifting
- Increased Visualization

### **Other Trance Components**

- Conscious/Unconscious Dissociation
- Moving from External to Internal

### **Embedded Suggestions in Inductions**

- *Relax even more deeply*
- *Go into trance*
- *Going into trance*
- *Really letting go*
- *Deeper, even still*

### **Utilization in Inductions**

- Sitting there, with your feet on the floor
- You may be aware of the sounds in the room

### **Confusion in Inductions**

Pattern Interrupt/Handshake

### **Covering All the Bases**

“And one hand may begin to feel lighter and lift up ever so slowly at first. Starting with a little twitch. That's right. Or perhaps heavier. As one gets heavier perhaps the other gets lighter and begins lifting... Lifting... One or both. Or remain perfectly still. That's right.”

## **Exercise I: Conscious/Unconscious Distinctions With Arm Levitation**

Conscious mind...

Unconscious...

hears	understands
wonders	chooses
may or may not understand	responds
relaxes	feels
may or may not be aware of...	learns
thinks	experiences

### **Permissive Words**

- Can
- Might
- Maybe
- Perhaps
- Possible
- Allow
- Choose
- Permit
- Let
- Grant
- Take in
- Accept
- Consent to
- Go along with
- Indulge in
- Acquiesce to
- Assent to
- Enter into
- Go along with
- Okay (as in “OK the idea of relaxing.”)
- Yield to

### **Suggesting Hypnotic Responses (arm lifting)**

- Feel the hand/arm getting lighter
- Twitch
- Balloons
- Lifting
- Which finger moves first?

- Tingling

## ***Amplifying Hypnotic Responses***

- That's right
- As the arm lifts, you grow more relaxed
- As one arm grow lighter, the other grows heavier

## ***Exercise II: Feedback Loop***

Pacing Current Experience

Suggestion hypnotic responses

sitting in the chair	your eyes can close
hands on your lap	...and relaxing
breathing in and out	going into trance
your feet are flat on the floor	wondering
you hear the sounds in the room	feelings of comfort, warmth, numbness
aware of things	carefree/floating feeling
are thinking things	hypnotic or unconscious movements
feel the air on your skin	everything else b my voice becomes unimportant
feel the weight of the clothes on your body	your mind drifts
feel your body resting on the chair	you begin to imagine more vividly
	you may feel as if part of your body doesn't belong to you

- Get rapport
- Get permission
- Start out with three pacing statements to each suggestion. Gradually move toward more and more suggestions.
- When your subject responds, add “that's right,” or “good.”
- When you think they have responded sufficiently, begin more direct suggestions to deepen the trance... “Each breath allows you to go deeper into trance and you may find yourself relaxing even more deeply and experiencing a more profound trance.”