

Ericksonian Hypnotic Language Patterns

Douglas O'Brien

Pattern 3. Suggestions Orienting towards the Future

(Erickson believed that traditional psychotherapy was often akin to “psychological archeology.” He told stories to illustrate the point, sometimes evoking his early life on the farm and lessons learned thereon. Like learning that *when you shovel the waste from the animal stalls you put it out behind the barn and cover it over with straw. And you quickly learn not to go poking around back there.* Therefore he would orient his clients toward the future and towards solutions, believing that doing so would draw them towards those new possibilities.)

Indirectly get your client to visualize or otherwise imagine the future. You can do this via most of these collected patterns, and the following openings are useful:

“You may not know if... “

“What happens when you...”

“How would it feel if you...”

“Can you imagine... “

“You probably already know... ”

“You may not know if you will **go into a deep trance** when I count to ten.”

“What happens when you **learn new ways of responding?**”

“How would it feel to **close your eyes and drift into a very comfortable trance...now?**”

You could even join a few together, as in the following:

“You may not know if you’ll really **enjoy the feeling of control** that comes when you quit smoking, but can you **imagine** what you would do at the office tomorrow as a non-smoker?”

So, now, **write your own examples.** The best way to learn is by doing. Write them out. Practice. Say them aloud to a human being with the proper tonal shift. (See lesson One if you need more clarity on that) Write at least ten. Twenty is better. You probably already know that you can **utilize the few sentence openings** offered on this page and then go from there.

Use them on teachers: "How nice will it feel when you **give me a high grade?**"

Use them on newsboys: "Can you imagine how grateful I'll be when you **place the paper safely on the front porch tomorrow morning?**"

Use them on your spouse, your teammates, your party members, your clients.

Use them.

Have fun. See you next week.