

Clinical Notes on Behavioral Modification: The Theory and Practice of Hypnosis and Guided Meditation

Abstract

This work is the result of over 40 years of clinical and private experience in dealing with all aspects of the modification of human behavior and the expansion of human consciousness through the use of the many techniques of hypnosis and guided meditation. The theory behind the successful use of techniques ascribed to hypnosis and guided meditation will be presented and discussed before the use of those techniques to be utilized in a clinical setting is then offered. The theory and techniques are presented as the result of many years of intensive study, clinical practice and personal experience by the author.

Theoretical Background

Hypnosis

The Wikipedia online presentation is an excellent resource for understanding the general background for hypnosis [1]. Hypnosis involves the active participation of both the therapist and the client/patient. Thus, the contribution to the well-being of the client/patient is entirely dependent upon the skill and experience of the therapist. The client/patient will, in order to move towards their stated goal for the session, accede voluntary control to the therapist and follow the suggestions/directions of the therapist. This entails a certain amount of trust and rapport and invariably involves a bit of getting to know each other discussion. Ericsoni an Hypnosis techniques work so well because the therapist puts the client/patient at ease and leads them to relax (physically, emotionally and mentally) and allow themselves to deal with their issues when they are ready to do so within the session.

Guided Meditation

The wikipedia description of guided meditation [2] gives a good description of what guided meditation does and is for but not much on theory. What the difference is between hypnosis and guided meditation is that in the former, there is no direct merging of body consciousness or emotional/mental consciousness between the therapist and the client/patient. In guided meditation, there is a direct merging at all levels of beingness between the guider and the guidee. This fact is the essential difference between hypnosis and guided meditation. I suspect that those therapists with their Mercury in a fixed sign will be the most able and long lasting therapists due to emotional/mental stability.

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Review Article

Edward F Block*


Acupuncturist, Block Institute for Astrobiological Studies, USA

*Address for Correspondence

Edward F Block, Acupuncturist, Block Institute for Astrobiological Studies, 160 Holiday Loop, Unit 2, New Braunfels, TX 78132

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Each therapist should be very well acquainted with their Astrological influences!

The Guided Meditation Protocol

This is the protocol that I use while guiding a client/patient in total body awareness. It helps if the client/patient would read a text in human anatomy if for nothing else than to learn the whereabouts of the intent of their explorations. As they figuratively "visualize" successive parts of their anatomy, they should also be aware of any muscle tension(s) and to relax! Also being aware of any sensations such as tingling (vitalization), itching (healing), burning (disease, inflammation), and any numbness, blank or dead spaces (needing much vitalization and enervation). In this protocol description, the dots mean a subjective passing of time that feels adequate within the whole flow of the protocol as a process. OK! So now you will start with the right big toe (left big toe if you are left handed). Letting only the right big toe fill your consciousness. Letting yourself visualize the bone, the muscle, the blood vessels, the nerves, the skin, the nail, each in turn. Visualizing only the right big toe! See each part within the whole. Form a good association in the mind's eye before moving on to the next region. You should become steady in each of the visualizations. Now move your attention to the right little toes, all at once or each in turn if desired. Just the right little toes. Now to the right foot. Any tenseness anywhere? Just relax! To the ankle. Now put the toes, foot and ankle together as a whole, YET EACH PART DISTINCT in your mind's eye! Each part within the whole!. Now move the attention to the right lower leg. Be aware of any sensation! to the right knee. Now put together, as a whole, the foot, lower leg and knee, yet each part distinct! Now moving your attention to the upper right leg. Any tenseness? Relax! Now put the entire right leg together as a whole, yet each part distinct! Being stable in your awareness of the entire right leg. You next repeat the same procedure for the left leg. After being stable in left leg awareness, join both of your legs together at the same time as a whole, yet each part distinct, being aware of just the legs only! Any tenseness? Relax! Any sensation?. Be aware! Now You

move your attention to the pelvic region. Start with the right buttock, letting your consciousness be filled with the right buttock. Any tenseness? Relax. Now the left buttock. Any sensation? Be aware now both at the same time. Each part distinct in the whole now move to the perineum and the anus move inside to the rectum any tenseness?. Relax now back out and to the genitalia. For females, be aware of the labia the clitoris the vagina the os cervix the fallopian tubes (split the mind's eye to go up the left and right tubes at the same time) the ovaries. Any sensations? Be aware, Any tenseness? Relax back out of the vaginal opening and on to the opening of the urethra. Up the urethra to the bladder and now putting the entire pelvic region together as a whole, yet each part distinct in that wholeness. Being steady in your awareness, now putting together the legs and the pelvis as a whole. Yet each part distinct! Any tenseness? Relax any sensation? Be aware! Floating along in the awareness of the body from the waist downwards. For males, be aware of the scrotum, the testes, the penis any sensation?. Be aware! Move to the opening of the urethra and then up into the bladder. Any tenseness? Relax. Now putting the entire pelvic region together as a whole. Each part distinct! being steady in that awareness. Now putting the pelvis and the legs together as a whole. Being aware of the body as a whole from the waist downwards. Yet each part distinct. Any tenseness? relax, any sensation? be aware. Floating along in whole body awareness from the waist downwards!. Now we move to the abdominal region. Starting with the lower spine where it meets the waist at the sacrum of the pelvis. Move up the vertebrae of the spine to where they meet the ribs, be aware of the vertebrae as a whole. Split the attention and sweep left and right through the abdominal musculature on either side of the lower spine and meet in the midline of the abdomen in front. Now put the lower spine and abdominal musculature as a whole any tenseness? Relax. Now move inside the abdominal cavity to the rectum and large intestine. Start up the tract on the left of the descending colon to the splenic flexure of the large intestine. Across the transverse colon, from left to right between the stomach and pancreas to the hepatic flexure on the right of the abdominal cavity. And finally down the ascending colon to the cecum and appendix. Being aware of any sensation! Now moving into the small intestine and on to finally the duodenum of the small intestine. Putting the intestines together as a whole! yet each part distinct in that wholeness. Now to the stomach, the pancreas moving on to the spleen on the left under the ribs and now the liver on the right under the ribs. Now to the kidneys on the back of the body wall. Any sensation? now putting together the entire abdominal region as a whole, yet each part distinct in that wholeness.... Being aware of any tenseness relax any sensation, now putting the body together as a whole, the abdominal region the pelvis and the legs being aware of the body from the diaphragm downwards as a whole yet each part distinct in that wholeness. Now you will move your attention to the chest region. Start with the spine as it meets the ribcage and then move upwards to the neck. "See" each vertebra in your mind's eye split the attention and sweep left and right along the ribs and meet in the front in the sternum. One rib level at a time or all at once (as your proficiency improves, you will be able to simply think of a region and be instantly in total awareness)

Any tenseness? relax, now move inside to the heart and its beating Lub-Dub Lub-Dub Lub-Dub any sensation? Be aware Be stable in your awareness. Now move to the lungs and their filling with the inbreath. Emptying with the outbreath. Breath slowly and deeply, feel the air move through the lungs. Any tenseness? relax, now put the chest region together as a whole. Each part distinct! be stable in awareness. Now put the chest region together with the rest of the body we have explored. Being aware of the trunk of the body from the neck downwards and the legs as a whole yet each part distinct in that wholeness. Floating along in trunk and legs awareness from the neck downwards. Now move your attention to the right shoulder. Start with the right collar bone where it meets the sternum and move to the tip of the shoulder, move now to the scapula where it meets the arm and move to where it lies next to the spine. Any tenseness? relax, Now move to the other scapula on the left. Any sensation, be Aware move to the tip of the left shoulder and then along the left collar bone to the sternum. Visualize the shoulder as a circle and be stable in your awareness. Now move to the right are where it meets the shoulder. Down the arm to the elbow. Any tenseness? relax, elbow to the wrist. Wrist to the hand, hand to the fingers, and thumb, now putting the entire right arm together as a whole. Each part distinct any sensation? be aware, Now move to the left fingers and thumb. The hand, the wrist, the lower arm, the elbow, the upper arm, now putting both arms together as a whole, in a circle with the shoulders. Being stable in awareness, any tenseness? relax. Now being aware of the entire body from the neck downwards as a whole, yet each part distinct in that wholeness. Next, move to the vertebrae of the neck. Start where the shoulders meet the neck and move up to the skull. Again, split the attention and move through the musculature of the neck and meet in the front at the voice box. Now pay attention to the glands on the side of the voice box and a bit lower. now put the body together as a whole from the head downwards each part distinct in that wholeness. Start next with the head at the back where it meets the spine and move upwards across the scalp to the top of the head and forwards to the eyebrows any sensations? any tenseness? relax, now move to the nose, the cheeks, the eyes, the lips, the chin, the ears. Now move into the brain, be aware, be stable in your awareness. Now put the body together as a whole, yes all the parts of your body as a whole yet each part distinct in that wholeness. Floating along in whole body awareness. At this point in the exercises, focus your attention from the outside now to the inside and your internal milieu. Being aware of all your senses and your internal milieu at the same time. Being stable in your awareness. Just floating along floating and relaxing even deeper. Aware of all your sensations, comes the awareness that you are not your body any longer, but floating along inside of it. Your body is but a shell and you are inside of it comes the realization that you are not your physical body. Your physical body is not your consciousness. Your body is merely an extension of your consciousness. Being completely in tune with the energies of the body, feeling the energies moving where they need to go. All is free-flowing, bright and filled with energy. Being aware of any blank or dark spots. Gently project energy and light to these areas until they are in harmony with the rest of your beingness. All the body feeling

great. Gently project cooling and healing energies to the areas with burnings and hurts. All the body in the light. The body aglow in the bright light. After completing this induction protocol, the session moves on to address the issues that the client/patient wishes to pursue. Again, this is where the experience of the therapist comes into play. Upon completion of the tasks at hand to be addressed, the client/patient is told to again go into the flowing bright light and slowly move their consciousness from the inside of their body to the surface of their body while keeping the bright wholeness in mind. Then to take a deep breath, and when ready, to open the eyes and be in the now in/of the clinical setting. This ends the active guided meditation. At this point in the session, I ask relevant questions regarding their entire experience of the protocol, the work with their issues and their general feeling after completion of the session.

Notes from Personal Experience

1. I have found that it is not always possible to establish the proper rapport with every client/patient that walks in the door in order to ensure the attainment of a successful outcome. An introductory session is always performed after considerable discussion with the client/patient. The outcome will determine the suitability of continuing a course of sessions.
2. I always found that 3-5 sessions was sufficient for the stated goal of the client/patient to be achieved. A follow up session a week(s) later was seldom required but a good idea when dealing with the cessation of an addiction; be it physical, emotional or mental.
3. Diet was always discussed and suggestions were made accordingly. This is particularly relevant to those persons seeking to become free of substance abuse.
4. A Natal birth chart for Astrological analysis was constructed and never failed to provide a deeper understanding overall of the issues the client/patient brought to the clinic. This also provided a discussion that greatly aided in leading to a more comprehensive and deeper understanding of the immediate issues involved on a conscious level. A Natal birth chart comparison with significant others or between individuals associating with the client/patient in some social manner was very instructive in assisting the client/patient with questions regarding their relationships and gaining understanding of and directions for improvement in their relationships with others.
5. As the client/patient became more comfortable with myself

as the therapist, other issues that troubled the client/patient would arise and be addressed as needed or desired by the client/patient.

Notes from Clinical Practice

1. Very quickly after starting my clinical efforts, as soon as the client/patient entered the clinic, I was able to understand what I needed to do to assist the client/patient to achieve their goal(s) whether consciously stated upon verbal exchange or unconsciously held. This was before any verbal exchange had started and any discussion had ensued. Thus some of my techniques were adjusted to address both the consciously stated and unconsciously held issues.
2. Suggestions/directions were always worded in the positive.
3. I found that body imagery and internalization worked best for the client/patient to more easily enter a "trance" state.
4. Female clients/patients always seemed to have an easier time entering into a trance state. I assume this to be that most females are right-brain dominate individuals. The dominant type individuals (whether male or female) always seemed to be the most reluctant to enter into a trance state, left-brain dominant individuals.
5. Sessions were always conducted in the dark with all lights out. This seems to assist in trance induction.
6. Clients/patients were always able to quietly converse in short answers to questions asked by the therapist.
7. Before the trance induction, I always stated to the client/patient that the process would not ask the client/patient to do something that they would not like to be willing to do in the conscious state. And, that they would be easily able to stop the session at any time upon a stated request to do so.

Conclusion

In the experience of the author, a guided meditational approach to trance induction was found to consistently work better than mere relaxation and suggestion giving to the client/patient for achieving the stated and un-stated goals of the client/patient.

References

1. Hypnosis
2. Guided meditation

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