

An Overview Of Hypnotic Regression

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Due to it's simplicity, for many years the tremendous potential for the use of hypnosis has been overlooked by many. Psychology teaches to look for deeply hidden, complicated, multi-faceted reasons for each disturbing discomfort of the psyche. Most of the time it's not that complicated!

Because of all the publicity given to psychology resulting in indoctrination during recent decades, we find it difficult to set aside the often futile attempts at successful conscious level solutions. Working with the conscious rationale to effect change of an **emotional conflict** between the past stored in the subconscious and what the conscious mind tells us we should feel, frequently becomes an exercise in futility and frustration.

As long as we are using conscious level rationale in an attempt to solve the problem, we are deliberately keeping the conscious mind in control, in a position of critical, analytical thought. Therefore, we are kept from having any good access to the source of the problem in the subconscious. Remember the mental law, "**The more the conscious activity, the less will be the subconscious response.**"

Freud said, "There is no effect without cause and the cause is usually deeply hidden from the conscious mind. Amnesia lies at the base of all neurotic symptoms. Our goal is to reveal the forgotten memories through **yet to be learned methods.**" Freud knew that without the ability to discover the events causing a persons problem, a cure for that individual was beyond his abilities. He also believed that one day there would be a technique discovered enabling a therapist to discover the true cause of the individuals problem.

Hypnotic regression is the finest and fastest method available to find the true source of a clients problem. Regression is the most effective tool in the hypnotherapists toolbox. It is extremely safe and beneficial. Many hypnotists never use regression in their sessions because they fear they will not be able to understand or control the situation. This fear is more than likely born out of ignorance of the process due to the lack of proper training in this area of hypnosis.

Four Types Of Hypnotic Regression

1. Directed Regression – Using this type of a regression method, the hypnotist directs the client to return mentally in time to a known time and place in his past. For example, telling the client that when you lift his arm and drop it he will be in the first grade. The benefit of this type of regression is that it enables the client to become accustomed to moving through time without the possible fear of experiencing a traumatic event instantly during the first regression attempt. This method was a favorite of Dave Elman and he honed it to a art form.

2. Non-Directed Regression - With this method of regression the client is instructed to go back as far as he needs to go to discover the real and true cause of his problem. A good instructional method to the client is to say, "As I count from ten back to one, allow yourself to return to an earlier time and place that has to do with (state the client's problem). Many times using the non-directed regression clients will return to what they perceive to be a past life. These regressions are usually very vivid and full of details of the causal events of their problem.

3. The recreational regression. Many times people will come to the hypnotist to be regressed to a past life. I call these recreational regressions, as they are done because the client has a curiosity concerning the phenomenon. Recreational regressions are, unfortunately lacking the same accuracy and detail that may be found in the non-directed regression to perceived past lives. Frequently they become wanna-be regressions. People seem to regress to places that interest them at the conscious level. Also, many times the people wanting these regressions, don't regress. The reason for this is that they never let their conscious mind attain the quietness and passivity needed for the process to work. They are constantly thinking, "Am I going to regress?" "What's going to happen?", etc. Remember the mental law, "The more the conscious activity, the less will be the subconscious response."

4. Spontaneous Regression – Some clients, without conscious level awareness, have a tremendous need to deal with a problem which has been causing them great distress at the subconscious level. Consciously, they came for hypnosis to stop smoking and have no awareness that the subconscious desperately needs to deal with this other issue which has been repressed by the conscious mind. With these individuals, the induction process itself is enough to remove the conscious mind's effort to keep the problem repressed. During the induction the person will automatically regress to the cause of the repressed problem. Spontaneous regressions usually lead to rather emotional and explosive abreactions as the repressed memories are released. When this happens, it is critically important for the hypnotist to understand how to handle and control the situation. **Remember these three things:**

Remain calm and keep your voice calm. The client is hyper-suggestible and can detect if you are frightened. You may have to increase the volume of your voice to be heard; but, attach no fear to the volume increase.

Do not touch the client. I know you may want to pat them on the shoulder and tell them everything is all right, but this could cause them to become anchored to the event. Therefore, a touch on their shoulder by anyone at a later date could possibly cause them to instantly regress again to this traumatic event.

Say the following nine words. "The scene fades and you tend to your breathing." Over a period of about ninety seconds, the client will calm down and become as they were before the unexpected abreaction occurred. You may use other words to stop the abreaction, but these always work. You may then continue with the hypnosis from the point before the abreaction occurred; as if nothing happened. **DO NOT**, under any circumstances, deal with the problem that was revealed to you during the abreaction.

Frequently, the individuals conscious mind will not be allowed to have memory of the event. It would be unethical to deal with an issue without the client's direct consent. Only deal with the problem for which the client scheduled the appointment!

Signs To Look For

1. Negative signs: Facial expressions denoting **conscious** attempts at memory or clear articulation upon being questioned. No change in respiration rate when recounting exciting details. No tears with sad details. No visible reaction to frightening incidents. No obvious happiness to positive events.

2. Positive signs: **NO** visible appearance of trying to "think-up" answers or events. Quickening respiration rate when recounting exciting events. Tears or obvious sadness when recounting sad events. Instant answers to questions of easy detail (name, country, coinage etc.). Obvious physical and emotional reactions to emotional incidents, positive or negative.

Becoming proficient in using hypnotic regression aids in reaching the causal event or events of the client's issues resulting in positive outcome for many of your hypnosis sessions. This article is an overview of regression techniques and is not intended to instruct the reader in regression. To become proficient in this area of our profession, seek out a good class of instruction focusing on all aspects of regression. In future articles, I hope to detail the exact process for the many different regression techniques that are available and invaluable to us in our work.

Best regards,
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