

Rapport-Building for HGSHS:A

Standard Version

Before we begin the hypnosis part of the experiment I'd like to take just a couple of minutes to introduce ourselves to you, talk some more about hypnosis and the research project.

First, let us introduce ourselves. I'm John Kihlstrom, a professor in the Department of Psychology, and it's my laboratory that does this research. In the rear of the room are some other people involved in the laboratory -- you might be working with one or more of them later in the semester: from my left to my right **[name individuals]**.

I'm sure that all of you have had some contact with hypnosis at some point in your lives. You may have been hypnotized yourself, or know someone who has. Certainly you've read about it, or seen it in the movies. We are interested in hypnosis as a means of studying basic psychological processes -- how people perceive, think, and remember; the relations between behavior and experience, and between personality and social processes.

As I'm sure you know, hypnosis has a number of clinical applications as well. It's often used by physicians and dentists to help control pain, by psychotherapists to help people relax and free up the flow of ideas and memories. We hope that by finding out more about hypnosis, what it can do and what it can't, who can be hypnotized and who can't, we can help clinicians to use hypnosis more appropriately and effectively in their practice. But we are strictly a research outfit, and don't do any therapeutic work ourselves.

Probably the single most important thing about hypnosis is that it reflects an ability that people have. Hypnosis is a skilled activity, very much like playing the piano or tennis. What that means is that probably everyone can experience hypnosis to at least some degree, with practice. But some people experience hypnosis quite readily, while others need some practice than others. And even with a great deal of practice, some people can have many experiences, and others only just a few. Most of us fall somewhere in the middle, between these extremes. But the important thing to realize is that hypnosis is an ability, a capacity, that normal people have.

Because of this fact, the role of the hypnotist is actually very limited. The hypnotist functions as a sort of a coach or tutor, whose role is to assist people to experience hypnosis -- to do something that they're perfectly capable of doing on their own, if only they knew how. It doesn't really take any skill to induce hypnosis. Of course, it takes a great deal of skill and training to use hypnosis appropriately in a clinical or research situation, but hypnosis itself is quite simple: the subject does all the work.

The proof of this is the hypnotist you'll be working with today. The voice on the tape you'll hear belongs to the most experienced hypnotist of all time. He's a former Boston radio announcer whose only qualification was that he lived next door to the researchers who developed this procedure. But he's never had any training in hypnosis, and he's never hypnotized anyone in person; but by virtue of this tape, which has been use for more than 20 years, literally tens of thousands of people like yourselves have been able to experience hypnosis.

What's going to go on? The tape presents a kind of a "script" for a hypnotic experience. It begins with an induction procedure that asks you to get as comfortable as you can, to relax, focus your eyes on a target, and pay close attention to the voice. Eventually you'll probably close your eyes, and at that point the tape will go on to give you some suggestions for the kinds of experiences that hypnotized people can sometimes have.

What we'd like you to do is to take each suggestion, work with it, and see what happens. Some of you will experience many of the things that are suggested, others will experience only just a few, and most of you will fall somewhere inbetween. We are interested in the entire range of response to hypnosis

-- we're are as interested in people who experience lots of the suggestions as we are in those who don't experience much of anything. So just concentrate on having the experiences. Don't push an experience that isn't happening, but don't hold back on it either. Just let things happen as they happen, because we're interested in whatever you experience.

Let me say something more about the purpose of this experiment. We sometimes call hypnosis a "special state of consciousness", but it isn't really all that different from certain experiences that each of you have had in the ordinary course of everyday living. Hypnosis is a lot like those occasions when you're reading a book or watching a movie, and you get really absorbed in what is going on, perhaps you identify with one of the characters and feel what they feel. You're not paying too much attention to other things that are going on, so that they don't distract you from the imaginative experience that you're having. Hypnosis is largely a matter of focusing your attention on one particular thing, to the exclusion of everything else. In these studies, we're interested in determining how hypnosis related to other instances in everyday life where attention is intensely focused in this manner.

Finally, let me say again that we don't use hypnosis as a tool for changing people. In fact, hypnosis is a particularly bad technique for controlling behavior and changing people. People can't be hypnotized against their will, and even if they're deeply hypnotized they can't be led through suggestion to do things, and experience things, that they don't want to. It goes without saying that we won't be asking you any personal questions while you're hypnotized -- we're not going to be prying into your deepest, darkest secrets. And we won't ask you to do anything that might embarrass you -- we won't ask you to run around like a chicken or anything like that.

But at a somewhat different level, we want you to be assured that you'll leave the experimental session the same person as you were when you arrived. You won't have any fewer problems or hangups than you did before -- but you won't have any more, either. You'll be somewhat richer for the experience -- you'll be better informed about hypnosis, and you'll have three points toward your extra credit, but I'm sorry to say that if you couldn't play the piano before you came in, you won't be able to play like Rubenstein after you leave.

We'll have a chance to talk more about hypnosis after you've had a chance to try it. But before we begin the next phase, I'd be pleased to address any questions that any of you might have about hypnosis, the laboratory, or the experiment. Anything at all? **[Answer all questions before proceeding.]**

All right, you'll be having your eyes closed for some time during the hypnosis. For that reason, we suggested that those of you who wear contact lenses might want to remove them before the session. If you wish to remove your lenses, but haven't already done so, this is the time to do it. If you forgot your case, and they're hard lenses, we have some tissues here that you can wrap them up in. We also have some wetting solution that you can use to get them back in. If you should leave your lenses in, and for any reason they get uncomfortable, just open your eyes, blink to wet them a little, and then close your eyes and go back into hypnosis. This won't detract from the experiment in any way.

One thing that really gets in the way is chewing gum. It is very hard to concentrate on being hypnotized when you're trying to remember where your gum was last time you noticed it. For that reason, we ask -- actually, we insist -- that you dispose of your gum for the rest of the experiment. Again, we have some tissues that you can use if you need them.

All set? All right, you won't be doing any writing during the tape, so you can put your materials down on the floor where they won't get in the way. Make yourselves comfortable -- but not *too* comfortable. The tape will talk to you for a while before it gets down to business. **[Start tape.]**

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Patient Version

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In particular, we won't be giving you suggestions that attempt to control your food preferences, eating habits, or body weight. This is research, not clinical work. We're interested in how different groups of people respond to hypnosis, and the relations between hypnosis and various features of personality. But aside from filling out various questionnaires, the study doesn't involve the kinds of problems that brought you to the clinic.

Because this is a research project, and doesn't have anything to do with your treatment, you are of course free to participate or not as you choose. If for any reason you don't want to participate any longer, this is the time to say so. If you should decide during the tape that you don't want to do the experiment any more, just sit up and open your eyes. You'll bring yourself out of hypnosis just as you put yourself in it. Then just sit quietly until the procedure is over, and things will work out fine.

We'll have a chance to talk more about hypnosis after you've had a chance to try it. But before we begin the next phase, I'd be pleased to address any questions that any of you might have about hypnosis, the laboratory, or the experiment. Anything at all? **[Answer all questions before proceeding.]**

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