Six Day Stage Hypnosis Course

Abreactions

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Abreactions

Welcome,

Here is a brief overview of abreactions. I would assume that all of you are familiar with this through your hypnosis training but wanted to include it to share my thoughts on abreactions.

**ABREACTION—A NEGATIVE REACTION TO HYPNOSIS**

Some people will experience a negative reaction while in a hypnotic trance. Hypnosis is a very powerful state of mind. It can bring back unpleasant memories or feelings. This negative reaction is called an abreaction. For instance, if you are doing a show and someone vomits according to your suggestions of riding on a roller coaster, some may define that as an abreaction… others may say you are an outstanding hypnotist.

Depending on your training or professional memberships the definition of abreaction may differ slightly. I define an abreaction as a negative emotional or physical reaction that is outside the scope of the suggestions. It could be natural for someone to vomit on a roller coaster and it could be natural for someone to cry and get upset if they had a fear of the water and you put them on a boat. That is something entirely different from reliving a sexual assault because it happened near a roller coaster or at a lakeside resort.

In the hypnosis world an abreaction is the big scary monster hiding under the bed. A lot of trainers emphasize the danger and prevalence of abreactions. In this book, I draw upon my experience and opinions. In some instances they differ markedly from others in the profession. My views on abreactions are no different in that regard.

In some ways I think of hypnosis as a matchbook profession—meaning that you can hang a shingle and call yourself a hypnotist with very little training or financial investment. There are those who use their knowledge to intimidate people and or to make themselves feel important and by doing so they over-emphasize the importance of ab-reactions.

I know trainers who consistently have terrible abreactions in their classes. I think this is more the fault of the trainer than this condition. Frankly what I’m saying is very controversial, but it is based on my experience of hypnotizing more than 15,000 people.

And keep in mind that while I have done a fair amount of therapy, the vast majority of my work has been on stage and that is why I’m writing this book—for the stage hypnotist. The on-stage experience is a totally different dynamic from what happens in a therapeutic setting. People are volunteering for fun.
They are not coming up to relieve a deep-seated issue that may take them to a troubled place.

Having said that, it is important for me to provide what I think is the best way for you to handle abreactions. I’m also going to warn you that you may be faced with another hypnotist that emphasizes the danger of this thing we call abreactions. Do not be deterred.

Learn about it and know that this is a natural phenomenon that you can easily deal with and that you need not fear.

Knowledge is power.

**How to Deal Successfully with Abreactions**

By now you’ve probably realized I’m a very cautious individual. My method of dealing with an abreaction is that you need to head it off before it gets out of control. In all my years and all the thousands of people I have hypnotized I have never had a problem with abreactions. Isn’t that amazing? Certainly I have had people cry or get upset, but I have never had anyone flipping out on stage or rolling all over in terrified state of mind.

How have I managed to avoid something that so many others cannot?

As soon as I notice any beginning signs of an abreaction—and they are easy to spot—I get the individual out of any uncomfortable experience, bring them back to the present, emerge them from the hypnotic state, and excuse them back to the audience. It is that simple.

Do I perform some in-depth testing to be sure I’m only eliminating someone that is going to have an abreaction? No. I err on the side of caution. Anyone that is doing anything that is suspicious or outside of the bounds of normalcy, gets my immediate attention, the issue is resolved, they are excused, and returned to their seat in the audience. Do I ever excuse someone that perhaps was not going to have an abreaction? Yes. But remember I’m trying to head off any trouble.

I am exercising caution and prudence. I suggest you do the same.

**Signs of Abreactions**

The signs of an abreaction are simple to spot and very obvious. My shows are about having fun in a comfortable setting. Whenever I see anyone behaving in a manner contrary to that I consider it the beginnings of an abreaction. Here are specific characteristics that signal a potential abreaction:
• Facial muscles flexing in a disturbing manner
• Apparent inner turmoil or discomfort
• Going through a variety of emotional states
• Labored breathing
• Rapid eye movement side to side with eyelids closed

When you see the beginnings of what potentially could turn into an abreaction, I recommend you give the following suggestions:

• As you take a deep breath that allows you to relax and experience confidence and security.
• The deeper you go the more confident you feel.
• The deeper you go the more secure you feel.
• The deeper you go the more you can just let go and realize how really nice and peaceful it is here.

If those things do not immediately eliminate the signs listed above, I emerge them and bring them back feeling better than ever. In my experience it typically takes about sixty seconds for me to emerge a person I have deemed as one exhibiting a sign of a possible abreaction.

In the vast majority of cases, by giving those above-mentioned suggestions you will instantly see the signs disappear. The person will change states immediately. But if they don’t, I emerge them with the following:

“Just for the individual I’m touching, listening to my voice, and focusing on the here and now, one, two, three, four, and five. Wide awake now and feeling better than ever. Thank you. You will enjoy the rest of the show out there tonight (as I gesture towards the audience).”

Let me assure you again, I have never had to do anything more than what I have explained here. I have never had anyone lose their mind, get extremely upset, become unruly, or weep uncontrollably. As soon as I have seen the possible signs of an abreaction, I have dealt with them swiftly before there was any issue.

What if this process does not work?
For me it is hypothetical because my methods have always worked. But here is what I would do if I were in a situation and someone was having an abreaction and the above did not solve the issue.

**Abreaction Hypnosis Script**

“As the scene fades from your mind, you come back to the here and now, relaxed, secure, and feeling wonderful. When I awaken you, you will feel proud of having demonstrated your power of imagination… feeling terrific, full of comfort and relaxation. Your confidence will be soaring, feeling so wonderful, one, two, three, four, five… wide awake.

That’s it.

Be aware of abreactions, deal with them swiftly, but have no unwarranted fear.

Sincerely,

Geoff

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