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<https://hypnotc.com/what-is-a-hypnotic-induction/> – written by **Rory Z Fulcher**

How does a hypnotherapist get their client into hypnosis? How does a stage hypnotist hypnotise volunteers during a stage hypnosis show? Well, in either situation, it comes down to a technique known as the ‘hypnotic induction’. The induction phase of the hypnosis process is where a person is guided into their own hypnotic state, at which point the hypnotist/hypnotherapist may then use various types of ‘state deepener’ in order to ensure the person is sufficiently hypnotised, and that they are able to follow the suggestions given to them during the hypnosis session (more on that in a different blog though).

**Progressive hypnotic inductions**

There are many different types of hypnotic induction. Some take minutes, others can take mere seconds. The most common type of induction (in both hypnotherapy *and*stage hypnosis too) is what’s known as a ‘progressive induction’ (sometimes called a ‘progressive relaxation induction’). The progressive hypnotic induction is, as you might expect, a progressive (read: fairly slow and gradual) process involving various different components. A hypnotherapist will talk to their client, giving them various different suggestions and asking them to follow their instructions. Progressive hypnotic inductions can involve suggestions about many different things such as;

**Breathing**‘Focus on your breathing, and allow each breath that you exhale to relax you even more deeply…

**Muscular relaxation**‘Allow all of the muscles in your upper body to relax… Your chest, your stomach, your shoulders and your arms… Relax them all completely now…’

**Tension vs. relaxation**‘Squeeze all the muscles in your legs tight, from your hips to your toes… Hold it, hold it, hold it… And now let it go and notice how much more relaxed your entire lower body has become…’

**Visualization**‘Imagine you are in a wonderfully calm, relaxing place… A perfect place of total relaxation… Notice how relaxed you feel as you can enjoy simply relaxing now in that special place in your mind…’

**Counting**‘With each number that I count, you can allow yourself to go even deeper into this state of hypnosis… Starting with 10…’

These methods rely solely on the use (and acceptance) of hypnotic suggestions. Some clients may respond better to the physical suggestions (relaxing the muscles), others may engage more with the visual suggestions (visualisations) and some may prefer the more analytical and cognitive approaches (counting). There are many variations on the above-mentioned aspects of a progressive hypnotic induction, but those are some of the most common.

You might think that a progressive hypnotic induction sounds simple enough to do, and you’d be quite right. It mostly comes down to asking a client to do something and suggesting it in a way that is easy to understand and follow. There are, however, some hypnotic inductions that involve a little more than just talking to the client when they have their eyes closed.

## Eye Fixation Hypnotic Inductions

## Some hypnotic inductions involve ‘eye fixation’ (i.e. having the client look at something, such as a light in the ceiling). The idea behind this type of induction is that the hypnotherapist suggests that as the client looks at the light, their eyes are to become tired. When the client follows these suggestions, their eyes do become tired. The hypnotherapist then suggests that the client closes their eyes and goes into a state of hypnosis. Here’s a great video on the eye fixation induction:

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<https://youtu.be/75gK6FzfhVQ>

## Rapid Hypnotic Inductions

Another widely used type of hypnotic induction is the ‘rapid induction’. As you’ve probably guessed, this just means a ‘quick’ induction. Rapid inductions are more frequently used by stage and street hypnotists (as they tend to be more dramatic looking). However, they’re also becoming more and more popularly used by hypnotherapists and are a great way of cutting down the induction time, giving a therapist more time for the ‘therapy part’. As well as that, rapid hypnotic inductions are useful for working with hypnotherapy clients where a longer more ‘relaxation based’ approach may not be appropriate (such as if you only have a few minutes in which to work, or if the client is in acute pain). There are 3 different categories of rapid hypnotic induction:

**Shock inductions**These hypnotic inductions involve, you’ve guessed it, a ‘shock’. So the hypnotherapist asks a client to do something or distracts them in some way, then gives them a shock whilst telling them to ‘sleep’. This causes the client to immediately go into a state of hypnosis, as rather than try to understand why the shock happened and deal with their ‘fight flight’ response, it’s much easier to just ‘sleep’. Obviously, we know hypnosis is not actually sleep (that’s a [**hypnosis myth**](https://hypnotc.com/hypnosis-myths-misconceptions/)), but rapid inductions utilise the word as it has become linked to hypnosis in various different films and books.

**Confusion inductions**The use of confusion during rapid hypnotic inductions is very similar to the use of shock. The idea is to put the client into a state whereby they are ‘overloaded’ and unable to continue to focus (such as asking them to count backwards from 10,000 in jumps of 37, whilst moving one hand in one direction, the other in a different direction and singing their answers to the tune of ‘happy birthday’). If you give a client too much to do they will become confused and overloaded and the option to just ‘sleep’ is much more preferable than trying to continue engaging with the confusion process.

**Pattern interruption inductions**These hypnotic inductions tend to involve handshakes. The idea is that you interrupt a ‘subconscious pattern’ (like shaking hands) and when that pattern is interrupted, there is a moment where the client’s brain is confused and doesn’t understand what’s happening. It’s at that point where you tell them to ‘sleep’ and go into hypnosis. Here’s a video of the handshake induction in action:

<https://youtu.be/zjY5IAUhQ6M> (Pattern Interrupt Example)

## Conversational Hypnotic Inductions

Finally, some hypnotherapists choose not to use a formal induction process at all, and instead engage in something that’s known as ‘conversational hypnosis.’

You can use conversational hypnosis techniques to have the same effect as a standard hypnotic induction, however it is more ‘covert’ and indirect. Conversational hypnotic inductions involve talking to the client (about anything, whether hypnosis related or not), and interspersing and embedding various different ‘hypnotic suggestions’ within whatever it is that’s being said. Here’s an example of a conversational hypnotic induction script, with all the embedded suggestions in bold:

‘Thanks for coming to see me today. It’s great to see how **you’re really starting to relax**even though we’ve only just sat down. Many of my clients say that they **go into hypnosis**almost instantly, and that it must be the chair or something… It is a **very comfortable feeling** to know that **as you’re sat in my chair you can just relax**. So, I wonder if today you’ll **go into hypnosis**sooner or later. However, we don’t need to **think about going into hypnosis now**yet, because we can just have a chat for a few moments longer before you **go into hypnosis**. We wouldn’t want you to **relax into hypnosis** too soon, not until exactly when **you are ready to go into hypnosis**…’

Pretty cool right? Some hypnotherapists use these conversational/Ericksonian/indirect methods during the start of a hypnotherapy session (the pre-hypnosis part), in order to prime the client for a more formal induction. Others simply use these methods throughout the entire session without a formal hypnotic induction. However, many clients will expect a ‘process’. so including a hypnotic induction can often be beneficial so that the client can know when the hypnosis has started (…even if it started as soon as they entered the room, with your indirect hypnotic language).

So, as you can see, there are many different ways to induce a state of hypnosis in a client. As a hypnotherapist, it’s a great idea to have a working knowledge of all types of hypnotic induction, so that you are able to effectively hypnotise any client that walks into your office, because some clients respond better to some inductions than others. We teach a number of different hypnotic induction styles on our [**Hypnotherapy Diploma Course**](https://hypnotc.com/ngh-certificate-course/) as well as offering specific courses for [**rapid inductions**](https://www.rory-z.com/rapid-induction-training/) too. There are also some other induction videos on the **[HypnoTC YouTube Channel](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCRHcwyDK8SecR3Zu10piYCA?sub_confirmation=1" \t "_blank)**, so by all means check those out!

We hope that this blog on the topic of hypnotic inductions has been helpful to you. If you have any more questions about this topic or anything else for that matter, do please [**get in touch**](https://hypnotc.com/contact-hypnotc-the-hypnotherapy-training-company/), because we’re always happy to help!