



Hypnosis Scripts for Habit Change

by Courtney Armstrong, LPC



Harnessing the Power of Hypnosis for Habit Change

Hypnosis can have a profound impact on our ability to break unwanted habits and cultivate healthy new ones. But how does it work?

Understanding the Subconscious Mind

Hypnosis taps into the subconscious regions of the brain where automatic habits and behaviors are encoded. The subconscious regions of the brain think like an animal, learning through *experience, association, and repetition*. Clinical hypnosis provides a tool to create new experiences and associations, facilitating change more quickly. Plus- it's enjoyable!

Dispelling Misconceptions

Hypnosis isn't about mind control or swinging pocket watches; it's a scientifically validated therapeutic technique. At its core, hypnosis induces a state of deep relaxation, fostering openness to new ideas and possibilities.

Utilizing Hypnosis for Habit Change

Consider habitual behaviors such as smoking cessation or nail-biting. Through hypnosis, individuals can directly experience and practice new desired responses and associations. Mentally rehearsing desired responses in a hypnotic state not only encodes new neural networks, but also boosts motivation and belief in one's capacity to change.

Yet, the utility of hypnosis extends beyond mere cessation of an unwanted habit. It serves as a catalyst for fostering new, healthy habits. Whether it's sticking to an exercise routine, eating better, or boosting confidence, hypnosis can help you rewire your brain for success.

Empirical Support for Hypnosis

The efficacy of hypnosis in habit modification is underscored by a wealth of empirical research. Numerous studies attest to its effectiveness in facilitating behavior change, affirming its status as a legitimate therapeutic modality. Furthermore, our Trauma Informed Hypnosis approach ensures safety, naturalness, and absence of coercive techniques.

Unlocking Potential

Hypnosis offers a gentle yet potent intervention for those seeking to break free from entrenched habits or embark on a journey of self-improvement. It unlocks the latent potential of the mind, fostering enhanced well-being and fulfillment.

Ready to Explore?

Give the scripts in this packet a try with yourself or your clients to enhance motivation and spur positive change. To learn more about our Trauma Informed Hypnosis approach and how you can use it to improve client outcomes, visit our website at www.traumainformedhypnotherapy.com.





FORK IN THE ROAD SCRIPT FOR HABIT CHANGE

PREPARATION

First, ask your client to name all the negative things they associate with continuing their habit, both the health and emotional consequences. Ask them what's the worst thing they could imagine if they continued to do this habit for 5-10 more years. *(Write the answers in the blanks below the "Low Road" section of this script)*

Next, ask your client to name all the positive things they associate with being free of the bad habit, or starting a healthy habit (like exercise). Ask them to tell you positive health and emotional consequences and get specific and sensory descriptions if possible. *(Write their answers in the blanks under the High Road section of the script).*

Then, start with a Peaceful Place Induction, then suggest the client can see two paths up ahead like a fork in the road. Guide the client to explore each path and weave in suggestions that you and the client discussed prior to the induction about the pros/cons of changing their habit.

PEACEFUL PLACE INDUCTION

To begin, make yourself comfortable... positioning your body so that it is well supported... and if you like you can close your eyes or cast your gaze down... you can let your arms rest by your side, or on your abdomen... and when you're ready, take a nice deep cleansing breath, perhaps noticing the rise of your body on an inhalation... and the release of your body on an exhalation.

And when you're ready... I'd like to invite you to imagine yourself in a peaceful, healing place... this place can be outdoors or indoors... as long as it feels safe, comfortable, and uplifting... it could be a place you've been before or a place you just make up... it really doesn't matter... whatever feels appealing and comfortable for you today... you don't have to get a clear mental image... just a sense of what it's like to be there.... Imagining what you would see there... noticing the beautiful scenery and other pleasant things you like to look at in this place... taking in their colors, shapes, or other details... letting them come into view more vividly... *(pause 10 seconds).*

And I wonder what kind of soothing sounds you might hear there? Perhaps you can imagine the sound of water nearby... or the sound of birds... or music... or a gentle breeze rustling in the leaves on a tree... *(pause 5 seconds).* And as you take in the sights and sounds in this place, you can also notice what feels pleasant and comforting to you... whether it's the feel of the air... the warmth of the sun on your skin... or a cool gentle breeze... you can adjust the temperature to make it just right for you...

And as you look around this place, you begin to notice that there are two interesting paths up ahead of you... like a fork in the road... and you can walk towards the paths now to take a closer look so you can



explore them with a sense of curiosity... And as you move closer, you see a version of yourself in front of you... and this you in front of you realizes that each of these paths enables her/him to see a glimpse into their future... the path to the left is named “Same Old, Same Old” *(or whatever client wants to name it)* and reveals what the future could look like should you continue to *(name the unwanted habit)*.

The road to the right is named “Healing and Freedom” *(or whatever client wants to name it)* and reveals the positive rewards and possibilities ahead of you if you begin *(name desired behavior change)* today. The road on the right goes upward. It is the way of freedom, health, and life. It is the road of being in control of your life. It will take some *effort* to walk up the High Road at first. But as you venture onto it, you will quickly gain strength and discover abundant rewards.

LEFT-ROAD (SAME OLD, SAME OLD) IMAGERY

Now as you’re looking at these two roads, you see the you in front of you begin to veer down the road to the left... the road called “Same Old, Same Old,” it is a slow downward road that seems easy to take... you could just coast down it if you wanted to... It is the path of doing what you have been doing for so long... and at first it may seem comfortable because it is familiar... you begin to follow the you in front of you as he/she travels down this road... and as you watch this version of yourself, you can have compassion for them, knowing that in the past this (unwanted habit) once served a purpose... but you can also see what’s up ahead for her/him if you continue to *(name unwanted habit)*...

What are you noticing as you follow yourself down this road? What do you see, hear or feel as you travel down this road? What do you smell or taste? What do you see yourself exposed to as the road goes on? Is it the *(Name the negative consequences client identified before the session listed below:)*

Feel your desire to be free from all of the ill effects of hurting yourself this way. Sense your compassion and care for the you who has been traveling on this road... as you realize that they have just not been fully seeing what you can see now... Let them know that you care about them, but you see what’s up ahead and want to protect them...

And now you can fast-forward now to the 5-year point on this “Same Old, Same Old” road that is revealing what would happen if you had continued to *(name habit)* to the year _____. Notice how you feel and what you look like after 5 more years of being on the “Same Old, Same Old” path. Compassionately show the you on that path all the unwanted effects of that choice... reassuring that you on the road that there is no need for shame, or guilt, or blame... You are simply helping them see future consequences you’d like to help them avoid... Allowing yourself to feel the effects of remaining on this Same Old Road that once seemed easy, and yet ends up making your life so hard.

Then, when you’re ready allow that unpleasant image to fade into the distance... moving further and further away from you... getting smaller and smaller in size... and disappearing as you decide to take the



other path to the right... the path to Healing and Freedom as you make the choice to *(name desired habit or change)*.

RIGHT ROAD (PATH TO HEALING AND FREEDOM)

Even though this path may take a little more effort, you know in your heart and mind that it is worth it. You can feel better because you're looking out for yourself, taking care of your needs in new ways, and discovering new strengths within yourself. In fact, you've already stepped off the Same Old, Same Old Road by coming here today... right now you are already on the path to Healing and Freedom.

As you travel down this road, how do you feel? What positive rewards do you notice? Is it *(name all the positive things client named about adopting the desired habit)*

Really let yourself feel and enjoy the rewards of being on this healthier path... Notice the positive things you can see... imagine the positive things you might hear... notice how you feel inside... I don't really know what you'll enjoy the most... perhaps it's a newfound sense of confidence... strength... energy... inner peace... or satisfaction... just let yourself feel what is most meaningful and important for you as a result of having the courage and care to make this change for yourself now...

And you can fast-forward now to the 1-year point on this road of being successful in making this change to the year _____. Bring forth right now all of the benefits you can imagine for making that choice. Really allow yourself to feel the effects of that decision. You feel strong. Everything in your life is better for having made these changes. Even if all the changes didn't happen overnight... see that as a result of your patient persistence you are able to meet your goal *(Pause 10 seconds)*

And if you like, you can fast forward now to the 5-year point or further on this road... again bringing forth all the benefits you can imagine for making this choice to take care of yourself. *(Pause 10 seconds)*

And so *(Client's name)*, sensing at a deep place that this is one of the best decisions you have ever made... and looking forward to this new, exciting chapter in your life, you can ever so gently find your way back here... bringing back a renewed sense of clarity, confidence, and courage... as you take a nice deep breath in..... letting each breath lift and restore you... and then exhale, releasing what you no longer need... as you tune back into my voice... feeling the support of the surface beneath you... being aware of the light behind your eyelids, and slowly opening your eyes... knowing you are on your way to better things... and are absolutely worth it.



SWISH TECHNIQUE SCRIPT

The Swish Pattern is a neurolinguistic programming (NLP) technique that can be used to manage urges and cravings and reinforce a person's motivation to stay on track with their desired goals and self-image.

1. Create a picture of the Behavioral Cue. Ask the person for the visual cue of what they see just before they do the problem behavior-- such as their hand holding the object, or their hand moving towards their face.
 - a. The cue image should be dependable and something that is ALWAYS present just before the problem behavior occurs.
 - b. The cue image should be associated, in the first person with person imagining being in their body looking at the object.
 - c. Ask the person to make the image larger, brighter, closer as if it's happening right now.
 - d. Ask them to rate the intensity of craving associated with this image on a 1-10 scale.
(Baseline measure)
2. Next, create the desired self-image. Invite the person to see themselves as a person who has more choices, capability, and creative resources, so this old behavior is no longer a problem.
 - a. The desired self-image should be of desired qualities associated with choice and capability, not of the person doing a specific behavior.
 - b. Find the balance between appeal and possibility. The image should feel appealing and desirable but also realistic and attainable. It does not need to be a "perfect" person.
 - c. This image should be dissociated, in the third person, as if they are observing the ideal self. You are drawn to the image when it is seen as something to move toward.
 - d. Brighten, enlarge, and enhance sensory aspects of the image to increase its appeal.
3. Check for the appeal level of the desired self-image. Establish a "Yes" set by asking person three questions to establish agreement and alignment with their ideal self-image such as:
 - a. As you look at this image of your ideal self, you can get a sense of what you really like about him/her, don't you?
 - b. And would it be okay to be showing up more like him/her? (Establishes agreement and ensures there is no inner conflict about their ideal self-image.)
 - c. Would you like that every time you saw (craving object), you had a strong drive to be more like him/her?"
4. Shrink the image of the ideal future self down to small square about the size of a postage stamp.

5. Invite person to visualize the picture of the cue image again, making it big and bright initially.
6. **Use the "Swish" sound** as you tell person to quickly darken and shrink the craving image down to a dot and brighten, enlarge, the ideal self-image and move it forward so it completely covers the craving image.

--- *Alternative option:* Tell person to imagine throwing the picture of the cue image out towards the sky and then imagine the desired self-image returning in its place as they say "Swish!"
7. Break state. Invite the person to see a blank screen, open their eyes for a few moments, or talk about something else for a minute.
8. Repeat steps 1-7 at least five times, quickly. Doing it quickly helps the brain encode it as an easy, automatic, subconscious response rather than an effortful conscious response.
9. Rate the intensity of response to the original cue image on a scale of 1-10.
10. Repeat the sequence until person no longer feels triggered by the cue image.
11. If the urge is not lessening in intensity after five repetitions of the Swish, then you may need to adjust one or both images until they feel more realistic and/or appealing for the person.

Sources:

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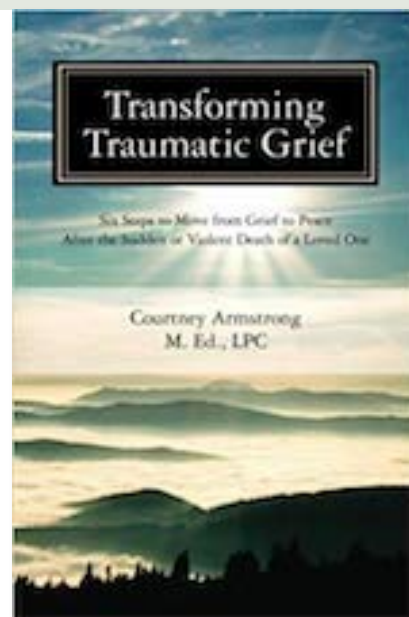
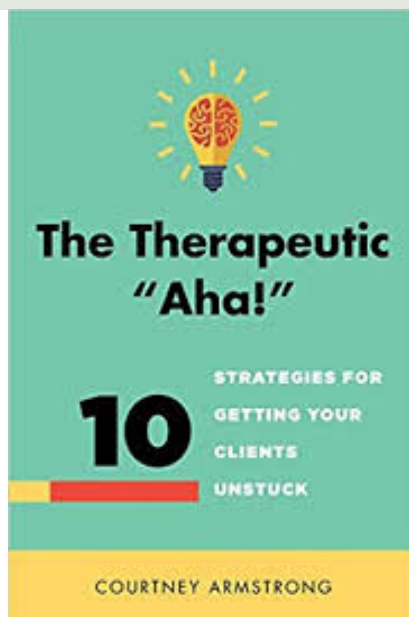
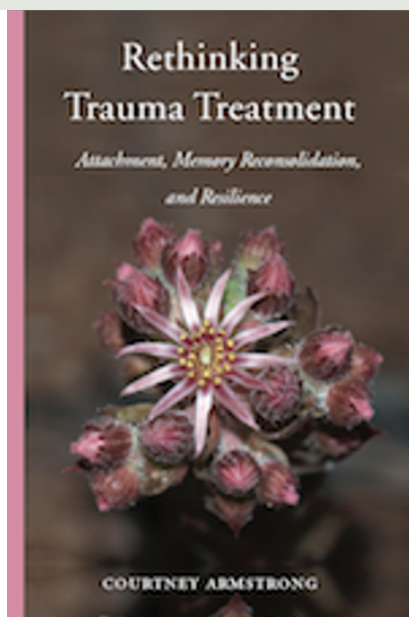


SWITCH TECHNIQUE

The Switch technique is a neurolinguistic programming (NLP) tool that can be used to reduce cravings, self-soothe, and reinforce a motivation to stay on track with desired goals.

1. Recall a feeling, behavior, or response that you would like to change. Imagine yourself in a situation that has been triggering this undesired response. How intense does it feel on a 1-10 scale?
2. Where do you feel the urge/craving/trigger feeling in your body?
3. How much room does it feel like that feeling is taking up in your body? If it had a shape, what shape would it be? What color would it be? Is there sound, movement, or vibration that goes with it?
4. Imagine taking that feeling out of your body and holding it out in front of you in your hands. When you have this feeling, what is it you say to yourself? How do you finish the sentence "I feel _____?"
5. What do you want to do with this feeling? Do you want to keep it or let it go? If you are ready to let it go, how would you like to let it go and send it away? Would you like to toss it up to the sky and let the light of the sun evaporate it? Would you like to toss it in the trashcan, or in the ocean? Imagine tossing it out and away from you, releasing it to your higher power or whatever image works for you.
6. Now you have empty hands, let's fill it up with what you really want. You can imagine the desired feeling, thoughts, and response for yourself and give it a color, shape, sound, or movement if you like. Or, you can imagine something that is symbolic or an image of something that elicits the desired emotional response.
7. As you imagine holding this desired response in your hands, what is it that you say to yourself? How do you finish the sentence, "I feel _____?"
8. Where would you like to put this feeling?
9. Put your hands to your heart or any other location where you would like to transfer this feeling. Imagine the desired feeling now filling you up from head to toe, infusing every cell as you say the sentence "I feel _____." Stay with this at least 20-30 seconds or longer.
10. Rate the original urge/craving on a scale of 1-10. Is it less intense now? You can repeat this process until you've eliminated or reduced the urge/craving down to the level you would like.

Get More Ideas Here!



Courtney Armstrong, LPC
Office: 423-876-3490
armstronglpc@gmail.com

748 Overbridge Lane
Chattanooga TN 37405

Courtney Armstrong is a licensed professional counselor in Tennessee and Board Certified Fellow in Clinical Hypnotherapy who specializes in resilience focused treatment for grief and trauma.

Known for her ability to translate scientific research into practical treatment strategies she is the author of Rethinking Trauma Treatment, The Therapeutic “Aha” and Transforming Traumatic Grief.

Inspired by mentors such as Bill O’Hanlon and Michael Yapko, she is the founder of the Institute for Trauma Informed Hypnotherapy which offers training to mental health professionals worldwide and has developed clinical hypnosis training programs for the U. S. Veterans Administration.

To get more info, visit her website at
<https://traumainformedhypnotherapy.com>