



Intensification of hypnotic experience

ASCH Level 1

May 2026



Learning Objectives

- Demonstrate the ability to intensify the hypnotic experience in ways that are tailored to the patient/client
 - Identify how fractionation can be used to intensify trance
- 



Trance Elicitation-Now What????



Elicitation strategies

- ▶ How did you elicit trance and how do you then deepen it?
 - ▶ Diaphragmatic breathing is a typical starting place
 - ▶ Or eye roll, or eye fixation or any other
 - ▶ Watching for evidence of trance
 - ▶ Using language to create a sense of calm and quiet (more about this later)
 - ▶ Encourage but don't require eye closure



Depth

- “The ‘trance’ state is regarded as having the property of ‘depth’ and can be measured by subjective report using simple numerical scales (Tart) and more qualitatively by self report questionnaires (Pekala & Kumar)”...or we can “infer depth from the subject’s response to different suggestions”

Depth of Trance-Light Trance

Clinical Characteristics:

- Mild dissociation from external concerns
- Increased relaxation and focus
- Heightened receptivity to direct suggestions

Observable Indicators:

- Slower breathing, eyelid fluttering
- Subtle body stillness or a sense of floating
- Client reports “hearing everything,” but feeling “far away”

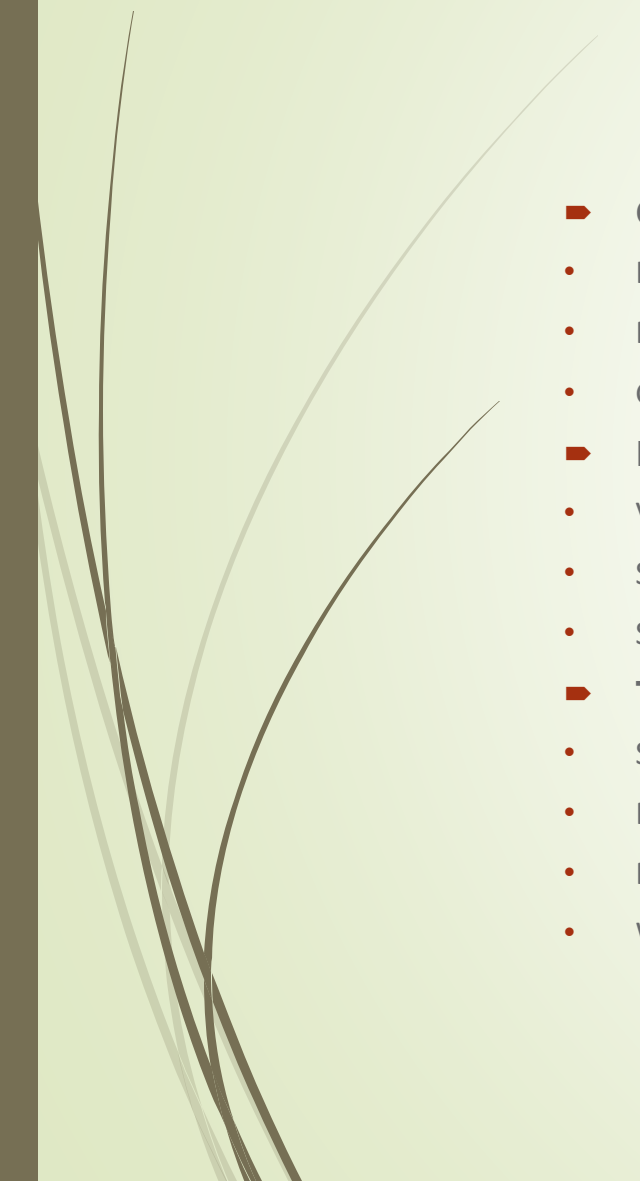
Best Uses in Practice:

- General stress relief and relaxation
- Enhancing sleep hygiene
- Surface-level habit modification (e.g., nail-biting, minor procrastination)
- Setting positive anchors or affirmations

Tip: Light trance is often sufficient for ego-strengthening techniques or when rapport is still being built.



Depth of Trance-Medium Trance



➤ **Clinical Characteristics:**

- Heightened imaginative involvement
- Partial time distortion or detachment from the body
- Greater affective responsiveness

➤ **Experiential Indicators:**

- Vivid imagery and emotional release
- Spontaneous insights, memory access
- Symbolic or dreamlike experiences

➤ **Therapeutic Applications:**

- Systematic desensitization for phobias
- Performance enhancement and confidence-building
- Reframing limiting beliefs
- Working with inner child imagery



Depth of Trance-Deep Trance (Somnambulism)

➤ **Clinical Characteristics:**

- Profound relaxation and minimal critical interference
- Enhanced susceptibility to therapeutic suggestion
- Potential amnesia, regression, or deep emotional catharsis

➤ **Client Experiences:**

- Detachment from the body or surroundings
- Vivid reliving of past events or symbolic imagery
- Altered sense of identity, space, or time

➤ **Advanced Clinical Uses:**

- Complex trauma resolution (within ethical and evidence-based boundaries)
- Pain control and chronic condition support
- Regression therapy (with informed consent and proper safeguards)
- Transformational belief restructuring



Depth of trance-Deep trance

- **Ethical Caution:** Recovered memories through deep trance are highly controversial. Always approach with clinical neutrality, informed consent, and a trauma-informed framework.
- From International Hypnosis Association



Myths about Trance Depth

- “Deeper is always better.” Not true. The right depth is determined by the client’s goals, comfort, and therapeutic readiness.
- “You need to try hard to go deep.” In fact, effort creates resistance. The paradox is that letting go facilitates depth.
- “If clients are aware, they’re not hypnotized.” Awareness and hypnosis can—and often do—coexist. Suggestibility doesn’t require unconsciousness.

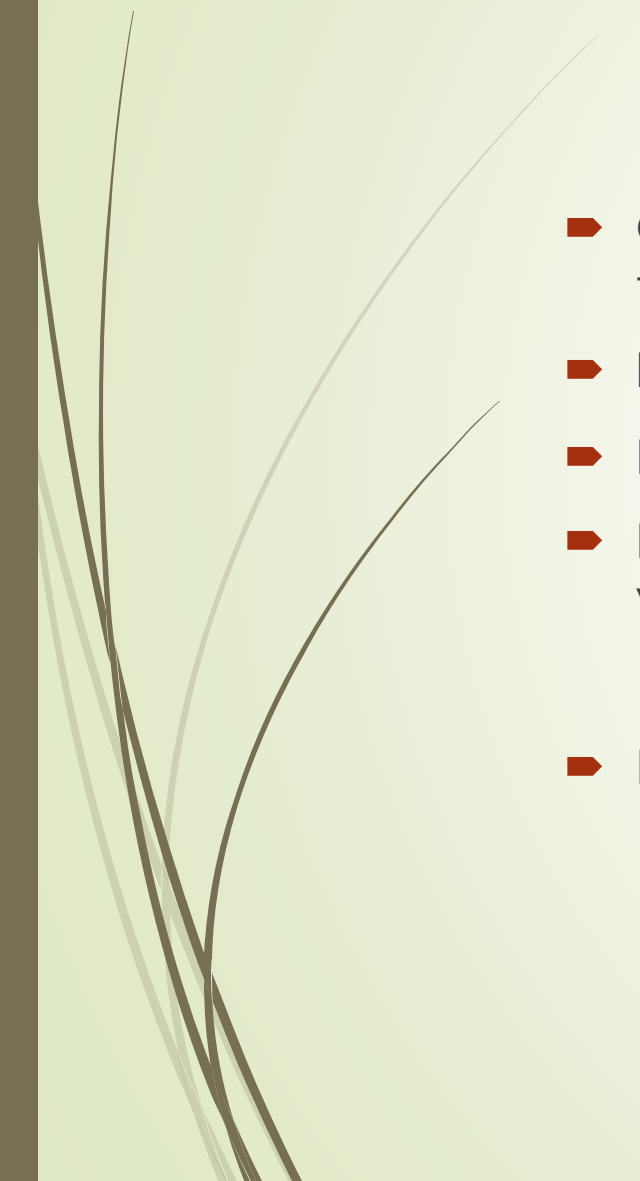


Why Use intensification?

- Goal is to allow for deeper level to be reached
- Enhance dissociative experience
- Quiet the left hemisphere to allow greater access to the right hemisphere learning
- Intensifying hypnotic involvement



Intensification



- Once you have some evidence of trance beginning you want to intensify that sense of trance at least a bit
- Intensification is increasing strength or magnitude of something
- How to make the trance EVEN MORE than it already is
- Deepening the sense of internal focus, quiet, calm, relaxation, whatever you are working toward
- Remember, trance is not identical to relaxation!



Intensification and varying levels of hypnotic depth of trance-Elkins 2017

- Light trance-little dissociation-needed for easy suggestions such as calmness, easing up, letting go
- Deeper trance-greater dissociation-needed for deep exploration or painless surgery/procedures without anesthetic
- Adaptive dissociation is where true hypnotic responding arises from the experiential/unconscious and responses are experienced as involuntary or automatic and there is a depth continuum to be monitored



Intensification and depth continuum

- Hypnotic involvement is matter of degree
- Not either/or but rather lightly, significantly or deeply
- Gradual development of more profound engagement in trance state
- Goal of intensification is to create a deeper engagement in the hypnotic process



Ways to Intensify Trance for Your Subject

- Add another elicitation strategy
- Go down a path, stairs, hallway
- Just count down (5-1; 10-1)
- Use pacing as you intensify trance
- Use your voice to encourage deepening
- Watch what happens as you do this! Observation is KEY



intensification Strategies

- Touch and pressure downward
- Confusional techniques-forgetting to remember or remembering to forget
- Fractionation
- Periods of silence



Fractionation

- This is the process of a person going into trance then re-alerting and then going back into trance. The more it happens, the more likely the person is going into deeper trance states.
- With patients, you can use this clinically to enhance the trance effect with the expectation of greater impact of suggestions
- During this type of training, participants are going in and out of trance multiple times each day, enhancing the “fractionation effect”



Demonstrations

Counting, PMR, stairs, path, hallway