



Using Hypnosis for Trance Channeling

" . . . the study of self . . . may best be done by suggestive forces to the body through hypnosis." 3483-1

"Each will find a variation according to the application and the abilities of each to become less and less controlled by personality, and the more and more able to shut away the material consciousness, or the mind portion that is of the material, propagated or implied by what is termed the five senses. The more and more each is impelled by that which is intuitive, or the relying upon the soul force within, the greater, the farther, the deeper, the broader, the more constructive may be the result." 792-2

"As it has been indicated from the first through this channel, there should ever be that ideal, 'What does such information as may come through such a channel produce in the experience of individuals, as to not their thoughts, not their relations other than does such make them better parents, better children, better husbands, better wives, better neighbors, better friends, better citizens?' And if and when it does not, LEAVE IT ALONE!" 1135-6

Stare at a spot high upon the wall across from you. I am going to slowly count backwards from ten to one. Each time I count, take a deep breath and very slowly blink your eyes. Ten . . . blink your eyes ever so slowly . . . nine . . . eight . . . ”

We are eavesdropping on a session of hypnosis. The hypnotist is giving the person instructions that will lead into the state of hypnosis. Let's continue listening.

“ . . . two . . . one. And now you can just close your eyes and keep them closed. Your eyelids are now very tired. In your eyelids you find a comfortable feeling of tiredness, of relaxation, or a moving sensation. However you experience this feeling, let it magnify and multiply, let it increase until your eyelids are totally, completely, and pleasantly relaxed.

“This is something you do, no one else can do it for you. Take your time and relax your eyelids. As you relax them, you can allow that feeling of relaxation to flow outward in all directions.

“Imaginary waves or ripples of pleasant relaxation now move throughout the entire face. Allow your entire face to relax. As you do so, waves of relaxation spread over the head . . .

“ . . . Welcome this wonderful feeling as it spreads throughout your entire body. Completely and pleasantly, your entire body is relaxing and you slow down just a little bit . . . you can slow down a little bit more and a little bit more . . .

“ . . . More in perfect harmony now, you're at your own natural level of relaxation. It's something you want, it's happening here, it's happening now.”

These particular instructions are adapted from Henry Bolduc's book, *Self-Hypnosis: Creating Your Own Destiny*. They're typical of the instructions hypnotists use in leading a person into a hypnotic state (a free copy of Bolduc's entire book can be downloaded at www.henrybolduc.com/freebook.html). I have experienced hypnosis under the guidance of several hypnotists and have found their procedures quite similar. All induce a state of relaxation.

You may be wondering, as I did when I first began, where the actual *hypnosis* comes into play. Doesn't the hypnotist invoke some magical words to put you into a trance and take control of your mind? No.

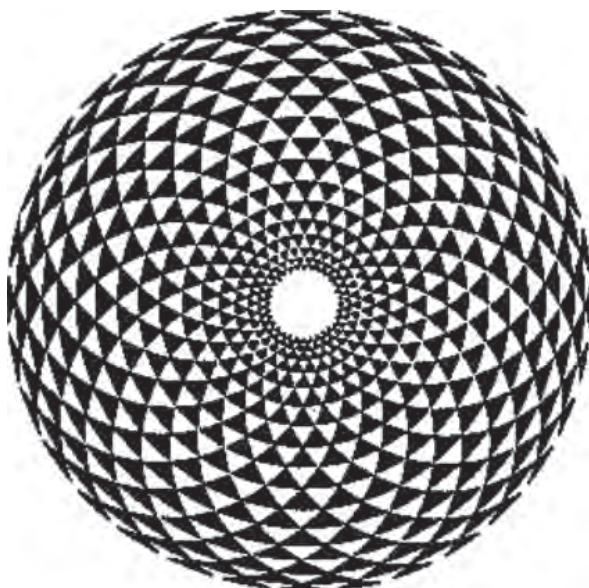


Figure 34
A Hypnotic Focus

That's a false stereotype of hypnosis. Entering hypnosis is basically a process of deep relaxation while maintaining a quiet awareness. It's much like what we experienced in the meditation on inspiration, with the possibility of adding further suggestions to open the imagination to deeper channels of the mind. Some prefer a hypnotic focus (Figure 34).

Edgar Cayce's Story of Hypnosis

Hypnotism played a significant role in Cayce's development as a psychic channel. As a child growing up in Kentucky, young Edgar had a strong interest in religion, a tendency toward mystical experiences, and showed evidence of psychic abilities. The concept of a mystic or a psychic being a *channel*, however, didn't even exist until several years after Cayce began his psychic work under hypnosis.

The first time Edgar Cayce functioned as a trance psychic, there was a great personal need. According to the account given by Thomas Sugrue,

in his biography of Cayce, *There is a River*, it began with a strange event:

In the spring of 1900, at age 23, Cayce began work as a traveling salesman. One night, in Elkton, a town about 40 miles from his home in Hopkinsville, he stopped at a doctor's office to get some powder for a headache he had been experiencing for the past several weeks. The next thing he knew he was home in bed. A friend of the family had recognized him in Elkton, walking about disheveled and disoriented and took him home. The family doctor suspected that the headache sedative had been too strong. When he recovered he had lost his voice and was quite hoarse.

The hoarseness didn't go away and remained that way through the summer. Several doctors diagnosed and attempted to treat the malady, but without success. Cayce decided his throat was incurable, gave up sales work and began working in photography, which was to become his career.

Hypnotism was a fad in America at the time, much like channeling has been since the 1980's. One of its more dramatic aspects was the psychic powers it often revealed.

At that time, a traveling stage hypnotist, by the name of Hart, came to perform in Hopkinsville. He had a trick of inviting someone to hide an object anywhere in town, then he would ride through town blindfolded and direct the carriage to the hidden object. Hypnosis was also claimed by some (not incorrectly, although prematurely) to be the medicine of the future.

Hart learned of Cayce's problem and bet he could solve it for \$200, nothing if he failed. Under hypnosis, Cayce talked normally, but when he came out, his voice was hoarse as usual.

A physician from New York heard of Cayce's case and traveled south to try his hand with a hypnotic cure. He, too, was a failure. In a letter to the Cayce family he noted, however, Cayce seemed to resist accepting the posthypnotic suggestions about his throat, as if wanting to take charge himself. The doctor suggested that someone hypnotize Cayce and then give him the suggestion to talk about his illness. A local hypnotist, Al C. Layne wanted to try and Edgar was willing to undergo one final experiment.

A year since the problem had first begun, the fateful experiment in

hypnosis was attempted. Layne gave Cayce the suggestion that Cayce would put himself to sleep. When Cayce was breathing deeply, the hypnotist suggested that Cayce would “see his body and describe the trouble in his throat.”

Cayce then spoke in a clear voice, stating what would become his trademark of an opening line: “Yes, we have the body.” Cayce went on to describe the problem in the throat as due to poor circulation. He indicated that the circulation could be improved by the use of suggestion while he was in this unconscious state. Layne gave the suggestion and Cayce’s throat turned bright red. After about 20 minutes, Cayce said the condition was removed, and asked that it be suggested that his condition return to normal, and then awaken. The suggestion was given, and it did and he did. His voice was restored.

Within a few days, however, Cayce’s voice was weak again. Using the same procedure as before, Layne was able to help Cayce regain his voice. For almost a year, Cayce needed these periodic hypnotic sessions to keep his voice functioning.

Layne immediately saw the potential value of Cayce’s trance. Hypnotists in Europe had demonstrated that while in trance, the hypnotized person often evidenced the psychic ability to diagnose another person’s illness. Cayce had been able to diagnose his own problem and effect a treatment. He might well diagnose someone else’s condition. Layne decided to use Cayce’s trance to build his own medical practice. Soon Layne (a self-taught, non-licensed osteopath) had opened an office and was using Cayce to secretly diagnose and prescribe treatments for patient’s conditions. In this way, Cayce began giving what Layne called “readings” without Cayce knowing about it.

When Cayce learned what was going on, he was quite upset and made Layne promise to stop. But Cayce was dependent upon Layne for the hypnotic treatments, and they continued their work. Cayce later learned that Layne had also continued with the readings. Layne insisted that the readings were definitely on target, the diagnoses given to the patients were accurate, and the remedies suggested were working well. Nevertheless, the practice bothered Cayce and he broke their relationship. Difficulties with his voice forced Cayce to return to Layne, once more, however, and Cayce reluctantly agreed to giving readings

for Layne's patients. Word of Cayce's and Layne's work finally leaked to the press and Layne, who was practicing without a license, left town.

Cayce found another hypnotist for his treatments, and gave readings for other people only occasionally as the need warranted. It took many years before Cayce finally accepted that his psychic readings were beneficial to those in need. Only then did he accept his role as a psychic.

When given the name of a person, Cayce would often describe the person's environment. On one occasion, he described the room perfectly, but noted that the person wasn't there, as he was supposed to be. Moments later, he indicated that the person had just arrived. It was as if he had traveling vision, as well as a sixth sense of knowing where to look. With his psychic X-ray eyes, he could look within the body and describe internal conditions that doctors would then verify with their own examinations.

It was the accuracy of his psychic perception and the fact that doctors who followed Cayce's prescriptions with their patients had success was what convinced Cayce. His clairvoyant power was phenomenal. He once prescribed a medicine that couldn't be found anywhere. It was no longer made. Cayce then gave the formula for making it. Soon after, a letter came from a doctor who had located the formula for the treatment and it was exactly as Cayce had formulated it. On another occasion, Cayce prescribed a remedy that no one could find. Cayce then identified a particular pharmacy, described a shelf in the stock room, and indicated to look in the rear, behind more currently used medicines. The pharmacist was located, asked to check out the directions, and found an old bottle of the remedy.

As the father of holistic medicine, he described the interaction of mind and body, especially the workings of the endocrine system and the healing functions of the body that would take medicine over forty years to discover for themselves. Cayce restricted the use of his psychic talent, in fact, to medical diagnosis and prescription, until one fateful meeting.

Some twenty years after that first experiment hypnotizing Cayce, a wealthy printer named Arthur Lammer asked Cayce if he had ever sought out the mysteries of the universe through his psychic trance. Cayce hadn't even thought of the idea. Lammer's suggestion came as

another challenge. He agreed to the experiment. Lammer asked many questions concerning metaphysics, reincarnation, and the spiritual nature of the human being. The answers that came from Cayce's psychic trance to such questions opened an entirely new horizon for Cayce's psychic vision. What followed was Cayce's teachings on the various ways that human beings are channels of divine energy and the significance of that spiritual potential.

The Suggestibility of the Subconscious During Hypnosis

It's common today to define hypnosis as a state of heightened suggestibility. This definition is another way of stating what Edgar Cayce explained was the essence of hypnosis—*communicating directly with the subconscious mind*.

The subconscious mind operates upon the principle of suggestion. It *accepts any* statement as being true. The conscious mind operates by reasoning upon sense impressions. It regards any statement, Cayce noted, as a *proposition* to be analyzed and evaluated.

If I suggest to you that there's an apple in front of you, your immediate reaction will be to compare that statement with the impression from your senses. Your conscious mind will disagree with me. The conscious mind can't accept suggestion, but first evaluates the statement.

On the other hand, if I suggest that you *imagine* an apple, or *pretend* that an apple is in front of you, your conscious mind will step aside and allow your subconscious to bring up an image of an apple. The subconscious mind readily accepts the suggestion concerning an apple and immediately complies with a suitable image.

While the subconscious mind is involved with the imaginal apple, the conscious mind may kibbutz from the sidelines. It may note that the imaginal image isn't like the experience of a real apple. It may note that pretending isn't the same as reality. If the conscious mind is distracted, however, from the activity of the subconscious, then there's nothing to interfere with the effective reality of the imaginal apple.

The process of hypnosis is like seducing the attention of the conscious mind and redirecting it elsewhere. Relaxation helps in this process. As

the body relaxes, the sensory system also relaxes and the conscious mind grows dim. It's very much like what happens as we fall asleep. The only difference is that in hypnosis, the conscious mind doesn't dissolve, because the hypnotist's voice has captured its attention and gives it a place of restful focus. If the hypnotist were to cease talking for a prolonged period of time, the conscious mind would lose that focus and the person could easily fall asleep.

As the person relaxes more fully, and the dimming conscious mind rests upon the pillow of the hypnotist's voice, the subconscious becomes uninhibited in its response to suggestion. Whatever the hypnotist suggests can be vividly imagined by the subconscious mind. And what it thus imagines, it takes to be reality. In this way hypnosis becomes both a state of heightened suggestibility and a state where the hypnotist can communicate directly with the subconscious mind.

Learning Self-Hypnosis Through Relaxation Imagery

You can learn to enter the hypnotic state yourself by learning to respond to your own suggestions. Focusing on images suggestive of relaxing is the basic procedure. Let's see how it works.

Get into a comfortable position, perhaps reclining in an easy chair or lying down on a bed. Rest your arms at your side. Take a deep breath, hold it momentarily, then let it out with a sigh. Now you're ready to work with suggestive imagery.

We've learned that we can control our body indirectly by imagining certain images. That's how we're going to enter a relaxed state.

Focus on your right arm. Notice anything about your right arm that might feel heaviness and say to yourself, "my right arm is heavy." Don't *do* anything with your arm, just let it lie there. Repeat the phrase to yourself several times, "my right arm is heavy." Allow yourself to experience your arm as feeling heavy. As you imagine your arm feeling heavy, notice how you *let go and relax* in your right arm. You are responding to the suggestion.

After about a minute, go through the same process with your left arm. Then focus on both your arms at the same time and repeat the phrase, "my *arms* are heavy." During the next minute, focus on your



Figure 35
Reliving a Channeled Past Life

right leg, repeating the phrase, “my right leg is heavy.” Then your left leg. Then both legs at the same time. Finally, spread your focus out over your arms and legs. Repeat to yourself, “my arms and legs are heavy.” The more you experience your arms and legs as heavy, the more you let go and relax, the more you’re responding to suggestion, and the more you’re becoming absorbed in a self-hypnotic trance.

If you want to go further with this procedure, repeat all of the above steps, but this time, use the word *warm* instead of *heavy*. When you’re finished, repeat this phrase as an integrative suggestion: “My arms and legs are heavy and warm.” To go deeper, begin to practice the meditation on the breath we learned earlier. Watch your breath without interfering with it. Repeat the phrase, “it breathes me.” It’s a very passive experience. Besides relaxing heaviness, you may also experience waves of tingling sensations as you move deeper into the self-hypnotic state.

By now you have become very relaxed. You will notice that your thinking is hazier and you may experience spontaneous daydreams, or

have a tendency to fall asleep. You're bordering on the sleep state. You're beginning to directly experience the region of the subconscious mind.

Hypnosis and ESP

Recall that Cayce indicated that all subconscious minds are in contact with one another. If hypnosis is a means of communicating directly with the subconscious mind, we should expect that ESP would be more pronounced during hypnosis than during the normal, waking state. Hypnotic subjects should be mind readers. Experience and research proves this assumption correct.

In the original golden years of hypnosis of the 1800's, the psychic aspects of hypnosis were almost taken for granted. Hypnotized subjects could read books blindfolded. Hypnotists could deliver suggestions simply by thinking of them. In demonstrations of the "community of sensation," meaning the telepathic sharing of experiences, the hypnotist could bite into an orange and the subject would report the taste, think of the lyrics of a song and the subject would sing them, have himself be pinched and the subject would cry ouch. In fact, some hypnotists could telepathically hypnotize their subjects even over great distances. Witnesses verified that the person, for no apparent reason, lay down on the couch and seemed to go to sleep. In other occasions, the person would stop what they were doing, make some excuse, and go to the telepathically suggested location.

Telepathic hypnosis is a controversial subject. The psychiatrist, Jules Eisenbud, in *Parapsychology and the Unconscious*, tells of his experiments sending suggestions to patients that they phone him. I have experienced myself the effect of telepathic hypnosis. Without my knowing that he was even thinking of me, a hypnotist telepathically induced analgesia in my arm. I was unaware of the effect until it was pointed out to me that I couldn't feel my arm being pinched. In my book, *Awakening Your Psychic Powers*, I give more details about this incident and provide other accounts of telepathically transmitted suggestions. Cayce reminds us that we affect people by our thoughts. The saying "Don't say anything about a person unless you can say something positive" should be extended to what we think. Sending people thoughts of encouragement

is a natural and positive use of telepathic suggestion.

Modern research in parapsychology, where ESP is statistically tested in laboratory settings, has confirmed that hypnosis often increases telepathic ability. Modern studies have also demonstrated the striking telepathic rapport that people in hypnosis can achieve with one another.

Hypnotic Imagery: A Channel of Self-Diagnosis

In his self-induced hypnotic trance, Edgar Cayce was able to clairvoyantly diagnose the medical problems of people who sought his help. Cayce indicated that we could diagnose ourselves if we would turn within.

Hypnosis has often been a catalyst for helping people to turn to the knowledge within. Marshall S. Wilensky, Ph.D., a Canadian psychologist, reported the use of hypnotic imagery to elicit self-diagnostic imagery in patients of varying medical conditions.

Wilensky used suggestive imagery, borrowed from Jean Houston's book, *The Possible Human*, involving a personification of the body's inner wisdom. His experiments demonstrate the evocative power of such imagery.

After entering a light hypnotic trance, the person imagines being on top of a mountain searching for a path down. After making a careful descent, the person discovers a door leading into the depths of the mountain, entering an atmosphere that has the vibrations of renewal and restoration. The person comes to a door with a sign upon it reading, "The One Who Knows Health." The person opens the door and meets someone who is completely knowledgeable about the person's body. The person sits down in front of this knowing one and asks questions. The One Who Knows Health answers, not just verbally, but also through images and bodily sensations that the person experiences.

Here are some brief descriptions of the cases Dr. Wilensky presents, showing that the imagery that comes through these sessions is surprisingly accurate, given follow-up medical examination.

One woman asked about her sore knee. The wise being answered her directly, "Forget about your knee. See somebody about your fatigue immediately!" She went to her physician the next day. The results of

blood tests indicated that she had leukemia.

One man inquired about the night pains in his legs. His wise being gave him an image of two oxygen tanks strapped to his legs. When he went to his physician, examination revealed a circulatory disorder, starving his legs of oxygen.

A man suffered from a kidney and prostate infection. Treatment with antibiotics had cleared the infection, but the man complained of fatigue and physical distress and hadn't been able to resume working. His wisdom figure appeared as white light and as a sensation of movement in his lower abdomen. The information given was that the infection was indeed gone and the discomfort was an excuse not to work. His wisdom appeared as a sensation of movement, it explained, because it was a "call to action." Subsequent examination bore out the truth of this message.

A woman suffering from fainting spells had been diagnosed by CAT scans, but the source of her problem couldn't be located. Her wisdom figure appeared as a star and as a crystal. When asking about the problem, she touched the right side of her head, just above her ear. A repeat CAT scan located a glioma in just that location. A subsequent reexamination of the original scan also revealed this problem.

In Wilensky's opinion, the inner wisdom figure is an image representation of a state of consciousness, an internal awareness that has proven therapeutic value. Once again we see the value and power of the process of personification. Using an image of a person, or being, can unlock hidden powers within the mind.

The Power of Hypnotic Role Playing

Role playing allows us to take on the characteristics of the role, to channel whatever characteristics the role suggests. Role playing is a process of pretending. It engages the channel of the subconscious mind through an act of the imagination. By neutralizing any interference of the conscious mind and providing more direct access to the subconscious, hypnosis can increase the power of role playing to an incredible degree.

In his book, *The Laws of Psychic Phenomena*, Thomas J. Hudson describes

a very revealing experiment in hypnotic role playing that he witnessed in the company of many well educated people. The hypnotist, Dr. Carpenter, hypnotized a man and told him that Socrates was alive and standing right in front of him. Soon the young man said, "Oh yes, I see him there now." Dr. Carpenter told the man that Socrates was very eager to speak to him and would answer any question that the young man would care to ask. The young man began asking some questions and found that Socrates did answer. He relayed these answers to Dr. Carpenter. Members of the audience also suggested some questions to ask Socrates. As the man relayed answer upon answer, he gradually came to play Socrates himself. He amazed the audience with his eloquence and profundity. Hudson noted that these speeches, for they were becoming that, were delivered in a spontaneous manner with no hesitation. He proceeded to provide a complete account of the universe, a compelling spiritual philosophy worthy of the speaker's role. Even though the audience had witnessed the artificial creation of Socrates, the man's performance was so convincing, his utterances so inspiring, that many people even took notes!

The demonstration dumbfounded the audience. In his waking state, the man, although college educated, wasn't an impressive intellectual or speaker. Yet his Socrates was genuinely gifted. The audience genuinely believed that Dr. Carpenter had enabled the man to contact the spirit of Socrates. In later experiments, Dr. Carpenter suggested to the hypnotized man that he was in communication with a disembodied spirit of supreme intelligence. Once again, the man proceeded to expound the most spellbinding and marvelous spiritual philosophy, exceeding even his Socratic performance. Hudson remarked that a transcription of the discourse, had there been one, would have made a very credible book.

Hudson told this story to demonstrate one of the powers of the subconscious mind that we vastly underestimate. He calls it "deductive reasoning power." If you give the subconscious mind a certain assumption, that Socrates is present, for example, it can take that premise and instantly draw out its implications. Using the powers of the imagination, the subconscious begins with the person's own unconscious memories to fabricate its performance. Being in contact with other sub-

conscious minds, it can also draw upon other person's memories. Conceivably, it could also attract actual spirits as a resource. It could tap into a universal level of awareness, accessing the Akashic records of all knowledge. Whether it's accessing a disembodied pattern of thought forms, or simply the unconscious knowledge of the person, it's not possible to determine in a given instance. What is clear, however, is that the initial premise has a lot of power to generate a surprising performance. The subconscious was able to deliver on cue in a very convincing manner.

The story of channeling Socrates has a double-edged, *good news, bad news* lesson. On the one hand, by demonstrating how the subconscious mind is capable of amazingly creative improvisation, we're reminded that the appearance of channeling a spirit doesn't necessarily mean a spirit is involved. On the other hand, the demonstration also shows the power of personification, how proposing an image of a being can open a profound channel of inspiration. We might wonder, therefore, if it's possible that given the right image, one could actually open up a valid channel of universal intelligence. What might this right image be? Cayce suggests that we choose according to our ideals, that it be an image of the higher self. Cayce's own experience serves as an instructive example.

Edgar Cayce's Hypnotic Journey

There have been a couple of references in this book to the fact that when Cayce went into trance, he experienced going to what he called the Hall of Records and getting his information from an old man. Although his trance source didn't describe the process in such concrete images and personifications, the waking Cayce did. Here's a verbatim account of Cayce's waking description of his journey in the trance state, taken from comments he made at a public lecture:

"I see myself as a tiny dot out of my physical body, which lies inert before me. I find myself oppressed by darkness and there is a feeling of terrific loneliness. Suddenly, I am conscious of a white beam of light. As this tiny dot, I move upward following the light, knowing that I must follow it or be lost.

"As I move along this path of light I gradually become conscious of

various levels upon which there is movement. Upon the first levels there are vague, horrible shapes, grotesque forms such as one sees in nightmares. Passing on, there begins to appear on either side misshapen forms of human beings with some part of the body magnified. Again there is change and I become conscious of gray-hooded forms moving downward. Gradually, these become lighter in color. Then the direction changes and these forms move upward and the color of the robes grows rapidly lighter. Next, there begins to appear on either side vague outlines of houses, walls, trees, etc., but everything is motionless. As I pass on, there is more light and movement in what appear to be normal cities and towns. With the growth of movement I become conscious of sounds, at first indistinct rumblings, then music, laughter, and singing of birds. There is more and more light, the colors become very beautiful, and there is the sound of wonderful music. The houses are left behind, ahead there is only a blending of sound and color. Quite suddenly I come upon a hall of records. It is a hall without walls, without ceiling, but I am conscious of seeing an old man who hands me a large book, a record of the individual for whom I seek information."

On other occasions, Cayce "felt himself to be a bubble traveling through water to arrive at the place where he always got the information," according to records in the A.R.E. library. In another instance, "he went up and up through a very large column; passing by all the horrible things without coming in contact personally with them, and came out where there was the house of records. It, the column, wound around on a wheel like the Rotarians have. He felt very secure traveling that way."

That was Cayce's experience of the imagery that accompanied his psychic trance. We might wonder, what would happen if that imagery were used as a series of suggestions to someone in a hypnotic trance? Would it lead to the same type of psychic, universal awareness Cayce obtained?

Henry Bolduc, the hypnotist I referred to in the beginning of this chapter, has tried that experiment. In his book, *The Journey Within: Past Life Regression and Channeling* (a free copy is available at www.creativespirit.net/henrybolduc/free.htm), he tells the story of what happened when he turned Cayce's description of his trance into a script for hypnotic suggestions.



Figure 36
Receiving Messages from a Cat

His first experiment was with Daniel Clay, a lay minister whom Henry had trained in self-hypnosis, and who initiated the idea of following in Cayce's thought patterns.

After Clay was in the hypnotic state, Henry began by turning Cayce's first statement into a suggestion: "You will see yourself as a tiny dot out of your physical body, which lies inert before you." That suggestion was easy for Clay to follow. At the next suggestion, "You find yourself oppressed by darkness and there's a feeling of terrific loneliness," Clay's face drooped in sadness. Clay's facial expressions showed appropriate responsiveness to each of the remaining suggestions. At the end of the sequence, Henry gave Clay the name of someone and it was suggested that the old man would produce that person's record book. Clay made

a few statements about the person in question. Afterwards, Henry was able to verify that some of what Clay indicated was correct. They decided to continue this line of experimentation.

Each time they repeated the experiment, Clay's body seemed more adjusted to the sequence. There was less physical torment expressed during the passage by the grotesque figures, and the clairvoyant information was clearer and more accurate. The result was that Clay began to channel what appeared to be a universal consciousness called, "The Eternal Ones." This source identified itself as a state of consciousness within us all. It distinguished that source from spirit mediumship, a channel the Eternal Ones discouraged in no uncertain terms. Clay has since built a reputation for accurate and inspiring channeled readings.

I have met with Clay on numerous occasions and have interacted with the Eternal Ones. What has impressed me the most isn't how different or spellbinding the Eternal Ones might appear, but how much resemblance I sense between the spirit of Clay's sincerity of purpose and gentleness as a human being and the effect of being in the presence of his trance channeling. That resemblance has confirmed for me Cayce's perspective that channeling, when it's not "trick shooting," is an expression of the channel's own growth in consciousness.

Henry describes a second experiment, with a woman named Eileen Rota. Using the same procedure, Eileen ultimately channeled a source called "Pretty Flower," yet whose self-description and style of teaching was quite different from the Eternal Ones. Pretty Flower's work has since been published as a book, *Welcome Home: A Time for Uniting*.

What's particularly interesting about Eileen's experience is that soon after Pretty Flower appeared, she told Henry that it would be better for Eileen to use her own imagery rather than Cayce's. She suggested images that were more in keeping with Eileen's own style of higher self consciousness. When Henry shifted to using these images, the work accelerated.

Improving trance channeling by using the person's own imagery parallels Cayce's story of his development as a trance psychic. Under hypnosis, when he, rather than the hypnotist, was allowed to design the suggestions, Cayce finally made some progress.

Henry reports a third experiment that sounds an important note of

caution. A woman wanted to learn trance channeling and Henry asked her first to master the preliminaries of self-hypnosis and its use for general self-improvement. She was impatient, however, and asked her husband to give her hypnotic suggestions following the Cayce imagery. Although she showed some signs of modest success, she began suffering from a skin irritation that required her to give up the experiments. It's easy to speculate that opening herself up to channeling stimulated some unresolved emotional problems. Her story serves as a warning against moving too fast into such experiments.

My Experiments with Trance Channeling

To use Cayce's imagery as a basis for suggestion, to test its effectiveness as an approach to trance channeling, makes a lot of sense. I wanted to experience it for myself. I called up Henry Bolduc and asked him if he would demonstrate his method with me. He readily agreed.

The only thing about Henry that fits the popular stereotype of the hypnotist is that he has a beard. A man of tremendous warmth and enthusiasm, I trusted him the moment he walked up to my door. Besides making a house visit for our first session, he also went into our kitchen and taught me how to make a quick and easy soup for lunch afterwards.

I was anxious to try the Cayce imagery, but he insisted that we move slowly. His plan was to start with recapturing childhood memories and then past life recall before attempting channeling. We followed his plan.

I had been hypnotized several times before, by different hypnotists, and found nothing unusual about Henry's induction. I did find his personal warmth, however, to add to my feelings of comfort and relaxation.

At the end of our first session, I emerged with a past life memory that pleased Henry immensely. I was skeptical, however, that I had recalled an actual memory, or even anything meaningful. As the weeks went by I had to admit, however, that as an allegorical story, my "memory" did reveal some important themes in my life. For example, in that memory I was driving a horse cart. Recalling that memory excited me and I ended up buying a cart, and a horse, to enjoy once again something

that had been very important to me (Figure 35).

Henry encouraged me to practice with a self-hypnosis tape that included the induction of hypnosis and some positive suggestions about self-confidence. I worked with that tape several times a week.

A couple of months later, Henry again led me through a past life recall experience. This time he suggested that I would remember my *very first* lifetime. I experienced something very strange, as if out of a science-fiction-fantasy novel. It concerned souls working with God's creative forces to make a material world and inhabit it with bodies. Part of the soul's discovery process was learning what *physical feeling* was like and what it added as a channel of awareness.

Again, I was skeptical about the experience, except that the story was an intuitively inspiring one that has stayed with me. Recently, when Ken Carey published his channeled book, *Return of the Bird Tribes*, I found that some of his descriptions of the primordial life of Native American souls were similar to my own story. More than I realized, I must have been tapping into a universal level of the imagination. It's so easy to undervalue your own experience.

In my third session, I told Henry that I thought that I could contact a higher self plane of consciousness. My intuition visualized it as the process of rising up on a blue flame. Henry agreed to try that image and we proceeded. During that session, I became so deeply relaxed, my body felt very heavy and I seemed to float within it. I found that the effect of dissolving into blue flame to give me a sense of a very quiet confidence, an expanded sense of being all-knowing.

When Henry asked me to speak, I hesitated. No matter how relaxed I might be, or confident I might feel, I was getting in my own way. It was like I had a sense of stage fright, and I was blocking the ability of the expanded awareness to speak out. Henry suggested I relax and then encouraged me to simply start talking. Once I began, by surrendering the need to make sure I would say something wise, the words flowed easily. In that respect, it was much like the process of inspirational writing.

As agreed, Henry gave the suggestion that I would speak about my book. I did so, particularly about my attitude toward writing it. Using a humorous and non-critical example, I teased the compulsiveness in my

approach to writing the book. I also provided some alternative images and early childhood memories to remind myself of what it was like for me to approach work in a more casual manner. I described several different exercises I could do to keep my attitude positive and help the work proceed smoothly. I kidded myself about wanting to receive the text of the book effortlessly through this trance state, saying that I wasn't really the sort of person who would enjoy taking dictation.

Henry was very excited about this session. My wife was in attendance and she, too, thought I had said some very important things about my writing. I was skeptical, as usual. I assumed that I remembered most of what I had said, and it didn't seem like any big deal. Henry encouraged me to listen to the tape, try the suggestions, and keep practicing with the self-hypnosis tape.

I didn't listen to the tape of my channeling session for several weeks. One day, my wife pointed out to me that I had been complaining regularly about the progress of my writing and perhaps I should listen to my tape. I did and was quite surprised. There were many key statements that I had forgotten. They spoke directly to my feeling stuck in my writing and were just the sort of counsel I needed to hear. What particularly impressed me was the tone of the reading. It was like listening to myself being a wise and loving big brother and my best friend. Nobody else could know me as well and know just what to say to get me back up on my feet. It was a record of a state of consciousness that restored me to myself. I began practicing its advice, with good effect.

A few months later, Henry conducted me in a fourth session. In the middle of my trance talking, I suddenly announced, "There're entities that would speak." I sensed something like a ball of energetic knowing just above my head, and I experienced it as wanting to open up. I heard myself say, "There's a plant entity. There's a bird entity. There's an angel entity. There's an extra-terrestrial entity." I felt apprehensive, nervous.

Henry seemed calm and took my announcement in stride. He began to suggest that I might allow them to speak. I heard myself advise him, "The channel's blood flow is constricted . . . warming the hands will open the channel." I must have been referring to the physical consequences of being nervous. Henry suggested that my hands and feet

would become warm and they did. One by one, I allowed the “entities” to speak.

Each character had something interesting to say, each provided food for thought. I later discovered some Cayce readings that resembled what the plant told me about the creative forces, what the bird told me about intuition and what the angel told me about celestial music. The angel also gave me some interesting advice about combining the exercise of walking with singing silently to myself, which I have continued to practice with good effect. The basic message of the extra-terrestrial was for me to grow stronger in the earth before I allowed my imagination to soar so high.

Afterwards, Henry was enthusiastic, as usual. I was intrigued, probably because of what Cayce would call the “wonderment” of it all. During the channeling process, I didn’t feel possessed, or out of control. Rather, it was more like I had become suddenly inspired to speak as a plant, to speak as a bird, and so on. Figures 36 and 37 are some portraits I made of a couple of these channeled sources that were animals. It felt like role playing in trance, a way of giving expression to various intuitions. It was hard, but I tried not to be too skeptical, or analytical.

Subsequent sessions were more like the third. I practiced speaking improvisationally from a trance state of higher consciousness. No more characters appeared. Instead, I continued to give myself advice about writing and about developing my channeling abilities.

In this trance work, and while applying the advice I received, I learned an important lesson. My tendency to become fascinated with the phenomenon of trance channeling got in the way of my being a graceful channel. It became clear that it was important to integrate what I experienced in trance into my daily life. If I approached trance channeling as a way to overcome my sense of inadequacy as a person, it was easy to become attached or addicted to apparent power of the trance state. On the other hand, as I incorporate the trance insights, including the experience of feeling confident in approaching life in a spontaneous manner, the trance state itself becomes less a compelling need. Instead, trance channeling feels more like simply taking time out, as in meditation, to honor and focus exclusively upon a state of awareness that’s always present in the background.

Using Hypnosis to Clear the Channel of Smoke

I want to conclude this chapter by sharing with you the story of how my hypnotic trance channel led to my *finishing* smoking cigarettes. It is a story not just about hypnosis, but also is a good example of Cayce's approach to "do as you know to do, then more is given." Because of the importance of our having a "right relationship" to tobacco, and because the story demonstrates a use of hypnosis that has wide applicability for receiving and applying intuitive guidance, I share this story here.

I started smoking when I was 14, and by the time I was in my 40s, the symptoms were getting worrisome and hard to deny: the coughing, breathing constriction, and circulation problems were scaring me, but I felt helpless to stop. I had quit so many times before, only to resume smoking within 24 hours or less after my declaration of intent. I no longer had any credibility with myself. There was a feeling of helplessness about quitting. I had declared myself to be a hopeless smoker.

To create a recovery program from smoking cigarettes, I used hypnosis. I didn't use it in the way people generally think of using hypnosis for smoking cessation, for example, to plant suggestions on quitting or being smoke-free. Instead I used hypnosis to contact or create a higher consciousness from which I sought and received guidance on how to go about quitting. Here's how it happened.

At times when I would work with Henry Bolduc on developing the trance channel through hypnosis, the subject of smoking would come up, both as a block to my fuller creativity and as a challenge to higher creativity. So I asked Henry to pose this question to me: How will I ever quit smoking? The answer was that I would FINISH smoking once I had completed certain tasks. The first task was to replace my feeling of helplessness with a feeling of mastery. The channeled guidance said I had become "hypnotized" into believing I had no control over my smoking because of my repeated failures at quitting. I had to begin, the channeled source said, with learning that I could assert some control over my smoking. How could I assert control? Was the question Bolduc put to me while I was in trance. The answer that came forth was to start with a very small step, to count my cigarettes. The task was within my skill range, and even though a small step, it would lead to a greater



Figure 37
Horses as Channeled Sources

sense of control. It would also teach me something about my smoking behavior.

I accepted this guidance, but to implement it I had to develop a plan that would be easy to follow. I invented a system that enabled me to count my cigarettes effortlessly. I got a cigarette case and vowed to only smoke cigarettes that I took from this case. I would stock the case with five cigarettes each morning, and restock it whenever needed, five cigarettes at a time. Although I always carried a pack of cigarettes with me, I never smoked a cigarette directly from the pack. I always loaded five cigarettes into the case, then took a cigarette from the case. It was a simple matter to notice when I smoked the sixth cigarette of the day, for example, by noting when I had to restock the case, and then load it up again. My spirits were pleased and my confidence increased as I saw that I could keep my vow. I achieved that first step of mastery. I continued this procedure for the approximately three years that it took me to “finish” smoking. Although three years may seem like a long time, had

I not started the process, I might still be smoking today.

Twice a year I would practice trance channeling using hypnosis with Bolduc. Besides exploring other topics, we would always revisit the smoking program. I would review my progress and receive further guidance. I would give myself discourses on the meaning of my smoking and provide further procedures to follow to move closer to the goal of finishing smoking. A major procedural idea was to practice being a nonsmoker for short periods of time at critical junctures during the day. One such juncture was after the evening meal. My higher self instructed me to postpone my after dinner cigarette by going for a walk first, then smoking all I wanted when I returned home from my walk. The prediction was confirmed that many times when I returned from my walk I would “forget” to smoke for as long as an hour. Also as predicted, I made many useful observations about the nature of my craving for cigarettes.

In the hypnosis sessions, I received, besides these specific procedures for practicing being a nonsmoker, diagnostic and explanatory discourse on the meaning and purpose of my smoking. One of the major themes of these discussions was that I used smoking to create a wall around my feelings and to shield myself from others. Part of my task in finishing smoking was to learn to be comfortable with my feelings, to be more sensitive in detecting them, and to develop the capacity to experience other people’s feelings without being lost in them, or confusing them as my own. As it happened, this theme of emotional sensitivity and contagion came up just as I was writing about and investigating the role of intimacy, and the fear of it, in psychic functioning (you can find this article at www.henryreed.com/publications/getknowyou.htm). My higher self seemed to be saying that smoking had been guarding the gate to my taking conscious responsibility for my psychic ability and the implications of that ability.

I realized later that I was learning to deal face to face with the process of deconstructing an addiction by reconstructing the ego for which the absence of the addiction was a compensation. I had to face directly and had to experience and understand all the aspects of my relationship with smoking. This process included experimenting with Nicorette gum to learn that any problem dealing with nicotine withdrawal could

easily be handled by the gum. Nicorette showed me that I no longer had as an excuse about smoking that I could not tolerate the withdrawal sensations. Nicorette removed that obstacle. I set Nicorette aside until such time that I was no longer smoking cigarettes. It would be used faithfully at a later date.

The last hypnosis session contained a surprise encounter that was very emotional. In an earlier session I gave a discourse on how I, like many other teenagers, had formed impressions, from advertising and other sources, that formed a self-image of myself as a smoker. I had rejected this diagnosis, but came to realize that I had associated smoking with meditation, with creativity, and I had indeed made a cult of a self image surrounding smoking. Then in this final hypnosis session, I sensed the presence of some other individuals.

I look more closely at that feeling of a presence and sense that it is a Native American, someone who reminds me of the Indian on the TV commercial who has a tear flowing down his cheek. He says that he is sad that I, as a brother spirit, was having to let go of tobacco. At that statement, I see behind him a large chorus line of Indians, and they are all crying for me. What is an Indian, they cry, without his tobacco? In fact, I had in my collection, several valuable tobacco pipes and some beautiful books, including some about the mythology of tobacco among Native Americans. Then the Indian spokesman said that the group of Indians knew I was doing this project for a good cause, and they wanted to support me because it was in the greater interest of Spirit. The Indians stand aside, and part their line to reveal behind them a large tobacco field. It is bright green and with the sun backlighting them, the leaves glow. The natives say they have a present for me. And from among the tobacco plants jumps up a moving figure, which I first identify as a ball of energy. Then as it comes closer I realize, or the Indian explains, that it is a tobacco plant spirit. The Indian explains that the tobacco spirit is sacrificing itself willingly to be with me to keep me company on this sacred journey I was about to take. The spirit jumps across the top of the tobacco leaves and dives into my chest. When it enters my body I feel a big rush akin to a nicotine hit when you have a cigarette after a long absence. I also feel a real sense of being loved, as well as having received a sacred blessing.

It wasn't too long after that experience that the final day came. It wasn't planned, but it happened spontaneously. I went to interview a psychic, Ray Stanford, as part of my research project for this book on channeling (the result of that interview is given in the final chapter). In our discussion, the subject of smoking came up. I mentioned that I had been at work on a project to "finish" smoking by embracing psychic ability. He asked if I wished him to ask the Holy Spirit to help me finish. I said OK. After the interview, we stood up and held hands in a brief moment of silent prayer. As I walked out of the interview room, I realized I was now free of cigarettes if I was willing to walk away from them. I never smoked a cigarette again.

Practicing the skills I had learned, I used Nicorette gum for awhile, and then moved on to regular gum, and then occasional mints. One disturbing component of the symptoms of smoking had been a concern for my heart, as if smoking induced heart disease. Hugging people—enthusiastically—experiencing feelings, being closer to other people's feelings, were all qualities or capacities that came into blossom as I followed my program after having "finished" smoking. I walked more, hugged more people more often, and became more intimate with my feelings, and those of others. My heart was opening. I went on to publish work on intimacy and psychic sensitivity (see www.henryreed.com/publications/close2you.htm for an example of creating psychic intimacy through an imagined heart connection). I owe a lot to the channel provided by hypnosis.