



## Building Your Hypnotic Imagination

Using sense and imagination as a path to amplified personal experience.

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*“Attempts have been made to create training procedures aimed at increasing a subject’s hypnotic abilities.”* — **Jan Dyba** and **Kathryn Rossi** (2024)

Two things remind me hypnosis is more of a skill than a state: a client and an article. Like many of my clients, this client is analytical and I’d like them to be less. The article is called *Developing Deep Trance in Therapeutic Hypnosis*, recently published by Jan Dyba and Kathryn Rossi (2024).

Hypnosis is a mind-body technique; a way to amplify of our control of ourselves. This ability is both a risk and an asset. It’s something we all have to a more or less degree.

Western culture emphasizes intellect, which is a combination of analytic skills and attitudes. These include reason, memory, and discernment. The rewards have been obvious. The loss has been less obvious.

What’s lost is our ability to intuit or imagine irrational connections. Most of the connections we establish and control are analytical, but most of the connections that exist between things are not. The

greater our analytical skills become, the weaker our intuitive skills grow. Across the arc of history, there has been little effort to recognize, control, or repair this.

Many of humanities difficult problems relate to a deep failure to understand. Our analytic understanding is growing, but not broadly or uniformly. Many people continue to rationalize their own misunderstood behaviors based on religious, political, and cultural ideas they don't understand. The obligation to understand is being widely abdicated and replaced by unintelligent institutional authority.

## **Therapy**

The central problem in all therapy is knowing what to do. In mechanical circumstances we know what needs to be done. Tissues need mending, bones need healing, and functions need to be restored.

In mental health there are many levels of function, both progressive and regressive. A therapist may think they know the best solution, but setting the goal must be the client's responsibility because only they will live and maintain it.

Most therapists consider themselves in service to comfort and coping strategies. This is restorative but not evolutionary. It aims toward what is calming and adequate, not what is disturbing and reformative. It's not clear if this can really be called healing.

If a person has a disturbing problem, such as most counseling clients present, is the goal to remove the disturbance or to solve the problem? In most cases, no one knows, not even the client. Before therapy can do anything, it must define its goal. This is a process of discovery, not repair.

Most counselors advertise comfort and aim to remove disturbances. I'm drawn to understand, but understanding is rarely comfortable. I want to solve the problem, which means first to understand it. According to my notion of healing, understanding is therapeutic.



## Trance

Trance is a state of mind of fixated attention. You are in trance when you're staring, when you're feeling emotional, excited, or blankly driving at night. There is no form of attention that is not associated with something, so every form of attention is some form of trance. That being said, each form of trance is suited to the object of its attention.

A transformative trance is one that facilitates a new connection, insight, or ability. Therapy is equated with transformation, but this is often untrue. In many contexts, therapy is regressive. It fosters a return to a pre-problematic point of view.

A phase of disconnection is a required stage in the process of change and learning. This threatens old structures while promising new possibilities. It's rarely possible to measure the risk of one against the promise of the other because they apply to different perspectives. As institutions become predominant, change and learning becomes subordinate, and transformative trance itself becomes a subversive state of mind.

*“The development of deep trance phenomena... permits a diffusion of understandings from the conscious to the unconscious mind.”— Milton Erickson and Ernest Rossi (2018, 235)*

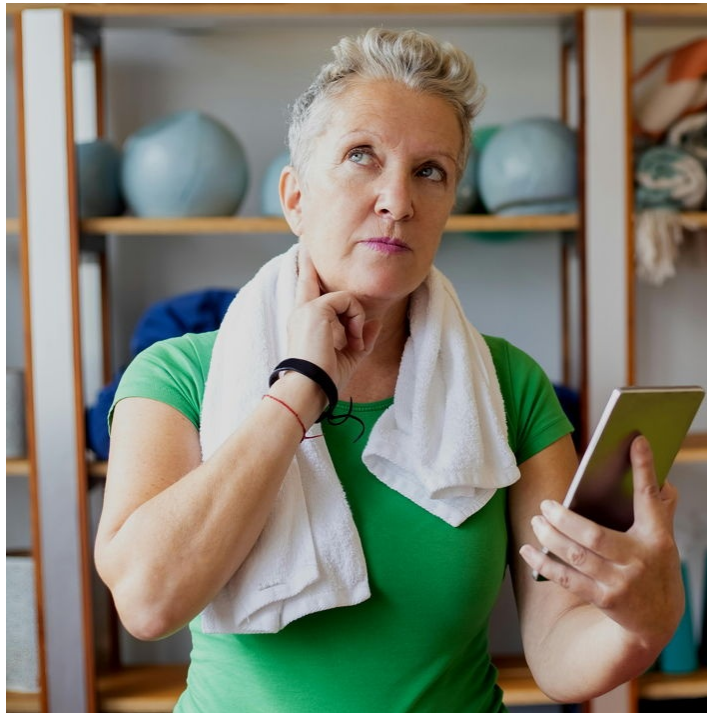
## Imagination

There are ways to escape your intellect. One way is through emotion, another is through physical action, and a third is through imagination. The purpose of physical experience is to expand your awareness. In this way, you become more capable. Imagination can do the same thing.

Imagination is the confabulation of associations with experience. It's the ultimate in recycling as nothing old is used up in the creation of something new.

Just as there are deeper levels of trance, there are deeper levels of imagination. And just as deeper levels of trance create more immersive realities, imagination does too. It's hard to compare physical experience with imagination as they're on opposite ends of the reality spectrum, but there is a unity. It's almost impossible to create insight from experience without the help of imagination.

The difference between trance and imagination is that imagination is intentional while trance is not. This is the key to training trance: engage the imagination through more salient associations and more compelling experiences. This is my motivation in creating the hypnotic visualization *Being the Breath and Pulse*.



## Breath and Pulse

Your breath and your pulse are real physical experiences, but you are only marginally aware of them. Both are accessible but neither demand your attention. Most of the time, neither will reward you if you do attend to them.

You can expand your experience of both through the use of your imagination. There are benefits at any time, not just in circumstances of anxiety or exertion. With a modicum of effort, you can improve your mental and physical health in the moment. The *Being in the Breath and Pulse* induction illustrates this.

The key fact is that you gain control over what you give attention. To some extent, control and attention are the same thing, but they differ in their actions. Control is assertive while attention is passive.

In spite of this, neither are effective without the other. Control without attention has no direction, while attention without control has no feedback, which is to say you have no engagement.

*Being the Breath and Pulse* asks you to both attend and engage. The breath and pulse are the vehicles, and the purpose is to demonstrate how your imagination makes things real. Obviously, you can't make any imaginary thing real, but you must imagine before anything you can make real will become real.

The full *Being the Breath and Pulse* audio is 26-minutes long. The audio linked to this post is the full induction if you are a paid subscriber. It's a 10-minute introduction if you are not. If you become a paid subscriber, you'll gain access to it.

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## ***Being the Breath and Pulse* is a downloadable product**

I have made this induction an MP3 audio file, with accompanying written transcription, that you can purchase on my website. If you'd like to have the full product to listen to and practice with, you will find it at: <https://www.mindstrengthbalance.com/product/being-the-breath-and-pulse/>

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## **References**

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