How to Get the Most From Your Program

Silicon Valley Hypnosis Center

I'd like to welcome you to your program at the Silicon Valley Hypnosis Center. Our changework programs are the results of decades of experience and refinement of techniques. In order to get the best and fastest results, it is useful to learn some mindset strategies that will help guide your progress. This guide will give you some background and mental frames to adopt that will help your program run smoothly, and help you get the results you desire. Please read it through carefully since there are is a lot of useful information and frames that will allow you to get the most from your sessions. Please bring any questions to me.

Let's get started…

Logistics:

- Sessions are 50-55 minutes. The exception is that for some first sessions in a program, the length may run up to 90 minutes. I will let you know if that is the case when we set up your appointment.
- Sessions will start and end on time.
- If we are not in a good place to conclude your session at the appointed time, we may run longer in order to get you to a good stopping point for the day. This may happen with a client before you, so I appreciate your flexibility around that.
- My goal is to leave you in a positive state at the conclusion of the session. Sometimes that goal cannot be completely achieved due to some processing that may happen, but it is my intent for you to be in a better place at the end of the session than at the beginning.
- Sometimes you may finish a session feeling good, and the next day or two that may shift as other stuff comes up. You may then lose that good feeling for a time. This is a normal part of the process. Over time the good feelings should last longer.
- During sessions I may touch you on your arm, shoulder, or upper back. I will usually ask before I do so, but let me know if in general that is not OK. The purpose of touch is for anchoring in a positive feeling, or for hypnotic convincers.
- We may do some of our work standing up. Let me know if you have a challenge with that.
- If something comes up between scheduled sessions and you would like support, call, text, or email me. I will do my best to accommodate you.
- Measurement - I will often ask at the beginning, end or in the middle of a session where something is on a scale of 0-10. 0 means a neutral feeling, and 10 means an intense feeling. That helps us know what progress we are making.
- If a suggestion does not fit, please mention it to me. Suggestions are only suggestions. All of the answers are within you.

About Hypnosis…

What notions do you have about hypnosis?
- Do you have any concerns about hypnosis? If so, please bring them to my attention before your first (or any subsequent) session.

What hypnosis is not:
- It is not mind control – I cannot make you do anything that violates your morals or ethics, nor would I want to.
- It is not sleep. You should not expect to black out.
- It is not amnesia
- There is no feeling per se
- It is not something I'm going to do to you. It is something we do together.

What hypnosis is:
- It is focusing your mind and following along with suggestions.
- It is something we do together – like a contract
- It is like a good movie – you can get drawn in and tune out other things
- You may find it relaxing (most people do)
- You may remember as much from a hypnosis session as you do from any normal conversation.

Worries/concerns that may come up for some people:
- You may be wondering if you are doing it right (There is no right or wrong way to do it)
- You may have thoughts that come up during hypnosis, and may find them distracting. If that happens, just bring your attention back to the sound of my voice.
- I may say or do something I don't want to (remember, you are always in control)
- You may think you are not hypnotized (see the part about convincers below)

I will offer you suggestions that you can respond to physically while in hypnosis. That may be something like lifting a finger on your right hand. These physical convincers will let us both know that you were hypnotized and following along with suggestions.

Other Tools

Besides Hypnosis, I may use other tools with you during your program. I use whatever tool will provide the fastest, longest-lasting change.

Neuro-linguistic Programming (NLP)

- NLP is a set of tools to identify limiting patterns of thinking, limiting beliefs, and internal conflicts that are causing the current problem, and to change those patterns so that you act and behave in a way that gets you your solution. These tools are proven to work with issues like fears, phobias, trauma, anxiety, cravings and other limitations.

Mindfulness

- Mindfulness is a way of building more presence in your body
- Mindfulness can help build acceptance of all your thoughts and feelings
- Mindfulness practices may be a prerequisite for deeper change for some people

- I teach mindfulness practices (which are done daily) as part of a number of programs as needed, including for issues like weight loss and anxiety/depression.
- There are numerous evidentiary studies that show the value of mindfulness practices.

Long-Term Change

For deeper issues, change will often need to come in stages. If someone has a simple issue like a fear that started as a result of a one-time event, changing it may take only a few sessions and last the rest of their life.

For issues that are more complex, like losing a lot of weight, or recovering from ongoing abuse in childhood, change can take longer to effect. Sometimes even seemingly "simple" issues, like a fear of public speaking, bring up numerous limiting beliefs that must be changed in order to be able to confidently speak in public.

For changes that require deeper work, think of it in phases:

1) A Clearing phase where the limiting patterns are cleared out.

2) A Building phase where new beliefs, habits and behaviors are identified and installed.

3) An Integration phase where the changes are integrated into your life over time. This allows us to condition in the changes so they are automatic, and deal with any hiccups that come along the way – which is normal in life.

In summary, some presenting problems can be taken care of in a few sessions, and some require a longer commitment to get the result – regardless of the set of tools used. James Prochaska did scientific studies showing that a one-and-done model for change can often lead to failure.

It takes time to put on 50 pounds, and it will take time to lose that 50 pounds. Ongoing support during that process will help make it a reality. The same may be true for something like severe anxiety.

Challenges that may come up during your program:

In many programs stress will come up and it may feel like results are not coming fast enough – or at all. In those moments you may not want to continue with your program. This is a normal response and should be expected. Unfortunately, it sometimes can cause a person to drop out of a program before they get the results they were looking for. It is often masked as "getting busy" or "having other priorities."

When people get stressed they will go into what the famous family therapist Virginia Satir called "stress coping mechanisms." There are 4 categories or coping mechanisms people will go into according to her model.

- Blaming – blaming self or someone else or "the program" for not working.
- Placating – saying something to be agreeable, but not really agreeing.
- Distracting – putting focus on something else – TV, work, food, the internet, etc.
- Computing- checking out, disassociating, and not being emotionally present.

When a person is not in a stress coping mechanism, he or she would be called "level" or "Leveler" by Satir. That is the non-stressed state where a person is open to change.

Notice when you get into a stress-coping mechanism and use the tools to get out of it.

Ecology

The broad definition of ecology is the study of consequences. In making a change for the better, we want to make sure that it does not make some other aspect of you life worse. A common example is someone who wants to be motivated to put more focus on their career, which might have a detriment on that person's relationship or health. I will listen for these potential conflicts and bring them up to be sure that you are OK moving forward to make the change and any collateral impact.

Internal Conflicts

When working towards any big goal that has been elusive, a common barrier is an internal conflict. For example, a person may genuinely want to lose weight and is conscious of their goal. On the other hand, their unconscious mind may cause them to act in a way that seems to sabotage their success. I look for these conflicts and help to resolve them as they come up. Note that conflicts can show up in many ways, including someone feeling like it is not working and dropping out of a weight loss program. It can also show up as a fear of success or fear of failure, and then the person gets "busy" with something as a reason to start missing sessions in their program. Or to run off and try the next thing, rather than sticking with a program until they get the result.

Curiosity and Acceptance

Often judgement will come up. Judgment of the speed of change or progression towards a goal, judgement of yourself and performance, or judgement of the program and your coach. Just know this can come up, and when it does, to transform that into curiosity. Curiosity allows you to step out of the negative feelings of judgement and objectively measure progress.

Another thing to be aware of is that parts of your personality may show up that you may have not been accepting of. In order to reduce the internal conflict that can produce, we want to transform those seemingly oppositional parts into allies. That starts with welcoming them and their positive intent in an accepting way. The goal is to make friends with all parts of yourself. We will do this when these parts show up in sessions.

Useful Mental Frames

Here are some additional ways of thinking that will speed your progress - and have your mind work for you, rather than get in your way:

- We all have filters that determine how we experience the world. People react to what is filtered through their filters. Old experiences, beliefs, values and personality are the filters. We do not react to reality. We react to our interpretation of reality that is run through our filters. Change your filters and change your experience. Trying to change reality is a recipe for stress and frustration.

- Be aware of your thoughts around the process. Every thought is like a little hypnotic trance. Your thinking got you where you are—and no further. Be aware and choose to have thoughts support your overall success in the program.

- Constantly asking "Is it working?" is less useful than noticing when you are thinking, feeling, or behaving differently than you were before, even if only a little.

- Sort for Analog rather than digital/binary. That means that rather than asking "Have I completely changed or not?" Instead notice "to what degree and in what context have things shifted?" That is Analog. It is like a dial, rather than like a switch that is on or off.

- You get what you focus on; focus on what you want rather than you don't want. It will determine your outcome.

- After you experience a change process, be sure to notice and track for the difference, not sameness. Ask yourself, "How am I behaving differently or responding differently now?" Especially if a piece of changework is less effective than we were hoping for in a particular session. This becomes critical in noticing changes as transformation naturally occurs—incrementally and then sudden bursts, and then incrementally...

- Note that I am most focused on one thing: you achieving your outcomes. It is my purpose for our work together.

- Have your own Journey. Others in your life may be affected by the changes you are making. Reassure Them. Be friends with them, love them – and don't let them pull you off the path to your dreams.

- Questions direct your thinking and your focus. We know already know that you get what you focus on. The question is not "IF" or "will I be able to" or "can I?" or "is it possible" but rather "how?" "How" orients your mind to looking for the way forward. If we take the option of "can't" and "won't" and "impossible" off the table, our orientation and results will be dramatically different in a positive way.

- All suffering is the result of wishing something to be other than it is. Acceptance is the gateway to peace. Being at peace allows you to integrate and evolve even faster and more rapidly than if you focus on [lack acceptance of] where you are vs where you would like to be. You are where you are. You cannot be anywhere else. Accept it while putting your resources into evolving. Without the judgments, you will have more resources. Note that you can evolve/grow/transform AND accept where you are now. The two are not mutually exclusive.

- Instant change is possible. Instant transformation is not. This journey often takes practice, attention, awareness, time, investment, and plain old heavy lifting. It is like building muscles—the muscles of your mind and emotions. Patience and compassion with yourself and the process will speed the transformation.

- Humans do not experience reality; we experience our experience of reality—our internal representations through our senses and then re---presented in our internal mapping or coding made up of pictures, sounds, feelings, smells, tastes, and language. Example: The friends you are thinking of are not in the room, yet you feel a palpable response when you imagine their face. Etc.

- Our internal representations have structure, as do sub-sets of those representations, e.g.; location, size, brightness, direction, density, moisture, clarity, color, tone, volume, tempo,
    - If we change the structure—the way it is represented internally—we change our experience
    - Most of our internal representations are out of our awareness

- We are responsible for our own emotional reactions. No one can make us happy or sad without us allowing them to. We are really responding to our (mostly unconscious) internal representations.

- Disproportionate emotional reactions are typically sourced in an unresolved event(s) from the past, not what is happening currently. We have not resolved the memory of that situation in the past, so we still react to it.

- Shame comes from a case of mistaken identity—from thinking your identity worth is based on your behaviors. This is confusion of logical levels. You have your behaviors. You display them, but you are not your behaviors and they are not you.

Presuppositions for Our Work:

There are a set of beliefs that are useful to hold in our work together. You do not need to memorize them, but they are useful to know about. You may recognize them when I mention them in our sessions. There will be exceptions to all of these presuppositions, but they are a very useful starting basis for communication and personal evolution.

Behind every behavior is a positive intention
While a behavior may be harmful or seem "bad", there is always a positive intention behind the behavior, at least for the person doing the behavior.

The map is not the territory.
People respond to their map of reality, not to reality itself. NLP is the science of changing these maps (not reality). Different people have different maps. Your map is based on your mind's filters, values, reference experiences, and personality.

You create your own reality
You experience your personal reality, not the "truth".

We are all responsible for creating our own experience
Even when challenging events that we cannot control happen, we are responsible for our responses to these events. Typically, however, we have much more control than we think we have. Another way of stating this presupposition is that "We consistently create our own environment" through our beliefs, filters, capabilities and behaviors.

People are always communicating
You are always communicating in all 5 major representational systems. If someone is not saying something, they will still be communicating it nonverbally. 93% of communication is nonverbal.

The meaning of your communication is the response that you get
Communication is not about what you intend, or about saying the right words; it's about creating an experience in, and getting a response from, the listener. The "bottom line" is the response you elicit.

People are not their behaviors
It is useful to sort the person's behavior from his or her identity as a person.

People work perfectly
No one is wrong or broken; it's simply a matter of finding out how you function now, so that you can effectively change that to something more useful or desirable. People don't need to be "fixed".

People always make the best choice available to them at the time.
(But often there are lots of other better ones). This is why we strive to add choice rather than take it away, so your unconscious will naturally pick the better choice, rather than the old behavior.

Choice is better than no choice.
One choice is no choice, two choices can be a dilemma, and three choices (or more) is real choice. If you feel like you can't choose (like a bad habit) then adding another option gives you choice.

Every behavior is useful in some context.
Some behaviors may be an asset in one context, but a liability in another context. And vice versa.

Just about anyone can learn to do anything.
If one person can do something, it is possible to model it and teach it to anyone else.

People already have all the resources they need.
What they need is access to these resources at appropriate times and places. With NLP, we can transfer resources from a context where they are accessible to a context where they are lacking.

There is no such thing as failure, only feedback.
If you tried something and it did not work out the way you wanted it, you can use that feedback. You can change your approach based on that feedback, and take your next action more in the direction of your goal.

Chunking
Anything can be accomplished (by anyone) if you break the task down into small enough chunks.

Requisite variety
The person or element with the most flexibility in a system will have the most influence. In any field, the top people in that field are those who have the most variety in their behavior. They have choices of behavior that their colleagues don't. Any time you limit your behavioral choices you give others the competitive edge.

All symptoms contain communication
Symptoms—pain in the body, anxiety, depression, tumors, colds, etc. contain communication from your unconscious mind.

Energy flows where attention goes.
(From Huna) You will experience more of wherever you put your attention.

Setting Appropriate, Achievable, and Measurable Outcomes

The "Well-formed outcome process" consists of a series of questions that I can guide you through to create a clear and complete model of what you want – in any context no matter how big or small. I will use these questions often. You do not need to memorize them, but it is helpful to review them in the context of any goal you may have.

You can also use this as a worksheet to build out a well-formed outcome for any major goal or context of your life.

1. What do you want?
2. What will having that do for you?
        Am I doing this for myself or someone else?
        Does my goal depend solely on me?
3. Ensure your goal is appropriately contextualised.
        Where, when, how, and with whom do I want it?
4. Describe the evidence that will emerge from the procedure.
        What will I be doing to get my goal?
        How will I know I'm achieving it?
        What will I see, hear, and feel when I have it?
5. Identify the resources you need.
        What resources do I have now?
        What resources do I need to acquire?
        Have I got evidence of achieving my goal before?
        What happens if I act 'as if' I already have it?
6. Check that your goal is ecological. Ecology involves making sure that making a change that fixes one thing does not break another.
        What is the real purpose behind why I want this goal?
        What will I lose or gain if I have it?
        What will and won't happen if I get it?
        What will and won't happen if I don't get it?
7. Describe the first step.

Personal Needs (The Personality Profile Matrix)

We track 5 different personality tendencies in our programs. We use them as a predictor of where the strengths will help the process, and where the weaknesses of that type can cause unnecessary stress or even a "derail and bail" from the program.

Note that everyone is unique and nobody can be defined by a personality type. But people come in different flavors, and there are common traits to some flavors versus others. And no one personality type is better or worse than the other. They are all like wildflowers – unique and beautiful in their own way. People tend to have a top 2 or 3 that resonate most with them.

Here is a basic overview of the 5 Personality Profile Matrix Types:

Competency

- The Competency-based personality wants to be seen as smart and competent, and wants to be admired and respected.
- Have a huge need to be perceived as smart or superior
- Derives safety from feeling smart and in control
- Hard workers and self-motivated
- Always have to be right
- Often need to take something and "make it their own"
- Difficulty integrating into a team
- May have trouble following a program designed by someone else

Security/Rules

- Tend to view the world and make decisions based on what will keep them safe
- Can be idealistic
- Great at following the rules
- Can do routine work
- Great at spotting risk and doing due-diligence
- Does not do well with chaos (or change)
- Does not like it when reality doesn't match their expectations
- Can engage in digital or black and white thinking

Freedom

- The freedom-based personality have a need to do what they want to do when they want to do it and not be told otherwise.
- Likes having options
- Rules do not apply to them
- Self-motivating
- Likes to be in control
- Will risk their own health and welfare to maintain a feeling of sovereignty
- Has difficulty following rules (or a program)/

Belonging

- Belonging-oriented people like to be the member of a team or group
- When making decisions, tend to go with the group majority
- Fear being alone
- Tend to conform
- Great team-player
- Good a following rules and thinking about others
- Not as comfortable working on their own
- May have trouble thinking outside the box

Self-Expression

- Self-Expression is all about being unique and special
- Need to feel special
- A self-expression person will not like being labelled. Nobody does, but this personality trait will object more than others.
- Very creative and expressive
- Does not need structure
- Has to do things their own way
- Sometimes believe they are so unique that a program will not apply to them

Different Ways People Respond to Stress

One predictor of challenges that will come up is based on personality. A more security/rules personality will evaluate their progress based on all-or-nothing thinking when stressed. Things may be getting better as sessions for on, but since they are not 100% better, a Security personality may think that they or the program is failing. They will need to remember that any progress is a step in the right direction.

A more freedom/competency type personality will be excited in the beginning and may be "all-in" with the program until they have proven they could get the result, but may then lose interest. They may also have a hard time slowing down enough to take the information in, and doing the necessary work to get the result. When that happens, they will begin looking for other alternatives and going on the internet to make a case for why "it doesn't work."

Your program has worked with thousands of people, and one of the top predictors of your success in the program besides an honest desire to change will be staying in the program until you get the results you desire. It means coming when you don't feel like it or it feels like it is not working. It means bringing your concerns to the check-in that we do at the beginning and end of every session.

How To Measure Progress

The Flip side of the above means actively looking for progress. Look for the smallest changes in your behavior and celebrate them. People tend to do more of what feels good, and less of what does not feel good. When you are doing deep work in one of our programs, it is possible to forget how things used to be, and how you may be behaving differently now. For example, you may notice that you are in a situation that used to cause a high-level stress response, and now you just experience a moderate stress response. That is an example of things getting better.

In our check-ins, I recommend reporting on what is working better first. This will help to train your unconscious mind to look for the positive first. Then we can go into what is still not where it needs to be and work on it in the session.

Finally, in all our programs we want to replace judgement with awareness. Judgement is making a negative evaluation of something or someone. It often involves words like good, bad, right, wrong, should, shouldn't, must, have to, etc. The problem with judgement is that it doesn't work. A critical internal voice is seemingly trying to get something positive for you, but it often just leads to bad feelings, and does not change behavior. The best way to eat more cheesecake is to beat yourself up about eating cheesecake, then feel bad about it, and then want more cheesecake to feel better.

Instead of judgement, practice **curiosity**. Curiosity is observation with acceptance. It is the ability to notice how things are and be OK with it. Being OK with it doesn't mean you don't want to change it in the future; it does mean seeing things as they are without a "negative" emotion attached to it.