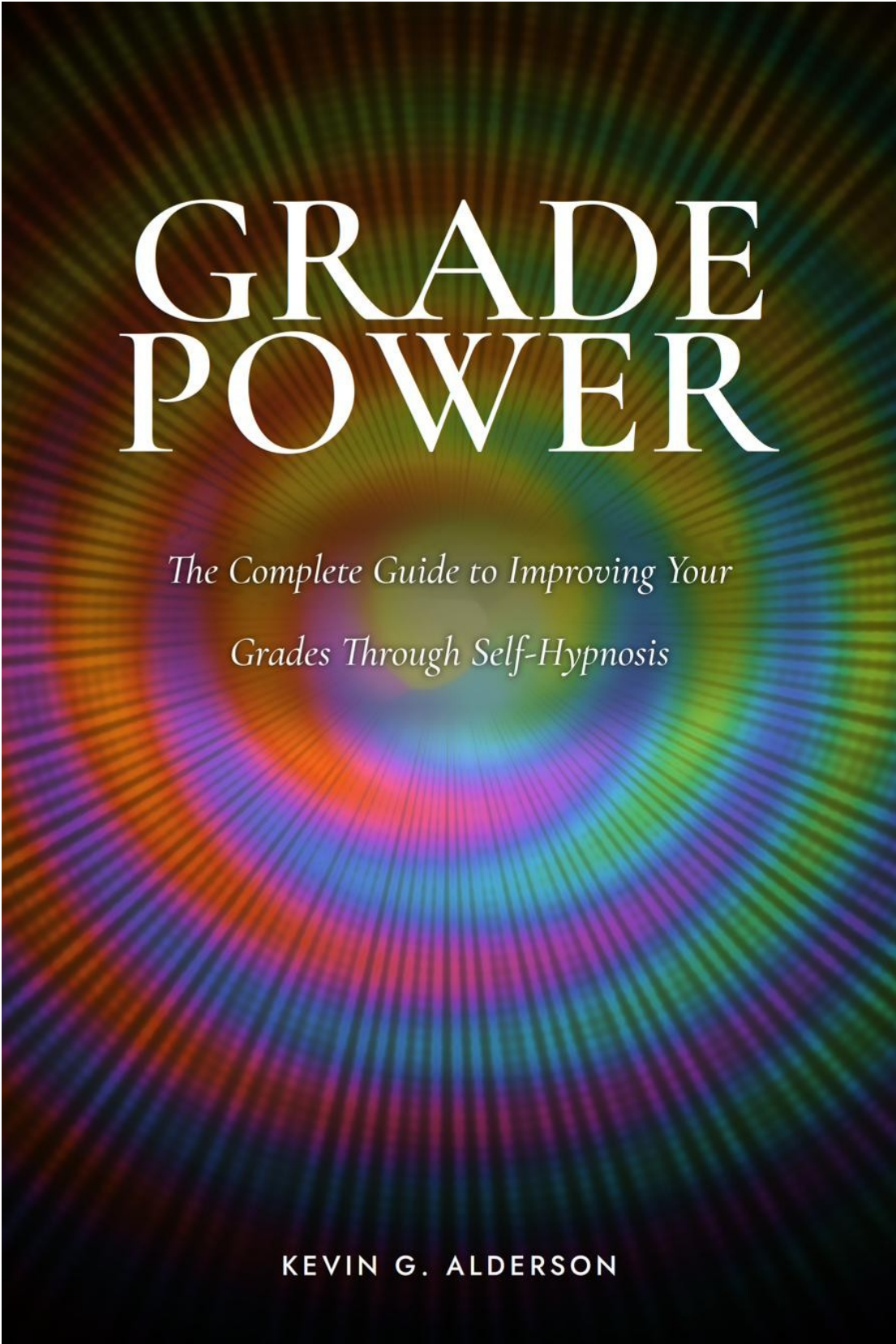




GRADE POWER

*The Complete Guide to Improving Your
Grades Through Self-Hypnosis*

KEVIN G. ALDERSON

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Kevin G. Alderson, PhD

Professor Emeritus, Counselling Psychology
University of Calgary

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A Note on This Complimentary Edition

Thank you for reading this complimentary edition of Grade Power.

I'm sharing this book free of charge with readers whose feedback matters to me. I'm weighing whether to prepare a fully revised edition, and before I do, I'd like to hear from the people it's written for. Did the self-hypnosis techniques work for you? Were the study strategies clear and practical? Is there anything you'd add, cut, or explain differently?

Your reply will directly influence whether, and how, a revised edition takes shape. Please write to me at alderson@ucalgary.ca. I read every message, and I will reply with a thank you.

With gratitude,

Kevin G. Alderson, PhD

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Preface

I've always been fascinated by the power of the mind and the human spirit. Whenever I think I understand it, I end up placing it in a box. The box invariably shatters, and I am left once more in awe of something far bigger than I.

Never underestimate the power of the mind. Never underestimate yourself. Strange, though, how nearly everyone does. But who knows what capabilities lie dormant within you right now?

How does a simple man from humble beginnings become President of the United States? How did Abraham Lincoln do it? How did he garner such incredible respect that he would be elected? Yes, he was intelligent. Yes, he became well spoken. But was he destined to become President? Something deep within him had to change. What was it?

Mahatma Gandhi of India was another great leader. Despite aggressive acts against Indians by the British in their attempts to maintain control and order, the Mahatma preached his message of peaceful resistance in protest of British rule while personally fasting for long periods. What kept driving him so hard? Why didn't he give up?

Ordinary people can do extraordinary things. There are examples of average individuals who have developed incredible strength when needed. Imagine a loved one being trapped underneath a car after the mechanism in a vehicle jack fails so that the car collapses. Can you imagine lifting the back end of the car so that your loved one can escape? Without thinking, you might unwittingly do it, as some other "anything-but-Arnold-Schwarzenegger" types have done before.

Can you imagine walking to a hospital miles away after suffering a broken back in a car accident, and then discovering that you will be physically incapable of walking again for months, if ever? How can your mind rule your body at times of such trauma?

The movie, Titanic, reminded us of the power of love. The human spirit soars to meet any challenge when it becomes convinced that something is necessary,

even if it may lead to death. How can we garner just some of this power, preferably without having to die for it?

You know of people who accomplish many goals simultaneously. They work, they go to school, they exercise, they party, they maintain an intimate relationship, and they have time for their friends. Why aren't they insane with stress? How do they do it?

You might wonder, as I did, whether the power of the mind is something that can be amassed, and then directed toward a particular goal. In other words, can we control some of this power, or is it only by happenstance or coincidence that it emerges at all?

When I was 17, my friend and I were at the annual exhibition, a festival event complete with amusement park rides and sticky cotton candy. An entertainer was about to begin on stage -- the amazing Vandermede -- a stage hypnotist who purportedly could hypnotize someone within minutes. My friend heeded his call, and as he left his seat to saunter to the stage, I had little idea of what I would soon witness. My friend was quiet, reserved, like myself. Predictably, I suppose, he was in a deep trance within minutes, falling forward and nearly off his chair when Vandermede said, "Now sleeeeeeeep." I felt myself wanting to respond, needing to shake my head to keep my consciousness intact. I wasn't about to be embarrassed, and I didn't think my friend would have felt differently.

I didn't know my friend could sing. I didn't know he could move like an accomplished dancer. I didn't know he had confidence. I didn't know he wasn't shy. I didn't know he could convincingly act like a Casanova. Strange thing was, neither did he! After the performance, my friend became "himself" again. I never again heard him sing or act with social poise and confidence. He avoided school dances and retreated into the shyness he and I knew so well.

Since then, I could never let go of the power of hypnosis. I, like you, was fascinated by it. I needed to know more. Books on the topic were hard to come by, and I assumed they were carefully hidden from most of us, like old crusty manuscripts that revealed the secrets of magic. Hypnosis is not magic, of course, but scientific, and a powerful tool. It is something that is proven to access the power of the mind.

I'm still fascinated when I see the transformations that result from hypnosis. Unlike my friend's fleeting experience, permanent change is possible, and if suggestions are administered correctly, permanent change is inevitable. And self-hypnosis is as potent as whatever a hypnotist could do for you.

This book is for you, a student struggling to make life easier. If you learn your lessons in this book well, you will not only excel in school, but you will also succeed in life. Grade Power is life power -- the attitudes, beliefs, and skills you develop in becoming a better student are life skills transferable to any situation. Turn the page and find out how this book will help.

Introduction

As a student, I wasn't that interested in learning the most effective study skills or finding better ways to manage my time. I don't recommend this undisciplined approach -- it caused me unnecessary stress. But through many years working in a community college, I noticed that most students tune out when someone starts talking about these academic skills. Let's face it -- it can be boring! I'm sure, for similar reasons, most books aimed at helping students succeed collect dust in both bookstores and on shelves at home. Despite this, we know that most students who enter college are academically underprepared for what they are about to face (Moss & Young, 1995). What differentiates those who succeed in school from those who don't? Part II of this book answers that question in a depth deserving of its importance. Success is a predictable occurrence, and it is only somewhat related to having top-notch academic skills.

From the outset, know that the most important answer is found in belief. It's the same kind of belief my friend had when he sang and danced. When the failure script is replaced by the success script, failure becomes nearly impossible. Why? Because it becomes unacceptable. Our inner scripts, which are the repetitive thoughts and beliefs that define who we are, are posthypnotic suggestions, and if they dictate you will succeed, then you will succeed. Commonly, however, the inner scripts give a different message, a much more negative one. They say you can't, you won't, you shouldn't, you're not deserving, you're not capable, etcetera. Abraham Lincoln, too, had to believe -- he had to believe that becoming President was possible, and he had to believe that he was capable. Otherwise, he would never have tried by working diligently to make the possible become probable and the probable become actual. It's true for all of us.

How Can This Book Help?

Belief alone is not enough for academic success, and students still need to have adequate academic skills, especially for post-secondary education. But it doesn't have to be as difficult as many people think! Grade Power is about making school easier and more enjoyable.

In this book, you will learn:

- the most effective conventional methods to help you succeed at school.
- to become familiar and comfortable with self-hypnosis.
- about the four powers of success and applications of self-hypnosis.
- how to use self-hypnosis to become a better student.

Educational psychologists and educators already know a great deal about how to help students succeed in school. Each chapter, starting in Part II, begins with a brief review of the best techniques known in the field of student success. These methods alone have been enough to help mediocre students become outstanding students, sometimes without having to increase their study hours. But *Grade Power* surpasses the conventional know-how on this topic by transporting you into the world of imagination, relaxation, and creativity -- the world of self-hypnosis. In this world, you will learn to enter the most powerful part of your mind -- your subconscious. As explained in the next two chapters, accessing the subconscious is the field of mind technology. Why work harder when, instead, you can work smarter?

Features of This Book

Major Scripts

There are two major scripts in this book. You will be asked in Chapter 2 to make a recording of these scripts. The scripts are complete hypnosis sessions, but more effective because you will listen to them in your own voice. The scripts for each recording will take approximately 20 minutes to record.

Major Script 1

Major script 1 is called, "The Basics of Self-Hypnosis," and it serves three purposes:

- relaxation
- ego-strengthening
- self-hypnosis conditioning

First, once you have the script recorded, it becomes a relaxation recording. Many people find listening to a recording helpful in teaching them how to relax better. There are several benefits to simply spending time relaxing, and these

are explained in Chapter 2. Second, the script contains suggestions for ego-strengthening, which is the technical term for suggestions aimed at improving your self-esteem, self-confidence, self-image, and self-concept. Ego-strengthening helps you feel better about yourself. Some people spend hundreds of dollars in their attempts to improve self-esteem. Listening to your recording may be just as effective. Third, the script also includes instructions for entering self-hypnosis, a technique I call "the basic induction." The more times you listen to your recording, the more these instructions will act as posthypnotic suggestions. In other words, the more you listen to it, the better your response should be when practicing self-hypnosis -- that means going into self-hypnosis deeper and faster.

Major Script 2

Major script 2 is called, "Grade Power: Unlocking the Keys," and it contains suggestions and imagery for all the important academic areas and personal growth areas. Once recorded, it becomes a generic student success recording. The topics it addresses are:

- believing in yourself
- increased passion
- increased motivation and persistence
- better balance in life
- better concentration
- improved study skills
- positive study attitudes
- proper exam preparation
- reduced exam anxiety
- overcoming writer's block
- enhanced career exploration

As the ideas in this script become deeply implanted, much of what this book covers will become easier to absorb since you will already be familiar with the topic. The content of major script 2 parallels the chapter topics in Parts II and

III of this book. This is intended to help bridge the content of the script with what you read and practice in the book. Instructions for making these recordings are found in Appendix 1.

Conventional Methods Section

This section briefly reviews the best techniques generally used to improve in the area covered by the chapter. Use these techniques for optimal performance as a student, in addition to the self-hypnosis methods described in the next section.

Self-Hypnosis Applications

Many books on self-hypnosis suggest either one or two approaches. This book offers three:

- verbal suggestions/positive affirmations
- visual imagery
- recorded script

Verbal suggestions are statements you make to yourself just before you enter self-hypnosis, once in self-hypnosis, or both. Positive affirmations are similar, except you use them in a slightly different way. Appendix 2 provides instructions in how to use verbal suggestions and positive affirmations properly. Visual imagery is the use of our imagination to visualize certain images, like we do when we daydream. Appendix 3 provides instructions for their use. Some people find that their hypnotic response is best while listening to a recording with suggestions and imagery. A script for this purpose is provided in each chapter, beginning in Chapter 4, which you can record and listen to while in self-hypnosis. Instructions for doing this are contained in Appendix 1.

Try all three approaches before you decide which you will continue to use. If you are a more visual learner, for example, you may find visual imagery is most effective. If you are more logical in your approach to life, or find greater meaning in words than in images, you may experience verbal suggestions as better. Alternatively, if you find it hard to concentrate on either verbal or visual material, the recorded script may be your best alternative. You might also find

that each is useful at various times. There is no way to predict this in advance of your own personal experimentation.

Summary

A summary is found at the end of each chapter. Only the highlights are mentioned, offering you a quick method for reviewing the chapter's focus and its personal usefulness.

What's Inside

Grade Power is broken into three sections. Part I is called Foundations of Power, which includes Chapters 1 and 2. Together, these chapters provide a thorough review of hypnosis and self-hypnosis. Part II is called Applying the Four Powers of Success, which includes Chapters 3 through 7. This section is about developing qualities that successful people in general have mastered. Part III is called Other Powerful Applications, which includes Chapters 8 through 12. This section focuses on typical academic concerns, and some less common ones as well. The following questions reflect the content of the respective chapters:

- How powerful is the mind, and can hypnosis access it? (see Chapter 1)
- What are the clinical uses of hypnosis today? (see Chapter 1)
- What is self-hypnosis, and how can it help me? What about hypnotic tests? (see Chapter 2)
- How does relaxation differ from self-hypnosis? What are its benefits? (see Chapter 2)
- What are the four powers of success? (see Chapters 3 through 7)
- How do I learn to deeply believe in myself? (see Chapter 4)
- How do I develop more passion for life and for my goals? (see Chapter 5)
- How do I become motivated, and then sustain it? (see Chapter 6)
- Why is maintaining a balanced lifestyle so important? How can I become better balanced? (see Chapter 7)
- How do I become better at concentrating, memorizing, and remembering? (see Chapter 8)

- What is the best way to study? How can I make studying easier? (see Chapter 8)
- How do I reduce or overcome exam anxiety? (see Chapter 9)
- How can I overcome writer's block, so I write instead of procrastinating? (see Chapter 10)
- How do I reduce or overcome speech anxiety? (see Chapter 11)
- How can I enhance my career exploration through self-hypnosis? (see Chapter 12)

Chapter Summary

This chapter has reviewed the many ways that this book can help you as a student. Combined, the major scripts, the conventional methods used to help students become successful, and the self-hypnosis applications help guarantee your success in school, and in life. This introduction also included a brief look at the content of each chapter. The next chapter lays the first foundation of grade power.

Part I: Foundations of Power

Chapter 1 — Hypnosis and the Power of Suggestion

Everyone uses suggestion to some extent in everyday life. When you offer a chair silently to someone, and he sits down, you have successfully induced suggestion (Ziegenfuss, 1962, p. 505)

Hypnosis is everywhere. It appears in many forms, and most people never realize it has already happened to them. Indeed, it is happening to them right now. You are no exception.

It is the influence created by other people who are significant to you in some way, and the influence created by your own experience. It occurs anytime you are really listening without being judgmental or critical, or when you are not listening, but still hearing. This latter instance creates a subliminal effect. If you were never open to suggestion, which professionals call suggestibility, you could not learn or change.

Under what conditions do you become more suggestible? Most people are aware of three such conditions: clinical hypnosis, self-hypnosis, and stage hypnosis. But there are also naturally occurring forms of hypnosis, which can be called natural hypnosis. By understanding each of these forms of hypnosis, you will develop a much clearer sense of what hypnosis is and what it isn't.

The Four Forms of Hypnosis

Natural Hypnosis

You can't escape hypnosis. You are naturally more suggestible at certain times, and knowing about this is an important lesson in the way the mind works. You are more suggestible, compared to the normal waking state, under the following 10 conditions:

- shortly before natural sleep and upon awakening from it
- when tired or relaxed
- under total concentration
- when influenced by effective persuasion
- when experiencing sleep and sensory deprivation

- during childhood and adolescence
- when experiencing emotional crisis or disturbance
- when in shock
- when under the influence of mind-altering drugs and alcohol
- under a state of hysteria

Shortly Before Natural Sleep and Upon Awakening from It

Before you go to sleep, your brainwaves slow down. When you are just about asleep, but not quite there, your mind becomes very active. If you are aroused at such times, you may be aware that you have either been dreaming or daydreaming vividly. At these moments, your mind becomes more suggestible, both to your own suggestions and to those made by others.

Shortly before awakening fully, your mind also becomes more suggestible. Have you had the experience of "getting up on the wrong side of the bed"? This is a good example of how a bad dream or negative thought early in the morning can spoil how you subsequently feel that day.

Tiredness or Relaxation

When you are tired or feel relaxed, the critical part of your mind also relaxes. Have you noticed it is easier to settle an argument when you and the other person remain calm and relaxed, as compared to tense and angry? This is because you become more suggestible to the other person's perspective.

Some tribal societies use rhythmical sounds and movements, like drumming and dancing, to induce altered consciousness, creating relaxed states of intense concentration within the participants. Our own culture adds other sounds and creates the "hypnotic experience" young people experience at a nightclub or rave. Drivers have nearly driven off roads as they become hypnotized by a strobe effect created when sunlight shines between intermittently spaced trees, or after becoming confused by the effect of snow blowing at their windshields at night.

Total Concentration

Have you ever read a novel that was so engrossing it brought tears to your eyes, or found that a happy sequence put a smile on your face? Do you

remember the last time you laughed hysterically at a movie? Words and images can have this effect on you only when you find something compelling. Only then do you become suggestible and, in turn, react emotionally.

Effective Persuasion

Have you ever felt emotionally affected, or trapped, by a persuasive salesperson? Effective salespeople have learned every trick in the book to help you succumb to their allure, and ultimately to the product they want you to buy. If you leave a sales presentation without buying and find yourself feeling like a loser for it, you have become hypnotized into believing that you need the product. Motivational speakers have the same effect -- you leave the presentation feeling pumped and ready for action.

Sleep and Sensory Deprivation

The use of sleep and sensory deprivation is an established technique in brainwashing. The truly unfortunate thing is that they work. If you were kept in some kind of bubble and prevented from experiencing anything with your senses (an example is found in the fictional movie *Altered States*), you might find that your mind not only becomes extremely imaginative, but it might also become very receptive to new ways of looking at things.

Childhood and Adolescence

It has been well established that children and adolescents are highly suggestible. Young children are impressionable, and the ideas we give them are accepted uncritically. Adolescents become suggestible to their peers and other important figures as they search for a sense of their own identity. The most powerful hypnosis is that which we call childrearing.

Emotional Crisis or Emotional Disturbance

Did you ever wonder how cults recruit their members? You think it could never happen to you. If you were suffering an emotional crisis, however, or if you experience long-standing emotional problems, you may find that there are times when you are desperate for a solution - so much so that you may choose the solution that someone else offers you, despite how insane it might seem to your friends and family. Crisis counseling is also effective in helping people to

change, for example, because people become suggestible when they urgently need answers to their problems.

When in Shock

You enter a minor state of shock when you do not have the coping resources to deal with a particular stress or event in your life. A worse state of shock occurs in times of extreme crisis, such as what happens if you are seriously injured. Children who are yelled at usually enter a state of shock, and for this reason, many of the negative messages directed at them are internalized, thereby lowering their self-esteem and damaging their self-concepts, sometimes for life.

Mind-Altering Drugs and Alcohol

There is no denying it -- alcohol impairs judgment and releases your inhibitions. Subsequently, you become more likely to take chances and act on other people's suggestions, including your own. Drugs like LSD, psilocybin, and MDMA have shown themselves to increase people's openness and suggestibility (Alderson, in press).

Hysteria

Have you ever wondered how intelligent teenagers and adults came to believe that there were witches in Salem, Massachusetts, in 1692? Why is laughing in a movie theatre often contagious? Psychologists use the term hysteria to explain this effect. Hysteria can spread when something powerful to the senses occurs to somebody and witnesses to it develop similar ways of thinking, feeling, or responding to it. For example, laughing, crying, and feeling sick can all be contagious under the right circumstances.

Stage Hypnosis

Stage hypnosis is the use of hypnosis for fun and entertainment. Are the participants on stage really under the hypnotist's "spell," and consequently forced to obey the hypnotist? Stage hypnosis has fostered several misconceptions about hypnosis because of what we think is occurring on stage. What really happens? First, the stage hypnotist asks for several volunteers to come forward. The fact that these people volunteer indicates that they want to be part of the performance. They also know that if chosen to remain on stage,

they will be expected to entertain the audience. Three types of people find their way to the stage -- those who: -

- are sincerely interested.
- want to test the hypnotist and prove that they cannot be "made" to do anything.
- go up on a dare or because they feel pressured by friends.

The only participants who have a chance of remaining on stage are the ones who are sincerely interested in experiencing hypnosis. This is because certain factors are necessary for the induction of a hypnotic state, referred to here as the "five Cs" of hypnosis. These include:

- Cooperation
- Consent
- Concentration
- Communication
- Conviction (i.e., trust in the hypnotist and in the process)

Only the sincerely interested will meet the criteria for the five Cs. The best subjects for hypnosis are intelligent, creative, imaginative, and relaxed individuals. Above all else, they are highly motivated to experience hypnosis and its benefits.

Once the stage performance begins, the participants are given several suggestions. They know what is being asked of them, and because they want to take part, they feel a desire to act out the suggestions. Be aware that there is a difference between a desire and a compulsion. No one is compelled to do anything while in hypnosis. The hilarity of what occurs on stage is a combination of increased suggestibility and performance (i.e., acting).

Clinical Hypnosis

Clinical hypnosis is the result of a relaxed state of mind and body, along with an increased state of suggestibility. Its purpose is to help people overcome problems, or make them more manageable, and to help foster personal growth and development. Like stage hypnosis, the five Cs are necessary preconditions if hypnosis is going to occur. Unlike natural hypnosis and stage hypnosis,

clinical hypnosis is almost always conducted with the client or patient relaxed throughout the treatment, and the treatment is usually provided by someone with professional credentials in the fields of psychology, psychiatry, medicine, nursing, dentistry, or clinical social work. There are many uses for clinical hypnosis, and the following lists provide just a few examples:

Psychological Uses

- anxiety disorders, including phobias
- crime detection
- educational enhancement (e.g., the focus of this book)
- habit disorders (e.g., smoking, nail biting, weight control)
- performance enhancement (e.g., sports)
- psychosomatic disorders (e.g., asthma, headaches, irritable bowel syndrome)
- self-esteem difficulties
- sexual disorders
- stress management

Dental Uses

- control teeth grinding
- excessive salivation
- needle phobia
- reduce bleeding
- substitute for local anesthetics

Medical Uses

- alleviate pain, including analgesia (i.e., absence of pain) and anesthesia (i.e., absence of sensation)
- certain types of warts
- bedwetting

- growth of breasts in females (one to two inches)
- insomnia
- relaxation for childbirth (i.e., natural childbirth)

Self-Hypnosis

Self-hypnosis is also a relaxed state of increased suggestibility, but you are the person who directs it. It is not, in any sense, a loss of control on your part. Instead, it is a means by which you can learn to have more control over your own thoughts, feelings, and actions than you currently experience. More will be said about self-hypnosis in the next chapter, which looks at self-hypnosis and relaxation in depth.

What Is Hypnosis?

After reading about the four forms of hypnosis above, you now have a good idea of what defines hypnosis. In summary, hypnosis is a state of increased suggestibility, however it is attained.

Hypnotists often refer to a conscious mind and a subconscious mind in their work. The conscious mind includes what you are aware of right now. It is your thinking mind, and because it has the capability of being analytical and critical, it can neutralize most suggestions. Unfortunately, it often negates the value of positive suggestions as well. For example, you hear a compliment about your looks or your intelligence, and you think, "She doesn't really mean it," thereby preventing your self-esteem from increasing. A friend encourages you to give up a bad habit, and you think, "Easy for him to say." In either instance, your conscious mind has negated the value of the positive suggestion.

In contrast, your subconscious mind does not have the ability to be critical. Instead, it is part of your mind that works automatically and literally. The subconscious mind affects the way you function mentally and physically. One way that it affects you physically is through your autonomic nervous system, which controls your heartbeat and breathing cycle when you are asleep. It affects you mentally by creating dreams for you, and by warehousing your deepest attitudes, values, beliefs, habits, and long-term memories. When you feel an emotion, it, too, is created in your subconscious mind. When there is a conflict between the conscious mind and the subconscious mind, the subconscious mind wins. It is more primitive, but more powerful.

Try to stop feeling jealousy or envy, for example, if your mate dumps you for a more attractive and wealthier person. Try to stop feeling shame and guilt if you do something against your values and beliefs. Try to stop the nightmares if you consciously avoid dealing with an important issue in your life. Our subconscious mind works automatically, and it lets us know where we are really at with something.

If you don't really believe you can succeed at school, you'll be shocked at how the old failure scripts continue to play as you attempt to be successful. Likewise, when your deepest belief is that you will succeed, it's amazing how you simply make yourself successful, despite the many challenges that school creates for you.

Because your conscious mind is limited by what you are thinking about now, it has a very limited capacity. The subconscious mind contains everything other than your present thoughts, and it has unlimited capacity. As an analogy, your conscious mind is like the tip of an iceberg, with most of it (i.e., your subconscious mind) beneath the surface.

Hypnosis results when your conscious mind takes a break (i.e., when it stops being critical and judgmental). Once it's on vacation, your subconscious mind automatically takes over. If what's inside is positive, your goals become easier to accomplish. Why? Because the subconscious strives to create whatever lies within it. That doesn't mean that achieving important goals then requires no effort. Instead, it means that you have two parts of you working toward the same goal, and there is no internal conflict. For example, if you believe in recycling, and you get a job providing education to young people on this subject, you will feel a deep sense of meaning and purpose in what you are doing. A job becomes easier the more you deeply believe in its purpose. Contrast that with how you would feel if you were completely against smoking, yet your job was to promote the interests of a tobacco company. That kind of predicament creates intense internal conflict.

Dispelling the Myths About Hypnosis

The most common myths regarding hypnosis have to do with giving it magical qualities, including variations of either:

- The hypnotist is all powerful, or
- Hypnosis itself is either all powerful or completely ineffective

The Hypnotist Is All Powerful

On stage and in movies, hypnotists appear to have incredible control over their subjects. To the uninformed observer, hypnotists rule, and everyone else becomes a potential victim of their amazing mind control. Remember that stage hypnosis and clinical hypnosis occur only when the five Cs are in effect (i.e., cooperation, consent, concentration, communication, and conviction).

Hypnotists are either of the stage or clinical variety, and therefore their ability and "power" over you are controlled by your desire to be hypnotized. Even then, you cannot be made to do things against your will. You do not lose consciousness when you are in hypnosis (unless you fall asleep, in which case you are no longer in hypnosis), and therefore you hear everything being said to you. The moment you hear a suggestion that is disagreeable to you, you will reject it. If the suggestion is crazy enough, you will realize that the person is a charlatan, and you will end the hypnotic state yourself. You can always end a hypnotic state, or trance, on your own, so there is never a concern about what would happen if the hypnotist left you before ending the hypnotic session. You would simply end it yourself.

Research has shown that all hypnosis is really a form of self-hypnosis. If you want hypnosis, and are ready for it, only then will the conditions be right for it to occur. Otherwise, it just doesn't happen. Having said that, natural hypnosis does present interesting examples of times when people do influence us in all kinds of ways. Rarely are these people trained as hypnotists. Our best defense is to keep our wits about ourselves when confronted by situations that make us more suggestible.

Hypnosis Itself Is Either All Powerful or Completely Ineffective

If stage hypnosis were always effective, everyone who goes up on stage would remain on stage. If clinical hypnosis were always effective, everyone treated by it would be cured of his or her problems, and no other treatment method would ever be necessary. Hypnosis is not the cure for everything. It, too, has its limitations, and there are times when it doesn't work as hoped or as expected. The "magic" of clinical hypnosis is often the result of repetitive suggestions made at the appropriate times. Change also requires effort on the part of the person who wants the change. If you want to quit smoking, you will also have to find different ways of coping with stress and many of your emotions. If you want to lose weight, suggestion alone will not substitute for a healthy diet and

exercise program. Likewise, although self-hypnosis can help you become a more successful person and a better student, you will still need to work hard and study.

Another common misconception people have about hypnosis is that it can act as a lie detector test. The belief here is that, under hypnosis, you will automatically reveal your deepest secrets. Forget it -- you can lie just as easily under hypnosis as you can at any other time. Closely related to this myth is one that many people hold: the idea that hypnosis can guarantee the accurate retrieval of long-forgotten details and memories.

Because of increased suggestibility, the mind will indeed attempt to recall things from the past if it is suggested. Due to many reasons that go beyond the scope of this book, memory cannot always be trusted, whether hypnosis has attempted to facilitate it. Psychologists know that memories are sometimes created by our subconscious minds. These so-called "memories" aren't real, although the person might believe them to be so. The technical term for these false memories is pseudomemories, and because they can be so damaging, hypnosis aimed at facilitating memory recall is not permitted in most criminal investigations today.

All the myths above have had the exaggerated power of either hypnosis itself or the hypnotist as the theme. The remaining myth is the opposite of these -- the idea that you are not suggestible, that you cannot be hypnotized, and that you will not, therefore, benefit from it. By now, you can appreciate that you have always been suggestible and that you always will be, particularly to that which can benefit you. If you need surgery, but you are allergic to chemical anesthetics, it's amazing how much hypnosis will increase your suggestibility, which, in turn, helps your mind create the necessary numbness. Your mind is more powerful than anything you can imagine. Don't underestimate it, or yourself. You can change.

Summary

Everyone has been hypnotized before. All of us have experienced times when we were, and are, more suggestible. The four forms of hypnosis include natural hypnosis, stage hypnosis, clinical hypnosis, and self-hypnosis. Hypnosis is an increased state of suggestibility, however it is attained. The conscious mind is what we are thinking about right now, and the rest is part of the subconscious

mind. Hypnosis results when our conscious mind is bypassed, thus allowing the power of the subconscious to do its work. Tapping into this power is what the rest of this book is about.

Chapter 2 — The Power of Self-Hypnosis and Relaxation

Imagine -- just imagine. Where does your mind take you when you give it the freedom to go anywhere? The possibilities are endless in the world of imagination, in the world of daydreams and fantasies. The fact is, you have already imagined more wonderful ideas and experiences than you could ever achieve. So how do you take an idea from its inception to its realization? How do you take constructive steps to change yourself, and remain in control of the process, instead of relying on life experience to transform you, which takes away much of your control?

The Buddha is credited with saying, "We are what we think," meaning that the more we think something, the more these thoughts come to define us, and the more likely we become to put these thoughts into action. Napoleon Hill in his classic book, *Think and Grow Rich*, suggested that if you want to become rich, you need to think like a rich person thinks. Then as you begin to think in that particular way, you need to begin acting like a rich person acts. Getting to know rich people and spending as much time as possible with them are two of Hill's suggestions.

Psychologist James Prochaska and his colleagues argue that people go through predictable stages when they succeed in making personal changes. They support their arguments with an impressive amount of research conducted over many years. In their book, *Changing for Good*, they outline six necessary stages: precontemplation, contemplation, preparation, action, maintenance, and termination.

The precontemplation stage occurs before you think about making a specific change; while in the contemplation stage, you begin to think that making some kind of change is desirable. At this stage, however, you are not committed to taking any steps to change, and some people remain in the contemplation stage forever. For example, if you think about going to college someday, but never do, you stay in the contemplation stage with respect to this desired change. In the preparation stage, you make thorough plans for making the change and commit yourself to a start date. The plan will include the what and how of the change you intend to make, so a desire to attend college will require achieving necessary prerequisites in high school and having adequate financial resources, amongst many other necessary plans. The action stage is where you

begin taking action toward your goal (e.g., applying for college), and the maintenance phase involves taking the necessary steps to continue succeeding at your goal (e.g., doing the homework, the study, and continuing to register for courses). The termination stage occurs when the goal has been fully realized (e.g., graduation).

What do the works of Napoleon Hill and James Prochaska have to do with self-hypnosis? Referring to Hill's work, accomplishing an important goal requires that you become more like other people who have already accomplished the goal. If you want to become rich, think and act like a rich person. If you want to become a rock star, think and act like a rock star. Self-hypnosis can help you change your values, beliefs, or attitudes so that you begin to think more like the successful person you want to become.

Now referring to Prochaska's work, we know that before you can achieve something, you first need to contemplate it. Self-hypnosis is an effective way of increasing your focus on a goal, and of intensifying its importance to you. Consequently, self-hypnosis can help you shorten the time you spend in contemplation by increasing your motivation to begin working on the goal, thereby launching you into the preparation and action phases. Self-hypnosis can also serve you well through the maintenance stage by helping you continue to keep your focus and sustain your effort. Now let's take a closer look at self-hypnosis.

Self-Hypnosis

How Does Self-Hypnosis Compare to Heterohypnosis?

As you discovered in Chapter 1, self-hypnosis is a relaxed state of increased suggestibility, which is both created and directed by yourself. It is often compared and contrasted to heterohypnosis, which is the term used when someone else hypnotizes you. Research undertaken in the 1970s revealed that both are the same altered state and both can produce the same desired results (see Fromm et al., 1981; Johnson, 1997; Stanton, 1988). Some minor differences were noted, however, in how individuals subjectively experience hypnosis when they do it themselves as compared to when it is done to them. Compared to heterohypnosis, subjects in self-hypnosis have reported the following:

- Enhanced imagery
- Fluctuating depth of trance
- Expansive attention and concentration
- Active direction
- Greater control

In self-hypnosis, imagery becomes richer and more detailed. When you direct the activity of your mind, it can become more creative than if someone else directs it, like what happens when you are nearly asleep and beginning to dream.

The depth of trance is less stable in self-hypnosis as compared to heterohypnosis, especially when you are first learning it. The important thing to learn from this is not to worry if you have trouble attaining a deep state of relaxation at first. Remember -- the subconscious mind takes over when you consciously stop trying, so if you try to make something happen intentionally, little will happen. Hypnosis occurs in the absence of effort, not because of it. Let things happen as they happen. Attention and concentration are more focused in heterohypnosis compared to self-hypnosis, meaning that it is common for you to experience times in self-hypnosis where your attention drifts to something other than your goal. In this sense, your attention becomes broader and less restrictive in self-hypnosis.

Compared to heterohypnosis, there is a sense of directing, rather than passively receiving, suggestions while in self-hypnosis. Because you actively direct where your mind takes you, there is a greater awareness of having control while in self-hypnosis.

What Does It Feel Like to Be in Self-Hypnosis?

Most people report feeling relaxed, carefree, and peaceful, while at the same time enjoying a general sense of well-being while in hypnosis (Edmonston, 1977). The sensations experienced include the kinesthetic (i.e., feelings of lightness, heaviness, warmth), the visual (i.e., lights, colors, shapes, images), and the tactile (i.e., the feeling of touch or breezes blowing across their bodies; Holloway & Donald, 1982). In other words, being in hypnosis or self-hypnosis is a very pleasurable activity! Let's begin.

How Do I Enter Self-Hypnosis?

The instructions for entering self-hypnosis are found in Appendix 7. The two sections are called Preliminary Practice and The Basic Induction Method. Begin with the preliminary practice and do the exercises there until you feel competent using each of the three components of self-hypnosis. You also need to commit these components to memory before moving on to the basic induction method.

Next, begin practicing the basic induction method. The entire procedure need not take more than 10 minutes, although most people will find 15 to 20 minutes is better for enhancing their depth of relaxation. Once you are comfortable with the basic induction, you are ready to begin using self-hypnosis for change as outlined in all the subsequent chapters.

Are There Ways I Can Test My Suggestibility?

Yes, there are. There is really no need to do this, however, because your mind will be motivated to make the changes that will help you academically.

Hypnotic depth often coincides with the minimal depth necessary to make the desired change.

Nonetheless, you might want to have some fun with the hypnotic tests outlined here. Before you start, though, be aware that hypnotic phenomena occur automatically while in a hypnotic state. Therefore, don't make the phenomena occur by forcing them, but on the other hand, don't stop the phenomena from occurring either by holding back. Some people tell themselves things like, "It won't work," "It's not happening," or "What's wrong with me?" Remember: You become more suggestible to all suggestions in self-hypnosis, so self-defeating ones will surely take effect, and will prevent the response from occurring. Instead, the verbal suggestions you give yourself should be statements like, "It's beginning to work," "I can feel it happening," or "I am beginning to respond to this." The following are some common hypnotic tests:

- Locked eyelids
- Arm rigidity
- Arm levitation

Locked Eyelids

First, enter self-hypnosis using the basic induction method in Appendix 7. After step 5, press your eyelids together tightly, and give yourself the following suggestions:

My eyelids are sealing together, glued together with Crazy Glue. They are sticking together tighter and tighter, tighter and tighter, and I can't open them. The harder I try, the tighter they stick together. My eyelids are now stuck firmly together.

Now test your response by trying to open your eyelids. Keep telling yourself, "They can't open no matter how hard I try" as you test them. After a minute or so of trying, stop testing yourself. If you couldn't open them, great! If you could open them, repeat the test until you respond correctly to it. If necessary, add in the visual image of having Crazy Glue applied to your eyelids. If you still do not respond after a few more attempts, examine the thoughts you are telling yourself. You are probably counteracting the suggestion by telling yourself a self-defeating thought, such as "This can't possibly work." In truth, it will work -- if you stay focused on it. Before moving onto the next test, remove the suggestions of locked eyelids by telling yourself, "My eyelids are returning to normal, and I can again open my eyes."

Arm Rigidity

First, enter self-hypnosis using the basic induction method in Appendix 7. After step 5, straighten out your dominant arm (i.e., the one you write with) and make it tense and rigid. As you hold this tension, give yourself the following suggestions: My arm is becoming a steel rod. It is becoming straighter and straighter and straighter. It is so rigid and hard, I cannot bend it. I cannot bend my arm. It has become steel, and the harder I try to bend it, the straighter and more rigid it becomes.

Now test your response by trying to bend your arm. Keep telling yourself, "I can't bend my arm, no matter how hard I try" as you test it. After a minute or so of trying, stop testing yourself. If necessary, add in the visual image of seeing your arm turning into a steel rod. If still unsuccessful, continue in the same manner as in the locked eyelids test. Remember to remove the suggestion at the end of your testing by telling yourself, "My arm is returning to normal, and I can again bend my arm."

Arm Levitation

First, enter self-hypnosis using the basic induction method in Appendix 7. After step 5, let your dominant arm lie by your side, unobstructed, and focus your attention on the index finger, the finger next to your thumb. As you concentrate on it, think about how it already feels different from the other fingers in your dominant hand. Now give yourself the following suggestions: My finger is becoming so light it floats into the air. Helium balloons are being tied to this finger, and the finger is lifting upwards. The finger is going up, up, up, up, etcetera. [continue saying "up" to yourself until the finger lifts].

Now that the finger is lifting, we want to generalize that response to the rest of your hand. Now give yourself the following suggestions: Now helium balloons are being tied to all the fingers and my thumb in this hand. I can feel my hand lifting, rising, lifting and rising. My hand is going up, up, up, etcetera. [continue saying "up" to yourself until the hand lifts].

Now that the hand is lifting, we want to generalize that response to the rest of your arm, until your arm is floating above your head. Now give yourself the following suggestions: Now a tremendous hurricane is blowing underneath my hand, and underneath my elbow. My hand is lifting right up above my head, right up above my head. My arm is going up, up, up, etcetera. [continue saying "up" to yourself until the arm lifts].

You will notice an interesting effect once your arm is suspended above your head. It will feel as though it is weightless, and as though it could be suspended there indefinitely without any effort. A wonderful sensation, right? Again, remove the suggestion at the end of your testing by telling yourself, "My arm is returning to normal, and it has become its normal weight once more."

How Do I Use Self-Hypnosis to Make Changes?

Self-hypnosis relies on two approaches: verbal suggestions and visual imagery. Verbal suggestions are statements you make to yourself just before you enter self-hypnosis, once in self-hypnosis, or both. Visual imagery, on the other hand, is the use of our imagination to visualize certain images, like we do when we daydream. As mentioned in the Introduction, one method may work better for you than the other method, but you will only know by trying both. The way to use these methods is explained in Appendices 5 and 6.

A third approach is included in this book, and that is the use of a hypnotic script that you record. This method is most like heterohypnosis, except that it will be recorded in your own voice. One of the main advantages of making a recording is that once you have it prepared, it requires little to no effort to listen to it, whereas the other two methods require that you take a more directive role while in self-hypnosis.

When Should I Record and Begin Using the Hypnosis Recordings?

Either now or after you finish reading this chapter is a good time to make these two recordings. Begin by first reading Appendix 1, which shows you how to make these and all subsequent recordings. Once recorded, Major Script 1, found in Appendix 8, will act as a relaxation recording and as a self-esteem booster, and it will help condition you to reach deeper stages of self-hypnosis. Major Script 2 contains suggestions and imagery for all the important academic areas and personal growth areas. Once recorded, it becomes your generic student success recording.

Listen to your recording of Major Script 1 whenever you want to relax and whenever you want to condition yourself deeper for self-hypnosis. Another good time to listen to it is when your self-esteem feels diminished, or whenever you are feeling discouraged. Major Script 2 contains suggestions and imagery for all the topics in this book, so you may want to listen to this recording frequently while you work through each chapter, and whenever you feel you need a "booster shot" of positive thinking and motivation.

Relaxation

Many busy people forget that spending time relaxing is an important part of leading a balanced life, and of managing their daily stresses. These same people often find that when they are ready to relax, they are unable to do so, either because they have never learned or never practiced it, or because they are literally too stressed to derive much benefit.

Relaxation is an important component of self-hypnosis, and in effect, neutral hypnosis, meaning hypnosis without suggestions or imagery, is the same thing as relaxation. As a student, you would do well to spend time relaxing as a daily practice. The first application of self-hypnosis in your studies, which will be described later, is simply using relaxation purposefully. There are significant documented benefits to using relaxation regularly.

What Are the Benefits of Relaxation?

The benefits of regular relaxation include positive physical, emotional, and cognitive changes. Here are a few examples:

Physical Benefits

- restorative function to the body
- improvement in health
- increased ability to cope with stress
- fewer medical symptoms
- improved sleep
- enhanced performance and efficiency
- decreased heart rate, blood pressure, respiration, and muscle tension

Emotional Benefits

- reduced worry and anxiety
- greater feelings of self-acceptance
- increased sense of purpose and satisfaction with life
- feeling of peacefulness

Cognitive Benefits

- improved memory and ability to concentrate
- reduction in self-critical, negative thoughts

In summary, relaxation not only makes you feel better, but it also actually makes you better in many areas of functioning. If you want to learn more about this topic, read Herbert Benson's book, *The Relaxation Response*. It is interesting and well researched.

What Are the Different Methods of Relaxation?

There are many different methods available today, and they all produce the same relaxation response as described by Herbert Benson. Some of these

methods include meditation, yoga, autogenic training, self-hypnosis, and progressive muscle relaxation.

Which Method Should I Use?

The two methods described in this book are self-hypnosis and progressive muscle relaxation (PMR). If you find that you have trouble getting as relaxed as you want with self-hypnosis, try PMR, which is the most popular method of relaxation taught. Recall the simultaneous muscle contraction you did earlier as part of the basic induction method for self-hypnosis. PMR is the same method; only it has you contract and relax each of your muscle groups sequentially, one by one. If you want to try this method, turn to Appendix 4 and record the complete script. Then as you listen to the recording, perform the muscle contractions and relaxations as suggested.

To summarize, whenever you want to practice relaxation, simply do one of the following:

- Use the basic induction method found in Appendix 7.
- Listen to your recording of Major Script 1 (i.e., Appendix 8).
- Listen to your recording of progressive muscle relaxation (i.e., Appendix 4).

Using Relaxation to Become a More Effective Student

There are three times when using relaxation will help you as a student:

- as a daily practice
- whenever you are under stress
- to help you transition from school to home or residence

As a daily practice, relaxation will provide you with the benefits listed earlier, including better concentration and memory and more positive thinking.

Because relaxation is effective in reducing or eliminating anxiety, it is helpful to use at times when you are under stress.

You will notice one of the most immediate benefits when you start using relaxation as a means of helping you make the transition from school to home. How many times have you felt too tired to study when you get home from school? Often this feeling of fatigue can last right up until bedtime! It also

provides a great excuse not to get down to work. When you get home from school, studying is often the last thing you want to do because you are genuinely tired, and because you have a negative attitude about what you need to accomplish, otherwise known as the "study blahs."

Fifteen to 20 minutes of relaxation can often feel like three hours of sleep when you are mentally fatigued, and it usually produces a more positive attitude as well. All you need to do is relax, using any of the relaxation methods already covered, at least 20 minutes before you intend to study, and presto -- you are on your way!

Summary

This chapter reviewed both self-hypnosis and relaxation. The two techniques of using self-hypnosis include verbal suggestions and visual imagery. Self-hypnosis with neither suggestions nor imagery is the same as relaxation. Three hypnotic tests were described if you want to have some fun with them. The basic induction method for self-hypnosis is included in Appendix 7. Major Script 1, once recorded, is ideal for teaching you self-hypnosis and relaxation, whereas Major Script 2 covers the student success areas. Progressive muscle relaxation is another relaxation technique you can use, and its script is found in Appendix 4. Relaxation has many benefits physically, emotionally, and cognitively. This chapter concluded by looking at how relaxation can help you succeed academically.

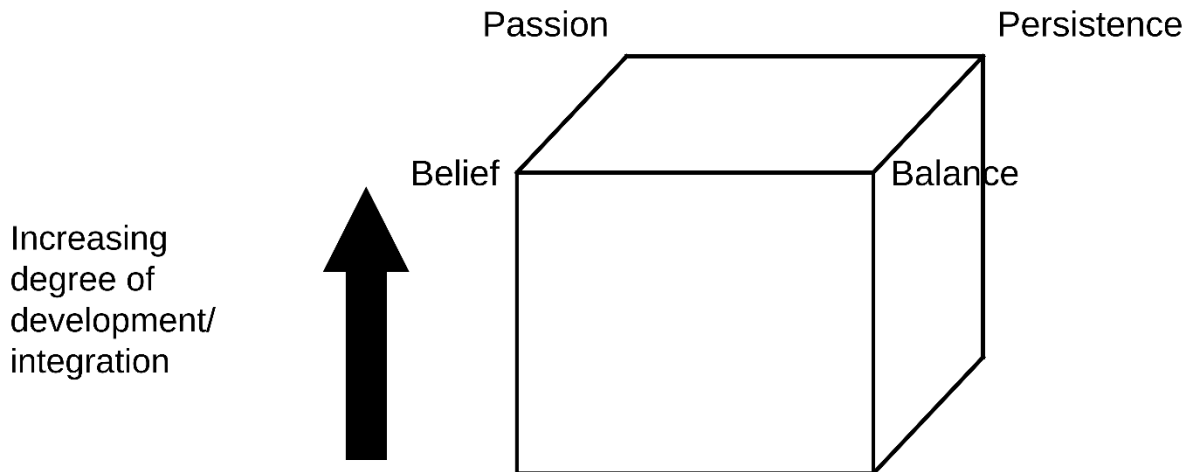
Part II: Applying the Four Powers of Success

Chapter 3 — The Success Formula

Like many people who later become psychologists, I have spent my lifetime watching and observing people. I also read a lot. By the time I had completed ten years of university, I realized I had neither learned to study efficiently nor had I learned to manage my time very well. These are the two skills that most study guides emphasize. Despite having poor skills in these areas, I succeeded at school. I began questioning this approach and came to some interesting conclusions about what underlies success. What attributes distinguish those who are successful in school, and in life, from those who are not? My answer, which is based on extensive observations and on my reading of psychology for the past 40 years, is what I call the Success Formula. The formula can be expressed in the form of an equation:

$$\text{Success} = \mathbf{B^2P^2}$$

B-squared stands for *Belief* and *Balance*, and P-squared stands for *Passion* and *Persistence*. Graphically, the success formula is represented as follows:



Along the left side of the figure is an upwards arrow that signifies that each of these attributes can be developed in our lives to an optimal level. Theoretically at least, success becomes likelier as each attribute is further developed. The

next four chapters examine how each of these affects your life and how you can either begin or continue your growth in each area.

Chapter 4 — The First Power: Belief (In Yourself)

I remember when I was working toward a master's degree in clinical psychology. I was nearing completion of the coursework and practicum, yet I still did not have a thesis topic. My thesis supervisor was also at his wits' end with me, so one day I received a letter in the mail stating that if I did not have a thesis proposal to him within six weeks, he would cease to continue as my supervisor. I sat there shocked and scared. Deep in my mind I had harbored an unhealthy belief for several years: "I cannot do a thesis. I can barely write a 20-page essay, let alone a 100-page thesis." I started having night terrors while asleep. I would sit up in bed and scream. The worst was the night I got out of bed like a sleepwalker and checked under the bed for Martians while simultaneously screaming for my partner to leave the room and save herself! Luckily, we were both saved when I finally came up with a topic.

I then worked on the thesis for the next few months and wrote up the 200 pages that it required during the summer. Soon after completing it, I sank into a deep clinical depression. I now know that a deep part of my mind was trying to prevent me from succeeding -- the part that believed I was inadequate, inferior, and lacking. Now that my beliefs about myself have changed, I no longer scream in bed. Now I sleep without the demons of my own destruction.

Few people succeed in life without having a strong belief in themselves and their capabilities. Examples abound of people who have accomplished great things despite facing incredible adversity. It is often said that successful people have faced as many failures as unsuccessful individuals. However, the successful ones keep picking themselves up again while recommitting themselves to their goals.

Those who are not successful find ways to give up on themselves. I remember a childhood friend who was raised by an overly critical father. Whatever he did was never good enough. The constant putdowns hypnotized him to believe that he was lacking in many areas. I watched my friend through the years as he tried to succeed at his goals, but every time he got close to success, something would happen to jeopardize his efforts. While returning to school several years later to upgrade high school courses, he developed back trouble and subsequently needed to drop out. This same individual was able to drive a school bus every day, however, and his back never seemed to cause him much

distress in this capacity. The last time I heard, nothing had changed for my friend, other than that his complaining about his plight is now 30 years old!

Now ask yourself -- how many times have you given up on a goal because you felt insecure, inferior, inadequate, or incapable? Don't get me wrong. We all have certain talents, just as we have relative weaknesses as well. It might be that you can't succeed at your goal. If you want to become a nuclear physicist, you will need to have high intelligence and good aptitude in math. In other words, you also need to be realistic. Answering the questionnaire found in Appendix 6 will help you assess the cause of your inability to accomplish your goal. Although this questionnaire refers to scholastic success, you could modify it to help you reflect on any goal that has not been attained.

A goal of this chapter will be to help you improve in the areas of self-esteem, self-concept, self-confidence, and self-efficacy. Self-esteem refers either to your global rating of yourself or to your judgment of some aspects of yourself. It refers to how you feel about yourself, so it usually has a valence: you either have positive self-esteem in an area you feel good about, or you have negative self-esteem in an area where you feel deficient. If you make a global rating, you either feel good about yourself in general, or you feel lacking.

Self-concept is related to self-esteem but instead refers to the various identities that define who you are. For example, you might view yourself as intelligent, attractive, and sensitive. You might also define yourself as a skater, a basketball player, a sports enthusiast, a preppie, etcetera. All of these are aspects of your self-concept. Self-esteem and self-concept are not always in sync either. You might view yourself as relatively unattractive (i.e., self-concept); however, you may feel it is something you have no control over and view yourself very favorably despite this (i.e., self-esteem).

The next concept is self-confidence, which is your current view of your capability to do something. If you believe you have good skills in dating, you have self-confidence in this area. If you are shy, you probably lack dating confidence.

The final concept is self-efficacy. This is both your anticipated view of your capability of doing something and your view of your capability while developing the skill. Before you try something for the first time, you have a view as to whether you will be successful at it or not. The first time you danced, did you think you would be capable, or were you dreading the thought of possibly

looking ridiculous because of your perception that you would fail miserably at it? Furthermore, did you stop practicing dance moves because you didn't think you could ever become capable? Lots of people don't dance because of low self-efficacy. As you come to believe in yourself more fully, you will experience:

- positive self-esteem in most areas
- an accurate self-concept
- appropriate self-confidence in skill areas you have developed
- high self-efficacy toward most new activities

Believing in yourself is crucial if you are going to succeed in school and in life. If you experience bona fide limitations, such as having lower intellectual capability or having a learning disability, school will be more of a struggle for you than for someone who is not similarly challenged. But my point is that with the right belief system, you will optimize your capabilities, and without the right belief system, it won't matter how smart or capable you are -- you won't use the many talents given to you anyway.

Conventional Methods

Whether you need to develop an accurate self-concept or of improving your self-esteem, self-confidence, self-efficacy, or some combination thereof, realize at the root is the way that you view yourself. Most often, whether you see the proverbial cup as half empty or half full is simply a matter of self-perception. Changing how you look at things can be achieved in several ways, but the most established techniques are derivatives of cognitive therapy developed by Albert Ellis, Aaron Beck, and Donald Meichenbaum. The premise of cognitive therapy is that the way we look at things determines how we feel about them. If we entertain plenty of negative thoughts, we will experience plenty of negative feelings. The converse is also true -- positive thoughts lead to positive emotions.

One of the biggest obstacles to developing a positive belief system is perfectionism. Remember the cliché, no one is perfect. Perfectionists acknowledge the truth in this statement; however, they continue to indoctrinate themselves into believing it doesn't really apply to them. Some perfectionists are disappointed when they only get 90 percent on a test! The best solution to perfectionism is to work on accepting the idea that you are

striving for competence, not perfection. Competent individuals still make mistakes, and they accept themselves whenever they do. Doing cognitive therapy on yourself is straightforward, and you can use the triple-column technique to begin your work. Here is an example:

MALADAPTIVE THOUGHT OR BELIEF	QUESTIONING IT	HEALTHIER THOUGHT OR BELIEF
"I am good for nothing. I will never do well in math."	"Why do I believe this? Just because I failed a math exam doesn't mean I am no good. In my case, it means I didn't study enough and I didn't answer enough practice questions. I need to work harder and smarter."	"I am a worthwhile person, but I need to work harder at math if I am going to do better at it."

The full instructions, along with a sample, are provided in Appendix 10.

Here are a few other ideas for improving your self-esteem, as suggested by Weiten and Lloyd (2003):

1. Be aware that you control it -- Self-esteem is something that you need to control. Although others will give you feedback about aspects of yourself, you are ultimately the one who must decide how to view yourself. It is you who maintains your self-image.
2. Develop greater self-awareness -- You will improve your self-esteem by learning more about yourself. As this is an important part of passion, this topic will be covered in depth in Chapter 4.
3. Set your own goals -- You cannot follow someone else's path in life: you must find your own way. As you begin to walk in your own shoes, you will appreciate yourself more fully.
4. Recognize when your goals are unrealistic -- If your goals are set too high, you will only experience frustration and disappointment. Be sure to take accurate stock of your capabilities and limitations before embarking on an arduous path. If necessary, get opinions from those who know you well if you are having trouble making an accurate assessment, or seek the advice of a psychologist.
5. Change negative self-talk -- Review the triple column preceding this section for help with this.
6. Emphasize the strengths you have -- One method of improving your self-esteem is to spend more time focusing on your strengths than on your weaknesses. Remember that what you feed your mind will impact how you feel about yourself, and it will impact how you feel about everything else too.
7. Treat others in a positive manner -- Weiten and Lloyd (2003) suggest that one of the best ways to feel good about yourself is to be validated by others who respect and like you. The more you show genuine liking, respect, and affection for others, the more it will be reciprocated. As self-esteem problems are common, below are some additional resources you may find useful if you want to use additional conventional methods (as suggested by the University of Texas at Austin, 1999):
 - Burns, D. D. (1999). *Ten days to self-esteem*. Quill.
 - James, M., & Jongeward, D. (1996). *Born to win: Transactional analysis with gestalt experiments*. Perseus Press.

- Johnson, K., & Ferguson, T. (1991). *Trusting ourselves: The complete guide to emotional well-being for women*. Atlantic Monthly Press.
- McKay, M., & Fanning, P. (2000). *Self-esteem: A proven program of cognitive techniques for assessing, improving and maintaining your self-esteem*. New Harbinger.
- Seligman, M. (1998). *Learned optimism: How to change your mind and your life*. Pocket Books.

Self-Hypnosis Applications

The Clenched Fist Technique

The clenched fist technique was developed by Stein (as cited in Stanton, 1988) and was intended to help people overcome a plethora of negative feelings. You can use it too for the same reasons, and here I present it as a way of improving self-esteem. Here are the steps to conditioning yourself to use the technique:

1. Hypnotize yourself using the basic induction (see Appendix 7).
2. Once you are deeply relaxed, remember a situation in the past where you experienced positive self-esteem.
3. As you recall how you felt then, clench the fist of your dominant hand and give yourself the following suggestion: "Whenever I clench this fist in the future, I will re-experience a surge in positive self-esteem."
4. Now think of another time in the past when you experienced positive self-esteem.
5. Repeat step 3.
6. Next, remember a situation in the past where you experienced diminished self-esteem.
7. As you recall how you felt then, clench your non-dominant hand into a fist and imagine the negative feelings flowing into it.
8. Now link the two parts of the procedure by first clenching your dominant fist and focusing on positive self-esteem.

9. Now clench your non-dominant fist and allow it to open, allowing the negative feelings associated with diminished self-esteem to flow away and evaporate into nothingness.
10. Whenever you are ready, exit the self-hypnotic state. Now that you have begun to condition yourself to use the technique, here is how you use it:
 - a. Whenever you feel diminished self-esteem in your daily life, stop what you are doing and clench both fists.
 - b. If you can close your eyes for a few moments, do so. If not, proceed to step 3.
 - c. Feel the surge of positive self-esteem through your dominant fist while opening your non-dominant fist, thus allowing the negative feelings to dissipate.
 - d. Now open your eyes if they were closed and carry on with your activities. You will need to strengthen the response periodically by repeating the 10 conditioning steps while in self-hypnosis. I suggest doing it daily at first until the response is firmly established.

Suggestions/Affirmations

(Note: instructions for using suggestions/affirmations are found in Appendix 2)

1. I strive to be competent, and I accept that I occasionally make mistakes.
2. I am developing an accurate picture of my strengths and weaknesses.
3. I focus on mostly positive thoughts about myself.
4. I feel my self-confidence increasing as I develop new skills and improve old ones.
5. I approach new tasks with a feeling of capability.

[Write some of your own below]:

- 6.
- 7.
- 8.

Imagery

(Note: instructions for using imagery are found in Appendix 3).

Begin by writing down circumstances, situations, or events that have already shown themselves to lower your self-esteem, self-confidence, or self-efficacy. Then imagine yourself in detail doing these things competently. For example, if you lack confidence in asking someone out on a date, repeatedly visualize yourself doing this with finesse. Also in your imagery, imagine the words you might use in making the approach. If you have been earning low grades and you have determined that the main reason is insufficient time spent studying, picture yourself studying for longer periods of time while enjoying the fact that you are learning new material. If you are afraid to try something new or if you anticipate that you will not be successful at it, visualize yourself learning the new activity in a step-by-step fashion. See each step to learning the activity in as much detail as possible while maintaining a positive enthusiastic attitude.

Script

[Caution: If you have a medical condition or physical problem that might prevent you from doing any of the exercises contained in this script, please use a pencil and cross out the part of the script that contains these exercises. If you are uncertain about whether to exclude something, ask your physician before making this self-hypnosis recording]

"Get comfortable, preferably lying down with your arms and legs uncrossed. Now contract all your muscles simultaneously and hold the tension [pause for 7 breaths]. Now relax your muscles and notice the contrast [pause for 4 breaths]. Now contract all of your muscles simultaneously again and hold the tension [pause for 7 breaths]. Now relax your muscles and notice the contrast once more [pause for 4 breaths]. "With your eyes open, stare at a spot slightly behind your normal line of vision so that you feel a mild eye strain. Do not let your gaze drift from that spot. Take in five deep abdominal breaths [pause for 2 breaths]. Inhale the fifth breath extra deep, and while holding it, count backwards mentally "5-4-3-2-1." When you get down to "1," exhale and close your eyes at the same time [pause for 2 breaths]. "Every day you find yourself becoming mentally healthier and stronger [pause for 1 breath]. You feel increasingly positive about who you are and the person you are becoming [pause for 1 breath]. You are letting go of perfectionistic tendencies and replacing these with a desire to be competent [pause for 1 breath]. This means

you forgive yourself when you make mistakes, but you also learn from them to reduce the probability of making the same mistakes again [pause for 2 breaths].

"As you develop greater competence, you also become increasingly self-confident [pause for 1 breath]. Your self-confidence steadily improves [pause for 1 breath]. You look forward to learning new skills and having new experiences [pause for 1 breath]. While you begin learning something new, you maintain a good feeling about your capability [pause for 1 breath]. Learning something new takes time and no one, especially yourself, expects you will be competent from the very beginning [pause for 1 breath]. You are a reasonable person, and you are reasonable with yourself [pause for 2 breaths]. "In every way each day, you become more of who you are, and less of who others are or who others want you to be [pause for 1 breath]. This is your life, and you need to find your own path -- a road that will take you where you want to go [pause for 2 breaths]. "When you are ready to leave self-hypnosis, first silently tell yourself that you will count to five and that at the count of five, you will come out of self-hypnosis feeling refreshed, relaxed, and confident [pause for 1 breath]. Then awaken yourself by counting to five mentally and say "AWAKE!" to yourself [pause for 3 breaths]. Then open your eyes."

Chapter Summary

This chapter has shown you how to develop belief, the first power of success. Learning to strongly believe in yourself entails developing positive self-esteem and an accurate self-concept. It also means becoming self-confident and developing respect for your ability to learn new things.

Chapter 5 — The Second Power: Passion

I used to watch the old Bob Newhart series where he played a psychologist. Although his clients were often nutty, he wasn't. Instead, Bob was the kind of person I admired: intelligent, witty, responsible, and well-adjusted. I wanted to be like him. As I entered late adolescence, my desire to become a psychologist grew stronger. I remember at age 19 I convinced myself that I needed to become a sex therapist. One could argue that raging hormones had a lot to do with my interest back then. I talked to every professor who might know how I could do this, and I enrolled in every sex course I could find. My passion intensified as I continued through graduate studies, and despite many obstacles along the way, I continued my training. I became a hypnotherapist before I became a licensed psychologist, and then I worked in a community college for many years where questions about sexuality seemed remarkably rare. Now I am a professor, and my primary research specialty is sexuality. I also do some work in private practice. Strange how my passion to become a sex therapist has finally realized itself -- nearly 30 years later.

Have you ever wanted something so bad that you would have done almost anything to get it or achieve it? If not, then you have yet to experience passion.

Passion is a deep-rooted belief and commitment toward a particular goal or ideology. It is generally accompanied with emotion, both when thinking and talking about it, but perhaps especially when it is being thwarted in some way. In some religious circles, they refer to it as your "calling." When you have passion, you feel energized as you think about and begin pursuing your target. Underlying passion is a belief that the goal or ideology has deep meaning or significance to you.

Accomplishing a goal without passion is a bit like having to clean your bedroom because your mom tells you to. You might know it is the right thing to do, but doing it feels like soulless work. All you can think about is the relief of getting finished. Terry Fox was a man who felt great passion to raise money for cancer research. He became so focused on his goal that he kept running while his body was succumbing to another bout with cancer. He never finished the run -- he collapsed before his unwilling body would take him where his mind so wanted. Terry passed away on June 28, 1981 -- one month before his 23rd birthday.

Passion is an attribute of most heroes, and it is an important attribute to underlying greatness. We admire passionate people because they remind us that there are things worth pursuing in life with vigor and dedication. How do you become passionate? Passion is intimately connected with knowing yourself and having a strong sense of your own identity. Many young people choose careers without having deep insight into what makes them tick. It should come as no surprise then that youth aged 15 -- 24 in Canada are the least likely to indicate that they are very satisfied with their work (Canadian Institute for Health Information, 1999) compared to those over 24 years of age. To develop passion, the following steps seem to be necessary:

1. You must have a clear sense of your identity, including your likes and dislikes.
2. You need to set goals based on your identity and then prioritize these.
3. The highest priority goals must be deeply meaningful to you in some way. If you are not feeling passionate about where your education is taking you, even if you are still in grade school, it is difficult to sustain the effort to keep attending and earn good grades while you do so. I suspect this is one of the biggest reasons why some students drop out of high school and fail to attain good positions in life. The dropout who goes on to greatness is by far the exception. This chapter will look at the ways you can begin getting a clearer sense of your identity. It will also look at goal setting and how to make your top goals more meaningful. As this develops, you will find more of the passion you need to become truly successful in school, and in life.

Conventional Methods

Enhancing Self-Awareness

1. Self-Examination -- Come to know yourself better. How? Through personal experiences, listing your likes and dislikes, your admirable traits and less admirable traits, and your values. Your career choice or career planning may shed some insights into it too. Which jobs do you most admire? Why? If you had no limitations on you, what career would you choose? An excellent free resource from the University of Waterloo regarding career planning can be found at <https://uwaterloo.ca/career-services>

2. Psychological Testing -- A personality test, like the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) and the Strong Interest Inventory (SII) may prove helpful. You should be able to take these tests through the counseling center at your school (note: these tests are not very useful until you are at least 16 years of age). There are two free versions of the MBTI available on the Internet that you might find helpful:
<https://www.16personalities.com> and
<https://www.humanmetrics.com/personality/type>

Purpose of Life

What gives your life meaning? What is most important to you? How do you want to make a difference? Think of the most meaningful experience you have had in your life. What made it so meaningful? List these.

Become Independent in Your Thinking

Focus on personal empowerment. This is the time to be a nonconformist -- you will never find your passion so long as you depend on or care about what others think of your choices.

Establish Goals for Yourself

If you don't know what you want, or what you're trying to accomplish, it's difficult to feel passion or motivation toward anything that you do. You must perceive that the benefits that you will derive from your goal will outweigh the costs of attaining it. Any worthwhile goal is going to take some work to accomplish.

Setting Goals

Think about a goal you have already accomplished -- one that you chose. How did you get to the finish? Chances are that it looked like the following:

1. An idea for a possible goal enters your mind (e.g., think about joining the basketball team).
2. Learn about and consider the pluses and minuses of pursuing that goal (e.g., how much time will it take for the practices and games? Can I afford it? Do I have enough skill?).
3. Decide on the goal (e.g., "Yes, I want to get on the team.").

4. Take steps to begin pursuing the goal (e.g., try out for the team).
5. Be persistent (e.g., "I didn't get on this year. After another year of practice, I'll try again).
6. Continue pursuing the goal (e.g., "Finally, I'm on the team.").
7. Stay committed (e.g., "I will not quit halfway through the ball-playing season.").

Principles of Goal Setting

Your goals must:

- Be your own personal goals -- until you establish and internalize your own goals, they will lack meaning and you will lack sufficient drive to attain them.
- Be realistic and attainable -- there is no point setting goals that are impractical. Unrealistic goals will only frustrate and disappoint you.
- Be clearly defined -- if you want to exercise more, write out exactly what it is you want to do. For example, "I will ride the exercise bike three times a week for 20 minutes on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays."
- Have a deadline for achievement -- write out your goals and establish deadlines for their achievement. This will help you minimize procrastination.

Set Priorities

No single goal is unfulfillable. Attempting to accomplish everything at once, however, is. Consequently, you need to establish your priorities. Give all your goals a rank order (i.e., your most important goal is 1, your second most important goal is 2, etcetera).

Develop a Strong Desire to Accomplish Your Goals

The one major reason a lot of people express that their goals are unfulfillable is that they don't desire them enough. The more time you spend focusing on a goal, the stronger it becomes.

Use Role Models

Look for a role model who has already achieved one or more of your important life goals. The role model can be either fictitious, like Bob Newhart's portrayal of a psychologist was for my goal, or it can be an actual person, either living or dead. Then engage in some way with your role model. For example, for a television character, watch the character in his or her television series. For a historical figure, you can read as much as you can about this person. If you have a goal to become fitter or healthier, paste up photographs of fit and healthy individuals in noticeable places. If you already know someone in your life who can act as a role model, even better. Spend time with this person and let them know that you want to achieve a similar or identical goal.

Self-Hypnosis Applications

Suggestions/Affirmations

(Note: instructions for using suggestions/affirmations are found in Appendix 2).

1. I am dedicated to learning more about my likes and dislikes.
2. I am becoming more of who I am and less of what others want me to be.
3. More of my time and energy is being devoted to finding my passions in life.
4. My career choice will (or does) reflect some of my deepest passion.
5. I pay attention to role models and mentors to learn what I can from them.

[Write some of your own below]:

- 6.
- 7.
- 8.

Imagery

(Note: instructions for using imagery are found in Appendix 3)

Gaining a Clearer Sense of Your Identity

If you were to die tomorrow, what would you want to be remembered for? After visualizing, list these qualities, traits, accomplishments, etcetera. Related to

this is imagining what a typical day would look like at work if you had complete control over it. Later write down some of the aspects that would make that a good day. Another visual image is imagining how you would spend your day if you didn't have to work -- what would you be doing instead? What is it that really excites you in life?

Setting Your Goals

If you are having trouble setting your goals and prioritizing them using conventional methods, try spending time visualizing yourself in numerous experiences to get some sense of whether you might want to establish any of these as goals. For example, let's pretend that you are thinking about bodybuilding, but you aren't sure if you would like that activity. Visualize yourself going to a gym, imagine the equipment inside, and picture yourself lifting weights. Don't forget to also imagine your body as it becomes more muscular. As you begin to imagine more possibilities, you will also develop a sense of what priority to give each goal.

Increasing Dedication and Desire for Your Goals

The best technique here is to visualize the outcome of your goals. Stay focused on seeing how different aspects of your life change as you achieve goals. If your goal is to become a more caring person, for example, picture yourself doing caring activities, and allow a feeling of nurturance and compassion to emerge as you continue to visualize. The more you imagine what it will look like when the goal is achieved, the more you set into motion the desire to make it happen. Do this often as a way of strengthening your passion and your motivation.

Script

[Caution: If you have a medical condition or physical problem that might prevent you from doing any of the exercises contained in this script, please use a pencil and cross out the part of the script that contains these exercises. If you are uncertain about whether to exclude something, ask your physician before making this self-hypnosis recording]

"Get comfortable, preferably lying down with your arms and legs uncrossed. Now contract all your muscles simultaneously and hold the tension [pause for 7 breaths]. Now relax your muscles and notice the contrast [pause for 4 breaths]. Now contract all your muscles simultaneously again and hold the tension

[pause for 7 breaths]. Now relax your muscles and notice the contrast once more [pause for 4 breaths].

"With your eyes open, stare at a spot slightly behind your normal line of vision so that you feel a mild eye strain. Do not let your gaze drift from that spot. Take in five deep abdominal breaths [pause for 2 breaths]. Inhale the fifth breath extra deep, and while holding it, count backwards mentally "5-4-3-2-1." When you get down to "1," exhale and close your eyes at the same time [pause for 2 breaths].

"You are motivated to know yourself more fully [pause for 1 breath]. You embrace the uniqueness that makes you who you are, and coming to know your likes and dislikes feels gratifying [pause for 1 breath]. Knowing that you don't need to like everything or everybody is liberating in fact [pause for 1 breath]. Becoming your own person allows you to love the things and the people that really matter [pause for 1 breath]. You know that you will make a difference in this life -- your impact will be felt [pause for 1 breath]. Underlying the difference you will make is great passion toward important life goals [pause for 1 breath]. Increasingly you find yourself becoming a passionate individual, a person who strives toward your own commitments and beliefs [pause for 2 breaths].

"Your goals are becoming ever more crystallized and more real [pause for 1 breath]. The more you focus on them, the more important they become to you [pause for 1 breath]. You deserve to succeed in school and in life [pause for 1 breath]. This is, after all, your life, and no one can achieve what is important to you other than yourself [pause for 1 breath]. You are continually coming to better terms with your priorities and acting on them accordingly [pause for 2 breaths].

"Your most important goals take on deep and personal meaning [pause for 1 breath]. They may not have meaning to other people, and that is fine [pause for 1 breath]. It is enough that your goals serve your purposes in life [pause for 1 breath]. The more you focus on any particular goal, the more it becomes realized [pause for 1 breath]. Your passion toward your important goals sustains you during the times of dedicated effort [pause for 1 breath]. Nothing important ever occurred to anyone without dedication and perspiration [pause for 1 breath]. You are up for the fight -- you are a passionate individual [pause for 2 breaths].

"When you are ready to leave self-hypnosis, first silently tell yourself that you will count to five and that at the count of five, you will come out of self-hypnosis feeling refreshed, relaxed, and confident. Then awaken yourself by counting to five mentally and say "AWAKE!" to yourself [pause for 3 breaths]. Then open your eyes."

Chapter Summary

In this chapter you learned how to develop the second power of success: passion. To develop passion, you need to have a clear understanding of your likes and dislikes. In other words, you need to know yourself. Besides this, you need to establish realistic goals and decide upon their priority for you. The final piece of developing passion is to increase the desire you have to attain your goals.

Chapter 6 — The Third Power: Persistence

At the college where I once worked, I hypnotized hundreds of students, both individually and in groups. I witnessed the benefits they derived from it repeatedly and their enjoyment of it. The thought of writing this book occurred to me many times over the past 17 years, and I even told some people about it. None of them ever thought I would do it. In truth, neither did I.

I needed to look at the many half-read books in my bookshelves and uncompleted projects on my desk and in my mind before I realized the pattern I had established. I knew that successful individuals don't start endless projects without finishing at least some of them. I remember signing a contract with one of my PhD supervisors that I would co-author an article with her upon completion of my dissertation. That was in 1996. I felt some guilt that I never fulfilled the contract.

In 2001, I finally lived up to my obligation and I wrote the article, but it wasn't published. Two years later, I worked on a different co-authored article. I sensed by this point that my PhD supervisor didn't believe I would complete it, but eventually it did get published -- and she was already retired by this point! Now you are reading *Grade Power* many years after the idea was conceived. I have learned that if you want to write a book, write it, and don't stop until it's done. The same is true of other important life goals.

How many times have you felt excited to pursue a goal, only to find that your motivation dwindled before it could be completed? How many half-done projects do you have in your life right now? Persistence is about pursuing your goal, even in the face of adversity. The result of persistence is completion of a goal or task. I generally prefer the term persistence rather than motivation because most of us see motivation as having an emotional element to it. In other words, when we are motivated to do something, we often say that we feel motivated. Relying on feelings to get something done is fraught with difficulty. How often do you actually feel like doing your homework? How often do you feel like doing anything that is difficult or time consuming? "Rarely" would be the answer, I suspect. It is easy to procrastinate on tasks that we find undesirable in some way. If you procrastinate, you may eventually get the job done, but you will end up motivating yourself through fear. Fear will deplete your energy reserves, however, and this can exhaust you if it continues for too

long. Furthermore, if you end up procrastinating on studying, you will likely end up "cramming" the night before an exam, which often has negative consequences to your grade.

In this chapter, I will show you ways to stop procrastinating and ways to develop the kind of impenetrable determination that underlies persistence. Be sure to use the conventional methods in this chapter as the discipline required for persistence is often best developed through a structured approach. Also be aware that your persistence will be greater when you already have a strong belief in your ability to succeed (i.e., Chapter 4) and when you have developed passion for your goals (i.e., Chapter 5).

Conventional Methods

Overcoming Procrastination

Procrastination happens when we avoid a task because it seems difficult, time-consuming, unpleasant, or some combination of these. The following suggestions can help you break the cycle:

Chipping the Ice

The best way to approach a difficult and time-consuming task is to break it down into smaller, more manageable steps, a practice I call chipping the ice. No one climbs Mount Everest in a day, for example -- you need to plan each aspect of the excursion carefully and then ascend it over a requisite duration of time. Now using a more academically relevant example, let's say you have a 30-page essay due in a month. This can seem especially daunting if you have poor writing skills. Let's begin breaking this assignment down into doable steps:

1. Step 1 -- Conduct a thorough search using electronic databases for articles and books on the essay topic. Also check the library catalogue for relevant books (complete in next 3 days).
2. Step 2 -- Collect relevant books and photocopy required articles (complete in next 2 days).
3. Step 3 -- Read all articles and relevant sections from the books and take notes (complete in next 7 days).

4. Step 4 -- Write out an outline for the essay (complete in 2 days). [Imagine in this example that the outline has five sections].
5. Step 5 -- Take two days to write out each section of the essay -- each section will be about 6 pages (complete in 10 days).
6. Step 6 -- Ask a friend who has good writing skills to edit my essay (complete in 3 days).
7. Step 7 -- Don't look at the essay for two days. After that I might see other changes I want to make (2 days).
8. Step 8 -- Read the entire paper and make any further edits I think will improve the essay (complete in 1 day).
9. Step 9 -- Submit the completed essay.

Using Rewards

Chipping the ice works well when a task is seen as difficult and/or time-consuming. If you also see the task as unpleasant, yet necessary, then you need to rely on the use of rewards. A reward is simply treating yourself to something you find pleasurable for getting a certain task accomplished. In the example above, if you foresaw doing this essay as a necessary "evil," you will want to use rewards. Reward yourself after completing step 1, for instance, and again after completing step 2. A reward should be readily available to you, and probably something that you do on a periodic basis anyway. You might be thinking, "Well, if I do it anyway, how is that rewarding?" The important point is not to give yourself the reward until after you complete the task. If the task does not get completed as planned, the reward is withheld until completion occurs. Include the duration that you will enjoy the reward as well. Here are some good examples of rewards:

1. Taking a walk (1 hour).
2. Telephoning or online chatting with a friend (15 minutes).
3. Relaxing on the couch (20 minutes).
4. Watching my favorite television program (30 minutes).
5. Listening to music (20 minutes).
6. Partaking in an engaging hobby (45 minutes).

7. Enjoying a tanning session (15 minutes).
8. Cycling around a city park (40 minutes).
9. Cooking a gourmet meal (2 hours).
10. A hot cup of tea or coffee (10 minutes).

There are two systems by which to reward yourself: time-based rewards and task-based rewards. Using a time-based reward system, you give yourself a break and a reward after a specified amount of time working on the task at hand. Using a task-based reward system, you don't take a break or give yourself a reward until a segment of a task, or the entire task, is first completed.

Getting Organized for the Semester

You need to get organized if you are going to become persistent in working on your goals. The following sheets will be helpful:

Semester Timetable Sheet

Begin your organization of the term or semester by using the Semester Timetable Sheet found on the next page. It is set up for 16 weeks of classes and exams -- if your term is more than four months' duration, use a second sheet and attach it. Here is how you use it:

1. Write out the dates for the weeks of the term in the first column (e.g., first entry might be "Sep. 13 -- 17," then "Sep. 20 -- 24" below this, and so forth).
2. Then write in the Monday through Friday columns when your exams and quizzes are to occur and write in when your assignments and papers are due. Also include what percentage of your final grade each is worth. For example, let's say you have a midterm for biology on October 20 worth 25 percent toward your final grade. Write in the appropriate column and row, "BIOLOGY 201 midterm, 25%."
3. Keep the Semester Timetable Sheet in front of your binder so that you can review it periodically and use it for planning purposes.

Time Commitments Sheet

This sheet will help you determine how many hours you will likely need to study for a post-secondary education if you want to earn top grades. It is based on the commonly held belief that a student of average ability should spend two hours outside of class in study and course preparation for every hour of class time. As not everyone is of average ability, the Scholastic Ability Multiplier at the top of the sheet will help you determine what is right for you. For example, if you have superior ability or intellect, you can reduce the number of study and preparation hours to one hour for every hour of class time. Alternatively, if you have below-average scholastic ability or if you have a learning disability, you will need to increase the number of academic hours.

At the bottom of the sheet is the recommended maximum number of hours you should be employed, if you need to work in addition to attending school.

Following these guidelines will help you prevent overload. If you are working too many hours at school and in a job, you run the risk of burnout, which means you are exhausted and rendered less effective in your efforts to succeed (see the next chapter about keeping balance in your life).

Getting Organized Weekly

Two methods are suggested in this section that will help you get down to work and persist. Although the methods are similar, you might prefer one more than the other.

Method 1: Typical

Weekly Timetable Sheet

Most study guides suggest that you complete a Weekly Timetable Sheet as well. An example is provided in this chapter. Here is how you use it:

1. Begin by blocking in all the "fixed" times in your schedule -- your classes, your work schedule (if it is consistent each week), your lab times, meals, fitness schedule, etcetera -- in ink.

2. Next, using a pencil, block in your planned study times, remembering to base this on your calculations from the Time Commitments Sheet.
3. Where you have planned to do academic work for more than 30 minutes, remember to take breaks periodically. Establish rewards for getting a certain amount of work done if you find the task difficult, time-consuming, and/or unpleasant.

The Academic Do List

Now that you have created your Weekly Timetable Sheet, you are ready to make entries into the Academic Do List. Here is how you use it:

1. If in the Weekly Timetable Sheet, you wrote that you are going to do academic work for three hours on Monday, and it is Monday, begin the day by writing down precisely what you intend to do during those three hours. Be as specific as possible. For example, it could look like the following: (1) Work on math problems (time allotted: 1 hour); (2) Research essay topic in the library (time allotted: 1.5 hours); and (3) Study chapter 6 in biology textbook (time allotted: 30 minutes).
2. Once you complete the specific task, place a checkmark in the "Done" column.
3. If you didn't complete the specific task, write the reason why you didn't in the "Not Done (Reason)" column. This helps you stay accountable to yourself.

Method 2: Dr. Alderson's Modification

Some students prefer a somewhat less structured method for organizing their weeks, and I created my own method that you might like using yourself.

The Weekly Scheduler and Priority List

Complete one of these forms at the beginning of each week. Here is how you use it:

1. Write out your goals and priorities for the week in the second column.
2. If there is a completion date, write that in the third column.

3. Estimate the total amount of time it will take you to complete the goal.
4. If the goal takes more than a week to finish, calculate the number of hours you will need to work on it each week to complete it.
5. Now prioritize your goals in the first column.
6. Lastly, sketch in the last seven columns, representing the days in the coming week, which day(s) you will work on your various goals. A completed sample of the Weekly Scheduler and Priority List is included in the pages that follow so that you can see exactly how the system looks. The primary purpose of this sheet is to keep you focused each week on your goals, and then it goes a step further by committing you to when you will actually work on them.

Today's Do List

Complete one of these forms at the beginning of each day, or the night before. Here is how you use it:

1. Begin by taking items from the Weekly Scheduler and Priority List for that day and writing them in the third column of Today's Do List, along with the time you specified you would work on them in the fourth column.
 2. Write additional items in the third column that you want to accomplish and the time you wish to devote to them in the fourth column.
 3. Prioritize the items in the second column.
 4. Place a check mark in the first column once you complete the specified task.
- In addition to these steps, there is space near the top to include a reward for your priority 1 and 2. Sometimes our highest priorities are something we find difficult, time-consuming, or unpleasant, and if any of these apply, include a reward that you will give yourself after completing the task. On Today's Do List, there is a statement included near the top that says, "Remember: Action Precedes Motivation." This is a reminder to you that interest grows for most of us because of becoming proficient at a task. Therefore, motivation generally grows after we become good at something. Lastly, on the bottom of the sheet is space for creating a schedule that day if you desire. Sometimes that is helpful if you have a long list of tasks to complete that day. See the sample Today's Do List in the pages that follow so you can see exactly how this works.

Semester Timetable

Set up for 16 weeks. Write the dates for each week in the first column, then enter exams, quizzes, and due dates (with the percentage each is worth) in the appropriate day columns.

WEEK OF	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					
8					
9					
10					
11					
12					
13					
14					
15					
16					

Time Commitments Sheet

Scholastic Ability Multiplier	
Superior or Gifted	× 1
Above Average	× 1.5
Average	× 2
Below Average	× 3

Hours of Lecture Time/Wk. × Scholastic Ability Multiplier = Hours of Lecture Study

1. _____ × 2. _____ = 3. _____

Hours of Lab + Tutorial + Seminar Time/Wk. × 1 = Hours of Extra Study

4. _____ × 1 = 5. _____

6. Total Hours of Class Time/wk. (1 + 4) = _____

7. Total Hours of Academic Work Time/wk. (3 + 5) = _____

8. Total Hours Committed to School/wk. (6 + 7) = _____

9. Total Hours of Employment/wk. = _____

Recommended Maximum Total Hours of Employment

(when compared to total hours committed to school)

Total Hours Committed to School/wk.	Total Hours of Employment/wk.
41 - 45 hours	10 hours maximum
36 - 40 hours	15 hours maximum
31 - 35 hours	20 hours maximum
26 - 30 hours	25 hours maximum
21 - 25 hours	30 hours maximum
16 - 20 hours	35 hours maximum
11 - 15 hours	40 hours maximum

Total Hours Committed to School/wk.	Total Hours of Employment/wk.
10 or fewer hours	45 hours maximum

Weekly Timetable

Block in your fixed commitments (classes, work, meals) in ink, then pencil in your planned study times based on the Time Commitments Sheet.

TIME	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
6:30 am							
7:00 am							
7:30 am							
8:00 am							
8:30 am							
9:00 am							
9:30 am							
10:00 am							
10:30 am							
11:00 am							
11:30 am							
12:00 pm							
1:00 pm							
1:30 pm							

TIME	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
2:00 pm							
2:30 pm							
3:00 pm							
3:30 pm							
4:00 pm							
4:30 pm							
5:00 pm							
5:30 pm							
6:00 pm							
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7:30 pm							
8:00 pm							
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9:00 pm							
9:30 pm							
10:00 pm							
10:30 pm							
11:00 pm							
11:30 pm							

TIME	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
12:00 am							
12:30 am							

The Academic Do List

Each morning, write the specific tasks you intend to complete, and the time allotted for each. Check off completed tasks; note the reason for any not done.

DAY	TASKS	TIME ALLOTTED	DONE	NOT DONE (REASON)
MONDAY				
TUESDAY				
WEDNESDAY				
THURSDAY				
FRIDAY				
SATURDAY				
SUNDAY				

Weekly Scheduler and Priority List

Week Of: _____

List your goals for the week, prioritize them, note completion dates and time required, then sketch in which days you will work on each.

PR. #	PRIORITIES AND GOALS	COMPLETION DUE	TIME REQ'D / WK.	M	T	W	T	F	S	S

Weekly Scheduler and Priority List — Sample

Week Of: September 13

PR. #	PRIORITIES AND GOALS	COMPLETION DUE	TIME REQ'D / WK.	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
#2	1. Study for math test.	Sep. 20	6 hrs	1	1	0	1	1	1	1
#1	2. Biology assignment.	Sep. 16	5 hrs	3	3	2	1	4	4	0
#4	3. Aerobics workout.	Ongoing	N/A	0	0	1	1	1	1	1
#3	4. Psychology essay.	Oct. 8	40 hrs	0	0	1	1	4	4	0
#5	5. Piano practice.	Ongoing	N/A	1	0	1	0	1	1	0

Today's Do List

Date: _____ Remember: "Action Precedes Motivation!"

Reward for Priority #1: _____ Reward for Priority #2: _____

DONE	PRIORITY NUMBER	ACCOMPLISH TODAY	TIME REQUIRED

Today's Do List — Example

Date: Monday, September 13 Remember: "Action Precedes Motivation!"

Reward for Priority #1: 20 minutes of jogging Reward for Priority #2: none

DONE	PRIORITY NUMBER	ACCOMPLISH TODAY	TIME REQUIRED
	#2	1. Study for math test.	1 hour
	#1	2. Biology assignment.	2 hours
	#3	3. Aerobics workout.	1 hour
	#6	4. See my friend, Steve.	1 hour

DONE	PRIORITY NUMBER	ACCOMPLISH TODAY	TIME REQUIRED
	#4	5. Go to the bank.	30 min.
	#5	6. Housecleaning.	30 min.

Schedule for Today (Optional)

7:00 – 8:00 am	Get up	3:00 – 4:00 pm	Social Studies class
8:00 – 9:00 am	Get to school	4:00 – 5:00 pm	Aerobics class
9:00 – 10:00 am	Biology class	5:00 – 6:00 pm	Go home, eat dinner
10:00 – 11:00 am	English class	6:00 – 7:00 pm	Biology assignment
11:00 – 12:00 pm	Physical Education	7:00 – 8:00 pm	Biology assignment
12:00 – 1:00 pm	Lunch	8:00 – 9:00 pm	Study math
1:00 – 2:00 pm	Chemistry class	9:00 – 10:00 pm	Clean room, relax
2:00 – 3:00 pm	Go to the bank	10:00 – 11:00 pm	Go to bed

No time to see Steve today. Will see him tomorrow.

Self-Hypnosis Applications

Suggestions/Affirmations

(Note: instructions for using suggestions/affirmations are found in Appendix 2)

1. My motivation will increase toward something as I become competent at it.

2. I am becoming increasingly motivated toward important life goals.
3. I am developing a clearer sense of my priorities in life.
4. I persist at important goals even when I don't feel motivated.
5. I work on assignments and goals early by breaking them down into manageable steps. You might also want to personalize the suggestions/affirmations, as in the following examples:
6. I am becoming motivated to (fill in the blank) _____.
7. I am becoming strongly driven to _____.
8. I can feel my determination to _____ growing stronger and stronger.
9. I am ready to work on _____.
10. There is no better time than NOW!

[Write some of your own below]:

- 11.
- 12.
- 13.

Imagery

(Note: instructions for using imagery are found in Appendix 3) Imagine as clearly as you can the outcome of your goal. For example, to develop an overall motivation toward your career goal, imagine yourself doing the career for which you are preparing. See yourself as a happy, content person, and enjoying most aspects of your employment. Imagine the various aspects of your work in detail. To get an assignment finished (or started), imagine that you are enjoying working on the project, and the relief you will experience once it is finished. You might also imagine the various steps that will be required to get your project underway, and in this way, you also build yourself an outline for the assignment.

Script

[Caution: If you have a medical condition or physical problem that might prevent you from doing any of the exercises contained in this script, please use a pencil and cross out the part of the script that contains these exercises. If you are uncertain about whether to exclude something, ask your physician before making this self-hypnosis recording]

"Get comfortable, preferably lying down with your arms and legs uncrossed. Now contract all your muscles simultaneously and hold the tension [pause for 7 breaths]. Now relax your muscles and notice the contrast [pause for 4 breaths]. Now contract all your muscles simultaneously again and hold the tension [pause for 7 breaths]. Now relax your muscles and notice the contrast once more [pause for 4 breaths].

"With your eyes open, stare at a spot slightly behind your normal line of vision so that you feel a mild eye strain. Do not let your gaze drift from that spot. Take in five deep abdominal breaths [pause for 2 breaths]. Inhale the fifth breath extra deep, and while holding it, count backwards mentally "5-4-3-2-1." When you get down to "1," exhale and close your eyes at the same time [pause for 2 breaths].

"You are becoming increasingly motivated toward important life goals [pause for one breath]. As you focus your energies on your goals, you develop increased competence in what you are doing, and this in turn increases your motivation as well [pause for one breath]. Regardless of how you feel, however, you persist in working toward the things that matter most to you [pause for one breath]. You prefer to get down to work early on projects, and it makes you feel good about yourself to do so [pause for 2 breaths].

"You are developing a clearer sense of your priorities in life and at school [pause for one breath]. Consequently, you work on assignments and goals early [pause for one breath]. When you perceive that an assignment or goal is going to be difficult, time-consuming, or unpleasant, you break it down into manageable steps, and you reward yourself for getting each step accomplished [pause for 2 breaths].

"There is no better time than now to succeed in life and at school [pause for one breath]. This means you are persistent in your efforts, even when adversity tries to hold you back [pause for one breath]. Setbacks may slow you down

from time to time, but you are like a bulldozer when it comes to getting the job done [pause for one breath]. You have the stamina to keep pushing forwards toward achieving the goals you have set for yourself [pause for one breath]. You are ready to get down to work [pause for one breath]. Your determination is impenetrable [pause for one breath]. Like an ever-ready battery, you keep going [pause for one breath] and going [pause for one breath] and going [pause for 2 breaths].

"When you are ready to leave self-hypnosis, first silently tell yourself that you will count to five and that at the count of five, you will come out of self-hypnosis feeling refreshed, relaxed, and confident. Then awaken yourself by counting to five mentally and say "AWAKE!" to yourself [pause for 3 breaths]. Then open your eyes."

Chapter Summary

This chapter has shown you how to persist in the goals that matter to you. By following the techniques outlined in the conventional methods section, you will also avoid procrastination and become well organized for school. The self-hypnosis applications will also assist you in building the kind of impenetrable determination that characterizes highly successful individuals.

Chapter 7 — The Fourth Power: Balance

"All things in moderation, nothing in excess." Greek proverb When my two children were both young, I remember a year when I worked myself to the bone. I was a full-time employee at a community college, I saw up to ten clients a week for hypnotherapy, I worked in a residential treatment program Fridays from 4 pm until Sundays at 4 pm one out of every three weekends, and when I wasn't working, I was so exhausted I drank whisky and beer. My stomach grew as my spirits sank so that by May, I was so depressed I thought I was going to die. I could hardly function anymore, and I had lost all desire to do anything but pout. It took me the next four months to get back on my feet again, along with a psychiatrist who told me that I might do better if I looked after myself.

I've never forgotten those words. Have you ever tried to accomplish too much at the same time? Do you remember how you felt as you struggled to keep your head above water, yet the tides of pressure kept trying to drag you back down? To be successful in life, you must remember that balance is necessary. You only have limited time and energy, and how you spend it is crucially important. If all your time and energy is devoted to school and/or work, the rest of your life suffers. If all your time and energy is devoted to playing, school and/or work suffer. Balance means that you invest enough time in the various domains of life. Optimal health requires balance in the following areas:

- Educational/academic and/or work and career (i.e., the work side of life)
- Leisure and recreation (i.e., enjoying free time)
- Social (i.e., spending time with others, and having significant relationships with them)
- Physical (i.e., exercise, sleep, diet, rest, and relaxation)
- Spiritual (i.e., finding purpose and meaning in life) If your life remains out of balance for an extended duration, you will likely experience varying degrees of burnout, meaning that you feel exhausted and perhaps even immobilized across potentially all domains of life. A completely burnt-out student, for example, feels too tired to take part in most activities, including studying, concentrating, thinking, and writing.

As a psychologist, I have seen far too many students who have become so burnt out that they needed to withdraw from one or more classes. In severe cases, they have needed to withdraw from the entire semester. You can become burnt out when the load you are carrying is either uneven (i.e., breadth), meaning that one or more areas of your life have been ignored over a significant period, or when the load is overwhelming (i.e., depth) in one or more areas. A problem of breadth would eventually occur if you ignored or avoided one or more of the life domains.

For example, if you focused your time and energies on the first four domains listed above, but ignored or avoided the spiritual domain, you could easily become self-centered and passionless. If you neglected the physical domain, your physical health would deteriorate. Problems of depth would eventually occur if too much of your time and energy were devoted to one life domain. Sometimes this is unavoidable. If you became (or are) a chronic pain sufferer, too much of your energy would become absorbed in managing pain. When the pain is intense, it becomes difficult to exercise, socialize, or sleep.

If you are a single parent of young children without good social support, you may find the work of childrearing overwhelming. If you could never get a break from your children, it could become difficult to focus on other life domains.

It is also important to find the path of moderation, especially in the physical domain. Students in colleges and universities are well known for alcohol and drug use and occasionally abuse as well. This is a difficult area for most of us to assess on our own because if our friends are heavy substance users, we may not think anything of it when we do the same. It is beyond the scope of this book to review substance abuse and its management. If you suspect you may be developing a problem in this area, please seek out counseling services at your school.

Moderation must also be found in the other components comprising the physical domain. This means avoiding under- and overindulgence in eating, sleeping, and exercising. Too little or too much of any of these is unhealthy. In this chapter, I will review some ways to help you stay in balance most of the time. This is not always possible in the short run because despite our efforts to stay balanced, unforeseen circumstances occur. If someone in your immediate family became gravely ill, for example, your attention would be temporarily

drawn away from maintaining your personal balance. The important thing is to regain balance as soon as it once again becomes possible.

Conventional Methods

Assessing Where You Are and Where You Want to Be

Complete the questionnaire below periodically to assess and reassess where you are in your attempts to balance your life. If you need or want to make a change within any of the five domains to attain better balance, either place a checkmark in the + column if you want to do more of something in that domain or place a checkmark in the -- column if you want to do less of something in that domain. In the last column, write out specifically what you intend to do differently.

For example, if you need to get more exercise, write down exactly what you intend to do (e.g., Ride exercise bike for 20 minutes, three times a week, or Lift weights for 60 minutes, four times a week). Domain + - What Will You Do Differently? Be Precise. 1 School/Work 2 Leisure/Recreation 3 Social 4 Physical 5 Spiritual

Sticking to It

Once you have decided what you need to do differently, you need ways to help you stick to your plans. Our lifestyle tends to be very habitual, so we keep doing things the way we always did them. To break the cycle, write down your plans on the forms contained in Chapter 6 (i.e., the forms designed to help you organize your time -- either on the Weekly Timetable Sheet or on the Weekly Scheduler and Priority List). If you anticipate that getting down to doing it will be a struggle for you, be sure you build in rewards for successful achievement (chapter 6 also explains how to use rewards).

Commit to a Friend, or Join Them

It is often easier to stick to a goal if we commit ourselves to doing it to someone else. Part of the reason why this helps is that it offers us social support, and part of the reason is accountability. Once we commit to another person, we feel we need to live up to our spoken or written words.

Even more helpful is if you can find someone who also wants to work on the same goal as you. If you want to work out regularly, for example, having a workout partner is very helpful. If you can't find someone else to do the activity

with, consider joining a group that participates in the activity. For example, if you want to lose weight, there are many weight loss programs (e.g., Weight Watchers) that can help you achieve your goal. If you want to get fit, most commercial gyms have aerobics classes available.

Self-Hypnosis Applications

Suggestions/Affirmations

(Note: instructions for using suggestions/affirmations are found in Appendix 2)

1. I am striving to find a healthy balance in my life.
2. Like brushing my teeth, exercise, nutritious eating, and adequate rest and sleep are also part of my daily rituals.
3. When I have too many competing interests, I prioritize and let go of the lesser goals, at least temporarily.
4. When I need to, I am okay with saying "no" to people's demands, including my own.
5. I strive to create moderation with all things that can affect my health.

[Write some of your own below]:

- 6.
- 7.
- 8.

Imagery

(Note: instructions for using imagery are found in Appendix 3)

Visualizations for the Deficient Dimension

If you have decided that you need to do more of something to have better balance in your life, spend time visualizing yourself doing more of the activities that will help you attain balance. If you think you should go out dancing more with your friends, picture yourself going out with them and dancing to your heart's content. Also imagine how much fun you would be having.

During times in your life when you cannot balance your life because of circumstances beyond your control, you can also use this type of imagery to help offset the lack of balance. If you need a holiday, imagining yourself on a beach in detail can imitate the actual experience to some extent. If you had to stop working out because of an injury, continuing to imagine your workout will help keep the mental discipline needed so that you can more readily return to working out once you recover.

Visualizations for the Excessive Dimension

If you have decided that you need to do less of something to have better balance in your life, imagine ways you can reduce the amount of time spent on the activity or the intensity of involvement in the activity. For example, let's say you have decided to drink less when you go out with friends. Imagine ways you can reduce the amount you drink. Here are some possible images:

- Having a glass or two of water after each alcoholic beverage.
- Deciding to be the designated driver every second time you go out with friends.
- Asking your friends to cut you off after five drinks.
- Switching to a lower alcohol content drink (e.g., light beer instead of regular beer). Also imagine how much better you will feel the next day.

If your goal is to eat less calorie-rich foods and thereby lose weight, picture yourself eating healthy foods and enjoying them. Also visualize yourself as a slimmer person -- how will you look once you have lost the excess weight? Another helpful image is to see yourself getting appropriate exercise.

Script

[Caution: If you have a medical condition or physical problem that might prevent you from doing any of the exercises contained in this script, please use a pencil and cross out the part of the script that contains these exercises. If you are uncertain about whether to exclude something, ask your physician before making this self-hypnosis recording]

"Get comfortable, preferably lying down with your arms and legs uncrossed. Now contract all your muscles simultaneously and hold the tension [pause for 7 breaths]. Now relax your muscles and notice the contrast [pause for 4 breaths].

Now contract all your muscles simultaneously again and hold the tension [pause for 7 breaths]. Now relax your muscles and notice the contrast once more [pause for 4 breaths].

"With your eyes open, stare at a spot slightly behind your normal line of vision so that you feel a mild eye strain. Do not let your gaze drift from that spot. Take in five deep abdominal breaths [pause for 2 breaths]. Inhale the fifth breath extra deep, and while holding it, count backwards mentally "5-4-3-2-1." When you get down to "1," exhale and close your eyes at the same time [pause for 2 breaths].

"You are striving to find a healthy balance in your life. You are committed to spending time focused on the five domains of life: school and/or work, leisure and recreation, social, physical, and spiritual. You know that school is demanding, and when you are working hard, you know that you also need to take care of your physical needs. No wonder you feel a strong desire to get adequate exercise, sufficient sleep, proper diet, and enough rest and relaxation [pause for 2 breaths].

"When faced with too many commitments or obligations, you prioritize these and let go or suspend temporarily the ones of lesser importance [pause for 1 breath]. You know that you cannot do everything at once, and you are forgiving yourself when you need to put some things off for a time [pause for 1 breath]. When the load is too great, you are okay with saying "no" to people's demands [pause for 2 breaths].

"You strive to create moderation with all things that affect your health [pause for 1 breath]. You are aware of what you are doing that is good for you, and you are aware of what you are doing that is not [pause for 1 breath]. Because you love yourself deeply, you take the necessary steps to let go or at least minimize unhealthy activities [pause for 1 breath]. This is your body, and you are committed to looking after it [pause for 2 breaths].

"When you are ready to leave self-hypnosis, first silently tell yourself that you will count to five and that at the count of five, you will come out of self-hypnosis feeling refreshed, relaxed, and confident. Then awaken yourself by counting to five mentally and say "AWAKE!" to yourself [pause for 3 breaths]. Then open your eyes."

Chapter Summary

This chapter reviewed the fourth power of success: balance. You can become burnt out when the load you are carrying is either uneven (i.e., breadth) or when the load is overwhelming (i.e., depth) in one or more areas. Optimal health requires balance, and this can be attained when the issues of depth and breadth across the five domains of life are addressed. You also need to find the path of moderation in those activities that can affect your physical health.

This chapter ends Part II of this book. In Part III, applications to specific academic challenges are presented, including (1) learning and studying, (2) exam anxiety, (3) writer's block, (4) speech anxiety, and (5) career exploration.

Part III: Other Powerful Applications

Chapter 8 — Turning the Inner Keys to Learning and Studying

Leslie has found it difficult to retain what she is trying to learn. When she is about to study, she gets herself ready by turning on the radio to the dance music station before she lays out her books on her bed. While reading, she chews gum and bops her head to the music. Her concentration is unfocused while her reading is periodically interrupted by thoughts about the music and thoughts about her boyfriend. Nonetheless, she assumes that she knows the material quite well after reading it over three times.

The next day Leslie writes her midterm in social studies. She is shocked that she cannot remember three quarters of the answers to the questions. She feels devastated when her exam is returned to her with a mark of 39 percent. Obviously, self-hypnosis is not a panacea for everything. The most effective students, regardless of whether they use self-hypnosis as an adjunct to their success, need to do two things:

1. Dedicate sufficient time to school.
2. Use effective study techniques.

Determining how much time you need to study and getting motivated to do so were covered in Chapter 6. Please review that chapter if needed. This chapter will look at tips you can use to improve your concentration, your memory, and your study skills.

Conventional Methods

Improving Your Concentration

Creating a Learning Environment

You need to create an environment that is conducive to learning. This means eliminating unnecessary distractions. As we associate bed with sleep, studying in bed is not recommended. Instead, pick a desk, preferably in a quiet non-distracting location in the house, or pick a table as your second-best option. If you want music in the background, play baroque music -- it has been shown to enhance concentration (Bancroft, 1976). Baroque music is a definable type of

classical music written between roughly 1600 and 1750 ("Welcome to the wonderful world," n.d.). It is both lively and soothing at the same time. Some of the famous composers of the baroque period include Antonio Vivaldi, George Frideric Handel, and Johann Sebastian Bach.

Shaping Your Skill at Concentrating

When you sit down to read or study, work on your materials until you begin to find your concentration drifting. The moment this occurs, stop working and write down how long it took before your concentration diminished. Let's say you lasted ten minutes. Take a short break and then return to your study but attempt to increase the amount of time you concentrate on during the next sitting before your attention drifts. If needed, add rewards for increasing your study time (see Chapter 6 for a discussion about using rewards). Incrementally, then, you increase your concentration time in this way until you can stay focused for up to 45 minutes or so. Few people can continue concentrating without a break beyond the 45-minute mark.

Improving Your Memory

The least efficient means of learning something is rote memory, which is trying to remember something by sheer repetition. For example, if you are trying to remember someone's name and you simply repeat it to yourself 100 times, you are using rote memory. It may shock you when you see that person two weeks later, and alas, you have forgotten her name already!

The key to improving memory is to process information to a deeper level (Craik & Lockhart, 1972). If instead of using rote memory you processed her name at a deeper level, your ability to remember her name would be enhanced. For example, if her name was Jane and if she had long hair, you might associate her name with Jane from the Tarzan novel.

The mere fact of making this association greatly increases the likelihood you will remember her name. When you see her next time, you now have a number of ways by which to access her name from your memory, including recalling it through (a) rote memory (you likely repeated her name to yourself a number of times), (b) the name Jane because of its association with Tarzan, (c) the name Tarzan first and then remembering its association with Jane, (d) association between her long hair and the name Jane, or (e) some combination of these memory cues.

There are several methods to help you process information more deeply, the most common of which are called mnemonic devices. Mnemonic devices are various methods of organizing material so that the material becomes easier to recall later (Oracle Education Foundation, n.d.). There are several mnemonic devices that have been developed, and the following are the most typical:

- Acronyms and acrostics
- Rhymes
- Chunking
- Imagery
- The method of loci

Acronyms and Acrostics

Acronyms result when we combine letters where each letter acts as a cue to something we wish to remember. For example, a common acronym used for remembering the correct order of the colors of the rainbow (e.g., red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, and violet) is the name, ROY G. BIV. An acrostic is when we create a phrase or sentence based on the first or last letter of each word of a list that we wish to remember. To remember the correct order of the planets around our solar system (e.g., Mercury, Venus, Earth, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, Neptune, and Pluto), a common acrostic is "My Very Earnest Mother Just Served Us Nine Pickles" (or substitute the word "pizzas" for "pickles").

Rhymes

Using rhymes to help you remember entails creating sayings that have similar sounds at the end of each line. For example, "In fourteen hundred and ninety-two, Columbus sailed the ocean blue," or "'i' before 'e' except after 'c.'"

Chunking

Chunking involves putting information into categories, or chunks, which help you to remember. For example, if you had to remember a list of unrelated letters, such as TWANBACBSCPRCIA, this would be a difficult task at first glance. By chunking the letters together as follows, TWA NBA CBS CPR CIA, it

would become much easier as each of these chunks represents well-known abbreviations.

Imagery

Imagery can be used to memorize word pairs. If you need to remember the word pair, "dog-flies," you could picture a dog getting irritated by having hundreds of flies hovering around it and landing on it. The more dramatic or surprising the visual image, the better retained it usually becomes.

The Method of Loci

This method dates to Ancient Greece. To use this method, you need to imagine a place that you know quite well so that you can visualize several locations within it. Then you associate each bit of information you want to remember with a location within that familiar place.

For example, let's imagine that you need to remember a list of items to purchase at the grocery store (your list includes bananas, peanut butter, olives, cheese spread, watermelon, canned tuna, chicken, and ice cream), and you are going to associate each item with locations within your bedroom. This is how it might look:

1. I walk in my bedroom holding a banana.
2. As I enter, I go to my desk and find peanut butter smeared across the top of it.
3. On top of my computer keyboard are olives resting between the keys.
4. I look up at my computer screen and find it is covered with cheese spread.
5. I go to the closet and find watermelons in the way.
6. Once inside, I notice someone has put cans of tuna between my jeans.
7. I flop on my bed in frustration and my head lands on raw chicken.
8. I am just about to scream when mom enters my room eating ice cream. Once you make the associations a few times in your head, you are ready to go to the grocery store. Once there, you remember the items in order by remembering the above sequence, beginning with you entering your bedroom and concluding with your mom entering it.

Improving Your Studying and Notetaking

Would you be interested in a combined study and notetaking method that offers the following advantages? •

- Provides you with feedback as to exactly how much you know (e.g., if you can thoroughly answer eight out of ten questions, you know your retention rate is 80 percent).
 - Reduces exam anxiety because of this feedback mechanism (i.e., confidence and exam anxiety are inversely related, which means that as your confidence increases for what you have learned, your exam anxiety diminishes).
 - Builds in processing of material to a deeper level, thus facilitating memory enhancement.
 - Structures your notes in an efficient manner, thus permitting easier studying. A modified form of the famous SQ4R method [i.e., Survey, Question, Read, "Rite" (write), Recite, Review] will do that for you. Here is how it works:
1. Set up all your note paper -- both for lectures and for taking notes from your text and other readings -- by adding a margin of two-and-a-half inches to three inches from the left side of each page.
 2. In lectures, write your notes only on the right side of your note paper.
 3. In a sense, your notes are like answers to questions or problems. As soon as possible after the lecture, review your notes and make up questions that your notes are answering. Write these questions to the left of your margin.
 4. Now your lecture notes are set up in a "question-answer" format. When you are ready to study, simply cover up the right-hand side of each page, ask yourself the questions on the left side, and recite back the content of your covered notes. If you miss any points, spend more time memorizing this material.
 5. If you can recall your answers to questions on three different occasions without having to check your notes, you have studied the material enough. A quick review before the exam is still a must, however.

6. On the next page is a sample of this form of notetaking. The sample also includes instructions for using SQ4R to take notes from your text or other readings. Sometimes you will decide that you don't need to take notes from what you are about to read and study. This is generally not recommended, but there are occasions when the material is very easy or you don't have the time to do a thorough job. If you are not intending to take notes from what you read, the order of SQ4R should be modified. Here is how it would then look:

1. Survey -- The scanning that you do during the survey stage provides you with an overview of what the chapter is about. Flip through the pages, scanning the headings and sub-headings, note drawings, graphs, and pictures, and read the chapter summary.
2. Question -- Turn headings and sub-headings into questions and form other questions as you begin reading.
3. Read -- As you begin reading, look for the answers to the questions you first raised. Use underlining and checkmarks beside important points in pencil and highlight as well.
4. Recite -- When you have finished reading a small section, look away from your book and briefly recite the answer(s) to your questions (or ask yourself questions about what you have just read, and summarize it in your own words).
5. Relate -- Remembering material that is personally meaningful is easier, so as you read a section, try to link new facts and concepts with information you already know.
6. Review -- When you're done reading, skim back over the chapter. Check your memory by reciting and quizzing yourself on different occasions. Make frequent reviews of your study habits.

The "SQ4R" Study Method What is the best way to set up my lecture notes? What is the best way to set up my textbook notes? What is the most effective study method? What are the six stages in this method for textbook reading and studying? Set up your lecture notes by placing a margin two-and-a-half to three inches from the left side of each page. As you take notes in lecture, keep all of them on the right-hand side of the page, adding questions later on the left side. Use the same format, and follow the instructions below: "SQ4R"

1. Survey -- flip through the pages, scanning the headings and sub-headings, note drawings, graphs, and pictures, and read the chapter summary.
2. Question -- turn headings and sub-headings into questions and form other questions as you begin your first reading.
3. Read -- first reading -- place checkmarks beside important points in pencil (do not highlight at this stage).
4. Rite ("write") -- As you begin your second reading, write out questions in the left column of your note paper as you come up to each sub-heading or section. Write answers to these questions in the right column of your note paper (i.e., like this example) in . . . (a) your own words, (b) using abbreviations, (c) from memory initially. As you read the section, complete your answers (add to them), and add further questions and answers as needed. If you highlight your texts, do this during this your second reading.
5. Recite -- this has already occurred for the first time while you prepared your notes (remember having recited answers by recalling them from memory). Before leaving your study session, cover the right-hand side, and attempt to recite your answers to the questions on the left side of the page.
6. Review -- periodically review your notes through this process of recitation (step 5). When you can recall your answers to questions on three different occasions without having to check your notes, you have studied the material enough. A quick review before the exam is still a must.

Self-Hypnosis Applications

Improving Your Concentration

One of the simplest methods, called the concentrate and recall exercise, was developed by Porter (1978). As you get yourself ready to study with the materials in front of you, briefly pause and say three times firmly and slowly to yourself, "concentrate and recall." This will help to focus your attention.

Two other helpful exercises were developed by Porter (1978). The relax/let go exercise was intended to reduce tension that develops during a study period. Take five slow deep breaths, thinking at the same time to relax as you breathe in and to let go as you breathe out. You can use this technique at any time

without others being aware. The last technique Porter (1978) called the REC/TTF exercise, and it is used for reducing tiredness and fear. As in the preceding exercise, concentrate on the words, "relaxation, energy, and confidence" (REC) as you breathe in, and "tension, tiredness, and fear" (TTF) as you breathe out. Anywhere from five to ten breaths is recommended.

Improving Your Memory

The best advice I have read about memory enhancement is from Kihlstrom and Barnhardt (1993): We can remember things better by paying active attention to them at the time they occur, deliberately engaging in elaborative and organizational activity that will establish links between one item of information and another; and we can facilitate forgetting by neglecting to do so. Forgetting will increase with the passage of time, if we allow it to happen; but continued rumination about the to-be-forgotten material may prevent this natural process from occurring.

Once-forgotten items can be recovered, too, if somehow, we can find the right cues to gain access to them; and some spontaneous recovery is to be expected as well, especially if the information was well encoded in the first place. . . In the absence of conscious recollection, sheer guessing -- influenced by implicit memory, which is much less constrained by the conditions of encoding and retrieval -- may lead the person to better-than-chance levels of memory performance (p. 115).

Memory enhancement through hypnosis and self-hypnosis is highly debated and the results of studies are equivocal, meaning that some studies conclude that hypnosis can facilitate memory while other studies find the opposite result.

An excellent review of the use of hypnosis in criminal investigations did conclude, however, that if the information to be retained "is personally relevant and emotional, hypnotic techniques appear to possess definite potential to enhance recall to a mild or moderate degree in some individuals, without necessarily including an increase in inaccuracies or false recollections" (Brown et al., 1998, p. 352). Given that some memory enhancement may occur for some people using self-hypnosis, some of these techniques are included in the suggestions/affirmations, imagery, and script sections that follow.

Improving Your Studying

Arons and Bubeck (1971) created the sandwich method of studying, which offers some advantages to students:

- Promotes the proper attitude and atmosphere for studying (helps to get you focused and "in the mood" for studying).
 - Reduces anxiety, thereby assisting in improving your concentration.
 - Produces a positive mindset and positive expectancy for desirable results.
- Here is how you use the sandwich method:

1. Prepare study materials.
2. From a prepared card read suggestion 1 five times, then drop the card.
Suggestion 1: "The material I am about to study will be deeply impressed and permanently retained."
3. Put yourself into self-hypnosis for three minutes using the basic induction (Appendix 7).
4. Study for a short period -- stop before you are tired.
5. From a prepared card read suggestion 2 five times, then drop the card.
Suggestion 2: "The material I have just studied is permanently retained and is easily available when I require it."
6. Put yourself into self-hypnosis for three minutes.
7. Return to step 4 above and continue studying.
8. OPTIONAL: After step 6 above, relax with something completely different -- sports, TV, music, etcetera for five minutes. Then repeat steps 2 through 8 until study is completed.

Another technique for studying is using Shrader's (cited in Cohen, 1982) blackboard method. Here is how you use the method:

1. Put yourself into self-hypnosis using the basic induction (Appendix 7).
2. Visualize a mythical blackboard and write the information on the blackboard that you are studying. The above method has been found to be helpful for memorizing mathematical and scientific formulas specifically, but the method holds promise for studying other materials as well.

One of my methods involves reading the material you intend to learn into a recording and then listening to the recording while in self-hypnosis. Give yourself a few minutes lead time at the beginning of the recording to get yourself into a calm state of self-hypnosis. Such a method might be useful in learning material that would ordinarily be learned through rote memory (e.g., straight facts or definitions). Be sure you spend time reciting the material that you heard after the recording ends to ensure that you have learned it.

Suggestions/Affirmations

(Note: instructions for using suggestions/affirmations are found in Appendix 2)

For Improved Concentration

1. My concentration on studying is improving.
2. When I sit down to study, I can concentrate on increasing periods of time.
3. I am becoming more focused on my studies.
4. I am becoming more interested in what I am learning .
5. My mind is clear and efficient.

[Write some of your own below]:

- 6.
- 7.
- 8.

For Improved Memory

1. My memory is improving.
2. My ability to learn new information is getting better and better.
3. Because of my improved study methods, I can easily recall information when I want to.
4. I can access information from my memory quickly and effectively.
5. My memory works like a high-speed computer.

[Write some of your own below]:

- 6.
- 7.
- 8.

For Improved Studying

1. I feel motivated to study.
2. When I sit down to study, I completely focus on what is in front of me.
3. I am conditioning myself to study for longer periods of time.
4. I feel confident in my ability to learn.
5. I review my material periodically, reciting out loud or silently what I have learned.

[Write some of your own below]:

- 6.
- 7.
- 8.

Imagery

(Note: instructions for using imagery are found in Appendix 3)

For Improved Concentration

Imagine yourself approaching your study area, sitting down, and focusing with deep concentration on your study materials. Picture each aspect of this scene in detail. Also visualize yourself studying for longer periods of time before needing to take a break.

For Improved Memory

Imagine that all your notes are set up as described earlier (i.e., in a question-answer format). Now picture yourself covering up the right-hand side of each page and finding that you can recall the covered information quite well. Feel a growing sense of confidence as you find you can answer most of the questions this way without needing to review the covered information much at all.

For Improved Studying

The best image here is to imagine yourself using the SQ4R method of studying consistently. Imagine opening your textbook or other study material and going through each of the six stages of SQ4R [i.e., Survey, Question, Read, "Rite" (write), Recite, Review]. It also helps if you can create a feeling of enjoyment while you go through this image.

Script

[Caution: If you have a medical condition or physical problem that might prevent you from doing any of the exercises contained in this script, please use a pencil and cross out the part of the script that contains these exercises. If you are uncertain about whether to exclude something, ask your physician before making this self-hypnosis recording]

"Get comfortable, preferably lying down with your arms and legs uncrossed. Now contract all your muscles simultaneously and hold the tension [pause for 7 breaths]. Now relax your muscles and notice the contrast [pause for 4 breaths]. Now contract all your muscles simultaneously again and hold the tension [pause for 7 breaths]. Now relax your muscles and notice the contrast once more [pause for 4 breaths].

"With your eyes open, stare at a spot slightly behind your normal line of vision so that you feel a mild eye strain. Do not let your gaze drift from that spot. Take in five deep abdominal breaths [pause for 2 breaths]. Inhale the fifth breath extra deep, and while holding it, count backwards mentally "5-4-3-2-1." When you get down to "1," exhale and close your eyes at the same time [pause for 2 breaths].

"Your concentration for reading and studying is constantly improving [pause for 1 breath]. When you sit down to read or study, you can concentrate for longer periods of time [pause for 1 breath]. For whatever reason, you are becoming more focused and more interested in what you are learning about [pause for 1 breath]. Your mind is clear and it works efficiently [pause for 2 breaths].

"Your memory is also steadily improving [pause for 1 breath]. Your ability to learn new information is getting better and better [pause for 1 breath]. Because of your improved study methods, you can easily recall information whenever you want to [pause for 1 breath]. Your mind works like a high-speed

computer [pause for 1 breath]-- you retain that which you input, and you remember that which is needed for output [pause for 2 breaths].

"You find it interesting how your motivation to study is growing [pause for 1 breath]. Your goals are important to you and achieving good or exceptional grades in school will help you immensely [pause for 1 breath]. Part of the exercise is learning to be well disciplined in life, so you know that all the studying is serving you well [pause for 1 breath]. You feel confident in your ability to learn [pause for 1 breath]. You review your material periodically, reciting out loud or silently that which you have learned [pause for 2 breaths].

"When you are ready to leave self-hypnosis, first silently tell yourself that you will count to five and that at the count of five, you will come out of self-hypnosis feeling refreshed, relaxed, and confident. Then awaken yourself by counting to five mentally and say "AWAKE!" to yourself [pause for 3 breaths]. Then open your eyes."

Chapter Summary

This chapter has shown you how to improve your ability to learn new material. It has focused on improving your concentration, improving your memory, and improving your studying and notetaking behavior. Consequently, you will soon be enjoying better grades without having to work as hard as you imagined. Studying will soon become something you enjoy instead of something you have to endure.

Chapter 9 — Taking the Terror Out of Tests

Perhaps the only thing more painful than this is a slow death, Richard thought as he sat down to write his final exam. He noticed his hands were cold and clammy, trembling as he also noticed his shakiness resided deep within himself. He looked at the first question and like brain freeze from a Slurpee, his mind drew a blank. Hours of study didn't seem to matter now. Most of the questions looked easy enough, yet answers were not forthcoming.

By the end of the test, Richard felt so demoralized and so stupid, he couldn't rush out of the classroom fast enough before breaking into tears. A week later, the exam was returned, and looking over the questions now seemed as though he was looking at a different test than the one he wrote. How could he have missed even the easy questions? Richard knows his material -- what went wrong?

Likely this is not a topic that you need an introduction to -- you have already experienced it. Every serious student will feel some degree of anxiety before and during an exam. When this anxiety is mild-to-moderate, it acts to create positive excitement and feeling of challenge. In turn, this helps you to work quickly under the pressure of time constraints.

When anxiety becomes severe-to-incapacitating, it shuts down your ability to think clearly. Research has shown that there is a negative correlation between the levels of anxiety that students have and their test scores. In other words, the more anxious you become, the lower your test score will probably be. . . Anxiety also hurts your self-confidence -- and low self-confidence can contribute to low test scores. (Johnson, 1997, p. 1).

Exam anxiety is the self-inflicted punishment for either not feeling capable or for having unrealistic expectations. Exam anxiety is "self-inflicted" because no one is causing the reaction, other than yourself. Regarding capability, people of at least average intelligence can do well in most programs at college and university. However, many people do not feel capable because of self-defeating thoughts and beliefs that are deeply ingrained.

These thoughts often lead to students making insufficient effort, which in turn becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy (i.e., students neglecting to study because they don't feel capable, and then failing because they didn't study). If you

haven't prepared adequately for an exam, you will end up feeling threatened and uptight. "Cramming" the night before a test will probably leave you feeling tense, which leads to disturbed sleep. The only remedy for this type of anxiety is getting down to work early enough to avoid this pitfall. Good study habits are essential if you wish to avoid exam anxiety.

Regarding unrealistic expectations, there are individuals whose expectations are far greater than is considered reasonable. For example, if you have not attended classes for 15 years and you have now returned to school, it is unrealistic to believe you will be an "A" student in your first year. Becoming an accomplished student takes time. You need to be able to master your studies and your time to pull off "A's" consistently, not to mention you must have high aptitude for all your subjects. Furthermore, when you have unrealistic expectations, the emphasis switches from "learning" to "performance."

If studying is done for the sole purpose of grades, a tremendous performance pressure ensues. This becomes exam anxiety. It is important to study for the purpose of learning. If learning is emphasized, instead of grades, the exam situation becomes an opportunity to communicate what you have learned. Good grades will follow naturally if you have learned the material. This type of exam anxiety is created by perception, but it is clear from this example that perception can affect our emotions substantially. If you tell yourself thoughts such as, "I must get an A on this exam," or "This is a do or die situation -- if I fail this test, it proves I am stupid and worthless," then you are going to turn an exam into a THREAT situation.

Compare these beliefs to thoughts like, "I know this material very well, and I have every reason to believe that I will succeed," or "I am going to stay calm because all I can do is my best anyway," or, "If I fail, I can handle it. I will learn from my failures as well as my successes, making it likely that I will succeed the majority of the time." With these beliefs, you will likely see the exam as a CHALLENGE and view it positively and confidently. Begin to feed your mind positive thoughts on a regular basis.

Be aware that the goal of becoming a successful student is not to eliminate exam anxiety. Instead, the intent is to reduce it to a point where you are alert and functioning at a high intellectual capacity. Most of us accomplish tasks better when we feel some degree of excitement (which you may label as mild to

moderate anxiety). If you are too relaxed, you simply won't work at peak efficiency.

Conventional Methods

Assess the Problem

If you suffer exam anxiety, the first thing is to do a careful assessment of what is causing it. Turn to Appendix 6 and complete the questionnaire there to help you make this determination. If you have not learned how to manage your time -- and therefore do not study enough -- or if you have not learned how to study properly, be sure you pay special attention to Chapters 6 and 8, respectively.

Writing an exam provides us with an invaluable opportunity to gain feedback regarding our learning and our performance. When you get the test back, go over it carefully to extract the reasons why you didn't get 100 percent on it. Ask yourself the following questions:

1. Did I study the wrong material? How can I find out what to study for the next exam?
2. What types of questions threw me off -- e.g., multiple choice, short answer, essay? How can I modify my study approach for the types of questions I have trouble answering?
3. Was the exam itself constructed in a fair manner? If not, what can I do to prepare for this type of test next time?
4. What are the gaps in my knowledge of this subject? How can I make up for these deficiencies?

Reducing Exam Anxiety

The following psychological methods have proven helpful in reducing excessive exam anxiety:

1. Relaxation Techniques
2. Cognitive Therapy
3. Systematic Desensitization Therapy
4. Imagery (as imagery is a self-hypnotic technique, it will be covered in the next section).

Relaxation Techniques

Why learn to relax? Relaxation is the opposite of anxiety, so by learning to relax, you can learn to release tension whenever and wherever you choose. You will find relaxation methods in Appendices 3, 4, and 7.

Cognitive Therapy

We reviewed the triple-column technique in Chapter 4. Here is an example:

MALADAPTIVE THOUGHT OR BELIEF	QUESTIONING IT	HEALTHIER THOUGHT OR BELIEF
"I am no good at math, and I am going to fail the exam."	"Okay, math is difficult for me, but what proof do I have that I cannot pass a test in it if I work hard enough? Past failures do not dictate my entire future as a student."	"If I dedicate more time to learning math, I will be able to pass the next exam. I don't have to get an A in it - I just need to get through it."

The full instructions are provided in Appendix 10 and apply equally to exam anxiety.

Systematic Desensitization Therapy

Systematic desensitization is a common method used to reduce people's fears and phobias, and it can be used to help you reduce your exam anxiety. It involves first creating a hierarchy (i.e., a list arranged in descending or ascending order) of the various situations that precipitate your exam anxiety and then visualizing these scenarios. Here is how it works:

Constructing Your Anxiety Hierarchy

1. Purchase a stack of index cards or cut up some cardboard into 3" x 4" rectangles.
2. Complete the questionnaire on the next page.
3. Cut along each row so that you create strips of paper, each with one item on it.
4. Throw away the items for which you responded with a "0" as these situations do not cause you anxiety.
5. Paste or staple each remaining item on a separate index card or piece of cardboard.
6. Arrange these completed cards in order from the item that causes you the least anxiety on the top of the deck to the one that causes you the most anxiety on the bottom of the deck.
7. Number the entire deck of cards sequentially, beginning with 1 on the top of the deck.

Working Through Your Hierarchy

1. Read two cards a few times before proceeding to the next step. Which cards you read depends upon where you are in desensitizing yourself to the items in your hierarchy. If you are just beginning, for example, you begin with your cards 1 and 2. If you already desensitized yourself to cards 1 and 2, then you would begin with cards 3 and 4.
2. Close your eyes and get yourself into a relaxed state, using whatever technique feels comfortable for you.
3. Visualize the situation from the first card you read while remaining relaxed. Maintain the visualization for 20 seconds or so. Then stop the

visualization and refocus on feelings of relaxation. Repeat the visualization for another 20 seconds and again refocus on feelings of relaxation. If you can stay relaxed while visualizing the image from this card twice, you are ready to move onto visualizing your subsequent card. If you're unable to stay relaxed while visualizing this image on these two occasions, return to the previous card in your hierarchy and work through it again before coming back to the subsequent card. NOTE: The entire process of working through the cards successfully may take several days or weeks. Following completion, I recommend that you revisit your hierarchy periodically to ensure that you continue to approach exams with less anxiety.

Strategies to Use During the Test

Once you have the exam in front of you, look it over and get a sense of its length and where the marks for the exam are concentrated. It is sometimes helpful to write in time intervals regarding where you ought to be at various points. For example, if the test has 50 multiple choice questions and you have 50 minutes to complete the exam, place a mark at question 12 (denoting where you should be approximately after 12 minutes, which is quarter time), another mark at question 25 (half time), and another mark at question 37 (three quarter time). Also, it is best to answer easier questions first so that you build confidence, which builds momentum and lowers exam anxiety. Do the hardest questions last.

If you start getting overly anxious during a test, do the following:

1. Use a quick relaxation strategy to calm yourself.
2. Remind yourself that you will do your best, and you can accept this right now.
3. Look for key words in each question and underline or circle them as a way of deepening your focus on the question.
4. If necessary, write on the back of the page anything that may cue your memory.

CREATING YOUR EXAM ANXIETY HIERARCHY

Answer the following questions by circling the number in the column that represents how much anxiety the situation creates for you. Use the following scale: 0 = None, 1 = Mild, 2 = Moderate, 3 = Severe After completing this, add in additional situations that cause you exam anxiety.

Creating Your Exam Anxiety Hierarchy

Circle the number in the column that represents how much anxiety each situation creates for you (0 = None, 1 = Mild, 2 = Moderate, 3 = Severe). Then add your own situations in the blank rows.

SITUATION	0 = None	1 = Mild	2 = Moderate	3 = Severe
BEFORE THE TEST				
Two days before the exam	0	1	2	3
The night before the exam	0	1	2	3
Going to bed and attempting to sleep the night before the exam	0	1	2	3
Waking up the day of the exam	0	1	2	3
Waiting outside the classroom before the exam	0	1	2	3
Sitting down in my seat before the exam is distributed	0	1	2	3
I find out I need to get an A on the exam to pass the course	0	1	2	3
DURING THE TEST				
The exam is now in front of me	0	1	2	3
I am looking over the exam	0	1	2	3
I am finding a question difficult to understand	0	1	2	3
I am finding a question difficult to answer	0	1	2	3
I have not been able to answer two questions in a row	0	1	2	3

SITUATION	0 = None 1 = Mild 2 = Moderate 3 = Severe
I am running out of time, and I haven't finished the exam	0 1 2 3
There is five minutes left before I must turn in my exam	0 1 2 3
AFTER THE TEST	
I leave the exam believing I have failed it	0 1 2 3
After leaving, I remembered the answer to some missed questions	0 1 2 3
The day the exam is returned to me	0 1 2 3
[SPACE FOR ADDITIONAL ITEMS]	
	0 1 2 3
	0 1 2 3
	0 1 2 3

Self-Hypnosis Applications

If you start becoming overly anxious during the test, put your pen or pencil down for a minute and use the REC/TTF exercise already introduced in Chapter 8. All you would do is concentrate on the words, "relaxation, energy, and confidence" (REC) as you breathe in, and "tension, tiredness, and fear" (TTF) as you breathe out. Anywhere from five to ten breaths is recommended. The more times you have done this before the test, the more you will have conditioned this response -- meaning it should become more effective. Another technique would be to go into self-hypnosis using the basic induction and then begin giving yourself positive suggestions about having increased confidence, composure, and calmness. You could also create a quick visual image of the way you want to be both feeling and appearing at that moment (i.e., cool, calm,

and collected). If you come to a question that you can't immediately answer, give yourself the following suggestion silently if you have in fact studied the answer to this question, "When I return to this question, I will remember the answer to it." This will act like a posthypnotic suggestion and will increase the likelihood that the answer will return (it doesn't always work, however). If you didn't study the answer to a question, give yourself this suggestion instead, "I don't know the answer to this question, but I do know most of this material." This suggestion will help keep you from developing brain freeze.

Suggestions/Affirmations

(Note: instructions for using suggestions/affirmations are found in Appendix 2)

1. I am well prepared for exams, and I feel confident in my ability.
2. I feel cool, calm, and collected when I write exams.
3. Preparing and taking exams is often challenging, but I am up for the challenge.
4. I can accept whatever the result is of my performance because I am not perfect.
5. I focus my time and energy on learning, and I accept that I do not fully control the outcome [note: the reason for this is that you are not the one who constructs the test -- a teacher can make a test difficult or easy].

[Write some of your own below]:

- 6.
- 7.
- 8.

Imagery

(Note: instructions for using imagery are found in Appendix 3) A very useful visualization is to picture yourself coping well with whatever your "triggers" are when you feel exam anxiety. Triggers are the thoughts, images, sensations, situations, or feelings that lead to your exam anxiety. An example of each of these would be thinking about failing the test (thought), daydreaming or dreaming about getting really anxious (image), smelling formaldehyde and

recalling a failed chemistry exam (sensation), being in the actual classroom waiting to write an exam (situation), or feeling depressed about the test and then becoming anxious as you dwell on it (feeling). The images you want to create are the opposite reactions to your triggers. The opposites to the above examples would be:

1. Visualize yourself passing the test (thought),
2. Picture yourself feeling or becoming relaxed and calm (image),
3. See yourself smelling formaldehyde and imagine having pleasant thoughts about the next chemistry exam (sensation),
4. Envision yourself in the classroom while remaining composed, alert, and ready (situation), or
5. Imagine yourself no longer depressed and feeling capable and calm (feeling).

Script

[Caution: If you have a medical condition or physical problem that might prevent you from doing any of the exercises contained in this script, please use a pencil and cross out the part of the script that contains these exercises. If you are uncertain about whether to exclude something, ask your physician before making this self-hypnosis recording] "Get comfortable, preferably lying down with your arms and legs uncrossed. Now contract all your muscles simultaneously and hold the tension [pause for 7 breaths]. Now relax your muscles and notice the contrast [pause for 4 breaths]. Now contract all your muscles simultaneously again and hold the tension [pause for 7 breaths]. Now relax your muscles and notice the contrast once more [pause for 4 breaths].

"With your eyes open, stare at a spot slightly behind your normal line of vision so that you feel a mild eye strain. Do not let your gaze drift from that spot. Take in five deep abdominal breaths [pause for 2 breaths]. Inhale the fifth breath extra deep, and while holding it, count backwards mentally "5-4-3-2-1." When you get down to "1," exhale and close your eyes at the same time [pause for 2 breaths]. "You are well prepared for exams, and you feel confident in your ability [pause for 1 breath]. Once you take your seat in the room where you will be sitting the exam, you feel a sense of belonging in that seat and this comforts you [pause for 1 breath]. You become cool, calm, and collected when you write exams [pause for 1 breath]. The excitement you feel is only about feeling

pumped for the challenge you are about to face [pause for 2 breaths]. "You can accept whatever the result of your performance is because you are not perfect [pause for 1 breath]. Furthermore, you are neither the one who decides what the test will look like nor the one who determines its difficulty level [pause for 1 breath]. That is why you focus your time and energy on learning and accept that you do not fully control the outcome [pause for 1 breath]. If you were a surgeon, for example, you would only have control over your knowledge and your performance [pause for 1 breath]. The outcome is not fully within your control [pause for 1 breath]. The patient might not improve from the surgery, and something unforeseen could occur [pause for 1 breath]. Similarly, you only control your learning and your performance, and you can fully accept the outcome, whatever it looks like [pause for 2 breaths]. "If you need to become more relaxed during an exam, you can simply put your pen or pencil down for a minute and simultaneously contract all of your muscles [pause for 1 breath]. Alternatively, you can tilt your eyes back slightly, take in five deep abdominal breaths, and then breathe out and close your eyes at the same time [pause for 1 breath]. Once done, you can tell yourself the messages you need to hear, such as 'I am regaining my composure and becoming totally focused on this exam. I am here to do my best, and that is what I will do right now' [pause for 2 breaths]. "If you come to a question that you can't immediately answer, tell yourself, 'When I return to this question, I will remember the answer to it' [pause for 1 breath]. Then move on to the next question. This will act like a posthypnotic suggestion and will increase the likelihood that the answer will return [pause for 1 breath]. If you didn't study the answer to a question, give yourself this suggestion instead, 'I don't know the answer to this question, but I do know most of this material' [pause for 1 breath]. This suggestion will keep you motivated with momentum [pause for 2 breaths]. "When you are ready to leave self-hypnosis, first silently tell yourself that you will count to five and that at the count of five, you will come out of self-hypnosis feeling refreshed, relaxed, and confident. Then awaken yourself by counting to five mentally and say "AWAKE!" to yourself [pause for 3 breaths]. Then open your eyes."

Chapter Summary

It is important that you develop a strong sense of your capability to write exams effectively, while at the same time keeping your expectations realistic. A certain amount of anxiety, which can be reframed as excitement, helps us to reach peak efficiency while writing a test. Consequently, the goal of this

chapter was not to eliminate exam anxiety, but it was instead to show you how to manage it better and reduce it as needed.

Chapter 10 — Breaking the Block to Better Writing

Arlene has nearly completed all her coursework for a master's degree in women's studies, but she is struggling with coming up with a research topic for her thesis. She begins what soon becomes a frantic search to get focused. After countless hours of reading through journals in her field, she decides on a topic that doesn't really pique her interest. She needs to get her degree done, however, and at least having a topic provides her with some momentum. After three months of doing the necessary research, Arlene is ready to begin writing it. She sits down and begins staring at the blank computer screen.

The sweat forms on her forehead as she strains to find something to write that makes sense to her. Eventually she manages to write two paragraphs, but after reviewing her work a few hours later, she realizes how crappy it reads. With a quick touch of the delete key, she is ready to start again. The next few paragraphs she writes seem equally bad, and again she touches the delete key. A week has passed, and Arlene has been unable to write anything of consequence. All that has resulted is that her anxiety level is now at an all-time high.

Months later, Arlene has finally completed her thesis, but she is exhausted and feels like the entire experience has been a nightmare. After her graduation, she never again opens her thesis. The relief of being done is her only salvation.

Arlene is experiencing two problems common to students who need to write something: she has difficulty deciding on a topic to write about, and then later experiences "writer's block." Whether you too need to begin a thesis, dissertation, or essay, the issues are the same. Behind both problems is often some degree of perfectionism. You want to come up with the perfect topic, and you want your writing to be perfect as well.

Perfectionism is never helpful. Remember from Chapter 4 that it is far better to embrace competence than it is to embrace perfectionism, which is beyond the human condition. Your ability to write becomes increasingly important as you pursue higher levels of education. For this to become a joy instead of your worst nightmare, three things become essential. You need to:

- acquire good writing skills
- explore and decide on good topics

- develop and sustain writing momentum

This chapter will explore ways that will help you overcome barriers in these three areas.

Conventional Methods

Acquiring Good Writing Skills

Perhaps it is true that some writers are born with the gift of being able to write well. Certainly, one's vocabulary, which is highly related to one's overall intellectual ability, is an undeniable factor. More important, however, is knowing that you can also learn to become a good writer. Without question, word processors have revolutionized our ability to improve our writing skills. If you don't own a computer, developing good writing skills will be more difficult for you. Whether or not you have a computer, two good references to read are as follows:

1. Strunk, W., & White, E. B. (2000). *The elements of style* (4th ed.). Allyn & Bacon.
2. Waddell, M. L., Esch, R. M., & Walker, R. R. (1993). *The art of styling sentences: 20 patterns for success*. Barrons Educational Series.

The first book is considered a classic, and the second is very useful in that it shows you how to write better sentences in a cookbook style. Another great reference to own is as follows:

Merriam-Webster's collegiate dictionary (11th ed.). (2003). Merriam-Webster.

I am going to assume throughout this chapter that you are using a word processor to do your writing. Three of the most helpful tools are the spell check, the grammar check, and the thesaurus. An advantage of an online dictionary such as Merriam-Webster (merriam-webster.com) is that it offers many features not generally found in a print dictionary, including searches you can make for words that rhyme with a word you are trying to recall. Homophones and synonyms can be searched too, along with several other useful features.

I think the single most important axiom to remember if you want to become a good writer is the title of a book by Joel Saltzman called, *If You Can Talk, You Can Write*. Throughout this book, Saltzman makes the point repeatedly that a

great way to start writing is to write something the same way you would say it. The art of writing is really the art of rewriting, so after you write down something the way you would say it, you then begin the editing process.

Most good writing flows in a way that sounds conversational. Many times, when writing, we become blind to our own glaring mistakes or oversights regarding content or grammar. If you have time, it is always a good idea to put your work away for a few days after completing it before you do another edit on your work. Alternatively, another good option is having someone you know with good writing skills review your work before you submit it.

Explore and Decide on Good Topics

A good topic is one that you feel some passion toward. Just as passion is a vital part of becoming successful, it equally applies to doing good work in any area. You may want to review Chapter 5 if you still need to get in touch with more of your passion. One thing you can do, either alone or with the help of another, is to brainstorm possible topics. Write these down as they are suggested.

Another good idea is to always carry around a small notepad and pen with you. When an idea comes to you, write it down. Also keep the notepad and pen by your bedside -- some of the best ideas come to us when we are relaxed and either about to fall asleep or upon awakening. Sometimes great ideas even come to us in our sleep. If one does, chances are you will wake up because your subconscious knows that you need a topic right now. Then write the idea down right away before you forget it.

Another important step in coming up with a good topic is to begin doing library and Internet research. Read for a general understanding of the topic that you are considering first before doing a detailed reading of the subject area. When you are ready, write out a proposed title for your project and write out the central theme of what it is you want to say in the paper. If you have done enough reading already, you will also be ready to prepare an outline. Once you have an outline, you are ready to begin writing your paper.

Here is an example of these three tasks:

<i>Title</i>	How to Cope Better with Stress and Still Have Time for Your Friends
<i>Central Theme</i>	Stress is an unavoidable consequence of living, and how you cope with it makes all the difference. Managing stress better allows you to enjoy your spare time more fully.
<i>Outline</i>	1. Begin with an anecdote of a time when I was really stressed 2. Define stress. 3. Look at how stress affects people, both positively and negatively. 4. Review the various stress management strategies: (a) Physical methods – exercise, proper sleep, meditation or relaxation, nutrition. (b) Psychological methods – positive self-talk, talking yourself down, finding humor in the situation or making yourself laugh by going to see a live comedian. (c) Social methods – talking to a friend, seeking social support. (d) Spiritual methods – spending time in prayer, reflecting on what is personally meaningful to you. 5. Look at how better time management can help reduce stress. 6. Argue for the importance of balancing work and play. 7. End with an anecdote of someone with many pressures in her life, but who successfully manages these and spends lots of time with her best friends having fun and celebrating life.

Develop and Sustain Writing Momentum

The best way to begin writing is simply to begin writing! Get rid of the notion that your writing will be perfect, but by following your outline, you will know how the pieces of your essay will fit together. Many people find that beginning with writing the body of their essay is easier than beginning with the opening paragraph. Find out what works for you.

If after you begin writing you find that you lose momentum, you need to ask yourself what is behind it. Here are some of the most common reasons with the most common solutions.

Lack of Discipline

Writing requires a high degree of discipline. If you haven't developed discipline yet, read Chapter 6 and follow the instructions there. You will develop discipline as you learn how to persist at your goals, which Chapter 6 addresses.

Lack of Interest and Boredom

This happens far too frequently, particularly when someone else assigns you the topic. Nonetheless, you know it needs to get done. Read the section in Chapter 6 for overcoming procrastination and use the same techniques listed there. Remember to give yourself rewards for getting chunks of the assignment completed.

Perceived Difficulty

If you perceive that the topic you need to write about is going to be too difficult, you will tend to lose your momentum. Again, return to Chapter 6 and read the section about procrastination. You need to become more patient with a difficult subject and accept that the writing will take longer.

Exhaustion and Burnout

If you have been burning the proverbial candle at both ends for too long, you suffer the risk of experiencing exhaustion and perhaps even burnout. If this happens, you will need to take a break, and perhaps an extended one. The best plan here is to avoid this depth of fatigue by maintaining a balanced life (see Chapter 7).

Lisa Cohen (n.d.), herself a writer, talked to some prolific writers and extracted the common themes behind the advice they offered to reduce writer's block. The following quote shows what she found:

1. Don't obsess on one thing -- have more than one project going at a time and if you get stuck on one, move to another.
2. Commit to finishing everything you start -- if you've left a project, commit to returning to it; continue to work on the problem.
3. Change the mode of putting down words -- if you're stuck on the word processor try a dictation machine or writing by hand; or change where you write -- go outside, or to a friendly coffee shop, or the library.
4. Get some physical exercise -- go out and walk; mow the lawn -- physical activity of the pleasant and slightly mindless kind seems to precipitate mental activity of the kind that promotes creativity (p. 1).

Self-Hypnosis Applications

Suggestions/Affirmations

(Note: instructions for using suggestions/affirmations are found in Appendix 2)

Acquire Good Writing Skills

1. My thinking is becoming clearer, and this results in better writing.
2. I am developing good writing skills.
3. Because I can talk, I can also write.
4. I am motivated to learn more about how to improve my writing.
5. I feel confident in my ability to write, and with proper editing, I too can write well.

[Write some of your own below]:

- 6.
- 7.
- 8.

Explore and Decide on Good Topics

1. I am motivated to learn enough about a subject so that I can come up with some good topics.
2. If I haven't chosen a topic yet, my subconscious mind works hard to give me ideas as well.
3. If I get to pick my topic, I choose one for which I feel passion.
4. When I need a topic, I always carry a notepad with me.
5. Once I have my topic, I write a statement describing the central theme and then I create an outline.

[Write some of your own below]:

- 6.
- 7.
- 8.

Develop and Sustain Writing Momentum

1. I am developing the necessary discipline to persist in my writing.
2. If the writing project is boring or difficult, I remember to reward myself for getting each step of it completed.
3. Whenever I am having trouble sustaining my writing, I take a break, get some exercise, or switch to another project for a while.
4. I soon regain the momentum needed to return to writing. The writing project will get done.
5. My writing does not need to be perfect, and neither do I. Instead, I strive to become a competent individual.

[Write some of your own below]:

- 6.
- 7.
- 8.

Imagery

(Note: instructions for using imagery are found in Appendix 3)

Acquire Good Writing Skills

Visualize yourself as though you already have good writing skills. Picture the computer screen in front of you and see yourself typing away with abandon. Imagine the words flowing from your mind onto the screen. Once you have a draft of your project completed, imagine yourself doing a spell check and grammar check on your work.

Explore and Decide on Good Topics

First do the necessary reading in the subject area in which you will choose a topic. After you have a good understanding of the area, a very good technique to help you come up with a topic is to place yourself into self-hypnosis using the basic induction (i.e., Appendix 7) and then begin allowing thoughts and images regarding your topic to enter your mind. You might need to prime this first by telling yourself, "My entire focus now is on coming up with a good topic for my writing project." The more relaxed you become, the more likely you will find this method effective.

Another excellent technique is to give yourself the following suggestion several times before going to sleep at night: "My subconscious mind will give me a topic while I am asleep, or first thing upon awakening." This is like how many people can wake up at a specific time by programming the time into their mind before they drift off to sleep.

Develop and Sustain Writing Momentum

Variations of Porter's (1978) methods, introduced in Chapter 8, can be useful and very quick. If while sitting at your computer you begin to lose focus, briefly pause and say three times firmly and slowly to yourself, "concentrate and focus." If tension is becoming a problem, use Porter's relax/let go exercise. Take five slow deep breaths, thinking at the same time to relax as you breathe in and to let go as you breathe out.

The other helpful visual image is picturing yourself writing with whatever goal you have in mind. If you want to become a prolific writer, imagine yourself

doing lots of writing for extended periods of time. Be sure to create a feeling of enjoyment as you visualize.

If your goal is simply to complete a current writing project, visualize writing that project and seeing its completion. It helps too if you picture some of the content of what you intend to write. In this application, it also works as a form of rehearsal for some of the things you want to write. Much of my writing and many of the public talks I have given were first imagined before they were ever written or spoken, respectively. The inner mind is a wonderful place to rehearse.

Script

[Caution: If you have a medical condition or physical problem that might prevent you from doing any of the exercises contained in this script, please use a pencil and cross out the part of the script that contains these exercises. If you are uncertain about whether to exclude something, ask your physician before making this self-hypnosis recording]

"Get comfortable, preferably lying down with your arms and legs uncrossed. Now contract all your muscles simultaneously and hold the tension [pause for 7 breaths]. Now relax your muscles and notice the contrast [pause for 4 breaths]. Now contract all your muscles simultaneously again and hold the tension [pause for 7 breaths]. Now relax your muscles and notice the contrast once more [pause for 4 breaths].

"With your eyes open, stare at a spot slightly behind your normal line of vision so that you feel a mild eye strain. Do not let your gaze drift from that spot. Take in five deep abdominal breaths [pause for 2 breaths]. Inhale the fifth breath extra deep, and while holding it, count backwards mentally "5-4-3-2-1." When you get down to "1," exhale and close your eyes at the same time [pause for 2 breaths].

"Your thinking is becoming clearer, and this results in better writing [pause for 1 breath]. Because you can talk, this means you can write [pause for 1 breath]. You can now feel confident in your ability to write because with proper editing, you will be writing well [pause for 1 breath]. You are also motivated to learn more about how to improve your writing [pause for 2 breaths].

"If you have a writing project to do for which you have no choice on the topic, you develop the necessary discipline to work on it and complete it in a timely manner [pause for 1 breath]. If necessary, you provide yourself with rewards for getting segments of the project completed [pause for 1 breath]. If you are given the choice of a topic to write about, you select one for which you feel passion [pause for 1 breath]. You will find that your subconscious mind helps you in various ways to come up with a good topic [pause for 1 breath]. It might happen that a great idea is given to you in a dream, or upon awakening [pause for 1 breath]. It may just be that an idea will pop into your head as you go about your daily routines [pause for 1 breath]. For these reasons, it is always a good idea to always carry around a notepad and a pen with you when you are searching for a topic [pause for 2 breaths].

"When you need to take a break from writing, you get some exercise or switch to another project for a while [pause for 1 breath]. Afterwards, you soon regain the momentum needed to return to writing [pause for 1 breath]. The writing project will get done [pause for 1 breath]. Your writing doesn't need to be perfect, and neither do you. Instead, you strive to become a competent individual [pause for 2 breaths].

"When you are ready to leave self-hypnosis, first silently tell yourself that you will count to five and that at the count of five, you will come out of self-hypnosis feeling refreshed, relaxed, and confident. Then awaken yourself by counting to five mentally and say "AWAKE!" to yourself [pause for 3 breaths]. Then open your eyes."

Chapter Summary

Becoming a better writer, choosing worthwhile and meaningful topics to write about, and then sustaining the momentum to complete the writing project are important skills to have as a student, particularly if you plan to pursue postsecondary education. This chapter has shown you several ways to develop these skills using conventional methods, followed by using the inner powers of your subconscious mind to help you turn your goals into reality. Write well with less effort than you had imagined.

Chapter 11 — Finding Your Voice When Giving a Talk

Sarah had been dreading today ever since she knew she would have to give a presentation to her sociology class. The content was not the issue -- she had read extensively, written a paper on the topic already, and had recited the material out loud several times. It was the thought of having to talk in front of the class that was making her sick to her stomach. Now it was her turn to stand and deliver. As she took her place, she felt like she was about to face a firing squad. She could hardly speak. The words could barely form in her mouth, and worse than that, she began forgetting what it was she wanted to say. It took every ounce of courage for Sarah to finish her talk, and she nearly raced back to her seat afterwards. She felt horrible inside and knew she could have done a whole lot better if it were not for her anxiety.

Public speaking anxiety, otherwise known as speech anxiety, is the most common fear experienced by the average person. You have probably felt it yourself if you have already delivered one or more presentations. The feeling of being gripped by fear is not uncommon.

Candice Thomas (n.d.) reported five common factors that contribute to speech anxiety: (1) the speaker's previous experience presenting to a group, (2) the fear of being the center of attention, (3) the fear of having others judge your performance, (4) the amount you have prepared for the presentation, and (5) the amount of experience you have presenting to a particular audience or on a specific topic. A good presentation can be gripping to the audience that hears you, while a poor one can put people to sleep or have them bolting for the door. Regardless of your level of anxiety, there are some things you can do to improve your presentation style and performance, thereby optimizing your grade or at least your impact.

Some nervousness is a good thing: it shows you care about what you are doing, and it also creates some excitement within yourself. That excitement, in turn, can be used to garner greater passion in your talk. You don't want to be completely relaxed when you are trying to tell other people something of importance.

Conventional Methods

Tips for Giving a Better Presentation

The Counseling Center for Human Development at the University of South Florida (n.d.) offers the following tips for speakers:

1. Decide on your specific objectives first.
2. Put yourself in your audience's place; speak in terms that they'll understand.
3. Practice your speech privately. This can help you to feel more confident with what you will say.
4. Don't memorize or read your speech; use brief notes or an outline.
5. Speak to one person at a time; try to make eye contact with everyone at least once.
6. Don't worry about your hands or your facial expressions.
7. Take it slow and easy, speaking as you do in casual conversation.
8. Use slow, deep breathing both before and during your talk to help reduce physical tension.
9. Ask for advice and feedback from someone you trust.

Craig (n.d.), an instructor at the University of Iowa, offers additional suggestions:

1. Practice your speech using a detailed outline.
2. Continue practicing, using the outline less and increasing eye-contact with your imagined audience.
3. Practice from a key-word outline, reading only direct quotations.
4. Work on integrating body language and visual aids into your verbal message.
5. Check the timing of your speech.
6. Practice in front of friends, listen to their advice, and make changes if necessary.

7. Practice some more until you feel comfortable and confident.

Other factors to work on include the following (from Craig, n.d.):

1. Appearance -- You want to dress appropriately for the situation. This will help you feel comfortable in front of your audience.
2. Facial Expression -- Make sure that your facial expressions serve a purpose.
3. Voice -- Craig recommends that you work at controlling the following vocal properties:
 - a. Volume -- Speak at an appropriate volume and vary it for emphasis.
 - b. Pitch -- This refers to how high or low your voice is (e.g., bass versus treble). Effective speakers strive to use their optimal pitch as the base for their speech, although they vary it as well for emphasis. Optimal pitch is four or five notes above the lowest note you can sing.
 - c. Rhythm -- Rhythm is determined by your use of volume and pitch. Avoid using a "singsong" pattern but give your rhythm some variation as well. A monotone voice is not desirable either.
 - d. Tempo -- This is the rate at which you make sounds. People in the southern states, for example, generally speak slower than those in the northern states. Learn to vary your tempo and use pauses for emphasis.
 - e. Articulation and Enunciation -- You want everyone to understand you, and work at correctly pronouncing words as well.

Reducing Speech Anxiety

The same methods used to reduce exam anxiety are used for reducing speech anxiety:

1. Relaxation Techniques
2. Cognitive Therapy
3. Systematic Desensitization Therapy
4. Imagery (as imagery is a self-hypnotic technique, it will be covered in the next section).

Relaxation Techniques

You will find relaxation methods in Appendices 3, 4, and 7.

Cognitive Therapy

We reviewed the triple-column technique in Chapter 4. Here is one example:

MALADAPTIVE THOUGHT OR BELIEF	QUESTIONING IT	HEALTHIER THOUGHT OR BELIEF
"I can't stand to talk in front of my class. They will see how nervous I am. "	"What evidence do I have that indicates I cannot give a presentation? I may not enjoy the experience, but I will get through it. Even though I will be nervous, it will be more obvious to me than to them. Who cares anyways? Most of them are also nervous when speaking.	"I can give an effective speech. Even if I am nervous, I can still deliver a good talk."

--	--	--

The full instructions are provided in Appendix 10 and apply equally to speech anxiety.

Systematic Desensitization Therapy

Repeated here are the instructions for how this method works:

Constructing Your Anxiety Hierarchy

1. Purchase a stack of index cards or cut up some cardboard into 3" x 4" rectangles.
2. Complete the questionnaire on the next page.
3. Cut along each row so that you create strips of paper, each with one item on it.
4. Throw away the items for which you responded with a "0" as these situations do not cause you anxiety.
5. Paste or staple each remaining item on a separate index card or piece of cardboard.
6. Arrange these completed cards in order from the item that causes you the least anxiety on the top of the deck to the one that causes you the most anxiety on the bottom of the deck.

7. Number the entire deck of cards sequentially, beginning with 1 on the top of the deck.

Working Through Your Hierarchy

1. Read two cards a few times before proceeding to the next step. Which cards you read depends upon where you are at in desensitizing yourself to the items in your hierarchy. If you are just beginning, for example, you begin with your cards 1 and 2. If you already desensitized yourself to cards 1 and 2, then you would begin with cards 3 and 4.
2. Close your eyes and get yourself into a relaxed state, using whatever technique feels comfortable for you.
3. Visualize the situation from the first card you read while remaining relaxed. Maintain the visualization for 20 seconds or so. Then stop the visualization and refocus on feelings of relaxation. Repeat the visualization for another 20 seconds and again refocus on feelings of relaxation. If you can stay relaxed while visualizing the image from this card twice, you are ready to move onto visualizing your subsequent card. If you're unable to stay relaxed while visualizing this image on these two occasions, return to the previous card in your hierarchy and work through it again before coming back to the subsequent card.

NOTE: The entire process of working through the cards successfully may take several days or weeks. Following completion, I recommend that you revisit your hierarchy periodically to ensure that you continue to approach presentations with less anxiety.

CREATING YOUR SPEECH ANXIETY HIERARCHY

Answer the following questions by circling the number in the column that represents how much anxiety the situation creates for you. Use the following scale: 0 = None, 1 = Mild, 2 = Moderate, 3 = Severe After completing this, add additional situations that cause you speech anxiety.

Creating Your Speech Anxiety Hierarchy

Circle the number in the column that represents how much anxiety each situation creates for you (0 = None, 1 = Mild, 2 = Moderate, 3 = Severe). Then add your own situations in the blank rows.

SITUATION	0 = None	1 = Mild	2 = Moderate	3 = Severe
BEFORE THE SPEECH				
Two days before the speech	0	1	2	3
The night before the speech	0	1	2	3
Going to bed and attempting to sleep the night before the speech	0	1	2	3
Waking up the day of the speech	0	1	2	3
Waiting for my turn to speak	0	1	2	3
Walking up to give the speech	0	1	2	3
A local television station has asked you to speak on camera	0	1	2	3
DURING THE SPEECH				
I am now standing in front of the audience	0	1	2	3
I am beginning to speak	0	1	2	3
I notice someone in the audience looks bored	0	1	2	3
I lose my place in my notes	0	1	2	3
I am asked a question I cannot answer	0	1	2	3
My mind goes blank for a moment	0	1	2	3
AFTER THE SPEECH				
I leave the speech believing I have done a poor job	0	1	2	3

SITUATION	0 = None 1 = Mild 2 = Moderate 3 = Severe
After leaving, I remember some important points I forgot to include	0 1 2 3
My grade for the speech is less than I expected	0 1 2 3
[SPACE FOR ADDITIONAL ITEMS]	
	0 1 2 3
	0 1 2 3
	0 1 2 3

Self-Hypnosis Applications

If you start becoming overly anxious during the speech, use the REC/TTF exercise already introduced in Chapter 8. All you would do is concentrate on the words, "relaxation, energy, and confidence" (REC) as you breathe in, and "tension, tiredness, and fear" (TTF) as you breathe out. Anywhere from five to ten breaths is recommended. The more times you have done this before the speech, the more you will have conditioned this response -- meaning it should become more effective.

Suggestions/Affirmations

(Note: instructions for using suggestions/affirmations are found in Appendix 2)

1. I am motivated to prepare adequately before giving a speech.
2. I feel cool, calm, and collected when I talk before an audience.
3. I am okay with being the center of attention periodically.
4. I feel passion for the speech that I will deliver.
5. My speech doesn't have to be perfect -- I will do the best that I can, and this will suffice.

[Write some of your own below]:

- 6.
- 7.
- 8.

Imagery

(Note: instructions for using imagery are found in Appendix 3) The more you visualize yourself giving an effective speech or presentation, the more your anxiety will diminish. The important thing to remember is to give it as much detail as you can. Imagine having confidence in both how you feel and in how you posture yourself. Picture the passion you feel and see it come across as you get into your talk. See the audience responding to you and see yourself responding to the audience.

Imagery is also an excellent forum for practicing all aspects of your speech: use it to rehearse the things you want to say, and the way you want to say them. Imagine all the aspects of giving a good speech that were introduced earlier in the conventional methods section (e.g., appearance, voice dynamics).

Script

[Caution: If you have a medical condition or physical problem that might prevent you from doing any of the exercises contained in this script, please use a pencil and cross out the part of the script that contains these exercises. If you are uncertain about whether to exclude something, ask your physician before making this self-hypnosis recording]

"Get comfortable, preferably lying down with your arms and legs uncrossed. Now contract all your muscles simultaneously and hold the tension [pause for 7 breaths]. Now relax your muscles and notice the contrast [pause for 4 breaths]. Now contract all your muscles simultaneously again and hold the tension [pause for 7 breaths]. Now relax your muscles and notice the contrast once more [pause for 4 breaths].

"With your eyes open, stare at a spot slightly behind your normal line of vision so that you feel a mild eye strain. Do not let your gaze drift from that spot. Take in five deep abdominal breaths [pause for 2 breaths]. Inhale the fifth breath extra deep, and while holding it, count backwards mentally "5-4-3-2-1." When

you get down to "1," exhale and close your eyes at the same time [pause for 2 breaths].

"Whenever you are to give a speech or presentation, you prepare extensively for it [pause for 1 breath]. You learn your material well so that the content is mostly committed to memory [pause for 1 breath]. You also practice your speech several times, both out loud and in your imagination [pause for 1 breath]. You remember to use relaxation exercises, such as abdominal breathing, to help you become comfortable before getting up to give your presentation [pause for 2 breaths].

"Rather than having your speech written out word-for-word, you instead have a key-word outline in front of you [pause for 1 breath]. You are amazed that although you feel some excitement before giving your talk, you soon become cool, calm, and collected in front of your audience [pause for 1 breath]. Your passion also comes through, however, as you find ways to modulate your voice dynamics to enhance interest [pause for 2 breaths].

"You are finding that it is okay to become the center of attention when you give a talk [pause for 1 breath]. Although people's eyes are focused on you, they are mostly focused on what you have to say [pause for 1 breath]. You speak with confidence and authority -- you find your voice, and your voice is strong and impactful [pause for 1 breath]. You have something to say, and you want to say it when given the opportunity [pause for 1 breath]. With practice, you find that you begin enjoying giving speeches and presentations [pause for 2 breaths].

"When you are ready to leave self-hypnosis, first silently tell yourself that you will count to five and that at the count of five, you will come out of self-hypnosis feeling refreshed, relaxed, and confident. Then awaken yourself by counting to five mentally and say "AWAKE!" to yourself [pause for 3 breaths]. Then open your eyes."

Chapter Summary

Public speaking anxiety is the most common fear experienced by the average person. This chapter has shown you methods to help you give a better presentation, and it has also shown you both conventional and hypnotic methods for reducing speech anxiety. By following the suggestions outlined here, you will begin to find your voice when giving a talk.

Chapter 12 — Sleeping Through Your Career Search

Jared was told all his life that he would follow in his father's footsteps by becoming a physician. An admirable profession, Jared thought, but not one that he was particularly interested in. His interests really seemed to find expression in the arts, especially drama. Jared took drama throughout junior and senior high school, and drama teachers occasionally told him that he had real talent. He thought that acting would become his career, but his dad nearly had a coronary when he told him the news.

Dad said in no uncertain terms that acting was an unacceptable career choice, and Jared would instead enroll in pre-medical education. Despite his own wishes, Jared could understand the logic of what his dad was insisting upon.

Jared began pre-med, and although he hated chemistry, biology, and math, he was gifted and this meant he could succeed at nearly any career choice. His grades and letters of recommendation eventually did lead him into the faculty of medicine, and a few years later he graduated and became a family practitioner. Jared enjoyed his income immensely. When he wasn't working, however, he often felt depleted of energy and joy.

The thought of having to return to work was almost sickening, but how could he change careers now that he had invested so many years into becoming a doctor? He began looking for ways to help him cope better, and drugs were easy enough to come by. The drugs seemed to help, but what really helped him feel better was drinking an entire bottle of vodka every night.

Twenty years later, Jared began feeling a pain in his lower back. He ignored it as long as he could but was soon forced to seek medical help. He had incurable liver disease, and within six months was dead. Everyone who attended the funeral said he seemed like such an unhappy soul, despite his prestigious and successful career. No one could understand it.

There are some decisions in life that have a profound impact on our health and our happiness. One of these is the lifestyle decisions we make, another is our choice of an intimate other, and still another is our career choice. As most of us spend the best part of our waking hours working in our careers -- and our careers provide for the financial resources necessary to have an optimal

lifestyle which may help us attract a worthy mate as well -- perhaps our career choice determines our happiness more than any other life decision.

Using a very large sample, Holland and Gottfredson (cited in Morgan & Skovholt, 1977) found that an individual's top occupational daydream is often more predictive of his or her eventual career choice than scores on the Self-Directed Search, a popular career interest test. Wilson and Eddy (1982) claimed that knowing oneself may be more important in decision making than knowing the world of work. Most career practitioners would agree that both are significant, and this chapter will look at how you can enhance your ability to make a good career decision.

Making an appropriate career choice is important for academic success. Once you know which career you feel passion for, you will begin feeling motivated to excel in school. Without a goal that extends beyond your education, it is difficult to work hard because school can seem removed from real life at times. If you are going to work hard at something, it may also be something that takes you to your own destination.

Conventional Methods

Making an appointment with your guidance counselor is highly recommended when you are ready to make a career decision, in addition to whatever steps you take on your own. Looking at the career exploration process in depth is beyond the scope of this section, but generally it follows four steps. The Internet websites included in the following four steps do contain this information in depth, however, if you are interested in reading more about them:

1. Increasing self-awareness -- The more you know about yourself, the easier it will become to make a good career decision. A guidance counselor at your school may have several tests, inventories, and questionnaires for you to complete that will help you become more aware of your interests, personality, aptitudes, values, and other important factors to consider in making your choice. Some good Internet sites to help you increase your awareness are as follows:

A. Career Planning and Self-Assessment Guides

- (1) <https://www.mynextmove.org> (O\NET Interest Profiler)

(2) <https://www.jobbank.gc.ca/career-planning>

(3) <https://www.careeronestop.org>

B. Personality Preference Guides

(1) <https://www.truity.com/test/type-finder-personality-test-new>

(2) <https://www.16personalities.com>

(3) <https://www.humanmetrics.com/personality/type>

(4) <https://www.keirsey.com>

2. Learning about the world of work -- The more you know about the career opportunities available, the better chance you will have of making a good career decision. Some good Internet sites to help you explore career possibilities are as follows:

A. In the United States

(1) <https://www.onetonline.org> (O\NET OnLine)

(2) <https://www.bls.gov/ooh> (Occupational Outlook Handbook)

B. In Canada

(1) <https://www.jobbank.gc.ca> (Government of Canada Job Bank)

(2) <https://www.jobbank.gc.ca/trend-analysis> (labor market information)

3. Coming up with a list of possible career choices -- For this process it helps to both use lists of career titles and to brainstorm either alone or preferably with others who know you well.

4. Evaluating the choices and making a career decision -- This is probably the hardest step in career exploration because it means weighing everything you know about yourself with what each career choice you are considering has to offer.

Self-Hypnosis Applications

Several writers have commented on the usefulness of using imagery work within career counseling (Morgan & Skovholt, 1977; Owen & Wilson, 1980; Reupert & Maybery, 2000; Sarnoff & Remer, 1982; Wilson & Eddy, 1982). One of the common themes expressed in these articles is that imagery helps people improve their self-awareness. Sarnoff and Remer (1982) used guided imagery to help clients generate career alternatives, and they found that this group produced more alternatives compared to a discussion control group. They concluded that guided imagery promotes divergent thinking.

Suggestions/Affirmations

(Note: instructions for using suggestions/affirmations are found in Appendix 2)

1. I am motivated to take the necessary steps to learn more about myself and my interests.
2. I am motivated to take the necessary steps to learn more about the world of work and about career opportunities.
3. My mind often makes me think about my career options.
4. There is not one perfect career choice, but there are several good choices for me that I need to discover.
5. My dreams sometimes reveal interesting career choices to me, and I remember them in the morning so that I can write them down.

[Write some of your own below]:

- 6.
- 7.
- 8.

Imagery

(Note: instructions for using imagery are found in Appendix 3)

Applications in Career Decision Making

I have organized this section according to the use of imagery work during three periods of career development: before a career decision is made (i.e., Pre-

Career Choice), during the decision-making process (i.e., Career Choice), and during the time you are beginning your job search (i.e., Job Searching).

Pre-Career Choice

Increasing self-confidence. Imagery suggested while in the hypnotic state has been used successfully to increase a woman's self-confidence to later make a career decision (Reupert & Maybery, 2000). Improving self-confidence is a common goal of hypnotic intervention (Hartland, 1971).

Improving self-esteem. An entire book has been written about how imaging and self-hypnosis can be used to improve a person's self-esteem (Napier, 1990). Hartland (1971) also writes about this as well. Enhancing self-awareness. This was mentioned earlier as a frequently referred-to application of imaging within career counseling work.

Career Choice

Increasing creativity. As mentioned earlier, Sarnoff and Remer (1982) found that guided imagery was more helpful in generating career alternatives compared to a discussion control group. Other research by Raikov (1976) suggested that creativity in subjects can be enhanced in those capable of deep hypnosis.

Enhancing career exploration. Imagery, whether guided or self-directed, is a wonderful way of having clients visualize themselves performing different careers. You can imagine yourself going through a typical day of what someone in that career would experience. It may be the next best thing to engage in job-shadowing. Wilson and Eddy (1982) had clients imagine themselves with high or low scores on interest inventories and then asked them questions like, "Picture in your mind how your life would be: What sort of things are you doing? What would you do differently than now? Where are you living? How is your lifestyle different? How do other people act toward you?" (p. 293).

Putting ideas into the unconscious for answers. Our unconscious minds often provide us with the answers we are looking for -- all we need to do is ask. One way of using this technique is to ask yourself for career possibilities once you retire to bed. You may find that something comes to you in a dream that is helpful, or you may wake up with a few career-related thoughts already in your mind.

Job Searching

Preparing for job interviews. I have used this technique myself. While in a relaxed state, imagine yourself in the job interview situation, visualizing as fully as possible how composed and confident you will feel. You then anticipate the questions that may be asked of you, and how you will respond to these, imagining both the verbal (what you will say) and the nonverbal aspects (voice dynamics, facial expression, etc.). Making a choice between different job offers. Like the idea presented in enhancing career exploration described earlier, here you visualize doing each job on a typical day. You can also put the choice to your unconscious for answers and then sleep on it.

Some Useful Visualizations

Below are some visual images that have been used for career counseling by various researchers and practitioners:

1. Images of "a beautiful outdoor place, flying to any part of the world, and visiting the future" (Skovholt, Morgan, & Negron-Cunningham, 1989, p. 303).
2. Image of yourself at the end of your career. Then write a soliloquy about what you have accomplished in your life; how you have felt about these accomplishments, your secret hopes, feelings, and dreams; and how you and the world have changed (Torrance & Reynolds, p. 42, cited in Gerler, 1980).
3. The "Day in the Future" Fantasy (Morgan & Skovholt, 1977). A guided imagery that asks you to imagine all the events that occur to you, from morning till night, during a typical workday 5, 10, or 15 years from now.
4. The "Award Ceremony" Fantasy (Morgan & Skovholt). You imagine you are receiving a special award for a special competence. The fantasy is said to help you get in touch with your goals and motivation.
5. The "Opposite Sex" Fantasy (Morgan & Skovholt). You imagine you are the opposite sex performing work-related activities. The fantasy is meant to diminish gender stereotypes in choosing a career.
6. Reupert and Maybery (2000) used three techniques with a woman who was seen for career counseling, using hypnosis as the medium. Borrowing from other writers, they used time projection (like the "Day in the Future"

Fantasy), going to a special place (and receiving a "special gift" from the unconscious), and listening to an older and wiser version of herself (reported as a common technique with therapists).

7. An image I suggested earlier in Chapter 5 focused on getting in touch with the purpose or meaning of your life. This can be done in numerous ways, one of which is to imagine what you want said in your eulogy after your death. What do you want to be remembered for?

Script

[Caution: If you have a medical condition or physical problem that might prevent you from doing any of the exercises contained in this script, please use a pencil and cross out the part of the script that contains these exercises. If you are uncertain about whether to exclude something, ask your physician before making this self-hypnosis recording]

"Get comfortable, preferably lying down with your arms and legs uncrossed. Now contract all your muscles simultaneously and hold the tension [pause for 7 breaths]. Now relax your muscles and notice the contrast [pause for 4 breaths]. Now contract all your muscles simultaneously again and hold the tension [pause for 7 breaths]. Now relax your muscles and notice the contrast once more [pause for 4 breaths].

"With your eyes open, stare at a spot slightly behind your normal line of vision so that you feel a mild eye strain. Do not let your gaze drift from that spot. Take in five deep abdominal breaths [pause for 2 breaths]. Inhale the fifth breath extra deep, and while holding it, count backwards mentally "5-4-3-2-1." When you get down to "1," exhale and close your eyes at the same time [pause for 2 breaths].

"Finding a suitable career choice is one of the most important decisions you will make in your life [pause for 1 breath]. You recognize that there is not one perfect career choice, but there are several good choices that you need to discover [pause for 1 breath]. It is imperative that you spend sufficient time on this task so that you come up with an appropriate career plan [pause for 1 breath]. Consequently, you are motivated to take the necessary steps to learn more about yourself and your interests [pause for 1 breath]. You also feel motivated to take the necessary steps to learn more about the world of work and about career opportunities [pause for 2 breaths].

"Often your mind takes you to thinking about your career options [pause for 1 breath]. Sometimes you find yourself fantasizing about working in different careers [pause for 1 breath]. Your dreams sometimes reveal interesting career choices to you, and you remember them in the morning so that you can write them down [pause for 1 breath]. Both your conscious and subconscious minds are working together as a team to help you with this goal [pause for 2 breaths].

"Not only do you use imagery to help you to consider different career alternatives, but you also use it to prepare for job interviews [pause for 1 breath]. You envisage yourself in the job interview situation itself, visualizing as fully as possible how composed and confident you feel [pause for 1 breath]. You also anticipate questions that might be asked of you, and how you will respond to these questions [pause for 1 breath]. You include the nonverbal aspects as well, such as having a steady calm voice, and having appropriate voice volume, voice tone, facial expressions, and body posture [pause for 2 breaths].

"When you are ready to leave self-hypnosis, first silently tell yourself that you will count to five and that at the count of five, you will come out of self-hypnosis feeling refreshed, relaxed, and confident. Then awaken yourself by counting to five mentally and say "AWAKE!" to yourself [pause for 3 breaths]. Then open your eyes."

Chapter Summary

Besides the many conscious processes you use to help you in deciding upon a suitable career choice, you can also rely on self-hypnosis for helping to get properly motivated to begin thinking about careers, for assistance in coming up with viable career options, and for preparing for job interviews. If knowledge of self is indeed more important in career-decision making than knowledge of the world of work (Wilson & Eddy, 1982), imagery has the added advantage in the many ways it can enhance self-awareness. I encourage you to try it.

Epilogue — More Power to You

Einstein said, "When I examine myself and my methods of thought, I come to the conclusion that the gift of fantasy has meant more to me than my talent for absorbing positive knowledge" (Dreistadt, as cited in Bowers & Bowers, 1979, p. 359). You are now at the end of your next beginning. Succeeding in school and in life doesn't have to be as difficult as you might have thought. It remains challenging, but challenging is not the same as grueling.

When you are doing it right, you will feel the inner power that gets released from succeeding at one goal after another. Each success strengthens your resolve to enjoy yet another success and still another. Along with the mental and emotional gains are the increases in stamina that you will experience.

This book has shown you how to improve in several major areas that ultimately lead to higher grades. Through both tried and true conventional methods and through the best of what we know about self-hypnosis, this book has armed you with a plethora of techniques to help you succeed at your goals. As this is the first edition, your feedback is important to me. If there is something you found particularly helpful, or not helpful, let me know -- I would love to hear from you. You can contact me by sending an e-mail to alderson@ucalgary.ca. Your feedback will be incorporated into the next edition of *Grade Power*.

Perhaps you will never sing like my friend I wrote about in the preface. Perhaps you will never dance either. But know that if it were something you ever wanted to do, you could, and self-hypnosis could be your ally in your quest to become more of who you want to become. Success is about believing in yourself, feeling passion for your goals, persisting in attaining them, and keeping a balanced lifestyle most of the time. Now is your time, so make it the best it could ever be. You deserve it.

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Appendices

Appendix 1 — How to Make and Use Your Own Recorded Scripts

In addition to the major scripts that follow these instructions, there are shorter scripts suggested throughout this book. The instructions for recording them and using them are the same.

Making Scripts

Voice Dynamics

Remember -- you will be recording scripts that are intended to serve a purpose, the first of which is to help you relax. Your voice dynamics will have some effect on this. Before you begin recording, practice getting your voice into the following state:

1. Relaxed, Slow Voice -- you will want to talk slowly on the recording and sound as if you are already relaxed. Get relaxed before you start taping.
2. Monotone -- the more monotone the sound, the better. Practice talking at the same pitch, with little variety in your tone. It can be effective to lower your pitch toward the end of each sentence if you prefer, but it is unnecessary.
3. Deeper Tone -- another helpful, but unnecessary, voice dynamic. Practice talking in a somewhat deeper voice than you normally use.

Pause Conventions

To make an effective recording, you will want to allow pauses of various lengths between the sentences that you read during the recording. The script tells you whether to pause for one, two, or three breaths after each sentence. To pause for one breath, simply wait until you have exhaled the next breath before continuing with your reading of the next sentence. To pause for two or three breaths, wait for two or three exhaled breaths before continuing.

Recording

When you are ready, proceed with the following steps: Step 1. Set Up Equipment and Make Sure It Works -- be sure everything is working before you

begin. Test the equipment out by recording a few lines and then playing it back. Step 2. Begin Reading the Script -- use the voice dynamics you practiced earlier. Remember to pause for the appropriate length according to the conventions described above.

Using Scripts

Hypnosis and self-hypnosis create changes when deeply held attitudes, beliefs, and behavior change. This takes time, and that is why repetition of suggestions and imagery is important. Listen to your recordings whenever you have time to relax safely. It is not safe to listen to the recordings while you are driving, for example. The deeper you become conditioned for self-hypnosis, the greater will be the depth of relaxation you feel while listening to your recordings. Be sure you are in comfortable surroundings where you don't have to do anything other than relax.

It is generally best to listen to a recording daily to enhance the repetition of the suggestions and imagery. You will know if it is helping you after you have been consistent in listening to it for at least a week. If it is not helping you, you may want to spend more time on the other techniques described in this book to deal with the particular area you are wanting to improve.

Appendix 2 — How to Use Verbal Suggestions and Positive Affirmations

Each chapter in Parts II and III of this book contains five suggestions that can be used as verbal suggestions, positive affirmations, or both. Below are instructions for how you use them:

Using Verbal Suggestions with Self-Hypnosis

Using the Suggestions Contained in Parts II and III

1. Each chapter includes five verbal suggestions/affirmations. Pick one of these for use in self-hypnosis.
2. Read the suggestion to yourself five times before entering self-hypnosis. The suggestion should be read slowly, meaningfully, and reflectively so that it becomes the most important thought entering your mind.
3. Place yourself into self-hypnosis using the basic induction found in Appendix 7 and remain there for at least 3 or 4 minutes.
4. During these 3 or 4 minutes (or longer), you will find that the words in the suggestion begin to enter your mind in an automatic or semi-automatic fashion, although not necessarily in their correct sequence. If the words are not forthcoming on their own, use as little effort as possible to bring the key words of the suggestion into your mind.
5. Awaken yourself in the usual manner.

Using Your Own Suggestions

In each chapter, there is room for you to write your own suggestions for later use as verbal suggestions, positive affirmations, or both. Below are instructions for how you use them:

1. Write positively worded suggestions in the book or on a separate sheet of paper. Pick one of these for use in self-hypnosis. Each suggestion should be a one-sentence statement that conveys the intent of your goal. For example, if you wanted to become a calmer individual, you would not use the suggestion, "I will try to become less tense each day" for two reasons. Firstly, the word try implies the possibility of failure to your subconscious

mind, and secondly the word tense may increase your tension. Instead, find a more positive word that means its direct opposite. For example, a positive suggestion is "I will become calmer each day." The word calm suggests the desired outcome.

2. Read the suggestion to yourself five times before entering self-hypnosis. The suggestion should be read slowly, meaningfully, and reflectively so that it becomes the most important thought entering your mind.
3. Place yourself into self-hypnosis using the basic induction found in Appendix 7 and remain there for at least 3 or 4 minutes.
4. During these 3 or 4 minutes (or longer), you will find that the words in the suggestion begin to enter your mind in an automatic or semi-automatic fashion, although not necessarily in their correct sequence. If the words are not forthcoming on their own, use as little effort as possible to bring the key words of your suggestion into your mind.
5. Awaken yourself in the usual manner.

Using Positive Affirmations

The suggestions contained in each chapter, or the ones you write yourself, can be used as positive affirmations. An affirmation is like a suggestion, a message you give to yourself repeatedly. The intent is that, over time, the affirmation will become internalized, meaning that you begin to believe it. If you haven't read the section above called Using Your Own Suggestions, review now the first point that explains how to write a positively worded suggestion/affirmation.

1. Re-write or type the positively worded affirmations into large print on a single sheet of paper and keep this list by your bed.
2. Then read the list to yourself five times before you go to sleep, and five times when you wake up. Each time you read it, concentrate on it and think about what it means to you.
3. Feel free to add visual images that also contain the theme(s) of the affirmations.
4. The entire exercise of using affirmations need take only two or three minutes.

Appendix 3 — How to Use Visual Imagery in Self-Hypnosis

Visualization is like daydreaming, only it is directed by you. It is best accomplished while relaxing. You relax deeply every night before you fall asleep. Consequently, relaxing is nothing new to you. There are many ways to relax, and below I suggest the simplest way of doing this.

1. Lie down in a comfortable place. This could be your couch, your bed, or on a recliner.
2. Close your eyes and let yourself become calm and relaxed. If you want to relax deeply, let it happen. In a deep relaxation, you will probably not want to move at all. You might also feel heavy, warm, and tired.
3. Begin to visualize, as clearly as you can, that which has been suggested to you in the chapter you are reading. This means to picture it in your mind's eye, similar to daydreaming about it.
4. The best visual images are detailed, so create as much detail as you can. For example, if you are visualizing a burning candle, see the shape and size of the candle, picture its burning wick, imagine the flame darting about, and see the wax dripping down its sides and falling onto its holder.
5. Allow as many of your senses into the visual image as possible. For example, imagine hearing people talk to you or other sounds (like ocean waves), bring in the sense of smell (what does ocean air smell like? What about the smell of melting chocolate?), add color, allow the tactile to develop (in a beach scene, feel the sun's warmth upon your skin, and the sand under your feet), and even taste (remember the taste of candy floss?). That's all you need to do to derive benefit from visualization exercises. Continue to do these daily, for 10 to 15 minutes, until you are satisfied with the improvement that you have made in the given area.

Appendix 4 — Progressive Muscle Relaxation Script

Progressive Muscle Relaxation teaches you how to physically relax every major muscle group in your body. By practicing this technique, you will learn how to turn a tight muscle into a relaxed muscle at will. The following script was prepared by Gregory E. Harris and is included here with his permission. Remember that if you have a medical condition that precludes you from doing any of the specific muscle contraction exercises contained in this script, avoid doing them. Whenever you want to listen to your recording, first find a comfortable spot on a well-supported chair, a couch, or a bed. You want your entire body to feel comfortable. Record the entire script below using the instructions found in Appendix 1.

"Take a deep breath from your diaphragm, hold it for a few seconds, and then allow it to flow out from your mouth [pause for 2 breaths]. Notice the quiet and peacefulness in your relaxation place [pause for 1 breath]. Take a few more deep breaths just like the one before and allow yourself to notice whatever is coming to your mind [pause for 1 breath]. At this point you may be already starting to feel some relaxation happening in your body [pause for 1 breath]. That's okay; this will become an increasingly natural feeling as you practice this relaxation exercise [pause for 2 breaths].

"Squeeze your right hand into a tight fist and feel the tension and pressure in your hand and forearm [pause for 3 breaths]. Maintain this tension for about five seconds and notice how it feels, focusing on the tension and pressure [pause for 3 breaths]. Feel it all the way up your arm [pause for 1 breath]. Now just let it relax [pause for 1 breath]. Just let it go limp [pause for 1 breath]. Notice the relaxed feeling that happens when you just let the tension go [pause for 1 breath]. Feel the relaxed feeling [pause for 1 breath].

"Now tense your right hand again and feel the tension [pause for 3 breaths]. Focus on the tension and how it makes you feel [pause for 1 breath]. Pay attention to the pressure [pause for 1 breath]. Now let it relax [pause for 1 breath]. Notice the difference it makes to relax [pause for 1 breath]. Feel the difference when you relax [pause for 1 breath]. Just notice the relaxation feeling in your hand and forearm [pause for 1 breath].

"Now flex your right bicep muscle [pause for 3 breaths]. Feel the tension and pressure in your muscle [pause for 1 breath]. Hold this tension for about five

seconds and just observe the tension [pause for 1 breath]. Now let it relax [pause for 1 breath]. Let it just feel relaxed [pause for 1 breath]. Notice the difference between relaxation and tension [pause for 1 breath]. Focus on this difference and feel the relaxation feeling [pause for 1 breath]. Feel it in your body [pause for 1 breath].

"Flex your right bicep again and notice how it feels [pause for 3 breaths]. Pay attention to this feeling of tension and pressure [pause for 1 breath]. Just feel the tension [pause for 1 breath]. Then just allow it to release [pause for 1 breath]. Feel the difference between relaxation and tension [pause for 1 breath]. Just notice the relaxed feeling [pause for 1 breath]. Just enjoy that calm relaxed feeling in your body [pause for 1 breath].

"When you are ready, squeeze your left hand into a tight fist [pause for 3 breaths]. Hold this tight for about five seconds and notice the tension and pressure in your hand and forearm [pause for 1 breath]. Experience the tension and pressure [pause for 1 breath]. Now just let that fist go and fall into a relaxed position [pause for 1 breath]. Just feel the relaxing difference [pause for 1 breath]. Notice how you can control the relaxation and tension [pause for 1 breath]. Just feel the relaxation in your hand and forearm [pause for 1 breath].

"Now squeeze your left hand again [pause for 3 breaths]. Notice the tension and pressure in your hand and forearm [pause for 1 breath]. Focus on the tension [pause for 1 breath]. Now let it relax once again [pause for 1 breath]. Feel free to just focus on how relaxed and limp your hand and forearm feel [pause for 1 breath]. Just notice the relaxed feeling in your body [pause for 1 breath]. Notice the differences between relaxing and tensing, and how good it feels to be relaxed [pause for 1 breath].

"Now tense your left bicep [pause for 3 breaths]. Notice the tension and pressure [pause for 1 breath]. Try holding this tension for about five seconds [pause for 1 breath]. Now let it relax [pause for 1 breath]. Just let it fall into a comfortable position [pause for 1 breath]. Notice the relaxation [pause for 1 breath]. Just sit for a few seconds with the relaxation feeling in your left bicep [pause for 1 breath].

"When you are ready, tense your left bicep again [pause for 1 breath]. Notice the tension and the pressure in this muscle [pause for 1 breath]. Notice how it is different from the relaxing feeling [pause for 1 breath]. Now just let it relax

[pause for 1 breath]. Feel relaxation [pause for 1 breath]. Feel how it is different from the tension [pause for 1 breath]. Just enjoy the relaxing feeling [pause for 1 breath].

"This time wrinkle up your forehead [pause for 1 breath]. Notice the tension in your forehead [pause for 1 breath]. Just hold this for a few seconds while you notice the tension [pause for 1 breath]. Now let it relax [pause for 1 breath]. Feel the difference relaxing makes [pause for 1 breath]. Just notice the relaxation feeling [pause for 1 breath].

"Now wrinkle up your forehead again [pause for 1 breath]. Notice the tension and pressure in your forehead [pause for 1 breath]. Feel how different this pressure feels [pause for 1 breath]. Just let your forehead relax [pause for 1 breath]. Experience the relaxation [pause for 1 breath]. Just sit for a few seconds and notice the relaxation in your forehead [pause for 1 breath]. Notice the difference between relaxing and tensing [pause for 1 breath].

"Now tense your cheeks by making a large smile [pause for 1 breath]. Try making the biggest smile you can [pause for 1 breath]. Notice the tension in your cheeks [pause for 1 breath]. Feel the tension [pause for 1 breath]. Now just let that smile go [pause for 1 breath]. Just let it relax [pause for 1 breath]. Notice the relaxation feeling in your cheeks and face [pause for 1 breath]. Feel the relaxing feeling [pause for 1 breath].

"When you are ready, make another really big smile [pause for 1 breath]. Notice the tension in your cheeks [pause for 1 breath]. Study this tension [pause for 1 breath]. Hold this tension for a few seconds [pause for 1 breath]. Then just let it relax [pause for 1 breath]. Now feel relaxation [pause for 1 breath]. Notice the difference between the relaxing feeling and the tension [pause for 1 breath]. Just enjoy that relaxing feeling [pause for 1 breath].

"Now tighten up your jaw and notice the pressure and tension [pause for 1 breath]. Just experience all that tension in your jaw [pause for 1 breath]. Notice how it makes you feel [pause for 1 breath]. Then just let it relax [pause for 1 breath]. Just let the tension melt away [pause for 1 breath]. Feel how relaxing it feels and how different it feels [pause for 1 breath]. Just sit and enjoy the relaxing feeling for a few seconds [pause for 1 breath].

"Now tighten up your jaw again [pause for 1 breath]. Notice the pressure in your jaw [pause for 1 breath]. Notice how it makes you feel [pause for 1

breath]. Hold that pressure and tension for a few seconds [pause for 1 breath]. Then just let it go [pause for 1 breath]. Feel the relaxation in your jaw and face [pause for 1 breath]. Notice the difference between the tension and relaxation [pause for 1 breath]. Feel how relaxed you have made yourself [pause for 1 breath]. Just enjoy that relaxing feeling [pause for 1 breath].

"You have been doing a very good job becoming relaxed [pause for 1 breath]. You can notice the changes in your body from when you first started this relaxation exercise [pause for 1 breath]. You may notice that relaxing feeling of being at peace throughout all those parts of your body that you have already relaxed [pause for 1 breath]. It can be useful to review those parts to remind yourself how relaxed you really are and give yourself the chance to relax those parts even more deeply [pause for 1 breath]. As you read through the list, feel free to remember the relaxation feeling in each part of your body [pause for 1 breath]. If there is a part that you feel could be relaxed even more, just repeat the relaxation steps that you already did [pause for 1 breath]. Just go at your own pace [pause for 1 breath]. Take all the time you need [pause for 1 breath].

"Focus on your right hand and forearm, feel how relaxed they are [pause for 1 breath]. Notice the relaxing feeling in your right bicep [pause for 1 breath]. Take some time to enjoy that feeling [pause for 1 breath]. Notice the relaxation in your left hand and forearm [pause for 1 breath]. Feel the relaxation in your left bicep [pause for 1 breath]. This relaxation feeling goes all the way into your head and face [pause for 1 breath], with nice warm feelings into your forehead and cheeks [pause for 1 breath], and down into your jawbones [pause for 1 breath]. Just feel this warm relaxation feeling for a few seconds [pause for 1 breath].

"When you are ready, tense your shoulders and upper back [pause for 3 breaths]. Feel the tension throughout your shoulders and your upper back [pause for 1 breath]. Hold this tension for a few seconds [pause for 1 breath]. Then just release the tension and let the relaxation come pouring in [pause for 1 breath]. Let your shoulders and upper back just relax in a natural limp position [pause for 1 breath]. Pay attention to this relaxation [pause for 1 breath]. Feel the difference between relaxation and tension [pause for 1 breath]. Just sit and enjoy the relaxing feeling [pause for 1 breath].

"Tense your shoulders and upper back again [pause for 3 breaths]. Notice the tension, feel the pressure [pause for 1 breath]. Observe this pressure for a few

seconds [pause for 1 breath]. Then let it relax again [pause for 1 breath]. Notice the relaxing feeling for a few seconds [pause for 1 breath].

"This time, tense your stomach muscles and your lower back by making them as tight as you can [pause for 3 breaths]. Feel the pressure and tension in your stomach and lower back [pause for 1 breath]. Then let them relax [pause for 1 breath]. Notice the warm comfortable relaxing feeling that takes over [pause for 1 breath]. Notice how the tension just seems to melt away into relaxation [pause for 1 breath]. Feel that relaxation [pause for 1 breath].

"Tense your stomach muscles and lower back again, noting the tension [pause for 3 breaths]. Feel how the tension makes your stomach and body feel [pause for 1 breath]. Just notice the pressure and tension [pause for 1 breath]. Then let it relax [pause for 1 breath]. Let the tension disappear and allow the relaxation to take control [pause for 1 breath]. Experience relaxation for a few seconds [pause for 1 breath].

"Now tighten your right thigh and calf [pause for 3 breaths]. Feel the tension down your leg [pause for 1 breath]. Notice the tension and pressure in your right leg [pause for 1 breath]. Just study the tension in your thigh and calf for a few seconds [pause for 1 breath]. Then just let it relax [pause for 1 breath]. Notice the relaxation feeling that is now in your right leg [pause for 1 breath]. Flowing through your thigh and down into your calf [pause for 1 breath]. Notice the difference between the tension and the relaxation [pause for 1 breath].

"When you are ready, tense your right thigh and calf again [pause for 3 breaths]. Notice the tension [pause for 1 breath]. Feel the pressure [pause for 1 breath]. Hold this feeling for a few seconds [pause for 1 breath]. Now just let it relax [pause for 1 breath]. Notice the relaxing feeling in your thigh and calf [pause for 1 breath]. Feel that relaxation for a few seconds [pause for 1 breath]. Now try to feel the tension in your right foot [pause for 1 breath].

"Make your toes point up in the air [pause for 1 breath]. Make them point up until you feel the tension [pause for 1 breath]. Notice this tension [pause for 1 breath]. Then let them relax [pause for 1 breath]. Notice how they feel when they are relaxing [pause for 1 breath]. Just enjoy that relaxing feeling [pause for 1 breath].

"Tense up your right foot again [pause for 1 breath]. Make your toes point up toward the sky [pause for 1 breath]. Feel the tension just for a second [pause for 1 breath]. Then let them relax [pause for 1 breath]. Feel the difference between tension and relaxation [pause for 1 breath]. Just focus on the warm relaxing feeling [pause for 1 breath].

"This time, when you are ready, tighten your left thigh and calf [pause for 3 breaths]. Feel the tension down your left leg [pause for 1 breath]. Try studying the tension in your thigh and calf for a few seconds [pause for 1 breath]. Then just let it relax [pause for 1 breath]. Notice the relaxation feeling that is now in your left leg [pause for 1 breath]. Notice the difference between the tension and the relaxation [pause for 1 breath].

"Now tense your left thigh and calf again [pause for 1 breath]. Notice the tension [pause for 1 breath]. Feel the pressure [pause for 1 breath]. Hold this feeling for a few seconds [pause for 1 breath]. Now just let it relax [pause for 1 breath]. Notice the relaxing feeling in your thigh and calf [pause for 1 breath]. Notice the feeling all up and down your left leg [pause for 1 breath]. Feel that relaxation for a few seconds [pause for 1 breath]. Now try to focus on the tension in your left foot [pause for 1 breath].

"Make your toes point up in the air [pause for 1 breath]. Make them point up until you feel the tension [pause for 1 breath]. Study this tension [pause for 1 breath]. Then let them relax [pause for 1 breath]. Notice how they feel when they are relaxing [pause for 1 breath]. Just focus on that relaxing feeling [pause for 1 breath].

"Now tense up your left foot again [pause for 1 breath]. Make your toes point up [pause for 1 breath]. Feel the tension just for a brief second [pause for 1 breath]. Then let them relax [pause for 1 breath]. Notice the difference between the tension and the relaxation [pause for 1 breath]. Just pay attention to the relaxation feeling in your foot [pause for 1 breath], and throughout your body [pause for 1 breath].

"You are still doing a great job relaxing [pause for 1 breath]. You have relaxed your entire body [pause for 1 breath]. Part of learning to become deeply relaxed is learning to notice the difference between tension and relaxation [pause for 1 breath]. You can learn to recognize when your body is feeling tense and then how to take control and relax [pause for 1 breath]. Like you

have done here today [pause for 1 breath]. The more you practice the more control you will have [pause for 1 breath].

"It is important to remember all of the relaxing that you have done here today so you can see how relaxed you are [pause for 1 breath]. As you read through all of the parts of your body that you have relaxed, feel free to notice just how relaxed they are feeling [pause for 1 breath]. If you think something could be more relaxed, just spend some time reviewing the relaxation steps you have already done, for that part of your body [pause for 1 breath].

"Just go at your own pace [pause for 1 breath]. Take all the time you need [pause for 1 breath]. Focus on your right hand and forearm, feel how relaxed they are [pause for 1 breath]. Notice the relaxing feeling in your right bicep [pause for 1 breath]. Take some time to enjoy that feeling [pause for 1 breath]. Notice the relaxation in your left hand and forearm [pause for 1 breath]. Feel the relaxation in your left bicep [pause for 1 breath]. This relaxation feeling goes all the way into your head and face [pause for 1 breath]. With nice warm feelings in your forehead and cheeks [pause for 1 breath]. Down into your jawbones [pause for 1 breath]. Just feel this warm relaxation feeling for a few seconds [pause for 1 breath].

"Notice the feelings of deep relaxation in your shoulders and upper back [pause for 1 breath]. Feeling warm and relaxed [pause for 1 breath]. Take a deep breath and notice how you are feeling [pause for 1 breath]. Notice how the relaxing feeling extends through your chest [pause for 1 breath]. Down into your stomach and lower back [pause for 1 breath]. Feel how it moves into your legs [pause for 1 breath]. Relaxation goes through your thighs and into your calves [pause for 1 breath]. Feel it go all the way into your feet [pause for 1 breath]. Just sit for as long as you like and enjoy this feeling of deep relaxation [pause for 1 breath].

"It is important for you to know that even when you stop this relaxation exercise you can still allow yourself to continue feeling deeply relaxed [pause for 1 breath]. You can practice this exercise as often as you like, wherever you like [pause for 1 breath]. One way that can help you to reorientate yourself back into your room is by counting [pause for 1 breath]. You can count forwards from one to five [pause for 1 breath]. This will give you time to wake up and feel refreshed [pause for 1 breath]. With each number you say, you can feel increasingly relaxed and awake [pause for 1 breath]. Take your time and

go at your own speed [pause for 1 breath]. One [pause for 1 breath], feeling deeply relaxed [pause for 1 breath]. Two [pause for 1 breath], feeling relaxed and refreshed [pause for 1 breath]. Three [pause for 1 breath], starting to feel more awake [pause for 1 breath]. Four [pause for 1 breath], noticing the sounds more clearly in your relaxation place [pause for 1 breath]. Five [pause for 1 breath], waking up and feeling refreshed and awake."

Appendix 5 — My Plan for Change

1. Goal Setting

A. What is the most important change that I wish to make in myself? (for multiple goals, complete one form for each important change desired).

B. What are my reasons for wanting to make this change?

C. If I change, how would I:

(1) Behave differently?

(2) Think differently?

(3) Feel differently?

2. Base Rates

Regarding the changes that you would like to make in question C above, how would you rate your present ability to behave, think, and feel in the desired manner? (Use the following abbreviations for this question):

VD = very difficult

D = difficult

S = so-so

E = easy

VE = very easy

	Behave	Think	Feel
The ease with which I do this now is			
The frequency with which I do this now is			
The quality of this is now			

3. Treatment Plan

A. In what ways can I assist myself with this goal using hypnosis?

B. Besides hypnosis, what other strategies will assist me in accomplishing my goal?

C. What factors may prevent or hinder me from attaining my goal?

Appendix 6 — Self-Assessment Toward Academic Success

There are many reasons why students do not do as well in school as they had hoped. Place a checkmark beside those factors that you anticipate may be a problem for you:

	#	Type of Concern	Is There a Self-Hypnosis Application? (specify what you intend to do)
Time Management Concerns			
	1	Poor time management skills.	
	2	Procrastination.	
	3	Too many other commitments ____ (a) part-time or full-time job ____ (b) family responsibilities ____ (c) other	
	4	Insufficient time spent on assignments.	

Academic Concerns			
	5	Insufficient academic background (i.e., you were not adequately prepared).	
	6	Inappropriate course selection (i.e., you took courses that you did not want, need or like).	
	7	Difficulties in: ____ (a) reading skills ____ (b) writing skills ____ (c) math skills ____ (d) memorization ____ (e) exam anxiety ____ (f) note-taking ____ (g) inefficient study strategies ____ (h) concentration	
Other Concerns			
	8	Career uncertainty.	

	9	Financial difficulties.	
	1 0	Lack of motivation, boredom, or apathy.	
	1 1	Low energy level.	
	1 2	Difficulties in: ____ (a) regular exercise ____ (b) healthy diet ____ (c) sleep ____ (d) social/recreational activities ____ (e) excessive use of drugs/alcohol ____ (f) problem behaviors	
	1 3	Lack of readiness or desire to be a student.	
	1 4	Lack of commitment to school.	

	1 5	Lack of assertiveness.	
	1 6	Experienced a recent crisis.	
	1 7	Emotional difficulties (i.e., depression, anxiety).	
	1 8	Difficulties with relationships.	

Appendix 7 — The Basic Induction for Self-Hypnosis

Preliminary Practice

Spend some time practicing the following three components of self-hypnosis separately before moving to the basic induction itself. These three components are:

- simultaneous muscle contraction
- deep abdominal breathing
- relaxing visual imagery

1. Simultaneous Muscle Contraction -- Contract as many muscles as you can at the same time. This should involve doing the following steps simultaneously:

- A. Scrunching your face together.
- B. Pulling your shoulders up as high as possible.
- C. Tightening your hands into fists and straightening your arms.
- D. Flattening your abdomen and making it rigid.
- E. Tightening the muscles in your buttocks.
- F. Straightening your legs and pressing your heels down.

Hold the muscle tension for 20 seconds, then relax your muscles for 10 seconds, paying attention to the contrast in how your muscles feel. Repeat by tensing again for 20 seconds followed by 10 seconds of noticing the contrast.

2. Deep Abdominal Breathing -- Do the following, one step at a time:

- A. Regulate your normal breathing cycle by making it slow, steady, and rhythmical. When we're anxious, our breathing becomes choppy. The kind of breathing you want to create is where air enters your lungs at the same pace and is exhaled from your lungs similarly.
- B. Begin deep breathing. There is no need to hold any of these breaths.

C. Place one hand on your stomach.

D. Now when you inhale, make your stomach rise as much as you can. This is done by letting your stomach puff out as you breathe inward. It will feel as though you are breathing air into your stomach. Mostly what is happening is that you are breathing air into both the top and bottom portions of your lungs. We call this abdominal breathing, and it is the most relaxing form of breathing due to the greater amount of oxygen inhaled.

3. Relaxing Visual Imagery -- Spend some time relaxing while you create relaxing visual images in your mind. This is the same thing as daydreaming, except you fully direct the visualizations. Here is a sample of relaxing images you could use:

- Lying on a beach
- Hiking through a forest
- Scuba diving
- Feeding birds
- Walking barefoot in a park
- Relaxing in a Jacuzzi Imagery is best accomplished by introducing as many senses and details as possible into your visualizations. For example, if you imagine yourself lying on a beach, see the blue sky and blue water (i.e., sights), hear the rhythmical sound of ocean waves crashing into shore (i.e., sounds), remember the feeling of warm sand under your hands and feet (i.e., touch), smell the fresh ocean air (i.e., smell), and recreate the sense of tranquility (i.e., feelings). The more vivid your visualization, the more deeply you'll relax.

The Basic Induction Method

After you've practiced the above three components of self-hypnosis several times over several occasions, and you feel that you have done each one satisfactorily, then it is time to integrate these pieces. There are many ways to get into self-hypnosis. The advantage of the basic induction method presented here is that it will help you relax your body and mind quickly and thereby enter

self-hypnosis quickly as well. Once you become proficient in attaining a deep relaxed state following this method, you may wish to shorten the induction further. A simpler induction might include only steps three and four, for example. Let depth be your gauge in deciding whether to shorten the induction eventually. Follow these instructions:

- Step 1. Get Comfortable -- Get comfortable, preferably lying down with your arms and legs uncrossed.
- Step 2. Contract Your Muscles Simultaneously -- Hold the muscle tension for 20 seconds; then relax your muscles for 10 seconds, paying attention to the contrast in how your muscles feel. Repeat by tensing again for 20 seconds, followed by 10 seconds of noticing the contrast.
- Step 3. Fixate Your Eyes -- With your eyes open, stare at a spot slightly behind your normal line of vision so that you feel a mild eye strain. Do not let your gaze drift from that spot.
- Step 4. Engage in Deep Abdominal Breathing Before Eye Closure -- Take in five deep abdominal breaths. Inhale the fifth breath extra deep, and while holding it, count backwards mentally "5-4- 3-2-1." When you get down to "1," exhale and close your eyes at the same time.
- Step 5. Create a Relaxing Visual Image -- Spend at least five minutes focusing on a relaxing visual image.
- Step 6. Exit the Self-Hypnotic State -- When you are ready to leave self-hypnosis, first silently tell yourself that you will count to five and that at the count of five, you will come out of self-hypnosis feeling refreshed, relaxed, and confident. Then awaken yourself by counting to five mentally and say "AWAKE!" to yourself. Then open your eyes.

That's it! What you do with this state is explained throughout this book.

Appendix 8 — Major Script 1: The Basics of Self-Hypnosis

Record this script using the instructions in Appendix 1. If you have a medical condition or physical problem that might prevent you from doing any of the exercises contained in this script, please use a pencil and cross out the part of the script that contains these exercises. If you are uncertain about whether to exclude something, ask your physician before making this self-hypnosis recording. As soon as you're ready, begin:

Record the Following Script:

"Either sit down or lie down on a comfortable surface. Uncross your arms and legs. Your eyes may be either open or closed [pause for 1 breath]. Let yourself relax, and know that for right now, there is nothing more important than letting go [pause for 1 breath]. Letting go of all thoughts, all worries, all stress [pause for 1 breath]. This is your time to relax [pause for 1 breath].

"In a few moments, I will ask you to contract as many muscles as you can at the same time [pause for 1 breath]. This involves doing the following steps simultaneously:

- Scrunch your face together.
- Pull your shoulders up as high as possible.
- Tighten your hands into fists and straighten your arms.
- Flatten your abdomen and make it rigid.
- Tighten the muscles in your buttocks.
- Straighten your legs and press your heels down [pause for 1 breath].

"Okay, let's begin. Scrunch your face, pull your shoulders up, tighten your hands into fists and straighten your arms, flatten your stomach and make it hard, tighten the muscles in your buttocks, and straighten your legs and press your heels down [pause for 1 breath]. Hold the tension [pause for 2 breaths]. Hold the tension [pause for 2 breaths]. A few more seconds [pause for 2 breaths]. Keep holding [pause for 2 breaths].

"And now release the tension, let your muscles relax, and concentrate on the difference, on how relaxed your muscles feel by contrast [pause for 1 breath].

Notice how your body feels -- relaxed, calm, perhaps tired, perhaps fatigued [pause for 1 breath]. All parts of your body are relaxed now [pause for 1 breath]. Face relaxed, shoulders and arms relaxed, stomach relaxed, legs and buttocks relaxed [pause for 1 breath].

"Now let's repeat the muscle contractions [pause for 1 breath]. Scrunch your face, pull your shoulders up, tighten your hands into fists and straighten your arms, flatten your stomach and make it hard, tighten the muscles in your buttocks, and straighten your legs and press your heels down [pause for 1 breath]. Hold the tension [pause for 2 breaths]. Hold the tension [pause for 2 breaths]. A few more seconds [pause for 2 breaths]. Keep holding [pause for 2 breaths].

"And now release it, let your muscles relax, and concentrate on the difference, on how relaxed your muscles feel by contrast [pause for 1 breath]. Notice how your body feels -- relaxed, calm, perhaps tired, perhaps fatigued [pause for 1 breath]. All parts of your body relaxed now [pause for 1 breath]. Face relaxed, shoulders and arms relaxed, stomach relaxed, legs and buttocks relaxed [pause for 1 breath]. Your whole body is relaxed now [pause for 1 breath].

"In a few moments, I will ask you to take five deep abdominal breaths [pause for 1 breath]. Before you begin this, I want you to regulate your normal breathing cycle by making it slow, steady, and rhythmical [pause for 3 breaths]. You want air to enter your lungs at a slow steady pace, and you want it to exit your lungs at a slow steady pace [pause for 1 breath]. Inhale deeply and slowly, and exhale deeply and slowly [pause for 2 breaths]. Inhale deeply and slowly, exhale deeply and slowly [pause for 2 breaths].

"Now, with your eyes open, stare at a spot slightly behind your normal line of vision so that you feel mild eye strain. Do not let your gaze drift from that spot [pause for 1 breath]. Now when you inhale, make your stomach rise as much as you can. This is done by letting your stomach puff out as you breathe inward. It will feel as though you are breathing air into your stomach [pause for 3 breaths].

"Now take in an additional five deep abdominal breaths [pause for 1 breath]. Inhale the fifth breath extra deep, and while holding it, count backwards mentally "5-4-3-2-1." When you get down to "1," exhale and close your eyes at the same time [pause for 3 breaths].

"Let your eyes feel relaxed, calm, perhaps tired, perhaps fatigued [pause for 1 breath]. Your eyes and body feel heavy, warm, tranquil [pause for 1 breath]. Your mind is calm, yet alert; relaxed, yet focused [pause for 1 breath]. You can focus more clearly now, focus more clearly on hearing your voice, focus more clearly on hearing and absorbing the content, hearing and absorbing the content of your recording -- of this recording [pause for 2 breaths].

"Your mind can dream and dream in detail [pause for 1 breath]. It goes where I ask it to go [pause for 1 breath]. A day off from school, free to go, where I ask it to go [pause for 1 breath]. Imagine [pause for 1 breath].

"You've planned a hike, a hike up a mysterious mountain. You don't know what you'll find there [pause for 1 breath]. You don't know what to expect [pause for 1 breath]. You don't know how much positive effect it will have on you [pause for 1 breath]. And you realize you don't need to know [pause for 1 breath]. A lot of things we don't know before we get there [pause for 1 breath].

"You begin your hike, your journey, by entering a beautiful forest. The well-worn path has obviously been used by many before, but each person finds something unique along the way [pause for 1 breath]. They don't always know what they've found either, until later, sometimes much later, until after they have forgotten about what they didn't know they had found in the first place [pause for 1 breath]. Just go deeper and enjoy the splendor of this sanctuary [pause for 2 breaths].

"See the path, made from nature's own hands -- fallen leaves, small branches, moist dirt, green vegetation [pause for 1 breath]. The dense trees on either side of you stand tall, stand tall, and seem to intertwine near the top edges, leaving little light shining on the path -- only certain segments where the light shines through clearly, where the light shines on the path [pause for 1 breath]. Smell the air, the cool, crisp, fresh, outdoor scent, the smell of foliage, the smell of humid air, the smell of a forest [pause for 1 breath]. Feel the gentle moisture on your skin, gentle [pause for 1 breath]. See the squirrels, the chipmunks, the birds -- hear birds, chirping, singing, celebrating -- feel their joy, their freedom, their contentment [pause for 1 breath]. They seem to accept themselves as they are, accept as they are [pause for 2 breaths].

"Each bird, unique, yet part of a whole [pause for 1 breath]. Loving both parts -- loving that which is unique and loving that which is part of the universal connection [pause for 1 breath]. If words could be sung by such tiny creatures,

your mind wonders what they might be [pause for 1 breath]. "Breathe peace into your heart, and tranquility into your soul" -- are these the words they sing? [pause for 1 breath] "Be yourself and love yourself [pause for 1 breath]." Have I heard these words before? Maybe the birds are just singing, "Have a safe journey, and don't forget what's really important in life [pause for 2 breaths]."

"Regardless of their message, it is hard to understand, understand, so you move on, farther along, till you reach the higher place where the forest ends and the meadows begin [pause for 1 breath]. Can you remember the last time you walked through a meadow? This one is more beautiful [pause for 1 breath]. As you enter the meadow, you take off your shoes and socks and feel the dampness of moist grass under your feet [pause for 1 breath]. You feel so contented, so privileged, so happy [pause for 1 breath]. You feel that so many of the things that have affected you are affecting you in more positive ways now [pause for 1 breath]. From every experience there is something you can learn, something you can learn from, something you can grow from, something that helps you grow [pause for 1 breath]. You are not perfect, and you know that every mistake is simply a failed experiment [pause for 2 breaths]. Life is full of experiments, and each one contains a new learning, and offers a new growth opportunity [pause for 1 breath]. Life is full of opportunities [pause for 2 breaths].

"You continue to climb, and move on, farther along, till you reach the higher place where the meadow ends and the rocky surfaces begin. But still, the path is clear, and safe, and the incline is gradual, yet steady [pause for 1 breath]. A few more steps, and you see that the destination is before you [pause for 1 breath]. Ahead, steam is rising from a small cavity in the rock [pause for 1 breath]. You get closer, and you feel the warmth rising from your bare feet to your legs to your torso, your arms, and your face [pause for 1 breath]. It's a natural hot spring, and its call is irresistible [pause for 1 breath]. You remove your clothes, slowly ease yourself into the hot clear pool, and sit on a comfortable rock [pause for 1 breath]. Most of your body is surrounded by the warm water [pause for 1 breath]. Feel the water on your skin, and smell the soothing minerals it contains [pause for 1 breath]. As the steam rises, imagine that it is washing away all of your thoughts, all of your concerns [pause for 1 breath]. All that is left is perfect calmness, total peacefulness, complete serenity [pause for 1 breath]. Keep enjoying this state for as long as you want,

especially while you listen to the last few minutes of this recording [pause for 3 breaths].

"The more times you listen to this recording, the deeper will be your conditioning for self-hypnosis [pause for 1 breath]. This means you will enter self-hypnosis more quickly, you will create greater depth in self-hypnosis, and you will find enhanced benefits when using self-hypnosis to create changes within yourself [pause for 2 breaths].

"With practice, you will be able to shorten the induction of self-hypnosis to two steps and be able to do this without listening to this recording. Don't do this now, but whenever you wish to place yourself into self-hypnosis in the future, do the following. First, with your eyes open, stare at a particular spot directly in front of your line of vision. Do not let your gaze drift from that spot [pause for 1 breath]. Second, take in five deep abdominal breaths. As you exhale the final deep breath, close your eyes at the same time. As you do that, you will drop into a deep state of self-hypnosis [pause for 2 breaths]. After you have listened to this recording enough so that you respond to it by becoming deeply relaxed, try this abbreviated induction on your own. If you then respond to the abbreviated induction with good results, great. If not, either continue listening to this recording, or use the basic induction method as outlined in Appendix 7 [pause for 2 breaths].

"You are now at the end of major script number one, "The Basics of Self-Hypnosis." You may wish to continue enjoying this relaxed state for a while longer. Whenever you are ready to end this experience, first silently tell yourself that you will count to five and that at the count of five, you will come out of self-hypnosis feeling refreshed, relaxed, and confident. Then awaken yourself by counting to five mentally and say "AWAKE" to yourself. Then open your eyes."

Appendix 9 — Major Script 2: Grade Power: Unlocking the Keys Major Script 2

Major script 2 is a compilation of the individual scripts found in Chapters 4 through 12. Each is labeled here (e.g., Belief in Yourself) so that you can decide to exclude any of the segments that do not apply to you. For example, if you do not have a problem with exam anxiety, you might choose to delete this section from your recorded script. Now let's begin:

"Get comfortable, preferably lying down with your arms and legs uncrossed. Now contract all your muscles simultaneously and hold the tension [pause for 7 breaths]. Now relax your muscles and notice the contrast [pause for 4 breaths]. Now contract all your muscles simultaneously again and hold the tension [pause for 7 breaths]. Now relax your muscles and notice the contrast once more [pause for 4 breaths].

"With your eyes open, stare at a spot slightly behind your normal line of vision so that you feel a mild eye strain. Do not let your gaze drift from that spot. Take in five deep abdominal breaths [pause for 2 breaths]. Inhale the fifth breath extra deep, and while holding it, count backwards mentally "5-4-3-2-1." When you get down to "1," exhale and close your eyes at the same time [pause for 2 breaths].

[Belief in Yourself]

"Every day you find yourself becoming mentally healthier and stronger [pause for 1 breath]. You feel increasingly positive about who you are and the person you are becoming [pause for 1 breath]. You are letting go of perfectionistic tendencies and replacing these with a desire to be competent [pause for 1 breath]. This means you forgive yourself when you make mistakes, but you also learn from them to reduce the probability of making the same mistakes again [pause for 2 breaths].

"As you develop greater competence, you also become increasingly self-confident [pause for 1 breath]. Your self-confidence steadily improves [pause for 1 breath]. You look forward to learning new skills and having new experiences [pause for 1 breath]. While you begin learning something new, you maintain a good feeling about your capability [pause for 1 breath]. Learning something new takes time and no one, especially yourself, expects you will be

competent from the very beginning [pause for 1 breath]. You are a reasonable person, and you are reasonable with yourself [pause for 2 breaths].

"In every way each day, you become more of who you are, and less of who others are or who others want you to be [pause for 1 breath]. This is your life, and you need to find your own path -- a road that will take you where you want to go [pause for 2 breaths]. **[Passion]**

"You are motivated to know yourself more fully [pause for 1 breath]. You embrace the uniqueness that makes you who you are, and coming to know your likes and dislikes feels gratifying [pause for 1 breath]. Knowing that you don't need to like everything or everybody is liberating in fact [pause for 1 breath]. Becoming your own person allows you to love the things and the people that really matter [pause for 1 breath]. You know that you will make a difference in this life -- your impact will be felt [pause for 1 breath]. Underlying the difference you will make is great passion toward important life goals [pause for 1 breath]. Increasingly you find yourself becoming a passionate individual, a person who strives toward your own commitments and beliefs [pause for 2 breaths].

"Your goals are becoming ever more crystallized and more real [pause for 1 breath]. The more you focus on them, the more important they become to you [pause for 1 breath]. You deserve to succeed in school and in life [pause for 1 breath]. This is, after all, your life, and no one can achieve what is important to you other than yourself [pause for 1 breath]. You are continually coming to better terms with your priorities and acting on them accordingly [pause for 2 breaths].

"Your most important goals take on deep and personal meaning [pause for 1 breath]. They may not have meaning to other people, and that is fine [pause for 1 breath]. It is enough that your goals serve your purposes in life [pause for 1 breath]. The more you focus on any particular goal, the more it becomes realized [pause for 1 breath]. Your passion toward your important goals sustains you during the times of dedicated effort [pause for 1 breath]. Nothing important ever occurred to anyone without dedication and perspiration [pause for 1 breath]. You are up for the fight -- you are a passionate individual [pause for 2 breaths].

[Persistence]

"You are becoming increasingly motivated toward important life goals [pause for one breath]. As you focus your energies on your goals, you develop increased competence in what you are doing, and this in turn increases your motivation as well [pause for one breath]. Regardless of how you feel, however, you persist in working toward the things that matter most to you [pause for one breath]. You prefer to get down to work early on projects, and it makes you feel good about yourself to do so [pause for 2 breaths].

"You are developing a clearer sense of your priorities in life and at school [pause for one breath]. Consequently, you work on assignments and goals early [pause for one breath]. When you perceive that an assignment or goal is going to be difficult, time-consuming, or unpleasant, you break it down into manageable steps, and you reward yourself for getting each step accomplished [pause for 2 breaths].

"There is no better time than now to succeed in life and at school [pause for one breath]. This means you are persistent in your efforts, even when adversity tries to hold you back [pause for one breath]. Setbacks may slow you down from time to time, but you are like a bulldozer when it comes to getting the job done [pause for one breath]. You have the stamina to keep pushing forwards toward achieving the goals you have set for yourself [pause for one breath]. You are ready to get down to work [pause for one breath]. Your determination is impenetrable [pause for one breath]. Like an ever-ready battery, you keep going [pause for one breath] and going [pause for one breath] and going [pause for 2 breaths].

[Balance]

"You are striving to find a healthy balance in your life. You are committed to spending time focused on the five domains of life: school and/or work, leisure and recreation, social, physical, and spiritual. You know that school is demanding, and when you are working hard, you know that you also need to take care of your physical needs. No wonder you feel a strong desire to get adequate exercise, sufficient sleep, proper diet, and enough rest and relaxation [pause for 2 breaths].

"When faced with too many commitments or obligations, you prioritize these and let go or suspend temporarily the ones of lesser importance [pause for 1 breath]. You know that you cannot do everything at once, and you are forgiving of yourself when you need to put some things off for a time [pause for 1

breath]. When the load is too great, you are okay with saying "no" to people's demands [pause for 2 breaths].

"You strive to create moderation with all things that affect your health [pause for 1 breath]. You are aware of what you are doing that is good for you, and you are aware of what you are doing that is not [pause for 1 breath]. Because you love yourself deeply, you take the necessary steps to let go or at least minimize unhealthy activities [pause for 1 breath]. This is your body, and you are committed to looking after it [pause for 2 breaths].

[Learning and Studying]

"Your concentration for reading and studying is constantly improving [pause for 1 breath]. When you sit down to read or study, you can concentrate for longer periods of time [pause for 1 breath]. For whatever reason, you are becoming more focused and more interested in what you are learning about [pause for 1 breath]. Your mind is clear and it works efficiently [pause for 2 breaths].

"Your memory is also steadily improving [pause for 1 breath]. Your ability to learn new information is getting better and better [pause for 1 breath]. Because of your improved study methods, you can easily recall information whenever you want to [pause for 1 breath]. Your mind works like a high-speed computer [pause for 1 breath]-- you retain that which you input, and you remember that which is needed for output [pause for 2 breaths].

"You find it interesting how your motivation to study is growing [pause for 1 breath]. Your goals are important to you and achieving good or exceptional grades in school will help you immensely [pause for 1 breath]. Part of the exercise is learning to be well disciplined in life, so you know that all the studying is serving you well [pause for 1 breath]. You feel confident in your ability to learn [pause for 1 breath]. You review your material periodically, reciting out loud or silently that which you have learned [pause for 2 breaths].

[Exam Anxiety]

"You are well prepared for exams, and you feel confident in your ability [pause for 1 breath]. Once you take your seat in the room where you will be sitting the exam, you feel a sense of belonging in that seat and this comforts you [pause for 1 breath]. You become cool, calm, and collected when you write exams

[pause for 1 breath]. The excitement you feel is only about feeling pumped for the challenge you are about to face [pause for 2 breaths].

"You can accept whatever the result of your performance is because you are not perfect [pause for 1 breath]. Furthermore, you are neither the one who decides what the test will look like nor the one who determines its difficulty level [pause for 1 breath]. That is why you focus your time and energy on learning and accept that you do not fully control the outcome [pause for 1 breath]. If you were a surgeon, for example, you would only have control over your knowledge and your performance [pause for 1 breath]. The outcome is not fully within your control [pause for 1 breath]. The patient might not improve from the surgery, and something unforeseen could occur [pause for 1 breath]. Similarly, you only control your learning and your performance, and you can fully accept the outcome, whatever it looks like [pause for 2 breaths].

"If you need to become more relaxed during an exam, you can simply put your pen or pencil down for a minute and simultaneously contract all of your muscles [pause for 1 breath]. Alternatively, you can tilt your eyes back slightly, take in five deep abdominal breaths, and then breathe out and close your eyes at the same time [pause for 1 breath]. Once done, you can tell yourself the messages you need to hear, such as 'I am regaining my composure and becoming totally focused on this exam. I am here to do my best, and that is what I will do right now' [pause for 2 breaths].

"If you come to a question that you can't immediately answer, tell yourself, 'When I return to this question, I will remember the answer to it' [pause for 1 breath]. Then move on to the next question. This will act like a posthypnotic suggestion and will increase the likelihood that the answer will return [pause for 1 breath]. If you didn't study the answer to a question, give yourself this suggestion instead, 'I don't know the answer to this question, but I do know most of this material' [pause for 1 breath]. This suggestion will keep you motivated with momentum [pause for 2 breaths].

[Writer's Block]

"Your thinking is becoming clearer, and this results in better writing [pause for 1 breath]. Because you can talk, this means you can write [pause for 1 breath]. You can now feel confident in your ability to write because with proper editing, you will be writing well [pause for 1 breath]. You are also motivated to learn more about how to improve your writing [pause for 2 breaths].

"If you have a writing project to do for which you have no choice on the topic, you develop the necessary discipline to work on it and complete it in a timely manner [pause for 1 breath]. If necessary, you provide yourself with rewards for getting segments of the project completed [pause for 1 breath]. If you are given the choice of a topic to write about, you select one for which you feel passion [pause for 1 breath]. You will find that your subconscious mind helps you in various ways to come up with a good topic [pause for 1 breath]. It might happen that a great idea is given to you in a dream, or upon awakening [pause for 1 breath]. It may just be that an idea will pop into your head as you go about your daily routines [pause for 1 breath]. For these reasons, it is always a good idea to always carry around a notepad and a pen with you when you are searching for a topic [pause for 2 breaths].

"When you need to take a break from writing, you get some exercise or switch to another project for a while [pause for 1 breath]. Afterwards, you soon regain the momentum needed to return to writing [pause for 1 breath]. The writing project will get done [pause for 1 breath]. Your writing doesn't need to be perfect, and neither do you. Instead, you strive to become a competent individual [pause for 2 breaths].

[Speech Anxiety]

"Whenever you are to give a speech or presentation, you prepare extensively for it [pause for 1 breath]. You learn your material well so that the content is mostly committed to memory [pause for 1 breath]. You also practice your speech several times, both out loud and in your imagination [pause for 1 breath]. You remember to use relaxation exercises, such as abdominal breathing, to help you become comfortable before getting up to give your presentation [pause for 2 breaths].

"Rather than having your speech written out word-for-word, you instead have a key-word outline in front of you [pause for 1 breath]. You are amazed that although you feel some excitement before giving your talk, you soon become cool, calm, and collected in front of your audience [pause for 1 breath]. Your passion also comes through, however, as you find ways to modulate your voice dynamics to enhance interest [pause for 2 breaths].

"You are finding that it is okay to become the center of attention when you give a talk [pause for 1 breath]. Although people's eyes are focused on you, they are mostly focused on what you have to say [pause for 1 breath]. You speak with

confidence and authority -- you find your voice, and your voice is strong and impactful [pause for 1 breath]. You have something to say, and you want to say it when given the opportunity [pause for 1 breath]. With practice, you find that you begin enjoying giving speeches and presentations [pause for 2 breaths].

[Career Exploration]

"Finding a suitable career choice is one of the most important decisions you will make in your life [pause for 1 breath]. You recognize that there is not one perfect career choice, but there are several good choices that you need to discover [pause for 1 breath]. It is imperative that you spend sufficient time on this task so that you come up with an appropriate career plan [pause for 1 breath]. Consequently, you are motivated to take the necessary steps to learn more about yourself and your interests [pause for 1 breath]. You also feel motivated to take the necessary steps to learn more about the world of work and about career opportunities [pause for 2 breaths].

"Often your mind takes you to thinking about your career options [pause for 1 breath]. Sometimes you find yourself fantasizing about working in different careers [pause for 1 breath]. Your dreams sometimes reveal interesting career choices to you, and you remember them in the morning so that you can write them down [pause for 1 breath]. Both your conscious and subconscious minds are working together as a team to help you with this goal [pause for 2 breaths].

"Not only do you use imagery to help you to consider different career alternatives, but you also use it to prepare for job interviews [pause for 1 breath]. You envisage yourself in the job interview situation itself, visualizing as fully as possible how composed and confident you feel [pause for 1 breath]. You also anticipate questions that might be asked of you, and how you will respond to these questions [pause for 1 breath]. You include the nonverbal aspects as well, such as having a steady calm voice, and having appropriate voice volume, voice tone, facial expressions, and body posture [pause for 2 breaths].

[Awakening Instructions]

"When you are ready to leave self-hypnosis, first silently tell yourself that you will count to five and that at the count of five, you will come out of self-hypnosis feeling refreshed, relaxed, and confident. Then awaken yourself by counting to

five mentally and say "AWAKE!" to yourself [pause for 3 breaths]. Then open your eyes."

Appendix 10 — The Triple-Column Technique

MALADAPTIVE THOUGHT OR BELIEF	QUESTIONING IT	HEALTHIER THOUGHT OR BELIEF
"I am good for nothing. I will never do well in math."	"Why do I believe this? Just because I failed a math exam doesn't mean I am no good. In my case, it means I didn't study enough and I didn't answer enough practice questions. I need to work harder and smarter."	"I am a worthwhile person, but I need to work harder at math if I am going to do better at it."

Sample entry shown in the first row.

This is how you use the triple-column:

Step 1 -- Write out the thought(s) or belief(s) that is causing you to feel bad about yourself in the first column. You might already be aware of some of these, in which case you can record them now. Another approach is to wait until something triggers you to feel bad before making an entry.

Step 2 -- In the second column, challenge the logic behind your thought or belief. Use the questions below to help you do this:

- a. What proof do I have that this is true?
- b. Do I have any evidence that indicates it is not true?
- c. Are there any competing "truths?" Is another belief just as valid?
- d. Does everyone think this way? Why not?
- e. Does agreeing with the majority on this make it necessarily correct?

- f. Where did I learn this message? Is it possible that the messenger was wrong?
- g. What purpose is served in continuing to believe this?
- h. What price do I pay for continuing to believe this?
- i. What will be the advantages of believing something different?
- j. Are my feelings about this providing an accurate gauge of what I should believe?
- k. If I was helping someone else deal with this, what would I want him to believe?
- l. If I knew I would be dead tomorrow, would I be happy believing this?

Once you have challenged your thinking, write out the challenge in the second column.

Step 3 -- In the third column, write out a healthier thought(s) or belief(s) that you would like to substitute for the one written in the first column.

Step 4 -- Spend time focusing on the thought(s) or belief(s) written in the third column. The more you absorb yourself in repeating the thought(s) or belief(s), the more you will internalize it.

Step 5 -- Whenever you catch yourself again repeating similar negative thoughts to yourself, either again write it down and repeat steps 2 through 5 or do the work in your head by talking to yourself, either silently or out loud. Remember to do both the challenge and then to substitute the healthier thought or belief.