

FORENSIC HYPNOSIS INTERVIEW GUIDE

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I believe that techniques pointed out in the following guide such as the non-directed and multi-review process may improve the recall of additional facts. Having the person recall the sequence of events in free narrative, unedited, may very well set the stage to allow the person to isolate some of the trauma-charged emotions during the information eliciting phase of the hypnotic interview.

It is hoped that the “Investigative Hypnosis Interview Guide” will be useful in providing you with some additional ideas for organizing and structuring an investigative hypnosis interview; however, it should be kept in mind that the structure of any interview, with or without hypnosis, will vary depending on the circumstances of the crime as well as the background makeup of the person to be interviewed.

1. Audio or video recorder tested and running (Initial contact Hello to Good-Bye)

Document on tape the day, date, time, and location of the hypnosis interview. State for the record, “The purpose for this recording is to document an investigative hypnosis interview.” The police hypnotist may consider assigning someone the responsibility of making a backup audio recording of the interview if possible.

2. The police hypnotist should then state for the record on tape what he has been told about this case prior to this interview.

3. Introduction of the police hypnotist to the witness/victim

For the record, “Have you and I ever met before?” If the police hypnotist and witness/victim are acquainted it should be explained.

4. Explain the purpose for recording the interview

In Texas, it is required that a recording be made of the entire contact between the police hypnotist and the witness or victim as a prerequisite to the admissibility of hypnotically refreshed testimony.

5. Identify all persons present on the tape recording

- Name
- Purpose for being present
- Agency if police officer, artist, etc.

(In any event none of the persons present, except for the police hypnotist and, when appropriate, the artist may participate in the interview during the development of a composite sketch.)

6. Advise the witness/victim of your training and credentials

- _____ years of law enforcement experience
- Investigative Hypnosis Training
- Certified by the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement Officer Standards and Education and authorized by the Chief, Sheriff, or Director of the agency to conduct these types of interviews.
- Other types of training which may be significant to establishing your credibility with the person to be hypnotized.

7. Ask the witness/victim “Have you ever been hypnotized before?”

(If they have been hypnotized before it should be explained. For example: during a previous hypnosis interview in this case, while attending college or a class on self-hypnosis, etc.)

8. Rapport Building Session

To provide an opportunity for the hypnotist to establish rapport with the person to be interviewed.

9. Ask the witness/victim “Have you ever seen anyone hypnotized?”

10. Explain misconceptions which most individuals have about hypnosis.

11. Explain the hypnosis process and tell the person “You may or may not remember additional information”

Tell them “You will be able to recall everything that occurred during the hypnosis session after you come out of hypnosis.”

12. Explain the term “In your mind’s eye.”

Have the individual close their eyes and ask them to recall a mental visual picture of the front of the place (apartment, duplex, house) where they live.

After a few moments tell them to open their eyes and have them describe to you what they were viewing. Tell them that when you use the term “in your mind eye” you are asking them to recall a visual memory and then translate that visual memory into words.

13. Complete all agency required forms

- Have the witness/victim read and sign the agency’s voluntary consent form.
- Verbal consent should then be obtained on tape for the record.
- The police hypnotist should then go through the standard checklist to insure that all items related to the witness/victim’s welfare are addressed.
- Ask the witness/victim “Is there any event in your life which was traumatic or painful for you to remember?”

14. The witness/victim should then be asked the following questions to establish their orientation

- Do you know where you are right now?
- Who asked you to come here today?
- What is your understanding of the purpose for coming here?

15. Ask the witness/victim “Do you have any questions?” Prior to starting the information review process

16. Have the witness/victim explain in free narrative the sequence of events as they occurred on the day in question

17. Induction

- Eye fixation—“Deep Breathing”—eye Closure
- Progressive relaxation, etc.
- Deepening techniques (Stair steps, etc.)
- Sensory Stimulation Techniques

18. Information Eliciting Phase

- Mental review (sequence of events) after selecting the retrieval techniques (TV-Documentary-Age Regression-ideomotor response, etc.) to be used and placing the witness/victim into “hypnosis,” ask them to mentally review the sequence of events without verbalizing the information to the hypnotist. The witness/victim should be told to let you

- know when the mental review process is complete by indicating with a finger signal.
- Ask the witness/victim to translate their visual, auditory, kinesthetic, or olfactory memories into words as they mentally review the sequence of events for the second time.
 - The police hypnotist may then ask zeroing-in, neutral non-leading, and compound type questions to clarify the information provided. Start with the general and go to the more specific.

19. Give the witness/victim a post-hypnotic suggestion that “You will recall the information reviewed during hypnosis after you are dehypnotized”

20. Dehypnotize the witness/victim by counting from 1 to 10 (slowly) giving positive suggestions of feeling refreshed, clear headed, relaxed, and all of the normal sensations returning to all parts of the body, etc.

21. Ask the witness/victim if there are any questions or comments which they would like to ask or address

22. Tell the witness/victim “Should you recall any additional information in the future you should contact the case investigator”

23. Interview Terminated

(Recording must be continuous from “hello to good-by” as required by procedural safeguards established by the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals for hypnotically-enhanced testimony to be admissible in Texas.)

24. Document on tape the time the interview terminated.

This hypnosis interview guide consists of ideas which I think are worthy of your consideration. Statutory and case law should be complied with when applicable.