

Facilitation of Age Regression

Joseph W. Herod, Jr., M.D.

Some patients resist age regression by "trying too hard" to go back or with other forms of resistance. The author suggests a tape, the text of which is included, to introduce patients to the methods and purposes of age regression, thereby lowering resistance. Some electronic assist equipment is also described, which can be of great value and assistance to the therapist.

BACKGROUND

It is not always easy to get complete cooperation in trying to age regress a patient to a previous time in his/her life. Often it becomes apparent that the patient needs time to develop feelings as well as time for the unconscious search for the requested material. Sometimes a diversion from consciousness is necessary. In addition, there may be a need for a vehicle that will enable the patient to feel like he/she is being "carried back" to the event. When such a vehicle is available, the patient's attention is diverted from attempts to consciously search for unconscious material. In addition, the operator is free to do other things while the patient's unconscious searches in an almost automatic fashion for the requested material.

EQUIPMENT DESCRIPTION

Such a vehicle is available in the Bryan Electronic Automatic Robot (B.E.A.R.,

Boswell, 1974). This unit makes use of the TEAC Model 2 eight channel mixer, with six separate input channels for pre-recorded material and two separate channels for microphone inputs. In addition, two or three tape decks are available with each unit, one of which is used to record analytic sessions. With two tape decks available for inductions, realistic sound effects may be mixed with pre-recorded inductions or age regression instructions.

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An integrated switching mechanism was constructed especially for the integration of these various components for use in hypnosis and hypnoanalysis. Thus, the operator can monitor the patient, the induction or other tapes by merely switching to the appropriate mode. Starting and stopping is accomplished at will, and at any time the operator can communicate directly with the patient through the headphones.

TECHNIQUE OF AGE REGRESSION

An age regression might proceed somewhat in this manner: "Now I want you to

go back into time to a point where you felt like you were smothering, to an event in which your chest felt tight, restricted and you couldn't breathe; where you felt just like the problem you brought into the office today. For the next several moments I want you to use your imagination to picture yourself on the beach." The operator then begins to fade in sounds from a beach scene. The waves are pounding gently against the shore. Volume is gradually increased until all that the patient can hear is the ocean. The operator continues: "Now as you use your imagination, you see yourself walking along the beach, visualizing the sand and the surf. You will feel like you are daydreaming." The operator now begins to count from one to five, continuing the emphasis upon the beach and total relaxation.

"Patients are consciously distracted by a beach scene so that their unconscious remains free to follow the operator's instructions."

The point of this whole procedure is that the patient is consciously distracted by the beach scene so that his/her unconscious remains free to follow the operator's instructions, which are to age regress to a particular time or place in his/her life. Sound effects are most helpful in this regard, and the B.E.A.R. will emphasize realism in sound effects and therefore increase the likelihood of a spontaneous regression on the part of the patient.

SOURCES FOR SOUND EFFECTS

There are many available sources for sound effects. For example, in most large amusement parks the sounds of an old railroad steam engine can be recorded. Automobile interior sounds may be recorded, or the takeoff and landing of an airplane could be recorded in a large airport. In the past, a magnetic telephone pickup as a source for an electronic hum has been used to create the mental image of a time machine as well as an effective hypnotic sound.

"In early age regression, this author uses the recording of an old fashioned steam locomotive, made at a local amusement park."

Also available are many commercial recordings of sound effects. Syntonic Research, Inc., 175 Fifth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10010 has published several recordings which have been found to be helpful. Several of these are: "The Psychologically Ultimate Seashore"; "The Ultimate Thunderstorm"; "Wind in the Trees"; "Country Streams"; and "Sailboat." Elektra Records has also produced several volumes of recordings of sound effects which are helpful. Some of these recordings include seagulls and 707 jet takeoffs and landings.

During early age regressions, a regular procedure for this author has been a three minute recording which was made in an amusement park, utilizing an old fashioned steam locomotive. As the patient becomes more involved in the age regression process, a recording of a sailboat has been effective from the Environment Syntonic Research Group. The fantasy involves sailing on an old sailing vessel with the groans of the mast and the lap of the waves, which is carrying the patient across the sea of life.

Another recent Capitol recording which appears to have promise is "Lullabyes from the Womb." This recording contains the sounds of the main artery of the mother as recorded from inside of the uterus during pregnancy. The author has used this recording at very low volume in age regression to facilitate the emotions of an in-utero experience.

TEACHING PATIENTS TO AGE REGRESS

There is a definite need for patients to be taught how to age regress more effectively, for the better educated the patient is as to what he/she is supposed to do, the better the age regression becomes. It has been found that detailed explanations of what to expect relieves considerable fear and anxiety on the patient's part. Excessive time can be consumed in explaining to each indi-

vidual patient exactly what he was to do in an age regression. The B.E.A.R. was designed to eliminate the repetitive type of work of the hypnotist.

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I have produced a tape which includes the following suggestions which I have felt to be helpful in observing the internal barriers which patients have towards age regression.

“Continue to relax. At this point in your therapy we’re going to explain this concept to you so that you will know exactly what to expect and so that you can participate more effectively in your treatment. There are two ways that you can experience age regression. First, you can stand off from the event and see it happening in your own mind’s eye. In your imagination you can view it as if it is some interesting phenomenon, much like you are watching TV. The other way of age regressing involves getting into the event, reliving it, and experiencing the emotions associated with it. With either approach you can gain the material we need which is necessary in order to remove the negative feelings from your mind.”

“Your subconscious mind is like a giant warehouse of a department store. There are pieces of old junk in there which you no longer need.”

“Everything that you have learned, including the feelings you brought into this office today, has resulted from a concentration of your mind sometime in the past, at which time you accepted some basic ideas about yourself, other people and life. You may have already indicated to me that you didn’t feel you could remember very much about your childhood. I won’t ask you to remember it. I am

simply going to ask you to use your imagination and your feelings and to go back and see your childhood as it might have been. On the other hand, you may have an excellent memory. If that’s the case, you can revivify the experience with very little difficulty. Remember, everything that has happened to you which is important is stored in your brain.”

“Let’s think for a moment about how the mind works. We can compare it to a department store which has a retail store and a warehouse. The retail store keeps the items that sell quickly and are needed often. We can call the retail store our conscious mind. In your conscious mind you have the ideas, facts, the names and other data which you use most of the time in your daily life. They are readily available to you just as the goods are available in the retail store.”

“Your subconscious mind, however, is more like the warehouse of the department store. Like a giant warehouse, it contains all of those items that are not in constant demand, especially those items which have emotional significance and which you have not called to examine. There may be some reason why it was better not to remember some of this stored information, and you may have had some difficulty. You may be sure, though, that every word that you have ever heard, everything you have ever seen, and everything you have ever experienced is in this giant warehouse, including many pieces of old junk which were placed there but which you no longer need.”

“Let’s continue this warehouse picture. If you want something from a warehouse, you place an order with the retail store, and they in turn send to the warehouse to get it. The warehouse then delivers the item. Let’s relate this to age regression. When I ask you to relive or to go back and see something, you are going to send an order to your subconscious. You will not need to fume, fret or rack your brain to remember. I will tell you that I want you to go back to a time when you had a certain feeling. We will simply give the instruction to your subconscious mind through your conscious mind and then

divert your attention to something else to allow your unconscious to work. To divert your attention, we use some vehicle which will make you feel like you are being carried back to that time when you experienced that very special feeling, event, or that physical happening that we are looking for. Sometimes we use a railroad train or time machine, or we may just ask you to walk on the beach or in the woods, daydreaming."

"No matter which vehicle I use, I want you to do one thing: to concentrate on relaxing and seeing yourself in the situation that I describe. For instance, should I say that you are in an old railroad station, you will begin to imagine the scene, complete with a railroad car and train. You're moving backwards in time on the train. You will allow your imagination to divert your attention so that your subconscious can bring up the material which we want to discuss. Sometimes the event or the events may be so painful that you may be unable to bring them up on that particular visit. That is all right. There's no hurry. If you say, "I can't see it, I can't feel it, I don't want to, I'm afraid to," that will be acceptable. Own up to the feeling and tell me that you don't want to see it. We will leave it alone, giving you a suggestion which will enable your unconscious mind to remove its defenses. We will suggest to the subconscious that you will be ready to bring it up out of the warehouse and talk about it at some later time."

"Age regression is perhaps the most important aspect of Hypnoanalytic treatment."

"This is your therapy, and you're paying for it. It's your time and we'll handle

it in the way that feels the easiest and best for you. I want you to remember one thing, however. I know that you are not consciously fighting the therapist, for consciously you want to be well. Unconsciously, you may be afraid to bring up the material which hurts so badly. You may feel that bringing up this material could be threatening to you in some way. The body and mind will protect itself from danger, and the unconscious could perceive it as being beneficial not to bring some material up at this time. Therefore, with this in mind, you can just relax."

"The most important thing for you to remember is this: we will use some diversion or some vehicle, for carrying you back across time, into the warehouse, to review, bring out, and rid yourself of the power of these negative suggestions. These suggestions which have been stored for some time in your unconscious, were probably never meant to be there in the first place. Perhaps you were so young that you had no way of knowing how to prevent them from sticking there, but you are older and wiser now, and we are ready to begin. Continue to relax. Look forward to the success you shall have in learning about the origin of these ideas about yourself. Relax."

SUMMARY

I have found this tape to be useful in putting patients at ease and believe that age regressions are much more effective. Also, the use of the sound effects which I have described, with all the realism of stereo, help to overcome the negative attitudes of the more skeptical patients toward hypnosis.

Age regression is perhaps the most important aspect of hypnoanalytic treatment. The methods which have been described in this article have been found to enhance the overall effectiveness of age regression and hence the outcome of treatment.