

ZebuTM

I created Zebu to help me teach my classes in Ericksonian Hypnosis. The level of proficiency that my students developed was nothing short of phenomenal, and it's all due to this card game. Playing Zebu is learning at its best, because the whole time is spent listening to and using the language patterns... and it's entertaining! What could be better? Playing Zebu we've laughed so hard it hurt, and at other times we've used the Zebu cards to actually hypnotize members of the class. Enjoy!

--- Robert Anue

Zebu

The Hypnotic Language Card Game

While you Play Zebu and Laugh with you friends
you'll learn how to deliver Embedded Commands,
Make indirect Suggestions and Speak Hypnotically!

Introduction to Zebu Cards

Zebu is a normal deck of 52 playing cards with 52 extraordinary language patterns taken from the field of NLP and the work of Milton Erickson. Instructions, insightful commentary, and examples included.

"I created Zebu to help me teach my classes in Ericksonian Hypnosis. the level of proficiency that my students developed was nothing short of phenomenal, and it's all due to this card game. Playing Zebu is learning at its best, because the whole time is spent listening to and using the language patterns ... and it's entertaining! What could be better?"

Playing Zebu we've laughed so hard it hurt, and at other times we've used the Zebu cards to actually hypnotize members of the class. Enjoy!"

Robert Anue

Embedded Commands

An Embedded Command is a fragment of a sentence that if spoken alone would be a verbal command. Examples of embedded commands are written in italics in the commentaries on the playing cards. An embedded command is a powerful way to make a suggestion to another person, because people won't consciously notice it, but it registers and has an impact at an unconscious level.

In order to be effective, you need to mark your embedded command, which means that you do something different while you are saying the words of the embedded command. You can practice embedded commands by reading examples on the cards out loud, and lowering the pitch of your voice while you read the words in italics. Then try reading the same sentence, and marking the embedded command by touching the person you are talking to while you read the words in italics.

You can mark embedded commands by changing the pitch or the volume of your voice, tilting your head, looking the person in the eye, touching the person, increasing the pressure of a touch, pointing at the person, smiling, pausing just before the embedded command, etc. You might want to practice all these ways of making embedded commands while reading the examples on the cards.

Instructions to Zebu Cards

Each card in a deck has a language pattern written at the top and bottom, and a commentary in the center. An underlined blank in a language pattern indicates a place for an embedded command. The words in italics in the commentaries on the cards are examples of embedded commands. The underlined words in the commentaries are just underlined for emphasis.

Zebu is a tool that you can use to practice and learn important language patterns, and have fun doing it! Before you begin playing Zebu, have all the players agree not to take any of the suggestions made during the game seriously. Then you are free to practice making hypnotic and trance inducing suggestions to the other players without the fear of anyone falling asleep. Of course that makes it fair game to offer mischievous suggestions as well!

How to play Zebu

Any normal card game can be turned into a Zebu game by adding the following rule: Before you take your normal turn, make a statement using the language pattern on the card that was last played, and say it to another player in the game. A good game for Zebu is the Modified Crazy Eights game; it's easy to learn and each game doesn't last long.

The Modified Crazy Eights game

Deal out 7 cards to each player. Put the remaining cards face down to form the draw pile. Turn one card over from the draw pile to form the discard pile. Take turns playing one card onto the discard pile, clockwise around the table. A person can play a card from their hand onto the discard pile only if it matches the suit or the number (or A, K, Q, J) of the previous card. Eights are the exception. you can play an eight on any card. If you can't play a card, then turn over from the draw pile to the discard pile. Always begin your turn by making up a statement using the language pattern of the top card on the discard pile, and say it to someone else in the game, The first person to play all their cards wins.

Game Variations

In the beginning

- You might want to begin by playing on game of modified crazy eights without saying any of the language patterns, so that everyone understands the card game.
- To make it easier, you can limit the kinds of suggestions that players should make. Try limiting the suggestions to hypnotic induction suggestions like Relax, Feel Comfortable, and Close your eyes.

Game Variations for advanced Players

- Make each player's statement build on statements of the previous players, so that all the statements form a continuous monologue,
- Let the dealer of the hand specify how the embedded commands will be marked for that hand. This is a great way to generate flexibility in the many ways to mark embedded commands.
- If you have experience inducing hypnosis, you can use the Zebu cards to generate a hypnotic induction. Just turn over Zebu cards one at a time, and make a hypnotic statement with the patterns on each card. This is great fun with a group, where several people take turns flipping over cards and talking, and one person goes into trance.

I'm wondering if...

I'm wondering if you will stop smoking this afternoon. I'm wondering if that comfortable feeling in your feet will spread up into the rest of your body. I'm wondering if you can pretend you've never smoked in your life, and imagine what it is like to go through a typical day. I never told you to do anything, I was just wondering...

You probably already know...

You probably already know many ways to feel good without smoking. And what do you do in response to this statement? You might try to think of the things that I say you know, and of course, you are likely to find them if you think long enough! If I wanted you to really search for those answers I could say: On a deep level, you probably already know how useful indirect communication can be.

Can you imagine...?

You probably already know that people are more likely to do what they are more familiar with, and that imagining something is a great way to create familiarity. Can you imagine what you would do on an airplane if you really enjoyed flying? Can you imagine all the situations where you would use this language pattern if you practiced it and really knew it?

You might notice the feelings ... as you ...

You might notice the feelings directs attention to internal body sensations, which is good for hypnotic inductions. As you provides another opportunity for an indirect suggestion. You might notice the feelings in your feet, as you relax them completely. You might notice the feelings of comfort as you begin to relax your whole body.

Maybe you'll _____.

Maybe you'll direct some unusual embedded commands to your friends while you play Zebu. Maybe you'll dream of new ways to say things tonight. Maybe you'll spot the embedded commands in these sentences.

Don't _____ too quickly.

This phrase has the implication that what I suggest will definitely happen anyway, and all I really care about is when it happens. And if you are resisting me, your internal response may well be: "Oh yeah, who says I can't do this quickly! I'll show you!" isn't that great? Don't stop smoking too quickly. Don't go into a deep trance too quickly, just relax and listen to my voice for a while.

One can, <name>, _____.

By adding the person's name at the beginning of the embedded command, you will make it much more powerful. One can, Eve, feel good for no reason at all. One can, Greta, enjoy the experience of hypnosis without knowing exactly what is going to happen. One can, Joe, let the eyes close just because it feels good. Who can? ... One can. We're not talking about you Joe.

A person might, <name>, _____.

Say the name close to the second half of the sentence, and it becomes a personal embedded command. A person might, Sarah, take the lessons from that situation and let go of the old emotions. A person might, Allen, find some good reasons that make losing weight compelling.

One could _____, because ...

Because is the magic word, because it lends emotional credibility to whatever goes before it. One could use the word 'because' after important suggestions, because you enjoy trying new things. One could let this learning go to a very deep place inside, because you may not be completely aware of how important it is yet.

You can _____, because ...

Here's that because word again. You can just use it and discover how powerful it is, because you can pretty much say anything you want after it. You can believe it works, because it is such a nice way to keep talking and keep the suggestions coming. you can even use it in everyday conversations, because people love to hear reasons for things.

You can _____, can you not?

Can you not is such a great way to end a statement. It turns it into a question which is less threatening, and it's so confusing to try to disagree with. You can appreciate my point, can you not? You can relax into that chair, can you not? You can allow new answers to come to you, can you not?

I don't know if _____.

I don't know if you're going to like this game better than any other learning game you've ever played. I don't know what things in particular you will enjoy the most. I really don't know if this experience is going to change your life. Don't ask me, I don't know.

You might notice how good ... feels, when you ...

The hidden assumption is that what I'm suggesting feels good, and the when you part further assumes that you are going to do it! You might notice how good your eyes feel when you close them and they stay closed. You might notice how good your arms feel when you relax them as they rest n that chair.

One doesn't have to, <name>, _____.

One doesn't really have to, does one. It seems so formal and detached and impersonal, (your name here), or does it? One doesn't have to, Betty, close your eyes as we begin. One doesn't have to, Josef relax deeper and deeper with each breath.

People don't have to, <name>, _____.

People don't have to, but they do anyway, doesn't it seem like that? And when I use your name, it makes it so personal. People don't have to respond favourably when you use their names, but you know (your name here), they sure do. People don't have to, Marilyn, listen carefully to everything I say.

You may not know if _____.

When I wonder whether you know something, I presuppose that something exist and is true. You may not know if this is going to be fun. You may not know if you're going to enjoy this SO much that you'll have to write me and tell me about it.

It's easy to _____, is it not?

Is it not is another one of those endings that softens a statement into a question. And it's a bit confusing to disagree with, is it not? It's easy to go into a trance, is it not? It's easy to discover something special deep inside, is it not? And if I say that something is easy, you will probably try doing it to see if I'm right.

A person may not know if _____.

For added fun a person can change the subject of the sentence halfway through to you, it's mildly confusing, and it underlines that you aren't really talking about a person in the abstract anyway. A person may not know if you're going to have a meaningful experience. A person may not know if your arm will slowly raise up automatically.

You are able to _____.

You are able to enjoy being at your work, because you have a great sense of humour. You are able to relax your hands completely. It's another truism, I'm just observing the obvious. You are able to re-read this to make sure you get it.

<fact>, <fact>, <fact>, and _____.

When you start off saying a string of facts, the other person internally is thinking yes, yes, yes ... yes, and they get into the habit of agreeing with you, then you hit them with your suggestion. You've made yourself comfortable in that chair, I'm going to talk for a while, you can listen to the words I say, and drift off into a deep state of relaxation.

A person is able to _____.

What do you do when I comment on what other people are able to do? You probably check to see if you can do it too. A person is able to eat less food, and enjoy it even more, when you can savour each mouthful of food and chew it slowly.

... once told me, " _____ "

Quote someone else and put your message in the quote. The nice thing is that they said it, you didn't. My babysitter once told me, "Close your eyes and go to sleep or I'll whack you in the head!"

... said, " _____ "

Quote somebody else and put your message in the quote. Through the years again and again my students have said, "Quotes are one of the most fun way to deliver indirect messages." In fact, one of them once said "If you can't use quotes to deliver a message, you must be brain dead!" But that was him, I wouldn't say such a thing.

If you _____, then ...

This is a cause and effect statement, but it doesn't have to make too much sense. In order to verify that the then part is true, the person has to do the if part, which is what you want. If you imagine yourself in your favourite place, then you will feel feelings of comfort in your body, If you rest your hands on the chair like this, then you'll be ready to begin.

When you _____, then ...

I say when X, then Y, and you have to do X and then search for Y in order to understand what I'm saying. Pretty tricky huh? When you get in touch with that loving and forgiving part of yourself, then an opportunity will open up for a deep transformation. Check it out.

You don't have to _____.

This is called a truism. On the surface, the statement is true, and can't be argued with. Beneath the surface lies an embedded command. You don't have to understand how this works, in order to use it. You don't have to help me with the dishes. Really.

One may, <name>, _____.

One may, Sara, feel comfortable imagining standing on that balcony. One may, Jerry, forgive someone even if you don't think you want to. One may, Jane, be excused from the room AFTER you raise your hand.

A person could, <name>, _____.

A person could, Bob, go to work tomorrow with a new outlook. A person could, Susie, develop a sense of perspective on this situation. A person could, (your name here), write a big check to that fun loving Zebu team. Heck, it's a free world!

Will you _____ now, or will you _____?

Will you do it now, or will you do it later. It sound like you're getting lots of choices. Will you close your eyes and relax now, or will you try to keep your eyes open a little longer while other parts of your body relax first?

A person may _____, because ...

A person may get permission to do what I'm suggesting, because I'm giving it to them. Who said my because has to make any logical sense? And besides, the because clause is an opportunity for another suggestion. A person may just stop drinking, because you can remember all of your reasons for not drinking each time you feel an urge to take a drink.

You may _____.

You may find this experience very valuable. You may get confused about what used to bother you. You may want to relax. You may like what you see here. You may, go ahead, I give you permission.

You might _____.

You might, and whatever you might do might be even more likely after having it suggested like this. You might want to make this change more than anything. You might discover that your eyes don't want to open.

You could _____.

You could, of course you could, you have free will. You could sleep on it tonight, and call me in the morning. You could let this process of transformation take place without even knowing how it was happening. Huh? You could just let go and relax. OK? OK.

One might, you know, _____.

One might, and then again one might not, who knows? ... you know! One might, you know, just relax and let the learning take place on a deep level. One might, you know, understand how to use this at just the right times.

People can, you know, _____.

I'm just talking about what other people can do, I'm not talking about you! You know, that you know clause, it seems to imply in an ambiguous fashion that you knew this already. People can, you know, find ways to make these changes easily and comfortably.

You may or may not _____.

You may or may not notice the comfortable sensation in your hands. So you think about the comfortable sensation in your hands, and if you feel them you think, "Of course I notice them." If you don't feel them you think, "Maybe I'm just not noticing them", so you think about it a little more and pretty soon you're feeling comfortable sensations that you're feeling comfortable sensations that I said were there all along.

You might want to _____, ... now.

This now is the trickiest part. If you slur it together with the rest of the sentence it just adds an imperative quality to the embedded command. If you pause and then say it, it becomes a powerful command all on its own. You might want to close your eyes now. You might want to let that feeling of comfort move up your arm, ... now.

Maybe you haven't ..., yet.

Maybe you haven't, maybe you have, I'm just making an observation, but when that yet comes along, there's a strong implication that sooner or later you're going to! Maybe you haven't decided to buy copies of Zebu for all of your friends... yet. Who knows? ... There's still time... It's just an observation.

I'm wondering if you'll _____, ... or not.

This or not ending is the greatest way to dodge resistance. If you see the other person smiling and nodding their head, then don't bother to add the or not, who needs it? I'm wondering if you'll use this language pattern constantly, (pause, what, no enthusiastic agreement?) ... or not.

You might notice the sensation in ... while you ...

You can induce hypnosis by directing attention to various parts of the body, You might notice the sensations of your shoes on your feet, the sensation of the chair beneath you, the feeling of the card in your hand. You might notice the sensations in your hands while you relax and pretend that you can't move them.

What happens when you _____?

In order to answer this question you must imagine what I am suggesting, which is the reason I ask. Remember: in the area of emotions and feelings, people learn just as well by vividly imagining experiences as by physically having them. What happens when you just decide you aren't going to let him bother you anymore?

Some people ...

Who are those some people? The first thing a person does is to check inside to see if they are one of those people, so give them something you want them to check for. Some people get feelings of comfort in this office and want to go into trance right away. Some people have hidden strengths that they discover can help them in situation very much like yours.

Try to resist ...

Try to resist implies that you will try, but you won't be able to do it. You can use your voice inflection to strengthen this implication. Try to resist the sensation that your hands are becoming so relaxed that they just won't move. Try to resist, a deepening sensation of relaxation as you breath.

Sometime ...

Sometime, somewhere, there will be a person in a situation very much like yours who will take a deep breath and just let it go. Sometime, you're going to feel better about this. Sometime you are going to understand this from a viewpoint where it all make sense. Sometime you might indirectly get a person to imagine a time when they have the resources you want them to feel.

Can you really enjoy ...?

Can you really enjoy having your eyes get heavy and start to shut? Can you really enjoy taking a deep breath and relaxing deeply? The question isn't if you can do it, or if you will do it, the question is how much will you enjoy doing it. Of course, the only way to answer the question is to do it.

You might not have noticed ...

You might not have noticed how often you direct other people's awareness while you are talking to them. Directing awareness to various parts of the body generally creates relaxation and confusion, both induce hypnosis, You might not have notice the comfortable sensations of your socks on your feet. You might not have noticed the way the chair supports you... beneath your legs... beneath your arms... behind your shoulders...

Eventually...

Eventually everything comes to pass. Eventually what I want to direct your attention to will probably come to pass as well. Eventually you will develop a deep understanding of these difficult events in your life, and you will find some hidden value in them. Eventually, indirect language patterns will become second nature to you. Imagine that.

Sooner or later ...

Sooner or later you'll resolve this present difficulty, and begin to enjoy the simple things in life again. Sooner or later, you'll want to close your eyes. Sooner or later, you're going to be able to look back on this and laugh about it. Jeepers, just about everything happens sooner or later.

I could tell you that ... but ...

I could tell you that ..., but I won't, so you have no reason to resist or take offense at whatever I just didn't tell you. I could tell you that this experience will give you more confidence and self-assurance, but I would rather let you discover that for yourself. I could tell you this is a great way to avoid resistance, but you probably understand that already.

How would you feel if you ... ?

In order to answer this question, you have to imagine what I propose, which is the whole purpose for asking the question. How would you feel if you felt comfortable around dogs, and you could just go up and pet one. How would it feel if you had already made this change?

I wouldn't tell you to _____, because ...

I wouldn't tell (here I am telling you anyway), and you can't disagree with me, because I said upfront I wouldn't tell you. And I use the magic word because to make another comment, because it lends authority to what I just said, and it carries attention away from the embedded command before you consciously recognize it.

Will you ..., or ..., or ...

This is the form of infinite choice, and I'll cover all the possibilities so you can't help but do what I say. And if you get into the habit of doing what I say, sometime I may begin to actually lead you. Will your hand begin to lift up automatically, or will it relax just where it is, or will you notice certain sensations in your hand that you can enjoy.