

# Ericksonian Hypnotic Language Patterns

Douglas O'Brien

## Pattern 15. Open Ended Suggestions

"We all have potentials we are unaware of, and we usually don't know how they will be expressed."

"He doesn't know what he is learning, but he is learning. And it isn't right for me to tell him, 'You learn this or you learn that!' let him learn what he wishes, in what ever order he wishes."

Open-ended suggestions are essentially universal - suggestions that would work for just about anybody. Fortunetellers often use them, in a way that is sometimes referred to as cold reading. Take, as an example, the statement "you don't live up to your potential." This is more true for some of us than for others, but it is true for all of us. So when a fortuneteller reads our palm and looks into our eyes and says, "Mmm... You were given many gifts you that have lain undeveloped, have you not?" It rings true because it is.

In the first quote above from Milton Erickson, he was making use of the same phenomenon. If you ever get a chance to watch the famous "Monde and Nick" video of Dr. Erickson demonstrating therapy with two different individuals, you'll see/hear a great deal of this type of suggestion taking place in the second part of the video. This is because in part two Dr. Erickson is working primarily with Nick whom he has just met. He knows nothing about Nick except some very general information, so he gives very general, open-ended suggestions.

Let me put on my turban now... as you read this sentence, I can tell what you are thinking... You are realizing that you have not been fully taking advantage of this learning opportunity offered you. **You can learn so much more. You could utilize and become greatly proficient with these language patterns, won't you?** You can **imagine yourself** taking a notebook and writing out some of your own examples and then using them with actual people. Because you know, **the more you use them, the better you get with them.** AND you will **have fun.** See you next week.