





*Theater is Life  
Film is Art  
Television is furniture*

**Unknown**

*In the theater experience,  
you actually hope that you will  
get caught up emotionally in the  
movie. You invest your time  
and money and your intention  
in order to feel and experience  
something.*

*If it's a good movie, you find  
yourself caught up in the plot.  
If it's a thriller, you even find  
your heart racing and a genuine  
sense of fear, even though  
you know it's only a movie  
and that you're perfectly safe.*

**Forbes Robbins Blair  
Instant Self Hypnosis,  
Sourcebooks Inc. 2004**



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## Foreword

Have you ever asked yourself what the best venue for mentalism is? Many of us dream of packed auditoriums and prime-time television specials, but are these really the best places to experience one of the most intimate performance arts?

Certainly they are roads to commercial success, but can these venues truly do justice to the experience and ritual of mind reading?

What would be more spectacular, more memorable to you as a layperson: watching the Amazing Kreskin live on stage or meeting someone in your favorite pub or coffee shop who, in the course of a fascinating conversation, divines your innermost thoughts?

It's like entering the tent of the gypsy fortuneteller or the lodge of the shaman... there is an intimacy and uniqueness to the experience that is easily lost in a theatrical setting.

In this manuscript, Alan Strydom brings mentalism back to that level of intimacy, sharing his thoughts on designing a close-up routine. Although he builds on classic principles and effects, it is the context of his presentation that makes the difference.

Read this text carefully and look beyond the effects: it's a reminder that the best venue for mentalism is inside a single mind.

Matthew 'Malchat' Schouten  
February 2007

## Introduction

My journey into magic began, like most people, with a fascination for gimmicks that made the magic work. Soon the gimmicks and gaffs weren't enough, and I began to familiarize myself with methods and skill.

While both skill and gimmicks made it possible to do seemingly impossible things, I could see that because of the structure of the things I was doing, my audiences still saw them as clever tricks. As long as this perception remained intact, I wouldn't have the impact with magic that I wanted.

This wasn't a power trip for me that stemmed from any insecurity. No, this was about rocking someone's perception of the world so that they could see the possibility of things.

My interest in magic began as a therapist treating a young child of nightmares and sleeplessness. I learned a few tricks in order to break through to that part of him that still believed in fairy tales. It was through the magic tricks that I was able to install a sense of control and empowerment in this child, and the nightmares stopped.

However, my interest in magic didn't stop there. It grew into a passion in no time, and soon afterwards I began doing kid's shows, restaurant table-hopping and corporate events.

In my search for stronger magic and stronger impact, I finally put my cards away and turned to mentalism.

This was a few years ago and I continue to learn the intricacies and subtleties that can allow a mentalist, even as a known entertainer, to make a difference... to have impact.

This is what this manuscript is all about: Taking what you know, constructing a routine that moves up the scale of believability at a steady and acceptable pace, tying it together with a theme that makes logical sense and is captivating, and offering it as an emotional experience to anyone who is interested.

Thus you have before you a three-phase routine that I perform on a very regular basis.

I have described the effect in story form to illustrate all the elements of the routine and how the theme holds it all together.

Although the effects herein are not new per se, consider this an essay on how to construct a routine and make it your own. Imagine too, the strength of performing this one-on-one with a potential client who is thinking of booking you.

You don't have to use the theme as it's presented here. Just take note though how each phase builds around the theme. This is the lesson here.

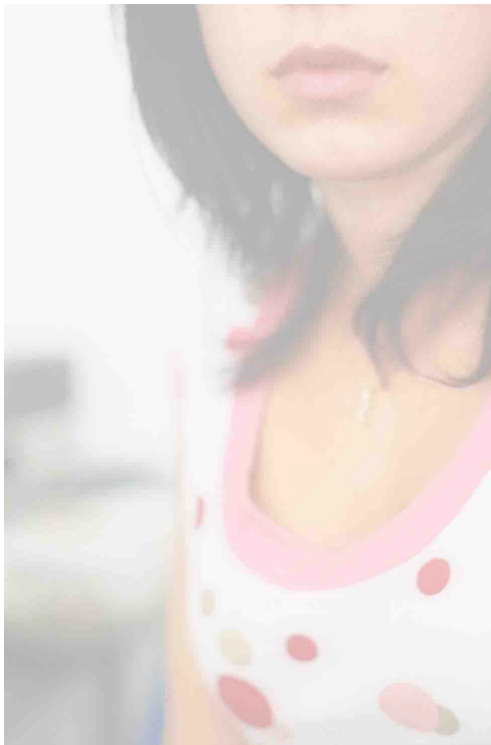
Also, you'll find an interesting use of directing someone to feel different emotions and achieve different states. This is then proven through the effects that you perform.

Lastly, and I can't emphasize this enough, this routine will give your audience something very tangible to remember you by.

Thank you to Matthew "Malchat" Schouten for writing the foreword.

Alan Strydom  
February 2007

## The Real Deal



She sat across the table from us, still laughing. Yes, the joke was on us, and yes, it was funny - *if* you were into that sort of humor. My friend didn't care for it though. He felt it could have had bad repercussions had anyone from the media seen us. I didn't think it was possible though; we hadn't been there long enough for anyone to really notice before she joined us. It turns out she was watching from a distance to see our response; but the thing is neither of us had noticed. Perhaps this was more a reflection of her attitude than ours, but it hadn't bothered us enough.

There had been a small voice in the back of my mind though, trying to get my attention. Somewhere inside I knew there was something a little odd, a little out of place. Good music, a humming crowd, excellent coffee, orange couches, a friendly waiter... Wait!

That was it: a *too* friendly waiter. *He* didn't mind at all showing me the CD cover of the music that was playing. The way he had handed it to me; the proximity of his body to mine, the tone of his voice. I looked around again. Yes, if only I had taken notice earlier. It still wouldn't have bothered me though.

Across from us a couple of the same sex were deep in conversation, holding one another's hands the way lovers do.

I thought the reason people were looking at us was because of my friend. He's somewhat of a celebrity having been on television back in the early nineties. He had been in the media countless times since then for various things, and people still remembered him.

That's why he was a little uneasy with the situation. His friend, *she*, had arranged to meet us at a coffee shop frequented by the gay community. All we could do then was laugh. After all, she had intended to make us feel out of place... it was her idea of a joke.

She told us she had done the same thing before to her brother, and some guys had hit on him. Whatever. This was definitely a reflection of her own attitude than it was mine. I'm ok with my sexual identity and didn't mind in the least. I leaned forward and took a sip of the hot foaming brew.

"So, what did you guys get up to today?" she asked. "More magic?"

I noted the tone in her voice. I was nearing the end of my three-day visit with my friend. We had had so many practice sessions and discussed so much about magic and, now to my delight, mentalism, that I was facing overwhelm. My friend was a magician first and foremost. Thirty-five years in the business and still performing. This time around we had developed a little routine based on some old ideas.

"Yes, we've been speaking about magic. But not the kind you're thinking of. We've been speaking about *real* magick," I said.

"Oh?" Her eyebrows arched. The look in her eyes betrayed her.

"I see by your response that you're skeptical. You don't believe in real magick? Have you ever seen *The Secret*?" I asked.

"Oh, *that*." She said. "Well, that's not magic is it? That's some sort of new-age positive thinking isn't it?"

"Positive thinking... maybe. New age? Definitely not. That kind of thinking has been around for a very long time." I took another sip of my coffee. "You don't believe your thoughts influence your reality?" I asked again.

"Maybe." She replied. "I have often had a headache from thinking too much, but that's about it."

"Well, that's a good start." I said. "Don't you think though that the same set of laws apply to everything else? If you continued to be under stress from worry you would develop an ulcer. If you stubbed your toe it would indicate that you weren't focusing on where you were going. Some people even have thoughts that eat them alive, resulting in cancer."

"What? I don't know about that!" she admitted. "What about something as simple as toothache? Surely your toothache isn't about bad thinking?" "Your toothache is a result of your thoughts not being focused on proper care for your teeth. Simple enough."



I am a firm believer that your thoughts create your reality, one way or another. The problem is though, that even if you *don't* believe it, then you are right too... because your thoughts succeed in creating *that* particular reality."

"Wow!" She said. "I never thought of it that way."

"People often don't. And that's ok I guess. But then they ask themselves why their life doesn't work out. They fail to make the connection that somewhere inside, their thoughts do not suit their actions; or vice versa. They're out of sync with themselves and what they are asking for."

"What do you mean 'asking for'?"

A smile crossed my friend's lips. I continued.

"Well, it's like this. The very process of thinking is asking and answering a question. Right now you're asking yourself if what you hear is true, and you're in the process of answering it and forming an opinion. It happens so fast that we don't even realize it as a question and answering process. The Secret calls this entire process The Law of Attraction. That which you think about, and consequently feel, you bring about... you attract or create."

"Wait, where did feelings enter into this?" she asked.

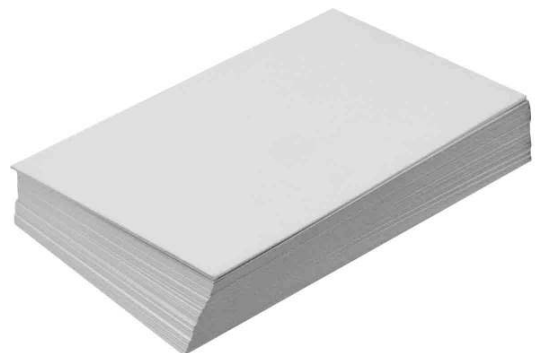
"Feelings are the outcome of your thoughts on a matter. Thinking about something generates a feeling about it. You either feel good about it or you feel bad. Again, simple."

"Wow. I really never had thought of these things before." She had stopped laughing. "Is it really as easy as all that?"

"It's as easy as me knowing the kind of person you are." I smiled.

"Wait. What do you mean? Explain yourself," she dared.

"In the short time I've known you... what has it been, two days? ...I see that you're the kind of person that likes control. Your need for it probably comes from a childhood shared with a brother or sister, probably older than you. You needed to stop them from taking your things. You like everything in its place and don't like a mess. If things are messy then they're lost... or worse, taken. At least now your relationship with that brother or sister is a lot better. They no longer take your stuff. And they are no longer the center of attention.



You are able to get the attention you want now from your folks, particularly your dad. You still don't trust that he loves you enough though, and you sometimes think he doesn't understand you. But you try and keep the peace by doing, or more often than not, not doing things in order to please him."

"Wow. You're scaring me now. You were wrong with one thing though... I'm the third child in a family of two older brothers and a younger sister."

I smiled softly and sipped the coffee again. It was good coffee. Not the bitter kind. The foam was slowly settling.

"Would you like me to show you just how powerful your thoughts can be and how they can influence your reality?" I proposed. "It's a bit offbeat, but it's interesting."

She perked and showed her interest. "Sure. What do we do?"

I reached into my pocket and removed my business card wallet. From inside I extracted a stack of blank business cards, wrapped and held together by an elastic band. I held the stack in my left hand, flicked the wallet closed with my right and replaced it in my pocket. I pulled three cards from the top of the stack and placed the stack down to my right, ends facing her and out of her reach.

"Who carries blank cards?" she remarked suspiciously.

"I do." I said. "I keep my business cards in the inside pockets of my business card wallet. I use these cards to make notes on and write people's numbers on. I also use them for times like these."

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