



## Using ChatGPT in the therapy room

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*How do you feel about the possibilities offered by Artificial Intelligence? Excited? Bewildered? Downright worried about what the future holds? As someone with a background in the written word, I have strong opinions on the subject, but however you feel about AI, one thing's for sure: it will have an increasing effect on the way we live our lives. Here, Trevor Eddolls takes a look at one of the most popular engines, and how it might be used by SFHs today.*

You've probably all heard of ChatGPT and how it and similar Artificial Intelligence (AI) engines can replace scriptwriters on TV and films. You've also probably heard about students using AI to write essays for them. So, if they are so powerful, why aren't we using them to write scripts (language patterns) for our Hypnotherapy sessions?

Everyone graduating from CPHT schools has been given a few scripts that they are encouraged to use over again with clients. Many SFHs have bought books of metaphors that they either use as is, or to borrow ideas from, for their sessions. Some therapists write their own scripts. Some people even go completely off piste and take the Erickson approach, making up what they say as they go along, reflecting back the client's own words and ideas. Whatever the case, a few more script or script ideas wouldn't go amiss, would it?

### What is ChatGPT?

ChatGPT is an advanced natural language processing model developed by OpenAI that is designed to generate human-like responses to prompts or questions. To access ChatGPT, go to the OpenAI website (<https://www.openai.com>) and locate the 'GPT-3 Playground'. Once you're on the playground, you'll see a text box where you can interact with the model.

Begin by entering a prompt in the text box to start a conversation. The system will generate a response based on the context and information provided. The prompt can be a question, a sentence, or a statement that guides the conversation.

One key feature of ChatGPT is its ability to maintain continuity across multiple messages. To achieve this, precede your input with a user or system name followed by a colon (':').

For example:

*User: What's your favourite colour?*

*Or:*

*Assistant: How tall are you?*

By maintaining the user and assistant distinction, the model can better understand and respond to the conversation's context. Iterative conversation allows you to engage in extended interactions and improves the model's understanding of the intended conversation flow.

To guide the model's behaviour, you can provide high-level instructions. These instructions help shape the response based on the desired outcome. For example, you can specify:

*Assistant: Answer the question as if you're a Shakespearean character.*

You can control the length of the generated response using the 'Max tokens' setting. The more tokens you allow, the longer and more detailed the response will be. However, increasing the token limit also affects the model's response time. Adjust this setting based on your preference and the desired level of detail.

Training the model to generate precise responses requires providing it with clear instructions. If a response is not satisfactory, you can use examples to illustrate how you want it to be improved.

For instance, you can mention previous correct or desired responses during conversation. This helps ChatGPT understand the desired output, leading to better performance and more accurate replies.

Instructions will improve the quality of generated responses. You can try different prompts, lengths, system instructions, or even restructuring your conversation to achieve better outcomes.

Remember, refining prompts and iterating through conversations will help you discover the best approaches to obtain the desired results.

You'll not be surprised to learn that I asked ChatGPT to write the preceding information! Although, I have changed it a bit.

It's also worth noting that prompts really need to be specific to get a good response. You can ask ChatGPT to act in a particular role (eg customer support or HR manager), and you can ask it to perform a task (eg writing a job description or responding to a complaint). You can specify the format (eg bullet points or a flow chart), and you can get it to use a particular tone (eg engaging or serious). Also, you need to specify the objective.

### How useful is ChatGPT to SFHs?

So, can ChatGPT write Hypnotherapy scripts? I asked it: *Act as a therapist and write a Hypnotherapy script. The tone is engaging, and the objective is to help someone to feel more confident and relaxed.*

The result was a short script that was direct in tone. Next, I told it to be indirect – again in the Erickson manner. I also suggested the number of words (Max tokens). Here's the script it produced:

#### **Cultivating unshakeable confidence and deep relaxation**

*In this tranquil space, allow yourself to connect with the innate confidence that resides within you. Picture a radiant light at the very core of your being, shining brightly and filled with unwavering self-assurance. See this light growing stronger, expanding throughout your entire being, reaching every corner of your body and mind.*

*As this light of confidence intensifies, recognize that you have the ability to embrace any challenges that come your way with ease and clarity. Visualize yourself engaging in various situations that may have previously evoked nervousness or self-doubt. Notice how effortlessly you navigate these scenarios, feeling an unshakeable sense of confidence and deep relaxation.*

*Imagine yourself stepping into a social gathering without any hesitation or apprehension. Observe how you engage with others naturally and authentically, expressing your thoughts and ideas with calm assertion. Feel the presence of others responding to your confidence, admiration and respect shining in their eyes.*

*In this sanctuary of confidence and relaxation, repeat affirmations silently within your mind. Feel the words resonate with your deepest self, reinforcing your beliefs and strengthening your inherent confidence.*

*'I radiate confidence in every aspect of my life. I am calm, centered, and at ease in all situations. I embrace challenges as opportunities for personal growth and development. I am deserving of success, and I trust in my innate abilities. I choose to relax deeply, releasing any tension or stress that arises.'*

*As you continue to embrace these affirmations, imagine yourself in a variety of scenarios that typically test your confidence. See yourself delivering a presentation with ease and poise, captivating your audience effortlessly. Picture yourself engaging in conversations, expressing your thoughts with grace and clarity, feeling a profound sense of ease in social situations.*

*Notice how confidence and relaxation intertwine within you, forming a harmonious state of being. Observe the physical sensations that arise as you imagine these situations—feel the ease in your body, the relaxed state of your muscles, and the peacefulness that pervades your entire being.*

*Embrace this state of deep relaxation and unshakable confidence as an integral part of who you are. Allow it to become your new default mode of being, accessible to you at any time you choose. Know that you are worthy and deserving of self-assurance, tranquility, and success.*



### Conclusion

Well, what do you think?

ChatGPT is what's called a Large Language Model (LLM). It is basically like the predictive text on your phone. It chooses the next likely word to write based on the previous words. If I were giving the script a score, it would be six out of ten. There are parts of it that seem perfectly fine. However, in my opinion it lacks any kind of personality. Also, I don't know how much of the script it produced was taken from scripts that it was trained on, or scripts that other people have typed in for ChatGPT to improve.

If I were to do it again, I would train ChatGPT on a few of my favourite scripts, so that it knew the kinds of thing I like. Why, I might even train it on the scripts that I have written, in order to make the result sound more like I'd written them.

I'm not suggesting in any way that everyone rush out and get ChatGPT (or Bard from Google, Copilot from Microsoft, or any other AI – lots are available) to write their scripts for each client session. What I am saying is that AIs like ChatGPT are going to become more and more common, and that knowing about them ensures that we, as Hypnotherapists, can offer our clients the best experience possible. Using this technology may not be commonplace at the moment, but it surely will be in a few years' time.



#### **About the writer:**

Trevor regularly contributes to the Journal and the website. He runs his Hypnotherapy practice in Chippenham, runs CPD sessions, and offers one-to-one Supervision sessions over Zoom.