**Mind Games - Angie**

Little Joe

Angie
I got a front seat at the course next to Angie. It was the highlight of the three day long course for aspiring sales representatives and it was led by Alison Masters the well known expert on persuading people to buy things they didn’t want. I didn’t of course pose the obvious question of why we would be selling things the public didn’t want; I had after all failed the course the previous year and I wasn’t going to upset things this year. How I’d d got back on the course I had no idea. You were only supposed to be allowed one go at it, but then even in our company not everyone was perfect.

Alison’s course contained some high power persuasion techniques that the company didn’t want to get out, so everybody was sworn to silence on what they learned, having to sign a little bit of paper that would get them sacked, hung, drawn and quartered if they breathed a word.

The room was set up with the participants in a semi-circle. In front of the semi-circle was a chair. An ordinary wooden chair. And pointing at the chair was a camera, the view from which was projected up on a screen at the front of the room so that everyone could see it.

As usual Alison started off with a description of how people had managed to sell the Empire State Building and Sidney Harbour Bridge despite the fact that they didn’t own them and the buyer had no need either of building a or a bridge, again this begged the question which I wasn’t going to ask, of why we were selling people stuff that they had no need of.

“Right, I need a volunteer to demonstrate some of these techniques on. You’re going to be made to do some really embarrassing things so don’t volunteer unless you want to.”

Of course a forest of hands shot up. These were after all keen young sales reps and they were desperate to show how keen they were.

"You'll not get me to do any embarrassing things," said Angie, "with a load of cheap con tricks."

She put her hand up. She was short, she was slim, she was busty, she was sassy, as I think they say in the States and she show the cheap trickster a thing or two.

“Scaredy-cat,” she said to me as I sat on my hands (I never volunteer for anything nowadays), “no way is that Dumbo going to persuade me to do anything I don’t want to!”

"Careful Angie. The volunteers get put through it."

"Just let her try putting me through it! I'll give her what for."

Angie, well known for putting her own subordinates through the wringer as often and as hard as she liked, was anxious to prove her mettle.

Then Alison invoked her powers of suggestion. This wasn’t after all, as I knew, just a trawl for a volunteer. This was a test of who would be a good subject.

“Right everybody,” she said, "look at me,” and it must be said that her voice did carry an extraordinary level of authority, deep for a woman and resonant, “you’ve all put your hands up because you want to volunteer. You’re so keen. You really want to do it. And now nothing will make you put your hand down. You just can’t do it. It’s stuck up there and will stay there until I tell you that you can put it down.”

That provoked a laugh. What a cheap trick. Nobody would be stuck with their hand up because of that. Hands came down all over the place. One after the other. Except that is for Angie. She looked wildly round, horrified that hers was the only hand still up. I could see her trying to pull it down, but the power of suggestion was too strong; the more she tried, the more she found it impossible to do. It can be very strong - the power of suggestion you know. There is always somebody who is susceptible.

Alison smiled, “Ladies and gentlemen,” she said (though apart from me there weren’t that many gentlemen), “we have our volunteer. Angie is it. Well done Angie. Now I need you to wait outside Angie while I explain to your colleagues what we’re going to do."

Angie reluctantly got up and went out the door. Her hand was still up. I could see that embarrassed her more than anything. And she would have had to stand outside with her hand up wondering what was going to happen to her; perhaps she wasn’t quite so immune to persuasion as she had thought, and she would hear the laughter of people inside as the persuasion techniques and their results were described. It was all part of the softening up process. The subject was supposed to hear.

It was ten minutes before she was allowed back in.

“Oh, you can put your hand back down now Angie darling, unless you need the toilet of course,” it was a cheap jibe, but it got a big laugh. Alison sounded particularly condescending and patronising.

Of course calling her 'Angie' and 'darling' was all part of the strategy. You know why bosses and teachers and nurses and the like always call you by your first name. It's not to be friendly. It establishes their superiority. You are 'Bert' or 'Jim' and they are Sir or Miss or Nurse. Angie’s arm came straight down. She looked round nervously.

“Well,” said Alison, “a big round of applause for the wonderful Angie, our star performer,” Angie beamed with a slightly anxious glance around. She did enjoy being the centre of attention.

Everybody clapped and cheered.

“Right Angie darling. What I need you to understand is you are key to this presentation. We’re relying on you to do things right, to help people to understand how these techniques work. Without your help your colleagues will get no benefit. I can see you’re not going to let us down, are you Angie.”

Well what can you answer to that, 'No – I am going to let you down’ – of course not. Angie, already nervous with the softening up, agreed that they could rely on her.

“So Angie, I’m going to keep you right through these presentations. I’ll make sure you do the right thing. You’ll trust me to do that. You have confidence in me haven’t you.”

‘You have confidence in me don’t you?’ the phrase that gave its name to the confidence trick. Nobody can bring themselves to say ‘No I don’t trust you’ so of course they say ‘yes’, and when they say ‘yes’ then they don’t feel able to contradict any more.

“Yes,” said Angie.

“Just do as I say Angie and we’ll be fine. All you have to do is follow my instructions to the letter. You’ll do it for me won’t you?”

Who’s going to say they can’t follow instructions, yet when you agree to it you mentally commit yourself to doing just that.

“And when you get it right just think how proud everyone will be of you, how good it will make you feel. You’ll have been the star.”

Angie beamed. She liked the idea of being the star, but of course the suggestion was planted that it made her feel good to follow her orders. These were typical soft sell techniques. Even I knew that. Butter the client up. Make her feel good about herself. Make her like you. Make her not want to disappoint you.

“So Angie we start with the first demonstration. I’m going to teach you to relax. Can you relax Angie?”

Angie nodded her head eagerly.

“Kick off your shoes Angie darling. You’ll not need those. Close your eyes Angie and listen to my voice. Can you hear my voice Angie?”

Angie nodded.

“I want you to concentrate on my voice and nothing else. Just my voice. Now think of somewhere where you were happy and relaxed. Somewhere out in the country with the sun shining, where the grass was green and a stream gushed nearby. Can you think of such a place Angie?”

Angie nodded her head.

“And you were happy and relaxed there Angie.”

Angie nodded her head.

“Now I want you to hold that vision in your head, because that vision relaxes you, that vision makes you feel good. Keep that vision in mind Angie darling because I’m going to relax your muscles now. First we have to stretch your muscles, then we can relax them. Now to stretch your muscles Angie. Stand with your feet slightly apart and bend forwards so you touch the floor. That's right Angie. Now slowly stand up running your hands up the front of your body, up your legs, over your tummy, over your chest, up beside your head then stretch as high as you can. That’s right Angie, stretch those muscles. Arch your back, throw your head back, go up on your toes, reach up, reach up as high as you can, try and touch the sky.”

And there Angie was: barefoot, on tip-toes, back arched, head flung back, eyes still closed, reaching and reaching upwards.
“Hold it Angie darling, hold it. You can’t relax till I tell you. Hold it, hold it. And relax. All your muscles. Flop down onto a heap on the chair. All your muscles are so relaxed you can’t move.”

It was an old technique. The relaxed mind in a relaxed body is so receptive.

“So you’re going to have to bear with me Angie,” there it was - the old subliminal message while the mind was relaxed and receptive, the hidden message that the brain hears and doesn’t register - the message ‘you’re going to have to bare with me’. The operative word in this case being 'bare'.

“Yes you’ll have to bear with me Angie darling. I’m going to ask you some questions. Some of these questions will be embarrassing because I want the audience to see how the embarrassed person reacts. Embarrassment is an important part of persuasion. You get the client embarrassed, then they can relieve the embarrassment by making the purchase. Are you ready Angie?” Angie nodded.

“Now sit up on the chair Angie”

Angie sat up. She was ready to be questioned. Alison set the camera up on Angie's face and projected it on the screen so we could analyse her reaction in detail.

"Right. Your name is?"

"Angie Thomson."

"Right you can all see that there is no reaction to the simple question."

"And your height is?"

"Five foot two."

"Okay Shorty," she paused a second, "oh - you can see she didn't like that comment. A slight shift in posture, eyes opening a bit, her face flushing slightly."

We’d all seen it in close up on the screen and nodded. Angie shuffled slightly in the seat wondering what was coming next, this analysing of her reaction would, I knew, be unnerving her.

"And your breast size Angie. Okay - you'll all have seen that. The first real embarrassed reaction - the flush pass over the face and the eyes dropping slightly. Come on Angie you've got to Answer."

We looked at the screen. Angie looked nervous. She clearly didn't like answering.

"Thirty eight D," she croaked, flushing more and hardly looking at the camera.

"Next nervous reaction - the mouth goes dry, you get a lump in the throat and the voice croaks - and did you see how wide her pupils dilated."

I could see how the detailed description of her reactions was stressing Angie. The subject finds it very disorientating.

"Well Angie, those are big breasts for a little girl aren't they? Aren't they Angie?" Pressurising her to answer.

"Yes," croaked Angie.

"And tell me Angie, do you shave down below... Oh that really embarrasses her. Persistent flush of the face and a nervous movement of the arm. And did you see the flick of the eyes. Look for the flick of the eyes up and right. She's thinking of lying. It's a sure giveaway. You were going to lie weren't you Angie. Don't lie to me Angie, I can always tell"

Angie nodded.

"Well Angie," the voice becoming more commanding.

"Yes," croaked Angie.

"How often do you shave down there?"

"Every day croaked Angie," the signs of acute embarrassment obvious to everyone. She knew everyone would have a mental image of her shaving herself down there.

"Right - relaxation technique again Angie," the full authoritative voice now.

Angie stood up visibly relieved at the break in questioning. But not for long.

"And this time in your undies."

I knew this was the crucial point, that Angie had beeen stressed, stressed by the nature of the questions and the analysis of her reactions, to make her more vulnerable to the request. It was a request that Angie would have laughed off under any normal circumstances. But she just sat there immobile.

"Angie," Alison almost barked at her.

Angie just sat and shook her head.

"Silly little girl," barked Alison, "I thought we could rely on you Angie, I thought you trusted me, and now you're going to spoil everything."

It was the sudden shift from soft sell to hard sell that was disorientating. In the soft sell you make the subject feel good about cooperating - you're good cop. In the hard sell you make the subject feel bad about not not cooperating - you're bad cop. You are authoritarian, you are angry; you make the subject feel small. And the smaller they feel the more likely they are to acquiesce. And Angie was feeling very small. Embarrassed, stressed and belittled she was going to cooperate.

And I knew that if she cooperated here Alison had her. This was something she would have had every right to refuse, and if she didn't then her will to resist was broken, and her feeling that she had to cooperate was reinforced.

And of course she was broken. Already. It hadn’t taken long. She stood up, unbuttoned her blouse, took it off, unzipped her skirt and stepped out of it. She stood there in her undies trembling slightly.

"Right you can all see the signs of acute embarrassment here. The slight tremble, the nervous rubbing of her arm, the goose bumps on her bare skin. And you can just see through her bra that her nipples are erect."

"Your nipples are erect, aren't they Angie?"

Angie nodded.

"Right Angie darling. Picture the relaxation scene again and listen to my voice. You are going to stretch you muscles first. Bend... And stretch..."

And Angie stretched right up, her big bosoms stretching forwards straining against the silky material of her black D cup bra.

"Hold it, hold it... You can't rekax till I tell you..."

The held stretch was another stress technique. It made the muscles ache and ache, and the fact that the subject couldn’t break out of it stressed them even more. And Angie was made to stay stretched up on tip-toe until Alison permitted her to relax.

"And relax.". Angie crumpled back into the chair and the relentless questioning started again. Only this time she was more vulnerable because she was in her undies.

"Well done Angie. You'll be my new darling soon. You know you will."

I spotted the subliminal message again. Did you? The message that the brain would take in and help it accept the inevitable, for the brain would hear "You'll be my nude darling soon."

"Right Angie, when was the last time you had sex..."

"Oh Angie you're going to lie. Did you see the eyes flicker everyone, and she rubbed her arm again."

"Last Thursday," Angie's voice was a croaked whisper.

"Angie!" The harsh tone was back, "I don't mean with yourself."

The room burst into laughter and Angie cringed even more. Poor Angie knew it was no good trying to lie any more.

"Well Angie?"

"I haven't."

"What do you mean you haven't?"

"I haven't ever had proper sex. Not with somebody else," Angie was looking right down at the floor now.

Who would have believed it! Sassy, sexy Angie a virgin.

"Okay Angie. Relaxation again. And this time no bra," it was the voice of authority again and Angie didn't even think of resistance. In her heightened vulnerable state she couldn't bear another tongue lashing. The bra came off to audible gasps. Her nipples were erect.

"Okay Angie, now listen to my voice. Think of your happy place. Bend... And stretch..."

The alternation of the pressure of the questioning and the stretching technique also disorientates the brain, making it more vulnerlable.

"And hold..." She was being asked to hold stretched to her limit for longer and longer each time. In her receptive state, her brain wouldn't let her relax until told to, "and relax..."

"Well done Angie. Thank you for bearing with me. You really will be my new darling soon.'

Angie collapsed in the chair almost cringing at the thought of what the next question would be.

"Well Angie. You must play with yourself a lot. How often do you masturbate?"

Angie knew she'd be caught out in any lie. She would have to tell the truth. Visibly shaking and looking straight at the floor she answered, "Every day." In her croaky nervous whisper.

"And what do you use Angie darling. A vibrator?"

"Yes. And my fingers Miss,"

"You play with your clitoris using your fingers?"

"Yes Miss.” Angie was completely broken

"Righ Angie. Time for the final relaxation. You want that don't you Angie? You want it to be all over."

"Yes Miss."

"Okay. Panties off Angie."

She must have known it was coming, but she didn’t hesitate.

"Yes Miss."

She couldn't get her panties off quick enough.

And Angie stood in front of us, flushed, trembling and completely naked, her hands trying to hide her smooth shaved sex.

Alison beamed at the class.

"Well," she said, "you thought it couldn't be done. When I told you what I was going to do you said I could never strip Angie naked. Not bossy, confident Angie, yet here she is stark naked in front of you. In spite of all her inhibitions and embarrassment she's stripped naked in front of her colleagues, entirely of her own volition.” There was a spontaneous round of applause.

"Come on Angie," she said, "final relaxation. Naked relaxation is always the best. Think of your happy palce. Listen to my voice. Bend.... And stretch... And hold... And keep holding until I tell you to relax."

I watched as Angie bent and stretched, then stood nude, completely nude. Trembling on tip-toe, her leg muscles taut, the cheeks of her bottom tight, her smooth shaved sex clearly visible between her slightly parted legs. Her back was arched and her big bosoms with their prominent nipples thrust forwards, her head flung back and her arms stretched high above her head strectching for the ceiling.

It was a highly erotic pose and unbearably uncomfortable to maintain, but Alison was going to keep her in it for a while. Just to demonstrate her power.

I looked at Angie. I knew how she must be feeling. Stripped naked and made to adopt that adopt that pose of extreme sexual provocation and be totally unable to break out of it. The embarrassment would be acute. You could tell from the flush, the goose bumps, the trembling lip, the erect nipples, the constant and unavailing struggle to move.

And I knew all about it anyway. When I had stood there the previous year, it hadn't been my nipples that had been erect.