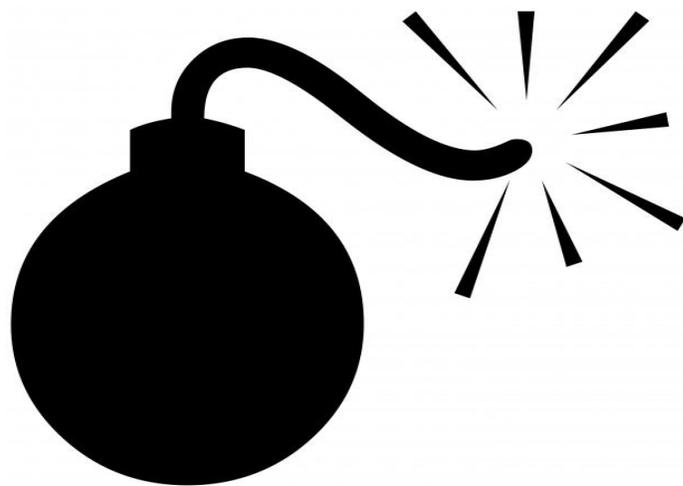


**ALWAYS
ON MY
MIND**



JAY SANKEY

MENTAL BREAKDOWN

This trick plays like honest-to-goodness mind reading. The pack is shuffled and six cards are freely selected. A spectator is asked to think, merely THINK of anyone of the six cards, and then shuffle them. And yet, a few moments later, the wonder worker divines which card the spectator has in mind without any questions whatsoever!

This trick is based on a Steward James idea. All I've done is streamlined the handling and presentation. In fact, the entire routine requires but a single move, the Turnover Pass.

To begin, have the pack shuffled (always a nice way to start any trick.) Then spread the face down deck either on the table or between your hands. Have six cards touched and removed from the pack, but insist -for "fairness sake"- that no one look at the faces of the selections. After all, "I don't want to get any subtle psychic messages from any of you."

Have a spectator mix-up the packet of six cards while holding the cards face down. Ask her to stop mixing the cards any time she wishes and then to either take a tiny peek 'at the top card of the packet OR at the bottom card of the packet. Again, it is entirely her choice. After she has noted a card, ask her to immediately mix-up the cards again. (Extremely fair, isn't it?)

You should still be holding the face down deck in your left hand (in the dealing position.) With your free right hand, take back the six card packet, turn the packet face-up on top of the face down deck, and spread the six cards in a small fan, but be sure to hold the cards up to your face so that ONLY YOU WOULD SEE THE FACES OF THE SIX CARDS.

Stare at the six cards, then into the spectator's eyes. Urge her to concentrate. Suddenly, remove anyone of the six cards from the fan and place it face down on the table. Pause beat, and then head into your "recap/sales pitch" in such a way that everyone knows you are just clarifying the proceedings before revealing the card you chose under impossible conditions.

As you recap, smoothly turn the remaining five cards face down onto the deck, turn the entire pack face-up, and spread the pack between your hands as you say, "And remember, all the cards are different and we began by having you choose literally any six cards you wanted." Or at least that's what it should LOOK LIKE you have just done. Actually, as you turn the deck face-up, execute a Turnover Pass, secretly cutting the top

five cards into the center of the pack. After spreading the face-up deck between your hands, immediately square the cards, turn the deck face down, and smoothly thumb-off the top five cards in a little fan, taking them in your right hand as you say, "And then, of the six cards you chose, you thought of literally anyone of these cards."

Table the five (switched-in) facedown cards, still in their small fan, and pick up the face down card you first tabled as you say, "And then I narrowed it down to one and only one card. My prediction, which -for safekeeping- I'm going to slip into the very middle of the pack." Suiting your actions to your words, slowly slip the face down card into the center of the face down deck.

I know the proceeding actions sound pretty "up and down and all around", and yeah, they will only work if supported by a smooth, confident script, but with a little bit of rehearsing you will find that the actions not only 'fly,' they fly beautifully.

To end, table the pack and ask the spectator to name, for the very first time, the card she is merely thinking of. Then slowly, one by one, turn over the five tabled face down cards, to reveal that her card is not among them. Pick up the pack and triumphantly fan-out the deck to show that her card is sitting in the very center of the pack, precisely where "you put it."

Note: As with many mentalist tricks, presentation accounts for 98% of the trick's potential impact.

NUMERO

This has been an impromptu favorite for a long time. All you need is a pen and a business card and you are 'good to go.' One proviso: the business card must be the same color on the back and the front. About 95% of cards ARE like this, but just wanted to let you know up front.

Begin by asking people to suggest some single and double digit numbers. As they do, pick up the business card in your left hand, and have it resting on the palm with the printed side facing up. It's important that you hold the card, not at your fingertips, but rather on your palm so nobody can see if you are holding the business card 'face up' or 'face down.'

Quickly write the first number suggested in the corner of the 'face up' card, but then stop and wave the pen as if the ink is 'jammed.' As you wave the pen in your right hand, there is plenty of natural misdirection to cover the fact that your left hand has casually fallen to your side and ROLLED OVER the card.

Say, "Okay, where were we," and act as if you are only NOW starting to jot down a few numbers. Holding the card in your left hand, write the first number suggested in the SAME CORNER you did the first time, but now you are writing it on the blank side of the card.

Continue writing down several 1-digit and 2-digit numbers, all on the blank side. When you are done, carefully tear the card into small pieces with a different number on each piece. But of course, on one of the pieces you actually have the same number on BOTH sides. For this deception to be totally convincing, it's important that there is no ink, design marks, etc. on this double-sided piece. In a completely improvised way, you have created a double-sided 'gimmick' that will automatically force the number.

Drop all the pieces into a glass and have a spectator hold the glass between her hands and give it a good shake. While she's doing that, openly make your prediction. Your prediction can be as simple as writing the number on a paper napkin or the palm of your hand. You could whisper it in someone's ear. You could check to see which coins you have in your pocket and give the correct amount to someone to hold. But whatever you do, try to do something interesting and memorable, as well as something that works with your own unique style.

As per a very old handling idea, after shaking the glass, have the spectator dump out all the pieces onto the table and 'slide off to one side', any of the pieces that land with the

numbers facing down. Then gather up the remaining pieces, drop them into the glass and repeat the process of shaking, dumping out, and 'sliding off to the side.'

The last piece will always be the piece with your force number on it!

OF A CLOTH

Over the years, I have shared this effect with a zillion couples. You need a paper napkin and a pack of cards. Divide the pack in half and give one half to each person. Have them shuffle both halves, and then reassemble the pack.

Spread the pack face up for a moment to show that the cards "are completely shuffle" (and glimpse the top card of the pack at the same time.)

Pick up the paper napkin, tear it in half, and mention that you are going to make "two predictions." But what you in fact do is make a quick sketch of HALF a playing card on both pieces of napkin, so that when the two halves are later held together, they form ONECARD. (This card is of course the card you glimpsed on the top of the pack.)

Dramatically place half a napkin face down in front of each spectator. Force the top card on one of the two people, but make sure the other person does not see the card. "I want only Steve to look at the card. It's important that we keep your two brains totally isolated for now."

Have the card returned to the pack, controlled, and forced again on the second person. Have the card returned to the pack and pocket the deck. Take a few moments to recap the events, talk a little bit about the mysterious connection between partners in a relationship, etc.

Then have them announce the name of their card at the same time. Do NOT look surprised. After all, you are about to reveal the fact that you somehow KNEW they were going to select the same card. I usually just raise my eyebrow in a low-key kind of 'this is interesting' way.

But even with such a low-key response, the two halves of the napkin are so theatrically misleading, people still assume I screwed up. Turn over both halves of the napkin at the same time and slide them together to reveal the image of a single card.

Note: I will sometimes follow this up with a restoration of the napkin, but in that case I need to have a napkin set-up beforehand and cull the force card to the top of the pack.

DIGITS

Mentalism doesn't get any simpler than this. It also doesn't get any more practical. The next time someone asks you to 'read my mind,' definitely try this.

To start, borrow some bills, the more the better. You should use at least 6 or 7 bills. Arrange them so they are all facing the same way, and hold them in a neat stack with the serial numbers on the bills facing DOWN towards the floor.

Take a moment to roll over the stack and fan them out like playing cards as you comment that 'considering they all have different serial numbers, there must be thousands of different number combinations.' Then neatly rollover the stack once again so all the serial numbers are facing down.

But the 'work' is done. In the few seconds it took you to roll over the stack, fan out the bills, make a comment, and then roll the stack over again, you spotted the last few digits of the BOTTOM bill of the stack.

Casually count the stack of bills down onto the table, one on top of each other, then scoop them up and ask someone's name a number between one and seven' (assuming you are using 7 bills.) Notice that when you counted the bills down onto the table, you reversed their order so that the bill that was originally on the bottom is now on the TOP.

When they name the number (let's say it's "Four") say to them, "Okay, I'd like you to take these bills and just count 4 of them down onto the table." Suit your actions to your words and quickly count the first 4 bills down onto the table, one on top of each other. Then smoothly pick up the stack of just dealt 4 bills and drop them directly back on top of the rest of the bills in your hand.

This very fair and casual action not only demonstrates to the spectator exactly what you want her to do, but it also positions the bill with your memorized digits in the 4th position. So now when the spectator counts the top four bills down onto the table, the top bill of her dealt pile will be the 'force bill.'

Make a point of turning your head away as you ask her to 'take a peek at the last 2 or 3 digits of the serial number on the underside of the bill.' Have her concentrate on the numbers and reveal your inexplicable ability to 'read her mind' with as much fun and style as you can.

Notes: This same effect can of course be easily presented as a prediction effect rather than mind-reading. After you spot the digits and count the bills onto the table, remove one of your own businesscards out of your pocket and jot down the 2 or 3 digits you have memorized. Table the card (face down of course) and have someone put their hand on it. Or you could simply write your prediction on another bill.

CROSS OUT

It's amazing how some things stick with you. I learned this 'beginner magic trick' over 30 years ago and it's still part of my 'go to' set when someone asks me to show them something in a casual situation.

This is really just a very basic example of linguistic programming. I say, "I'm going to ask you to cross out a number from one to four." Then, on a paper napkin or anything else that's handy, I write down a single, vertical column of numbers starting with 1 at the top, then 2, 3 and finally 4 at the bottom of the column.

Then I say, "There they are. Four numbers running from one to four. And in a moment I'm going to ask you to cross out one of the numbers from one to four. But first, I'm going to make a prediction, and I'm going to put my money where my mind is." (And I always tap my head for emphasis.)

I take out my wallet and remove the smallest bill I have. I write the number '3' on the bill but make sure nobody can see what I've written. Then I ball it up, place it on the table and cover it with an empty glass or cup. (This always adds drama.)

Then I hand the pen to spectator and say, "Are you ready? Alright, take this pen and cross out one of the numbers from one to four." And at least 75% of the time they cross out the 3. Why? Because have mentioned the 'one' the 'to' and the 'four' SEVERAL times without mentioning the three even once.

I ask someone to lift the glass, unfold the bill and everybody is pretty darn impressed (especially because the build-up strongly undercuts the idea that there was ever a chance I might be wrong.)

What do I do the other 25% of the time when they don't cross out the three? Play the odds, and work the heck of out my linguistic programming, that's what. I say, "Good. Okay, so that leaves three numbers left, right? Three of them." (Notice how much I'm saying 'three' now.) I continue, "And actually, I'm going to have you make a total of three choices. Go ahead, cross out one of the three remaining numbers."

And I silently hope they leave the three alone and cross out one of the other numbers (which they do, about 50% of the time.) This leaves two numbers left. I say, "Okay, last choice. Go ahead and cross out one last number." And if luck is on my side (and this time it's a 50/50 split) the 3 is left untouched during even this final choice.

In that case, I really 'milk the effect' for all its worth, emphasize that they had three opportunities, but from the very start I knew, I just knew that the one number they were going to leave untouched (opening the bill to show my prediction) would be the three."

What do I do when things don't go my way (despite the odds from the start that they will?) I say, "Well, that didn't work out quite how it usually does. So you can keep my dollar...or I can teach you the psychology behind the experiment." Only ONCE has anybody ever taken the money. And when I let them in on the linguistic programming, they tend to be even MORE impressed with anything else I show them. Gotta love that.

CONSTELLATION

I've been exploring the 'world of the dry marker' for a long time. (It's kind of an obsession.) You'll need three thin-tipped markers: two black + one red.

To prepare, uncap the black marker and hold one of your business cards behind your back, with the printed side facing UP in your left hand. With your free right hand, pick up the marker and hold it behind your back as well. Quickly TAP the underside of the business card with the tip of the marker several times in quick succession. Next, bring the card and marker forward from behind your back and replace the marker on the cap. Now with the red marker, do your best to copy the lay-out of the black dots onto the back of a second business card.

You also need to let one of the black markers soak in a glass of water for a day or two, and then leave it out in the sun to DRYOUT. Have the two prepared business cards on top of a small stack of your cards, and slip a rubber band around the stack.

To perform, take the band off the packet of business cards, turn over the packet (so the printed side of the cards is facing the floor) and spread out the top few cards as you say, "let's try a little experiment with a few of my business cards." Square up the packet, turn it over and thumb off the top two cards. (These are the prepared cards.)

Introduce and uncap the dried-out black marker. As you demonstrate what you would like the spectator to do, say "Behind your back, I'd like you to hold this marker in one hand, and one of my business cards in the other hand. And when I say start, I'd like you to please TAP the bottom of the card with the tip of the marker several times. While you do that, I'm going to do the exact same thing behind my back. Just be careful you don't get any ink on your fingers."

When the two of you are both holding cards and markers behind your back (you holding the red marker, the spectator holding the dried out black marker) say, "Now" and make a point of staring directly into the spectator's eyes. After a few seconds, ask the spectator to stop and bring the marker and card forward from behind his back. While he actually tapped the bottom of the card with his marker, you were only pretending to do the same with yours.

Put away both markers and the remainder of the business cards. Now is the time to recap the proceedings and perhaps mention something about the infinite variety of possible patterns ("not unlike the stars in the sky.") Turn over both cards and comment on the 'obvious signs of connection.'

Notes: You might want to put a pencil dot on the back of one of the two business cards to prevent you from ever getting them mixed up. Instead of just dots, you could also make a quick shape or 'blind doodle' on the two cards, but the more elaborate the design, the more you might be challenge credibility. Instead of drying out the marker, you could paint the tip of the marker with a few coats of clear nail polish. I've also performed this handling with small note pads, dollar bills and paper napkins.

BLACK MARKET

I first released this effect many years ago on my '22 BLOWS TO THE HEAD' project and it has proven to be one of my most popular mentalism effects.

You will need two identical match books. Prepare one of them by marking every match in the book with a black marker. And don't just put a dot on each match. Instead, totally blacken the heads and stems of every match in the book. Have the 'marked' book in your right pants pocket, and the unmarked book in your left pants pocket. You also need to have the marker in your right pants pocket.

To share this intimate mystery, slip both hands into your pockets. Slip the unmarked book into left finger palm as the right hand slips out of its pocket holding the marked book at the fingertips. Hand it to someone and ask them to hold the book behind their back, open it, and tear out "the one match you feel drawn to." Encourage them to take their time.

When they have done that, ask them to close the match book and bring it forward, but to make sure they keep the match they removed "safe in your tightly closed fist."

Retrieve the matchbook from the spectator with your empty right hand and pretend to transfer it to your left hand. In reality, execute Roth's 'Shuttle Pass' and switch the booklets. Casually table the left hand's booklet as you admit that you "did something to one of the matches..with this." As you say this, slip your right hand into your pocket and remove the marker (leaving the marked book behind.)

Take a few moments to emphasize the absolute freedom of choice the spectator had when choosing a match. And then 'let them in' on the fact that you marked one of the matches with the marker. Build the drama by picking up the tabled matchbook, opening it and spreading the matches "to see if we can find the one marked match." It is of course not there. Finish by asking the spectator to open her fist.

HYPERSENSITIVE

You are going to love this one! You can do it in a moment's notice and people's jaws always hit the table. All you need is a coin, any coin, thumb palmed in your left hand and you need to know the date of the coin. Also, it has to be a well-lit space. (It's too hard to read dates on coins in a dim bar!)

Ask a few people to place whatever change they have inside a glass or -if you don't have a glass-they can just place the coins in a small pile on a nearby table. They can even place the coins in someone's cupped hands.

Borrow a pen and ask a spectator to "get ready to write down a few numbers" on a paper napkin, business card or whatever else is handy. Slowly turn your head away from the pile of change. With your head still turned away, slowly show your right hand undeniably empty and then reach down into the pile of change and remove a coin. Keep the coin concealed behind your fingers so that nobody is able to see the denomination of the coin. Quickly close your right hand into a fist. Appear to concentrate for a moment and then announce the date of the coin palmed in your left hand.

As the spectator writes down the date, open your right hand, raise the coin up to your face, note the date on the coin, nod your head in satisfaction and then casually place the coin into the left hand. As you do all of the above, the just-picked up coin must remain hidden from the audience's view. In other words, they have no idea whether you grabbed a dime, quarter or whatever.

Continue by again turning your head away, show your right hand empty, dip it into the pile of change and remove a second coin and hold it in your closed right fist. Appear to concentrate, then announce the date of the FIRST coin you removed from the pile. As before, while the spectator writes down the announced date, take a moment to open your right hand, raise the coin up to your face, note the date and nod your head in "humble satisfaction." Then place the coin in your left hand.

To finish (this is my favorite part!) repeat the exact same actions a third time, but this time only PRETEND to pick up a coin from the pile and hold it in your right fist. Concentrate, announce the date of the second coin you removed from the pile and, as the spectator records this third date, again raise your right fingers to your face to apparently note the date on the coin. Smile, then casually place the non-existent coin into your left hand!

Drop the three coins into the hand of the nearest spectator and shyly comment, "I guess I haven't lost my touch." They will of course check the dates and be utterly astounded!

DIAMONDS IN THE ROUGH

This is one of those simple, dramatic ideas that can be brought to life in a dozen different ways. I came up with the idea while developing material for my corporate stand-up show, but I've also included it in a children's show with great results. As a diehard sleight-of-hand guy, I prefer routines that stay based in real sleight-of-hand, but from a commercial perspective it also pays to have stuff that at least climaxes in an extremely visual fashion that can be experienced by 25-100 people. This is one of those rare gems.

You'll need a stack of red paper napkins. You can use two-ply but I prefer 1-ply napkins. Dollar Stores often carry the perfect kind. Tear one of the napkins into 6 diamond-shaped pieces. Do NOT use scissors. It will SHOUT "switch" at the end of the effect. After tearing the napkin, firmly ball-up the pieces and have them in your right pants pocket. Have a deck of cards in your left pocket with the Six of Diamonds on top.

To perform, just introduce a second red paper napkin and have a spectator tear it up into pieces. I usually make some comments about lithe therapeutic value of such an expression of aggression, etc." For adults I add some psycho-babble, but for kids I play up the silliness of the action and encourage the child to really go crazy.

Either way, after they tear it I ask them to ball it up and I take the balled napkin in my left hand. I now execute Tamariz's 'Crossing the Gaze' switch. Essentially, my right hand goes into my pocket as if looking for the pack of cards. As soon as my right hand enters the pocket, I palm the prepared napkin and "realize" that the deck must be in the other pocket.

In a smooth, continuous action, my right hand comes out of the pocket and I pretend to transfer the napkin from my left hand to my right, but really execute a modified Shuttle Pass and keep the napkin in the left hand and immediately slip the left hand into the left pocket where I "find" the deck and bring it out into view. It only takes a moment, but the switch is undetectable due to the ample, built-in misdirection of the ballet of the two hands.

Sometimes I'll hand the napkin back to the spectator, though because that doesn't make a lot of sense (having just retrieved it from him.) More often, I'll drop the switched-in napkin in a glass or even just table it. To finish, just force the Six of Diamonds with your favorite method and then have the spectator unroll the napkin.

Notes: You might want to pretend to "miss finding the selected card" once or twice before revealing the napkin, both for the theatrical value and the time lapse (since you touched the napkin.) I've switched the napkins with the aid of a card case by having the prepped napkin inside the case and pretending to slip the just torn napkin inside the case. Because the whole idea of the effect is to play to a larger audience, I've also used Jumbo playing cards (and forced the card via both the Crisscross cut and a few times even with a rough-and-smooth force pack!)

MEMORY LAPSE

This uses Gene Gordon's wonderful "Out to lunch" gimmick to make a memory vanish in a totally inexplicable way.

You'll need to prepare a few of your business cards as follows: cut a business card in half, and on the blank side draw

3 small symbols including a triangle, square and circle. Draw these same symbols on the blank side of a second full card, near one end of the card, but include a heart symbol as well. You will also need a small, thick rubber band (I always use the kind you find in grocery stores for bundles of broccoli.)

Set up the cards as follows (from the top down) half card with 3 symbols, full card with 4 symbols, 10 or 12 more business cards. The half card should completely hide the 4 symbols on the card below it from view. And if you slip the rubber band onto the packet directly onto the edge of the half card, you'll find that the illusion is perfect.

To perform, remove the banded packet from your pocket but do NOT let anybody see the 3 drawn symbols. Instead, uncap a marker and pretend to draw the symbols on the card, holding the packet up above the sightlines of the spectators.

Only now do you show the 3 symbols drawn on the card, but do NOT mention how many there are. Extend the packet towards someone and ask them to 'initial the card' as you point towards the other end of the card. Of course, when they initial the card they are actually initialing the card below it.

Ask the person to "study and memorize" the symbols, then turn over the pack and pull out the initialed card from beneath the rubber band and table it. Pocket the banded packet.

Ask the person if they feel they have a 'good memory: Then look them in the eyes, snap your fingers and ask, "How about now? Do you still feel you have a good memory? Okay, well what I want you to do is concentrate on all four of the symbols. Really see the four of them in your mind." Of course, at this point the spectator will insist that there were only three symbols. Ask them which ones they remember. Then ask, "What about the heart? It seems you forgot it." When they insist there were only ever three symbols, ask them to turn over the card.