



Inside Ed's Head

August 2012

Do As I Do (Do Do Do)

Do I have a “go-to” trick? Do bears sleep in the woods? Do bats sleep upside down? Do Popes tend to be Catholic?

Do I think I’ve hammered down my point? Yes. The trick that I’ve ALWAYS used in a situation where I had to make an impression is “Do as I Do.” (DAID) The method I use is the standard “key-card,” right out of Hugard’s “Encyclopedia of Card Tricks.” What makes it effective is the presentation I created.

The premise of DAID is as follows:

The magician shows two decks of cards and lets the spectator choose which deck she wishes to use, and which deck the magician is to use. In order to be fair, the magician offers to let the spectator shuffle his deck, while he shuffles hers. Their rightful users now take the decks, and the magician explains the premise.

“In order for this ‘experiment’ to work, we must synchronize our actions as much as possible, so we may work to a common result. You must watch me carefully, and do as I do as best as you can. Are you ready?”

The magician now goes through a complicated, perhaps even silly, process to remove a single card from the deck. He looks at it, returns it to his deck, and loses it in an equally complicated manner. All the while, the spectator is mimicking his actions. The decks are exchanged again, and the magician asks the spectator to remove the duplicate of the card she took out of her original deck, as the magician does the same. The two cards are tabled face down.

With an air of gravity, the magician asks the spectator to turn over her card. The magician follows suit. The cards match!

I would tell the spectator who I chose to be my assistant that she was about to **help** in an “experiment” that could only succeed if she and I synchronized our thoughts and actions. She was responsible for watching me, and following my actions as closely as possible. If I held the cards in my left hand, she was to hold her cards in her left hand. If I used my right index finger to push a card out of the spread, so should she.

I made the shuffling, selecting, return of the card, and switching the decks, all seem very complex and important. Sometimes, I'd add some funny sounds or gestures to the procedure, if I thought I'd need to lighten things up a bit. I could get several minutes of entertaining interaction out of Hugard's simple instructions about selecting and replacing a card.

All of this craziness had two very important effects. It focused the spectators' attention on me, and made my assistant and I part of a team. When we each turned over our matching cards at the end of the effect, not only did I get the normal amazed reaction of a trick well done, but my assistant also got a feeling of accomplishment that was of value through the rest of the performance.

This month, I'd like to give you a few new (I think) takes on DAID.

Do as I Do – Stacked – Version 1

It's always advantageous to have spectators shuffle your cards before you ring in a stacked deck, but if you can avoid the deck switch entirely, it's even better.

If you do this as an opener (a good idea), have two stacked decks ready to go. It doesn't matter if they're the same color. If you wish to do this later in your routine, have a stacked deck of the same back color at your disposal.

You will need to start the procedure with you "shuffling" the stacked deck. If you are starting with two stacked decks, this is not an issue. If you are introducing a second deck after the first one has been shuffled, the following equivoque will work fine.

Point to the two decks, and ask the spectator, "Which one would you like?" If she points to the stacked deck, say, "Fine. Before, we start, please shuffle MY deck, so you don't think I'm cheating. I'll shuffle yours at the same time."

If she points to the other deck, just say, "Great! Please shuffle that deck before we begin."

Either way, you should call attention to how important it is for her to shuffle competently. Let her know that the deck that she's shuffling is the one you'll be using, and you want her to be sure you won't be cheating. You want to have her, and the rest of your audience, concentrating on the way she shuffles. This way, you now have ample misdirection while you do a full deck false shuffle of the stacked deck. Since you'll be shuffling her deck, one or two perfunctory false shuffles should do the job admirably.

Now switch decks. Since you know the top and bottom cards, you don't have to glimpse a key card. Just continue as in the regular DAID.

At the conclusion of the effect, you are left with a stacked deck with one card out of place. It's easy to replace this card in its proper location, and you'll be ready to burn your audience with several stacked deck effects.

Do As I Do Stacked – Version 2

Here's a method you might consider if you want to make the trick more deceptive for an audience that might be "in the know." It doesn't use a key card, and is designed to fool people who know about key cards.

The handling for the trick begins exactly like Version 1. After the decks have been "shuffled" and exchanged, ask the spectator to spread the cards face down with her right hand; left to right front of her. Have her slide a card out of the spread with her right hand, and leave it face down on the table. You now ask her to square the deck and leave it off to the right. She's now asked to take the card in her right hand, and look at. Then, she's asked to spread the cards with her left hand, from right to left, and place the card back in the deck. (Please note: when I say you "ask" the spectator to do something, I really mean that you do it first, and then have her "Do as I Do.")

This handling all but guarantees that she will replace the card in a different location than where it was taken, so you'll easily be able to identify it when you get the deck back. As in version 1, you'll have a stacked deck ready to go once you replace the selection in its rightful location.

Do As I Do – Ridged Method

This method involves no switching of decks, so the handling can be more direct than the "normal" methods. You lose the focus and foreshadowing of these methods, but gain a degree of "shock value." You might consider doing this if you know you have only a short time to make a very strong impression.

Each of the decks should have a pair of duplicate cards, say the Jack of Spades. These cards should also be "quarter crimped" so they'll cut to the top of the deck. They should also be marked on the back so you can tell when they've been cut to the top. Ideally, these cards should be placed around fourth and seventh from the top.

Place the two cased decks in front of the spectator, and go into your DAID spiel. Tell her that she may choose a deck, but then she must do as you do exactly. Once she chooses the deck, take yours, and shuffle it twice. Then cut the cards (cutting your ridged card to the top.) Most likely, she'll have done the same. Regardless, cut the deck into four or five small piles. (Try to leave your other ridged card in the center of one of these other piles.) By this time, your spectator will likely have at least one of the ridged cards on top of one pile. If not, cut all of your tabled piles, and complete the cut. Be sure you cut your other ridged card to the top of its pile.

By now, if your spectator STILL hasn't cut a ridged card to the top, you'll have to gather up all of your cards, switch decks and proceed with regular DAID using your ridged card on top of the deck as a key card. (Then you should go to your local house of worship, and beg for forgiveness.)

Anyway, assuming the worst hasn't happened, have your spectator touch a pile (use magician's choice to force the pile that has the ridged card on top), and turn over its top card. Voila! Synchronicity!!

Best possible ending:

During the initial shuffling and cutting, it's very possible that your spectator will end up with BOTH a ridged card on top of two of the piles she's cut. In this case, direct her to place the piles with the ridged cards on top of the other piles. With just two piles on the table, tell her she'll now finish with a free choice: she's to place either pile on top of the other, and then turn over the top card of the deck. You do the same. Miracle!!!

Note: make sure that you don't leave two ridged cards on top of the piles in front of the spectator. You wouldn't want her to be able to look at the top of the other pile.

News From HEH Software

I've been working very hard the last few months on three different software products; two of them are for magicians.

I've updated The Magic Database™ and will probably have it available on the website within the week. I've also created a new program, called StackPrak™. This is a program that will help any magician trying to memorize a stack. The most valuable feature of this program is that it includes AUDIBLE prompts for the card. This is very important, as hearing a spectator call out the name of the card is a completely different experience than seeing the card in the deck as you are practicing. I know that while dealing out cards during practice, I could name the stack number for the card almost immediately, but in real life, when HEARING the name, I had to take extra time to convert that sound into a mental image, before I could get the stack number. This slowed me down, and messed up the tempo of the trick. With Stacprak, I hope to overcome this. (So far, so good.)

The program is available for beta test. I'd appreciate anyone who'd help me out with this.

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