

WHAT YOU MUST KNOW TO MAKE HYPNOSIS WORK FOR YOU

Understanding Hypnosis

Hypnosis and its uses in the practice of hypnotherapy are rapidly emerging as a highly effective science in solving the problems people have. It can be very beneficial in many cases as a therapy in itself. It is a valuable adjunct in psychotherapy and psychiatry.

Yet few therapeutic procedures are less understood or more plagued by misconceptions and misunderstandings. Before considering what hypnosis is, perhaps it would be best to establish what it is not. When interviewing a new client/patient I ask what s/he thinks hypnosis is. Replies range from sleep, to being unconscious, to surrender of mental powers and control, to magic, to voodoo. All are in error.

Hypnosis cannot be sleep because in most cases the client is fully aware of communication and is able to respond on request either verbally or by signal. Nor is it being unconscious. If a client is asked to make a specific movement, s/he will comply with the request unless it is objectionable to them and they will refuse.

There is no surrender of mind or control. A person who does not want to be hypnotized cannot be hypnotized or be induced to say or do anything which violates their personal standards of behavior or integrity. There is neither magic nor voodoo involved. It is only in the fiction of movies or television where the subject follows directions mindlessly.

Actually, hypnosis is better described than defined. It is often considered an altered state of consciousness featuring "selective perception". This is a process in which the client (who is the one in control) chooses to see only what is relevant to his task, blocking out everything else. Hypnosis involves guided concentration. The guidance is provided initially by me and then by the client as I teach the process of self-hypnosis. Self-hypnosis and the techniques and therapies that I have developed can be learned by virtually every client and can provide a lifetime of benefit.

Where Did Hypnosis Originate?

The original basics of hypnosis go back to ancient times. There have been periods of progress and periods of stagnation in the development of modern hypnosis. Medical interest and acceptance expanded following World War II. It was found that the use of hypnotherapy proved especially helpful to surviving battlefield casualties due to shock, injury, battle fatigue and various psychological disorders. As understanding increased, hypnosis began to be

recognized as an important adjunct to counseling, psychology, psychotherapy, psychiatry, and also medical fields including neurology, obstetrics, emergency medicine, burn therapy and others. Hypnosis is finding increasing usage in dentistry and other areas where pain control is important. All humans have two distinct minds - the conscious mind and the unconscious mind. The unconscious mind is vastly larger and more powerful than the conscious mind, yet it is the least understood and used by mankind. Actually, the great unconscious mind has two functional elements: the subconscious and the super-conscious. The subconscious is the storehouse for memory. The super-conscious, or conscience, serves to guide us in spiritual and ethical ways.

How Does Hypnosis Work?

The subconscious mind receives and retains all the messages we receive from our backgrounds, whether genetic, social, religious or experiential, plus all the conflicts (big and little) that enter our daily lives. When, for whatever reason, the conscious mind (which deals with everyday living, logic, and reasoning) becomes overloaded, the subconscious prepares us for what is considered appropriate action - the fight or flight response. However, the subconscious mind does not analyze and evaluate as the conscious mind does, but accepts all messages in the literal sense.

Hypnosis, then, is a means of communication between the conscious mind and the subconscious mind. Many human problems, habits, stresses, anxieties, attitudes, or apparent deficiencies can be traced to interpretations by the subconscious mind. When these errant messages are re-programmed, specific problems can be reduced or resolved. Also, the subconscious is the seat of all memory. Traumatic events can be buried or suppressed in the subconscious. A major benefit of hypnotherapy is its ability to uncover and bring into the light of understanding the buried information or experience which may be the cause of a troublesome behavior.

What will I experience?

At your first visit I will gather more precise information about you and the behavior that you wish to change. Together we will set realistic goals of where you are now and where you want to be. I will then share with you more detailed information about hypnosis and the processes that we will be using. My role is to teach you how to go into trance at will. Instinctively, we all know how to do this -- -we've all been told "Stop Daydreaming!"

The very best hypnotherapists are skilled in facilitating trance by building rapport and making the patient feel comfortable. I have clients enter into an agreement with me, for hypnosis is a contract. When both of us keep our agreements, working together we can achieve fantastic results. For my part, I pledge to them that I will always treat them with utmost respect in the highest

degree of professionalism; that I will put together the programs, therapies, suggestions and techniques that will be most beneficial to them and achieve the results that they want as soon as possible; and that I will create a safe and caring environment and always make sure that no harm comes to them. For their part, my clients agree to instantly do what I ask them to do to the best of their abilities. They agree that they will not think about it, they will not analyze it – they will instantly do it and know that they can also instantly stop.

Hypnotic states can be divided into three types: (1) A light trance, only slightly more pronounced than a relaxed daydream; imagination is enhanced and attention turns inwards. (2) Moderate trances which also have muscle relaxation to a point where there is unwillingness to move and feelings of emotional serenity and peacefulness. Light and moderate trances are those most used for therapy. (3) Deep trances intensify physical relaxation to a state of lethargy. Deep trance may limit the effectiveness of hypnotherapy, as it tends to slow the client down, losing some mental flexibility.

The great majority of my clients find hypnosis to be very pleasant and relaxing. Often they will say “I have never felt so relaxed in my life” or “That was so pleasant, I didn’t want to come back”. Some are surprised by how normal and natural trance seems, sometimes claiming they trance has not happened. They say “I couldn’t have been in trance because I heard every word you said” or “I could have come out of trance at any time” or even “I was still in control of my actions so I couldn’t have been hypnotized”. All of these statements are true because the client is in control of their own behavior and aware of their surroundings while they are in a hypnotic state.

How are hypnotherapists trained?

In most states there is no state licensure of certification for hypnotists. The training that practitioners have received is widely varied. To ensure that the hypnotherapist has sufficient training, ask about their education and experience. Find out what professional associations they belong to and what the qualifications are for entry into these associations. Some organizations are “Self-certifying” which sometimes means if you pay your dues, you are a certified hypnotist. Other organizations have a very high level of education and experience as criteria for entry. I recommend that people contact the American Psychotherapy and Medical Hypnosis Association – www.apmha.com – for a qualified therapist in their area.

Can the hypnotherapist tell exactly how many appointments I need?

No. A good hypnotherapist individualizes treatment, uniquely tailored to your needs. If a practitioner says “You need precisely X number of sessions”, s/he does not represent ethical practice standards. No one, no matter how experienced, can truly know. Many of my clients say “I take better care of my car

than I do my mind!” and so they schedule a mental tune-up every time they take their car in for an oil change. The number of sessions and the time between sessions should always be determined on an individual basis.

Is hypnosis a “one-shot” treatment?

By no means. On occasion many clients do get great benefits from a single session. But often there are triggers deep at the subconscious level, and the unwanted behavior may return. When this happens, often those who have had only one session will say “I tried hypnosis, but it only worked for a short time”. It is best to follow through with therapy so that the problem is alleviated once and for all.

Will the hypnotherapist use CDs?

At my office we have found that there is a tremendous amount of positive reinforcement and therapy work that can be accomplished between sessions by the use of specifically tailored CDs that are recorded by your therapist. We suggest that the client use these to fall asleep at night so that no extra time is taken out of their day.

Some supposed “Hypnotists’ office visits” consist only of having clients listen to a standard audio recording and then call that hypnotherapy! Save your money! There are hypnotic tapes available at health food stores, book stores and on the internet that are just as likely to be useful (or not) and are considerably cheaper than merely listening to a tape in a hypnotist’s office.

What can hypnosis be used for?

Hypnosis is often thought to be a therapy that only affects the mind, but as mind and body are inseparably joined, hypnosis can also be used for physical ailments. The popular assumption that hypnosis is only useful for weight reduction and smoking cessation is very much mistaken; there are many more possibilities.

Hypnosis has a definite effect on our physical well being, and it is generally accepted that if we feel unhappy, stressed, or over-worked, our health may suffer. Psychological pressure can cause a propensity for minor illnesses, like colds. Recent research suggests that mental factors play a part in the development of many serious diseases.

While we still have incomplete and imprecise knowledge of how bodily illnesses connect with the mind, we do know hypnosis promotes mental changes that lead to improvement in wellness. Trances act effectively as a bridge between the mind (psyche) and body (soma). Psychosomatic complaints are conditions where there seems to be no organic cause for ill health. They have

been said to be “all in your mind” – as if the patient were choosing to be in pain. The pain and discomfort are real and painful, and even may be life-threatening. Generally, we have not more conscious choice in psychosomatic complaints than we do in organic maladies.

My practice is 80% physician referral. Since 1983, I have treated patients for pain control, surgical anesthesia, dental trauma (gagging response, bleeding, phobias, teeth grinding, TMJ), pregnancy and childbirth, cancer and life-threatening illnesses, PMS and menopause, ulcers, irritable bowel syndrome, allergies and asthma, weight reduction, eating disorders, smoking cessations, alcohol/substance abuse, insomnia, anxiety, depression, phobias, and lack of self-confidence related disorders.

I have also used hypnosis for enhancing learning, memory, concentration and test taking for students of all ages and abilities. I use hypnosis widely in sports to improve motivation and performance. Mental rehearsal is an important part of top athletes' training. Sports' highest achievers use imagery, visualization and other psychological techniques as a valued part of training and preparation for competition.

Stress is often considered to be a problem reserved for executives and managers, but it can affect everyone. The effects of stress are not always bad because it can stimulate us to achieve great works. Stress is a necessary part of life, a part of the human survival system, and part of human evolution. It is very efficient, but sometimes-modern living places demands that it just wasn't designed for. The very mechanism whose function it is to protect the person may lead to distress, discomfort, disease, and even death. The knowledge of what triggers your stress, where it manifests itself, and the realization that you can control the muscle tension, is half the battle in stress reduction. The other half is learning to release the tension. Hypnosis offers a uniquely holistic approach to stress management.

**I CONSIDER HYPNOSIS TO BE COMPLIMENTARY
TO TRADITIONAL MEDICINE**

-RATHER THAN AN ALTERNATIVE –

AND WORK CLOSELY WITH THE MEDICAL COMMUNITY

Is hypnotherapy covered by insurance?

This depends entirely on the type of benefits that you have. To keep my office expenses at a minimum, I have gone to the policy of having my clients pay up front for their sessions and have the insurance company reimburse you directly. I will provide you with a super bill for you to send to your insurance company for services from an out-of-network provider for an outpatient

counseling sessions and we use hypnosis when it is needed as part of the therapy process.

My sessions are \$120 for the first session (includes a CD for reinforcement) and \$100 for sessions thereafter. Sessions are about one hour in length.

I feel that it is my professional responsibility to take you where you are to where you want to be in the shortest amount of time possible. I always keep openings in my schedule so that I can get you in as soon as possible. This is another way we bring results about more quickly as we are beginning therapy when interest is at its highest.

My office in Tallahassee is at 3323 Thomasville Road. As a service to clients who travel a lot and those who find it inconvenient to come into the office (including the many clients living out of state), I offer sessions over the phone. Hundreds have found this to be most beneficial for we can also achieve incredible results this way as well.

For any other questions and to schedule your first appointment, please call my office at 850-201-0073 and I will return your call as soon as possible. Thanks you for your interest in hypnosis. I am honored to be of service to you.

Congratulations on your decision to use hypnosis to improve your quality of life. It's time we start using all of our mental resources to create new and wonderful realities. Thoughts can become actions and dreams can become realities, even more quickly than you think!

I look forward to working with you soon.