

Folkestone Hypnotherapy

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You are interested in hypnosis and hypnotherapy and want to know more. So, let's remove some common myths and misconceptions about hypnosis and explore some of its many uses.

Myths & misconceptions

Many people get their ideas about hypnosis from television, books or movies. While the plotlines involving hypnosis can make for good stories, they are often inaccurate.

Many misconceptions about hypnosis are due to the fact that the term “sleep” is often used when discussing hypnosis. Hypnosis is not sleep, but because people experiencing hypnosis are often very, very relaxed, it may outwardly appear like sleep. One difference is that – in a hypnotic state – you can think clearly.

And did you know while in hypnosis, your morals and ethics remain intact? In other words, you won't do anything against your will. You can reject or accept suggestions – it's your decision. If someone were to give you suggestions that you disagreed with, you would simply reject them.

Some ill-informed people think it's possible to become stuck in a hypnotic trance. In fact, if someone hypnotised you and then decided to take a trip to Tahiti, in the middle of your trance, you would simply continue to relax for a few moments and then choose to emerge when you felt like it.

Because hypnosis is not a truth serum, people can lie while experiencing hypnosis. In hypnosis, the psychological “Law of Self-Preservation” is in effect. You can control what you choose to say. So, while in a hypnotic trance, you won't “spill the beans” or tell your secrets.

Some people believe that in order to be hypnotised you must have a weak mind. Nothing could be further from the truth. Because hypnosis is not a contest of willpower, a highly intelligent, strong-willed and imaginative person can make a great hypnotic subject.

Many people think that to experience hypnosis, they must become unconscious. This is probably the most common misconception about hypnosis. In hypnosis, you are aware and can hear clearly. In fact, hypnosis is a state of increased awareness. In a trance state your hearing may be sharper, you may feel subtler sensations, and your imagination and memory are enhanced.

Naturally occurring hypnosis

Hypnosis is a natural state – we are in hypnosis many times each day. We pass through hypnosis on our way to sleep and when we wake up each morning. Recent studies of ultradian rhythms (bio-rhythms that are less than one day long) conclude that every 90 to 120 minutes we pass into a state physiologically identical to hypnosis. So, when people ask: “Can I be hypnotised?” the answer is: “You already have been.”

Here are some other times in which people experience hypnosis naturally. If you’ve ever woken up, feeling very relaxed but not needing to be anywhere and thought something like: “Maybe I’ll get up and brush my teeth,” but your body is too relaxed to move, you’ve been experiencing hypnosis. Becoming absorbed in a good book or movie is experiencing hypnosis. Driving on long trips on automatic pilot is known as motorway hypnosis. Becoming bored or allowing your mind to drift away leads to hypnosis. Becoming extremely engaged in something and allowing your mind to focus means that you are experiencing hypnosis. Because of the rhythmic sounds and swaying, riding on the train is often a highly hypnotic experience.

Hypnosis is a state in which you can think clearly, and your imagination is active. It’s a state where you could move if you wanted to or if there were an emergency, but you would rather just remain pleasantly relaxed. It’s a state in which beneficial ideas can more quickly and easily gain access to the inner mind. And because we all experience trance states each day, we can understand just how safe it is.

What is hypnosis?

We all have a conscious mind, and what some people call either a subconscious or an unconscious mind. Hypnosis deals with your unconscious mind which, for the sake of clarity, I’ll call the inner mind. Your conscious mind is responsible for logical, analytical, linear thinking.

Though our belief systems and behaviours reside in the inner mind, the conscious mind is responsible for guarding them. So, when someone tells you something that you think is not true, your conscious mind may reject the idea or suggestion.

Your inner mind is more symbolic and holistic in nature. Emotions are the domain of your inner mind, as are perceptions, habits, beliefs and automatic bodily functions such as breathing and digestion.

Often, we learn something consciously, and then the inner mind takes over that learned behaviour. So behaviours that we once learned step-by-step, like tying our shoelaces, are now second nature or automatic, unconscious behaviour. These are things we've learned to do so well that we don't have to think too much about them. Habits are another example of this automatic behaviour.

And what about ideas that our conscious mind accepts? Once an idea is accepted by the conscious mind it can pass through to the inner mind. Once accepted by the inner mind, the mind behaves as if it is true. If the conscious mind is willing to play along, or is not paying attention, is in shock, or is not yet fully formed (as in the case of a child), new ideas can establish themselves in the inner mind. This is why it is so important to be positive with children.

So, in order to get the inner mind to accept new, beneficial ideas, we must relax the conscious mind and communicate directly with the inner mind. If an idea is accepted by the inner mind, the whole mind is focused and tuned in to making that idea true. Since the inner mind runs the body, our perceptions, emotions, and our habits, it can line up all those resources to make things happen. Deep in your mind, changes can take place that allow you feel different emotions, have different habits, learn things quickly and respond with a more thoroughly resourceful physiology.

In hypnosis, we temporarily relax the conscious mind and gain access to the powerful inner mind. In this beneficial, relaxed state, we can more easily get positive ideas across to the most powerful parts of our minds.

So, one definition of hypnosis is this: hypnosis is a temporary relaxing of the conscious mind allowing positive and beneficial ideas to become accepted by the inner mind. When these ideas are presented with sufficient skill and connected to an individual's motivations, they become powerful permanent allies for healing, personal development and habit control.

Some prominent hypnosis scholars take the position that all hypnosis is self-hypnosis. In other words, the person hypnotising you is merely your guide, showing you how to achieve hypnosis. Another way of putting this is simply that you must agree to be hypnotised.

What is hypnosis like?

People describe the experience of hypnosis as highly pleasurable and often comment upon emerging that they feel like they've had a refreshing nap. You might feel any number of sensations while in a trance. Most people's muscles grow loose and relaxed. Many report pleasant feelings. Often breathing

grows deeper and slower as a result of increased relaxation. Feelings of warmth or tingling are common. Often people report an increased ability to visualize things, much like daydreaming. Some people's perception of time is altered – the trance state may seem much longer or shorter in duration than it actually is.

While some continue to listen to the words of the hypnotist, others report that the mind drifts away to some pleasant memory or imagined scene. Because the conscious mind may drift away, some people report only a general sense of what was said in the trance – just like seeing a film but not perfectly remembering every scene. Each individual's experience of the trance state is unique.

The uses of hypnosis

In the hands of a qualified and skilled person hypnosis can be a valuable ally for healing, self-improvement, pain management, habit control, and much, much more.

The British Medical Association approved hypnosis as a valid therapeutic modality in the late 1950s. Though many people are familiar with the success of hypnosis in smoking cessation and weight loss, most are unaware of its powerful uses as an anaesthetic and to speed healing. It has long been used to help people suffering from trauma and to overcome roadblocks originating from past experiences. Hypnosis has also been used by law enforcement to help witnesses increase recall. It can be used to overcome anxieties fear and phobias. Hypnosis is a powerful tool for performance enhancement and goal-setting. The hypnotic state is also a great stress buster.

Every situation can benefit from having the powerful inner mind on your side.

I hope you now better understand how hypnosis can help to improve your life. You've learned that in trance you can hear clearly and your morals remain intact. You've learned that no one has ever become stuck in a trance. You've learned that having a strong mind can actually help you to enter hypnosis easily. You've learned just how safe and natural hypnosis is. Perhaps now you're feeling more comfortable about experiencing hypnosis. If you are about to be hypnotised and you have any further questions, feel free to ask the person who's hypnotising you.