

Questions You May Have About Hypnosis

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1. What exactly is hypnosis?

Hypnosis is a state of altered consciousness that occurs normally in every person just before they enter into the sleep state. In therapeutic hypnosis I prolong this brief interlude so that I can work within its bounds.

2. Can everybody be hypnotized?

Yes, because it is a normal state that everybody passes through before going to sleep. However, it is possible to resist hypnosis like it is possible to resist going to sleep. But even if one resists hypnosis, with practice the resistance can be overcome.

3. What is the value of hypnosis?

There is no magic in hypnosis. There are some conditions in which it is useful and others in which no great benefit is derived. It is employed in medicine to reduce tension and pain which accompany various physical problems and to aid certain rehabilitative procedures. In psychiatric practice it is helpful in short-term therapy and also, in some cases, in long term treatment where obstinate resistance is encountered.

4. Who can do hypnosis?

Only a qualified professional should decide whether one needs hypnosis or could benefit from it. The professional person requires specialized training in the techniques and uses of hypnosis before they can be considered qualified, and should be certified by a reputable Hypnotism Training Institute.

5. Who do some people not believe in the value of hypnosis?

Hypnosis is a much misunderstood phenomenon. The exaggerated claims made for it by undisciplined persons has resulted in some people not feeling comfortable with it. Some don't believe in hypnosis because they have never tried it or haven't had any experience with its modern uses.

6. Can hypnosis be safe?

The hypnotic state is as safe as the sleep state. Sometimes unskilled operators may give subjects foolish suggestions, such as one often witnesses in stage hypnosis, where the trance state is exploited for entertainment purposes. A delicately balanced and sensitive person exposed to unwise and unkind suggestions may not respond favourably. On the whole, hypnosis is safe and comforting when practiced by ethical and qualified practitioners.

7. Do I need hypnotherapy?

If you have symptoms such as tension, depression, fear, fatigue, and certain physical complaints for which your doctor finds no physical basis; if you find it difficult to get along at work or have challenges in your relationships; if you self-sabotage or have

challenging patterns and emotions that keep recurring in your health, relationships, career and finances ... or if you merely feel irritable, unhappy and believe you're not getting the most out of life, hypnotherapy will be of help to you.

8. How does hypnotherapy work?

Nervous symptoms and unwarranted unhappiness are the product of inner emotional conflicts. In hypnotherapy you are helped to understand and move through your conflicts. In this way it is possible for you do take constructive action towards their resolution, enabling you to grow into the potential of who you are.

9. Can physical symptoms be caused by emotion?

Many physical symptoms are psychosomatic in nature, which means that they have an emotional or nervous basis. When you come to think of it, it's not really so strange that emotional strain or worry would produce physical symptoms. After all every organ in your body is connected to your brain by nerve channels; and so it is logical that when your nervous system is upset by some crisis or conflict that you may feel the effects in various organs or parts of the body.

10. If I cannot solve my personal problems without help does that mean that I have a weak will or am on the way to a mental breakdown?

No. Even if you have no serious symptoms, it is difficult to work out emotional problems by yourself because you're too close to them and cannot see them clearly. More and more people, even those with a great deal of psychological knowledge, are seeking help these days because they realize this. The fact that you desire aid is a compliment to your judgment and is no indication that you're not mentally stable. Hypnotherapy has helped countless numbers of people to overcome serious emotional symptoms and has enabled many others to increase their working capacities and to better their relationships with people.

11. What happens to information about me?

All records are held in the strictest confidence. No outsider, not even your closest friend or family physician, are permitted to see your records without your written permission.

12. I am not sure I can be hypnotized.

All people go through a state akin to hypnosis before falling asleep. There is no reason why you shouldn't be able to enter a hypnotic state.

13. What does it feel like to be hypnotized?

The answer to this is extremely important because it may determine whether or not you can benefit from hypnosis. Sometimes people do not pursue hypnosis because they perceive that they are not suitable subjects. The average person has the idea that they will go through something different, new and spectacular in the hypnotic state. Often they equate being hypnotized with being anesthetized or being asleep or being unconscious. When in hypnosis they find that their mind is active; that they are very aware of themselves; that they remember everything that has happened when

they open their eyes, they believe they have not succeeded. They imagine then that they are not a good subject and they are apt to not continue hypnotic treatments. The experience of being hypnotized is the same as the experience of relaxing and of starting to go to sleep. Because this experience is so familiar to you, and because you may expect something startling different in hypnosis you may not believe you are hypnotized when a trance is induced. Remember you are conscious, you are fully aware. Your mind is active, your thoughts are under your control, you perceive all stimuli and you are in complete communication with the therapist and yourself. The only unique thing you may experience is a feeling of heaviness in your arms, and maybe some tingling in your hands and fingers. If you are habitually a deep sleeper, you may doze momentarily or if you are a light sleeper you may have the feeling that you're completely awake.

14. How deep do I have to go to get benefits from hypnosis?

If you can conceive of hypnosis as a spectrum of awareness that stretches from waking to sleep, you will realize that some aspects are close to the waking state, and share the phenomena of waking, and some aspects are close to sleep and participate in the phenomena of light sleep. But over the entire spectrum suggestibility is increased and this is what makes hypnosis potentially beneficial provided we put the suggestibility to a constructive use. The depth of hypnosis doesn't always correlate with the degree of suggestibility. In other words, even if you go no deeper than the lightest stages of hypnosis and are merely mildly relaxed, you will still be able to benefit from its therapeutic effects. It so happens that with practice you should be able to go in deeper, but this really is not too important in the great majority of cases.

15. How does hypnosis work?

The human mind is extremely suggestible and is being bombarded constantly with suggestive stimuli from the outside and suggestive thoughts and ideas from the inside. A good deal of suffering is the consequence of negative thoughts and impulses invading one's mind from conscious recesses. Unfortunately, past experiences, guilt feelings and repudiated impulses and desires are incessantly pushing themselves into awareness, directly or in disguised forms, sabotaging one's happiness, health and efficiency. By the time one has reached adulthood they have build up "negative" modes of thinking, feeling and acting, which persist like bad habits. And like habits they are not easy to break. In hypnosis we attempt to replace these "negative" attitudes with "positive" ones. It takes time to disintegrate old habit patterns so do not be discouraged if there is no immediate effect. If you continue to practice the principles taught you by your therapist, you will eventually notice change. Even though there may be no apparent alterations on the surface, a restructuring is going on underneath. An analogy may help clarify this. If you hold a batch of white blotters above the level of your eyes so that you see the bottom blotter, you will observe nothing different for a while until sufficient ink has been poured to soak through the entire thickness. Eventually the ink will come down. During this period while nothing seemingly appears to be happening, penetrations were occurring. Had the process been stopped before enough ink had been poured we would be tempted to consider the process a failure. Suggestions in hypnosis are like ink poured on layers of

resistance; one must keep repeating them before they come through to influence old, destructive patterns.

16. How can I help in the treatment process?

It is important to mention to your therapist your reactions to treatment no matter how unfounded, unfair or unreasonable these reactions may seem. If for any reason you believe you should not continue the therapy, mention your desire to do so to your hypnotherapist. Important clues may be derived from your reactions, dreams and resistance that will provide an understanding of your inner conflicts, and help in your treatment.

17. What about self-hypnosis?

“Relaxing exercise”, “self-hypnosis” and “auto-hypnosis” are interchangeable terms for a reinforcing process that may be valuable in helping your therapist help you. If this adjunct is necessary, it will be employed. The technique is simple and safe.

Terri has practiced Clinical Hypnotherapy for over a decade to empower individuals by assisting them in understanding how to work through their challenges, enabling them to grow into the fullness of who they are. For additional information or to make an appointment for clinical hypnotherapy, past life therapy, regression therapy, or motivational therapy call Terri at: (780)418-8346.