

What is Hypnosis?

Hypnosis is one of the oldest forms of treating people, and dates back to ancient Egypt (at least!). Unlike stage hypnotism, in which the hypnotist appears to take control of the subject, the use of hypnotism in therapy is a collaboration between the therapist and subject(s). The hypnotist's role is to encourage relaxation, and by suggestion help people control the subconscious mechanisms in their own bodies.

How does it work?

Hypnosis bypasses the conscious mind, allowing direct communication with the subconscious.

Can anyone be hypnotised?

All people can be hypnotised to a greater or lesser extent; the best subjects are those who are imaginative and easily absorbed in what they are doing. It is, however, essential that the subject is willing, as it is perfectly possible to block hypnosis.

What does it feel like?

Hypnosis is a natural state of consciousness, one we have all experienced before. For example, have you ever been caught daydreaming or thought only a few minutes had passed while engrossed in something only to find that actually an hour had passed? These are both altered states of consciousness: forms of self-hypnosis. Something your mind is not only familiar with but already knows how to do.

Everybody experiences hypnosis in their own unique way, and often people think they are not in hypnosis when in fact they are. Your body may feel a comforting heaviness, as if a blanket of peace were covering you; or you may feel very light, as if you were floating. Many have experienced

diana penny

 dianapenny.co.uk

the feeling of being completely unaware of their physical body altogether. Your breathing and heart rate slow down. Your eyes may get slightly teary and your eyelids may flutter. You may hear the sounds and voices around you or you may go into a quiet place of your own. You may see blackness, colours or light. The depth of your relaxation may vary from a deep, profound state to a very light state. The results are the same, regardless.

How can hypnosis help me?

The subconscious mind controls our emotions, our self-esteem, our beliefs; it informs our immune systems, and our bodies. With the use of hypnotherapy we are able to create a very relaxed yet highly focused state of mind allowing us access to the subconscious. While in this state, changes are allowed to take place as we instruct the subconscious to believe and behave differently. This allows for positive changes to occur based on the desires of the individual. As we redirect or change our emotions, behaviours and patterns, our lives also reflect these changes.

Is it safe?

Of all therapies, medical and non-medical, hypnosis is among the safest. It has no side effects other than feeling calm and refreshed.

Will I lose control of myself?

No. This is the most common misconception people have of hypnosis. You are in complete control at all times. The altered state of consciousness which occurs during hypnosis allows the subconscious mind to take charge, however you have the power to reject any instruction or visualisation given by the therapist. You can choose to come out of the altered state at any time. Remember the therapist is acting only as a guide to help you relax and enter these altered states of mind. You are participating to the extent that you accept the guidance of the therapist to help you. No matter how relaxed you may be, the hypnotist cannot force you to do anything against your will.