

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT HYPNOTHERAPY

### **What is hypnosis?**

Hypnosis is a state of deep relaxation in which a person's brainwave frequencies shift from normal waking consciousness (beta wave frequency) to slower brainwave (alpha or theta) frequencies. In this very relaxed state, a person's mind becomes more receptive to imagination and suggestion. The calming of the rational mind allows the subconscious mind to become more available in the hypnotic state - opening the mind to suggestions for new ideas and outcomes. Hypnotic states are experienced naturally in the course of one's daily life, such as when meditating, exercising, daydreaming, or concentrating intently on a task.

### **What is hypnotherapy?**

Hypnotherapy is a therapeutic treatment that induces a hypnotic state and then works with the subconscious mind to help a person make changes in their life. My hypnotherapy practice is client-centered, so we only work towards the goals that you identify for yourself, and within the context of your own beliefs and values. As a transpersonal hypnotherapist, I may incorporate your spiritual beliefs and resources into the session, if that is important to you.

I practice suggestive therapy, or clinical hypnosis. This type of hypnosis helps create change by suggesting new perspectives and approaches to the subconscious mind. You may have experienced something similar using guided imagery or meditation practices. We will co-create suggestions for your hypnosis session during your clinical interview. After your session, you will receive a recording to listen to at home, which will reinforce these suggestions.

### **Is hypnosis mind control?**

Some people fear that a hypnotist can control someone or implant unwanted suggestions in the mind. In fact, under hypnosis you retain your free will and stay connected to your own values. You can choose to accept or reject any suggestion just as you would in your waking state. I formulate suggestions using the words, images, and values that you express during your interview - therefore, we are only working towards changes you want to make.

Hypnosis does teach you to have more control over your *own* mind by training you to relax and visualize the outcomes you want to create in your life. All hypnosis is actually self-hypnosis - so I will be a guide in helping you to enter into the hypnotic state and to create change using the power of your own mind, which is a powerful tool when put to use in this way.



## **Can anyone be hypnotized?**

To go into hypnosis, you simply need to relax and concentrate. These are innate abilities we all have, but for some people it may take a little more time or practice to calm the mind than for others. That said, if you are open and willing to experience hypnosis, in most cases, you should be able to attain a state of relaxation that is sufficiently deep to become receptive to hypnotic suggestion. The more you practice and listen to your hypnosis recordings at home, the easier it will become to relax and enter hypnosis.

If you have difficulty relaxing, that is all the more reason that a practice like hypnotherapy could benefit you. However, you may consider some factors to help make your session more effective - such as avoiding caffeine or other stimulants before your session (this is recommended for anyone, as stimulants can interfere with the relaxation response), scheduling your session at a time of day when you are naturally more relaxed and less preoccupied with what you have to do later, and other ways to come to your session ready to relax. If you are new to hypnosis, it may be more effective to try multiple sessions to become familiar with the process over time.

There are certain health and mental health diagnoses for which hypnosis may not be the safest or best approach. My intake process screens for these conditions and for potential contraindications.

## **Are hypnotized people asleep or unconscious?**

Hypnosis is *not* sleep (although falling asleep during a session occasionally happens, and it's okay). Depending on your trance level, you might be fully conscious of everything I am saying or you may drift off and not consciously hear my words at all after a period of time (as if sleeping). Or, you may feel like you are 'in and out' of conscious awareness. Either way, in hypnosis you drop into a level of relaxation that is distinctive from normal waking consciousness. It's helpful to remember that you need not feel pressured to "do it right" or go to the deepest possible level of trance in order to benefit from your session. You will have a recording to listen to later so that you can keep practicing and keep benefitting from the session beyond the initial experience.

**I'll answer any additional questions during a free 20-minute consultation.**

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