



Hypnotherapy: The Mind/Body Connection and Healing

What is hypnotherapy?

Hypnotherapy is an ancient aid to healing and symptom relief that has been in use in one form or another for thousands of years. It is a technique that works directly with the unconscious—sometimes called the subconscious or preconscious—mind to bring about desired changes. Guided imagery and visualization, terms which are increasingly in common usage, are actually hypnotic techniques. Meditation accesses that same subconscious state. Currently hypnotherapeutic techniques are gaining popularity again with the growing awareness of the connection between the mind and body.

You may have noticed that the state of your body can affect your mind and emotions. When you have been ill or under the influence of certain medications, you probably felt as if you couldn't think clearly, or perhaps you felt depressed. Some mental influences come from the body's own normal functioning. Do you remember the mental and emotional turmoil caused by your hormones when you were in puberty?

As the body affects the mind, so does the mind affect the body. In other words, how you mentally and/or emotionally react to the events in your life affects your physical state. Imagine someone with a fear of public speaking who is contemplating giving a talk. As he visualizes himself in front of the audience his hands begin to sweat, his heart rate elevates, and his breathing speeds up. Although he may be sitting in the solitude of his own office, his body is reacting as if he were actually giving the speech.

Biography becomes biology is a phrase that you may have heard. It means that your physical health may be related to your personal history. More accurately, your physical health is related to your subjective interpretation of events in your life. It is how you interpret and react to the events in your life that determine whether and how these events impact your physical health or your state of mind. The exact same event experienced by several different people will be remembered by them differently and will impact them differently, depending on each person's previous life experiences and their innate psychology. As an example three soldiers might be in the same platoon experiencing the same war experiences, but one might develop PTSD (post traumatic stress disorder), one might develop irritable bowel syndrome (IBS), and the third might remain mentally and physically healthy.

How does hypnotherapy enter this picture? The hypnotic state can be used to reframe these life experiences to allow the person to return to a state of health.

How does hypnosis work?

Hypnotherapy works on the connection between the mind and body to bring about changes in one that can affect the other. Clients and therapists alike are increasingly recognizing the value of hypnotherapy in solving many of the problems that keep otherwise healthy people from functioning to their greatest ability. Hypnosis is an induced state of relaxation and concentration in which the inner subconscious or preconscious—normally not conscious—parts of the mind become more readily

accessible. Hypnosis can be self-induced or you can enter the state through the guidance of a trained practitioner, a Certified Hypnotherapist such as myself.

In a sense all hypnosis is self-hypnosis. If we work together and decide to use hypnosis as a tool to achieve your goal, I would guide you in the hypnotherapy session in accessing those inner states, using relaxation and focusing techniques, but you are really the one who would do the work. As a Hypnotherapist I do not do anything *to* you. Rather, you and I form a partnership through which your desired changes take place. My role is to act as a guide, both in working with you beforehand to discover the changes you want to make and in leading the hypnotic induction and delivering the posthypnotic suggestions we both agree on that are designed to bring about those changes.

As a hypnotherapist I can also teach you visualization techniques you can use yourself to help you achieve the healthy state you desire.

How can hypnotherapy help me?

Hypnotherapy can be utilized for virtually any condition, although the following are some of the most common health goals for which I have helped people using hypnosis:

- Stress reduction and relaxation
- Pain management and control of other health symptoms
- Healing emotional trauma
- Anxiety and panic control
- Promotion of motivation, especially for a healthy lifestyle
- Habit control
- Dealing with loss and separation

Hypnotherapy also works well in conjunction with other modalities, such as Reiki or ritual work.

Contact me with any questions you have about hypnotherapy, guided imagery, and visualization. I would be glad to meet with you for a free consultation to discuss how hypnotic techniques might aid you in achieving your goals.

Bibliography

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Rev. Jenny Sill-Holeman, CHt, RM
bluerosehealingarts.com
650-369-6215 (phone & fax)
Redwood City, California

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