

## What is Hypnosis?

“for thousands of years, philosophers and intellectuals have known that thoughts can control the body’s functions and human behaviour – that within us all there is the potential to uplift, heal and inspire others as well as ourselves” A.M. Krasner

Dr. A.M. Krasner, an established and highly qualified authority on the subject, presented hypnosis as a powerful therapeutic tool. Dr. Krasner drew on his years of research, teaching and clinical experience to establish the American Institute of Hypnotherapy (1981) and The American Board of Hypnotherapy (1982), the Board that sets Hypnosis standards internationally.



Many of us are wary of hypnosis because we are not educated on the topic. Hypnosis is a natural state and many people reach this state of consciousness every day without even realizing it. When we drive a car, we are in a light state of hypnosis. We are in control, have an increased ability to concentrate, and are operating on autopilot without really realizing it. A great deal of research has been conducted on the hypnotic state and various states of consciousness.

Our brain has four different brain wave states: beta, alpha, theta, and delta. While you are reading this article, you are in the state of beta. You are alert and able to concentrate on this article. The beta state is normal waking state. Alpha state is a relaxed state. You are able to access creativity and visualization. Theta state is a deeper state of relaxation; this is a common state of hypnosis and meditation. Theta allows you to access memories. You experience theta as you fall asleep and wake up every day. Lastly is delta, which occurs while sleeping. Delta allows your body to heal. You are able to access your subconscious mind during alpha, theta, and delta states and can also reach various depths of hypnosis (Tools for Wellness).

Hypnosis is a form of self-control, allowing you to relax, a state that deepens the more you do it. Even a light form of hypnotic trance is enough to create effective therapeutic intervention. Hypnosis is not about being gullible, being asleep or under mind control. When in Hypnosis, you are always in control.

Whatever you can imagine, you can create. Hypnosis is so effective, because when in a hypnotic trance, your creative mind becomes more active, using visualisations and imagery to facilitate therapeutic intervention easily. One’s mind becomes open to greater possibilities, via vivid visualisations that appear more real. This is just one reason why Hypnosis is found to be so effective in improving sports performance.

Hypnosis is not like what you see in the movies, it is a natural state of selective, focused attention, and, even though it is 100% natural and normal, it remains one of the most fascinating phenomena of the human mind. Our ability to enter this unique state of consciousness opens the door to countless possibilities for healing, self-exploration and change. Hypnosis, called by different names in different cultures and times, has been recognized for thousands of years and used for many purposes.

When we enter into the absorbed state of hypnosis, we can use our thoughts, talents and experiences in ways not usually available to us, we can develop innate, individual abilities that enable making desired changes in our thoughts, feelings and behaviours possible.

So it can be used not only to solve problems but to enhance our life as in helping us to be more motivated, energised, to be more confident so as to effortlessly achieve that which we might have previously found very difficult.

Hypnosis has been used in the treatment of pain, depression, anxiety, stress, habit disorders, and many other psychological and medical problems.

In addition to its use in clinical settings, hypnosis is used in research with the goal of learning more about the nature of hypnosis itself, as well as its impact on sensation, perception, learning, memory, and physiology. Researchers also study the value of hypnosis in the treatment of physical and psychological problems.

### **How can a treatment aimed at your mind affect your body?**

The body responds physically to thoughts. For example, when we think a frightening thought, we can experience increased heart rate, shortness of breath, “butterflies” in the stomach, muscular rigidity, sweating, shaking, and so on. Similarly, when we think a pleasurable thought, we can experience reduced heart rate, deeper breathing, relaxation of muscles, and so on. These are autonomic nervous system responses that are involuntary, but they can be utilized to promote health. When hypnotized, an individual is very open to suggestions that can enhance positive and diminish negative physical reactions.

### **Can anyone be hypnotized?**

Some people find it easier to relax than others. By the same token, some people are able to go into trance more quickly and more deeply than others. About 85% of people can go into at least a light trance. For most therapeutic goals, light trance is enough to enable almost everyone to benefit from hypnotherapy to some extent.

Even for those people (maybe 10-15%) who do not enter into even a light trance state, hypnosis may still be helpful to assist their relaxation and improve their suggestibility to constructive comments and suggestions.

### **Will I be asleep or unconscious?**

The word hypnosis comes from the ancient Greek word ‘hypnos’ meaning sleep, but it is mis-named. Hypnosis is NOT sleep. Sleep and hypnosis may seem similar since we may be relaxed and have our eyes closed (although not necessarily), but there are many differences. One main difference is that we tend to be in a relaxed state, but with heightened awareness! If a person were to fall asleep during a session, they would return to normal consciousness when asked to, or simply awaken after a short nap. They would feel refreshed, relaxed and would have no ill effects at all.

### **“I don’t think I was hypnotized—I heard every word you said!”**

Some people, after a session of hypnosis, don’t believe that they were hypnotized at all. This likely comes from misconceptions about just what a ‘trance’ really is. There are differences between the brain waves of people who are asleep and those who are in trance. In practice, people who are hypnotized often talk with the hypnotherapist, and can both answer and ask questions, hear everything that is said very clearly, and are perfectly well aware.

There is no mysterious feeling to being hypnotized and our minds are not taken over nor controlled.

### **Will I lose control of myself?**

No, there is no loss of control. Hypnosis allows clients to be more focused and less distractible and more skilful in using their own mental abilities constructively. In this way, they can achieve more of their goals, and consequently, actually achieve more (not less) control of their personal comfort,

health, and well-being. The 'control' misconception appears to originate from stage hypnosis which actually involves people doing what they want to be doing in a social agreement to be entertaining.

**Can I get stuck or trapped in the hypnotic state?**

No. At any time a client can re-alert or choose to ignore suggestions. No one stays hypnotized indefinitely – you will always “come out” of trance within a short time.

Below are some areas of life that can be improved with hypnotherapy – there are many more -

Deep Relaxation  
Stress Management  
Learning Faster  
Smoking Cessation  
Relationships  
Money  
Success  
Procrastination  
Exercise  
Enthusiasm  
Improve sports ability  
Improve memory  
Insomnia

Activating the Body's Healing Mode  
Self Hypnosis  
Improving Concentration  
Weight Reduction  
Career  
Health & Fitness  
Self-Confidence  
Nail biting  
Assertiveness  
Enhance creativity  
Exam preparation  
Improve study habits  
Pain management