



Fascinating, Powerful Hypno-Anesthesia!

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Michael Yapko states, "*Hypnosis is a fascinating domain of clinical research and practice that involves the study of how ordinary people like you and me can accomplish extraordinary things by using our minds.*" The way we use our minds in hypnosis involves learning to focus on mental images, thoughts, and ideas that can influence our body's responses in some very specific and special ways.

There's a great deal of flexibility in what the mind experiences, including perceptions about the body that we have learned through the study of hypnosis. We know that people can become so deeply absorbed in their daily life experiences that they can permit their body to be more comfortable, even when there are reasons that perhaps they shouldn't be. Even when there is an injury or disease that causes discomfort, the ability to use the mind to make the body comfortable is the foundation for what is called hypnotic analgesia or hypnotic anesthesia. **It represents the most sophisticated use of hypnosis and it is what hypnosis for pain management is all about.**

Hypnotic analgesia is typically one of the hypnotic phenomena that people react to with the most uncertainty and disbelief. When considering a person is in pain from a physical cause like a disease or injury, people wonder and are skeptical that mind-body medicine can make a difference? Many people even go a step further with a misconception that if you're in pain, and it is reduced by hypnosis then it must have been in your head in the first place. The meaning being that there wasn't actually any pain to begin with. I have had many patients say to me, "*I don't know why I was sent to you, my pain is not in my head.*"

A recent client participated in a number of hypnotic sessions with me for Complex Regional Pain Syndrome (CRPS). Her chronic pain had persisted for over six years and had included multiple surgeries, but with no relief. She had traveled a long distance and I saw her twice daily for a week. All her pain symptoms went away. However, when she returned home and her family and friends saw that she was pain free, the comment to her was, "*so it was just in your head*". It is so easy for the pain client to be sabotaged by their family and friends. Unfortunately, they also have a tendency to sabotage themselves with negative self-talk. It comes down to this simple saying, "Change your mind, change your brain, and you change your behavior".

Hypnosis has been used as the sole anesthetic in major surgical procedures from the 1800's to the present. The incision and physical effects are obviously quite real; therefore, the pain is not just in the head, but at the surgical site also. However, there is no pain until it gets to the brain. That is why surgery with hypnosis is a very powerful and dramatic application of the same principles and skills that one can experience through hetero-hypnosis (hypnosis directed by someone else) or self-hypnosis. Hypnosis actually takes the hurt out of pain.

The ability to experience hypnosis is a natural phenomenon that exists within each of us, which means that we have the ability to reduce the use of some medications or even eliminate them all together. Unlike medications, hypnosis has no side effects nor is it addictive. Discomfort is reduced to different degrees in different people, and the result is obtained safely and naturally. Hypnosis permits a higher level of functioning, enhances the healing process while remaining active. Progress is greatly influenced by the expectations of wellness for a positive outcome. It advances the experience of comfort and lessens anxiety and fear, which are very important factors in facilitating recovery or at least in minimizing decline.



If you have experienced hypnosis in the past, then you know that it is nothing more than focus and concentration that allows setting aside all the demands and pressures of everyday life, so that you can spend a little bit of time with yourself in a way that is easy and comfortable. If you have experienced hypnosis in the past you know that it is a truly enjoyable, relaxing experience that feels good. But more importantly, hypnosis opens the doors to new ideas and perspectives on mind/body techniques for health and wellness.

Hypnosis Review

Hypnosis in one form or another has been used throughout the millennium from ancient witch doctors to modern day physicians. Hypnosis is an excellent adjunct to anesthesia. Many operating room nurses and nurse anesthetists use simple hypnotic techniques. They do not realize it is hypnosis, but they know that the way they talk to their patients makes a major difference in the patient's outcome. They know their suggestions are effective because there is confirmation from the Post Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU) staff. Research has shown that hypnosis prior to surgery results in less nausea, less vomiting and less pain.

As stated earlier, hypnosis is nothing more than focused concentration that is defined by some as an altered state of consciousness, which allows us to be more accepting of suggestions. It is a state that is said to raise awareness by as much as 200 percent, which is focused inward to the subconscious mind. This concentrated focus enhances the ability of the subconscious mind to accept and to positively respond to suggestions. It is often thought that the subconscious mind is located in the brain. Not so, according to Candace Pert, a biochemical researcher from George Town University in Washington D.C., who says the subconscious mind is made up of every cell in the body. Stating that every cell in the body has its own consciousness and includes over 6,000 receptor sites on the surface of the cell, there are memory units within the cell. Each soft tissue cell divides into a daughter cell and becomes a new cell every three months and the mother cell dies off. Skeleton cells go through the process of division and dying every six months. Each cell's receptor sites and memories are influenced by the chemical responses we create by our thoughts.

Hypnosis Is Not	Hypnosis Is
Loss of Control	The Ultimate Display of Control by the subject
Sleep	An Awake State with Complete Awareness
Being controlled by someone else	Rapport with the Subconscious Mind
A form of Black Magic	An avenue for Therapy for a multitude of problems in various areas
Being gullible	Imagination
An abuse of the person's desires or capabilities	A legitimate tool in the Health Care Field to help people

Thoughts become things

Every time we have a thought, we create a new neuron within the brain. **Therefore, if we dwell on pain, we actually create new pain responding neurons.** The more pain responding neurons we create the more pain we have, or we can think we have: *"I'm getting more comfortable. I feel better now."* **This type of positive affirmation wheel creates neurons and connects them for comfort.** So the cliché, "Use it or lose it" can be applied here. If you don't



keep reinforcing them, they go away. The neurons disconnect and atrophy; just like a muscle can atrophy when not used. Think about it, which would you rather lose - the pain or the comfort? Only **you** control your thoughts, so the decisions belong to the one with the pain. Unrelieved pain develops the same physiology as stress. These include; irritability, high blood pressure, increased pulse rate, and a slew of other body changing problems.

It is often thought that relaxation and hypnosis are the same thing. Relaxation does complement the hypnotic state. However, one can be relaxed without being in hypnosis, and hypnosis can occur without a person being deeply relaxed. Some examples of a hypnotic state are driving to work, and not remembering going past buildings or intersections. Another example is watching TV and being unaware when someone enters the room. These are critical times, because we are more responsive to the thoughts or daydreams that accompany these hypnotic states. Be careful of what you think as well as your self-talk and self-thought.

We enter "highway hypnosis" when driving and are subjected to the billboards that flash by with subliminal messages influencing the subconscious mind. Advertisement agencies have understood for years the power and success of subliminal suggestions. An example is: "*Can you hear me _____?*" Think of which commercials you remember, and why. Today's commercials may not even tell you the name of the products. You're looking at it subliminally. Then they'll have this little thing at the bottom that tells you what the product is. Hypnosis at work.

Two Aspects of Pain

There are two aspects of pain. One is sensory and it's discriminative. It occurs when we get hurt. The person hurt can quickly pinpoint the location, intensity, and duration of the pain. That's acute pain. We automatically move away from what is causing the pain. We automatically rub it to make it feel better. We've seen people walk across hot coals and not feel pain, because mentally they've turned it off-that electrical impulse-from getting to the brain. You turn it off or you change your perception. There is no pain until it gets to the brain. Understanding that will give the control.

The motivational-affective aspect refers to the emotional response that makes pain personal and unique for everyone. That's why some women can go through natural childbirth and feel nothing. While others with just the thought of having a contraction causes pain. "*Oh I think I may be having a contraction*" sends them into oblivion, and the same thing happens with some people who have to go in for dental work. Some need anesthesia. Some don't. People respond in different ways.

Conclusion

Hypnosis is simple; however, the complexity of the brain and how hypnosis can influence the different mechanisms within the brain is less understood. Changing thinking truly does change how the brain rewires itself which enables it to put out different hormones and proteins for change. Using hypnosis enhances the ability to change negative thinking into positive thinking. Changing how one thinks and talks to themselves will allow them to reach their goal of changing unwanted behaviors, habits and addictions, and create desired effects in the body.

Thank you for reading these important articles, and ... enjoy your Hypnobabies Class!

The Hypnobabies Team

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