

The Top 5 Things You Should Know before Going to a Hypnotist

Are you considering hypnosis to help you through a particular life struggle? Good for you! Hypnosis is an excellent tool to help people get unstuck from the problems in their lives. It has been proven effective over and over in research, and has been approved by the American Medical Association, the American Psychiatric Association, and the American Psychological Association for decades.

There are some things to know about hypnosis, however, before you jump into the process. Understanding these things ahead of time will help you reap the most benefit from any work you may do with hypnosis.

(1) Hypnosis is a state of focus and concentration. Many people have seen hypnosis used in stage shows, and as a result have a very skewed idea of what it is. It is often thought that the hypnotist can control you or make you do silly or embarrassing things, but this simply isn't true. The person experiencing the state of hypnosis is always in control, and will not do anything that is morally or ethically unacceptable to them. Hypnosis is a state of absorption, of focus and concentration, a state that allows us to more easily accept and act upon selective, acceptable ideas and suggestions.

(2) If you *want* to experience hypnosis, you probably can! Because hypnosis is a state of focus and concentration, if you are able to do a reasonably good job of concentrating, you can likely experience a state of hypnosis. There does seem to be a range of "hypnotizability," with some people able to go deeply into hypnotic states and exhibit predictable hypnotic phenomena, and others who have a harder time doing this. People in the latter group tend to be highly analytical thinkers, but they, too, can experience the state of hypnosis. People of this bent are usually very good at focusing, so with a professional accustomed to working with a broad range of individuals, even highly analytical, rational thinkers can experience hypnosis.

(3) Most people experience hypnotic states every day. If you consider the definition of hypnosis as stated above, it should follow that most people experience hypnosis quite often, perhaps even several times a day – and they do! Some examples: a child who becomes so focused on his game system that he doesn't hear mom calling him for dinner. Or the spouse who is so involved in her computer work that an hour passes and she thinks it's just been 15 minutes. Or perhaps you, when you made that regular drive home from work, and once you pulled into the

driveway, couldn't recall the details of the drive (this is called "highway hypnosis"). A hypnotist will simply make the process explicit and directed for the purpose of the change you are seeking.

(4) You will remember what goes on in your session of hypnosis.

Many people are concerned that they will be in some altered state of consciousness that will not allow them to remember what takes place during hypnosis, but that isn't true. You will remember, be aware, and be in control throughout the process!

(5) Hypnosis isn't a magic bullet. Hypnosis is a wonderful tool for resolving problems such as anxiety, panic, fears and phobias, anger, depression, or helping people lose weight, manage stress better, or build self-esteem and confidence. But you do need to be an involved and willing participant! There are some issues for which hypnosis is more of an adjunct to other work an individual is doing – such as weight loss, because hypnosis will be more effective if you also have an eating and exercise plan in place. It also requires good communication between you and the professional you're working with, so be willing to share with him or her what your concerns are, what your goals are, and any questions you have along the way.

Now that you know more about hypnosis, begin the search for someone in your area who is experienced and knowledgeable about hypnotherapy. Ask questions so that you can begin the process with confidence and a strong likelihood of success!

This article was written by licensed therapist Kalli Matsushashi, MA. Kalli was first trained in hypnosis by Cal Banyan of the Banyan Hypnosis Center for Training and Services, and received additional training in hypnosis through the American Society of Clinical Hypnosis (ASCH) (beginner through advanced levels). She regularly utilizes hypnosis in her work with clients. If you would like to contact Kalli directly, please send an email to kalli@NewFamilyBeginnings.com. You can also learn more about hypnosis and the services Kalli offers by visiting her website at www.NewFamilyBeginnings.com. Copyright 2009.