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Hypnosis; What Is It?

By Paddy Landau

Hypnosis — What is it? What can we use it for? And can you be hypnotised?

Sally sat down in the chair. She looked at me and paused. "I don't think you'll be able to hypnotise me," she said.

"What makes you think that?" I asked.

"I've been to a hypnotist, and he couldn't hypnotise me. Another time, I went to a stage show, and the hypnotist just couldn't get me to do the stuff. I went to a hypnotherapist after that, and nothing happened. So I don't think you can hypnotise me."

I've heard endless variations of "I can't be hypnotised," with reasons ranging from Sally's story to, "I just don't think you can".

What is hypnosis?

The thing is, when we ask, "What is hypnosis?" we get many different answers, depending on whom you ask.

Hypnosis is everything

The loosest definition is NLP's "Everything is hypnosis." NLP says that hypnosis is simply a different state — and whenever you change your mental state, it would mean you're in some type of hypnosis!

Whilst this definition is useful and practical for NLP-type work, it certainly doesn't answer what most of us think of as hypnosis.

Hypnosis is obedience

Thanks to the movies, many people think that when you go into hypnosis, you obey the hypnotist without question and against your will; and when you come out of hypnosis, you forget what was

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happening.

Like most Hollywood themes, this is nonsense. It does sometimes happen that a person has spontaneous amnesia (in other words, he forgets what happened while in hypnosis), but it's rare.

It's also possible for a hypnotist to deliberately cause amnesia, but that generally needs a lot of trust. Some wicked person saying, "And then you will shoot the man opposite you"

would not generate much trust, would it?

Hypnosis is a trance

If we think of hypnosis as a sleepy trance–like state, this covers most types of modern hypnosis

therapy. However, a person under hypnosis can wake up and still be in hypnosis. You've seen this in stage hypnosis shows.

In fact, hypnosis is generally a more alert state, where you are more aware of what's going on.

The science

Researchers have measured what happens in the brain when under hypnosis. Although they don't understand hypnosis yet, they have spotted a number of important things going on. One interesting thing is that, under hypnosis, the left brain (which we usually think of as the "logical" side) becomes less active, and the right brain (the "creative" side) more active.

Under hypnosis, we can access our more creative and imaginative parts, and make great and lasting changes. In fact, I teach self–hypnosis to all my clients so that they can continue to improve after we've finished our sessions together.

A number of other things happen in the brain, but I won't go into them here.

What can we use hypnosis for?

Hypnosis lets you to change your state of mind, either temporarily or permanently. So, hypnosis is useful whenever you need to change your state of mind. Here are just a few examples:

Entertainment — you've seen stage hypnosis, and it can be tremendous fun. Another favourite is to go out and get drunk on water. At closing time, you can safely sober up in seconds and drive home without hangovers, without destroying your liver and without wasting all that money!

Therapy — when a therapist uses hypnosis to speed up or improve therapeutic change

Education — good teachers will hypnotise their pupils (using the NLP definition of hypnosis) to speed up learning and make it more enjoyable

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Rapid change — when a hypnotist uses hypnosis to effect fast changes to mental states; such as removing phobias, getting someone off alcohol, increasing confidence, and so many more

Sports performance — to improve game–playing skills. Expert golfers, for example, use a form of self–hypnosis when they take each shot

Can you be hypnotised?

I lifted Sally's arm. I let go and it stayed there. "Are you keeping it there deliberately?" I asked.

"No," Sally said, looking at her arm as if it were a strange object.

"OK," I said. "Imagine that your arm is a stiff rod that can't bend. No matter how hard you try, you just can't bend it. Can you imagine that?"

"Yes," said Sally.

"Right, then, try to bend it." Sally's arm stayed straight. "Try harder," I said. "I can't see it bending." It still stayed straight.

"I can't," Sally laughed.

"The funny thing is, Sally, when I tap the arm, you can feel control coming right back to you and you can bend it, now." I tapped her arm. Sally bent it, relaxed it into her lap and looked at me.

Anyone can be hypnotised... It requires is trust; so, if you're not happy with the hypnotist, it won't happen. It needs you to be willing to go along with the hypnotist; that's because it's your unconscious that does the work, and your unconscious wants your permission to go ahead.

Sometimes, a person can't be hypnotised, because they're scared of losing control. I used to be like that. During my first training, I became frustrated at not being able to enjoy the experience (hypnosis is very, very pleasant), and I made a point of allowing myself to lose the control. I'm really glad I did, because the hypnotist used the opportunity to fix a big sleeping problem I had been having for years!

If you're scared of losing control, you can ask your hypnotist to hypnotise you in a way that you keep full control.

Actually, you always stay in control: Experiments have shown that a hypnotist can't make you do anything that you find ethically distasteful. You could believe that you're naked on stage in front of an audience, but if the hypnotist told you to actually take off your clothes, you'd come straight out of hypnosis (unless you're a natural exhibitionist!).

In short, hypnosis is completely safe under trained hands.

Paddy Landau, Hypnotherapist and Life Coach based in Oxford UK Change Fast — with

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<http://www.landau.ws>

When Do I Need Hypnosis?

By Mark Dodd

Have you seen this scene: A man is asked by someone to jump for ten times, crawl on the floor then roll over like a dog? Some have this in mind as the picture of hypnosis. Actually– it is not the truth. What is hypnosis then?

Hypnosis is, in fact, a natural state of heightened awareness, focused attention and, often, deep relaxation. This experience is called "the alpha state". In the "alpha state" our brain wave frequency is slower than when awake, but faster than when we're asleep. According to different academic studies, the old misconceptions are now eradicated and the fact that all forms of hypnosis are really self-hypnosis is now paving the way to deeper understanding.

For others, hypnosis is the exit to stress because it is a way of relaxation. According to experts, hypnosis depends on how the recipient accepts it– whether deep or shallow it depends on him or her.

Nowadays, hypnosis has brought wonders to a lot of people all over the world and it has been the source of all that could be relied on as solutions. Many who were able to accept hypnosis as a deep process were able to see for themselves the goodness behind it and the light at the end of the tunnel.

Hypnosis has solved problems involving one's inner sense like: addiction especially today's illegal substance addiction; it could also help out with one's self-acceptance and acceptance of others too. If your fears, lack of confidence, low motivation, success orientation are really bothering you, hypnosis may let you calm the storm inside you.

The skills that may have been not that active in you because of some reasons may be polished again through this method. So, if you think that you need help with regards to your leadership, learning skills, creativity, sports performance and so forth hypnosis may just be the one you have been looking for.

Health disorders could also be addressed with the use of hypnosis. Experts have proved that the power of hypnosis reach even the solutions of various health disorders like Fibromyalgia, headaches which are common with us, insomnia, high blood pressure and others.

The misconceptions about hypnosis are now near the exit door. Recent studies are now showing how hypnosis paves the way to better living. If done with the proper purpose, this would be a great means of healing naturally inside and out.

Mark Dodd is a freelance writer for the Hypnotic Times. He writes a regular column which is published every Thursday. His latest 'favorite pick' is

<http://www.behypnotic.com/>

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