

An Introduction to Hypnosis

by Betsy Rippentrop, Ph.D.

(All Rights Reserved)

Most people seem to have a reaction to this word. Perhaps you have been to a hypnosis show at a comedy club where you watched volunteers play air guitars and sing like Elvis. Maybe you have seen movies where people get “stuck” in hypnosis and walk around unaware of their predicament. Unfortunately, the media has painted a biased view of hypnosis so misperceptions prevail.

Although this may sound somewhat surprising, everyone has experienced hypnosis, or an altered state of awareness, at one time or another in their lives. Think of those times when you were driving on the interstate and suddenly realized that you missed your exit because you were “zoned out” or “on auto pilot”. Or the time you were so engrossed in a good movie that you lost track of time. This is hypnosis.

Hypnosis is a naturally occurring phenomenon where a person experiences an altered state of awareness. It is a highly relaxed state in which a person’s subconscious mind is focused and more open to therapeutic suggestion. Hypnosis is a completely safe procedure when used in a therapeutic setting. In fact, the use of clinical hypnosis dates back to 1773, and has undergone rigorous scientific inquiry.

This intervention can be used to treat a variety of physical and emotional issues such as smoking cessation, weight control, sexual problems, irritable bowel syndrome, anxiety, phobias, depression, chronic pain, self esteem/ego strengthening, concentration/memory improvement, and childbirth. Treatment may also include instruction for self-hypnosis so clients can use this useful technique on his or her own.

It’s important for people to know that hypnosis WILL NOT make you lose consciousness, weaken your will, make you do something you don’t want, spontaneously talk or reveal information you want to keep secret, or make you fall asleep. These are just a few of the misconceptions of hypnosis that are important to dispel.

Hypnosis is offered at Eastwind in conjunction with psychotherapy. If this is a service that interests you, contact us to set up a consultation.