

Is Hypnosis The Answer For Those New Year's Resolutions?

from the American Counseling Association

When you hear the word "hypnosis," it's probably the show business version that springs to mind – people being made to perform embarrassing actions or experience imaginary events, all to entertain an audience.

Clinical hypnosis, however, is something much different – a valuable and respected tool that trained professional counselors use every day to help clients. Yet many people don't think hypnosis could help them simply because the myths of stage hypnosis have them questioning its worth.

That's unfortunate, because hypnosis with a trained counselor can be used to treat a number of problems including depression, anxiety, low self-esteem and chronic pain. It's been used to overcome test anxiety and help improve athletic performance, too.

And in this season of New Year's Resolutions, it's worth noting that hypnosis can play a valuable role in helping achieve success in smoking cessation and weight management programs.

A good starting point for learning about hypnosis is to understand that many of the myths about hypnosis are simply false. Stage hypnotists want you to believe they have special powers and can make you surrender control, but that isn't true. A person under hypnosis isn't weak or gullible, and isn't going to lose consciousness or suffer amnesia. In the hands of a trained counselor, hypnosis is not the least bit dangerous.

Hypnosis is a technique that helps you focus your attention and narrow your scope of concentration. In a hypnotic trance, your attention becomes so focused that everything else just seems to disappear.

In fact, it's probably happened to you. Have you ever been reading a book or concentrating so hard on work that you suddenly realize you've lost track of time and the people and noises around you? That's actually a form of hypnosis.

Hypnosis isn't a therapy itself, but rather a technique a professional counselor uses along with other techniques to help someone to stop smoking or lose weight or overcome depression. Because it's a way to focus your concentration, it can help achieve results more quickly and effectively.

A first step in learning about hypnosis and whether it might be helpful to you is to talk with a trained clinical hypnotherapist. In most cities, the yellow pages of the phone book includes a listing for hypnotherapists. You can also find certified hypnotherapists through the web sites of the American Society of Clinical Hypnosis (www.asch.net), or the National Board of Certified Clinical Hypnotherapists (www.natboard.com).

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