

Beginners

Guide



to

Hypnosis

Your Questions Answered

Edited by Cal Banyan

Beginners Guide to Hypnosis

Your Questions Answered

Edited and Distributed by Calvin (Cal) Banyan, MA, CH, BCH, CI, MCPHI, FNGH

Derived from a previously published book written by Dr. Brian Knight, now owned by Calvin D. Banyan.

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Introduction

This was an ebook that was written by another author, which I bought from him along with a website. Now that I have this book, I thought the best thing to do with it is to give it away to those interested in learning about hypnosis. I especially thought it would be a good resource for those who are looking at learning basic hypnosis.

The anonymous author wrote in his introduction to the original version of this ebook, *“Every person new to hypnosis asks the same questions. Decades ago I also asked them. Lately, as a grumpy old man, I’ve grown tired of having to give the same answers over and over. So I decided to compile the questions and answers into one ebook which is in total, a very good guide for beginners wanting to learn about hypnosis.”*

With that, I hope you will learn a lot from this book and it will kindle your desire to learn more about hypnosis, and hopefully one day, I will either see you in class or find that you are a new graduate of one of our distance learning courses.

Sincerely,

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The rest of this book is written in a question and answer format with the author's comments interspersed. To help you further, from time to time you will run across hyperlinks in the text that will take you to additional information. This has been done in order for you to have access to new and updated material. Alas, every book becomes dated as soon as it is published, but by providing you with the embedded links, we expect that the information provided will be updated regularly.

So now, on with the questions:

1. Is it true that can't be hypnotized unless you are willing to be hypnotized? (In other words, if we're sitting and talking, I couldn't be put under hypnosis unless I wanted to be put under. Many years back we had a hypnotist at school and that is what he said too.)

Depends on what you mean by "willing". People are swayed by a politician or a salesman using hypnotic techniques, ditto with TV ads. But, you see, no amount of hamburger ads would persuade me to buy a hamburger because just the thought of eating something with all those chemicals, animal cruelty and environmental devastation, makes me feel sick. So, I'm "not willing to be hypnotized to eat red meat."

2. Is it true that you can't be hypnotized and not know you're being hypnotized? Example: We're talking and without having a clue, you could hypnotize me. (Sure hope not.)

Controversial. Hypnosis is like daydreaming. So if you're in awe of someone or say, falling in love with a guy, you might not realize that you are in a sort of trance-like state.

Basically, all this is words. You probably have an erroneous idea of what hypnosis is from bad movies, books and stage shows that deliberately make you think the hypnotized person is in some kind of other-worldly state, under the control of the hypnotist. Not so.

3. If you willingly are hypnotized, can you be made to forget what happened while you were hypnotized?" And then, when you're brought out of the hypnosis, you have no idea you were even hypnotized in the first place?

No one can MAKE you do or think anything, unless you want it. So you may ask the hypnotist to suggest amnesia. And you'll forget. But recall is always possible with a little verbal nudging.

The "hidden observer" in your mind is watching continuously to keep you safe.

Many people think that people who are hypnotized don't remember it. And they have that erroneous belief precisely because they have a totally wrong concept of hypnosis to begin with. In hypnosis, you are awake, aware, and conscious. You can even tell lies if you choose, you don't "wake up" because you were not asleep. Time is very subjective. In hypnotherapy, the subjective passage of time can be slowed down or speeded up. This is very useful for therapy.

That wasn't enough for the enquirer. She wrote a follow-up:

4. Thank you for your prompt reply. I think you're probably right. I don't really know what hypnosis is. Regarding my 1st question, your example of the hamburgers was a good one. By willing, that's what I meant. Example: If I smoked (I don't) and I didn't want to stop, I couldn't be made to stop through hypnosis. Another example, if I see a dog, hypnosis couldn't make me think it's a horse because I wouldn't want to think that. Am I right?

Right! Except that in the second example you could be "tricked" if you trusted the hypnotizer and were told that a new language or a new definition, would now call the dog a horse. (If you were on stage you'd readily identify the dog as a horse). But again, you still believe it because you want to. And, once out of hypnosis, the absurdity would have you laughing....

5. Regarding question #2 you hit the nail on the head. I thought the hypnotist was in control and able to make you do things you didn't want to do. That's false?"

Thought I'd made that point -- as you have above.

6. From your explanation, am I right in saying the hypnotist can suggest things such as thirsty or hungry, but if you're not, you're not going to want a drink or food. He can suggest it but he can't MAKE you want it. Right?

Right. Why don't you read a good book on hypnosis?

7. The last part of #3 regarding time. If I were in a session with you, you could make it seem like time had passed quickly or slowly but if my appt. started at 3:00 and I left at 3:15 I would know time had passed. You couldn't make me think no time had passed. Correct?

Couldn't MAKE you think anything. I didn't write that NO time had passed. I wrote that time (remember this is a human construct) is subjective so the hypnotic suggestion of time could be of stretching it, or of shortening it but not too outlandish lengths.

8. So to sum it up, (1) a hypnotist is not in control, (2) she can't make you do or think something you do not want to do or think, and (3) she can't make you forget you were hypnotized because you are not in a trance (sleep). Correct?

Whether you're in a trance or not, is a controversial point. What, after all, is a trance? But, definitely not sleep. How could you follow suggestions if you were asleep? Always amazes me that people don't wonder about that.

9. I think my wrong ideas about hypnosis are like you said. From bad movies, etc. Are hypnosis and hypnotherapy one and the same?

Hypnotherapy is the use of hypnosis to enable the therapist to conduct therapy.

Definitions

1. What is hypnosis?

Although some definitions describe hypnosis in terms of interaction between people, hypnosis is not something one person "does" to another.

Hypnosis is like daydreaming: a form of relaxed concentration. What is relaxed is, first the body and second, the conscious part of the mind

2. Does it put you into a trance state?

Some hypnotherapists believe our everyday sense of reality is actually a trance. That we need to awaken, to de-hypnotize from the myths of what we think is real.

For most practitioners, the most common view of hypnosis is that it is an altered state of consciousness; your awareness differs somehow to your everyday sense of reality. This is often referred to as being in a trance. However, for many, perhaps most people being in hypnosis do not seem much different to how they feel at other times.

3. So does that mean that you are not in a trance?

The very existence of trance is challenged by some hypnosis authorities.

4. So, is hypnosis just another name for relaxation?

No. Often a person new to hypnosis will note that she feels relaxed. Often more deeply relaxed than she's ever felt before. This has led to claims that hypnosis is nothing more than profound relaxation. But laboratory tests prove hypnosis is something more than relaxation: e.g., after hypnosis, the heart rate remains slowed down longer than after relaxation alone.

5. Is hypnosis simply suggestion?

What does this mean? That people in hypnosis will accept suggestions more readily than when not in hypnosis? That explains nothing.

People are readily suggestible without hypnosis -- the mammoth advertising industry attests to that -- and people in hypnosis by definition want to cooperate. Of course they accept suggestions.

They suspend their disbelief as they would while reading a novel. But suggest something that is distasteful to them and they'll quickly stop cooperating -- just as they'd drop a novel which offended them.

6. Perhaps hypnosis is just role-playing?

Some theorists say that people think or do things in hypnosis because it's expected of them and by them. They are fulfilling a role. They want to please the hypnotist. So there's no altered state of consciousness, there's simply a motivation to act as though hypnotized.

This theory might hold for stage performances and the like but can hardly apply to surgery. Thousands of hypnotized persons have benefited from operations with no chemical anesthetic.

7. Is hypnosis a form of psychological conditioning?

According to this explanation, a person learns through direct experience or through TV or the movies, how to behave 'hypnotized'.

Another way to see hypnosis as something learned is to assert that a person becomes conditioned to a word stimulus such as "Relax." Once having allowed himself to relax, the client is thereafter conditioned to repeat the experience of relaxing upon hearing the stimulus-word.

8. Is Hypnosis a Form of Dissociation?

This definition claims that in some as yet unexplained way, the mental functioning of a person is compartmentalized and one part can be isolated from the others.

Dissociation is an everyday conscious experience which begins in childhood, according to Dr. Josephine R. Hilgard, noted hypnosis researcher and author. When a person is engaged in conversation with someone else, he is also talking with himself and thinking ahead to his next comments.

Children blithely slip in and out of fantasy lives, temporarily adopting make-believe roles which they discard at will. This capacity to fantasize can be retained through practice and makes the dissociation characteristic of hypnosis less surprising.

9. When you are in hypnosis are you asleep?

No, you are conscious, awake and aware.

10. So, what is hypnosis?

Altered state, relaxation, heightened suggestibility, role-playing, conditioning or dissociation, whatever hypnosis is, it enables a person to experience thoughts and images as though they were real.

11. Does that mean it has nothing to do with the subconscious?

Not necessarily. Many hypnotists define hypnosis as the bypassing of the critical [conscious] mind and accessing of the subconscious.

12. That sounds impressive, but what do we mean by the subconscious?

Although some people equate the subconscious with the brain's right hemisphere, the subconscious is probably better understood in a metaphorical sense. For example, Freud claimed it is a cesspool of sexual and violent urges while present-day theorists are more likely to consider the subconscious to be either a well-spring of goodness or a storehouse of memories that normally lies outside our conscious awareness.

Hypnotizability

1. Can anyone be hypnotized?

Generally speaking, yes. Any person of normal intelligence who is willing to follow instructions can be hypnotized. The exception would be individuals who suffer from severe mental illness such as Schizophrenia.

Many people, when they hear about hypnosis, say, "Well, I can't be hypnotized." These people have been misinformed, mostly by Hollywood, about what hypnosis is and is not. It is not necessary to be in some sort of other worldly trance to be in hypnosis. Hypnosis is a natural state which everyone moves in and out of throughout each day. Many of our everyday normal activities are actually performed under hypnosis without us being aware of it.

An example of hypnosis is playing video games. Some people can play video games for hours in one sitting. If someone were to talk to you while you were in a video game session, you would be able to respond. Yet another good example of a hypnotic state is being on the computer. People who are using a computer are focused on what they are doing, but can intelligently answer the phone when it rings.

So, hypnosis is no different to playing video games or working on a computer. Most people engaged in these activities would not think they are in a trance, but they are. They are in a light hypnotic trance known as Alpha.

Oh, by the way, reading a fascinating article (like this one) is another form of hypnosis...surprise! You're in hypnosis!!!

In alpha, your mind is slowed down just a little, your focus is narrow, your breathing is slow, and you are relaxed. Since you are up to 200 times more suggestible even while you are in the light state of alpha, anything beyond this is unnecessary for most purposes (i.e. programming someone to lose weight, stop smoking, overcome fear of flying, etc.). You can have an extremely effective hypnosis session while being aware of and able to recall every word spoken by the Hypnotherapist.

2. Can a sleeping person be hypnotized?

Although some people claim this is possible, you have only to remember that the sleeping person is unconscious to realize the absurdity of trying to hypnotize her.

3. Is hypnosis a skill?

Yes. Hypnosis is an inborn talent of the client. Its use, deliberate or unwitting, varies from person to person. Your development of this skill can be enhanced with the guidance of an experienced hypnotist. Then the talent can subsequently be even more useful and enjoyable when employed by you on your own.

4. Is it a trait?

No. Hypnosis is not a fixed trait, like eye color. Although built-in to our basic biology it can be enhanced with practice.

5. Is hypnotizability linked to other personality? Characteristics?

Not much. People who are highly intelligent are more easily hypnotized as are people who have been sexually abused as children (possibly, because to survive they had to dissociate).

Science

1. Is there a scientific basis to hypnosis?

Yes. Hypnosis has been studied extensively.

2. Is there a biological basis for hypnosis?

Yes. When a person is in hypnosis, specific parts of the brain “light up” in brain scans. Also, for decades Candace Pert, a scientist, and Ernest Rossi, a psychologist, have explained how hypnosis has measurable effects arising from thoughts and behaviors through the intermediary flow of neurons and hormones.

3. So, hypnosis is built-in to our basic biology?

Yes. It’s the opposite of the well-known ‘flight-or-fight’ response. It’s the calm-and-confident response.

4. Is it true that everything that has ever happened to me is recorded in my brain like a video, waiting to be replayed?

No. Memory is selective and malleable. There is no unblemished record of your life stored somewhere just waiting for you to re-discover events from your past. With hypnosis, you may be able to recall some events that you are consciously unaware of but, there is no guarantee that the recall is accurate.

5. Are hypnotic suggestions akin to software and the brain like a computer?

Sort of. These metaphors suit our current thinking. They serve as handy shorthand for describing the process of hypnosis. But just as Newtonian physics was revolutionized by Einstein and his theories later brought into question by quantum physics, so our metaphors will likely be superseded when we understand more about how the brain functions. Meanwhile, just as Newton’s ideas are still useful in certain contexts, so too is the idea that our minds are somewhat like computers. However, remember

that a computer spits out exactly what is entered into it. The human mind modifies the information entered.

Control

1. Does the hypnotist control the client?

That is only as much as the client wants to be controlled. Bad movies and books notwithstanding, since the client is awake and aware, she decides what she'll agree to.

2. Are there times when it would be good to be out of hypnosis?

Yes. For example, when you are so mesmerized while surfing the Net that you would buy something you don't need, just because you are in a daze.

More seriously, you might want to be de-hypnotized from the food industry's TV ads or from the negative messages implanted in your head by well-meaning (or not so well-meaning) parents.

3. Can someone be hypnotized to rob a bank?

That is only if they actually want to commit the crime. And then, they wouldn't need to be hypnotized. If it were possible to make someone commit a crime by hypnotizing them, then the CIA and the KGB would have rejoiced in being able to program killers.

Despite their best efforts (in the '60s) they were unable to persuade normal recruits to kill just because they were hypnotized. And their psychopaths didn't need hypnosis as an excuse.

4. Will I reveal secrets when I am in hypnosis?

You will only say what you want to say. In therapy, it is often beneficial to reveal a secret. But if you are revealing a secret while in hypnosis, it's because you choose to do so, not because you're hypnotized.

5. Can hypnosis be used to uncover the truth?

No. This question is often asked by someone wanting to know for sure if their partner is really being faithful. However, the partner could tell lies while hypnotized. Hypnosis does not act like a truth serum.

Dangers

1. Can hypnosis be dangerous?

No. There's no danger in hypnosis, only in hypnotists. Hypnosis can be misused, deliberately or unwittingly.

Deliberate misuse of hypnosis is what a philandering physician did when he tricked his hypnotized wife into swallowing a fatal overdose of pills.

Unwitting misuse is like the British stage hypnotist who was convicted of causing a volunteer extreme distress because he regressed her to an age when she recalled being sexually assaulted. He should have suggested she act like a six-year-old, rather than be six years old.

2. Can the hypnotist create a false memory in my head?

No. But, she could create a false belief inadvertently because she suggests something that didn't actually happen or deliberately, because it's part of your therapy.

Let me explain: the hypnotist might by accident ask a "leading question" such as "And who else is in the room with your 7 year-old self?" which would likely cause a hypnotized client to imagine someone being in that room even if in reality there had been no other person present.

On the other hand, the hypnotist might very deliberately and positively suggest a client who is afraid of public speaking imagine himself giving a great speech at his next business meeting.

3. Can I get stuck in a trance?

No. If the hypnotist stopped talking to you after a while you'd either drift off to sleep or you'd open your eyes to find out what's going on.

4. Will I say things that would embarrass me?

No. You are the one in control of what you say and do. Even in a hypnotic trance, you are aware of your actions.

5. Could I be sexually assaulted while in hypnosis?

Of course anyone could be assaulted at any time. Fortunately, since you are awake and aware of what's happening while you're in hypnosis, you would be able to respond in the same way that you would when you were not in hypnosis.

6. What does it feel like to be in hypnosis?

This is traditionally answered by "it feels different for each person" which is a bit like claiming that no two snowflakes are alike. How on Earth would we know? When used in a therapeutic context, many people report feeling relaxed, uncaring about their everyday concerns, only vaguely aware of their surroundings, barely hearing extraneous noises, focused in their imaginations, arms and legs either pleasantly heavy or light, enjoyable tingling sensations, sense of peace and lethargy, mind super alert.

To an observer, the hypnotized person looks as relaxed as if she were asleep. In particular, the face becomes placid and sometimes a little flushed. The eyelids may twitch a little.

7. How do I know I was hypnotized?

The best way is from the results achieved. If you experience the kind of physical and imaginative details described above, you probably won't even ask this question. However, if like a lot of people, you don't feel much different physically or mentally while supposedly in hypnosis, there are three possibilities:

- a. You were hypnotized but because of false notions about hypnosis, decided you weren't.
- b. You chose not to be hypnotized.
- c. You were not hypnotized.

8. When I was supposedly in hypnosis I heard every word the therapist said so I could not have been hypnotized, could I?

Hypnotherapist Sir Michael Carr-Jones answers this by saying your question is his "biggest bête noir".

"Of course, you hear every word. You are awake, aware, and fully conscious. If you could not hear every word, we would all be wasting our time and your money."

9. Why are you and Sir Michael annoyed when people use the phrase under hypnosis?

That is because that invokes the out-dated concept of the hypnotist being in control, of the client being involuntarily sedated.

10. Is hypnosis safe for children?

Yes. Hypnosis is safe for everyone. Children can readily benefit because, even more than adults, they slip in and out of hypnosis naturally all day as they play make-believe.

11. Is relaxation a prerequisite for hypnosis?

No. It is, of course, preferable to relax when you are in a therapist's office. But you could (and often do) go into hypnosis while exercising vigorously (e.g. running a marathon) or in an emergency (such as a car crash).

12. What is forensic hypnosis?

Forensic Hypnosis is the use of hypnosis in police and similar investigations.

Hypnotherapy

1. Is hypnosis the same thing as hypnotherapy?

Strictly speaking, no. The label is often used when a therapist uses hypnosis with a client. But, however refreshing it is to enjoy being in hypnosis, the experience by itself is not therapeutic. Therapy is done while a person is in hypnosis, not by hypnosis.

2. So the hypnotist has to be a trained psychotherapist, physician or psychologist?

Not necessarily. In many jurisdictions, anyone can open an office as a hypnotherapist (or as a psychotherapist) with absolutely no credentials in psychology, medicine, hypnosis, psychotherapy or psychopathology.

3. How long does a post-hypnotic suggestion last?

Generally speaking, it depends on a number of factors such as the depth of hypnosis, the number of time a hypnotic suggestion was given, and the hypnotic techniques being used. I have found that the deeper the hypnotic state is, and the greater the number of times the suggestion is given, the longer the suggestion lasts. Also using insight techniques such as hypnotic age regression can make suggestions last a very long time, or even be permanent.

4. Having successfully had hypnotherapy for a phobia, will it ever be necessary to have a "top up" to prevent the phobia from returning?

Perhaps. If you are frequently in the formerly phobic situation but now feel comfortable, it's unlikely you'll need a "top up". The new habit of being non-phobic will have replaced the old phobia.

However, if the phobic situation is one that you rarely encounter but you do find yourself once again about to face it then you might need brief hypnotherapy. Or you could use the self-hypnosis techniques taught to you by your therapist.

5. Does a person have to go deeply into hypnosis to make changes in her life?

"Depth" in hypnosis is subjective. But what might be called a "light trance" is sufficient for therapeutic change such as stopping smoking or losing weight. Presumably though, you'd want to be deep into hypnosis if it was the only anesthetic you were using while undergoing surgery!

6. Does hypnotherapy require gadgets or electronic devices?

Some hypnotherapists like to have their clients listen through headphones to a relaxing induction mix of words and music. Others will use a metronome, pendulum or other device for focusing the clients' attention.

No device is actually essential. Most hypnotherapists simply talk their clients into hypnosis on a one-to-one basis. Probably not as financially profitable as having a number of clients in several rooms with electronically-equipped recliners linked to a central 'broadcasting' unit.

7. Can hypnotherapy be performed long-distance?

Yes, but not in some other-worldly mental telepathy format. A telephone or computer is necessary.

Today NetHypnosis is a lot more convenient. Skype and webcams mean hypnotherapy is available to anyone, anywhere.

8. Does a hypnotherapist have to have a special voice?

No, unless he's trying out for a part in a Hollywood movie. Real-life hypnotherapists use whatever voice they've been graced with. Of course, it helps if the voice is soothing rather than grating. And a confident tone is important. Apart from that any kind of voice is sufficient.

9. What is past-life regression?

Regression is helping a client in his imagination to go back in his life; past-life regression supposedly takes a person to a previous life. More likely, the many accounts of such experiences are a tribute to human creativity.

10. What training does a person need to become a hypnotherapist?

Hypnosis professionals (both hypnotists and hypnotherapists) receive their training in many different ways. Many go through [live training programs](#) such as the National Guild of Hypnotists Approved Banyan Hypnosis Certification Super Course. However many successful hypnosis professionals can receive excellent training through [distant learning courses](#) that conduct testing of their grads that is on part with the programs that are given in a live classroom situation.

11. Can hypnotherapy be successful if I do it myself, i.e. what can I accomplish with self-hypnosis?

Yes. And you can accomplish everything. It's best to first experience hypnosis with a competent practitioner.

12. Are there other names for hypnotherapy?

Yes. Although their advocates will argue otherwise in my opinion here are a few of the many practices that are basically hypnotic:

- Creative Visualization
- Guided Imagery
- Yoga
- "Flooding" (a technique used by psychologists)
- EFT
- Eye Movement and Desensitization and Re-Processing

13. Must I close my eyes during hypnotherapy?

No. You can keep your eyes open. There are three reasons a hypnotherapist will ask you to close your eyes:

- a. Doing so sets the stage for you doing as she asks,
- b. You focus more easily on whatever you are imagining,
- c. It's quite disturbing to the therapist to watch an unblinking client for an hour or so. ☺

14. What problems can hypnotherapy overcome?

There are so many applications for hypnosis that you might consider it a panacea -- i.e., a solution for all emotional, psychological and physical problems. Especially since hypnosis can be used with people of all ages and with a myriad of problems.

Here are a few: phobias, weight control, insomnia, alcoholism, depression, psychosis, hypertension, eating disorders, sexual dysfunctions, smoking cessation, medical illness, post-traumatic stress, and bipolar affective disorder."

15. Can hypnotherapy help me do better in sports?

Yes, for sure. Hypnosis can be used to enhance: your sports activities, your love life, your work habits, your confidence, and your creativity.

16. How is it possible that hypnotherapy can be so powerful?

Because it deals with fundamental beliefs. Supposedly stored in what we call the subconscious (or "unconscious" in England) these beliefs are what guide us in our everyday living. Change these beliefs and you change your life.

17. Can hypnotherapy cure cancer?

There are hypnotherapists who make such claims. While some remarkable physical effects of hypnotherapy are possible, the actual curing of diseases such as cancer and diabetes seems to be a somewhat outlandish claim, not to mention, probably illegal in most jurisdictions. However, hypnosis, its imitators and derivatives, are certainly powerful in helping sick people be relaxed and to lead less despairing lives.

18. How can hypnotherapy help a terminally-ill person focus her mind when she has little time left and might be suffering from nausea and pain?

Hypnotherapists who specialize in pain control say that the focusing may begin first on the pain. Alleviation of some discomfort helps the client feel she still has some control. Then, when she's ready, she exercises the ultimate in self-control: letting go.

19. Wouldn't such clients have a difficult time reaching somnambulism while under the influence of morphine, for instance?

“Somnambulism” is the concept of a very “deep” level of hypnosis that some practitioners consider mandatory if a client is to successfully achieve change. Since I consider this to be a belief, rather than a fact, my answer is that reaching somnambulism only matters to the therapist?

Morphine might make it easier for a patient to utilize hypnosis – after all, she is already relaxed. I’m not aware of any studies on this, so I am not giving a definitive answer.

20. Is it true that I won't remember anything that went on during the hypnotherapy session?

No. On the contrary, you will remember everything you want to remember. Unless: you request a suggestion for amnesia, you choose not to remember, or you spontaneously forget.

21. Why would I “spontaneously” forget?

Either because your subconscious considers you are not yet ready to consciously face whatever you were dealing with during the session, or because you are one of the estimated 3% of the population who enjoy such a high talent for hypnosis that amnesia occurs automatically.

Even for these fortunate people (sometimes known as “somnambules”) a few verbal hints will suffice to activate recall.

22. What is the “hidden observer”?

Something within your brain that Ernest Hilgard, scientist and hypnosis researcher, postulates is always there keeping an eye out, so to speak, to keep you safe. It's the reason somnambules can recall what went on when prompted to do so.

23. Is hypnotherapy simply a placebo?

No. But as with all therapies, placebo plays a large part. (Perhaps more than 50%, claims Ernest Rossi, psychologist).

Religion

1. Is hypnosis compatible with Christianity?

Some Christian fundamentalists frown upon the use of hypnosis. They believe hypnosis is a tool of the Devil; that hypnosis opens you up to access by evil spirits.

Mainstream Christian groups have no such qualms. Indeed, some not only use hypnosis in a therapeutic manner but have their own associations.

2. Is hypnosis mentioned in the Bible?

Perhaps. Some people think hypnosis is referred to here: Genesis 2:21, 1 Samuel 26:12, Job 4:13, 33:15, Acts 10:10.

3. Do organized religions use hypnotic techniques?

Yes. From prayer to music to ritual procession to repetitive chants to awe-inspiring buildings, religions benefit from techniques that could be considered hypnotic. Some of these are: suspension of disbelief inculcation of new beliefs repetition through sermons singing or chanting rituals to reinforce beliefs repetitive drumming or dancing.

Stage Hypnosis

1. On stage, surely the hypnotist is in control?

He (and occasionally, she) deliberately gives that impression.

However, the only control the stage hypnotist has is whatever amount the volunteers give. They are cooperating with his suggestions, allowing themselves to have fun and they can exit hypnosis any time they choose.

2. Are the people on stage really hypnotized?

Yes, of course.

3. Why does the stage hypnotist say "Sleep!" ?

Seems to be a holdover from earlier times when people thought hypnosis was a type of sleep. Also in those days, all hypnosis interaction (stage and therapeutic) was authoritarian. Today, audiences expect this approach by stage hypnotists.

The #1 Question That I Get

The wording varies but the #1 Question I've been asked is:

1. Can hypnosis help me forget someone?

Possibly. Often the enquirer wants to be able to forget a former lover, a traumatic event or an obsessive thought.

What is certain is that the damaging emotions around an event, person or persistent thought can be minimized or even eliminated with hypnotherapy.

“Cutting the cords” (or the ties that bind) is a technique that hypnotherapists often use to free a person from a disturbing memory.

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