

HYPNOSIS

What is Hypnosis?

- A clear definition of the phenomenon has still not been produced.
- Hypnosis does not give the hypnotist total control over the subject.
- A dangerous or antisocial act will be ignored
- Hypnotic suggestion works well as long as it does not conflict with our deeper convictions.

Historical Development

- Franz Anton Mesmer (1734 - 1815)
 - Coined the terms *animal magnetism* and the process called *mesmerism*
- James Esdaile (1808 - 1859)
 - demonstrated medical hypnosis in London
- James Braid (1785 - 1860)
 - credited with coining the term *hypnotism*

- Jose Custodi di Faria (1756 - 1819)
 - "lucid sleep"
- Jean Martin Charcot (1825 - 1893)
 - hypnosis involved physiological reflex actions.
- Sigmund Freud (1856 - 1939)
 - used hypnosis to explore the unconscious or subconscious mind

Hypnotic Procedure

Administration of the Stanford Hypnotic Susceptibility Scale, Form C

- Setting and Preliminaries
- Standardized, can be read word-for-word from printed instructions
- Responses are evaluated in a standardized way
- Low key
- Reassurance that there is nothing dangerous or threatening

Beginning the Induction

- Visual fixation upon a "target"
- Repeated suggestions guide the subject's thoughts and perceptions

The Sleep Parallel

- Sleep suggestions are given
- Subject is told to relax and experience the pleasant feelings of drowsiness and relaxation.
- Sleep suggestions become more direct as induction continues
- The standardized induction procedure takes between 12 and 15 minutes.

Formal Tests of Hypnotizability

Form A of the Stanford Scale:

1. Postural Sway
2. Eye Closure
3. Hand Lowering
4. Arm Immobilization
5. Finger Lock
6. Arm Rigidity

7. Hand Movement
8. Verbal Inhibition
9. Fly Hallucination
10. Eye Catalepsy
11. Posthypnotic Suggestion
12. Hypnotic Amnesia

Other Tests from Forms B & C

- Sweet or Sour Taste in Mouth
- Vivid Dream
- Age Regression
- Anosmia - inability to smell
- Anesthesia
- Positive Hallucination
- Negative Hallucination

Explanations of Hypnosis

Correlates of Hypnotic Susceptibility

- Cognitive: Susceptibility has been found to correlate with susceptibility to visual illusions
- Hypnotic susceptibility has also been found to correlate with a high capacity for absorption in imaginative activities outside of hypnosis

- Personality: Studies have found no significant correlation between hypnotizability and personality variables
- Physiological: Evidence suggests that hypnotizability is correlated to right-brain processing.
- Highly susceptible subjects show more alpha wave brain activity during normal waking state.

Three Dimensions of Hypnosis (Tart)

- Role-Playing: (sociological theory) we become identified with the role we are playing
- Trance: refers to a fading of the intellectual framework by which we automatically evaluate our experiences.
 - In the trance dimension, experiences occur in isolation, without automatic or conscious evaluation.
- Archaic Regression: similar to Freud's concept of transference: we transfer a childlike cognitive/emotional attitude onto the hypnotist.

Therapeutic Uses of Hypnosis

- Habit Control: most successful when used in combination with behavior modification or cognitive techniques.
- Phobias: often used along with systematic desensitization with quite successful results.
- Psychological Disorders: sexual dysfunctions; manic-depression; eating disorders; personality disorders, etc.

- Pain Control: historical use as an anesthesia before chemicals appeared.
 - Also has use as an analgesic, as a substitute for chemical agents.
- Memory: Hyper-mnesia opposite of a-mnesia
- Hypnotic age regression

Self-Hypnosis

- Has much in common with affirmation and visualization
- Many variations and styles. Often effective to tape record your own voice and listen through headphones. Can also be done through mentally guiding yourself.
- Best done in the morning immediately after rising or just before going to sleep.

1. Know your objective and goal before you start.

- Write it out clearly
- Should be a positive statement
- You may include slight variations of wording

2. Begin with relaxation technique

- Step-by-step process
- May help to visualize going down stairs, down an elevator...
- Keep mind focused on task at hand
- Do not try to self-induce sleep so much as total relaxation

3. Once relaxation is achieved, begin by mentally repeating the phrase

- Repeat affirmations firmly, with intensity and sincerity
- Avoid mechanical repetition
- Continue repeating the affirmation for 5 to 15 minutes.

- Gradually return to waking consciousness.
- It's OK to fall asleep after the practice (especially if done before sleep)