

Hypnosis—Dr. Randy Gilchrist

Hypnosis today is practiced by many people possessing a hypnosis certification only, but no Masters of Doctoral-level psychotherapy degree or license. What I offer is deeper and generally more effective. True clinical hypnosis from a licensed and Doctoral-level psychologist like myself is not a "therapy" unto itself, but is instead a highly valuable technique of therapy. In other words, "hypnotherapy" can be better referred to as "clinical hypnosis" within the broader counseling/therapy process.

I prefer to blend and combine hypnosis and hypnotic techniques with other traditional, non-hypnosis therapy approaches. This tends to bring the best results: working on your goals through both a conscious AND a subconscious therapy approach. (However, for those clients wishing to come in for hypnosis ONLY for a specific goal such as weight loss, I will gladly do so. Just let me know).

I typically structure sessions with hypnosis in the following way to help you achieve the greatest amount of change:

Our first meeting (Session 1): Assessment of your background/history, reviewing your goals/desires for change, discussion of hypnosis, creation of a between session "homework assignment" to prepare you for your hypnotic experience.

Our second meeting (Session 2): Hypnosis exercises, discussion of hypnotic experience, creation of a homework assignment to further support your changes. (*If you prefer, sessions 1-2 may be combined in the first meeting with an initial 100 minute session as opposed to the usual 50 minutes).

Sessions 3 and on: Blending of further hypnosis exercises, complimentary non-hypnosis exercises, progress reviews, and the creation of homework assignments to facilitate change.

*From my experience, change through hypnosis-based sessions tends to be most effective when at least 4 sessions are attended and the homework created during these sessions is practiced between meetings. However, you may have more or less than 4 sessions depending on your goals, your preferences and your situation. The number of sessions will be up to you according to the progress you are making plus the depth and difficulty of the goals you are striving for. You may come in for as many sessions as you wish.

Hypnosis is powerful and very effective, but it tends to require some time and effort to produce the best results. Hypnosis is not a "quick fix" or a "magic pill". However, the positive changes from hypnosis can often seem like magic!

In its simplest form, "clinical hypnosis" may be viewed the following 3-step process to promote change: 1) leading a person into a highly absorbed, focused state/ trance ("induction"), 2) giving suggestions and truisms to help them towards their goals, and 3)

giving further suggestions to help transfer hypnotic suggestions after hypnosis into their everyday life (“post-hypnotic suggestions”).

No one knows exactly how hypnosis works, but there is a wealth of clinical research backing its effectiveness in counseling. When a person is in a trance, they are more suggestible because their conscious resistance to change is otherwise absorbed and distracted. “Conscious resistance” is a main reason why many positive changes often do not occur—even when a person strongly desires to change. For instance, after making a goal to lose weight, people often tell themselves all of the reasons why their diet won’t work: I’ll get too hungry, etc. Their consciousness creates a defeatist attitude and a set up for failure.

Hypnosis is so effective because it minimizes our conscious resistance against suggestions for change. However, again, it should not be viewed as a “quick fix”. It may take several live hypnosis sessions + follow up audiotape reviews at home for the desired changes to occur. How quickly hypnosis is effective will depend on a number of factors, including how rigid the old beliefs are, how focused the person is during hypnosis, how visual a person is, etc. Furthermore, again, hypnosis also works best when used within a well balanced counseling process including other traditional approaches and techniques.

Nevertheless, clinical hypnosis is a power tool that can help those who need an “extra something” to overcome their inner resistance to change. As a psychologist with 4 years of hypnosis training, I’ve found hypnosis helpful with clients in many areas, including: weight loss, exercise, stress/anxiety, depression, addictions/habits, relationships, etc.

Disclaimer:

Hypnosis tends to not be effective—and may even be harmful—when it is used to try to recollect memories of physical or sexual abuse in childhood. The main risk here is the possibility of remembering abuse events that are distorted or may never have even occurred at all. It is for this reason that abuse memories recovered under hypnosis are not allowed in a court of law. Also, remember that people won’t do anything under hypnosis that they wouldn’t do in real life. Furthermore, hypnosis won’t change someone against their will. Hypnosis works best with those possessing a strong inner desire for change.

*Just remember that if you can focus and visualize, and you possess an adequate inner desire to change, then hypnosis will likely be helpful to you. Hypnosis is wonderful. If you are interested in it, please bring this up during our sessions and we can discuss incorporating it into our work together.

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