

Reassuring advice on
how hypnotherapy can help you

Hypnotherapy

FOR DUMMIES®

Mike Bryant

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Clinical Hypnosis*

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Hypnotherapy Terms

Conscious and unconscious

These terms describe aspects of your mind. Think of the range of states your mind experiences as a spectrum. At the right extreme of the spectrum are the super-alert states you're in when you're frightened or excited. At the left end of the spectrum of mind states is deep sleep. Read Chapter 1 for more on the conscious and unconscious mind.

Direct and indirect suggestions

A direct (or authoritarian) suggestion gives an explicit instruction to do something such as 'Stop smoking now'. It acts as a form of reprogramming.

An indirect (or permissive) suggestion allows your unconscious mind to explore a variety of possibilities before coming up with a response. For example, 'I wonder how soon it will be before you stop smoking and start to enjoy a healthy lifestyle?' Indirect suggestions allow your unconscious mind to make change in a way that fully suits you.

Chapter 2 has more on direct and indirect suggestions.

Hypnosis

Hypnosis is a technique. The word *hypnosis* comes from *hypnos*, the Greek word for sleep. People used to think that hypnosis was the same as sleep, but it isn't. Hypnosis is a deeply relaxed state where your mind can help you to focus extremely well on any task that either you or your hypnotherapist suggest to help you.

Hypnotherapy

Hypnosis used for therapeutic purposes becomes hypnotherapy. Many different hypnotherapy techniques and applications exist. This book gives you a good overview of the range of hypnotherapy possibilities.

Hypnotherapy is a way of solving personal problems through reaching a deeply relaxed state of mind called *trance*.

Induction

Induction is the technique used to establish a trance state, usually by fixating your eyes onto something, and counting down from ten to one and becoming more relaxed.

Trance

Trance is a state of mind that involves a selective focus of attention. You are in trance-like states naturally several times throughout the day, such as when you are fully involved in reading a book. Trance-like states are often associated with states of relaxation. Hypnotherapy uses the trance state to access the powerful forces of your own subconscious to make the changes you want.

Post-hypnotic suggestion

This is a suggestion given in trance, for you to make something happen when you are not in trance. Your mind is reprogrammed to respond in a healthier way to something.

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What Happens in a Hypnotherapy Session?

Briefly, here are the steps involved in a typical hypnotherapy session. However, bear in mind that a 'typical' session varies widely depending on both the hypnotherapist and the patient.

1. You get acquainted with your hypnotherapist.
2. Your hypnotherapist gathers information about you (mainly completed in the initial session).
3. Trance is induced.
4. Trance is deepened.
5. The actual therapy takes place.
6. You're given post-hypnotic suggestions.
7. You're given feel-good suggestions.
8. You emerge from hypnosis.
9. You're given homework to help reinforce the therapy in between sessions.

Turn to Chapter 13 for a complete run-down of a hypnotherapy session.

Simple Steps to Self-Hypnosis

Serious problems are best dealt with in conjunction with a professional, clinical hypnotherapist, but self-hypnosis is useful for boosting your confidence, encouraging yourself towards a healthier lifestyle, and improving your performance. The basic steps of self-hypnosis are

1. Think about what you want to achieve or change, and state your goal in a single sentence.
2. Choose a place where you can be completely comfortable, whether sitting in a chair or lying down.
3. Set a time limit by mentally giving yourself the following suggestion: 'Exactly ten minutes from now, my eyelids open automatically and I feel calm, rested, and refreshed.'
4. Close your eyes and take a few deep breaths. Progressively relax all your muscles, from head to toe, or toe to head, whichever you prefer.
5. Count down from ten to one and tell yourself that with each number you'll become more relaxed, both physically and mentally, and go deeper into trance.
6. When you're in a deepened trance state, start using the goal statement you devised for your self-hypnosis session. Remember your single sentence goal statement, and make it as vivid as possible in your imagination. Then simply let go. Trust that you have handed it over to your unconscious mind, and that this wise part of you will now solve the problem.
7. Count yourself awake, up from one to ten, and tell yourself that you're no longer in trance.
8. A few minutes after awakening from self-hypnosis, you are still in a highly suggestible state. Use that time to reinforce how relaxed and calm you feel, and how pleased you are that your unconscious mind is helping you reach your goal.

Chapter 14 covers the process of self-hypnosis.

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by Mike Bryant and Peter Mabbutt

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With extensive experience in both America and the United Kingdom, Mike has established a range of innovative mental health schemes in London as well as having provided senior service development consultancy to NHS Mental Health Trusts across England, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales as a Senior Consultant with the Sainsbury Centre for Mental Health (SCMH). While at SCMH, he published a range of papers and reports on mental health issues.

Mike currently lives in London with his wife and family and has a private practice as a counsellor and as hypnotherapist. You can find more information about Mike's practice at www.londonhypno.com.

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With a background in psychopharmacology Peter co-authored a range of papers on tranquilisers, anxiety, and learning and memory before training with the LCCH to become a hypnotherapist. Peter has a specialist interest in the mind-body connection, weight control, the treatment of trauma, and hypertension.



Authors' Acknowledgements

From Mike Bryant: I would like to dedicate this book to my family: My lovely wife Toni, and my gorgeous daughters Jodie and Jessie. Jodie, sorry I couldn't use your working title of *Daddy's Wicked Hypnotherapy Book*. Maybe next time.

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From Peter Mabbutt: This book is dedicated to my parents, Christine and Charles. Though sadly no longer with us, they always encouraged my dreams. Hey mum and dad, I realised another one! To my sister Nadine and her family, ¡Hola! And to the rest of my family a big thank you and hello too.

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Introduction

Hypnosis is a subject everyone has an opinion about, but few people have ever directly experienced. Hypnotherapy, on the other hand, is a topic that leaves many people baffled or completely blank. So what exactly is the difference between hypnosis and hypnotherapy? That's one of questions this book answers.

An important point to understand is that hypnosis and hypnotherapy are not the same thing. Hypnosis has been around since humans began to speak and involves going into a trance. Hypnotherapy uses the hypnotic trance to help you achieve a goal, or create a positive change in your thinking, to help solve a problem. Whereas hypnosis is centuries old, hypnotherapy, like other talking therapies, is a relatively recent practice.

This book helps you understand how hypnosis works. It also discusses the various problems and symptoms hypnotherapy can effectively treat, and shows you how you can put hypnotherapy to use for you.

About This Book

Hypnotherapy For Dummies helps you understand hypnosis on both a theoretical and a practical basis. Both are useful depending on your interests. You can, for example, use this book simply to find out about hypnosis. You may stop at this level and just be clearer about how hypnotherapists work with their clients.

Or, you may be interested in finding a hypnotherapist to work on problems, or to help you succeed in achieving your goals. If you don't know what sort of things a hypnotherapist can help with, you will be an expert after you read this book!

Hypnotherapy can help people to overcome a surprisingly wide range of habits, emotional problems, and phobias. It can also dramatically improve performance for students taking exams, athletes wanting to improve their game, and creative artists wishing to deepen their abilities.

In many ways hypnotherapy is like counselling, but it is a different approach and much more rapid in producing changes. Hypnotherapists frequently remove phobias within four to six sessions. There is also a body of evidence demonstrating that hypnotherapy is the most effective way to help people stop smoking.

Most people only know about hypnosis from stage hypnotists and movies, which often portray a negative image. This book explores the different ways in which hypnotherapy helps people overcome their problems and achieve their goals.

Conventions Used in This Book

To help you navigate through this book, we set up a few conventions:

- ✓ *Italics* are used for emphasis and to highlight new words, or define terms.
- ✓ **Boldfaced** text indicates the key concept in a list.
- ✓ `Monofont` is used for Web and e-mail addresses.

Sometimes we (the authors, Mike and Peter) use the pronoun ‘we’ to signify both of us or ‘I’ followed by ‘(Mike)’ or ‘(Peter)’, depending who the author writing that particular paragraph is.

Also, when speaking generally we use the female pronoun ‘she’ in even-numbered chapters and the male ‘he’ in odd-numbered chapters, just to be fair to both genders!

Foolish Assumptions

We assume you picked up *Hypnotherapy For Dummies* for one of the following reasons:

- ✓ **You have a general interest in self-improvement techniques.** You’re looking for ways to become more the sort of person you’d like to be.
- ✓ **You want to break a habit.** You know that hypnotherapy has a good track record with helping people overcome phobias, smoking, eating problems, and other unwanted habits and you have a habit you want to lose.
- ✓ **You’re curious about various techniques such as psychotherapy, Neuro-linguistic Programming, counselling, and hypnotherapy.** You think that it may all just be psychobabble and want to know what really helps.

This book tells you about the therapies most closely related to hypnotherapy, how they differ and what they have in common.

- ✔ **You want tips on choosing the right hypnotherapist.** Chapter 12 is devoted to helping you find a qualified hypnotherapist.
- ✔ **You're interested in becoming a hypnotherapist.** This book is the equivalent of an introductory course in hypnotherapy so after reading it, you may be interested in learning first-hand. If that's the case, Chapter 19 shares tips on training as a hypnotherapist.
- ✔ **You're just browsing.** 'Oh, is this a book about hypnosis? I thought this was *Cleaning and Stain Removal For Dummies!*' Sorry, wrong book.

Why You Need This Book

As the authors of this book we, Mike and Peter, are both practising hypnotherapists. *Hypnotherapy For Dummies* emphasises the importance of working with a hypnotherapist to achieve your goals. Developing a working relationship with your hypnotherapist is the key to achieving a positive outcome. We think that this is a significant difference to many introductory books on hypnotherapy. Many of those currently available fall into two main types:

- ✔ **Specific interest books** aimed at anyone interested in solving a particular problem. These books focus on a single issue, such as the application of hypnosis to achieve weight control, decrease anxiety, develop confidence, or to stop smoking, and so on.
- ✔ **Scripts books** aimed at teaching a DIY (do-it-yourself) approach to hypnosis. *Scripts* are the phrases hypnotherapists use to conduct therapy, once someone is in trance. These types of books offer techniques you can use to hypnotise yourself or others.

In our opinion, this DIY approach cannot approach the level of trance or range of techniques that a good hypnotherapist can provide. We have seen many clients in our practice who have had nil, or negative results, from amateur hypnosis learned from books alone. A qualified hypnotherapist has a variety of techniques to choose from, and selects the technique uniquely suited to relieving your symptom efficiently and effectively.

We think you need this book, because unlike specific interest books, this book takes a broad overview of the theory and practice of hypnotherapy, examining a wide range of the most common hypnotherapy treatments and looking at these in detail.

And unlike script books, our approach recommends self-hypnosis *after* you've experienced a few sessions with a qualified hypnotherapist. Postponing self-hypnosis lets you understand the depth of trance properly before you try it on

yourself. A good hypnotherapist can address your specific needs more directly than a generic script gained from a book or an audiotape. Afterwards, you can approach self-hypnosis with the experience of deep trance.

In short, you need this book to ensure that your hypnotherapy experience is profoundly successful and positive!

How This Book Is Organised

The great thing about *For Dummies* books is that you don't have to read them all the way through. You can simply turn to the bit you're interested in and start at any point within a chapter, within a section, or even just go directly to a paragraph that interests you.

We divided the book into five parts, with each broken into chapters. The Table of Contents and the Index help you pinpoint information within the outline explained in the next sections.

Part I: Understanding Hypnotherapy

This section defines the terms used in hypnotherapy and what hypnosis can do for you. Here we also explain what hypnotic trance is and what it feels like.

We also describe the techniques a hypnotherapist has to choose from and exactly what you can expect to happen in a typical session. This knowledge lets you know how to set clear and realistic goals for your own hypnotherapy.

We provide practical and useful information to help you make hypnotherapy work best for you.

Part II: Considering How Hypnotherapy Can Help

Ever wondered how hypnotherapy affects the mind and the body? The chapters in this part describe how hypnotherapy can help you overcome unwanted habits and increase your feel-good factor.

We're not pretending to be magicians, but hypnotherapy can help with an impressive range of physical problems. But, just in case you think that hypnotherapy is a cure-all, we devote a chapter to letting you know what it can't accomplish.

Part III: Expanding the Reach of Hypnotherapy

This part focuses on the lesser known applications of hypnotherapy. You may be surprised to know that children are natural hypnotic subjects. The techniques involved in working with children are described here.

Hypnotherapy is also used to work with past-life regression. Whether or not you believe in past lives, this area can still be very powerful in uncovering unconscious themes in how you live now.

We also describe in detail how phobias can be removed through hypnotherapy.

Part IV: The Practical Stuff

This is the part of the book that can help you choose the right hypnotherapist or practice self-hypnosis.

Chapter 13 walks you through your initial session, telling you what to expect and how to prepare – don't worry, it's as easy as closing your eyes! And Chapter 15 introduces you to some of the other therapies you may come across, as you explore the world of hypnotherapy.

Part V: The Part of Tens

You can think of this part of the book as a 'Frequently Asked Questions' section. So you may want to start with these chapters to debunk common myths about hypnotherapy, survey the pioneers who made significant contributions to the field, discover the characteristics of a good hypnotherapist, or find out how to train to become a hypnotherapist yourself.

Appendix

Here we include some very useful books and Internet resources for hypnotherapy training courses and organisations – plus a sample Code of Ethics from the British Society of Clinical Hypnosis.

Icons Used in This Book



This book won't throw lots of questions at you, but it should certainly set you thinking. These icons highlight some of the points you may be thinking about.

Here you'll find anecdotes and examples to illustrate certain concepts, or true life stories we want to share with you.



This icon highlights hypnosis or hypnotherapy terms, or language, which may be unfamiliar to you.



The text next to this icon tries to correct possible wrong thinking or misconceptions.



This icon draws your attention to an important point to bear in mind.



When you see this icon we're trying to emphasise a bit of information that may be useful to you later on.



This icon is saying 'watch out!' This is something to be very aware of regarding the subject you're reading.

Where to Go from Here

You don't have to read this book from beginning to end. Each chapter of the book can be approached individually, depending on your interest. Have a look at the Table of Contents and jump right into any chapter that appeals to you.

If, for example, you wanted to know how hypnotherapy can help break habits like smoking, you could start reading this book by going straight to Chapter 5. On the other hand, if your interest is to understand how a hypnotherapist can help remove your phobias, then Chapter 11 is an excellent starting place.

The most important part is, that after reading this book, you're in an informed position to begin doing the work with a hypnotherapist, and can walk into your very first session with a great deal of confidence and certainty of success.

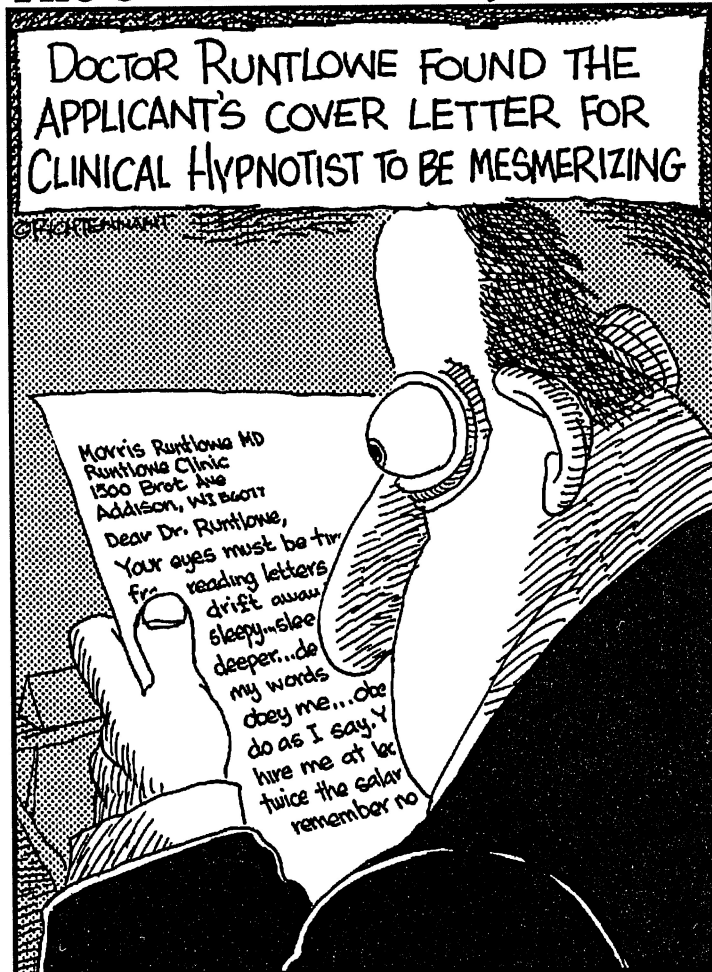
Good luck to you, and we wish you the best in finding the answers you're looking for.

Part I

Understanding Hypnotherapy

The 5th Wave

By Rich Tennant



In this part . . .

You find some helpful background information in this part to help you to understand how hypnotherapy works. This part also looks at the terms used in hypnotherapy, the basics of how it works, and what hypnotherapy is used for. You even find a very brief history of hypnosis and hypnotherapy included in this part.

If you want to know exactly what a hypnotherapist does, we describe the techniques and procedures used in a typical hypnotherapy session. In other words, this part is a great place to start if you're new to hypnotherapy.

Chapter 1

Examining Hypnotherapy

.....

In This Chapter

- ▶ Understanding the terms
 - ▶ Realising the evolution of hypnosis
 - ▶ Looking to hypnosis for help
 - ▶ Distinguishing the therapeutic aspects
-

Hypnosis is a powerful technique. It can help you change negative beliefs and achieve your goals, treat serious emotional problems, and alleviate a range of medical conditions.

You may hear about a work colleague who was cured of smoking in a single session, or a friend of a friend whose lifelong phobia was permanently removed by a hypnotherapist. A hypnotherapist can also show you how to practise self-hypnosis in order to achieve a seemingly infinite variety of personal goals.

This chapter explains what hypnosis and hypnotherapy are about. It gives you a clear understanding of what is involved, the difference between hypnosis and hypnotherapy, and some of the amazing benefits possible.

Getting to Grips with the Basics of Hypnotherapy

First things first. We want to reassure you right up front that hypnosis is safe.



Being hypnotised is not dissimilar to being sleepy or in a daydream. And, as we explain in the 'Sliding into trance' subsection, you've been in a trance probably every day of your life; hypnotherapy is simply a method of putting your trance state to work solving your problems.



Understand the techniques
of hypnotherapy and
put them into practice

Find a practitioner, set your goals, and get results

If you think hypnosis is just for stage tricks and party games, think again; this reassuring and responsible guide explains how hypnotherapy works and shows you how to use it to treat a wide range of problems. Whether you're seeking to overcome anxiety or depression, improve performance, lose weight, or beat an addiction, hypnotherapy can help you make the positive changes you need to achieve your goals.

Mike Bryant is a hypnotherapist, counsellor, and an expert in mental health. **Peter Mabbutt** is Director of Studies at the London College of Clinical Hypnosis.

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