

A Natural State of Mind

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by Julian Aloysius Leicester

Hypnosis has been frequently misunderstood and associated with the supernatural. Julian A. Leicester clears up the myths.

Hypnosis has long been associated with the strange and mysterious, with sideshows and faith healers. But the truth is that hypnosis isn't the least bit mysterious or supernatural. In fact, you are in a hypnotic state everyday. You don't notice it because it seems such a natural state of mind.

Everyone goes into a trance many times daily, but we don't usually call it hypnosis. All of us are sometimes so absorbed in thought - while reading a book, or driving the car to work - that we fail to notice what is happening around us. While we are zoned out, another level of consciousness, which we refer to as our 'subconscious mind', comes forward and takes over.

It has been proven that there is a mind-body link connection. Self-hypnosis is a method that allows you to access this connection for the purpose of helping yourself. All hypnosis is an altered state of relaxed consciousness, between wakefulness and sleep, where ideas are accepted by suggestion rather than by logical evaluation.

I use the term self-hypnosis because it is you who is placing yourself into this hypnotic state. It is important for you to remember that a trance state can be terminated by you at any time. It is your choice to enter the hypnotic state, and you can always choose to leave it.

If you were left in this state by a hypnotherapist or by your hypnotic tape, you would either return to full consciousness on your own or enter a natural sleep and awaken after a pleasant nap. Most Malaysians associate hypnosis with stage shows and think that it is perhaps mystical or dangerous. In the public imagination, a hypnotist is a man with piercing eyes and a pocket watch. He swings his watch, your eyes droop and you fall into a trance. He can then get you to do anything, including perhaps asking you to reveal your bank PIN number or your deepest secrets.

If you buy this myth, it's not just the media that's to blame. The truth is far more down to earth than the mythmakers would have you believe. Hypnosis is not black magic and has no religious connection. Some say it is more of a science. In fact, the opposite is true. It's a practical skill.

Hypnosis actually helps you gain more control of your own life. Some people are sceptical

about hypnosis and believe that you need to be gullible or weak-minded to be able to use hypnosis. This theory is also not true. People with above-average intelligence actually are better at using self-hypnosis techniques.

Self-hypnosis is one of the most powerful tools that you can use to accomplish your goals. In this new millennium, hypnosis is becoming a promising tool that can help society extensively in coping with daily stress-related issues. Cigarette smokers will be able to kick their habit overnight, weight gain can be controlled, people can learn to relax and live free from fear and phobias, get effective pain relief, etc.

Hypnosis is now being used in hospitals in western countries. It can be used to improve your general functioning because of its effect on the functioning of the mind and the body. Hypnosis is now slowly taking its proper place as a serious part of medical and social science.
- Julian A. Leicester

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