

Understanding Clinical Hypnotherapy

Hypnosis is a naturally occurring state of mind that each and every one of us makes use of on a regular basis.

Clinical Hypnosis as an intervention is a method of communication that utilizes a focused state of mind to present ideas or suggestions. In a state of concentrated attention, ideas and suggestions that are compatible with what the person wants seem to have a more powerful impact on the mind. With practice, suggestions can be presented to the self (self-hypnosis). In this state of mind, although we have not been taught to call it "trance", one's attention is narrowly focused and relatively free of distractions. All of us have been so absorbed in thought -while reading a book, driving to work- that we fail to notice what is happening around us. Other examples of trance states are daydreaming and some forms of meditation.

With clinical hypnosis, the therapist utilizes suggestions designed to help the client make use of internal processes (feelings, memories, images and internal self-talk). This can lead to symptom reduction and to better understand underlying motivations and identify whether past events or experiences are associated with causing a problem. Hypnosis avoids the critical censor of the conscious mind, which often defeats what we know to be in our best interests.

Myths and Misconceptions about Hypnosis

Clinical hypnosis is not the "entertainment" trances we see on television or performed as a stage act. Clinical hypnosis is a proven scientific method of helping a client achieve their goals in conjunction with other

established methods of helping. Some goals include stopping smoking, weight loss, relief from pain, stress, compulsions, obsessions, anxiety, and especially trauma. People change their minds and actions throughout their lives when exposed to appropriate information presented in a helpful way. A clinical hypnotherapist uses methods based on sound psychological principles to help repair and restore healthy levels of emotional and behavioral functioning. During trance, you are not powerless- you know exactly where you are and can adjust your position, sneeze, cough, and continue to function normally any time you wish. Trance is not sleep, although some people can get deeply relaxed.

There is no "right" way to experience trance. One person may experience trance as a restful feeling, while another as not very different from regular awareness. Everyone who is motivated to benefit from hypnosis can, and every person's experience of hypnosis is unique. Hypnosis cannot cause anyone to do something against his or her will or that contradicts his or her values. A hypnotic state is not the same thing as gullibility or weakness. Hypnosis is not something imposed on people, but something they do for themselves.

A clinical hypnotist simply serves as a facilitator to guide the process. A licensed therapist performing hypnosis is ethically required to make only those suggestions that support agreed-upon outcomes. As in choosing any health care professional, care should be exercised in selecting a hypnotherapist. We emphasize that we are not "hypnotists", which requires no training or certification, but licensed health care professionals who use hypnosis along with other tools of our profession.

We have been trained and certified by the American Society of Clinical Hypnosis, an internationally recognized organization with the highest standards for its practitioners.

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Montclair Health Associates offers a wide range of health services including psychotherapy, clinical hypnotherapy, nutritional, behavioral, diabetes & weight management counseling with offices in Montclair, Englewood, and Roseland, N.J. Weight management services for children and adults are provided through Y.E.S., Youths Eating Smart program- Julie Jaskiewicz, R.D., and Judy Amir, L.C.S.W., program managers. All hours and services are scheduled by appointment. Many insurances accepted.