

Client Factsheet: Hypnosis + CBT

(Cognitive Behavior Therapy – skills training)

The more you understand hypnotherapy and CBT, the more effective it is likely to be. If there are any points below which you don't agree with, or don't understand, please discuss them with me.

* Hypnosis is a special way of using various naturally-occurring psychological and physiological states. It's a collaborative process in which you allow yourself to follow along with the guidance of the hypnotherapist by using your imagination to evoke positive emotions and rehearse behavior change.

*Everyone can, in principle, be hypnotised. It has been shown to help if you relax, think positively, and imagine the things being suggested.

*Hypnotic "trance", so called, is simply an increased ability to respond to positive suggestions, usually accompanied by relaxed attention to the ideas being suggested.

*Hypnosis is definitely not a state of sleep or unconsciousness. Roughly 90% of people report being aware of everything that happens, and relaxation helps but is not essential to hypnosis.

*Hypnosis is definitely not a state of mind control. You cannot be made to do anything against your will. On the contrary, normally you must *want* to accept suggested ideas and *actively* imagine responding to experience their effects.

*Hypnosis is completely safe when used in a responsible and professional manner. Nobody has ever been "stuck" in hypnosis.

*Comedy stage hypnosis has very little to do with clinical hypnotherapy and has been shown to foster misconceptions which can prevent people from benefitting from treatment. Take what you see on television with a generous pinch of salt...

*Hypnotic suggestion is a means of experiencing certain helpful ideas at a level profound enough to directly influence our emotions and behavior.

*Psychological and emotional problems can be seen as the result of negative thinking, whereas hypnotherapy aims to encourage ("suggest") positive ideas which lead to improvement.

*Hypnotherapy, except for smoking cessation, usually requires more than one session. However, it is probably one of the briefest forms of psychological therapy, and in clinical studies the average number of sessions is 3-5. Hypnosis combined with principles of CBT and skills training has a substantial evidence-based foundation of quickly and effectively assisting clients toward achieving improvement and reaching their goals and desired outcomes.

*Hypnosis can help with an enormous range of different issues. Research tends to provide most support for its use in: Anxiety management, pain management, overcoming sleep disorders, improvement in low mood, management of stress and stress related illnesses, conquering habits such as nail-biting, smoking cigarettes, or for personal development in areas such as sports performance, public speaking or creativity as well as confidence and self esteem building .

*Thousands of positive experimental and clinical research studies on hypnosis and CBT have been published. It was recognised as an effective treatment by the British Medical Association (BMA) and American Medical Association (AMA) in the 1950's, and, since then and more recently, by the American Psychological Association (for overweight issues) and NICE guidance (for IBS) used by the NHS.

*Hypnosis and CBT are essentially simple, down-to-earth, and common-sense treatments. For example, by relaxing, thinking positively, and picturing your goals, hypnosis can help you to progressively improve your habitual feelings and behaviors. This, alongside CBT skills training, gives you tools in your toolbox to use for the rest of your life. This is empowering for clients to break the vicious cycles, overcome unhelpful thoughts, feelings and behaviors and lose the feeling of somehow being held back, or feeling stuck.