

# How to Use Hypnosis Effectively

## **Beginner's Guide:**

Unlock the Creative Power of Your Mind  
with Audio MP3 Downloads, and Make  
Positive Changes in Your Life,  
*Safely and Easily*



**Bob Collier**

# **How To Use Hypnosis Effectively**

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Unlock The Creative Power Of Your Mind With Audio MP3 Downloads  
And Make Positive Changes In Your Life Safely And Easily

by Bob Collier

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## **DISCLAIMER**

This guide provides information and advice on the subject of downloadable pre-recorded hypnosis sessions (hypnosis MP3s) based on research by and the personal experiences of the author. All the information contained in this guide is presented from an 'end user' perspective and should be regarded as such.

The author is not a qualified hypnotist or hypnotherapist. Nor is he a producer or provider of hypnosis MP3s.

The views expressed in this guide are solely those of the author and are not intended in any way to represent the views of professional hypnotists or hypnotherapists in general or any professional hypnotist or hypnotherapist in particular.

The author has made every effort in this guide to accurately represent hypnosis and hypnosis MP3s according to his own understanding and can make no guarantees with respect to the completeness of its contents. If you apply the ideas, suggestions and recommendations contained in this guide, you accept full responsibility for your actions.

Nothing in this guide is intended to replace common sense, or medical, legal, or other professional advice.

If you are in the slightest doubt whatsoever about any aspect of hypnosis or about the suitability of hypnosis MP3s for your personal circumstances, you must consult an appropriate professional before applying any of the ideas, suggestions or recommendations contained in this guide.

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# INTRODUCTION

## How This Guide Will Help You

Thanks to the “Digital Revolution”, many of the world’s best hypnotists and hypnotherapists are now recording sessions on MP3s and offering them to the general public on the internet. If you have an internet connection, you will be able to find a hypnotist or hypnotherapist, should you choose to do so, who will help you improve your life in whatever ways you desire without leaving the comfort of your own home *and* you will find that you only have to pay a fraction of the cost of a face-to-face session.

Perhaps one day people of all ages will routinely use hypnosis MP3s to help with every aspect of their lives. It’s as easy as putting in earphones, pressing the ‘play’ button and allowing a calm soothing voice to guide you into the most powerful state of mind you can be in for absorbing useful information, supportive advice or life changing ideas.

Hypnosis, however, is a controversial subject.

Many people are afraid of it. Most people don’t understand it. And, to be honest with you, even professional hypnotists and hypnotherapists can disagree, occasionally quite strongly, when attempting to explain hypnosis to the rest of us.

I want you to understand from the outset then (and I’ll be sure to reiterate this point) that I’m writing this from my perspective as an ‘end user’ of hypnosis MP3s for a number of years. And also, incidentally, as somebody who first encountered pre-recorded hypnosis sessions in the 1990s when they were cassette tapes and made all the mistakes and discovered all the problems that I’ve since corrected and solved and which I will tell you about in the pages that follow.

*How To Use Hypnosis Effectively* is not a guide to hypnosis itself.

You will find that I’ve done my best to explain hypnosis to you from my own personal understanding. I tell you what I know, both from experience and research, and *what I believe about hypnosis myself*. If you should wish to

explore the subject of hypnosis more fully, and I hope you will, I recommend that you do so through the hypnotist or hypnotherapist, or perhaps there will be more than one, whose work you come to particularly like and benefit from.

As we move toward that possibility, I want to emphasize an important distinction between hypnosis as we've seen it on stage, TV and more recently YouTube and the design of pre-recorded hypnosis sessions.

Whatever we might feel about swinging watches and Svengali-like caricatures or any of the other popular perceptions of hypnosis with which we're already familiar, it's my observation that there are *differences* between a face-to-face encounter with a hypnotist, or a hypnotherapist, and listening to a pre-recorded hypnosis session in the comfort of your own home – and those differences are advantageous once you've learned how hypnosis MP3s 'work' and how to find those that are a good match for who you are and what *you* want.

As in other areas of life, this is a matter of "due diligence". We would consider very carefully our choice of medical practitioner, legal representative, accountant, motor mechanic, and so on, and we're wise to take the same attitude toward the selection of a suitable hypnotist or hypnotherapist. It is, indeed, as important as choosing who we would invite to dinner.

*How To Use Hypnosis Effectively* will help you understand and maximize the benefits of using downloadable pre-recorded hypnosis sessions to make positive changes in your life and to feel comfortable and safe when using hypnosis MP3s *no matter what you believe about hypnosis right now.*

## Stage Hypnosis and Hypnotherapy

These days, more people are familiar with the use of hypnosis to improve or change the direction of our lives than ever before, but I think it's fair to say that most people still think of hypnosis as a form of entertainment.



There was a time when that was all I knew about hypnosis myself. My favorite was the guy practicing his “pick-up lines” on a yard broom under the impression he was talking to a sexy young lady. Awesome! How I laughed. Which, of course, was the general idea.

Hypnosis as entertainment comes in two forms these days. “Stage hypnosis” is the traditional form, it customarily takes place in a theater or TV studio and the hypnotic “subjects” are volunteers from the audience who, some might say, appear only too willing to do silly things. Depending on the showmanship of the hypnotist, there might be an appropriate embellishment or two, such as our legendary swinging watch or maybe a goatee beard and a swirling cape embroidered with signs of the zodiac.

“Street hypnosis” (sometimes referred to as “conversational hypnosis”) is a more recent development in which a wandering hypnotist will accost a seemingly random member of the public as they’re going about their business and persuade him or her to do silly things in a public place. How some of those hypnotists haven’t ended up in hospital is a mystery to me. Obviously they’re skilled enough to avoid that. Of course, it should be noted that the seemingly random member of the public has in reality been very carefully selected.

Street hypnosis does at least give us some clues to the real nature of “hypnosis”. For example, there’s simply no opportunity in street hypnosis for any of that “you are feeling sleepy” business. The hypnotic experience must out of necessity be created while the “subject” is wide awake. Hmm ... Very interesting and more on that later.

And then there’s “hypnotherapy”.

“Hypnotherapy” is the practice of hypnosis in a therapeutic setting. That is, or so the name implies, it’s used as a form of treatment.

By far the majority of producers of hypnosis MP3s are hypnotherapists.

However, many of the topics covered are not therapy. Not what I would call therapy anyway. For me, they would fall into the category of self-improvement or personal development. So “hypnotherapy” to my mind is a slightly misleading term. Nonetheless, both the use of hypnosis in therapy *and* the use of hypnosis for personal development come under the heading of “hypnotherapy” and we only need to be aware of that.

The *deliberate* use of hypnosis is properly called hypnotism, although that

distinction seems to be rarely made. Usually, the term “hypnosis” is applied to both the experience itself *and* the actions of creating the experience.

Whether practiced by a stage hypnotist, a street or conversational hypnotist, or a hypnotherapist, it's ALL hypnosis. Only the context changes.

# HYPNOSIS MP3s – A TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANTAGE

## Hypnotherapy Past, Present and Future

The history of hypnotherapy is fascinating but well beyond the scope of this guide. Here, however, are some interesting facts:

The use of hypnosis in treating psychological difficulties and for the management of pain in childbirth and surgery was approved by the British Medical Association as long ago as 1955. The BMA also at the time advised that all physicians and medical students should be given basic training in hypnosis.

In 1956, the Roman Catholic Church – which until then had explicitly banned the use of hypnosis – gave approval for its use in diagnosis and treatment by suitably qualified health care professionals.

In 1958, the American Medical Association approved the medical uses of hypnosis while encouraging further research.

In 1960, the American Psychological Association endorsed hypnosis as a branch of psychology.

It seems then that, while stage hypnotists have literally been in the limelight, hypnotherapists have been quietly and successfully working away in private practice for decades.

According to what I've read, the first pre-recorded hypnosis sessions were created and marketed in 1976 by American hypnotherapist Dick Sutphen. These were audio cassette tapes.

Cassette tapes were of course eventually superseded in the 1990s by compact discs (CDs). Many hypnotherapists still do produce pre-recorded hypnosis sessions on CDs for those who prefer that option.

Today, however, there's a digital technology that makes it easier than ever for hypnotherapists to offer their skills to the wider general public (and thus help even *more* people beyond the walls of their consulting rooms) and that technology is called an MP3.

MP3s can compress huge amounts of data into a much smaller size, so that it's now possible to transfer substantial and increasingly sophisticated pre-recorded hypnosis sessions from one computer to another via the internet. You're probably already familiar with using MP3s to listen to songs and music.

MP3s are easy to download, simple to use and are compatible with a wide variety of devices including Apple iTunes, Windows Media Player, RealPlayer, the iPod, Microsoft Zune and mobile smart phones.

## The Major Benefits of Hypnosis MP3s

There's no doubt that for some issues, particularly deep rooted issues, traditional face-to-face hypnotherapy will continue to be the best option. The ability of the hypnotherapist to interpret and be immediately responsive to verbal or non-verbal feedback from the client during the hypnotic experience can be crucial in some cases and this is not something that can be replicated in a pre-recorded hypnosis session.

In most cases, however, we don't necessarily need the personal attention of a skilled practitioner. We only need his or her *talents and expertise* to help us do something for ourselves, and that's when an appropriate and suitable hypnosis MP3 can be the perfect solution.

The great advantage of hypnosis MP3s for me is that they don't require me to learn new skills. For simplicity and ease of use, and for obtaining the biggest rewards for the least amount of effort, nothing has matched them. They really are as close as can be to having somebody else do all the work.

Perhaps for many people though the initial appeal of a digital pre-recorded hypnosis session would be one of the most *obvious* benefits – the cost.

My own survey of fees charged by more than 70 different hypnotherapists showed that the average cost of a single in-person face-to-face session was

\$156.

And so I've read, most hypnotherapists agree that most problems require between three and eight sessions to resolve. It could be inferred from those numbers that a typical course of 'live' sessions with a hypnotherapist might cost anywhere from about \$470 to more than \$1200.

However, when a hypnotherapist creates *a typical or comprehensive session* for each of the most common problems he or she encounters in private practice and offers those as recordings through the most affordable medium available, what's the cost of a session now?

For a single hypnosis MP3 I've paid as little as \$8.95 and up to \$19.95.

That's not a lot of financial commitment, is it?

Here are some of the other major benefits of hypnosis MP3s:

You're in control of the experience. You're in the comfort of your own home and you get to press the 'play' button if and when you choose.

You don't need to settle for the best hypnotherapist you can find locally – you can choose your hypnotherapist from amongst the best in the world.

You don't need to schedule your time to suit a local hypnotherapist or make the journey to his or her office with all the additional time that requires. You can listen to your hypnosis MP3s whenever and wherever it's convenient and suits you.

You gain *instant access* to your chosen hypnotherapist's talents and skills at the very moment you're inspired to create positive changes in your life. You can purchase your hypnosis MP3 instantly online, download it immediately, and be enjoying the benefits of listening to it within minutes.

You get unlimited use of the hypnotherapist's skills and expertise. You can listen to your hypnosis MP3s as many times as you need or want to and repeated sessions don't multiply the cost as subsequent sessions of face-to-face hypnotherapy do. In effect, you pay a small one-time fee for the first session and every session after that is free.

There are therapeutic ‘side effects’ from listening to hypnosis MP3s. In particular, you get to practice relaxing naturally. Many people have no idea how to relax naturally or even how to relax at all. Natural relaxation *also* helps to reduce stress, which, depending on who you read, contributes to somewhere between 75% and 99% of all physical illness.

Hypnosis MP3s offer confidentiality and privacy. You listen alone through headphones or earphones and nobody knows what you’re listening to except you. This can be helpful to people who are new to hypnosis, especially if you have around you in your life family and friends who are not supportive of your interest. Hypnosis MP3s are ideal for people who don’t want to share their issues with a real life hypnotherapist or with anyone else.

Hypnosis MP3s cover a wide range of topics and, as the ‘traditional’ topics are being expanded into more and more specific sub-topics and new topics are constantly being added, the opportunities increase for us to be more *precise* in our use of hypnosis MP3s and find the perfect match for who we are and what we want every time.

The best quality hypnosis MP3s are so good now that, once your eyes are closed, there’s probably little or no difference between listening to the hypnotherapist in the comfort of your own home and being in his or her consulting room.

Developments in digital technology are, in fact, making it possible to add features to a hypnotic recording above and beyond what would normally be experienced in ‘live’ face-to-face hypnotherapy and some producers of hypnosis MP3s are experimenting now with just how useful that opportunity can be.

## Developing the Hypnosis Habit

Repetition is an important aspect of all pre-recorded hypnosis sessions. By being consistent *and* persistent we can achieve our desired outcomes and all that requires is the establishment of a listening habit.

Most hypnosis MP3s are stand-alone single sessions that can be listened to

every day if they're goal related (until the goal is achieved) or otherwise as you feel necessary.

Some hypnosis products have multiple sessions. For example, there might be an introductory session to familiarize the listener with the hypnotic experience (which you normally only need to listen to once) plus the main hypnosis session on the topic of interest and perhaps an alternative version of that or a second session on the same topic.

Other hypnosis products are more like a *course* of MP3s, some of which are hypnosis sessions and some of which are audios containing relevant information and advice to be listened to when 'wide awake'. I generally refer to these as "programs". Usually they relate to major areas of change such as weight management or quitting smoking where additional psychological support can often be needed.

In the case of both the multiple-session hypnosis products and the hypnosis programs, the hypnotherapist will usually provide you with instructions or advice about how and when to listen to the individual MP3s.

There are also what are commonly referred to as "bundles". These are single hypnosis sessions with related topics offered together at a discount price. For example, there might be a "Health & Fitness" bundle of, say, six hypnosis sessions with topics like healthy cooking, slim body image, or whatever it might be, and the price will be less than if you bought each session separately.

Again, the hypnotherapist will usually provide instructions or advice on how and when to listen to the individual MP3s.

In my experience, there's no advantage in listening to the same hypnosis session more than once a day.

## Getting Results

The question of how long it will take to achieve a desired result from using a hypnosis MP3 is I think almost impossible to answer. Or, at least, there may not be a single answer.

Is it *possible* to achieve a desired outcome in a single hypnosis session?

Yes it is, if what we want involves only a change in our *perception*. For example, I use hypnosis MP3s for creative problem solving, for breaking out of circular thinking, for reducing stress and other similar purposes and, in those cases, I will normally use a specific MP3 *once only* at the time it's needed. Hypnosis is excellent for those kinds of situations.

If our interest is in changing habits of behavior, however, that requires a different level of use.

I see numbers quoted for how long it takes to change a habit (or, to be more accurate, to replace an old habit with a new habit) and they can seem quite arbitrary – it'll take 21 days, or 28 days, or even 90 days, for example. Perhaps, when the degree of change required is greater, it simply takes as long as it takes.

In my own experience of developing new habits, there are usually too many factors in play to make an accurate prediction.

For example, is the behavior I want to change deeply ingrained from my childhood or is it just a “bad” habit I've picked up in my adult years that I'd like to get rid of?

Am I using a hypnosis MP3 on its own, or am I using it in conjunction with another personal development technique or with other lifestyle changes?

Are you genuinely motivated to achieve the outcome you say you want, or are you trying to please somebody else?

It's important I think to make a distinction between getting results and creating change.

Change starts from the moment you *decide* to change and change can be happening even when we think it isn't, so there's no need to feel disappointed when, as occasionally happens, a hypnosis session doesn't seem to have made any difference at all.

There are times when I've listened to a new hypnosis MP3 myself and needed two or three sessions before I even start to become aware of new ideas about the topic of interest, and that may be perfectly normal.

Appropriate responses to a hypnotherapist's suggestions can be occurring *initially* at an unconscious level.



Change can be instantaneous *and* it may take a few days to achieve the *result* you desire, or a week, or a month, or perhaps longer. It depends on what the desired result is.

In the meantime, notice what you notice. Clues that your unconscious mind is moving you toward the desired outcome will emerge, so be alert for even the smallest things that you're doing differently.

As powerful as hypnosis MP3s can be, I think that, beyond those situations which do require only a change in our perception, "instant success" is an unreasonable expectation of the technology. For developing new habits and more advanced uses of hypnosis generally, repetition of a pre-recorded hypnosis session is probably always necessary, so anticipate that it will be the case, and some issues of course do need more repetition than others anyway.

Often, and depending on the MP3 you're listening to, a time period *within which* you can expect to obtain the results you desire will be suggested to you by the hypnotherapist and that's always a good thing to watch out for and to be reassured by.

## Visualization

Mental imagery is often described as the language of the unconscious mind and the better we're able to visualize during hypnosis the more powerful will be our experience and the greater the effects on our thinking, our emotions and our consequent behavior.

Normally, as we go about the activities of our daily lives, we're in an alert outwardly focused state of mind and hardly notice our mental imagery, if at all. This can be an issue when we're new to being hypnotized and find that our ability to visualize is not well developed.

Effective visualization is, in my view, an acquired skill, and something perhaps that most people may need to work on and improve. However, in my experience, improvements *will* happen naturally through regular practice.

We can also experience the so called "imaginary" with all five of our physical senses. So when we think of things generally or we're being asked to think of something in particular, as in hypnosis, a sense other than our sense of sight

may be dominant. Sounds and smells, for example, can in many cases be more evocative of an “imaginary” experience than what we would see.

If visualizing seems to be a problem for you, trust that with practice and repetition your imagery *will* become more powerful and that, even when your mental pictures are not clear, a *sense* of what you’re being asked to think about will be good enough.

## Multiple Projects

Don’t try to change everything in your life at once.

That’s a huge mistake. I’ve been there. You can end up wasting a lot of energy on making changes that are barely more than superficial.

It’s a much better idea to be focused and patient. By all means have an idea in mind of your ‘ultimate’ lifestyle. At the same time, make a little progress every day and a year from now ... who knows? Five years from now? You might be amazed. Enjoy the journey with baby steps and continuous forward movement.

It may help to prioritize the positive changes you want to make in your life, then start with whatever is most urgent or important to you right now.

In my experience, the number of projects hypnosis can be helping you with at the same time will be governed by the *opportunities* you have in your daily life for listening to your hypnosis MP3s.

Even in ideal circumstances, it may be unwise to listen to more than three different hypnosis MP3s each day, because if you try for more than that you *will* start to lose focus.

The hypnosis MP3s you listen to need not be from the same hypnotherapist. You, like me, may find one particular hypnotherapist whose work is most suited to you generally, and then there are occasions when he or she doesn’t offer exactly what you’re looking for and you need to work with another hypnotherapist who does.

If you’re listening to more than one hypnosis MP3 a day, it’s not a good idea in my experience to listen to them consecutively, even when the topics are

complementary. If you're working with two or three hypnosis MP3s, they're better listened to in two or three *separate* periods of time. If you only have enough space in your day to devote one period of time to your hypnosis MP3s and you are working with more than one, take a break of at least five minutes after a session to allow your thoughts to settle before you begin the next session.

# HOW TO FIND THE HYPNOSIS MP3s THAT ARE RIGHT FOR YOU

## Start With the End in Mind

There's no 100% fool-proof method of selecting the right hypnotherapist, any more than there's a guaranteed way to select the right medical practitioner, legal representative, accountant, or motor mechanic.

It's a matter of discovering probabilities and proceeding from there.

We're all unique and individual and that means that what's right for me, or for anybody else, might not be right for you. Just as with the people we invite to dinner in our home, it's a very personal choice.

It's a good idea I think when you begin to look for a suitable hypnotherapist to not be looking in a sense of wondering what it would be like to try a hypnosis MP3 but looking with already a purpose in mind. By that, I mean not necessarily that you've set a goal so much as you've decided what general area of your life you want a hypnotherapist to help you with.

Some hypnotherapists cover a wide range of topics, and some do specialize more.

Our unconscious minds also are very *literal* in how they process information. It's usually helpful if we can define as exactly as possible what it is we want before we start looking or we may find that we're unconsciously led to something else.

For example, if you're overweight and wish to not be overweight, what exactly is it you want instead? Do you want to lose weight, or do you want to become slimmer? Do you want to be slender or do you want to be thin?

These might appear to be different ways of achieving the same outcome, but they're not. Different words generate different associations in our minds that may be supportive or they may slow our progress.

Do you want to increase your income or make more money? Perhaps you want

to *earn* more money. Do you want to be prosperous, affluent, wealthy, or rich?

Being precise about our desired outcome is a crucial part of the process of matching what we want to what a particular hypnotherapist is offering. We can think about what we want in very different ways and so can the producers of hypnosis MP3s.

## Try Before You Buy

A reputable hypnotherapist will, in my experience, always offer you an opportunity to judge their work without you having to spend any money.

Occasionally, this could mean a sample excerpt from one of their programs. More usually, it will be a purpose-made MP3 that will give the listener a taste of the hypnotherapist's style and methodology and, if you're new to hypnosis, an experience of what it's like to be hypnotized.

Often you'll need to subscribe to an email newsletter ("e-zine") to get your free MP3, and this will allow the hypnotherapist to periodically give you more free information about hypnosis (and also remind you of his or her commercial offerings). You can always unsubscribe from the e-zine at any time.

Something I recommend you consider doing is to always listen to a new hypnosis MP3 for the first time with your eyes open and with a critical ear.

This is especially important if the hypnotherapist is new to you. It will give you some idea of what to expect when you listen to the MP3 'for real', and it will also give you the opportunity to note anything you don't understand and which you might wish to consult the hypnotherapist about.

Most hypnotherapists do usually keep their way of leading you into hypnosis and bringing you out of hypnosis the same or similar on all of their pre-recorded sessions – it's only the 'middle third' relevant to the specific topic of interest that's different each time; so in the case of a hypnotherapist whose work I'm already familiar with, I usually only run through that core part of the session once just in case there's something on this occasion that I'm not sure about.

If any hypnotherapist you're interested in *doesn't* offer you a free trial of their work, move on. That's what I would do anyway.

## Credentials

Whenever you have an opportunity to do so, search on the internet for an article entitled, “Credentialing: It May Not Be the Cat's Meow”.

It's a fascinating (and somewhat alarming) read – a cautionary tale about the adventures of American psychologist Dr. Steve Eichel and “Zoe D. Katze”, a certified hypnotherapist who also happens to be Dr. Eichel's *cat*.

Hypnotherapy, unfortunately, is a largely unregulated profession. And so it seems, practically anybody can learn the basics of hypnosis, buy a certification, set themselves up in business and there they are in the Yellow Pages under H for Hypnotherapists. Or as likely these days, there they are on the world wide web.

It would be wise then not to make assumptions about the letters we see after a hypnotherapist's name. They could indeed mean something important or they could mean nothing.

To be honest, I've never really understood what the letters after a hypnotherapist's name mean, so what I do is look for other kinds of information when I'm visiting a hypnotherapist's website for the first time.

I usually read the “bio” or “about” page first, because I'm interested in finding out who the person behind the website is, and I look in particular for details of their training.

I want to know if the hypnotherapist was already experienced in treating individual clients in private practice *before* they started producing MP3s, and how long he or she has been practicing hypnotherapy.

I look for any testimonials and read those.

I look for an FAQ page and read that. I want to see a balanced view of hypnosis, including an acknowledgement of its limitations and those aspects of deliberately applied hypnosis about which we need to be cautious. Information not hype, in other words.

I search the internet for any articles the hypnotherapist has written and read at least a few samples of those. Can he or she write at length and knowledgeably about hypnosis?

If those criteria have been met and I get a sense that the hypnotherapist is somebody who knows what they're doing, then I sign up for the free MP3.

## Personality

If we're considering a hypnotherapist who does seem to have meaningful qualifications, who is experienced with one-to-one clients in private practice, whose skills have been appreciated by others, and who can write knowledgeably about hypnosis, then we're ready for the big question. Do I like this person?

Is this somebody I think I would get along with in real life? Is this somebody I would be happy to invite to dinner in my home and whose company I would probably enjoy?

If the hypnotherapist has a blog, and especially if they like to share on their blog at least some aspects of their private life, that's a great place to go for further information. If they have a YouTube channel, even better. You can get useful ideas from watching their videos that will tell you a lot about who they are as a person. And it's worth remembering too that the more open a hypnotherapist is about who they are, the more trustworthy they're likely to be.

The internet provides an unprecedented and *invaluable* resource for discovering what we need to know before we make any commitment at all. I used to listen to pre-recorded hypnosis sessions without having a clue about the person I was listening to. We must be a lot wiser before the event than that and, these days, we can be.

## Music and Other Features

A voice we like to hear is a very personal thing, and it can be a big factor in the decision making process.

There are hypnosis MP3s that don't have any features *apart from* the voice of the hypnotherapist. Given the possibilities of modern recording technology, that might seem a little old fashioned, but when it's done well it's very effective.

Most hypnosis MP3s have a music track to help relax the listener into the hypnotic experience. Occasionally the music might be a factor in our decision making if it's not to our taste, but in my experience the music used on hypnosis MP3s is generally well chosen and not a major concern.

Some hypnosis MP3s include what are known as "binaural beats".

Binaural beats are sound frequencies that are used to slow down the listener's brain waves and help develop a deeper level of relaxation more easily.

This is fairly new technology and a matter of what you're comfortable with. Some hypnotherapists are now producing an alternative version of their MP3s with binaural beats added.

## Direct vs. Indirect Hypnosis

Direct hypnosis is the traditional form of hypnosis and is based on the idea that the hypnotherapist holds a position of authority over the client. Suggestions given to the client in "direct" or traditional hypnosis are prescribed by the hypnotherapist and usually take the form of a command.

Indirect hypnosis emerged from the therapeutic work of an American psychiatrist by the name of Milton Erickson. In the 1950s and 60s, he developed a style of hypnotherapy which encouraged the client to experience hypnosis in his or her own way.

As Milton Erickson himself reportedly said, "There are no two people alike. No two people who understand the *same* sentence in the same way, and so in dealing with people you try not to fit them to *your* concept of what they should be. You should try to discover what *their* concept of themselves happens to be."

A suggestion made during the hypnotic experience when using *direct* hypnosis might be, for example, an affirmation such as, "You are now more confident



when meeting new people”. A comparable suggestion made when using *indirect* hypnosis might be something along the lines of, “I wonder if you are beginning to think now of ways you can feel comfortable and confident when meeting somebody for the first time.”

Both forms of hypnosis can be effective. Indirect hypnosis, however, is generally regarded as more respectful of the listener’s unique perception of reality and more supportive of his or her ability to discover an individualized outcome.

Though Milton Erickson’s exact methodology was all his own, his general way of doing things has been copied by many modern hypnotherapists. Indirect hypnosis is, in fact, often referred to as “Ericksonian” hypnosis.

## Session Lengths

If you’re busy with many things in your life that you *must* attend to, my suggestion would be to plan for one hypnosis session as often as possible, preferably each day, and to find an appropriate and suitable session that’s as short as possible.

Mostly, you’ll find the shortest sessions are 15–20 minutes in length and that’s generally sufficient time for an effective hypnotic experience.

Anything around 30 minutes is probably a good fit for most people’s lifestyles.

Some hypnosis MP3s are 45–60 minutes long. If the topic is an important one and your current lifestyle allows you to accommodate a longer hypnosis session, that’s something that can be considered.

Essentially, what I would recommend is that you work backwards from whatever time and space you *do* have in your everyday life and look for the best (for you) hypnosis MP3s available that will fit into that time slot.

# THE HYPNOTIC EXPERIENCE

## Can You Be Hypnotized?

Scientific studies, depending on which study you read about, suggest that between 80% and 95% of people can be *deliberately and systematically led into a hypnotic experience* by a skilled practitioner.

This is usually referred to as “hypnotizability”

There are numerous factors that may affect a person’s “hypnotizability”, for example, their age, personality, core values and so on, but which factors come into play in any specific situation is practically impossible to predict.

About 10% of people apparently can be hypnotized especially deeply. These are the people stage hypnotists look for when selecting participants in their shows.

One of the (many) misconceptions about hypnosis is that only weak minded people can be hypnotized.

According to research, however, there’s actually a correlation between “hypnotizability” and intelligence. Generally speaking, the more intelligent you are the easier you are to hypnotize. People who can maintain concentration for longer periods and who have a creative imagination, not surprisingly, make the best “subjects”.

Whatever a person’s level of “hypnotizability”, it will deepen naturally with practice.

The most difficult person to hypnotize, you may be pleased to know, is *anybody who doesn’t want to be hypnotized*.

Despite what some stage and street hypnotists might prefer you to believe (perhaps to protect the mystique of their trade) resisting hypnosis is actually quite easy.

## Addressing Concerns

Possibly *the number one concern* about hypnosis (or hypnotism, to be more accurate) is that it will mess with our minds and turn us into unthinking zombies who will be at the mercy of the hypnotist and his (or her) evil plans for world domination.

The good news is, we're nowhere near being in that ballpark (that is, if such a ballpark actually existed). Our interest is in cute fluffy hypnosis MP3s produced by perfectly sensible qualified professionals who are here to help. Most importantly, they're here to help by our invitation only.

You simply *won't be asked* to do anything you don't want to do. You won't be asked to embarrass yourself, or go against your moral code, or reveal your secrets, or anything like that.

When hypnosis is used for entertainment purposes, the hypnotist *alone* establishes and masterminds the conditions in which hypnosis will occur. Hypnotherapy is quintessentially hypnosis *by mutual consent*. We choose if we want to be hypnotized or not and if we don't want to be hypnotized, we won't be.

It's hypnosis in a different environment altogether. And, of course, with hypnosis MP3s, that environment is the comfort of your own home.

You won't be asleep or unconscious when you're in hypnosis. There would be no point in you being hypnotized if you were because you wouldn't hear the hypnotherapist's instructions.

You'll be less aware of your external surroundings and more aware of what's going on inside your head but you'll still be aware.

You won't get stuck in hypnosis and be unable to wake up.

If you fall asleep during your hypnosis session, all that will happen is that you'll sleep for a while and wake up in the normal and natural way.

There's no evidence that hypnosis presents any psychological or emotional danger.

Hypnosis in itself, that is.

Hypnosis is not intrinsically either a good thing or a bad thing. It's how it's applied that can be good or bad and that's where we sometimes do need to question motives or make judgments on intent or ability.

You *can* be harmed by hypnotists or hypnotherapists who are *incompetent* and they do exist.

Never listen to a hypnosis session when driving a vehicle, operating machinery, or in any situation that requires your complete attention.

Some religious organizations – for example, Seventh Day Adventists and some Christian Scientist groups – don't approve of the use of hypnosis. If you're in any doubt whatsoever in that regard, please consult an appropriate senior member of your religion.

There are certain medical conditions which make it unwise to use hypnosis – epilepsy and schizophrenia in particular. Hypnosis is not suitable for anyone suffering from dementia or from a neurological dysfunction. If you suffer from a medical condition and are concerned about whether or not you can use hypnosis, you *must* consult an appropriate medical professional first.

Hypnosis is not suitable for very young children, anyone under the influence of drugs or alcohol, or anyone who is 'intellectually challenged'.

Hypnosis should not be used for pain management unless an appropriate medical professional has first been consulted to determine the underlying physical cause.

## Different Ways of Going into Hypnosis

Hypnotists and hypnotherapists all have their favorite ways of creating a hypnotic experience. This process is called an "induction".

Inductions used by stage hypnotists tend to be brief and somewhat intense, whilst hypnotherapists typically employ a gentler gradual relaxation of the body and mind.

The longer forms of gradual relaxation can be quite detailed and elaborate – and they can be very creative and maybe even entertaining as well. You might perhaps be asked to imagine walking down a flight of steps as you go “deeper and deeper”, you might be asked to imagine that your arms and legs are melting like candle wax as your muscles relax, you might be asked to imagine the colors of the rainbow in turn as your attention turns inward. These are ways of engaging your creativity to assist with the relaxation process and there are hypnotherapists who are particularly good at this form of induction.

Shorter forms of gradual relaxation can be quite straightforward and they can sometimes be based on an assumption that you already have some idea of how to relax your body. There might be, for example, only a simple countdown from maybe one hundred, or fifty, or twenty to one and very generalized suggestions to relax our muscles from top to bottom or bottom to top (usually it’s the latter, but not always). Occasionally, you’ll find a hypnotherapist who counts down to zero rather than one, but it’s most commonly from a higher number down to one.

Some hypnotherapists will give you quite a lot of information in the induction process about what you might expect to happen as you go into the hypnotic experience and some will simply take you through the mechanics of relaxation and allow you to discover the effects for yourself.

The three areas that hypnotherapists will invariably focus on relaxing when leading us into hypnosis are our eyelids, our breathing, and our muscles. Sometimes, the focus will be on one of those in particular, often all three will be attended to at some stage in the process.

When you’re listening through earphones or headphones as recommended, you’ll usually find that the sound of the hypnotherapist’s voice is centered in your head. There are some hypnosis MP3s where the voice will continually move across from one side of your head to the other (normally left to right, which is how the passage of time is customarily represented in “western” culture). I did listen to one hypnosis MP3 that had the hypnotherapist’s voice moving around all over the place inside my head and I have to say I found that rather disconcerting.

Some hypnotherapists use what’s called a “double” induction. There are two voice tracks, one that you can hear in your left ear and the other in your right ear.

It’s the same voice but saying different things and there’s generally a lot of overlap between the two inductions so that it becomes impossible to follow both

of them at the same time.

My own experience of double inductions is that I find myself either listening to passages of one or the other tracks alternately or I'm thinking about something else altogether. I'm told that the double induction is intended in fact to encourage our conscious awareness to wander off so that the hypnotherapist can more easily connect with our unconscious mind. Our unconscious mind can absorb both tracks perfectly well (it does, after all, absorb thousands of bits of information from our environment every day that we never consciously notice).

## What Being Hypnotized Feels Like

Hypnotists and hypnotherapists seem to agree that there's no typical hypnotized feeling. We're all unique and individual and our experience of hypnosis will reflect this. So you won't need to wonder, "Am I doing this right?". There's no 'right' way to be in hypnosis. Only your way.

I read somewhere that the *reason* hypnotherapists use gradual relaxation is because one of the signs of hypnosis is that our brainwaves have slowed down and this is something that also happens when we drift off to sleep. So, putting two and two together, if we relax as if we're drifting off to sleep, we'll go into hypnosis. That, supposedly, was the thinking.

I don't know if that's true or just a story. In any event, it's my personal view that wrapping the process of entering hypnosis inside a gradual relaxation of the body and mind is not only a kind and respectful thing to do, especially for anybody who's apprehensive about being hypnotized, it's also, as I mentioned earlier, enormously beneficial simply because it's the *practice* of relaxing naturally and reducing stress.

Because we're engaging our unconscious mind during hypnosis, we can also learn to control many of our "autonomic" functions such as our heart beat and blood pressure.

The reason why we're asked to close our eyes in hypnotherapy is not necessarily because of the association with drifting off to sleep but to minimize sensory input from our physical surroundings, about 85% of which enters our brain through our sense of sight. Having our eyes closed makes it easier for us to internalize our attention, which is what takes us into hypnosis.

In a hypnosis session then, my eyes will be closed and there will typically be a feeling of becoming physically relaxed, and as I become more and more relaxed I will generally become less aware of my external environment and more aware of what's going on inside my head.

I usually become very aware of my breathing as I go through the process of relaxation and it becomes more even. Sometimes, depending on which MP3 I'm listening to, I will be directed to focus my attention on my breathing, other times I notice it anyway.

I become very aware of the stillness of my body. Sometimes it seems to be like a heavy melting kind of stillness, sometimes it's a light floaty kind of stillness. Again, depending on the MP3, it will sometimes be suggested to me which of those I can expect it to be, other times it's whichever happens.

I usually become acutely aware of the hypnotherapist's voice. It seems to come to the forefront of my awareness and everything else happening inside my head seems to be somehow in the background even if it's what I'm actually paying attention to. It's a little difficult to put that experience into words. I usually have a sense that, *whatever* I'm paying attention to, I'm *hearing* the hypnotherapist's voice even when I'm not actually listening to it.

It's not necessary, however, to pay attention to exactly what the hypnotherapist is saying to us. If our ears are open, and they are, communication of some kind with our unconscious mind will be happening. Your unconscious will be following and responding to the hypnotherapist's suggestions even if your conscious attention is on other things.

At some point, as my awareness internalizes, my imagination starts to flow of its own volition and where I am physically fades away and I'm hypnotized.

I've never felt "spaced out" or "trippy" in any of the hundreds of hypnosis sessions I've experienced. What it feels like for me is simply that I'm "inside my head".

My experience of different individual hypnosis sessions *can* vary and even on different occasions that I listen to the same session. Sometimes I'll have only a kind of general overview of my mental imagery, or any other mental sensations, sometimes I notice very specific details very clearly, and I can't say that any of it is predictable. Sometimes my mental imagery seems very relevant to the topic of interest and other times it seems to not be related to it at all. But maybe it is and I don't realize it. It could be said I think that our unconscious mind

doesn't process information in quite the same way as our conscious wide awake mind does.

I've had hypnosis sessions where I've become emotional during the hypnotic process, either shed tears or burst out laughing, for example. This is an indication that the experience is taking me somewhere in my unconscious mind where I wouldn't otherwise be able to go if I had to rely on my own logical conscious mind. That's good. It's why I've invited the hypnotherapist to guide my thoughts on that particular topic in the first place. I've always found it a releasing experience.

Hypnotherapy doesn't necessarily require an intense experience to be beneficial. And it's not something that requires brow furrowing concentration. I have had sessions when I feel especially engaged with everything that's happening. Most times, I'm in a kind of idle watchfulness.

I've seen the hypnotic experience described as "like a guided meditation" and that seems to me from my own experiences to be a fairly accurate perception.

It's apparently common for a hypnotized person to lose track of time and this happens to me too. As far as our unconscious mind is concerned, the concept of "time" is meaningless. "Everything is now", as the saying goes. We could be in hypnosis for half an hour and it feels like five minutes. Or the other way around.

Often people report when they come out of hypnosis that they didn't feel they were ever in hypnosis, and I have felt like that myself occasionally.

Some hypnotherapists use what are called "convincers" during the hypnotic experience for that reason. A convincer, for example, might be to suggest at some point that you feel a cool breeze on your face and it makes you shiver and if you do *physically* shiver, you're hypnotized.

What people remember of a hypnosis session seems to vary too. I've had occasions when I haven't remembered much at all afterwards and other occasions when I've remembered most of the experience. Usually I don't remember all of it and I think that's to do with my attention wandering around the different aspects of the experience at different stages. As it's free to do.

That's how being hypnotized has felt to me. It may be different for you. We're all unique and individual and our experience of hypnosis will reflect this.



## Different Ways of Coming Out of Hypnosis

When the purpose of the hypnosis session has been accomplished, the hypnotherapist will guide you back to a full and alert awareness of your physical surroundings.

Usually this is done by counting up, most commonly from one to five, sometimes from one to ten. Often the hypnotherapist will suggest to you in the process of counting what you might expect to happen as you return to your normal outwardly focused state of mind. Perhaps they will take the opportunity to give you some generally worded positive affirmations.

Occasionally, a hypnotherapist will count you out of hypnosis by counting from a higher number to a lower number – for example, from five to one – which seems to me a totally contrary idea, but it does happen. As with the occasions when a hypnotherapist will relax our muscles from top to bottom rather than bottom to top, it seems there are popular ways of doing things rather than any universally accepted protocol.

Every experienced hypnotist and hypnotherapist will usually have evolved their own style and preferred methodology. Some like the hypnotic experience to be a reasonably accurate reflection of life in the physical world (only more adventurous perhaps), some like to encourage the mind's ability to fantasize and explore worlds that can only exist inside the head, and some are anywhere in between. It's a matter of us being comfortable with the relationship between how a particular hypnotherapist likes to operate and our own preferences and what suits us.

I've found, by the way, that it's a good idea to remain at rest for a few minutes after a hypnosis session to re-orient yourself before you get up and go on to other things. Maybe take a few deep breaths and have a good stretch.

## An Ideal Hypnosis Session

The components of an ideal hypnosis session are pretty straightforward, but it's well to remember I think that an ideal hypnosis session is exactly that – an “ideal”. In practice, things don't always go according to our plans.

But it can be very useful to have a ‘best case’ scenario to aspire to.

So. Here’s my view of an ideal hypnosis session:

1. You’ve decided on the purpose of the hypnosis session.
2. You listen to your hypnosis MP3 at the same time every day for as long as you need to. Earlier in the day is better in my experience.
3. You’re somewhere on your own where you *know* you won’t be disturbed for the duration of the hypnosis session (which I measure myself as the length of the hypnosis MP3 plus five minutes).
4. You’re wearing loose fitting clothes made of soft fabric. And you’ve remembered to use the bathroom!
5. You’re lying or sitting down in a comfortable position. You have your arms by your sides if you’re lying down and away from your body with your fingers separated. Your legs are uncrossed and, if you’re sitting down, your feet are flat on the floor. If you’re sitting in a chair, you’re resting your arms on the arm rests, or resting your hands in your lap so that your hands and fingers are not touching each other. These are ways of minimizing sensory input, thereby assisting your ability to detach from your physical surroundings.
6. You’re following the hypnotherapist’s instructions and you *know* you’re listening to the voice of somebody you trust.

In the beginning it helps to get as close to the ideal as possible, and to be as consistent as possible, almost ritualistic if you like, as you establish the ‘hypnosis habit’.

A bedroom is an obvious location to be but it’s not always the best for daytime hypnosis because of its association with sleeping. There are hypnosis sessions you can buy which are specifically designed for listening to at night as you drift off to sleep in the normal way, but when listening to a hypnosis MP3 during the daytime you need to avoid falling asleep.

If you discover that you do tend to fall asleep when lying down on your bed while listening to a hypnosis MP3 during the day, you could sit on a chair in the bedroom rather than lie down. You might prefer to not be in the bedroom at all and sit in a comfortable chair in another room if you have one available to you.

Make sure the room you're in is warm enough but not hot.

If other people you live with are home when you want to have a hypnosis session, let them know that you're going to disappear for a while and you want them to respect your privacy. Lock the door of the room you're in if you can. If the door's locked and somebody does interrupt your session by trying to open it, those sounds will alert you.

Some hypnotherapists will include in the process of leading you into a hypnotic experience specific instructions for coming out of hypnosis if and when *you* want to do so. It will usually be something along the lines of, "If, at any time, you want to come out of hypnosis, all you need to do is count up from one to five, say the words "wide awake", and open your eyes." That idea or some variation of it.

If the hypnotherapist doesn't include such an instruction, I think it's a good idea in the beginning to include it yourself for your reassurance. As your body is starting to relax, say out loud, or quietly to yourself, something like, "I can come out of hypnosis whenever I want to by counting up from one to five ..." and so on. Do that each time until you're familiar with the hypnotic experience and don't need to say it – by then you'll just *know* you can.

Utilize whatever 'counting up' process you decide upon if it ever should happen that your hypnosis session is interrupted either by somebody attempting to open a locked door or walking in on you unannounced. The preference however is always to be sure that your privacy is respected by other people.

Never leave a baby, toddler or young child unattended. Not ever. If you have children, organize your hypnosis session so that everybody not only feels safe but also *is* safe.

If you do have a baby in the house to attend to, small children generally, I certainly wouldn't attempt more than one hypnosis session each day. And perhaps even then you sometimes still might need to *create* your opportunities and be content with listening as frequently as possible rather than every day.

Don't start a hypnosis session if you're angry or in a particularly excited mood.

Calm down first. It's helpful before a hypnosis session anyway to take a few deep breaths and make sure your headphones or the buds of your earphones are comfortable and wires to your MP3 player are away from your face before pressing the 'play' button.

Sometimes, a hypnotherapist will recommend closing the curtains or blinds to darken the room you're in. I've been consistently *inconsistent* with that idea myself, to be honest. Occasionally, it feels like something that would help at the time (particularly if it's a bright sunny day and the sunshine is actually coming in through the window), mostly I find it unnecessary. It's really up to you.

If you want to use an aroma or scent to assist in creating a relaxed atmosphere, that can be helpful. *Anything* you would normally do that you associate with feeling comfortable and safe and relaxed could be helpful too, whatever that might be.

Some hypnotherapists like to suggest as you're relaxing that you create an ideal setting for the hypnotic experience in your mind – to imagine yourself perhaps lazing on a beach or meditating in a country garden or being in any place that seems to you a haven of tranquility; either a place you know of in real life or one entirely made up. This exercise can be particularly helpful for deepening the relaxation of body and mind when actual conditions are less than ideal.

Though I always have the hypnosis MP3s I'm currently using myself on a *portable* listening device, and I have had hypnosis sessions when I've been away from home – in a hotel room, for example – my personal ideal is to listen to my hypnosis MP3s in the comfort of my own home where I feel most relaxed to begin with, and I would suggest that you at least begin by regarding hypnosis MP3s as something you listen to at home.

## What Hypnosis Can Help You Achieve

Here's something to consider:

A typical human being, so I'm told, thinks about 60,000 thoughts a day, and apparently upwards of 80% of them are the same thoughts we had yesterday. And the day before ...

And yet studies of the human brain in recent times have suggested that the number of thoughts a typical human being is *capable* of generating is in the region of 1 followed by almost *ten miles* of zeroes.

That's some serious potential, or another way of looking at it might be that there are an awful lot of things we *could* be thinking.

Our everyday thinking then is normally relatively 'shallow' and quite habitual and that's probably just fine and the way it needs to be for managing our daily routines; but when we want to create change in our lives, we need to think differently and more expansively, and this is the area of our lives where I believe deliberately applied hypnosis is especially helpful.

It gets our habitual routine thoughts *out of the way* so that we can think *other* thoughts. More helpful thoughts. More informative thoughts. Thoughts that can change our beliefs at an unconscious level.

This is most useful, I've found, in the area of how we think about *ourselves* – our "self-image", as it's most commonly called.

Our "self-image", in my understanding of the concept, is the product of psychological 'filters' we've established as we've grown up that help us judge how to behave in society. It's not of course 'who we really are' but nonetheless it's there in our every waking moment whether we notice it or not and it governs our responses to every situation we find ourselves in.

We can only do what our "self-image" can allow us to do.

If we have an inadequate or negative "self-image", that can be chronically detrimental to our ability to function successfully in the world. So updating our perception of our character and our personal capabilities is probably an excellent place to start when using hypnosis, and it will also have a supportive effect on more advanced uses.

Hypnosis can help us, for example, to:

Build self-confidence

Increase motivation

Improve concentration

Improve memory

Accelerate learning

Become better organized, more optimistic, more creative ...

Develop our sense of humor

Manage our emotions  
Resolve emotional conflicts  
Learn to enjoy housework (yikes! yes I really did see that one)  
Improve social skills, parenting skills, thinking skills ...  
Remove all sorts of limiting beliefs generally

Hypnosis can also help us to:

Minimize stress  
Reduce anxiety  
Lower blood pressure  
Overcome depression  
Cope with panic attacks  
Overcome eating or sleep disorders  
Manage our weight  
Quit smoking  
Overcome alcohol dependency  
Overcome addictions generally  
Support natural childbirth  
Improve sports performance  
Recover from physical injury faster  
Resolve problems in the bedroom  
Improve relationships generally  
Overcome fear of heights, fear of flying, fear of failure, etc.

Hypnosis is particularly good at helping to cure phobias – that’s because phobias can only be established by a hypnotic experience in the first place ...

And you can use hypnosis to learn how to hypnotize yourself.

As far as I’m aware, hypnotists and hypnotherapists in general concur with the applications of hypnosis listed above.

It’s my understanding, however, that as the topic for consideration moves away from the psychological and through the area of our mind-body relationships and especially beyond that into what might be termed the metaphysical, the suitability of hypnosis becomes more subject to the personal beliefs of both the hypnotherapist and the individual client.

Be wary of exaggerated claims for what hypnosis can do for you.

Hypnosis can be very powerful. But it’s not magic.

It can't enable you to do what you don't know how to do. If you couldn't play the violin before you went into hypnosis, you won't be playing it when you come out. Skills are skills and need to be acquired in the customary ways.

Hypnosis can't get your body to do anything it isn't capable of doing. It can't, for example, change the color of your eyes or grow back a missing limb.

Should you be wondering if hypnosis can help with you any issue or situation that's not mentioned above, check with the suitably qualified professional hypnotherapist of your choice. A visit to his or her website will usually tell you what you need to know, or email the hypnotherapist if you're still not sure.

# THE NATURE OF HYPNOSIS

## What I Believe About Hypnosis

*You don't need to understand how hypnosis works, or even believe that it does work, for it to work.*

However, having a basic understanding of the mechanics will help you feel more comfortable about using hypnosis MP3s, especially if you're using them for the first time.

Something I've discovered is that there's no complete agreement amongst professional hypnotists and hypnotherapists on the most accurate way of describing to the lay person exactly what "hypnosis" *is*. So, rather than offering you a 'round up' of various definitions of hypnosis from website FAQ pages you're free to visit yourself if you wish, I'm going to give you here my *own* definition of hypnosis.

This is a perception that has emerged from my experiences as a regular user of hypnosis products, numerous visits to online hypnosis forums, and much pondering over a long period of time.

Here it is:

*Hypnosis is direct communication with the unconscious mind that temporarily or permanently affects what the unconscious mind believes and consequently how it responds.*

By "direct" communication I mean communication that enters the unconscious mind without being first examined and evaluated by the conscious mind.

This is a perfectly natural and everyday phenomenon. We experience it every time we "act without thinking".

Have you ever, for example, found yourself wondering, "Why on earth did I do that?" when you've acted *automatically* in a way that you wouldn't have done had you stopped to *consider* what action it might be logical and sensible to take?



We experience it when we react *emotionally* to ink squiggles on a page or pixels on an electronic screen or to any other representation of something that isn't physically present. Some movies can make you laugh and some can make you cry and we *forget* that the people we're watching are only actors.

What makes hypnosis possible, in my view, is the limited capacity of our present moment awareness – that is, the relatively small number of things we can *consciously process* at any one time out of all the hundreds, or maybe thousands of bits of information present in our immediate environment.

The prevailing opinion amongst people who know about these things is that it's "seven plus or minus two".

Our conscious awareness is very limited and thus we tend to experience life in a kind of general sense and notice only relatively few details moment to moment. Stage magicians use this characteristic of human perception to help them perform their tricks by artfully directing the audience's attention wherever it is the *magician* wants it to go. It's what stage hypnotists and street (or conversational) hypnotists do too. That's the nature of their work.

A stage magician will make sure through meticulous attention to detail in his or her preparations that the "seven plus or minus two" bits of information the audience notices moment to moment are always somewhere *away from* what the magician needs the audience to *not* notice for the trick to be performed successfully.

A stage hypnotist (or street or conversational hypnotist) will make sure that the "seven plus or minus two" bits of information the volunteer from the audience notices moment to moment are *inside the volunteer's head*.

This internalization of attention and the *automatic* influence it has on the flow of our thoughts is, in itself, nothing special. It happens all the time.

For example, if I ask you to tell me the color of the front door of your home, assuming you're not somewhere where you can physically see it, you must *internalize your attention* to retrieve a memory of it – a mental image – so that you're able to answer my question.

Now, if I asked you to *keep your attention on* that mental image of your front door and, in your imagination, I want you to *open* the door and, instead of being in the familiar place you would expect to be in, you find yourself in a meadow ... a lush green carpet of fragrant grass sprinkled with yellow flowers ... and as

you look around and begin to notice whatever “seven plus or minus two” bits of information from this imagined scene are influencing your senses in each passing moment ... here we have the beginning of a different kind of mental experience altogether.

We can be hypnotized many times every day and have no clue whatsoever that it’s happening.

It doesn’t even require verbal communication. Suppose, for example, that we’re having lunch together and engaged in a deep and meaningful conversation and I want you to pass me the salt. Instead of *asking* you to pass it to me, I simply point to it and give a subtle nod of my head. Most likely you’ll *automatically* hand me the salt without thinking about it as we continue talking.

That’s hypnosis. It’s of the kind often referred to by street or conversational hypnotists as “covert hypnosis” because generally people *don’t recognize it* as hypnosis. After all, where’s the guy with the turban and goatee telling you to “look into my eyes” or “you are feeling sleepy”???

Nowhere to be seen because melodrama and stage props are not necessary for a verbal or non-verbal message to be *communicated to and acted upon by the unconscious mind without being first examined and evaluated by the conscious mind*. That’s all hypnosis is.

The fact is, we can’t escape hypnosis even if we wanted to. It’s a universal phenomenon and *an intrinsic part of being human*.

## Why Hypnosis is Important

There's a saying (you may have heard this already):

“People are like icebergs”.

If you can imagine an iceberg or have seen a picture of one, you’ll know that only the *tip* of an iceberg is visible above the surface of the water. The vast majority of its bulk is hidden below the waves and in the deep, deep depths of the ocean.

When we think of people as “like icebergs”, we could say that the tip of the

iceberg corresponds to our “conscious” self – that part of us which is interacting through our sensory organs with our physical environment and of which we are aware in each waking moment. This is the part of us that operates through analysis and logic because it’s living in a world of sensory information where the laws of physical reality apply.

The submerged bulk of the iceberg corresponds to that part of ‘everything we are’ of which we have *no* present moment awareness. Which is most of ourselves most of the time. This part of us operates through our biology and in whatever ways our biology has been modified by our life experiences – especially our earliest life experiences, which are the foundation of everything we subsequently believe about ourselves and the world we live in.

It’s our biology that runs our lives. Not our intellect. Our intellect is there to *assist* us by analyzing our actions and their consequences and, hopefully, figuring out how we can do better next time, if that’s what’s required.

When we take a closer look at our metaphorical iceberg, we might notice immediately now that it is indeed the *submerged* and much larger part of the iceberg that moves with the currents and other influences of the ocean in which it resides. From this observation, it can be easily understood that wherever the hidden part of the iceberg goes its visible part must also go.

And so it is with our lives. It’s the submerged and much larger part of our mind which moves us in response to the currents and other influences of our personal circumstances. Our “visible” mind is the observer of where we are going.

It doesn’t matter then where we would *prefer* our life to go or determine that it *should* go (for example, when we write down our “new year’s resolutions”), we can only go where our *unconscious mind* is taking us.

So, if we need or want to change the *direction* of our lives, we must *first* change something we believe in our unconscious mind.

We could certainly use conscious analysis and logic to do that. Changing our lives by the application of our “willpower” is a time honored practice, and maybe sometimes we do get the results we desire if we can stick to our work long enough to sufficiently impress our unconscious mind with our new intentions. It can be done that way.

We could perhaps hire a drill sergeant to bully our unconscious mind into compliance. That can work too.

Or we could use hypnosis.

## CONCLUSION

Hypnosis has always been a part of our lives, whether we've realized it or not, because the ability to accept and respond to verbal or non-verbal suggestions without conscious analysis and evaluation is an intrinsic part of being human. And that's all hypnosis is.

Our ability to internalize our attention, and to explore and modify the associations that have been formed in our psychological 'map of the world' – these things too are an intrinsic part of being human.

These abilities *meet* in the practice of "hypnotism" – the art of deliberately and systematically creating a state of hypnosis in the mind of another person for a specific purpose.

Hypnotism is not only an art but also a skill, though it's not necessarily a skill we need to have or acquire ourselves. This is the most wonderful feature for me of hypnosis MP3s. We have instant access to the talents and expertise of any hypnotherapist of our choice from amongst the best in the world, at our convenience and at an unbelievable price, and all *we* need to do is close our eyes, relax and enjoy the experience.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Hi, I'm Bob Collier.

I've been fascinated by “personal development” and “self-improvement” for more than thirty years and if you knew me thirty years ago and met me now it would be obvious to you that I've had good results from my interest.

I'm not a hypnotist or a hypnotherapist. I don't produce hypnosis MP3s and I don't supply them. I'm a satisfied customer. This gives me a unique perspective. My guide to understanding and maximizing the benefits of hypnosis MP3s is the product of years of interest in hypnosis as an ‘end user’, including research and trialing downloadable hypnosis recordings and programs from more than forty different hypnotists and hypnotherapists.

Thank you for reading *How To Use Hypnosis Effectively: Beginners Guide - Unlock The Creative Power Of Your Mind With Audio MP3 Downloads And Make Positive Changes In Your Life Safely And Easily*.

I wish you all the happiness and success you would wish yourself,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bob Collier". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Bob Collier  
Canberra, Australia  
December 2011

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