

Self Hypnosis Handout

What is self hypnosis?

Self-hypnosis involves becoming highly focused and absorbed in the experience while giving yourself positive suggestions about ways to reach your goals. Self-hypnosis is an individual practice, unlike when you are working with a therapist. It can be a most empowering practice as you learn to have better control of your thoughts and reactions while enjoying the physical and emotional benefits of the relaxation that is typical of self-hypnosis techniques. (1)

What can a person accomplish with self hypnosis?

What can humans accomplish if they're in the "right" frame of mind? When people are focused and motivated to accomplish a goal, and most effectively use their abilities, they are at the peak of their personal power. To use that power to learn new skills more easily, perform athletic feats, be more creative, tolerate pain, and face the unknown with greater confidence, are just a few of the infinite examples of the value of self-hypnosis. Self-hypnosis is a means of learning to focus yourself, motivate yourself, be more self-aware, and make the best use of your innate skills. If you think about it, when you see other people do amazing things, they're usually intensely focused on what they're doing and what they're trying to accomplish. Self-hypnosis is all about developing and using your focus in a goal-directed fashion.

How to hypnotize yourself

Below are commonly employed steps to perform self-hypnosis. Hypnosis is perfectly safe, and you will be in control the whole time. After all, it is your experience. To end the hypnosis session at any time simply count to five and instruct yourself to re-alert. Here are the steps to hypnotize yourself we're going to discuss below:

1. Find a comfortable place to relax and get comfortable
2. Relax using a hypnotic induction like progressive muscle relaxation
3. Introduce a suggestion
4. Return to your usual level of alertness

1. Find a comfortable place

First, make sure you feel physically comfortable as this will help you relax. Sit in a soft chair with your legs and feet uncrossed. You may also lie down although this method may lead you to simply fall sleep. Loosen any tight clothing and avoid eating large meals so you don't feel bloated and uncomfortable. Ensure you will not be interrupted for 20-30 minutes during the hypnosis.

2. Relax using a hypnotic induction

Enter the hypnotic state with a common technique known as progressive muscle relaxation. With this, focus awareness upon any tension stored in parts of the body, and release tension sequentially. Begin with your hands and arms, then move down to your back, shoulders and neck, then stomach and chest and legs and feet. Visualise the tension dissolving or evaporating away, or slowly tense then relax the muscles. The feeling of deep, pleasant, comfortable relaxation is an excellent starting point to begin self-hypnosis.

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3. Introduce a suggestion

In the focused and relaxed state of hypnosis, you can pay deeper and fuller attention to the suggestions you want to give yourself for self-improvement. These can be simple but clear statements you offer yourself about what you might do differently, or how you might react differently in some challenging situation, or how you might come to think differently about yourself or some circumstance. These 'post-hypnotic suggestions' (meaning suggestions that can take effect after your self-hypnosis session is finished) can help you achieve your goals. Some common examples of goals addressed in self-hypnosis include:

- Improving confidence and self-esteem
- [Overcoming anxiety](#)
- Quitting smoking
- Overcoming addiction
- Fears and phobias
- Visualising a goal or action
- [Sleep better](#)

This is a short list, but suggestions can focus on any area of your life in which you hope to initiate a mental shift. Examples of post-hypnotic suggestions in the form of affirmations, a common self-hypnosis approach, include:

- I accept myself for who I am
- I eat three healthy meals per day
- I am confident and assertive when speaking to others
- I feel calm, confident and relaxed
- I find it easy to stop smoking

4. Return to your usual level of alertness

After providing the suggestions, you can become more alert & aware by counting to five while telling yourself you are becoming aware of your surroundings. At the count of five, you can open your eyes and stretch out your arms and legs and go on with your day.

Tips for hypnotic suggestions

When making suggestions during self-hypnosis in step 3, follow these tips:

- Say it with conviction: Imagine the words being said gently but with conviction and ensure the tone is reassuring, confident and positive.
- Phrase suggestions in the present tense: The suggestion, 'I am confident' will be more effective than, 'I will be confident' as the word 'am' is in the present tense and is more certain.
- Make suggestions positive: For example, 'I am at peace' is better than 'I am not stressed' ; talk to yourself about what you do want, not what you don't want.
- Make suggestions realistic: Avoid over-ambitious suggestions such as, 'I will lose a lot of weight quickly'. Instead focus on smaller and more specific goals such as, 'I will eat more vegetables, and exercise more'.
- Repeat the suggestions: State the suggestions many times during the hypnosis. Repetition of an idea can help drive home the point.

Using imagery and action in self hypnosis

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Adding imagery to the post-hypnotic suggestions can improve the hypnosis. You may also engage your sense of taste, touch and smell. For example, to help overcome anxiety you could imagine:

- Sitting on a sandy beach on a warm day
- Seeing a hot air balloon and placing your worries into the basket
- Releasing the sandbags and watching the balloon rise into the distance

Adding in action steps – what you'll actually do differently to improve things – is also very helpful to successful self-hypnosis.

Advantages of Self hypnosis

- Can be performed anywhere
- Subject may feel more in control
- Subject chooses hypnotic suggestions
- Money saved from the consulting fee