



COURSE MATERIAL FOR THE CERTIFIED HYPNOTHERAPIST PROGRAM

182 - Hypnosis and Religion

- Religion has had an impact on the growth and use of hypnosis because of the church's lack of knowledge and understanding that hypnosis is a natural ability built into us.
- Once a belief system is established, history reveals that it takes education and time to change that belief. Most people fear what they do not understand.
- Mesmer worked within the patient's belief and faith. They believed that Mesmer could heal them. He did not understand that it was the power of the human mind, the patient's belief within himself or herself, which brought about a cure.
- The medical doctors at the time were jealous of Mesmer's success and the numbers of people who claimed healing. They discredited him as a physician, and branded him a fraud. As a result, the scientific world disclaimed Hypnosis.
- Superstition is an irrational belief about something. Those who had the gift of a strong intuition or perception were looked by their fellow man upon with fear when the event happened. Ignorance and fear have



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contributed to superstition and has served as a way of controlling individuals within religious groups and without. Certainly, the church has not been immune to the various beliefs and superstitions that have held hypnosis back.

- Freud found hypnosis interesting and conducted sessions many times. Of course, he did not understand that left/right brain dominant individuals have to be hypnotized differently, so sometimes his suggestions worked and sometimes they did not. He was not very good as a hypnotherapist. Freud stated that hypnosis did not work which set hypnosis back further.
- Psychology, under John Watson's leadership, became the science of behavior rather than the study of inner processes. This contributed to setting hypnosis back even further.
- The growth of interest in visualization techniques, since the 1960's is part of a new climate of thought. This new climate has manifested itself in an interest in all forms of imagery.
- Unfortunately, entertainment has also set hypnosis back because people identify hypnosis with stage entertainment, which leads people to think that a hypnotist can control a person. This created the belief of



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many non-religious people that hypnosis opens their mind up to the control of another. Religious believers felt that hypnosis was not Christian because it might allow their mind to be open to a negative spirit.

- These beliefs are due to lack of knowledge, education and understanding.
- If hypnosis is used for evil, that would only indicate its misuse. Your television, computer, and even your cell phone are wonderful ways of keeping up with information, learning, and loved ones. However, if used for evil, it only indicates the misuse of it.
- Hypnosis is neither anti-religious nor religious. Depending on the therapist, the hypnotherapist, the physician, or whomever, they can use hypnosis, like all kinds of therapy, for good or bad.
- I believe one of the main reasons, Medical Hypnotherapy has been held back in the medical field, even though there is proof that hypnotherapy works, and there are many studies to back up its success, there is no profit in it for the drug companies. It seems, unfortunate, that conventional wisdom has it that only drugs are the answer to mental and physical health.



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- When Dr. John Ellington tried to renew interest in hypnosis, both physicians and the church attacked him.
- In Mathew 17:20 -The Bible says that if you have the faith of a grain of mustard seed, you can move a mountain and nothing will be impossible for you.
- First, there must be an expectation, then a belief that results in Faith.
- You have an expectation in tomorrow, you believe there will be another day and that leads to faith in tomorrow.
- You have faith in the religious modality and a perception of authority.
- The religious modality is the most powerful on earth. For a modality to work there must be the perception of authority. We must perceive that the priest, rabbi or pastor is more knowledgeable in the subject than we are.
- There must to be a doctrine or paradigm that supports why and how something is going to work.
- Father Johann Joseph Gassner gained a great reputation for his ability to cure mental illness.



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- Those that came to see Father Gassner perceived him as an authority. The assistants of Father Gassner gave the patient many indirect suggestions suggesting his power to heal, reinforcing the patient's belief.
- The patient had an expectation and a belief. He knelt down, closed his eyes, and waited for the priest. The patient was in a prayerful and a God given hypersuggestible state.
- Father Gassner majestically entered the room and lowered the cross onto the patient's head.
- By this time, through indirect suggestions, the patient expected to be healed, increasing a faith and belief in Father Gassner's power to heal. This individual's belief and faith within healed them.
- Every culture and religion known to man has practiced faith healing since the beginning of recorded time. Even today, the pastor or the priest will still lay hands on the sick and pray for their healing and many are permanently healed because of their faith.
- In Luke 44:48, Jesus was walking amid a crowd of people, a woman who had suffered with a bleeding disorder for many years tried to get near enough to reach him, but all she could do was touch the hem of his



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garment. As she did so, she was healed. Jesus said to her, "your faith has healed you. Go in peace."

- This woman had an expectation, a belief, a faith that if she could touch the hem of his garment she would be healed and she was.
- While Jesus uses the natural faith ability that God creates within us, this in no way suggests that Jesus did not have the power to perform miraculous healing independent of the natural abilities he has created within us.
- Everyone goes into environmental hypnosis or a hypersuggestible state every day of his or her lives. As you know, hypersuggestibility or environmental hypnosis is created by message units (information) coming into the brain. When the critical brain becomes overwhelmed with message units, you begin to feel it in your body. Your body tightens up and you are unable to think clearly and begin to feel anxious.
- Then the critical mind relaxes, allowing some of those message units to drop down into the subconscious mind so that you can continue to cope. Without this natural ability, to drop some of those message units, problems would be even more overwhelming, from which there would be



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no escape. More information and message units continue to come into the brain even as you try to drop some of them.

- However, in this anxious state, it is more likely the message units you are dropping are negative and can create some negative attitudes, behaviors, and habits. The subconscious mind does not analyze and will accept the negative just as easily as it accepts the positive.
- Our subconscious mind associates and identifies with certain knowns and therefore becomes suggestible to those behaviors because it has experienced them before.
- In the quiet of sleep these message units are dropped down into the subconscious mind. It takes eight hours of sleep to allow 16 hours of message units to clear. Those message units are sent to different places in the brain and some are vented out in early morning dreams. This leaves your mind clear and you wake up rested and feeling good.
- If you are unable to sleep and drop all those message units, you wake up tired and irritable.
- A hypnotherapist takes this natural God given state and changes the way your subconscious mind identifies and associates with a problem allowing the subconscious mind to work for you instead of against you.



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- An overload of message units entering the brain in a negative uncontrolled state creates anxiety and leads to environmental hypnosis.
- One would have to assume that throughout the ages, there has always been stress allowing for a natural state of hypersuggestibility or environmental hypnosis. Understanding how the brain works, one would have to assume that God initiated this ability.
- Our behavior is influenced everyday to some extent by what we think, our expectation, what we visualize and to all the different modalities, and suggestions trying to sell us something or change our beliefs.
- Church is an example. Our subconscious mind associates and identifies with certain things such as: the atmosphere of the sanctuary, perhaps soft light, maybe stained glass windows, music or perhaps candles. Something fixes the attention of the person upon the presence of God, such as a symbol. There is the bowing of our head in prayer, meditating with our eyes closed and our body relaxed. We open our minds to God. These are all examples of hypnotic techniques that are a central part of the religious experience.
- Wonderful scriptures of faith are introduced to the mind while in the hypnotic state, strengthening faith, implanting values and purpose.



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- This takes nothing away from the spiritual experience or the power of God. One has to believe that God created this state.
- In the old and new testament, there are verses that refer to our faith.
- Most religious systems use the natural process of suggestion in healing of disease through their particular practice.
- *Luke 4:18 - "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me; he has appointed me to preach Good News to the poor; he has sent me to heal the brokenhearted and to announce that captives shall be released and the blind shall see, the downtrodden shall be freed from their oppressors"*
- Did not God use his disciples also to bless and help others in his name? Isn't that what Ministers, Rabbis, and Priests do?
- Hypnotherapist can help those with a broken heart feel good again. We can take away some of their pain and eliminate their fears and phobias. We can set them free from habits that have controlled their lives.
- When a physician says a kind or encouraging word or takes a few extra minutes to listen, isn't that what he is doing? Isn't that true of every professional, child, or parent.



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- When a person keeps gossip confined or they use understanding, if possible, rather than condemnation, isn't that the same? It is protecting someone else with kindness.
- Everyone is a therapist to someone in life. Some of the best therapy I have ever receive, has been sitting at a friend's kitchen table sharing and talking. I know I was in a hypersuggestible state because often her wise words dropped right into my subconscious.
- Before medicine, the power of suggestion, whatever name it was given, was perhaps the only way people had to help themselves.
- There is evidence that what is called hypnosis today has always been part of human experience. Being in hypnosis is a time when we are more attuned to that voice within.
- *Acts 22:17-18, Paul had returned to Jerusalem and he was praying in the Temple, when he fell into a trance and saw a vision of God saying to him, Hurry! Leave Jerusalem.*
- Paul went into a trance. This is a hypersuggestible state, to zone out like when we are driving down the road and suddenly realize you have reached your destination and have no memory of how we got there, because we were so focused on something else.



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- Paul was in prayer, so his focus was on God.
- When we enter into a trance state, it is a state of environmental hypnosis simply because of human suggestibility, the way the mind operates and nature of hypnosis itself. It is a way of tapping into the imagination and creating a suggestible state in which the individual experiences the determination and desire to reach a dream, a goal, an accomplishment.
- While Paul was in the trance state, God gave him a perception, a vision that he must quickly leave Jerusalem now. There was urgency in the message.
- I believe that when we are in the hypnotic state or a hypersuggestible state we are more attuned to our intuition and our perception. Have you ever become still, and then asked yourself a question and you knew the answer, but then your logic and reason stepped in and talked you out of it. Later you found out you were correct and you thought, "Why didn't I listen to myself?"
- I believe that people of time past used this gift of intuition and perception to protect themselves from dangers. In modern times, I think we have suppressed it with our logic and reason.



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- Some years ago I was standing at the copy machine in the office and I heard in my head very loudly, "Lock the front door Now." I immediately ran to the front door and seconds later before I even got back to the copy machine, there was loud pounding on the door. When they were unable to get in the front door, they went around to the side door while the evening class was going on.
- It was three men, that had been drinking at the bar down the street, who were looking for some excitement and trouble.
- For once, I acted on it that intuition. Usually my reason and logic talks me out of it.
- A client told me that she parked her convertible and immediately thought, *No, move the car*. Her logic and reason talked her out of it. When she came back to the car, someone had taken something sharp and cut the top of her convertible.
- Sometimes it is a gentle perception or feeling the need or sadness in another and a desire to say or do something comforting.
- I believe that God gave everyone this gift. It is built into us and our subconscious mind picks up things we are unable to consciously understand. It is a perception, an intuition, an insight and a knowing.



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We have all experienced this in one form or another. Some have developed this ability more than others.

- It would seem that when we are in church or temple we are even more aware of this ability.
- When we are in the hypnotic state, our mind is calm, quite, and focused, we become more aware and perception to the voice within us.
- God doesn't need to use the natural ability he created within us, even though it is there. When God spoke, Paul listened and obeyed.
- When you go to Temple or Church, you open your mind, entering a hypersuggestible state and listen to the positive message by one you consider an authority.
- When a person holds a thought or visualization in their mind it affects every cell of their body through the autonomic nervous system. If you are holding a fearful thought it creates fear within you. Your heart may beat harder and your breathing may increase. When you are sexually aroused, your body responds automatically. When you are embarrassed, you may blush or become uncomfortable. It may affect hormonal balance, blood flow and metabolism. You also know what happens when you visualize or think about something relaxing or



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something that makes you smile. Your breathing slows down and there is relaxation in your muscles.

- Since our subconscious mind is unable to analyze, our body reacts regardless of whether the situation has occurred in the external world or is a thought held in our mind.
- Paracelsus was a physician in the early 1500's in Switzerland. He is considered the father of modern drug therapy and scientific medicine. He believed that a physician could heal by tapping the power of God, and that people could be healed by their own thoughts, as well as by God.
- Remember the verse, "*As a man thinketh in his heart so is he.*" That principal worked within the lives of people from early times. The Egyptians and Greeks were aware of the power of our thoughts and visualizations.
- God is his wisdom and love gave us the ability to help ourselves by taking control of our thoughts and with positive visualizations that contribute to our creative, inventiveness and our ability to move forward as a society.



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- This principal worked because we are created with that gift no matter who we are or what our religious beliefs.
- The Egyptians and Greeks held healing ceremonies. Those who were ill would go to the healing temples and the priest would chant or sing prayers. They used visualizations, dreams, herbs, and laying on of hands.
- The patient went to a special room to sleep. The priest was dressed in special clothes. He entered the room, touched the patient's diseased part and sometimes talked to them.

When we are moving from the waking state to the sleep state we are in a hypnogogic state that is similar to hypnosis. Most likely the priest talked to the patient in this state adding strength to his suggestions.

The patient was healed or acquired the knowledge through dreams to help himself. The priest was presented as an authority. The patient had an expectation of healing and a belief, a faith in the process. The subconscious stepped in and brought about the result. A belief system was touched within the patient.

- We have healing shrines today, called hospitals. As scientific as they are, there is a healing expectation within the patient.



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- Psychogenic disorders, probably range as high as eighty-five percent of all physical disorders, Suggestion plays a major role in the healing process of human illness.
- Physicians sometimes use placebos as substitutes for drugs, obtaining the same results from the placebo as would have been received from the drug, the reason being that the patient expected the same results. The patients expectation was due to the suggestion by the nurse or physician.
- However, if the patient knows that he is being deceived, the placebo will not be effective.
- The physician is an authority in the Medical field model and the patient has a belief in the process. If the patient loses faith in the physician or the treatment, it will become less effective because the authority in this medical modality has been weakened. If the physician explains that this treatment may or may not work but others have been healed with this treatment and he can be healed also, then the authority in the medical model will remain strong.
- *In Act 28.8 Paul shipwrecked on an island. While he was there, he prayed and laid hands on a man sick with a fever and the man was*



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healed. All the other sick people on the island were so impressed they too came to Paul to lay hands on them and pray and they were healed.

- *In Acts 14:8 - 10 - Paul was preaching to a crowd and he noticed a man who was crippled from birth and unable to walk. The man was listening and Paul noticed him and realized that he had the faith to be healed so he told the man to Stand up and he did. His faith had healed him.*
- *In Acts 22:17 Paul had been blinded by an intense light. Ananias, a godly man, thought well of by the Jews of Damascus, came to Paul and said Brother Saul, receive your sight! And, from that moment on, he could see.*
- The modern faith healer exerts the same power for the same reason in Pentecostal healing revivals. There have been many people who claim to have been healed by Oral Roberts praying for them and laying on of hands. Once again, look at the modality.
- This takes nothing away from the power of God working through the clergyman. Understanding how our thoughts, our belief systems and our faith, only as much as a mustard seed, can change our life. Understanding this wonderful gift only adds to our faith. When we know the importance of how we think, we can take control of our thoughts.



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When we think positively about something it adds to our expectation and that contributes to our belief and faith.

- Remember there is no single technique of producing hypnosis. It is natural and happens in many places and times. Hypnosis is called by many different names, but no matter what it is called, it is the same thing. The state produces an increased concentration of the mind. An increased relaxation of the body and an increased susceptibility to suggestions.
- In this hypnotic state, if a suggestion is against the individual's belief system or something they object to, they will reject the suggestion or sit up and come out of the hypnotic state. Then they most likely will never let you hypnotize them again unless you can quickly regain their faith again.
- If a person is listening to a religious leader, but the speaker of authority says something that is in direct conflict with their beliefs or with the way a religious speaker should act like or talk, they will close their mind and reject the message.



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- If the hypnotherapist is perceived as a professional and then promises that the client will stop smoking with one session and the client doesn't, the client will feel deceived and the perception of authority has collapsed.
- In the hypnotic state all your senses are heightened. If the hypnotherapist is eating, shuffling papers, struggling to come up with the proper suggestions, the client feels and hears it. It damages their perception of the hypnotherapist, in a negative way.
- Remember that your client is in a heightened state of suggestibility and if there is the sound of others talking while you are in a session, your client may be taking in some of what they are hearing from those talking elsewhere in the building.
- If there is a conflict between the will and the imagination, the imagination will always win. If there is an emotional attachment to a suggestion, it will be more effective, and any strong emotion always overcomes a weaker one.
- The American physiologist, Edmund Jacobson, has done studies which show that when a person imagines running, small but measurable



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amounts of contractions actually take place in the muscle associated with running.

- Since the subconscious mind is unable to analyze, the same pathways in the brain are excited by the visualization of running as if the individual were actually running.
- You ask your client to think of a time when they felt peaceful and happy. They remember walking by a lake. Flowers and clouds were reflected and it look beautiful and made them feel peaceful. You suggest that it is that same peacefulness they feel when they think their Restful Alert Key and those good feelings are experienced more and more. Those same pathways in the brain that experienced those peaceful feelings in the past become excited and the suggestion brings that good feeling into the present.
- When you bow your head in prayer and feel the peace of the music, the focused attention of meditation upon God, the same pathways in the brain that have experienced this before, become excited. You can see how all of these things play into everyday life, as well as in the religious experience.



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- You have a copy of the Hypnotherapist Guidelines Governing Hypnotherapists.

The General Standards Are:

1. Hypnotherapists shall respect the well being and rights of each client.
2. Hypnotherapists shall avoid any behavior that may be considered immoral.
3. Hypnotherapists shall use hypnosis within the scope of their field, know their limitations and avoid infringement on other professions.
4. Hypnotherapists shall respect and practice within the established laws and regulations.
5. Hypnotherapists shall never mislead, but always be ethical and honest in their advertising and in their business practices.
6. Hypnotherapists shall maintain proper office and client records in a professional manner.
7. Hypnotherapists shall not discuss personal problems with a client.
8. Hypnotherapist shall not socialize with clients. It is a quick way to lose them.

Number 8. When you teach your client how to lose weight and then eat junk, or you are taking a client off of cigarette and they discover you smoke, or you teach your client to be calm and relaxed under pressure and they see you get upset, your authority is gone and so is the paradigm.

- For that reason, it is important to explain the mind model in detail and then relate your clients presenting complaint to the mind model. If you skip this part of the session, you will not be as affective in your practice.
- Many things contribute to your professionalism, such as: how you dress, you're listening skills and ability to frame suggestions.



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- Never tell your client that they will stop smoking, or their presenting issue will be changed in one session because if it isn't, then your authority in the field is questioned and unless you can revive that, your whole , paradigm, your modality is gone. Your client will go away feeling let down, deceived or that you don't know what you are talking about and will most likely be sure to tell at least ten other people that it didn't work. There are some exceptions to the rule, but if you are successful, your client may tell one person how you helped them.
- Explain to your client that the progress of their sessions will be determined partly by their suggestibility and their depreciation rate. Explain to them that you will see them weekly until the suggestions hold for a full week. Then you will up their sessions to two weeks apart and when they hold the suggestions for two weeks, you will go to three weeks, a month, three months, six months and then one year.
- Be sure your client understand that they are the ones who will tell you how they are doing.
- Tell your client that they will practice their Restful Alert Key with two deep breaths the first week. When they come back, if they have done well with the Restful Alert Key you will cut it down to one deep breath



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and then when they do well with one deep breath you will begin to tie it in automatically with their natural breathing.

- As far as I know, no Protestant, Jewish or Orthodox church has any laws against the proper and ethical use of hypnotherapy. Many of the Eastern Faiths approve of the use of hypnotherapy.
- The sum and substance of the Roman Catholic position is:
 1. Hypnosis is allowable for medical and other therapeutic purposes.
 2. Under the aspect of anesthesia, the church governs it by the same principle as any other form of anesthesia.
 3. The church does not permit Catholics to participate in entertainment through hypnosis.
- Protestant Churches - within a loosely defined Protestant category, there are two groups opposed to the use of hypnosis.
- The Seventh-day Adventists maintain that hypnosis brings control and the will under the power of another person. However, they admit that under medical authority, hypnosis could be a valuable aid to healing.
- They realize that suggestions are necessary for pain relief and is beneficial to medical science. Relaxation techniques are used by the



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Seventh-day Adventist's medical school in Los Angeles. There are a number of Seventh-day Adventist physicians who use hypnosis techniques in the administration of anesthesia. They usually do not call it hypnosis.

- Christian Scientists remain opposed to the use of hypnosis techniques.

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