

Hypnotic Pain Control

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Hypnotherapy for Chronic Pain

Elkins, G., et.al. *Int J Clin Exp Hypn.* 2007 Jul; 55(3): 275–287.

Meta-study of 13 studies: The findings indicate that hypnosis interventions consistently produce significant decreases in pain associated with a variety of chronic-pain problems. Also, hypnosis was generally found to be more effective than nonhypnotic interventions such as attention, physical therapy, and education.

Cancer Pain

Low Back Pain

Arthritis Pain

Sickle Cell Disease

Temporomandibular Pain

Fibromyalgia

Disability-Related Pain

Mixed Chronic-Pain Problems

Tilburg, M. A., Chitkara, D. K., Palsson, O. S., Turner, M., Blois-Martin, N., Ulshen, M., & Whitehead, W. E. (2009). Audio-Recorded Guided Imagery Treatment Reduces Functional Abdominal Pain in Children: A Pilot Study. *Pediatrics*, 124(5). doi:10.1542/peds.2009-0028

Askay, S. W., Patterson, D. R., Jensen, M. P., & Sharar, S. R. (2007). A randomized controlled trial of hypnosis for burn wound care. *Rehabilitation Psychology*, 52(3), 247-253. doi:10.1037/0090-5550.52.3.247

Meta-analysis of 18 studies revealed a moderate to large hypnoanalgesic effect, supporting the efficacy of hypnotic techniques for pain management. The results also indicated that hypnotic suggestion was equally effective in reducing both clinical and experimental pain.

Abdeshahi, S. K., Hashemipour, M. A., Mesgarzadeh, V., Payam, A. S., & Monfared, A. H. (2013). Effect of hypnosis on induction of local anaesthesia, pain perception, control of haemorrhage and anxiety during extraction of third molars: A case–control study. *Journal of Cranio-Maxillofacial Surgery*, 41(4), 310-315. doi:10.1016/j.jcms.2012.10.009

Dental hypnosis: Of the subjects who underwent hypnosis, only two subjects (8.3%) reported pain after induction of hypnosis. In the local anesthetic group, 8 subjects (33.3%) reported pain. There was a significant difference between the two groups. The results of the study showed that patients in the hypnosis group had less pain during the first few hours post-operatively. Anxiety scores in the two groups were very close to each other and no statistically significant differences were observed in general and when each person was compared with himself or herself. Pain intensity in the two groups at 5- and 12-h post-operatively exhibited significant differences. In the hypnosis group, 10 patients (41.7%) took analgesic medication; in the local anesthesia group, 22 patients (91.7%) took the analgesic medication ($P = 0.0001$). In other words, patients reported less pain when they were under hypnosis.

PAIN CONTROL DIRECT SUGGESTIONS

1. Right now think of the word cool. Cool. Cool like the top of a refrigerator or cool like a fall breeze. When you think of this coolness can you create an awareness of coolness, even focusing on that place where pain had radiated and really fixating on that spot while thinking of cool? And notice when you do, just the thought of cool, calms the intensity of pain.

2. What color is your pain (await response). Now bring you attention to the center of your pain, but also imagine the pinpoint of a Chroma color wheel, in the center of that pain. And imagine moving the wheel to change the color palate to a more conformable color. In your mind do that now – what color is more comfortable for you?

3. Have you ever been happy, but also sad? Have you ever been both excited by scared? I know that you feel pain, but at what level can you also create and be comfortable? Can you ow amplify that awareness of comfort, even if it's in a different part of the body? I bet you can even make the part of you that holds comfort as comfortable as you feel pain.

4. Notice your pain. Rather than wishing it away, or trying to make it stop, what would happen if you really observed it, studied it and allowed yourself to feel it. So often when we try to get rid of something it simply amplified awareness, it become like an itch we keep scratching to make it stop. And so rather than trying to stop it, focus on it, study it, follow it. Notice where the pain starts, where the pain stops ad where it is more intense and where it is less intense.

5. Imagine your hand is like a magnet, able to pull pain like a magnet can pull mettles scraps. I bet when you were a kid you played with a magnet and watched it attract to it metal shavings. And of course, you also learned that to create a magnet, you rubbed one magnet on another piece of metal. My hand is a pain magnet, and I'm placing it on top of your hand, and now your hand is a pain magnet. Go ahead, test it out, hold it over your pain, and notice how much of it is drawn out and removed by the magnet. And now shake your hand, shaking loose the pain it has attracted, letting it simply fall to the ground and disappearing.

6. Listen to your pain. Is it screaming, or yelling or making noises in your mind? If pain can come with sound, it can also come with a volume knob, and imagine reaching out and turning the volume down. Maybe half the volume. Or maybe all the way to silent.

7. Imagine pain is a target, and you can drive a bullet right through that target, blowing out the center of

the target. At the moment you imagine the bullet passing through, what is the feeling in that spot? Feels pretty amazing doesn't it?

8. Sooner or later everything changes, and you know even pain will disappear. Let go of it now, letting it leave early.

9. A person may even give themselves permission to heal, to feel better and even to smile when things are hard or the body hurts.

10. Imagine a single white puffy cloud floating across the sky and into the distance. As it moves towards the horizon, becoming smaller and smaller, cast all your pain into that cloud and let it be carried away... moving towards the horizon and disappearing....

11. By following the doctors suggestions for icing and healing your pain, you will notice that the results are exactly as promised.

12. Imagine a pain killer being injected right into the center of the pain. Notice what it feels like as the skin absorbs that pain killer, noting that there are no side effects, no prescriptions to go get, just an ability of the mind, to create the same awareness as if you have received an injection.

SUGGESTIONS BASED ON ERICKSON LANGUAGE PATTERNS

Milton Erickson, M.D. was the psychiatrist who popularized medical hypnotherapy in the 1950's to the 1980's. His work is credited as being the foundation to many modern approaches to hypnotherapy. In particular, the language patterns he used, have been modeled to replicate his results with many clients with many presenting problems. The suggestions below are "formulas" based on his language patters. You can learn more about "The Milton Model" and hypnotic language patters in my book "Speak Ericksonian: Mastering the Methods of Milton Erickson." is considered a classic in the arena of Ericksonian hypnosis by many teachers of hypnosis and you can get a copy from any bookseller or from www.SubliminalScience.com

1. I wouldn't tell you to (let go of your pain) and you can't disagree with me, because I said I wouldn't tell you.

By structuring the suggestion this way, it forces the subconscious mind to process "what wouldn't be" told to the client. It avoids paternalistic suggestion and the linkage because it is a linguistic maneuver that creates causation.

2. Will you (do this or that) or will you (this or that) or will you? Will you let go quickly, or will you take another session before you let go, or will you let go in your own time, regardless of our schedule?

Structuring a suggestion in a way that uses Will you and or forces one of several choices to be made. These are often faked alternatives, and each choice often leads to the same outcome even if the process is different.

3. A person may easily find the answers because they have learned hypnosis

A person is a generic term, and the subconscious mind will put itself in the category of a person, making the suggestion personal yet non-specific. Because explains why the first part of the suggestion is acted upon, creating congruency between the unconscious and conscious mind.

4. It is as-if change is easy and instantaneous

As-if statements are presuppositions that are quite powerful. As you write your own suggestions, is as-if statements regularly.

5. You might find it is less difficult that ever imagined to (go into trance, quit smoking, hit a goal, etc.)

You might find forces a person to look for something. And of course, we find what we seek!

6. A person could (clients name) quit smoking in just one session.

By using a client's name in a session you instantly make the suggestions something for them, from them and give them ownership of the suggestions.

7. Can you really enjoy going into a deeper trance, and using this time to learn, empower and success?

Asking questions, forces a client to look for answers. Structure almost any suggestion as a question, you can have confidence that the subconscious mind will discover the answer.

8. It is easy to go into hypnosis now, isn't it?

Again, a question, coupled with an indirect suggestion. It is easy is a direct suggestion, now tells them when, and isn't it is a rhetorical question.

9. You may not know if you are reaching the deepest levels of trance, or can go deeper

By stating they might not know something, causes a client to see what they do know.

10. What happens when you close your eyes and realize you have now stopped smoking?

Now tells then when to experience or do something.

11. Now is the time. 12. Try to resist success and you will find that failure in your attempt to resist, leads to success.

Try is a word that implies failure. So it can be used to create paradoxical suggestions.

Middle of Nowhere Technique

Go ahead and close your eyes. Let yourself relax. You know what deep relaxation and the hypnotic state feels like. Bring yourself to that state of calmness, serenity, and relaxation. Bring yourself to that state where you learn best through experience. If you find yourself distracted by anything around you, such as a noise outside or even the frustrations of the day, you can return your attention to this experience by simply paying attention to your breath. As you breathe in and breathe out, neither try to speed up or slow down your breath. Instead, simply let yourself pay attention to the breath with no regard to whether or not it should be quicker or slower. By focusing on your breath, you can easily focus your attention inward and let go of any stress or tension of the day. Allow yourself to easily enter that state of learning and intuition that we call hypnosis. As I count backwards from five to one, deepen your hypnotic state. Five, four, three, let yourself relax completely, never sleep but deeply relaxed. Two, one, zero. Over the next couple of minutes, I am going to guide you through a process of dissociating here from there. Milton Erickson called this the nowhere technique. As you relax, you can recognize that a part of you is here. You can feel the chair below you with your eyes closed and your mind relaxed. You can also see that a part of you is drifting away. Drift to a place that is really nowhere. In fact, drift to a place we call the middle of nowhere. You can let your mind drift and meet me in this place, a place that has no time, in the middle of nowhere. It is a place that has no place, in the middle of nowhere. It is a place that has my voice and your awareness. It is a place that is neither here nor there. It is just a place of your own creation. In the middle of nowhere, there is no awareness of pain, but simply an awareness of nothingness. Here in the middle of nowhere, nothing is just fine. There is nothing to be and nothing to feel. There are no feelings to feel in the middle of nowhere. It is a very pleasant place to be, isn't it?

During this brief exercise, you had a chance to experience your own ability to dissociate from the place you are sitting to that place of nowhere. Now pay attention to my voice and the chair below you. Let yourself return from the middle of nowhere to this place where you are sitting. Now, I am going to count from one to three. With each number, let yourself become more alert and oriented. One, take in a deep breath... Two, stretch out any muscles that need to be stretched... Three, open your eyes and feel fantastic...

The Wayward Clock: Time Distortion I commonly use the following as an induction when I want to accomplish time distortion. It is helpful because the moving clock imagery can really confuse time relationships.

Induction Close your eyes for a minute and take in a breath. Let yourself relax. With each breath, double the sensation of relaxation. With each breath, notice that your heart rate is becoming smooth and rhythmic and notice how easy it is to enter a state of deep relaxation. You can even unclench the jaw and relax the shoulders. Allow the hands become warm, heavy, and very relaxed. Think of a clock or think of your watch. Imagine that both of the clock's hands are at 12 o'clock. Imagine seeing that clock and realizing that it is no longer important what the numbers on the clock say. In fact, the hands of the clock could point to 6 o'clock, 3 o'clock, or

12 o'clock. It wouldn't make any difference to you. As you continue to relax, you can let go of the meaning of time and let your clock move from 12 o'clock to 7 o'clock, from 7 o'clock to 1 o'clock, from 1 o'clock to 5 o'clock, and from 5 o'clock to 9 o'clock. Imagine that the hands of the clock not only go clockwise, but can even go counter clockwise, no longer concerned about day or night. Simply bring yourself to this place and this time, right here and right now. Take in a deep breath and feel wonderful. Bring yourself back to the chair that you are sitting in, to this experience, and to this learning session.

In Addition Another suggestion we can use to accomplish time distortion is to mention that an hour can seem like a minute. We can also use indirect suggestion and say that keeping time is so much effort that it is hard to know what time it is. Similar suggestions can be useful for a client who is experiencing pain. You can give them the suggestion that because it is hard to know what time it is, it is hard to know if it is time to experience the pain. Keeping track of the time and the pain is too much effort. By simply taking a minute to enjoy the process of hypnosis, wherever they are, they can forget about the hands on the clock, forget about keeping time, and forget about what time it is. In the process, they can also forget to remember to feel the pain.

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