

change your mind with hypnosis

Hypnosis. The word may create images of someone in a zombie state, being programmed and controlled. Not so. Hypnosis is an effective method to improve and enhance the quality of life, says Kim Boudreau, a clinical hypnotherapist in Surrey and White Rock.

"Hypnotherapy changed my life at 45 years of age," recalls Boudreau, who suffered since childhood with a debilitating lack of confidence in her appearance. She studied hypnotism hoping to help others achieve a positive change of mind.

Over 50 years ago, hypnotists were mainly entertainers, often seen as charlatans or witches. Today, hypnosis is a respected technique of mind/body medicine practiced by doctors, nurses, psychologists and athletic coaches. Hypnosis is used to reduce fears, pain and stress, overcome undesirable habits and achieve goals. It also strengthens the immune system, adds Boudreau.

"Every cell in your body has a living memory," she explains. "Scientists prove your thoughts can control your body's systems."

If you simply "think positively" you are following a form of self-hypnosis. By constantly thinking good thoughts, you can boost your immune system and train your brain to help you achieve any goal – whether it's giving a great speech, passing an exam, or excelling in your sport. However, for those who have more deeply embedded challenges (such as severe lack of confidence or addictions)



professional hypnotherapists can tackle the issue more effectively.

"Hypnosis is the only way to get to the root of the problem – to reprogram the information in your subconscious mind," says Boudreau. "You may be consciously telling yourself 'I'm pretty', but your subconscious mind is still telling you what you've believed for years; 'I'm ugly.'"

She explains attending a seminar to help empower the mind is very inspiring – for the short term – but it won't "take hold" in the mind if the subconscious is programmed to believe otherwise.

Boudreau explains when hypnotized, you are in a state of deep concentration, focused and paying attention, yet ignoring everything around you. You are not meditating and you are not asleep. You are simply relaxed enough to accept suggestions that will help you achieve your goals. Hypnotherapists have the skills and techniques to train your brain to think differently. Over time, you learn to change your old beliefs.

Anyone can be hypnotized. Do you remember being so involved in a book or movie that you weren't aware of your surroundings? This is a form of hypnosis. We all undergo hypnosis each and every day, all our lives, says Boudreau. Our minds are constantly programmed by what we think, say, do, see and hear.

It's a misconception that people who are easily hypnotized are weak-minded, while those who are harder to hypnotize are strong-minded. Those who easily respond to hypnosis simply accept being hypnotized (they can also choose not to be hypnotized, if they wish, assures Boudreau). Those who are more difficult to hypnotize actually hypnotize themselves against hypnosis by refusing to relax, not trusting the hypnotist or not believing in the technique.

Hypnosis in a controlled environment is an entirely safe and effective technique, says Boudreau. She adds clinical hypnotism is often confused with stage hypnotism. Stage hypnotism is not intended as a form of therapy. It is simply an entertaining way to demonstrate the power of the mind.

Boudreau says there are two "kinds" of people: emotional and physical. "Physical people aren't embarrassed by their actions – they enjoy hamming it up for an audience," laughs Boudreau.

Stage hypnotists screen audience volunteers to find these enthusiastic "hams" who are receptive to being hypnotized. However, stage hypnotists don't offer the ongoing therapeutic benefits of clinical hypnosis. They do not explore emotional stability or other health problems, as a clinical hypnotherapist will do.

When using hypnosis for health improvement, you are in complete control to change your mind for the better!

For information about hypnosis, contact Kim Boudreau, CMH, CHt, at 604-506-4297, e-mail peace@kimshypnotherapy.com or visit www.kimshypnotherapy.com

More information is available from the Coastal Academy of Hypnotherapy: www.coastalacademy.ca ■



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Eve Lees, a former newspaper editor, has been a health and fitness professional for over 20 years. She is a Certified Nutrition & Wellness Specialist, a Certified Personal Trainer, a health speaker, and a health writer for several publications.