



INTRODUCTION TO HYPNOTHERAPY

Module 1 of 2

MODULE NAME: INTRODUCTION TO HYPNOTHERAPY

MODULE CODE: MHYPNO – (1 of 2)

Descriptor: This module describes the underpinning knowledge of hypnotherapy principles and practices.

Content of Module:

- Hypnosis is defined.
- Duality of the mind explained.
- The power of the subconscious mind explored.
- Hypnosis and suggestion defined.
- Level of consciousness introduced.

Assessment:

As this is a free module, there is no assessment included.

These symbols will guide your learning and self-assessment exercises. Please take a moment to familiarise yourself with them.

SELF-ASSESSMENT



Write your answers in this space for self-assessment.



Write true (T) or false (F) beside these statements. These exercises are another form of self-assessment.

SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING (Some of these exercises will be for assessment)



Write your answers in your own workbook or journal, and keep for future reference.



Write about your practical experiences in your diary or journal. When you practise on other people, ask them to write their experience and sign it.



Case study.



Research project.

INSTRUCTIONS



Please note.



Pay special attention to this.



Return this assignment to the College.



Try this activity.

Introduction to Hypnotherapy

Part I

Module Outcome

Demonstrate understanding of hypnosis and its influence on the mind.

Learning Outcomes

You will achieve the Module Outcome when you can:

- ⇒ Define hypnosis
- ⇒ Explain how the mind and its duality works within the context of hypnotherapy
- ⇒ Understand how hypnotic suggestion works and can be implemented in a therapeutic setting.

Focus

Definition of hypnosis

Understanding how hypnosis influences the mind.

Personal Assessments

Not applicable.

WELCOME

Welcome to this **free module**; one of two modules that comprise the *Introduction to Hypnotherapy* - mini online course. If you would like to complete this mini course you will need to purchase the second module for \$69 and complete the assessment included in this second module. You can do this by contacting our friendly staff on 07 3217 3560 or emailing info@careeraccelerators.com.au, and we will arrange payment and the last module to be emailed to you.

This mini course has been specially designed for those that are interested in hypnotherapy but are unsure as to whether to commit to enrolling in our formal courses – the *Certificate of Clinical Hypnotherapy* and *Diploma in Clinical Hypnotherapy*. Both these formal courses are recognised by the Australian Hypnotherapists' Association (AHA) at Professional and Clinical Member level respectively.

When you were emailed this free module this email should have also included the college Prospectus. Please have a read through this Prospectus as it will introduce the college to you, as well as outline all the courses and training we offer. It will also introduce the Director of the Career Accelerators, Gwendoline Ford, who has been a pioneer of hypnotherapy in Australia for nearly twenty years. Therefore, when studying with Career Accelerators you can be assured of the highest industry standards.

Career Accelerators aims to provide all our students with the highest quality training in hypnotherapy and welcome all feedback from students and prospective students – yours included. If you have any questions or feedback about this module or any of our courses, please feel free to phone or email our college at the above listed contact details.

Career Accelerators hopes that you enjoy your journey into understanding hypnotherapy and how beneficial it can be for your life, the lives of your loved ones, and for future clients. Let's start!

INTRODUCTION

The first thing you will need to know about hypnotherapy is why it is called that. The term 'hypnosis' comes from the Greek word 'hypnos', meaning sleep – due to the sleep-like trance state that hypnosis achieves in others. However, it is important to stress here that a trance under hypnosis is not sleep in that a person under hypnosis is able to be alert, can talk and move, and the brain waves differ from those of sleep.

Hypnosis as a group activity has developed throughout many years. In fact, hypnosis has been practiced throughout the ancient ages from small tribes to vast empire-conquering civilisations. Such group hypnosis may include mass chanting, singing, and meditation to a steady drum beat. Many of these form part of religious ceremonies or rites of passage. In these ceremonies there was healing of the mind well before any orthodox medical practice.

What exactly is Hypnosis?

Hypnosis is a state of heightened suggestibility, which allows suggestions to be easily accepted by the subconscious mind. In hypnosis, very deep, long time habits can be eliminated in what seems to be an incredibly short time. Hypnosis and its uses in the practice of hypnotherapy are rapidly emerging as a highly effective science in solving the problems, habits and challenges of people.

How does Hypnosis work?

Hypnosis is a means of communication between the conscious mind and the subconscious mind. To understand this more clearly, let's talk about how the subconscious mind works. Most of our mental conditioning was formed from ages 0-7 years. Its response is automatic to whatever conditioning, or "programming", has been put in, much like a computer.

The subconscious mind:

- is involved with memories, habits, addictions, compulsions, etc.
- has a nature that is very childlike — likes to play and have fun.
- enjoys routines and moves into methodical procedures quite easily.
- learns very well with a lot of repetition.
- can be very demanding in what it wants and when, as is the case with addictions.
- forms beliefs, likes approval and familiarity.

THE DUALITY OF THE MIND

We have one mind, one brain. The term brain will be used to refer to the physical brain of grey matter, nerves, synaptic connections, blood vessels and all other physicalities that go to making up the brain. The term mind will be used to refer in this text to the functioning of the input into the brain. So, you have only one mind, but your mind possesses two distinctive characteristics.

The two functions of your mind are essentially unlike — there are two levels, two modes of functioning:

- 1) the conscious or rational level, and
- 2) the subconscious or irrational level.

You think with your conscious mind and whatever you habitually thinks ‘sinks’ into your subconscious mind, which created according to the nature of your thoughts. The conscious mind is the reasoning mind — choices and decisions are consciously made by this mode of functioning.

The Conscious Mind

The conscious mind is the reasoning, rational mind. You think with your rational mind. You are absorbing this information through your rational mind. This mind is constantly employed in learning, writing, communicating and in all our daily activities.

The conscious mind is also referred to as the objective mind because it processes information taken from the outward objective environment. We gain knowledge through our five senses as they absorb information from the outward environment. The objective mind learns through observation, experiences and education. Its greatest function is that of rational analysis and reason. Logical choices and decisions are made through the use of the left side of the brain.

The left brain also tends to work in a linear way. It processes information using a step-by-step method, assimilating information one bit at a time, one step leading to another.

The Subconscious Mind

The subconscious mind is the seat of emotions, imagery, rhythm and visual impressions. It functions subjectively, assimilating information independently of the five senses. The subconscious mind can operate without the use of the natural organs — you can see in your mind's eye, or hear in your mind's ear.

The subconscious can leave the body and, for example, revisit family and friends and travel to distant lands. You do not have to be there physically. The right brain is global in nature, experiencing things as whole impressions, as opposed to individual bits.

The subconscious mind is the part that assimilates that which you are usually not aware of, yet it determines much, sometimes most, of what you do. It creates, computes, conceives, plots, plans and never makes a mistake. It is the mind we use least, but rely on most, as we shall see.

LEFT

Conscious Mind

- Logic
- Reason
- Mathematics
- Reading
- Writing
- Language
- Analysis
- Ego
- Logic

RIGHT

Subconscious Mind

- Recognition
- Rhythm
- Visual
- Imagery
- Synthesis
- Dreams
- Symbols
- Id
- Emotions



Use your imagination to see a time when you were really happy.

- Where are you?
- Who do you see?
- What are you doing?
- Do you feel like you are there?

Now that you have a grasp of the conscious and the subconscious sides to the brain, look at how they process information to get a deeper understanding of how suggestion can work.

Inductive Logic

The conscious mind uses inductive logic. Inductive logic goes in the reverse direction to deductive logic. With induction you form generalities from specifics. This is the logic of science, in which the thinker tries to deduce a general rule from particular instances. You make a limited number of observations, then develop hypotheses and apply what you learn to the rest of the population. A number of different instances can be considered as you try to induce what general rule covers them all.

Deductive Logic

The subconscious mind is limited to deductive logic. Deductive logic is the process of reasoning from the general to the specific. It means applying what you know about a lot of things to one or just a few things that are similar.

Examples:

- 1) For just about every human being you have known or heard about was born with a nose. So when you hear that someone gave birth to a new baby, it is through deductive logic that you assume that the new baby also has a nose.
- 2) Consider the case of redheads. An unsubstantiated stereotype has it that redheads are hot-tempered. But let's say, for the sake of argument, that you have known 10 or 15 redheads in your life and every one of them has had volatile tempers. If you were then introduced to someone new who had red hair, it would not be illogical of you to conclude that these new friends might also have quick tempers.

This is deductive logic, or deduction. Much of the uniqueness and contradiction that is inherent in the subconscious mind are possible because it is limited to deductive reasoning. It also shows how a hypnotic suggestion repeated often enough and long enough will be accepted by the subconscious mind as true. It is this characteristic that allows you to make statements that, in the beginning, are not really true, but that eventually become true. This is basically why hypnotic suggestions can be very effective.

THE POWER OF THE SUBCONSCIOUS

The subconscious mind works in surprising ways. It does not know the difference between reality and fantasy, or the products of our imagination, which are often the same thing. Because it uses deductive reasoning, it is possible to ‘trick’ the subconscious into believing what is presented to it.

There are two important basic ‘laws’ to be aware of concerning the subconscious mind:

- 1) The subconscious does not argue, make comparisons, contrasts or reasons, nor does it show preference for one course of action over another. That is the realm of the conscious mind. The subconscious simply reacts to impressions given to it from the conscious mind.
- 2) The subconscious therefore knows and recognises your predominant desire. Once the subconscious mind accepts an idea, it begins to execute it. When it has assimilated the facts, it brings the results into the conscious mind through the form of new ideas and new modes of behaviour, which leads to accomplishing the desired outcome.

The subconscious mind can operate without the use of the natural organs. You can see or hear in your mind’s eye or ear. The subconscious can leave the body and for example, travel to distant lands, hear bells, revisit family or friends. You do not have to be there physically. It is essential that you understand the interaction between the conscious and subconscious. The subconscious mind cannot argue. If it is given an idea it will accept it and begin to execute it.

Example:

If a person keeps on saying ‘I can’t do this’ he or she will not be able to do it because the subconscious is being programmed to act in the ‘I can’t do it’ mode. Therefore if the subconscious is given wrong suggestions, it will accept these as true and proceed to execute the ideas as conditions, experiences and events.

If you have conveyed incorrect concepts to your subconscious mind, a method of overcoming them is by the repetition of constructive harmonious thoughts which the subconscious accepts so forming new health habits of thoughts. The habitual thinking of your conscious mind establishes deep groves in your subconscious mind.

It is obvious that your conscious mind is the so-called watchman at the gate and its function is to protect your subconscious from false impressions, and ideas and from negative destructive thoughts. A basic principle is thus; the subconscious is amenable to suggestion. The subconscious does not make comparisons or contrasts; neither does it reason and think things out for itself. This function belongs to the conscious mind. The subconscious mind simply reacts to impressions given to it by the conscious mind, nor does the subconscious show a preferential for one course of action over another.

SUGGESTIONS

Suggestion is how you set out your goals and instruct your subconscious mind to achieve those goals. Once your subconscious is in alignment with your conscious goals, their achievement is practically guaranteed. You can get that alignment, but it may take a little effort. And you need to know how to formulate suggestions, and how to apply them.

Conscious Approval

One of the major things to consider with hypnotic suggestions is they need approval from the conscious mind to be successful. It will be unsuccessful if it triggers any resistance. Naturally, a suggestion is given with the intention of provoking a specific, predictable and relevant response. If the suggestion did not meet the approval of the conscious mind, it would not pass through to the subconscious.

Hypnosis and Suggestion

Effective hypnotic communication is based on suggestion. A suggestion is a proposition for belief or action that is accepted in the absence of intervening conscious and critical thought.

A hypnotic state is an altered, heightened state of awareness with a concentrated attention that screens out all other sensory stimuli as it focuses with increased receptiveness. You know from learning about the conscious and subconscious minds, that you can see now how in a hypnotic state, your subconscious is more responsive to suggestion than when you are in a fully conscious state.

The suggestion travels a direct channel to the subconscious where it effortlessly becomes a belief, produces an action or modifies behaviour. It is that intelligence which becomes operational when the conscious mind is suspended or in a sleepy drowsy state, an altered state of awareness.

Some points to consider when formulating suggestions:

- ❖ **Protection** — One of the main reasons for the conscious faculties to intervene when suggestion is being delivered to the subconscious is for the protection of the subject. If the suggestion is considered dangerous by the conscious mind, the subject will be protected by not carrying out the suggestion. If the suggestion is considered by the conscious faculties to be genuinely beneficial to the subject, or belonging to the harmless, non-threatening category, then it will more likely be allowed to pass through to the subconscious.
- ❖ **Rational** — A suggestion must always be rational, as one of the conscious faculties is reason. An irrational or unreasonable suggestion will meet with rejection.
- ❖ **Suggestions must be positive** — Suggestions should tell the subject what to do as opposed to what not to do. Negative suggestions are unlikely to provoke any response at all — even without conscious intervention.

Example — Futility of a negative suggestion

Sally is at school doodling when she is supposed to be paying attention. The teacher tells her to stop drawing. Sally does this, but starts writing a letter to a friend. Once again the teacher tells her not to do that. Sally stops this but begins to graffiti her school desk. In desperation, the teacher pleads, “Put your hands on your head!” To her amazement and relief, Sally does this.

On reflection, we realise that Sally had been obedient but none of the responses had satisfied the teacher. It was the final suggestion, the only positive one, which allowed Sally to really understand what she was being asked to do.

Suggestions must be singular — When we are dealing with the unreasoning, illogical, obedient part of the brain, the subconscious a rule to observe: **One Rule = One Response**. The subconscious is programmed or conditioned to respond in a certain way to a particular stimulus. The result would be unpredictable and disappointing if confusing and complex suggestions were presented to the subconscious. For suggestion to work, it must be singular.

Suggestions must be authoritative — As a hypnotist, it is important to convince the subject that you have the authority to give a certain kind of suggestion.

Example — Sales people

They will rarely sell anything if they portrayed to the customers no knowledge of the item they were selling. Prospective customers would be more likely to listen and accept the suggestions made, if the sales person proved to be an authority on the matter. In hypnosis, if you prove yourself to be an authority, the conscious facilities will not reject the suggestion.

Reprogram gradually — The habitual thinking of your conscious mind establishes deep grooves in your subconscious mind. If incorrect concepts have been conveyed to the subconscious mind, suggestions need to be formulated and repeated to re-establish a healthy habit of thoughts.

There are limits of what you can achieve with suggestions depending on the limits set by the subject's subconscious. It is suggested to gradually push these limits so that the required outcome will become approved by the conscious mind.

Suggestions must be familiar to the subject — All suggestions must be familiar to the subject's subconscious responses. A suggestion will be futile if it doesn't suggest a response that is familiar or already conditioned.

The hypnotist must be acceptable to the subject — This mainly concerns appearance. The hypnotist should avoid outlandish trends in hairstyle, dress and manner. The personal style of the hypnotist should be simple, smart and not at all extreme.

Suggestion as used in hypnosis is a potent force that directs the subconscious mind toward the achievement of consciously chosen goals. Suggestions must be specific, technically correct, and applied with appropriate regularity under the right conditions. Without properly prepared and applied suggestions, hypnosis does not yield very spectacular results.



A suggestion cannot impose something on the subconscious mind against the will of the conscious. The conscious mind has the power to reject the suggestion given — it is the gatekeeper. A suggestion has no power in and of itself except if it is accepted by the conscious mind.

LEVELS OF CONSCIOUSNESS

Everything you have learned is stored in your subconscious. We perform many functions that are automatic activities — some are our involuntary, bodily functions and others are some learned conditioned actions.

Example

While awake or asleep, the subconscious mind controls all the vital functions of the body without the help of the conscious mind — your heart continues to beat rhythmically, your lungs continue the process of inhalation and exhalation, the digestive processes proceed and glandular secretions carry on. All of these are independent from the conscious mind.

A similar type of functioning occurs when one proceeds on a learned conditioned action.

Example

Driving is an automatic activity. Because you have already learned to drive your driving skills are stored in your subconscious — you get into the car, switch on the ignition and instinctively control the clutch, gear, accelerator, etc.

Often one ‘switches off’ when driving, so you move into a trance. It seems as if the subconscious has taken over and the conscious is free to roam with its thoughts. Reflect on this, as this is the trance state that forms an important component of the hypnotic trance. A similar trance state occurs when a person is gardening or knitting.

The above explanations refer to various levels of consciousness. There are no rigid boundaries setting one level from the next, the levels tend to blend into each other and can generally be defined as:

Levels of Consciousness

Alert

Mental and Physical Characteristics

- 1) Normal intellectual functioning
- 2) Normal reflexive and motor responsive

Light Trance

- 1) Relaxation of the body
- 2) Slowed breathing and pulse
- 3) Withdrawal into self
- 4) Direction of attention to imagined activity, dialogue or event

that may be possible or impossible

Moderate Trance

- 1) Loss of awareness of surroundings
- 2) Closed eyes
- 3) Increased awareness of internal functions, such as heartbeat or breathing
- 4) Increased receptivity of senses
- 5) Intensified imagery
- 6) Literal interpretation of speech.
(If asked, 'would you lift your arm?' you would answer 'yes')

Deep Trance

- 1) Further reduction of activity and energy output
- 2) Limpness or stiffness of limbs
- 3) Narrowing of attention
- 4) Increased suggestibility
- 5) Illusion of senses possible
- 6) Loss of auditory receptivity and environmental awareness
- 7) Heightened function of creative process

Sleep

- 1) Suspension of voluntary exercise of limbs
- 2) Reduction or absence of conscious thought
- 3) Oblivious of the environment



It is essential that the concepts of the conscious or subconscious mind be fully understood as this forms the basis of hypnotherapy. It is in the interplay between the modes of functioning that the hypnotic trance occurs. When reference is made to the conscious mind, this course refers to your present or current awareness. Your conscious awareness is relative to the total amount of information that your nervous system receives and processes.

Example

Think of the conscious mind as a narrowly focussed bank of awareness that can be directed on whatever you think is presently important. It's like a beam of light from a flashlight that can be directed through a large, darkened room. As we change the direction of the beam, different parts of the room can be seen — parts that had always been there, but had previously gone unnoticed. Sometimes you may forget about the rest of the room, remaining narrowly focussed on only what is lit and thinking that is all there is. When you think about who you are, you necessarily engage in conscious processing by thinking that you are only who you think you are. **No matter how we think of ourselves, we are more than that.**

If the conscious mind represents your current awareness, then the subconscious mind represents everything else. The terms ‘conscious’ and ‘subconscious’ minds really refer to the functions of the ONE mind. Therefore, what is commonly referred to as the conscious and subconscious minds are the functions that you associate with them.

Your nervous system may be receiving up to two million bits of information per second. This information is almost completely outside of your conscious awareness. In addition to this, everything you have seen, heard, felt, smelled, tasted and said to yourself, is recorded in some way in your subconscious mind. Milton Erikson referred to it as ‘the storehouse’ of all your memories, beliefs, identities, values, and other filters that delete, distort, and generalise the information you receive.

It’s also the storehouse for your autonomic functioning. Your so-called ‘autonomic nervous system’ would generally fall within the sphere of your subconscious mind. It contains all of your habitual patterns — anything that you do automatically. This includes sensation and perception, emotional responses, respiration, digestion, and on a micro level, the biochemical functioning of all of the above, as well as the endocrine and immune systems.



Each mind and its related functions have inherent value in and of themselves, yet the two functions also combine in a mutually interdependent, co-existing system.

When the founder of modern hypnotherapy, Milton Erikson, was asked the question why he used hypnosis and what hypnosis was, he replied: “The hypnotic state is a state in which the client pays attention to what is really, immediately important, and disregards information that isn’t immediately important. In a hypnotic state, you may not be aware of your right foot, you may not be aware of your right arm, or that you’re wearing a watch. You can just forget about that. You can forget about your left arm, you can forget about what you had for breakfast. You can forget about anything that is up here on the board while you’re listening to what I’m saying. What’s important about the hypnotic trance is that you’re capable of paying attention to what is immediately important so that you can access memories and resources that you have long since forgotten.”

The conscious mind — You are using this mind at this moment in time to comprehend this course of study. This mind is constantly employed in learning, writing, communicating and in all your daily activities and, on occasion, it does tend to become tired and ‘overstretched’, resulting in a feeling of being ‘burnt-out’ or ‘brain-dead’." In such a situation enthusiasm for any project or job in hand is drastically reduced and it becomes difficult, sometimes impossible, to learn, store, recall and remember anything, let alone achieve a state of peace of mind.

This is a sign that you are doing too many things wrong and certainly not enough of the right things. Your life is not under control, you are not getting what you need to motivate you, and you most definitely are not enjoying life as you should be. You are in too much of a hurry all the time. You will never attain peace of mind until you become still and you will never feel real enthusiasm until you begin to do the right things.

The centre of the conscious mind is the **ego**. The ego works without thought and the ego accepts whatever it is confronted with — without question and without thinking. Each and every person's mind functions in this manner, so this can have a great psychological bearing if you are seeking to employ the "act as if" philosophy.



Utilise psychology in "acting as if" — Dress like a king, act like a king, feel like a king and you will be treated like a king.

The subconscious mind — This is the reservoir wherein lie all the reasons for your inhibitions, fears and hang-ups. Of major importance to the successful application of mind power is the ability to draw the causes of these inhibitions to the surface.

In professional terminology this is known as psychoanalysis, but its practice goes back way before Freud as the philosophy of "Gnothi Seauton" — Know Thyself. This was as important to the sages of Ancient Greece as it was, and still is, to the mystics of Tibet and India who would not contemplate their feats of endurance without this self-knowledge.

Example

In Tibet, where self-knowledge is necessary for spiritual attainment, a Yogi in his meditation will start from where he is and then retrace in his mind every single action that he performed that day. Then he will retrace all the actions made the previous day, going further back throughout his life. In this way, it has been said, after many years practice the Yogis can remember right back to the moment of birth.

In essence you can do the same thing by asking questions and gathering information about your childhood. All relevant information appertaining to your upbringing can be processed so that you may find out if your fears and inhibitions are in some way related to childhood experiences.

Psychologists have found the strongest possible evidence that inhibitions are formed in early childhood. Should the child be chastised instead of being gently encouraged, then trouble begins and fears and inhibitions become firmly rooted forming a basis for what was once known as an inferiority complex and is now called an inadequate self-image.

If you are afraid of going out and meeting with or talking to people — then this is what you must do. Not all at once, but gradually, one step at a time. Just as the racing driver who, following a crash, is told to get back behind the wheel as soon as possible, you must confront your fears in the same fashion.

If you take the necessary time to strengthen yourself through meditating in solitude, stillness and silence, you need have no fear of the outcome for you are guaranteed a safe clear path through the power of the mind.



Your subconscious creates, computes, conceives, plots, plans and never makes a mistake. It is the mind that you use least, but rely on most. Because of all the noise within your minds and around you, you never hear it.

The subconscious mind knows and recognises your predominant desire, and when it is fed the relevant facts, assimilates them and organises them into an infallible plan to enable you to attain whatever the predominant desire happens to be. When it has completed its task of computing the facts, it brings the result into the conscious mind in the form of an idea.

Should you feed into your subconscious mind negative thoughts of fear and failure, poverty and ill-health, the subconscious mind will loyally carry out plans for the realisation of such thoughts. Should you, conversely, maintain an input of positive thoughts of success, happiness etc., then the subconscious mind will create plans necessary to the attainment of such goals.



Your subconscious mind gives you exactly what you ask for. This is exactly what **Emerson** meant when he wrote, "**be careful what you set your heart on, for it will surely be yours.**"

The psychologist, William Moulton Marston, would get people to rehearse in their mind's eye. If a client came to him seeking advice on his or her career, he would advise them to visualise themselves in the position or post they required. His wisdom embraced the philosophy of "**Rehearse the future as you would have it be.**"

It is imperative that you can see your desires clearly in your mind's eye (imagination), be they material or intangible goals. In solitude, stillness and silence, meditate and visualise whatever it is that you desire to be or long to possess. Supercharge your subconscious with the thoughts, emotions and images surrounding your desire and the belief that you are, you do, you own.

The subconscious mind, as with a computer, can only work with the data to hand. If you eat, drink, talk and visualise doom, gloom, disaster and failure then the subconscious mind will build and create plans at this level. The language of the subconscious mind is repetition of images. By feeding it mental images of the things you desire, you give it the data, the material it needs to use as a basis for its creativity.

END OF MODULE 1

The information contained in this lesson is based on Hypnosis principles practised in many countries. Hypnosis is a complementary healing practice and should be used in conjunction with normal medical treatment. Hypnosis should not be taken or construed as standard medical diagnosis or treatment. For any medical condition, always consult a qualified medical doctor. Do not discontinue any prescribed treatment without consulting your doctor. Neither the author nor the College may be held responsible for any action or claims resulting from the knowledge gained in this module.