

# How to hypnotize yourself

## 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 asleep. Ensure you will not be interrupted for 20-30 minutes during the hypnosis.

## 2. Relax using a hypnotic induction

Close your eyes and take a few deep breaths, relaxing your muscles from head to toe with each out breath. This is a common technique known as progressive muscle relaxation. Focus your awareness upon any tension stored in parts of the body, and release tension sequentially. 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.

## 3. Introduce a suggestion

In the focused and relaxed state of hypnosis, you can pay deeper 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
- 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. Keep it really simple to start with, you could start with affirmations such as:

- I accept myself for who I am
- I am confident and assertive when speaking to others
- I feel calm, confident and relaxed

## 4. Return to your usual level of alertness

After providing the suggestions, take a few more deep breaths, and then you can start to bring your awareness back into the present moment. 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.