

Deep hypnosis (Somnambulism – Latin for ‘sleep walking’)

- Ten percent of individuals can experience this state.
- Person can open eyes and walk around.
- Amnesia and disassociation of the body can be experienced.

Left/Right Side Brain

It is said the brain is the computer and the mind is the energy that allows the brain to operate. Two hemispheres divide the brain – the left side is termed as being *analytical*, whilst the right side is *creative*. Figure 1.1 illustrates the different activities or functions that are carried out in the two hemispheres.

<u>Conscious Mind</u>	LEFT	RIGHT	<u>Sub-conscious Mind</u>
Analytical			Creative
Logic			Recognition
Reason			Rhythm
Mathematics			Visual
Reading			Imagery
Writing			Synthesis
Language			Dreams
Analysis			Symbols
Ego			Id
			Emotions

Figure 1.1

Conscious

- That which we are aware of at any time – focussed attention.
- Reasoning aspect of thinking, e.g. questioning and testing.
- Can think of 7 things plus 2 or as little as 5 at any one time, e.g. body temperature, chair attributes if sitting, hardness/softness of floor/shoe, pictures of magazine, headache, coldness of hands etc.
- When the conscious is overloaded stress and anxiety occur.

- When the overload becomes too much the conscious switches to the sub-conscious.

Sub-conscious

- Everything learned and experienced is held here.
- Solutions to problems/issues originate from this area.
- ‘Unwanted baggage’ is housed in the sub-conscious.
- Feelings and emotions are used as forms of expression.
- Works in imagery (pictures).

We can distinguish between the conscious mind and the sub-conscious mind, but until circa. 1965, it would not have been suggested that these activities are located in specific parts of the brain.

There is now growing evidence that the conscious mind is located in the left hemisphere of the brain, and the sub-conscious mind is located in the right hemisphere. It does not mean we have two different brains, but that the brain activities vary within the two hemispheres.

The main distinguishing attribute being that the activity of the right brain tends to work as a whole, global in nature and experiences a whole image. The left-brain, however, tends to be linear; part for part or step-by-step. Both these activities are essential in our existence as human beings.

From Figure 1.1, it is obvious that words occur in the left-brain, in the conscious mind, along with reasoning. The right brain is the seat of emotions, imagery, rhythm and visual impressions. When we talk of a state of mind, reference is made to the state of the right and left-brain, and the way the two interact. Between the right and left hemispheres of the brain there is a bundle of nerves called the corpus callosum. The corpus callosum acts as both a barrier and bridge between the two hemispheres.



FACT FILE: The adult human brain weighs more than 1,360g and it is estimated to contain 12 million neurons or nerve cells.

Hypnosis, then, is a procedure that creates a state in the left-brain, a state in the right brain and puts the two activities in harmony, so as to create an altered state of consciousness.

When a hypnotic procedure is used, we are communing with the right brain (the subconscious mind) by means of words (the use of the conscious mind). The process of a hypnotic induction is a means of achieving a pathway from the left-brain to the right brain. Once this bridge is formed, the hypnotic state can be deepened and utilised.

Hypnotic trances can further be described as follows:

1. *“Hypnosis is a super relaxed state with enhanced susceptibility to suggestion.”* (Desplace, P, one time Chairman, Hypnotic Foundation of Australia)



FACT FILE: In Genesis : 2v21 it states: *“So Yahweh God made the man fall into a deep sleep.”*

This is hypnosis in action. It is however interesting to note that nowhere in the Bible is reference made to the fact that the man woke up.

2. The ability of an individual to direct the whole force of nervous energy into a smaller number of nervous channels reducing the synaptic resistance and facilitating the passage of nervous energy. (Eysenk)
3. An unusual state in which the mind concentrates on immediate thoughts disregarding surrounding stimuli.

Hypnosis is a normal physiological altered state similar to, but not the same as, being awake. But also similar, though not the same as, being asleep and is produced by the presence of two conditions:

1. A central focus of attention
2. Surrounding areas of inhibition

The state of hypnosis in turn produces three things; an increased;

- concentration of the body
- relaxation of the body
- susceptibility to suggestion.

In hypnosis the physical implications are that it allows the left and right brain to harmonise both chemically and electrically. Hypnosis is a technique for causing the brain to cycle down into *alpha* without going to sleep. In *alpha* the sub-conscious mind is open to suggestive input.

In achieving an altered state of consciousness the brain releases endorphins as it produces alpha waves. Released in sufficient quantities, the endorphins can cause a state similar to anaesthesia of the body and a coma like state of mind that is different to sleep.



TUTOR TALK: Therefore, in this course we will think of hypnosis or the hypnotic trance as being in an altered state of awareness. An altered state of awareness is by definition a state that is different from the normal, waking state.

Hypnosis is biologically similar to the hypnagogic state (the transition from waking to sleeping), the hypnopompic state (the transition from sleeping to waking) and the dream state. There is a considerable body of research indicating strong similarities between hypnosis and dreaming in EEG activity, cortical and sub-cortical simulation, and neurotransmitter activity. In fact, the underlying mechanism from dreaming (rapid eye movement sleep) continues to operate through the entire waking state represented as ultradian cycles. Humans are always cycling through biological rhythms that make a trance a naturally occurring state. Recognising hypnosis as an everyday phenomenon makes it far more accessible to the everyday person.

Post-hypnotic Suggestions

Whilst in a hypnotic state instructions are given to the individual to either change or eliminate a behaviour. The term ‘post-hypnotic’ means after hypnosis has occurred. Post-hypnotic suggestions are suggestions/directions given by the hypnotherapist to the client for actions/behaviours to be exercised thereon after the session has ended. The two types of suggestions include:

1. Elimination

In this instance, behaviours/habits are removed, e.g. smoking, over-eating, nail biting etc. When removing a behaviour, the ‘hole’ needs to be filled or the habit replaced by an ego strengthening instruction, e.g. take away ‘smoking’ – replace with suggestion of ‘healthy lungs and taste becoming more intense’. If a void is left, the client will refill it with negative beliefs, which will lead on to negative actions.

Examples of ego strengthening instructions include:

“You feel more alert... more wide awake...and more alive with energy.”

“During this deep sleep... you notice your confidence levels increase. The more you sleep in this deep sleep... the more confident you are...and nothing can eliminate this incredible confidence.”

“Every day... you will feel a great sense of well being... a great security within yourself... that you have not felt for a long, long time.”

“You love exams... each time you think of taking exams... your ability to recall information increases. Exams mean you can recall information easily and effectively.”

2. Installation

New positive habits are installed, e.g. feelings of relaxation, assertiveness and confidence. It is important for the hypnotherapist to install suggestions that are what the client needs rather than what the person believes they want. The instructions also need to be realistic and achievable. It is not a good idea to suggest the client will lose a stone in weight a week, rather it should be suggested between two and four pounds, depending on their current weight. The two or four pound weight loss can act as a goal setting exercise for the client, an exercise in which they can measure whether they are achieving their weekly goal.

Background to Hypnosis Explained

Every culture has used hypnosis in one form or another. The earliest evidence of its existence was found among shamans, who were also referred to as witch doctors, medicine men or healers. In Africa the sangoma (witch doctor) plays an important role in the community and tribal healers are recognised by the government as a legitimate healing organisation.

The Ancient Civilisations of Egypt, China and Tibet abound with references to the deep sleep. As a result of Western traders' explorations in the East, the practice of hypnosis was introduced to the West from the East in the 18th Century.

It was Mesmer (1733-1815) who made use of the hypnotic trance in curing medically diagnosed ailments, and brought hypnosis to the attention of the medical fraternity and the general public. Franz Anton Mesmer was a flamboyantly dressed Austrian doctor, who recognised the ancient healing phenomenon of hypnosis and incorporated it into a theory of Animal Magnetism (description provided further in text).

Mesmer's consulting rooms were typically dimly lit and hung with mirrors. Soft music broke the otherwise deep silence. The doctor's patients sat in a circle around a vat, which contained elements such as powdered glass or iron filings. The patients held onto iron rods that came out of the vat and were supposed to transmit the curing force. Mesmer believed that an Acosmic fluid could be stored in inanimate objects, such as magnets, and transferred to patients to cure them of illness.