Interested in Hypnotherapy?
Get the Facts

What is Hypnotherapy?
Hypnotherapy is a very normal and natural altered state of consciousness, one we all experience from time to time in which the mind remains clear, alert and focused. Have you ever become completely absorbed while watching TV, or driven to work on auto pilot? That’s the same kind of altered state as hypnosis. Some misconceptions about hypnosis are that it’s a frightening or eerie state, or that it feels very weird, but it’s actually very normal and pleasant. Some people even ask if they’ve really been hypnotized after undergoing hypnosis. This occurs because hypnosis feels much like a relaxed state, where one has full recollection of what transpires.

How does hypnotherapy work?
Hypnotherapy works by utilizing the innate power of the unconscious mind. The conscious and the unconscious minds are connected in a symbiotic relationship. The unconscious mind follows the instructions of the conscious mind when there is a relationship or rapport between them. In other words, the unconscious mind is the servant of the conscious mind and chooses to follow those instructions that are given in a clear, concise and consistent manner. The problem that many people experience is that their conscious mind gives inconsistent or ambiguous suggestions that confuse the unconscious mind. When this happens, the unconscious mind is then forced to operate out of previously held patterns of behavior, not understanding the new instructions. When a person uses hypnotherapy to give suggestions to the unconscious mind, the unconscious mind can understand the new instructions clearly and will happily follow them. The act itself brings about a rapport of harmonization between the two and empowers the connection in a way that allows for maximum results.

How does hypnotherapy feel?
Since hypnosis is a natural state of mind, it is not unlike a state of deep relaxation that you experience before sleep, when you first wake up in the morning or when you watch a movie that has you totally engaged. Many people describe their experiences differently, so there is no set standard for what you will experience when you are in trance. Some describe a feeling of lightness like “floating” while others report feeling heavy and some report a euphoric sensation, almost like being intoxicated but without negative side effects. Some even report feeling nothing unusual at all but achieve their outcome nonetheless.

How do I know if I can be hypnotized?
Everyone can be hypnotized. In fact, we each enter into a trance state on a daily basis. Any time your attention is so engrossed in a task that you are familiar with, you are in a light trance. Your unconscious mind is engaged whenever a complex task has become so familiar that it has become automated. Driving, for example, actually engages the unconscious mind because operating the pedals, steering the wheel and shifting gears consciously is too complex a job for your conscious mind to do alone. And because you have become proficient at this complex task, you have given the
vast majority of the task to the unconscious mind so that you are free to concentrate on other things, such as your destination and paying attention to other cars around you so that you can drive safely.

**Does a hypnotized person ever give up control?**

Never. If someone were to say, “I’d like you to relax and take a deep breath” and you went ahead and did that, you would be the one to decide to do that, wouldn’t you? If someone said “now I would like you to imagine a beautiful scene where you feel safe and comfortable”, is it not your choice whether or not you do so? And when your unconscious mind accepts suggestions, it likewise chooses according to its desire to make those changes that will increase your personal power and well-being. In other words, all hypnotherapy is self hypnosis and requires that you choose to follow the instructions of the hypnotherapist which is an act of self-control. You are always in control and can choose to accept suggestions or refuse them. All the suggestions that are offered are designed for your specific needs and desires to achieve the result you choose, which is an act of total self control.

A good hypnotherapist assists his/her clients in making positive changes that support their overall well-being and personal power. Never at any time does a hypnotherapist attribute the change to him/her self. All change comes from within the patient. The patient is therefore always responsible for whether or not they actualize the change. This understanding prevents any kind of unhealthy bonds of dependency from forming between the hypnotherapist and the patient. In realizing all behaviors and change are unconscious and that all hypnotherapy is self hypnosis, the dependency or inter-dependency that is formed is always and only between the client and their own unconscious mind. The client then realizes that function of the hypnotherapist is only to assist the client in utilizing the resources within themselves.

**Indications for hypnotherapy**

Hypnotherapy has been well studied in the medical literature for conditions such as functional abdominal pain and irritable bowel syndrome. Through “gut related imagery,” patients are able to help alter their visceral sensation and perception and allow for a greater sense of control of their symptoms. Several reports detail that up to 80% of patients reports some degree of symptomatic improvement through these techniques.