
HOW MUCH DO YOU KNOW ABOUT HYPNOTISM?

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"If you happen to fall into the power of an evil hypnotist, you might not only lose your fortune, but you might perhaps be his slave the rest of your life." This statement is not true, and I am going to try to explain why, and maybe clear up a few facts about hypnotism.

There is a legend that hypnotism was first used on Adam, when Eve was formed from his rib, but of course this is only someone's daydream. There is, however, an Egyptian papyrus that dates back to 1,500 B. C., stating how the Egyptians used a form of hypnotism (Wickware 1941), so this shows that hypnotism is not anything new.

The first great modern hypnotist was Frany Anton Mesmer who lived in 1778. Then George du Maurier wrote a book entitled *Trilby* in which Svengali, a hypnotist, makes a beautiful young girl his slave. Of course this book is fiction, but it terrified the world, and people became curious to see a hypnotist. Stage shows began traveling around bringing with them a hypnotist, who, with the mystic power, would put people in a trance and have them make fools of themselves. Many of these so-called hypnotists could not hypnotize at all, but merely had an accomplice who acted as if he were asleep. The people knew they were being tricked. Thus, false hypnotizing plus making fools of the people aroused a general public suspicion and fear of this strange power. Then it was in 1862 that Jean Martin Charcot found a use for hypnotism by using it to quiet hysterical persons.

The things that a subject will do while he is in a trance are numerous. For instance, one man was told he was freezing and he shivered and shook when it was really a hot day in August. A subject can be made to believe he is a certain age, and he will remember everything he did at that age. One man was regressed first to eight years old, and he soon was playing cops and robbers. Then down to four, and he had a tea party. At the age of nine, he misspelled "laboratory" and "vaccination," but when he was awakened, he spelled them perfectly. Another man was told a bottle containing ammonia was sweet-smelling perfume, and he breathed it deeply. No faker could have done this and kept a straight face. The subjects may also be made to see imaginary things or hallucinations.

Hypnotism is divided into two classes, informal and formal. Informal hypnosis is practiced every day over the radio when the announcers recommend their products. Formal hypnosis takes place when a person is actually put in a trance by the power of suggestion. There are many ways that this may be done, such as by staring at a coin, eyes, or a spot on the ceiling, but in almost any case, the hypnotist is talking in a monotone and suggesting sleep. One of the best solutions of hypnosis is that the mind has a conscious and sub-conscious part (Luttinger 1946). The conscious mind is always in control until it is distracted; in this case it is concentrating on sleep. Then the subconscious mind takes over. It is so used to taking orders from the conscious mind that it automatically takes orders from the hypnotist. The subconscious mind has the same morals as the conscious mind, so a subject would do nothing against his morality. Anyone can be hypnotized except a moron, although no one can be hypnotized against his will. Some unconsciously refuse though, so actually about one out of five can be hypnotized easily.

Also, everyone could be a hypnotist. An inexperienced hypnotist, though, often puts himself to sleep instead of his subject. Some people can remember what happened to them in their trances, while others have to be hypnotized again to remember.

One use of hypnotism in medicine is that it may be used in place of an anesthetic. If a subject is told he will feel no pain, he will not. Andrew Salter, a living hypnotist, says a quarter of mankind can save themselves pain if they will only confide in hypnotism (Time 1941). A pastor who practices hypnotism as a sideline hypnotized a housewife for an operation because anesthetics made her sick.

Hypnosis can also be used to cure mental sickness, by revealing forgotten incidents in the subject's life which had unconsciously been preying on his mind. One girl was afraid of water and when she was in a trance, it was learned that when the girl was small, her baby sister had nearly drowned in a tub of water. This made the girl resolve to stay out of water. Then when she was older, a man threw her in the water to rid her of her fear, but it frightened her worse. When the girl was awakened she was reminded of these facts, and she began to realize how foolish her dread was.

Something more recent in the field of hypnotism is the post-hypnotic suggestion. This is suggesting to a sleeping subject that he will carry out

the command when he awakens, and he does it, not knowing why (Griswold 1942). A woman was told when she awoke she would be very hungry and there would be something in her left shoe. When she awoke, she commented on her hunger, and took off her left shoe to see what was in it. One man was given a post-hypnotic suggestion, and fifteen minutes after he woke up, he kissed his dog. A hypnotist once told a college student that when he awoke, he would not be able to see his friend who was standing right in front of him. The boy wondered where his friend had gone. Then the hypnotist told the subject a hat could hang in mid-air, and after he placed it on the head of the friend, the subject actually thought the hat was floating (Griswold 1942). The student was awake all this time, too. One hypnotist informed his sleeping subject that when he awoke, his hand would keep moving back and forth. Sure enough, it did. The hypnotist even talked to the boy about other things, but still the hand kept moving. Then he was told to quit, which he did. The hand would have quit anyway after a few hours. It is easy to see how the post-hypnotic suggestion can aid the medical profession. It can be used to cure alcoholics, smokers, stutterers, nail-biters, and sleep-walkers.

Andrew Salter (Wickware 1941) gives his subjects the post-suggestion of hating liquor, or cigarettes and when they awake, they find no desire to indulge. Of course this wears off, and it usually takes around ten treatments to cure a subject entirely. Women following diets can be made to despise chocolate sundaes and other rich foods, and instead they will have a craving for such things as lettuce. Salter has failed to reduce only one lady—who did not want to dislike chocolate so she quit going.

Mr. Salter has no opposition from the medical doctors; in fact he has worked on fifteen M.D.'s.

Now a person can be given a post-suggestion of feeling no pain, and he can sit in the dentist's chair painlessly even though he is not in a trance at the time (Time 1941).

By a man's refusing to shoot himself while in a trance, it is understood that no person will do anything endangering his life or against his morals. The superstition of being put to sleep and not waking up is also false. A person will wake up after a few hours even if the hypnotist dies while the subject is in the trance. The person usually comes out of the trance into natural sleep as one does with an anesthetic.

In 1943 hypnotist Howard Klein was called to hypnotize a German captain in order to learn vital information. Since no one can be hypnotized against his will, Klein did not let the German know what was happening. They learned the information. This would be a great help in time of war

but it might not always work. Hypnosis could also be used to cure fatigue, hunger, noise, and other things the soldiers have to go through. Some believe that Hitler used a form of hypnotism on the German people to make them fight.

In London some men were hypnotized by looking into a television apparatus (Time 1946). This could be one of the dangers of hypnotism, for an evil man could have hypnotized England in such a manner, so England has passed a law forbidding hypnotists to broadcast over television.

But that does not seem to be enough, for on October 4, 1941, Howard Klein on Hobby Lobby hypnotized some people over a loud speaker while he was in another room (Griswold 1942). The people's room was sound-proofed, because the radio staff would not let him hypnotize over the air for fear the radio audience would go to sleep. People driving cars might be put in a trance and have a wreck, resulting in lawsuits. The experiment was much safer conducted off-stage, but it did prove that people could be hypnotized by the radio. A good radio announcer who can hypnotize could send his listening audience running down the street yelling for soap chips.

Now, Andrew Salter has come up with one of the newer things in hypnotism. This is selfhypnosis. Salter says (Wickware 1941) anyone can put himself to sleep if he tries hard enough. He was twenty-four years old when he got this idea but no one would back him on it. Finally he managed to get the good will of a doctor who gave him a list of alcoholics, stutterers, and nail-biters. Salter contacted these people and taught them how to put themselves in a trance. They would need help at first, but soon they could go to sleep instantly. Salter wrote an article on self-hypnosis and letters came pouring in asking him to help them. The patient tells himself that he is going to sleep and will do whatever he demands. In other words, he delivers orders to himself. By this method a person can convince himself that he feels no pain when he burns his hand. People will not have to keep making frequent and expensive trips to the hypnotist, but can cure their bad habits by themselves. The only danger of this, Salter believes, is that a person might stop some pain from bothering him when he should see a doctor about it. Self-hypnosis leaves no dangerous after effects though.

Another mystifying fact about hypnosis, is that while one is in a trance, he has a keen sense of hearing. A subject can hear a pin drop 100 feet away. Also, boys and girls while in a trance, can explain the meaning of the dreams which they have had (Science News Letter 1942). Hypnotism seems to affect not only the mind, but the whole nervous system. One subject was cut in two places, and she could contract her veins so as to stop either cut from bleeding, even though the cuts were on the same arm (Mannix 1947). A person might be able to keep himself from bleeding to death by going into a trance and contracting his veins.

Of course, hypnosis is also an aid in the actor's world. A traveling salesman was told he was Hamlet, and he remembered the lines from when he read the play in highschool. He was a better Hamlet than John Barrymore. Self-hypnosis has had some use in Hollywood in making pictures.

It all sums up into the facts that through the use of hypnosis, a person can: keep himself from feeling pain; remember anything that he has ever done, seen, or thought about in his life; make himself like or dislike certain foods or drinks; and stop himself from bleeding. It is easy to see that hypnotism, the mystic power that has for so long a time baffled the world, is rapidly becoming a useful tool in medical science.

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