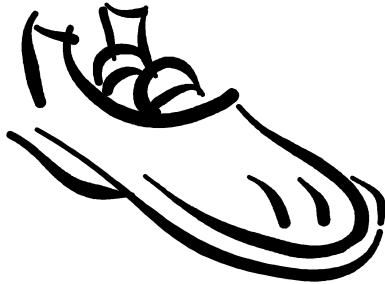


Hypnotherapy & the Gym



Hypnotherapy combines hypnosis (trance) with cutting-edge research on how the brain works to set up mental and physical changes in how we think and act. Modern neuroscience has estimated that up to 90% of our behaviour is in fact generated unconsciously. The mind, our thoughts, are hugely powerful and since the mind and body are intrinsically connected, how we think and feel has great impact on how we behave. Therefore questions such as how motivated we are to succeed in the gym, how we cope with any difficulties and problems that come up, how we remain positive, how well we actually make what we want to happen physically, are all issues that can be greatly helped by hypnotherapy.

Trance is a natural state we go into when we are relaxed or on 'auto pilot' – ever wondered how you got from your house to work? – since your mind has 'switched off'. Nevertheless, the 'switched off' mind is still in control. It does what the traffic lights say, you still get on the train/bus. In the same way the deeply relaxed hypnotherapy client remains in control at all times, but because the hypnotist has calmed and relaxed their mind, they are receptive to new ideas on how to improve their motivation, deal with problems, increase the power of positive thoughts and actually make their goals happen.

Our beliefs can either limit, hold us back, or enable, take us forward. We all have both sets of beliefs. For example:

Limiting belief: “I’ve never been any good at that”

Enabling belief: “I can learn how to do that”

Limiting belief: “Mistakes mean I’m a failure”

Enabling belief: “Mistakes are just feedback that can help me improve”

Limiting belief: “I’ll look stupid if I fail”

Enabling belief: “I’ll give it a try; what is the worst that can happen?”

Hypnotherapy can alter, change, existing beliefs and embed enabling, positive beliefs in the deeply relaxed and receptive mind of the client.

The power of having positive thoughts is an essential component of success. When you have a positive thought this impulse causes the brain to release serotonin, the ‘feel good’ chemical that gives you the feeling of happiness and wellbeing. Such thoughts are transmitted from one brain cell to another. If however, the thoughts you are having are negative, the chemical triggered is cortisone, which gives you a feeling of sadness and depression, limiting the flow of positive thoughts and ideas. This explains why 2 people can look at exactly the same situation: a packed gym and one person thinks “Oh my God, so many people, they will all be looking at me, I will look so stupid” and the other “ Whow! So many people! All this enthusiasm and energy, this is going to be great!” So it is psychologically true that we all make our own world – in our heads.

Hypnotherapy can set up new, different, positive thoughts which in turn lead to success.

Dealing with pain is another area that hypnotherapy is particularly successful in assisting with. As a double cancer survivor, who had major surgery that has left me in constant pain, I can personally state this to be true. Since drugs numb the brain, making a normal life difficult, I discovered in hypnotherapy an empowering tool that keeps me in control, since it provides effective methods of dealing with pain, anxiety and stress. Hypnotic Interventions such as:

- Creating an ‘anchor’ - the memory of a deeply peaceful/joyful experience that you can recreate in your mind in a moment

- Methods of changing the colour, shape and texture of the pain
- Fooling the brain into thinking that all is well and you are not in pain, by blocking the 'flight or fight' responses to stress
- The creation of a positive phrase e.g. "I can do this"
- Creating deep relaxation, which by its very nature, gives you the opportunity to be calm and peaceful, creating a state of mind in which the power of pain is greatly reduced

So it is the case that the techniques and relaxation of hypnotherapy can greatly improve our mental state, which leads to greatly improved motivation, the ability to deal with any problems or difficulties and the reduction of pain, anxiety and stress. It increases the positive, empowering nature of our thoughts and therefore the actual degree of success we have, all of which creates a new, enhanced performance in the gym.