

PAIN MANAGEMENT

Pain does not exist.

Do I have your attention?

Pain is not an entity, and object or a thing. We can't pick it up and say, "This is it." Pain is not the tumor or the skinned knee.

What we refer to as pain is the perception of stimuli, both physical and emotional. Pain serves us and saves us. It warns us of impending danger, it reminds us that we have to care for and maintain our physical and emotional selves. It could accurately be said the pain is a good thing. Pain is the alarm system, which we need to survive: *Hey! Look at this! Pay Attention!*

Before we use hypnosis to manage pain, we have to consider the obvious question: what message is the pain delivering? This is very important. We don't want to mask a signal which is trying to tell us something. Consult your doctor and discuss your intent to use hypnosis or ask for a referral to a hypnotist. A hypnotist can assist you to achieve a level of relief and build in suggestions for maintaining the relief through the use of self-hypnosis.

When the physical symptoms of injury or illness continue beyond the initial warning, the physical message loses its import, and we experience emotional strain. This strain contributes to and even increases the discomfort we are already experiencing. This is suffering. Pain is one component of suffering. Another component of suffering is fear or anticipation of further discomfort. Fear of the pain itself can make us more susceptible to the pain, which increases the suffering....,etc.

When symptoms become chronic (stress, pain, depression, etc.) we may begin to feel that our lives are out of control. What really happens is that we often **give up** control....to doctors and therapists or whomever we believe can make the suffering stop. When they fail

to relieve our symptoms, we feel we are beyond control and lose hope. Hypnosis can definitely help us to regain a sense of control and cope with the situation. The nature of the pain or suffering and our degree of motivation will determine the extent of our relief.

Secondary Gain

When we live in constant distress, we begin to adapt. This is not to say that the adaptation is positive, or that we “get used to it”, merely that as human beings we adapt. The manifestations of our adaptation will of course vary, but often we will begin to use our situation to our advantage. When we are suffering, we get more attention, people put up with our crabbiness, they make excuses for us and we can get out of doing things we wish to avoid by blaming our discomfort. We profit by our discomfort! We naturally say, “I would do anything to be better,” and we mean it, but...would we miss the attention? This is completely normal but we must be aware of the influence these hidden motivations exert on our efforts to improve. Pain causes us to tense our muscles. The tension reduces the circulation, which impairs the healing process and of course increases the pain by reducing our ability to deal with the emotional aspects of it. So it is clear that relaxation is our first line of defense.

Use Your Senses

Imagery is often useful for pain management. Allow yourself to sense the area of discomfort. I say “sense” because the way you perceive the pain, whether as a shape, colour, sound, vibration or any combination of the senses is the right way for you. Don’t force it; just let it come, and when you have the image in mind use your imagination to alter any aspect of the image. The alteration does not have to be dramatic. In fact the small subtle changes are more effective, as you can realize immediate success, which encourages further success. Remember your breathing; we can use it to “blow away” or “cool” the fiery pains.

Sunlight or moonlight may fade the colour or intensity of the glowing, throbbing pains. You may find that imagining a safe place, free of pain, works best for you. I stated earlier that pain could be considered a **good thing**. Thank your body for giving the warning

and tell it that you are aware of the situation and no longer need the alarm. Listen to your inner self. You have the answers within. All pain is real whether we can explain the cause of it or not. If we experience it, it is real. By the same logic, if we perceive pain we can alter our perception of it so that it no longer interferes with our lives.

The most important of our senses when dealing with pain management is **common sense**. If there is **any** question about the cause or nature of the pain, see a doctor! The body uses pain as a warning message:

DO NOT IGNORE THE MESSAGE!

What is Hypnosis?

Hypnosis is a method by which we can alter our state of awareness, allowing us to focus upon issues or ideas of our choosing. Hypnosis is a tool which we can utilize to enhance or enable whatever we set our minds to accomplish. We can use this tool to build self-esteem and confidence, add clarity and a sense of control to our lives. In the hypnotic state we can access the subconscious mind to implement, at the most effective level, the changes we desire.

Imagine the mind and body as a computer, with storage, retrieval and operating systems which we use in measuring, evaluating and directing all we do. Consider the conscious mind as our input device, the subconscious mind as the hard drive with the programs running, the critical faculty as the link between them. If the input isn't in accord with the program which is running, the critical will not allow it to be connected-sorry, wrong number.

To facilitate effective change in our lives we must alter the programming, to accomplish that, we bypass the critical faculty of the mind.

**Hypnosis is the bypass of
the critical faculty of the mind!**