

YOGA TM MAGAZINE

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LOVE, LAUGH, LEARN

**KEEP YOUR
NEW YEAR
RESOLUTION WITH**
hypnosis



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KEEP YOUR NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS WITH HYPNOSIS

Words: Drake Eastburn

It's that time of year again, when thoughts often turn toward starting the new year with a positive change. Perhaps you want to be rid of an old habit, or you want to drop those few extra holiday pounds, or maybe it's time to address that annoying pandemic weight gain that has been hanging on for the past couple of years. No matter what it is that you want to change, hypnosis is your friend. Habits reside in the subconscious mind and as hypnosis is one of the most powerful ways to impact the subconscious mind, it is the logical choice for those desiring to successfully keep their new year's resolutions.



HYPNOSIS – THE KEY TO PERMANENT CHANGE

Habits are created through repetition. No one became addicted to smoking with the first puff of a cigarette, nor did fast food become their downfall with just one Big Mac. Likewise, you didn't become comfortable driving a car the first time you slid behind the wheel, nor did you become a gym rat the first time you did a workout. By repeating a behaviour, we create a habit, whether it is good for us or not. Hypnosis is the key to resetting your brain, it is the doorway to permanent change.

SUBCONSCIOUS PATTERNS BECOME HABITS

The subconscious mind operates in patterns; these patterns become habits. Once we have created a pattern—positive or otherwise—the subconscious mind continually repeats it, and it does so with no volition. The subconscious takes what I refer to as the path of least resistance, and the subconscious basically runs on autopilot. Unless we correct it. When we try to shift a subconscious pattern through conscious willpower, we are likely to fail; using willpower is stressful and is a short-term strategy which is not meant to run our lives. The conscious mind can handle up to seven things at a time, and the closer we get to those seven, the less effective it becomes at juggling them.

For example, it's one thing to focus on losing weight, but if we get bogged down dealing with personal or professional commitments, relationship issues, family obligations,

financial woes, or other stressors, our desired focus is quickly crowded out of the forefront of our mind. Overwhelm, which is what occurs when we try to consciously address too many things at once, causes our willpower to give way; when this occurs, our old patterns reemerge, and the subconscious resumes its comfortable path of least resistance. You have experienced this if you have ever tried to break a habit and failed. It is a well-established fact that when the subconscious mind and the conscious mind are in conflict, the subconscious—which is simply larger, and by its very nature always “on”—will win every time. Hypnosis can change all that.

"The power of the mind is enormous, and hypnosis is one of the most valuable tools available to access that power and keep those New Year's resolutions once and for all!"



HYPNOSIS CAN HELP

Simply speaking, this is how it works. Hypnosis makes use of the subconscious mind which is where these habits reside. Anytime we create a subconscious pattern, we are creating a neural pathway. Hypnosis is a powerful tool that can rapidly and efficiently create change in the brain. In establishing a new neural pathway, we create a new behaviour; in turn, this new behaviour becomes our normal behaviour. In other words, we keep our New Year's resolutions and successfully attain our desired change.

MAKE THE SUBCONSCIOUS WORK FOR YOU

To achieve your goals, you may elect to work with a professional hypnotherapist, but there are also several hypnotic techniques you can implement yourself. To be successful with any change, it is helpful if you have a goal in mind. Perhaps you have a family reunion or class reunion coming up, or maybe you are going on a cruise, or there is a wedding that you want to look your best for. Or maybe you want to achieve a certain level of fitness for your own wellbeing. Whatever it is, becoming relaxed and imagining yourself meeting your goal is most helpful, and it is essential to maintain these successful goal images with consistency. The more you maintain the desired results in your awareness, the more the subconscious will work in your favour.

Make your images so believable and so real that it is as if your desired result has already occurred. This is what I refer to as foregone



conclusion, or presupposition, and as the subconscious mind is goal-achieving, this is an invaluable practice. Your inner self-talk should be present tense—as if what you desire is happening right now. There is no past or future in the subconscious mind, so you must communicate the future in present tense—again, as if it is happening now. Also, you don't want to think in terms of maybe it will happen, or I'm hoping it will happen, but rather commit to the shift you

want and trust your subconscious to create this reality. Another beneficial way to put your subconscious to work for you is to visit the achievement of your goal as you drop off to sleep. As we drift off to sleep, we enter what is known as the hypnogogic state. This is a natural state of hypnosis that we enter very easily, and it is a time when the subconscious is particularly receptive to positive suggestions and images. So, practice achieving your goal as you drift off to sleep each night.

DON'T THINK OF A PINK ELEPHANT



What happens when we try not to think of a pink elephant? A pink elephant instantly appears in our mind, and we then need to erase it. With any habit change, like stopping smoking, we must not imagine ourselves not doing whatever it is we want to release. The subconscious mind responds to visual information (a form of transderivational search), to what we see, whether we deliberately bring it forth or intend to not see it (there's that pink elephant!). If we create images of being at our goal weight or fitness level, for example, this is what the mind will respond to. These are what are referred to as transformational suggestions. We are giving the subconscious a suggestion that it can move toward, or what we call toward motivation. If I were to say, imagine yourself as not overweight—the mind can't imagine a not-something so therefore experiences the overweight you because that is the image it can create.

THE SOLUTION

If you can't imagine yourself not smoking, what can you do? What you can do is create images of success that preclude being a smoker. What is it that you will gain by being free of the tobacco habit? Perhaps you would like to do some extensive hiking in the mountains, or how about those thoughts of running a half-marathon? Maybe you want to scuba dive (it's hard to keep a cigarette lit under water), or perhaps you want to live long enough to walk your daughter down the aisle. We can easily imagine these activities occurring without cigarettes, and in so doing, the subconscious mind becomes focused on what we do want. It will then help us achieve the desired outcome, even though it is not stated directly. This is the hypnotic technique known as indirect suggestion, and it is the solution to pink elephant syndrome.



ENGAGE ALL THE SENSES

Imagining yourself on that sunny beach with your new fit, healthy body is great, but it's even more effective when you include your other senses. Notice how the sun feels on your skin, listen to the sounds of the seagulls or the waves rolling into shore, breathe in the scent of suntan lotion, taste that piña colada. The more we make use of all our senses, the more we anchor the expectation of success, the reality of having achieved our goal. Imagining your healthy body at the beach is one example of how to engage the senses, you can take it and apply it to whatever change you desire.



THE POWER OF THE MIND

Hypnotherapy is a mind-body process, and it is considered rapid change therapy. Therapeutic hypnosis—working with a professional hypnotherapist—is solution-focused, and sessions are designed to communicate with your subconscious mind and effect the change you desire. Hypnotherapy goes beyond do-it-yourself hypnosis and is especially helpful in complex scenarios or when self-hypnosis methods just aren't enough.



Photo credit: Tim Gillies

Drake Eastburn is a Board-Certified Hypnotherapist, co-founder of Eastburn Hypnotherapy Center and the Eastburn Institute of Hypnosis, as well the former Director of Education for the School of Integrated Hypnotherapy. He is a sought-after author and the official hypnotist to

the U.S. Olympic Cycling Team due to his highly-regarded work in sport hypnotherapy. With more than 40 years experience in hypnotism, he is on a mission to educate people on the reality and impact of hypnosis. Together with his wife Lynsi, Drake also teaches foundational classes in hypnosis through their institute in Colorado and globally. The training includes advanced methods such as Regression Therapy, Resolving Repetitive Body Focused Behaviours (trichotillomania, nail biting, skin picking, etc.), and state-of-the-art smoking cessation. His passion for sports led him to professionally work with athletes from almost every sport, including football, golf and cheer. over the past three decades. As one of the most prolific authors in contemporary hypnotism, Drake has written seven books on the subject, several of which are used in hypnotherapy training globally.

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