

Hypnosis & Meditation

What's the difference?

An idea that takes root in the subconscious mind has no capacity for reasoning and must be discharged in a motor action – whether it's a good idea or bad idea.

Essentially every single word uttered to a subject in a hypnotic state, such as those experienced in any meditative or relaxation yoga practices, may result in the uptake of a post-hypnotic suggestion and thus influence that individual's action. Therefore it's of the utmost importance that everything said or thought during any yogic practice should not only be thought out thoroughly beforehand, but tailored to be only positive and beneficial.

What exactly is hypnosis?

First of all, it's important to highlight that there is no such thing as a 'special' state of hypnosis. It's a very ordinary phenomenon that we pass in and out of several times every day. That blurry place between sleep and awake, and any time in fact you are engrossed in an activity such as work, a hobby, long-distance driving and of course hatha yoga, meditation and relaxation practices – where eternal stimuli are mostly blocked out. A hypnotic 'state' is just a feeling of being relaxed coupled with a heightened state of awareness, all of which is brought about by suggestion or auto-suggestion. In fact it's often said there is no such thing as hypnosis – only suggestion.

What's the difference between hypnosis and meditation?

One definition of meditation is the absence of all thought – to just be. If a person is mulling over a problem during meditation, they are actually thinking and therefore no longer meditating in its truest sense. Hypnosis, on the other hand, is to have a specific thought to effect a desired outcome, 'I've got to stop smoking, lose weight', or for stress management, pain management etc. In hypnosis, just as in guidance meditation, the hypnotist may take you down a path, but instead of just suggesting a stroll through beautiful scenery, the hypnotist skillfully uses suggestion to achieve predetermined goals – for example reduce exam nerves, stop nail-biting or develop confidence. So as you can see, if someone is participating in a guidance meditation, the guide is also suggesting that everyone should see this, hear that and experience, with as many senses as possible. Some people may smell the flowers, feel the breeze, even hear sounds in this internal picture, while usually also deepening relaxation and lowering anxiety levels – albeit short-term. Clearly this is no different in concept from the hypnotist's scripting, bar the actual suggestions themselves and resultant behavioural change.

So, hypnosis is just another word for relaxation. It's what you do or think about when you are in this state of relaxation that differentiates between meditation, hypnotherapy and daydreaming. Both hypnosis and meditation are an allowing process. No one can force you into hypnosis. Otherwise hypnotists would already rule the world – by simply obtaining your bank account number for their financial benefit and having you run around like a chicken for their entertainment! Similarly, in guided meditation, no

one can make you go down the paths and smell the flowers if you don't want to. It's an all-too-common misconception that hypnotists can 'control' your mind. Stage hypnotists are just very adept at selecting the more outrageous wannabes from an audience, whose very personality type is such that they are looking for any opportunity to be the star of the show, however 'silly' they may be made to look. Both hypnosis and meditation can be used for the better good of the individual. You may quite simply need to decide which word sits more comfortably with you. If meditation is a more palatable word for you, then by all means meditate! However, if you need more guidance or the mere mention of the word meditation brings up thoughts of rigid discipline that sends you screaming into the night, then by all means go find a well-qualified hypnotherapist.

Emotional release

So what about the common experience of emotional release in yoga classes? You may have experienced or seen people crying their hearts out, or experienced sudden deep feelings of sadness, for example, during

people
magazine
July 2008

For more information on yoga visit the
Africa Yoga Federation (AYF):
www.yoga.org.za

For more information on hypnosis, visit
the South African Institute of Hypnotism:
www.hypnotherapy.co.za

Celeb Hypnosis & Meditation

MANY Hollywood stars have used hypnosis to lose weight, stop smoking or get rid of another bad habit.

Samuel L. Jackson, Drew Barrymore, Ben Affleck and Matt Damon stopped smoking because of it, and Fergie quit biting her nails and stopped a meth addiction.

Here we see how some of our favourite celebs have used hypnosis to solve their problems!

- Said Ben Affleck on *The Oprah Winfrey Show* after his hypnosis treatment: "I finally decided to quit smoking when I found out I was going to have a child. That was the thing the sort of put it over the top for me. I decided to go to a hypnotist. You sit in a chair and the hypnotist sips water and just talks to you for an hour, and explains how nicotine is poison. All of a sudden I thought, 'This is asinine that I've been doing this to myself for all these years'. My last cigarette was on November 10, 2005 and I feel a huge difference in my health now that I don't smoke. I feel like I'm in better shape than I was five years ago."

- Talk show host Ellen DeGeneres had famous hypnotist Paul McKenna on her show. He helped her quit smoking using hypnosis and NLP techniques. She said three days later: "I feel so good. I feel healthier! It seems ridiculous but my skin looks better - I feel healthy, I feel really good."

- Lily Allen managed to go from a size 12 down to a size eight, thanks to hypnosis. The singer slimmed down with the help of Susan Hepburn, an accredited hypnotherapist and psychotherapist who charges approximately \$600 (about R4 800) an hour to implant subconscious messages into clients' minds, reminding them to stop eating when they feel full. Said the star: "After the hypnosis, I want to go to the gym every day, otherwise I feel really bad. I just want to get more toned and healthy. I'm really good about everything at the moment - I've never been happier."

Courtesy of www.makeyourgreatlife.com and www.fafarazzi.com

Former *Isidingo* star Emmanel Castis was recently hypnotised on *3Talk*. We asked him his thoughts on the experience. "It was a very light form of hypnosis. I was aware of certain things, yet I had no control over my actions. I would like to do a deeper hypnosis treatment in the future though - I strongly believe in it. I thought it was awesome."

Lindsay Lohan and Jessica Alba are just some of the stars who underwent meditation at some stage. Lohan, who had meditation during her time in rehab at Utah's Cirque Lodge, says that it 'changed her life'. The *Mean Girls* star said she had too much pressure on her shoulders and that she had to check into rehab to be 'happy'. "If I get stressed out I say a serenity prayer. I meditate, too." Adds new mom Alba: "I think there's something to be said for herbs and meditation and things like that."

Courtesy of www.usmagazine.com and www.teamsugar.com



yoga and meditation - or just as commonly on the treatment table during a massage. Well, essentially, these situations all induce a relaxed and therefore natural hypnotic state, which allows bubbles of emotion to break the surface. It's a bit like a fizzy drink: you shake it a bit and bubbles come up and pop as emotion and tears! But each and every time you shake that drink in the state of hypnosis those bubbles will be unstoppable. If you've experienced this, it demonstrates just how close to the surface those emotions are within you. No doubt it's usually a very conscious and exhausting effort for you to keep those bubbles held in check the rest of the time. This experience is a huge wake-up call.

Pure hypnoanalysis and meditation

The other form of hypnotherapy, Pure Hypnoanalysis, works differently to suggestion therapy. Instead of putting suggestions into the mind, it removes problems from the mind. So it's especially beneficial and life changing for those with anxiety-related problems. In fact, as an insight into oneself, Pure Hypnoanalysis has no rival. If you are on a search for deeper self-knowledge as most yogis are, then you would do well to surrender yourself to the process of analysis.

Pure Hypnoanalysis utilises this powerful natural phenomenon of hypnosis to allow a person to locate the reasons they're stuck in certain thought patterns, behaviours, reactions, or beliefs about themselves. Once the problem is found and cathartically 'let go', the mind is then permanently freed from those troublesome paths of thought or unconscious forces surrounding the thing inside, out of the subject's control, and can once again release its normal, natural, efficient and healthy functioning.

