Welcome to Week 3

Choosing a Hypnotherapist

**So many hypnotherapists so who is right for you?**

I can take a guess that if you are here on my blog it is because you are thinking about visiting a hypnotherapist for a course of treatment. You might be wondering how to choose as there seem so many out there. Unfortunately (in my opinion anyway) anyone can call themselves a hypnotherapist, so you do need to be careful.

**Safety first so choose someone on the CNHC register**

First thing is to do is make sure you are safe. So make sure your hypnotherapist is registered with a professional regulator. In the UK this would be the Complementary and Natural Healthcare Council (CNHC). You can find out more about them at <http://www.cnhc.org.uk/> and check if the hypnotherapist you want to see is registered with them.

If you are outside of the UK look for someone who belongs to an organisation which has an ethical code, a complaints procedure and requires that its members have a recognised and externally validated qualification. (that means a government recognised or academic body says this qualification is good).

Also check the hypnotherapist carries professional insurance.

**Aim for a specialist hypnotherapist**

Then aim for a specialist. You are likely to get a much better service if you go for someone who has real expertise in their field. You might check out whether they have

* Extra qualifications in their speciality
* Have written articles
* Have written books
* Have support products (such as recordings) which you can access

**Talk to the hypnotherapist: do you like them?**

Then comes the really important bit. Phone them up, talk to them and find out if you like them. A hypnotherapist can be incredibly skilled and well-qualified and a fantastic person but just be not right for you.

Rely on your instincts. To get the most out of a hypnotherapy session you will need to have a good rapport with your therapist and this is so much easier if you feel you would get along.

**Ask for a recommendation**

If you don’t think you would work well with the first person you ring do not feel afraid of saying so and asking for their recommendation. If they are a successful professional, they will not mind this at all. And you will get some good advice because they will know who else is good in their area of expertise and locality.



The Unconscious mind

People who come to see a hypnotherapist often ask what is the unconscious mind? Well there have been a fair few books written about that and I’m not going to give you a lecture. But some pointers might put your (conscious!) mind at rest if you are thinking of coming to see a hypnotherapist like me.

**Your mind’s filters**

We all know that a lot (even most) of what we do we don’t really think about. Think about it – you get up, dress, go to work and a lot of this you do as habit, without consciously thinking about it.

Or here is another startling fact which is startling and obvious at the same time! Every second of every day you are being bombarded with information. Uncountable amounts of stuff is flowing in through your senses all the time and you are, unconsciously filtering it so you can make sense of it. Here’s a little thought experiment – you are bored and looking out of your office window, you don’t really notice anything until A BIG BRIGHT BLUE BIRD flies past. The bird was unusual, different, interesting so your filters noticed and called your attention to it. You notice the unusual, the dangerous, the fun, the routine and the boring will often be filtered out.

**When this goes wrong**

Another thing which can happen is when the filter system goes wrong in some way. Often this can take the form of a fear or a phobia. You see, say a spider and you go into overdrive. No matter how much you tell your conscious logical mind there is no real danger your unconscious mind is in the driving seat and it feels as if there is nothing you can do.

**Hypnosis and the unconscious**

Serious work on how the unconscious mind functions took off when Sigmund Freud started writing. Since then many theories and developments have been made.

For us hypnotherapists we believe that the process of hypnosis, which will relax your whole body and as a result of this will mean your brainwaves slow down and your brain becomes more able to accept new ideas and learning, enables you to take control over these thought patterns.

This can be great if you have a problem, such as that fear of spiders we have already mentioned, but it can also help you function better even if you are functioning pretty well to start with. So perhaps you speak in public and you do it quite well but it takes it out of you, you are nervous. In hypnosis I could make some suggestions which would get you into a place where you would actually enjoy public speaking. How good would that feel?