Welcome to Week 5

Can I get stuck in trance?

If you put me into a trance will I get stuck?

The short answer to this is no, and I didn’t put you into trance, you did this for yourself, using the power of your mind and you are in control.

But, I do understand why you want this question answered as the experience of trance, or hypnosis, can feel so different from everyday life that it might feel a bit scary.

Actually, because you are more relaxed in hypnosis it usually feels very pleasant. I notice with some clients it feels so pleasant that they do not want it to end. Well, that’s fine, I can always say to that client – soon I’ll teach you how to do this for yourself and then you can experience this lovely state as often as you want.

When you are ready to come out of a trance then I will use a variety of techniques to bring you back to ordinary consciousness and if you use self hypnosis you can do the same. These techniques are gentle and natural and will leave you feeling relaxed and refreshed.

So you can use a simple counting technique. I will say (or in self hypnosis you can say to yourself,) I’m going to count from 10 to 1 and with every number I will become more aware of my immediate surroundings and by the time I get to I I will be fully awake.

Or I will use the story I have been telling you and bring it to a natural end, and again you can do this for yourself. So an example might be - you have experienced a strong visualization where you have been walking through a wood and have stopped at a stream which runs through that wood. By looking into that stream, and perhaps even changing it in some way, you have addressed some issues which have been holding you back or upsetting you. You are now ready to return to everyday reality. So imagine that you stand up, walk alongside the stream and notice the wood beginning to thin out. Everything is getting brighter and the trees are getting fewer, and you are coming out of your trance. By the time you are out of the wood you are fully aware of your everyday surroundings again.

You will get the most out of your experience if it ends gently at the point where you feel you have done enough to address those issues. You will often somehow know this at a deep instinctual level.

I hope this has given you some information to put your mind at rest. If you are thinking of seeing a hypnotherapist then it is a good idea to raise this question with them. An experienced hypnotherapist will make you feel secure on this point. If they do not shop around until you find someone who does.

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The difference between the conscious and the unconscious

The conscious and the unconscious mind – a nice description

I really liked this description taken from a Canadian site Ayrmetes, set up by NLP practitioner and hypnotherapist Marisa Broughton. She took it from Training Trances by John Overdurf & Julie Silverthorn. (Overdurf J 1994). I am going to adapt this into various forms to give to my clients. I have already made it into a small leaflet but am also going to record it for the benefit of clients with an auditory lead modality and eventually make a multimedia version (with video and sound) which I will keep on the computer in my therapy room.

The conscious mind is only aware of 7 + or – bits of information at a time.
The unconscious mind is aware of everything else.

The conscious mind is sequential. It likes logical order
The unconscious mind processes simultaneously. It multitasks.

The conscious mind is logical. It likes things to make sense – have a reason.
The unconscious mind is intuitive and can make associations of information easily.

The conscious mind is linear thinking. It thinks in terms of cause-effect.
The unconscious mind makes associations and connections between many thoughts, ideas and feelings.

The conscious mind seeks answers to “why”?
The unconscious mind knows why.

The conscious mind does your intellectual thinking. Is responsible for your self-talk.
Your unconscious mind does your perceiving and feeling.

Your conscious mind is associated with the waking, thinking state.
The unconscious mind is associated with the dreaming (including day dreaming), reflecting, meditating and sleeping state.

The conscious can voluntarily move parts of your body.
The unconscious can involuntarily move parts of your body.

Your conscious mind is only aware of the now.
Your unconscious mind is unlimited in time and space. It holds all your memories and future constructs.

The conscious mind seeks understanding of problems and reasons that if it understands them, it can make them go away.
Your unconscious mind decides what it will do about it. It can forget (amnesia), distort (make false associations) or break connections (get over it).

The conscious mind is deliberate.
The unconscious mind is automatic.

The conscious mind is verbal (including self-talk).
The unconscious mind is nonverbal (feeling).

The conscious mind is analytical.
The unconscious mind is literal.

The conscious mind is the place of cognitive learnings and understandings.
The unconscious mind is the place of experiential learnings.

Your conscious mind uses the intellect to come up with logical solutions for problems.
Your unconscious mind can access internal resources from memories of experiences, linking them all together - creating a resourceful state.

Your conscious mind will tell you when you're right because the facts line up.
Your unconscious mind will tell you when you are right because it will feel right.

Your conscious mind has limited focus.
Your unconscious mind has unlimited focus.