

Self-hypnosis helps individuals use their talents

By Patty Pryor

Self-hypnosis can be the key to success in a variety of self-improvement programs, according to a UNL junior who practices the technique.

"Hypnosis is more or less helping the individual in using his own talents," said Dwight Groth, a special science major from Lincoln.

Groth offers UNL students a self-hypnosis program designed to improve concentration and academic performance through a series of taped exercises costing \$40.

"I don't hypnotize people," Groth said, "but it's easy to hypnotize yourself."

The tapes provide instruction and suggestions to induce a hypnotic state, during which the subconscious is opened up to further suggestion, Groth said.

"The key is to open up the subconscious," he said, "so it can take in suggestions easier."

"I look at the subconscious as a computer, and we can just program into it."

Relaxation plays an important part in opening up the subconscious, Groth said.

If the mind is in an intensely relaxed state during hypnosis, he explained, the suggestions and triggers just flow into the subconscious easily without any mental obstacles.

The program Groth offers includes five different tapes which he said produce this relaxed state by a variety of methods, including one called the "elevator of relaxation."

In this method, he explained, the tape counts from one to five, as the "elevator" descends into an increasingly relaxed state, with suggestions for self-improvement coming in along the way.

Visualizing a scene

Another aid in relaxation is called

visualization, Groth said.

This involves simply visualizing a relaxing scene, which is then plugged into the subconscious, where it can be stored to serve later as a trigger for relaxation in a stressful situation, such as taking a test.

"One of the best uses (of hypnosis) is for relaxation," Groth said.

Some studies have concluded that 20 minutes of hypnosis is equal to four hours of sleep, he said, because of the intense relaxation it produces.

Groth's program is geared toward acquiring study habits and test-taking abilities. This is done through general self-help techniques, such as increasing concentration, motivation, relaxation and self-confidence.

"It's not going to teach you the material," he said. "It helps eliminate the fears and anxieties."

"I'm concentrating on self-improvement," he added.

Of the three responses to the program he's had so far, one client is using self-hypnosis for help in losing weight, Groth said.

The program should consist of half-hour sessions twice a day for about three weeks, he said.

At that point, Groth said, an individual should be able to hypnotize himself without the use of the tapes.

"Hypnosis is inherent," he said. "Learning it is mostly a discipline, just learning the format. Once you know the steps, it's real easy."

Daydreaming

"A lot of people say they've experienced something like it (the hypnotic experience) before, but they never called it hypnosis," Groth continued. "It's called daydreaming instead."

Self-hypnosis means learning to induce this daydream-like experience, he said, and take it further, for useful purposes.

Fall shots urged by medical group

September and October are the best months to get flu shots, the Nebraska Medical Association says. Many times people wait until later in the season to get their shots. Often shots cannot be given when a person has already been exposed to influenza or is not feeling well.

The vaccine is changed periodically and people must be revaccinated each year.

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A good imagination is important to successful hypnosis, Groth said, which makes an analytical thinker a poor subject.

"You need a positive attitude and an open mind," he said, "and the confidence that it can do something for you."

Although he gives no guarantees, Groth estimated that 75 percent of his subjects are hypnotizable.

A common misconception about hypnosis is that it is a state of deep sleep, during which you are under someone else's power, he said.

Hypnotic twice a day

Actually, most people pass through a hypnotic state twice a day, when first waking up and first falling asleep, he explained.

Hypnosis is not addicting, Groth said, and there has never been a case involving a subject who hasn't come out of a hypnotic state.

A hypnotist does not have to be licensed, he added.

Groth began his study in hypnosis while living in Los Angeles last spring.

He attended a seminar at the police academy where his uncle, a hypnotist who holds a master's degree in psychology, is in charge of hypnotic investigation.

Although not well known in Nebraska, hypnosis is a growing field, Groth said.

Both Harvard and the University of Pennsylvania medical schools teach hypnosis, he said, and some hospitals have used hypnosis as an anaesthetic.

Some estimates, he said, predict that by 1990 every major medical school in the country will have a hypnotist on its staff.

"We're just starting to get into it for personal use," he said.

"It's a healthful thing, and anything healthful becomes popular, so I think in the next five to 10 years, it'll really catch on."

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