Hypnotherapy and Cognitive Behavioural Therapy

Clinical hypnosis and cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) is used conjunctively in a myriad of therapeutic interventions ranging from smoking cessation to stress and anxiety linked conditions to drug and alcohol issues to obesity to irritable bowel syndrome.

The concept of ‘faulty learning’ which underpins CBT can be addressed directly through hypnotic suggestion. Once the hypnotic state is induced, suggestions (using the patients specific language) are directed towards the required behavioural changes.

An example of the integration of cognitive behavioural therapy and hypnotherapy can be most easily seen with a smoking cessation program where the change of behaviour is established using cognitive behavioural principles and then reinforced through hypnotic suggestion. The methodology is:

1. establishing the behaviours the patient want’s to change
2. establishing the new desired behaviours
3. using hypnotic suggestion to reinforce the patient’s desired behaviours

This process can be extrapolated to encompass various interventions and specified to exact patient requirements. Obesity issues can be addressed in similar fashion. If the patient wants to change eating patterns, hypnotic reinforcement can be used to institute the new patterns. More advanced hypnotherapeutic techniques (eg Ideomotor Questioning) can be implemented to further enhance the therapeutic process.

As illustrated hypnotic interventions can enhance existing CBT interventions. Should you require additional information the Hypnosis Advisory Line can assist on (02) 9415 6500. An article ‘What is Hypnosis?’ is available (amongst other articles) at www.aah.edu.au/publications.htm for further information.

References:

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