

## A Method for Self-Hypnosis

by Bruce L. Ross MA, LMFT

Have you ever driven down the freeway, lost in thought, and actually gone past your particular exit and perhaps a few more exits as well? Or, have you ever gone to the beach on a delightfully warm day and decided to open your favorite book for some reading only to find yourself having read the same paragraph or sentence over and over again without quite being able to remember what you had just read? These are both common examples of the process of self-hypnosis, for it is believed that all humans and many animals naturally and normally experience the hypnotic state.

Many of my clients find that with a little practice and effort each day that they can achieve many of their goals within a brief amount of time by using the technique of self-hypnosis. Hypnosis, or self-hypnosis, directs and mobilizes your innate, inner resources toward any intended goal or outcome by way of appropriate, positive suggestions. And, as I mentioned in my last article, it isn't important for your unconscious mind to know exactly *how* you are going to accomplish your goals. It is only important to be as specific as possible as to *what* it is that you intend to accomplish. Once your unconscious has accepted your specific suggestions it will act both quickly and thoroughly to actualize your intended outcomes.

There are many, many ways of using the technique of self-hypnosis and most people are only limited by their own imaginations. Common goals that are sought are; stress reduction, relaxation, increased productivity, enhanced performance (athletic, public speaking or presentation, etc...), weight reduction, smoking cessation, control of pain, improved sleep, recovery from illness or surgery, increased self esteem, wealth, etc... In a future article I will describe a technique called **anchoring** which is an effective procedure for describing in detail your particular goals and is designed to be used during the process of self-hypnosis. Until then try familiarizing yourself with the technique of self-hypnosis.

*The key to successfully attaining the desired state of trance is to practice every day (at least 10 minutes) at as close to the same time each day as possible until it becomes a recognizable pattern by the unconscious mind. Once the pattern has become familiar to the unconscious portion of your mind you will have an easier time going into trance and will experience deeper states of trance more quickly.*

### Method

- 1) Sit comfortably in a chair (arms and legs uncrossed) or lay down and close your eyes.
- 2) **Eye Roll** - with your eyes closed roll your eyes up toward the top of your head until you feel a *gentle* eye strain and then let them relax.
- 3) Take two deep breaths and then resume breathing normally and, as you do, suggest to yourself that with every breath you take, you are breathing more and more slowly and becoming more and more relaxed.
- 4) Imagine relaxing all of the muscles in your body starting with your feet and going to your head or vice versa. Suggest feelings of warmth, heaviness, lightness or a tingling sensation. Notice which of these sensations is the most pronounced and encourage it to grow to whatever level feels comfortable for you.
- 5) Begin to visualize a **special place** in nature that allows you to feel most relaxed, refreshed and without cares or responsibilities. Actually see yourself there and encourage any and all

sensations (sounds, smells, feelings, emotions, images, tastes, etc...) that help promote this awareness.

6) End your session by counting down from 3 to 1 and suggesting feelings of being relaxed, refreshed and being completely awake and alert.

### **Suggestions;**

- There is no right or wrong way of achieving the hypnotic trance state therefore, whatever works for you is perfectly alright - experiment.
- Soft, rhythmical music will enhance and promote the self-hypnotic process.
- This process needs to be practiced to ensure best overall results.
- **It is important to remember that trying too hard or forcing the process is always counterproductive to the results that you are after.**