



Are you Addicted?

By Helen Hart – Clinical Hypnotherapist, Reiki Master and Relaxation Coach

Have you ever tried to quit anything ‘cold turkey’? It can be hard, very hard and in fact many people find it impossible to quit some of the most common addictions such as smoking and alcohol. The reason a person becomes addicted to something can be complicated. In many cases when using hypnosis to treat addiction, the treatment recommended is hypnosis combined with other forms of therapy that will assist in treating the underlying causes of the addiction. Common causes of addiction are genetics, mental health concerns, environmental considerations, abuse, low self-esteem, stress and some substances in themselves are highly addictive.

Addictions come in many forms. When you hear the word addiction, most people think of cigarettes, alcohol or drugs. However, there are many forms of addiction including, sugar, gambling, food, games and internet, shopping and even work (I might have this addiction)!

Let’s set the record straight, right from the start. Hypnosis cannot make the change for you. You still have to put in the work...but...it can assist by making that process of ‘quitting’ a lot easier on you. **‘Tell me more’** I hear you say. **‘How does it work?’**

‘It is not about taking away and leaving you with a huge void in your life’

It is a very simple and relaxing process. In short, through hypnosis we **cut the triggers of your addiction and replace it with something that you desire**. The reason for the success of hypnosis in assisting with addictions is because it is not about taking away and leaving you with a huge void in your life. It is about breaking the habit, taking away the emotional charge associated with that addiction and replacing it with something desirable. The replacing is a very important aspect to the success of hypnosis.

So, let’s break it down into steps:

Breaking the Triggers of Addiction

‘getting rid of the emotional charge towards the addiction and the reasons for the it’

Through hypnosis we can help with addictions by getting rid of the emotional charge towards the **addiction** and the reasons for it. Let’s take smoking as an example. Hypnosis works by breaking the triggers or neural pathways in the mind that make you reach for the cigarette. So let’s say you use smoking as a reward for getting through your day or as a break from work or to help you when you feel stressed. Hypnosis can assist you by breaking down the connections of those pathways. We are constantly creating patterns in our brains called neural pathways (which are the signals in our brains). The more we do something the more that pathway is reinforced and the faster and faster and more permanent those signals become. So, the more often we reach for a cigarette or a block of chocolate as a reward or when we are stressed or just to make us ‘feel good’ or belong, then the more we reinforce this pattern. Hypnosis can help by breaking down the connections of those pathways and create new pathways, reinforcing a pattern that works better for us.

Creating the Desired Patterns

‘lay the groundwork for the new patterns and then you must go out and live it’

In essence hypnosis can assist in creating the wanted pathways. Once we have cut the triggers or the reasons for the addiction in the first place then we can begin to create those wanted patterns and pathways in the mind. So as you see, through hypnosis we lay the groundwork for the new patterns and then you must go out and live it. By reinforcing these desired pathways in your brain, you make these new patterns stronger and stronger and pretty soon the old habits or addictions are a thing of the past. If you want your new pattern to be drinking water or eating healthy, then your reward will be that you will start to feel terrific in a short period of time. This in turn creates endorphins, the feel good chemicals in our brains, and further enforces the desired pattern.

So how does hypnosis work?

'you get to sit back and have a lovely relaxing experience while your subconscious mind is put to work.'

Hypnosis is a gentle, non-intrusive therapy. In short, you get to sit back and have a lovely relaxing experience while your subconscious mind is put to work. Our conscious mind keeps us safe and as a result once it creates a pattern it continues with this pattern over and over therefore reinforcing the pattern. However these patterns can become outdated and begin to cause us damage or hold us back. By accessing the subconscious mind we can change these patterns to ones that work for you now.

We start by relaxing your mind, which will establish what is called a trance state, whilst your conscious mind continues to think about whatever it likes. It could listen to me talking or take you on a relaxing journey, wherever it wishes to go. While your conscious mind does this, the trance state allows your subconscious mind to become more accessible - this is the key to making lasting changes! The word trance can make some people nervous but there really is no need to be concerned. Our mind goes into this state all the time, when we sit and zone out watching the television or have you ever driven somewhere only to arrive not quite sure how you got there? This is when your mind goes into a trance state. Your mind is your moral centre so hypnosis cannot make you do anything that is against your morals. Nor can it access your private thoughts.

Want to know more about how hypnosis can help you?

Contact Helen Hart www.helenhart.com.au 0409682429 or helen@helenhart.com.au

Or join Helen for her weekly relaxation class: <http://www.helenhart.com.au/#!news-and-documents/c20d9>