

MINDoverMATTER

Whether you're suffering from physical pain or mental obstacles, hypnotherapy may be the key to unlocking your power to heal yourself.

I recently went through some major changes in my life that left me in a state of emotional flux. Old insecurities resurfaced and, for a long while, were my waking companions. Looking for help, I visited Dr Casey Chua, senior hypnotherapist and founder of the Hypnae Center.

EL: What is hypnotherapy, and what are its uses?

CC: Hypnosis is a heightened state of relaxation and suggestibility; hypnotherapy is the use of hypnosis in a therapeutic environment. Accepted by the American and British Medical Associations, it is used to treat a plethora of disorders including weight issues, anxiety, low self-confidence, and even physical pain. Surgery patients, for example, who cannot receive anaesthesia, may opt for hypnoanaesthesia, which allows them to undergo surgery in a fully conscious state with no sensation of pain.

EL: How many sessions are required to produce results?

CC: This depends on the condition being treated. For minor issues, results can be achieved in one 45-minute session; clients with more severe problems, however, may require repeated visits. I generally see my clients between four and ten times.

EL: What do people experience while under hypnosis?

CC: While clients are fully aware and in control at all times, they usually experience spatial, sensory and time distortion, which can cause a floating or sinking feeling, numbness in their extremities or the feeling that the session lasted only minutes.

After our discussion, I decide I must experience this therapy for myself.

Dr Casey turns on some tranquil music and begins to talk me into the 'theta' state of relaxed awareness, which sits between the 'delta' state of sleep and the



'beta' state of being awake. My eyes close and I begin to float weightlessly; random thoughts flutter through my head. I can hear Dr Casey's soft, calm voice beside me, "You will gain more peace and confidence as each day goes by." I feel like I am on the cusp of sleep, meandering through the hallways of my mind. I am aware of my body, my surroundings and Dr Casey, yet there is a sense of detachment. "Open your eyes when you are ready," he instructs.

I slowly blink open my eyes, and the room comes into focus. Dr Casey asks how I feel.

How do I feel? It's as if I've emerged from a deep sleep or meditation, rested and calm. I have a sense of clarity that has long been absent. I feel at peace with myself.

Dr Casey smiles knowingly. He explains that after 27 years of practising hypnotherapy, it is still rewarding to see his clients regain happiness and start to appreciate life again.

by Mai Chi Tran

The Hypnae Center is located at Camden Medical Centre and Tanglin Shopping Centre. Contact them on 6732 4741 or visit www.hypnae.com for more information.