



Introduction

This simple self-hypnosis routine is designed to help you relax and to enable you to make positive changes in your life by using suggestions, affirmations and visualisations.

There is a possibility that you may feel sleepy or drowsy for a few minutes afterwards. This is completely natural and will subside after a very short time which means however, that you should avoid driving or using machinery until you are back to full normal alertness.

If you practice self hypnosis in bed late at night you can give yourself suggestions for a night of deeply refreshing unbroken sleep as well as other positive suggestions. At any time if you happen to fall asleep whilst doing self hypnosis, you will awaken naturally and refreshed.

Preparation

Find a **place to relax** where you can be comfortable and have a good chance of being undisturbed. You can sit down or lie down as long as you are comfortable.

Decide on some **positive suggestions** and /or **visualisations**, which you will make to yourself later. Some examples might be:

- ◆ "Each day I am more positive, relaxed and self confident in my ability to cope with anybody and any situation I encounter in my daily life.
- ◆ "As the days and weeks go by I believe more and more in my own unique blend of talents and abilities."
- ◆ "Every day my determination to achieve my goals grows stronger and stronger."
- ◆ "As the days go by I am becoming more calm and optimistic about the future."

Whichever you choose, or better still make up for yourself to suit your own particular circumstances, should be repeated several times each time you practice self hypnosis (preferably daily).

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Creating your own positive suggestions:

- ❖ *Use the present tense* - install an idea into the subconscious mind as if it has already been achieved. E.g. "I am confident and relaxed"
- ❖ *Be positive and avoid negatives* - rather than "I will not be anxious when presenting to others" suggest "I am confident and relaxed when presenting to others"
- ❖ *Choose one area at a time* - select a specific topic for self-improvement at a time and avoid suggestions covering multiple areas e.g. for weight management and stopping smoking.
- ❖ *Use as much detail as you can* - include as many aspects of the desired behaviour as you wish. E.g. "As I begin to talk my audience I take a deep breath and enjoy presenting to them in a confident, vibrant and friendly manner."
- ❖ *Use straightforward and stimulating language* - try to incorporate words which convey positive energy to your subconscious mind such as 'vibrant', 'powerful', 'radiant' etc.
- ❖ *Affirm activity* - structure suggestions to encapsulate your action and your behaviour, not your actions. E.g. Rather than "I have the ability to understand others" use something like "My family and friends co-operate with me because I understand them and care for them."
- ❖ *Be accurate* - If it is possible to measure the desired outcome then make the suggestion as precise as possible. E.g. "..... get rid of XXlbs in weight by XX date."
- ❖ *Be realistic* - Make sure your suggestions are achievable. If they are not it may be difficult to visualise and achieve your goals and you may become frustrated.
- ❖ *The change is in you* - Make suggestions for changes in attitudes, behaviours and emotions in yourself. Do not suggest changes in others. Changes in others may occur as you change.
- ❖ *Symbolise your suggestions with a keyword and visualisation* - when you have written out your suggestions using the rules above, find a single word or short phrase which sums up the feelings and content. E.g. if you want to

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get rid of some weight you could use 'slender' and visualise yourself when you have achieved your target weight. If you want to be more confident when presenting you could use the words 'relaxed and confident' and see yourself presenting in the way you want to be. You create **Visualisations**, to rehearse the achievement of your goals and experience the positive feelings and emotions associated with success.

You can be as creative as you like using adjectives or metaphors as you feel fits your needs best. *Most of all make your suggestions natural and mean them when you say them.*

The self hypnosis process

Beginnings

Read your suggestion out loud three times and add your keyword and visualisation.

Next choose a **word or short phrase which will help you during the relaxation stage below**. You might use words such as 'calmer and calmer', 'sleep' or 'relax' and you will repeat this word at the beginning of each out breath during the relaxation section below.

The next step is to **select a relaxing scene** for use later in the process, perhaps lying on a beach or sitting in a garden or any alternative beautiful place you have in mind.

You may choose to use your favourite place of relaxation if you have experienced this in trance already.

It doesn't matter whether this place is real or imagined so long as it is somewhere you feel totally safe, secure and relaxed. If you find it difficult to think of a relaxing scene, then imagine that you are surrounded by a very soothing fluffy cloud which is helping to relax and protect you.

Relaxation stage

Take a few deep cleansing relaxing breaths, then allow your breathing to slow naturally as you

Start to repeat the word you have chosen to help you relax during each out breath.

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.... and begin to relax each section of your body in turn. You can go from the top of your head downwards to the tips of your toes or vice versa.

It may help to imagine that your body is divided into a number of sections which you will relax in turn. You might like to divide them into:

- ◆ your scalp, face, jaw, neck (front and back)
- ◆ your shoulders, chest, upper back and shoulders
- ◆ your upper arms, elbows, forearms, hands and fingers
- ◆ your lower back, stomach and waist
- ◆ your hips and thighs
- ◆ your knees and calves
- ◆ your ankles, feet and toes

Perhaps you will be able to visualise each muscle group in turn relaxing and notice how each is becoming more and more heavy and tired as you relax more and more with each breath whilst repeating the word or short phrase you chose above.

Once you have completed this section you will feel deeply physically relaxed and mentally calm.

Deeper and deeper

The next stage is designed to help you deepen your level of relaxation and self-hypnosis. There are a number of ways of doing this, most of which follow the same basic pattern.

One good and effective method is to imagine yourself standing at the top of a flight of ten stairs or steps. At the bottom is your relaxing scene. Visualise a strong banister onto which you can hold if that helps you to feel comfortable as you take each step.

Take each descending step slowly one at a time, counting down from ten with each step. Allow yourself to become more and more deeply relaxed with each step you take.

When you arrive at the bottom step imagine entering into your **relaxing scene** as you take your last step (zero). Then take some time to become fully aware of everything around you. Notice the colours, the brightness, any sounds or music, any pleasant odours and the texture and temperature of anything you can touch. You can mentally adjust them to be just right for you at this time if you wish.

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Now permit yourself to let go and enjoy the wonderful sensations and feelings of physical relaxation and mental calm.

(Some alternative deepeners are - Going down 10 floors in a lift and emerging into your relaxing scene from the ground floor; Going through 10 sets of doors before the last door opens out into your relaxing scene. You can create your own if you wish.)

Positive suggestions only

Now, repeat your positive suggestion keyword to yourself and at your own pace and in your own time. If you are using a visualisation to augment your keyword use it at this time in conjunction with the keyword.

Remember to mean what you say and speak to yourself in the way that you would like to be spoken to - with respect and empathy.

You can stay in this state and repeat your positive suggestions for as long as you want.

Wakey, Wakey!

In order to awaken from this wonderful state all you need to do is count up from 1 to 10 and by the count of ten your eyes will have opened and any time your eyes are open you will be fully wide awake. You may find it beneficial to blink a couple of times and move your arms and legs in order to fully wake yourself up again.

Summary

- ◆ Find a place to relax, get comfortable
- ◆ Decide on positive thoughts, affirmations, keywords and/or visualisations
- ◆ Choose a relaxing word or phrase
- ◆ Choose a favourite place of relaxation
- ◆ Progressively relax your body repeating the relaxing word or phrase
- ◆ Use the stair (or other) deepener
- ◆ Enjoy your favourite place of relaxation
- ◆ Repeat your positive suggestions, affirmations and/or visualisations
- ◆ Slowly come back to full waking consciousness

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Visualisations

You may wish to use visualisation only as an alternative method of helping yourself perhaps when you need a quick boost or when you do not have time for a full self hypnosis session, e.g. before a presentation, exam, sporting event etc.

By seeing yourself achieving your goals and experiencing the positive feelings and emotions associated with that success you give yourself a better chance of success.

Please note:

If you are taking any prescribed medication or are being treated for depression or any other psychological condition please talk to your GP or a suitably qualified medical practitioner or hypnotherapist before undertaking self-hypnosis.