

# Hypnosis and its applications to Problem Gambling

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# Hypnosis

- What it is and what it isn't.
- Myths debunked.....can I make you act like a chicken???
- Definitions are wide and varied..... Micheal Yapko (2011)  
“hypnosis applied in clinical interaction employs suggestions provided by the clinician to facilitate the client to proactively and collaboratively develop a state of experiential absorption. When so engaged, the client typically experiences a dissociation allowing them to respond to suggestions and interventions on multiple levels of awareness, thereby utilizing resources in a goal –directed way. “

# Solutions rather than Problem

- Solution orientated hypnosis is where we look at whats missing.
- Assumption is that people have resources that they have disconnected from.
- Not focused on the pathology but on the resources the client comes to us with.
- Communication and relationship is essential

# First lesson of hypnosis: what you focus on you amplify

- Regardless of what type of therapy you use, we focus on certain processes...
- Hypnosis focuses on and amplifies peoples strengths.
- The underlying premise is that people have resources and strengths and that when they have “problem” they are disconnected from these strengths.
- So we can ask “whats missing”.
- Milton Erickson said “when a client comes to see you, they always bring their solution with them, only they don’t know that. Its our job to help them find the solutions they brought”.

# Solutions cont'd.

- Questions that we can ask.....
- Miracle question
- What do they enjoy doing and what is it about that that they enjoy....look for the resource.
- How will you know if the problem is no longer a problem. What would be different.??
- Use their thing that they enjoy as the hypnotic experience.

# Elements

- Focus and absorption are in our daily lives.

Rob McNeilly calls it connecting and disconnecting, and we have many examples in our every day experience.

Reading, watching TV. We can access this ability to not notice, forget time, focus.

All these elements are what hypnosis is.

# Focus

- What happens when we close our eyes and focus.??
- New technology....PET studies on hypnosis at Harvard Uni (Kosslyn & ass 2000) .

The study was designed to find out whether hypnosis could be used to modulate colour perception. It can!!

# Dissociation and gambling

- Literature and anecdotal reports document that people often lose control over amount of time and money when they are gambling.
- Something about the process of gambling that compels people to act differently, not themselves, detach from reality (Carrig, Darbyshire, Oster 1999), because they were absorbed in their activity.
- According to Jacobs theory of addictions (1986, 1988, Kuley +Jacobs 1988) dissociation is central to explaining this. Gambling as an avoidant response.
- (Dickerson, Blaszinski 1999) Also showed pokies gambling is used as a escape from negative mood states.



# Hypnosis and gambling

- Self esteem : better problem solving skills, improve impulse control.
- Relapse prevention.
- Pain management: back ground/ foreground (Gestalt)
- Trauma.
- Anxiety; self hypnosis, increased sense of self –control

Relaxation. Self- soothing skills.

# Cont'd

- Various presenting problems along with gambling clients bring such as pain, anxiety, OCD can be seen as a “bad trance”
- Understanding what the function of these behaviours are allows us to understand what is missing .
- Dissociation as a skill.

# References.

- Yapko (2011) Mindfulness and Hypnosis
- Yapko (2012) 4<sup>th</sup> Ed. Trancework
- McNeilly (2016) An Easy Guide to Hypnosis (an ebook)
- Allcock, Delfabbro, Garcia, Blaszyński et al (2006) Current issues related to dissociation. Australian Gaming Council

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