Review of the International Literature

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Al-Harasi, S., Ashley, P. F., Moles, D. R., Parekh, S., & Walters V. (2010). Hypnosis for children undergoing dental treatment. Cochrane Database Systems Reviews, [On-line publication: CD007154]. The authors reviewed the literature on using hypnosis to help children manage distress and pain for dental procedures. The authors found numerous case studies and non-randomized control studies purporting to demonstrate the therapeutic value of hypnosis in general dentistry with children. However, the authors were only able to locate 3 randomized control studies that met the inclusion standards for a Cochrane review. Therefore, the authors were not capable of producing the kinds of data analyses that are usually found in a Cochrane review of a subject matter. The authors conclude that there is not enough evidence yet to recommend hypnosis as a beneficial treatment method for helping children with pain and distress while undergoing general dental procedures. Address for reprints: Dr. S. Al-Harasi, Military Dental Centre, P. O. Box 454, PC 121, Seeb, Oman.

Aurora, R. N., Zak, R. S., Auerbach, S. H., Casey, K. R., Chowdhuri, S., Karippot, A., Maganti, R. K., Ramar, K., Kristo, D. A., Bista, S. R., Lamm, C. I., & Morgenthaler, T. I. (2010). Best practice guide for the treatment of nightmare disorder in adults. Journal of Clinical Sleep Medicine, 6(4):389-401. This article contains a summary of current treatment guidelines recommended by the American Academy of Sleep Medicine for the treatment of nightmares. The authors recommend using hypnosis as a behavioral treatment method that can be helpful with nightmares and other PTSD related phenomena. Address for Reprints: Dr. Rashmi N. Aurora, Mount Sinai Medical Center, Sleep Center for Medicine, Klingenstein Pavilion, 6th Floor, New York, NY 10029. Email: rashmi.n.aurora@mountsinai.org.

Barker, J., Jones, M., & Greenlees, I. (2010). Assessing the immediate and maintained effects of hypnosis on self-efficacy and soccer wall-volley performance. Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology, 32(2):243-52. The authors of this paper present a study of how hypnosis can be used to improve the self-efficacy and performance of soccer-playing athletes. Fifty-nine soccer players were randomly
assigned to either a hypnosis group or an attention control group. The participants in the hypnosis group received three sessions of hypnosis which contained a variety of ego strengthening suggestions to help them be better soccer players. The attention control group watched edited versions of soccer players playing matches. All participants completed self-efficacy and soccer performance measures following their sessions and at a one month follow-up session. Soccer performance was assessed using a soccer wall-volley performance measure. The effects of hypnosis on self efficacy were assessed with a ten item questionnaire which asked participants about their attitudes towards their soccer performance. The authors reported finding that the hypnosis group was significantly higher in the performance and self-efficacy ratings than the control group. They also reported finding that self-efficacy in general was associated with better soccer performance. The authors conclude that their data show the value of using hypnosis to help improve the physical performance and self-efficacy of soccer players. Address for reprints: Dr. J. Barker, Brindley Building, Staffordshire University, Leek Road, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire, United Kingdom, ST4 2DF Email Address: j.b.barker@staffs.ac.uk.


Edwards, S. D., & Edwards, D. J (2010). Sigmund Freud: Pioneer in energy healing. *Journal of Alternative & Complementary Medicine. 16(2):219-222.* This paper contains an examination of what the authors consider to be the neglected energy healing aspects of Sigmund Freud’s clinical work. The authors discuss the continuity of Freud’s ideas about psychic energy throughout his lifework and theorizing. Initially, Freud’s use of hypnosis with medical patients could easily be seen as a form of energy healing. Freud also often described the psychic flow of energy that accompanied eruptions of the unconscious during cathartic experiences within hypnosis. However, psychoanalysis has largely become a less embodied tradition as it has evolved into a more cognitive study of the intra-psychic structure and the relational world of the individual with less emphasis on their psychophysiological nature. The Psychoanalytic community also has traditionally discarded more embodied variants like Reichian and Orgone therapy whenever they arise. Consequently, it is easy to overlook Freud’s contributions to energy medicine since the contemporary psychoanalytic community is little concerned with this aspect of Freud’s ideas and experiences. However, one can find exceptions to this statement such as, for instance, the tradition of Ego State Therapy. Address for repints: Dr. S. D. Edwards, Department of Psychology, University of Zululand, KwaDlangezwa, Durban, South Africa.

Paoletti, G., Varanini, M., Balocchi, R., Morizzo, C., Palombo, C., & Santarcangelo, E. L. (2010). Cardiovascular and respiratory correlates of deep nociceptive stimulation, suggestions for analgesia, pain imagery and cognitive load as a function of hypnotizability. *Brain Research Bulletin, [Online Pre-publication Document]*. This is a psychophysiological study of the autonomic characteristics and differences between high and low hypnotizable persons. The authors wished to examine the subjective and autonomic psychophysiological
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differences between high and low hypnotizables engaging in a painful stimulation trial, an imagined painful stimulus trial, and a mental computation task. A variety of autonomic measures were utilized including heart rate, blood pressure, and respiration. Not surprisingly, the authors found some differences between high and low hypnotizables’ subjective experiences such as their ability to reduce pain and to experience imagined pain. Highs were able to reduce pain more readily and also to imagine it more easily. However, the authors found very few autonomic psychophysiological differences between high and low hypnotizables while they engaged in tasks. Address for Reprints: Dr. G. Paoletti, University of Siena, Via Banchi di Sotto 55, 53100, Siena, Italy.

Santarcangelo, E. L., Scattina, E., Carli, G., Ghealarducci, Orsini, P., & Manzoni, D. (2010). Can imagery become reality. Experimental Brain Research 206:329–335. In this study of the psychophysiological differences between high and low hypnotizable persons, the authors examined bodily positioning changes of high and low hypnotizable persons to assess difference in their response to hypnotic imagery. Previously, a number of theorists have suggested that true hypnotic responses are involuntary and automatic in their in nature. The authors presented participants in this study with hypnotic imagery and physical stimulation while assessing the participants’ involuntary body responses. In particular, they employed a research paradigm that allowed them to assess the vestibulo-spinal reflex of their participants. The authors reported finding significant involuntary differences in high and low hypnotizables’ vestibulospinal reflex responses to hypnotic imagery. The authors interpreted their findings to indicate that hypnotic imagery can actually alter a person’s experience of reality so drastically that it can result in involuntary changes in a person’s vestibulospinal reflexes responses. Address for reprints: Dr. E. L. Santarcangelo, Department of Physiological Sciences, University of Pisa, Via San Zeno, 31, 56127 Pisa, Italy. E-mail address: enricals@dfb.unipi.it.

Schaffer, S. (2010). The astrological roots of mesmerism. Studies in History and Philosophy of Biological and Biomedical Sciences, 41(2):158-168. The author reviews the historical origins of mesmerism which resulted in our modern day practice of hypnosis. The paper contains a detailed review of how Mesmer’s original thesis on magnetic phenomena and their uses in medicine were taken from much earlier works on the uses of astrology in medicine by authors such as Paracelsus and Richard Mead. The paper discusses the emergence of mesmerism from a background which mixed occult philosophy with ideas of contemporary enlightenment thinkers.

An example of this is Mesmer’s creation of the Society of Harmony. The Society of Harmony was ostensibly founded to teach Mesmer’s methods of Animal Magnetism which were to be used in the service of Medicine and Science. However, the Society of Harmony was structured in such a way that it actually resembled an occult lodge of Freemasonry. The Society even contained a ritualized series of initiations into the mysteries and truths of animal magnetism. This paper will be of interest to those with a serious interest in the early history of hypnosis. Address for reprints: Dr. S. Schaffer, Department of History and Philosophy of Science, University of Cambridge, Cambridge CB2 3RH, UK. Email Address: sjs16@cam.ac.uk.

strategies that can be employed in helping patients undergoing dermatological procedures. The paper discusses the difficulties that excessive stress can bring to dermatological procedures such as hemodynamic instability, distress, and pain. The author recommends hypnosis as one of several relaxation strategies that can be effective in helping patients while undergoing surgery. The paper also discusses how these various methods can be combined to increase their overall effectiveness. Address for reprints: Dr. P. Shenefelt, Department of Dermatology and Cutaneous Surgery, University of South Florida, College of Medicine, Tampa, FL 33612. Email address: pshenefe@health.usf.edu.

Smaga, D., Cheseaux, N., Forster, A., Colombo, S., Rentsch, D., & de Tonnac, N. Hypnosis and anxious troubles. Review Medicale Suisse, 6(236):330-333. This article reviews the uses of hypnosis to treat anxiety disorders by means of developing relaxation skills. The authors also discuss how hypnosis can be utilized to help patients with post traumatic stress disorder reformulate their traumatic experiences. Address for reprints: Dr. D. Smaga, HUG, Département de psychiatrie, Avenue Krieg 15, 1208 Genève. Email Address: smaga@infomaniak.ch.