

## ***What is Hypnotism?***



**\* Franz A. Mesmer**

Hypnotism is an art which can so change / control the mental state of a human being that he starts working according to the directions of the hypnotist. Man has been practicing hypnotic power since ancient times to demonstrate some mysterious power, magic or miracles. A scientific study of hypnotism was started by Franz A. Mesmer, a doctor from Vienna. For a long time it was known as 'mesmerism' after the name of Mesmer. The word 'hypnotism' was used for the first time in 1840 by James Braid, a surgeon from Scotland. This word has originated from the Greek word 'hypnos' meaning 'state of sleep'.

In fact, a hypnotized person appears to be drowsing. His brain is so much influenced that he can do anything according to the directions of the hypnotist. Hypnotic power is used only over those persons who are fully willing and ready to co-operate. Nobody can be hypnotized against his wishes. The person to be hypnotized is asked to sit in a dark room. The hypnotist then repeatedly tells his subject in a very calm voice to relax and sit comfortably. Thereafter the subject is asked to concentrate his attention

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and focus his eyes on some object. When he gazes at that object for a long time, his eyes start getting tired. When this happens, he is asked to close his eyes. Now the subject is in a state of sleep.. The hypnotist, at that moment, starts giving his suggestions and directions to him. He is now hypnotized and does everything that the hypnotist asks him to do.

Hypnotism can make a person feel as if he is blind, deaf or dumb. It can make him shiver. Hypnotism can be used to frighten people. So much so that under the influence of hypnotism a man can do things which he will never do in his normal state. When he regains his normal state, he cannot remember what he did in the hypnotized state.

Hypnotism is one of the methods 'of operating on patients with out anesthesia and also in dealing with mental anxieties.

Hypnosis can also be brought about by the subject himself. This is called, self hypnosis or autohypnosis. Hypnosis is not a game. It can be -dangerous when performed by an untrained person.