

Anxiety and Stress

Excessive anxiety or stress is a common problem in today's society. A certain amount of stress can be dealt with naturally, as long as it stays within your 'safe levels'. However, when it becomes too much for you to cope with it can affect your quality of life and, often manifests in physical or mental illness, such as physical and emotional exhaustion, increased anxiety or panic attacks.

The Physical symptoms of severe stress can be:

- Panic & anxiety attacks
- Fatigue and tiredness, lethargy
- High blood pressure, chest pain, palpitations,
- Frequent stomach pain and heart burn
- Frequent colds, infections
- Rashes, itches, hives,
- Headaches, dizziness, neck ache, back pain,
- Heart Disease,
- auto immune system illness like alopecia

Psychological Effects of stress can be:

- Difficulty in decision making,
- Insomnia, nightmares, bad dreams,
- Difficulty in concentrating,
- Anxiety and nervousness
- Feeling of loneliness and worthlessness
- Irritability, mood swings, angry outburst

Behavioral Signs of Stress can be:

- Neglect of punctuality,
- Loss of interest in appearance, social withdrawal and isolation,
- Not sharing thoughts with others, and decrease in social interaction.
- Excessive activities like exercise or overspending
- Excessive gambling
- Lack of motivation
- Increase in alcohol consumption, smoking or drug taking.

If you are suffering with one or more of these symptoms, Solution Focused Hypnotherapy may help.

Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD)

OCD is an anxiety disorder characterised by intrusive thoughts, producing uneasiness, apprehension, fear or worry, and repetitive behaviours aimed at reducing the associated anxiety. OCD sufferers generally recognise their obsessions and compulsions as irrational, and may become further distressed by this realisation. Symptoms may include

excessive washing or cleaning; repeated checking; extreme hoarding; preoccupation with sexual, violent or religious thoughts; aversion to particular numbers; and nervous rituals, such as opening and closing a door a certain number of times before entering or leaving a room.

Solution Focused Hypnotherapy enables the brain to produce more serotonin in the left pre-frontal cortex thus reducing anxiety and enabling positive control over the mind, which helps OCD sufferers to break out of the anxiety-obsession-compulsion cycle.

Insomnia & Sleep Disorders

Good quality sleep is vital to your health and well-being. Lack of sleep affects many areas of your life and often results in becoming anxious, short tempered, lacking in energy and motivation and/or exhaustion and can affect your ability to cope with life. What's more, with serious sleep disorders such as insomnia, the inability to sleep can become an obsession, thus exacerbating the problem.

A short amount of sleeplessness can happen to any of us and its consequence is usually tiredness. However, if the sleeplessness gets out of control then this can lead to serious health and social problems. Hence, it is so very important that you take care of your insomnia, initiating at the earliest so that it does not become a threat to your existence. Solution Focused Hypnotherapy is a very quick and effective way of helping to resolve the issues which lead to sleep disorders and restore good sleep patterns.

Common sleep disorders include:

- Insomnia
- Difficulty getting to sleep
- Waking up in the middle of the night
- Waking up too early
- Difficulty Waking up

Solution Focused Hypnotherapy can help correct unhealthy sleep patterns by reducing anxiety and reprogramming the sub-conscious mind.

Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS) affects one person in five and is the world's most common digestive disorder, with symptoms including abdominal pain, abdominal bloating, diarrhea or constipation.

For many IBS sufferers stress, anxiety or other emotional upset is an important factor in the triggering of their IBS symptoms due to the strong connection between the nervous system and the gut.

Fortunately, Peter Whorwell, Professor of Medicine and Gastroenterology in the School of Medicine and Director of the South Manchester Functional Bowel Service, discovered a way to treat Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS) using hypnotherapy. Most recently, 250 patients who have suffered from IBS for over two years were given twelve one-hour sessions, during which they were given an explanation of how the gut works and what causes their symptoms.

During the course of hypnotherapy, sufferers learn how to influence and gain control of their gut function, and are helped to learn how to change the way the brain modulates their gut activity. (Please remember that if you think you have IBS always consult with your GP first).

Post Traumatic Stress

Post Traumatic Stress Disorder is a condition that can develop following a terrifying event. Often, people with PTSD have persistent thoughts and memories of the event which can manifest physically in unwanted behaviour patterns such as:

- alcohol or drug abuse
- OCD
- eating disorders
- repeated panic attacks
- physical symptoms or ailments
- depression

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder can result from a number of experiences including violent attacks, mugging, rape, torture, terrorism, being held captive, child abuse, serious accidents, a major fearful experience, and natural disasters. Usually the cause is something that threatened (or felt like it threatened) your life or the life of someone very close to you, or it could be something was witnessed, such as a death. Some individuals with PTSD repeatedly relive their trauma through dreams, nightmares, and disturbing memories throughout the day and may also experience sleep problems, feel alienated from reality, or be easily startled.

Solution Focused Hypnotherapy offers a range of techniques that re-code the brain and how it responds to the PTSD triggers

Panic Attacks

Panic attacks range from hot or cold sweats, feelings of fear, increased heart rate, and stomach churning to, in the extreme, feeling like you are having a heart attack.

Panic attacks usually first occur when your anxiety levels are raised to the extreme your body goes into the flight, fight or freeze response. These levels of anxiety can rise gradually over time, so the panic attack often seems to come from nowhere.

Once a panic attack has occurred, unless the overall anxiety levels are reduced, another

attack can be triggered again by any of the senses - sight, sound, smell, taste or touch – when the brain associates that stimulus with the first panic attack. This can be very frightening and lead to avoidance of possible triggers, which in the extreme can lead to conditions such as agoraphobia (fear of going outside).

To find out more about why you suffer from panic attacks and how hypnotherapy can help overcome it contact Sage Hypnotherapy to arrange an Initial Consultation.

Weight Management

Weight Loss

Solution focused hypnotherapy can help you to lose weight naturally as hypnosis helps you to let go of all the unhelpful habits and negative beliefs that seem to get in the way of weight loss goals.

If you find yourself frequently standing at the fridge, or the food cupboard, eating calorie laden carbohydrates, then hypnotherapy helps you to learn how to regain control over unhelpful patterns of behaviour. Often, the first time we become consciously aware of our actions is after a binge, by which time we have piled on the additional calories, and generally feel guilty, miserable or both. This is a destructive trance state (negative hypnosis) and can often follow as a subconscious reaction to stress or boredom.

With commitment and determination, Solution Focused Hypnotherapy can help you reverse that polarity and become conscious and aware before your hand reaches for the fridge door. Hypnotherapy acts like a safety net, catching destructive behaviours and moving you forward by developing positive habits, beliefs, and more control.

Other important factors hypnotherapy brings to your weight loss journey are confidence, calmness and positive thinking, crucial not only for control, but to keep us on track if we slip-up here and there.

Eating disorders

Eating such as anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa and compulsive overeating are closely linked with anxiety and/or depression and are eating related forms of OCD (Obsessive Compulsive Disorder).

As with all OCDs, the subject of the thought patterns or behaviours becomes the obsession, in the case of eating disorders it is extreme control of what is being eaten or vomiting, and when the act is carried out the anxiety levels are temporarily relieved until the next build up. The source of the anxiety is usually totally unrelated to food, appearance or body image but more often associated with lack of control or build up of anxiety in other areas of the sufferer's life.

Solution Focused Hypnotherapy works by reducing anxiety levels and helping the client bring about positive changes in the areas which are causing the underlying anxiety and/or depression.

Anger Management

Anger evolved as a primitive response in early man in order to help protect himself against danger or threat. However our complex modern lives and heightened levels of anxiety can generate this same response, often for no rational reason and we can find ourselves becoming increasingly intolerant or angry.

Symptoms can be:

- Suffering from an increasingly quick temper
- Feeling impatient and frustrated much of the time
- Finding your temper can take you by surprise, leaving you embarrassed and ashamed
- ‘Seeing red’ frequently
- Feeling a loss of control over your temper.

Solution Focused Hypnotherapy will focus on reducing stress and anxiety levels helping you to change these patterns of behavior.

Fear of Flying Air travel has become an everyday means of travel for many, and an essential part of our work and personal lives. But it is estimated that up to one in ten people suffer from a fear of flying, also known as aerophobia, which can severely limit your horizons.

Hypnosis can quickly and easily help you overcome your fear by helping you to become more confident about flying.

A fear of flying can occur for various reasons, from claustrophobia to a feeling of loss of control. The subconscious part of your mind is responsible for your survival, generating ‘fight or flight’ responses, so the fear is caused by the unconscious part of your mind warning you that it’s dangerous to get on a plane for some reason. If the plane was obviously not in a condition to fly then your subconscious would be doing a grand job. However, in the case of a flying phobia, that protection mechanism, which is meant to keep you safe, has become over-sensitive and is now a problem.

This is where hypnosis comes in. You will be asked how you would like to feel when you fly and then hypnosis is used to relay this message to the subconscious, alleviating the need for it to become over-protective and create negative feelings.

Stop Smoking

Imagine how healthy you would feel every day if you were no longer taking in cigarette smoke, with all its deadly carcinogenic poisons, into your body.

Imagine how much younger, fitter and more attractive you would become if your body's processes were working to optimise your health and energy, rather than being damaged daily.

Imagine how happy and confident you would feel, knowing that you had lengthened your life by years or if not decades, knowing that you had greatly improved your chances of avoiding life threatening illnesses such as lung cancer and heart disease.

Imagine how many extra thousands of pounds you could spend on the things you really love – things which would actually improve the quality of your life, and not undermine it.

Imagine all the new places you could go, the things you could do, the people you could meet.

Like all other habits, smoking is hard to stop as it has become part of your daily routine. However, Both Which? and New Scientist have reported that hypnosis is the most effective way of giving up smoking, and in most cases without cravings, irritability or weight gain.

Phobias

When a fear becomes a Phobia it can be extremely debilitating and can often limit us and what we do in life. Common fears include, spiders, needles, vomiting and dentists but a phobia can develop around almost any object or situation.

Solution Focused Hypnotherapy can help, through a collaborative process between therapist and client to address and reduce the underlying anxiety and diminish the emotional trauma associated with the fear, whilst programming the sub-conscious with new, more helpful behavioural patterns in response to it.

Chronic (Persistent) Pain

Using 'Gate Control Theory' Sage Hypnotherapy will help you understand how hypnosis can "close the gate" on pain and at your initial consultation you will be given an understanding of how the brain works and an explanation of how we can help you to cope better with the pain and what we can do about it. Hypnosis can essentially direct attention away from the pain sensations as well as transform your perception of the pain sensations. This can inhibit or slow the transmission of pain messages from the source.

Chronic pain is continuous, long-term pain of more than 12 weeks or after the time that healing would have been thought to have occurred in pain after trauma or surgery.

Neuropathic pain is pain initiated or caused by a primary lesion or dysfunction in the

peripheral or central nervous system. For example, pain following shingles, or an amputation, or spinal cord trauma. Pain that occurs in diabetics or in patients with multiple sclerosis can also be neuropathic.

Many complementary therapies have been found to be useful as part of an overall pain management regime. Hypnotherapy, including self hypnosis can be used as part of a relaxation technique. www.britishpainsociety.org

Addiction

Addictions are treated using Solution Focused Hypnotherapy to bring about positive changes in the client's life. The client must engage with the therapy and plays an active part in therapy bringing to mind a preferred outcome of life for themselves and/or their loved ones.

The trance work (hypnosis) at each session and the CD or MP3 recording given to each client are both an integral part of therapy and will help the process of re-programming the brain to be more active in the left pre-frontal cortex, where the 'feel-good' chemicals are generated, such as serotonin and endorphins.

The brain will be encouraged to rely on these chemicals more and more rather than the substitutes from the addiction itself.

Solution focused therapy will be used in each session to encourage the client to set goals and explore steps to reach them. Progress will be scaled and monitored each week and the client will be encouraged to focus on the good things that have been happening in between sessions.

Sports Achievement

Solution focused hypnotherapy is not only effective for 'problems and issues' but also to help with life goals such as education, sport or business, simply by allowing us to be calmer and more focused.

Hypnotherapy has been used for decades by world champions and amateurs in sporting endeavours, helping in three main ways:

- Focus – the best sports people have an ability to shut out distractions and will often report even being completely unaware of them. Sometimes referred to as 'flow', in this state athletes find self-consciousness and distraction fade into the background, giving way to laser like focus, automatic reactions and a feeling of success.
- Visualisation – on specific moves, events or upcoming competition – also referred to as mental rehearsal, visualisation is a critical part of an athlete's make-up. Regardless

of how physically prepared we are, if we see things going wrong, they generally do. If we can experience ourselves having achieved our goal, step-by-step, through our own eyes, over and over again, we are mentally preparing for success.

- Motivation & confidence – overcoming competition jitters, reframing limiting beliefs to go that extra mile on the treadmill, or simply a more positive outlook to your sporting activities, hypnotherapy also helps to remove triggers and negative responses that can be encountered due to pre-competition nerves, nagging self-belief issues or previous sporting mishaps.

Solution Focused Hypnotherapy helps bring an overall sense of focus, calm and control to areas of your life that you wish to improve, as well as boosting confidence levels and reducing anxiety and worry.

Tinnitus

Most causes of tinnitus are not harmful, however it can be quite a nuisance for sufferers. The most common cause of tinnitus is damage to the sensitive hearing nerves inside the inner ear. In older people, tinnitus is often caused by natural hearing loss which lessens the sensitivity of the hearing nerves. In younger people, tinnitus can sometimes occur as a result of hearing damage caused by excessive noise. There are many other possible causes of tinnitus however, including ear infections or build up of ear wax.

Stress is not a direct cause of tinnitus but it can sometimes make the symptom worse. For example, some people have reported that their tinnitus was worse during stressful events in their life, such as bereavement.

One of the major ways in which hypnotherapy is used to help with tinnitus is by realising that you can learn not to notice the bothersome sound so much. We naturally tune out sounds, so you can learn to invoke that ability where it is needed. You can also learn to manipulate the sound itself so that you can change its nature and pitch and as a result tone it down.

Public speaking/exam nerves

It's normal to feel a little nervous prior to taking exams, but for some people exam nerves are so bad that can actually affect how well you can study, retain information, and perform during the exam.

Imagine if you could walk into any exam or test situation feeling calm, relaxed and confident; able to recall information more easily and quickly and able to 'let go' of worrying about the end result.

Hypnotherapy can help you achieve this more productive way of approaching exam and test situations. By working directly with the subconscious we can work towards building

this picture so that your attitude towards exams and tests becomes a much more positive one, allowing you to feel much calmer, more relaxed and more confident, so that you can achieve the best results possible.

Blushing/Nail Biting/Tics/Stuttering

Hypnotherapy can be very useful in treating conditions such as blushing, nail biting, nervous tics and even stammering. An hypnotic trance is used to gain access to the subconscious mind, a pleasant and relaxing experience, during which time unwanted habits can be erased via reprogramming of the subconscious.

The process begins with an initial consultation where you will be given an understanding of how the brain works with regards to unwanted habits. During the consultation information will also be taken from you, and if wanted a treatment programme will be put in place and you will be given a CD to take home and an appointment booked for the following week to begin your treatment.

Blushing

Blushing is a natural and involuntary bodily response to an emotional feeling such as embarrassment, guilt, shamefulness or nervousness, often coupled with a fear of not being able to control the blushing which can cause it to occur even more.

Hypnotherapy can be very successful in treating this condition and enabling you to replace the anxious thoughts and feelings with calming, relaxing and empowering ones. The outcome of this is that you will have the power to both consciously and unconsciously control your blushing.

Nail Biting

Nail Biting is usually an unconscious habit and can be easily treated with Hypnotherapy via reprogramming of the subconscious.

Nervous Twitches or Tics

Simple motor tics are sudden, brief, meaningless movements that usually involve only one group of muscles, such as eye blinking, head jerking or shoulder shrugging. Motor tics can be of an endless variety but the most common are hand clapping, neck stretching, mouth movements, head, arm or leg jerks, and facial grimacing.

A simple phonic tic can be almost any sound or noise, with common vocal tics being throat clearing, sniffing, or grunting.

Complex tics

Complex motor tics are typically more purposeful-appearing and of a longer nature. They may involve a cluster of movements and appear coordinated. Examples of complex motor

tics are pulling at clothes, touching people or touching objects.

Complex phonic tics may fall into various categories, including repeating words just spoken by someone else, repeating one's own previously spoken words, repeating words after reading them and the spontaneous utterance of socially objectionable or taboo words or phrases (also known as 'Coprolalia' which is a highly publicised symptom of Tourette Syndrome; however, only about 10% of Tourette Syndrome patients actually exhibit coprolalia).

Complex tics are rarely seen in the absence of simple tics and can be difficult to differentiate from compulsions, such as compulsive shouting.

Both simple and complex tics usually respond well to a course of hypnotherapy treatment.

Stuttering and Stammering

Stuttering, also known as stammering, is a speech disorder in which the flow of speech is disrupted by involuntary repetitions and prolongations of sounds, syllables, words or phrases, and involuntary silent pauses or blocks in which the stutterer is unable to produce sounds. It can also be an abnormal hesitation or pausing before speech, referred to by stutterers as blocks, and the prolongation of certain sounds, usually vowels and semivowels. Stuttering is often variable, which means that in certain situations, such as talking on the telephone, the stuttering might be more severe or less, depending on the anxiety level connected with that activity.

Stuttering is generally not a problem with the physical production of speech sounds or putting thoughts into words. Anxiety, low self-esteem, nervousness, and stress also do not cause stuttering, although the impact of stuttering on a person's functioning and emotional state can be severe. There are many treatments and speech therapy techniques available that may help increase fluency in some stutterers to the point where an untrained ear cannot identify a problem.

Hypnotherapy can be very effective in greatly reducing or even eliminating a stutter or stammer in a relatively short amount of time.

Confidence Building

From time to time in life we could all do with an extra boost of self confidence either to help us on our way with a new job, meeting new people, getting out and about in the world, speaking in public or just generally feeling better about ourselves.

Hypnotherapy can help improve confidence and self esteem by getting us to focus on our positive aspects and retraining the brain to think from the left pre-frontal cortex which is where all the 'feel good' neuro-transmitters are made.

The first step to feeling more confident is to imagine how that would feel for you. What

would you be able to do if you had the confidence you desired? Imagine how you would feel walking into an interview calm, confident and collected rather than a bag of nerves. Or what about standing up to give a talk feeling excited and motivated rather than anxious and panicky.

The difference that self confidence can make is astounding, and once your new confident behaviour has become second nature, you may find yourself able to do things you hadn't even considered before.

Relationships

There can be many reasons why a relationship breaks down, runs into difficulties or needs help to get off the ground in the first place.

Hypnotherapy can help relationships in many ways :

- by giving a new perspective into ongoing relationships
- by giving the client confidence in making or breaking relationships with others
- by bringing back happy memories of times long gone in order to get back on track within an existing relationship
- by overcoming family problems
- by overcoming fear of dating or meeting new people
- by overcoming sexual problems

Whatever your reason for wanting to make changes in your relationships, Solution Focused Hypnotherapy may be able to offer you all the necessary skills to do this.