

Hello! I'm Richard Blake. I'm a certified hypnotherapist and co-owner of Root of Healing. I love what I do, because I get to see my clients experience profound and lasting results from hypnotherapy. I truly feel honored to be able to help people achieve their goals, or eliminate stress and anxious feelings from their lives—when maybe nothing else that they have tried has worked for them.

The purpose of this brief video is to explain HOW hypnosis works and WHY it works. Research has shown that when we take the time to explain this information to our clients, they benefit from their hypnotherapy sessions so much more. I'll be discussing the different functions of the mind and removing some common misconceptions about hypnosis.

Below this video is a link to a PDF file containing a map of the mind. I recommend downloading and printing out the file, and then following along as I explain it to you. If you have any questions, please write them down and bring them with you to your first hypnotherapy session. I really enjoy answering questions about hypnosis, so I encourage you to ask me.

Take a look at that map of the mind. I'm going to discuss the functions of the four parts of the mind—the conscious mind, the ego, the subconscious mind, and the unconscious mind. And I'll talk about how each of these parts has a protective function. The conscious mind (CM), the ego, the subconscious mind (SCM), and the unconscious mind (UCM) are constantly working to protect you and to make sure that you are safe—even when you are in the deepest levels of hypnosis.

Let's start with CM. As you know, you use your CM to make decisions and form beliefs about yourself and the world around you. It's the part that has desires and that decides to act upon those desires. It's like the captain of a ship. It decides what to do and where it wants to go. It makes those decisions and forms those beliefs based on information from the world, from other people—and even from other parts of the mind—such as the ego and the SCM.

In order for it to make decisions, the CM keeps our attention focused on the present time. Although it can remember the past—hazily sometimes—and can anticipate or fantasize about the future, it primarily keeps our attention focused on the here and now. For example, your CM is keeping your attention focused on this video in the present time. But if you were to start thinking about the past, your attention would become focused there and it would *leave* the video—and miss all of this important information I'm giving you! Because of its disposition for staying focused on the present, the CM organizes information chronologically, referring all events to the present, the past, or the future. This aspect of the CM explains why it is so hard to change your behaviors using the CM alone. While your CM remains focused on the present time, beginning a new habit in the morning—such as jogging, for example—can be very difficult, because the benefits of jogging will be experienced mostly in the future, not in the present. The increased metabolism, reduced weight, and healthier body would be experienced in the future, but right now, the CM is more aware of how good it feels to sit back, relax, and enjoy a latte.

Because the CM's purpose is to keep us focused, it has only temporary memory. It's designed to forget less important things. In fact, psychological research has shown that the CM can only keep track of 7 to 9 bits of information at a time—sort of like it's juggling 7 to 9 balls. If another piece of

information gets added to those 7 to 9 balls, the CM has to drop one of the balls—otherwise its attention would become too scattered and it wouldn't be able to make decisions very easily. This explains why it's so difficult for some drivers to drive well and talk on a cell-phone at the same time. The CM is causing the person's attention to focus on one activity or the other.

The protective function of the CM works in this way: It protects you from immediate dangers. If you were walking down the street daydreaming and out of the corner of your eye you saw a car swerving to hit you, your CM would focus your attention on the car—and thankfully causing you to forget about the daydream—so you could jump out of the way.

Now, let's compare the CM with the SCM. The SCM is who you really are. It contains all of your beliefs and habits. It's truly an amazing part of yourself. For one thing, it seems to have an unlimited capacity to store information. Unlike the CM, the SCM remembers *everything*. As you are born, it is more or less empty, but as you grow up and experience life, it becomes a *vast* database of information. It remembers every single experience you've ever had, every thought you've ever thought, every feeling you've ever felt, every habit you've ever created, and every belief that you've ever formed about yourself and the world around you. And all of those beliefs and habits evolve into a consistent way of behaving and reacting to the world. They become your personality.

Not only does the SCM remember everything, it is wise, creative, imaginative, and resourceful. It's your Wise Mind. When the CM decides to do something, the SCM helps it achieve those goals. For example, artists, musicians, and writers all get their creative ideas from the SCM. Once a poet has decided to write a poem, the SCM will provide the language and ideas for that poem, pulling from the vast amounts of stored information at its disposal. The SCM is a source of useful intuition, insights, hunches, and creative inspiration, and the SCM can share this information with the CM to help it reach its goals.

The SCM also protects you by using emotions to motivate you. If something is a known danger, the SCM would use fear to motivate you to protect yourself and keep yourself safe. Fear might keep you from entering a bad part of town where you know there's a lot of crime. If someone were trying to cheat you out of some money, your SCM mind would cause you to feel anger, to motivate you to take action and protect yourself from being cheated.

One final point about the SCM. The SCM has a sense of time very different from the CM's. To the SCM, everything that has ever happened to you is taking place right now. So, even if the CM vaguely remembers an event that occurred over twenty years ago, to the SCM it seems to be occurring right now, in the present time. This is very apparent in people with anxiety, for example. Because the SCM is afraid of something that occurred 20 years ago, a person may be feeling anxiety right now, even though she got through the fearful event just fine so many years ago. But twenty years later, the SCM is *still* trying to protect the person from that scary event!

The SCM also controls the body—all of its myriad processes. The part of the SCM that controls the body is called the UCM. It regulates breathing, the heart rate, the production of hormones and other chemicals—it's what medical professionals call the autonomic nervous system. You don't have to consciously think about any of these functions. The UCM performs all of them for you. The UCM also coordinates all of the muscle movements involved in walking or playing the piano. As young children, we consciously learn how to walk. We learn how to balance ourselves as we shift our weight from leg to leg. Eventually, all of these muscular processes become automatic when they are

stored in the UCM. Then the UCM does them for us, without the CM having to be aware of them. Do you have to think about how to move and coordinate all of your muscles when you walk across a room? No. The UCM controls the details of physical movement for you, when your conscious mind gives it the command to walk. Perhaps you've heard of muscle memory. That's the memory of the UCM as it applies to the body's muscular functions.

With hypnosis, we can train the unconscious mind to learn new behaviors. For example, it can help people with migraines. Migraine headaches are an unconscious process, not controlled by the conscious mind. Through hypnosis, we can train the unconscious mind to be free from the intense pain being created by the UCM.

Whenever it is generating emotions, the SCM uses the body's UCM to talk to the CM. When you feel happy or sad or afraid, it becomes a sensation that you experience *in your body*. When the SCM is angry, for example, it tells the UCM to tighten the muscles in the body and to get the adrenalin surging. When those things happen, the CM can *feel* anger in the body and can then become aware of the anger being produced in the SCM. Strangely enough, this is the only way for the CM to become aware of emotions—only through *embodying* emotions. That's why we call emotions felt in the body *feelings*. The SCM is the true emotion generator of the mind and it instructs the body's UCM to tell the CM what emotions it is feeling.

The UCM protects you in a couple of ways—through the immune system and reflexes. If you accidentally put your hand on a hot burner on a stovetop, your UCM would automatically react by jerking your hand away without your having to think about it consciously at all. In fact, your CM would not become aware of what happened until *after* you jerked your hand away.

Now that we have talked about the CM, the SCM, and the UCM, I want to focus on a particularly important function of the SCM, which is the storage of beliefs and habits. When the CM forms a belief, that belief gets stored in the SCM. There is another part of the mind that protects those stored beliefs and habits: the ego.

The *ego* is the part of the CM that does all the thinking and analyzing. It's the part you use when you balance your checkbook or do a crossword puzzle. However, there's a reason that the ego is listed on the handout between the CM and the SCM. The ego also has a protective function, just like the other parts of the mind. The ego is designed to *protect beliefs and habits stored in the SCM*. It acts as a filter between the CM and the SCM—filtering out anything that conflicts with beliefs stored in the SCM. When you have an experience that seems to agree with a belief or a habit stored in the SCM, the ego will allow that experience to reinforce and strengthen the belief. But if the experience seems to *disagree* with a belief or habit stored in the SCM, it will simply file that information away without letting it change any of your beliefs or habits. The experience will become a part of that vast database of experiences, but it will not have an affect on your life.

Because it protects beliefs and habits stored in the SCM, the ego can make it difficult to change negative beliefs and bad habits. If you've had a smoking habit for ten years and one day you tell yourself: "I've quit! I'm no longer a smoker." Well, guess what the ego does with that message! That's right! The ego filters it out because the message *disagrees* with the smoking habit stored in the SCM. People with low self esteem believe there is something wrong with them. That belief is stored in the SCM. Whenever such a person makes a mistake or experiences an event that reinforces low self-esteem, the ego allows those experiences to strengthen that negative, self-limiting belief.

Whenever this hypothetical person with low self esteem does something *well and receives a compliment for it*—that information would get filtered out and filed away by the ego. What this person would most likely do is roll his eyes or otherwise reject the compliment. That’s the ego filtering out an experience that conflicts with negative beliefs stored in the SCM.

The ego is very indiscriminate in the way it protects all beliefs stored in the SCM. Positive or negative beliefs, good habits or bad habits—the ego protects them all. Everyone has both positive and negative beliefs and habits stored in their SCMs. But when negative, self-limiting beliefs and self-destructive habits have gotten extremely powerful after many years of life experiences and constant reinforcement through the filtering processes of the ego—they can create depression or anxiety, increase stress, or lead to weight problems or an inability to stop smoking or stop drinking too much—just to name a few examples.

Fortunately for us, there is a process called hypnosis. Hypnosis allows us to eliminate those negative, self-limiting beliefs. But how can it do that? *The definition of hypnosis*, as given by the Human Services Division of the U.S. Department of Education, *is the bypass of the ego through acceptable, focused attention*. By focusing the attention of the CM on something we want to focus on, we create a state of mind where the ego can be safely bypassed. When the ego is bypassed, it is *no longer capable of filtering out experiences—such as positive suggestions*. We can give information *directly* to the SCM that will eliminate negative, limiting beliefs and unwanted bad habits. The smoker can eliminate the smoking habit, so she can easily become a nonsmoker and remain a nonsmoker. The anxious person can permanently eliminate the fear that was caused in childhood, over 20 years ago. Hypnosis allows powerful changes to happen right away. With hypnosis, it becomes possible to neutralize any negative, self-limiting beliefs or bad habits and replace them with positive beliefs and good habits—because the ego is no longer interfering with the process of making those changes. A computer analogy may serve here: You need to eliminate all the viruses and junky operating systems if you want to benefit from installing new software that will help you accomplish what you want, run smoothly and efficiently, and keep you functioning at your very best.

What many people don’t realize is that hypnosis is a perfectly natural state of mind. Whether you’ve been to a hypnotist or not, you’ve been in hypnosis probably thousands of times already, because hypnosis is the same process that we use when reading a book or watching a movie. Your ego knows that a movie is based on a fictional script performed by actors and filmed under the guidance of a director. Nevertheless, when you focus your attention on a movie to such an extent that you bypass your ego, you can connect more directly with your imagination, which—you will recall—is a function of the SCM. With your ego bypassed, the movie becomes more “real” to you. You identify with the main character. You get thrilled by the imagery, the plot. Do you remember how another function of the SCM is to generate emotions? When the good guy kills the monster, you *feel excited* and may even *feel relieved*. That’s hypnosis, but we just don’t call it hypnosis.

Here’s a second example of how hypnosis is a naturally-occurring state of mind. Hypnosis can also create analgesia (a lack of pain) and anesthesia (a complete lack of feeling). At the end of the day, have you ever noticed that you had a bruise on your leg or a cut or scrape—and you didn’t know how it got there? When you got the injury, your attention was so focused on something else that you had entered a state of hypnosis and were able to feel no pain during the injury.

Here's another example of how hypnosis is a naturally-occurring state. Have you been driving on the highway and suddenly wondered where all the time went and whether or not you missed your exit? You experienced what is called highway hypnosis. Your attention was focused on something other than driving (maybe you were daydreaming) and you were letting your UCM handle the driving process while you daydreamed, using your SCM to daydream without your ego being there to think about which exit to take or evaluate the driving process.

Reading books, watching movies, experiencing natural analgesia and anesthesia, and experiencing highway hypnosis—are natural forms of hypnosis. This fact alone can help dispel a lot of myths about hypnosis. One common myth is that hypnosis is a form of mind control. Perhaps you've heard of stage hypnotists who "force" people to cluck like chickens! It's a myth! Just because your ego is bypassed does NOT mean that you lose control. You always remain in control during hypnosis, thanks to the protective functions of the CM and SCM and UCM. During the hypnosis session, I will ask you to focus your attention on some things—such as relaxing. As you will recall, focusing is a function of the CM. And because your CM is fully engaged during hypnosis, you always have the ability to make decisions. If I were to give you a suggestion that you didn't like, you would have the power to reject it by calling in your ego to filter it out. Therefore, those people who clucked like a chicken *wanted* to do something goofy for the fun of it, because they *chose* to accept the suggestion! Furthermore, if during a session I were to leave the room for an indefinite period of time, you would not be stuck in hypnosis until I came back. At any point in time, you could simply choose to open your eyes and emerge yourself from hypnosis.

It's the same as when you watch a movie. When your attention is focused on the movie and your ego is bypassed—you're in hypnosis. But you always have the power to emerge yourself from hypnosis by having your ego remind you that it's "just a movie." People often will do this during scary movies. Because you remain fully conscious throughout hypnosis, you always remain in completely in control—just as when you're watching a movie or reading a book. Conversely, this also means that I cannot *force* you to lose weight or stop smoking unless you really *want* to do it and are *fully committed* to doing it.

Another myth is that hypnosis is a trance-like sleep. Hypnosis is not sleep. Your CM—where you make all of your decisions—is right there with you throughout the session. And it better be! If you *were* to fall asleep, I would have to wake you up to continue the session. Hypnosis has nothing to do with sleep. You need to be fully conscious in order for it to be effective. Although I may use the word sleep during a session, it's just shorthand for *close your eyes and go deeply relaxed*.

Another important point is to realize that anyone of normal intelligence and who is willing to follow instructions can be hypnotized. Some studies in the 1950s claimed that only 10% of the population could enter hypnosis. But what we've learned since then is that if we take the time to explain hypnosis and the functions of the mind as we have just done here—anyone can experience a deep level of hypnosis and achieve the goals they want to achieve.

Hypnosis is *safe*. It has been accepted by the AMA since 1958 and the BMA since 1955. Medical professionals have been using it for anesthesia, behavioral changes, psychosomatic illness—and many other conditions. When the purpose of hypnosis is to help you change negative, self-limiting beliefs and bad habits into positive and life-affirming beliefs and habits, it is called *hypnotherapy*. Hypnotherapy is what we do at Root of Healing. Hypnotherapy is a process. Every stage of the hypnotherapy process builds on the previous stage, bringing you more and more powerful results

with every session—so you can get the results that you want and keep those results for good. Many people begin to feel better after the very first session. The techniques that I use are proven. Over fifteen years of research and testing and refinement have made them the best hypnotherapeutic techniques available today.

But it's also important to bear in mind that hypnotherapy is a team effort. You'll be *working with* me. You will be fully conscious, and you will even be talking to me throughout most of the sessions. Hypnosis is not something that I do TO you, but rather it is something that WE do together, with me simply coaching you on how to reach the hypnotic state and guiding you through the process. In fact, my role during the hypnotherapy sessions is the coaching role. You are the player. By following my instructions, I can help you bring about lasting, positive changes in your life. It's like we're dancing. I lead and you follow.

Hypnosis is different for everyone. You *may* experience some tingling; or heaviness in your limbs; or a floating, drifting feeling in your mind as if you were zoning out after a big meal. You *may* have thoughts pop into your head that make you wonder "Where did that come from?" Some, all, or *none* of things may happen for you. It doesn't matter. Hypnosis is not a feeling. It's the bypass of the ego. Therefore, during the sessions, allow me to determine whether or not you are in the proper level of hypnosis. When people try to decide for themselves whether they are in hypnosis, they will often use their egos to do that—which is the one part you need to bypass in order to enter hypnosis! So just leave it to me...

Before I close, I'd like to share some advice on how you can get the most out of your hypnotherapy sessions: Be relaxed and open-minded about the possibilities of these sessions. You will be gaining some amazing insights into yourself. There is nothing that you need to do during these sessions besides letting your mind relax and listening to my guidance and instructions. Leave the rest to me. Remember: Hypnosis is powered by focused attention. From time to time, your attention may wander during the session. You may even start to daydream or think about things. If this happens, gently guide your attention back to my suggestions and instructions. By keeping your attention focused on my guidance, you are giving yourself the best possible hypnosis session and you are gaining the greatest possible benefits.

Thanks for watching. And if you have any questions, please write them down and share them with me at our first session. I look forward to working with you.

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