

# Book Review of “Advances in the Use of Hypnosis for Medicine, Dentistry, and Pain Prevention/Management”

J Fogel

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## Citation

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## Abstract

Donald C. Brown, MD, in his edited book titled, “Advances in the use of hypnosis for medicine, dentistry, and pain prevention/management” (1) wants to encourage physicians, dentists, and behavioral medicine practitioners to consider that use of hypnosis can be beneficial in medical, dental, and behavioral medicine clinical practice. Dr. Brown is not just writing from theory. As an individual who practiced academic Family Medicine for many years, he incorporated hypnosis into multiple aspects of his traditional Family Medicine clinical practice. In his current focus on private practice, a substantial part of his practice focuses on treating patients with hypnosis.

Chapter 1 by David Spiegel, MD, introduces the usefulness of hypnosis for medical practice and describes some diseases and conditions useful for treatment with hypnosis. This includes pain, psychosomatic disorders, and habit control conditions such as smoking cessation and weight control. Chapter 2 by Bruce H. Lipton, PhD, offers biological explanations to help understand why hypnosis works. This theoretical chapter that can be often dry reading for those more interested in applied topics is made very interesting by the use of numerous clinical case examples that stimulate the reader.

Chapter 3 shifts to discussion of assessment and explanation of a rapid technique for assessment of the ability to undergo hypnosis. David Spiegel, MD, offers a short overview of the Hypnotic Induction Profile. He introduces the topic by explaining that not all hypnosis practitioners believe in the necessity to conduct an assessment of ability to undergo hypnosis. He advocates for his approach of using the Hypnotic Induction Profile, as it only takes about six minutes to complete. As an individual trained from the school of not performing an assessment of ability to undergo hypnosis, I was intrigued by this topic. A critique that I have

with this chapter is that just when I thought I was beginning to master some of concepts, the chapter ended. Only part of the Hypnotic Induction Profile was explained. It would have been more useful to completely explain how to perform the complete assessment using the Hypnotic Induction Profile.

Chapters 4 and 5 by Marlene E. Hunter, MD, are on the topics of the mind-body connection and psychosomatic medicine. Practical techniques are offered to interest the patient in becoming an eager participant to the hypnotic process. For example, one technique is to “trigger curiosity.” This involves inviting the patient to become curious about some topic that is of concern. Then, the patient is invited to be curious about how things would be if this concern was no longer an issue. Hypnosis is suggested to the patient as a way to explore a future scenario where this concern is no longer a concern.

Three chapters are included on hypnosis and dental practice. In Chapter 6, John G. L., Lovas, DDS, and David A. Lovas, MD, discuss the use of hypnosis to manage patient anxiety before dental procedures such as patient anesthesia injection. They discuss the use of an approach that combines meditation and hypnosis and that they name as Rapid Relaxation. They step-by-step describe this approach in a ready to use approach that is clear and would be considered useful to a dentist even if this dentist does not want to practice formal hypnosis. Chapter 7 by Gabor Filo, DDS, offers an overview of the applicability of hypnosis to many dental treatment scenarios. Chapter 8 by Ashley A. Goodman, DDS, and Donald C. Brown MD, discusses hypnosis guidelines when working with children for both dental and general pain management settings.

The final four chapters focus on pain management. Chapter 9 by A. Max Chaumette, MD, discusses phrases to avoid

saying to a patient. For example, he writes that one should never say that “I am going to put you to sleep” as this phrase is often used when euthanizing pets. This can cause anxiety among patients. He also provides a hypnosis induction script that can be used before anesthesia. Chapter 10 by James H. Straub EdD, and Vicki W. Straub, PhD, discuss hypnosis use with traumatic memories. They discuss techniques that include dissociating from the memory, extracting useful understandings from the memory with restructuring, and dialoguing. Also, they provide very concrete step-by-step approaches for more intensive submodality processing with hypnosis. Chapter 11 by Leora Kuttner, PhD, addresses pain, anxiety, and sleep disorders in children and adolescents. Numerous scripts are provided that appeal and are useful when working with this population.

The final chapter is by Donald C. Brown, MD. He reviews the evidence for use of hypnosis in obstetrics. He includes numerous studies and data. He also shares some of the results from his own research with women in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada.

This book is intended for a healthcare practitioner and even those with limited background in hypnosis can benefit by reading the book. Those with a basic and moderate background in hypnosis will also benefit too. The writing style from the numerous chapters is written in a scientific and readable manner. The necessary technical content is not overbearing.

### **References**

1. Brown DC. Advances in the use of hypnosis for medicine, dentistry, and pain prevention/management. Crown House Publishing, Bethel, CT, USA, 2009.

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