

[http://seattlepi.nwsourc.com/brothers/361995_joyce519.html]



May 18, 2008

By Dr. Joyce Brothers
Syndicated Columnist

DEAR DR. BROTHERS: I've been trying to lose weight for a few years now, and I just haven't had any success. I'm not obese, but I could stand to drop 20 to 30 pounds. My next-door neighbor recently went to a hypnotist to help her quit smoking, and she raved about the experience, saying that hypnotherapy can help with all kinds of problems. Is this true? Might **hypnotherapy** work to help me lose weight? -- A.K.

DEAR A.K.: Actually, it is possible that **hypnotherapy can help people lose weight**. Obviously, it's not a magic bullet, and it's not for everyone, but there are cases in which it can be extremely helpful. Hypnotherapy is used to treat a variety of mental-health issues, from depression and anxiety to insomnia, pain management and smoking cessation (as your neighbor has experienced). This type of therapy works only on people who are open to it and ready to make a significant change. In your case, you should be ready to start changing your lifestyle and outlook on food and eating, because without this change, no diet plan -- hypnosis-based or not -- will work. The hypnotherapy can affect your mind-set and make it easier for you to make the changes you want to make in your life. You will be able to access the strength that is in your own mind to take on a new lifestyle.

Make sure that if you do seek out a hypnotherapist, you find someone who is certified and experienced, and whom you trust. You have to be receptive to being hypnotized, and your relationship with the therapist can affect how susceptible you are to hypnosis. And remember, you still will have to make difficult changes and choices; you are simply calling on your mind to convince yourself that these changes are doable and worthwhile.

Write to Dr. Joyce Brothers via King Features, 888 Seventh Ave., New York, NY 10019.