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**How do Guided Imagery and Hypnosis differ?**

**Guided Imagery – A Subset of Hypnosis**

* Visual and sensory-oriented
* A guided visual journey for a specific purpose (e.g., relaxation, better health, performance enhancement, emotional release)
* Elicits all senses through imagination: sight, smell, hearing, touch, taste.
* Perception expands and conscious and subconscious resources can be accessed.

Guided imagery can help:

* Create a vision of the future
* Tap into supportive resources
* Calm and regulate the nervous system
* Find solutions to problems using our creative unconscious

**Hypnosis** **is more Complex**

* Guided imagery may be part of a hypnotherapy session, one of many processes a hypnotist may choose to help a client.
* Hypnosis is both suggestion-oriented and invitational: the hypnotist uses his/her voice to speak specific words and phrases to suggest a positive outcome, to offer some ideas about how to get to the outcome and to tap into under-utilized or forgotten resources to support their client.
* Attention is brought to thoughts, feelings and consequent actions or learning leading to behavioral change (but remember, in hypnosis the client is engaged in “contention” – which is attention without effort.
* The client learns to exercise personal choice to attend and commit to certain actions congruent with what is important to their values or goals.
* A state in which it is easier to uncover and discard core beliefs that no longer serve us and create new behaviors that truly serve.
* Goal oriented, enabling clients to make better life choices
* Tends to cognitive distortions in the here-and-now rather than a focus in the past.

**Abstract** <https://psycnet.apa.org/record/1977-06208-000>

Used knowledge from the basic sciences and clinical research in psychology, cross-cultural psychiatry, psychodynamics, hypnosis, and behavior therapy to develop a multimodal form of therapy. It is argued (a) that the integration of techniques from behavior modification and hypnosis can expedite therapy for specific disorders and (b) that hypnosis intensifies the perceptual and cognitive factors involved in "visual voyages" or hypnagogic experiences, evocation of fantasies, feeling states, and "altered states of consciousness" to bring about behavioral changes. (PsycINFO Database Record (c) 2016 APA, all rights reserved)