

# Should You Use Hypnosis or Meditation? What's the Difference?

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Are hypnosis and meditation just different terms for the same phenomena? ***Hypnosis and meditation both produce impressive results when applied properly and consistently.*** Meditation has been practiced for thousands of years. Hypnosis has been around as long as people have roamed the Earth. However, the idea of hypnotism wasn't proposed until far more recently.

While they may appear similar, hypnosis and meditation differ in several important ways. One isn't a good substitute for the other, but both can be powerful tools.

### Understand the differences between hypnosis and meditation:

- 1. You're hypnotized several times each day.** Each time you're more involved with your thoughts than you are with the outside world, you're hypnotized. You've experienced this while watching a movie or reading a book. Have you ever driven in the car, only to wonder where the time went after arriving at your destination? You were hypnotized.
  - It has been suggested that people are technically hypnotized after watching only 7 seconds of television!
- 2. Meditation attempts to be devoid of thought.** In most types of meditation, the objective is to concentrate on an object, such as the breath, and create a mental state with minimal thought activity.
- 3. Hypnosis is dissociative.** In a highly hypnotized state, the subject is unaware of his immediate surroundings. It's akin to being in a dream that's directed by himself or another person.

- ***Meditation is the opposite. The goal of meditation is complete presence.***

4. **Both techniques can be useful tools for managing stress or anxiety.** Both can be equally effective for dealing with mental distress:

- Meditation can help by revealing the reality that stress and anxiety are self-induced.
- Hypnosis often uses visualization techniques to experience new ways of reacting to the same stimuli in the future.

5. **Hypnosis could be viewed as experiencing something with your senses that's not really there. *When you close your eyes and imagine something, you're hypnotized.*** When you relive a conversation in your head, you're hypnotized. How much time do you think you spend hypnotized each day?

6. **Hypnosis is more outcome oriented.** Hypnosis is often undertaken to solve a challenge or to enhance performance. Hypnosis is used to get over a trauma, increase self-esteem, lose weight, or quit smoking. It's directed at a specific outcome. Meditation isn't normally applied in this way.

7. **Hypnosis is aimed at the subconscious.** It's believed that hypnosis works around the conscious mind and influences the subconscious. It's easier to address the subconscious while the conscious mind is otherwise occupied.

8. **Hypnosis is considered an altered state.** Your perception of reality is flawed because your mind is in another place.

- ***On the other hand, meditation seeks to eliminate everything except the truth.*** All opinions, beliefs, and preconceptions are dropped. Nothing remains but mental stillness.

***In spite of these basic differences, there are actually many kinds of meditation, some of which could be considered similar to hypnosis.***

If you're interested in learning more about either, both techniques can be learned on your own. There are many books, audio programs and video programs available. As with anything else, a great teacher can be helpful.

You already spend a portion of your day in a hypnotic state. Put it to work! Take control of the trances you enter each day.

Consider adding meditation *and* hypnosis to your self-improvement activities. Meditation and hypnosis are simple, but require practice. There's no better time than the present to get started.