

## Learning to Embrace Sweetness Again!

Diabetes Mellitus, as we well know, is a multi-faceted disorder requiring medical management and self-treatment. Most of the responsibility of the maintenance of blood sugar levels is done by the diabetic through the monitoring of diet, exercise, and medication. This gives health care professionals the opportunity to teach, and the patients to learn self-empowerment.

Ask yourself the following questions:

- a. "What would make my life sweet again?"
- b. "What do I really enjoy doing?"
- c. "If I could do only one thing right now that would make me feel alive, in control and happy, what would it be?"
- d. "How would I feel if my life were in control and I was happy?"
- e. "How would it be different from the way I feel right now?"

Notice, we are focusing on *feelings* and allowing ourselves to get in touch with our feelings. In effect, becoming *sensitive* once again to joy.

Review the lessons learned from having diabetes. What has it taught you? More specifically, what has it taught you about yourself? Are there any particular issues surrounding self-esteem, self-worth and value that arise? Has conflict been a part of your lifestyle for so long that you have forgotten how to experience joy? Or, has your life been spinning out of control so that now the prospect of trying to get it back under control seems insurmountable?

Yet, doesn't the possibility exist that the lessons learned might be of some benefit? In reviewing your responses to these questions, what insight have you gained?

Keeping along these same lines, let's review some of the "must-do's" associated with this disease.

- a. Modify diet to more healthy and nutritious foods.
- b. Reduce weight
- c. Increase exercise
- d. Get stress under control.

Won't all of these actions result in greater "ease" of our physical body? Isn't disease a lack of ease? Isn't it possible, that by making some changes to our lifestyle, we can change the outcome of the disease?

For Type II diabetes, these actions may lead to complete remission of the disease. For Type I diabetes, this will lead to more stable blood sugar control and greater peace of mind. Letting go of the conflict also makes it easier to maintain a healthy lifestyle (eating right, exercising, getting stress under control).

The goal is to help you focus on the activities that bring joy (sweetness) into your life. However, if we are insensitive to our feelings because we are caught up in the turmoil of "being a diabetic" or some other conflict (internal/external), and find it necessary to numb ourselves to all feelings, then we also become insensitive to the happiness and joy that these activities used to bring us. We become detached, and build walls around ourselves keeping both the pain and the joy from gaining entrance. The key, then, is to let go of the past. Hypnotherapists have a number of tools to bring this change about. Parts therapy, disassociation, NLP, imagery... The list goes on and on.

One of the most effective self-empowerment modalities is the mastering of self-hypnosis. Self-hypnosis is a state of mind in which a person can learn to respond to his/her own suggestions more powerfully than possible without its use. It is a natural state of being that once learned, can instruct and direct the unconscious mind and body to accomplish goals that might otherwise appear to be too difficult or even impossible to achieve. Self-hypnosis is a state of mind that virtually everyone, with practice, can learn to use. It is an intense form of concentration that is often experienced without our realizing it, many times during a day. Have you ever been so absorbed reading a good book, or engrossed in a project or a movie, that you have not heard someone speak to you or have not noticed how much time has passed? These are hypnotic like states. The difference between these types of concentrated attention and self-hypnosis is that in self-hypnosis we learn how to direct our mind toward a clear and specific intention and do not require outside stimulation to focus upon.

There are four specific areas where this very powerful modality can be used in the management of diabetes: compliance with diet and exercise; blood sugar monitoring and administration of medication; stress reduction; and the use of visualization and imagery to stimulate insulin production by the pancreas.

It is readily accepted that the greatest challenge a diabetic faces is the ability to comply with the prescribed diet and exercise. Every diabetic knows the success that is achieved when he/she has followed a consistent diet and exercise regime. Likewise every diabetic knows the struggle that has been experienced when there has been an inability to follow the regime.

This is where self-hypnosis can be so effective. Once the individual has learned to communicate with the unconscious mind and has set a goal of commitment to a healthy diet and moderate exercise, the result is a feeling of self-empowerment and inner strength needed to reach the desired outcome. The same process is used in the commitment to monitor blood sugar and administer medication.

The effects of stress on the physical body are well documented and certainly apply to the diabetic. Increased or uncontrolled stress can elevate blood sugar levels, decrease insulin production, and cause emotional and physical instability, thus creating a feeling of being out of control. The ability to stay focused upon goals becomes more difficult, if not impossible. When a person learns to use self-hypnosis he/she can relax both physically and mentally in a matter of minutes. Progressive relaxation and meditation are forms of self hypnosis frequently used in the management of stress.

The health care arena is just beginning to understand the power of the mind and its relationship to healing. Clinical hypnosis and self hypnosis are modalities that assist us to gain greater control of our mind and bodies, thus creating an exciting marriage between traditional western medicine and what has been considered in the past to be alternative healing techniques. When self-hypnosis is taught by a Certified Clinical Hypnotherapist, it is a very powerful adjunct to the maintenance and control of diabetes.



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# DIABETES

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This brochure is presented for the information of the general public, to discuss the applications of hypnosis available for dealing with such matters as habit control, stress, excessive eating, smoking, fears, motivation, self-confidence, concentration, learning enhancement, attitude modification, pain management, insomnia, goal-setting, relationships and other areas which lead to unhappiness, dysfunction or difficulty in achieving personal goals.

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