

Not Hypnotism, but Suggestion

The Power of Mind

This document explores Henry Harrison Brown's influential work "Not Hypnotism, but Suggestion" and related texts that examine the power of suggestion in shaping human experience. Brown argues that suggestion, not hypnosis, is the key to understanding the mind's influence over body, emotions, and circumstances. Through conscious concentration and self-affirmations, individuals can control their thoughts and feelings, thereby shaping their own destiny. The following sections delve into Brown's "NOW" philosophy, the mechanisms of suggestion, practical applications, and the ethical implications of these powerful mental techniques.

The key insight Brown offers is that this same process occurs constantly in everyday life, not just in formal hypnotic settings. "Thought is power," he declares. "It is the power the Individual uses to direct the Absolute power in which he lives and moves as an Ego, an individualised being." By understanding this mechanism, individuals can begin to consciously direct the process, choosing which suggestions to accept and which to reject.

Scientific evidence from Professor Elmer Gates is cited to support Brown's claims about the power of thought. Gates' research demonstrated that negative emotions like envy, jealousy, and hate create physical toxins in the body, while positive emotions produce beneficial chemical changes. This research reinforces Brown's assertion that "thought creates reality" on both psychological and physiological levels.

Understanding the "NOW" Philosophy

Henry Harrison Brown's "Not Hypnotism, but Suggestion" introduces readers to what he terms the "NOW" philosophy or "Soul Culture." This philosophy posits that individuals possess the inherent power to control their environment and achieve their desires through the conscious application of suggestion and affirmation. Brown draws a critical distinction between hypnotism and suggestion, arguing that the phenomena commonly attributed to hypnotic influence are actually manifestations of suggestion at work.

According to Brown, "Suggestion is that which causes a sensation or a thought," making it a fundamental force in human experience. Unlike the popular misconception that hypnotism involves one person dominating another's will, Brown emphasizes that all hypnotic phenomena result from the subject's own concentrated will responding to accepted suggestions. He states emphatically, "The phenomena occur, but they are not hypnotic. They are not the effect of a power that the operator possesses, but are the effect of the subject's own mind."

Suggestion

The objective side of life; anything external that causes a sensation or thought. It represents the stimuli we constantly receive from our environment.

Affirmation

The subjective response to suggestion; a statement of Truth as perceived by the individual. Brown notes, "Each person is controlled by his convictions of Truth."

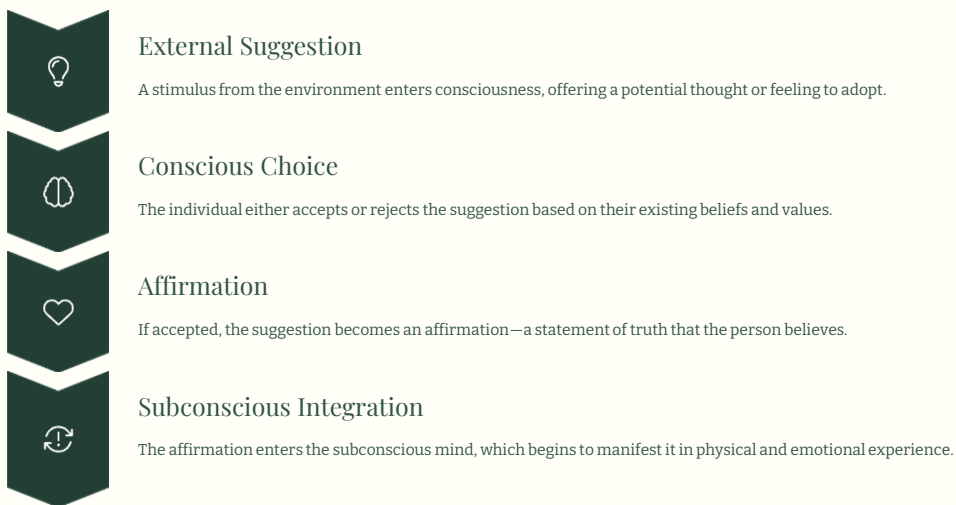
Concentration

The focused attention on a chosen thought or affirmation. Brown calls this "the long-sought 'Philosopher's Stone'" that enables mastery over one's life.

Brown's philosophy challenges readers to recognize their power of choice in accepting or rejecting suggestions. He argues that each person "creates his body and his surroundings from his choice" of which suggestions to accept and which to ignore. This places the responsibility for one's life circumstances squarely on the individual, while simultaneously offering the empowering message that anyone can reshape their reality through conscious thought selection.

The Mechanics of Suggestion

Brown provides a comprehensive explanation of how suggestion operates in the human mind and body. He distinguishes between the conscious (objective) mind and the subconscious (subjective) mind, emphasizing their distinct yet complementary roles in the process of suggestion. "All power comes from the sub-conscious," Brown explains, but it "does nothing that is not willed by the Conscious mind." This relationship forms the foundation for understanding how suggestion influences human experience.

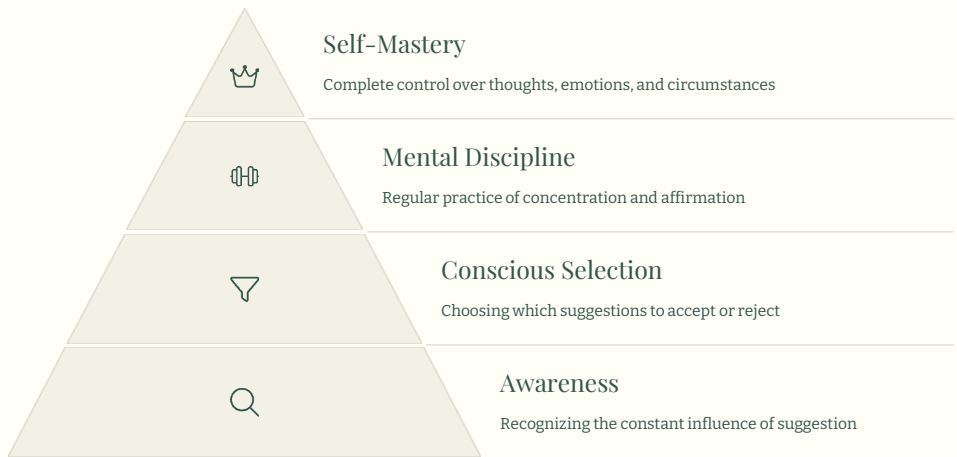


Brown illustrates this process with the example of a hypnotic subject who is told a coin is hot. When the subject accepts this suggestion, they form the affirmation "This coin is hot," and their subconscious mind creates the physical sensation of heat—sometimes even producing a blister, despite the coin being at room temperature. This demonstrates the profound power of suggestion to create physical effects through mental processes.

Self-Mastery Through Concentration

At the heart of Brown's philosophy lies the concept of concentration as the key to self-mastery. He describes voluntary concentration upon a chosen thought as "the long-sought 'Philosopher's Stone'" that enables individuals to become masters of their own destiny. Through focused attention on specific affirmations, Brown argues that people can reshape their mental, emotional, and physical experiences.

The power of concentration works in both positive and negative directions. Brown cautions that concentration upon unwanted thoughts can manifest undesirable outcomes just as effectively as concentration upon desired ones. This underscores the importance of learning to "let go" of negative thoughts while cultivating positive ones. As he states, "A MAN CAN THINK WHATEVER HE WISHES, AND CAN MAKE THAT THOUGHT A REALITY IN THE OBJECTIVE LIFE."



Brown draws parallels between the trained and untrained will. The untrained will is susceptible to random suggestions and habitual patterns, while the trained will can choose and maintain desired thoughts with intention. He notes that hypnotic subjects temporarily achieve a state of heightened concentration that allows them to manifest remarkable changes in their experience. Brown argues that this same state can become a permanent condition for anyone willing to practice the art of concentration.

Dispelling Myths About Hypnotism

Brown dedicates significant portions of his work to debunking common misconceptions about hypnotism, particularly the fear that it can be used to control others against their will. He emphatically states that "no one can be hypnotized to do something against their will or conscience," arguing that the hypnotic state is actually one in which the individual is most protected from harmful suggestions.

The author criticizes the media for spreading misinformation about hypnotism, citing specific examples of cases misrepresented by the press. These sensationalized stories, he argues, reinforce harmful stereotypes and contribute to unwarranted fear. Similarly, he condemns certain advertisers and teachers who promote misleading ideas about hypnotism and "personal magnetism," claiming to offer secret powers of control over others.



Ethical Protection

Brown argues that individuals cannot be compelled to act against their moral code, even under hypnosis. The conscience acts as a shield against harmful suggestions.



Cooperative Process

Hypnosis requires the willing participation of the subject. It is not something done to a person, but rather something they actively engage in.



Therapeutic Potential

When used ethically, hypnotic suggestion can be a powerful tool for healing and personal development, helping millions overcome limitations.

To support his arguments, Brown cites various authorities on hypnotism who confirm its safety and therapeutic value when practiced ethically. He provides multiple firsthand testimonies from experienced hypnotists, all of whom affirm the harmlessness of hypnotism and highlight its potential for positive change. As one authority states, "The only principle concerned in the phenomena is the constant one of concentration upon an Affirmation that is the result of a chosen Suggestion."

Brown frames hypnotism not as a tool for manipulation but as a pathway to self-liberation. By understanding the principles of suggestion that underlie hypnotic phenomena, individuals can learn to harness these same principles consciously in their everyday lives, achieving greater self-control and personal empowerment.



Practical Applications of Suggestion

Brown offers numerous practical applications for harnessing the power of suggestion in daily life. He provides specific formulas for self-hypnosis and affirmations to address various challenges, including pain, nervousness, insomnia, illness, bad habits, and fear. These techniques are designed to help individuals access their subconscious mind and direct its power toward desired outcomes.

For Physical Healing

Brown suggests affirmations like "I am Well!" or "There is no pain!" repeated with concentration to overcome physical ailments. He explains that by directing attention away from pain and toward wellness, individuals can activate their body's natural healing abilities.

The author cites examples of individuals who have learned to control their physical sensations through self-suggestion, demonstrating the mind's remarkable influence over bodily processes.

For Mental Challenges

For issues like nervousness or insomnia, Brown recommends affirmations such as "I am Peace!" or "I am going to sleep soundly!" These statements, when concentrated upon, can calm the mind and create the desired mental state.

Brown emphasizes the importance of relaxation and letting go of resistance when working with these affirmations, allowing the subconscious mind to respond naturally to the suggestion.

For Habit Change

To break unwanted habits, Brown suggests focusing not on the negative behavior but on its positive opposite. For example, rather than saying "I will not smoke," one might affirm "I am free from all desire to smoke!"

This approach acknowledges that concentration on the unwanted habit only reinforces it, while concentration on the desired state creates new neural pathways that support positive change.

Brown also explores the phenomenon of post-hypnotic suggestion, where suggestions given during hypnosis are carried out later when the subject is awake. He proposes that this principle explains the effectiveness of mental healing and encourages parents to use positive suggestions to influence their children's development. Several anecdotes illustrate the power of post-hypnotic suggestion to achieve various goals, including academic success, problem-solving, creative inspiration, and overcoming performance anxiety.

For those seeking to apply these principles independently, Brown provides instructions for using post-hypnotic self-suggestions to access the subconscious mind and solve problems, retrieve forgotten information, or gain creative insights. He emphasizes that with practice, these techniques can become powerful tools for self-improvement and personal growth.

Connections to Spiritual and Healing Movements

Brown draws fascinating connections between his understanding of suggestion and various spiritual and healing movements throughout history. He argues that understanding the principles of suggestion can shed light on "occult" and "spiritual" phenomena from ancient mysticism to modern movements like Spiritualism and Christian Science. In his view, these diverse traditions all tap into the same fundamental principles of suggestion and concentration, albeit with different terminologies and conceptual frameworks.

The author specifically examines Christian Science, tracing its roots to the work of Dr. Phineas Quimby, who influenced Mary Baker Eddy's development of the movement. Brown suggests that while Christian Science frames its healing work in religious terms, the underlying mechanism is the power of suggestion working through concentrated affirmation. As he states, "The School of Suggestion is the University of the Soul. All other schools are of the intellect. This school opens the door through which to reach the Ego itself. None other is equal to it."

Similarly, Brown analyzes Spiritualism as another manifestation of the same principles. He suggests that mediumistic phenomena can be understood through the lens of suggestion, with the medium's heightened concentration allowing access to normally unconscious mental faculties. This explanation offers a psychological framework for understanding experiences traditionally attributed to communication with spirits.

Brown also references the work of William Walker Atkinson, whose "Nuggets of the New Thought" presents similar principles of positive thinking and focused action. Both authors emphasize the crucial role of concentration in directing the power of thought and the potential for positive transformation through understanding and applying these principles.

By connecting these diverse traditions to his unified theory of suggestion, Brown attempts to demystify seemingly supernatural phenomena while simultaneously validating the genuine transformative experiences reported by practitioners. His approach offers a bridge between scientific understanding and spiritual practice, suggesting that both can be reconciled through a deeper understanding of the mind's inherent powers.

Life as a Fine Art: Mastering Your Destiny

In the culmination of his philosophy, Brown proposes that life itself can be approached as a "fine art" when individuals consciously apply the principles of suggestion and concentration. Just as an artist shapes clay or canvas into a beautiful creation, Brown argues that we can sculpt our lives through the deliberate application of thought. He emphasizes that this mastery requires consistent practice and effort, comparing it to learning to play the piano—a skill that becomes increasingly natural with dedicated repetition.



Brown draws on the scientific concept of "registration of experiences" to explain how mental and physical changes occur through repetition and intention. He argues that our bodies are essentially materialized thought and feeling, and that we can use our conscious will to mold our bodies and environments according to our ideals. As he eloquently states, "He who dares assert the I, May calmly wait. While hurrying Fate Meets his demand with sure Supply," quoting Helen Wilmans.

The author emphasizes self-belief as the foundation for this process of self-mastery. By affirming the ideal, holding to it through concentration, and allowing it to manifest, individuals can achieve remarkable transformations in their lives. Brown encourages readers to continue exploring and applying these principles, emphasizing that self-mastery is an ongoing journey of learning and practice.

This philosophy places tremendous power and responsibility in the hands of the individual. Brown's message is ultimately one of empowerment—that through understanding and applying the laws of suggestion, concentration, and affirmation, each person can become the conscious creator of their own destiny. As he concludes, "The Key to Wisdom, the Inlet to Power, And the road to Success, are all found In the Principle of Suggestion..."