Hypnosis, rumination, and depression

Over the past 30 years, mental health practitioners, encouraged by rigorous empirical studies and literature and meta-analytic reviews, have increasingly appreciated the ability of hypnosis to modulate attention, imagination, and motivation in the service of therapeutic goals. This article describes how hypnosis can be used as an adjunctive procedure in the treatment of depression and rumination symptoms, in particular. The focus is on attention-based treatments that include rumination-focused cognitive behavioral therapy, cognitive control training, and mindfulness-based cognitive therapy. The authors provide numerous examples of techniques and approaches that can potentially enhance treatment gains, including a hypnotic induction to facilitate mindfulness and to motivate mindfulness practice. Although hypnosis appears to be a promising catalyst of attention and mindfulness, research is required to document the incremental value of adding hypnosis to the treatments reviewed.


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