

don't think it's appropriate. We will address patients' concerns in other ways that they find acceptable. Many of our staff have deep spiritual roots yet have not personally experienced this conflict between hypnotherapy and spirituality. Our job as therapists, however, is to respect patients' spirituality, not to challenge or change it.

### **Hypnotherapy is a tool.**

While hypnotherapy is not what some people imagine, it is a powerful tool for helping people grow. It is especially useful in working with problems that seem "automatic" and outside our conscious control. Examples include certain habits or sleep disturbances, flashbacks, and upsetting memories often related to abuse or other trauma.

**For more information or to make an appointment call: (800) 342-5653.**

### **Bowen Center can help.**

Bowen Center is a Community Mental Health Center offering a full range of professional services to meet the needs of individuals in Indiana. Since 1961, Bowen Center has dedicated itself to providing life-changing care to families, individuals and organizations. Bowen Center's expanding range of services for all ages includes: family therapy, marital counseling, adolescent and children's counseling, alcohol and substance use treatment, individual and group therapy, case management, hypnotherapy, transitional living services, and inpatient unit services.

**Bowen Center's mission is to strengthen our communities and to improve the health and well-being of those we are privileged to serve.**

# **HYPNO- THERAPY SERVICES**

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# HYPNOTHERAPY SERVICES

## Bowen Center Hypnotherapy

Bowen Center is a leader in the use of hypnotherapy, also known as “trance work,” to help patients. Hypnotherapy can be a powerful tool in helping people discover solutions to their problems. Hypnotic work dates back hundreds of years. It was widely used during the first part of the last century in the early days of psychiatry and psychotherapy. There has been increasing interest in hypnotherapy in recent years. In our busy, fast-paced world, many patients feel a need to make quick progress. Hypnotherapy may help some patients achieve prompt, lasting results.

There are many confusing myths about hypnotherapy. By providing facts, we seek to help our patients make informed choices about counseling options.

### MYTH 1- Hypnotherapy is like sleep.

#### FACT 1- Hypnotherapy is not sleep.

Hypnotic trance is different for everyone. It is often like a daydream in which one’s attention is focused on things we may often ignore. In trance, one may focus attention on mental images, physical sensations, unspoken ideas, emotions or memories. Typically, time seems to pass more quickly than usual.

If you have ever been so absorbed in a book or a TV show that you lost track of time, you’ve been in trance. Most of us probably experience some form of trance every day.

Trance is a normal, natural state of mind. Yet, trance is also a state in which people can better influence their own “unconscious mind.” This is difficult to do in our usual state of conscious awareness. The unconscious is the part of the mind that does things “automatically,” with little conscious intent or control. The unconscious influences our dreams, habits, and our automatic physical functions.

### MYTH 2 - I won’t remember what happens.

#### FACT 2 - Not necessarily. You can remember whatever your mind chooses to remember.

You may not remember everything, but that has more to do with what you were paying attention to than it has to do with trance itself. Even in a state of full waking consciousness, we don’t remember all the information that comes our way.

### MYTH 3 - Many people can’t be hypnotized.

#### FACT 3 - Most people can do hypnotic work.

In the past, many therapists practiced “directive hypnotherapy” and basically ordered people to go into a trance state. Most of us have a natural, appropriate resistance to being ordered to do things. Resistance to trance probably has more to do with what the therapist does than with the patient’s personality. We prefer “permissive hypnotherapy” where the patient is in control and is given lots of choices. It is much easier for people to participate freely and comfortably when they are *invited* into trance rather than directed into it.

### MYTH 4 - I will remember things with hypnotherapy that I otherwise could not.

#### FACT 4 - Maybe. People may remember new things in trance, but that is not always true.

People may recall things that would be good to remember and probably won’t remember things that are best left alone. The patient’s unconscious mind will make those decisions, not the therapist. It is important to realize that “memories” recalled in trance may not be true memories. They may be memories that have been changed by time and experience, or something the person imagined or was told by someone else. Unnecessary heartache has sometimes happened when a person acted on memories, believing they were true, only to find out later they were not.

### MYTH 5 - In hypnotherapy, I will have to go back and relive my past.

#### FACT 5 - “Age regression” is not practiced at Bowen Center.

We believe that change happens in the present toward the future, so we don’t focus excessively on the past. Our intent is not to ignore the past, but rather to help patients focus their attention and energy where it will do the most good-in the “here and now.”

### MYTH 6 - Hypnotherapy will instantly solve my problems.

#### FACT 6 - Hypnotherapy is not a magical cure.

It does not work for everyone and is not a substitute for hard work by the person seeking to make changes. Hypnotherapy can help people change habits, heal old hurts, get in touch with inner strengths, learn to do things differently, and discover creative solutions to problems.

## Hypnotherapy and Spirituality.

Occasionally, patients express discomfort with hypnotic work on religious grounds. Among these concerns is the belief that during hypnotherapy, patients surrender their free will and self-control to the therapist. Some people believe that trance and dream-states are places where God speaks, so we should remain “hands off.” The first concern assumes that hypnotherapy has far more power than it really does. People will not do anything in or after trance that they would not otherwise do.

The second issue, and other concerns like it, is more complicated. There are many Scripture references to God communicating with people in dreams or in trance. John’s visions, detailed in Revelation in the Christian Bible, are noteworthy examples. We respect patients’ spiritual convictions and religious traditions and will never do hypnotic work with patients who