

## How can Horseback Riders benefit from Self-Hypnosis?

Firstly, what is Self-hypnosis? Self-hypnosis is a process of communicating with oneself, directing one's own attention in specific ways in order to produce states that are commonly recognised as trance states. Neither sleep nor unconsciousness, hypnosis is a state in which a person has shut out distractions and is free to focus intently on a particular subject, emotion, or memory or goal. The hypnotic state is an optimum state for making changes in your attitude and approach to horse riding. Why would a horse rider want to change their attitude or approach? Because her competition nerves are hindering her performance during contests Because she wants to get rid of the debilitating residual fear after a horse riding accident Because she wants to get rid of ingrained riding habits that limit her progress Because she wants to master new riding skills faster Because she wants to stay motivated to reach her riding goals Self-hypnosis can be a very powerful tool in the mental skills toolbox of the rider. However, if you think hypnosis is no more than a stage trick or is performed only by charlatans, your doubts will impede any positive results that you may get from a hypnotic session. Therefore, you must be open-minded to some degree to the possibility that you can improve your riding ability through the power of auto-suggestion. In reality, trance states are nothing special; we go in and out of these states several times during the day. Day dreaming, a well-known trance state, is a form of self-hypnosis. You have hypnotised yourself when you drive to work on auto-pilot. Afterwards you remember little of the journey, but if you suddenly had to react fast to avoid an accident, you would have. You are not asleep during hypnosis. You are aware of every thing that is being said. You can remember everything afterwards. True, effective self hypnosis should be designed and created by the very person who will ultimately use and benefit from it, incorporating the precise words and phrases that mean the most to that particular person. If someone is willing to take the time and mental discipline necessary to improve their riding ability and awareness of themselves and their horses, with self hypnosis, the results will be extraordinary, positive and lasting. Hypnosis is simply a state of mind, in much the same way that happiness is a state of mind. Contrary to what most people believe, the mind under hypnosis is still alert and very much in control. If you cannot hear anything, then you cannot benefit from self-hypnosis. Hypnosis is a state of heightened awareness. You remain fully alert, in fact more alert than usual. Any one can be hypnotised. In fact, it is often a learned trait. You can teach your body and mind to go into trance, and get better and better at it as you practice self-hypnosis. We are constantly hypnotising ourselves. Sometimes we are our own worst enemy, when we call ourselves names, or put ourselves down and reinforce fears and limitations. It can become a habit and if you do it long enough you will develop a belief that will get the results you fear. Ex: \* Boy, my jumping is getting bad \* I am so bad at setting the horse up for a jump \* I will never jump higher than 90 cm, never These are auto-suggestions or negative affirmations. More appropriate auto-suggestions to give yourself under self-hypnosis would be: \* My jumping is getting better and better every day \* I am very good at show-jumping, it is easy for me to set up my horse for a jump \* I will easily jump higher than 90cm ...and because the trance state gives you direct access to your unconscious mind, you will embrace these suggestions without reserve and accept them as the pure, unadulterated truth. Imagine what might happen if you changed the suggestions that you give yourself on a daily basis? If you used the hypnotic trance state to give yourself empowering suggestions to improve your riding, reduce your anxiety about and exponentially increase your self-esteem?

## About the Author

Dr M de Clermont wrote "Ride with Supreme Self-Confidence" and edits the Equestrian Inspiration Newsletter about the mental skills needed to master the art of horsemanship. Subscribe at <http://www.equestrian-life-coaching.com> to receive a FREE 7 day e-course

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