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Port Orchard hypnotherapist Diana Labrum has developed her own hypnosis-based weight loss course.

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## Hypnotist says it doesn't work like it does on TV

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Hypnotism is often portrayed as a mysterious practice in which the subject loses control over their actions in order to move the plot along to a fantasy conclusion.

In real life, it is a straightforward procedure that helps people overcome the mental blocks that obstruct their path to a happier life.

“The general assumptions about hypnosis aren’t always true,” said Diana Labrum, owner of Personal Best Hypnosis. “It can help people control the impulses that cause them to overeat or smoke. It is one of the best ways to deal with stress or to overcome a mental block.”

Hypnosis, however, is not a form of mind control. Someone in a trance will not do anything that is against their nature or incompatible with their beliefs.

“If I put someone under hypnosis, they will never do anything they would not do when they are awake,” Labrum said. “If I tell you that a session costs \$60 and put you under hypnosis and ask you to write a check for \$600, you will get up and walk out.”

While the purpose of hypnosis is to quit addiction or modify behavior, it is only the first step.

It is perhaps used most often as a method to slim down, and to this end Labrum’s most popular program is a \$150 eight-week weight loss course.

Still, the course doesn’t offer a direct path to weight loss. Rather, it helps the patient accomplish the sometimes-difficult (and necessary) diet and exercise goals.

“Hypnosis changes the way you view things,” Labrum said. “It can motivate you to take better care of yourself or see yourself more clearly.”

Continuing the notion that it is not a typical mall, the Towne Center in Port Orchard features a hypnotherapist as part of the spectrum of businesses sharing the location, Labrum has taken over a small room on the mall’s lower level, furnishing it with a variety of recliners positioned in a circle.

Labrum, who once worked as an accountant, has worked as a hypnotherapist since 2005. Since then, she has worked out of her home and in a mall office, moving to her current location earlier this year.

Prior to treatment, Labrum conducts a 30-minute “intake interview” to determine a patient’s needs.

“The assumptions that you make about a patient aren’t always true,” she said. “If you have an overweight person they may not want to lose weight. Maybe they’d rather quit smoking, although it’s very difficult to do both at the same time.”

Hypnotic suggestions are often permanent, such as one that steers a person away from a certain unhealthy food.

Physical dependencies are different. Someone may use hypnosis to quit smoking, but may relapse if their life takes a stressful turn that causes them to again crave cigarettes.

In those cases a follow-up visit could be required.

Aside from weight, stress and smoking, Labrum said that hypnosis is most useful to deal with fears and phobias.

Fear can be a positive thing when it creates caution. In other cases, such as the fear of public speaking or certain small, harmless animals, it serves no useful purpose.

And fears of crowds or unfamiliar places can impose unwelcome restrictions on a person’s ability to function.

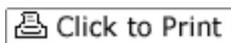
Labrum uses age regression, which delves into a person’s past and finds the reason for their particular fear or phobia. Through this, casual factors can be addressed and healed.

“Regression therapy deals with specific fears that you might not be aware of,” she said. “Something can happen to you when you are three or four that you remember in your subconscious. I can help you discover and address this.”

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