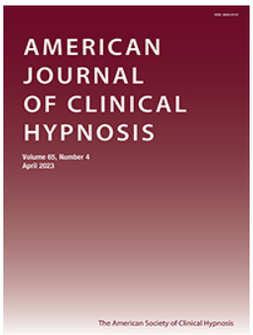

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Symphonic resonance: optimizing hypnotic suggestions with music to harmonize depression and rumination

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ABSTRACT
Depression is a complex, multi-dimensional disorder that is recognized as a leading cause of human suffering and disability. A wide variety of treatments, both physical and psychological, have been developed to lessen the burden on depressed individuals and those they may affect. Hypnosis has been shown to be an effective vehicle for delivering psychological treatments for alleviating depression in a number of studies, but it is always a challenge to increase the effectiveness of suggestions given in hypnosis. The addition of music to enhance hypnotic approaches has been studied and received substantial support for its potential effectiveness. This article explores the merits of incorporating music into the delivery of hypnosis sessions and offers specific recommendations for the use of rhythmic methods as a means of deepening hypnosis and increasing the impact of one's suggestions for reducing depressive ruminations. Five case examples are provided to illustrate the successful use of this integrative approach to treatment.

KEYWORDS
Depression; hypnosis; hypnotic suggestions; music; rumination

Depression is a pervasive and debilitating disorder that affects people's physical and mental health, significantly affecting quality of life in many ways. Many different treatments have been developed over the years, including physical treatments such as antidepressant medications, newer variants of Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation, and the growing use of psychedelics. Psychotherapeutic methods have evolved as well and been successfully applied, especially cognitive-behavioral, behavioral activation, and interpersonal therapies among others. All of these approaches, and many others as well, rely on the use of suggestion to help shape treatment response. Thus, the role of hypnosis as the deliberate use of suggestion has been studied in depth for its potential impact on therapeutic efficacy.

It is widely acknowledged within the hypnosis community that hypnosis is not considered a therapy "in its own right" (Kirsch, 2017, p. 680). Rather, it is considered a vehicle for delivering therapy more effectively (Kirsch, 2017). Since efficacy of hypnosis relies on the successful employment of suggestion to influence people's subjective experience, it is a common concern among hypnosis practitioners to find ways to enhance the effectiveness of suggestions given during clinical hypnosis sessions.

In this article, I will be considering the role music may play in increasing the effectiveness of suggestions delivered during hypnosis. It is generally acknowledged that music can both trigger and amplify mood states, as anyone who watches movies and television programs or attends concerts can readily attest. The main focus of this

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article, then, is on the role that music may play in treatment in general and the treatment of depression in particular. Special consideration will be given to the use of music to help counter depressive ruminations, a negative coping style that features repetitive and disturbing thoughts.

Connecting music with hypnosis has both a historical and empirical foundation in relation to influences on mood states

The historical use of music in conjunction with hypnosis can be traced back centuries. Two prominent examples are Franz Anton Mesmer, who utilized the glass armonica, and Jean-Martin Charcot, who explored the hypnotic potentials of gongs and tuning forks. Both early pioneers were curious about the interplay between music and altered states (Gallo & Finger, 2000; Kennaway, 2012). In the many decades since their early explorations, many studies have attempted to better define the relationship between music and mood states and these can provide meaningful insights into the relevance of music as a means of enhancing therapeutic suggestions.

Well-executed hypnosis sessions have been shown to alleviate depressive symptoms as shown in a recent meta-analysis by Milling et al. (2019). Empirical research also consistently affirms the effectiveness of music in successfully treating depression and inducing pleasurable states giving rise to an overall improvement in functioning (Erkkilä et al., 2011; Golden et al., 2021; Hanser & Thompson, 1994; Tang et al., 2020).

The critical role of carefully chosen musical interventions in alleviating depression, distress, and anxiety among older adults is exemplified in a 1994 study by Hanser and Thompson. Incorporating home-based and self-administered programs alongside a control group, the study focused on identifying individualized music preferences through interviews and by observing relaxation responses accompanied by imagery that the therapist recommended. The music intervention groups exhibited significant and lasting improvements in depression, distress, self-esteem, and mood over a 9-month follow-up compared to the control group. These findings emphasize the importance of thoughtfully selected musical scores, such as personalized preferences, relaxation-inducing compositions, and mood-enhancing pieces, in both therapy sessions and homework assignments.

Studies have linked listening to music to the reduction of depressive symptoms in young individuals through the accumulation of positive moments which may serve as protective factors for well-being (Rutter, 2012; Stewart et al., 2019). Listening to preferred music as a coping strategy has been found to provide solace and reduce rumination in young individuals struggling with suicidal thoughts (Cheong-Clinch & McFerran, 2016). Reduced rumination may lower the risk of self-harm and suicide attempts (Polanco-Roman et al., 2015).

One recent study focused on the relationship between mood states and the specific elements of rhythm and tempo of music exposure. A study of 794 university students explored the link between music preference and emotional regulation. A strong affinity for energetic and rhythmic music (such as rap/hip-hop, electronica/dance) was correlated with an up-regulation of positive emotions, a down-regulation of negative emotions, and increased emotional arousal (Cook et al., 2019). Soul/funk music was linked to reduced negative emotions, while blues/jazz influenced both positive and negative emotions but not arousal levels. While this study primarily focused on musical genres, a relatively superficial

consideration, it contributes to a general understanding of the relationship between music preferences and emotional regulation.

The effects of music on a specific population, namely palliative care patients, was explored in two studies, one conducted in Germany (Teut et al., 2014) and the other in India (Dietrich et al., 2015). These revealed that palliative care patients experienced pleasant visualizations, relaxation, and calmness through a specially crafted body tambura that was played either directly on or near their bodies. These beneficial effects appeared to stem from multisensory stimulation, rhythmic vibrations, as well as music's universal appeal in therapy.

A pilot study involving 28 palliative cancer patients exposed them to lullaby-like music with gradually decreasing tempos, while the control group received no music intervention (Reinhardt, 1999). Those patients exposed to the music showed improved heart rate synchronization with the music (6/8 rhythm), particularly at tempos from 48 to 42 beats per minute. This led to enhanced relaxation responses, more positive music perception, reduced reliance on analgesics, and improved sleep quality. The relevance for depressive symptoms may be apparent. Notably, the control group in the study did not exhibit these beneficial results.

In a study involving 79 working-age individuals aimed at addressing depression, researchers integrated music therapy with psychodynamic therapy, with a particular emphasis placed on the significant impact of rhythm (Erkkilä et al., 2011). The treatment consisted of 20 bi-weekly 60-minute sessions in which clients, who may have had no prior musical background, engaged in expressive musical interactions guided by therapists. These expressive sessions included emphases on rhythm, harmony, melody, dynamics, and timbre. The emphasis on rhythm in particular significantly improved depression, anxiety, and overall functioning at the three-month follow-up compared to the control group receiving psychotherapy alone.

These studies seem to suggest that musical elements, including gradual tempo reductions and rhythmic patterns, might serve to induce a state of physiological relaxation and harmony that may benefit individuals with depression. A practical application can involve integrating drum beat recordings or playing a frame drum during a hypnosis session to synchronize with and then pace the client's breath with the music's tempo. Initial drumbeats can concretely represent the fast-paced ruminative thoughts of the client, slowly guiding them into a harmonious and comfortable rhythm conducive to the induction of hypnosis. A deliberate slowing of the drumbeat, accompanied by verbal suggestions involving feedback to the client regarding observable changes in their breathing rate and facial tone (trance ratification), can potentially reinforce responsiveness and deepen their experience.

Exploring the role of imagined music and imagery

Ted Sarbin often described the essence of hypnosis as "believed-in imagination" (Sarbin, 1997). Advances in hypnosis can include integrating imagined music during hypnosis. The examination of four case studies pioneered by Kelly (1993) described notable progress in leveraging imagined music to evoke emotional recall and induce desired states. Kelly utilized a combination of insight-oriented psychotherapy, self-hypnosis, and the integration of imagined music as a therapeutic tool. In three of the presented cases, he chose a familiar

musical score, and in one case, he asked the client to choose his own score to enforce his sense of tranquility. In each instance, the use of music as a cue for emotional recall proved effective, serving not only as a reminder of advancements already achieved but also as a trigger for the desired emotional states. These cases demonstrate the versatility of imagining a musical soundtrack as a dynamic tool for shaping emotions and underscoring its practical utility in diverse clinical hypnosis applications.

The neurobiology of music's impact during hypnosis

The study cited above by Erkkilä et al. (2011) was taken a step further by Fachner et al. (2012) in their neurobiological analysis of the findings. The same group of 79 showed compelling evidence that music intervention may impact cortical activity in depression. The researchers observed increased left fronto-temporal alpha and theta oscillations during resting brain activity, suggesting potential neuroplasticity and the brain's responsiveness to music intervention. Notably, while basic musical elements were not individually examined, the findings did highlight the significant role of rhythm.

The effects of rhythm in music seem to parallel the role of oscillations in hypnosis experiences. Power in the theta bandwidth is often associated with hypnotic phenomena while hypnotic responses have been linked to changes in patterns of gamma oscillations, dependent on various factors (Jensen et al., 2015). Jensen and his colleagues further noted that these oscillatory patterns are implicated in processes related to the storage and retrieval of declarative memories and the interaction between emotional limbic circuits and neocortical circuits during hypnosis. If so, the potential impact on depression through rhythm may prove significant.

In subsequent research, Fachner et al. (2019) explored the relationship between shared visual imagery, emotions, and event-related brain activity in frontal and parietal regions. Specifically, they examined whether therapists and clients shared and processed emotions similarly, particularly when therapists experienced a strong connection with their clients. They employed guided imagery directly focused on the imminent threat of family members facing mortality, which was followed by soothing, agreed-upon music. The researchers employed a methodological approach, micro-analyzing data by integrating dual-EEG, detailed video-based observations, and qualitative data. They did not, however, specifically examine the individual components of the musical interventions that might have influenced the observed effects.

Contrary to expectations, EEG analysis of the guided imagery sessions with music revealed significant differences from the resting state during the time that the client and therapist experienced negative emotions. The therapist's emotional peak processing aligned with that of the client until an imagined guide provided a supportive message. Frontal and parietal asymmetry synchronized at its peak with the emotional dynamics of the music, highlighting the significant interplay between neural activity and musical stimuli. This underscores the potential for creative applications of music in hypnosis which extend beyond providing mere background ambiance. Innovative approaches may involve playing musical pieces in isolation and integrating them as a distinct and essential element within the hypnosis session.

During hypnosis, the anterior cingulate cortex (ACC) has been shown to become more active (Egner et al., 2005). The ACC is linked to diverse cognitive functions, including

processing conflicting information and monitoring cognitive control (Del Casale et al., 2021). This extends to scenarios like music, where expected outcomes may differ from actual experiences and thereby heighten attentiveness and responsiveness (Koelsch et al., 2019).

Practical applications

Drawing insights from studies on the impact of musical interventions on emotions and brain activity, it seems evident that the integration of carefully selected musical elements into hypnosis holds significant therapeutic potential. Further possibilities can unfold as clinicians might include imagined snippets of familiar songs, complete melodies and singing, or rhythmic body tapping during trance states. Such imagined music can be used for initiating and enhancing self-hypnosis routines aimed at alleviating symptoms of depression. Clients can engage with these familiar or self-created musical elements, aligning them with therapeutic suggestions. For instance, clinicians might encourage their clients with suggestions such as, "Whenever your thoughts wander, you will feel the uplifting rhythm of that song within your body, and you'll be in control of your thoughts," or indirect suggestions such as, "Music has the power to ignite hope and remind us that things can improve."

Rhythm and the concept and application of the Hypnotic Tihai

Concept of the Hypnotic Tihai

Given the role of rhythm in facilitating meaningful emotional and hypnotic responses, using a vehicle of rhythm may be advantageous in treatment. The Hypnotic Tihai (HT) can serve that purpose. The HT, as defined by the author (2024), stems from a musical phenomenon grounded in the polyrhythmic structure of the tihai, a fundamental element of Indian Classical music. It is especially prominent in the domain of tabla drumming and is characterized by the repetitive iteration of a rhythmic or melodic pattern for three consecutive cycles (Ranade, 2006). This pattern typically exhibits an escalating level of intricacy or intensity. Notably, the third repetition culminates precisely on the initial beat of the rhythmic cycle, increasing tension and thereby possibly evoking a sense of resolution and fulfillment (Chatterjee, 2005). Central to the HT technique is the modulation of tension, a concept observed in both music (Koelsch et al., 2019) and hypnosis (Raz et al., 2005). Similar to the intentional disruption of predictable patterns in music and hypnosis, using the HT can result in momentary confusion and stimulate the motivation to seek resolution and desired information (Juslin & Västfjäll, 2008). It is common for composers to manipulate fundamental musical elements such as rhythm and volume to elicit emotional responses and cultivate anticipatory states in their audience. These anticipations, encompassing both melodic and timing expectations, play a crucial role. For example, within popular music, the deliberate use of sudden and unexpected changes is a common strategy to provoke surprise and foster the emergence of novel expectations, potentially contributing to an elevation in dopamine activity, thus enhancing the overall pleasurable experience (Salimpoor et al., 2015).

Cheung et al. (2019) explored the impact of expectancy in music by investigating the role of predictability in musical enjoyment. In one experiment, 39 adults assessed chord pleasantness in popular songs, focusing on specific chord sequences while analyzing the influence of uncertainty and surprise on musical pleasure. The study found that both pre-event uncertainty and post-event surprise contributed to musical enjoyment.

In the second experiment, conducted by Cheung et al. (2019), 40 participants listened to timed chord sounds while undergoing functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI). Imaging revealed how uncertainty and surprise influence brain regions associated with music-related emotions, including the amygdala, hippocampus, auditory cortex, nucleus accumbens, caudate nucleus, and pre-supplementary motor area. These findings objectively demonstrate the impact of expectancy and surprise on musical pleasure, shedding light on how unpredictable elements can enhance the enjoyment of music.

The Hypnotic Tihai application in hypnosis and addressing rumination in depression

Clinicians can employ the HT technique to catalyze the effects of suggestions with potential positive outcomes (Jung, 2024). A rhythmic pattern is established by repeating a specific phrase or set of words three times, aiming to set an expectation within the subject's mind. However, clinicians deliberately break this pattern by abruptly returning to the initial first word of the phrase, accompanied by a dramatic pause. This intentional interruption can heighten tension and captivate attention.

Here's an example of a HT utilizing "You" as the initial measure: "You can hear it. You can hear it. You can hear it. You!" (Suggestion:) "You are calm now" (Figure 1). This represents another way of utilizing the benefits of repetition in delivering suggestions and also helps build positive expectancy by highlighting the malleability of subjective experience, such as slowed breathing and greater relaxation (Godot, 2016; Yapko, 2022). Clinicians employing the HT technique can optimize the impact of hypnotic suggestions, potentially harnessing the brain's inherent processes of expectation and conflict detection to foster a more profound and receptive state for a transformative and novel experience.

Rumination, a distressing clinical phenomenon characterized by recurrent intrusive thoughts, poses challenges for individuals with various psychological and physical

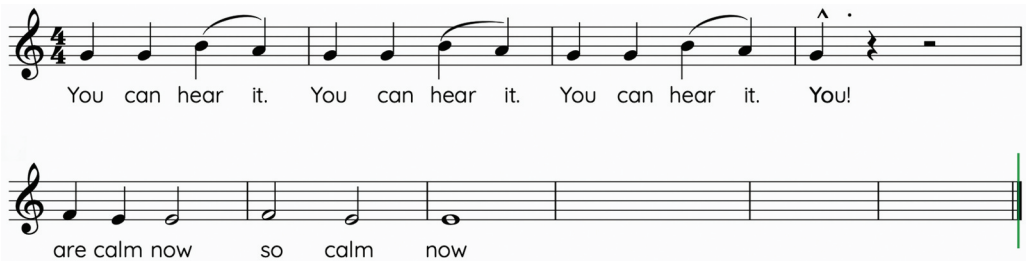

Figure 1. Illustrates the structure of a Hypnotic Tihai. The repetition of the first three measures culminates in the deliberate intensification of the first word, "You," the first note fo the opening measure. This is followed by a dramatic pause, with the subsequent suggestion "You are calm now."

disorders. These self-initiated and attentional thoughts often revolve around the causes and consequences of symptoms, leading to negative self-assessments, anticipatory anxiety, and counterfactual thinking. Paradoxically, attempts to suppress these ruminative thoughts tend to exacerbate their persistence (Wegner, 1989, 1997).

To address this issue, Otani proposed a mindful approach that redirects the individual's attention from the fixated thought to another detached conscious experience, employing techniques such as mindful thought detachment and mindful de-reflection (2023). Mindful thought detachment involves swiftly redirecting attention from obsessive thoughts to a predetermined object, such as the breath or sounds, repeating the process until rumination subsides. In contrast to challenging and striving to change the content of rumination, mindful de-reflection shifts attention to any other readily available sensory cues, such as limb sensations or smells, in an attempt to divert focus from ruminative processes until the urge dissipates. Positive outcomes can be achieved by intentionally shifting focus and engaging in a detached manner.

Expanding on this concept, the utilization of a Hypnotic Tihai emerges as a powerful tool for delivering impactful suggestions that leave a lasting impression. By capturing the mind's inadvertent fixation and expectation on a particular thought, by increasing tension when the prediction is not met, and redirecting attention to a compelling conscious experience, the Hypnotic Tihai shows promise as a tool for creating experiences that are memorable and give rise to improved outcomes.

The HT also has the potential to be implemented as a tool in various treatment modalities to treat rumination. For instance, Lynn et al. (2010) proposed an approach incorporating mindfulness inductions with motivational suggestions to alleviate barriers and enhance participant engagement in consistent mindfulness practice. Combining the HT in a range of cognitive-behavioral, attentional, and mindfulness techniques holds the potential to effectively address rumination.

The impact of temporal qualities of music in hypnosis

In music, rhythm involves arranging time durations and accents, shaping its flow and structure. Meter organizes beats into regular patterns, providing a rhythmic framework. "Tactus" refers to the perceived or felt beat, often associated with the regular pulse or tempo of a musical composition. Tempo in music refers to the speed at which a piece of music is performed. Clinicians can strategically manipulate these rhythmic elements to engage listeners, creating an immersive experience that fosters relaxation, elicits uplifting emotions, and enhances therapeutic connections.

The interplay of rhythm, tactus, and tempo also applies in hypnosis. For example, envisioning a favorite danceable song in hypnosis or prompting individuals to tap a rhythm on their bodies while imagining playing music with a band can likely evoke feelings of inner connectedness. Studies by Marsh et al. (2006) and Uchino (2006) suggest that rhythmic structures may play a role in strengthening social bonds. Building upon this idea, the rhythmic cadence in the hypnotist's speech can create a comforting and predictable pattern, establishing a sense of safety and encouraging feelings of comfort. Much like the tempo of a musical piece, the pacing of the hypnotist's speech can dictate the flow of the session, leading the listener on a journey of focused attention.

Skillful manipulation of rhythmic patterns or tempo changes in speech or music can induce time distortion during hypnosis, deepening the hypnotic state. For example, slower tempos and repetitive patterns elongate time perception, while gradual tempo changes and extended endings suspend time. Sustained tones, calming melodies, and visualizations invite a timeless experience, detached from regular temporal rhythm, causing time distortion. Just as the expressive nuances of prosody may lend emotional depth to speech, in music, the deliberate modulation of rhythm, melody, and dynamics may serve to infuse compositions with profound emotional resonance. The parallels between shifts in the non-verbal elements of music and verbal shifts in the delivery of hypnotic suggestions are reflected in the practitioner's modulation of tone. The intent is to offer suggestions with greater confidence and authority, potentially enhancing their impact.

Collectively, these elements harmonize to induce a trance-like state akin to the entrancing effect of music. In both realms, the artful arrangement of rhythm, tactus, and tempo unlocks the potential to evoke profound shifts in consciousness and foster positive transformations. Clinicians can personalize their approach by adapting these concepts to resonate with the individual's needs or the clinician's own abilities.

Case examples

In this section, I will present five case examples that feature the Hypnotic Tihai technique applied in the context of hypnosis sessions addressing depression and rumination. These cases are meant to highlight the merits of utilizing music and rhythm for creative interventions that can enhance the effectiveness of suggestions delivered during hypnosis.

Case example one

Daniel is a 40-year-old father who sought therapy due to anxiety, rumination, somatic, and depressive symptoms triggered by marital dissolution, business closure, and the global pandemic (Jung, 2024). His emotional struggles connect to a traumatic childhood marked by early parental responsibilities imposed on him at the age of eight. Despite reduced pleasure in general (i.e., anhedonia), Daniel finds solace in music. One particularly poignant aspect of Daniel's emotional state is the paroxysmal weeping and somatic distress he experiences when his children leave for three days to visit their mother.

Hypnosis was employed in an effort to reduce his emotional distress. The induction used a prerecorded frame drum playing a prominent rhythmic pattern that gradually decreased in tempo, creating an ambiance akin to a lullaby. The drum initially played a scattered rhythm to metaphorically reflect scattered thoughts. Around two minutes into the session, this scattered rhythm transformed into a pleasant, slow, and steady beat, which visibly influenced Daniel's breathing and facial expressions. Daniel was then guided to imagine a favorite song and tap the song's rhythm on his body to foster a sense of control and inner stability.

During hypnosis, crafted narrative interventions centered around Tolkien's hobbits to convey individuation and separation, engaging cognitive and emotional processing through vivid metaphors and imagery. The initial Hypnotic Tihai (HT) utilized the wording "Pasture of Shire, all right," repeated three times, culminating on "Pas." This technique aimed to elicit a compelling response to the subsequent hypnotic suggestion: "Calm now, so calm,

remember the calm." Similarly, the second HT utilized the pattern of repeating the phrase "Right here, right now" three times, concluding with the word "right." Following a dramatic pause, the subsequent hypnotic suggestion was delivered: "In an instant, calm."

Tailoring the therapeutic approach to Daniel's needs, the integration of hypnotic interventions utilizing musical elements in hypnosis yielded promising outcomes. The sessions aimed to modulate neural processes, transform distressing memories, enhance hypnotic suggestions, and facilitate psychological healing during periods of separation from his children. Preliminary findings after three hypnosis sessions, indicated a decreased in anxiety and depressive symptoms, improved attention, and the cessation of somatic distress. His crying spells ceased after the initial hypnosis session. Six months post-intervention, progress continues, with Daniel experiencing no distress during prolonged visits with his children.

Discussion

Incorporating the client's preferred musical rhythms into hypnosis sessions may potentially be a powerful tool. By inviting Daniel to imagine and physically tap the rhythm on his body, the therapeutic process became somatically intertwined with the rhythmic experience, fostering a more profound therapeutic connection. This approach aligns with Koelsch's (2014) findings, indicating that rhythmically dominant music can modulate neural processes, improve information processing, and facilitate the integration of distressing memories. Having Daniel tapping his favorite imagined song's rhythm on his body aligns with studies on using rhythmic patterns to enhance self-confidence and inner stability, especially in clients with no prior music experience (Aigen, 1998). This intervention also demonstrates the versatility of imagining rhythm or a song as a dynamic tool for shaping emotions thereby underscoring its practical utility in diverse clinical hypnosis applications.

Case example two

Kim, a resilient 32-year-old woman, has wrestled with the relentless grip of depression and anxiety since her teenage years. During her initial hypnosis session, she demonstrated a remarkable degree of hypnotizability, characterized by the presence of rapid eye movement (REM), dissociation, and an instant receptiveness to experiencing hypnotic phenomena. The estrangement from her father, forged in the fiery aftermath of a tumultuous parental divorce, served as a profound wellspring of anguish for Kim. Burdened by an unwavering sense of guilt and self-blame, she carried the weight of their shattered connection. However, their reunion revealed that her father did not perceive their estrangement as a daily source of sadness. This discovery created a profound cognitive dissonance, as she was torn between conflicting cognitions – the belief that her actions caused her father's suffering and the realization that her absence held no significance in his life. It was a perfect double bind, with both thoughts generating equally negative self-evaluations.

Furthermore, Kim experienced shame linked to her perceived failure in maintaining friendships, leading to self-imposed isolation. When asked about her father's feelings of shame regarding their lack of communication, she responded despondently, "he has no shame." This statement was amusing to her once she became aware of the double meaning of "shame" referring both to her father's apparent lack of embarrassment or guilt concerning their communication issues and to his perceived absence of a sense of moral

responsibility or remorse for the situation. This statement, which seemed to be quite amusing to Kim, became a focal point in subsequent hypnotic inductions, effectively mitigating her shame and guilt while intensifying the impact of her new memories.

Various techniques were utilized, including rhythmic elements to induce trance, prosodic modulation to deepen the hypnotic state, and the integration of a HT (threefold pattern: "I live my life. He lives his life" culminating in "I") to heighten the following suggestion: "Have no shame, no more shame, now." The suggestion evoked laughter from Kim. The climax of the HT encompassed a dual meaning, conveying her father's lack of shame regarding their lack of contact and his indifference to external judgment. This nuanced statement aimed to eradicate her shame and guilt, offering multiple interpretive possibilities – both positive and negative.

Although Kim's depression and anxiety were not fully resolved, her preoccupation with her father and the guilt surrounding her severed connections with him and her friends steadily faded away. This progress allowed her to embark on the gradual development of new and healthier interpersonal relationships.

Discussion

Kim's case highlights the effective integration of musical elements in hypnotherapy to address depression and anxiety. Recognizing her high hypnotizability and receptivity to a musical method of intervention, the therapist strategically incorporated rhythmic and prosodic modulation, along with the Hypnotic Tihai Technique. The success in reducing Kim's preoccupations highlights the therapeutic potential of these approaches.

Case example three

Jay is a 41-year-old divorced man known for his creative pursuits, such as playing percussion in bands and indulging in tennis. Jay shares custody of his four-year-old son and maintains a long-standing commitment to sobriety. Despite his active lifestyle, he seeks therapy to address persistent rumination, most recently triggered by a lip sore. This led to insecurity, sleep disturbances, avoidance of medical evaluation, catastrophic thinking, and self-deprecation.

In an effort to break these negative patterns and promote self-acceptance, the clinician performed a purposely choppy hypnotic demonstration infused with rhythmic speech and prosody, occasionally interrupted by intrusive thoughts. This demonstration effectively mirrored Jay's thought processes, prompting him to gain valuable insights into his rumination. Throughout the session, Jay spontaneously burst into laughter, reflecting the profound influence it had on his internal thoughts and emotions. The demonstration contributed to his heightened self-awareness, temporarily interrupting his tendency to ruminate and evoking a positive emotional response, gradually fostering greater self-acceptance.

The induction began by instructing him to take three deep breaths and utilizing a previous anchor to imagine comfort, to pave the way for future HTs. Given Jay's drumming background, he was encouraged to anchor his sense of comfort even more by mentally playing his favorite rhythm and subsequently tapping it on his body. He was guided to observe his ruminations from a distance and was informed that he had the control to adjust the volume and speed of his tapping based on the rumination's intensity or proximity to him. Jay embraced this suggestion effectively, assuming control over his

rhythmically infused ruminations. The intensity of his thoughts became evident through the rhythmic tapping.

Following Jay's rhythmic tapping, the first HT was designed to shift Jay's focus and help him detach from intrusive thoughts. This HT employed the deliberate threefold pattern of: "Move on, moving by," marked by a meaningful pause and culminating in the word "Move," encouraging him to gain distance from his thoughts "farther and farther away."

After his breathing synchronized and he tapped the rhythm much softer, the second HT centered around reconnecting Jay with his core self, fostering profound awareness: "Farther and farther away. Farther and farther away. Farther and farther away. Farther!. . . deeper into your inner self." When Jay ceased tapping the rhythm, the third HT focused on ego-strengthening: "You are in your true self. You are in your true self. You are in your true self. You!. . . are comfortable and confident.

Incorporating Jay's rhythmic tapping experience, combined with the three HTs, played a crucial role in helping him detach from rumination, increase self-awareness, and enhance ego-strengthening. Following the intervention, Jay's rumination about the lip sore ceased. He shared that the rhythmic experience empowered him to counter intrusive thoughts that would have triggered rumination in the past. Six months later, he reported the ability to recognize and redirect ruminative thoughts very effectively.

Discussion

The intervention with Jay underscores the potential benefits of incorporating personalized and rhythmic elements into therapeutic interventions as a way of addressing persistent rumination. By tailoring the intervention to Jay's musical background, a combination of rhythmic tapping and hypnotic techniques were able to successfully reduce his rumination.

Case example four

To illustrate the potential of the Hypnotic Tihai in combating rumination, consider the case of Larry, age 38, who struggled with rumination and depression. A devoted Beatles fan, he spontaneously connected with the song "Let It Be" during a hypnosis session. Larry imagined himself in a car, singing the song to the tunes of the radio. Following the induction, the clinician gently reminded Larry of the song's calming message of solace, acceptance, and resilience in the face of life's challenges. He was then encouraged to incorporate singing this song in his daily life as homework. During subsequent sessions, when ruminative thoughts surfaced, the therapist used the song as a prompt for Larry to shift his focus. Larry was also encouraged to play the song on his phone and join in either audibly or silently. Over time, Larry developed the ability to recognize and redirect his ruminative thoughts, by calmly observing his thoughts, humming the melody, or redirecting himself to sing his thoughts or sing a preferred song. He was also coached to sing his thoughts using the same melody which shifted the emotional tone or valence of his rumination. Although rumination persisted to some extent, Larry's perception and response to the rumination evolved positively by deliberately re-directing it when it arose.

Discussion

Larry's case offers a compelling example of integrating the Hypnotic Tihai technique with hypnosis to address rumination. The use of his favorite Beatles song, "Let It Be," showcases the potential power of utilizing personalized musical interventions in therapeutic contexts. By actively involving Larry in the process, singing the song during sessions, and also incorporating singing as a healthy pattern interruptor into his daily life, Larry developed a unique, music-based strategy for managing rumination.

Case example five

HT to soften or eliminate ruminations was utilized with Julian, age 47. Julian is a creative individual who had previously achieved a successful resolution of his panic disorder through the use of hypnosis. As an adoptee at four months old, Julian had embarked on a diligent exploration of his self-diagnosed attachment trauma. Despite his high motivation in therapy, noticeable symptom relief primarily occurs during hypnosis sessions but not beyond. Julian sought therapeutic assistance across two sessions to address persistent rumination triggered by insecurities related to his upcoming role as a moderator for a newly scripted television show. He frequently voiced a recurring narrative during therapy: "I was kicked out at birth."

The induction started by asking Julian to take three deep breaths, thereby seeding an upcoming HT. He was asked to remember returning to his previously elicited state of comfort and well-being by using his imagined talisman which was a rock. Once his facial features and body had softened, Julian was invited to observe his ruminating thoughts at a distance. Once he was able to elicit the rumination, the clinician placed a HT by uttering: "It's that old feeling" with the subsequent climax on "It's" and subsequent suggestion "that I do matter." Notably, Julian's attention significantly shifted when prosodic emphasis was placed on the phrase "I do matter." Recognizing the significance of this shift, he was encouraged to incorporate the statement into his daily self-affirmation routine whenever thoughts of insecurity arose. Prosody was deliberately employed to highlight the phrase and enhance cognitive and emotional processing. A practical technique involving biting into a lemon was introduced to temporarily divert Julian's attention from rumination to sensory experience to allow him to employ his self-suggestion, further reinforcing his desired belief. One and three months post-treatment, Julian reported cessation of rumination, increased self-efficacy, success as a TV moderator, and an increased overall sense of well-being.

Discussion

The intervention with Julian highlights the potential benefits of integrating the Hypnotic Tihai technique into hypnosis interventions for rumination and depression. By leveraging the power of attention, expectation, and tension modulation, the HT technique can open a unique and experiential, non-rational pathway to fostering positive psychological outcomes.

Summary

The incorporation of musical elements into hypnosis presents a multifaceted approach that leverages the power of music to enhance hypnotic interventions and energize depression

treatment. Hypnosis and music together seem to highlight the potential to influence attention, emotion, motivation, and imagination. By incorporating musical components into the suggestion process, clinicians can amplify the emotive qualities of music. Utilizing rhythmic patterns, practitioners can induce deep relaxation, evoke emotions, enhance cognitive processes, and facilitate therapeutic outcomes.

Responding to music, like responding to hypnosis, is a subjective experience. Objectivity about these experiences is hard to come by, making it clear why studies of hypnotic phenomenology continue to have such great importance for clinicians. Through creative and competent applications, practitioners and researchers alike can explore the nuanced use of musical elements within hypnosis to unlock its full therapeutic potential.

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