

## BRAIN HEALTH BOOST



### **Brain Health Matters and Self-Esteem Can Make a Difference**

*The Brain Health Initiative (BHI) is working to develop brain healthy communities, creating a culture that promotes brain health protective factors and decreases risk factors, thereby improving brain health, optimizing brain performance, and fighting brain illness across the lifespan for the Florida Suncoast region and beyond. Today, the BHI looks at self-esteem and the role that the mind-body intervention of hypnosis can play in our ongoing brain health, daily performance, and sense of well-being.*

At some point in our lives we all experience a lack of confidence, but when low self-esteem is an ongoing problem, it can have a harmful effect on our brain health, emotional wellness, and our day-to-day lives.

Self-esteem is an area that can affect so many different areas of our lives. Low self-esteem is linked to a number of negative outcomes, such as depression and anxiety. There are many mind-body interventions that can help us have a more positive outlook. One of them is hypnotherapy.

The word hypnosis often triggers an image of an old black-and-white movie in which a bearded psychiatrist is swinging a pocket watch and saying: “You are getting very sleepy.” But modern hypnotherapy is a valid, complementary, mind-body treatment that has proven to be effective at protecting brain health, fighting brain illness, and treating health risk factors (e.g., weight loss, smoking cessation, anxiety, and stress.)

Hypnosis has also been shown to be effective in improving our self-esteem and overall sense of well-being. Local to the Suncoast region, certified consulting hypnotist Shana Rosenthal and supporter of the Brain Health Initiative, says she is seeing an increase in self-esteem issues, especially in teens and women, due, in part, to the increasing pressures of social media. Further, Rosenthal shares that she experiences tremendous success in supporting her clients' self-esteem and well-being challenges through the practice of self-hypnosis.

The how and why of the effectiveness of hypnotherapy is not always clear. It is similar to guided

meditation or mindfulness in that it asks us to set aside our normal judgments and sensory reactions and to enter a deeper state of concentration and receptiveness. In fact, as early as the 1970s, researchers at the Benson Henry Institute for Mind-Body Medicine at Massachusetts General Hospital showed self-hypnosis and meditation relaxation were equally effective in the non-pharmacological treatment of anxiety.

During the first stage, referred to as induction, the subject is asked to relax and focus. This quiets the mind. During the suggestion phase, the therapist takes the person through a series of hypothetical situations intended to address the behavior or emotion for which the person is seeking treatment.

The benefits are effective for most, especially when combined with leading a brain healthy lifestyle in general. Hypnotherapy can help us feel more positive about ourselves, about life in general, and can help us feel that we are better prepared to deal with the ups and downs of our lives.

## WHAT YOU CAN DO TODAY TO *BOOST YOUR BRAIN HEALTH*

Rosenthal has developed a [5-day Self-Esteem Challenge](#) focused on using hypnosis and other techniques that utilize the science of neuroplasticity to restructure your brain and, in this case, to support an increase in your self-esteem. The series of five exercises focuses on these actionable steps to help you improve your sense of well-being.

- Appreciate your strengths
- Affirm and accept who you are
- Eliminate negative self-talk
- Eliminate toxic relationships
- Affirm others

**To sign up for the 5-day Self-Esteem Challenge, [click here](#).**

And as always, remember to **adopt a brain healthy lifestyle**, including thoughts, behaviors, emotions, responses, and language that promote:

- Stress resilience
- Nutrition
- Physical activity
- Sleep
- Social connection
- Emotional wellbeing
- Meaning and Purpose
- Cognitive stimulation and creativity
- Engaging with nature
- General health
- Positive impacts

## **About the Brain Health Initiative ([www.brainhealthinitiative.org](http://www.brainhealthinitiative.org))**

The Brain Health Initiative (BHI) is a cutting-edge, new approach to protecting brain health, optimizing brain performance, and fighting brain illness across the lifespan. The BHI is a collaborative effort with Massachusetts General Hospital, a Harvard Medical School Teaching Hospital, to build brain healthy communities through education, collaboration, research, innovation, and action, with a specific focus on *brain health promotion, prevention, early detection, evidence-based intervention and optimization of performance*. The BHI is creating a culture that promotes brain health protective factors and decreases risk factors, thereby improving brain health and optimizing brain performance outcomes for the Florida Suncoast region and beyond. Join the ***Be Brain Healthy*** movement, ***because brain health matters, and lifestyle makes a difference***. To view all Brain Health Boosts [click here](#).