

# Miracle Hypnosis Seminars Explained



by  
Mark Bancroft MA/CHT  
206 Sacramento St., #302  
Nevada City, CA 95959  
530.265.2133

**M**ost people have seen or heard ads promoting a one day or one evening hypnosis seminar guaranteeing that attendees will quit smoking or lose weight. Such seminars are presented several times a year in any city of size. The print and radio ads are always alluring and enticing. The seminar leader, who is apt to be a “nationally renowned authority” on hypnosis, will be in town, one night only, to use the power of hypnosis to make you quit smoking or lose that unwanted weight. You figure you have nothing to lose and everything to gain, “Why not? It’s only an evening, only costs \$59.95, and results are guaranteed—if it doesn’t work I’ll get my money back”. Before you run to the phone to reserve your spot for the limited seating event, there are some things to know...

First of all there are likely some marketing tactics in place that you don’t know about. Many times the guarantee does not mean you will get your money back if hypnosis doesn’t work. It is not uncommon to find out that your reimbursement is not a check in the mail or you receiving a charge-back on your credit card. It will probably be you receiving a complementary ticket valued at \$59.95 to the next seminar the master hypnotist will be conducting when he or she returns to your town.

What, then, is happening when you find a seminar offering a legitimate money-back guarantee? Obviously, if the promoters are “happy to give you back your money if it doesn’t work”, then they must be pretty darn confident and good at what they do to offer something like that. Again we see marketing at work. First of all the money that is returned is anticipated and part of the cost of promotion. Statistically, rebates and refunds are notorious for having a high percentage of dropouts—people that are entitled to compensation simply not following through on sending in the required paperwork on time, if at all. Even if the event is non-effective for the majority of attendees, the promoters will still come out on top.



Some seminars are geared to get as many people in the seminar room as possible. If a percentage later want their money back, so be it. In these seminars the gate fee (the price you pay to attend the event) is inconsequential compared to the back-of-room sales BOR the event is really geared towards generating. The real money is often made in the book, tape, and CD sales that take place during the break and at the end of the event. Sales tables armed with credit card machines and smiling support staff are strategically placed to help ensure your purchase. The “seminar” is little more than a glorified sales pitch for the “follow up” material for sale, this night only, during the break and after the event.

In fact BOR is so successful, the audience is so motivated to buy (to take a part of the experience *and* hope home with them) that a good number of hypnotists are finding it more profitable to not charge a seminar fee at all! Free hypnosis seminar = public perceives they have nothing to lose = very large numbers of motivated tape/book/CD buyers resulting in thousands of dollars in high margin product sales. Don’t be at all surprised to find that the tape that you want, the one for weight loss, is only sold in the 10-pack multi-volume which is on

sale, tonight only, limited time, for only \$99.95. You end up paying \$100 to get that single tape on weight loss. I have personally listened to several such tapes and can tell you that the ones I heard are of extremely poor quality and nothing more than repeated affirmations, “you are losing weight, now the weight is gone, you are lighter, you feel good when you eat less, eating healthy works for you, you are losing weight now, you like to lose weight”. You would do better to record your own. Also, don’t forget that it is human nature to *want and expect* to give back when someone gives you something (i.e. you *want* to buy product to settle having been *given* a “free” seminar).

Do people experience the results they are promised at such seminars? A few do; most do not. The ideal participant is the one that is so inwardly motivated to make a change in their life that all they really need is a little push to get them to jump into a new life reality. For these people, and for those who are highly adept at suspending disbelief, the seminars offer benefit and value. There is a place for them. The author’s concern is the large group of people who leave the seminar only to find that “hypnosis” did not work for them. For these people the seminar has performed a tremendous disservice. It is highly doubtful that these people will ever call a hypnotherapist; one that could indeed help them. The seminar experience incorrectly leads them to conclude that either “hypnosis doesn’t work” or “hypnosis won’t work for me”. Worse yet are those that go away from the seminar, not experiencing the results they wanted, and thus concluding that “nothing will help”. The seminar has only served as a reason to give up on themselves altogether. “See, hypnosis didn’t work, nothing will; I’m done with trying.”

Hypnotherapists that offer a series of private sessions, perhaps a weight loss program, have a much higher success rate than that of the one-evening seminar hypnotists. There is an appreciable difference between the two. The hypnotherapist you see in private session is helping you work through your personal, individual process of change, healing, or transformation. The seminar leader is giving you a series of positive, generic group suggestions. It is nice when the suggestions take hold and relapse or transference doesn’t enter the picture; however, the probabilities indicate this is the exception, rather than the norm. If it weren’t then nearly everybody would be smoke-free and physically fit. If you have attended a hypnosis seminar and didn’t quite experience the outcome you had hoped, you are not alone. These people are encouraged to understand that the hypnosis seminar is not the same as seeing a practicing hypnotherapist. Hypnosis is not therapy! Don’t dismiss hypnotherapy on the basis that because you or a friend went to a hypnosis seminar that didn’t work, then hypnotherapy is ineffective- it isn’t. What is likely to be ineffective in such a case is the quick-fix solution, based on generic suggestion, that is being sold and marketed as hypnosis (even hypnotherapy). Whatever you do, don’t give up on yourself! See things clearly, see them for what they are; not how they are sold.

*Note: Local hypnotherapists sometimes offer free, or low cost, informational seminars to the public. These seminars inform and educate attendees about hypnosis and the hypnotherapy service the therapist offers. These types of seminars are useful and should not be considered a “miracle hypnosis seminar” as discussed above.*

