



Autosuggestion: Theory and Practice

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ABSTRACT: *Autosuggestion is a powerful tool for change and personal development. It consists of imposing an idea on a person's brain using different modes of communication with the subconscious mind. In this study, the methodology used combines the theory and practice of autosuggestion. The theory includes the definition, importance, types, application and mechanism of operation. The practice reports in the form of testimonials the observations made on practices relating to personal development and the healing of moral ailments extracted from the literature. The analysis of his observations highlights the importance of autosuggestion to overcome negative thoughts related to behaviour and/or ailments in the individual. Moreover, his practice is highly recommended for a cure of positivism to eliminate negative thoughts and accept positive ones.*

Keywords: *autosuggestion, self-hypnosis, Coué method, positive thinking, metaphysics*

I. INTRODUCTION

Autosuggestion is talked about and practiced, without always achieving real results. What exactly do we need to know about autosuggestion? The practice of autosuggestion goes back to the dawn of time (Freud S., 921). It is very present in hypnosis techniques and no matter what people say, if it is used correctly, its effectiveness will never be denied. Today, science has demonstrated its impact on our brain. When a person practices autosuggestion by associating his or her emotions to it, areas of the brain, similar to those that would be activated if they were experiencing the situation in real life, are stimulated.

Some people lead a more enviable life than others. Undeniably. It seems that luck always smiles at them: they are successful in business, have a fulfilling profession, enjoy good health, have loyal circles of friends, say they are happy in love. Others, on the other hand, seem to be fighting a bad spell that darkens their daily lives: professional failures, health problems, and love problems stick to them like a jinx.

Of course, the picture painted here is too simplistic: such a chance on one side and such a de vein on the other does not seem realistic. Nevertheless: some lives seem to be marked by success and happiness while others are not, or at least much less so. We are not all equal in the face of life's ups and downs, this is an indisputable fact. Unhappiness and happiness have largely become the fruit of our ways of being, thinking and behaving.

This modern conception, which makes humans responsible to the detriment of supernatural factors, has given rise to the development of a current that continues to make adepts today: positive thinking. At its base, a very simple idea: whoever thinks positively will experience positive, will attract positive in his life. On the contrary, those who indulge in pessimism and negative thoughts will bring negative to themselves, in the form of illnesses, failures and other dramas (Hay, L., 1984).

The usual techniques and practices remain (autosuggestion, visualization, etc.), but without any reference to elements that cannot be precisely explained, without invocation of any universal law or recourse to a vocabulary borrowed from the physical sciences. Theoretical anchoring is solely psychological: these are classical theories that have been accepted for years by the scientific community because they are supported by numerous experiments carried out and reproduced under rigorous conditions (Coué, E., 1912).

Within this framework, this study focuses on the positive thought that is autosuggestion, including the theory that governs it and examples of lived practices.

II. AUTOSUGGESTION THEORY

What is autosuggestion?

Émile Coué defined suggestion as "the action of imposing an idea on a person's brain" (Coué, E., 1912).

Professor Hippolyte Bernheim (2007) defined suggestibility, which allows the realization of suggestions, as: "the ability of the brain to receive or evoke ideas and its tendency to realize them, to transform them into action".

Others also said that suggestion was the implementation of subconscious forces or the implantation of an idea in the brain.

What about autosuggestion? Same answer as for the word "suggestion", with the difference that you remain in control of the suggestion. It is therefore you who choose the suggestion that will be imposed on your brain. In short, autosuggestion is the implantation, by oneself, of an idea in one's brain instead of letting others do it in one's place (Coué, E., 1912).

Why practice autosuggestion?

The deepest layers of the subconscious mind are very sensitive to the suggestions of the conscious will. The different methods of putting ourselves in a "suggestibility state" such as self-hypnosis, NLP, sophrology or even yoga, lead us to a state of very high receptivity to suggestion, or conscious autosuggestion, by opening up access to this area. Suggestions made at this time are reinforced by the tremendous power of the subconscious mind and can have a great influence on our personality.

Autosuggestion allows you to improve your health, to develop your qualities or skills (sport, self-confidence, communication, memory...), or to modify your behaviors. Autosuggestion is a powerful tool for change and personal development. The influence that autosuggestion can have on your life and your happiness is simply phenomenal.

Autosuggestion is the ability to influence your own will, mind or body. Through autosuggestion, you can trigger physiological reactions, such as slowing your pulse, reducing a feeling of pain, but also changing the metabolism to promote healing.

Each of us practices autosuggestion without knowing it, for good or ill. Consciously practiced autosuggestion offers each of us the opportunity to make this natural mechanism our own and to use it wisely by choosing our own ideas and suggestions. Otherwise, as with any tool that is misused, you risk suffering your own involuntary autosuggestion and preventing any progress.

The postulates of autosuggestion according to Coué E., 2012 are:

- Any thought we have in our minds becomes reality (within reason), any thought that occupies only our minds becomes true for us and tends to become an act.
- Contrary to what is taught, it is not our will that makes us act, but our imagination (being unconscious). If we often do what we want to do, it is because we think at the same time as we can.

The power of the subconscious mind

What is the subconscious? Its definitions are many and varied (Murphy, J., 2013). Since the dawn of time, its existence has been sensed, and it has been given a multitude of different names. However, it is difficult to define what it is, because no one knows its nature or its limits. It is easier to say what it is not: everything that is not conscious.

Thus, if the conscious mind is objective, uses the senses and reason to interpret the world, thinks logically and uses memory to highlight facts, the subconscious is, on the contrary, the set of cognitive and vital functions outside the sphere of control of the conscious mind.

It is therefore subjective. He remembers faithfully and takes advantage of all the emotions felt during life, can make use of all the physical and psychic capacities available, never sleeps, makes the heart beat, regulates breathing and biochemical exchanges. He is the master of the body, and controls 90% of human behavior. However, his powers are much more extensive.

Hypnosis has revealed the many powers of the subconscious mind, even the most incredible. It can :

- alter or modify the senses and reactions to events ;
- remove fears, emotions and feelings, or create them from scratch;
- to bring about recovery - even from terminal illnesses - without external intervention;
- to know exactly what is happening in another part of the world;
- perform "miracles"; and
- predict the future!

Generally speaking, and although it is hard to believe, the powers of the subconscious are so vast and effective that they can provide the solution to any problem. If the powers of the subconscious mind are prodigious, this does not mean that they are easily accessible, especially with regard to the most spectacular ones.

There are two reasons for this. On the one hand, one cannot control the subconscious because it is totally independent of the will: one can only influence it. On the other hand, few people know how to influence it effectively. If the subconscious influences the conscious to such an extent, the conscious is not outdone: it is its choices that determine the field of action of the subconscious.

Like a boat captain, the conscious person gives the direction to follow and waits for his orders (conscious thoughts) to be respected. The subconscious mind is the crew: it is the crew that is in charge of implementing the plan of action. It never contradicts the orders given by the captain, it does not judge them: if they are wrong, it will follow them faithfully, until the boat runs aground, if the course is wrong.

To take another example, the subconscious is like a piece of farmland: the soil is passive and accepts any seed planted in it. It is in charge of making the plant grow, independently of the will of the sower, but it is the sower who chose (or should have chosen) the type of seed that was planted.

That's why the type of thoughts that everyone admits in their mind is so important. It is the thoughts that determine the subsequent subconscious reactions that, underlyingly and exponentially, will change behaviour without the person even being aware of it. Whoever builds a house is extremely careful in the choice of plans and the layout of the rooms. Likewise, thoughts are the mental blueprints of one's future lifestyle: it is essential to select them carefully.

Thus, the person who promotes positive thoughts will be happier than the person who keeps harping on his problems. Thoughts are not just fleeting mental impressions: they have lasting effects on the whole being. Choosing them means preparing who you want to be tomorrow.

Modes of autosuggestion

Emotional autosuggestion

For positive autosuggestion to be effective, think emotionally. In addition, remove negative emotions such as fear, hatred, or jealousy and make room for positive emotions such as love, respect, empathy, trust. Thus, whatever your thoughts and what you aspire to, put emotion into them and find valid reasons in accordance with your values (Coué, É., 1924).

Autosuggestion through desire Desire

This type plays an important role in your subconscious mind. Therefore, if you do not sincerely and strongly desire the object of your suggestion, autosuggestion will have little effect. Therefore, you must sincerely want to get what you think. Desire can also be nurtured and nurtured with self-work. Indeed, your mind possesses unsuspected faculties as for the means which it can implement to materialize what you covet (love, healing, wealth...).

Autosuggestion by faith

When you focus on your goal you must believe in it. In addition to believing in it, you need to have a strong faith that you will achieve it. This faith must be serene, sure and ardent. Indeed, your mind and subconscious will pick up the message the more faith accompanies it. If you don't believe in it, it won't work. Therefore, if you believe in it, positive autosuggestion can help you greatly.

Autosuggestion by Words (Coué)

To implant an idea by words or autosuggestion by words: It is the autosuggestion by the repetition of positive and motivating sentences. Unfortunately we often use this force of autosuggestion unconsciously and most often in a negative way. This has the effect of implanting negative ideas in us. We see this more easily in others than in ourselves. We can, for example, hear them say phrases such as "I don't feel good", "I don't have confidence in myself", "I don't feel capable", etc.

All these sentences, like predictions, program us directly towards failure or unhappiness. Émile Coué proposes to fight them and counter them by repeating positive sentences that also act as preaching, autosuggestion and positive programming through the words: "I'm going to succeed", "I have confidence in my abilities" . etc.

Image autosuggestion

Visualization is the implementation of an idea or image autosuggestion. The technique of the "pleasant image. It consists in visualizing - projecting - a pleasant image for oneself, an image that will generate a positive feeling. This projection can be real, such as looking at photos, or virtual, by using one's imagination. For example, it is a question of projecting oneself, of imagining oneself in a pleasant place, a place of vacation, a place of renewal, in order to generate at the time of this visualization a state of serenity, calm, quietude, confidence. Each person will choose his image according to what he wishes to obtain as a feeling. For example, a flowery clearing can generate serenity when the visualization of the sandstone rocks of Fontainebleau can generate a feeling of strength.

The Coué Method

Let us recall here the definition of autosuggestion proposed by Émile Coué: "Autosuggestion is the implantation of an idea in oneself by oneself. "With our mastery of The Coué Method and conscious autosuggestion, and with our knowledge of Émile Coué's proposals to develop "self-control through conscious autosuggestion" and positive; and to affirm that there is a way to implant an idea in oneself or to autosuggest oneself (Coué, E, 1912; Gregorie, M., 2009):

- The being is double: Conscious and unconscious.
- We can only exercise our free will if we direct our unconscious instead of being directed by it.
- The unconscious is stronger than the conscious, but we can take control of it.
- To be strong we must imagine that we can do what we want to do.
- Imagination can make the body sick, but it can heal it.

Originally, the Coué method was intended for medical use for :

- Avoid diseases
- Amplify the effect of drugs
- Healing by the placebo effect

III. METHODOLOGY

The methodology used consists of autosuggestion practices and observations in the form of testimonials (Grégorie, M., 2009; Lindsay B., 2016b) :

Practices for Personal Development

Take up the challenge of "practicing positive autosuggestion" to counter our limiting thoughts, which we drag along in spite of ourselves and which prevent us from moving forward. To ensure success, here are the steps to follow: Positive (present time); realistic, repetition, relaxation, one thing at a time, mental image, trust, stop asking questions. Suggestions on: self-confidence, willpower, success, self-control, ease of speaking, gratitude, prosperity, etc.

Identify limiting thoughts and choose a suggestion from yourself (e.g. "Every day, from every point of view, I am getting better and better," and repeat it quietly, effortlessly, but with perseverance for 30 days, twice a day for 5 to 10 minutes each time. The results will follow,

Practice for healing

There are several uses of autosuggestion for healing. The examples from the literature focus on the suggestion for the healing of original or acquired moral ailments and defects.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Observations of practices in the form of testimonials are summarized in the following:

Practices for personal development

The first step is to take a little time to identify my main limiting thoughts. The best way to discover your limiting thoughts is to think about the things you've always wanted to accomplish, but never did, and then write down the reasons why. These reasons are our limiting thoughts. Help yourself to make a list of all the limiting thoughts you think you have about yourself. You can also write down all the criticisms that you or people often give you. Don't neglect anything, write down anything that might come between you and your dreams. Once your list is complete enough, you can move on to the next step: autosuggestion.

In this context, here is an example of an anonymous testimony: The first one comes to me quite easily, it's that I don't have the right to what is best, that I have to settle for something average because it's easier to reach. Guided by this principle, I have often made easy choices, thinking that what really interested me would be too valuable and too hard to get anyway.

The second negative thought I've been dragging around for a very long time is that I have a lot of things to do, and I don't have time to do everything. This thought generates a lot of stress. And the amazing thing is that I've always had it, even before my first child... when I had a lot less mandatory daily chores to do.

The third limiting thought is that I will always be stressed and dissatisfied, and that even if I succeed in my projects, I think I will always be the same, more stressed than Zen. I've long dragged this thought that it's not possible to change, I mention it in my article "In search of happiness, 5 thoughts to fight. »

The fourth limiting thought is that I will never be able to do anything other than my current unsatisfactory job. I'm afraid I won't be able to do anything else.

For each limiting thought, a suggestion should be associated, such as:

"I have the right to do what I want to do. What I want, I can get. »

"I accept and do with love what I have to do without trying to do something else instead. "

I am more and more Zen and happy "» "I'm learning and applying the tips that work, so I'll find the solutions to make a living from my new passion-activity.»

The practice of these suggestions according to the method described has given unexpected results that can be summarized as follows:

I spend quality time with my children because I am completely with them. There is no more irritation in the morning or in the evening because everything happens in its own time. I am more zen and happy in this ideal life, and I live entirely in the present moment without trying to do anything else. I manage to stay relaxed while working. I am free to move freely. I no longer have to stay locked in an office and no more imposed schedules to follow. Visualizing myself for a few moments in this ideal life has immediate positive effects, I feel like I'm there a little bit!

I remembered how I felt before. I understand very well why I always felt dissatisfied. I had left out a whole bunch of things that I deeply love to do, I was just doing one "imposed" daily activity after another, and I was trying to be happy in the present tense. But it didn't work, I had the constant frustration of not doing anything to change the meaning of my life. I realize how much things have changed, today I really enjoy every moment. I'm not saying that everything is perfect, there are still tensions, I'm a perfectionist and quite impatient, but today I'm slowly moving towards my ideal life. And that changes everything! *And what about you? What thoughts have you identified and started to replace?*

Practices for healing

I have been fortunate to contribute to the healing of a large number of neurasthenics in whom all treatments had failed (Coué, E., 1922a; Guillemain, H., 2010). One of them had spent a month in a special institution without any improvement. In six weeks he was completely cured, and he is now the happiest man in the world, after having thought he was the most unhappy. And never again will he fall back into his illness, because I taught him how to do conscious autosuggestion, and he knows how to do it in a wonderful way.

To help you understand how suggestion acts in the treatment of moral defects, we can make the following comparison: suppose that our brain is a plank in which are stuck spikes representing our ideas, our habits, our instincts, which determine our actions. If we find that there is a bad idea, a bad habit, a bad instinct, in short, a bad tip, we take another one which is the good idea, the good habit, the good instinct, we place it directly on the head of the bad tip and we hammer it with a hammer, in other words, we make suggestion. The new point will sink a millimeter, for example, while the old one will come out by the same amount. With each new hammer stroke, that is, with each new suggestion, it will sink another millimeter and the other will come out a millimeter, so that after a certain number of strokes, the old point will be completely out and replaced by the new one. Once this substitution is made, the individual obeys it.

By way of illustration, here are a few examples. The young M..., aged 11, was subject night and day to certain small accidents that are inherent to early childhood; moreover, he was a kleptomaniac and, naturally, he also lied. By practicing suggestion, from the first week, the accidents stopped during the day, but continued during the night. Little by little, they became less frequent, and finally, a few months later, the child was completely cured.

This child's 18-year-old brother had conceived a violent hatred against another of his brothers. Every time he drank a little more than he should have, he felt the urge to pull out his knife and hit his brother. He felt that this would happen one day and at the same time he felt that, after he had completed his crime, he would start sobbing on the body of his victim.

By also making suggestion, the result was wonderful He was healed. His hatred was gone, and since then they have both been friends, trying to be nice to each other.

When, through suggestion, similar results are obtained, wouldn't it seem useful, even indispensable, to adopt this method and introduce it into homes? It is absolutely certain that, by a suggestion daily applied to vicious children,

more than 50% of them would be brought back to the right path. Wouldn't it be an immense service to society to restore to it the health and well-being of its members who were previously gnawed by moral decay?

V. CONCLUSION

The method being general and, therefore, aimed at everyone. If we follow them well, we will obtain all that is humanly possible. For children, it will be good to make suggestions while they sleep.

On the other hand, we possess within us a force of incalculable power which, when we wield it unconsciously, is often detrimental to us. If, on the contrary, we direct it in a conscious and wise way, it gives us control over ourselves and enables us not only to help remove ourselves and others from physical and moral illness, but also to live relatively happily, whatever the conditions in which we may find ourselves.

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