

Ground Your Motion Sickness with Hypnosis

by **Kelley T Woods** Certified Hypnotherapist

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It is a rare person who has not experienced, to some degree that queasy and dizzying sensation brought about by a change in equilibrium. Remember the time in your youth when you couldn't get enough of roller coasters and other mind-boggling rides? Then, at some later age, the fun stopped and you spent most of the ride fighting off the nausea, eyes clamped shut, praying for the end of the ride.

Opting to take a roller coaster ride is a choice adults can easily defer, but avoiding an airplane, boat, train or car trip is often inconvenient, costly and sometimes even embarrassing.

A common "cure" for motion sickness is the application of a drug such as Dramamine, with side effects that include drowsiness and loss of appetite. But what's the point of going on that fishing trip of a lifetime when you spend the majority of your trip snoozing in the forward cabin? And everyone knows that a major attraction of cruise ships is the fantastic array of available foods; you won't be getting your share while drugged out, or worse, fighting off nausea while isolated in your stateroom.

Have you ever needed to use those airsickness "doggie-bags" while wedged between two strangers in an airplane seat? Talk about humiliating. Often, if you take the medication, you can miss out on the adventure all together, and even suffer a "drug" hangover once you arrive at your destination. A vacation in the tropics isn't too fulfilling when you are in a fog state.

I wonder if you can imagine being free of the devastating effects of motion sickness...being able to enjoy travel without discomfort from rolling or lurching sensations. It is possible through hypnosis.

What actually causes motion sickness? According to the Encyclopaedia Britannica,

"Motion sickness is caused by contradiction between external data from the eyes and internal cues from the balance center in the inner ear. For example, in seasickness the inner ear senses the ship's motion, but the eyes see the still cabin. This stimulates stress hormones and accelerates stomach-muscle contraction, leading to dizziness, pallor, cold sweat, and nausea and vomiting. Minimizing changes of speed and direction may help, as may reclining, not turning the head, closing the eyes, or focusing on distant objects."

Traditional preventative cures for motion sickness include drugs such as Dramamine, whose active ingredient Dimenhydrinate, may cause tiredness. There is a patch available that is worn on the body like a smoker's patch, but instead, behind the ear. It should be placed in position about 12 hours before riding. It works by administering the drug Scopolamine Hydrobromide through the skin. It may be worn up to 3 days, but cannot be reused. For those that wish to try a drug-free method, there are wristbands that apply pressure to an acupuncture point on the arm. Two bands must be worn, one on each wrist in the correct position to be effective. Even worn properly, they may not work for

everyone.

Hypnosis techniques anyone can apply for relief. Research has proven that stress and fear responders in the body contribute to elevated blood pressure and tightened muscles, resulting in discomforts such as headaches, tension, dizziness and nausea.

The first step toward alleviating these symptoms involves relaxing your body. This can be achieved quickly by three simple steps: 1) Close your eyes to eliminate outside distractions 2) Breathe deeply and slowly 3) Imagine yourself in a peaceful and calm setting, perhaps your favorite place to read or relax, or maybe a safe and beautiful spot outdoors that you enjoy.

Notice as you continue breathing and mentally focusing on that place that both your mind and body gradually ease and relax. In addition, as you continue to calm yourself, clasp your hands gently together, or press the tips of a thumb and finger together. This gesture will act as a trigger in the future to assist you in reaching that relaxation even more quickly. It is a good idea to practice this technique several times a day prior to taking your trip.

Another method that is useful in reducing the discomfort of motion sickness is to actually imagine yourself experiencing your trip. As you practice the self-hypnosis for relaxation, project yourself into your trip. This is called future pacing and is supported by the belief that you become what you think. In this case, seeing yourself on your trip, enjoying yourself, feeling healthy and happy, will actually assist in the manifestation of a pleasant voyage.

So you have practiced the preceding techniques and now you are actually traveling and are still finding that you suffer from motion sickness. What can be done? To ease discomfort quickly, close your eyes and breathe deeply...then follow one of these strategies:

Regain Control. Imagine yourself with your favorite toy. Perhaps you haven't actually played with it for a while, but you can recall a time when you spent hours learning how to manipulate and control it. Maybe it was a yo-yo, or a remote control car, or a basketball. If you didn't have any toys when you were little, how about choosing one of your adult toys: your car or motorcycle, or even a paintbrush and canvas? Whatever it is, see and feel yourself handling it now.

Become consciously aware of the physical motion that is making you feel bad and now, transfer that motion to your toy. If the boat is rolling from side to side, imagine that movement in your toy. Realize that you are the one directing the movement now; you are in control of your toy. If you are driving a motorcycle, project your vision down the road so that each turn, every small rise and dip is anticipated and enjoyed.

Notice that the action is planned and controlled by you. You can see yourself painting a fantastic picture with your brush, perhaps dipping it into the paint rhythmically or sometimes jolting it quickly to the canvas, all in sync with the movements inspired by your voyage. As you take control of the motion, it evolves into a tolerable and perhaps even an enjoyable sensation. Reapply this method as needed. Soon you will find it will not even be necessary to close your eyes to achieve relief.

Object Imagery. An effective hypnosis tool for relieving symptoms is to imagine the discomfort, be it physical or emotional, as an object and then transform it. This amazing technique can be used for all ages.

Begin by focusing on the problem and assigning it a particular shape. This can be any shape you wish, it is entirely your choice. Add to this shape a color, a color that represents what that discomfort feels like. Imagine then the texture and consistency of the discomfort. Finally, designate the size of this object; as big as a plane or boat...or maybe it is the size of a breadbox. You choose.

As you visualize this image in your mind's eye, begin to change the elements of the object. Start with the shape: what shape would you like it to become? See it change into the newly desired shape. Imagine now changing the color to a color you wish, and continue by varying the object's texture and consistency. See it evolve before your eyes, transforming under your command. Next, change the size of the object, watching it as it now appears completely different.

Finally, create a way to let that object go. You may want to attach a helium balloon to it, or place it on the wing of a bird. It doesn't matter how, but notice the feeling as you watch that transformed object slowly float away, drifting up into the clouds of your consciousness. And notice, too, that you can keep it in sight if you want and in fact, can even retrieve it if you need to.

Secondary gain from motion sickness. One of the keys to reducing or eliminating an illness or malady requires discovering its source or casual factor. Unfortunately, understanding and treating the issue is not always enough to make it go away. This is due primarily to a phenomena described as "secondary gain".

Secondary gain is a method by which a sufferer either consciously or subconsciously receives benefit from being ill. For example, a person with a back injury, although he is actually experiencing the misery of the injury, may benefit hugely from secondary gains. This could be in the form of being able to stay home from work, receiving sympathy, attention and care giving from friends and family, being able to avoid normal chores at home, financial benefits, etc.

Often the benefits of secondary gain overshadow the benefits of recovery and play a large role in restricting recovery and even influencing reoccurring episodes of the illness or injury.

Keeping secondary gain in mind is crucial when addressing an issue such as motion sickness. It is important to consider any possible reasons why a sufferer may be, albeit unaware of doing so, encouraging the problem. Hidden secondary gain may be: a deep desire to avoid taking a trip, an undiscovered phobia of speed, water or heights, a craving for attention and care giving, avoidance of having to participate in activities, a fear or dislike of lack of control, etc. In addition to debilitating the physical source of motion sickness, it is ultimately recommended to understand and deal with any suspected secondary gain. This may be done through self-hypnosis methods or with the help of a qualified professional, depending on the depth and severity of the issue.

Hypnosis is an affordable, natural and effective solution toward the treatment of motion sickness. The days of crazy roller coast rides may be long past, but with a little pre-planning and practice, nearly anyone who suffers from this restrictive malady can find relief and be able to enjoy travel and vacations.