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NBC11 Special Report: Hypnotherapy Helps People Shed Pounds

So you're really going to do it this year, right?

You're going to stick to you New Year's resolution and lose weight.

NBC11's medical reporter Marianne Favro met with San Francisco certified hypnotherapist Olga Stevko and discovered that an unusual approach just may help you succeed.

You are eating smaller portions of food ...

Sure, hypnotherapy is helping Michael Casey relax but it's also helping him lose weight.



He's dropped 107 pounds in just 14 months.

"There's no sense of deprivation, which is really nice," Casey said. "I'm not punishing myself, I'm not starving myself, I'm not feeling like a martyr -- I'm just not eating the way I used to."

This wasn't Casey's first weight-loss attempt.

"I've done all kinds of diets -- the no-carb, the high-carb, the high-fat, the basic calorie-counting," Casey said.

But nothing worked, until he underwent six, 90-minute sessions with Stevko.

Stevko said she reached Casey's subconscious mind to help change some of his thoughts and beliefs about food.

"You can actually go to the root cause of those emotions which link to over-eating or eating unhealthy foods," Stevko said, "and you can neutralize those emotions."

Stevko also helped Casey embrace exercise.

"Hypnosis will motivate them to really, really want to exercise," Stevko said.

Stevko said she's helped more than 100 clients shed their plus-size clothing and tighten their belts.

But the doctors and registered dieticians that spoke with NBC11 remained skeptical.

They questioned the therapy's effectiveness and whether it would work on most people.

"I can tell you every single client who stayed with the program, every single one, lost weight," Stevko said.

Casey now undergoes hypnotherapy once a month, primarily for maintenance.

If he's out of town? A phone hypnotherapy session can do the job.

Casey is no longer a member of the clean plate club. He's kissed mayonnaise goodbye and the veggies he once shunned are now staples.

"Now I look for the veggies first," Casey said. "Now I love them."

He describes it as meditation with a purpose and credits the mind-molding with ending 25 years of dieting. It's given him a new body.

Each hypnotherapy session costs \$150. Most people need at least six sessions to see results.

Stevko said most people will continue to enjoy the benefits for a lifetime.