



Teeth Grinding - Bruxism by Peter Field

Clenching and teeth grinding - or Bruxism, to give it its medical name - is a condition that we see quite frequently here in our hypno-psychotherapy practice in the UK.

Many times our clients are referred by dentists who understand that this behaviour is linked to psychological causes. Still other clients self-refer themselves for grinding teeth, calling to make an appointment when they realise that this is a problem that simply won't go away on its own.

Very often the person suffering from bruxism - known as a 'bruxer' - finds him or herself grinding teeth while sleeping and may have been given a plastic mouth guard to wear at night in order to prevent further damage to the teeth.

Though such measures may be necessary - and sometimes essential - to immediately safeguard the teeth, they are best used as a short-term solution.

There's no denying, after all, that it really is uncomfortable and inconvenient to have to sleep with a plastic mouth guard or shield in your mouth.

Of course, a mouth guard works only at the symptom level. It does nothing about the reason for those symptoms, 'the driver', or underlying reason why the individual is grinding his or her teeth in the first place.

And this is where effective hypnotherapy can be extremely useful.

In my clinical experience of treating this condition, I have often found a real degree of underlying stress and anxiety acting as a trigger for teeth grinding and jaw clenching.

Sometimes the reason for the bruxism lies in the present or the recent past -- a particularly stressful situation, relationship or job, for example.

Yet many times its cause can be traced back to some apparently unrelated experience in the person's past - often, though not always, having occurred in childhood. This anxiety provoking experience was perhaps perceived as being unfair and so it naturally caused a feeling of anger which was not expressed at the time it was generated.

As each of us knows, human emotions are powerful things. Yet one thing we can be sure of is that they are also relatively short-lived - except when they are not allowed expression, when they are forced down and bottled up inside us.

When this happens then they never really give us peace. Like monsters from the deep, they keep on returning and vying for our attention, making their presence known in one way or another until they can no longer be ignored or denied.

When this stage is reached, they need to be properly processed and effectively taken care of if further problems are to be avoided.

You see, because the anxiety or the anger was not allowed real expression - or 'processed' - at the time it was felt, this powerful energy became internalised. And the result of this, of course, is that when the person's conscious mind is 'off guard' - focused on other matters, day dreaming or asleep, for example - the subconscious mind finds a way to release some of its energy, grabbing the attention by clenching the jaw and grinding the teeth.

It's as if the subconscious mind is attempting to find a way to really 'get its teeth' into the anxiety or stress or anger and to do something about it.

Unfortunately, what it is doing is not resolving the underlying issues that continue to generate the stress, anxiety, or anger, but to damage the individual's teeth and seriously jeopardise their oral health.

Effective hypno-psychotherapy for bruxism consists in first teaching the individual's subconscious mind an alternative and less harmful way of dealing with anxiety, stress and anger while sleeping etc.

With this accomplished, the underlying reasons for this behaviour are next uncovered and effectively neutralised.

Through the advanced techniques of transformational hypnotherapy, the subconscious mind can be helped to 're-process' the past experience so that the mind no longer needs to find release by forcing the body into jaw clenching and teeth grinding behaviours.

If you or someone you care about suffers from this worrying and damaging condition, a fully qualified and experienced transformational hypnotherapist really can help you to end teeth grinding and bruxism.

In skilled hands, transformational hypnotherapy really can provide relief from grinding teeth allowing you to sleep peacefully and without the need of an uncomfortable night guard.

Peter Field is a leading British hypno-psychotherapist and originator of AIROTherapy™ with practices in Birmingham and London, UK. He is the author of numerous articles on psychotherapy, hypnosis and health and his articles are currently published internationally by more than 200 different websites. He is a Member of the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy and Fellow of the Royal Society of Health. For more of his interesting and informative articles visit his website:

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