A photograph of a woman with dark hair and blue eyes lying back in a dental chair. A dentist in white scrubs and gloves is examining her teeth with a dental instrument. The scene is brightly lit, typical of a dental office.

*How hypnosis can significantly
reduce the pain and anxiety of
dental procedures*

Hypnosis for Dentistry

Making it easy

DAVID QUIGLEY

HYPNOSIS FOR DENTISTRY – MAKING IT EASY
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For information contact: www.alchemyinstitute.com

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Chapter 1

Introduction

The progress in dental science over the last century has been as dramatic as the progress in many other areas of modern medicine. Thinking back to the times of the barber/dentist whose only tool was a set of pliers, we have certainly come a long way.

My dentist, Dr. Kenneth Alford of Santa Rosa, tells me that in one area modern dentistry is still in need of improvement: many of his patients need help with anxiety connected to dental chairs and procedures. He is also sufficiently impressed by his own academic research and by my experiences as his patient using hypnosis in complex dental procedures, to realize that hypnosis can provide more than just anxiety relief. Dr. Alford has 35 years of experience and the latest trainings and equipment in his pioneering practice of dentistry. Here is his experience as my dentist:

"David Quigley has been a patient of mine for 25 years. During this time, I have performed numerous nonanesthetized dental surgeries on David while he was in a self-induced hypnotic state, including procedures that would leave any

nonanaesthetized patient running for the door screaming! Instead, David was lying relaxed in the chair, fully awake (enough to assist my procedures) but almost entirely pain free. He also healed from his procedures with surprising speed. Recently he recovered from a complex extraction which would normally take around two weeks of healing, in just two days. He reported no post-operative pain or discomfort."

Kenneth L. Alford, DMD www.drkenalford.com

My mouth was a nightmare of crooked teeth, old cracked fillings, decaying roots and a bizarre bite that only an orthodontist could love. But for most of my early life, my problematic mouth was the least of my problems. In my twenties I experienced several serious illnesses diagnosed as chronic bronchitis, crippling rheumatoid arthritis, chronic fatigue, and other acute challenges including being extremely hard of hearing. Fortunately, as I learned about our powerful inner healing resources that we all have, I was able to discover how to heal myself of all of these conditions - often in conjunction with medical treatment and nutritional strategies, always through hypnosis and guided imagery and the amazing set of tools that are now called “Somatic Healing”. The power of Somatic Healing lies in its ability to help clients access their own innate healing resource, the INNER HEALER. Currently I am active and healthy with all the passion and strength of my youth. As a professional hypnotherapy trainer I have taught these healing skills to thousands of clients and practitioners all over the world.

With Dr. Alford's encouragement, I am ready to share my success story with you. One of the great challenges in fixing my mouth was finding a dentist who was highly trained in the latest technologies, had skilled hands, a kindly and approachable personality, and who was amenable to hypnosis. In Dr. Alford I found just such a dentist. Finding a dentist to trust and work with in the chaotic jumble that was my mouth, empowered my inner healer to teach me the methods of experiencing freedom from dental pain, and easy healing of dental surgeries.

Conquering a Low Pain Threshold

One complicating factor was that I have a ridiculously low pain threshold. Sometimes a biting insect sets me screaming. One of the worst pains for me was the routine injections that dentists use to eliminate pain. Also, the numbness and swelling that filled my mouth after these injections not only felt awful, there would be loss of appetite and cheek biting in the numb aftermath of the process. Then of course the shot would wear off and the pain would return, sometimes while I was still sitting in the dental chair.

It is important to explain what hypnosis for dentistry is not. This type of hypnosis does not ever make you unconscious or put you under the control

of the hypnotist. Although some clients may wish to be “knocked out” by hypnosis, this is unnecessary for even the most extreme dental procedure. You will be awake, in control -- and you will feel every procedure in your mouth. You just won't feel the pain, or the anxiety. And you will heal far more rapidly, with minimal post-operative pain. I firmly believe this is a skill that anyone can learn easily in the hands of a skilled professional hypnotist.



Before you start the process make sure your dentist is reliable, skilled and supportive of your use of hypnosis. Hypnosis is a powerful tool, but it can be no substitute for the skill and knowledge of the dental practitioner who is working with you. Do their hands move in your mouth with both precision and safety? Trust your instinct and realize that your mouth can feel along with your heart when a practitioner is trustworthy. If not, find another.

Next, you need to know every detail of the procedure to be followed. Ahead of time, Dr. Alford walks me through every step on the x-ray screen displayed before my eyes. These details are used first in our practice session imagery, and later during the procedure. Seeing the goal clearly is also excellent preparation. Prior to the procedure preform a practice session. The practice session is a hypnotic rehearsal of the entire event, using proven hypnotherapy techniques to eliminate or greatly reduce pain and discomfort.

Practicing Dental Self-Hypnosis

First, you enter a relaxed trance state with an induction that involves a number of standard hypnotic methods, counting down, progressive relaxation, etc. Then we begin with a pattern of simple suggestions to alleviate any dental office anxiety. For example, suggestions that the dentist's office is a safe and loving place where you can trust the dentist and his staff to do a good job. Then these suggestions are anchored with multisensory images of you entering the office in peace, sitting in the chair in relaxed comfort, and hearing the dentist's soothing voice. Various suggestions can be used to help deepen this state at the time when the actual procedure begins. Some examples:

“Every time you open your mouth your whole mouth relaxes and you go even deeper in trance.”

“Every time you hear the sounds of the office around you, you go deeper into relaxation.”

“Every time you hear the sound of the drill, you go deeper and deeper into relaxation.”

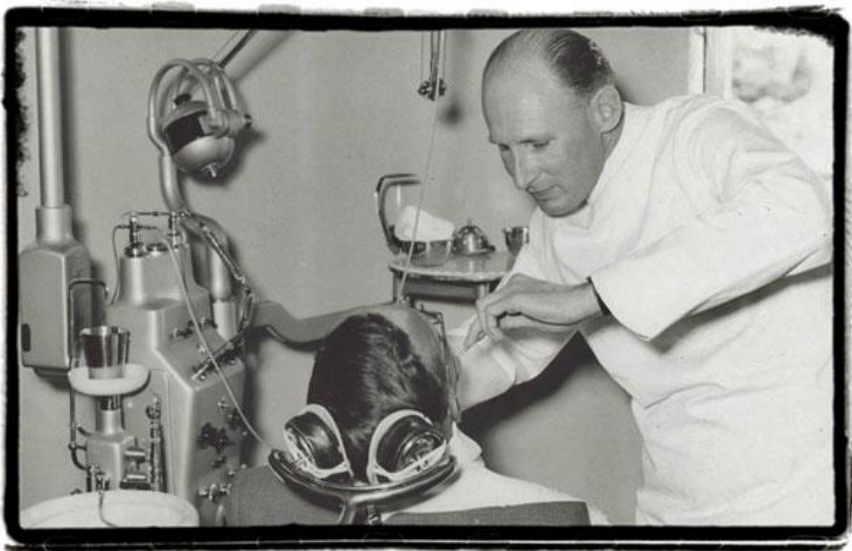
Relieving Dental Phobia

Some clients need to relieve dental phobia, a nearly crippling condition in which a panic attack often connected to the open mouth, makes the entire procedure almost unbearable. In these rare cases we may need to go back to a subconscious memory that is being re-stimulated by the physical sensations of the dental procedure. Sometimes such experiences go back to a previous dental procedure. In other rare instances the cause is rooted in another traumatic experience such as sexual abuse. One dental phobia client returned to a childhood memory of oral sexual abuse from a baby sitter. We needed to rescue the child in her memory from this scene before we could use hypnotic suggestion to establish trust in the dental procedures being followed. While such interventions are rare, they can usually be completed in one session for a complete alleviation of the phobic response.

Once the dental anxiety is relieved, we practice the application of some local anesthetic. If a local anesthetic is planned, you can rehearse by pressing a fingertip or the end of your toothbrush handle or the tip of a covered pen point against this area of the mouth. Practice imagining that this point is emitting a soothing cooling color against the area where the shot is going to go. Blue is the color most often chosen by the subconscious mind, but we let the

client's subconscious mind choose. It is cool and numb. Then add a firmer pressure with the pen tip, and suggest more soothing, cooling color. In this way the body prepares for the local injection.

The next practice consists of direct suggestion to feel this soothing coolness and color emitting from all of the dentist's instruments, including that once terrifying buzz of the drill. This training helps maintain the numb feelings and emotional calm even through the most difficult moments. For many dental clients this pleasant experience alone is enough to justify the expenditure of using hypnosis.



It is possible to achieve a degree of pain control through hypnosis so that anesthetics are not required. In my case I hate injections and dislike the intense swelling that lasts for a long time after the procedure so I developed this sequence for myself.

For serious pain control, I personally use and recommend introducing music into the procedure. Choose your favorite music and channel it through headphones to become familiar with both the sounds and the pressure of the headphones.

The client can be trained in their rehearsal session to allow the music to carry them out of their bodies, into a beautiful peaceful realm. If the client has even a minimal ability to imagine, they can be encouraged to imagine a beautiful place of healing in their inner world, beginning in the practice session and then reinforcing it through homework: a guided journey CD that the client listens to every evening. The next step may be to bring in their inner healer into this peaceful place. This could be an angel, or a beloved grandmother, or a chosen spiritual guide.

The inner healer is instructed to guide the dentist's hands as well as eliminate the client's pain and speed up the healing. By combining music with more trance induction, including this special inner place, clients can be trained to use their subconscious mind to channel the powerful pain signals into a beautiful display of inner light. Pain signals become multicolored fireworks that explode in time to the music in the skies within the inner temple of healing.

As my dentist's staff well remembers, I am sometimes weeping tears of pure joy at the amazing display that mix with the music in a cascade of beauty, while my dentist is performing the surgery.

Many clients can learn the process in one or two practice sessions, however I prefer to accompany them to their appointment, actively working with them to increase their depth of trance and experience a pain free dental procedure.

One of the most important benefits of the use of hypnosis for any surgical procedure is that it speeds up the process of healing exponentially. James Esdaile discovered this accidentally on the battlefields of the Indian wars in the mid 1800s. When he performed surgical amputations with hypnosis (chemical anesthesia was unavailable at the time) the survival rate went from 50% to 96% using hypnosis! While surgery has become safer and hypnosis replaced by surgical anesthesia, the record of hypnosis' success in promoting rapid healing is still well established by modern research. The reasons for this are still not entirely understood. Perhaps like sleep, which it resembles, hypnosis is simply a state where the body heals itself automatically.

And, there is even more that can be done by a modern hypnotherapist. With the exact picture of what healing in the area will look like, images of the area healing quickly and painlessly are inserted into the subconscious mind, even as the dentist is finishing up his procedure. After a recent extraction, bone scraping, and bone graft, I was giving my gums instructions to close over the hole and telling the bone to begin knitting together while I was in the

middle of the procedure. I also sent in some immune system cells to minimize the infection and reduce inflammation. In this case, as with even the most extreme procedures, I went home with no pain at all. After a dental procedure I usually take my first bite of food within a few minutes of getting home. No pain, no swelling, and the bone and gums heal so quickly the dentist is stunned. (Of course I also credit his skill in large part for making this recovery so easy.)

So while it's true that hypnosis will always speed up the healing process, I can design for you with your dentist's help the precise pattern of hypnotic visualizations you can practice that will heal any aches, and your mouth, in record time.

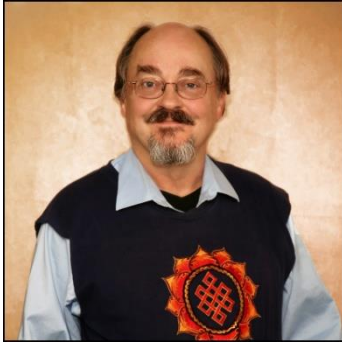
How to Know if you Qualify for Dental Hypnosis

Of course I cannot guarantee that every client will get all the same results described above. The effectiveness of any hypnotic technique is determined not only by the skill of the practitioner but by the client's ability to respond to hypnotic induction and suggestion. Here's a quick test to see if you are a good trance subject: Close your eyes and take a moment to relax your mind. Then imagine that you are sucking a sour lemon. Swish its tangy juice around in your mouth. If your mouth begins to

salivate profusely, this shows not only your ability to visualize, but far more important, to get your body to respond to the commands of your imagination. That is the essence of a good subject for dental hypnosis.



About the Author



In 1978, David was crippled with rheumatoid arthritis, chronic fatigue, severe food, pollen, and dust allergies, chronic lung disease, and multiple chemical sensitivities. Using the methods described in this book he not only restored his health, but is now a rock climber/mountaineer in his free time. David has extensive training in clinical hypnosis, NLP, Gestalt and primal therapy, and a host of other modalities. He is a living testimony to the power of Alchemical Healing.

To book a session, call David Quigley at his home office: 707-539-4989. David offers a free 15 minute phone consultation prior to making an appointment.

To learn about Somatic Healing Practitioner training, visit the website: www.alchemyinstitute.com