

Three IBS case studies

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8th October 2024

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Case 1

- ▶ J is 59 happily married and has 2 younger sisters who help out with Mum (in her late 70's). Mum drank a lot throughout her life and only stopped when she got dementia
- ▶ J developed anxiety and IBS following Mum's diagnosis of dementia about 5 years ago. Mum was sectioned twice and lives at home with Dad who cares for her. Mum won't allow any external carers. J found the sections and visits to the residential psychiatric ward traumatic
- ▶ J works part in shop which she likes. Also looks after grandchildren. Felt out of control when mum got sectioned and got 'low'. She couldn't think rationally and 'got in a state'. GP put her on sertraline 100mg. At the time she had pains in her body; lumpy feeling in throat, in shoulders and back. Also developed griping pain in her tummy and incomplete evacuation - all tests were clear so IBS diagnosed. J still thinks they missed something though.
- ▶ Notices difference with IBS when stressed. Don't notice tummy when on holiday and away from it all. GP recently put J on mebeverine and suggested hypnosis. No effects from food. J sleeps well.

Case 1 1st session

Induction:

- ▶ Eye roll
- ▶ Fractionation
- ▶ Progressive muscular relaxation
- ▶ Count down 10-0
- ▶ Is it possible? Script
- ▶ Special place as anchor

Case 1 1st Session

- ▶ Control room of mind for calm-anxiety dial.
- ▶ Calm = 10 & anxious = 0. J moved it from 5 to 8.
- ▶ Back to special place. Suggestions re tummy. Explained link between brain & tummy. Said tummy has been sending a lot of messages to brain probably due to stress. Perhaps tummy could dial down the messages, all is OK now, J doesn't need so many messages. Relax a bit. You can go back to normal, as you were for most of J's life. Buddha statues have him with half-smile on his face; your tummy can have a half smile, imagine that. Soon you won't notice your tummy at all, it will be back to normal etc.

Case 1 1st Session feedback

- ▶ 'That was nice'.
- ▶ Could visualise her special place; it's a very relaxed and chilled out place they go to
- ▶ Wasn't aware of tummy throughout hypnosis
- ▶ Heard my voice and outside sounds but they faded into background
- ▶ She was aware of my voice all the time but couldn't recall all I said
- ▶ She doesn't recall the tummy suggestions.

Case 1 2nd Session 2 weeks later

- ▶ For the first few days after the first session J didn't really feel any different. Then she got a D&V bug and was really poorly for 5 days. Since then her IBS 'hasn't been bad at all'. It's a lot better, less cramping and this makes her feel much better in general. The incomplete evacuation has been better too.
- ▶ MyMOP: IBS was 3/6 now 1.5-2/6; Anxiety was 3/6 now 2.5/6

Case 1 2nd Session 2 weeks later

- ▶ Same induction
- ▶ Special place
- ▶ Calm/anxiety dial - this was at 4 she moved it to 10 - totally calm.
- ▶ Tummy: repeated same as last time; messages from tummy to brain can reduce/slow down/less frequent. Tummy happy and calm etc. Back to normal, how it's been for most of her life.
- ▶ Protective bubble: used Gill's bubble script. After developing imagery for it I suggested she sees herself at work in the shop with a difficult/angry customer and notice how it doesn't bother her; in fact she might even feel sorry for difficult angry customers, they are not happy. Did the same for when she visits parents; whatever happens she is OK and protected in her bubble. She can help her Mum and Dad without absorbing their issues or negativity etc. J 'can see' her bubble, it's like a bubble bottle bubble, clear and iridescent. She felt safe inside there. 'I can see it now.'

Case 1 2nd Session 2 weeks later

- ▶ J agreed to recording in which I will include her bubble. Also include some gut focused suggestions. I recommended listening to it every day for a week if possible, and 2-3 times/week at least. J will contact me when she wants another appointment.
- ▶ No more appointments; J reports back to GP that IBS is ‘cured’
- ▶ GP refers other patients to me for IBS, anxiety and phobias

Case 2 - Referral from same GP

- ▶ Fit and otherwise well 70 year old woman, married with grown up children, very comfortably off
- ▶ A presented with 'panic diarrhoea' and IBS which started in 2009. It affects her badly when she is going out, especially for an appointment when she may have to go 4+ times. She takes up to 4 imodium to manage it. Started following a severe bout of D&V due to meal in restaurant. They have a caravan in Italy and go for 5-6 weeks at a time which she loves. Her tummy is fine travelling there by car over 3 days and while she is there but 'terrible' when travelling back, which she can't explain and hadn't thought about before. Her tummy is OK when husband driving her; she gave up driving 8 years ago due to cataract and loss of confidence.
- ▶ Second marriage; 1st broke up when he left her when kids were 16 & 18 for another woman. She remarried her solicitor and is very happy. Describes herself as an introvert, happy with own company; is under pressure to visit son and family in the North a lot more to be close grandparents and she gets stressed thinking about going up there. Describes herself as a worrier.

Case 2 - Session 1

MyMop

- 1) Panic diarrhoea = 5/6
- 2) IBS= 4/6
- 3) Going to apts = 6/6
- 4) Wellbeing = 4/6

- ▶ Suds = 9/10: 'extremely anxious/distressed'. (She is worried about having an accident especially when out and about).
- ▶ Usual induction

Case 2 - Session 1

- ▶ Special place as anchor
- ▶ Can she see her tummy as a face, see it smiling like a Buddha gentle half-smile? (She saw the half-smile before I said 'Buddha'). Emphasised happy, calm, content tummy.
- ▶ Can she visualise a river; can she see the river as her gut/digestive system; as she is in control, she can change the speed it flows; make it slower; change the flow to different speeds at different times of day etc. (She couldn't do this; omit from future sessions)
- ▶ Hartland's ego strengthening
- ▶ **Feedback:** She felt good. Could visualise the river but couldn't get it to slow down. Was aware of random thoughts passing through, e.g. 'is this working?'. Didn't feel as though in a trance but was surprised how far her head had relaxed when she came round. Her hands had felt really heavy. Tummy did have half-smile on its face and she liked that image. Also liked Hartland. As she was leaving she said she 'felt very good'. Her mood seemed to have lifted. Told her results can happen over period of time.

Case 2 - Recording

I did a recording to cover:

- ▶ PMR/Elkins induction
- ▶ Special place
- ▶ Tummy half-smile
- ▶ Visualise her gut/intestines/bowels; she can visualise them in her mind so use those words and imagery. Did Parts approach: thanked the part that had got rid of her tummy infection in 2009; it kept her safe. Now everything is OK, that part can return to its normal function of making sure her tummy is normal, happy, calm etc.
- ▶ Comfort/pain dial for tummy especially early morning
- ▶ Sleep right through till time to get up.
- ▶ Send her off to sleep

Case 2 - Second session 2 weeks later

Feedback:

- ▶ 'I can't believe it - after 1 visit, no problems. No panic diarrhoea, 5am tummy pain has gone, still wake up to go to the loo but go back to sleep.' Been like this since the day after our 1st session; that day she went to hairdresser's, no problem. Been going out and about, with no problems.
- ▶ Likes the recording, listens to it 5/week; last 3 nights has fallen asleep listening to it.

MyMop:

Panic diarrhoea = 0/6

IBS= 1/6

Going to apts = 0/6

Wellbeing = 0/6

Suds was 9/10: 'extremely anxious/distressed'. (She is worried about having an accident especially when out and about). Now 5/10: moderate anxiety etc. She puts this down to being a worrier; not to do with IBS.

Case 2 - Second session 2 weeks later

Therapy:

- ▶ Usual induction
- ▶ Special place
- ▶ Parts approach using IDM responses. Part causing panicky diarrhoea agreed to change permanently back to normal and all other parts agreed
- ▶ Then suggested gradual increase in appetite and weight, so at some point she would find she's back to 10 stone, naturally and automatically, surprised to see that happened with no effort etc. (She wanted to put weight on)
- ▶ Can she see her tummy as a face, see it smiling like a Buddha gentle half-smile? Emphasised happy, calm, content tummy
- ▶ Heap's ego-strengthening.

Case 2 - Third session 7 weeks later

Relapse:

A was fine till 2 weeks before Christmas when she messaged to say she'd had a relapse twice when going to the theatre. Panic diarrhoea had returned. A is also feeling unwell due to dizzy spells which GP is investigating and treating. She had put on 8 pounds then lost a couple due to dizziness. Her appetite is still OK. Tummy generally OK, the early morning pains have not returned. A reports always falling asleep very early on in my recording so we agreed that I'd do another which she would listen to during the day to ensure her unconscious mind heard it all.

MyMop:

Panic diarrhoea was 0/6 now 5/6

IBS was 1/6 now 3/6

Going to apts was 0/6 now 5/6

Wellbeing = 0/6

Suds: 6/10

Case 2 - Third session 7 weeks later

Relapse:

A was fine till 2 weeks before Christmas when she messaged to say she'd had a relapse twice when going to the theatre. Panic diarrhoea had returned. A is also feeling unwell due to dizzy spells which GP is investigating and treating. She had put on 8 pounds then lost a couple due to dizziness. Her appetite is still OK. Tummy generally OK, the early morning pains have not returned. A reports always falling asleep very early on in my recording so we agreed that I'd do another which she would listen to during the day to ensure her unconscious mind heard it all.

MyMop:

Panic diarrhoea was 0/6 now 5/6

IBS was 1/6 now 3/6

Going to apts was 0/6 now 5/6

Wellbeing = 0/6

Suds: 6/10

Case 2 - Third session - therapy

- ▶ Usual induction
- ▶ Special place
- ▶ Control room of mind - calm-anxiety dial. A liked this 'needle' suggestion. 0= calm/10 = anxiety. She moved it from 6 to 3.
- ▶ Special place is a cliff edge at a seaside so door to mind was interesting - it was like a Tardis with lots of dials inside.
- ▶ Did a bit extra on relaxation, calm, in control, reminded about sympathetic and para-s nervous system, suggested equilibrium and balance etc.
- ▶ Addressed the part of A that was causing the tummy upset and thanked it for its work, reminded it that it could do a different, more important job and asked it to revert to that job to ensure A's tummy worked normally, smoothly, perfectly etc.
- ▶ Then suggested gradual increase in appetite and weight, so at some point she would find she's back to 10 stone, naturally and automatically, surprised to see that happened with no effort etc.
- ▶ Can she see her tummy as a face, see it smiling like a Buddha gentle half-smile? A said she felt like the mouth wanted to be a straight line as she is feeling put out with her health but she make it lift up a little bit at the edges so tummy had a faint smile.

Case 2 - Fourth session - 3 weeks later (25th Jan 2024)

- ▶ All going well until she went to the theatre and had to take 3 imodium. A is very cross with herself and 'determined to beat it'. She is also disappointed as thought she had cracked it. She thought she was 'going to be going a lot' this morning but didn't - she told herself she had a 'road block on the M1'. Told me after her session that when we started she was aware of the sensation (wanting to 'go').
- ▶ Meantime her appetite is still good, she has put on 7 lbs and is now 9.7st. She is happy at that weight and up to 10st.
- ▶ **Therapy** - usual induction including special place
- ▶ Developed sense of peace and calm: what did it look like? Size, colour etc. Suggested she can change it, expand it etc. Afterwards she said at one point she felt 'really nice: saw fluffy clouds in a blue sky'. She put this over her road (M1) - her metaphor for her gut.
- ▶ Discussed the communication system between mind and gut. Wondered what hers looked like; railway track? Explored the system running from her gut to her mind; frequency of messages, dial them down, turn volume down etc. Did same with messages from mind to gut - those that made her think continually if she needed to go. Turn those down or off etc.
- ▶ **Feedback on reorientation:** her comms system is a 'mess of wires'. She thinned them out a bit and changed the colour from yellow to green to blue to purple. (*Note to self for next time - develop the wires metaphor: straighten them out, thin them down, clean them, polish them. Give them a service or re fit with new system?*).
- ▶ Suggested appetite would remain good, she will enjoy her food, and going out for meals etc. Weight will stabilise at right point for her.
- ▶ Felt really good when she came round. The feeling she may want to go had completely gone.

Case 2 - last contact 20th February 2024

‘Hello Julie

Thought you would like to know that I’ve had a really good 2 weeks. I’ve been to the theatre twice, the caravan show at the NEC and today I’ve been to the dentist for 2 fillings. No problems at all and I’m feeling very positive’

Case 3

- ▶ Woman age 72, lives on her own, 'highly strung', retired air steward.
- ▶ IBS 'for as long as I can remember'; had 2 colonoscopies, has diverticulitis
- ▶ IBS pain 'like a potato peeler has peeled off the surface of my tummy - a burning feeling'
- ▶ Also 'random aches and pains which move around my body'
- ▶ MyMop:
 - ▶ 1) Random aches & pains = 5/6
 - ▶ 2) IBS = 5/6
 - ▶ Wellbeing = 0/6 (as good as it can be)
 - ▶ SUDS = 7/10 (quite anxious/distressed, interfering with performance)

Case 3

- ▶ Therapy:
- ▶ Special place (abreaction; couldn't see special place but felt sad and cried)
- ▶ Calm/anxiety dial (couldn't see that)
- ▶ Heap ego-strengthening
- ▶ **Session 2**
- ▶ Parts approach for IBS, as per previous 2 cases
- ▶ **Session 3**
- ▶ Same as session 2 + recording

- ▶ At the end of session 3, spaced fortnightly, we both wondered if she had been 'in a trance' (probably not) and symptoms no better. Didn't like the recording. Decided to give it one more go.

Case 3

- ▶ Changed tack and used Whorwell script from BSCAH handbook pp251-2
- ▶ Client like the imagery, could see the river
- ▶ Did recording of same
- ▶ Fortnight later 'IBS has been amazingly good, just one blip one morning'. She had 'forgotten about it, it's been so good'. Listened to recording 4 times
- ▶ Benefits were sustained and:

Three months later: MyMop & SUDS

- ▶ 1) Random aches & pains = 1/6
- ▶ 2) IBS = 1/6
- ▶ Wellbeing = 0/6 (as good as it can be)
- ▶ SUDS = 5/10 (moderate anxiety/distress but can still perform)

Conclusions

- ▶ As we know - different approaches suit different people
- ▶ Some clients take a while to be receptive - in Case 3, client acknowledged that trust was an issue in the early sessions and that she was aware of resistance
- ▶ Although small numbers (including my other IBS cases), it seems a prescriptive approach to number of sessions and content may not be necessary
- ▶ Recordings invaluable - all my clients receive them, most listen to them regularly, a few for over a year and one to get to sleep every night
- ▶ Feedback welcome