



Relief from Your TMJ Pain

Pain Management Department

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Managing Your TMJ Pain

Week 1: The Mind-Body Connection: Body Awareness, Relaxation

Week 2: Cognitive Distortions: How Thinking Errors add to Stress

Week 3: Mindfulness: How to Shift Your Focus to the Here and Now

Week 4: Tying it All Together, Further Resources

Each week will include relaxation skills and home practice.

Managing Your TMJ Pain - Week 1: Body Awareness and Relaxation

Welcome & introductions

What Type of person are you?

The Mind-Body Connection

Body Awareness and Relaxation Skills Training

Home Practice (the key to success)

Managing Your TMJ Pain - Week 1

- Who here:
 - Is a **Type-A** kind of person?
 - Feels like they have to deal with a **high stress load** most every day?
 - Has **trouble relaxing**?
 - Feels like they're **chronically tense** or wound over-tight?
 - Has trouble **sleeping**?
 - **Grinds their teeth** at night?
 - Gets **tension headaches**?
 - **Feels tension** in their jaws, as well as pain?
 - Feels pain and tension in **other places** than their jaws? Where?

Managing Your TMJ Pain - Week 1

- Week 1: Relaxation, Body Awareness
 - **Stress and tension** can create pain.
 - **Chronic tension and bracing** can restrict movement, trigger inflammation and increase pain. Chronically tense muscles never fully relax.
 - Our nervous systems are designed to **drop constant stimuli** out of our awareness if they're not an immediate threat.
 - The one major exception to this rule is **pain**. Pain sensations are perceived as **danger** signals, and your nervous system tenses up to respond to the threat.
 - **Sensations of tension do follow this dropout rule**. Even if you don't notice it, chronic tension in a muscle group restricts movement and increases muscle stress and inflammation.

Managing Your TMJ Pain - Week 1

Week 1: Relaxation, Body Awareness

Our focus this week is to help you **become aware of how and where you hold tension** in your body, especially in your **jaws**, learn to release that tension, relax, become calmer and reduce your stress.

This will lead to less tension-triggered pain and less overall stress.

Managing Your TMJ Pain - Week 1

Week 1: Relaxation, Body Awareness

- You need body awareness (somatic awareness) to **sense and release** chronic bracing and tension.
- You can't release what you don't feel.
- *(Fingers to jaws, clench teeth...move to temples)*

Managing Your TMJ Pain - Week 1

Week 1: Relaxation, Body Awareness

- Skill 1: Brief Relaxing Breath
- Skill 3: Pause Cards
- Skill 2: Figure-8
- Skill 4: Gills Breath
- Skill 5: Guppy Mouth.

Managing Your TMJ Pain - Week 1

Week 1: Relaxation, Body Awareness

- Exercise, body awareness:
 - Orient
 - Ground
 - Interoception (body focus)
 - Felt Sense
- Exercise: Stressful Event
- Exercise: Pleasant Memory

Managing Your TMJ Pain - Week 1

Week 1: Relaxation, Body Awareness

- Home Practice:
 - Daily TMJ Journal
 - Week 1 Skills Practice:
 1. Brief Relaxing Breath
 2. Figure-8
 3. Pause Cards
 4. Gills Breath
 5. Guppy Mouth

(Relaxation Audio: drjoepersinger.com)

Managing Your TMJ Pain

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Managing Your TMJ Pain - Week 2: Cognitive-Behavioral Skills

Review: Week 1 and Home Practice skills.

Skills 6 and 7.

Cognitive-Behavioral Skills: Thinking Distortions – What are they?

Cognitive-Behavioral Skills: Thought Records.

Home Practice Skills form.

Managing Your TMJ Pain - Week 2

What did you notice this past week?

Any changes in:

- Pain
 - Jaws
 - Other places
- Tension
 - Jaws
 - Other places
- Stress, Mood, ...

Managing Your TMJ Pain - Week 2

Week 2: Review of Week 1

- Home Practice: What helped? What didn't?
 - Daily TMJ Journal
 - Brief Relaxing Breath and Pause Cards
 - Figure-8
 - Gills
 - Guppy Mouth

Managing Your TMJ Pain - Week 2

Week 2: Relaxation, Body Awareness Skills

- 6. Quick Coherence (*Heart Breath*)
- 7. Gratitude List

Managing Your TMJ Pain - Week 2

Week 2: Thought Distortions (thinking errors)

Your repeated patterns of pain/stress

Autobiography in 5 parts:

Managing Your TMJ Pain - Week 2

Week 2: Thought Distortions (thinking errors)

Patterns of beliefs left over from childhood about yourself, others, life... They tend to get triggered when we're stressed.

- Characteristics: (*see manual*)
 - Simplistic
 - Self-centered
 - Negative
 - Judgmental
 - Often very convincing
 - Usually not helpful
 - Often increase your stress

Managing Your TMJ Pain - Week 2

Week 2: Thought Distortions (thinking errors)

Patterns left over from childhood about yourself, others, life...

- **What are they:** *(see manual)*
- **Common Situations:** *(see manual)*
- **How do we know?** *(see manual)*
- **Categories:** *(see manual)*
- **Thought Records:** *(see manual)*

Managing Your TMJ Pain - Week 2

Week 2: Cognitive-Behavioral Skills

THOUGHT RECORD:

Recall a recurrent stressful event (person, place, situation) and how you reacted:

- Sensations
- Emotions
- Self-talk
- Reactions

Managing Your TMJ Pain - Week 2

Week 2: Home Practice

- Daily TMJ Journal
- Week 2 Skills Practice
 1. Brief relaxing breath
 2. Figure-8
 3. Pause Cards
 4. Breathing Through Gills
 5. Guppy mouth
 6. Quick coherence skill
 7. Gratitude list
 8. Thought Records

Managing Your TMJ Pain

Week 1: The Mind-Body Connection: Body Awareness, Relaxation

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Managing Your TMJ Pain - Week 3: Mindfulness

Review: Weeks 1 & 2 and Home Practice Skills

Principles of Mindfulness

Mindfulness Skills: Mindful Sitting, Mindful Activities

Skills 8 and 9

Home Practice Skills

Managing Your TMJ Pain - Week 3

- What did you notice this past week? Any changes in:
 - Pain
 - Jaws
 - Other places
 - Tension
 - Jaws
 - Other places
 - Stress, Mood,

Managing Your TMJ Pain - Week 3

Week 2: Review of Weeks 1 & 2

- Home Practice: What helped? What didn't?
 1. Daily TMJ Journal
 2. Thought Records
 3. Figure-8
 4. Brief Relaxing Breath
 5. Pause Cards
 6. Gills
 7. Guppy Mouth
 8. Quick Coherence (Heart Breath)
 9. Gratitude List.

Managing Your TMJ Pain - Week 3

Week 3: Mindful Awareness

- The **mind's main purpose** is to keep us alive by **reacting** to our environment. It constantly scans the environment looking for threats and problems to respond to. The more **stress** you have, the more '**hyper**' your mind becomes.
- We spend most of our time mentally on **automatic**, controlled by our **reactive mind** thinking about the **past**, the **future** and **things elsewhere**, not paying attention to our immediate present – except when there's a threat.
- **Mindfulness** is a skill to help us bring our attention to the **present** and escape the endless hamster wheel of mental ruminating and stressing.
- Step out of your **reactive mind** and take more control of your life.

Managing Your TMJ Pain - Week 3

Week 3: Mindful Awareness

- *Basic principles:*
 - Your mind is **restless** and **hyperactive**, and you don't have much control over what it focuses on.
 - However, you are not just your mind. You are the **owner** of your mind.
 - You can learn to **observe** your mind's restless wanderings without getting caught up in them. Practicing self-observation **re-wires** your brain. (*Train station, river, sky.*)
 - Think of your life as a **road trip** and your mind as an excitable, 'hyper' passenger riding next to you. It can be very entertaining and useful... but it can also go off half-cocked; don't let it drive your car.

Managing Your TMJ Pain - Week 3

Week 3: Mindful Awareness

- *Exercise: Mindful Sitting*
 - Sit comfortably and notice your **breath**.
 - Notice your **hearing**, the sounds around you.
 - Notice your **body sensations** (tension, relaxation, constriction, expansion, pain, tingling, heavy, light, ...), and any **urges/impulses** to respond (e.g., scratch an itch)..
 - Notice your **thoughts** and **emotions** your self-talk. Experience your thought process, always changing. Back to your breath.
 - **Choiceless awareness**. Now just notice whatever arises into your awareness, like clouds in the sky, moment to moment, the constantly changing of your mind's activity.

Managing Your TMJ Pain - Week 3

Week 3: Mindful Awareness

- *Mindful Body Tracking Exercise:*
 - Relaxing abdominal breaths.
 - Body Scan.
 - Breath waves.
 - Focus on **TMJ tension** and track:
 - Notice any **shifts** or **changes** in sensations;
 - Notice **what comes up** into your awareness (thoughts, emotions, sensations, images, memories...) and hold space mindfully.
 - **Breath through** your tense jaws as if you had gills, and notice what changes.

Managing Your TMJ Pain - Week 3

Week 3: Mindful Awareness

- **Skill #8: Mindful Sitting Practice**
 - For 5 minutes every day:
 - Sit comfortably. Bring your attention to your **breath**. It will be your focal point, your home base. Breathe deeply and slowly and **smile**..... **Relax** as you breathe out.
 - When your mind wanders, don't get upset, **just start over** and bring your attention back to your breath. It doesn't matter how many times you start over -- every minute, every two seconds -- makes no difference.
 - Be **kind** and **patient** with your restless mind. It's just doing what it knows how to do. As you meditate, stay **neutral**, notice without judging. Keep **smiling** gently as you do this.

Managing Your TMJ Pain - Week 3

Week 3: Mindful Awareness

- **Skill # 9: Mindful Activities**
 - Pick a **daily mundane activity** (walking, driving, dishwashing, cooking, eating... etc.) breathe deeply and slowly, smile and focus on present awareness through your senses.
 - As you do your activity, you can practice **belly breathing, relaxing** and **smiling** gently.
 - Each time you find your mind wandering, just return to your activity and **just start over. (no drama, no criticism, no judgement – just start over...begin again.)**

Managing Your TMJ Pain - Week 3

Week 3: Home Practice

- Daily TMJ Journal
- Week 3 Skills Practice
 - Skills 1 – 7.
 - Skill # 8: Mindful Sitting
 - Skill # 9: Mindful Activity.
 - Thought Records

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Managing Your TMJ Pain - Week 4: Tying It All Together

Review of Weeks 1, 2 and 3

Skills 10 and 11

Creating Your Maintenance Plan and Pain Flare Kit

Further Resources

Class Evaluation

Managing Your TMJ Pain - Week 4

- What did you notice this past week?

Any changes in:

- Pain
 - Jaws
 - Other places
- Tension
 - Jaws
 - Other places
- Stress

Managing Your TMJ Pain - Week 4

Week 4: Review of Weeks 1, 2 and 3

- *Week 1*
 - The Mind-Body Connection
 - Relaxation Skills 1 - 5
- *Week 2*
 - Thought Distortions
 - Relaxation Skills 6, 7
- *Week 3*
 - Mindfulness
 - Relaxation Skills 8, 9

Managing Your TMJ Pain - Week 1

- Week 1: Relaxation, Body Awareness
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Managing Your TMJ Pain - Week 2

Week 2: Thought Distortions (thinking errors)

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- Characteristics: (*see manual*)
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Managing Your TMJ Pain - Week 4

Week 4: Two New Relaxation Skills

- Skill # 10: Community of Support
- Skill # 11: Take Time to Feel Good

Managing Your TMJ Pain - Week 4

Week 4: Creating Your Maintenance Plan

- *(See Handout)*

Managing Your TMJ Pain - Week 4

Week 4: Planning for Pain Flares

When you're in a pain flare, it's hard to think clearly and act effectively. The best time to create a plan to manage your increased pain is when you're not in pain.

- Create a *Pain/Stress Flare Kit*:
 - *Instructions (from you to you)*
 - *Encouragement*
 - *Items*

Managing Your TMJ Pain - Week 4

Week 4: Further Resources

- Health Education Pamphlet
- Kaiser Podcasts and Videos (Google)
- Physical Therapy's class on TMJ Pain
(call 566-5844)
- Kaiser Pain Management Program
(ask your doctor for a referral)

Managing Your TMJ Pain - Week 4

Week 4: Class Evaluation

- *Please fill out and hand in.*

That's All!

Thank you for coming.