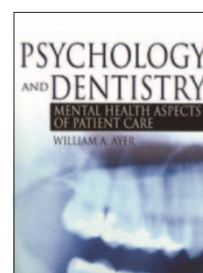


Books, videos, CD-ROMs, DVDs and any other relevant items submitted for a review in the *BDJ* should be addressed to: Kate Maynard, Assistant Editor, British Dental Journal, NPG, 4-6 Crinan Street, London N1 9XW



## Psychology and dentists: mental health aspects of patient care

W. A. Ayer  
USA: Haworth Press  
price \$24.95, pp 148  
ISBN 09780789022967

This is a compact, well laid out, easily readable book aimed at dental students and practitioners. Written by an eminent American academic, the contents cover the psychological aspects of providing dental treatment. Two of the chapters, on hypnosis and interviewing, are written by specialist clinicians.

I was bitterly disappointed by this book. The text focuses largely on the historical aspects of the subjects covered. This was reflected in the references used. For example, in Chapter 4: *Fear and anxiety in dentistry*, the references for the prevalence of adult dental fear date from 1954 and 1958. Of the 40 references for the chapter, eight date from before 1970; 24 from the 1970s (when the author was at his most research-productive); six from the 1980s and just two from 1990 onwards. Thus there is no mention of the major steps taken in identifying the cognitive aspects of dental fear. The chapter also lacks clinical skills descriptors detailed enough to help clinicians develop their skills.

I have similar concerns about other major omissions. For example, Chapter 8, *Stress in dentistry* makes no reference to the phenomenon of burnout. Neither do Chapter 2, *Behavioural foundations of dentistry* nor Chapter 6, *Compliance with health care* recommendations mention Prochaska and diClemente's *Stages of Change* model.

The missing opportunities for clinically insightful help are illustrated by Chapter 3, *Pain*, which states that: '*Measures of pain are available and are adequate for scientific and clinical study*', but no examples are reproduced or references given.

Chapter 10, *Hypnosis in dentistry* is much more useful. It contains historical

and theoretical backgrounds to dental hypnosis and gives clinical examples and skills hints. This chapter leaves the reader with an understanding of the potential uses of hypnosis in dentistry.

Chapter 11, *Interviewing* concerns patient-clinician communication and history taking. Written by a psychologist, it draws heavily on research into the formation of good therapist-patient relationships in the field of psychotherapy and there is much of relevance to dentistry in the text.

Both Chapters 10 and 11 draw on an appropriately balanced and up-to-date set of references.

Would I buy this book? No (unless I was a dental historian). There are other textbooks written by UK clinicians/researchers which are more thorough, relate theory to clinical relevance more convincingly and are more up-to-date, despite earlier publication dates.

H. Chapman

## Holistic oral care: A guide for health professionals

S. Boyle, J. Griffiths  
UK: Stephen Hancocks Ltd ([www.shancocksLtd.com](http://www.shancocksLtd.com))  
price £28.95, pp 320  
ISBN 0945614526

This book, now in its second edition, is an outstanding reference work. Authors Janet Griffiths and Steve Boyle have illustrated the work with precise, well laid out tables and chapter titles are printed along the sides of each page allowing for quick review. It is clearly aimed at the whole healthcare team.

If you wanted to know which drug classes have the potential to cause dry mouth, then a table entitled *xerostomic medication categorised according to function*, within a chapter on oral effects

of commonly used medication, is the most concise and informative I have come across. This is a very important topic as many of our patients are now on a cocktail of medications and dentists need to be rapidly aware of possible oral side effects. Similarly a high quality photograph shows localised swelling of the gingivae on the buccal surface of a single tooth as a side effect of Nifedipine, a commonly prescribed medication for heart/circulatory disease!

Equally impressive are the grids summarising *nursing standards for oral health in continuing care* and *the joint assessment nursing education tool* – which succinctly display the details required for in-patient admission with particular emphasis on dentures and problems that may arise. A clever animated oral chart to facilitate reporting and monitoring details of any oral abnormalities of the soft tissues should be a must for every dental practice!

An apparent anomaly appears in the chapter on *neurological and sensory impairment*, where concern is raised that the mercury in dental fillings may cause multiple sclerosis and sufferers often ask for their removal. The authors state that although there is no scientific evidence it would seem prudent to provide *alternative* filling materials as and when replacements are needed.

Chlorhexidine is continuously advocated as part of an oral hygiene programme, but no mention is made of alternatives such as Gengigel or co-enzyme Q10.

The final chapters cover *mental health problems, malignant disease and its treatment* and *practical oral health promotion*. An appendix completes the 332 glossy pages with some case studies.

*Holistic oral care* is the sort of book you can read in a day but should have handy to refer to every day. It covers virtually every disease that a dentist/healthcare worker may come across and the challenges of coping with them and with any treatment side effects.

D. Cowan