



Life-Enhancing Hypnosis:

Empowering people to achieve optimal mental, physical and emotional well-being.

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**A TEENAGE DILEMMA**

The challenges teenagers face have sometimes been referred to as the insoluble dilemma of adolescence. This case study bears that out and almost became the unsolvable mystery of Michael. It also demonstrates how one's subconscious mind, which is usually very cooperative when asked to assist a person in resolving issues, may, at times, be quite stubborn – like it has a “mind of its own”.

Michael was two months shy of his eighteenth birthday and getting ready to enter his senior year of high school when he came for his first appointment. His mother had said his issue was “eye floaters that affected his driving”. But as Michael and I started to get acquainted, it became clear he was also low in confidence, guarded about trusting a new person, anxious, and angry. The confidence, trust, anxiety, and anger factors would need to be resolved before his eye floaters could be addressed. While the floaters had been getting his attention big-time, they were really trying to tell him he needed to resolve the other issues first.

After discussing how being obsessed with floaters in his eyes was causing Michael to be afraid of driving, we began hypnosis. Michael initially was able to go to only a very light level of hypnosis and expressed disbelief that he was in a hypnotic state. It was only after I guided him through an eye-closure technique, which kept him from being able to open his eyelids, that he, almost grudgingly, began to accept that he was in hypnosis. I asked about “resistance” in his subconscious mind, but received no recognition of it. He did an anchoring movement for self-hypnosis and found he could re-enter the hypnotic state, by practicing, whenever he wanted. He then was able to imagine himself in a safe place, which was a tree house behind his grandmother's home. He and his cousins played on it often and it became a happy, calming influence on him. I suggested he would return in his mind to the tree house each time he went into self-hypnosis and the associated feelings would enhance his going into deeper levels of relaxation.

In an attempt to give Michael some hope about his future, I asked him to imagine being free of the floaters, fear of driving, low confidence, anxiety, anger and being untrusting. He then imagined positive perceptions that would replace what he had disconnected. He saw himself being free of the floaters, happy, excited, getting out a lot, driving around with his friends, and getting a job. He connected those

positive perceptions with the words “I am free”, and that became his affirmation for reinforcing release of the former issues and replacement of them with his new perceptions.

During the next four sessions we worked at having Michael release the influence of everything that had contributed to his floaters and fear of driving. He began by returning to when he was a developing fetus in his mother’s womb and was aware of being very uncomfortable and fearful because of anger expressed by his father. He disconnected all that and replaced it with confident, comfortable, peaceful feelings. He was also aware of anxiety in his mother that caused him to feel the same way. He released and replaced that and began the transformation from the ways he had been to the ways he would be able to become. His wombic recollections indicated how habits can begin before birth. Two school incidents had caused Michael much distress and anxiety. In third grade, an autistic classmate became very aggressive and lashed out at him. In eighth grade, he was removed from school several times because of his inability to control his emotions. He released the impact of those experiences and replaced them with relaxed, comfortable, confident perceptions of how he was becoming. Other techniques gave Michael the opportunity to release and replace more of the reasons for his inner discomfort.

Although progress had been slow, it was then time to address the floaters and driving. It seemed the floaters were constricting Michael’s vision and adding to his fear of driving. But other experiences had previously contributed to the driving fears, which the floaters exacerbated. Michael said: “I had so many close calls driving and they were my fault most of the time. Even my friends said I was a bad driver”. Two “almost accidents” scared him badly. The culmination of those events happened three weeks before the end of his Junior year, when Michael stopped driving. He released the influence of all the incidents and feelings and the impact of the floaters. He replaced them with imagining himself driving: “in control, concentrating completely, feeling relaxed, confident and comfortable; always watching out for the other guy; stopping before pulling out onto any road and looking both ways two times; getting where he is going safely; and assuming responsibility to keep himself and any passengers safe”.

I made a CD for Michael that reinforced all the positives he had imagined and I had expanded upon. CD’s are usually fifteen to twenty minutes long. Michael’s was thirty-seven minutes! Because he was still not ready to resume driving, I told his mother I would check with her periodically and be available to help if needed.

I spoke with Michael’s mother three weeks later. She said he had been listening to the CD every night, but nothing had changed. I suggested a couple of techniques he could try to help things take hold. Four weeks later, Michael’s mother emailed: “I just wanted to let you know how Michael is doing. Unfortunately, there aren’t drastic changes as we’d hoped, but little things are much better. Michael will drive after dark. He still hopes to wake up and have big changes. He does still listen to his CD. He is doing a little more now and is in a better place emotionally, so that’s good”. Five weeks later, Michael’s mother emailed again: “I just wanted to share some good news. Two weeks ago, Michael and I picked my husband up at the airport. While we were at Wal-Mart, Michael asked for an I-Tunes card. His deal was we would buy it if he drove to school the next day. I said absolutely! Yes, he drove and has been driving ever since. School is going great and he was accepted at a junior college for next year. His mood has been fantastic and all is well in our household!”

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**Remember:** *Hypnosis can be done in the office, by phone, and via Skype.*