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# Ask the Professionals

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**Q:** Last time you mentioned nitrous oxide as a good way to reduce anxiety during dental treatment. Isn't that just for hotrods?

**A:** Nitrous oxide has been used for medical purposes for over 150 years and is easily the most common way to provide sedation in a dental office. In the old days the gas was packaged in ox bladders and delivered by people riding (presumably) penny farthing bicycles to dental offices and hospitals. Now we have a guy named Gord who delivers tanks to us in his van.

Nitrous oxide is inhaled through the nose and is mixed with oxygen to a concentration that is effective for an individual. It is extremely safe and has no lingering effects after administration has stopped. That means driving or working after the sedation is no problem.

What does it feel like? Your mileage may vary, but most people describe a relaxed, happy state of mind while inhaling it. Patients remain awake during administration, so we are able to communicate and adjust as required. Its nick-name "Laughing Gas" may be a bit of an exaggeration. I have yet to see someone have an uncontrolled fit of laughter unless we have 'Mr. Bean' playing on the office TV. Instead we call it "Happy Gas", and no, you can't take it home with you after the appointment.

Nitrous oxide accounts for 90% of the sedation we do at my office, and has helped many of my patients have stress-free appointments. Some people who have more severe anxiety can benefit from a deeper sedation we can provide, which I will discuss next time.

**Susanne Dorder,  
M.A.**

Food Control & Obesity Specialist  
905-601-3268



### Food and Association

The relationship we have with food contributes a great deal to what we associate the food we eat with. This relationship stems beyond our biological need to eat. With time and consistency many of us pair our behaviors to the act of eating. As a result this creates the association between eating and activities. The associations can be conditioned by internal factors that involves our senses; taste, texture, sound and site including our emotions. Also included is our external factors some include social engagements, celebrations such a birthday parties and entertainment like movies or television shows. When our behaviors become conditioned to either the internal or external factors this causes us to react by eating. All routines have a starting point and through time and consistency become automatic. Automatic association with eating can create a sense of security. We the people feel safer when there is consistency in our lives. It allows us to have control over our selves. If over-eating is a challenge for you it can be helpful to reflect on what are you associating the foods you eat with.

To schedule an appointment call 905-601-3268  
Susanne Dorder, M.A.  
Food Control & Obesity Specialist

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### Couples Counselling and Healthy Relationships

What if your greatest relationship problem was not communication but a lack of commitment to maintain love and safety? Here are some tips on how to maintain safety in communication:

- 1. Manage your emotions.** It is important to manage our emotions at work and in public. However, many of us believe that we can let it rip once we get home. This mindset often results in a "no holding back attitude". Using strategies like retaliation, put downs or intimidation would likely get you fired if you used them at work. How can we justify using these same strategies with those we cherish? If honesty and openness are crucial in a relationship, they are not a passport to be hurtful.
- 2. Listening and empathizing.** When listening, paying attention to the content rather than the delivery can be a great challenge. Learn to listen to what the person tells themselves about the problem and the meaning they place on the event. Empathize with their feelings even if you don't agree with their perspective.
- 3. Acknowledge** the role you played in the conflict. Don't throw blame back the other way. Consider what you can do differently to positively impact the situation.
- 4. Ask** respectfully for your partner to hear your perspective and needs about the same situation.

If you and your partner feel that you would benefit from learning new communication skills, contact Manon Dulude at (905) 873-4343 to set up a confidential appointment.

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