

# You may not be able to change what is happening to you – but you can change how you respond to it

Heather was due to have an eye inspection – and she was dreading it. Ever since she could remember she had feared these inspections and when the consultant came near so as to look into her eyes they would automatically close however hard she tried to keep them open. It was always a battle, always a struggle. She would be near to tears just thinking about it. She knew the inspections were for her own good and this reaction seemed so irrational.

Her partner suggested that she make an appointment with me.

Over just two sessions, Heather was able to get a whole new perspective on the upcoming eye inspection. She became aware that as a young child she had been in an eye hospital for two weeks, and experienced all the fears and feelings that a young child in those circumstances might feel. As an adult she had forgotten she had ever had these feelings. She thought she had left the whole experience behind. In fact, these same feelings were coming back to her anytime she experienced something similar. This is why they seemed illogical and so frightening.

Heather had her eye inspection and this is what she wrote. “I am very very glad to report good news on all counts. My experience could not have been more different than those in the past. I couldn’t believe that I could allow this without my eyes closing automatically. My eye consultant could not believe that it all went so well. My attitude to the whole appointment was so very very different.”

For Heather it was her eyes. For other people it might be teeth, or hospitals, or sex or close relationships or a hundred and one things. Not all of these fears will change as quickly as hers did, but it is good to know that in many cases a real difference can be made.