



Jonathan Britto Clinic

“LIVE YOUR BEST LIFE”

For current news on Plastic Surgery, Aesthetics and Lifestyle Medicine

The Psychology Issue

Jonathan discusses the psychological preparation before aesthetic surgery.

Insights into the Psychology of Appearance

Dr Courtney Raspin’s input is integral to clinical decision making and the patient pathway at the Jonathan Britto Clinic.

The Psychology of Skin

Karen, our Principal Aesthetician, explains the relationship between mental health and skin problems.

Mental preparation for Surgery

Top tips by Shyamala, the Lifestyle Medicine Physician.





editor's note

This month the team at **the Jonathan Britto clinic** delve deep into the psychological preparation for aesthetic procedures.

Jonathan Britto, Consultant Plastic Surgeon, explains that the reason for aesthetic procedures is important. Setting expectations is vital to a successful outcome. He shares the detailed multi-disciplinary process undertaken to ensure a happy, satisfied patient, as well as a good technical result.

Clinical Psychologist, **Dr Courtney Raspin**, an expert in the field of appearance-change works with the team to ensure each patient is treated as an individual.

Karen Sargeant, our Principal Aesthetician, talks about the complex relationship between skin and mental health.

Finally, read the top tips to navigate the surgical period by **Dr Shyamala Moganarasundram**, the Lifestyle Medicine Physician.

Dr Shyamala Moganarasundram
Editor & Lifestyle Medicine Physician



Appearance Change Surgery

The psychology

Over the years I have come to realise that the psychology of appearance change surgery is as interesting, and medically important, as the technical aspects. Our motivations for aesthetic, appearance change surgery are hugely relevant to our appreciations of outcome – of the result that makes us happy.

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Reasons for the surgery and aligning expectations are a vital part of the pre-surgical pathway.

~ Jonathan ~



So much of how we look is invested in how we feel. That is human, and not in any way unusual. This has been the basis of the ‘cosmetics industry’ for so many years – back, so the historians say, to ancient Egypt. Excavations along the Tiber tell us that men and women thousands of years ago decorated their faces with pigments and scars – to make themselves more attractive in the eye of the beholder, and to help themselves feel better.

Even before anaesthesia, the Sushruta manuscripts from India, 600BC, detail the efforts of men and women to improve upon their appearance – to avoid stigma, to pass muster in society and to feel better about themselves.

Dial forward a couple of millennia – here we are: the Jonathan Britto Clinic, a team to manage not just the technical, the safe, and the requests our patients make – but to be holistic, to be complete, and to deliver excellence in modern aesthetic practice.





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I thought that having surgery would cure all my problems, but realised with the help of Jonathan and the team, surgery was part of a wider holistic approach.

~ A Grateful Patient ~

Dr Courtney Raspin

We welcome Courtney, who leads the team at Altum Health who are experts in the psychological support of patients undergoing appearance change surgery. Courtney, and Kate, are our two principal psychologists. They have wide experience in the appearance health of the mind.

- How do we decide if we would benefit from a procedure?
- What motivates us for change in appearance?
- Why does that bump, that wrinkle, or that blemish bother us so?

Despite the best of judgement, skill, and performance of Jonathan and the team, adverse events from procedures may sometimes occur. We can reduce the risk, but we cannot remove it. As the patient how can I prepare for a result that does not meet my expectation?

Thankfully, Jonathan and Courtney have developed pathways for our patients to consider these questions. Jonathan brings his experience of the surgery of the face and body to the surgery of the mind.

The Psychology of Appearance

by Mr Jonathan Britto
& Dr Courtney Raspin

Surgery will result in physical change and improved wellbeing in mind and spirit. However, it is unlikely to totally transform your life. If you are looking for surgery to bring about significant changes to your mental health or lifestyle, it is important to consider what other supports or changes might be required alongside surgery to help you build the outcomes you want. Surgery often brings a catalyst for other positive changes that you may wish to bring to your life.

We will ask you to complete validated short questionnaires about your attitude to your face, breast, or body - these help to plan your care, and can help measure your emotional response to the physical outcome of your surgery or procedure.

As you complete the 'Q;s', ask yourself:

- How long have you been thinking about surgery?
- What inspired you to consider changing your appearance through surgery?
- Was pursuing surgery your idea or somebody else's?

Be sure that surgery is something you want, as opposed to pursuing it because somebody else has suggested it.



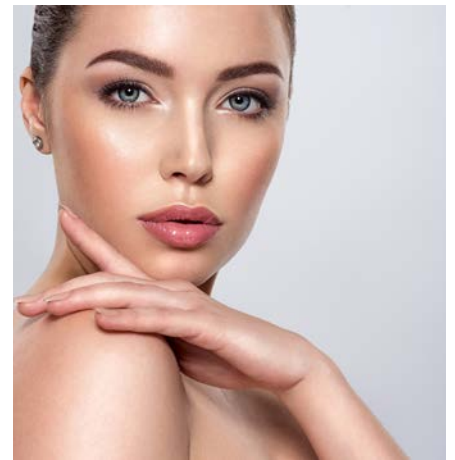
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Change can be wonderful, but it is also stressful.

~ Jonathan ~

While many may feel excited about surgery, others may feel some anxiety or nervousness in the lead up to surgery. We ask our patients to share any concerns with us, so we can provide the right support and remove stress.

In the initial days after surgery, there is commonly a great euphoria and positive mood that relates to 'I've done it! I made the decision, survived, and I'm comfortable!' Then in the latter part of the first and into the second week when the need to rest, recuperate, and deal with bruising and swelling limits the activities of daily living, it is common for people to experience low mood, doubt, and anxiety as the final aesthetic outcome is yet to be revealed.



You may find yourself feeling more irritable, sensitive, or sleep and appetite disrupted. For most people, these are short-lived symptoms and they resolve as swelling subsides. Such challenging emotions and responses can often be explained by the combination of boredom in early recovery, impatience to get back to regular activity, and the impact of anti-pain medication and the aftermath of anaesthesia that are part of the surgery process.

For these reasons we have, in our team pioneered the use of day-case, often twilight, anaesthesia to minimise the adverse impact of recovery. There is nonetheless a need for patience in recovery which inevitably slows down the return to life as usual. The frustrations can be managed very well if anticipated.

Recovery times will vary according to the surgery you have, but it is likely that it will take some time to heal before the final cosmetic outcome will be revealed.

Be prepared for a dip in mood which will then be much easier to manage with minimal disruption and distraction from the end goal.

Mental Preparation

for Surgery

Avoid surgery at times of stress or upheaval, so you have the resilience required to cope and are able to enjoy the outcome.

Engage a trusted person to provide you with both practical support, comfort & company during and after your surgery. Jonathan and his team will provide you with immediate access in the post-operative period.

Take adequate time away from work & play for a proper recovery period. We want to get you back to normal life as soon as possible but occasionally delays can occur.

Consider how you will respond to comments about the aesthetic outcome or your decision to undergo surgery. Think about what you may feel comfortable sharing. You yourself may take time to adjust mentally to the physical changes after surgery.

You may wish to defer attention from your physical changes; you might consider changing your hairstyle, jewellery style or clothing to divert the attention from surgical changes.

“ We operate on features, but are measured in feelings.

~ Jonathan ~



Ask Yourself ...

Do you feel comfortable with our team?

Do you speak honestly and openly with us?

Do you feel listened to?

Do you feel you can accept an opinion from us that you might disagree with?

Is there any information that you are not comfortable to share that is relevant to your care?



Skin & Mental Health

by Karen Sargeant,
Principal Aesthetician

Our skin is a powerful communicator; it's appearance affecting our self-image, identity and how we socialise and interact with others. It's condition, thus, has a significant influence on both our mental and physical health. The impact of our psychological well-being on skin health is also important to understand when treating skin conditions.

At the Jonathan Britto Clinic we take into consideration both aspects of this two-way relationship - how a psychological condition can exacerbate skin problems and how a skin concern can affect one's mental health and well-being.

Psychodermatology is a well-established field in Europe and offered as an outpatient service in some NHS hospitals. This field of medicine recognises the relationship between mental health issues like stress, emotional upset, depression and other psychological problems, and how they exacerbate skin problems.

Psoriasis, cold sores and atopic eczema are influenced by stress mediators, which set off a chain of events leading to skin inflammation and hormonal disruption. This impairs the skin's barrier function leading to dry, sensitised skin, susceptible to acne breakouts. This continued impact on the skin in chronic stress can promote premature ageing. Scars, including self-harm scars and acne scarring can be a constant



reminder of difficult times in one's life and often embed in the psyche of the affected. Pigmentation and birthmarks often cause embarrassment and lead to those afflicted becoming introverted or hiding behind a mask of make-up.

As a skin health specialist, it's important to understand and consider psychological factors that may influence the health of the skin. Strong emotional responses, both positive and negative, can be associated with the condition of our skin.

Our skin consultation subtly considers any psychological impact on the skin or due to the skin. In addition to an aesthetician and a surgeon, our multi-disciplinary team allows access to a lifestyle medicine physician and a clinical psychologist, when the need arises.

At the Jonathan Britto clinic, as always, it is our aim to support our patients' well-being through our holistic approach to their care.

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Allow us to help you love your skin ... and yourself.

~ Karen ~



Prepare Positively for Surgery

by Dr Shyamala Moganassundaram,
The Lifestyle Medicine Physician

Once you have decided to proceed with your aesthetic surgery or skin treatment, we advocate physical and mental preparation for the big event. Preparing oneself mentally reduces any anxiety, fear and pessimism ensuring a positive process. There is ample evidence in many fields of medicine and surgery that such preparation is associated with better physical outcomes.

At the Jonathan Britto Clinic, our peri-operative Prepare & Repair plan focuses on creating a positive outlook in our patients so that:

- their time prior to surgery is calm and reflective,
- their post-operative period is comfortable and pain-free,
- they are confident in the recovery process,
- they attain optimal results and
- they are happy and satisfied following their procedure.

“ Try our Top Tips for the ideal
outcome. ~ Shyamala ~



Our Top Tips

Apart from diet and exercise to enhance the healing process and optimising the stress response, we incorporate:

- A short, focused period of mindfulness to start each day. Do this whilst taking a brisk walk outdoors or sipping one of our signature juices.
- Personalised positive affirmations focusing on the process and the outcome.
- Activities to occupy the mind whilst maintaining calm. This can then be continued if there is any “down-time” following your surgery. Examples are reading humorous books, puzzles, mindful colouring or picking up an old hobby.



This is **NOT** the time to embark on too challenging a task like learning a musical instrument from scratch !

- Picking a happy thought or funny anecdote when faced with anxiety, fear or negativity about the upcoming event and
- A ritual to promote adequate and good quality sleep. Aim for a set bedtime aiming for 7 to 8 hours of sleep. Turn off all “blue light” in time for a wind down with a warm bath, soothing teas and a good non-taxing book.



“ Smile & Believe .. in your choices and the power to heal yourself.

~ Shyamala ~

A vibrant, sunlit photograph of a park. In the foreground, a large, leafy tree with bright green foliage frames the top and right sides of the image. A path or walkway leads from the bottom center towards the background, flanked by more trees and a grassy area. The lighting is bright, creating dappled shadows on the grass.

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We hope you have enjoyed this issue of our newsletter.
If you would like a holistic approach to your aesthetic
care or to book a consultation please contact us.