Background

- Purpose: To report on a case of Jane Doe with Bruxism treated with TCM (Traditional Chinese Medicine) style acupuncture
- Bruxism affects 8 – 31 % of adults
- According to western medicine there is no cure, only symptom relief and/or protection of dental damage possible

Narrative

- Jane Doe, a cis-gendered white female age 33, suffering on and off from bruxism since a traumatic event of a violent nature in her late teens.
- Currently under a lot of stress working/FT school 6 days/week plus from bruxism since a traumatic event of a violent nature in her late teens. Jane’s daily pain scores 0 – 10

Timeline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Treatment</th>
<th>Pain 0/10 Treatment Days</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Treatment 1</td>
<td>8/10 - Both fatigue + constant muscle tightness. After treatment – R side especially 9/10. Tight jaw + neck on palpation. Bruxism started with traumatic event in late teens. Acupuncture points: YINTANG, TW.17-B SI.17-B LI.4-B GB.34-B SP.6-B LR.3-B</td>
<td>Day 1, 8, 15, 22</td>
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<tr>
<td>Treatment 2</td>
<td>8/10 Two days after last treatment. Today 7/10, 4/10 after acu. Noticed breathing easier for 2 days. Homework was to play guitar. Did it and felt better. EX.YINTANG, TW.17-B SI.17-B LI.4-B GB.34-B SP.6-B LR.3-B, CV.4</td>
<td>Day 1, 8, 15, 22</td>
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<tr>
<td>Treatment 3</td>
<td>No breathing changes this week. Noticed touching jaw less. Talked about stress of working/school 6 days/week. Pain 6/10 by end of week + today. 3/10 after treatment. EX.YIN.TANG-TW.17-B SI.17-B LI.4-B GB.34-B SP.6-B LR.3-B, CV.4</td>
<td>Day 2, 9, 16, 23</td>
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<tr>
<td>Treatment 4</td>
<td>Pain 5/10 during week + visit day. 3/10 after acu. Talked again about holding her stress in her jaw + link to previous trauma. Talked about stress of her partners fertility procedures. EX.YIN.TANG-LI.4-B GB.34-B SP.6-B LR.3-B CV.4- ST.6-B ST.7-B</td>
<td>Day 2, 9, 16, 23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Outcomes

FIGURE 1. Jane’s daily pain scores 0 – 10

Pain then recedes to a level lower than initial presentation after the initial treatment bump (7/10)

Conclusions

- TCM style acupuncture with whole person trauma informed care can be not only be an effective way to treat bruxism but can also use the patients symptoms as a tool to achieve a patient reported better overall quality of life in general.

Discussion

- Value of whole person care and the need to at least touch on (within scope of practice) what happened around initial onset of pain
- Included here is homework and discussion centred around helping the patient see how own their own attitudes and behaviours affect their current symptoms
- Limitation of NPRS (Numerical Pain Rating Scale) to patient in expressing her own experiences and value she received from the treatment
- Being able to breath easier, better sleep, feeling more relaxed and calm, the immeasurable value to her of being able to better recognize and express her own emotions, improved overall sense of well-being
- Further research possibilities: comparing whole person trauma informed care to just physical treatment, longer course of treatment, other styles of acupuncture to TCM acupuncture

Perspective

- Pattern of Jane’s pain scores typical of what we see in clinic
- Pain increases slightly from initial presentation after first treatment if patient has not received acupuncture for this in for at least 1 month (8/10 to 9/10 for Jane)
- Pain then recedes to a level lower than initial presentation after the initial treatment bump (7/10)
- Pattern then is for pain to decrease after treatment and then to increase through the week until next treatment (7/10 to 4/10 to 6/10, 6/10 to 3/10 to 5/10, 5/10 to 3/10)
- That Jane’s pain looked like it was leveling out at 3/10 means that is likely the lowest level of we will achieve for her long term

Acknowledgements

I want to thank Jane for her willingness, openness and her time and effort in helping me with this case study