

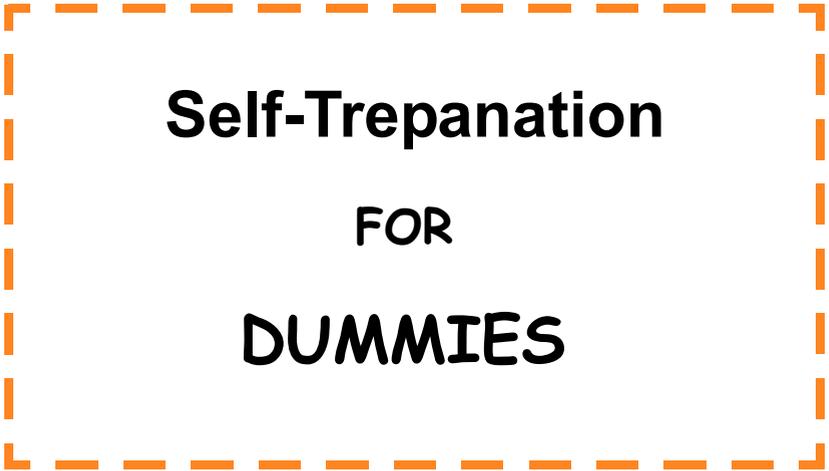
Self-Trepanation

FOR

DUMMIES

by Christopher Horrell





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Introduction

In This Section

- Introducing self-trepanation
- About this book
- Icons used in this book
- Assumptions
- Useful resources

Introducing Self-Trepanation!

You have in your hand one of the few practical resources for the self-trepanation enthusiast. Feels pretty neat doesn't it? Trepanation, as you may already know, is the act of cutting a hole in the human skull, an act that has been around for a very long time, since 5,000 B.C. as a matter of fact. Self-Trepanation, as you may have guessed, is the act of performing this procedure on oneself. But why, you may ask, would someone submit themselves to such a procedure? The reasons are varied. In the past, trepanation was performed on patients suffering from fractured skulls, convulsions, and insanity. More recently, the procedure is performed to relieve inner cerebral pressure. There are other benefits however. By removing a small portion of the skull, internal pressure is reduced, giving the patient a euphoric and calming feeling that lasts with them

throughout their lives. The purpose of this manual is to provide you, the handy do-it-yourselfer, a means of obtaining this euphoric effect on your own with very little cost.

Before you get started learning about this wonderful and enriching practice, I need to introduce you to this book and its conventions.

About This Book

Think of this book as a friend and companion through the whole self-trepanation process, because who really needs a neurosugeon when you can do it yourself, right? This book is not, and I should make this clear, a medical text.

Icons Used in This book



This icon is used to highlight important tips throughout this book.



This icon is particularly important. Keep an eye out for this icon and make sure to read the indicated information, it may save your life.

Assumptions

This first and most obvious assumption I'm making is that you, the reader, do indeed want to drill a hole in your head and reap its great rewards. I'm also assuming that you are aware of all the risks and are prepared to accept them. You can review these risks in the section entitled **A few Risks** on page 7. Next I'm assuming you're fairly competent with tools and have a steady hand because, believe me, you'll need it. Finally, and this is the most important part, I'm assuming your not the kind of person who will sue me if something goes horribly, horribly wrong. If you are, I would appreciate it if you put the book down right now!

Legal Disclaimer

Naturally, I need to include some legal stuff so I won't get sued:

In consideration for the provision of information in this book, I waive any and all claims I may now and in the future have against, and release from all liability and agree not to sue, Christopher William Horrell, for any personal injury, death, property damage or loss sustained by me as a result of my participation in any activities described in this book due to any cause whatsoever, including, without limitation, negligence on the part of Christopher William Horrell.

I am aware trepanation has, in addition to the usual dangers and risks inherent in self-performed surgery, certain additional dangers and risks, some of which include: hematoma (epidural, subdural and/or intracerebral), brain swelling/edema, intracranial infection, cerebral vasospasm, hypoxemia (low blood oxygen), hypercarbia (carbon dioxide accumulation), severe hypocarbia, short term memory loss, long term memory loss, slowed ability to process information, spatial disorientation, organizational problems and impaired judgement, seizures of all types, loss of smell or taste, speech impairments, fatigue, increased need for sleep, balance problems, coma and death.

What is Self-Trepanation?

In This Section

- A brief history of trepanation
- The advantages of trepanation
- The disadvantages of trepanation

A Little Background

As mentioned before, trepanation has been around for a very long time. A trepanned skull found in France was dated at about 5,000 B.C. and about 1,000 trepanned skulls found in Peru and Bolivia date from 500 B.C. to the 16th century. What is particularly interesting about these skulls is the evidence that the patients survived the operation. Holes in the bone are healed by new formations of bone tissue, and the sharp edges of bored or hacked holes become rounded off by callus tissue.

In 1761, the Swedish surgeon Olaf af Acrel described the purpose of trepanation as follows:

“Trepanation of the skull is intended to release what has forced its way out of the blood vessels, or to lift up and remove what, having been forced in, causes meningitis (irritation of the brain membrane) -- or to both of these ends together.”

Today, trepanation is performed to relieve acute pressure on the brain. This pressure is usually caused by internal bleeding after a blow to the head. In earlier times trepanation was used to alleviate an apparent excess of pressure which was believed to cause headache or migraine.

There are at least four different methods of trepanning. One method was to scrape a hole in the skull cap with a piece of flint or a polished mussel-shell (don't worry, you won't be using this method). The second method was to make a circular cut in the bone with flint or obsidian knife, and to deepen the hole until the hard brain membrane was reached. The third method, and the one we will definitely not use, is to use a hammer and chisel to cut four grooves in a cross shape, then lift out the square piece at their center.

The fourth, and most elegant method, was the procedure which gave this operation its name. Using a drill-bore, called *trypanon* in Greek, a wreath of tiny holes was made. These holes were connected using a chisel or knife to make a larger hole. This method is similar to the one I will suggest in this book.

Advantages

What possible benefits could you gain from drilling a hole in your head? Well, good old Olaf had it right when he used the word release to describe this

practice as used by the ancients. The modern view, although not necessarily recognized by doctors or the medical community, is that trepanation will relieve pressure on the brain resulting in relaxation and a higher level of consciousness. Another benefit derives from the satisfaction you gain by performing this procedure on your own. No neurosurgeon or doctor for you my friend, oh no! Finally think of all the money you'll save. Who needs to fly to Mexico anyway, and do you realize how dangerous flying can be? Not many people can say they've performed surgery on themselves and you, my friend, will be one of the lucky few.

Disadvantages

The most obvious disadvantage is the possibility of injury or death. Of course, if this was really an issue you wouldn't be reading this book, would you? Another possible disadvantage is the negative social reaction you may receive. Let's face it, people are not always going to be as open minded as you and I (no pun intended). Let's not forget how cruel children can be. Fear not! I will discuss this in detail and provide some useful tricks and coping mechanisms for dealing with the cruelty and closed-mindedness of others.

A Few Risks

Finally I should make you aware of the risks involved in self-trepanation. Be aware that this

procedure is dangerous and can cause serious injury or death if not done correctly. I should also mention that there is a possible risk of infection that goes along with drilling a hole in your head. These issues can be serious, but not if you follow the directions in this book carefully.

Getting Started

In This Section

- Tools you will need
- Final Warnings and precautions

Tools you will need

Here is a quick list of the tools you'll need:

- An electric drill (preferably cordless)
- 6 mm drill bit (preferably titanium)
- Antibacterial soap
- Bandages
- A clean mirror
- a magic marker
- Local anaesthetic (optional)

Final warnings and precautions

There are several important things you should be aware of before performing this procedure:

- Never, under any circumstances, perform this procedure under the influence of alcohol, prescription medication, or illegal narcotics. You

need a steady hand and a clear mind to get the job done right.

- Never use dirty or unsanitary equipment, especially the drill bit.
- Make sure a phone is handy so you can call an ambulance in the event of any mishaps
- There will be blood! If the sight of blood upsets you (sissy) then perhaps this procedure is not for you.

Preparation

In This Section

- Choosing the hole's location
- Choosing your work area
- Preparing your head
- Preparing the drill bit
- Preparing yourself

Choosing The Right Location For The Hole

First things first, make sure you select a location for your new hole carefully. Ideally, you will want to drill in an area that is most comfortable for you, but this does not mean the hole has to be in the centre of your forehead. If you prefer, choose a spot beneath the hairline. You may prefer this location as the hole will be less noticeable when it heals.

Choosing the Proper Work Area

The best place for this procedure is the bathroom. Bathrooms always have mirrors, which is essential for an operation of this nature, and they tend to have medical supplies too. Bathrooms also tend to have a calming effect, which is a good thing. Most

importantly, bathrooms are easy to clean (no carpet) and there is running water and towels available for an easy cleanup.

Preparing Your Head

Make sure the area you want to drill is clean and sanitary. Some antibacterial soap or rubbing alcohol should do the trick. If you are going for the discreet look (under the hairline), you'll have to shave off a small patch of hair where the hole will be. Again make sure this area is nice and clean, you don't want any hair to get trapped in the drill bit.

Preparing The Drill Bit

To sanitize the drill bit, wash with soap and water (antibacterial soap if you have it). You can also put the bit in boiling water to be extra sure, just don't burn yourself.

Preparing Yourself

Try to relax and think happy thoughts. This is usually a good time to apply any local anesthetic. Some people like to listen to relaxing music to calm their nerves, whatever works best for you.

Drilling the Hole

In This Section

- Getting set up
- Drilling the hole

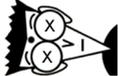
Getting Set Up

Mark the area you are going to drill using a magic marker. Some people prefer an “X”, others prefer a dot (don’t worry, the marker will eventually wash off). Make sure your drill is plugged in or, if it is cordless, make sure it is fully charged. Nothing ruins a good trepanation like a powerless drill and a half-drilled hole.



A few extra drill bits and an extra drill can come in handy, especially if the drill or the drill bit breaks

WARNING!



Once you start to drill there will be a lot of blood. Don’t Panic. panicking can make things worse and fainting with a power drill is dangerous.

Drilling The Hole

Start drilling slowly at first and keep a steady level hand. Use the mirror to make sure you don't make any mistakes. Apply slight pressure to the drill and slowly drill the hole in your skull. Keep applying pressure until you penetrate the skull. You'll know when this happens when the drill gives a little and there is less resistance.



It's important to do this as slowly as possible. Don't apply too much pressure or drill too quickly or else brain damage may occur (that's bad).

Once you no longer encounter resistance **STOP!** Now reverse the drill and pull it away from your head. Finally, apply several bandages and congratulate yourself, you've just performed a successful trepanation!

Cleaning Up

In This Section

- Cleaning yourself
- Cleaning Your equipment and work area
- Relaxing

Cleaning Yourself

Now that you've finished drilling the hole and you've applied enough bandages, you can clean up. Do not clean the hole right away but the areas around the hole. Your new hole may be a bit tender for a while so you may not want to touch it right away. Use the antibacterial soap and some warm water to clean your face, hands, and any other area that may have blood on it.

Cleaning Your Equipment And Work Area

With any luck you will only have to clean the drill bit and drill. Blood can be easily wiped off of most surfaces with cold water. Unfortunately, blood tends to splatter so you may have to clean up the mirror and any other surfaces that are present. If you used any towels, don't forget to wash them later.

Relaxing

Now is an excellent time to relax and enjoy yourself a little, you earned it. You may feel the effects of the trepanation an hour or so after the operation. Don't be alarmed, just sit back and take it all in, you did a lot of work today!

Caring For Your New Hole

In This Section

- Keeping your new hole clean
- Caring for your hole
- Protecting your hole from harm

Keeping Your New Hole Clean

Always wash and care for your new hole and make sure dirt and debris doesn't clog the opening. This will reduce the effects of the hole. You can wash the hole with simple soap and water.



Always wash away from your hole with soap and water using light pressure.

Caring For Your Hole

Don't poke or prod your hole, this will prevent it from healing correctly and may leave an unsightly scar. Since the hole will not be very large, a lot of care isn't necessary. Your hole should heal fairly quickly (in at least two weeks) and will not require much attention once it does.

**TIP**

A band-aid will keep your hole clean and germ-free while it heals and reduce the number of times needed for cleaning.

Protecting Your Hole From Harm

Avoid situations where your hole may come to harm. Don't allow others to poke it or stick objects in it and avoid sports or activities where you may get hit in the head.

Dealing With The Outside World

In This Section

- Dealing with others
- Coping strategies

Dealing With Others

It can be a difficult dealing with the criticism of others. Try to be patient and understanding. People may not be as tolerant as you and may be ignorant of trepanation and its benefits. One way of dealing with such individuals is to calmly explain the procedure and its benefits and hope they understand. Ideally, if you made your hole in a less conspicuous area, nobody will know and you won't have to deal with other people's intolerance. If this is not the case, and your hole is a little obvious, just tell them it's from an accident. Sometimes it's better to avoid difficult situations.

Coping Strategies

If your hole is in an obvious spot you won't be able to hide it. Wearing a hat all the time or a headband is not really practical. After all, your hole needs to breathe. If you feel that you are constantly being criticized by your peers and co-workers, try to ignore it. A good method of coping with this anxiety

is to seek out like-minded individuals. Try to find a local support group of trepanation enthusiasts and if you can't, try starting your own. The important thing to remember is that you are not alone. There are others out there just like you who are understanding and supportive.



If you can't find self-trepanation enthusiasts in your area, try searching the internet for like-minded individuals and create a virtual community!

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Colophon

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**Drilling a hole
in your head
has never
been
easier!**