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## Why the Body Sometimes Holds the Emotions the Mind Could Not Express

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### Abstract

#### Background

Chronic muscle tension and persistent pain are commonly approached through biomedical frameworks; however, increasing attention has been directed toward the relationship between emotional suppression, nervous system dysregulation, and somatic manifestations. Emotionally sensitive individuals, including creatives, entrepreneurs, and high-achieving professionals, may experience prolonged physiological activation associated with unresolved emotional stress.

#### Methods and findings

This conceptual and observational article explores the possible relationship between chronic emotional inhibition and muscular tension from the perspectives of hypnotherapy, subconscious processing, and nervous system regulation. Existing psychological and somatic frameworks were reviewed alongside clinical observations commonly encountered in therapeutic practice. The article discusses how prolonged emotional suppression, particularly frustration, fear of conflict, perfectionism, and hyper-responsibility, may contribute to persistent activation of the autonomic nervous system. Such activation may manifest physically through muscular contraction, shallow breathing patterns, fatigue, and chronic discomfort. Therapeutic approaches including somatic awareness, expressive processing, relaxation practices, and hypnotherapeutic interventions are discussed as supportive methods for reducing chronic tension patterns.

#### Conclusions

The relationship between emotional states and physical symptoms appears to be highly interconnected.

Although chronic pain should always be medically evaluated, emotional suppression and long-term nervous system stress may significantly intensify physical discomfort and muscular tension. Greater integration between psychological, somatic, and therapeutic approaches may contribute to improved understanding and treatment of chronic tension-related conditions.

### Keywords

Chronic muscle tension; Holds the Emotions; Psychology; Neuroscience; Somatic therapy; Integrative medicine.

### Abbreviations

SI — International System of Units

### Introduction

The connection between emotional experience and physical health has increasingly become a subject of interdisciplinary interest across psychology, neuroscience, somatic therapy, and integrative medicine. Chronic muscle tension is often treated primarily as a biomechanical or orthopedic issue; however, many individuals experiencing persistent muscular discomfort also report prolonged psychological stress, emotional suppression, and nervous system hypervigilance.

From a hypnotherapeutic and subconscious perspective, the body and mind function as an interconnected system in continuous communication. Emotional experiences that remain unresolved or chronically inhibited may contribute to physiological patterns of muscular contraction and autonomic nervous system activation. Individuals who repeatedly suppress frustration, anger, exhaustion, or emotional needs may gradually develop chronic tension patterns that become embodied over time.

This phenomenon appears especially prevalent among emotionally perceptive individuals, creatives, entrepreneurs, and high-functioning professionals who maintain external productivity while internally managing persistent emotional stress. Such individuals often develop adaptive survival strategies centered on emotional containment, perfectionism, people-pleasing behaviors, and conflict avoidance.

The purpose of this article is to explore the potential relationship between emotional suppression and chronic muscular tension through a conceptual review informed by therapeutic observation, nervous system regulation theory, and subconscious behavioral patterns. Additionally, this article discusses therapeutic approaches that may support emotional release and physiological relaxation.

### Methods

This article represents a conceptual and observational analysis informed by clinical hypnotherapy perspectives, subconscious behavioral frameworks, somatic regulation principles, and existing psychological theories related to stress and emotional suppression.

The discussion is based on:

- observational patterns commonly reported in hypnotherapy and somatic therapeutic practice;
- literature concerning autonomic nervous system activation and chronic stress responses;

- psychological frameworks related to emotional inhibition, perfectionism, and trauma-related physiological adaptation;
- Therapeutic models involving mind-body integration and somatic awareness.

No human participants, experimental interventions, randomized trials, or quantitative statistical analyses were conducted for this article. The article is intended as an exploratory theoretical discussion rather than an empirical clinical study.

Terminology associated with nervous system regulation, muscular contraction, emotional suppression, and subconscious adaptation was used according to commonly accepted psychological and therapeutic frameworks.

## Results

### Emotional suppression and physiological activation

Clinical and therapeutic observations suggest that individuals who habitually suppress emotional responses may experience prolonged physiological activation. Emotional states such as frustration, anger, fear, and emotional exhaustion may remain unresolved when individuals perceive emotional expression as unsafe or socially unacceptable.

This prolonged inhibition may contribute to persistent autonomic nervous system activation characterized by:

- chronic muscular contraction;
- shallow breathing patterns;
- heightened vigilance;
- fatigue;
- increased sensitivity to stress;
- difficulties achieving physiological relaxation.

The muscular system often appears to maintain protective contraction patterns, particularly within the jaw, shoulders, neck, and lower back regions.

### The role of personality and environmental adaptation

Highly driven individuals frequently demonstrate increased emotional monitoring and environmental scanning behaviors. Many individuals adapt to emotionally demanding environments by prioritizing external functionality while minimizing internal emotional awareness.

Common subconscious adaptation patterns include:

- perfectionism;
- hyper-responsibility;
- emotional inhibition;
- fear of conflict;
- people-pleasing tendencies;

- survival-based overachievement.

Over extended periods, these patterns may contribute to chronic tension and nervous system exhaustion.

### **Somatic manifestation of psychological stress**

Therapeutic observations indicate that chronic tension is not always experienced solely as emotional distress. In many cases, psychological stress gradually becomes somatically expressed through persistent pain, muscular rigidity, headaches, fatigue, and restricted relaxation capacity.

The body may effectively maintain unresolved emotional activation through ongoing physiological contraction patterns.

### **Discussion**

The findings discussed in this article support the broader concept that emotional and physiological systems are deeply interconnected. Chronic muscle tension may, in certain individuals, function not only as a biomechanical issue but also as a manifestation of prolonged nervous system stress and unresolved emotional suppression.

One significant observation involves the role of perceived emotional safety. Individuals who learned that emotional expression could result in rejection, criticism, conflict, or instability may unconsciously develop physiological containment strategies. These strategies may initially function adaptively by preserving relational safety or psychological stability; however, over time, chronic physiological activation may become maladaptive and contribute to physical suffering.

This relationship appears particularly relevant among creatives, entrepreneurs, caregivers, and emotionally perceptive individuals who maintain high levels of cognitive and emotional output under persistent internal pressure. Such individuals frequently report difficulty relaxing even in objectively safe environments, suggesting that nervous system conditioning may continue independently of present external circumstances.

Therapeutic approaches focusing exclusively on muscular relaxation may therefore prove insufficient in some cases if the underlying emotional and subconscious patterns remain unaddressed. Interventions incorporating emotional awareness, somatic processing, breath regulation, hypnotherapy, mindfulness, and subconscious restructuring may provide additional support in reducing chronic activation states.

Several therapeutic practices may assist nervous system regulation, including:

- progressive muscle relaxation;
- somatic awareness exercises;
- mindful breathing;
- expressive writing;
- therapeutic dialogue;
- restorative rest practices;
- subconscious and hypnotherapeutic interventions

This article has several limitations. The discussion is conceptual and observational rather than experimental. No empirical measurements, physiological recordings, or controlled clinical analyses were performed. Future research involving longitudinal studies, neurophysiological assessment, and psychophysiological measurement may further clarify the relationship between emotional suppression and chronic muscular tension.

## Conclusion

Chronic muscular tension may in some individuals represent more than isolated physical dysfunction. Emotional suppression, unresolved frustration, nervous system hypervigilance, and long-term subconscious adaptation patterns may contribute significantly to persistent physiological contraction and discomfort.

Although chronic pain conditions should always receive appropriate medical evaluation, greater recognition of the interaction between emotional processes and physical symptoms may improve integrative therapeutic approaches. Understanding the body as an active participant in emotional processing may provide additional pathways for healing, regulation, and recovery.

Future interdisciplinary research integrating psychology, neuroscience, somatic therapy, and integrative medicine may help further define the mechanisms connecting emotional inhibition and chronic physical tension.

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## Competing interests

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