

Health

20:10:14 **Air ambulance helps save crash woman**



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How hypnotherapy cured my phobia....

AVOIDING certain situations or things to keep the feelings of anxiety and panic away can become second nature if you have a fear or phobia, writes Freya Leng.

And at times it can be irrational, limiting and incredibly frustrating. It is estimated that 10 million people in the UK suffer with a phobia including anything from heights, spiders, water or even needles or the dentist. Battling with a fear of blood is something television presenter and author Steve Miller knows only too well.

Despite his successful career as a hypnotherapist and weight-loss expert hosting documentary reality show *Fat Families*, Steve has struggled with anything to do with blood and needles since his school days.

Just the mention of a possible blood test would send him pale, anxious, and running for the hills.

But he now laughs in the face of blood thanks to Cambridge hypnotherapy anxiety specialist, Dan Regan.

"I asked Dan to treat this phobia because I am aware of his success with other clients and also I trusted him," Steve said. "Blood phobia has affected me for so long that it was becoming a real issue when I watched movies that contained scenes of blood and even the word blood."

After two sessions with the hypnotherapist, who sees clients in Ely, Cambridge and Newmarket, they have turned the issue on its head and rather than feeling anxious, Steve is calm, and even a little happy about it.

Dan, who became a hypnotherapist five years ago after having hypnotherapy himself for anxiety and confidence issues, said phobias of blood, needles and injections were a common thing.

"Fear is useful in certain situations," he said. "But a phobia is like an overwhelming fear that people learn to have. Hypnotherapy helps them learn how to feel calm and more in control."

Hypnosis is a state of deep physical and mental relaxation, during which people allow themselves to become inwardly focused. It works with your unconscious mind and allows you to find new ways of acting and reacting with new beliefs and behaviours.

Mr Regan said people look for help when their phobia stops them from doing things.

"Phobias can stop people in certain situations," he said. "I've had people with a spider phobia who won't travel or won't go into their garden. I've had people who don't go to the dentist for years because they have too much fear. Public speaking is a common one. They could have heart palpitations or become hot and sweaty and panicky."

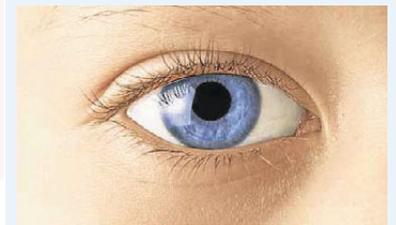
"Often it's when people get to a point where they can't avoid the thing, that's when they should get help."

Mr Miller added: "I don't quite know what he did but as soon as I woke up I started laughing. Dan then made me talk about blood, needles and blood tests and I just laughed. Since the sessions I have been able to watch gory scenes on TV which contain blood, put a needle next to a vein and talk about blood with friends. I now just feel more relaxed and laugh in the face of it. For me to now be able to watch TV shows that contain scenes of blood without passing out is such an amazing breakthrough. I feel as if a weight has been taken off my shoulders."



BLOODY HELL: TV presenter and author Steve Miller turned to fellow hypnotherapist Dan Regan, inset, for help with his phobia of the red stuff

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The new partnership keeping an eye on kids' health **Centrespread**



My dining table was making me ill - could something in your home do the same to you?

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Tweets of the week

- Jacinta Kelly @jacintakelly9 @PJ2009**
A pleasure to visit Addenbrookes - student mentorship is so good - wonderful clinical scholars shaping minds and hearts so generously.
- Marjorie Mallon @Marjorie_Mallon**
Just out of hospital after gallbladder op. Have huge admiration and respect for the dedicated doctors, nurses at Addenbrookes.
- Emily Willdigg @EMILYW_ACT**
Fantastic team at @cambridgebs volunteered their time to revamp a gardens at Addenbrookes! @CUH_NHS @ACTcharity
- Neil Prem @neilprem**
Waiting at #addenbrookes for my annual blood tests. Thanks to their dedicated staff I survived a stroke. You guys are awesome!
- Mary-Jo Gill @MaryJoGill**
Just been to see my brother @addenbrookes.He is in good hands.
- Charlotte Mills @charlottemills8**
Tomorrow I will complete ten years service @ CUH_NHS more than ever an amazing place to be a patient and staff #inspirationalplace #solucky **Muscular Dystrophy @TargetMD**
- Good luck to Joanna Musson who's running today's #TownandGown. She is one of the fantastic specialist neuromuscular team at @CUH_NHS....

