

'SPRING CLEANING SAVED US!'

If you want to revamp your life, then spring's the time to do it. Here, we help three women make the ultimate overhaul – and there's not a mop or duster in sight

"PLEASE STOP ME SMOKING!"

SPRING CLEANER: Rebecca Lockwood

AGE: 32

OCCUPATION: Project manager

SAVED BY: Hypnotherapy sessions with Third Eye, Dubai.

"I know it's bad – I've smoked 20 cigarettes a day for the past 15 years – and if anything was ever going to stop me, then hypnotherapy was a strong contender. I mean, I love a bit of Paul McKenna. Apart from the possibility that I might end up doing some kind of 'chicken dance', I jumped at the opportunity to be helped in such a way. I imagined myself lying on a couch with someone talking at me in sleepy, soothing tones and it all being rather relaxing. But no. As it turns out, it's not quite so simple.

First off, the hypnotherapist at the Third Eye clinic looks nothing like McKenna and is actually a very attractive woman. Second, I couldn't believe that such an oasis of calm could be found just off Sheikh Zayed Road! A brightly coloured and heavenly scented converted apartment was not what I expected, but exactly what I got. Leaving my shoes at the door, my hypnotherapist, Abeer Ajash, guides me to our treatment room for the two-hour session. She says that most people looking to quit a habit need four to six sessions, but that I should start to feel the effects immediately. I'm also shocked when she tells me that only 10 per cent of my addiction is due to the nicotine, with the other 90 per cent all down to my subconscious.

I lie on the couch, close my eyes and Abeer counts down from five to one. I have now entered the first level of 'my subconscious', she tells me (not so deep that I fall asleep though). In my half awake, half asleep state, I'm still aware of where I am and what I'm doing, which I like as I'd feared losing all control over myself! Abeer tells me to imagine walking through a corridor and to a door at the end. I'm then guided to my 'safe room'. I should enter this room if I feel uncomfortable at all throughout the session. I'm then told to go on through to the basement. We're now entering a deeper level of my subconscious and I hear her

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counting from five to one again before tapping me on my forehead (this opens up my subconscious). I'm now in a dark basement and Abeer instructs me to turn the light on. I see a couch in front of me and I'm told to push it down (this is me confronting my emotional ties to cigarettes, apparently) until it's the size of a ball. I then take my ball out into the garden and release it into the ether.

So far, so good, but then things get really strange. Abeer asks me to imagine myself as a young girl. I'm stunned by how easily this image of myself as a seven year old comes to me – I can see her standing in front of me clearly and I begin to speak to her. This part deals with why I began





smoking in the first place, working on the theory that once I've discovered the real reason I began, I won't feel the need to rely on it so much. Lastly, we concentrate on how smoking makes me feel. Abeer spends half an hour telling my subconscious that the next time I light up, it will taste like poison and I'll feel sick.

I awake drowsy and heavy, feeling like I've been hung out to dry in gale force winds. Abeer then teaches me some affirmations to say the next time I feel like a cigarette, such as 'I'm self-reliant and smoke free', and little triggers that I can do. These 'triggers' include things like stroking the side of my palm, which will take away the need. I leave the centre exhausted, but positive."

The verdict?

"Once home, I automatically reach for my pack of cigarettes. I take a long, hard look at them, but don't feel we have the same connection we once had. I throw them in the bin before heading to bed. The next day, I attempt to rekindle my cigarette love, but one puff makes me feel sick and I put it out. Like a true relationship junkie, I attempt this three times before facing up to facts: my cigarette and I have lost that spark."

BREAK A BAD HABIT

Mind, body and energy

practitioner, Abeer Ayash,

reveals her top-10 tips.

● USE EFT (EMOTIONAL IMPROVEMENT TECHNIQUE).

This is tapping or rubbing certain points on the hand or body in order to release emotional imbalances. Also repeat the following affirmations, while taking seven deep breaths: "I am strong", "I can break this habit" and "I believe in myself". The *Healing Power of EFT and Energy Psychology: Tap into Your Body's Energy to Change Your Life for the Better*, by David Forester, Donna Eden, and Gary Craig, is a great book to get if you want to understand EFT better.

● SELF-HYPNOSIS. I always teach my clients how to hypnotise themselves after coming to see me so they can use techniques anytime they feel anxious or are experiencing a craving. It can be done anywhere and involves repeating an affirmation for 10 mins such as "I am strong enough to quit" or "I can beat this addiction." This empowers the mind and restores self-confidence.

● IT TAKES 21 DAYS TO BREAK A HABIT. A person must maintain a discipline of not smoking (or whatever your habit may be) for this length of time so that the mind creates neuro-path ways (wires in your brain) to fortify this reality. I will then provide my client with an audio cd to listen to throughout this time which recites the affirmation "I'm smoke free and self-reliant" and this will become the new programme overriding the old smoking one.

● OVERHAUL YOUR LIFE if you're going to break a habit, it's best to do a whole life overhaul, such as also starting to eat more healthily. Exercise classes are another great option.

● Email abeer@theriwaye.com for more details.

