

I'm reaching new heights

SPRING is a time for new beginnings. As New Years' resolutions become a distant memory it is easy to think 'I'll try again next year'. Whether giving up smoking, losing weight or trying something new, things can be hard to stick to. But what about alternative therapies – can hypnotherapy give a kick in the right direction for almost anything? Reporter Nick Thompson went to find out.

ON MEETING Dunmow hypnotherapist Lee Shuttleworth, it would have been easy to be sceptical.

A fear of heights is something that you would think is so ingrained that only skydiving or a bungee jump could cure it.

"What if that goes wrong as well? Surely that would make the fear even worse," Lee asked.

Hypnotherapy has worked for people. My mum, a smoker for 30 years, gave up completely after just one session.

My first session was a journey of discovery, to find the route of the fear.

There was none of the 'look deep into my eyes' mumbo jumbo, just a comfy seat, quiet surroundings, some breathing exercises and a lot of 'inner' thinking.

"Many of the techniques involved take you through events in your life as if you are in a cinema watching," said Lee. "I ask people to fly in and out of the scenes and ask if they can or want to change things."

An hour in and we are addressing

the route of my problem – it turns out to be an abseiling trip taken at the age of 14. The rope twisted and I ended up spinning around in the air 20ft up. It was something I had not remembered until that point.

Lee had taken me through the entire scene. With my eyes closed and half asleep we changed various aspects of it, such as feelings at the top and bottom of the climbing wall.

It was time to test. Although not cured yet, my fear had diminished; I now had the guts to look over the top of a multi-storey car park in Bishop's Stortford.

Sessions two and three continued in the same vein, but with subtle additions to alter the way the brains sub-consciousness thinks about heights and challenging them.

Session four was where the real breakthrough came.

Lee explains that "sometimes these things can take longer, sometimes it takes less time. It all depends on the individual".

In session four, Lee led me through a 'self hypnosis' technique that involved clenching my fingers to create a feeling of control whenever I



Nick Thompson gets the treatment from Lee Shuttleworth

Picture: MICHAEL BOYTON (MEB_060409_Hypnotherapy)

felt the fear.

I have to say that it has been an incredible success. Since then I have scaled the heights of the London Eye,

something I thought would not be possible and at no point was I scared.

You can contact Lee on 01371 859893 or visit www.dunmow-

hypnosis.co.uk.

DO YOU have any strange or exciting hobbies? E-mail editor@dunmow-broadcast.co.uk