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Terrence Barnardt, aka Terrence the Teacher, is the fashionistas' favourite healer and hypnotist. But could he rise to the challenge of Robert Crampton's long list of problems?

Terrence Barnardt, aka Terrence the Teacher, is making a bit of a name for himself in the fashion world, with models, designers and editors seeking help for anything from anxiety and panic attacks to insomnia — although the precise name for what he does remains a little unclear. Hypnotist? Healer? Helper? Maybe he's a bit of all three. Maybe it doesn't matter. Christian Louboutin, no less, swears by the guy, saying "for me, Terrence represents the ideal teacher". Going to name a shoe after him, so I hear — a tottering high honour indeed, although I have to say that "I'll just slip on my Terrence the Teachers" is a bit of a mouthful.

Even so, good for Terrence. Good for M. Louboutin too. And good also, presumably, for fans of expensive footwear with a signature red sole. Still, I prefer to reserve judgment.

But hold on, what's this? Lord have mercy. No need to delay. The Day of Judgment, Terrence-wise, is upon us. Because here he is, guru to the stars, a-knockin' on my door. I'm honoured to have been granted an audience. In terms of personal therapy — although that is not a word he particularly relishes — this chap is the flavour of the month, charging from £200 for a session. And here he stands, all set to work his magic on his latest troubled, volatile, borderline-bonkers client.

That would be me.

A compact, enviably youthful 43 — no, 44, oh OK, he concedes graciously, 45-year-old South African — and one sporting a defiant blond-streaked quiff that ought not to work but somehow does, Terrence sits at my kitchen table and asks what I hope to get out of the session. Mate, I say, I've got the full set — where do you want to start? Weight, booze, fags, insomnia, rage, anxiety, agoraphobia, aggression, jealousy, depression, low self-esteem matched with overweening arrogance juxtaposed with a splash of paranoia, the whole ensemble accessorised by a flamboyant hatred of people I've never met. What do you fancy? Go on, take your pick.

Terrence swallows, looks down at his pad of paper, gathers his thoughts. "Have you done this sort of thing before?" he asks. I tell him I was first sent to see what was then called a child guidance counsellor in 1971, when I was 7. And again at 10, and again (by now it was an educational psychologist) at 17, and again (by now it was a full-blown shrink) at 21. She told me I wanted to sleep with my mother. I told her I was very fond of my mum but that was the most ridiculous thing I'd ever heard.

After which I backed off for a while. But then, in my late-thirties, I wrote a weekly column for this newspaper about undergoing various forms of mind, body, spirit therapy. Hypnosis, neuro-linguistic programming... Then, at 41, my wife put her foot down and I started on anti-depressants, which I still take, and which frankly aren't working as well as they used to. So, yeah, I've done this sort of thing before.

"Why were you sent to see someone when you were 7?" asks Terrence.

Anti-social, angry, aggressive, all-round generally obnoxious, what teachers would call a total pain in the arse, I tell him.

"So something happened to you when you were 7," says Terrence. "Some initial sensitising event, and it was an anger thing, and before you know it, it got compounded, became a habit, and is now a massive issue in your adult life."

I say I'm not sure it was any one event as such, but yes, for whatever reason, undeniably I lugged certain utterly useless, counter-productive modes of behaviour from childhood into adult life. These behaviours weren't much use way back then and they sure as hell aren't any use now. The weight, the fags, the booze — let's not worry about them. I know what I need to do about them — and in any case, they're symptoms, not causes. This other stuff, however — the anger, the aggression, the paranoia, the low self-esteem — that is altogether more ingrained, not least because it's been part of my life for much longer than has the over-eating, heavy drinking and smoking too much. I'm fed up with it. I want rid. So let's concentrate on that.

Terrence agrees. "It's good to simplify things," he says.

"My main tool," he explains, "is hypnosis. I've seen it change people's lives. In hypnosis, the subconscious — the core you — is more open to suggestion. Our subconscious mind wants the best for us. And if anger has worked for you, if it's served you, your subconscious has learnt that, and it will do whatever it can to sustain the core person it thinks you are. So we need to get the subconscious to make new connections, fire new neurons, realise that a new way of being serves you better." All of which, Terrence adds, may be confusing and hard to accept.

On the contrary, I tell him. None of what you have just said is even a little bit confusing. I accept it absolutely.

"My past is not the prettiest," says Terrence, suddenly changing tack. Really, I say, why so? "My mum was murdered," he says. "I was found on her body. I was two months old." He falters for a moment. So, frankly, do I. "It's cool," he says. I tell him it's anything but cool. "She had 20 stab wounds," he says, "and I survived. So I've decided I must be here for a purpose, which is to help other people."

We share a moment of reflection.

I know I shouldn't pry, but I can't help myself, so I go right ahead and ask this

“ I tell him that I was first sent to see a counsellor in 1971, when I was 7 ”

chap, who I've only just met, who killed his mum. "I'm not ready to share that, Robert." Fair enough. "I grew up in an orphanage," he volunteers.

"Oh really, so where was your dad?" I ask. "That's part of what I don't want to share." Another moment of reflection.

"I hated the surname [Barnardt] on my passport. I walked away from that history. I don't know if they are even alive." He was raised by foster parents. Not awful, I gather, but not ideal. "The people who believed in me, motivated me, encouraged me," he says, "were teachers. That's why I call myself Terrence the Teacher."

The penny drops: the mother's killer was the father. The father went to prison. Hence the orphanage and the foster care.

I start to ask another question, but Terrence intervenes. "If you could, please, for two minutes, be quiet," he implores, "I'd like to get back to you."

He tells me that, in his experience, for fairly obvious reasons, any therapy centred on reliving the pain of infancy is not only not much use, but potentially disastrous. I say, listen, compared with what you experienced, my childhood was pretty damn peachy, but in the normal run of things, it wasn't great. So the last thing I want to do is revisit it. Facing forwards, cracking on, leaving all that s*** where it lies, that's fine by me. "I'm all about taking charge," says Terrence.

Before becoming more interested in the emotional and psychological aspects of behaviour — although I would suspect he would agree with me in saying these matters are all of a piece — Terrence worked as a personal trainer. He recalls a period when, due to a pinched nerve in his shoulder, he couldn't do pull-ups. "So when I tried to do one, I'd say 'I love you' to that muscle." Before long, pull-ups became possible once more. "I set out to confuse my brain, mess up the messages it received." I nod. "That sounds weird, right?" Not at all, I say, and recount how I have had as much success in strengthening my abdominal muscles — on the rare occasions such activity has felt important to me — by focusing on them, lecturing them, talking to them — as I have had by lifting weights or doing endless sit-ups.

"It's the power of suggestion," says Terrence. "Engaging the brain gets amazing results. You have to give your subconscious permission to change."

And so, eventually, after all this preamble, Terrence and I repair to a quiet darkened room in which — having banished the cats, muted my mobile and warned off Barry the decorator who's flitting about doing a bit of painting — I lie on a couch while Terrence does his deeper and deeper you are now very relaxed stuff. It's all quite seductive. On paper, a strong Afrikaans accent such as Terrence's ought to be un-conducive to relaxation. Yet, rather like his quiff, his voice does the trick. I start to feel remarkably chilled, remarkably feely.

I don't mean to sound sceptical. If anything, I'm the opposite of a sceptic. I'm quite positive about these techniques. It's just that I've been the subject of hypnosis several times and each time, it hasn't had



Robert Crampton with Terrence Barnardt

hypnotist cure me in an hour?

TIMES PHOTOGRAPHER, DAVID BEBBER



much of an effect. I've done my best to be compliant. But the truth is, all I've felt is sleepy. A bit spacey, perhaps — maybe even a little suggestible. But mostly, sleepy.

Same again with Terrence, I'm afraid. Yes, I felt comfortable, calm, "waaaaay doooooown", to borrow his phraseology... but I think that was as much to do with lying supine all warm and toasty as it was about being in a trance-like state. I've got it on tape. If Terrence's instructions to be a more positive, happier, in-control, confident person were effective, I have yet, days later, to see the evidence. Which is not to say his methods didn't work, just that it's too soon to say. Not instantly changing a life such as the one I lead cannot be any cause for complaint. Far from it. I can see the guy has lots of potential. Perhaps I need more than one session.

Coming back to reality — I was thrilled to hear Terrence actually use the expression "back in the room" — he said that I should feel refreshed and optimistic and marvellous. I wish I had felt any of those sensations and, to be fair, I did feel mildly buzzy: but mostly I felt tired.

Tired in a nice way, like you feel having expended energy in a healthy, wholesome way — but tired nonetheless. I felt as if the biggest benefit I could have gained from the event would have been to exploit it to nick an extra hour of kip.

I suppose a decent extra hour of kip is what most of us would like, isn't it?

Still, it wasn't time wasted. These treatments, whatever they are, are all about the quality of your relationship with the practitioner. I liked, rated and trusted Terrence. And he seemed to like me. That's what's important. I just wish I could shake the feeling that his problems are a great deal more interesting than my own.

Terrence Barnardt's app The Train Trip — To Sleep is available to download from iTunes for £8.99

Crystals, tarot and healing the celebrities' favourite spiritual gurus



Stephen Russell

Who? Barefoot Doctor (Stephen Russell)
Who does he treat? Madonna, Naomi Campbell and Jade Jagger

What does he do? Meditation, hypnosis and psychotherapy to help clients "channel their life force". He's a master of Taoist martial arts and a doctor of Chinese medicine. He used to run an acupuncture healing practice in London, spent four years living with Native Americans and performs "sonic healing" using music and t'ai chi. He says that psychology, Hinduism, Buddhism, Shamanism, Existentialism and "timeless common sense" also influence his work.

How much does he cost? Online sessions start at £6 (barefootdoctorglobal.com)



Tina Cutler

What does she do? Based in London at the Harrods Urban Retreat and her private practice, Winterbourne says that she is a "professional intuitive" rather than a psychic and describes herself as "not a teacher but a tour guide for your soul". She may well look at her tarot cards and tell you what's in store for you, but she's more like a very sensible best friend. Clients say an hour with her is the equivalent of ten years of psychotherapy. Courses include an eight-week Self Mastery programme and a six-week Strategies for Conscious Living course.

How much does she cost? A one-hour consultation costs £160 (katiewinterbourne.com)



Naomi Campbell, Madonna and Gillian Anderson

Who? Tina Cutler
Who does she treat? Fashion designers, "a princess" and a British supermodel or two

What does she do? In Ibiza, where she is sometimes based, "Tina the healer" hops on and off yachts to treat the beautiful and the super rich. The former party girl says she offers "all-round TLC for your body, mind and soul". She channels "positive energy" into her clients, helping them to let go of negative experiences. At her clinics in Ibiza and West London she takes on everything from stress to poltergeists with psychic healing, visualisations and crystal healing.

How much does she cost? £160 for a two-hour initial adult session, £80 for children, £60 for dogs (tinacutlerholistics.com)

Who? Katie Winterbourne
Who does she treat? Actresses, CEOs and fashion types



Who? Kelvin Heard
Who does he treat? Jemma and Jodie Kidd, Gabby Roslin, Gabby Logan and Heather Mills

What does he do? Heard's speciality is "house balancing" — he "heals" people's homes by turning the negative energy they hold into positive energy. He believes that buildings carry thoughts, anxiety and stress from past inhabitants' energy fields and can in doing so affect the people currently living there.

How much does he cost? A one-hour house healing session is £120 (kelvinheard.com)

Who? Amaryllis Fraser
Who does she treat? Gillian Anderson, Antony Gormley and the property tycoon Anton Bilton

What does she do? A former *Vogue* model living in London, Fraser has established herself as a "sensitive" (psychic medium). After a car crash when she was 19 she says she began to hear the voices of the dead and her speciality is now clearing "negative energy" from family homes.

How much does she cost? £200 for a reading and £500 for space clearing (amaryllis.fraser@gmail.com)
Emily Sargent