

Tell us a little about Andy Thornton:

I'm a qualified Cognitive Behavioural Hypnotherapist. I'm married with two sons and live just outside Beccles. I've had a pretty diverse career spanning some 40 years - and yes that does sound like an extraordinarily long time! Over the years I've worked in a corporate setting, and run my own business. I've spent the last 15 years providing a lot of training, coaching and mentoring to people from a huge variety of backgrounds and in that time trained as a therapist. I've mentored for The Princes Trust and have been a mentor for Warwick University Business School, where I studied for my Masters degree, since 2009. I've also spent time volunteering as a Samaritan, an experience that was as humbling as it was amazing; it could be incredibly tough at times, utterly uplifting at others and I have nothing but respect for all the people who give so much of their time to help others in that way. I found out some time ago that what I really love to do is to work one to one with people, to help them and see them grow and develop, so moving from a corporate career into being a therapist really feels like coming home at last.

Why did you get involved with Cut Out the Stigma?

I got involved because I was invited by Katie to attend the event she organised in late 2018 and I was inspired by her passion, and the idea of making help more accessible to people at a time and place when they really need it. The one thing I could offer was my time so I decided to get more directly involved and we set up the monthly free sessions at CODE. For me, being able to provide some hands on support is really important and this is one way I can do that.



What services do you offer?

My therapy services cover a wide range of issues including all forms of anxiety, sleeping difficulties, changing habits, and dealing with phobias. I've also worked with people dealing with historical trauma, bereavement and severe work related stress. I provide support to a local health organisation as part of their Occupational Health service which means I can be asked to help people dealing with low confidence, poor self-esteem, or dealing with relationship issues that can crop up in work situations.

In addition to the core therapy services, I provide personal coaching and mentoring, life coaching would be the fashionable term for it. This can be particularly useful for anyone who finds themselves at a bit of a crossroads in their life. Sometimes we all need help to see the right way forward, I know I've been lucky enough to benefit from coaching in my life and would recommend it to anyone.

What's most important I think is that, whatever you call it, each and every session revolves around the other person, and that whatever they need the most is what is provided. No two people, and no two sessions, are the same so I work hard to make my therapy truly an integration of everything I know, have experienced and have learned. From this we collaboratively select the most appropriate approaches, tools and techniques that are likely to make the most positive difference.

What is Cognitive Behavioural Hypnotherapy?

Cognitive Behavioural Hypnotherapy is an integration of two forms of therapy, Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) and Hypnotherapy.



Cognitive Behavioural Therapy is an approach to therapy that considers the relationship between our thoughts, feelings, physiology, and behaviour. It asks us to become aware of the thoughts we are having and how these are impacting upon our emotional state and general wellbeing. In essence there are three aims of CBT:

- 1) To bring awareness to our thoughts and their effects
- 2) To enable us to make positive changes by increasing our self-awareness and ability to self-observe
- 3) To increase our awareness of how negative behaviour might be sustaining or even exacerbating our problems

It also introduces a range of tools and techniques that enable people to gain more control over how they think and feel, and to reduce emotional suffering.

Hypnotherapy is a special way of using various naturally-occurring psychological and physiological states. It's a collaborative process in which you allow yourself to follow the guidance of the therapist by using your imagination to evoke positive emotions and rehearse behaviour change. It was recognised as an effective treatment by the British Medical Association (BMA) and American Medical Association (AMA) in the 1950s and, more recently, by the American Psychological Association (for obesity) and NICE guidance (for IBS) used by the NHS.

What should I expect from my consultation?

The initial consultation is half an hour, which for some people is all they will need to feel better and more confident in the way ahead. In any session you can expect a warm and friendly welcome and know that you



will be treated with respect and not judged in any way, whatever the issue you might be dealing with. All sessions are completely confidential and nothing that you say will be discussed with anyone else.

Inevitably a consultation involves exploring issues, and this can sometimes be difficult for people, so there will be questions to think about and answer. You might find that you come away feeling as though you have worked quite hard, but you can be sure that you will have started working hard on the issue or issues that you WANT to deal with, so it's a great positive step to take.

How do I book?

Booking your free consultation is very easy, you can do it by contacting CODE and booking through the salon, or you can contact me directly and book that way, my contact details are shown on the posters and leaflets that are available. A number of people also get in touch through the social media posts on either Facebook or Instagram, so there are plenty of very simple options if you want to book. And if you just feel that a chat would be good and you haven't booked it's always worth just calling in on the day because I'll always try and be flexible and see everyone who turns up.

Am I obligated to book an appointment?

Absolutely not. There's no obligation at all and you can come along for your initial chat without any concerns, the session is all about you and what you need, not a sales pitch, and many people get a huge amount of benefit simply from that first 30 minute conversation.

Is it open to everybody?



These consultations are open to anyone over the age of 16, I don't typically work with younger people because that's not my area of expertise.

The initial consultation provides an opportunity to identify if there is a need for more specific support that falls outside of my skills and experience, in which case I might be able to signpost you to more appropriate support, so I would say if you think a chat might be helpful then just book in.

How quickly can I expect to see results?

Well that very much depends on what the issue is that you are dealing with but most people will see some benefit immediately and may not need anything other than the initial chat.

For people who do go on to book further sessions then often one or two are all that is needed. Of course, with more deep seated, or complex issues it can take a number of sessions over a period of time to fully resolve.

