

Local Cramahe hypnotist offers relief

CULBOURNE CHRONICLE

By BOB OWEN DEC 14/06
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She can't solve all your problems, but there are some Cramahe hypnotist Michelle Higginson can relieve.

She's had success helping clients with weight loss and putting an end to addictions. She's even had success reducing hot flashes. But, she admits serious psychological problems are beyond her purview.

A longtime worker in the health and caregiving industry, Michelle decided it was time for a change. The former resident of Cobourg has experienced successful weight loss and the end of a phobia of bugs through sessions with Dr. Georgina Cannon at the Ontario Hypnosis Centre in Toronto. The loss of the phobia has been particularly helpful in the country home she shares with husband Todd.

She admits she was leery when she went for her first session about a year ago.

But, since she treatment, her life has never been better. She has never felt as good about herself and what she is able to do, she says, and her cholesterol count is lower, as is her blood pressure.

The hypnosis process is simple, not at all like the old movies where clients were subdued by pendulums.

For Michelle, ethics are of the utmost priority.

People have to be willing to be hypnotized, she says; they need to be informed at every step and in control of the decision-making, in charge of where they want to go.

The first myth she dispels is that she will have control of the client. That never happens, she says, and the client does remember what transpires.

As for side effects, she admits there are some - all good.

But, success won't be instantaneous, she explains. It takes time to lose weight.

Hypnosis helps bring healthy lifestyle changes; when these are enacted, change happens, she says.

The first visit is a rapport-building session. Michelle admits she's not qualified to deal with multiple personalities, epilepsy, unstable heart conditions or schizophrenia.

In her first 90 minutes, Michelle determines what the client wants. If it's weight issue, she finds out how much the person wants to lose and how (s)he wants to look.

The hypnotist uses clues to determine the client's primary receptive sense. She



PHOTO BY BOB OWEN

Hypnotist Michelle Higginson is at home in her office in Dundonald.

can't assume that what works for one person will work for another.

The process can be complicated if the client doesn't have a clear picture of the goal. Sometimes, the perceived problem is a symptom of something else; stress and boredom may be the result of underlying problems.

Change can come quickly and may start even after the first session, a result of allowing the client to allow the subconscious to come to the forefront and make positive suggestions.

When the conscious mind is resting the person can go to a safe place, Michelle says. Once that place is established, the person can go to it any time.

In the end, it is all about making healthy life-changing decisions that you want to make, says Michelle. It's about reaching your goal.

"Our limitations are in our mind. It's about overcoming them," she says.

Some fears and phobias can be eliminated in one session. Smoking addiction and weight loss depend on various factors and generally take at least three sessions.

She believes enough in the benefits to give up her regular job and do this fulltime out of her Dundonald home. She's been at it five months now and her clientele is

growing steadily.

In January, she will be joining the staff of the Ganaraska Chiropractic and Healing Arts Clinic in Port Hope, working part time.

One day she hopes to branch out and help companies with staff relaxation clinics and stress management.

She understands that to be successful, she must be non-judgmental. Gone are the

days when she was circumspect of psychiatrists and social workers. Michelle recognizes we all have pasts and experiences that affect who we are. What matters is whether we want to make changes to improve our lives.

Michelle Higginson is a registered member of the National Guild of Hypnotherapists. She can be reached at 905-344-8355.

The Bees Knees - knitting for tomorrow

By BOB OWEN
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Call it trendy, call it leading edge, call it anything you like, knitting with Carolyn McAlpine at The Bees Knees in Warkworth is fun.

The engaging entrepreneur launched her new enterprise down the lane at 11 Main St. in September. Her fibre and needle arts boutique refuses to be caught in the cliché of the dusty knitting store, managed by someone's granny.

Carolyn carries exclusive lines of yarn for her growing list of clients who range in age from eight to well into their nineties. She also sells wooden needles, novelty tape measures and gadgets for knitters.

But it's the magic of Carolyn that makes the place vibrant. She jokes that she's on a high fibre diet. The reality is that she combines a warm welcome with a gift for marketing, creating a place for the experienced and the novice.

The cubbyhole at the back of 11 Main has seats where customers relax with a cup of tea and do their knitting. The door is always open and it's not always knitters who show up for a chat.

Carolyn promotes knitting through her numerous workshops, each with a catchy name.

Currently she's running Christmas Quickies - one evening workshops.

Jam Session will be a brainstorming session to "jazz up your knits".

S.O.S. - save our stitches - a class to fix those disasters. At adorknit classes knitters will embellish their work.

Over the Christmas break she will be running classes for teens and pre-teens. Beyond the Knit Stitch is designed to meet the needs of the intermediate level knitter. In January she will run classes for men only.



PHOTO BY GARY MULCAHEY

Carolyn McAlpine

vibrant dyes, creating one-of-a-kind colouring that can't be reproduced. It makes each knitting project unique.

Some of her yarns are brought imported and Carolyn attempts to use fair trade and Canadian products as much as possible. Some of her yarn is hand spun and dyed in Uruguay; her novelty tape measures come from an economic development area in Viet Nam.

Some of us don't knit but love to wear knitted products.

Carolyn has a solution for that. She has a hive of professional knitters who can knit that perfect item. And sometimes she has special things in her shop. Right now she has cozy mitts knitted from the hair of

Samoyed dogs and Shetland sheep. For the weeks leading up to Christmas she has a mailbox in the store for knitters to send their wishes to Santa. She's promising the letters will get delivered to the right place in time for Santa to do his work. Innovative and inspiring, Carolyn McAlpine brings knitting into the 21st century for knitters of all ages. She is open daily at 11 a.m. and can be reached at 705 924 9377.

Some classes run one evening, others run once a week for four-to-five weeks. It's zany, and it's fun and it's a new age approach to an ancient art. Carolyn says there is a whole new generation of designers out there today creating great patterns. Her clients are taking advantage of them and some of the hand-dyed yarns she is producing. She starts with natural yarn and