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CUMBRIA WOMAN LOSES WEIGHT WITH NEW 'HYPNO BAND'

Last updated at 09:43, Wednesday, 26 May 2010

Moments ago she was wheeled down a hospital corridor. Now Belinda Darrington is in the operating theatre, the anaesthetic taking effect as she prepares for the gastric band surgery which she hopes will help her lose some of her excess weight.



Belinda Darrington



Six weeks later, the operation seems to have been a success. Belinda has lost a stone and is confident that more will follow.

Just one thing though: there was no hospital corridor, no operating theatre, and no operation.

Belinda is among the first people in Cumbria to use the Hypno-Band system. A weight-loss programme new to the county, it offers the benefits of gastric band surgery without the risks.

A gastric band is a last resort for people who are morbidly obese. The band is fitted around the upper part of the stomach, controlling the amount that is eaten.

The procedure usually costs about £7,000 if done privately.

Virtual gastric band surgery is advertised as a pain-free, risk-free, cheaper alternative, with Belinda's treatment costing £300.

Based on hypnosis, the only part of the body affected is the brain.

The patient is conditioned to believe that a gastric band has been fitted. They know it hasn't really happened, but does their subconscious?

Monday April 12.

Belinda arrives at the home of hypnotherapist Colin Mills. The 'hospital' is Colin's semi-detached house in Anthorn, 15 miles west of Carlisle.

Belinda, 45, is an artist from Silloth who specialises in animal portraits. She already knows Colin through his reiki treatments.

Belinda was keen to lose weight anyway but she has an extra incentive – her wedding on June 4.

Having seen Colin for two preparatory sessions, today is Belinda's 'surgery'.

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She sits in the living room with Colin and his assistant Brigitte, both of whom are wearing light-blue hospital uniforms and fob watches.

"It's uncomfortable, being larger," says Belinda. "I struggle with exercise. Not being so heavy will help my joints and I should have more energy."

"I've struggled with my weight for years. I've been in denial. I still feel I'm skinny because it's crept up so slowly. It's taken me 15 years to put on nearly six stone."

"I'm 5ft 10in and I'd like to get to 11 stone. I've got about four-and-a-half stone to go."

"I've tried eating less. I lost about a stone last year because I wasn't well but I put it back on. I comfort eat. Mainly chocolate and cheese."

"I've bought my wedding dress smaller than I am now to give me an incentive to fit into it. I obviously want to look nice on the big day."

Belinda has tried several diets although she has not considered real gastric band surgery.

"I believe in hypnosis. It's just a matter of reprogramming your brain. There's no reason why it shouldn't work."

"Like all surgeries, there's no guarantee," says Colin. "But we have conditioned Belinda's subconscious that it will work. In about 93 per cent of cases, it works."

"We've spent some time addressing the issues that led her to put on the weight. The key is getting Belinda to control her eating habits. She's lost four pounds already, cutting out fatty foods."

"She will stay with us a little bit after the surgery and come back in a few weeks. We'll keep in touch with her for as long as she wants to see that she's not still over eating, or not eating at all."

He looks at his patient.

"We haven't got a magic wand. You are the key."

It's time for the 'operation'. "Belinda hasn't been eating for at least 12 hours," says Brigitte, in the measured tone one might associate with a medical professional.

Belinda takes off her earrings, puts on her slippers, and is led through to the sitting room.

The light is subdued and the decor is dark. Belinda is led to the bed. As she climbs in, she says "I'm going to start giggling now!"

She lies down. Brigitte sits on a chair to her left with Colin at the other side.

Brigitte holds Belinda's hand and fits her with headphones. These carry the sound of hospital noises, such as trolleys going through doors and monitors beeping.

They also carry Colin's voice. His equipment mixes mono and stereo to produce a 'voice in the head' effect.

Colin begins reading from notes. "I want you to close your eyes, Belinda. Take two or three deep breaths..."

For the next 25 minutes his voice carries Belinda into a state of hypnosis where her mind becomes open to suggestion.

"You look around the room and notice the equipment... a man in a green gown enters the room - you recognise the anaesthetist... he gives you an injection and you feel drowsy... you feel no pain at all, just a lovely, relaxed, calm feeling... the surgeon enters the room... he explains that with a gastric band fitted you will find it difficult to eat too much... you will eat less and often."

"You will not need to snack as you will feel full until the next small meal... he informs you that you may feel a slight tightness, or you may not be aware of the band at all. This is perfectly normal..."

"The surgeon is ready to begin the gastric band surgery... there is no discomfort... the gastric band is inserted through one of the incisions in your tummy. The surgeon tightens the band slightly, forming a small pouch at the top of your stomach. Happy that everything is satisfactory, he locks the band into place..."

Belinda lies in silence, eyelids flickering.

"The surgeon removes the instruments one by one and the operation is nearly over... the nurse dresses the small incisions... you are taken to the recovery room..."

Colin turns off the hospital sound effects and tells Belinda to relax.

"Your operation has been a great success... as the anaesthetic wears off you may feel a slight discomfort. But you know this will ease with time."

With Belinda still in a state of hypnosis, Colin tells her that she will eat smaller portions than she is used to. She will feel full quickly and won't need to eat any more. She will eat more slowly, chewing every mouthful before swallowing. Eating just enough to stay healthy and fit. Recognising the signals telling her that she is full.

"On the way home you know you feel different. A tightness in your tummy. But this tightness is not painful. In fact it is reassuring. It reminds you that you have had your gastric band fitted."

He counts from one to five: "You will come awake and feel

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refreshed."

Belinda's eyes open and she slowly sits up.

"You might feel a bit of discomfort for the next few hours because of the gastric band," says Colin.

"Be careful when you sit down. It's going to be tender there," advises Brigitte.

They slowly lead her back to the living room.

"I feel relaxed and sleepy," says Belinda, who certainly sounds relaxed and sleepy. "I think having had surgery before definitely helped. I could visualise it."

Brigitte places a 'post-op' meal of soup and bread on the table in front of Belinda.

Belinda stares at it. "This is a big meal! There's a lot of it," which seems like an encouraging reaction. "You don't have to eat it all," says Brigitte. "If you feel full, leave it. There's nothing wrong with leaving food."

"We weren't allowed to leave food when I was growing up. You had to clear your plate."

Six weeks later Belinda has lost a stone – and can now fit into her wedding dress.

She had been hoping to lose two stone but is happy enough with her progress.

"I think it's probably healthier for the weight loss to be gradual. When I've lost weight more quickly before, it hasn't stayed off."

Going back to the day last month when she was told she was having surgery – did she ever think it was really happening?

"I don't think you really do believe it. You're not going to hospital, you're going to someone's house. So you know it's not real. But at some level you're feeling you've had something done. Which I suppose you have. You feel something's changed.

"It's quite strange. My rational brain tried to argue with it and say 'You haven't had anything done – that's ridiculous!'

"But for the first week or so I was eating a lot less. And my tummy was a little bit sore. Then the portions started to creep up again.

"I thought I'd talked myself out of it. But I have still been losing weight so I must have tricked my rational brain into thinking I'm eating the same as I was while I'm actually eating less. I've even bought smaller plates.

"You don't feel you're on a diet although I am trying to eat more healthily. I'm not eating such fatty foods and I'm not eating chocolate in the week. I think it works in more than one way. Once you start to eat less, I suppose your stomach shrinks anyway.

"I don't think I'll change. That's how I eat now."

To contact Colin Mills call 016973 52153 or email colin@angelsrest4all.co.uk

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Have your say

This is another illustration of the power of the mind in putting on weight, the difference between eating when you are physically hungry and when you feel emotional seems to be the key. There's some evidence in this article here about the effects of hypnotherapy on weight loss- there is some evidence that it does work.

<http://www.articlesbase.com/weight-loss-articles/when-hypnotherapy-cds-can-help-you-lose-weight-and-when-they-cant-2486298.html>

Posted by Cordelia@GWS on 2 June 2010 at 10:29

This brings back memories. I had major problems with losing weight. I went to my doctor and to be honest he was not that interested so after listening to a programme on the BBC, I heard a Hypnotherapy expert called Claire Hegarty talking about weight loss hypnosis and gastric band hypnosis.

I became very interested and contacted her. I was 21 stone at the time and very low in confidence. After speaking to her for some time, I decided i wanted to try it and became her client. I am now proud to say i can show off my body and feel confident.

If you are not having any luck with your doctor and no luck with diets then do try hypnosis for weight loss as it does work

Posted by diane on 25 May 2010 at 15:31

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