

FIT



# All ● in the mind

Want to give up smoking? There is a little bit of inspiration out there on March 9, and Angel marks the occasion by looking at one alternative method said to help you *achieve your goal*.

**M**ention the term Neuro-Linguistic Programming, and what immediately comes into your mind? "It's a long-winded term, but we are stuck with it," Sarah Warder says. Barnsbury resident Sarah has ventured to the Angel office to talk about the practice (commonly known as NLP) in anticipation of No Smoking Day on March 9. The question is what has NLP got to do with giving up smoking?

"It was created in the 70s by linguistics professor John Grinder and psychology & mathematics student Richard Bandler," Sarah explains about the origins of NLP. "They wondered why some people continue to excel in their field. Studying the well-known psychotherapist Virginia Satir, the hypnotherapist Milton Erickson, the anthropologist Gregory Bateson, and others they considered "charismatic superstars" in their fields, Grinder and Bandler identified psychological, linguistic and behavioural characteristics that they said contributed to the greatness of these individuals. "It is basically looking at how we are programmed," clarifies Sarah, "delving into our subconscious."

Sarah first came across NLP back in 1998, at a time when she was a PA, and through working with a life coach who specialised in the practice, she discovered that she had been holding herself back. Sarah went to the Quest Institute to learn about becoming a NLP practitioner, where she says she "started learning even more about myself". She eventually opened her Harley Street practice in 2003, so have people been responding to NLP? "Oh yes," she beams. "People are now more aware of it, but it does come down to getting the message across and taking some of the mystique away from it. I do use some hypnosis, for example, and that's a scary word to some. However, you are never out of control."

Conversation turns to No Smoking Day, so Sarah takes a sip of her water before explaining how she would help a client give up cigarettes. "NLP is all about exploring the subconscious beliefs of the client. So, it's critical to go back to when the client first had a connection to smoking.

"Let's say you are five-years-old, in the kitchen and your mother is smoking. Your subconscious is taking everything on board. Everything feels nice and cosy. The subconscious takes on board that it is a comfortable, safe environment, and the fact that the mother happens to be smoking at the time is linked to this feeling. That's the connection - the subconscious then believes that smoking is a good thing, it's a good place to be."

Sarah will then guide the client into "reprogramming" this belief.

"We're not changing the memory, after all, what has happened, has happened, we are changing how the child perceived what was really going on in that scene. It comes down to the conscious of the adult and subconscious of the child," she explains, "and I guide the client to their own resolution." Sarah says she can help a smoker to give up in just one session, but she does add: "They have to really want to give up. If you do, NLP will work."

Angel admits surprise at how easy it seems, which garners an enthusiastic nod from Sarah. "Smokers think that it must be difficult to give up, which is a shame because it really can be very easy!" Past No Smoking Days have touched upon NLP as a means of quitting, but Angel proffers that no great thing has been made out of it. "Yes," Sarah agrees. "Maybe they are still nervous about the technique. I hope that more awareness will dispel some of the myths and prove how powerful our minds really are in controlling our behaviours and how easy it can be to literally change your mind!"

Like any alternative remedy, only the individual can find out if it works for them. From Sarah's perspective, she just hopes that the word about NLP can get out. "People need to understand a bit more about it. It's not magic, but the results can be. The client has the solution in themselves." The term Neuro-Linguistic Programming is certainly something that needs thinking about. **You can contact Sarah Warder's Harley Street NLP Practice on 020 7700 2948.**

## NO SMOKING DAY 2005

The annual event falls on March 9 this year, and north London will see several events taking place to encourage you to give up smoking. If it is something you have thought about, you are not alone - 72 per cent of smokers would like to stop.

Current smoking figures make for interesting reading. About 12 million adults in the UK smoke cigarettes - 27 per cent of men and 25 per cent of women. In 1974, 51 per cent of men and 41 per cent of women smoked cigarettes - nearly half of the adult population. Now just over one-quarter smoke, but the decline in recent years has been heavily concentrated in older age groups. This means almost as many young people are taking up smoking, but more established smokers are quitting.

It all points to the need for No Smoking Day. Both City and Hackney, and Islington Primary Care Trusts will be holding special drop-in sessions on March 9. **To find out more about the help out there, please visit [www.nosmokingday.org.uk](http://www.nosmokingday.org.uk) Please note that the Primary Care Trust doesn't endorse NLP in any way.**