

Analyse me

Tracy Northampton
speaks for herself

What do you do for self-care/to relax?

I am a qualified hatha and kundalini yoga teacher, so yoga is a true passion of mine, and I also have a daily meditation practice. I also love running - it keeps my mind clear and focused. I've become a huge fan of open-water swimming and we are blessed to have a lake on Castle Ashby estate.

What motivated you to become a therapist?

In my early 20s, during the 1980s, I was working for British Airways as a stewardess on long-haul flights, and the company had a crisis counselling service for the crew. Getting involved in this was my first step into the field. I didn't really know what counselling or therapy entailed, but I knew I wanted to help my fellow colleagues and was struggling with my own mood.

Do you have a specialist field of practice?

Eating disorders, body image and body dysmorphic disorder- (BDD) related issues. I suffered from an eating disorder from my late teenage years to my early 20s. Going into my own therapy at the age of 27 helped me navigate through this challenging period in my life. Following my core psychotherapy training at the Metanoia Institute, I went on to study trauma training with Pia Melody at The Meadows in Arizona. This really helped shape my practice, particularly in the area of trauma and relationships.

Where do you see yourself in five years' time?

Currently, alongside my London-based psychotherapy practice, I am developing a wellness centre with my husband at The Falcon Hotel on the Castle Ashby estate in Northampton. I am truly passionate about offering a space where anyone, including clinicians and those in the field of mental

health, can come for rest and renewal - taking time out in nature, with open-water swimming and yoga.

How has being a therapist changed you?

It has helped me to be more conscious in the world, particularly in terms of taking responsibility for my own actions. It has also helped me to assess a situation from the other person's perspective and be more tolerant and compassionate.

What do you find challenging about being a therapist?

Working with eating disorders can be very challenging. Resistance to change in eating disorders is common, and being patient with individuals who see themselves in such a punitive way can be hard.

And rewarding? My 30 years as a therapist have made me grateful for all the people who have allowed me into their world. To see people change against the odds gives me huge pleasure.

What is the most recent CPD you've undertaken? Was it worthwhile?

'Shame and the Body: body image, eating disorders and embodiment - learning to love our bodies at any age' - an online training with Sheila Rubin from the Center for Healing Shame in California. It was very worthwhile and gave me the tools to help clients with body shame.

What book/blog/podcast do you recommend most often?

For many clients with eating disorders and body-related issues, I recommend *Fat is a Feminist Issue* by Susie Orbach, which inspired me on my own journey. I also recommend *Facing Love Addiction* and *Facing Co-Dependency* by Pia Melody, for those facing relationship challenges.

What is your favourite piece of music and why?

I love anything by Jai Uttal, an extraordinary Kirtan musician. The track 'Guru Brahma' from the album *Shiva Station* really opens my heart.

What is the meaning of life? To evolve through experience in the service of others.

What would people be surprised to find out about you?

In my mid-20s, I took a sabbatical from British Airways to work for an independent record company, and managed rap bands such as Run DMC.

Who is your counselling/psychotherapy hero(ine)?

Back to Susie O again! She has done great things in the field of eating disorders and women's issues. I appreciate her psychoanalytic thinking and have attended many of her invaluable trainings over the years. My own therapist, Dr Roger Kennedy, also has to be a hero. ■



About Tracy

Now: BACP and UKCP accredited psychotherapist working in person in London and online, offering short- and long-term therapy, as well as supervision and coaching to therapists and trainees.

Once was: Long-haul cabin crew for British Airways.

First paid job: At age 15, a Saturday job working in Woolworths, Plymouth, behind the cosmetics and records counters.



Who would you like to answer the questionnaire? Email your suggestions to therapytoday@thinkpublishing.co.uk