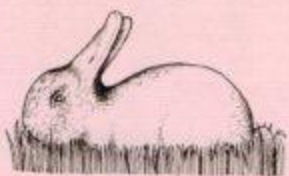


HOW MANY LEGS DOES
THE ELEPHANT HAVE ?



DUCK OR RABBIT ?



RABBIT OR DUCK?

The good shrinks guide

Whatever your problem, there is a therapist who can help you untangle it. And they might even use weird pictures of animals in the process. By Francesca White

Best for THE GOOD-TIME GIRL Who Noam Sagi

In another life – the one he lived before he became a healer and psychotherapist, and set up his therapy rooms, 58 South Molton Street – Sagi used to be very senior at Microsoft. Which accounts for his nature: his methodical means of analysing a problem and the careful, considered way in which he helps rebuild you. He's excellent for people who have lost their footing in life and for those struggling with low self-esteem. But where he excels is in taking those who feel that they are, quite literally, drowning, who feel empty: people who are using anything to kill the pain – from drugs and alcohol to destructive relationships. Sagi describes it as feeling like 'all your branches are swaying and you have no roots'. And his method of dealing with it is rigorous. He'll force you to confront things directly – his theory is that you need to go through the pain, to process it and to grieve for it, in order to move past it. Which means discussing every single incident, every obstacle, every negative experience and then telling him how each one makes you feel, even if at first you can't put it

into words. Sometimes you'll sit in sessions and not speak. At other times, you'll be in an angry, combative mood. Either way, he hugs you at the end, which helps. He'll tell you when he thinks that you're ready to finish the therapy – and when he sends you away, you leave feeling strong, resilient and rooted. From £135 for 60 minutes (noamsagi.co.uk; 020 7706 1997).

Best for THE CREATIVE TYPE Who Simon Berkowitz

Berkowitz is, amongst other things, a life coach, an acupuncturist and a remarkable craniosacral therapist. But what fascinates him most are dreams – specifically, yours. He refers to what he does simply as 'dreamwork'. In a nutshell, it is about interpreting your dreams as metaphors for issues that you're facing in your day-to-day life – and using those dreams as a way to spur creativity, enhance productivity and let go of negative thoughts. So you'll sit there and he'll scribble notes as you talk about the everyday, about the issues that you're up against – whether it's solving a work-related dilemma or coming to

terms with a broken relationship. And then he'll ask you if there is a dream you've been dwelling on, one that has lodged itself firmly in your psyche. It could be one from your childhood; it could be the one that you have over and over again. He'll listen intently when you tell him about it. Then he'll get you to picture that dream again and talk him through it while he fires questions at you. How do you feel about what is happening? What does that symbolise? Do you feel nervous? Scared? Excited? Is it dark or light, noisy or quiet? It sounds weird, but drawing parallels between your everyday life and your dreams opens up a whole new way of solving problems. Berkowitz describes the process as 'clearing the stream', which enables fresh thoughts to spring up. And the sensation – when you piece things together, when you see a light at the end of the tunnel, when an idea full of creativity and spark and limitless potential strikes you – is immensely rewarding. But Berkowitz doesn't take credit for any of it, brilliant and spookily accurate though his form of therapy might be. He just smiles. And you do the same, because you have found a solution. From £250 for 60 minutes (simonberkowitz.com; 07931 523749).

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BEAUTY

<| He shows you how to use past experiences to solve future issues, and he gives you the strength to face up to the things that are bringing you down. The most important thing, he maintains, is to think of your feelings as a 'graph': you might have highs and you might have lows, but instead of aiming for the absolute, highest perfection, you should be striving to feel 'just good enough' – every day. When you're going through a traumatic time, Callan provides you with a safe place to feel angry, frustrated, sad and confused. When you've battled the worst of it, when he feels that you're ready to stand on your feet again, he sends you away with the knowledge that you can face problems head-on, rather than crumble if things take a turn for the worse – and with the promise that his door is always open if they do. From £40 for 60 minutes (tngoodtotalc.org.uk; 020 7795 0315).

Best for THE OVERTHINKER Who Kirsten Dahlerup

Phobias, Dahlerup says, can be turned around in a single session. By 'phobias', she means anything from fear of flying to that of motorways or mice. A hypnotherapist with the softest sing-song voice, she says it's all about breaking subconscious habits. Which means reprogramming how your brain responds to scenarios that might cause you to panic, using a combination of hypnotherapy and neurolinguistic programming. Here's how it works: imagine that your mind plays the same record over and over again, carving out deeply etched neurological pathways. What Dahlerup has you do is alter that record and sort of 'scratch' it, so that the brain cannot make the same negative associations. Once

reprogrammed, she says, the brain does not resort to its original state. Which is all good and well if the phobia is a straightforward one. But if it is a symptom of a deeper underlying issue, she'll work to neutralise the root cause too. It means a bit of exploring your past and working to admit to problems that might still be weighing you down. A lot of it stems from the simple question 'Am I good enough?' So she works with you to build your confidence, underlining the importance of expressing disappointment and learning to forgive people in your past. 'It cuts an emotional umbilical cord,' she says, 'and stops you from resorting to childlike reactions.' Quick to point out that 'you are not your thoughts', she replaces fear with courage and empowerment. From £300 for 120 minutes (hypnotherapy-nlp.co.uk; 07726 465224).

Best for THE FEMALE DIVORCEE Who Andrew Wallas

Wallas calls himself 'The Modern Day Wizard'. Which, if you didn't know all that much about him, might sound a little silly. So for now, let's call him Wallas. Because Wallas – a brilliant conversationalist and as sharp as a tack – is a psychotherapist. And he's deeply, intuitively spiritual. He describes his work as 'energetic alchemy', but his speciality is breaking down subconscious barriers: the reasonings, the excuses and the behavioural patterns that we build around ourselves to protect us from the outside world. It makes him wonderful company if you're reeling from a recent divorce, inwardly anxious about entering into a relationship or perennially single. In fact, heartbreak is his forte. Two-hour sessions (at the Bulgari in London,



The madman is a dreamer awake

the Bamford Haybarn spa in the Cotswolds or his home near Henley-on-Thames) are designed to uncork suppressed emotion and to heal the effects of grief. As if reading Braille, Wallas first scans your body with his hands as you lie there quietly and then begins a profound mix of breath-, body- and energy work. You might roar with anger, you might jump up and down and dance around the room with him, but either way the results are great. He's funny, perceptive and completely unshockable – and he claims to repair broken hearts in just one session. Magic. From £260 for 60 minutes (obsonodermday.wizard.com; 0845 625 0650).

Best for THE SLOANE MALE Who Brian Kaplan

At the start of each session, Kaplan (a very gregarious South African with a twinkle in his eye) asks patients the same question: 'Do I have your permission, here and now, to say things that are cheeky, absurd and provocative?' It sounds odd, but they always give it to him. That's because Kaplan, as well as being a private doctor, practises Provocative Therapy – which he characterises as 'human reverse psychology mixed with humour'. After all, people don't like being told what to do, he reasons. 'If you tell someone not to take drugs or to smoke less, they won't listen. Tell them the opposite – to take more drugs, to smoke even more – and they realise the stupidity of a situation. It makes for a highly charged encounter, a gradual building of energy, before they're struck with a eureka moment.' His method of working might involve a few wisecracks, a bit of playing devil's advocate, but there's also a huge amount of affection. 'The most important thing is that people know I'm on their side,' he says. 'There should be no doubt in their minds that I want them to succeed.' He's a brilliant option for men – from middle-aged chaps who have never been on a date, to ex-boarding-school boys struggling with their emotions – who would rather dip into therapy under the guise of a friendly chat than have to experience full-blown 'couch therapy'. Facing a defect in yourself is painful, but Kaplan's method – of having you laugh and learn to laugh at yourself – acts as a sort of balm, releasing endorphins and helping you to face up to pain. It also helps you to improve a difficult situation in a remarkably short space of time. Think of it as tough love – but friendlier. From £150 for 60 minutes (drkaplan.co.uk; 020 7487 3416). □

THE FREUDIAN WORKOUT

Sharpen those grey cells by spotting the three differences between the two pictures



Image A



Image B

There are three differences between the two pictures. The first is the dog's position. The second is the dog's expression. The third is the dog's tail.