



FP

Style

True Story - The Freedom Programme changed my life....



10

Handbag Essentials

Quiz

Find Out How Your Partner Shapes Up In This Week's Quiz.....

Also.....
Horoscopes
Problem Page
And more



For when you're thinking of leaving...

The Freedom Programme
Contact us on 029 2046 0566



For more information on the Freedom Programme please visit www.freedomprogramme.co.uk
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Testimonial

Kate and Jo have recently completed all 12 sessions of the Freedom Programme, we asked them how the experience felt.

What helped you decide to come?

Kate: I wanted to get out of a rut, I wanted answers, to feel happier, to be free!

Most of all I wanted my life to improve.

Jo: I'm not good with people, I'm very shy. At first, I didn't believe it would help me. When I really looked into it I realised it would be good!

At first I didn't believe it would help...

Everything is so much clearer now!

How did you feel before coming to your first session?

Kate: It was the unknown. I felt worried about it. What if someone who knows him is there and he finds out? How busy will it be? Will I be the only one talking?

Jo: I felt nervous about going into town and walking into the building. What was there? Who would be there?

How did you feel when you started to attend?

Kate: I felt really relaxed. I was surprised about how much I could relate to the other women there. You worry you might sound a bit crazy !

Jo: It was easy because you don't have to share if you don't want to. One day I couldn't really talk, but that was ok, no one expected me to and I still learnt a lot.

Kate: There's so many women, from all different backgrounds and yet we can all understand each other, it's great. It's amazing how much you can have in common with people.

How do you feel now that you've completed the course?

Kate: Everything is so much clearer now! I was always bubbling after a session, I'd get a chunk off my chest. When I had a bad week, I knew that I'd feel a lot better after a session. They helped to reassure me that I didn't want to be with him. I stopped feeling sorry for him, and myself.

Jo: It really helped to see other women in different stages of their relationships. It made me realise how far I'd come and how much I'd changed.

What would you say to others?

Both: It makes us more safer, it makes us more aware! We can make different choices and be comfortable with them. I don't think I would've escaped without it.

Jo: I'd be lost without it!

Kate and Jo speak about the Freedom Programme



Real Life!

Ask Becky

AGONY AUNT BECKY

ANSWERS YOUR QUESTIONS



Dear Auntie Becky,

I need some advice, I've been wanting to go to the Freedom programme for a while, but I've missed a few sessions, and I'm worried that I won't be able to catch up. Do you think I should I wait until the beginning of the next programme to start?

Signed, 'Confused', in Cathays

Dear Confused,

Don't worry at all about missing sessions! You can join the group whenever you like, even in week 11. It's a rolling programme, so if you have to miss a few it won't matter, since each week is a separate topic.

Dear Ms B,

I really want to come to the Freedom Programme but I'm worried that people will know why I'm there. What should I do?

'Stressed-out',

In Splott

Dear 'Stressed-out',

We have a strict confidentiality agreement with the centre. Not even the centre staff can ask about the times or location of the session. We do not discuss anyone's details within the group and insist that 'whatever is said in the room stays in the room'.

Dear Auntie,

I want to go to The Freedom Programme this week, and I think it will be really useful and help me to build up my confidence, but I'm really nervous about going for the first time, and I'm worried I'll have to talk about my experiences. What should I do?

Signed,

'Nervous', Near Cardiff

Dear Nervous,

There really is nothing to be concerned about. No-one will ask you to talk about anything that you don't want to. The programme is a safe environment, and the group is asked for complete confidentiality, but if you want to just sit and listen the first few times that's completely up to you. If you're still nervous about going along for the first time, please get in contact with Rebekah Burns (029 2046 0566 or cwa@cardiffwomensaid.org.uk), and someone can meet up with you beforehand.

The Advice Column That Could Change Your Life

10 Handbag Essentials



The things you really need when you plan to leave.....

1 Passport and Birth Certificate
(For you and your children)

2 Cash, Cheque Book, Paying-in Book, Debit Cards, Credit Cards

3 Welfare Benefit Cards/ Information/Payslips

4 Mobile Phone and Charger/ Phone Card/ Change for Payphone

5 Keys - House, Car, Workplace

6 Marriage Certificate/ Divorce Papers

7 Drivers License and Car Registration Documents

8 NHS Medical Card, Prescribed Medication

9 Housing Documents - Mortgage Details, Lease/Rental Agreement

10 Some Form of Identification

Nb. Always seek advice before leaving

How does your partner shape up?

Quiz

Take this week's quiz to find out how your partner should be behaving towards you....

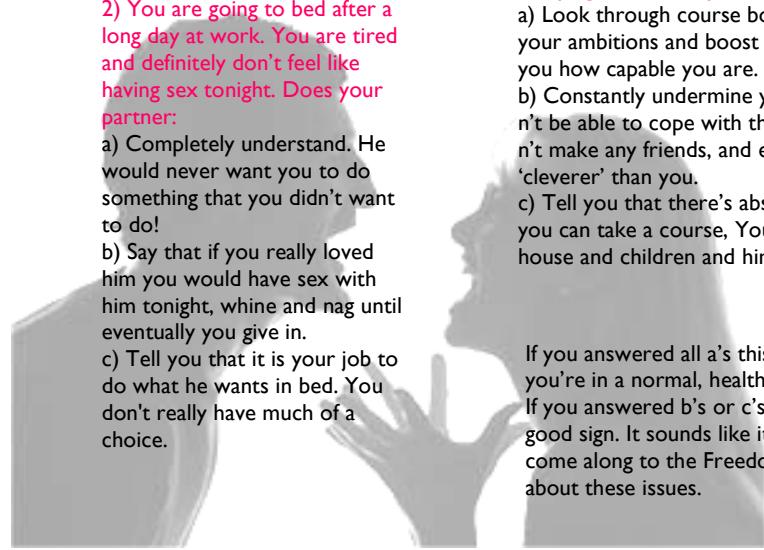
1) You are getting ready for an evening out with friends. Does your partner:
a) Compliment you on your outfit, and look after the children well while you are out.
b) Grudgingly agree to 'baby-sit', but do it very badly so that you are less likely to go out and leave him with the children again.
c) Start a row, say you should be at home and/or accusing you of having affairs, making you so upset that you don't want to go out anymore.

2) You are going to bed after a long day at work. You are tired and definitely don't feel like having sex tonight. Does your partner:
a) Completely understand. He would never want you to do something that you didn't want to do!
b) Say that if you really loved him you would have sex with him tonight, whine and nag until eventually you give in.
c) Tell you that it is your job to do what he wants in bed. You don't really have much of a choice.

3) You are in a bar with your partner and you bump into a male colleague from work. You have a brief chat, before going back to your table. Is your partner:
a) Not bothered at all, why would he be? He trusts you and is pleased that you get on well with the people you work with.
b) Immediately suspicious. He starts questioning you as soon as you sit down, and says you looked like you were flirting with him.
c) Angry, he says that you are dressed like a 'slut' and you obviously want as much male attention as possible. You know he will probably take it out on you when you get home.

4) You are planning on going back to college to improve your qualifications and hopefully get a good job, but you're a bit nervous about going back to studying after a few years away. Does your partner:
a) Look through course books with you, encourage your ambitions and boost your confidence by telling you how capable you are.
b) Constantly undermine you. Imply that you wouldn't be able to cope with the course, that you wouldn't make any friends, and everyone there would be 'cleverer' than you.
c) Tell you that there's absolutely no way he'll allow you can take a course, Your job is to look after the house and children and him.

If you answered all a's this is great! Sounds like you're in a normal, healthy, happy relationship. If you answered b's or c's, I'm afraid that's not a good sign. It sounds like it would really help you to come along to the Freedom Programme to talk about these issues.



The Stars

What do they have in store for you this week?

The Dominator Week 1

This week the Dominator will be in the spotlight. Representing all aspects of an abusive partner, he will be Bullying, a Sexual Controller, a Jailer, The King of The Castle, a Persuader, a Liar, a Bad father, and a Headworker. These different aspects of his personality will all emerge more clearly in the coming weeks.

The Bully Week 2

This week the bully will be mostly smashing plates and furniture, sulking, hurting your pets, and kicking walls. We will be scared to express any opinions, lose our confidence, apologise all the time and try and placate him.

The Bad Father Week 3

If we have children, bonding with them could well be difficult as the bad father will probably resent any affection we give to them. We will end up feeling like we have one child too many as he shouts, screams, and throws tantrums to get our attention back to him.

Effects on Children I Week 4

More damaging effects may be in store for our children as the bad father once again interrupts mealtimes, disrupts their sleep, and makes their home an unsafe place to be.

The Headworker Week 5

Nothing will ever be good enough for this abusive partner! We will however be constantly reminded of how much we need him. He'll be thinking things like 'women are all sluts'. Verbal and emotional abuse will be at record levels, while any respect for us goes right out of the window!

Look out for: attempts to put you down in front of friends and family. Comparisons with celebrities are also likely!

The Jailer Week 6

Innocent conversations could be mistaken for something more this week, as our partner's jealousy becomes even more aggressive. Keep a look out for criticisms of our outfits and appearance when planning a night out, also of our intelligence, competence and social skills, which may well prevent us from going out with our friends, doing well at work, and keeping in contact with our family.

Be wary of any attempts to move house away from your support network, now is not the time to be relocating to that remote cottage in the countryside!

The Sexual Controller Week 7

Even our body isn't our own this week, not when he's around anyway! He thinks we were put on this earth purely to satisfy his sexual desires. But will our desires be fulfilled as well? Don't be silly, we don't even have any.....apparently!

Hot Tip: We have the right to say NO, without having to explain why.

Effects on Children II Week 8

Confusion abounds for the children unfortunately, as they may start blaming themselves for what's happening around them. Social Isolation is one likely consequence if they can't invite friends round, and lack of routine could definitely see them losing concentration and lagging behind in school.

The Liar Week 9

Do not be surprised if our lying partner denies hitting us at all the previous night. It is also likely that he will blame drink or drugs for his violence; insecurity, depression and even our own behaviour. We can't believe a word this man says!

Look out for: fake staggering, 'glazed expressions', and convenient memory loss – he may well not be as drunk as he pretends....

The King of the Castle Week 10

Housework is all we're going to be good for this week, at least according to our abusive partner. We will mostly be: washing, cooking cleaning, and doing all the childcare, as well as looking after him. He will mostly be: sitting in 'his chair' with 'his remote control' while being waited on hand and foot.

Take note: He will expect to be treated as 'The Breadwinner' even if we earn far more than him, or he doesn't work at all!

The Persuader Week 11

Everyone is on his side in the coming week, or so it might seem! GPs, police and counsellors all might back him up when he claims that he "is depressed", 'has anger management issues', and that he basically 'just can't help it'. It will take a lot of determination not to believe him when he insists that his happiness is our responsibility!

Warning Signs Week 12

Predicting the future is of vital importance now, as we look out for the warning signs in a relationship which may soon go very wrong. Over-protectiveness, sexist jokes, influencing how we dress, and being jealous of time spent with friends may all be signs that this relationship is not destined for happiness!