

# 'Freeze The Fear' and try the Wim Hof method at this Suffolk clinic

Suffolk osteopath Tom Parry specialises in the wellbeing method - which combines extreme cold temperatures with breathing techniques.

**Danielle Lett** finds out more

I'm sure many of you reading this, like myself, absolutely hate being cold. There's just something so dread-inducing about being shivering and wet. For me, I hate when I'm in the shower and the hot water runs out, or when I'm at a camping at a festival and the temperature suddenly drops at night.

But some actively seek the cold - enjoying the myriad health benefits it brings.

Amongst them is Tom Parry.

Tom is an osteopath and medical acupuncturist based in Suffolk, and for the past seven years has been running his own health and wellbeing practice in Hintlesham - Hyntle Barn Clinic.

"We're a team of practitioners - ranging from osteopaths, masseuses and podiatrists, to Pilates and yoga instructors. We essentially spend our day-to-day lives treating people's physical health, and helping them understand their bodies better in order to look after themselves," he explains.

Tom has been working as a fully-qualified osteopath for 14 years - but it was just a few years ago he stumbled across the Wim Hof method.

Backed by years of research and science, the method is a combination of exercises that aim to reconnect the body with its natural ability to heal, adapt and survive.

Wim first developed the technique three decades ago - focussing on extremely cold practices that take the body out of its comfort zone, such as ice bathing or cold water swimming.

"The method has three key principles - the breath work, the cold, and the mindset," Tom explains.

"Individually, these are all quite powerful entities - but combined they really work wonders. The breath work is all about affecting your physiology and your body's chemistry. It helps by reducing inflammation and pain.

"With the cold, it's a eustressor, meaning it puts positive stress on your body. By going into the cold, you're using a low dose, positive stressor on the body which elicits a hormetic response, and in turn challenges your body. It causes a

spike in adrenaline and cortisol, and essentially, you're kickstarting your body.

"And the mindset part is all about using those techniques on a regular basis, and seeing how they can transform your life."

The Wim Hof method has recently come into the mainstream, thanks to the extreme athlete's recent show, "Freeze the Fear with Wim Hof", which sees him train eight celebrities to endure a series of challenges in sub-zero temperatures.

"I first heard about it on a podcast in 2017, and for me, it was all about understanding the natural way you can help influence your body," says Tom. "It really piqued my interest, as it aligned with the principles and values of osteopathy, and I wanted to see how I could use it to help my own patients."

Eager to learn more, Tom made his way to London and attended his first Wim Hof workshop. From then on, his life changed.

"That was the first time I saw the impact of how powerful breathwork and the cold can be."

Tom dabbled with his newfound teachings at home, before taking the next step in his journey.

"Soon after, I applied to do my advance training at Wim's House in Holland. The idea behind that was to find out what I could learn to help patients. But I didn't anticipate how much it could do for my own life - and that was a real turning point for me.

"Off the back of that weekend, I realised I needed to share it with others and teach them."

Tom applied to do his instructor training in February 2019, which took him to new extremes.

"I found myself out in Poland, bare-chested, wearing nothing but shorts and boots, going up a mountain for three hours. It was all part of the training. I spent six days learning more about breathwork, cold therapy, mindset work, as well as taking a series of exams."

Fully qualified following his stint in eastern Europe, Tom brought the teachings of Wim Hof back to Suffolk with him - and hasn't looked back.



Tom Parry in an ice bath



Tom Parry teaches the Wim Hof method to people at his clinic in Hintlesham

Pictures: CHARLOTTE BOND



The Wim Hof method involves submerging the body in icy water



A mix of breathing exercises and cold water has been proven to help reduce anxiety

“For the past three years, I’ve been teaching the Wim Hof method to various companies. I also teach individuals and groups here at my clinic. It’s become a staple part of the practice, because its appeal is so widespread.”

Teachers, suicide survivors, MMA fighters, and current and ex-members of the Armed Forces are just some of people Tom has taught.

“People come for their own reasons, but often times there are common threads that run through a workspace. It’s a space where people can share their experiences and history, as a way of better understanding themselves.

“And at the end, people leave with this simple and effective tool they can use in their day-to-day lives to help them feel healthier,

happier, and stronger.”

So how does a Wim Hof workshop work?

People will arrive at Tom’s practice, where he will first run you through the history of the method, and what it entails.

Then he will guide you through the breath work, before it’s time to step into the cold.

“Sometimes people come alone, or with friends and family, or they’ve read about it and they’re curious, or they’ve been trying it a bit themselves at home. But no matter who comes in, everyone is always nervous about the ice.

“But when they finally do it, they all say ‘is that it?’. They spend the morning preparing for it, but once it actually comes to it, they find out it’s much easier than they were anticipating. Once you’ve

learnt the breathwork, you learn to surrender to the cold.”

The Wim Hof method has been proven to reduce both stress and anxiety. And for Tom, he finds it really helps bring people in the moment.

“If you’re in an ice bath, I challenge you to think about that email you didn’t send, or what you missed off the weekly shopping list. When you’re in the cold, it gives you the chance to be free – and that’s what people find the most powerful.

“We spend a lot of time in our heads, and the idea is that these three pillars help connect you to your body and allow you to be present and calmer. And the beauty of it is that you can keep it in your back pocket do it anywhere on the go. We all deserve to be

happy, healthy, and strong, and this is a simple tool to help people do that.”

Tom recommends starting small if you’re trying the method at home.

“When you’re next having a hot shower, before you get out, turn it to the coldest setting, and just breath into it. Let the breathing relax you, and go from there. You’ll soon notice a positive change.

“The Wim Hof Method website and app also have a good step-by-step, to help people understand it.”

However, is it not recommended for those who are pregnant, or suffering from heart conditions or epilepsy.

**To find out more about the work Tom does, visit [livelongltd.com](http://livelongltd.com)**