

FIT FOR LIFE with Carol Westmorland

Day on the fells starts with the right meal last night

We British call cross-country walking of a longer duration than a simple walk over terrain where proper walking boots are required, 'fell walking'. As part of our ongoing fitness campaign, and with holidays approaching, there is no better time to put your fitness to the test than on our doorstep.

My father, 'the mountain goat' Westmorland, began his affair with the Lakeland fells at an early age. As a teenager he would take off by bike from his home in Rockcliffe, hop on a bus and into another world of adventure. As a result, he now knows the fells like the back of his hand and became a member of that auspicious band of fells men, The Fell & Rock Climbing Club. His love for them naturally passed on to me.

I have great respect for the enormity of any Lakeland climb. My preparation skills know no bounds when it comes to adventures of the upward variety. Being in a situation where help would be required is unthinkable. The late Horace 'Rusty' Westmorland founded the Borrowdale Mountain Rescue – known today as the Keswick Mountain Rescue. A lifetime member of The Fell & Rock Climbing Club, Rusty was their President during the early 50s and father has continued the Westmorland name, serving as their treasurer during the late 70s to early 80s. An ambition of mine is to become a member and keep the Club's association with the Westmorland name.

No backpack should be without a map, compass, whistle and torch. My fell walking



boots are of an age but I always wear two very thin pairs of socks to avoid friction. It is worth carrying some large plasters just in case on the basis that if you have them you will never need them. Like Rusty, who had a reputation for being immaculately turned out on the fells, I too think that it is only fitting to dress appropriately for a day on the fells.

A carbohydrate based meal the night before – lots of pasta or potato will ensure a good supply of energy. Start the day with oat cereal and toast with honey. Food doesn't carry well against the warmth of your back. Bananas are hopelessly soggy if expected to travel with you but dried fruit and nuts and some Kendal Mint cake are ideal. I never carry less than two litres of water, although it is said streams on hills are drinkable if fast-running over stony beds.

With Rusty's ashes scattered on the top, Great Gable, at just less than 3,000ft, is a magical climb. Of the ascent from Honister Pass, Wainwright wrote, "this is an excellent route for motorists, who may abandon their cars on the Pass with a height of 1,190ft already achieved, and experience the wind on heath, brother, for the next five hours with no thought of gears and brakes and clutches and things, and feel all the better for exercising his limbs as nature intended".

Carol Westmorland lives in the Eden Valley. She is a Cycling Time Trials national champion, clocking up 445 miles in 24 hours. She also teaches pilates. www.pilates-cumbria.co.uk

LIFE COACH with Marion Dunlop

Overcome the fear...then savour the freedom

I think most of us have things in life that can make us feel anxious, such as exams and interviews. These feelings are perfectly normal as they prepare us to perform effectively. For some of us, this natural response can become so exaggerated that it begins to limit how we live. At this point the fear or anxiety has become a phobia.

Phobias are irrational fears and about 1 in 10 of us will experience a phobia at sometime in our lives. They may have been learned from watching other people's reactions to certain situations. Sometimes a phobia arises through a very real experience that has been stored in an exaggerated way by our unconscious mind. Some are more

complex and may require longer term psychotherapy to explore the cause.

Phobia triggers come in many forms, for example, spiders; social situations; flying; confined places; heights; needles; vomiting; dental treatment. The list is endless.

I used to avoid flying myself and overcame the fear because I really, really wanted to go to a college reunion with friends I hadn't seen for about 10 years. I read a few self-help books, learned how to relax tension in my body, breathe steadily and focused on what it would be like to be there catching up with everyone. It really helped that I travelled with someone who was relaxed about flying and she kept me

focused on positive thinking, laughter distraction and what we'd do when we got to Edinburgh.

Phobias can be treated with a number of different approaches, for example, hypnotherapy; NLP; EFT; EMDR; psychotherapy; and cognitive behavioural therapy.

Get some help, research which approach might suit you best and ask around to find a well-qualified therapist. Then make an appointment and get freedom back into your life.



Marion Dunlop is a Carlisle-based life coach and therapist www.cumbriatherapies.com