

I, ME, MYSELF



Hip hypnotist

DAVE CRANE, ONCE DUBAI'S BEST-KNOWN DJ, has reinvented himself as a hypnotist, hypnotherapist and a life coach. **Lorraine Chandler** meets him expecting to be entertained, but ends up hypnotised

Sitting in the trendy More cafe in Garhoud, I wait for Dave Crane. I have great expectations of being amused by a man who has spent most of his life entertaining others.

Crane came to Dubai over 10 years ago, starting off as the DJ of the Champions nightclub in the JW Marriott Hotel in 1995.

He later went on to become the station manager of the innovative Channel 4 radio, in addition to disc jockeying and presenting some of Dubai's most high-profile events. He gained a name for being a 'party boy' and his impish face and dreadlocks were seldom absent from society pages. In a city desperate for celebrities, Crane carved a unique niche for himself.

Mind is a serious matter ... From full-time entertainment to a life coach and hypnotherapist, Dave Crane (left, as a caricature) is working hard to change people's previous perceptions of him.

He is half an hour late for our meeting, a fact I wrongly attribute to his celebrity status, but he later blames it on the Garhoud Bridge traffic. His trademark highlighted dreadlocks are still there, as are his earring and cheeky grin. But he's wearing a sombre suit and tie, despite the searing heat. When he starts to tell me about a business networking group, I worry whether my afternoon is going to be as entertaining as I had anticipated.

It turns out Crane has had a change of career. He still entertains, comperes and hypnotises people on stage. But he's also a certified hypnotherapist, an NLP (Neurolinguistic Programming) master practitioner, life coach and corporate trainer. He is bursting with ideas about people achieving their potential and upgrading their lives.

Still yearning for some light entertainment, I ask him to hypnotise me. Immediately, I question my wisdom, given the fact that we are a conspicuous pair in a crowded cafe.

Without any sign of being self-conscious, he stands over me in the

middle of the cafe. I close my eyes and give in to his soothing voice as he asks me to recall my most powerful memories and to see myself experiencing great success in the future. I cautiously foresee myself as a published novelist in 2010. Afterwards, I curse myself for not envisaging myself as a millionaire or famous actress a little bit closer to the present.

I quickly realise it is more hypnotherapy than hypnotism he is using on me, and that he is asking me to consciously believe I can reach my ambitions if I truly want to. I'm disappointed when he stops because I am enjoying envisioning my success, without having to imagine the work that would go into it.

Part of me is a little disappointed the old hedonistic radio presenter is gone, but there's no denying it: Dave Crane has grown up. At 37, he's found a new career that satisfies him more than anything he has done in the past.

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'There were two ways for me to cope with [being the only black child in nearly every town I lived]. I could either fight my way out of trouble, or I could make people laugh. I chose the latter.'

He is working hard to change people's perceptions of him as primarily an entertainer, and has turned down a number of lucrative contracts.

Nowadays, he focuses on motivational staff training and life coaching and has as much business as he could want, in Dubai and abroad.

Most importantly, he believes in what he is doing. NLP and hypnotherapy have turned his life around, and he finds it more rewarding to share these with others than to spin discs and play the joker card.

I

I look ... [from the outside, like] an incredibly confident self-assured radio DJ type. I am certainly self-assured, but I am more introverted than people realise.

I feel ... many people in Dubai put up a facade of happiness. For me and many others in the wellbeing industry, this is El Dorado. There are a huge number of people who believe that having fancy goods and cars is the way to happiness, but they have to realise that it isn't enough and that they need to start looking for more.

I love Dubai ... more than any other place on the planet. There are [many] nationalities living together [here]... After 10 years of living here, it is my reality. Your reality is what you choose it to be, and I know which reality I would prefer.

ME AND DUBAI

Dubai is incredible because it's like being on a working holiday. I think anyone who complains about it needs to go home for a while and think about it.

I feel safe in Dubai, and I like the fact that the laws ... are so strict.

If you flout the laws and get caught, that's your responsibility.

I thought it was great when the police cracked down on drink-driving.

There is a great push towards putting the city on the map, and it's commercially the best address in the world.



I believe ... I am gifted, not because of what I've done in my life, but because I know now what life is all about.

I bought an *X-men* comic when I was five years old. I've always thought of myself as a bit like Wolverine. He's small and dangerous and not one to underestimate, a bit like myself. I think everyone has hidden abilities.

I would like to be the Jamie Oliver of hypnosis. Everyone should do self-hypnosis because they deserve the self-discovery and happiness they can create for themselves.

ME

Me and growing up:

My parents, Peter and Eugenie, met in the 1960s when mum came from the West Indies to chase work in the UK. At the time they got together, racism was very strong in the UK and people disapproved of their inter-racial

marriage, but my parents wanted to prove that they could make a go of it. They moved to St Kitts and Nevis in the West Indies nine years ago, and I visit them whenever I can.

I learned from my parents that you have to go beyond skin colour to find the person inside, and that you have to believe that you can be the best.

I was the only black kid in nearly every town I lived in as a child, first in Scotland and then later near Middlesbrough in England. There were two ways for me to cope with this. I could either fight my way out of trouble, or I could make people laugh. I chose the latter.

Many years after I left school, I met a big brother of an old classmate who told me when I arrived in secondary school, he and the rest of the rugby team had vowed to protect me. I like the idea of that secret protection I had, although I never knew of it at the time.

If I were [of] a different skin colour, I might have ended up as an accountant, but the challenges of growing up in that environment taught me how to read people.

Me and celebrity:

I always wanted to work in TV or radio. I started in hospital and local radio, and spent some time working in Warner's holiday camp in the Isle of Wight. I was a DJ, singer and entertainer working 14 hours a day. I loved it, and would recommend it to anyone.

I also worked as a freelance journalist for the BBC for three years. However, when I was asked to take my

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earing out in a radio studio, I realised that wasn't where I wanted to be.

I then took the desperate step of going on *Blind Date*, which was a tremendously popular TV show at the time. I won the Christmas show and went on a TV date with a belly dancer (it didn't work out!). But I never did get the TV break I had hoped for, especially as I didn't want to move to London; I found it cold and unfriendly, so I decided to go on a world tour instead.

My first stop was Dubai, where I got a job as a DJ at Champions. One night, my close friend Jeff Price (now manager of Radio 1 and 2) and I were standing on the roof of the Marriott and we both said how much we'd like to be working in radio. Then we got the chance to join Channel 4, where I spent five years, eventually ending up as station manager.

Me and hypnotism:

About three years ago, [I decided to] rethink my career. If I was one of the best-known faces in the country, why wasn't I happy? I had also lost interest in being a DJ. I no longer got the same pleasure out of playing music for people.

I decided to question my choices. Hypnotism appealed to me because it was something I could do for the rest of my life. I started investigating and trained in hypnotherapy with Beryl Comar [in Dubai]. When she asked me to envision my future, I saw myself at a show in Las Vegas with 3,000 people in the audience.

In 2003, I went to Las Vegas and did a 10-day course in hypnotism at the Jerry Valley School, led by legendary hypnotist Ormond McGill. Only a short while later I did a huge show in Vegas.

I am still the only stage hypnotist in the GCC, but I was years ahead at the time, because when I approached the hotels, they just didn't get the concept.

At the Las Vegas hypnotism shows, I saw a lot of wacky things ... [including] people regressing to [act like they were] 8 years old. In a way, hypnotism is the ultimate karaoke, where people can pretend they are children again.

I'm very ethical about who and how I hypnotise and I never like to make people look stupid. A hypnosis show

proves there's more to life than meets the eye. If you can make someone think he is the world heavyweight boxing champion, then what's to say he can't be hypnotised into being the world's best salesman or even dad?

Me and my coaching:

While it took me a few years to establish myself as a hypnotherapist, the changing point for me came about a year ago when I got a contract for a major training event for APC (American Power Conversion).

My coaching focuses on how to upgrade your life. It looks at the premise that we all have to take

ownership of our lives and responsibility for making them what we want them to be. I tell people that what you put into life is what you get back. I believe self-hypnosis is very important in affecting change in our expectations and behaviour.

'Hypnotism is the ultimate karaoke, where people can pretend they are children again.'

Old [human resources] approaches looked at training people in the areas where they were weak, but I think you should let people focus on their strengths. You should help people find their talents and [achieve] an emotional balance.

When I carry out corporate entertainment and training, people walk away feeling that they have more inside them than before, and that they are more willing to push themselves for their companies.

In addition to NLP, hypnotherapy and life coaching, I'm also involved in pranic healing and dream therapies.

MYSELF

If you were on a desert island and you could hypnotise yourself into having three things, what would they be?

Kylie Minogue, the internet and a place to [entertain] friends.



Nowadays, people are more open to hypnosis. We unconsciously spend a lot of time in a hypnotic state, when we drive home without thinking, when we listen to a favourite song. You can hypnotise yourself through yoga [or] meditation. It's a way of accessing your subconscious ... and tapping into something that's not your usual reality.

"Sometimes I can address up to 30,000 people with a microphone ... But when I'm not working ... I no longer feel I need to be the centre of attention. My direction now is more about helping people"
- Dave Crane.

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"I knew he [James Brown] was a legend but I have to say I couldn't understand a single word he said, even when I replayed the tape afterwards," says Dave Crane, seen here interviewing Brown for Channel 4 in the late 1990s.

If a disaster was about to happen and you could only save three people, who would they be?

My friend Azizah, my best mate and my two dogs [hoping two dogs count as one].

Who are the most interesting people you've met in your career?

Jools Holland [pianist and band leader] was an idol I met at an early age. I interviewed him and was impressed by the fact that he didn't do the whole 'BBC thing' - the accent, the old-fashioned approach.

He has a great sense of humour and is tremendously talented. I found him a real inspiration, and he keeps evolving into different roles.

[While at Channel 4] I met James Brown and interviewed him. I knew he was a legend but I have to say I couldn't understand a single word he said, even when I replayed the tape afterwards.

I met Phil Collins when we were doing some volunteer work for the Princes Trust, whereby celebrities visit long-term unemployed or ex-offenders. I was working with him for three days and in fact, we did a concert together, although I doubt he would remember me!

If you had to be a bag rather than a man, what sort of bag would you like to be?

I supposed I'd be a cabin bag: small and neat, perfectly formed, and able to go anywhere. Oh no, is this a reference to my *Blind Date* appearance years ago?

You've spent a long time in professional entertainment. Are you an exhibitionist deep down?

Sometimes I can address up to 30,000 people with a microphone, like at the Dubai Sevens. I switch on for work, but when I'm not working, I just don't do it. I no longer feel I need to be the centre of attention - been there, done that!

My direction now is more about helping people.

If you could be someone else, who would you like to be?

In my work now, I sometimes meet people who are depressed about their lives. I tell them about what a miracle their lives are.

I believe I have a great life and wouldn't swap it. So many of our heroes, like Elvis, Marilyn Monroe and Curt Kobain, had immense talent and wealth, yet were immensely depressed. Life is about enjoying what you've got.

What's the worst thing that ever happened to you?

Well, sometimes the worst things are probably the best things in that you learn so much from them. People spend a fortune on survival training where they have to face the elements with a Swiss knife.

If you survive something, then you're still here. I have embraced my bad experiences because they've made me a survivor. **E**

