



*The four-day Health Hub at Stoke Place costs from £835 per person, including three nights' full-board accommodation. Health Hubs also run in Corfu and Dorset (0800 1588 360, healthmatters360.co.uk)*

## «My life got a much needed MOT»

### Stoke Place, Stoke Poges, Buckinghamshire

Health Matters 360 takes a holistic approach to wellbeing, splitting teaching into physical, nutritional and mind-related sessions. Its weekend retreats are accessible and affordable.

#### The verdict

Before I arrived, I had filled in an extensive questionnaire about the physical, nutritional and emotional aspects of my life, so the team could evaluate my needs. A life coaching session gave me practical advice for ways to improve my mental wellbeing, and a dose of hypnotherapy was prescribed to help with my anxiety issues. It was a novel experience, and I am now better able to cope with stressful situations.

There were nutrition advice and exercise sessions, which could have been a chore but for the beautiful surroundings. I left feeling like my entire life had been given a much needed MOT.

#### What we learned

■ Put it in writing. The 'essential needs' form, which used a rating system, helped me to see what wasn't working in my life. Give your work and relationships,

for example, a score out of 10 and it helps you see things more clearly. Write down what is bothering you, too. Putting problems down on paper somehow makes them seem less overwhelming and a lot more manageable.

■ Variety is key when it comes to exercise. I run for half an hour three times a week but was surprised to discover that I'm not actually that fit. My body is used to this level of exercise so my fitness has reached a plateau. Now I either do interval training – 10 minutes slow running, 10 minutes fast, 10 minutes slow – or run for an hour.

■ Our bacteria must be in balance. I have always had lousy digestion and was told that this might be due to an imbalance of bacteria in my gut. I was recommended a course of probiotics – Bifidobacterium bifidum – to rebalance that, and advised to cut down on very sweet fruits, vinegary foods and yeasty breads. **Sophie Herdman**