

JULIA BRADBURY on the power of positive thinking

UK EDITION

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JUNE 2021 • £4.70

MAGAZINE

GET YOUR MOJO BACK!

By reviving childhood passions

THE LIFE SCHOOL

- Bounce back from failure
- Create mindful goals
- Heal your broken heart

12-PAGE DOSSIER

AGONY AUNT

Feel calm

Overcome family resentment

COMFORT EATING?

Why you can't eat the pain away

HOW TO HAVE STAYING POWER

SPEAK UP WITH CONFIDENCE

Use your voice, be assertive and change your world
What's stopping you from having your say?



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JUNE 2021



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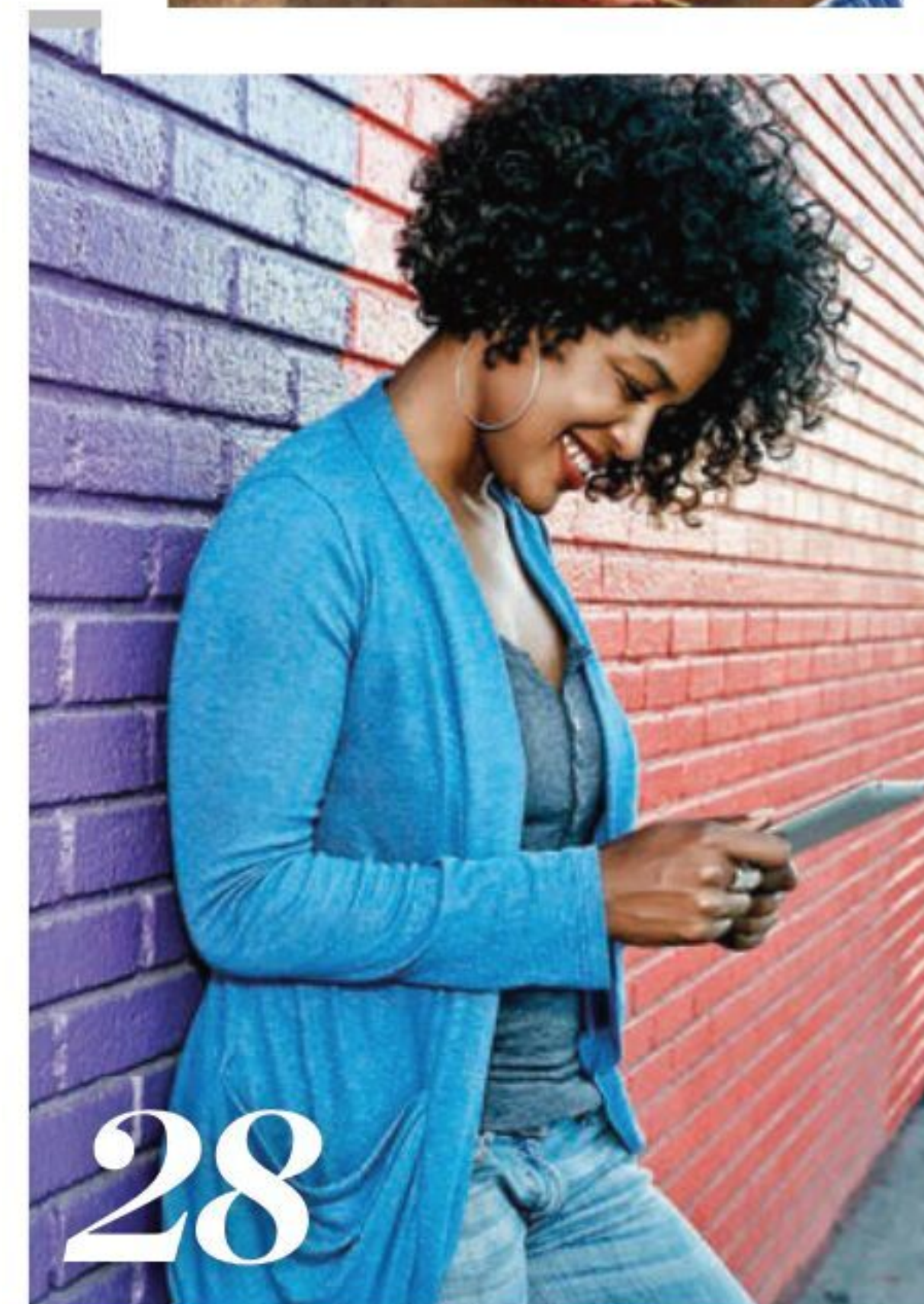
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Tap into power and creativity

Don't miss our July issue! We're listening to that small voice within, because intuition allows us to reconnect with the part of us that makes us feel true to ourselves. Plus, Lisa Snowden helps us manage the menopause and live a healthier, happier life

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The new fragrance and selfcare range by Katie Piper, exclusively on sale at Superdrug now.



"My fragrances, Confidence by Day and Confidence by Night, beautifully complement each other.

I created these inspiring scents to reflect the qualities that are within all of us. My products have been designed to ensure those who use the collection are reminded of the strengths, ability and power we all possess and must harness in the most challenging times.

It is my hope that whilst the range focuses on treating yourself, you will also gift it to the people who matter in your life, those who need it most.

This range was developed to give the gift of confidence so embrace it!"

5% of the profits will be donated to the Katie Piper Foundation.

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Katie
Piper
Foundation**

Superdrug ☆

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Meet three of the people who have taken part in the creation of *Psychologies*



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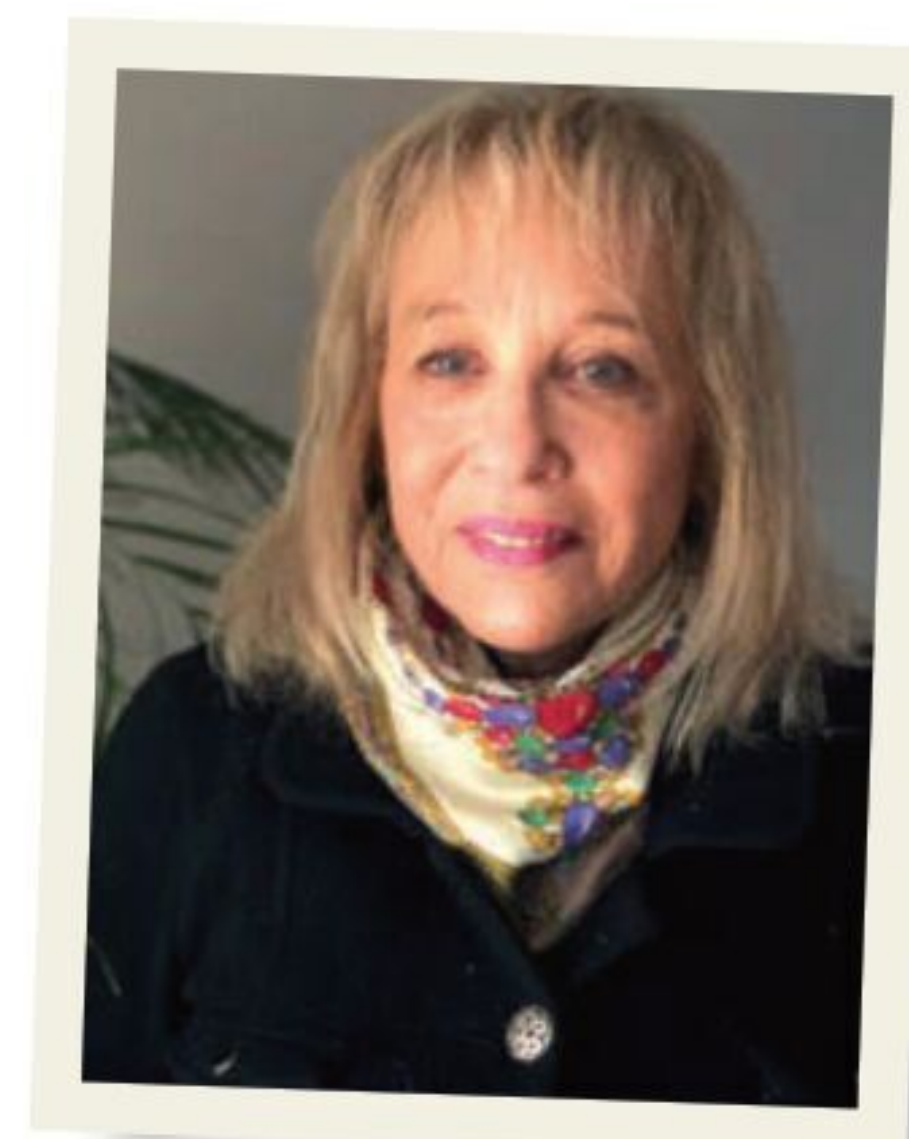
Scientist and writer

Pragya is a behavioural and data scientist, journalist and author. Her latest book is *SWAY: Unravelling Unconscious Bias* (Bloomsbury, £12.99). Pragya writes about a range of topics, in particular gender and racial justice and equality. A passionate campaigner for women's rights, she is the founder of the 50 Percent Project research think tank. Pragya organised the first TEDxWoman event in the north of the UK and hosts a podcast, *Outside The Boxes*. In our Dossier (page 51), she explains how to stand up against discrimination.

Alivia Rose

Psychotherapist

Before training with the UK Council for Psychotherapy (UKCP), Alivia worked for an agency specialising in addiction. With 35 years of experience as a therapist, she supports individuals and groups. Alongside her private practice, Alivia presented an award-winning show for BBC Radio Bristol for more than 10 years and continues to feature in the media, providing her psychotherapeutic insight. This month, she talks on the *Psychologies* podcast with UKCP, sharing advice about navigating overwhelming emotions. See page 44.



Claire Durrant

Personal branding consultant

Claire helps ambitious individuals build memorable personal brands that make an impact in the working world. She's an expert in online presence and the importance of social media. Claire runs workshops, training, mentoring programmes and more. On page 28, she outlines how to create a dynamic LinkedIn profile. She says: 'Whether you're looking for a job or using LinkedIn to grow your business, it's never been more important to ensure your profile works for you.'



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Comfort and joy

'I learned to be the guardian of my own heart,' writes Bianca Barton on page 22 about the emotional leap she made when her marriage broke down. This issue is dedicated to tending to our hearts and navigating difficult emotions. UKCP therapist Alivia Rose tells us how to manage overwhelming feelings on page 44. 'Emotions need to be expressed so they can pass,' she explains. Columnist Vee Sey agrees on page 32. 'You can't eat your pain away. Junk food will not fill a void and sugar does not anaesthetise pain or grief. There is no comfort in comfort eating,' she writes. On page 18, Rachel Dobson chats to Julia Bradbury about how she used walking as a form of therapy during IVF treatment. What tools can you employ to help you become the guardian of your own heart?

We also focus on developing the confidence to speak up in life. Anita Chaudhuri examines the barriers that keep us silent and offers strategies to get our message across. On page 38, Hazel Davies asks us to reignite our childhood passions, tap into self-knowledge and find fulfilment. And, on page 72, Ali Roff Farrar redefines her goals and discovers joy in serving others.

I hope you enjoy this kind and gentle issue.

Suzy



Suzy Walker
Editor-in-Chief



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Viewpoint

Send your letters to letters@psychologies.co.uk and tell us what you love about our magazine. You could win a copy of our special edition bookazine *Find Your Calm*




Star
letter

WAVES OF WELLNESS

I loved your feature 'Dive into sheer bliss' (Spring). Diving isn't just an exciting way to enjoy the ocean and view sea life, it's good for body and mind. It induces mindful breathing, and the rhythm of one's breath stabilises negative feelings and calms the nervous system. Deep breathing also builds stamina, boosts the immune system and clears the mind for better focus. Additionally, diving promotes emotional health and self-awareness – it's an incredible pastime! Thanks for the article. I can't wait to dive again. Paula

Share with us... Share your photographs and comments with us on Instagram @psychologiesmagazine, or tweet us @PsychologiesMag, both using #PsychologiesMagazine

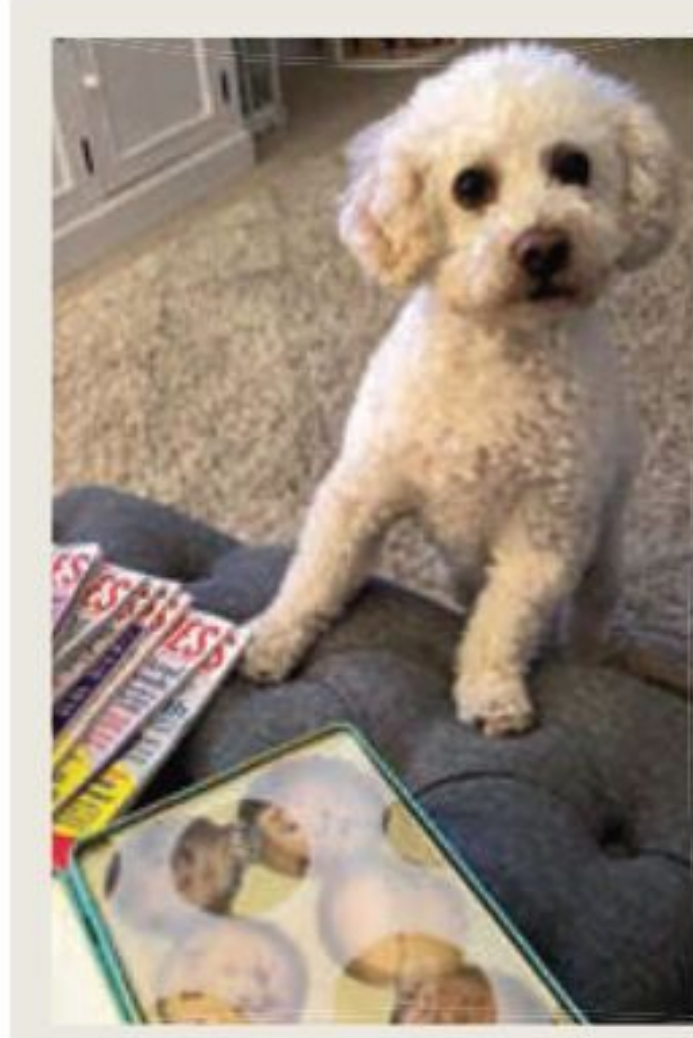
 **@SunSparks4:** I've been eating more plant-based meals for almost a year now so I can't wait to learn from @Ellen_Tout and her new 'compleating' book.

 **@LivvyChrissie:** All ready to record a podcast today for @PsychologiesMag and @UKCP_Updates talking about the wave of emotions we may experience during the pandemic and in any time of crisis.

 **@karenarnott:** Loved reading the latest @PsychologiesMag article about connecting with nature. Always thrilled to see local author @silverpebble featured. Reminder to self: go out for a walk today.

• Correction

In the 'Are you looking for a new career?' article on page 28 of our April issue, we made a mistake, printing: 'Coach Annie Lee sought the help of a business and personal coach during the lockdown period.' In fact, Annie Lee is a top coach who helped the writer build her own coaching business. We apologise unreservedly for the error and for any confusion caused.



 **ABOVE @paddington_the_pooch:** Oh go on, giz a biscuit!

 **RIGHT @tinaq cards:** A collage for above my desk inspired by @sarahmapleart #FrontRowGetCreative, mainly from #psychologies magazine



 **LEFT @the_expater:** My article on dealing with disappointment in this month's @psychologiesmagazine. Whether you're coming to terms with things since the pandemic hit, or life just didn't go as you planned, you're not alone.

Read all about it! DO ANY OF THESE LETTERS SPEAK TO YOU? IF YOU MISSED A COPY OF 'PSYCHOLOGIES', WANT

A RARE READ

I am a magazine lover living in the United States which makes subscribing to *Psychologies* expensive – but I renewed my subscription anyway. There is nothing like your magazine in the US. I appreciate the variety of topics and concise writing. I like that I can read a few pages at a time and get something out of them. I'm a retired therapist and lean towards psychological and spiritual material, and you offer plenty of that. I always learn something or am reminded of something I had forgotten.

I particularly enjoyed the 'Home, boy' piece in the April issue; a home isn't a home without a dog. Jill

PHOTO COMPETITION

I'VE LIVED IN EAST LONDON for more than a decade. Its ever-changing street art has always been a source of joy and inspiration for me. During the lockdowns, with all galleries and museums closed and with limited options, the colourful murals and paste-ups have become an even more important part of my life and a good reason to make myself go out for a walk. This is one of my favourites. Izzy



The winner

Would you like to showcase your photographic talent in *Psychologies*? What moment has made you feel inspired, grateful or moved this month? Capture it and tell us why. We'll print the winner, plus you'll receive a free copy of our bookazine, 'Find Your Calm', worth £6.99. Share your photograph with us and explain its inspiration on Instagram @psychologiesmagazine with the hashtag #PsychologiesPhoto, or email it to letters@psychologies.co.uk

Letter of gratitude

I'd like to thank...

*My brilliant sister, carer
and best friend, Emma*

*I wrote this poem just to say
Thank you for making me smile each day
For your one-of-a-kind humour, your unique wit
For bringing me to tears of laughter until my
sides split
For helping clear away the fog
For bringing clarity
For when I am feeling lost
For often maintaining my sanity
For being so effortlessly creative and talented
For encouraging me to always aim higher
For setting such a beautifully high standard
For being the person who I deeply admire
For being there when I need to talk
For when I feel overwhelmed
For making things feel so much lighter
For being my sister and my best friend
This poem has become a little too sentimental
So I will end on this
There's not much more for me to say
Except thanks very much, sis!*

Love Claire



This month's gratitude letter, star letter and chosen photo win a free copy of our enlightening bookazine, 'Find Your Calm', worth £6.99! Go to shop.kelsey.co.uk/product/BZPSYFYIC to order a copy.

Send your letters to letters@psychologies.co.uk

The Inca Trail Trek



Immerse yourself in the ancient kingdom of the Incas on this once-in-a-lifetime trek to Machu Picchu. Hiking through rainforests, mountains and high desert plateau, you'll discover sacred ruins and an amazing mix of cultures.

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The Fix

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EDITED BY ELLEN TOUT

I AM THE GREATEST.
I SAID THAT EVEN BEFORE
I KNEW I WAS.

Muhammad Ali



Tiger, tiger, burning bright... Relight your flame and find your inner courageous big cat with the new book from writer Anna Lou Walker. It's full of beautiful illustrations (pictured) to guide you to take those first steps towards becoming more self-assured. The empowering collection of tips and wisdom helps you learn to love who you are and sparkle with certainty. Fortune favours the brave, after all, and your journey begins here.

• ***'Find Your Shine: How To Go from Self-Conscious To Self-Confident'*** by Anna Lou Walker (Summersdale, £12.99)

ILLUSTRATION: FROM 'FIND YOUR SHINE: HOW TO GO FROM SELF-CONSCIOUS TO SELF-CONFIDENT' BY ANNA LOU WALKER

The Fix

Thought-provoking culture, creative ideas, insightful science and inspiring gifts



Kindness mug, £14, notonthehighstreet.com



RUSH OF KINDNESS

Oxytocin safeguards the cardiovascular system, explains writer and scientist David Hamilton



JUST AS FEELINGS of stress produce stress hormones, feelings induced by kindness produce kindness hormones. The main one is oxytocin, also known as the hug drug, love drug and cuddle chemical. Research* shows that just as too many stress hormones are physiologically harmful, kindness hormones are beneficial.

Scientists at the University of Miami found that oxytocin helps keep blood vessels clear. When oxytocin was introduced to cardiovascular cells that were under mental and emotional or lifestyle stress, levels of oxidative stress, or free radicals, and inflammation dropped dramatically. Both oxidative stress and inflammation play a significant role in cardiovascular disease and underlie why stress is so harmful to the body. As such, the kindness hormone is known as a cardioprotective hormone because it protects the cardiovascular system.

Join 'Psychologies' kindness tsar David Hamilton live on Facebook @Psychologiesmagazine for his free 30-day kindness challenge and monthly broadcasts – next on 15 June at 1pm. Catch up via Psychologies TV at tinyurl.com/psykind. For more, join the 'Psychologies' Life Leap Club, free when you subscribe to the magazine. 'The Little Book Of Kindness' (Octopus, £6.99) and 'The Five Side Effects Of Kindness' (Hay House, £12.99) by David Hamilton are out now

HEAD FIRST

*Have you discovered the joy of outdoor swimming? Wild bathing has seen an increase of 15 per cent in the past three years.** Why? Twenty per cent of swimmers say they took it up to support their mental health and wellbeing, and 70 per cent say a wild dip is key to their mental wellbeing. That's something to make a splash about!*



Recycled long-sleeved swim top, £110, and briefs, £65, davyj.org

47%

OF MANAGERS FEAR THEIR STAFF ARE AT RISK OF BURNOUT UPON RETURNING TO THE OFFICE AFTER A LONG PERIOD OF HOMEWORKING[†]

Missed an issue? COMPLETE YOUR MINDFUL LIVING LIBRARY. ORDER BACK ISSUES OF 'PSYCHOLOGIES' AT



Go explore! Rivers, lakes and oceans – the aquatic world is your oyster on a stand-up paddleboard



Culture

Like ducks to water

STAND-UP paddleboarding, or SUP for short, is the fastest-growing sport in the world. Combining the benefits of a moving meditation with time in nature and blue spaces, SUP is a wonderful pastime to improve overall wellbeing. From evening paddles to exploring your local lakes, coastline and rivers, SUP takes you on accessible mini adventures, with the chance to spot wildlife as well as unique photo opportunities. There's also SUP surfing, racing and yoga.

'The thing that sets SUP apart is the immense sense of peace that it gives,' says a Bluefin SUP community

team member. 'When I'm out on my board gliding across the water, listening to the waves, birds and rustle of the trees, I find remarkable tranquillity. It's like my own ecotherapy programme.'

The Paddleboard Bible by David Price is a complete guide to SUP, covering the basics such as equipment, technique and safety – and it enthusiastically explains why paddleboarding is an excellent sport for everyone. Step up and find out for yourself!

● *'The Paddleboard Bible: The Complete Guide To Stand-up Paddleboarding'* by David Price (Adlard Coles, £18.99)

PHOTOGRAPHS: FROM 'THE PADDLEBOARD BIBLE' BY DAVID PRICE; 'A SZETO ET AL. OXYTOCIN ATTENUATES NADP-DEPENDENT SUPEROXIDE ACTIVITY AND IL-6 SECRETION IN MACROPHAGES AND VASCULAR CELLS'; 'AMERICAN JOURNAL OF PHYSIOLOGY'; 2008; 'TRENDS IN OUTDOOR SWIMMING REPORT'; 'OUTDOOR SWIMMER MAGAZINE'; 2021; 'WALTERS PEOPLE'; 2021

GREEN IDEAS

ECO WARRIOR IN TWO MINUTES

Eco Living Editor Ellen Tout makes short work of a clever campaign that cleans up our world



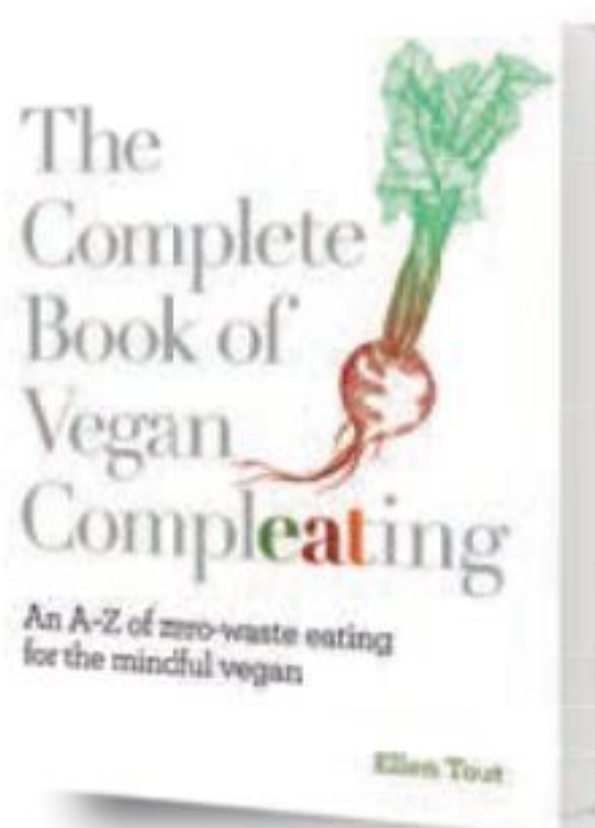
Ellen and her father, John Tout, on a beach clean in Kent

I AM SO INSPIRED by the work of The 2 Minute

Foundation, creators of #2Minute BeachClean. The charity has beach, river and park cleaning stations across the UK, so we can all take steps to clean up our environment if we have just two minutes to spare – and who doesn't?

The charity's founder, Martin Dorey, says: 'The smallest actions can make the biggest difference, and it's important to take the time, even if it's just two minutes – two minutes of litter-picking, two minutes of positivity, two minutes for something that makes you happy.' Even better, the clean-up stations are now circular and made from marine litter!

• See 2minute.org; @2minutehq

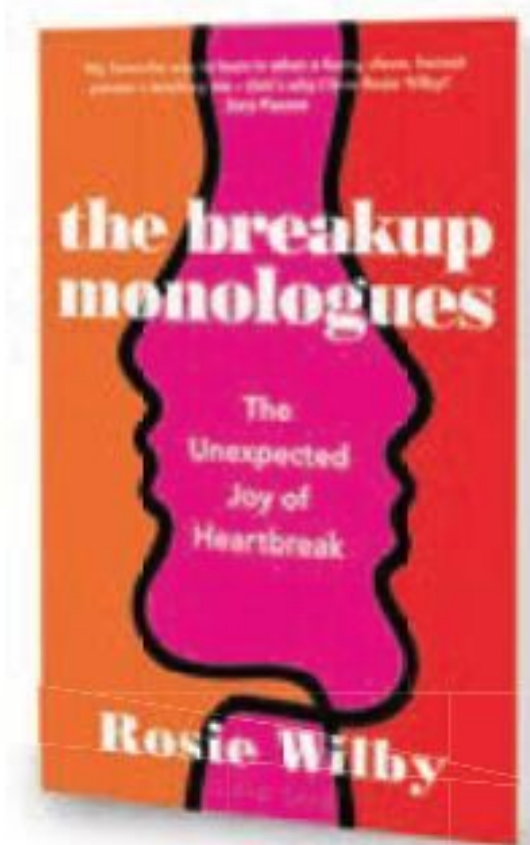


Reader offer!
Ellen's book 'The Complete Book Of Vegan Compleating' (Nourish, £14.99) is available for pre-order now. Psychologies' readers can save 30% with the offer code 'COMPLEAT21' at tinyurl.com/psymag

For more green living ideas, follow Ellen on Instagram @Ellen_Tout and @compleatly_vegan; ellentout.com

HEARTBREAK CLUB

Fall in love with this brilliantly wise combination of humour and science, writes Ellen Tout



ROSIE WILBY was dumped by email. Obsessing about breakups ever since, the comedian embarked on a quest to investigate, understand and conquer the psychology of heartbreak. Part memoir, part investigation, her book, 'The Breakup Monologues', tackles the big questions about our life-changing separations in the modern age of ghosting, breadcrumbing and conscious uncoupling. Wilby says: 'Heartbreak is such a universal thing, yet it's often kept secret. We hide ourselves away and lick our wounds. I hope the book shows that the story we share with our friends and community after a separation is a vital part of our recovery.' A witty and enlightening read.

• 'The Breakup Monologues: The Unexpected Joy Of Heartbreak' by Rosie Wilby (Bloomsbury, £16.99)



CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE
Rosie with Katy Brand and Miranda Sawyer at the Port Eliot festival; Rosie and her fiancée Suz (right) at Pride; Rosie speaks about her experiences

Win!

Indigenous Beauty is one of our favourite independent vegan and organic beauty brands. We've teamed up with them to give away a hand and body lotion and deodorant cream set worth £36.94. Follow @ellen_tout and @indigenous_beautyuk on Instagram to enter, and send Ellen a message to say why you'd like to win!*

See page 71 for details
indigenousbeauty.co.uk



31%

OF WOMEN HAVE TAKEN UP RUNNING SINCE THE START OF THE PANDEMIC AND 34 PER CENT HAVE RETURNED TO THE SPORT AFTER A LONG BREAK. ** AS LIFE REOPENS, MAINTAIN THE HABITS THAT GET YOU THROUGH

**Film
of the
month**

After Love

Directed by Aleem Khan
In cinemas from 4 June

IN HIS FEATURE DEBUT, writer-director Aleem Khan, a Bafta nominee for his short film *Three Brothers*, deftly explores culture, grief and identity. After the sudden death of her husband, Mary Hussain (Joanna Scanlan) has barely a day for the news to sink in before discovering her husband's breathtaking and life-shattering secret. Her search for answers takes her across the Channel to Calais, where she finds his clandestine second wife and son.

Khan has produced a refined script, confidently melding dialogue in English, Urdu and French, that capitalises on the impressive performances of the small cast. But it is Scanlan who delivers a powerhouse central performance, as she subtly portrays the ravages of grief and deception. There are touching moments that break cultural barriers and, despite its brief runtime, Khan manages to portray Islamic traditions rarely seen on screen. Much like Scanlan's performance, *After Love* is utterly fearless and engrossing. **MB**

FILM REVIEW: MANDEEP BACHU. "MESSAGE ELLEN ON INSTAGRAM BY MIDNIGHT ON 1 JUNE TO ENTER." **RUNNERS NEED, 2021

HACK INTO HAPPINESS

STAND OUT FOR JOY

Find your stretch zone and begin to shine, says happiness expert, coach Kia Cannons



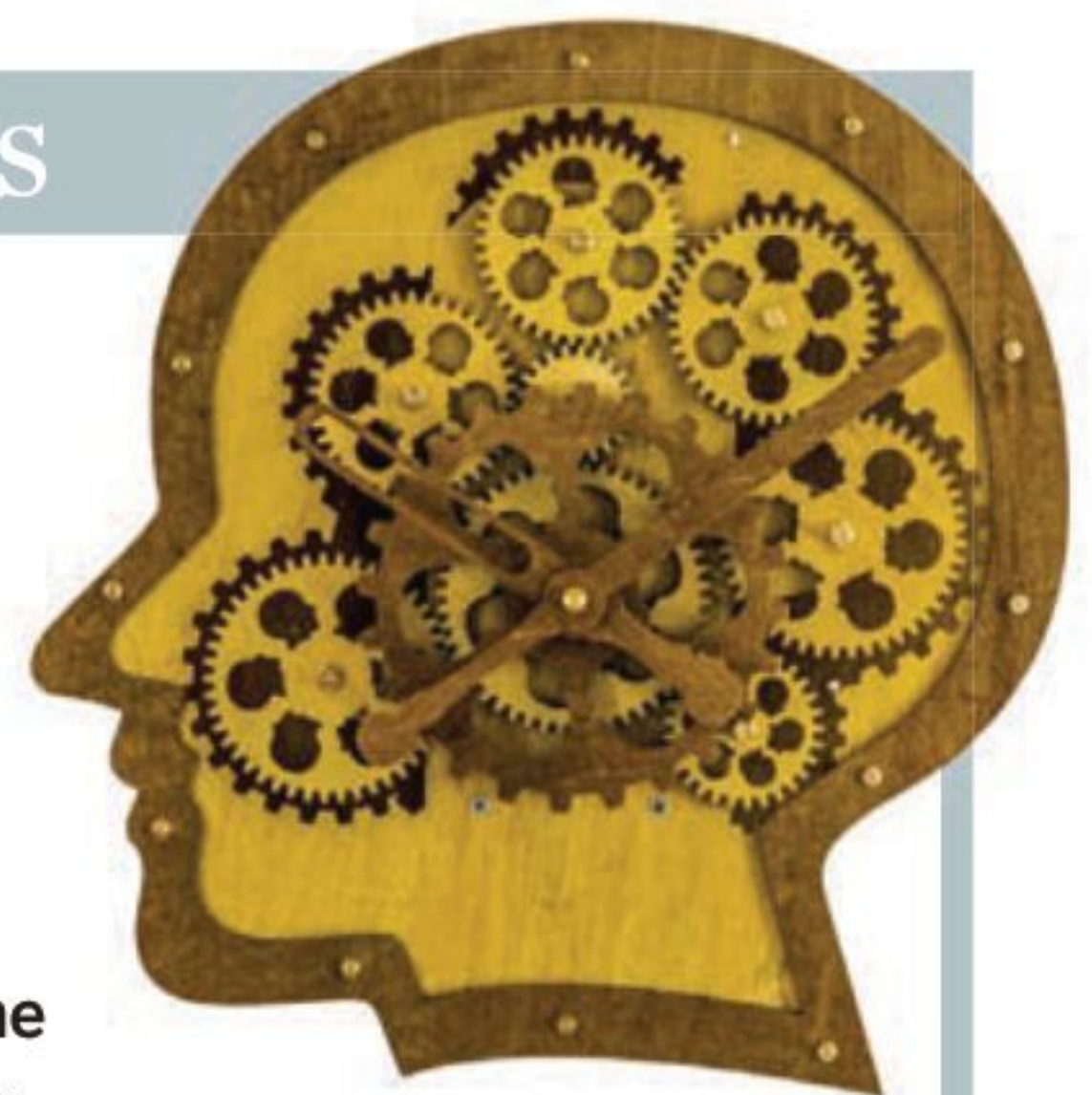
OUR BRAINS ARE DESIGNED to keep us safe, and one of the ways it does this is by ensuring that we fit in.

Doing what you love requires you to override your innate desire for approval. When we conform to avoid vulnerability, we live on top of a deadening feeling of self-betrayal. To shake off our inbuilt wish for approval, get clear on your 'why'. Journal around these prompts to find yours:

- **Why is it essential for you to honour your truth?**
- **What makes this urgent?**

As you focus on your 'why', you will start to care less about other people's opinions and feel braver to honour your own.

Join Kia Cannons for our 'Do What You Love' video series and more happy hacks at tinyurl.com/psyhappyhack; psychologiestv.co.uk is a platform where world-class experts are interviewed about productivity, work-life balance and relationships; happyhacks.libsyn.com



Thinking head clock, £53,
redcandy.co.uk

OUR ROAD TO RESILIENCE

Feel good in the great outdoors

Spending time outside is one of the best ways to recentre yourself and regain balance, writes our resilience champion, Katie Piper



By Katie Piper

IMMERSING YOURSELF in nature calms a busy mind and brings clarity to your thoughts.

Taking a break from artificial noise and screens through mini outdoor adventures brings a sense of peace I can't go without. In lockdown, I fell into bad habits, sitting at my laptop working without taking a break for fresh air, but now I diarise outside time because I've realised how important it is for a positive mindset and mood.

Get outside any way you can and feel the difference! Try the following:

1 Mindful walking. Many of us are time-poor and seeking ways to reduce stress. Taking time for yourself is crucial and going for a solo walk while actively practising mindfulness is the perfect way to achieve both.

2 Running. As daunting as it seems, once you get going, running ticks all the boxes: Time outside, time alone, time to think and improved health. Running is my saviour and is a great way to ease anxiety. I launched my 'Zero to 7k' programme because it's all about getting started and having a community to encourage you.

3 Try a new activity. If you have children, there are many fun, free pastimes – a picnic, treasure hunt, nature spotting or finding elements for crafting when you get home. There are also nature parks with play areas and water sports centres where you can hire canoes or pedalos.

Tip: *If you struggle to find time to go outdoors, use walking as a mode of transport. I've tried this as much as possible recently and it's such a mood booster. You may have to leave earlier, but it is truly worth it because the benefits are endless.*



Hang out with Katie

'A Night in with Katie Piper' is a live-streamed event in which Katie speaks about acceptance, moving forward and staying positive. Join her at fane.co.uk/katie-piper-online



Up and running

Believe in yourself and get fit with 'Zero to 7k' motivation. Find out more at zeroto7k.com

Go to psychologies.co.uk for more words of wisdom and strength from our monthly columnist, the indomitable Katie Piper



LOUD AND PROUD

THIS MONTH, our Dossier coaches you to speak up with confidence. Our in-house coach, Nikki Peterson, shares four key questions to explore



Vintage-style gramophone, £205, yellow
octopus.com.au

- **How and where can you take small steps to practise speaking your mind and being braver?**
- **What do you fear about speaking up and saying how you really feel or what you honestly think?**
- **How would it feel to speak up, stand out and be responsible for creating positive change?**
- **How are you able to help others and yourself by speaking out?**

LEARNING TO SPEAK openly in any environment and say what you truly think and feel will allow you to lead a more authentic life. Speaking your mind is highly beneficial for your wellbeing and may lead to a fairer society, and who doesn't want that?

'Psychologies' team coach Nikki Peterson hosts our live coaching hour at 3pm every Wednesday. Join her on Facebook @Psychologiesmagazine. Follow @nikkipeterson_ and read more at tigerbeecoaching.co.uk. See our Dossier on page 48

LESSONS IN ADULTHOOD

If at first you don't succeed...

Failure stings, writes Harriet Minter – who took six attempts to pass her driving test – but her determination to be free still gets her motor running

Can you remember the first time you failed? I can – it was an English test. I was eight years old and I got 48 per cent, which even then I knew was not a pass. I resented that score so much I made every effort to never fail at anything again, and I managed – until I started learning to drive.

If I drove you now, you'd think I'd passed first time. When I'm behind the wheel of my car, I am in a place of total pleasure. A good drive feels like dancing to me – there's a fluidity and ease to it that is hard to find in other parts of life.

I grew up in a tiny village in the countryside. If you wanted to leave, you had to rely on a bus that came once a day and went as far as the neighbouring village. Learning to drive represented freedom. I would be able to take off at a moment's notice and no one could stop me – a feeling I suspect is within all teenagers but feels particularly relevant to anyone who grew up in the middle of nowhere.

Time to hit the open road

As I'm sure you've guessed, I did not pass my test the first time, nor second, nor third. In total, it took me six attempts and two years. I was so shocked when I finally passed that I didn't even drive myself home. I let my mother take the

wheel of our beaten-up Mini Metro and, for the millionth time, I sat in the passenger seat.

But, when I went out for my first solo drive, I relished the exuberance of freedom and aloneness, and that feeling has never faded. Even now, as an adult who makes her own decisions about where and when she wants to go, I still feel intense excitement about setting off on a road trip by myself. Partly, it's the thrill of an adventure, but it's also because I am reminded of those two years when I tried, and failed, to pass my test.

Like a dog with a bone

I remember how much I wanted it, the hundreds of hill starts and the dozens of times I listened to my dad patiently explain how to reverse around a corner. I think back to the extra waitressing shifts I worked to afford more lessons and yet another test. And I remember the five times I picked myself up from

extreme disappointment – the way I supported my fear of not being good enough until it had calmed down enough to give it another go.

In those two years, I learned how to want something badly enough that I'd keep going until I got it. And, every time I start my car, I feel as if I'm turning the key in the ignition of my own perseverance.

For weekly wisdom from Harriet, sign up for her newsletter at tinyletter.com/harrietminter. Follow her on Twitter and Instagram @harrietminter





“When I was 12, I had cassette tapes about the power of positive thinking; I’d listen to them religiously”

TV presenter, nature lover and walking devotee Julia Bradbury chats to Rachel Dobson about the secret to her zest for life, how her upbringing influences her parenting style and why she embraces being 50

We’re used to seeing Julia Bradbury atop cliffs, striding across hills, through fields and up mountains, enthusing about big skies, fresh air and their benefits for mental and physical health. But, beyond the trademark puffer jacket and hiking boots, she is on a mission to spread a message of conservation, powered by proactivity and education.

The mother of three began her career as an entertainment reporter before hosting consumer affairs programme ‘Watchdog’ and Sunday-night favourite ‘Countryfile’, before returning to her love of hiking, nurtured by her father, Michael, in the Peak District during her childhood in nearby Sheffield. Most recently, Bradbury reminded us of the natural beauty of Britain in ‘Cornwall And Devon Walks’, which kept our outdoor dreams alive through lockdown.

Q You’ve described your childhood as idyllic. Can you expand on that?

A I don’t suppose I knew at the time that it was idyllic, but with the wonderful tool of hindsight, I do celebrate the fact that I had a lovely, loving childhood and it’s the foundation of my life. Having loving parents gives you great freedom as it affords you the confidence to try new things and take risks, because you know that if it doesn’t work out, you have something to fall back on. That’s not to say that if you don’t have a perfect childhood you can’t be a happy human being – there are millions of examples of people who have strived and overcome difficult childhoods. But I think it does frame your life differently. I’m grateful to my parents for giving me that.

Q What are your parents like? Do they have similarities, or are they opposites?

A My parents are so different. My father is bright intellectually and he’s from a frosty English family. He was sent to boarding school when his parents emigrated to Australia and then New Zealand. He’s loving, but sometimes finds it >>>

difficult to demonstrate his love. My mother, Chrissi, is a self-starter who came from a close Greek family that emigrated to Cardiff and suffered racism. She had to push and hustle – leaving school at 16 and getting a job. Dad was trying to find love, acceptance and a family unit and Mum was trying to find acceptance in a different way. They came together and they are still together.

Q Where do you think your bubbling positivity comes from?

A I don't know why but, when I was about 12, I had these cassette tapes that were all about the power of positive thinking, and I would listen to them religiously. My mother had a friend who was an advocate of positive thinking and I remember being in her house while Mum and her were talking, while I had the tapes. There was also a little blue book called *The Power Of Positive Thought*, which I have to this day. It really speaks to me.

Q You and your husband, Gerard Cunningham, have three children – Zephyrus, nine, and twins Xanthe and Zena, six. How do you emulate your happy childhood with your offspring?

A I haven't given them the cassettes! But I do impress upon them how you can take control of your emotions and that it's fine to be sad, but let's talk about it. Mostly, I shower them with love, like my parents did me.

Q You have endometriosis and had to have five rounds of IVF before you had your twins. How did you get through that?

A I walked! I usually work out quite hard; I do weights and interval training, yoga and walking but, when you're going through IVF, you really don't want to do tough physical exercise, because you're tired and don't feel great. Walking is the perfect exercise because you can either push yourself or take it easy, while making sure you are getting outside, getting the blood pumping and the brain active, but you're not killing yourself. I believe walking is one of the best forms of therapy, both physical and mental. I walk every single day.

Q Was it tough to leave *Countryfile* because you felt that you would have more chance of having a baby?

A The travel and long hours with *Countryfile* made it hard – but it's difficult for everyone. Some women

don't feel able to share with their boss that they're having IVF because they're worried about being discriminated against in the workplace. It's outrageous that we're giving birth, are the world's workforce, the carers of the world, contributing trillions to the economy in free care, and yet we have to fight for promotion and maternity pay if we dare to go off and have babies.

“I believe walking is one of the best forms of therapy, both physical and mental. It's the perfect exercise and I walk every single day ”

Q What do you hope will change with regards gender equality in your children's lifetime?

A I hope that things are going to change towards men and it will be accepted that men can and do have as much responsibility for the children as women.

Q How does equality play out in your household and relationship?

A We pretty much have an equal partnership. I'm lucky in the fact that Gerard has his own

business, so can manage his own time. He recently did a business course and one of the questions on his personality profile was about the most important part of his day. He said it was walking his son to school and he was marked highly positive for that because it's about balance.

Q You turned 50 last summer – do you worry about being sidelined in your career?

A I'm still ambitious and driven and I mitigate what may be a potential slide in my work by pushing for my own projects. The last four out of five series I've done have been my ideas and I've co-developed them. I have to be resilient because you do get knocked back, but I always try and work a way around any stumbling blocks.

Q Similarly to your mother, you chose to leave school to work in an advertising agency. Do you regret not going to university?

A When I was younger, I didn't have a thirst for knowledge like I have now. Last year, I did a 12-week course at Harvard on the environment and the climate crisis and the impact on health. One of my missions is to spread awareness about the importance of nature in people's lives. I think that because we're inherently selfish, until we understand how important nature and the natural world is for our health, we won't stop destroying the world.



TOP Julia Bradbury at Durdle Door in Dorset on *Britain's Greatest National Treasures*
ABOVE Hiking Helvellyn

in the Lake District on *Britain's Favourite Walks: Top 100*
RIGHT Backstage at *Good Morning Britain*



Q You love the great outdoors and open spaces, but live in London, one of the biggest cities on the planet. Are you concerned about pollution?

A Of course! We're lucky because we have a garden and have planted hedges that suck up toxins and we've also created a vertical garden with flowers that attract bees – basically, we've done everything we can to bring nature into the city. I love both the city and the countryside – I'm a split personality. The reality is that in the UK, around 80 per cent of people live in an urban environment, so I would never want to be negative about living in a city. I would rather work towards our towns and cities being greener. I want more green roofs, more trees, gardens, hedges, window boxes and electric car charging spaces.

Q Here at *Psychologies*, we hold meetings while walking our dogs and find the best, most creative ideas come in muddy fields...

A It's wonderful when you go for a long walk with a friend and there are beautiful pauses in the conversation, perhaps because you're concentrating on breathing to get up a hill. Then you get to the top, share the view and carry on talking. Who knows where the conversation will lead? My dad started me walking in Derbyshire and I've always had a connection with the outdoors and big landscapes – adding the physical motion of walking to it helps me think through my problems.

Divorce settlement

When Bianca Barton's* husband walked out, it broke her heart. The road to healing was tough but, five years later, she is happier than ever

My son and I were out walking on New Year's Eve when a couple crossed the road in front of us, hand in hand. It was my ex-husband of 25 years with the woman he had left me for five years ago. It was the first time I had seen them together.

Thirty years ago, this man and I would have been celebrating the new year as newlyweds. It was clear that he had moved on. Watching them, I might have been devastated – but, in that moment, I realised that I was finally over him.

Point of no return

Six months before, a friend had told me that the man who had once been the love of my life was engaged. It sent me into a tailspin. I believed I had healed, but I felt rejected all over again. My friend was shocked at my reaction. 'It's been four years,' she said, 'don't let him ruin any more of your life!'

Over the following six months, I had CBT with a therapist, the latest stage in a determined battle to recover and move out of the dark place I often found myself. That New Year's meeting showed that it had been worth it. When I look back on that day now, I am brimming with pride at how content I am with the new life that I have created for myself. I would not swap it for anything.

In July 2015, just as our younger son was

packing for university, my husband bluntly told me that he was leaving too. There had been plenty of warning signs. Six months earlier, he had started a job working miles away during the week. I had just secured a fantastic teaching job, but I knew he felt lost.

Drifting away

When he came home at the end of the week, I was buzzing with news, but he seemed preoccupied and uninterested. Over the following months, instead of coming back to his family, he went to his sports club. I would call him, but there would be no answer. I would cook his favourite meal, which would stay untouched in the fridge. I knew something was badly wrong.

I asked him, 'Are we OK?' Without hesitation, he said that he had feelings for someone else. I suggested relationship counselling. He refused. Three days later, he told our two boys that he didn't love me any more, packed his bags and left the family home. I was devastated and felt humiliated.

I continued my life on autopilot. With both my boys at uni, I pretended to friends that I was coping. In reality, I was engulfed by a tidal wave of grief. I would come home after work and go to bed without eating. I felt lonely and gripped by the agony of no longer feeling needed as a wife and mother.

More than 20 years ago, my

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“When I reflect on my married life, I don’t recognise myself. I had been passionate about literature, philosophy and singing, but I became squashed into my husband’s mould”

closest friend’s husband died suddenly and the emotions I was experiencing bore a striking resemblance to those she suffered. But she told me kindly, ‘Your situation is more complicated. I have closure, but he’ll keep reappearing in your life, reminding you of what you’ve lost.’ Her acknowledgement of the depth of my grief was reassuring.

I, robot

I was determined to keep going. I put the family house on the market, chose a divorce lawyer and bought a reliable car. One night, I sat with a dozen coloured pens and plotted my dreams and goals in a mind map: countries I planned to visit, events I would love to attend, possible renovations to my new home and alternative careers.

I placed a plaque by the kettle that read: ‘She believed she could, so she did!’ I scarcely believed it, but anything to quell the pain was worth a try. I refused to give up on the strong woman I knew lay beneath that deep layer of psychological pain.

I had always been a confident person, but my self-belief had faded. Rage at my ex-husband, combined with vengeful feelings towards the woman who had usurped me, bubbled inside me. An avalanche of guilt and shame about my feelings followed. I ignored my emotions and battled on.

When a colleague told me that he had seen my husband at the airport going on holiday with his new partner, I pushed the hurt aside and went straight into a school meeting. As it began, I felt an excruciating pain in my head. Within hours, I was admitted to hospital with a suspected bleed on the brain that

resulted in a CT scan and lumbar puncture, leaving me incapacitated for a week. It was a huge wake-up call; I was in denial and my body was screaming at me to slow down.

When I reflect on my married life, I do not recognise myself. I married in my early 20s and was passionate about literature and philosophy. I loved singing and ran half-marathons. But soon I became squashed into my husband’s mould. We moved around a lot because of his career. I started a succession of teaching jobs, would be considered for promotion, only to be forced to resign so we could relocate. I stopped making choices for myself and went with the flow. By the time he left, I had lost touch with who I was.

Work to do

Desperate for the pain to stop, I read *Uncoupling: How To Survive And Thrive After Breakup And Divorce* by Sara Davison (Little, Brown, £14.99), which is full of stories like mine. It was comforting to feel that I was not alone.

I sought the help of a therapist and confided in friends, one of whom persuaded me not to burn my ex’s letters in case I regretted it. I have no desire to read them now, but I’m pleased they are stored in her loft as a reminder that he did once love me.

I started journalling. Instead of focusing on vitriolic thoughts, I filled notebooks with all the things that I was grateful for in my life and wrote lists of my achievements, however big or small. I was amazed at how many there were when I thought about it.

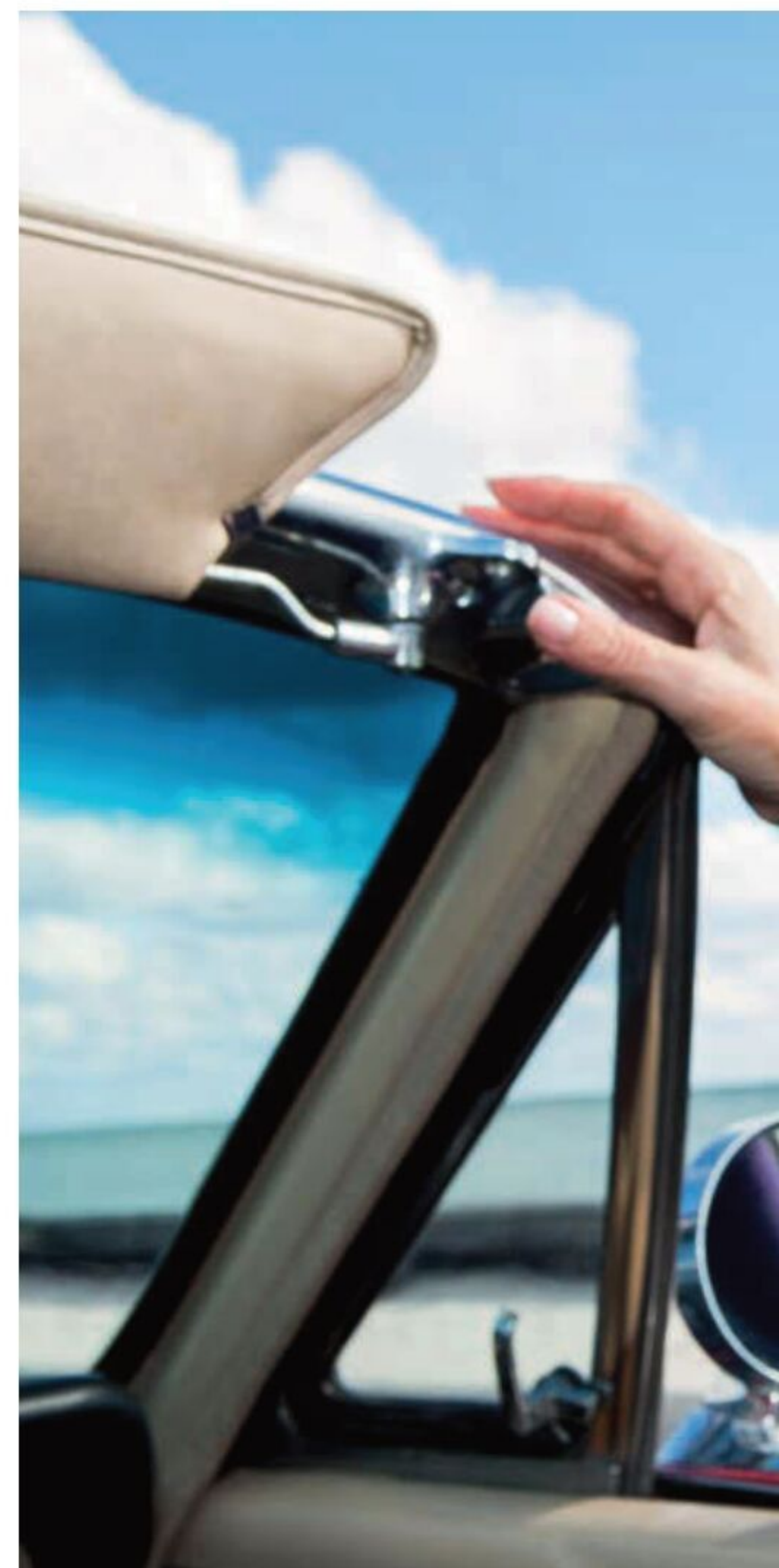
Meaningful change was gradual. My therapist taught me how to tune into

my body and mind through meditation. The first time he guided me through a mindfulness session, he said: ‘Do you realise that you are holding your breath?’ I had no idea.

I learned self-compassion, telling myself every day that it was OK to feel hurt and I was doing well. I was learning how to be the guardian of my own heart. I accepted that although I had no control over my ex’s decision to leave, I had choices about what to do with my life without him. As a couple, we had drifted into habits, and I was unconsciously maintaining them. With each decision, from buying shower gel to cooking a meal, I began to ask myself, ‘What do *you* want?’

Pain and progress

Tiny changes turned into bigger, braver ones. In 2018, I planned a solo trip to India to compensate for the fact that my sons would be spending Christmas with their father and





“ I learned self-compassion, telling myself that it was OK to feel hurt and I was doing well. I was learning how to be the guardian of my own heart ”

another woman. I visited the Taj Mahal on Christmas Day and paused near the bench where Princess Diana had sat in that famous image. I smiled at the camera, but I missed my sons. Life was getting easier, but I still had a long way to go.

And there it was

After seeing my ex with his fiancée on New Year's Eve, I revisited my mind map from the early days. I was thrilled to note that I had achieved nearly all my goals and the world had become a brighter place.

During lockdown, I wrote a light-hearted blog and collected

quite a following. I had rekindled an interest in politics and, more importantly, I had my sense of humour back.

Recently, I went for a walk with another friend whose husband had died. As we passed through a kissing gate, she said, 'Mark and I used to kiss here every time.' I felt sad for her, but it was an a-ha moment for me. I realised that I am living a life I love – one that would never have existed while I was married to a man who didn't value me. It has taken five long years, but every bit of the pain has been worth it for the happiness I have found on the other side of divorce.

How to navigate your breakup

Try these coping strategies from author Sara Davison

'MY ADVICE IS ALWAYS to work on the relationship if you can,' says Sara Davison, 'but there are times when you must face the fact that a marriage isn't working. If you are with a partner who doesn't love you, it will damage your self-esteem.' This is her advice for those headed for divorce:

- **Get a support team in place.** It's easy to get overwhelmed by divorce from a financial, legal and emotional perspective. Find experts who can answer your questions and give you the best advice. This protects your interests and dials down your stress.
- **Keep some fun in your life.** Divorce can be a rollercoaster of emotions, so ensure you find ways to laugh and connect with those you love.
- **Don't discuss your breakup** with everyone. Share your feelings with close friends and family, but don't get sucked into a world where the only thing you talk about is your split.
- **Write a list** of things you weren't happy with in your relationship. If you are heartbroken and find it hard to let go, this is useful. It's easy to focus only on the good bits and romanticise your relationship, but this type of thinking will keep you stuck and isn't the full picture, as your list will show.
- **Eat well and exercise.** This is crucial for wellbeing and will enable you to make better decisions.
- **Get help if you are struggling** to deal with negative emotions. Find a therapist or start reading one of the many books on coping with divorce.
- **Make uplifting plans** and put them into action.

Sara Davison's new book *The Split: Breakup To Breakthrough In 30 Days Or Less* (Speaker House, £15.50) is out now; saradavison.com

Our agony aunt, Mary Fenwick, offers a new perspective on whatever is troubling you

“I can’t stand my mother’s macho new boyfriend”

Q My parents split up eight years ago after my father had an affair. My mother was devastated and has been single ever since but now she has met someone new. When she told me, I was happy for her but then I met him, and I don’t like him at all. He is really controlling and domineering – the sort of person I just don’t like.

Since then, he has virtually moved in with her and I’m upset about it. I am at university, which hasn’t always been easy, and home was my sanctuary. I haven’t told my mum how I feel, as I’m scared she’ll tell him and things will be awkward. What should I do? **Name supplied**

A In the 1940s, psychologist Abraham Maslow described a hierarchy of needs, which is usually drawn as a pyramid with food at the base, then safety, then a sense of belonging. If those basic needs are not met, it’s hard to think about anything else. Since you’re at university, you’ll make more of your own decisions – what do I eat? Where are my people? – but you still want a secure place to retreat to from time to time.

I believe your mother will listen if you are fairly direct about this: ‘Could we have a chat? I still need you to be my mum so I can tell you

things that don’t go any further.’

The first step will be to share a bit more understanding on both sides. It’s possible that when you see macho behaviour, your mum sees someone who is dependable, decisive and takes care of her after years of being a single parent.

If you have concerns about controlling behaviour, you could say gently, ‘I’m not sure how you feel about this but I’d never forgive myself if I kept quiet when something might be wrong.’

I talked to systemic psychotherapist Lorraine Davies-Smith, who wondered about a few things: whether your mother might have waited until you left home before

allowing herself to think about a new partner; if you were having a fantastic time at uni, perhaps you would be relieved that she was getting on with her own life; and would it have been difficult to accept someone else in your close dynamic, no matter how it happened? It’s possible that the new man is triggering some of the emotions you felt over the divorce, or about men in general.

Overall, it’s understandable that you feel unsure about a new person in your life when you weren’t on the interview panel. As much as you want her to be happy, she wants the same for you, so let her know how you feel. lorrainedaviesmith.co.uk

MARY FENWICK is a writer, speaker and executive coach; she’s also a mother, divorcee and widow.

GOT A QUESTION FOR MARY?
Email mary@psychologies.co.uk, with ‘MARY’ in the subject line.

FOR MORE about Mary’s work in leadership and team coaching, her *Writing Back to Happiness* programme and free resources, go to maryfenwick.com



PHOTOGRAPH: VICTORIA BIRKINSHAW

“I’m in debt because of the pandemic and don’t see a way out”

Q I am a freelancer and my work has been badly affected by coronavirus. For the first time in my life, I’m in debt – up to my limit on my overdraft and credit card, which I used to pay off every month.

It makes me feel sick and panicky every time I think about it and my work situation is not improving. What can I do to get back on track?
Name supplied

A I know how hard it feels to open up about debt. I also know you will feel better as soon as you talk to one of the organisations that can help. Having a

good credit history ironically means that you have not needed to explore your options before now.

As a freelancer, your personal and business money is slightly more intertwined than an employee or a limited company, so it’s important to get guidance that takes that into account. The charity Business Debtline would be a good place to start. They can talk about specifics such as ‘breathing space’ which means you ask creditors not to contact you for 30 days while you can get debt advice.

Perhaps you could ask a good friend or family member to support you to make the first contact, but only if you can trust them to be

supportive and non-judgmental.

Financial worries are stressful, and research says that half of adults with debt will also struggle with mental health, including feeling sick or panicky as you describe. It would be a good idea to talk to your GP. Even if you decide not to seek treatment, you may want to tell your creditors that you are experiencing mental health issues. It is your choice, but it may help with your negotiations.

You’re not the first, last or only person to suffer like this – which is incredibly hard to remember in the middle of the night – but thank you for sharing. You’ll have helped someone else to feel less alone too. *businessdebtline.org*

“My siblings never thanked me for caring for our dying mum”

Q My mum died recently after living with dementia for 10 years. I was her main carer, which was exhausting and, towards the end, I gave up my job. My two siblings helped out from time to time but I did the lion’s share.

After Mum died, they thanked the professional carers, but neither of them thanked me. I feel resentful and want to break contact with them both. Please help me resolve this.
Name supplied

A What a fantastic thing to do, looking after your mother in her final years. It must have been hard to watch her deteriorate, and you probably had to put your own needs and feelings aside time and time again. Assuming the care was given by choice, you’ll always know that you acted with

integrity and kindness in line with your beliefs, and no one can take that away from you.

Unfortunately, death does not always bring the bereaved closer, as you have found. However, I think it is worth trying to share your perspective with your siblings. The worst that could happen is that there is a rift, but you are considering breaking off contact anyway. If you suspect that it might feel like two against one, approach the person you find slightly easier and open the conversation with curiosity: ‘How has it been for you since Mum died?’ I know it’s a cliché, but if you seek first to understand, you might spot an opening for connection.

Family therapists are experts in this field and, from my own experience, I know that just a few sessions can enable a more constructive way forward. One aspect you might explore

is sibling roles – it’s common to have labels, such as the responsible one (you), but also the black sheep or the one who’s cute or funny. Each of these roles has pluses and minuses and, for your own wellbeing, you could choose which parts of the dutiful sibling you want to carry forward. *aft.org.uk*

Be part of our tribe

Join the Life Leap Club and receive free coaching from our experts. All you have to do is subscribe to access free coaching videos, inspirational resources and masterclasses. Go to psychologies.co.uk/life-leap-club-new-subscribers. View video content with Mary at psychologies.co.uk

HOW TO...

Create a dynamic LinkedIn profile

With many of readjusting to the post-Covid world, it's key to showcase yourself in the best possible light professionally – and the first point of contact is online. Personal branding expert Claire Durrant shows us how to make an impact

'FIRST IMPRESSIONS COUNT, so it's important to build a LinkedIn profile that packs a punch,' says social media specialist Claire Durrant. 'Your LinkedIn profile is your professional online presence and will be viewed by employers, business partners, colleagues and investors. So, whether you're looking for a job or using LinkedIn to grow your business, it's never been more important to ensure your profile works for you.'

CHOOSE A PROFILE PHOTOGRAPH that reveals your personality. Use something recent and recognisable, and ensure your file name includes your name, location and keywords because Google indexes LinkedIn profile photos, for example, 'Claire-Durrant-Cambridge-Personal-Branding.jpg'.

WRITE A HEADLINE that captures attention and gives a rounded idea of who you are and what you have to offer. In which area or industry are you an expert? How do you help others? Instead of saying you are a 'finance manager', try 'corporate finance manager, helping business leaders create financial security'.

OPEN WITH AN ATTENTION-GRABBING FIRST LINE in your 'About' section. Focus on your achievements or projects that you're proud

of rather than a list of former jobs. Write in the first person, not third. Make it personal. Share your passion for your profession. Don't forget to use industry keywords.

ADD YOUR BEST-PERFORMING POSTS in your 'Featured' section or links to ventures that were a resounding success for you – this is your opportunity to illustrate what excites you and show people why they should work with you.

DON'T JUST LIST YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES in the 'Experience' section – focus on projects that have fired you up. Let your enthusiasm for your work shine through.

LISTING YOUR EDUCATION not only validates your skills, it aids recruiters when matching your profile to positions that require certain qualifications.

ASK FOR RECOMMENDATIONS from colleagues and your boss – they are a powerful way of giving your skills 'social proof'.

CUSTOMISE your URL so you're easy to find, for example: [linkedin.com/in/claire-durrant](https://www.linkedin.com/in/claire-durrant)

Get free LinkedIn and online personal branding training at clairedurrant.me





Coaching could change the trajectory of your life

Do you want to find greater meaning at work, set up a side hustle or blend your experience with a new skill? Coaching could be the perfect next step. We learn how three coaches took the leap, and how coaching brought life-changing results for a start-up business owner



After 25 years at the forefront of coaching and coach training in the UK, I remain

fascinated by the psychology of human experience and behaviour.

As pioneers of coaching to the highest standards, our focus is to inspire personal growth and make the world a brighter place through exceptional coaching. More than 3,500 people have completed our International Coach Federation (ICF) ACTP-accredited training and students leave as confident coaches ready to make a difference.

Kim

**Kim Morgan MCC, CEO
Barefoot Coaching Ltd**

HOW COACHING CHANGED MY LIFE

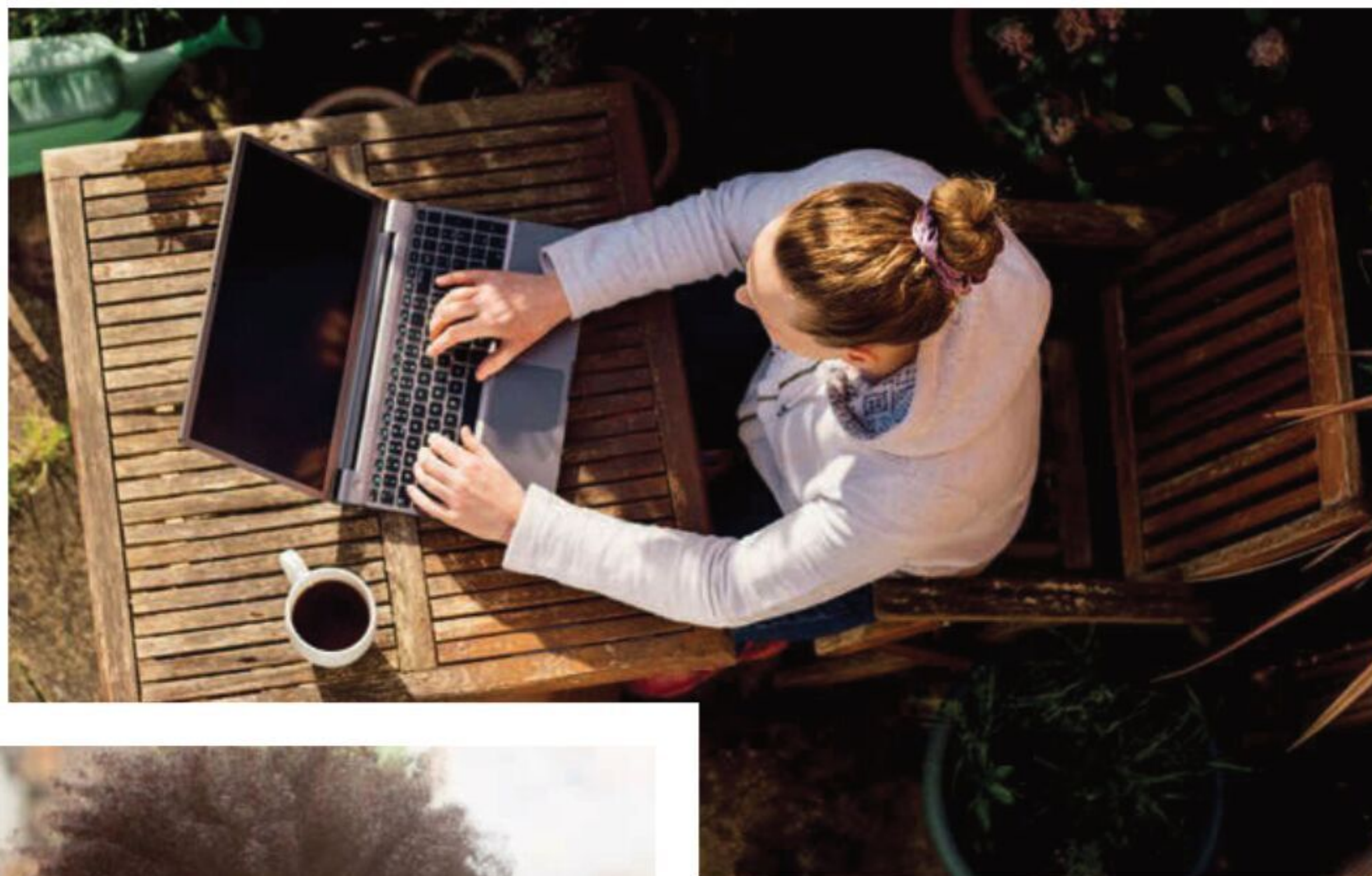
Emma Simms sought support from Barefoot-trained coach, Kate Darbyshire-Evans while launching her business. *Instead of feeling motivated, she was overwhelmed. 'I was procrastinating, losing confidence and worried about how to juggle everything,' says Emma.*

1 Coaching provided the opportunity to be heard and not feel judged, which was such a positive experience. It helped me clarify my thoughts and what was stopping me from achieving my goals. I felt safe and understood in the coaching space, which was a massive relief after feeling stressed for so long.

2 Talking things through was a major breakthrough. It reduced my stress levels so I could get on with what I needed to do. Instead of seeing every task as a mountain to climb, I slowed down and made plans instead of wasting energy worrying

and procrastinating. By breaking down my to-do list into manageable chunks, I felt in control, focused and productive. Kate's encouragement kept me on track and I could see my progress.

3 I gained confidence by accepting that it was OK to ask for help. I didn't have to be an expert on everything – it didn't diminish me as I had feared. As a result, my reluctance to ask for support was reduced and I began to connect with people who were more than happy to advise me. I am now confident about finding ways to deal with problems. Coaching was a life-saver during this stressful period.



“Coaching made me feel in control, focused and productive. Encouragement from my coach kept me on track”

FIND A COACH AND TRAIN TO BE ONE

Do you want to hire a coach, or help transform someone else's life by becoming a coach? Barefoot Coaching is here to help

FIND

Psychologies' partnership with Barefoot Coaching

gives you the tools to find a coach who meets your needs. Barefoot Coaching has been at the forefront of coaching and coach training for 25 years. It has a proven track record as a provider of high-level coaching and coach training to organisations and senior executives, nationally and internationally.

TRAIN

Train as a coach:

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taster-mornings](http://Barefootcoaching.co.uk/taster-mornings)

How I became a Barefoot coach

Three top coaches share why they decided to train



Kate Darbyshire-Evans

INITIALLY, I SAW training to become

a coach with Barefoot as a way to accelerate my personal growth after going through considerable life changes. Having personally experienced coaching before my training, I knew it was a powerful catalyst for change. Instinctively, I knew coaching as a profession was the right choice for me and I would find it rewarding and fulfilling. I wanted to share its benefits with others who were navigating uncertainty or challenging situations.



Sabrina Francis

SUPPORTING PEOPLE to get the best out of themselves and their

lives has always been my soul's mission. I leapt from a career as a teacher and leader towards an opportunity to work with author and professor Steve Peters, creator of the chimp mind-management model. But it wasn't until my coach training and the experiences that followed that I was able to access and integrate all my skills. My Barefoot training and postgraduate coaching certificate were transformative.



Becca Forshaw

I HAD A SUCCESSFUL career in sales but always felt that there

was something missing. After much soul-searching, I realised coaching could enhance my life and career. I relished the idea of connecting with individuals on a deeper level and helping them move forward. I chose Barefoot Coaching, and it was one of the best experiences of my life. I learned so many skills that enable me to support real and positive transition in my clients.

You can't eat the pain away

Like all the women in her family, Vee Sey fell into the dark hole of emotional eating and the negative spiral that follows – until she learned a healthier way to digest her feelings



SATURDAY AFTERNOONS were a purposeful affair in our house when I was a girl. We had two activities that sent us to heaven and, on sunny days

in Africa, when we should have been playing outside, we did them both at the same time – eating and reading.

We three little girls and our mother would tumble into her ugly beige Austin with the cranky sunroof and the rusted hole in the floor, and chug along to the book exchange, which would have been a short enough walk. There, a hawkish aunty with a stick-on bun swapped our weekly reads for a new haul of dog-eared treasures.

Untrue romance

It was a library of the pulpiest fiction – but with sweets: shelves of gummy, melting, chocolatey candies. Oh, what *would* we choose this week to fill our brown paper bags? On the book front, Mills & Boon were my favourite – improbable tales of first love in which the protagonist was a 19-year-old virgin with a menial job and the chap a high-earning professional in his early 40s. It was time to escape and gorge on far-from-aspirant dreams and unhealthy food that made my heart and belly ache.

Life revolved around food for my mother, and her mother before her, enough was never enough and I followed their example. In her learned behaviour and the need to forget the reality of a bad marriage that she could not leave, she taught me her coping method: lie on your bed and binge-eat rubbish. It was an affordable and accessible way out for the unhappy woman. The physical damage was plain to see but the psychological

damage burgeoned also. Before I could make my own decisions about what I should consume for good health, a pattern of self-harming though food – confused by the contentment I thought it gave me – was set.

Sticky situation

Feelings of guilt about my mother's challenging life were interwoven, along with powerlessness as a child who could not rescue her. Overeating together was solidarity. My mother was a gifted cook, but she hated to do it and, boy, did she let us know, so you can add feeling like a burden to the mix. And so, a complex relationship with food was born. We call them treats, but are they really, when you feel like choking on your twentieth toffee, and detest your lack of control?

I have found more balance, although I still struggle. I have learned that food, while certainly one of life's pleasures in all its vitality-giving forms, is only fuel. You need it, but you do not always need it when you feel awful. When you are at a loss, the answer is not between the layers of a Victoria sponge, when your heart is ripped apart, macaroni cheese won't seal the tear. Junk food will not fill a void and sugar does not anaesthetise pain or grief. There is no comfort in comfort eating.

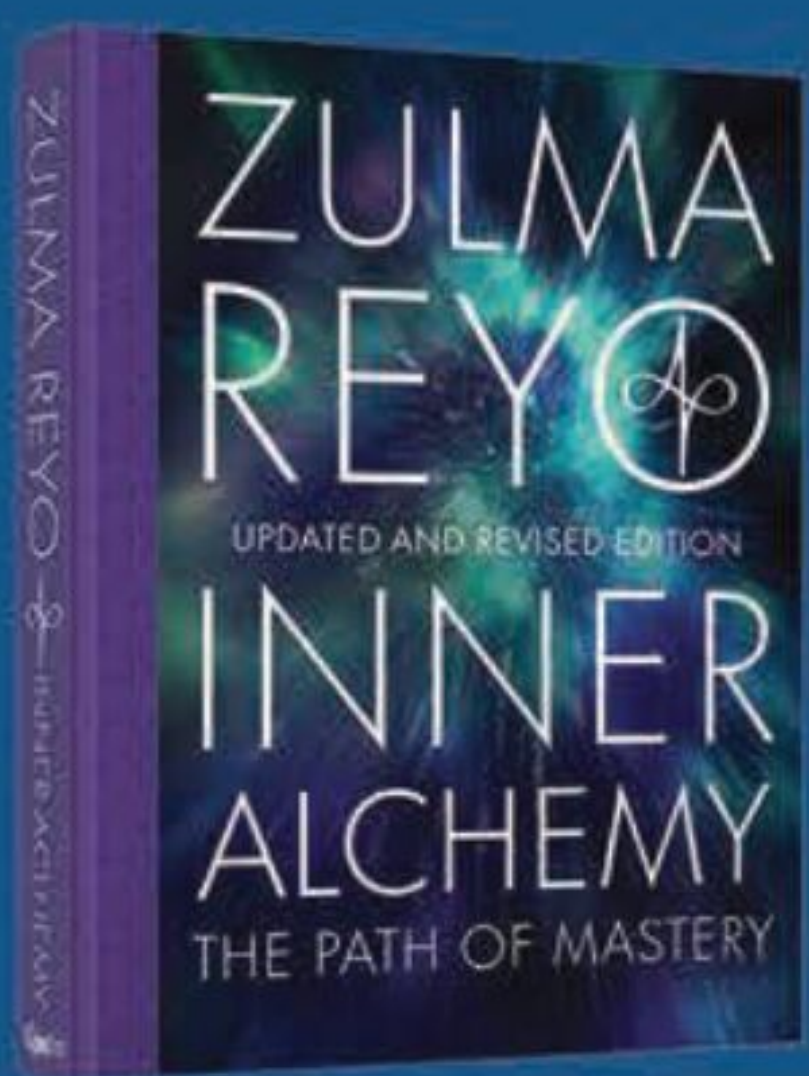
There is comfort, however, in optimum health and trying your hardest to improve your life. I am not saying it's easy, and many of us will need support, but I no longer wake up in bed with a biscuit tin that doesn't love me. These are the things about binge-eating that my mother did not tell me – because she did not know them herself. But she was right about the books. @VeeJaneSey





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Our school's purpose is to supply the tools for self-transformation so that we may connect with greater wisdom and change this world.

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Diary of scents

Fragrance is a portal to memory and creativity, explains our writing columnist, author and coach Jackee Holder

ONE OF MY MOST CHERISHED memories of growing up is walking home from school and breathing in the succulent, sweet scent of the honeysuckle that grew out of the bushes and hedgerows of the front gardens I ambled past every day. Even now, I can close my eyes and imagine the fragrance filling the air, taking me back to those happy moments.

In the rush of life, it is easy to forget the fragrances and aromas that send you giddy, into a relaxed state or boost your energy. According to aromatherapist Valerie Ann Worwood, author of *The Fragrant Pharmacy* (Transworld, £9.99), scent provides answers to a range of questions. Writing your own scented paper trail is an easy and natural way of responding to life's challenges on the page.

The sweet smell of...

One way to ground yourself and respond to your emotions is to reconnect with the scents that make you feel good. Perfumer Jo Malone said in a recent interview that the scent of grapefruit gives her confidence and a sense that all is well.

According to Alan Hirsch, founder of the Smell and Taste Treatment and Research Foundation in the United States, the quickest way to change someone's mood is with smell.

Try writing a list of scents and aromas you associate with childhood that evoke positive memories. Tim Jacob, a biosciences professor at Cardiff University who specialises in smell, describes these as your 'autobiographical smells'.

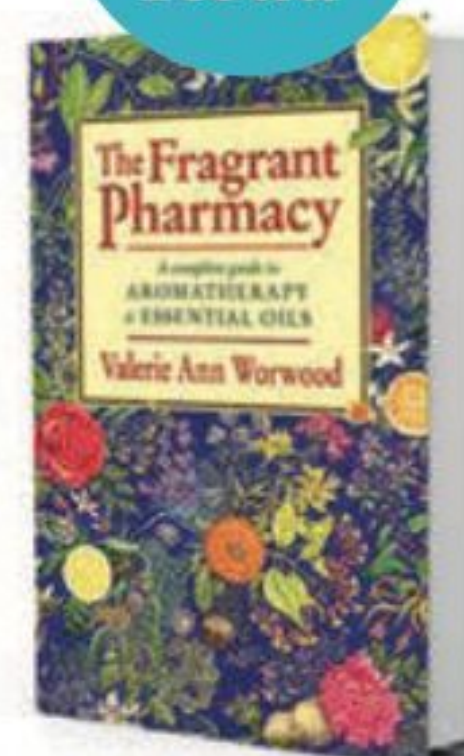
When I think of my father, I smell the wafting fragrance of Old Spice aftershave, heaving with cinnamon and orange notes. That memory reminds me that my father made me feel safe and, when I commit that memory to the page, I reconnect with that feeling of security. As journal entries, write sense memories, exploring your beloved scents and aromas. This is a creative gateway to becoming more present and mindful.

Jackee is a writer, coach and creative: jackeeholder.com; [@jackeeholderinspires](https://twitter.com/jackeeholderinspires)



“A weed is but an unloved flower! Go dig, and prune, and guide”

ELLA WHEELER WILCOX



Aromatherapy manual

Let scent guide you with this informative book about the varied uses and properties of each essential oil.

• *'The Fragrant Pharmacy' by Valerie Ann Worwood* (Transworld, £9.99)

RIGHT A reminder of a journey from lost to found with a quote from one of our favourite writers, Cheryl Strayed. Print, £4.69, etsy.co.uk



LEFT Let your colours shine through on the page. Pencil holder, £8.95, wearthlondon.com



“I have no idea what my future holds after university”

Our award-winning coach, Kim Morgan, mentors a young woman who is struggling to clarify her career prospects and find her path in life

ILLUSTRATION ANDREA DE SANTIS

Session one

“I’m in debt and worried about getting work in the post-pandemic world”

Jenna* was halfway through her final year at university and was feeling anxious that, when she finished, she wouldn’t get a job in the current climate. Her parents had paid for her to have coaching sessions. She didn’t seem terribly enthusiastic about being coached but had agreed to give it a try.

‘This final year at uni has been rubbish because of the pandemic and I’m worried about my future. I don’t know if I will get a job and I’ve got a big student loan to pay back. I did a languages degree and recently read that people who do languages are the least likely to get jobs using their degree. I don’t know if that’s true but I’m not sure what I want to do anyway,’ she said. I asked Jenna why she chose to study languages. ‘I was good at them,’ she replied.

I asked how much it mattered to her if she didn’t use languages in her work. ‘Not at all,’ she said.

I asked Jenna a number of other questions about what she enjoyed and she gave me one-word answers.

I thought that if this is how Jenna presents herself at interviews, she won’t get very far. It felt a bit like pulling teeth. However, as a coach, I know that direct questions can sometimes feel too confrontational. People can feel safer and you can get more meaningful answers if you avoid direction questions. I asked her to draw me a picture of what her life is like now, and another of what she wants her life to be like.

Jenna was so engrossed that she asked if she could finish the picture at home and bring it back to the next session.

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Session two

Overcome obstacles

Jenna was animated as she talked about the drawings of her life now and the life she would like.

While drawing, she realised that she wants a job (ideally in a start-up) where she can use her creativity and have freedom to generate ideas.

‘So, what do you need to do to achieve this?’ I asked. Jenna replied with a shrug and ‘I don’t know’. I realised that we were back where we started with monosyllabic answers.

Sometimes, a coach needs to ‘hold up the mirror’ to clients and tell them what they observe about them. I told Jenna that I noticed that when asked a question, she gives a one-word answer and shuts down. I compared this with the enthusiasm she showed when she was thinking out loud for herself.

Jenna was upset and asked: ‘What’s your point?’

‘My point is that what happens in interviews is that you are asked direct questions! I am wondering how prospective employers will get to see the best of you.’

Jenna admitted that she had received this feedback before. ‘I have realised that I really want to work in a creative industry and I am prepared to do what I need to do to get it.’

‘What do you need to do?’ I asked. We both burst out laughing and I apologised for asking another direct question.

‘What would someone else do?’ I asked.

Jenna laughed and replied: ‘Easy. They would get some interview skills training!’

“I lost my voice and my confidence when I was put on the spot. But it’s time I started to own my opinions”

More sessions

Find the fire within

I worked with Jenna for several more coaching sessions. I supported her interview skills training by doing mock interviews and practice presentations.

We worked on her confidence and self-belief. I learned that she was the youngest of five children in a noisy household where they used to play lots of games and do quizzes. Jenna had grown up thinking that she was not quick-thinking because her older brothers were loud and competitive and knew more than she did.

‘I lost my voice and my confidence when I was put on the spot. If I look back now, I realise that, of course, I wasn’t as quick or knowledgeable as they were because I was only young. But it’s time that I started to own my voice and my opinions.’

For more, see barefootcoaching.co.uk or follow @BarefootCoaches on Twitter

Coaching exercises

Are you battling to find your way and unsure of where to go? Try these tools to develop your plans

MAP OF YOUR LIFE

Take a large sheet of paper and divide it into three sections. The left-hand side of the map represents the land you are living in now. The right-hand side of the map represents the land you’d like to live in. Between these two lands is a river that you have to cross.

- Without thinking about it too hard, draw the land you are living in now. What is in it? Use symbols, drawings or words to describe your current landscape.
- Move over to your ideal landscape – the place you’d like to be in. Fill this with words, symbols and images to represent all you’d like to have in your life.
- Turn to the gap between the two lands. What is stopping you from getting from where you are to where you want to be? Use words, pictures and symbols to represent the obstacles you have to overcome.
- Draw a bridge that will get you across the gap. What is it made up of and who is there to help you cross it?
- When you’ve done your map, write down what your first three steps are going to be and when you’ll take them.

WRITE YOUR OWN JOB REFERENCE

Complete the following reference for yourself, with as much kindness as if you were writing a reference for a dear friend in whom you believe:

- Name
- Greatest personal qualities
- Greatest professional qualities
- What words do others use to describe you?
- You can have total confidence in yourself because...
- During the last two years, you have managed to...

FIND A FULFILLING FUTURE ROLE

Draw three large overlapping circles on a piece of paper. Use coloured pens and sticky notes to bring this exercise alive.

Write one of these questions in each circle:

- What gives me meaning?
- What gives me pleasure?
- What are my strengths?

Put as many answers to these questions in each of the circles. You can keep coming back to the questions. It is interesting to see the things that overlap in all three areas. You may want to use these as a checklist for when you are considering applying for jobs or embarking on a career change.



I want to be a...

Are you lacking direction at work or in life? Look back to the things you enjoyed doing as a child, writes Hazel Davies – the younger you has vital information to share

When my friend, Andy, was growing up, he wanted to be a lifeboat captain. He sailed regularly with his family but the thought of pursuing it as a career seemed ludicrous for a bookish and musical boy.

Andy made a career for himself in the music industry running a record label, while every so often hankering after the sound of the waves.

It's a scenario with which I am familiar. My childhood passion was music. I would sit at our ancient piano, imagining myself at Woodstock hanging out with Bob Dylan and Joan Baez. I've spent the best part of my life saying, 'I would have been a singer if...' But becoming a musician just wasn't something people like me from my background did, so I didn't bother to look into it too much, and chose a career as a writer.

Four years ago, Andy and his family moved to the coast. He started volunteering with the local lifeboat crew and, when a job as a coxswain came up, he went for it.

The move involved financial sacrifice but his family was supportive and, five months on, he says: 'It was the right decision. My old work was beginning to feel routine and unimportant. Living up to the trust the volunteers place in me is a big responsibility, but it doesn't feel stressful because I have the support at work and home to get the job done.'

His life changed dramatically. 'In the music

business, I was in St Petersburg one week and Los Angeles the next. Now, I'm on call 12 days out of 14, so I can't be more than five minutes from the boathouse.' These days, his work clothes are overalls, and socialising involves catching up with fishermen in the local club. But, he says, 'Once I started volunteering, it felt more important than anything else.'

I knew it all along

My children are seven and nine, and playing music till the cows come home, entering exams and considering music as a career. I've joined them, singing in two choirs, taking up the trumpet and finally plucking up the courage to enter my Grade 7 violin exam. It's probably too late for me to make a hit record, but musical me feels closer to the childhood Hazel than the one sitting at my desk writing. I'm happy and have no regrets, but I sometimes wonder why I didn't listen to that nine-year-old telling herself she'd like to be a folk singer, or why I didn't fight harder for music to be a bigger part of my life.

Recently, a friend told me about an art class that she was taking. At the age of 47, it had dawned on her that she was finally living the life she imagined as a child, having spent years pursuing what she considered 'proper' hobbies.

We do this a lot. A survey by Zety shows that 82 per cent of people who did not fulfil their childhood dreams are not pursuing them at all

in adulthood, and research from Open Study College finds that only one in three people are doing the job they dreamed of when they were young.

Many of my peers say the same thing – forget giving up the day job, the thought of going to a lino-cutting class seems self-indulgent; that they'd love to be in a band but that's for people without children and jobs.

We're bombarded with advice on how to be the 'new you', make changes and seek fresh challenges – but what about rediscovering the old things?

Self-seeking wisdom

Working out what we really want could mean going back to a time when our brain wasn't so set in its ways. 'Our pre-frontal cortex – the bit we use for decision-making and complex cognitive tasks – doesn't develop until we are in our 20s,' says psychologist Philip Karahassan. 'This means we rely on our amygdala to make decisions when young. This part of the brain is associated with emotions and impulses, so we're only thinking about ourselves, and we don't have to worry about money, kids or stability.'

Money, of course, is the stumbling block. It can be terrifying, Andy agrees: 'My last full-time job paid four times my Royal National Lifeboat Institution salary. It was a risk to give up those hard-to-replace contracts.'

For this reason if no other, going back to your childhood career plans might be more about accessing the

“Sometimes, it's about mixing with another version of yourself for a while, dedicating time to just being you and being a bit selfish”

“We're bombarded with advice on how to be the 'new you' and find fresh challenges, but what about rediscovering the old things?”

way the idea of doing that job made you feel. What we wanted when we were children may be quite different to our present needs but, says Karahassan, 'Thinking about the types of professions or way of life the child wanted will give us an understanding of what our needs are now, and also what we could be in the future.' For example, he says, 'Playing nurse when you're a child might mean you would get a sense of self-worth or self-esteem from a caring role. It doesn't mean a nurse specifically, but it could prompt you to look at your childhood value systems. Making a change might be about using your passion, values and creativity in a more fulfilling way.'

But it can be difficult 'once you've taken on a certain brand', says Karahassan. 'Sometimes, it's about mixing with another version of yourself for a while, dedicating time to just being you and being a bit selfish.'

LifeShine director Donna Easton runs programmes for adults who want to unravel grown-up layers and remember who they once were.

'When we were young, we indulged in activities for the sheer fun of them. Have you ever seen a dancing five-year-old worry about how good their moves are? They just enjoy the music. As we age, we decide we can no longer take part in things we aren't good at, so many of our inner desires are lost.'

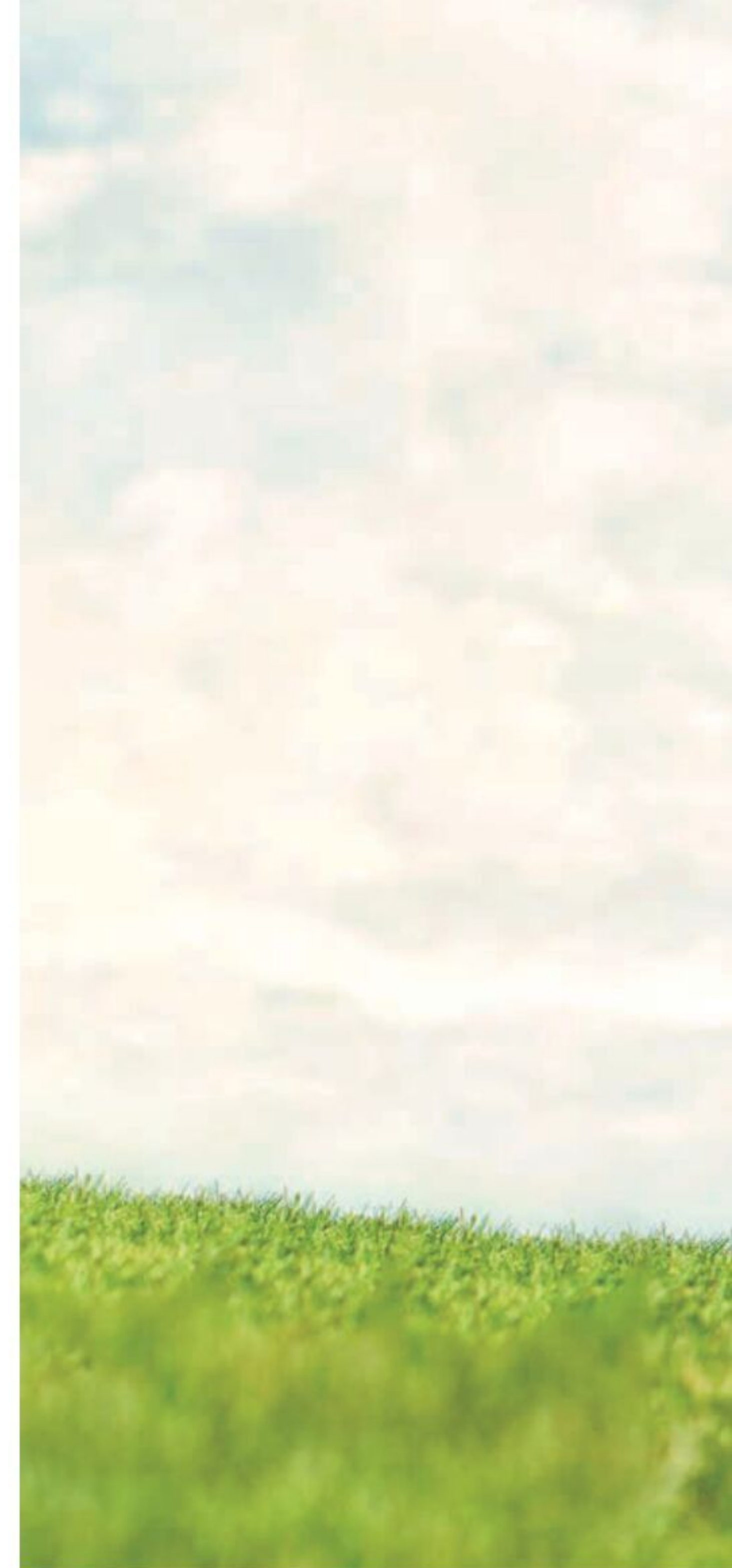
Easton's work involves using play to 'look at a specific dream, working out the core of that attraction and finding

ways to inject those elements back into the day to day. For example, if your dream was to be a pop star, what's to stop you singing every day? When we access the joy that is right at the core of our being, we awaken the wide-eyed "anything is possible" youngster inside and realise that it really is'.

Unlock the child's wishes

She takes clients through guided meditations back to moments in their childhood. 'I invite them to remember times when they felt like superheroes or when they were proud of themselves, when people were smiling and telling them how great they were,' she says.

'We can also open up our childhood memory bank by being specific. Ask yourself: What was the first thing you did when you got home from school? Did you spend time with your grandparents? What activities did you enjoy together? How did you spend your holidays? When you played with





“Have you ever seen a dancing five-year-old worry about how good their moves are? They just enjoy the music ”

your friends, what did you play? When you played alone, what did you play? When you were at primary school, what lessons did you *love*?

Back to the future

This imagining comes easily to me. I close my eyes and picture my grandparents' front room. I'm sifting through their record collection – Dolly Parton, Elvis Presley and Tammy Wynette, enduring loves of mine. Childhood me is telling me something.

Easton says she deliberately refers to grandparents as they are often the people who have more time and patience with us as children for beloved activities. This rings true as I recall hours listening to music with them and picturing myself on stage at the Grand Ole Opry while singing along to my grandad's harmonica.

These days, while tooting away on my trumpet, nine-year-old me glows with excitement. I'm finally where I wanted to be and I'm delighted.

I've resolved to encourage my children to never let go of these feelings like I did. When my daughter told me she could see herself having a career in politics, we had a discussion about what that could mean and how it made her feel, instead of me telling her to work hard and get good GCSEs. She might never fulfil her musical dream or be prime minister, but I hope she won't forget that she once wanted to be.

therapyin.london; mylifeshines.com

How to reignite your childhood passions

Tap into your innate self-knowledge and ability to find fulfilment

1 *Try and return to your childhood emotionally.*

Look at pictures from your past and remind yourself what you wanted and who you were when you were that age. Read your diaries if you have any. If this doesn't jog your memories, retrace the games you used to play, pick up a paintbrush, make a Fuzzy-Felt picture if you must. How do you feel? What did you want to be when you grew up? Get back in touch with your childhood dreams.

2 *Talk to people who knew you as a child.* If your

mother says, 'You always wanted to be an actor,' dig deeper. How did this childhood ambition manifest itself? How did you make your desire known? How do your schoolfriends remember you? What did they think you would be when you grew up? Have you surprised them with your choices in life?

3 *Think beyond the object or activity* to the emotional

sense of what realising your aspirations would mean for you. Ask yourself whether you are meeting that emotional need in the present. Are there ways you could do so right now? In the actor analogy, for example, did you enjoy performing as a form of expression? Do you need more creativity or playfulness in your life?

in partnership with Ollie School



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Ever wanted to make a difference and train to become a coach?
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Despite the very best efforts of our education system, it is struggling to cope with fully supporting the emotional wellbeing of our children within the curriculum. Have you ever felt that you would love to help, but were powerless to act? Well, here's your opportunity to do something positive.

The Ollie School plans to build an army of coaches who can make the world a better place, one child at a time. Ollie Coaching is a holistic approach that leads all our youngsters to a place where they can thrive in the chaos of modern living.

So many schools are battling to provide an appropriate mental health environment and busy parents are up against it in our fast-paced lives ruled by social media. That's why Alison Knowles, who was challenged throughout her life with undiagnosed dyslexia, decided to set

up the Ollie School. The Ollie methodology is all about empowering children to seek solutions and take control of their emotions, rather than be controlled by them. The Ollie School trains coaches in a blend of methodologies that brings together NLP, CBT, EFT and play therapy to make sure they cover all the bases. The Ollie methodology is all about personalisation and identifying which technique will work with each individual child – no one-size-fits-all approach here.

Licence to help

The Ollie School graduates are awarded a certified qualification in NLP and a licence to work as an Ollie coach. If helping children and their families to be more emotionally resilient appeals to you, contact us for a prospectus and let's talk about getting you with the programme.

Courses are now online and in the classroom, combining the best of both worlds with a limited number of trainees, maximising learning potential. See ollieandhissuperpowers.com



Get in touch

To train to become an Ollie coach, find a coach in your area or book an event, visit ollieandhissuperpowers.com, or contact us via email at info@ollieandhissuperpowers.com. We would love to hear from you!



PHOTOGRAPH: GETTY IMAGES

Permission granted

As Lucy Griffiths embarks on a new life in the country, she urges us to silence our inner critics, forget about shoulds and pursue happiness

AFTER YEARS OF DREAMING about country life, I've taken the leap, moving from a big city to a small village. It's so exciting, but it took me a long time to make the decision. Stepping into the unknown isn't always easy for introverts.

Perhaps you're doing what you think you *should* be doing, but it doesn't necessarily make you happy. I certainly felt like this. But shoulds suck!

It's about trusting your gut and being prepared to follow your intuition. Sometimes, we're not used to going within and really listening to what we want, and very often we ignore the warning signs when our inner GPS is flashing.

How do you tune into the passionate and purposeful voice within?

● *In what ways are you mean to yourself?*

How do you mentally beat yourself up with negative chatter? How would your life be transformed if you stopped listening to your inner critic? Catch yourself being nasty to yourself and, instead of chastising the voice, say: 'Thank you for trying to protect me. It's time to listen to another voice now. I promise I'll be OK.' Then, give yourself permission to go for what feels right, even if you don't have all the answers.

● ***This is your opportunity to ask for what you want.*** Sometimes, you don't know what you want in life, but you know exactly what you *don't* want. What do you choose to let go of?

● ***What would you do if you could be unapologetically you?*** Give yourself permission to stop pleasing others and doing what you *should* do, leaving space to do what you love. You don't have to do anything that doesn't feel right. This is your opportunity to reset your 'should button' and do what you want to do.

Lucy has co-created our series of 'Create the life you want' courses. Sign up at courses.psychologies.co.uk/loveyourlife; lucygriffiths.com



Recover from major emotional life events

Doctor Sarah Niblock, CEO of the UK Council for Psychotherapy, and psychotherapist Alivia Rose discuss how to navigate overwhelming feelings in the wake of unexpected and life-changing occurrences



THE CYCLE OF emotions that we experience when a momentous life event

takes place can leave us feeling out of control. If we've lost a loved one, a job or experienced isolation as a result of the pandemic, a chain of emotions can take hold. In the accompanying podcast with UKCP psychotherapist Alivia Rose, I seek to uncover what this emotional cycle looks like, and how therapy can offer a safe space in which to explore our emotional state.

Sarah

CEO of the UK Council for Psychotherapy

Therapist Alivia Rose explores the psychological effects of unanticipated crises that throw us into turmoil

Sometimes, things happen that turn our world upside down. A bereavement, job loss and the pandemic are all significant and unexpected events that trigger waves of emotions that can feel crushing. So, how can we find ways to cope?

It's important to remember that waves come and go. However, it's useful to have a road map of what to expect – although everyone's map will be unique. Generally speaking, we may experience anxiety and fear, and when we are scared or worried, our mind can take us to the worst-case scenario.

We might feel anguish, upset and

grief, asking the question: 'Can I bear this pain?' We may feel anger and frustration, or denial – cutting ourselves off from what's happening. We might feel depressed, rendering us numb to give us a break from the pain. Then, we can feel acceptance, when we are no longer ruled by our strong feelings, and we begin to accept what has happened and find new strength.

Path to healing

It may seem daunting to look at the road map, but the more we understand that these emotions come and go in their own sequence, the quicker the wave will pass over us.

If we feel extremely fearful or isolated, friends and family can bring a sense of support and space that is necessary to process what we are going through. However, there are times when those we love try to distract us or relieve

About UKCP and how to find a therapist

• **The UK Council for Psychotherapy (UKCP)** is the leading research, innovation, educational and



regulatory body working to advance psychotherapy for the benefit of all. We have a register of more than 8,000 individual members, who offer a range of therapy approaches for couples, individuals, families and groups. We also have more than 70 training

and accrediting organisations for those who wish to become psychotherapists.

• **To find the right therapist for you** or learn how to become a therapist, visit psychotherapy.org.uk



HOW I BECAME A THERAPIST

Learning more about herself during therapy attracted Alivia Rose to the profession

I WAS IN MY LATE TEENS when I realised that meditation alone wasn't helping me understand my feelings or why I felt the way I did. I was introduced to psychotherapy by a friend and it became a space where I could open up about my deep and painful feelings without judgment. I was fascinated and excited to learn more, and I chose to study the Gestalt psychotherapy model. I was interested in the attention to being in the present, the therapeutic relationship and the importance of the whole person. By understanding myself, I was drawn to work with others, so I could support them, often in their darkest hour.

During my career, I have integrated other therapeutic models. I ran the Gestalt Training Studio in North London and, 36 years after qualifying, I still feel privileged to listen to people in an authentic way every day and help them navigate difficult terrain. aliviarose.co.uk

our emotional waves, which can make us feel disconnected.

If you are in need of support after a bereavement, job loss or any other significant event, psychotherapy can help. Psychotherapists are trained to support you at your most difficult time and offer understanding and assistance in finding ways to help you contain and understand your strong emotions. Emotions need to be expressed and acknowledged so they can pass. The psychotherapeutic space offers calm in the eye of an emotional storm.



The podcast

Has a big life event caused you to feel a range of emotional states?

Perhaps you have lost a loved one, been made redundant or feel at a loss in terms of your identity? UKCP's Sarah Niblock and Alivia Rose discuss the cycle of emotions that come into play when something happens that is out of our control. Listen at psychologies.co.uk/recover-major-emotional-life-events-podcast-ukcp

How does a therapy session unfold?

Talking about your feelings in psychotherapy can be scary at first, but understanding your emotional road map with the help of an expert can, over time, leave you feeling reassured

1 *When a client first comes into my consulting room, they are usually ready to explore what is happening to them. The first thing I ask is what specifically brings them to therapy at this time, and they begin to open up.*

2 *As you start therapy and speak honestly about what is going on for you emotionally, sometimes for the first time, it can be unnerving. But, as a client starts to talk, I can see where they are in their cycle of emotions, and can initiate a*

conversation about the emotional road map. This often reassures a client about my ability to understand them and hold them in the psychotherapeutic space.

3 *As a psychotherapist, it is important that I articulate how normal it is to feel overwhelmed at certain times in our lives. Our work together aims to provide the space for free and frank conversation, so we can work through difficult feelings, realise that they are manageable and move to a happier state of being.*



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Suzie

Editor-in-Chief,
Psychologies

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TAKE OUR FREE 'SPEAK UP! HOW TO STAND UP FOR YOUR BELIEFS AND CHANGE YOUR WORLD' COURSE. WE RUN A FIRST-CLASS



Dossier

Speak up with confidence

HAVE YOU EVER mulled over a conversation, wishing you'd said something that was important to you, or dared to disagree? Whether at home, work or socially, we'd all like to communicate authentically and effectively. And, in a world where having an online voice can be crucial to your career, knowing how to get your message across in a calm and lucid fashion is a must-have skill.

Anita Chaudhuri explores why speaking up is vital for our wellbeing and a fairer society. She examines the barriers that keep us silent and offers strategies to help us use our voice with confidence. Take our test by therapist Sally Brown to identify what's stopping you from speaking up and ways to overcome your blocks. Poet Seamus Heaney said: 'Finding a voice means you can get your own feeling into your own words and that your words have the feel of you about them.' This Dossier shows you how.

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Find your voice and be heard

Who hasn't looked back on a conversation and thought 'if only I'd said...'? Anita Chaudhuri explores what holds us back from stating our truth, and discovers ways to communicate calmly and effectively

The other day, I found myself in an uncomfortable situation. I wanted to address someone's behaviour, but found it challenging. The person is the leader of a group I belong to and uses his position to make catty comments under the guise of 'banter'. 'Someone needs to have a word with him,' I fumed to a fellow group member. As long as that someone wasn't me...

Hold my tongue

Why is speaking up so daunting? I am no shrinking violet, yet I agonise over turning down an invitation or questioning a decision with which I don't agree. Often, I find it easier to put up and shut up – after all, no one else seems to have a problem with this guy. 'It's just his sense of humour,' said my friend after he belittled someone, but it didn't feel like a joke to me.

'It can feel safer to stay quiet and not rock the boat,' agrees Chloe Brotheridge, author of *The Confidence Solution* (Penguin, £9.99). 'So much of it comes down to conditioning. At work, for instance, if a man speaks his mind, he's a good leader but, when a woman does it, she's seen as bitchy or bossy.'

There's a beautiful quote in Brotheridge's book by author Debbie Ford, renowned for her work on the shadow self: 'The greatest act of courage is to be and to own all of who you are – without apology, without

excuses, without masks to cover the truth of who you are.' In any situation where we are required to speak up, this gets to the root of our deepest fear – that we will be seen by others and judged harshly for it.

The temptation is to hide by avoiding speaking up or copying the style and opinions of others when we do speak. Brotheridge points out that there's a tendency to disown the parts of ourselves that we

don't like. 'But the downside of filtering yourself – editing yourself down to a socially acceptable self – is that you filter out the good as well as the bad. That doesn't leave much room for authenticity.'

Who dares wins

Surprisingly, Brotheridge believes confidence is overrated. 'Bravery is more important, and you can take small, constructive steps to practise being braver.'

Every time we challenge ourselves in a small way, our nervous system may respond with fear but, when we survive that experience, something within us exhales. An inner voice says: 'Ah, this is OK. Maybe it's safe for me to speak up! Even if I did say the wrong thing, maybe it's not as bad as I thought it might be.' Bravery gives you confidence.'

Unpacking where our fear of speaking up came from can be the first step in creating lasting >>>

“When we are required to speak up, this gets to the root of our deepest fear – that we will be seen by others and judged for it”



Speak out against discrimination

Tackle prejudice with tips from Pragya Agarwal, author of *'Sway: Unravelling Unconscious Bias'*

When discrimination happens to us, our first reaction is often to think that we're overreacting or being oversensitive. It's natural to worry that if we call the person out, we might be viewed as someone who can't take a joke or that we're making a fuss about nothing. So, what should we do?

● **ASK YOURSELF: IS SPEAKING UP WORTH IT?** We can't fight all the battles in the world, so decide whether it matters enough to you.

● **IS IT SAFE FOR ME TO TACKLE THE PERSON RIGHT NOW?** It might not be, either physically or emotionally, and we have to protect ourselves. Will you be able to deal

with the aftermath if you confront the person?

● **ADOPT A MEASURED APPROACH.** Launching with: 'You're a racist!' is only going to make the other person defensive, and that shifts the attention onto them. Instead, keep the focus on you as the person who's experienced the discrimination. For example: 'Do you realise that your words or actions have an impact on me? They make me feel...'

● **FACE TO FACE, IF POSSIBLE.** Sitting down and having a chat with the person makes it easier to communicate where you're coming from. It means you have to take on the emotional load and it shouldn't

be up to you but, sometimes, if you suspect the person hasn't been exposed to any other narrative, it can be useful to have that talk.

● **BE AN ALLY.** If you see someone being discriminated against and want to speak up on their behalf, it's important that you don't speak for the other person, for example: 'Look what you made person X do, think and feel.' By doing so, you are saying that the person doesn't have a voice, so you must speak for them. Avoid falling into the trap of casting yourself in the role of saviour. Stick to the facts: 'These are the kinds of words that have been shown to cause harm' or 'I felt offended when you said Y.'

'Sway' by Pragya Agarwal (Bloomsbury, £16.99)

change. 'In therapy, examining a person's fear of speaking up can expose interesting material in their psyche,' says psychotherapist and author Julia Bueno.

What are you really scared of?

'Often, those worries are revealed to be irrational. For example, someone might say they are terrified of speaking up about a problem at work because then everyone will hate them and they will lose their job, then their house and end up homeless! My response is that such fears are ridiculous, but also not ridiculous.'

It can be helpful to track your fears back to their origins. Bring to mind past experiences where you did not feel able to speak up. 'Maybe you grew up in a buttoned-up family, where everyone was silent,' says Bueno. 'Or maybe your family was one where, if you did speak up, all hell broke loose and you were frightened. It can feel revolutionary to make connections with the past and realise how many years those stories go back.'

My fears of speaking up are not connected to my family. We enjoyed total freedom to express our views and feelings. Listening to Bueno's advice, I realised that my anxiety was rooted in a fear of being unpopular – a primal anxiety about being kicked out of the tribe. 'None

of us wants to be rejected from the group,' says Bueno, 'but I would also suggest that you ask yourself, in any situation where you're visualising a worst-case scenario, has that ever happened to you when you have spoken up?'

For many of us, it is about learning an effective style of communication. 'It can be difficult for those who haven't grown up witnessing positive examples of assertive behaviour,' says Bueno. 'If you have no role models, you

don't realise that it's possible to be assertive in a compassionate and calm way. It needn't be about being aggressive or angry.'

To boldly go...

Have the tricky conversation at a time when you can tackle the person on their own in a quiet space, advises Bueno. Then, she says, when you are working out what to say: 'Less is more. When we are in a sticky conversation, we feel that we need to embellish our

piece and give loads of material to justify our position. It can be a great idea to role-play the conversation with a friend to explore the different directions things could go.'

There is another aspect to speaking up that fills me with dread – public speaking. Voice coach and author of *Gravitas* (Ebury, £12.99) Caroline Goyder, has also >>>

“Someone may fear speaking up at work because they will lose their job and be homeless... Such fears are ridiculous...”

How to develop an authentic voice online

Coach and author Caroline Goyder offers pointers to help you find your unique message and tone

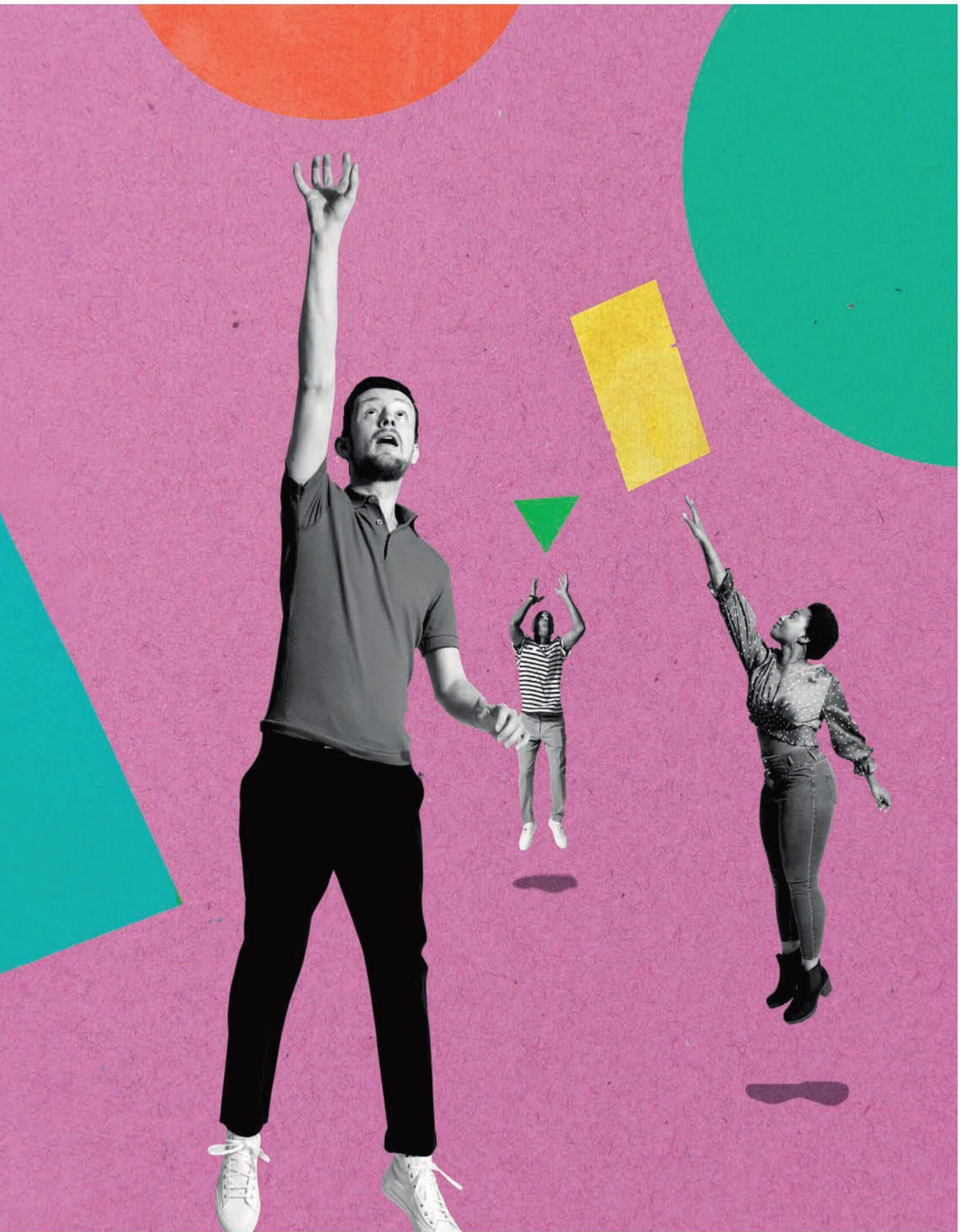
- **Focus on contribution, not competition.** This will take your attention away from trying to be perfect or like someone you hope to emulate. Ask yourself: what is the message I can give people that will improve their lives? How can I personally help others? Considering this question will build your confidence as you hone your message and feel more entitled to speak up about it. A great way to do this is to talk your ideas through with a friend to explore your core message and how best to communicate it.

- **Next time you have to give a presentation that you are anxious about, record yourself and have your words transcribed.** (The free app Otter is great.) Pick out your golden nuggets – insights, advice and unique turns of phrase. This is valuable content that you can share with your social media audience.

- **If you're nervous about appearing on camera or being heard, try the Clubhouse app, which is audio only.** Conversations aren't recorded, so you can express

yourself freely and try out ideas on a like-minded audience.

- **If you want to experiment with developing your message, do a Google search for the top questions in your area of interest.** Answer the question by filming off the cuff on your phone. If the result is OK, take a risk and post it online. While it's tempting to get dolled up and go overboard on filters, people connect most strongly with authenticity. Videos where I look polished with professional lighting get the fewest hits. Perfection is boring.



worked on uncovering unhelpful stories from the past that have created blocks to finding a voice in the present. 'I have a client who is a senior executive. When she was promoted, she could no longer delegate making speeches. We tracked her fear back to when she had to give a presentation at school at the age of 11. Her father had insisted that the best way was to speak without notes. She forgot her lines and everyone laughed at her. She was scarred by the judgment and visibility of speaking to an audience.'

Strength in the physical

It doesn't matter what form speaking up takes, from tackling a family matter to making a speech at a wedding. The important thing is that we embrace the challenge and understand the benefits of doing so. Goyder links it to pioneering psychologist Abraham Maslow's 'hierarchy of needs'. 'Maslow identified the importance of first addressing the fundamentals of our physiology and physical safety. Speaking up is the bold step you make when those foundations are in place. It requires the kind of trust in yourself that will allow you to dive into the moment and let go of anxiety, so you can be present and listening, not lost in your head worrying.'

In order to achieve this, Goyder suggests getting out of your mind and into your body, particularly immediately before you speak. 'Before they must perform, athletes are not charging around, they're sitting quietly, preparing mentally. They understand how to use adrenalin to their advantage – as a following wind rather than a force to flatten them. Mindfulness practices such as breath work, yoga or stretching are helpful here.' Another tip is to avoid digital devices in the run-up to speaking up. 'Studies show that when we check our email, for example, we hold our breath. That creates disharmony in our physiology.'

Fulfil your potential

We can get confused about what is required when we need to speak up, thinking it's got something to do with what Goyder defines as 'flashy loudness'. 'That's simply another way to present anxiety. What I'm talking about is self-actualisation, which is at the top of Maslow's hierarchy. He described some of the qualities of this kind

of confidence: the ability to be independent, spontaneous and natural, to be able to laugh at yourself, to connect with others and to focus on a purpose beyond your ego. To find confidence, you may need to override conditioning that taught you to be perfect, fit in, sit down and shut up. Self-actualisation is the zone where things get interesting. It's where you speak up, stand out and create change.'

A tip for overcoming nerves is to focus on why you are doing this. 'Just saying you are doing something to make money, say, is unlikely to give you the motivation to override your fear,' says Brotheridge. 'Drill down and ask: what will this lead to for me? What will money

bring me? It might be travel or taking time off to raise a family, or the sense of security that comes from owning a home. Focus on the end results.'

Another strategy is to concentrate on contribution rather than competing with others. 'The idea comes from conductor Ben Zander,' says Goyder. 'He suggested that when giving a performance, the first challenge is to overcome all the nervous system stuff. If you can focus on your audience and what you can give them, that will lead to a place of self-forgetfulness and creative flow. Flow and focus help you find your special message.

What is it that you can uniquely bring to others?'

The inner critic loves silence

Finally, as with all endeavours, perhaps the simplest thing we can do to support ourselves in speaking up is to practise self-compassion. 'There is a correlation between fears around visibility and a vicious self-critic,' observes Bueno. 'Pay attention to how you speak to yourself and the state of your inner climate. The self-critic loves to talk about imaginary things, such as: 'You are going to fail, everyone will laugh at you and you are going to get the sack; your lover will leave you and your friends will hate you. On and on it goes, so it's little wonder that you end up fearful and mired in perfectionism.'

Instead, work on the middle ground. It's unlikely anything dramatic is going to happen after you allow your voice to be heard. Nor do you need to feel 100 per cent confident or brilliant before you do so, Bueno reminds us. 'The key is to feel OK enough to be able to step up and let the world hear what you have to say.'

SPEAK UP FOR YOURSELF AND OTHERS

In our free coaching course for subscribers, 'Speak up! How to stand up for your beliefs and change your world', with coach and trainer Annie Lee, we will look at how to identify what you believe is right and how to stand up for it. Whether it's Black Lives Matter or campaigning about environmental changes, our four-week programme will provide practical ways to make a difference in the world, be an ally and find the assertiveness you need to create a world you want for yourself and others.



“WHAT WORKED FOR ME”

“Speaking up saved my baby’s life”

Charlotte Northedge found assertiveness in the most crucial of moments and, once she discovered her voice, she had much to say – as a novelist

DURING MY first pregnancy, I spent a ridiculous

amount of time imagining the perfect birth. I’d read the books, been to the antenatal classes and written the birth plan. My plan didn’t involve being induced at 42 weeks, the closure of the maternity ward nor being in the sole care of a no-nonsense agency midwife.

Innate people pleaser that I am, I resolved to be the perfect patient. But, after a few hours, I had a strong feeling that something was wrong. It’s hard to trust your instincts when it comes to

medical matters, especially in the face of weary expertise. The midwife was convinced that I had a low pain threshold and just needed to try harder.

I was overwhelmed and at my most vulnerable. I didn’t want to make a fuss or question her judgment but, when I saw that the baby’s heart rate had dipped, any concerns about being a good patient evaporated. I insisted, calmly but firmly, that she find a doctor.

Finally, she called an obstetrician. Within minutes, I had a roomful of people around me. Not just the obstetrician, but another doctor, midwives and a group of medical

students. Thankfully, 48 hours after I was induced, my son was delivered face up, which is why he was stuck. The obstetrician said it was extremely lucky that I spoke up when I did.

I’ve learned a lot from that feeling of powerlessness, and the experience of taking control. It inspired my debut novel – a thriller about a woman who is manipulated by a life coach. It has also motivated me to assert myself in difficult situations and, ultimately, to trust my instincts. If you don’t speak up for yourself, no one else will.

‘The House Guest’ by Charlotte Northedge (HarperCollins, £14.99) is out 13 May. See page 78

Test

What stops you having your say with conviction?

If your confidence deserts you at the thought of speaking out about an issue, take our test to find out what fears stand in your way

1 Past regrets about speaking out revolve around:

- ♥ Getting too emotional
- ◆ Embarrassment or feeling exposed
- The impact on relationships
- Feeling you can't defend your position

2 Generally, your biggest barrier to self-belief is:

- Taking yourself seriously
- ♥ Your critical voice
- ◆ Comparing yourself to others
- Feeling overwhelmed

3 Planned speaking out usually involves:

- ♥ Overthinking and overpreparing
- Being pushed to your limit
- ◆ Other people who take the lead
- Raising questions to spark thinking

4 Before a big social event, you worry that you will:

- Be a bit bored
- ♥ Make a fool of yourself
- ◆ Not click with anyone
- Find it too much

5 You'd speak out more if you knew:

- The right time and place
- ♥ How others felt
- ◆ It really mattered to you
- The possible outcome

6 When you can't sleep, you often worry about:

- Whether you've made the right choices
- ♥ Past conversations
- ◆ Whether life is passing you by
- Potential areas of conflict

7 When you find your voice, you:

- Get a sense of connection
- Make people think and reflect
- ♥ Feel like you're growing as a person
- ◆ Often make people laugh

8 Your ideal speaking out scenario involves:

- A set structure and process
- Interaction with a small group
- ♥ Acting on someone else's behalf
- ◆ Writing rather than speaking

9 When you have an audience, you tend to

focus on getting:

- ♥ Everyone's approval
- Everyone on your side
- ◆ Others involved
- The bigger picture on the agenda

10 With more confidence to speak out, you would be more:

- ◆ Yourself
- Understood
- Focused
- ♥ Respected

Circle the answers that most closely apply to you, then add up the symbols. Read the sections you circled most to reveal what fear inhibits you from saying your piece

WORDS: SALLY BROWN. IMAGES: GETTY IMAGES

>>>



What do you fear about speaking your mind?

IF YOU SCORED MAINLY ♥

Judgment

Speaking out can feel like a risk if you have a tendency to overthink the possible consequences of saying the wrong thing. It can leave you cautious about asserting your opinions and may trigger rumination – going over conversations to work out if you have offended anyone. Fear of judgment often has its roots in self-criticism – when you view yourself through a critical lens, you assume everyone else is also taking an unforgiving view of your behaviour. For others who find that speaking out triggers strong emotions, the fear of judgment is often around being perceived as losing control or being seen as irrational.

If you care about what others think and have deep empathy, you can easily imagine people feeling hurt or disapproving. Given the tone of this inner narrative, it's not surprising that it feels safer to only speak out when you feel you're on solid ground. But if fear of judgment stops you being authentic, it will have an impact on your wellbeing and relationships. Tackling the critical voice in your head is the first step towards resetting your oversensitive antennae that see judgment as a continual risk.

IF YOU SCORED MAINLY ♦

Exposure

When your comfort zone is behind the scenes, it's not surprising that speaking out instils fear, as it puts you centre stage. Expecting others to listen to you has never been your style – you're more likely to focus on developing connections and listening to others. But you may wonder if there's part of you that feels it's not OK to demand attention – a message that may be a hangover from childhood. You might gravitate towards loud voices who push boundaries and take the consequences, while you travel in their wake. But you know you have valuable input and, when you're with people who give you space to talk, you can find your voice.

You already know that when you're talking from a place of authenticity, you don't struggle to find your voice. Being authentic means allowing people to enjoy your personality, perspective and humour. Using your ability to see the funny side as a way of speaking up can help you connect with others in a more low-key way. If you've lost touch with that side of you, it's no surprise you're struggling to speak with confidence.

IF YOU SCORED MAINLY ●

Conflict

Sometimes, hesitancy to speak out is a fear of conflict. If even minor episodes of conflict cause discomfort, it's not surprising that you lack confidence in finding your voice. Applying a mental filter, second-guessing what others want to hear or using your charm and humour to manage mood and atmosphere may be so second nature that you don't even do it consciously. Often, those who are conflict-averse have not seen conflict modelled well, which can plant seeds of doubt about how others will react when you speak out and whether relationships can withstand conflict and survive.

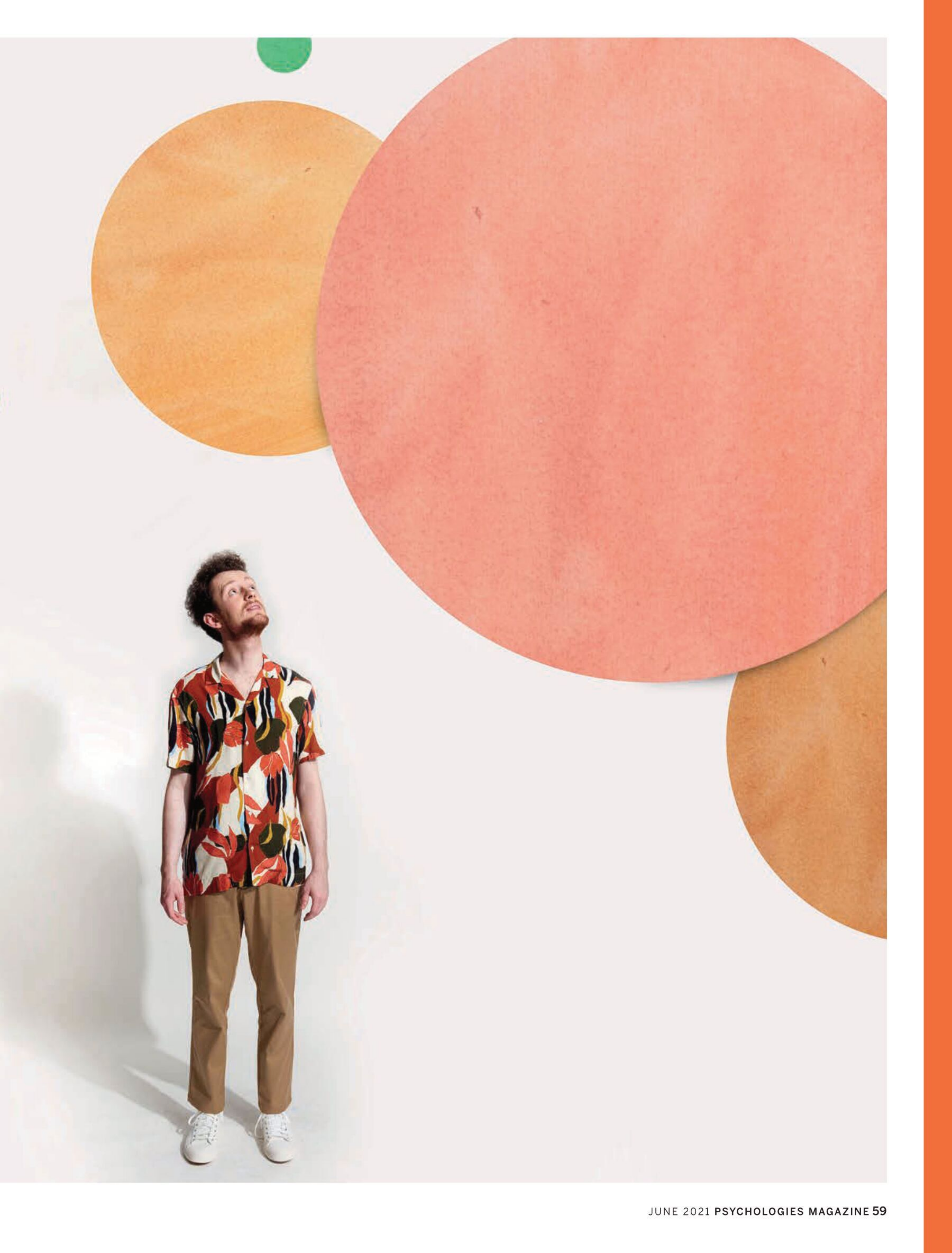
Sometimes, a low tolerance for conflict is a sign of something else – overwhelm or low self-esteem. If conflict feels like too much to handle, you may sidestep it – and it's wise to pick your battles and reserve your energy for things that matter... But if you're continually holding back, it's time to step out of your comfort zone because, until you do, you will never prove to yourself that you can cope with conflict, and that disagreement doesn't have to mean the end of a relationship.

IF YOU SCORED MAINLY ■

Challenge

Fear of challenge can exist even in those who are not conflict-averse – rooted in doubts about the courage of your convictions and, at its heart, perhaps a fear of being pinned to one view. With a natural growth mindset, you never assume that you know everything, and you can be adept at asking the right questions to get answers. What interests you is exploring ideas and you can feel stifled when others expect you to take a binary position or don't seem open to opposing points of view. What matters to you is that ideas are fully explored and the right solutions found, and you're happy to accept when you're wrong.

It may be hard to find your voice when surrounded by louder voices, as your default is to hang back rather than compete. You shine one to one or in small groups and get your point across while making others feel heard and understood. Remember that it's OK to raise questions even if you don't know the answers, and share ideas even if you haven't worked out how to put them into practice – expressing them can bring them to life. Let go, allow your voice to be heard and you may find you have much to say.



HEALTHY LIFESTYLE

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UNJUNKING YOUR BODY

A detox, like a water or juice fast, is an excellent way to rid the body of stored toxins, but it is often difficult to abide by, and involves days or even weeks of feeling tired and sick. However, there are other ways.

TEST YOURSELF:

Do you have a sluggish liver?

	yes	no
1. Headaches or brain fog	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Difficulty losing weight	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Indigestion & burping after meal	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Fatigue	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. Skin itching and brown spots	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. Coated tongue	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. Sensitive to strong smells	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. Elevated triglycerides	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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THE LIVER AND YOUR WAISTLINE

The liver is an important fat burning organ. If the liver is sluggish or clogged with waste material it will be less able to work, and fat will start to build up, under the skin, as belly fat and even inside the internal organs (as in a fatty liver). Making sure your liver is working well will help you flush fats from the body.



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EDITED BY ALI ROFF FARRAR

*“When you’ve seen
beyond yourself,
then you may find,
peace of mind is
waiting there”*

GEORGE HARRISON



PHOTOGRAPH: GETTY IMAGES

Mindful wellness

How easy is it for you to surrender and show gratitude when life throws you a curveball? Ali Roff Farrar shares a life-changing mindfulness practice that centres around grace and positivity



ACCEPT THE UNEXPECTED

It's easy to say 'yes, thank you' to the things you want in life – the pleasant experiences, the positive news and the desired life events. But what about the things you don't want, but end up with anyway – difficult times and bad news? How do you find the strength to say 'yes, thank you' in those instances?

I like to think of the 'yes, thank you' practice as radical acceptance with the superpower of gratitude.

Practise saying 'yes, thank you' – acceptance with thanks – to the good, the bad and the ugly this month. How would that make you feel, do you think? Try it and find out...

Ali

Psychologies Wellness Director, mindfulness expert and yoga teacher

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@psychologiesmagazine,
psychologies.co.uk



Sensual reboot

I love a ritual to close the chapter on one part of my day before I begin another. A spritz of the refreshing Reset Mist by Eve & Keel does exactly what it says on the bottle!

It contains zesty orange blossom and mandarin, clean vetiver and exotic ylang-ylang to whisk you away – plus, it comes in a recyclable glass bottle.



Reset mist, £32, eveandkeel.co.uk

QUOTES TO LIVE BY

“No one will understand you. It is not, ultimately, that important. What is important is that you understand you”

MATT HAIG,
THE HUMANS



● 'UnAnxious: How To Manage Your Worries, Transform Your Attitude And Feel More Positive Every Day' by Claire Chamberlain (Summersdale, £8.99)



AND RELAX...

Anxiety can affect anyone, but understanding your personal relationship with it can be challenging. In her new book, *UnAnxious*, Claire Chamberlain aims to help you understand your triggers in order to make lifestyle changes that will combat your anxiety and bring you peace.

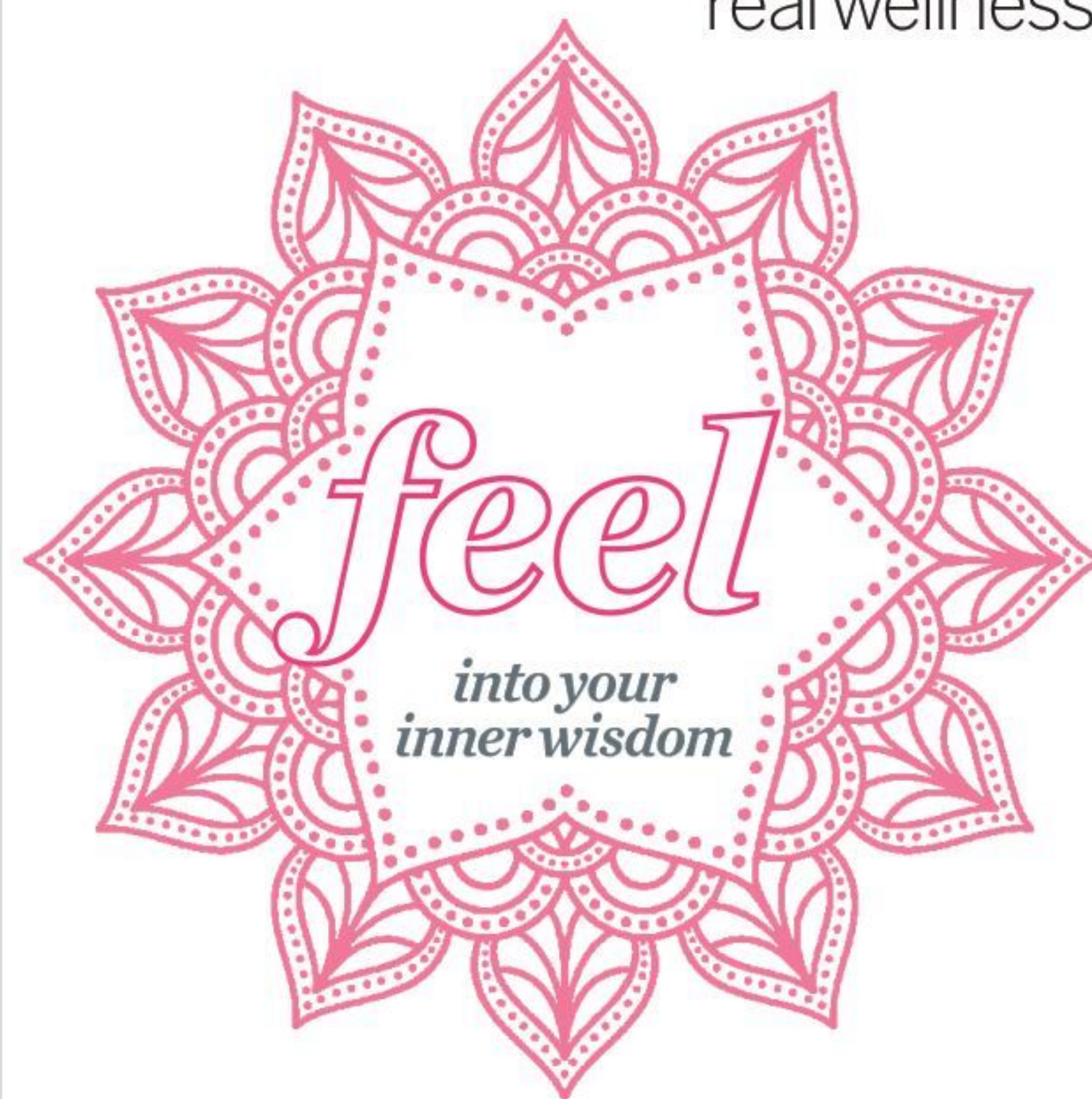
Lay me down

The perfect accessory for savasana, meditation or even an afternoon nap, the Sensory Retreats eye mask combines rest-inducing lavender with a soothing, warming action. When you open it, a thin layer of iron fillings is activated by oxygen in the air, gently heating the mask to send you into a blissful, dreamy state.

● For every mask purchased, £1+VAT is donated to the charity Mind



Eye mask, £3.95 each or £21 for seven, sensoryretreats.com



Mindful Health Club

Deep acceptance of the now is a powerful practice that can alleviate much suffering and struggle in your day-to-day life. Although it's not always easy, finding gratitude for the very thing we are trying to accept can make the process more accessible. This month, try the mantra: 'Yes, thank you'.

1 Can you say 'yes' (acceptance) and 'thank you' (gratitude) for everything that the present moment offers?

2 It's easy to do with the experiences, events and opportunities that you want, or feel are positive, but what about the ones you don't want? Can you invite them in and say 'yes, thank you' to them too?

3 Let's try it with something right here and now. Take a moment to listen to the sounds around you. Do you notice that some of the sounds are pleasant (a song on the radio, birds tweeting and peaceful moments of silence) and some are less enjoyable (passing sirens, building work next door or someone talking loudly on the phone).

4 Can you practise saying 'yes' by inviting the unpleasant sounds into this moment? Now, can you practise saying 'thank you' – feeling some sense of gratitude, wonder or curiosity in them and how they are sharing this moment with you?

5 Try the 'yes, thank you' practice with other elements that emerge in the present moment across your day... What happens when you accept and give thanks?

61%

of mothers who had babies during lockdown have anxiety* (the usual rate for postnatal anxiety and depression is 15 per cent). Are you an anxious new mama? Visit motherdom.co.uk, which is dedicated to maternal mental health and wellbeing

TAKE A MINDFUL MOMENT

If you've enjoyed these Mindful Wellness pages, you might like my book 'The Wellfulness Project' (Aster, £16.99) – it's your personal project to design a wellness routine and lifestyle based on your unique needs, creating a wellbeing plan that works exclusively for you

FACE THE LIGHT



DURING LOCKDOWN, we've taken a break from heavy foundations and enjoyed getting ready for bed without the rigmarole of removing make-up every day. We love this highly specific serum by Nuture, designed to diminish blemish marks and hyperpigmentation while brightening the complexion. It contains the exfoliant glycolic acid to smooth skin and promote a more even tone. Simply apply two to three drops to clean skin where blemish scars have appeared.



Facial treatment serum, £15.99 for 30ml, natureskin.com



BACK TO WORK ON A BICYCLE MADE FOR YOU

WITH OUR POST-COVID ENTHUSIASM for getting outdoors added to the renewed bicycle-friendly infrastructure in cities, electric bikes are having a moment in the spotlight. And, as an answer to health, congestion and pollution woes, what's not to love? E-bikes are not just for cities, but for longer commutes, because you can cover distances at speed without dreading that hill that you have to conquer on the horizon! *Psychologies* loves the new e-bikes by Specialized because they are low-maintenance, come with a two-pannier rack – lunch-hour picnic anyone? – and battery power for up to 93 miles. We can't wait to get back to the office!

• **To find out more about environmentally friendly Specialized e-bikes, go to [specialized.com](https://www.specialized.com)**

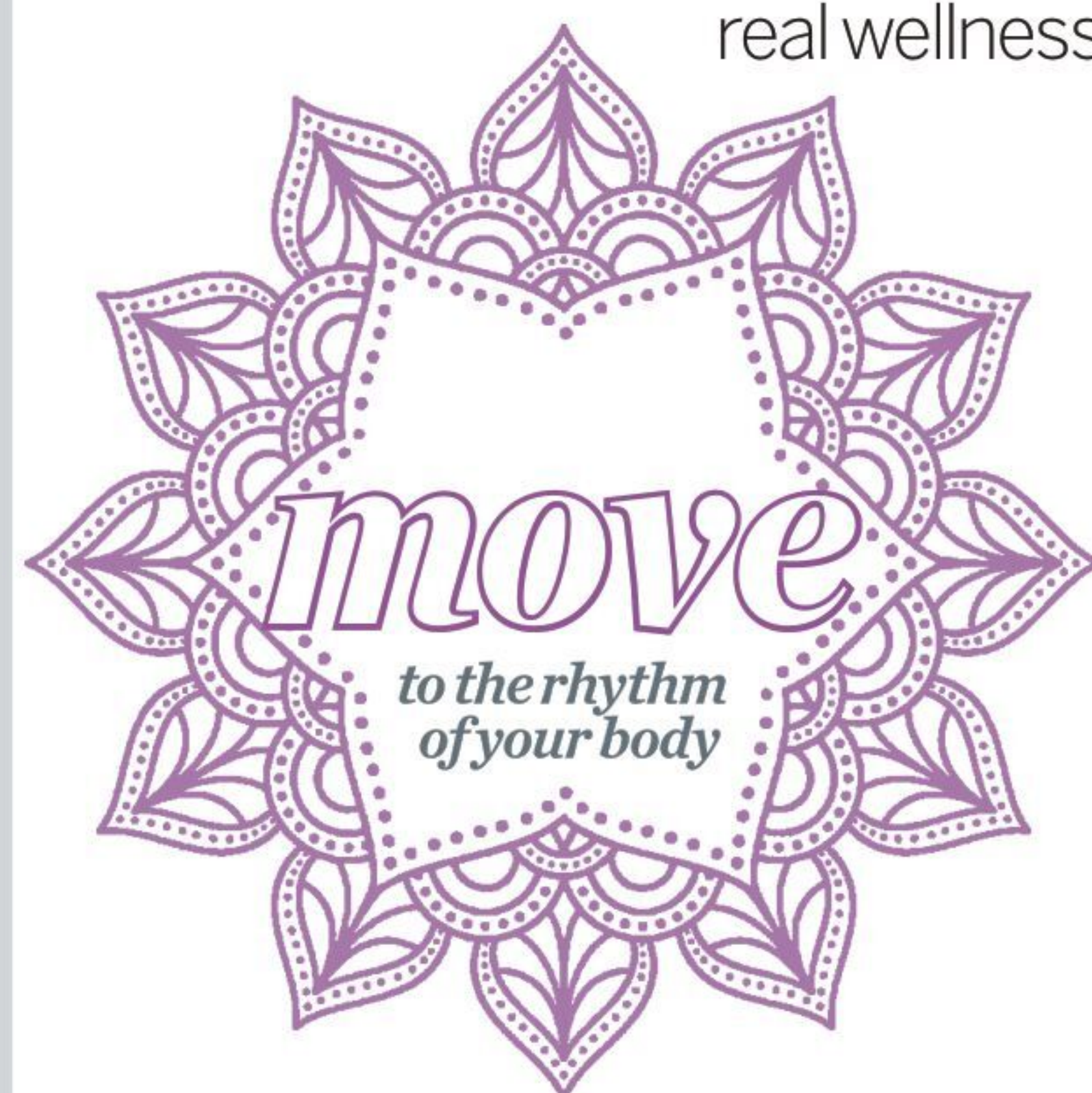


EXERCISE ON A ROLL

Doing the same workout every day will no doubt increase your physical fitness and wellbeing, but if you want to get the most from your exercise, both physically and mentally, you need variety. New research found that the more people moved, and the more varied their movements, the greater their sense of wellbeing.* Why not add a little spice to your workout routine and grab your old rollerskates?

CONFIDENT, COURAGEOUS YOU!

Gain access to free, life-transforming coaching with a 'Psychologies' subscription, including 'Overcome your triggers' and the upcoming 'Find your spark again'. Find out more on page 46



WE LOVE YOGA

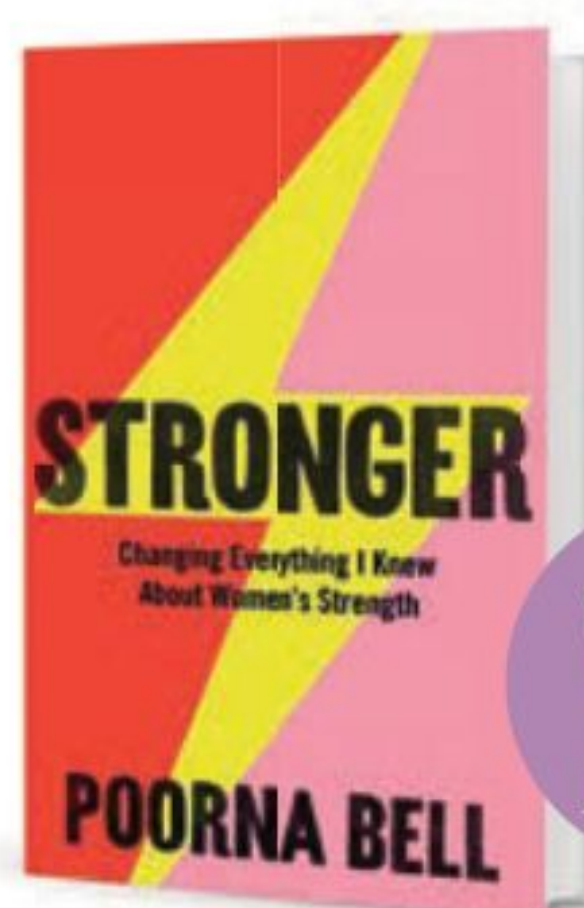
Discover the unique holistic health benefits of each asana



BHUJANGASANA Cobra pose

This pose is a heart opener and spinal stretch to counteract hours slumped over a desk. It stretches the chest, shoulders and stomach muscles, warms the body for deeper practice, tones the glutes, stimulates the digestive organs and helps relieve stress.

- LYING ON YOUR STOMACH, root your hip bones, pubis and the tops of your feet into the floor. Place your hands underneath your shoulders and hug your elbows into your ribs.
- INHALE, AND PRESS into your hands to slowly lift your head, chest and upper abdomen from the floor. Look forward.
- LIFT UP AS FAR as you can, while keeping your pubis rooted to the floor. Tuck your tailbone under and firm your glutes.
- DRAW YOUR SHOULDER BLADES together, and imagine a string is tied to your breastbone, pulling your chest forward through your arms. Find your backbend in your upper spine rather than your lower back. Stay for 20 seconds with slow, natural breathing.



Strength incarnate

What is the connection between physical and mental strength? After her husband died, Poorna Bell needed fortitude. Weightlifting helped her find the confidence that comes with physical strength. Her book, 'Stronger', is a great read for those who need a reminder that they can bear the load in tough times.

● **'Stronger: Changing Everything I Knew About Women's Strength'** by Poorna Bell (Pan Macmillan, £16.99)

62%

of young adults feel happier and better equipped to handle daily challenges when taking part in regular exercise sessions**



OPPO fitness watch, £229, [oppo.com](https://www.oppo.com)



High-protein smoothie

Anti-inflammatory beetroot, leafy greens for improved sleep and mood and high-protein granola pack a filling punch at breakfast time

SERVES 4

- 50g beetroot, peeled, topped and tailed
- 2-3 eating apples, peeled and cored
- 200g raspberries (fresh or frozen)
- Handful cavolo nero or spinach leaves
- 100g blueberries (fresh or frozen)
- 100g frozen cherries
- 400ml almond milk
- 100g granola
- Splash of water

1 Place all the ingredients in a blender and blitz until smooth. If the consistency is too thick, add a little water and blitz again.

2 Pour into glasses and sprinkle over the granola. You can store the smoothie mix in the fridge for a short while and add the granola just before serving.



• Lizi's high-protein granola, £3.69 for 350g, lizi.co.uk



GUT FEELING

NUTRITIOUS FOOD IS GREAT for your body and mind. Gut health is directly linked to mood – about 95 per cent of our body's serotonin, a hormone that regulates emotions, exists in the gastrointestinal tract. Serotonin-boosting foods include eggs, cheese and pineapple.*



Nim's Fruit Crisps pineapple and kiwi edible tea, £4.25 for 150g, nimsfruitcrisps.com

32%

*of us grab a lunch of poor nutritional value due to time constraints at work. Nutritionist Sian Porter suggests plant-based proteins, such as lentils, beans, peas, nuts, seeds and soya, to maintain cognitive function and reduce fatigue***



No1 Living water kefir, £2 per 330ml bottle, no1living.com



Cultural advantage

Replace sugary soft drinks with sparkling water kefir for gut benefits. Nutritionist Philippa Wallis explains that water kefir is made using a SCOBY – symbiotic community of bacteria and yeast – in the form of kefir grains that ferment the sugar, converting it into organic acids, vitamins and enzymes.

QUOTES TO LIVE BY

“Despite knowing they won't be here for long, they still choose to live their brightest lives – sunflowers”

RUPI KAUR



PROMOTE A FEELING OF AWE

Learn how to slow down, step back from the busyness of life and start to notice the everyday wonder that surrounds you.

Give yourself the opportunity to reconnect with yourself and the natural world by signing up to the 'Little Piece of Wonder Every Day' e-course at littlepieceofwonder.co.uk/course

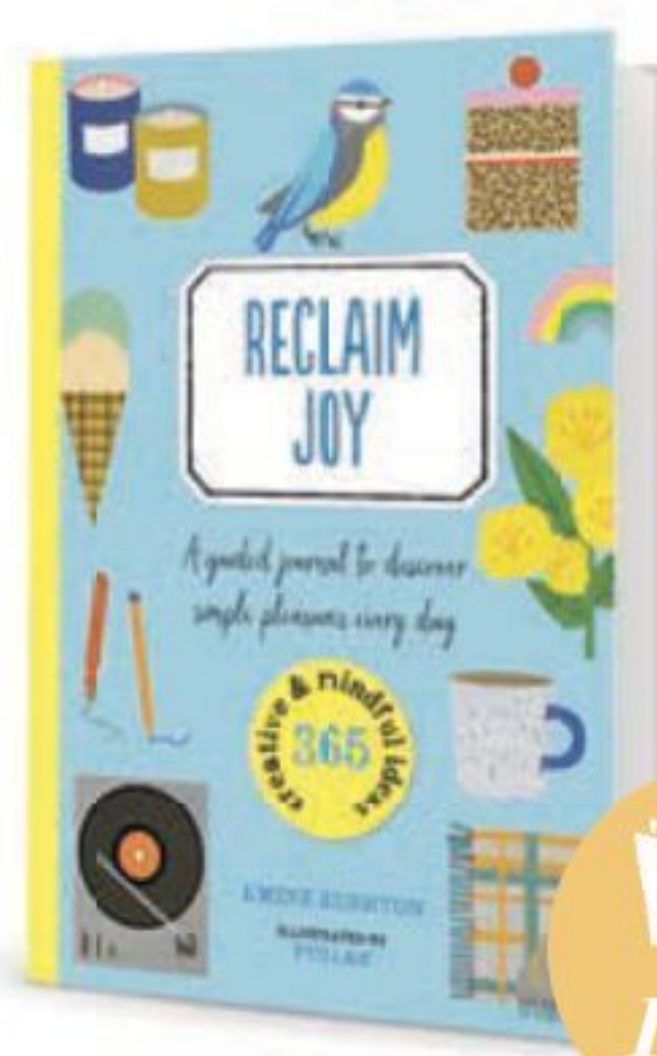
real wellness



AS NATURE
INTENDED

Country: **Mexico**

Native to the western hemisphere, the prickly pear is part of the cactus family, and produces bright yellow flowers in midsummer. Dubbed 'nature's answer to hyaluronic acid', Weleda's new range features plant extract from the prickly pear cactus, with clinically proven hydration for up to 24 hours. It's 100 per cent natural, organic and sustainably sourced from Mexico to Union for Ethical BioTrade standards.



• **'Reclaim Joy'** by Eminé Rushton
(Leaping Hare Press, £12.99)

Read

Simple pleasures

Full of gorgeous illustrations, ideas and activities to inspire joy, wellness expert Eminé Rushton's new book, 'Reclaim Joy', is a beautiful guided journal designed to help you navigate every day with greater happiness through nature, home, mindset and play. Write, sketch and try her lovely ideas for a joyous outlook.

53%

of people in the UK say environmentally friendly initiatives by brands influence what they buy.[†]

We bet that rises to 100 per cent for the eco-conscious readers of our magazine!

Prickly pear cactus hydrating facial range, from £14.95, weleda.co.uk



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Chew the fat

Omega-3 fatty acids are crucial for our gut microbiota and brain health, explains Nutrition Editor Eve Kalinik



OMEGA-3 FATTY ACIDS are called ‘essential’ for a reason and that is because they are vital for our health and wellbeing. The three main types are a-linolenic acid (ALA), found in

plant-based sources, such as flaxseed, chia seeds and walnuts; eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA) and docosahexaenoic acid (DHA), present in oily fish, such as salmon, mackerel, sardines and anchovies, organic grass-fed meat and marine algae, such as seaweeds. EPA and DHA have a fundamental role in managing inflammation and they form the lipid membrane of every cell in our body, including the myelin sheath that surrounds neurons.

If you only eat plant-based ALA forms of omega-3, it’s important to note that the body is pretty poor at converting ALA into EPA and DHA, which are the forms it can utilise effectively. And relying on seaweeds may mean falling short on EPA, plus it’s low in fat, so you’d have to eat a substantial amount to truly benefit.

Mega approach to omega

Oily fish are rich in omega-3 and those that are wild typically have higher levels than farmed, but can be more expensive. Other oily fish – sardines, pilchards, kippers and anchovies – can give you more bang for your buck and, as they are smaller, they have less exposure to metals such as mercury, which is a concern if you eat a lot of bigger fish, including tuna and swordfish. Not relying solely on one source of omega-3 is a good way to get a broader intake and meet your EPA and DHA requirements.

Including other healthy fats, such as organic butter, ghee, coconut (oil, flesh and milk), avocados, nuts, seeds and cold-pressed oils, such as extra virgin olive oil – is important for a happier state of mind and gut. Extra virgin olive oil also contains special plant chemicals called polyphenols that support our gut microbiota and, since our brain comprises a high percentage of fat, these all help actively nourish our grey matter, as well as our gut. @evekalinik

Next month, we explore the effect of sugar and artificial sweeteners on the gut



“As well as oily fish, omega-3 is present in organic grass-fed meat, organic free-range poultry and in smaller amounts in organic eggs”

Inside info

Science journalist Nina Teicholz’s book, ‘The Big Fat Surprise’, is a must read that debunks many of the misconceptions around fat being an intrinsic part of a healthy diet.



● ‘The Big Fat Surprise’ by Nina Teicholz (Scribe, £10.99)

Easy as 1, 2, 3

Their meticulous sourcing and extraction methods, potency, efficacy and sustainable practices make Bare Biology’s Life & Soul one of my go-to omega-3 supplements.

● Life & Soul pure omega-3, £28.50 for 60 caps, barebiology.com



Piscine power

Responsible, sustainable and utterly delicious, Leap Wild smoked salmon is packed with beneficial omega-3s.

● Smoked keta and sockeye salmon, from £5, leapwildfish.co.uk; ocado.com



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What is compleating?

Author Ellen Tout shares a completely fresh, waste-free and creative way of cooking



WHEN WE PREPARE FOOD, we automatically discard the parts of produce we have been taught are

inedible or not up to scratch. What we are left with is a pile of unloved offcuts – onion and garlic skins, banana peels, fruit cores, squash seeds, root vegetable tops and peelings. To compleat, however, means to eat all edible parts of fruit, vegetables and herbs (and yes, all those parts are edible!) In the UK, 70 per cent of food waste from our kitchens could have been eaten.* A demonstrable way to cut the environmental impact of your household is to rethink the way you see ingredients.

Compleating is much more than cooking with leftovers. When you compleat, you make full use of the goodness, taste and nutrition in every fruit and vegetable. It's a truly creative way to cook – saving you money and revamping your dinner while saving delicious food from being wasted.

For example, bananas are the UK's most popular fruit and yet around one million are thrown out every day – often because the fruit

is deemed too green or too brown. If too green, you can ripen them in a brown bag. If too brown, they are perfect for making banana bread, ice cream, smoothies or chopping into a coconutty vegetable curry. What about the skin? You can compleat a banana – the peel is tasty, versatile and especially high in potassium. Try marinading it to make a plant-based 'bacon' or shred it into a 'pulled pork'-like dish. You can even incorporate the peel into bean burgers or a sweet banana bread.

Compleating radically changes the way you cook – suddenly, the parts you used to throw away become inspiration for tomorrow's dinner. Some of my favourite waste-free dishes include carrot top pesto, onion skin stock, ravioli made with chickpea aquafaba, pumpkin pie with caramelised seeds and whole kiwi salsa. I'm so passionate about compleating that I've written a book about it (see offer, below), sharing how you can compleat every fruit, vegetable and herb. Reducing food waste has never been so delectable!

Ellen

Psychologies
Eco Living Editor



Reader offer! Ellen's book *'The Complete Book Of Vegan Compleating'* (Nourish, £14.99) is available for pre-order now. 'Psychologies' readers can save 30% with the offer code 'COMPLEAT21' at tinyurl.com/psymag. Follow @Ellen_Tout and @compleatly_vegan on Instagram; ellentout.com



Family way

If you're a parent, trying to be greener may feel like yet another thing to do. Jen Gale's brilliant new book is your guilt-free, practical guide to making your family and home more sustainable.

● *'The Sustainable(ish) Guide To Green Parenting: Guilt-Free Eco-Ideas For Raising Your Kids'* by Jen Gale (Bloomsbury, £8.99)



● Hand and body lotion and deodorant cream set, £36.94, indigenousbeauty.co.uk

Win!

Natural beauty

Indigenous Beauty is one of our favourite independent vegan and organic brands. We've teamed up with them to give away this natural gift set, worth £36.94. To enter, follow @ellen_tout and @indigenous_beautyuk on Instagram and message Ellen to say why you'd like to win.**



Mindful ambitions

Climbing the career ladder, Ali Roff Farrar followed the typical notion of success. But when she trained as a mindfulness teacher, her career evolved in a way that she hadn't expected – it was only when she changed her goal to serving others that she began truly serving herself

Most of us link our careers closely with the modern definition of success – the aim is to achieve as much as possible professionally and financially. It was hardwired in me: my academic upbringing, societal expectations and our materialistic culture all taught me a 'good' career would serve me well. So, I went out and got it all – a prestigious job in finance, a fancy title and a high salary.

But I soon realised that success isn't just about prosperity – my work lacked meaning and my work-life balance was nonexistent.

According to a study, many of us see success as more than a hefty pay packet.* The top qualities employees desire in their profession are permanent flexibility, work that has purpose, and commitment to health and wellbeing at work. So, I changed careers in search of more harmony and meaning and became a journalist. I enjoyed it immensely; my work had more value and I had >>>

a better work-life balance. But, after a few years, I began to see that, really, I was just part of another big business. It was my job to make them money, the pressure was on and it all began to seem a little soulless. I had a familiar feeling wash over me – and it didn't feel like real success to me.

The problem is that when our work doesn't tick the boxes when it comes to our personal version of career success, we can end up feeling like a failure. But what if we redefined the terms? What if I stopped expecting my career to serve me exclusively and instead switched my focus to my career benefiting others? What if my professional ambition wasn't to be successful, but to be useful?

Giveth and taketh away

I loved my career in journalism, but I felt emotionally chained to the ups and downs, the relentlessness of deadlines and draining office politics. The articles I wrote had meaning but, ultimately, the success of my career was dependent on the success of the companies that used my services. Like many people, I turned to mindfulness to help me deal with daily stresses at work.

Within months, my mindfulness practice had surpassed any initial goals of simply reducing stress. It allowed me to compassionately connect with friends, family, strangers and the articles I wrote in a more human way. I developed resilience, became less reactive and more responsive, and got to know myself better. I started to write about it; it felt like a secret – if only others could experience it too, they could reap the benefits with me.

I wanted to share my discovery – and then I had an aha moment: I could teach mindfulness to others! It was a refreshing prospect; a perspective

“I became more resilient, less reactive and more responsive, and I got to know myself better. I started to write about it; it felt like a secret – if only others could experience it too”

shift that took the focus off deadlines and onto service. It felt almost radical.

I found a certified mindfulness teacher training school, Breathworks, and enrolled to learn how to teach their eight-week mindfulness course to combat stress and improve health. It was a major commitment of time over two years, but I embraced my studies enthusiastically. The training consists of home practice and study with a personal tutor, plus two separate weeks and one weekend spent at a learning retreat, where I could immerse myself in my mindfulness practice and studies.

Education and bonding

I hungrily lapped up knowledge – new principles and teaching points. I shook with nerves when leading my first meditation, and mastered the skill of enquiry, encouraging participants to fully comprehend their experiences. I slowly gained confidence alongside my fellow students; we ate mindfully together in silence every morning and meditated as a group in the evenings before watching shooting stars skim across the sky at bedtime.

I'll always remember the feeling as

we sang songs and laughed together on our last evening, with a beautiful sense of connection to something greater than the daily grind. I couldn't wait to share that feeling with others.

The Breathworks course is structured with strong roots in compassion, which was important for me because I wanted to change my career focus to fully serving others. The blossoming of compassion towards myself and other people has been the most wonderful skill I have developed through my studies. It's the essence from which my career pivot has stemmed.

This is job satisfaction!

As I began to write more about mindfulness, and teach, I discovered happiness in my career. There was no pressure to perform, just a passion to serve. After every meditation session I lead, I feel energised and warm inside, instead of exhausted – the way I used to feel after work. Every article I write about mindfulness holds such meaning, it lights up my heart. I relish watching a student's shoulders relax through meditation, their eyes opening calmly and blissfully after their practice. It means everything to me to have someone say they saw a situation in their lives differently after reading my book about mindful wellness, *The Wellfulness Project* (Octopus, £16.99).

My focus has shifted away from what my work could give me – and how much I had to give to the companies I worked for – to how I might give to others. My career has evolved once again. Like so many people, I've found purpose by redefining my goals, and fulfilment and joy in making a career out of serving others.

Find out more about training with Breathworks at breathworks-mindfulness.org.uk/teacher-training; alioff.com; mywellfulness.com

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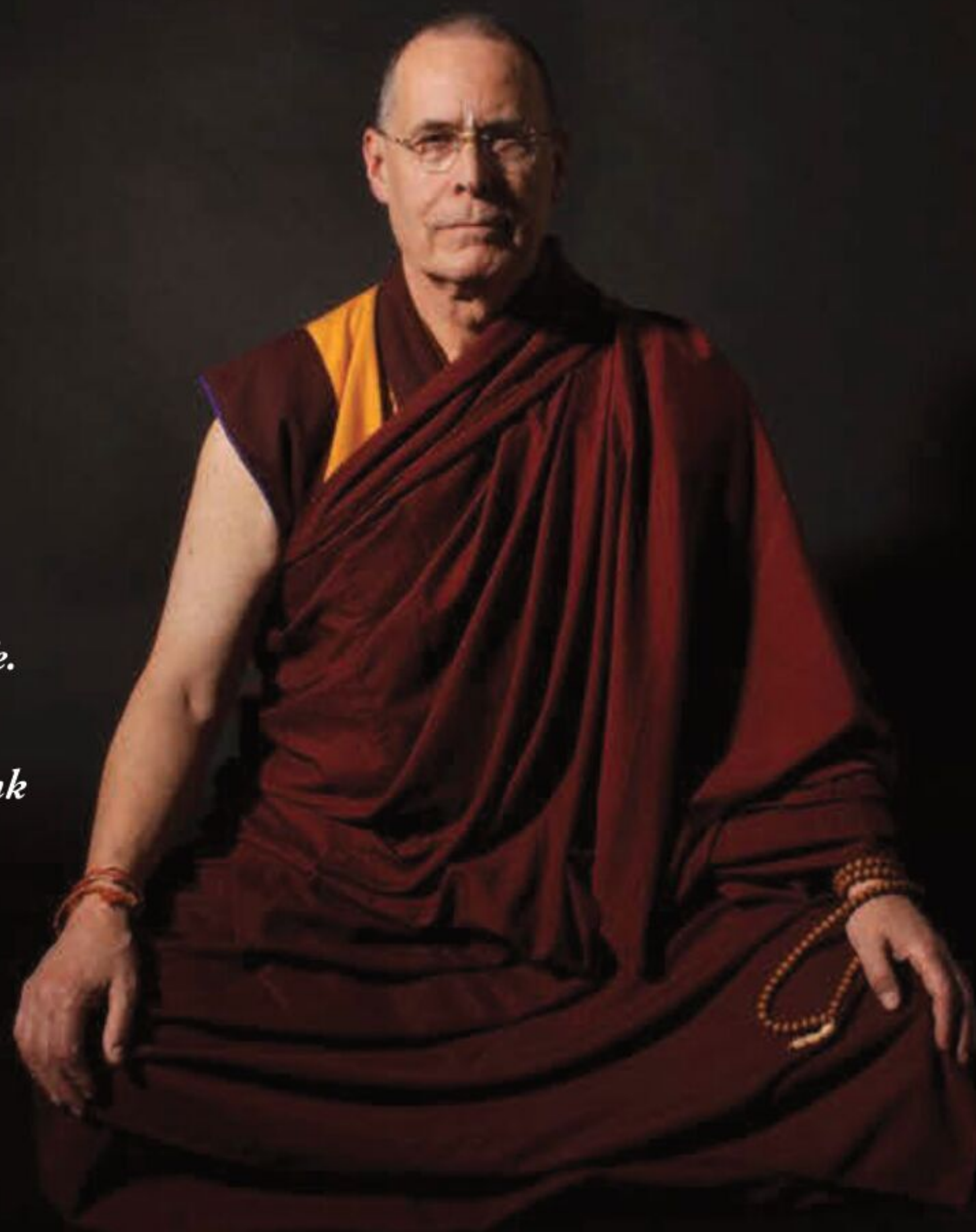
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VEN. LAMA SHRI SADHU DHARMAVIRA

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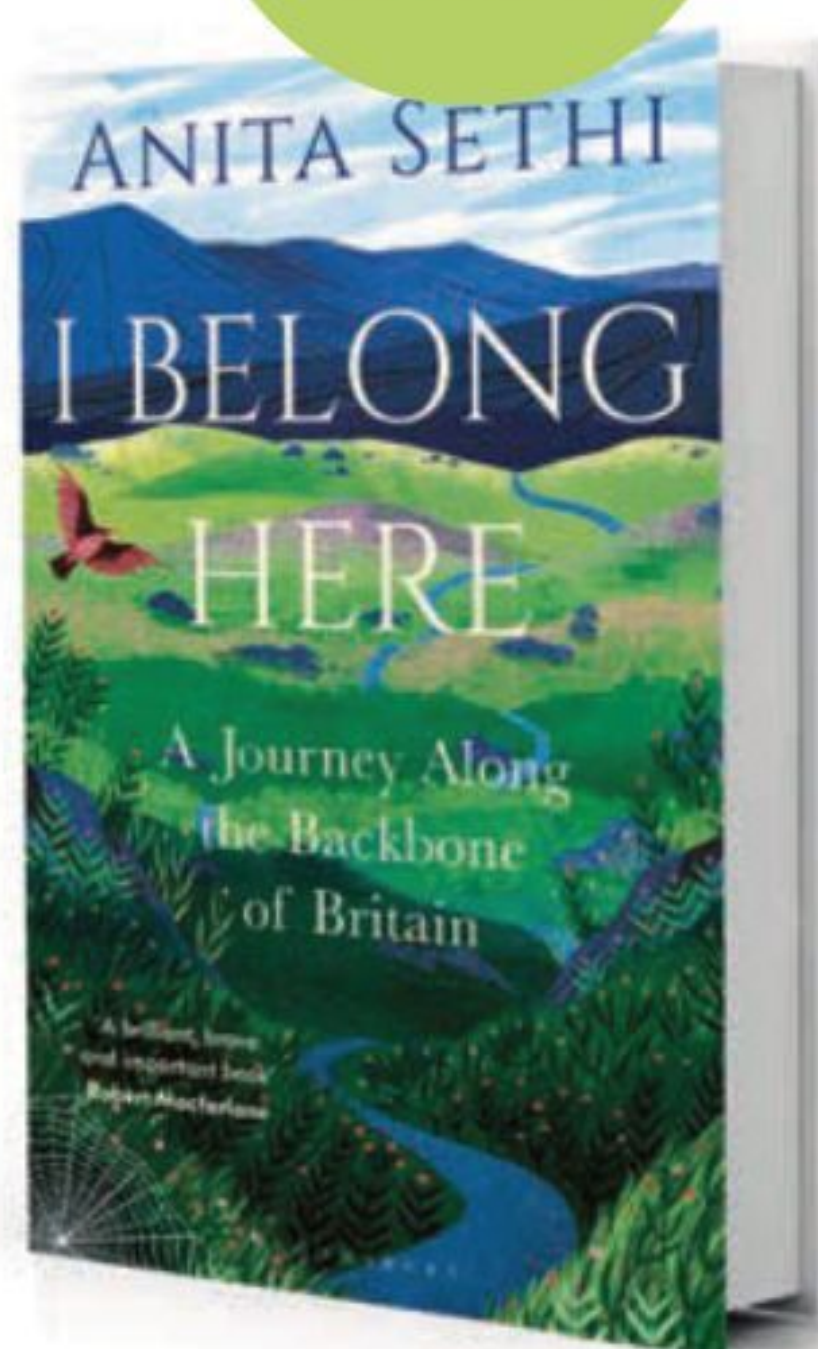
“If you have a garden and a library, you have everything you need.”

MARCUS TULLIUS CICERO

PHOTOGRAPH: GETTY IMAGES

The Words

Rejoice in the darling buds of May, let the sun kiss your face and expand your mind with these brilliant reads for peaceful days



I BELONG HERE *A Journey Along The Backbone Of Britain*

By Anita Sethi
(Bloomsbury, £16.99)

In 2019, Anita Sethi was subjected to racist abuse as she travelled by train through northern England. Feeling panicked and claustrophobic in the city, she craved open spaces and healing. Armed with maps, a rucksack and a determination to reclaim her right to belong as a 'brown woman', she headed to the Pennines.

This book has the rhythm of a long, steady walk, but her inward journey is as important. As she wanders, Sethi's spirit begins to rejuvenate. Restored by the wonders of nature, she finds the courage to embrace her vulnerabilities and strengths, and fully affirm her place in the world. A brave and beautiful book.

“It was the month of May, the month when the foliage of herbs and trees is most freshly green, when buds ripened”

THOMAS MALORY



LOST IN TRANSLATION

كبت ياعت

Taayeetbak (n)

Language: Omani Arabic

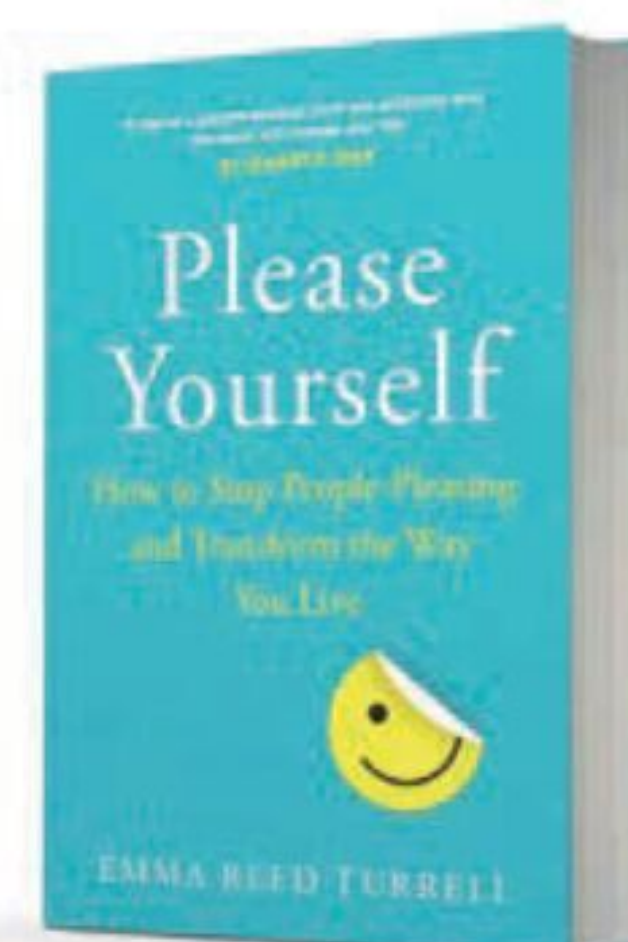
A basic translation of this word is 'controversy', but there's greater depth to the word taayeetbak. A more nuanced interpretation is the galling way someone might say one thing, while their actions tell you something else!



DISCOVER...

HOW TO PUT YOURSELF FIRST

Calling all people pleasers! This book is for anyone who feels stifled, craves approval and acceptance or is plagued by the inability to say no. *Please Yourself* by psychotherapist Emma Reed Turrell offers an alternative for chronic people pleasers and includes techniques, real stories and ways to understand your behaviour – so you can begin to speak up, live bigger and learn to give yourself permission to put your own happiness first.



• **'Please Yourself':**
How To Stop People-Pleasing And Transform The Way You Live by Emma Reed Turrell (HarperCollins, £14.99)



Paper therapy

BENEVOLENT NOTE

As we navigate our way beyond the pandemic, write about a moment when you helped someone or provided a service for free? Remind yourself of what you did and how it felt. What was the impact on the person and yourself? Kind acts are easily forgotten, so commit them to paper.

Jackee Holder is author of '49 Ways To Write Yourself Well' (Step Beach Press, £12.95); jackeeholder.com. Read Jackee's column on page 35



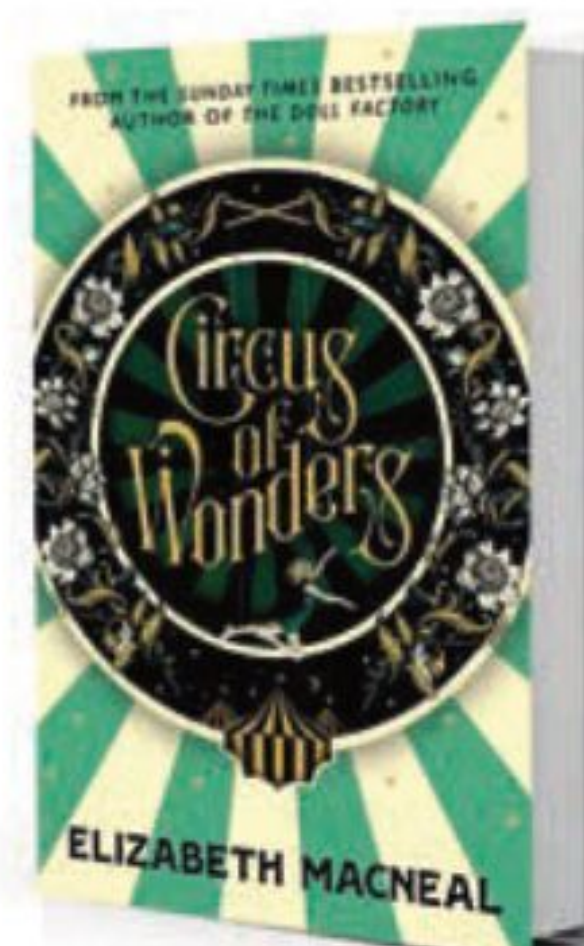
Wildwood fabric journal, £24, papermash.co.uk; set of three pens in pink, navy and blue, £4.99, tkmaxx.com

“ You will become way less concerned with what other people think of you when you realise how seldom they do ”

DAVID FOSTER WALLACE, *INFINITE JEST*

BETWEEN THE LINES

These three riveting novels with powerful characters will excite, shock and enthrall

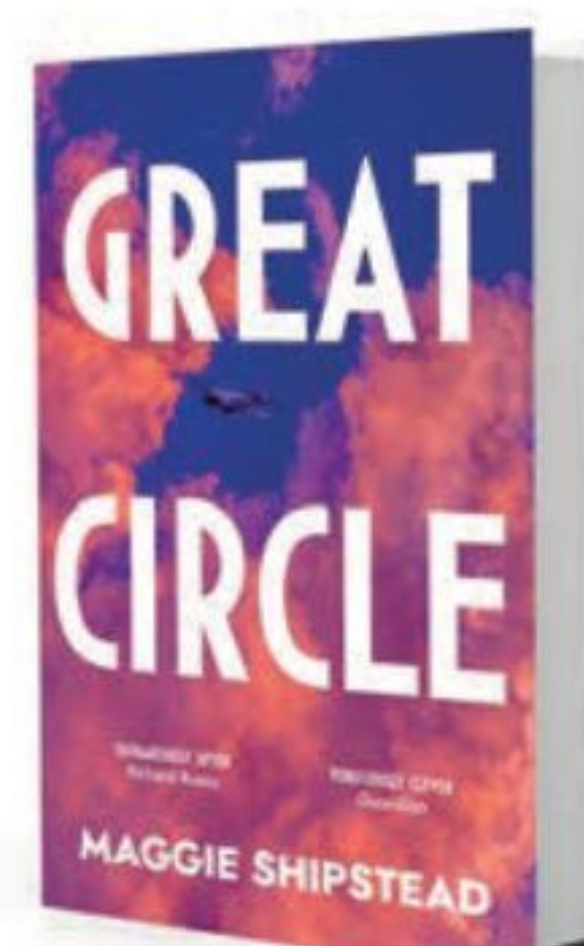


1 Circus Of Wonders

By Elizabeth Macneal
(Pan Macmillan, £14.99)

Elizabeth Macneal's second novel gleams with all the glitter and grime of a travelling Victorian circus. Nell, whose face is speckled with a constellation of birthmarks, is sold to Jasper Jupiter's Circus of Wonders by her drunken father.

She slowly grows into her role as 'Queen of the Moon and Stars' on the trapeze, and falls in love with Toby, who is damaged by the Crimean War. But Nell battles with his megalomaniac brother, Jasper, who wants power and fame, while she demands ownership of her own story. A fantastic read.



2 Great Circle

By Maggie Shipstead
(Transworld, £16.99)

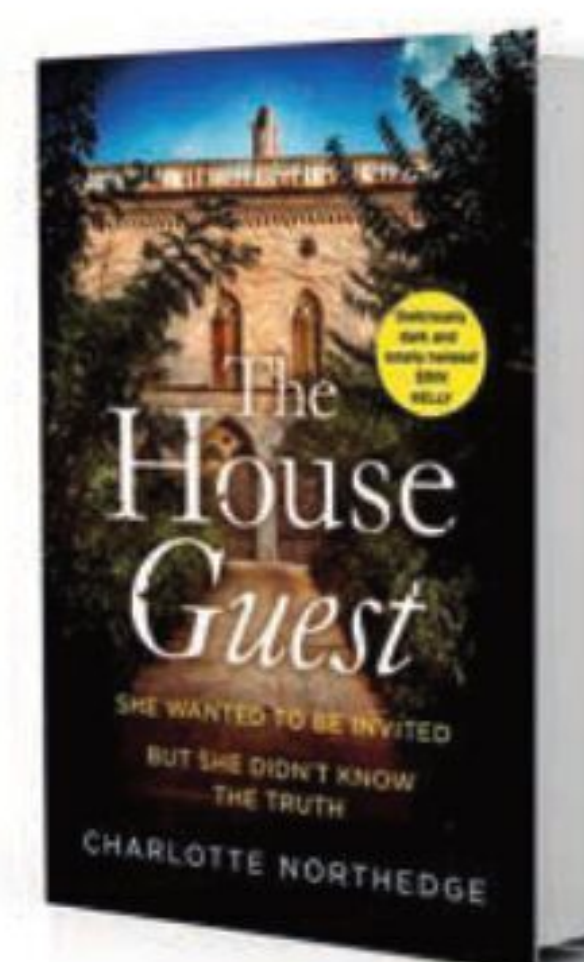
It's impossible not to fall head over heels with Marian Graves, an aviator who fights for her right to fly in a world that wants to keep women on the ground.

Marian spends her childhood running wild with her twin brother, weathers a bad marriage to a bootlegger, survives the war and takes to the air as if it was her natural habitat. Add a contemporary, disgraced movie star who plays Marian in a film about her life, and you have an engaging epic that soars!

3 The House Guest

By Charlotte Northedge
(HarperCollins, £14.99)

Charlotte Northedge's psychological thriller plays deftly on a host of painful insecurities that wreak havoc on the wellbeing of a vulnerable young woman. Kate is devastated by the disappearance of her sister, Scarlett, and heads to London for a fresh start. Her life rapidly entwines with that of life coach Della, who seemingly has the perfect home and family. During a summer in France, their bond turns toxic as sinister secrets, hidden agendas and bad decisions take a devastating toll. Utterly gripping.



The Cornish dream

Cornwall always tops the lists of popular staycation destinations and St Ives, known for its surfing and art scene, has been named the happiest place to live in Britain. With rugged beaches and wild moorlands, the county has so much to offer. Two writers – one local and one visitor – explore >>>



SOULFUL BREAKS TO FORTIFY THE SPIRIT

Space, seclusion and serenity in the salty heart of Cornwall

TALLAND BAY

In need of respite and self-care, Vee Sey takes shelter in an evocative Cornish cove, where renewed strength, romance and laughter await her

'Are we in an Agatha Christie novel?' asks my beau. He looks the part in his tweed flat cap, framed by a melancholy sky on a vertiginous slope that meets a rocky end in the treacherous sea below. Enhancing the literary fantasy are aloof and mysterious cliffside properties – secluded retreats of the rich and famous. I am in good humour but in need of this change of scenery and pace. As it is for most of us, I am asked by life and circumstance to dig deeper and find more, so the chance to bolster my weakened spirit in imagination, love, light-heartedness and nature comes at the right time. And this is the right place.

Talland Bay Hotel is a witty and bewitching player in the story. Mischievous sculptures create subplots in perfumed gardens and there's a silver thread of Cornish history and art woven through its pretty rooms. From our charming cottage-paned window, we can see beyond the sea to the sunset, and the enchantment of that defies description, I am sure Agatha would agree.

'We'll have afternoon tea on the lawn later,' I decree, before we head down the hill to find the South West Coast Path, England's longest waymarked footpath. But what goes down must come up and we're challenged on our journey to the fishing village of Looe. It's a merry and marvellous trek that's just the right distance for an afternoon adventure.

Looe Island is a moss-green mound of loveliness in the shallow waters off the mainland and pilgrims form a distant

ant trail there to explore its lore. Young Jesus was believed to have visited with his uncle, Joseph of Arimathea, who traded tin with the Cornish. And, more in line with our Agatha timeline and mood, in the 20th century, it was owned and inhabited by eccentric sisters Babs and Evelyn Atkins.

Hot chocolate and a coastal forage make for a happy visit, but a dark storm is rolling in... We'll be back tomorrow for a night-time meander alongside scores of working and leisure

boats, which edge perilously close to land as the tide laps onto the streets.

Do make time to explore nearby Talland Church, a favourite of ghost hunters on the trail of a headless horseman, who was shot dead by customs officials over his bounty of rum (it's not quite clear how he lost his head!). But enough of myth and more of cheffy legend: *Bake Off: The Professionals'* Nick Hawke is making dinner at our lodgings, and it's the finest vegan food I've

tasted in a long time, while my man wrestles a Cornish lobster he smacks his lips over in victory. We have our coffee on the patio and talk about meaningful matters before retiring to our bed with its garland of fairy lights and dreams of Dartmoor tomorrow. The vast national park is another reminder of the stark glory of the South West, and wild in a different way.

Our closing chapter is a walk along a slippery riverbed past piebald ponies to Dartmeet, where two rushing waterways bounce over pebbles and waterfalls to join forces. It's a gentle place for reflection – to remember that frantic water, despite its many obstacles, eventually finds its way home to the sea.

● **Rooms at the dog-friendly** Talland Bay Hotel cost from £210 per night on a bed-and-breakfast basis. For more information and to book, go to tallandbayhotel.co.uk

“From our charming cottage-paned window, we can see beyond the sea to the sunset”

REWILDING RETREAT

Cornish local Claire Rowley awakens her warrior spirit, discovers inner peace and reconnects with nature

HOW DO YOU GET AWAY without getting away? Cue Thera-Sea's 'Rewilding retreat' in the Cornish countryside, which is so off-grid, I have to hike to find it.

Thera-Sea is not your usual retreat; a campfire burns day and night and forms the focal point for the

group, with nutritious food cooked on the open fire. This, coupled with evenings relaxing in a hammock by the water's edge, makes for a truly soul-nourishing break.

As the sun pokes its head above the horizon, I lower myself into the freezing waters of the River Fal for

my cold water therapy. A stillness rises in me and a feeling of peace engulfs me.

Later, I find wood and kindling to make a fire with my team, under the watchful gaze of Mark Kelly, Thera-Sea's outdoors expert. As I watch the fire crackle and burn, I feel a deep sense of

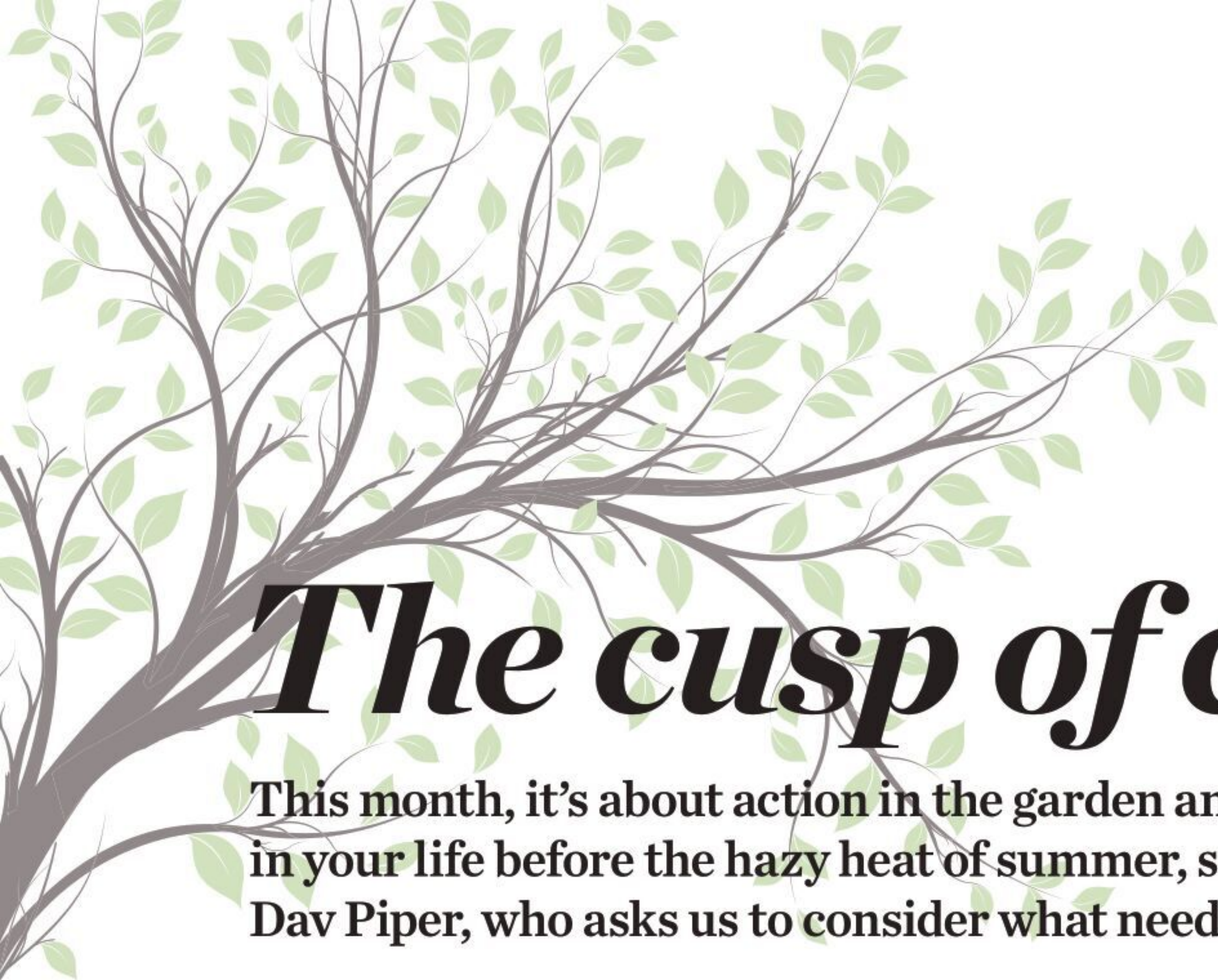
satisfaction. I've found tranquillity, learned how to make a fire – a skill that might one day save my life – and reconnected intimately with Mother Earth.

● **A two-night retreat at Thera-Sea** starts from £315pp, including meals and activities; next dates 22-24 June. Return train tickets from London to Truro cost from £51 with Great Western Railway; thera-sea.co.uk



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT
The glorious view from the Talland Bay Hotel is enough to invoke a sense of peace and wonder; watch the sun rise and set over the ocean from the beautiful gardens of the hotel; a refreshing swim at Thera-Sea's 'Rewilding retreat' in the heart of the Cornish countryside will boost your flagging spirits; go paddleboarding on the River Fal, *Swallows And Amazons*-style; enjoy nutritious food prepared over the open campfire at Thera-Sea; relax in the bubbling hot tub and gaze out over serene Talland Bay





The cusp of change

This month, it's about action in the garden and reflective attention in your life before the hazy heat of summer, says mindful gardener Dav Piper, who asks us to consider what needs a little more care



PREPARE FOR THE MAIN EVENT

AS WE CRUISE STEADILY towards the longest day on 21 June, the garden is buzzing with activity. Spring flowering bulbs and shrubs are falling back, soon to be overtaken by summer displays in all their wondrous and vivid glory.

As with every seasonal shift, there is tidying up to be done. As a gardener, it has become second nature to me to use these waypoints of seasonal change to take a long, hard look at where I am – not just in the day-to-day tasks of planting, weeding and developing gardens, but in my life. There is always something that would benefit from a bit of extra attention.

This is a wonderful time of year to draw on the energy around you – longer days and warm weather – to push forward with projects that you have put on the back-burner. Reinvigorate yourself and look to the future with enthusiasm and hope. It's also a good time to prune back any bad habits.

Long, hot summer days will come, full of lazy heat and relaxation but, for now, it's industrious activity! Open the windows and blow away the cobwebs; get outside and focus on your goals, fitness and wellbeing.

This is your final opportunity to get plants in the ground before the summer heat begins in earnest. Empty spaces are apparent now, so it's time to fill in the gaps. With increasing social opportunities, maybe it's time to review any voids in your own life too. What do you need to imbue your reality with colour and beauty?

Draw some encouragement and inspiration from the recent growth spurt in nature. Everything is lush and green, boosted by the April showers, and the grey winter seems like a distant memory. The gardens are on the brink of their finest hour.

Dav

Psychologies ambassador
and gardening columnist

Our conscious gardening writer, Dav Piper, is the founder of Piper Gardens. Find out more at pipergardens.co.uk



Garden caddy, £22.95,
annabeljames.co.uk

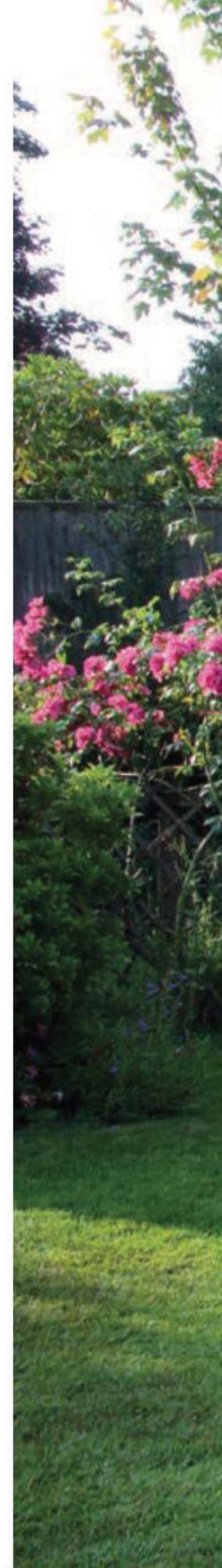


Handy accessory

Always have the right tool for the job close to hand with this delightful garden caddy, ideal for those little bits and bobs that you can never find in the garden shed when you need them!

20 mins

*Do you feel depleted?
Connecting with nature
for as little as 20 minutes
a day has been shown to
significantly increase
vitality,* so try getting
outside instead of reaching
for yet another coffee. Or,
if you like, take your coffee
into the garden!*





THE CHELSEA CHOP

Cut back some plants for a greater yield of summer blooms



PLANTS ARE GROWING RAPIDLY and the garden is looking lovely and green. It might feel counterintuitive, but consider pruning back some plants – known as the 'Chelsea chop', thanks to its timely correlation with the annual Chelsea Flower Show. In doing so, you can delay flowering and create bushier, more compact plants, with an extra-abundance of flowers. It also prevents foliage from getting floppy and leggy later in the season and keeps plants in their allocated space.

The Chelsea chop is best employed on herbaceous perennials and is not for those that flower once, such as asters, achillea, nepeta, echinacea, helenium, rudbeckia, monarda and sedums. There are three slightly different methods, easily learned by gentle experimentation.

The simplest method is to reduce the plant by a third to a half. You could also reduce only some plants, where there are many of the same type, to spread the flowering period. The other option is to prune back one third of the stems of one plant, leaving the rest to encourage bushy new growth and flowers.

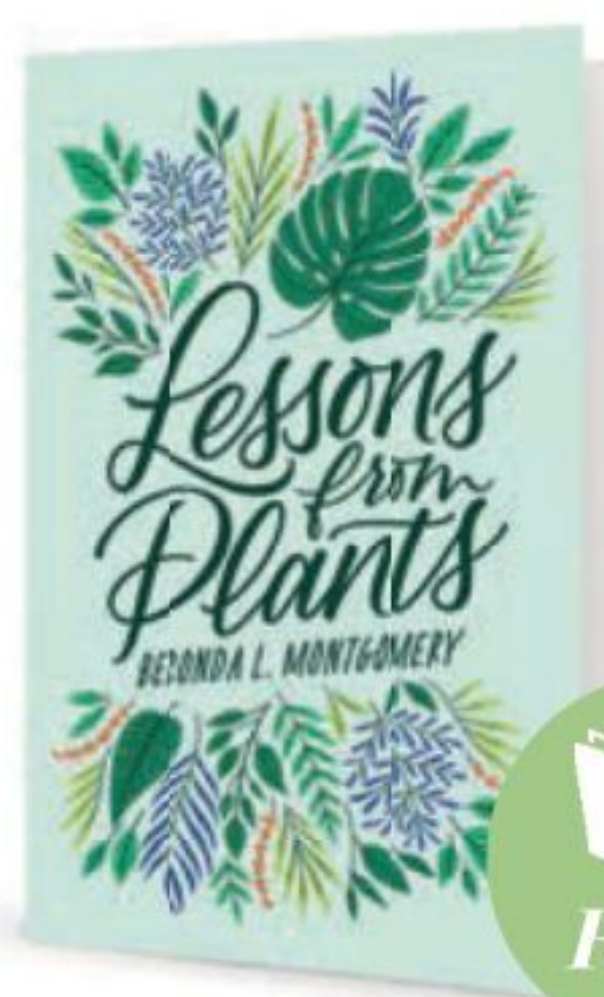
Later, when plants start to look tatty at the end of July, you can employ a similar tactic to plants such as hardy geraniums and nepeta to produce another round of flowers and growth within the year. Be brave and give it a try!



QUOTES TO LIVE BY

“Everything has seasons, and we have to be able to recognise when something's time has passed... Everything that is alive requires pruning as well, which is a great metaphor for endings”

HENRY CLOUD



● **'Lessons From Plants'** by Beronda L. Montgomery (Harvard University Press, £18.95)



Through the grapevine

We've heard of talking to plants but what would they say in reply? *Lessons From Plants* by scientist Beronda L. Montgomery is a fascinating look at the adaptive behaviour of plants, how they respond to their environments and neighbours – and, ultimately, what we can learn from them. A brilliant read for gardeners.

Under a Tuscan sky

Ellen Tout cycles, cooks and recharges on a glorious agricultural estate in the sun-drenched Italian countryside



48
HOURS

TOP Explore more than 2,000 hectares of fertile agricultural land at Toscana Resort Castelfalfi

LEFT Relax and read by the pool or find a vantage point with splendid views

BELOW Truffle hunting with expert foragers, Bianca and her best pal, Matteo



Toes hovering above the ground, I gingerly lift one foot and then the other onto the pedals of the e-bike. I haven't been on a bicycle since childhood, but with the rolling Tuscan hills beckoning, here's to hoping you really never do forget!

Formerly a medieval farming village, Toscana Resort Castelfalfi is an oasis of sustainably managed land in the heart of Tuscany. Gripping the handlebars, I meander along cobbled streets and through ancient olive groves and vineyards. As my confidence grows, I whizz down undulating hills, passing restored cottages and fields of yellow sunflowers, before taking a break to taste the sweet tomatoes and aromatic herbs grown in the estate's organic gardens. That lunchtime, the head chef teaches me to prepare a traditional caponata – a sweet dish made with pine nuts and vegetables sourced that morning from the allotment. Under his tutelage, I carefully chop the produce and can't help but blush when he exclaims that I have excellent knife skills.

La bella vita

From every point on the estate, its namesake castle is visible. Towering over the landscape, its atmospheric basement was used as the set of the 2002 *Pinocchio* film. Beautifully renovated, it now houses a restaurant and terrace where, that evening, I enjoy an aperitivo. Something of an art form to the locals, we start with olives, bread and oil, all produced onsite, followed by delicious little reimaginings of Italian dishes.

There is also an art to the hunt for truffles – the 'white gold' of the Italian mountains. The following day, I join truffle hunter Matteo Giuliani and his dog, Bianca. In the woods, she runs and plays, snuffling through leaves and mud as she goes. Abruptly, she stops and barks. We rush over and Matteo digs to find our first truffle.

After a yoga class, quiet walks and time spent reading in the sun, I head home from my short break feeling refreshed. What's more, my confidence on two wheels is renewed and I am keen to get back on my bike.

Is Tuscany calling you? *Toscana Resort Castelfalfi*, a member of the Preferred Hotels & Resorts group, offers hotel stays, villas and apartments. Rates from £277 per room per night; castelfalfi.com. Always check government guidelines before travel

Food of the gods

Journey through eastern Mediterranean countries to discover mouthwatering meals and exciting flavours from an area bursting with culture and character

EDITED BY EMMA COXON PHOTOGRAPHS MATT RUSSELL

Food evokes memories of people and places; it comforts and helps us heal in hard times and unites diverse cultures across continents. Migrant communities in major cities enrich so much of our lives, including our kitchen cupboards with interesting and exotic ingredients. In her new book, *'Ripe Figs' (Bloomsbury, £26)*, food and travel writer Yasmin Khan brings us a taste of the eastern Med. Travelling through Greece, Turkey and Cyprus, Khan shares recipes from a region brimming with culinary charm, transporting us to 'cobalt blue skies and shimmering seas, sun-drenched islands filled with olive groves and citrus trees, and mezze-laden tables'.

Beautifully interwoven are stories of the eclectic mix of people with whom she shares meals, as we're invited into a discussion about migration, borders and identity. The book is a celebration of food but is also dedicated to migrants and the resilience of the human spirit because, even in challenging periods, people can always find communion around the kitchen table.

HALLOUMI SAGANAKI

This Cypriot-inspired dish is the perfect appetiser and makes an ideal additional to any mezze feast. Sweet, salty, fried rectangles of halloumi are dusted in semolina or polenta, sautéed until crisp, then drizzled with warm, thyme-infused honey and topped with crunchy pomegranate seeds.

SERVES 4 (AS A MEZZE DISH)

- 300g halloumi cheese
- 1 medium egg
- 4 tbsp fine semolina or polenta
- 3 tbsp sunflower oil
- 2 tbsp runny honey
- 1 tsp finely chopped thyme leaves
- A couple of handfuls rocket leaves
- 4-5 fresh figs, quartered (optional)
- 3 tbsp pomegranate seeds
- Freshly ground black pepper

1 Cut the halloumi into eight thick slices. Beat the egg in a small bowl and sprinkle the semolina or polenta onto a plate. Dip the halloumi slices in the beaten egg, then roll them in the semolina or polenta so they have a crust around them.

2 Heat the oil in a non-stick frying pan until hot, then fry the halloumi pieces for a couple of minutes on each side until they are golden brown. Place on kitchen paper to soak up any excess oil. Meanwhile, heat the honey in a small saucepan with the thyme.

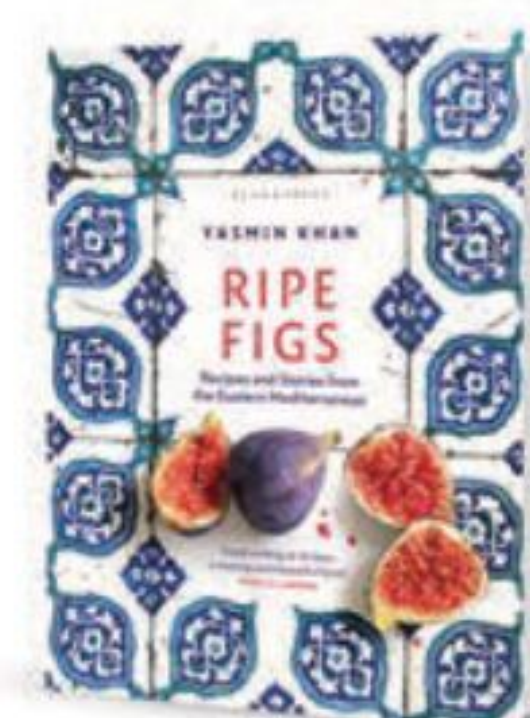
3 Now assemble the dish. Place the rocket on a serving plate and arrange the halloumi on top, nestling the figs around, if using. Drizzle a little of the hot honey over each slice of halloumi. Finish with a smattering of pomegranate seeds and grind over some black pepper.

Reader offer

'Psychologies' readers

can buy a copy of *'Ripe Figs: Recipes And Stories From The Eastern Mediterranean'* by Yasmin Khan for the special price of £20.80 (RRP £26).

To order, go to [bloomsbury.com](https://www.bloomsbury.com) and use the code 'PSYCHOLOGIES20' at checkout. Postage charges may apply. Offer valid until 11 June 2021.



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GRIDDLED FRUIT WITH YOGHURT AND HONEY

Be transported to sunnier climes with this delicious breakfast recipe. It's the ideal way to start a hot summer's morning; warm and succulent fruit served with thick, full-fat Greek yoghurt, finished with a drizzle of floral honey.

SERVES 4

- 8 ripe figs, halved
- 6 apricots or plums, halved and pitted
- 3 nectarines or peaches, quartered and pitted
- ¼ tsp ground cinnamon
- 4 tbsp orange juice
- 600g strained full-fat Greek-style yoghurt
- Handful of grapes, halved
- Handful of nuts, such as walnuts, almonds and pistachios, roughly chopped
- 8 tbsp runny honey of your choice

1 Place the halved figs and stone fruits in a bowl, then sprinkle over the cinnamon. Add the orange juice and toss well.

2 Heat a griddle pan until very hot. Cook the fruits for 1-2 minutes on each side until charred and slightly softened. Remove and set aside to cool.

3 Spoon the yoghurt into bowls, top with the griddled fruits, grapes and nuts, then finish with a thick slick of honey.

FIG AND PEACH TART

This easy-to-assemble tart is bursting with quintessential summer flavours of the eastern Mediterranean: ripe figs and sweet peaches, best served with a dollop of fresh cream or kaymak and a cup of coffee.

SERVES 4-6

For the pastry

- 250g plain flour, plus extra for dusting
- 45g caster sugar
- ¼ tsp salt
- 150g cold unsalted butter, finely chopped
- 1 egg yolk
- 1 tbsp cold water

For the filling

- 2 ripe peaches (total weight about 320g)
- 5 ripe figs
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- ½ tsp ground cinnamon
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- 75g demerara sugar
- 3 tbsp cornflour

For the glaze

- 1 egg white, lightly beaten
- 2 tbsp demerara sugar

1 To make the pastry, place the flour, caster sugar, salt and butter in a large bowl and rub together with your fingertips until they resemble breadcrumbs.

2 Lightly beat the egg yolk with the cold water, then add to the bowl, using your hands to lightly knead everything together into a soft ball of dough. Wrap in cling film and transfer to the fridge for 1 hour. When you are ready to start baking, preheat the oven to 200°C, gas mark 6.

3 Slice the peaches into 2cm-thick slices, removing the stones, and quarter the

figs. Place the fruit in a bowl and toss with the vanilla extract, ground cinnamon, lemon juice, demerara sugar and cornflour.
4 Place a sheet of baking parchment on a work surface and put the ball of pastry on it. Lightly flour a rolling pin and use it to roll out the pastry into a circle of around 5mm thick and 35cm in diameter. Don't worry if the edges are rough and the pastry starts coming apart, just squish it together with your fingers. Place the baking parchment with the dough on a baking tray.

5 Now arrange the peach and fig slices in the centre of the circle, leaving a 5cm border. You can do this by piling them all into the middle or making a pattern, such as concentric circles. Once you are done, fold the edges of the pastry over the fruit. Use your fingers to bring the pastry together where you have gaps.

6 Finally, use a pastry brush to lightly coat the top of the pastry with the beaten egg white, then sprinkle the crust with some demerara sugar.

7 Bake for around 40 minutes, until the top of the pastry is an even, dark golden brown. You can serve the tart warm, but the flavours improve at room temperature, so it is best to leave it to cool for 30 minutes.



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and the breath-taking Bavarian Alps to the once-a-decade
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co.uk

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sweetpeaandwillow.com

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Taste the summer

Stock up your pantry. Filippo Berio Il Rustico unfiltered olive oil, £8.99, ocado.com; The Collective plant natural Greek-style yoghurt, from £1.25, tesco.com; Riso Gallo Venere Rustico black rice, £2.79, ocado.com; Le Rustichella egg pasta, £12, sacla.co.uk; Newman's Own yoghurt and herb dressing and dip, £1.80, ocado.com; Sea Change rosé prosecco, £12.99, seachangewine.com; limoncello, £24.95, cotswoldsdistillery.com; El Bandarra aperitif pack, £39.99, shop.elbandarra.com

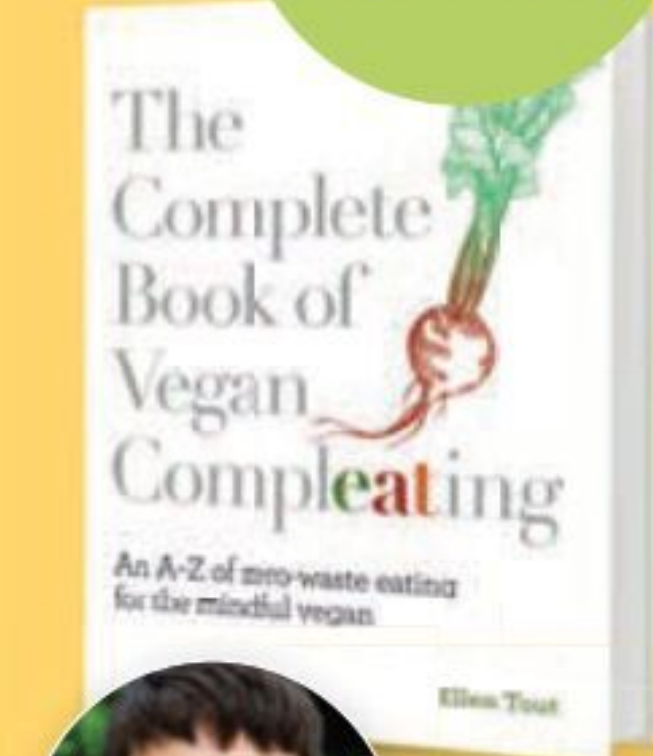
Adventure to the Med

SUN-KISSED Mediterranean soil provides an abundance of fresh fruit and vegetables, pulses and legumes. Add store-cupboard staples found in kitchens across Greece, Turkey and Cyprus and you'll be rustling up meals like the locals in no time.

A full-flavoured, quality extra virgin olive oil is a must for dressings and drizzled over colourful summer salads. Look out for large, vintage-style metal tins of oil to keep you well-stocked, or elegant bottles that can serve as decoration after use.



Waste-free kitchen



Tips tips!

Eco Living Editor Ellen Tout shares sustainable, creative cooking advice

It's tempting to discard veggie peels and seeds, but these are all nutritious and edible. Squash and pumpkin seeds can be roasted in oil and seasoning for a healthy snack, as can squash and root vegetable peels, which also make a great soup topper. Seeds can be dried and saved for planting too!

Reader offer: Ellen's book 'The Complete Book Of Vegan Compleating' (Nourish, £14.99) is available for pre-order now. 'Psychologies' readers can save 30% with offer code 'COMPLEAT21' at tinyurl.com/psymag
For waste-free recipes, follow Ellen on Instagram @compleatly_vegan; ellentout.com

SUNSHINE DINING Cookbooks bursting with Mediterranean flavours



1 Meze by Sally Butcher (Pavilion, £12.99) **2 Under The Olive Tree by Irini Tzortzoglou** (Headline, £25)
3 The Sicily Cookbook by Cettina Vicenzino (DK, £16.99) **4 Aegean by Marianna Leivaditaki** (Kyle Books, £26)

The secrets that we keep

Podcast Editor Rachel Dobson can't believe her ears – ominous confessions, revelations, rivalry and other people's houses have her audibly enthralled this month



NIGHT CALLERS

LISTENING
TO an artist

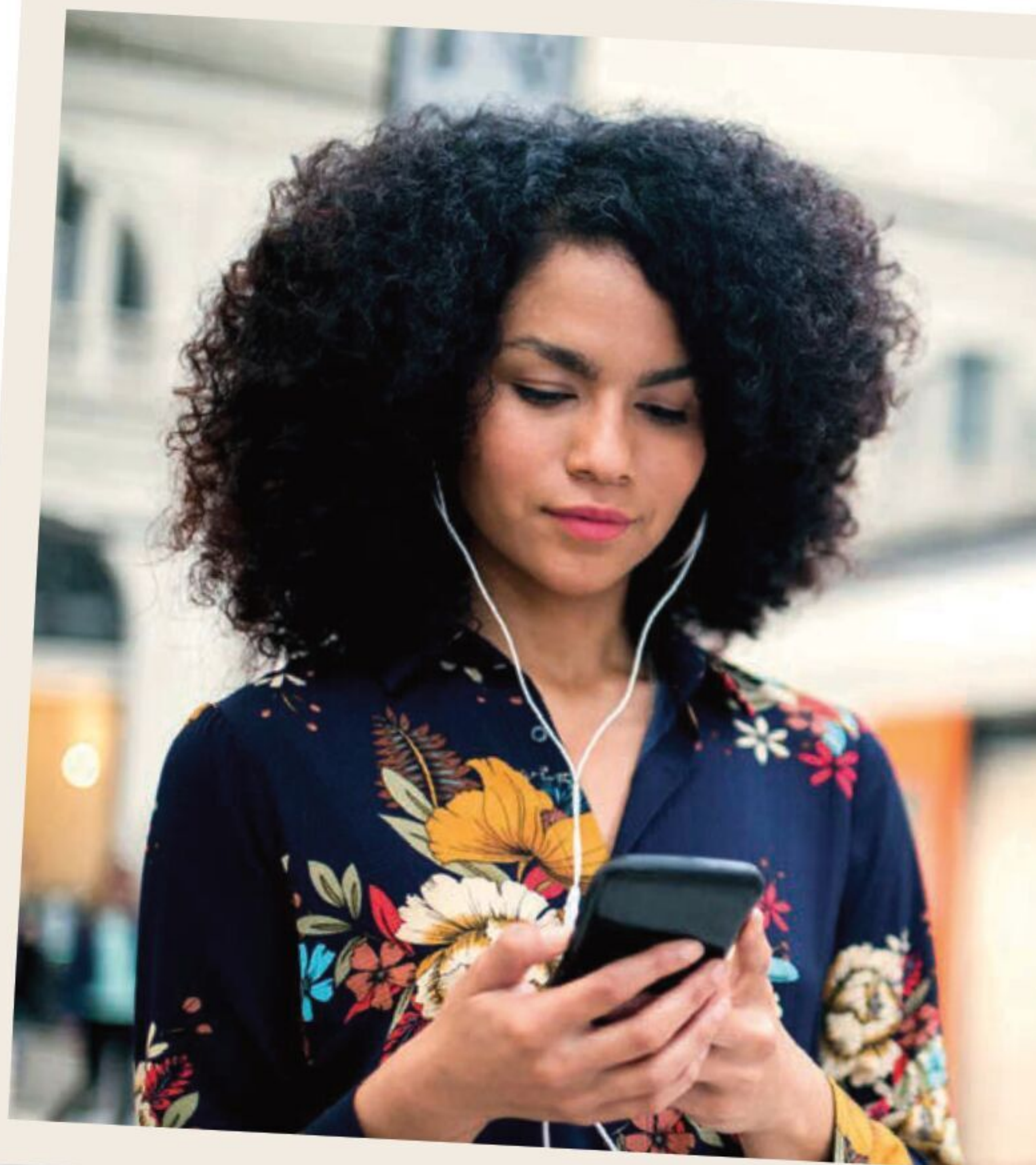
describe what it was like to live in New York in the early 1980s is edgy and exciting. The parties, the scene, the grotty apartments... Painter Marissa Bridge was at the heart of it, working in fashion, making art in her spare time and partying with other creatives.

In 1981, there were 2,100 murders in New York and the streets were awash with drugs, but Marissa creates an image of endless possibilities for work, love and life. Her husband, Allan Bridge, was Mr. Apology, the conceptual artist behind The Apology Line, encouraging criminals to leave anonymous answerphone confessions.

That phone was in Allan's apartment and the couple would lie in bed listening to people admitting to – often heinous – acts. Like a third character in their relationship, it interrupted every aspect of their lives – disembodied voices sharing secrets and making death threats. Allan produced an art installation from the project, sold the film rights and kept it going for 15 years. Now, Marissa has made a podcast – no spoilers here about what happened to Allan...

At a time when the future of our cities is under the lens, I can't help but wonder: can you have a vibrant and affordable city full of creative souls without the crime?

Email Podcast Editor Rachel Dobson at rachel@racheldobson.co.uk



“If my older sibling, Maddy, didn't take control, I reckon we would be in prison”

MARINA BYE ON RELATIVELY

DON'T MISS!

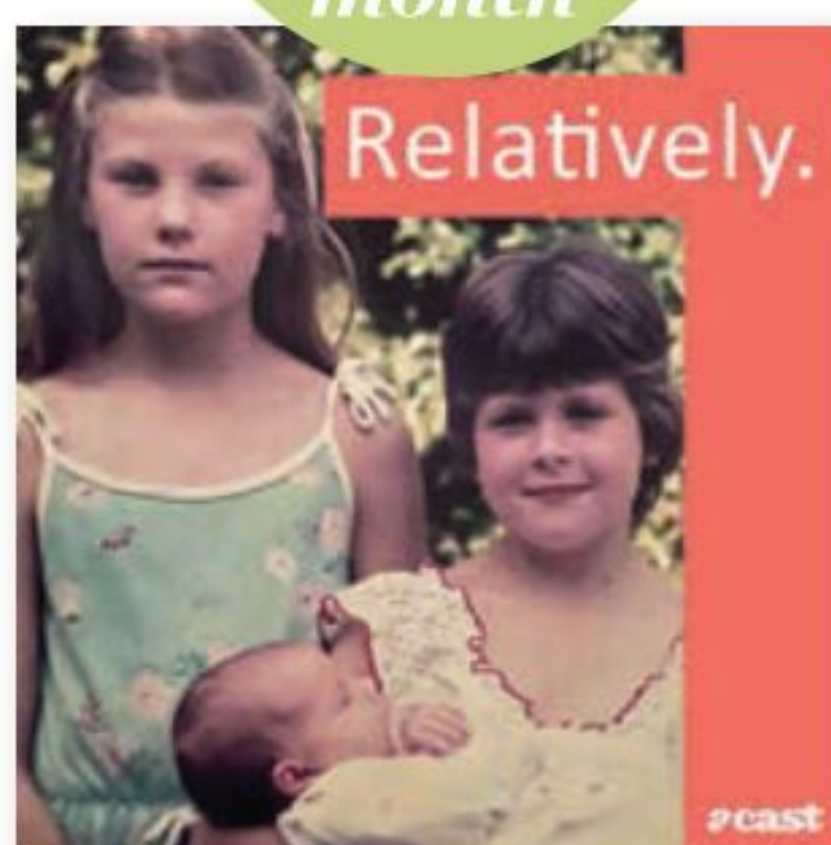
Recover from major emotional life events

UKCP talking therapies podcast

Are you in turmoil? Perhaps you have lost a loved one, been made redundant or feel at a loss in terms of your identity? The UK Council for Psychotherapy's Sarah Niblock and Alivia Rose discuss the cycle of emotions after something happens that is beyond our control. Listen at psychologies.co.uk/recover-major-emotional-life-events-podcast-ukcp

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Listen to the Psychologies podcast channel on iTunes, TuneIn and AudioBoom or at



RELATIVELY

Presenter Catherine Carr examines what can be the longest relationship of your life – the one with your sibling. Among the offspring of the famous, Ruby Wax's daughters, Maddy and Marina Bye, reveal what it was like growing up in Wax's household. I love this series for giving a peep behind the curtains, showing how other homes work – or don't – and how you really can't hide anything from your brother or sister.



READER PODCAST

THE INFLUENTIAL WOMEN PODCAST

with **Nicki Bannerman**

Psychologies reader Nicki Bannerman has a knack of selecting truly inspirational and encouraging women, including our very own editor-in-chief. Scroll down for the Suzy Walker conversation, nestled among other business leaders, authors, sports personalities and entrepreneurs. Bannerman delves into thriving in the face of adversity, overcoming health problems, lessons in life and love, and the mantras that get us through.



AUDIBLE BOOK OF THE MONTH

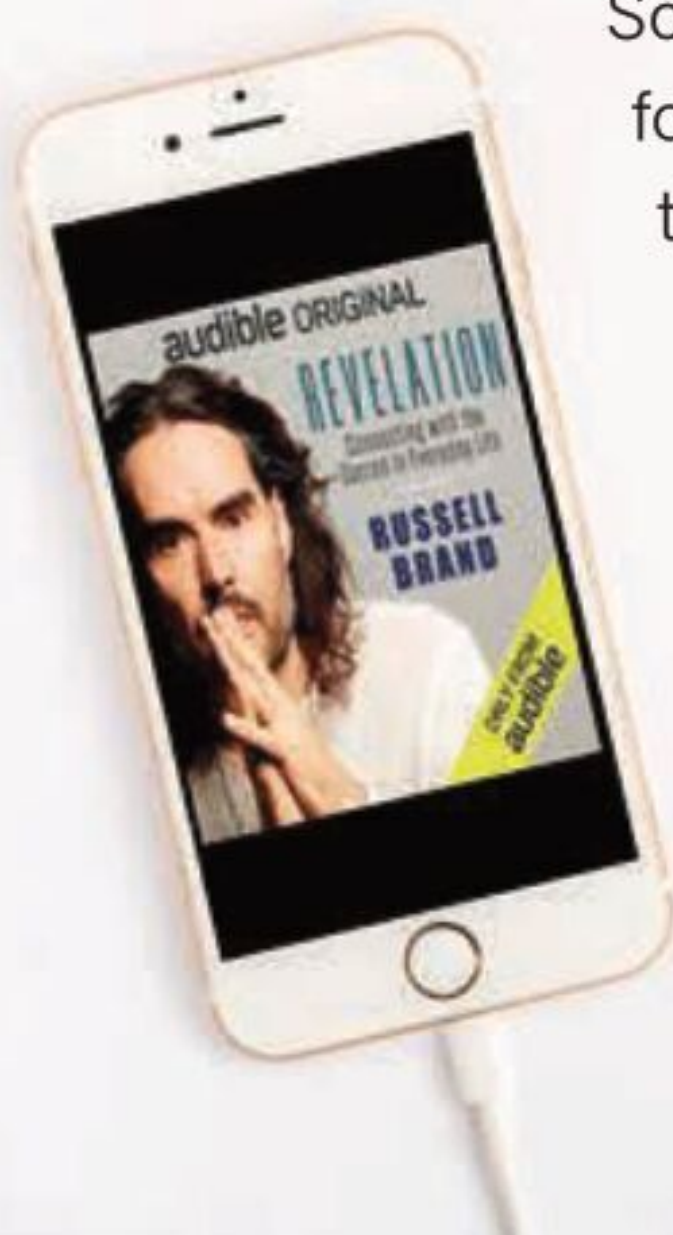
Revelation by Russell Brand

I sometimes miss a thread or tangent with Brand – his mind is so fast-paced – but, having read *Recovery* (Pan Macmillan, £9.99), I've become a fan of his writing.

I love his honesty, accessibility and sense of humour. In *Revelation*, he takes a typically earnest – with a fair amount of wit – dive into the meaning of life, death and the sacred space in between.

Something light-hearted for the walk with the dog, then? Count me in.

'Revelation' by Russell Brand, £27.49, or free with a 30-day Audible trial; audible.co.uk



THROUGH THE KEYHOLE

Rachel's top three podcasts about design and interiors



1 The Modern House

This podcast is hosted by writer Matt Gibberd, co-founder of The

Modern House, which is so much more than an estate agent's website. Gibberd asks his guests, mostly from the world of design, art and architecture, to talk about their three favourite properties. I enjoyed his interview with his wife, Faye Toogood, an artist with her fingers in all sorts of pies. I made many notes of places I want to visit.

2 The Great Indoors



These two pals are hard to tell apart and, between them, know all there is to know about interior design – and if they're stumped, they just quiz another expert. Designer Sophie Robinson and author Kate Watson-Smyth have great decorating tips – and they don't take their subject too seriously. They have a range of guests, from interiors specialists to psychotherapists. A fun and informative listen.



3 On Design with Justyna Green

If you only listen to one of these, choose the

brilliant episode with Stacie Woolsey, who devised the 'Make your own masters' course. Artist Green is a slightly hesitant interviewer, but gives people lots of space to answer questions in depth, so you find out a lot about her subjects and their subjects. I love her diverse choice of guests, all of whom have opened my eyes to the life and works of creatives and their processes.

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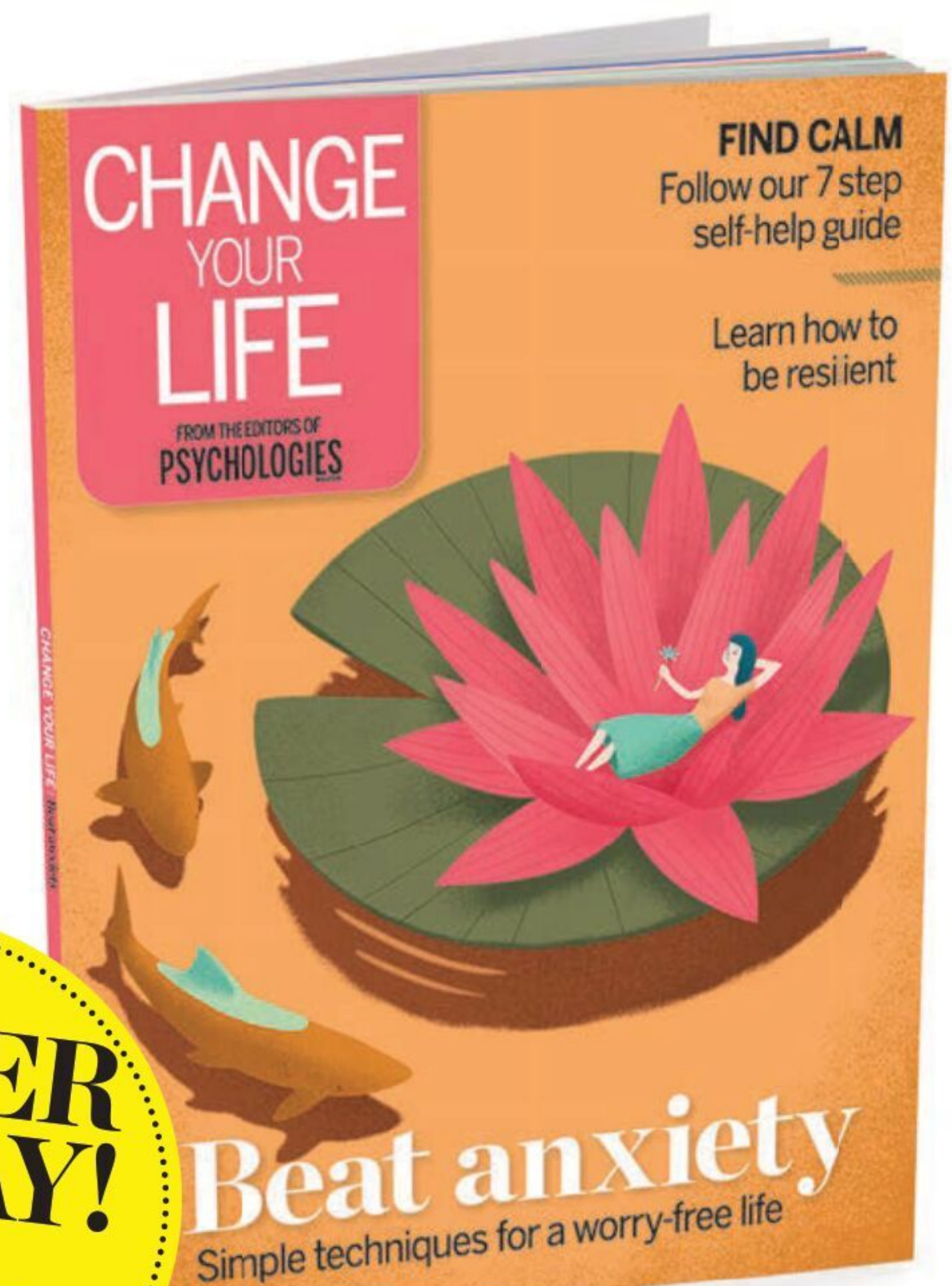
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