

GIVE YOURSELF A MENTAL SPRING CLEAN

CREATE A LIFE YOU LOVE

UK edition

psychologies

Get back in the game!

How to make your own personal comeback

Why going makeup-free is good for your mind

15-page DOSSIER

LEARN TO LOVE AGAIN

How to find happiness after heartbreak

World's favourite podcaster

Mel Robbins

'Learning to stop trying to control everything is so powerful'

TRANSFORM

YOUR ENERGY LEVELS

- Boost your energy by managing your stress and time
- Clear your emotional blockers
- What mantra gives you an instant boost?

PSYCHOLOGIES.CO.UK

APRIL 2025 • £5.25



KELSEYmedia 9 771746 734191



04

Is **Stress** tying you in **Knots?**



Floradix® Magnesium

Magnesium contributes to normal:

- ✓ **Muscle**
- ✓ **Nerve** functions

NEW
PACKAGING -
SAME GREAT
PRODUCT



If you are feeling irritable and snappy, with knots in your shoulders and tension stiffening your neck, bump up your magnesium and lose those knots.

Floradix Magnesium contains highly absorbable magnesium in a delicious herbal formula which could make the difference to your nerves - unlock the knots and survive the stress.

Contains no preservatives, colourings or alcohol.

Available from selected Holland & Barrett stores, Boots, independent health food stores and selected pharmacies.

www.floradix.co.uk

Salus

Welcome...



Growing up in Yorkshire, I would often hear things described as 'bloomin' lovely'. It might not mean that much to you, but I knew what high praise that was. It's not a phrase I hear that often now I'm living further south, but to me the word 'blooming' still has a very special meaning — after all, when can you think of something blooming being a bad thing? Flowers, blossoms, pregnant mothers, algae... okay, there's always an exception. But this month we're reflecting on the way the world around us is slowly starting to unfurl, stretch out and come into bloom — and inviting you to do the same. If you're a regular reader of this magazine you'll know that new year resolutions really aren't our thing. January is a time for cosiness and candles and cuddles in our book, not the gym and no chocolate. And while I'm not advocating for the gym and no chocolate now either, there is something in the air that makes the idea of refreshing and rejuvenating things that little bit more appealing right now.

After a few months when the focus has been indoors, on rest and recovery, the natural world is beckoning to us. So we're embracing this time of year and blue skies and daffodils and all the other good things it brings (list your favourite here!), and bringing this positive energy into our everyday lives. You might still be feeling tired after a long winter — if so turn to our dossier (page 47) to find out how to transform your energy levels gradually by managing your time, stress and emotional blockers. And you can find out how to have a gentle 'mental spring clean' (page 22) and clear out the clutter kicking around your mind to help you enjoy everything the season has to offer.

This feeling of welcoming in the positive energy is also inspired by our cover star Mel Robbins (page 12). She's one of the most in-demand experts on the globe at the moment, so I was blown away to spend time with her this month to chat about how she's changing the world little by little, bringing positivity and joy. I hope we're doing the same in this magazine. Happy reading!

PS. If you can't get enough of Mel, look out for next issue, when she'll be sharing more inspiration in our dossier!

Sally xx

**Sally Saunders,
Editor-in-Chief**

**We hope you love Psychologies.
Subscribe today and save!**

Go to shop.kelsey.co.uk/PYPIXI
or call 01959 543747



Subscribe at shop.kelsey.co.uk/PYPIXI

APRIL

In this issue...

Regulars

7 In the mood

Enlightening, happy-making facts, fascinating news stories and more

12 Mel Robbins

The world's favourite podcaster on how her kids inspired her groundbreaking new book

16 Life as I know it

Things aren't always how they appear from the outside — us included — remembers Harriet Minter

Mind

22 Do you need a mental spring clean?

Yasmina Floyer examines how to let go of your internal clutter and help yourself feel free

28 Writing to flourish

Jackee Holder shares the powerful secrets of The Miracle Question and 'What If' prompts

82

Do you dare to bare?

30 Coaching in action

Award-winning coach Kim Morgan is surprised by her client's change of view on her 'ageing hippy' mum

34 Breaking the spiral of silence

Are we becoming too scared of social sanctions to share our true opinions, asks Katie Scott

42 Comeback queen

She's done her time in the wilderness, now it's time for Kate Townshend to enjoy a little personal reinvention...

Heart

64 Happiness after heartbreak

It's never too late to find joy in dating again, writes Kellie Gillespie-Wright

68 Coming up for air

Sometimes, when you're a mum of four, too much is still not enough, discovers Caro Giles

70 On the defensive

Dr Stephanie Fitzgerald examines how to cope when someone makes your hackles rise for no good reason

Body

76 Mindful wellbeing

Ali Roff Farrar shares some conscious actions and wellbeing buys to help you live intentionally

82 Time to break up with makeup?

After a lifetime of religiously 'fixing' her face each day, therapist Kate Beckwith examines why now she dares to bare



**WORTH
£36!**

Join us today!

Subscribe to
Psychologies
and receive revitalising
Pixi Overnight Retinol Oil
and Glow Tonic!

Plus, subscribe to Psychologies and commit to happiness and joy. You'll benefit from life-changing tools and advice, to help you live the life you deserve. See page 42.



86

Get dinner on the table
in minutes

86 Jamie Oliver's air-fryer favourites

The cheeky chappie delivers easy ways to get simple, unprocessed meals on the table in minutes

90 Love yourself inside and out

Confidence coach Tiwalola Adebayo shares five ways to help you find your inner strength and love your body

Soul

94 What's your clutter personality?

Decluttering experts Ingrid Jansen and Lesley Spellman on the psychology of why we keep things

98 Last Word

Author Jojo Moyes on the joys of reinvention — and female friendship

Get your
Psychologies
subscription now!

Order online at
shop.kelsey.co.uk/PYPIXI

psychologies DOSSIER

With you
in mind



47

Step into Spring!

48 The rise of competitive tiredness

Dr Stephanie Fitzgerald explains why we're all in need of a boost after a long winter

50 Understanding your personal energy levels

Expert Heather Darwall-Smith asks you to take pen and paper to work out how you ebb and flow

52 Manage your stress to improve your energy

Are we low on energy, or are we asking too much of ourselves?

54 Clear your emotional blocks

Healer Oliver Nino shares four ways to wipe the slate clean

52 What's your instant boost?

Discover your personal mantra

Kelsey Publishing Ltd, The Granary, Downs Court,
Yalding Hill, Yalding, Kent ME18 6AL
(01959 541444, email letters@psychologies.co.uk)

OUR TEAM

Editor-in-Chief Sally Saunders
In the Mood and The Words Editor Alex Lloyd
Wellness Editor Ali Roff-Farrar
Art Editor Marisa Bailey, ATG Media
Social Media and Digital Content Producer Amy Mica Marsden

ADVERTISING & PRODUCTION

Production Assistant Katie Hollands,
01732 440038; katie@talk-media.uk
Head of Investment Bonnie Howard,
01732 447008; bonnie@talk-media.uk

MANAGEMENT

Managing Director (Lifestyle) Oswin Grady
Retail Director Steve Brown
Operations Director Gill Lambert
Subscription Marketing Manager Nick McIntosh
Print Production Manager Georgina Harris
Print Production Controller Hayley Brown

SUBSCRIPTIONS

13 issues of *Psychologies* are published per annum

- UK annual subscription price: £100.62
- Europe annual subscription price: £126.62
- USA annual subscription price: £126.62
- Rest of World annual subscription price: £139.62
- UK subscription and back issue orderline: 01959 543747
- Overseas subscription orderline: 0044 (0)1959 543747
- Toll-free USA subscription orderline: 1 888 777 0275
- UK customer service team: 01959 543747; cs@kelsey.co.uk

Find subscription offers on our website:

shop.kelsey.co.uk/psy

Manage your subscription online

shop.kelsey.co.uk/site/loginForm

DISTRIBUTION

• Distribution in Great Britain: Seymour Distribution Limited,
2 East Poultry Avenue, London, EC1A 9PT;
020 7429 4000; seymour.co.uk

Distribution in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland:
Newsread; 353 23 886 3850

• The information in 'Psychologies' is provided for entertainment purposes only and should not supersede the advice of medical experts. You must not rely on this magazine as an alternative to advice from your doctor or other professional healthcare provider. If you think you may be suffering from any medical condition, seek expert attention.

GLOBAL EDITIONS

Groupe Psychologies, 2-8 rue Gaston-Rébuffat, 75019 Paris, France. Tel: 01 44 65 58 00

PSYCHOLOGIES FRANCE
Editor-in-Chief: Laurence Folléa

PSYCHOLOGIES ROMANIA Ringier Magazines, 6 Dimitri Pompeiu Street,
Bucharest. Tel: +40 212 03 08 00. Managing Director: Mihnea Vasiliu
(mihnea.vasiliu@ringier.ro) Editor-in-Chief: Iuliana Alexa (iuliana.alexa@ringier.ro)
Advertising Manager: Monica Pop (monica.pop@ringier.ro)

PSYCHOLOGIES BELGIUM Edition Ventures, Chaussée de Louvain 431D,
1830 Lasne. Tel: + 32 2 379 29 90 Editorial Director: Marie-Christine De
Wasseige (mc.dewasseige@ventures.be) Chief Editor (French): Christiane Thiry
(christiane.thiry@ventures.be) Chief Editor (Flemish): Barbara Van den Abele
(b.vandenabele@ventures.be) Advertising Manager: Manonelle Sepulchre (manonelle.sepulchre@ventures.be)

Psychologies Magazine is a registered trademark. Copyright ©2002

Psychologies Magazine is a registered trademark and is published monthly by Kelsey Media 2022© all rights reserved. Kelsey Media is a trading name of Kelsey Publishing Ltd. Reproduction in whole or in part is forbidden except with permission in writing from the publishers.

Note to contributors: Articles submitted for consideration by the editor must be the original work of the author and not previously published. Where photographs are included, which are not the property of the contributor, permission to reproduce them must have been obtained from the owner of the copyright. The Editor cannot guarantee a personal response to all letters and emails received. The views expressed in the magazine are not necessarily those of the Editor or the Publisher. Kelsey Publishing Ltd accepts no liability for products and services offered by third parties.

PRIVACY NOTICE: Kelsey Publishing Ltd uses a multilayered privacy notice, giving you brief details about how we would like to use your personal information. For full details, visit kelsey.co.uk, or call 01959 543524. If you have any questions, please ask, as submitting your details indicates your consent, until you choose otherwise, that we and our partners may contact you about products and services that will be of relevance to you via direct mail, phone, email or SMS. You can opt out at ANY time via email: data.controller@kelsey.co.uk or 01959 543524.



The advice starts RIGHT HERE!



DR EMMA HEPBURN

'When we are mentally or cognitively overloaded, we can feel overwhelmed, irritable, have a shorter fuse, and physically we can feel more tired,' explains Dr Emma Hepburn. Find out how to clear out some of the internal disorder with a good mental spring clean, on page 22.

KAMALYN KAUR

'The idea of a "comeback" holds immense psychological power because it represents resilience, transformation, and the ability to rewrite one's narrative,' says psychotherapist Kamalyn Kaur. 'It's like getting a "do over".' Discover how to harness this power of reinvention for yourself on page 42.



UMIT IYI

'We tell ourselves a lot of stories about why or how someone is speaking to us,' says leadership consultant Umit Iyi. 'That defensiveness, that frustration, that energy that we define as negative, actually can relate more to how we feel about ourselves in that moment.' Learn how to let go on page 70.



Our mission

Psychologies' mission is to provide you with inspiration and advice to support you to improve your emotional wellbeing. We aim to help you boost your happiness and resilience and lower your stress and anxiety. We do this by providing simple, achievable steps to make small changes that can add up to a real difference.

Embracing the four pillars of your life, from mind and body to heart and soul, *Psychologies* engages with the world around us as well as the world within to help you discover inspiring ways to make every day better and create a life you love.

In the mood

Thought-provoking culture, insightful science and inspirational snippets to bring you up to date on all things uplifting, hopeful and happy-making

COMPILED BY ALEX LLOYD

Rise and shine!

Life really does seem better in the morning, with a study finding people generally wake in the best frame of mind.

UCL experts tracked the mental health wellbeing of 49,000 people over 24-hour periods across two years, discovering that we feel our worst around midnight.

The day of the week and the season also play a part.

Ratings for happiness, life satisfaction and feeling worthwhile were all slightly higher on Mondays and Fridays than on Sundays, and happiness was higher on Tuesdays.



IMAGES: SHUTTERSTOCK

43

is the age we starting turning into our parents, according to a survey by M&S Money, with 36% citing complaining about the weather as the top sign.



* PUBLISHED IN BMJ SEXUAL & REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

Cutting down contraception

Unreliable period tracking apps are driving a surge in abortions, NHS research suggests*.

Data from clinics shows a shift away from hormonal contraception in the past five years towards tech, which monitors cycles and encourages users to only have sex on days when they're predicted to be less fertile.

But reliance on these apps is only 76 per cent effective at preventing pregnancy according to the Faculty of Sexual and Reproductive Healthcare.

Meanwhile, the proportion of women relying on the Pill has fallen from 47 per cent in 2012-13 to 27 per cent in 2022-23.

Experts put this down to shifts towards contraceptives with less side effects and also difficulty accessing prescriptions.

No more empty nesters...

It's not just adult kids checking into the Hotel of Mum and Dad — more grandparents are moving in too, as homeowners renovate to accommodate the whole family.

Insurance firm Aviva say a rise in multi-generational living is driving building work, along with increased working from home.

A massive 44% of property owners surveyed said they plan to renovate over the next two years, with 21% planning to extend the layout.

Of those looking to increase space, 17% said housing more than one generation was a key factor, while a further 17% intend to reconfigure their home's layout to add more bathrooms or toilets.

WATCH, LOOK, LISTEN



WATCH *Your Friends and Neighbours*. Jon Hamm plays a newly divorced and fired financier who uncovers dark secrets when he starts stealing from neighbours' homes. Apple TV.



LOOK *Resistance at Turner Contemporary, Margate*. Director Steve McQueen curates the best photographs documenting a century of protests that shaped Britain. To 11 June.



LISTEN *Mad, Sad & Bad* with Paloma Faith. The singer delves into times when celebrity guests like Alan Carr and Mel B have been labelled, rightly or wrongly, with these words.



Tiredness gender gap

Women's tiredness is routinely unnoticed by others – while men's fatigue levels are overestimated. NASA scientists discovered this new gender gap while investigating the energy levels of astronauts. It's thought the differences are down to how the sexes behave in company, with women who feel drained still making an effort to be sociable – something men are less likely to do. Study lead Morgan Stosic said perceivers underestimated women's fatigue by 1.3 points while men's was overstated by 0.9 on a scale of ten. The result aligns with earlier research where volunteers had a tourniquet applied to their upper arm and did handgrip exercises, while onlookers rated the discomfort of each sex.*

*PUBLISHED IN SEX ROLES JOURNAL

Almost half of workers never take a tea break with colleagues, while a quarter of Gen Z admit to not offering to make a cuppa in the office, a poll by food company Tilda found.



Boiled to perfection?

Scientists claim they've cracked the secret code for perfect boiled eggs this Easter – cook them for 32 minutes.

The recipe, developed by the University of Naples Federico II, takes a room-temperature egg and switches it between a saucepan of 100°C boiling water and a bowl of 30°C water every two minutes.

The result should be a perfect 'creamy' consistency throughout, because the white cooks at 85°C while the yolk cooks at 65°C.

Chemical analysis of the finished eggs also suggested they contained more polyphenols, a type of micronutrients which have lots of health benefits thanks to their anti-oxidant and anti-inflammatory properties.

Friends like these

Opposites do attract — when it comes to women picking friends.

Tulane University in Louisiana asked 684 first-year students to complete tasks which measured their risk-taking and social preferences, and also to report who their closest friends were.

While men preferred pals who behaved similarly, women chose friends with different approaches.

Researchers suggest this is because men bond over shared activities, while women focus on fostering emotional support and diverse perspectives in their social circle.



Brits hit online shopping record

British people spend more of their income on the virtual high street than any other nation, handing over 8.8% a year. This is double the Americans and French, who splurge 4.3%, with only the South Koreans coming close at 8.5, according to research by Public Desire. But more spend doesn't equate to longer browsing, with an average of two hours and four minutes a week internet shopping — only a quarter of the time devoted by the Chinese.



"Gradually as you get older, you realise that it doesn't really matter what you wear, because nobody really remembers. They never have been looking. People are so absorbed in themselves, even before selfies. 'Will it be all right? Will I look all right?' And it only comes with age that special wisdom creeps in. That's the great thing about getting older."

Actress Joanna Lumley.



Baby-leave boost

Parents with sick babies will be entitled to additional paid leave from day one in a job from 6 April.

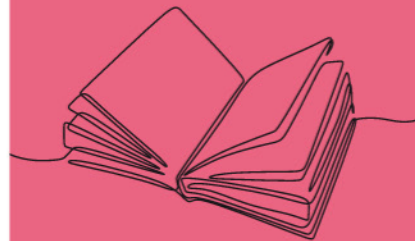
They could take up to 12 weeks of Neonatal Care Leave on top of their standard entitlement, including maternity and paternity.

Mums and dads of babies admitted to hospital up to 28 days old, who have a continuous stay of seven days or longer, will qualify.

Those who meet continuity of service requirements and a minimum earnings threshold will also get Statutory Neonatal Care Pay.

Women between 25 and 65 speak 3,000 more words a day than their male peers, a University of Arizona study found.

3 mystery page turners



1 **Everyone In The Group Chat Dies** by L.M. Chilton (£9.99, Bloomsbury). A darkly funny murder mystery ensues when Kirby's flatmate Esme sends a message from the grave.



2 **Anita de Monte Laughs Last** by Xochitl Gonzalez (£9.75, Bloomsbury). The lives of two female artists – one alive, one dead – intertwine to ask questions of power and love.



3 **The Seven O'Clock Club** by Amelia Ireland (£16.99, Black & White). Four traumatised strangers are brought together by an unconventional counsellor with a theory to test.





If my mistakes help you, that's a life well lived

Self-help superstar Mel Robbins tells Sally Saunders why her daughter dropping F-bombs was a life-changing moment

It's an old saying that most overnight successes have actually been hard at work for years, and perhaps never is that more true than in the case of Mel Robbins.

Her star has been on the rise for a long time: her podcast has been flying high in the charts since she launched it in 2022, and she's been writing best-sellers for the last 10 years.

But since the launch of her new book, *The Let Them Theory: A Life-Changing Tool That Millions of People Can't Stop Talking About*, she's gone positively stratospheric. Whether it's her viral morning routine, her take on the menopause, or the 'Let Them Theory' itself, it's been hard to find much media in the last few weeks that hasn't mentioned her. Articles, podcasts, TV shows, other books: you name it, the world is talking about Mel Robbins.

Understandably, it's hard to catch up with someone so much in demand, and when you throw in the California wildfires, a bout of covid and various other craziness, it takes quite some effort for us to connect. So I'm surprised when we do eventually meet for a call: far from the mega-star image, who is used to appearing with the likes of

Oprah, Jay Shetty and a Kardashian, she is in fact the most warm and funny woman — complete with a single roller in her hair and no make-up.

'I'm running around like a lunatic this morning, because I spread everything out in a hotel room, and then, and I'm like, "Where did I put that stuff?"' she laughs. 'It's ok, you can see me in my natural state.' It's the most disarming, generous start to an interview I can remember, and it's Robbins all over.

She's one of the world's most followed and sought-after experts in mindset, behaviour change, and life improvement, but her overwhelming emotion is not pride, but gratitude.

'I feel humbled by the fact that people are listening and that they're in a moment in history where you have no time, people are making time to listen to something that could help them,' she says. 'And I am so excited that people are excited about a book that's not fantasy, that has you escape your life, but that actually helps you go deeper into your life.'

'Podcasting is not like social media, where you bump into something: instead you have to select an episode and hit play. There's an intentional

IMAGES: JENNY SHERMAN



action by a human being to find time and make time to listen to it. And I see our success as the aggregate effect of one person at a time deciding to find time to invest in themselves.'

The new book is inspired by a phrase her younger daughter used when Robbins was being a 'typical mom' at her son's high school prom, trying to micromanage everything and upsetting everyone in the process.

'It was that experience where you literally feel yourself becoming a psycho, and you can't stop yourself, and the words are coming out of your mouth, and as soon as they're out of your mouth, you're trying to get them back,' she says.

'That was me, and I was putting my whole family on edge. My daughter, who was home from college, just reached over and grabbed my arm and said "Mom, you're being annoying."

'And she just kept saying, almost like a chorus in a song, "Let him get his tux wet. Let them eat where they want. Let him ruin his sneakers, let them dance in the rain, let them do what they want." She had a couple F-bombs in there too, because she was really cranking up the chorus!

'And there was something about that moment: you know how they say, "When the student is ready, the teacher appears." That was the moment that it actually hit my nervous system. And I then said to myself, "Let them" and I felt my shoulders drop.'

This aspect of trying to give up controlling others makes up the central tenet of the book, but Robbins is keen to point out that it's not an entirely new idea, so why does she think it's having such an impact?

'It's resonating for a number of reasons,' she says. 'Number one, I didn't make up the law that in order to take control, you have to stop controlling everything else. This is the truth about life: your life is not about what's happening out there. All your power is in your response to it.'

'This is stoicism, Buddhism, the Serenity Prayer. It's detachment theory. It's radical acceptance.'

'My mother's version of Let Them was "Pull up your big girl panties and deal with it."

'And so I think one of the reasons why this has exploded is because it exists within us, and within ancient wisdom. But I have made it modern in writing this book, I've turned it into a tool.'

'Because I think we all want to be able to not be so controlling, or not have the world affect us so deeply, and yet we don't know how, because we're all so stressed out and overwhelmed.'

'We're at a moment in time where it's scary,



"If I can use things that I regret for good, then that's a life well lived"

where the headlines make you feel helpless. And you know, I think this tool gives you some grounding. And so, it's actually a continuation of what is true about life that we've always known is true. And I'm reminding you of that.'

Real-world action

Robbins is keen to point out that much of her work has in fact dialled in to this wisdom — and science — that is already out there, with a little bit of her own secret sauce to make people want to read on.

'That's what I've done in my work for 10 years!' she laughs. 'I have this ability to make what is theoretical and intellectual tactical and applicable to anybody's life. The Five Second Rule is also not a new idea: it's a tool that you use to tap intrinsic motivation, it's what they call activation energy in physics and psychology. The High Five Habit is not a new concept; it's all about a field of study called neurobics, and it's also about the fact that how you treat yourself is the definition of self worth. But how do you do those things in real life?'

It's all true, no doubt, but there's also more to it than simply modifying an ancient truth, or coming up with a fresh way to talk about psychology: Robbins' authentic voice speaks out from every page. She agrees: 'The stories are really important, because it shows you how both the trying to control everything backfires, even though you have good intention, and why this actually works. And so I use stories, and they're all true. So it's very empowering, because I'm not talking down to you. You're like, "Oh yeah, she's right. I do the same damn thing."

'It's personal because I screwed up. I didn't know what is in this book. I lived my life like in the opposite of the Let Them Theory for 54 years, and I can see the stress I caused myself. I can see the angst and the jealousy. I can see how I stopped myself. I can see how I was a nightmare in relationships because I didn't know and so I was just like, "We're going there. Let's actually unpack this."

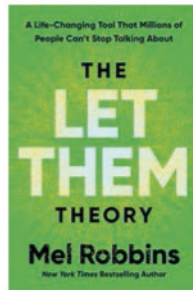
'And I don't hold back. I love being the villain,



because if I could use the things that I've done in my life that I regret or that I'm embarrassed by, and I can use that for good, then that's a life well lived. If I can save you the heartache and the headache that I caused myself or other people, now you got a fighting chance to not do that to yourself.

'I've wasted decades of my life talking myself out of the things that would have changed it, and it caused me so much pain, and I also know that there is something you can do now. It may not resolve all the problems that you face, but if you actually try some of the things that the experts share, or that you know I'm sharing because it's worked for a friend, or it's worked for me, and you start to feel slightly more empowered and slightly better, that just changes the experience that you have in life. And that's all it takes.'

This focus on small changes making us all feel a little better truly resonates. And it's this simple way of opening things up that makes such a massive difference. 'I'm trying to reach you the way that I would reach you if you and I were taking a walk,' she goes on. 'My whole brand is take a walk with a friend. Because when you and I go for a walk, even if we're just meeting for the first time, we would connect. And because you're not making eye contact, you don't feel like this was an interview or



The Let Them Theory: A Life-Changing Tool That Millions of People Can't Stop Talking About by Mel Robbins (Hay House, £17.99) is out now.

an inquisition, and so you're literally side by side with somebody. That's how I feel about the person that's listening to the podcast: we're side by side. I'm not better than you. We're on this road of life together. And there are going to be times, where you're ahead of me. You've moved through something with somebody in your family that I'm now dealing with, and you are best equipped to help the person you used to be. There will be times where I'm ahead of you by two or three steps, and I can share that with you.

'When you and I go for a walk together, we always feel better, no matter what it's doing weather-wise. We always learn something. We always leave feeling more energised. We also have something we typically want to do, a book you want to read, you have something that you want to share to a friend. And so whether I'm bumping into you on the street or I am writing a book or working on a podcast episode, my goal is to show up in your life in a way that is worth your time, and help you feel just a little bit better.'

'I'm not trying to get you to run an ultra marathon. This is about reminding you of the things that matter to you and your capability to just move the ball down the field a little bit, and trust that that could make you feel a little better.'



FEED YOUR MIND™



MENTAL PERFORMANCE

Pantothenic acid which contributes to normal mental performance



25 NUTRIENTS

Including zinc and iodine to help support normal cognitive function



SPECIALIST SUPPORT

Developed by Vitabiotics experts, and replaces a daily multivitamin



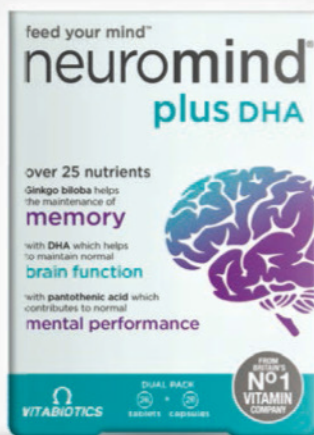
BRAIN FUNCTION

DHA contributes to the maintenance of normal brain function



neuromind®

original tablets
with 25 nutrients



original tablets
plus Omega-3
DHA capsule

From  **Holland & Barrett**,
pharmacies & health stores, neuromind.co.uk

*Nielsen GB ScanTrack Total Coverage Value and Unit Retail Sales 52 w/e 25/01/25. To verify contact Vitabiotics Ltd, 1 Apsley Way, London, NW2 7HF.


VITABIOTICS

From Britain's No.1 Vitamin Company*

What you see ain't what you get!

Sometimes there's a big difference between how we are forced to present ourselves and what's inside, writes Harriet Minter



When I was training to be a coach we were given a group exercise where we each

had to take on an archetype that represented the opposite of who we are. For example, a very talkative man took on the archetype of The Monk. A woman with perfectionist tendencies became the laid-back Surfer Girl. The twist was that rather than picking the archetypes ourselves, they were picked for us by the other group members.

I waited patiently for my archetype to be assigned, thinking I knew what I was getting. After all there were some clear labels that had been assigned to me all my life. Bossy. Know-it-all. Too smart for her own good. Demanding. Arrogant. The same

labels that have been assigned to little girls who see no reason not to take up space for centuries. But instead something strange happened.

My colleagues didn't see me that way at all. They saw me as quiet, thoughtful, friendly but a bit reserved. They assigned me the archetype of The Dominatrix.

I suspect my friends will read this and wonder if I was ill that day. But what the group had identified in just a day with me was something I'd completely missed. Years and years of being told I was too much — too loud, too authoritative, too demanding — had taken a toll. While I might still be those things inside, I'd learned to keep them in and not show the world in case it turned people off me. And in doing so, I'd become resentful of anyone who allowed themselves to turn up in full diva-domme mode, while I sat quietly in the background.

'Can you tap into your inner dominatrix?' is now an instruction I give a lot of my coaching clients. I'm not asking them to start dressing in leather and wielding a whip (unless they want to!) but instead to look at what they really want and start asking for it, with the expectation that the ask will be met. I want them to free themselves from the fear of being too much.

The reality is that most of us are nowhere close to being too much. My inner dominatrix wants things like a window seat on the train, an extra blanket on her bed and for people not to contact her after 9pm. Hardly the stuff BookTok fantasies are made of. Just little things that make her life easier. Your inner dominatrix might want more, maybe less. But if you don't let her out occasionally you'll never know.



IMAGE: MARK HARRISON. HAIR AND MAKE-UP: CAROLINE PIASECKI. STYLIST: KATE ANYA BARBOUR

Reduce tiredness and feel ready – Discover **Magnesium+**

Feeling tired and don't know why? You're not alone. According to studies less than half of us consume our recommended daily amount of magnesium, a mineral that helps turn the food we eat into energy.

Best known for helping to reduce tiredness and fatigue, magnesium is also vital for our health.

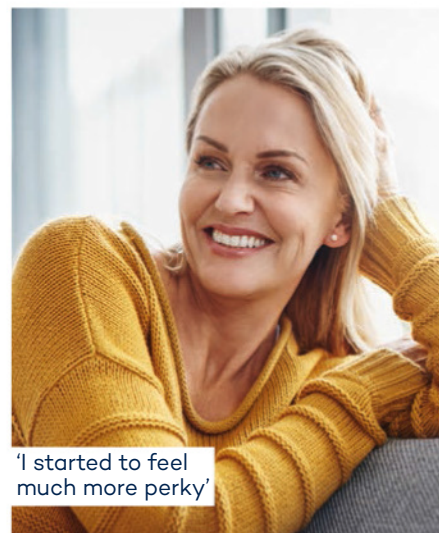
Sub-optimal levels of magnesium have been linked to tiredness and fatigue, reduced energy and dysfunction of the nervous system and psychological functions. If you have low magnesium levels, you are also less likely to get a good night's sleep.

One way to ensure we consume a consistent level of magnesium is by taking a daily supplement.

Your body's ability to absorb the magnesium depends on the way that the supplement is made.

'Most supplements use magnesium oxide – it's the most common form, as it has a high concentration of magnesium but it's not easily released into the body,' explains Dr Miriam Ferrer PhD, Head of Product Development at FutureYou Cambridge.

'Taking more magnesium to try and make up for the problem isn't the best approach, as too much can cause an upset stomach so we created Magnesium+ using magnesium lactate which has been shown to be an effective and well absorbed source of magnesium and is twice as absorbable as a standard magnesium oxide supplement.'



'I started to feel much more perky'

Reviews gathered on independent website Trustpilot speak of its effectiveness.

Nicole, 57 says, 'Within a couple of weeks. I started to feel much more perky – that's the best word to describe it.'

FREE Magnesium+ supplements offer

Leading Cambridge company to offer scientifically proven energy range supplements for free.

*Just pay £1.50 postage

FutureYou Cambridge, a nutraceutical company known for its well-researched nutritional supplements, is giving away packs of its flagship energy product to new customers.

It comes after the Cambridge firm received a flurry of positive reviews for its best-selling energy product on Trustpilot, the independent online review platform.

Michelle, 55 says 'Since taking Magnesium+ I'm feeling less weary and



short-tempered. I think it's something we should all be taking. I just feel more able to cope with the day. I feel less lethargic and more enthusiastic. It just enhances my mood.'

'I just feel more able to cope with the day.'

HOW TO CLAIM YOUR FREE PACK

To claim your free 28 day Magnesium+ subscription trial pack worth £12, visit

FutureYouOffers.co.uk

or freephone

0800 808 5740

quoting code

MGF480

Your first box is free (just pay £1.50 postage) and you will be enrolled into a flexible subscription costing £12 every 28 days, which you can cancel at any time, without obligation.



Developed
in Cambridge



Science you
can trust



Letterbox
Friendly



100% satisfaction,
guaranteed



Award-winning
Customer Care



EXCELLENT
Over 13,000 reviews

FutureYou
CAMBRIDGE

*Magnesium contributes to a reduction of tiredness and fatigue, normal energy-yielding metabolism, muscle function and normal psychological function and the maintenance of normal bones. Magnesium+ also includes vitamin B6, which contributes to the regulation of hormonal activity. Introductory offer valid for new UK customers only. Offer expires 30th April 2025. See FutureYouHealth.com/MGF480 for full terms and conditions.



Transform lives – become an Ollie Coach!

Become an inspirational force
in children's emotional wellbeing



**Ever wanted to make a difference and train to become a coach?
With the Ollie School, you could be changing lives before you know it!**

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

Comprehensive training

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.

Learn with flexibility

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 Ollie School for a prospectus and to find out more.

Connect, grow, and succeed

Courses are a combination of online and in person, offering the best of both worlds, with a limited number of trainees to maximise learning potential. Visit ollieandhissuperpowers.com

The Ollie therapeutic model has been successfully trialled with the NHS, demonstrating its commitment to improving children's emotional wellbeing across the UK.



Get in touch

Get in touch to train to become an Ollie Coach, find a coach in your area, or book an event. Use the QR code below to visit the website, or email info@ollieandhissuperpowers.com





Mind

Inspiration to boost your happiness and confidence,
plus simple steps to overcome anxiety and stress



***“The
beautiful spring
came; and when
Nature resumes her
loveliness, the
human soul is apt
to revive also.”***

HARRIET ANN JACOBS

IMAGE: SHUTTERSTOCK

DO YOU NEED A *mental spring clean?*

It's not just our homes that need a declutter at this time of year, writes Yasmina Floyer

Before the advent of electricity and modern technology, it was nature that set the pace of the lives of our ancestors. Winter, for example was a season to slow down, conserve energy, and survive.

The seasons no longer dictate the rhythm of our lives in the same way they once did, but there is no denying the influence that each one brings. New life explodes around us at this time of year with every branch bursting into tufts of pink and white, where verdant shoots spear through the soil before trumpet-headed daffodils herald the end of the land's slumber.

Springtime, therefore, provokes an undeniable impulse to refresh, which is why, a few years ago when the sunlight crept earlier into the mornings and languidly sprawled into the evenings like a stretching cat, I gave in to the urge to completely declutter my house. I cleared out drawers; went through every wardrobe, sorting and folding; organising shelves. Every bag I threw out, gave away and donated made way for a much yearned-for sense of peace and grounding that gently flooded other areas of my life.

And it isn't just our homes that benefit from decluttering: there are positive impacts to giving our mental health a spring clean, too. Because, like it or not, most of us are carrying a fair

bit of clutter inside as well, though now we usually call it 'mental load'.

'Too much load can lead to stress, impact on how we feel, and our cognition,' says psychologist and author of books including *A Toolkit for Your Emotions* (Quercus Publishing, £14.99), Dr Emma Hepburn. 'When we are mentally or cognitively overloaded, we can feel overwhelmed, irritable, have a shorter fuse, and physically we can feel more tired,' she explains. Constant demands without reprieve can put too much stress for too long on our body systems and impact on health and wellbeing, she adds. 'Longer term, having too much on, or too much cognitive load can lead to chronic stress and burnout.'

Much like with our homes, the more disordered things feel, the more overwhelming the task of clearing and decluttering becomes, so how can we begin to go about the work?

'I find it helpful to write down all the things weighing on your mind right now,' Dr Hepburn shares. 'Often I'll use a brain illustration to do this – so, you literally take it all out of your brain and put it in a page. Even doing this can start to help relieve the load and make

it feel more manageable as you see in black and white and make sense of what's adding to your load, and you can also start to see where you can focus your energy and identify where you can tackle things.'

Dr Hepburn goes on to tell me how





grouping your brain load into categories can really help to see how to reduce the load. 'The first category is anything you can chuck out of your brain! Is there anything you no longer need to do, can say no to, are worrying about unnecessarily or can make much

easier? Next, think about the small, easy wins.' Often when our brain is busy, things sit with us and create mental clutter, which is why she advises that when it comes to things that can be done quickly, do it now, or schedule in one task per day.

'Then there are the larger things that you need to make plans for,' she says. 'Having a clear plan really helps reduce load and make these things feel more manageable. Finally, there are the worries that sit with you. These might be things you need to talk through,



need support with, or maybe once you see them in black and white you decide you don't actually need to worry about this any longer!

Life is relentless in its demands, which is why I favour frequent check-ins: little mental tidy ups to keep on top of everything. Not unlike our ancestors, for years I have used the moon phases as a guide of sorts, a reminder to do the sort of work Hepburn describes. Like a snake that sheds its skin, the new moon is an invitation to wipe the slate clean.

Queen of decluttering, Marie Kondo invites us to ask one simple question when considering whether to keep or throw out an item from our homes: Does this spark joy? I apply a version of that question to my life whenever the new moon comes around, asking myself: 'What no longer serves me?' This invites me to think about whether there may be things like self-sabotaging behaviours, negative thought patterns, or perhaps procrastination or perfectionism that may be holding me back.

Writer, academic and author of *A Spell in the Wild: A Year (and six centuries) of Magic* (John Murray Press, £12.99) Alice Tarbuck describes the ways in which the the moon cycle helps to support our mental and emotional health. She reminds me that we all live in cycles of various kinds — the cycles of our bodies, which begin at cellular level, all the way to our planets orbit through the universe.

'The moon can be a brilliant cycle to tap into, as its cycles mark changes in the sea, seasons and year. The waxing and the waning of the moon mirror patterns of growth, as well as emotional patterns — the way that we rise and fall in our own internal

energies and enthusiasms. Living with a pattern that shows us that these rises and falls are in fact embedded in nature can help us be gentler, less judgemental towards ourselves.'

My personal practice involves using the new moon and full moon as fortnightly check in points. I am a huge fan of journalling and typically set intentions for the month around the time of the new moon and reflect on how I feel things are going around the time of the full moon.

Dr Tarbuck recommends that a helpful ritual as the moon is full, and begins to wane, is to consider letting go

of what you'd like to be rid of. 'I find a good way to do this is burning — provided you can do it safely, outdoors in fire-proof dishes, with water close by, and not anywhere experiencing drought,' she says. 'Write down three things that have been with you in the last waxing of the moon, that now you'd like to be part of the waning of the moon.'

'I find that writing these on scented paper — which is sometimes called incense paper — can add a little bit of joy to the ritual. You can simply say "these things have served me, I release them, may they

dwindle with the waning moon", and cast them into the flames.'

With spring awakening around us, thoughts of the jobs around the house that we have relegated to this time of year when the weather begins to grow milder begin to creep up and threaten to overwhelm, but organising the drawers can wait. The first thing I'll be doing is to turn to a fresh blank page and asking myself, what no longer serves me? What do I want to invite into my life this month?

I am writing this on the eve of the

full moon, a time that invites reflection. An important part of this balance is to acknowledge what is working well, giving ourselves a moment to honour the successes, however small.

Dr Hepburn echoes this sentiment. 'I would also say that a mental spring clean should be about celebrating wins, having regular self-appraisals of what's gone well... it's far too easy for our negative focused brain to overlook this. So, make this a regular part of your routine too.'

"I ask myself, what no longer serves me? What do I want to invite in to my life?"



Expert advice



Dr Emma Hepburn is a clinical psychologist, lecturer, author and illustrator. She has over 20 years experience of working with mental health and wellbeing. Her passion is making science-based information engaging and accessible through her writing and illustration. She is author of three books, her most recent A Toolkit for your Emotions with illustrations to help you look after your mind. @thepsychologymum



Alice Tarbuck is an award-winning poet and writer. She has taught creative writing at the University of Dundee, and is a 2019 Scottish Book Trust New Writer's Awardee for poetry. Her debut non-fiction book A Spell in the Wild: a year (and six centuries) of Magic is published by Hodder & Stoughton.

Be the **CHANGE** that makes a **DIFFERENCE**



For over 25 years, more than **6,000 people worldwide** have trusted Barefoot Coaching to build their coaching expertise and make a difference—for themselves, others, and the world.

Whether you're coaching loved ones, colleagues, or starting a new career, every journey is unique—and so is Barefoot's approach.

Our **Flagship Coach Training Programme** is accredited by the **International Coaching Federation (Level 2)** and approved by the **University of Chester** at postgraduate level.

Gain the training hours needed to apply for **Professional Certified Coach status with the ICF**, with the option to pursue a **Postgraduate Certificate**.



Join a free taster session

to see if Barefoot coach training is right for you.

info@barefootcoaching.co.uk
barefootcoaching.co.uk
01332 863 641

* Delivered online via Zoom in 28 half-day sessions.

*Interest-free instalment options available. Terms apply—contact the Barefoot Team for details



University of
Chester

Everyday Conversations *That Matter*

Great conversations create great change.

Barefoot Coaching Cards are designed for coaches working with clients, managers leading teams, and anyone who wants to spark more meaningful, impactful conversations in everyday life.

Whether you're guiding a coaching session, supporting a colleague, or exploring personal reflection, these beautifully crafted cards offer fresh perspectives, inspire deeper thinking, and unlock new insights.



Perfect for coaching sessions, leadership development, and personal growth



Thoughtfully designed to challenge perspectives and spark creativity



Used by professional coaches, leaders, and organisations worldwide



Ready to elevate your conversations?

Explore the full range of Barefoot Coaching Cards Now!



Can journaling be your little miracle?

Taking the time to ask yourself some powerful questions can unleash even more from your writing, reveals Jackee Holder



Each month in this column, I share journal prompts and writing exercises designed to help you navigate life's challenges, spark self-reflection, and deepen your

connection with yourself. If you've ever stared at a blank page, unsure where to begin, prompts can provide a powerful starting point, helping you uncover fresh perspectives, shift your mindset, and work through difficult emotions.

This month, I want to introduce you to two simple but transformative journaling techniques: The Miracle Question and What If prompts.

These approaches are especially helpful when you're feeling anxious, overwhelmed, or stuck in negative thought loops. A 2023 UK Mental Health report estimated that 60 percent of UK adults experienced anxiety that interfered with their daily lives. And 30 percent of adults are not coping well with the anxiety they feel, which means that finding accessible tools to manage these feelings is more important than ever.

We live in a world designed for speed, convenience, and instant gratification. At the tap of a screen, we can order anything we want, binge-watch endless content, or look up the answer to almost any question. But in closing the gap between discomfort and resolution, we've also lost something essential: the ability to sit with uncertainty, explore possibilities, and engage in deeper reflection.

When we're anxious, our brains get caught in a cycle of rumination and catastrophising, replaying the same worries and worst-case scenarios. Writing helps break this loop by slowing down our thoughts, externalising our worries, and shifting our focus from problems to possibilities. That's where the Miracle Question and What If prompts becomes helpful.

The Miracle Question

I first came across The Miracle Question when training as a solutions-focused coach. Developed by



*"What
if the
answers
you're
looking
for are
already
within
you?"*

therapists Steve de Shazer and Insoo Kim Berg, this approach shifts your attention from what's wrong to what's possible. Instead of dwelling on the problem, it helps you imagine life beyond it, allowing you to uncover small, actionable steps toward change.

Let's try it out now with a current challenge or obstacle you're faced with. Write out this prompt at the top of a blank page or screen: 'Suppose tonight you go home, have dinner, unwind, and go to bed. While you're asleep, a miracle happens: the problem that's been weighing on your mind is resolved. But you don't know this yet. When you wake up in the morning, what's different?' Now, answer these prompts by writing them out in your notebook, being specific and detailed.

There's a real nuance when working with The Miracle Question: How will you know the miracle has happened? What changes have you made? How are you feeling in your body? How are others responding to you? What are you doing differently? How are you speaking to yourself? What positive emotions are you feeling? Where are you? Who is with you? What are you seeing

and feeling? Once you've explored your responses, use the following prompts to further structure and organise your thinking: What are you noticing is already possible? What small actions could you take today to move closer to this vision?

Even though the word 'Miracle' appears in this question, this exercise isn't solely about magical thinking, it's more about expanding your sense of possibility. Research in positive psychology suggests that imagining a preferred future can increase motivation and problem-solving abilities, making change feel more achievable.

'What if' prompts

While the Miracle Question imagines a future where the problem is solved, 'What If' prompts create new pathways for thinking. They shift your focus from limitations to curiosity, optimism, and creative problem-solving.

Match your What If question to your situation. For example: Struggling with self-doubt? Try: What if I stopped comparing myself to others and started valuing my own uniqueness? This is a powerful way to shift from self-criticism to self-acceptance, reminding yourself that your journey is uniquely yours. Feeling overwhelmed and stretched too thin? Ask: What if I said 'no' more often? This helps clarify where you need boundaries and reinforces that saying no isn't selfish, it's self-care. Battling perfectionism or procrastination? Write: What if I stopped waiting for the perfect moment and just took action? This small mindset shift can help you move forward without overthinking. Worrying about uncertainty? Consider: What if this situation unfolds better than I could have predicted? This simple reframe interrupts negative spirals and creates space for unexpected positive outcomes. Feeling stuck in a toxic work environment? Try: What if I already have the resilience and resources to navigate this situation? This helps you reconnect with your strengths and see new possibilities.

Unlike affirmations, which can sometimes feel contrived, What If prompts open up possibilities without demanding certainty. Research in cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) suggests that reframing negative thoughts (a technique similar to What If questioning) can reduce stress and increase problem-solving abilities.

Recently, I was struggling with inconsistency with posting on social media. Instead of pushing through with self-judgment, I asked myself a What If question: 'What if I wrote a simple newsletter every month instead of trying to create something perfect?' This then led to: 'What if I saw writing my newsletter in the same



way as writing almost everyday in my journal?' Those small reframes unlocked an entirely new approach, one that felt doable and energising rather than overwhelming.

Problem solved!

This month I invite you to use the Miracle Question to imagine a future where your problem is solved. The more you explore your responses, the clearer your next steps become. Use What If prompts to shift from anxiety and self-doubt to possibility and creativity. Instead of focusing on what's wrong, ask: What if things work out better than I expect? Remember: Writing isn't about fixing everything instantly, it's about expanding your perspective and creating space for change.

These techniques won't erase deep-rooted struggles or mental health challenges overnight, but they offer powerful, realistic tools to help reframe everyday anxieties and get unstuck.

A gentle reminder to hold onto this month: What if the answers you're looking for are already within you? The beauty of the Miracle Question and What If prompts is that they train your mind to explore options rather than fixate on obstacles. They remind you that possibility exists, even in difficult situations.

jackeeholder.com; @jackeeholderinspires

Coaching in action

Seeing with fresh eyes

Award-winning coach Kim Morgan is surprised by Summer's progress thinking about her 'hippy' mum



IMAGES: SHUTTERSTOCK. *NAME HAS BEEN CHANGED

Session Two

I had thought a lot about Summer* since our first coaching session. Summer was a responsible and thoughtful young woman. She had sought coaching to improve her relationship with her mother. Summer considered her 'ageing hippy' mother to be irresponsible, selfish and a general embarrassment. She had spent her life longing for a 'conventional' mum.

When she arrived for her second coaching session, I sensed there was something different about Summer. She was dressed casually, wearing her hair down, smiling more and ... could I detect the scent of patchouli oil?

'What has been happening since our last session?' I asked.

Summer could hardly contain herself. 'So much! I have been reading the books you recommended and have learned a lot about relationships and acceptance of individuality. I kept re-playing in my head the things I said to you about Mum, and it made me sad. I realised I have never really given her a chance. All my friends think she is amazing so I started to question why I can't see what they see.'

I listened as Summer spoke with excitement about her new insights.

'I read this quote somewhere and it really resonated with me: "Learn to accept rather than expect and you will have fewer disappointments."

'I have been suffering because of the unrealistic expectations I had of my mum, and she has been suffering too because she knew she couldn't meet them.'

'This is an incredible turnaround, Summer,' I said, 'How have you been able to see your mum with fresh eyes in such a short space of time?'

Summer hesitated. 'Please don't judge me or think this is awful but I imagined that my mum had died, and I was speaking at her funeral.

'Putting myself in that position allowed all the wonderful aspects of her to come flooding into my heart and mind. I have spent all my life focusing on what she is not, and I have decided to focus now on all that she is.'

She took a breath and carried on. 'So, I wrote the eulogy, and I could finally

see what all my friends see. She is brave, she cares about important causes, goes on protests and defies authority to make changes in the world, she's physically beautiful and playful and adventurous and creative and quirky and she can sing and dance and doesn't care about material things — apart from her signature scent — patchouli. She could be a famous social media influencer if she knew how to use technology! I am proud of her.'

I smiled to myself about the patchouli. How sweet that Summer was wearing it too.

There was no doubt that Summer had experienced a huge shift in her thoughts, feelings and perceptions about her mum. When a coaching client achieves this kind of significant breakthrough in their thinking, it is important to celebrate their achievement whilst encouraging them to integrate it in a sustainable way.

So, I congratulated Summer and asked, 'What do you think allowed you to see things so differently?'

Summer didn't hesitate. 'I was stuck in my child mind. It's fair to say that it was confusing being a young child with a mum like mine. I wasn't given many boundaries. Life was chaotic. I think I got stuck in my childhood patterns of resentment and confusion. Realising that I am an adult now and she is getting older allowed me to see through the eyes of the adult I am, not the child I was.

'Also, I wouldn't have been open to coaching if I hadn't had a hippy mum who believed in personal development.'

I smiled. 'Thank you to your mum! What do you think you will do next to hold onto your new perspectives?'

'Mum doesn't know anything about this, so I am going to see her and tell her what I love about her. I'm anxious but excited. I look forward to telling you all about it in our next coaching session.'

I admired Summer for having the courage to let go of her expectations and to see her mum's unique, inherent worth. I really hoped that, when faced with reality, Summer's newfound acceptance of her mum would not be shaken.

*Does this sound like you?
Turn the page for Kim's
coaching exercises*



Coaching exercises

Scanning for evidence

In any relationship, it is natural to notice flaws, but sometimes, one person becomes so focused on the other's shortcomings that they filter out any positive qualities. Then, their mind starts scanning for evidence that reinforces this negative view, and the relationship can spiral downward.

If you are caught in a cycle of negative thinking about someone in your life, take a moment to reflect before making any lasting decisions about the relationship.

Consider these questions:

- If I were a stranger meeting this

person for the first time, what would stand out about them?

- If this person were a character in a book, what role might they play, and what wisdom or strengths would they bring to the story?
- If I stepped into their shoes, how would I feel? What challenges do they face? What experiences have shaped them? What might they be afraid of?
- When is this person at their best? What brings out their best qualities?

After reflecting on these

WORDS OF WISDOM

"Love is the ability and willingness to allow those that you care for to be what they choose for themselves without any insistence that they satisfy you."

Wayne Dyer

questions, consider how your perspective has shifted.

If you can, write down a list of behaviours or characteristics you genuinely appreciate in this person.

The Emotional Bank Account

The Emotional Bank Account represents the amount of trust built up within a relationship. We can build up the balance of trust by making deposits into the account and can diminish the balance of trust within a

relationship by making withdrawals.

An overdrawn emotional bank account cannot be placed in credit by one single deposit, but will require a consistent level of deposits being placed on a regular basis, in order to build the level of trust again in the relationship.

Here are four of the important deposits required to keep a relationship healthy and to build trust:

Keeping commitments	Saying sorry
Being loyal	Paying attention to small kindnesses

Think about two or three important relationships in your life and answer the following questions:

- In which of these areas are you strong?
- With which of these behaviours do you struggle?
- What could you do more of?
- How do your answers differ for your different relationships? What does that say to you?

REFERENCE: STEPHEN COVEY INTRODUCED THE CONCEPT OF THE EMOTIONAL BANK ACCOUNT IN THE 7 HABITS OF HIGHLY EFFECTIVE PEOPLE (1989)

Vintage Cash Cow - the UK's brilliant way to sell your old items... in one go!

Is your home full of unwanted items? Do you need an easy way to sell old valuables, rather than the hassle of trying to sell them individually? Vintage Cash Cow is the UK's easiest way to sell old gold, silver, watches, cameras, jewellery and much more in one go!

We have over 200k customers that describe the service as "free, fast and fully insured!" And don't take it from us, our TrustPilot score backs it up.

What's the catch? There isn't one. It's no obligation and a great way of getting some extra cash in your pocket for an enjoyable trip off with the family or just spoil yourself. Why not?

Here's how it works in three easy steps:
1 - Order your free postage pack at vintagecashcow.co.uk, which includes your

free insured postage labels and a handy guide. **2** - Pack your unwanted valuables into any box. **3** - Send your box for free using your postage labels. Drop your box at the post office or book a home collection.

Sit back and relax, receive your offer within a few working days. Then either accept and get paid the same day or have your items carefully returned for free! Did we mention it's free?

Vintage Cash Cow is based in Yorkshire and has a team of over 180 experts.

Vintage Cash Cow recommend you take a look at our website to see the huge range of items we buy, or, give our friendly UK-based team a quick call. Why not turn your unloved items into extra money? There's never been a better time to sell and have a little declutter.



✓ GOLD ✓ SILVER ✓ JEWELLERY
✓ WATCHES ✓ CAMERAS ✓ & MUCH MORE

Get your free postage pack at
vintagecashcow.co.uk

Call their UK team FREE

0800 246 1111 (Mon-Fri: 9am-6pm)

★ Trustpilot

★★★★★

"It's a real gem" Wendy

Rated **Excellent** 19,000+ Customers

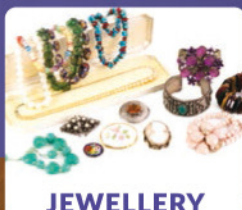


"It's easy to cash in your old items in one go."

Wendy from Yorkshire
Another happy customer

★ Trustpilot
★★★★★
Excellent

✓ FREE POSTAGE & RETURNS
✓ NO OBLIGATION & HASSLE-FREE
✓ EASY, SAFE & FULLY INSURED



JEWELLERY



SILVER



CAMERAS



WATCHES



GOLD

+ MUCH MORE

Get free postage labels at vintagecashcow.co.uk or call FREE 0800 246 1111



The spiral of SILENCE

Are we becoming too scared of social sanctions to share our true opinions, asks Katie Scott

It was a conversation like so many that they had had before. Yes, it was a politically-charged topic — the war in Gaza — but they had talked about so many emotive subjects over the years. She and K had often had different opinions too. That day, though, it was different.

Fran has agreed to share her experience but is clearly still upset about it: 'I always had the confidence that we could talk about anything without offence,' she says. 'Yes, we often disagreed but we always found our way to amicable resolution, often using humour to divert each other around tricky topics.'

She is now very guarded about what she says in front of someone she used to view as a close friend. They are, she adds, still on speaking terms, but she remains nervous of sharing her opinions; and even asked that her name be changed for this article.

We live in times where even the closest of friends can find themselves with starkly different views. Perhaps this has always been the case in turbulent times. But how often do we find ourselves holding back from sharing our views because we are scared of being rejected, or even losing friendships?

Ground-breaking studies into human communication and public opinion in the 1960s and 1970s discovered that we are hardwired to avoid sharing an opinion we perceive could be unpopular.

German researcher, Elisabeth Noelle-

Neumann, studied voters in the lead up to an election. What she discovered was that for months, the percentage of respondents expecting each of the two political parties to win was equal. However, as the results began to change in favour of one party, the CDU-CSU, the percentage of respondents expecting them to win climbed dramatically. She put it down to a State visit, which buoyed the mood among CDU-CSU supporters, who then started sharing their political convictions. As they shared more, people who supported the opposition became more nervous of sharing their views. It was, she explained, a Spiral of Silence.

This theory centres upon our natural fear of social isolation. Noelle-Neumann found that we will monitor the reactions of others for signs that they approve or disapprove of us. If we — either consciously or unconsciously — deem our opinion might lead to isolation, we don't share it. If, however, we feel our views will be warmly received, we are more likely to share them. This means that those with the dominant opinion will share their views more readily — and that view therefore becomes more and more popular. In contrast, those scared to share their view will become quieter — and more isolated.

With the arrival of the internet and then social media, we now exist in communities, which are often far more dictated by interests than geography. This means that the Spiral of Silence Theory is more relevant than ever. ►►

Sherice Gearhart is Associate Professor at the College of Media & Communication, Texas Tech University. She co-authored a study published in the journal *Cyberpsychology, Behavior, and Social Networking*, looking specifically at social media through the lens of the spiral of silence. She wrote: 'Results reveal that encountering agreeable political content predicts speaking out, while encountering disagreeable postings stifles opinion expression.' Writing to me from Texas, she adds:

'In general, people do not enjoy being around disagreeable opinions. It seems inherent to seek out similar voices to avoid discomfort. Of course, we all know that "someone" who seeks disagreement, but it's generally not something people want to experience.'

It also seems far easier to find disagreement in social-media environments, explains chartered psychologist, Dr Louise Goddard-Crawley. 'Social media appears to accelerate judgement, stripping statements of nuance and making them easier to misinterpret. A single comment, taken out of context, can be screenshotted, shared, and reshaped into something unrecognisable,' she explains. 'Outrage fuels engagement, meaning more polarising views often dominate the conversation, while thoughtful, measured perspectives can be drowned out. It's understandable why people hesitate before speaking — not necessarily because they doubt their own views, but because they question whether expressing them is worth the potential fallout,' she adds.

The result is that we seek out echo chambers, places where our own opinions are simply mirrored back to us by others. These are the places where we feel we can speak without threat of social sanctions. As Gearhart explains: 'People are emboldened to speak out when surrounded by others who agree with them. In an online environment run by algorithms, people see more

and more likeminded opinions.' The result, though, is we exist in silos where there is no dissent. Meta's recent decision to drop external moderators from its social media platform was claimed to be a measure to change exactly this. It has caused an uproar not least because it has heightened fears that marginalised groups could be more open to attacks of hate speech. But the team at Meta have defended the decision, arguing

that moderation was encouraging too much polarisation and censorship amongst users. Meta wrote: 'It's not right that things can be said on TV or the floor of Congress, but not on our platforms.' Meta says it wants more discussion, more dissent, and less echo chambers.

But can we take steps ourselves to mitigate our own movement into these echo chambers, or to recognise when we are perhaps being drawn into a Spiral of Silence? Goddard-Crawley says that we can identify when an emotional response is taking over. She explains: 'Disagreement can

activate the brain's threat system, triggering fight, flight, or freeze. Online, this might look like defensiveness, withdrawal, or even a sense of paralysis.' She suggests slowing the process down and asking: 'What is my goal in this conversation?' to help distinguish between arguing to be right and engaging to understand.

'If we are hoping to persuade, openness is often more effective than certainty,' she adds. 'If we are trying to make sense of something, listening before responding — especially in disagreement — can be valuable.' She adds that we also need to recognise that some conversations are not an exchange of ideas but more 'performances' when no one is listening to each other. In that situation, you can make 'a conscious choice to disengage, rather than feeling forced into silence'.

We can also control our own fear by asking: What exactly am I afraid of? If it is the other person's perception of us, we can change how we frame a perspective to soften the edges of

"A single comment, taken out of context, can be screenshotted, shared, and reshaped into something unrecognisable"



disagreement, she says. The key is a differentiation between self-censorship from fear and restraint through wisdom. As Goddard-Crawley explains: 'Am I choosing not to speak because the conversation isn't worth my energy, or because I don't feel I'm allowed to?'

If the discussion is with a friend, this leads to another question — one that Fran has wrangled with ever since the fateful day of her discussion with K. Are friends who would cut you off over differing views really friends at all?

Goddard-Crawley admits that this is complex to answer and 'likely depends on the nature of the disagreement and how it is expressed'. She explains: 'Some ideological differences can exist within a friendship without disrupting it, while others may create an unbridgeable divide.'

'A friendship based purely on agreement may struggle when tested by complexity. At the same time, some values are so fundamental to a person's sense of self that diverging from them feels impossible to ignore.' She argues instead that instead we should perhaps look for friendships that 'can hold space for difference'.

She continues: 'Some of the most meaningful relationships challenge us, push us to think differently, and allow for evolution on both sides. Others may reach a natural breaking point. The difference is often in how we navigate that tension — with rigidity and finality, or with enough openness to allow for complexity.'

Existing in spaces — whether physical or online — where that complexity doesn't exist is a sanitised existence. Disagreements in views can be galling, frustrating and even painful, but they are also human and natural. As Goddard-Crawley concludes: 'The question may not just be whether we can express our views without social consequences, but also why certain consequences feel unbearable. The Spiral of Silence is not only about the fear of speaking but about how we weigh risk against authenticity, how we navigate uncertainty, and how we engage in a world that increasingly rewards certainty over curiosity.'

'The challenge may not just be in knowing when to speak, but in learning how to hold space for difference without letting fear make the decision. Not every view needs to be aired, but the ones that matter most might be worth expressing — with clarity, courage, and care.'

Become a Professional Health & Wellness Coach in 12 months

HCA

Health Coaches Academy

Students at 3-Day Live Health Coach Training Event in London

Next
12 month
Diploma starts
23rd April &
16th July
2025

Have you been thinking about a career change this year?

Would you love a career where you can make a real difference to the lives of others?

Are you fascinated in natural ways to be healthy, happy and to live life well?

Imagine a job where you help others live healthier, happier lives - making positive lifestyle changes that can prevent chronic illness and support overall wellbeing, whilst also making improvements to your own health along the way. That's exactly what a Health Coach does. Plus, you don't need any prior experience in health or wellness to get started!

What is a Health & Wellness Coach?

With preventable diseases like heart disease, obesity, and cancer on the rise, the need for meaningful lifestyle changes has never been greater. Health & Wellness Coaches meet that need by supporting individuals to transform their lives by adopting healthier habits, leading to improved health, diet, energy, sleep, fitness, stress management, life satisfaction, and overall wellbeing.

This versatile, clinically proven profession offers endless opportunities. For healthcare professionals it's a powerful way to enhance your practice, expand your skillset, and improve patient

outcomes. Equally, it's a perfect career for those with no healthcare background. Whether you're a stay-at-home parent, teacher, corporate professional, or simply passionate about wellness, health coaching provides a flexible and rewarding way to make a difference. You can start your own practice, collaborate with others, focus on corporate wellbeing, or specialise in niches like menopause, neurodiversity, mental health and more.

With options to work online or in-person, one-to-one or in groups, health coaching fits around your life, whether full-time or part-time.

HCA
Health Coaches Academy

www.healthcoachesacademy.com

★★★★★
Google reviews

Could you be a good Health Coach?

Most Health Coaches who train with us have their own story that leads them to the profession. This could be their own health reaching crisis point or the sadness and frustration of seeing those who matter to them suffer, when so much could be done to help them. No matter their story, everyone who joins us shares a deep desire to improve lives, a passion for natural health and wellness, and a drive to make a meaningful impact. Does this resonate with you?



Carole, HCA Graduate

"I started my journey with HCA overweight, overworked, and stressed. Training to become a Health Coach has provided me with the missing information I needed to enable me to

make healthier, more informed choices. I am just about to launch my own health coaching business and have paying clients already signed up to start in October. I've also launched my own Happiness Walks Club including 1:1 health coaching as we walk and have a growing list of people wanting to join!"

Begin Your Coaching Career with Our 12-Week Coaching Certificate

Begin your journey to becoming a Health & Wellness Coach with our 12-Week Coaching Certificate, the first of four pillars from our 12-month Diploma training course. Accredited by the Personalised Care Institute (PCI), the Association for Coaching, and recognised by the NHS, this course gives you a strong foundation in professional coaching. Gain the essential tools and experience to support clients in achieving their goals.

Next intake is 23rd April & 16th July 2025.



For more information, visit:
www.healthcoachesacademy.com or
scan the QR code
Email us at:
hello@healthcoachesacademy.com

Scan the QR code here



Next
12 month
Diploma starts
23rd April &
16th July
2025

Join a **FREE** live webinar



Upcoming webinars

There are 3 to choose from, running regularly:

Discover the **MAGIC** of Health & Wellness Coaching

Transform Your Nutrition & Lifestyle as a Health Coach

Health Coaching : Opportunities & Earning Potential



Book a free event or a personal call with a member of our team. Scan the QR code or visit:

www.healthcoachesacademy.com/events

Join the UK's biggest Health Coach training academy

The HCA Health & Wellness Coaching Diploma offers flexible, part-time training that equips you to become a professional Health & Wellness Coach in just 12 months. Study online with live training opportunities including in-person 3 day events, receive support into professional practice, and gain a globally accredited qualification.

Health Coaching is one of the fastest growing professions of the decade:

Research show a 75% surge in the Health Coach market by 2030. As demand escalates across the corporate, private a public health sector, there's never been a better time to consider a new career as a Health Coach.



Hello!

This issue we're all about embracing the new season and putting a real 'spring' in your step.

If you want to give your skin a helping hand so that you look as rejuvenated on the outside as you feel on the inside, then you'll love this month's subscriber gift.

Just sign up to receive your favourite magazine delivered direct to your door, and you'll also receive this game-changing set of Pixi Overnight Retinol Oil and Glow Tonic.

The tonic sweeps away the day's dirt and any impurities, leaving your skin clear, prepped and radiant, while the oil gives your complexion that lovely plump, fresh feeling and helps to minimise your pesky pores and fine lines. The award-winning pair make the perfect simple bedtime beauty routine to help you wake up feeling — and looking — revitalised. Pair them with the subscription to your favourite magazine, complete with our cutting-edge authors, leading experts, big-name cover stars and the columnists you love, and you've got everything you need to feel great inside and out!

Sally x

Editor-in-Chief,
Psychologies

Fantastic reasons to subscribe:

- Pay just £25.99 for your first 6 months, saving over £22 on the full price
- Receive your Pixi Overnight Retinol Oil & Glow Tonic worth £36!
- Delivery direct to your door in 100 per cent plastic-free packaging
- Get our newsletter each week, providing you with ideas, advice, competitions and exclusive offers

Feel fulfilled in every aspect of your life...



Terms and conditions: *UK Direct Debit/Continuous Card offer, you will pay £25.99 for your first 6 issues and then go onto pay £44.99 on annual Direct Debit/Continuous Card. Savings are based on the standard basic rate, which includes the cover price of £4.99 plus Kelsey Medias standard postage and packing price per single issue for 12 months. Gifts are subject to availability and while stocks last. Gifts will not be dispatched until first payment has successfully been taken. Offer ends 31st July 2025.



Become a subscriber and receive Pixi Overnight Retinol Oil & Glow Tonic

The Pixi Overnight Retinol Oil is a game-changer for night time skincare, combining the power of retinol with nourishing plant based oils to visibly rejuvenate and treat skin while you sleep. Paired with the iconic Glow Tonic, infused Aloe, Ginseng and 5% glycolic acid it gently exfoliates and improves the texture of the skin. Together, they deliver smoother, brighter, and revitalized skin, making them a must-have for your beauty arsenal. Perfect for all skin types, this dynamic pair helps you wake up to your best skin yet.

**Worth
£36!**



EASY WAYS TO SUBSCRIBE:

Go to.. shop.kelsey.co.uk/PYPIXI

Call us .. Quote PYPIXI

Scan me..

COMEBACK queen

After a few hard years, Kate Townshend is looking to rediscover her lost identity

It's not an easy thing to admit, but between covid lockdowns, the beautiful fever dream of early motherhood and a prolonged spell of mental ill health, I've started to feel that somewhere in the last few years I might have dropped my mojo down the back of the sofa.

Don't get me wrong: a temporarily misplaced groove is a small price to pay for taking the time and space to look after my health. And I wouldn't change the intensity of falling

in love with my baby and learning to become a mum for anything in the world.

But I do sometimes feel I've retired a bit from the 'world facing' parts of my personality — and as I tick over into my forties, there's some hormonal low self-esteem also adding to this slightly tricky mix. The truth is I don't feel as dynamic as I once did, or as in charge of my own destiny. And it seems like ignoring these issues — or worse, accepting them as the new and forever-after normal — isn't going to cut it.

So I'm wondering, instead, if it might be time to tentatively come out of this period of rest and hibernation, and stick my head back above the parapet. I'm wondering, in short, if it might be time to stage my own comeback.

I realise I'm muscling my way into rather esteemed company here, since comebacks have long been de rigueur for every celebrity, sporting or artistic talent going. Just as the world counts them down and out, they return in a blaze of milieu-defining glory.

But the truth is, this is everyday magic for all of us, regardless of whether our own comebacks play out on a world stage or in the rather more intimate setting of our private lives. We can all find our way back from times of stress, failure, trauma or confusion — or at least that's what I'm hoping.

'The idea of a "comeback" holds immense psychological power because it represents resilience, transformation, and the ability to rewrite one's narrative,' says psychotherapist Kamalyn Kaur. 'It's like getting a "do over".'

And yes, there is certainly an element of wanting to pick up the pen and write some new scenes into my story again. Finding myself in a place where I'm ready to re-engage, to push myself a little, to take some risks even, I'm remembering there's a certain excitement to be found in those times when we have the chance

to bounce back. New chapters *are* exciting.

But there's more to it than this as Kaur goes on to explain: 'A comeback is more than just recovery; it signifies a conscious decision to rise and reclaim control. It speaks to our deep need for redemption and self-empowerment, reminding

us that our identity is shaped not by our failures, but by how we respond to them.'

This idea of identity is definitely at the centre of my own plans. There's something destabilising about losing a clear sense of ourselves almost by accident, so the allure of a 'come back', as a siren call to actively return and reclaim something lost or neglected resonates. For me, it's some of the

*"It's a conscious
decision to rise and
reclaim control"*



confidence of the girl from a few years ago. The very clear sense of my own identity I used to wield as a shield and sword all at once, and a matching adventurer's passion.

And talking to other women, this sense of shifting identities often seems to precede or trigger the need for a comeback. Though it doesn't always mean going back to someone we used to be — a comeback can also encompass our new facets too.

For clinical hypnotherapist and wellness coach Geraldine Joaquim, it was breast cancer — and subsequent treatments — that triggered her own comeback. 'When we go through struggles we feel changed, so doing something can mark that personal growth, help draw a line under the past and celebrate overcoming the hardship,' she says. For her, the visible symbol of this was completing an ultramarathon: 'It felt like a personal comeback — kind of "I'm still here and smashing it!" Doing something out of your comfort zone, whether it's a physical challenge, travel, creative activity, whatever it is, can bring a feeling of personal empowerment.'

So re-taking the narrative, finding a sense of control and agency — all of these are definitely part of my hopes for a comeback too. Yes, I want to fish that lost mojo out from underneath the sofa cushions, but I recognise it won't look precisely the same as it used to, because that would be a step backwards. And a comeback, despite the linguistic contradictions, is about moving forwards.

But here's the slightly less virtuous, slightly more ambiguous element that also makes a comeback an enticing proposition.

Because of course, the other definition of a comeback is a literal retort to our critics. If the best revenge is living well then the comeback is the super turbocharged version of it. The comeback says not only have I survived the things you've done to me or said about me, but here I am, thriving in spite of them.

And perhaps I'm finally deciding that some of the reasons why society tells me I don't deserve that confidence anymore — the 'just a mum' narrative, the unacceptability of ageing as a woman — are actually the very same reasons why I deserve it more than ever. I'm not saying that

spite should be our key motivation, but perhaps it's OK to acknowledge the part it has to play.

What next then?

'Staging a personal comeback requires intentional effort, self-compassion, and a clear vision of who we want to become,' says Kaur. In other words, I'm going to have to do more than live in hope of feeling more positively about myself. Because 'come back' is an imperative after all — so I'm going to have to *do* something.

I already have a few relatively gentle ideas — giving a little more time and attention once again to goals I've neglected of late. Saving space for

those activities that most make me feel like the version of myself I've put to one side. The hardest part is casting off those self-protective layers — a comeback might be a lovely thing to imagine, but it is slightly scary in reality.

And while I've worried I might be thinking too small, Kaur emphasises a practical approach as key

to success. 'Set attainable goals that align with your current circumstances and commitments,' she advises. 'Adopting this approach builds confidence and momentum.'

'Make it achievable,' agrees Joaquim. 'You really do want to succeed. That doesn't mean it has to be easy — it can be a real personal challenge.'

The word personal seems important here too. Because in the end, if we're not in the public eye, a comeback might not even be terribly visible to anyone else. And that's okay too.

As long as we regain our own sense that it's not over until it's over, that life continues to offer fresh starts and possibilities, even as we recover from those times when all we've managed is hunkering down and surviving, that's the important bit.

I'm not saying that it's a price I'd wish to pay too often, but there is definitely something in the idea that losing ourselves for a while gives us a chance to look around with fresh eyes; to find the beauty and value in things we might otherwise take for granted, as well as to make the most of another roll of the dice.

And if any of this resonates with you, perhaps it's time to consider your own comeback tour. After all, if it's good enough for Taylor...

*"We need to
know it's not over
until it's over"*



Feel energised!

Get ready to make the most of spring with a much-needed boost to revitalise and restore

A zest for life (and some extra energy!)

Zest Active is a multi-award-winning super supplement from Revive Active. Giving energy to top athletes, fitness enthusiasts and those that need more pep in their step, it features an abundance of 25 vitamins, minerals, antioxidants and amino acids. It's the perfect, convenient and great-tasting morning ritual to imbibe those all important B vitamins, plus with beta glucans, choline and taurine, it supports your immunity, focus and muscle function too! Vegan, gluten-free and suitable for diabetics.

Available in Orange or Berry Burst flavours, £29.95 for 30 days, reviveactive.com



Feel brighter

When our mood is high and stress is lowered, we naturally feel more energised. Taking HRI Good Mood can help relieve symptoms of slightly low mood and mild anxiety to make you feel brighter. With a high-quality extract of St John's wort herb, take one or two easy-to-swallow tablets daily. Always read the label.

£9.50 for 30 tablets, from Holland & Barrett, Boots, ASDA, Morrisons and hriherbalmedicine.co.uk



Make the difference

If you're feeling sluggish, procrastinating and finding it really difficult to get on with anything Saskia's award-winning Focus, Energise, Create flower essence blend is an absolute must. Just a few drops can make all the difference to your day.

£12 for 30ml + £4.10 P&P, saskiasfloweressences.com



IMPROVE BRAIN FOG AND ENERGY

Award-winning Bee Energised Energy and Focus supplement is helpful for fatigue, fogginess, fitness and sports training, menopause, long covid, exams and more. It's formulated by nutritionists and combines the highest

quality ingredients with proven benefits including organic bee pollen, rosemary extract, ginseng and much more and contains no fillers or excipients.

£12, from health food stores, Ocado and unbelievablehealth.com



A close-up photograph of a woman with long brown hair wearing a light-colored straw hat with a dark band. She is holding a bright yellow flower close to her face, with her eyes closed as if smelling it. The background is a soft-focus outdoor scene with greenery and sunlight filtering through, creating a warm, golden glow. The overall mood is peaceful and spring-like.

psychologies

DOSSIER

*With you
in mind*

STEP INTO SPRING!

The new season is well on its way, but if you're still feeling worn out from a long winter, how do you gently boost your energy levels?

IMAGES: SHUTTERSTOCK. WORDS: SALLY SAUNDERS

Competitive tiredness is a thing, and in the last few months of winter, it seems to become an Olympic sport. Standing at the school gates, in the queue at the supermarket, just chatting on WhatsApp, the level of exhaustion is plain to see. ‘After a few months of winter, tiredness can really hit you,’ says psychologist and wellbeing expert Dr Stephanie Fitzgerald. ‘A lot of the things that make us feel good and energised and ready to face the day, we can lose track of in winter. So, often our diets may not be the best, we’re tired from Christmas, and we might curl up and lose connection with others.’

‘Perhaps you normally go for a nice walk with friends, or go to the gym — all these things that make us feel good and positive and energised can often go on the back burner in winter because we focus on staying in and staying cozy.’

‘Now, getting cozy can be helpful and restorative to some degree, but in another way it can actually be quite demotivating. And once we’re demotivated, it can feel harder to get going again, particularly when it’s still a bit dark in the evenings and it’s still a bit cold and it just feels easier to stay in. It can feel quite effortful, I think, to keep our energy up in winter.’

And, sometimes, our best intentions can also come back to bite us: New Year resolutions, we’re looking at you.

‘During winter, our bodies and our brains are asking for rest and reflection and connection, and so it’s a really beautiful season to pause and take some time for ourselves,’ says Fitzgerald. ‘But we tend not to do that, because in our society when January rolls around we’re told “New year, new you” and so many of us crash into the new year with very high-energy activity, like a whole new fitness regime or a whole new diet, and it’s all at complete odds with what our brains are asking for at this time of year.’

‘So, often, we are already quite tired from the year end, and then we’ve gone

into the new year trying to be very high energy, and we just run out by mid January, and that can really impact on our mood, it’s really disheartening.’

‘If we thought: “Right, 2025 is going to be my year, when I’m going to be this whole brand-new person with a whole brand-new routine,” and then two weeks in we’ve fallen off the wagon, that can make us feel really low.’

‘It shouldn’t, because we haven’t failed personally. The problem is that we’re set up to fail when we try and do these things at the wrong time of year. There’s a reason why everything starts to bloom in spring: it’s been growing and developing throughout winter.’

‘If all those flowers tried to come out in January, they just die. It’s not the right conditions for them.’

‘And the same is true for us. If we try and do everything all at once at a time of year when we’re meant to be slowly growing towards things, then it’s not really sustainable for us either.’

‘There’s something very powerful, I think, about being kind to ourselves and planning for the future, but not thinking I have to do it all, all at once.’

What’s influencing you?

One of the most important ways we can manage these feelings — and our energy levels — is by keeping an eye on the media we consume, says Fitzgerald. ‘One thing that we’ve noticed in recent



years is people scroll a lot more at this time of year, because they’re in a lot,’ she says. ‘So I think if you’re watching lots of videos and memes and reels about things like bed-rotting, that’s not particularly inspiring.’

‘It’s almost this collusion, it’s like: “Yeah, you don’t have to do anything at this time of year. You can just collapse in a heap and rot in your bed.”’

‘I think there’s something around all that that’s not good psychologically, and it’s not good motivationally.’

‘And we’ve all seen those reels saying “it’s the 72nd of January”. Now, come on! January is just 31 days, we don’t need to exaggerate it, and it doesn’t do us any good to exaggerate it.’

She believes that by being a little more mindful of how we spend our time, we might naturally start to feel our energy increase. ‘Sometimes we



Expert advice



Dr Stephanie Fitzgerald is a clinical psychologist, author, health and wellbeing consultant. @workplace_wellbeing StephFitzWrites.com



Heather Darwall-Smith is an experienced UK CP psychotherapist and sleep specialist with a private practice based in London. Her new book, How To Be Awake (So You Can Sleep Through The Night) (Harper NonFiction, £16.99) is out now. heatherdarwallsmith.com



Oliver Niño is an entrepreneur, energy healer and spiritual activator. His new book Do This Before Bed: Simple 5-Minute Practices That Will Change Your Life (Hay House, £18.99) is out now. spiritualactivator.com

just blame our lack of energy on winter, but the problem might be that we've been bored or destimulated. Maybe we've not been doing something that we enjoy, not having much fun.

'It's really important to tune in to ourselves and think, "What do I actually need right now?" Otherwise it's tempting to just make ourselves busier, rather than really tune into what are the activities that are going to meaningfully sustain my energy? What makes me feel good, what makes me feel positive?

'If we don't take that time to reflect, and instead just make ourselves busier, we're not going to feel more energized, we're going to feel more depleted.

'So I think that we need to start by stopping, and asking ourselves: "What is it that I actually need right now? What am I actually feeling?" It could be you're bored, it could be you're

overwhelmed, it could be all sorts of things. And by tuning in, you're going to be able to think: "Right, what do I need to change?" The assumption is I need to change everything, and then a lot of energy that we don't have goes into trying to change a routine that doesn't need changing at all.'

First shoots of spring

'Winter can be quite isolating, but even if it's just wrapping up and going for a coffee and a walk with a friend, and reconnecting with yourself, with others, with nature, I think that can be really re-energising in a very gentle way. You don't need a new routine, you just need a gentle reconnection.

'It's a gorgeous time of year to do that, because everything starts to feel like it's coming alive again, and that will fill you with life too.'



HEATHER'S GOLDEN RULE

'The one thing that I really get people to focus on is to get up at the same time every day, seven days a week, because it's so critical to our circadian rhythm. Every cell in our body has this clock in it, and we set up so many things by getting up at that same time every day.'

'So, using a light-based alarm clock (so that the eyes are starting to register light before you wake and rouse you gently, instead of shocking you out of sleep) wake at the same time — within 30 minutes or so — every day and avoid the snooze button!'

Understanding your energy levels

So now we understand some of the challenges we face when it comes to feeling tired, but how do we start to build our energy levels? Sleep expert Heather Darwall-Smith says first we need to rethink how we look at the concept.

‘If we think of energy as this finite resource, then we really do risk running into burnout, because it’s like we’ve only got a certain amount of energy,’ she says. ‘So if I use all that energy, what am I going to do? We’re into crash-and-burn territory.’

‘But if we think about energy as something that we can align with our body’s natural resources, and with the natural rhythm of how we work, we can think about it differently.’

‘We can accept that our energy will ebb and flow, and there will be a time of the day when our energy falls, and a time of the day when it rises. If we can go with that, then we can manage our energy resources much better. Then it becomes like an infinite loop, rather than a finite resource.’

Of course, that can be easier said than done. ‘We have a culture of always on, our culture doesn’t really allow for downtime,’ says Darwall-Smith.

‘It’s very common for me to see people for whom the idea that they can’t be “on” all the time is a total anathema.’

‘A lot of my clients are perfectionists, and feel that they always need to be perfect, always need to perform. So I ask them: “How are you going to do that? And why do you think you’ve always got to be up here? Can you accept that you’re like the phone battery — you’re going to drop? How can you develop your relationship to that?”’

It’s something Darwall-Smith is well aware of herself. ‘I know that my body is going to get tired at about two o’clock,’ she says. ‘So I have to work with that, and I think, “Well, I’m not going to book

something important or be a speaker in a slot at two o’clock.” It’s thinking about where your own personal energies go up and down.’

This is our circadian rhythms in action. But while that’s a phrase we’ve all heard of, what does it really mean? Darwall-Smith encourages us to get up-close and personal with them by keeping a personal, paper-based diary, recording:

What’s your wake time?

What’s your sleep time?

What are your stresses?

What do you notice about how you feel?

What time do you exercise?

How much coffee or caffeine do you take?

What sort of stimulants are you taking?

‘Do that for a couple of weeks, and then just sit back and look, “What are the patterns in here? Where do I notice I really feel myself reaching for that chocolate bar, or that coffee? Where do I notice, actually, I’m really up? Where am I down?”’

‘Again, do take a gentle approach to this — perfectionists especially can become very, very obsessive about this sort of diarising. And I’m very aware of a lot of people are trying to quantify the self, especially with the data from their trackers. But this isn’t about the data as much as a mindful process just developing that awareness. “How does my body feel at certain times of the day?”’

‘I want that connection of the mind and body, because a lot of us have lost that.’

‘How do you really feel when you reach for that coffee? Are you reaching for it out of habit, or are you feeling tired? What’s going on?’

‘Consciously pay attention to where does my energy peak? Where does my energy drop? What do I need in each moment?’



Managing stress to **IMPROVE YOUR ENERGY**

Sometimes our energy levels really are low at this time of year, but is there perhaps a little bit more at play here? Heather Darwall-Smith believes there is.

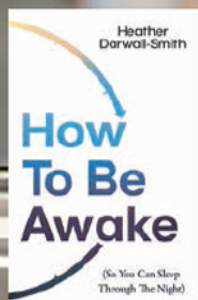
‘Oh my goodness, don’t we all try and squeeze a lot into 24 hours?’ she laughs. ‘So often, we’re running around thinking “I must finish everything today!” But it’s much better for us to take a realistic approach to what I’ve got to get done.

‘There are only 24 hours in a day. If we’re just mindlessly dashing through the day, thinking we can do all this stuff, and then when you get to the end of the day

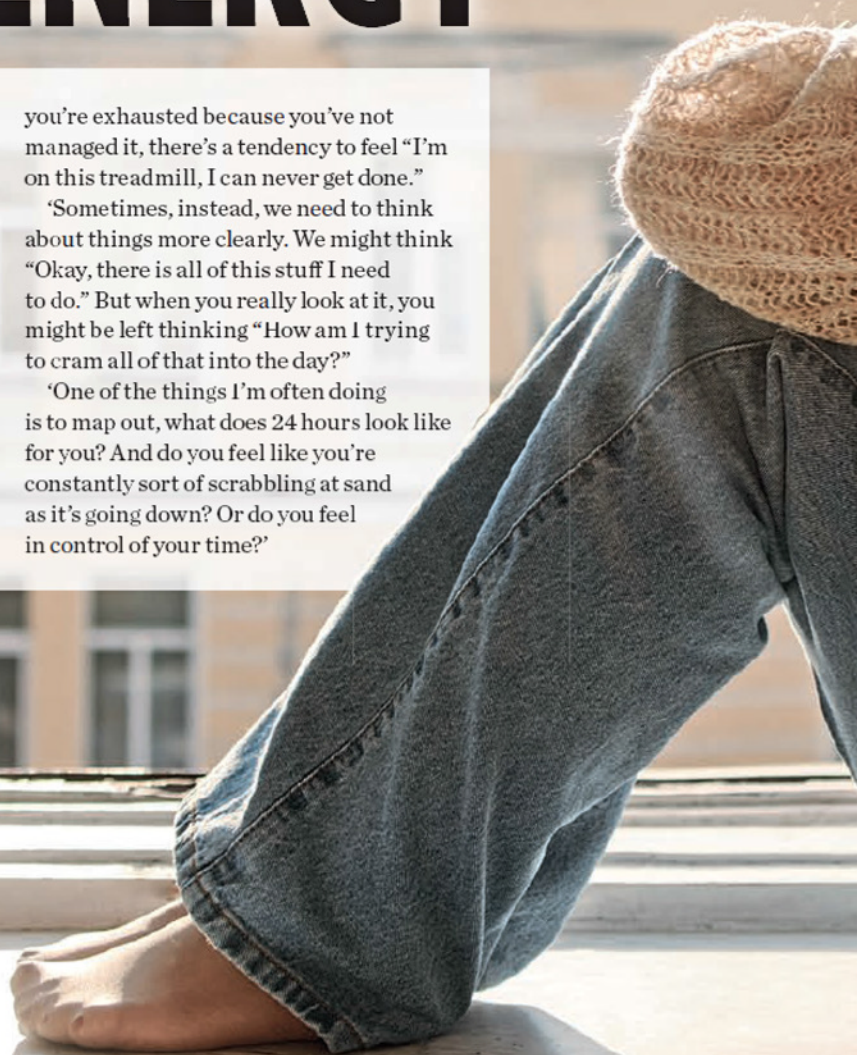
you’re exhausted because you’ve not managed it, there’s a tendency to feel “I’m on this treadmill, I can never get done.”

‘Sometimes, instead, we need to think about things more clearly. We might think “Okay, there is all of this stuff I need to do.” But when you really look at it, you might be left thinking “How am I trying to cram all of that into the day?”

‘One of the things I’m often doing is to map out, what does 24 hours look like for you? And do you feel like you’re constantly sort of scrabbling at sand as it’s going down? Or do you feel in control of your time?’



How To Be Awake
(So You Can Sleep
Through The Night)
by Heather Darwall-Smith
(Harper NonFiction)
£16.99, is out now.





Darwall-Smith advises we ask ourselves

What can I change?

What can't I change?

How do I manage what goes into my pot of 24 hours?

Is there anything I can put down?

This last point is where stress and energy really interact. She says: 'This is where those energy vampires come in, or all the things that you say yes to because you feel you should do. What serves you, and what can you let go? 'I really like to switch the focus from stress to energy, because stress has such negative connotations, and if we're focusing on managing our energy, it's a completely different conversation.'

Release stress, boost energy

We all know that our sleep affects our energy level, so how can we improve this? Again, Darwall-Smith says it comes down to stress.

'Think of the body like a bottle of fizzy drink. All day you're shaking that bottle. By the time bedtime comes, that bottle is full of bubbles, or your head is full of stress. When you go to bed, you take the lid off and it's going to be carnage: it's going to spill everywhere and you're going to be awake for hours.

'So how do we keep letting the pressure off? I like to just punctuate the day with little releases. So you're sat at the traffic lights: Breathe from the top of your head down to the tummy button in the count of five, back up in the count of five. Just sit there, and just breathe in.

'Between meetings, rather than picking up your phone, stand, stretch, walk around, look out of the window. It's about remembering I've got a body and that I can breathe.

'The idea of any sort of wholesale change is too much. So that's why I call it punctuation, pushing bits in here and there. We're looking to just take the level down. Because as we bring it down, we're starting to create some headspace in the brain. We're no longer exhausting ourselves with the building stress, and we're looking after our energy.'



A close-up, profile shot of a woman with dark hair tied back, eyes closed, and a serene expression, suggesting a meditative or peaceful state. She is wearing a light-colored top and a small hoop earring. The background is softly blurred, showing hints of an outdoor setting with trees.

Clear your emotional energy

'Spiritual activator' and energy healer Oliver Nino shares his favourite ways to declutter your inner energy landscape before bed

One of the things that makes life so challenging for many people is that they are walking around with an inherited set of beliefs that don't make them any healthier, happier, or more connected to themselves and others. These four practices will help you become more attuned to the real you — the eternal you who existed way

before your mind and heart were taken over by limiting beliefs and ideas about who you are and how reality operates. As you get into a rhythm with them, you'll gain a greater sense of clarity that helps you connect to your highest needs, and the beliefs that support you to tap into your full potential.

I recommend going all in with these practices at first, maybe even doing them

repeatedly throughout the day so you can build a higher level of mastery. This will help you develop a more intuitive sense of what you need over time. Try them, and you'll definitely notice a huge shift in your energy levels, mood, connection to yourself and others, and your ability to optimise your time and energy throughout the day.

Have fun, and sweet dreams!

#1: Clear and open your third eye, ears, and heart

If you're reading this, I'm willing to bet you're probably sensitive to other people's energies, meaning you can feel it when someone else is anxious or overwhelmed, but also when they're happy and relaxed. It's likely that the energy centres in your body (also known as the chakras) are open, which is great! But the downside may be that these energy centres are overactive. If so, you could be bringing all that heightened energy into your sleep. That might be okay if you're mostly hanging out with a lot of enlightened, happy, peaceful, relaxed people! But the truth is, highly sensitive people are usually picking up on both obvious and not-so-obvious vibes. And, given the fact that we don't exactly live in a generally relaxed society, if you're highly sensitive, you may be carrying excess negativity and anxiety into your sleep — which you most certainly don't want to do!

During sleep, you're supposed to recharge and refuel. But if you're carrying other people's energy, you're more likely to have nightmares and wake up feeling drained, overwhelmed, and as if you didn't get a lick of sleep. So, for starters, right before you go to bed I encourage you to never fixate on people who triggered or hurt you.

This first tool focuses on setting an intention to release any negative energy you might have absorbed throughout the day. By doing so, you'll be taking back the sacred period of time that

constitutes your sleep — a time for healing, recharging, rejuvenating, getting information, and connecting with your higher self. The three steps of this practice will help you to release any negative energy so you can experience the kind of peaceful calm essential to generate miracles.

STEP 1: RELEASE THE DEBRIS OF THE DAY FROM YOUR THIRD EYE

Your third eye is a powerful energy centre that activates your intuition. You don't want negative, lower-level energies polluting it, so you want to first clear out the influences of the day by releasing toxic energies from it. Say to yourself: 'I'm ready to release whatever is draining my third eye of energy and vitality, and to bring in my intuitive power and highest vision.' Imagine white light (some people may resonate more with a violet or gold light) coming down from the skies, sending all the gunk in your third eye outside of you with a giant whoosh. Now, feel the light filling your third eye, rejuvenating and recharging it, and replacing it with positive, love-based energy.

STEP 2: CLEAR OUT YOUR EARS

A lot of people don't realise that we also have energy centres in our ears, which, like the third eye, are constantly picking up words, thoughts, beliefs, and vibrations from others. You don't want this energy to invade your slumber!

After you've cleared out your third eye, say to yourself: 'I'm ready to release whatever is draining my ears of energy and vitality, and to bring in only the most loving words, thoughts, beliefs, and vibrations.' Visualise that the same light as before is coming through your ears in the form of a little tornado, clearing out any harsh or unkind sentiments that infiltrated your ear chakras throughout the day. Now, imagine this light is brightening your ears, filling them with words and sounds of kindness and positivity.

"Visualise the light as a little tornado, clearing out any harsh or unkind sentiments"

STEP 3: UNBLOCK YOUR HEART OF TOXIC ATTACHMENTS

Finally, it's time to unblock your heart of any toxic attachments that are making you feel disconnected from yourself and others. Your heart centre is primarily where you store all the negative energy you've absorbed throughout the day. Your heart also has the largest and most powerful electromagnetic field in your body — so you want to make sure it's clear of any negative influences. After you've cleared out your ear chakras, say to yourself: 'I'm ready to release whatever is draining my heart of energy and vitality, and to bring in love, joy, and rejuvenation.' At this point, feel that same light you imagined whirling around your heart centre, pulling out any toxic influences and making your heart shine bright and strong.

#2: Raise your vibration with three questions

It's so important to raise your vibration — which will make you feel like you can move mountains — and it's even more important to raise your vibration before you go to bed. I've found that this practice can be especially effective when it comes to turning your thoughts into reality. In fact, I've seen students and clients manifest what they want within 24 to 48 hours of doing this practice!

When you're in a high vibration, you attract other high-vibration people, situations, and experiences. All you have to do is ask yourself three simple questions:

1. What am I grateful for?
2. What did I do right today?
3. What experiences do I wish to create, and what emotions do I want to accompany those experiences?

For the first two questions, focus on simple joys, even if you had a really bad day: 'I'm grateful I have a roof over my head. I'm grateful for the air I'm breathing. There wasn't any traffic on my morning commute. My boss complimented my work. My daughter told me the advice I gave her meant a lot.'

As you reflect on these questions, you'll feel both a sense of peace and excitement for all the beautiful things

that are coming your way. Next thing you know, this high-vibrational energy will accumulate and flow into the next day, and you'll start experiencing more of what you want.

#3: Find the higher meaning

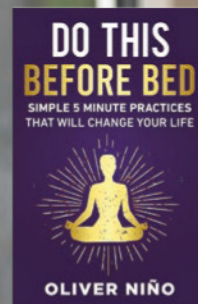
Sometimes, at the end of the day, we might feel discouraged about something that happened as if a door slammed shut on our fingers instead of opened with grace and welcome. We all experience disappointment, but this practice will help you transmute disappointment into possibility: What's the higher meaning of this?

When 'bad' things happen, it's easy to feel punished. But it's crucial to reframe these events. Consider how what you perceive as a disappointment might actually be leading you to the life you desire. Maybe the person who broke up with you, who seemed like such a good fit, is moving out of the way so your heart can make room for your true soulmate. Maybe your car stalling and making you late for an important meeting is a reminder to slow down and smell the roses instead of constantly overworking yourself.

Be open to the idea that what's happening in your life is exactly what you asked for, even if it doesn't seem like it. It's making space for the new you who's emerging... who'll be here faster than you think. If you're in pain, it's not permanent. For example, if you're suffering the loss of a relationship, what you often can't see in the moment is that this opens the door to a truer love. In a lot of cases, our pain breaks open our hearts to deeper compassion, understanding, and wisdom, as well — as long as we have faith that there's a purpose to it all. So, have faith that there is a higher meaning, and that what you want is right around the corner.

#4: Connect with the you who has it all

The final foundational practice is perhaps the most powerful, so I encourage you to spend the most time with it. In fact, if you do this three nights in a row, your life will never be the same!



Do This Before Bed:
Simple 5-Minute
Practices That Will
Change Your Life by Oliver
Niño (Hay House, £18.99)

There's a version of you right now who has it all. This version of you exists in the quantum field of possibility and is already living your best life with all the abundance, joy, peace, love, and wellness you could imagine. So, after working through the first three practices, I want you to set a simple intention. Say to yourself: 'I choose to connect to the highest version of me, the one who has it all.'

Next, imagine white light pouring



down from the sky, going through your head and filling your entire body. Follow the light as far as you can go, beyond the edges of Earth and the solar system. Go to the very end of this cosmic light, and then beyond. Sense that your higher self is here, living the life of your dreams.

Don't feel the need to force anything. You don't even have to visualise all the things you want, although you are free to do so. Just let yourself be bathed in

the energy of this glorious version of you. At first, your experience might feel subtle or even a little awkward. Just stick with it, and I promise you'll come to understand why this exercise is so awesome. Most people don't receive images in this place. It's likely that the energy of the highest version of you will come through sensations, feelings, or just a sense that you're connecting with something bigger than you.

As you make these foundational

practices an intrinsic part of your life, everything will change. You may find yourself seeing, hearing, and sensing the loving presence of your highest self. Bathe in that vibration, allowing it to change you — because it will. I love falling asleep in this state, because I usually wake up with a greater sense of connection to that version of me. This only ends up magnetising even more of what I want — and sometimes, miracles I didn't even think to ask for!



WHAT'S YOUR INSTANT ENERGY BOOSTER?

The right mindset tweak can add an instant mood boost – take our test to find your personal energising affirmation

Circle the answers that most closely apply to you, then add up the symbols. Read the section, or sections, you circled most, to find your energy-boosting mantra

1 You usually feel energised when you've

- ♥ Tried something
- Achieved something
- ◆ Learned something
- Found something

2 You feel most energised away from

- Concerns
- ♥ Stress
- ◆ Routine
- Pressure

3 Your worst habit is

- Comparing yourself
- Criticising yourself
- ◆ Neglecting yourself
- ♥ Doubting yourself

4 With more energy, you usually feel

- ♥ Braver
- ◆ Lighter
- Clearer
- Calmer

5 You're most daunted by making

- ♥ Changes
- ◆ Choices
- Decisions
- Connections

6 A life well-lived means

- ◆ Taking every opportunity
- Being your best self
- Being a good person
- ♥ Making the most of every day

7 Your energy would be most depleted by feeling

- ♥ Afraid
- ◆ Lost
- Stuck
- Alone

8 Your go-to energy booster is

- Making plans
- Talking to someone
- ♥ Taking time to relax
- ◆ Thinking big picture

9 Your energy is drained if you

- ♥ Worry too much
- ◆ Expect too much
- Take on too much
- Think too much

10 You hope feeling energised will bring

- ◆ Contentment
- Clarity
- Certainty
- ♥ Calm

Turn the page to find out what affirmation you most need right now





What's your energising mantra?

IF YOU SCORED MAINLY ♥

I am strong

There's a direct link between mental and physical resilience, especially if you have a mind that's prone to worry. Mentally preparing for any eventuality might be your go-to coping strategy, but it can often have a draining effect, gradually depleting your reserves. When you push through your fear and do something out of your comfort zone, you might have noticed an energy uplift that sustains you for some time afterwards. If this is the case, mentally checking any catastrophising with a simple 'I am strong' reminder could have an unexpected benefit of helping you feel more energised both mentally and physically. Your mind might still come up with worst-case scenarios, but mentally repeating 'I am strong' also inserts a pause that invites you to step away from your thinking spiral. It's about using your thinking to support your resilience rather than undermine it, laying a foundation for consistent energy and personal wellbeing. Check in and notice how differently you feel after spending a couple of minutes consciously focusing on your personal triumphs — however tiny — or just every-day events that have gone well. Instead of allowing yourself to overthink something that might never happen, give your wellbeing a boost by being your own cheerleader, and affirming to yourself that 'I am strong'.



IF YOU SCORED MAINLY ♦

I am grateful

More energy might not be the first benefit that springs to mind when you think of reasons to get into a gratitude habit, but it's a form of extreme self-care that can have a lasting impact on wellbeing, boosting energy in the process. If on paper there's much to appreciate about your life, it can be frustrating that your thinking mind still drifts towards problems or stress, draining your energy levels. A daily gratitude practice means consciously giving more mental airtime to what is going well or aspects of your life that bring you joy, balancing the mind's energy-zapping negativity bias. It's also about staying in close touch with what really brings you meaning and pleasure, which can help you make the right choices to support your wellbeing and your energy. A regular gratitude practice also helps build resilience against challenges and setbacks, boosting mood and energy. Try adding to a gratitude list in notes on your phone or on paper in a journal once a day, or simply mentally running through a gratitude list last thing at night. And don't be surprised if this simple habit proves to be the catalyst you need to pay more attention to your self-care in general, raising your default energy levels.



psychologies

DOSSIER

With you
in mind

IF YOU SCORED MAINLY ●

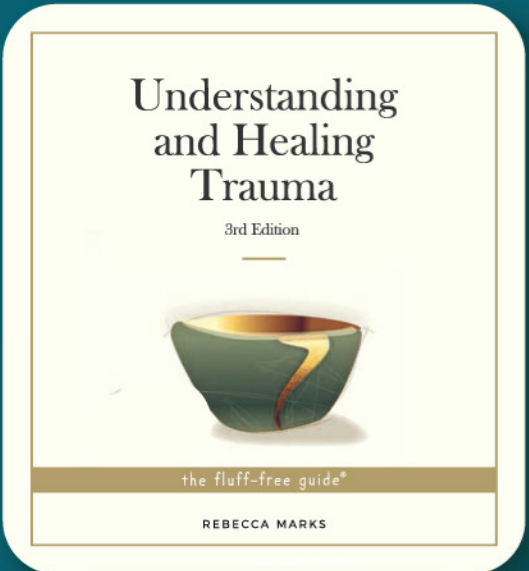
I am enough

Goal-setting can give you an energy hit but if it's become your go-to mood booster, you might be inadvertently sabotaging your energy levels, by creating a feeling of never quite being enough. There's no doubt that regular 'what's next' thinking can motivate you to make changes and to keep growing and learning, but getting stuck in future-planning mode can chip away at your emotional energy and have a knock-on effect on your physical resilience, especially if it's fuelled by comparing yourself to others. Spending too long mulling over ideas of what your life should look like can have the opposite effect to energising you, and start to demotivate instead, leaving you feeling stuck because your goals are out of reach. The antidote when you find yourself caught in a 'what next?' thinking spiral is to pause and consciously acknowledge what you've already achieved or experienced. Mentally repeating your 'I am enough' affirmation is a simple reminder that actually, you don't have to change or strive for anything, and you're perfect just as you are. Try simply being present and fully open to your life just as it is for while, then notice any change in your energy levels. You might be surprised to find the motivation and energy boost you've been craving comes from self-acceptance, not self-improvement.

IF YOU SCORED MAINLY ■

I am loved

Self-doubt can often feed low-level anxiety which over time can take its toll on energy levels. Even enjoyable social interactions feel exhausting when we put a lot of energy into reading the room, second-guessing what people want to hear, or adapting our mood and behaviour to fit in. There are few things more undermining to resilience and peace of mind than living with a sense that you're a heartbeat away from being disapproved of or rejected. Self-doubt often goes hand-in-hand with self-criticism and if you fall back on being hard on yourself as a quick-fix way to motivate and generate energy over time, it will chip away at your mood, with a knock-on effect on energy levels. You may already know that you need to work on your self-compassion and your relationship with yourself, but it can be hard to hold this in mind under stress. Repeating a simple 'I am loved' affirmation may help you snap out of a negative thinking spiral and self-soothe feelings of anxiety fuelled by self-doubt, minimising the toll on your energy levels. For best effects, imagine yourself bathed in a circle of love from the people closest to you. The more often you do it, the bigger the effect on your peace of mind and general wellbeing, including your energy levels.




Understanding and Healing Trauma
3rd Edition

the fluff-free guide*

REBECCA MARKS

Free Audiobook



Visit thewellnesssociety.org/trauma-audiobook or scan this QR code to download

WORK WORRIES?

ACHIEVE MORE, LIVE MORE IN 2025

ARE YOUR FEELINGS ABOUT WORK ALSO AFFECTING YOUR RELATIONSHIPS, SELF-ESTEEM, LEISURE TIME AND/OR HEALTH? NOW IS THE TIME TO TAKE THE DRIVING SEAT AND MAKE 2025 A YEAR TO REMEMBER

- FEELING MISERABLE, FED-UP OR STUCK BECAUSE OF DIFFICULTIES AT WORK?
- THINKING ABOUT A CAREER/JOB CHANGE BUT DON'T KNOW WHERE TO START?
- WISHING YOU FELT MORE CONFIDENT OR COULD DEVELOP YOUR PROFESSIONAL SKILLS?

YOU ARE NOT ALONE I'M A QUALIFIED CAREER AND LIFE COACH AND SPECIALISE IN WORKING WITH YOU, THE HUMAN BEHIND YOUR JOB TITLE. I'VE HELPED 100'S OF PROFESSIONALS DEVELOP THE CLARITY, SKILLS AND CONFIDENCE TO MAKE THE CHANGES THEY WANT, HAPPEN.

BOOK A **FREE "LET'S TALK" CONSULTATION** AND FIND OUT EXACTLY HOW I CAN HELP:
WWW.CAREERSOSHELP.COM/BOOK-ONLINE



EXPRESS PROBLEM SOLVING
GET A NEW JOB
REBOOT YOUR LIFE

Career SOS Help 

Achieve More, Live More make your career work for you

WWW.CAREERSOSHELP.COM MICHELLE@CAREERSOSHELP.COM 07789 922842

RAW WRITING

KEEN TO START WRITING? SIGN UP TODAY!

Just £10 a month for:



Live Writing Clubs



Live Online Masterclasses With Published Writers



Writing Competitions




Courses & Training for Ambitious Wellness Professionals



“ They shared their knowledge, skills, experience and techniques which means I now have the confidence to thrive. ”

Jo Murphy
Counsellor

- ✓ GHSC Accredited Diploma in Clinical Therapy
- ✓ Diploma in Intuitive Life Coaching

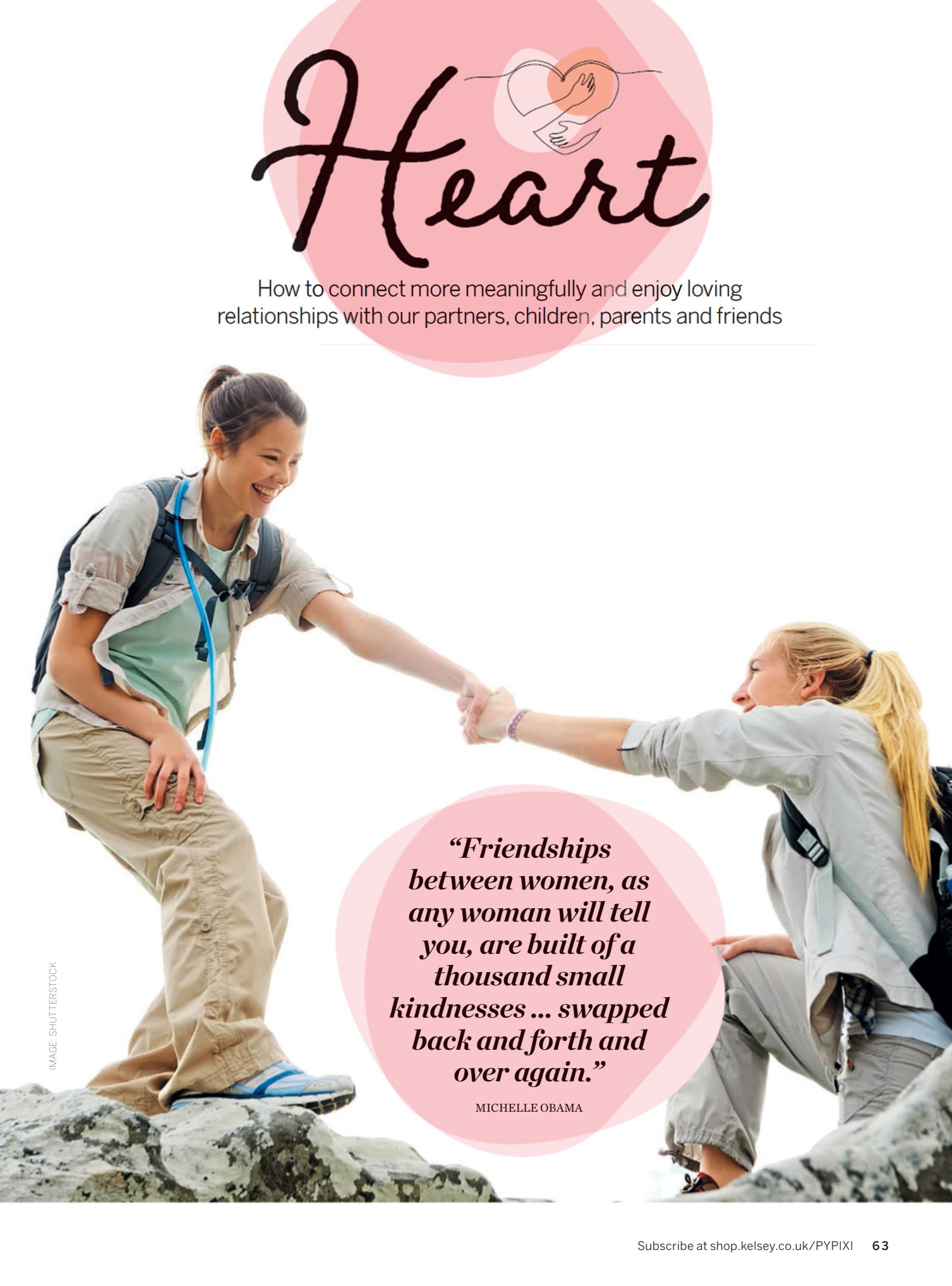
All Courses Online

03333 405 406 | insideoutwellness.academy

Heart



How to connect more meaningfully and enjoy loving relationships with our partners, children, parents and friends



***“Friendships
between women, as
any woman will tell
you, are built of a
thousand small
kindnesses ... swapped
back and forth and
over again.”***

MICHELLE OBAMA

IMAGE: SHUTTERSTOCK



Expert advice



Cathy Andrews is an integrative therapist specialising in hypnotherapy, psychotherapy, cognitive behaviour therapy, neuro-linguistic programming, life coaching, and counselling.
cathyandrewstherapy.co.uk

Happiness

AFTER HEARTBREAK

It might seem hard at first, but it is possible to rebuild your confidence and find joy in dating again, writes Kellie Gillespie-Wright

When a relationship ends, for whatever reason, it can feel as though the ground has shifted beneath you. Suddenly, the world you built with someone else is gone, and you're left wondering where you stand.

Self-doubt, heartbreak, and fear of the unknown can make the idea of dating again overwhelming, especially if you've been in the relationship for a long time. But rather than seeing your singledom as a setback, can you view it as a chance to reclaim yourself and rediscover what truly makes you happy? Integrative therapist and relationship counsellor Cathy Andrews says you can.

'I believe you must allow and acknowledge your emotions, not dismiss them,' Andrews says. 'It's a grieving process whether you have or haven't instigated the breakup. So, you need to grieve, and some days will be harder than others, that's okay.'

Healing from the past: letting go and reconnecting with yourself

There's no shortcut to healing, and trying to rush past the pain will only delay your progress. Some days will feel empowering, while others may be filled with sadness or uncertainty. The key is to allow yourself space to feel everything without judgement.

One of the biggest mistakes people make is staying emotionally connected to their ex, whether through social media, mutual friends, or the occasional text. 'Cut contact as much as possible,' Andrews advises. 'If children are

involved, you will have to see them, but remove them from your social media, and don't question mutual friends about what they are up to.'

Instead of dwelling on the past, focus on rebuilding your sense of self. 'Eat well, exercise, get outside and take time out for yourself,' she suggests. 'Think about what you used to do before your breakup that perhaps you had stopped doing. Try new things that interest you. Start dating yourself; this is a wonderful opportunity to rediscover You.'

Breakups can often lead to blame — whether it is directed at yourself or your former partner. While it's tempting to fixate on what went wrong, Andrews suggests shifting your perspective.

'I advise that you take away any blame from what has happened; this way, you avoid becoming the victim. I'm not saying that if someone cheated on you that's okay, but when you become the victim, you stay in that state. Instead, think about what you have learned from this. Know that this doesn't define your worth but is an opportunity to find the real you again.'

Breaking free from old patterns

Jumping back into dating without reflection can lead to repeating the same mistakes. Before you start looking for a new relationship, take time to assess past experiences. 'The first thing is not to rush back into the dating game after a breakup,' Andrews advises. 'There needs to be a detox period, where you can give yourself time to re-evaluate past relationships.'

Many people find themselves drawn to the same



type of partner, even when that dynamic has never led to happiness. If this sounds familiar, Andrews encourages you to reflect on your choices. 'This is looking at your part in the relationships,' she explains. 'Do you go for a certain type of person? Do you behave in a certain way? Do you ignore red flags? We often repeat past behaviours, not knowing that we are doing so. This can be a great time to delve into this.'

If you always date the same type and end up in the same disappointing situations, perhaps it's time to rethink what you're looking for.

'If you find yourself dating the same type of person and you're still not in a relationship, perhaps your type isn't your type,' she suggests. 'Try dating someone different — perhaps they are your type, and you never knew because you've never given them a chance.'

Recognising red flags and setting boundaries

One of the most important aspects of stepping back into dating is knowing what you won't tolerate. Setting clear boundaries before re-entering the dating world will help protect you from unhealthy relationships.

'Everyone will have different non-negotiable boundaries, and this is why we need some time before dating to reflect on what we have accepted in previous relationships that we wish we hadn't and learn what our values and boundaries are,' Andrews says. 'Knowing what is acceptable for you and what your boundaries are before dating can be empowering and stop you from entering a new relationship with the wrong person.'

Recognising red flags early on can save you from emotional distress. 'Some red flags I would watch out for are men who just text/message and don't make any plans to meet. This would indicate that they don't want a relationship and you could just be someone to message when they are bored or someone to make them feel good about themselves,' Andrews warns.

Another sign of emotional unavailability is when someone tells you outright they are not ready for a relationship. 'Men who say they aren't ready for a relationship, but want the benefits of one — believe them when they say they're not ready.'

Disappearing acts are also a warning sign. 'Men who disappear, don't answer your messages for days or even weeks and then return with no explanation, or they say they've been busy are also an issue. If someone is really interested in you, they will make the effort to see you however busy they are.' Other concerning behaviours include dismissing your feelings, trying to make you feel guilty for having boundaries, or refusing to take



responsibility for their actions. 'Take extra care around men who never take responsibility for their mistakes and always blame someone else,' Andrews adds. 'There are many more red flags, but the main thing is if anything doesn't feel right, don't ignore it. Go with your gut feeling.'

Overcoming a fear of rejection

Many people fear rejection, but Andrews believes it can be a positive redirection rather than a personal failure. 'When you go through a breakup, you often think you have failed on some level and feel rejected,' she says.

'You can reframe your thinking and instead realise that they weren't the right match for you, and you have been given the opportunity to find someone that is. Rejection isn't about your self-worth; it's about alignment.'

Instead of worrying about whether someone likes you, shift your focus to whether they are right for you. 'When you do start dating again, remember it's not just about someone liking you,' Andrews reminds us. 'Ask yourself if they match your values and how their energy makes you feel. Watch how they treat the waiter, listen to how they talk about their family, friends and work colleagues.'

'You are only dating; you are not in a relationship, so you can date other people,'

"Ask yourself if they match your values and how their energy makes you feel"



Andrews adds. 'In fact, the more dates you go on, the more confident you'll become.'

Enjoying the dating experience without pressure

Rather than approaching dating as a high-stakes search for 'the one,' Andrews recommends focusing on enjoying the experience. 'Taking your focus away from the outcome you would like can also help. Reframing it as "I'm going to enjoy the experience" will help you let go of pressure,' she advises. 'Don't think of it as a meeting that determines whether you find a relationship or not, but instead as a chance to meet someone new.'

If you find dating stressful, she suggests keeping things simple. 'A coffee in town feels less stressful than a meal in a restaurant,' she says. 'The first date doesn't have to be long, but you can get an idea in that time whether you'd like to learn more.'

With modern dating comes new challenges, from ghosting to inconsistent communication. Andrews encourages you to see these as part of the process rather than personal failures. 'Dating has changed over the years and modern dating does have many challenges,' she says. 'If you get ghosted, embrace this as him showing you that he's not a potential match. If you get rejected, it means you're not compatible and you now have the chance to move on and find someone who is.'

Most importantly, Andrews reminds you that a relationship should add to your life, not define your worth. 'You are whole enough on your own,' she says. 'Dating is an opportunity for self-discovery and connection.'

Reclaiming your power in love

Rediscovering joy in dating is about more than meeting someone new — it's about rediscovering yourself. When you approach relationships with confidence, knowing what you deserve and refusing to settle for less, you step into dating with a renewed sense of excitement.

And as Andrews puts it: 'Think of all the coffee and fun you could have.'

▶▶ NEXT STEPS

Listen: *Project Love Podcast (EP 84): Getting Back Into Dating After A Break Up*

Read: *Getting Back Out There: Secrets to Successful Dating and Finding Real Love after the Big Breakup* by Susan J. Elliott

Watch: Esther Perel: *How to Find, Build & Maintain Healthy Romantic Relationships* (YouTube)

A coastal scene at sunset. In the foreground, a bonfire of logs and driftwood burns brightly on a pebbly beach. The fire is surrounded by dark, smooth stones. In the background, the ocean waves gently lap against a rocky shore under a warm, golden sky. The overall mood is peaceful yet powerful, reflecting the theme of the article.

Coming up for air

Relight my fire...

Enough is not always enough,
and is sometimes too much,
discovers Caro Giles



For a long time, until quite recently, I told myself I am enough, and for a long time I believed it.

But in a therapy session the other day I told my therapist I'm tired of believing I'm enough. That phrase no longer sustains me.

That's not to say that those three little words haven't held power for me in recent years. They've helped me to realise I can manage on my own. On the days when I feel small and low,

reminding myself that I am enough helps me to remember I'm not lacking. When I race around trying to meet the needs of my four children, desperately stretched and running on reserves of energy I didn't know existed, I am enough becomes a mantra I repeat over and over until it feels true.

It's bewildering to me that I have had to remind myself I'm enough, whilst also feeling that I am too much. How is it possible for these two states to co-exist? Perhaps that's why I'm drawn to vast wild spaces. When I thrash around in the sea I am both huge and tiny. Lying down on the top of a hill, buffeted by winds

so strong they threaten to blow me away entirely, I am both brave and helpless.

Society tricks women into thinking they can have it all whilst sustaining systems that try to keep us small. It's no wonder I am confused. I absolutely must be enough in order to keep my family afloat. So why am I compelled to be even more?

I'm a social creature, and years spent on my own, including several national lockdowns and the protracted illnesses of two of my children, have taken the shiny edge from my solitude. I may well be enough in the sense that I don't need to be any more than I am.



refuge in the wilderness, in the process removing myself from the possibility of allowing myself to be hurt by anyone again. Seaweed and moonlight has felt safer than the sometimes harsh reality of human relationships. But now I feel ready to make new connections.

Carers are often forced to hide themselves away. People confuse my refusal to accept invitations with reluctance. They wonder why I say no when they offer help, not realising that letting new people into my home can cause such anxiety for some of my children that it feels easier to carry it all alone.

But I am not enough, I know this. Or if I am, my enough-ness comes at a great cost to my own health and happiness. I must try to find a way to reach out to others. Continue to grow my village. Learning to put myself first is hard, but perhaps it is a valuable lesson to teach my daughters, a lesson in self-worth.

I associate very strongly with fire. I burn endless candles, thrive in hot climates and try always to bring light to dark situations. I am a July baby which means I'm a Leo, a fire sign. An article I read last week about the Chinese zodiac reminded me that this is my year, the year of the snake, and it also told me I'm a fire snake, sociable and craving human interaction. My life is littered with flame analogies.

Fires need constantly feeding if they are to keep burning. I see my desire to keep building my world as a fuel that sustains me. It might be true that I am enough, but I can't ignore the flicker inside me reminding me there is more. Rather than a greedy dissatisfaction, I prefer to view this shift in thinking as an acceptance that I don't have to carry everything on my own. I have been enough for too long.

But I am no longer enough for myself. I am hungry for connection.

These long days of caring and reacquainting myself with my own potential have been in equal parts challenging and essential. And perhaps without taking the time to really examine who I am and what I need, I might never have reached this stage where I am no longer enough.

My therapist tells me that people often use this phrase to hide a yearning for something more and to justify their alone-ness. I don't think this is true for me, but as I stumble wearily out of the long grass and towards a new phase

of my life, I can see that I'm being disingenuous if I continue to tell myself that this is it, and that I don't need to build a bigger world for myself.

In the process of reclaiming my sense of self, I've immersed myself in rugged landscapes and bright skies. I've sought

"Seaweed and moonlight has felt safer than the harsh reality of human relationships"



ON THE *defensive...*

When interactions make our hackles rise, how do we learn to relax, asks Stephanie Fitzgerald

So, why have we hired you for this? What qualifies you to come and speak at our conference?' he asked. On the face of it, these are perfectly reasonable questions. This person doesn't know me, has never heard me present and clearly hasn't given my speaker bio even a cursory glance. Yet, even as I tell myself that it is a reasonable query, I can feel my smile tighten. I have to work hard to keep my shoulders away from my ears as I feel my hackles rise.

What is going on here? Why am I feeling so defensive? Perhaps it's the tone. Perhaps it's the bluntness that's bordering on rudeness. Perhaps it's the fact that this is my third briefing call with the client and everything had been finalised, yet now I feel my suitability is being questioned. Whatever it is, it stays with me for the rest of the day. But what really bothers me is *how much it bothers me*. Why is it that someone we've never met before and will likely never meet again can get under our skin? Why is it that people can make us feel so defensive?

I put these questions to Ümit Iyi, an experienced leadership consultant and founder of The Good Company. I ask Iyi how common this experience is, and why it happens to us. 'It is something all of us will experience many times throughout our lives,' Iyi tells me, explaining that 'something can be triggered within all of us and these situations can represent a lesson or

something which we haven't yet learnt in life.' This is why we can feel so wrong-footed in the moment. If we don't know how to respond, then our defensiveness acts as a form of protection.

Different communication styles also have a part to play, and Iyi tells me that a lot of our defensiveness can come out of interpretation.

'We tell ourselves a lot of stories about why or how someone is speaking to us,' Iyi explains. 'That defensiveness, that frustration, that energy that we define as negative, actually can relate more to how we feel about ourselves in that moment'. It's very true. If we are feeling uncertain or lacking in confidence, then being questioned or challenged in any way may bring a defensive response to the surface, even if the enquiry itself was perfectly innocent.

And it is easy when triggered to bite back, but there has to be a better way that will prevent misunderstandings and miscommunications. Iyi tells me that it's challenging, but the best action to take in that moment is to pause before we react.

'We are wired to constantly react to the world around us, but there is such power in a pause. If we can rise above a situation and look down on it with curiosity, then we remove the tension from it.'

Sometimes, it's not a stranger. Conversations with colleagues or our managers can leave us feeling undermined or as though our competence is being questioned, even if it's a small throwaway


comment. However, Rhiannon Rowley, a senior consultant at NFP specialising in employee wellbeing, reminds us that there are two people in the conversation, and it may not be about you.

‘A lot of the reactions we receive are not in relation to the information that you’ve just given someone,’ she says. ‘They might have had an argument with their partner, had an unexpected bill, or just found out they’ve got a really tight deadline, meaning their brain is somewhere completely different.’ They may not really be in your conversation at all.

Sarah Gashier, a wellbeing consultant who focuses on compassionate leadership, tells me that reviewing the intent behind any challenges is key. ‘I’ve had situations where in the initial moment I did feel defensive because I was being questioned and I thought “I know my stuff and I know my work”,’ she says. ‘But I quickly realised that this person was a mentor. They still are to this day. Their intention was positive; they had my back and wanted to encourage me to challenge myself and develop a critical way of thinking. They wanted me to improve my strategy. That was a positive experience of having my work questioned, I just had to step back to see that.’

Unfortunately, Gashier also shares less positive experiences of being challenged, where people have held discriminatory views about her, related to her ethnicity, her management of a chronic health condition and her dyslexia. On these occasions, Gashier tells me that although we can feel attacked, we need to remove the emotion and go back to data.

‘Evidence your work and ask the person to highlight their areas of concern or what they are looking to improve,’ she says. Taking the emotion out of it allows you to approach it critically and uncover if there is an actual problem or if the person challenging you is making assumptions. This approach also preserves your sense of wellbeing as you are not wasting energy defending an issue that might not exist. Gashier also encourages us to push back on decisions we don’t agree with. ‘I once had a manager tell me to copy them into all of the emails that I was sending to clients and I refused. It wasn’t a good idea and wouldn’t have prevented any mistakes from happening. I refused because that didn’t feel as though it was to support my development or growth. I would have felt like a child being watched and that’s not how I want to work.’



*“Strip away
the job titles
and we all have
the same
heartbeats
underneath”*

With so many different dynamics and hierarchies playing out in the workplace, it can be hard to know what to raise and what to let go. How do we decide what behaviour we need to challenge? ‘The question I ask myself is how would I feel in three months’ time if I stayed silent on this versus how would I feel if I spoke up about this?’ says Iyi. ‘The emotions I feel when I picture this guide me as to whether or not I say anything.’

The strength of the relationship is also important, Rowley explains. ‘You will have that knowledge yourself of whether you can say, “I feel like we’re not quite on the same page, or maybe this isn’t landing how I’m intending it to, can we talk about that?” to a colleague, versus



those situations where that's not going to be the right move. We need to ask, "Have I got the foundation with that person to have a productive conversation, or do I need to build that first?"

A core theme each expert raises is empathy. This seems to be the key tool to help us move past feeling challenged and rise above defensiveness. Going back to my own experience, I know that when I took a breath and saw the human behind the questions, I saw someone who was shouldering the responsibility of a conference and was being judged on its success. Therefore, he was bringing a lot of stress and anxiety to the call and was asking questions in a tone that he

probably wouldn't usually. Utilising empathy meant I switched from defensiveness to concern and support. Rowley emphasises the importance of making that human connection.

'Strip away the job titles and the salaries and we all have the same heartbeats underneath. The vast majority of us are motivated in similar ways and want to be in a productive and enjoyable work environment. If you can connect on a human level, rather than a job title or work level, then you can build up from there.'

As well as empathy to others, we need to show empathy to ourselves. It isn't nice to be questioned and to feel doubted so it's ok if we feel our hackles rise. It's what we choose to do in that moment that will define the outcome.

Expert advice



Rhiannon Rowley is a senior consultant at NFP, an Aon company. She specialises in supporting people through career transitions, parents in the workforce, and employee wellbeing. [linkedin.com/in/rhiannon-rowley/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/rhiannon-rowley/)



Ümit İyi, founder of The Good Company, is a passionate advocate for human-centric leadership, focused on leveraging core human skills to drive sustainable high performance and meaningful growth. [thegood-company.com](https://www.thegood-company.com)



Sarah Gashier is revolutionising the workplace through compassionate leadership. As a workplace wellbeing consultant and speaker, she helps organisations foster healthier, more human-centred work cultures where people thrive. [linkedin.com/in/sarah-gashier-bsc-msc-anutr/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/sarah-gashier-bsc-msc-anutr/)

Worth over £59

just £29.99 + P&P!

Off on Hols!



Love Beauty & Travel?

Get holiday ready
with our 7-day beauty
countdown calendar

**Order now and glow
for your holiday!**

- Discover treats to prep your skin and body for a radiant holiday glow.
- 7 luxurious products worth over £59 to get you excited for your trip.
- Includes 6 travel-friendly essentials for beauty on the go.
- Perfect for an indulgent and convenient pre-holiday routine.



Just £29.99

The ultimate beauty deal to kickstart your holiday!

Visit: offonhols.shop



Body



Improve your physical wellbeing with gentle activity, better sleep, optimum nutrition and natural beauty

***“If you can
dance and be
free and be
embarrassed,
you can rule the
world.”***

AMY POEHLER



IMAGE: SHUTTERSTOCK



MINDFUL WELLNESS



Ali Roff Farrar shares expert advice, ideas, stats and the newest research on all things wellbeing, including an easy daily habit to living longer, mindfulness tools to prevent dementia, a three-minute mood booster, a proven tool to help migraines and boost immunity, and yet another reason why sleep should be a top priority when it comes to wellbeing!

Three little words you need (& they're not 'I love you')

These three magical words can calm a disastrous discussion or a turbulent tantrum with your partner (or with anyone for that matter!) especially if you're finding it hard to agree on something, explains communication coach Amy Carroll.

Instead of pushing to get your point across and disagreeing with someone, simply say 'Tell me more'. The secret behind why these three words are so powerful is they invite the other to fully express themselves without interruption or resistance (imagine you're riding your bike into a strong wind; when you turn a corner and suddenly the wind is at your back, it eases your journey).

2 As you repeat this magic mantra, the other will feel heard and respected, and will likely calm down. As a result, they may become curious and more willing to listen to you.

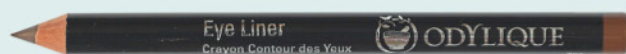
3 By resisting the temptation to have your say and by waiting until peace ensues to express your thoughts, harmony will return to the situation.

Discover Amy's next online Leadership Presence Spring Program in April, or join Amy in Chexbres, Switzerland for her 3.5-day, transformational Communication Catalyst Retreat at carrollcoaching.com/events

Skin-loving makeup

I realised something this month – I take care to use skincare free of nasties, only to brush and puff makeup filled with potentially irritating chemicals, fillers, talc and fragrance directly over my naturally cleansed and moisturised face! It's tough to find makeup with a focus on skincare, but Odylique's range is free from all those unwanted irritants. Every item boasts at least seven nourishing botanical ingredients, certified organic by the Soil Association and they are entirely free from palm oil, toxic metals and artificial additives. They're ideal for all skin types, including sensitive or mature skin. Even their eye products are thoughtful – the eyeshadows are formulated entirely from pure mineral colours, skin-caring organic plant oils and antioxidant extracts including calendula, chamomile and sea buckthorn. I also love the natural brown eyeliner which is so soft and natural, with organic jojoba, and extracts of castor and rice bran oils (and am now a convert from my previous liquid black liner!).

Mineral Eyeshadows £8.50/ Organic Eye/Lip Liner £12.50, odylique.co.uk





Mozzarella & Cherry Tomato Pizza

This recipe features a wholemeal, Greek yoghurt dough that is packed with protein, making it a really satisfying meal. The pizza sauce is also simple to make yourself. I prefer using tinned cherry tomatoes for some recipes as I find them sweeter and much more flavourful.

COOK TIME 40 MINUTES
MAKES 1 LARGE PIZZA

DOUGH

- 300g Greek yoghurt
- 135g self-raising flour
- 135g wholemeal flour
- 1tsp bicarbonate of soda
- ½tsp dried oregano
- ½tsp garlic granules
- Pinch of salt
- 1tbsp olive oil

PIZZA SAUCE

- 200g tinned cherry tomatoes
- 2tbsp tomato paste
- ½tsp Italian herbs
- ½tsp chilli flakes
- Salt and black pepper

TOPPINGS

- 1–2 balls of mozzarella, sliced
- Handful of cherry vine tomatoes, sliced
- ½tsp chilli flakes
- Chopped basil

- 1 Preheat the oven to 180°C.
- 2 Put the Greek yoghurt, self-raising and wholemeal flours, bicarbonate of soda, oregano, garlic granules and salt in a bowl and mix gently until they are combined.
- 3 Roll the ball out into a thin circle around 1cm thick and then use your fingers to form a crust around the edge. You may need to use some flour to stop it sticking to the surface.
- 4 Transfer to a large baking tray,

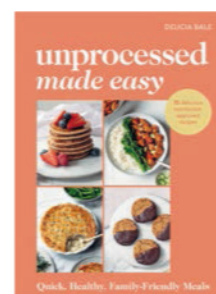
drizzle with the olive oil and bake for 10–12 minutes.

5 Meanwhile, blend the sauce ingredients together until smooth.

6 Remove the pizza from the oven and top with your sauce, the mozzarella, cherry tomatoes, some salt and pepper and the chilli flakes, then place back in the oven to bake for 5–10 minutes until the cheese is melted and the pizza is golden.

7 Serve topped with fresh chopped basil.

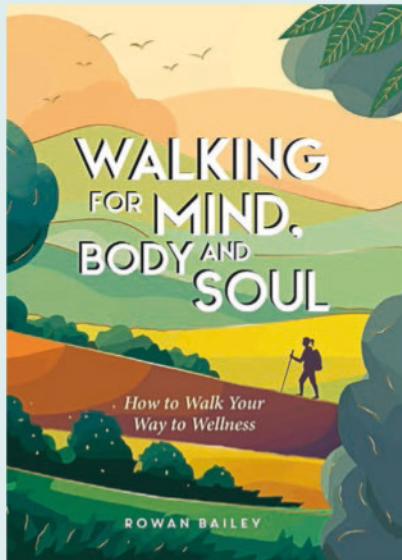
Extract taken from Unprocessed Made Easy by Delicia Bale, (Ebury, £20).



Movement

A love letter to walking

As the weather cheers up and we find ourselves able to spend more time in the great outdoors, I have been inspired by this lovely book. It's full of research around the benefits of walking; ideas on activities to weave into daily walks, such as foraging; and fascinating facts and things to spot and notice, to make walking a deeply inspiring and enriching experience. I especially like the focus on the different intricate smells we encounter on our way. 'The steady act of putting one foot in front of the other, transferring our weight and swinging our arms as we propel our body forward can improve heart health, strengthen our bones, lower blood pressure, burn calories and boost immunity. So step outside and let the world be your gym, your sanctuary and your playground,' writes author Rowan Bailey.



Walking for Mind, Body and Soul: How to Walk Your Way to Wellness by Rowan Bailey (£12.99, VIE).

*PLOS ONE, 2025

Three-minute mood booster

Want a sure-fire mood booster? Turn the music on and turn it up! It doesn't really matter what music you play either — or even if you like it! Researchers* have found that the 'pleasurable urge to move to music' is so powerful a physiological response that we can't resist the urge to move to it, independent of how much we even enjoy music in general. So, play your favourite song and give in to the enjoyable urge to groove.



For the love of yoga

Love yoga? Turns out yoga really does love us back — with new studies finding more and more empirical evidence that yogic exercise plays an important role in preventive health care, for example, enhancing cardiovascular health and reducing the associated risk factors*, reducing oxidative stress and regulating chronic inflammation in the body, enhancing immune function and increasing overall longevity**. It also has the power to treat specific health problems such as migraines, where yoga as a standalone preventive treatment was found to reduce pain intensity, migraine-related disability, and perceived stress in both adults and children. All hail the downward-dog!

* CURRENT PROBLEMS IN CARDIOLOGY, VOLUME 49, ISSUE 1, PART A, 2024 ** EXPERIMENTAL GERONTOLOGY, VOLUME 196, 2024

*"Just one small positive thought in the morning
can change your whole day."*

DALAI LAMA



Expert advice: Mindfulness techniques to prevent dementia

By Ali Roff Farrar, mindfulness expert

People with traits acquired through mindfulness techniques (eg. non-judgement and non-reactivity) have been found to experience less cognitive decline which can delay or even prevent dementia*.

Want a simple way to be more mindful? Try decreasing your negative bias by using gratitude journaling or positive association foraging (collecting things that make you feel happy or positive whilst on a walk or a turn around the garden). These practices can help to promote positive bias and reduce negative thinking patterns. How could this help? 'Taken alongside other studies which link depression and anxiety with dementia risk, we expect that chronic negative thinking patterns over a long period of time could increase the risk of dementia,' shares Dr Natalie Marchant of UCL Psychiatry. It's important to note that Dr Marchant also explains: 'We do not think the evidence suggests that short-term setbacks would increase one's risk of dementia.'

Brain booster oils

Derived from wild, sustainable fish, with no unnecessary ingredients, two of these super strength Omega-3 capsules amounts to the same amount of Omega-3 as a tin of sardines, boasting 860mg of EPA and 440mg of DHA, the two most important types of omega-3, all in environmentally conscious packaging.

Bare Biology Life & Soul Fish Oil Daily Capsules, £31.95
(subscribe & save 15%),
barebiology.com



* GLOBAL OPEN SCIENCE VOLUME 3, ISSUE 1, 2023



Privacy in the great outdoors!

If you love wild swimming or spend days by the lake or beach over the summer, I love this little privacy 'gadget' – a changing 'tube' designed to stay secure with its elasticated drawstring fastening, keeping it in place and freeing up your arms so that you can change in and out of your clothes whilst maintaining privacy in public. The fleecy material absorbs any remaining moisture and keeps you warm, folding up afterwards to make travelling with it easy. Perfect for holidays, days at the beach, festivals and retreats!

Warmcor Changing tube, £48,
www.warmcor.com

How to make friends and influence people

A new study has found an interesting factor which plays a role in how we come across to others; the more facially expressive we are, the more people like us. Perhaps surprisingly, the study didn't find only positive facial expressions as being perceived as more 'likeable', — it's not that smiling more makes people like us — any and all facial expressions contribute to

people warming to us more. The idea behind the research* suggests that this phenomenon occurs because when we feel that someone is easier to read, it may help us to feel as if we can trust them, which is key to any positive bond with someone. As Brene Brown says: 'True belonging only happens when we present our authentic, imperfect selves to the world.'



*PUBLISHED IN SCI REP 14, 12798 (2024)

101

We typically use 101 facial expressions per minute during a typical social interaction!



What's the deal with... 100% Natural?

'While many plant-based ingredients are extremely beneficial, some can be irritating, unstable, or even ineffective compared to lab-developed alternatives. For example, poison ivy is natural, yet you wouldn't want it anywhere near your skin!' shares Amy Frith, founder of BASE, a tailored skincare company. 'That's why science-backed ingredients like peptides, retinoids and niacinamide, are carefully formulated to be stable, absorb well and deliver consistent results — something nature alone can't always guarantee. Plus, lab-created versions of naturally occurring compounds, such as hyaluronic acid and vitamin C are often more potent and reliable than plant-based sources, which can vary in strength and effectiveness.'

'For that reason, I personally believe in blending the best of both worlds. Combining high-performing natural extracts and science-backed ingredients gives you real results, fast. The key isn't choosing between "natural" and "synthetic", it's simply choosing what actually works. So next time you see "100% natural" on a label, don't assume it means "100% effective". Science and nature should work together in perfect harmony for the healthiest, most radiant complexion. Your skin deserves more than marketing buzzwords — it deserves real results.'

Amy uses this philosophy in her skincare routine; The 5 Minute Kit, which is vegan, free of fragrance, sulphates, parabens, and formulated with active ingredients that are scientifically proven to treat skin ageing.

The BASE full skincare kit is £179, baseskincare.com



A secret to living longer

New research* has found taking omega-3 fatty acids can slow down biological ageing by up to four months, regardless of our gender, age or body mass index. Taking it a step further, researchers found that the combination of omega-3, vitamin D and strength training proved to be even more effective.

When is it best to take Omega 3 supplements? Bare Biology, who produce super strength Omega 3 supplements say: 'It's best to take your capsules with meals to help your body absorb them. This can also help some people with sensitive stomachs avoid any "disturbances". If you're in perimenopause or older, new research suggests that splitting your dose across the day can help reduce inflammation. So you could take one capsule with lunch and one with dinner. Otherwise, just take two at any meal. Our founder sets the dinner table with them.'



*RESEARCH PUBLISHED IN NATURE AGING, 2025

Sleep on it

Do you prioritise your sleep as a tool for emotional wellbeing? Many of us seek out help when we feel down, and while that of course has its place, a new study highlights the importance of a potentially simpler solution — more, and better-quality, sleep. The study* took 50 years of research across 154 independent studies to understand the wider impact of sleep on emotion. The meta-analysis found that periods of extended wakefulness, shortened sleep duration, and/or nighttime awakenings had a significant negative effect on our emotional health. 'In a largely sleep-deprived society... the effects of sleep loss on emotion is critical for promoting psychological health,' the researchers explain. It provides more evidence to support the theory that sleep is a top priority when it comes to our emotional wellbeing, especially for those who work in industries where sleep is impacted such as shift workers.

*PSYCHOLOGICAL BULLETIN

TIME TO break up WITH makeup?

She's been wearing a full face of makeup since age 12 — so what prompted therapist Kate Beckwith to dare to bare?

As a therapist working with children and young people, authenticity is at the heart of everything I do. I want my clients to feel safe, to see me as real, and to know that they can show up just as they are. Part of this commitment to authenticity is a decision I made years ago: I don't wear makeup to work — or most days, for that matter. But it wasn't always this way.

Let me take you back to when I was 12 years old. That's when it all started — my love affair with makeup. Except, it wasn't really about love; it was about survival. Makeup became my armour, my way of feeling 'enough.' I learned how to apply my makeup — mostly through trial and error and teenage magazines.

Every school morning, I'd be there, carefully applying it. Before long I didn't seem to be able to step outside without it anymore. Before popping to the corner shop, I'd put a full face on. Before anyone in my house woke up, I'd be in the bathroom, covering up my bare-faced self. And when I started staying over at my boyfriend's house? If I didn't have my makeup bag, I'd leave it on all night, waking up with panda eyes rather than let him see the 'real me'. Makeup wasn't just something I wore — it was who I was. Or at least, who I thought I had to be.

Then, everything changed. When I was pregnant with my daughter, I began to question

it all. Did I want her growing up thinking she needed to 'fix' herself to be seen, to be enough, to be worthy? Did I want her to feel, as I had, that her natural face wasn't 'good enough' for the world? The thought terrified me. I realised I had spent years hiding — not just from the world but from myself.

So, I stopped. I took off the makeup, and with it, the weight of all those expectations I'd carried for years. At first, it felt like I was walking outside naked. But over time, I found something incredible: freedom. My husband, Mark, hadn't even noticed when I stopped wearing it — he loved me regardless. And for the first time in years, I started loving me too.

Now, don't get me wrong — it wasn't just a quick fix. It took a lot of work in therapy over the years to begin to love myself genuinely. Also, I still enjoy getting fancy for a special occasion. It's fun, isn't it, to go all out from time to time? But it's not about needing it anymore. It's a choice, not a crutch. Most of the time, I don't bother with makeup at all. And that's exactly how I like it. I save makeup for special occasions — when I want to wear it, not because I feel I have to. It's a choice, not a mask. And as a therapist, this choice has become an essential part of my practice. I want the children I work with to see someone who is real, someone who isn't hiding behind a mask, someone who is comfortable in their own

"I realised
my worth
isn't tied
to what I
look like"

Expert
advice



Kate Beckwith is a writer, TEDx speaker, accredited psychodynamic psychotherapist, and founder of Kate's Garden: the first practice of its kind in the UK, where she is driving change by breaking away from the traditional confines of the therapy room and championing freedom of choice and access to the outdoors and nature. @katesgardentherapy

skin. Because here's the truth: authenticity is contagious. When we allow ourselves to show up as we truly are, we give others permission to do the same. By ditching the makeup, I gained so much more than I ever lost: I gained myself.

It's about showing up as I am, blemishes and all, and feeling enough. I want my clients to feel that too. When I sit down with a child or young person, I want to model being real, being human, and being okay with imperfection. Children and teenagers are so good at picking up on what's authentic and what's not. If I showed up with a face full of makeup every session, trying to present myself as polished and perfect, what message would that send?

If I'm encouraging my clients to show me their true selves — to peel back the layers they've built up to protect themselves — how can I not do the same? Makeup was one of my layers, and letting go of it has been part of my own un-learning process.

It's funny, isn't it, how these things get etched into our minds? We pick up ideas like the belief that we need to look a certain way to be acceptable — and they stick, often without us realising.

For me, un-learning meant recognising that my bare face was enough. It meant walking into the shop without worrying about what people thought. It meant realising that my worth isn't tied to what I look like. And do you know what? It felt liberating.

A lot of the children I work with struggle with this in their own way. They might not be worrying about makeup, but they're carrying other beliefs about themselves: beliefs that they're not good enough; that they have to act a certain way to be loved or accepted. Helping them un-learn these beliefs, bit by bit, is part of the work we do together.

It's also about reconnecting with their bodies in a world that often teaches them to disconnect. So many children I see are burdened by self-criticism, societal expectations, and the pressure to conform to impossible standards. Whether it's through subtle messages about appearance, behaviour, or success, they begin to internalise



a sense that they are not enough. For some, this manifests as negative body image or eating disorders, where their relationship with food and their bodies becomes a way to assert control or cope with feelings of inadequacy. For others, it shows up as a disconnection from their physical selves altogether.

*"I've learned
I'm enough
without it"*

Children are often taught to suppress their instincts and override their natural boundaries. 'Hug them; it's polite,' even when it feels uncomfortable. 'Finish everything on your plate,' even if they're full. Over time, they internalise the message that their needs don't matter and learn to distrust the signals their bodies send them. This disconnection often shows up in physical symptoms: tummy aches, constipation, or other issues — silent echoes of emotional distress that have nowhere else to go.

This was my story too when I was a child. The makeup I clung to became a clue — a physical manifestation of the armour I thought I needed to protect myself from a world I felt I had to face on its terms, not mine. It's a reminder of




how early and deeply these patterns can take hold and how healing begins with reconnecting to the body, trusting it again, and listening to the wisdom it's been trying to share all along.

I am now the founder and director of the first psychotherapy practice of its kind in the country. At Kate's Garden, children have the freedom to reconnect with their bodies on their own terms. They can move, run, jump, or sit quietly, whatever feels right in the moment. There's no judgement, no pressure to meet an external expectation. This freedom allows them to start rebuilding trust in their own physical experiences, noticing what their bodies are telling them and understanding how those sensations relate to their emotions. For children struggling with body image or eating disorders, this process is particularly transformative. It's about reclaiming their bodies as a source of wisdom and strength, rather than something to criticise or control.

This journey from disconnection to wholeness is profound. By tuning into their physical sensations and honouring their needs, children begin to heal the split between body and mind. They move away from fragmentation of thought, feeling, and self, and toward a sense of integration, where they can truly feel at home in their own skin.

So no, I don't wear makeup around my clients, or my own kids, for that matter. It's not because I think makeup is bad. It's because I want to be a real,



grounded, human presence for them. And because I've learned that I'm enough without it.

I know there are people for whom makeup is essential, like a trusted piece of armour that allows them to face the world. And that's okay. Just like our psychological defences, makeup can serve an important purpose when we need it. These defences, or our 'armour,' are what help us navigate life when things feel overwhelming or uncertain. But as we work toward healing and self-acceptance, we often find we need to lean on them less and less.

And I think that's what's happened to me. I've learned to embrace who I am, bare-faced and all. Sometimes, being fancy is fun. But being authentic? That's where the magic happens.

So, if you're reading this and feeling the weight of societal expectations

pressing down, let me remind you: you are enough. With or without the makeup, the fancy clothes, the Instagram-perfect angles, you are enough. And trust me, the world needs

the real you far more than it needs your concealer.

Take a look at @katesgardentherapy on instagram to follow Kate's journey and for inspiration and insights



Jamie Oliver's *air-fryer* favourites

Looking for something easy, quick and healthy to feed the family? Jamie Oliver has some ideas for you...

Air frying has completely changed the speed and convenience for home cooking – and Jamie Oliver loves it too.

‘Without question, it’s a super useful piece of cooking equipment,’ says the 49-year-old chef, whose latest cookbook is *Easy Air Fryer*.

‘Oven chips are magnificent in the air fryer, but there’s so much more to it than that. I wanted

to go beyond the usual. The air fryer is really useful if you have a family, with kids turning up at different times of the day. Because, let’s face it, the idea of the whole family sitting together at the table only happens about twice a week – so, when you have children coming back from after-school clubs hungry, you can bang something in the air fryer and have it on the table in no time at all.’





Posh fish and chips

HANDS ON: 22 minutes

COOK: 30 minutes

SERVES: 2

2-drawer air fryer

Ingredients:

- 500g potatoes
- Olive oil
- 1 free-range egg
- ½tsp smoked paprika
- 10g Parmesan cheese
- 1 thick slice of seeded wholemeal bread (40g)
- 2 x 130g salmon fillets, skin on, scaled, pin-boned, from sustainable sources
- 1tbsp plain flour
- 1 x 340g jar of baby cornichons
- 160g frozen peas
- 2 sprigs of mint

Method:

1 Scrub the potatoes, chop lengthways into two centimetre-wedges, place in the large air-fryer drawer, toss with one tablespoon of olive oil and a pinch of sea salt and black pepper, and arrange in a single layer. Cook for 30 minutes at 200°C, or until golden and cooked through, shaking halfway.

2 Beat the egg, paprika and a little seasoning in a shallow bowl. Finely grate the Parmesan into a food processor, tear in the bread, add one tablespoon of oil and blitz into fine crumbs, then spread across a plate.

3 Dust the salmon with the flour, then dip into the egg mixture, letting any excess drip off. Coat in the breadcrumbs, spending a bit of time really patting them on. Evenly space in the small drawer and cook for 10 minutes at 200°C, or until golden and just cooked through.

4 Meanwhile, to make a gherkin ketchup, empty the jar of cornichons, and half their juice, into the food processor and blitz until smooth. Spoon out two portions, then pour the rest back into the jar and pop it in the fridge for future meals, where it will keep happily for up to two weeks.

5 Cook the peas for four minutes in boiling salted water, then drain, reserving a little cooking water. Tip them into the food processor (there's no need to clean it), add in the mint leaves and blitz, loosening with splashes of reserved water, if needed, then season to perfection and cover to keep warm.

6 Serve up the fish and chips with the minty peas and gherkin ketchup.



Teriyaki pork ribs

HANDS ON: 6 minutes

COOK: 55 minutes

SERVES: 2

1-drawer air fryer

Ingredients:

- 40g caster sugar
- 40ml low-salt soy sauce
- 1tbsp rice wine vinegar
- 2cm piece of ginger
- 1 clove of garlic
- 1tbsp cornflour
- 1 higher-welfare rack of baby back ribs (600g)
- Olive oil
- 2 spring onions

Method:

1 Remove the shelf from the air-fryer drawer and go in with the sugar, soy and vinegar, along with 300 millilitres of water. Peel and finely grate in the ginger and garlic, add the cornflour and mix to combine, then replace the shelf.

2 Rub the rack of ribs with a little olive oil and a pinch of sea salt, then place it on the shelf (cut it in half to help it fit, if needed). Cook for 50 minutes at 160°C, or until the meat is tender and starting to get gnarly.

3 Use tongs to carefully remove the shelf, tipping the ribs into the sauce, then turn the ribs to coat. Cook for another five minutes at 200°C, or until the sauce sets and darkens on the ribs and the surrounding sauce thickens, too.

4 Slice up the ribs, then trim, finely slice and scatter over the spring onions. Pour the remaining sauce into a bowl, for dunking. Great served with sticky rice and zingy seasonal greens.





Easy Air Fryer by
Jamie Oliver
 (PenguinMichael
 Joseph, £26)
 is available now.
 Photography by
 David Loftus.

Pear and blackberry crumble

HANDS ON: 12 minutes

COOK: 50 minutes

SERVES: 6

1-drawer air fryer

Ingredients:

- 4 ripe pears
- 2 eating apples
- 2 balls of stem ginger in syrup
- 300g blackberries
- 100g cold unsalted butter
- 1 large orange
- 100g porridge oats

- 60g demerara sugar
- 1 pinch of ground cinnamon
- 100g cornflakes

Method:

1 Cut the pears and apples into sixths, removing the core. Finely chop the stem ginger. Remove the shelf from the air fryer, then place the pears, apples, blackberries and ginger inside with a knob of the butter, the orange zest and juice, and two tablespoons of stem ginger syrup. Mix together and cook for

40 minutes at 180°C, or until the fruit has softened, stirring halfway.

2 Meanwhile, place the oats in a bowl, cube up and add the remaining butter, then rub together with your thumbs and fingertips. Add the sugar and cinnamon, scrunch in the cornflakes, and mix well.

3 Scatter the crumble mixture over the fruit and cook for another 10 minutes at 180°C, or until golden and bubbling, then dish up straight from the drawer. Great with custard, crème fraîche or ice cream.

5 WAYS TO LOVE YOURSELF, *inside and out*

As social media creates unrealistic expectations, coach Tiwalola Adebayo is here to help you find your inner strength

Look a certain way, be a certain weight, have ‘pilates arms’, use filters, full makeup... the list goes on. Today, especially now we live in a social-media-dominated age, it’s easy for us to start lacking confidence in who we are and how we look.

A 2021 study found that a massive 85% of women do not consider themselves to be attractive, and in a separate study, only one in five women feel confident in their appearance. However, here coach and author Tiwalola Adebayo shares some tips to boost your confidence in yourself and help you to love yourself inside and out.

Realise how powerful your body is

Adebayo, who struggled with body confidence herself when she was younger due to seeking external validation from others, says the first step to feel confident was realising how powerful her body was.

To build inner confidence, Adebayo would look in the mirror in her underwear, hold different parts of her body gently, and appreciate it.

‘I would look into my eyes and say “I

love you”,’ she says. ‘Even if I had spots on my face and didn’t like the way I looked, I would still say I love myself.

‘Over time, those positive affirming actions change your perspective of how you feel about yourself.’

Adebayo believes in ‘body neutrality’ meaning that instead of linking our physical appearance to our self-worth, we can show gratitude and appreciation for our body’s abilities and functions, which can help build a more positive outlook.

Comparison is the thief of joy

Arden University recently launched the UK’s first confidence index, which found 27% of women compare themselves to someone else on a daily basis. ‘Everybody’s body is different and there’s no such thing as a perfect body,’ Adebayo says.

She mentions that in a world of social media, we have to be hyper conscious to realise that a high percentage of images we see have been retouched and edited.

‘It’s important we don’t look at ourselves in the mirror and compare it to an image online,’ she says.

‘Focus on who you are, what you’re made of and don’t let comparison steal

your joy.’ When Adebayo finds herself in what she calls ‘Insecurity Olympics’ — a conversation with other women saying things they don’t like about themselves — she works hard to remind everyone they are beautiful in their own way.

Create your true, authentic self

Researchers have found that people who scored higher on a measure of authentic living reported greater happiness, more positive emotions, and higher self-esteem than people who reported being less authentic.

More authentic people also reported having better relationships with others and more personal growth.

‘You cannot love yourself if you do not know yourself,’ Adebayo says. ‘You cannot show up as your true, authentic self if you do not know yourself.

‘You need to create your true, authentic self on your own terms. If you want to be a confident person, you have to dissect your idea of your identity and recreate the one you want for yourself.’

Using methods such as working out your strengths, what you are passionate about and what your values are will make you more equipped to finding

your true self and give you that sense of confidence and acceptance.

Keep the promises you make to yourself

Self-sabotage, limiting beliefs and past experiences can creep into our minds and make it difficult to look after ourselves. However Adebayo says that if you say you are going to do something, you need to do it.

‘If you don’t follow through with action, you don’t get to build your confidence, because confidence feeds on taking action,’ she explains.

‘The more action you take, the more confident you begin to feel in yourself. It’s important to do this and start with small steps and keep the momentum.’

Be unapologetically you

The final step is to stop apologising for who you are and embrace yourself, says Adebayo.

‘There’s no point in being the world’s best-kept secret. If you have something special in you, you need to speak up,’ she says.

‘You need to use your voice and share it with the world.

There is no confident person who hides their lights or dims their voice.’

Describing confidence as a beautiful feeling with an abundance of freedom tied to it, Adebayo says nobody has the power to make you feel insecure.

‘When you make the decision that you love yourself just the way you are, how you look does not determine your worth,’ she says.

‘You matter simply because you exist. When you move around in the world, move around as somebody who has worth, regardless of how you look, how much money you have, who likes you.

‘Your starting point is that you are good enough.’

SET YOURSELF FREE! LEARN TO LET GO AND MOVE ON

Coming next month

- Discover why your brain will thank you for booking a holiday
- Are you hiding silent heartache?
- How to come to terms with imposter syndrome
- Romancing ourselves through rest
- The hidden price of perfectionism
- Hack your breathing to feel more calm



**May
issue on sale
April 11!**

*Hurry, get your copy
before stocks run out!*

Can't find your next copy of *Psychologies*? Head to **frontline-group.co.uk/store-finder** and select *Psychologies* from the drop-down menu, then input your postcode to find your nearest stockist.

Or why not ask your local retailer to reserve you a copy – they will be happy to do so

SUBSCRIBE and make sure you never miss an issue! See page 40 for details.

Soul



Discover ways to make your soul sing... with creativity, nature, finding your purpose in life and at work, travel and spirituality

***“The flowers
of late winter and
early spring occupy
places in our
hearts well out of
proportion to
their size.”***

GERTRUDE S. WISTER



WHAT'S YOUR *clutter* PERSONALITY?

Decluttering experts Ingrid Jansen and Lesley Spellman shine light on the mess...

If you have a home that runs like clockwork, your cleaning schedule is non-negotiable and your laundry is up to date every weekend, it can be hard to understand how other people in your life, whether that be within your close network or a colleague at work can operate effectively in what seems to be a constant state of messiness and chaos. And all that clutter — why can't they just get rid of it?

You see, in life, there are people at one side of the spectrum who pride themselves on having a clutter-free home, people at the opposite end of the spectrum who pride themselves on not bowing down to societal norms of what tidy looks like and then, there are an abundance of people in the middle who feel overwhelmed, overrun and overwrought by the state of their home and the amount of things they have amassed.

Clutter is all born out of an emotional response — we feel guilty because of the money we spent on an item. We feel worried that we will let go of something we will later need. We

hold onto things because we feel we need to honour someone's memory. We buy things because we are bored or fed up, or as a treat to ourselves. We keep things because we vow we are going to start using them one day. The list is endless.

And these emotions take hold of us. In order to make a controlled, rational decision about something that in our heart of hearts we know we don't need, we need to understand ourselves and our emotions first and then try and break down these barriers that hold us back and keep us stuck. Then, and only then, can we start to successfully make headway with our belongings and make the changes we so want and deserve in our lives.

Whilst we are strong believers in drawing a line in the sand and moving forwards rather than constantly evaluating the baggage of the past, it's important to spend at least a short amount of time understanding what your core clutter personality traits are so you can be ready for them when they rear their head. ➡



Expert advice

Ingrid Jansen and Lesley Spellman run *The Declutter Hub* and *The Declutter Hub Podcast*, helping people develop their 'declutter muscle' and live a lighter life.



What type of keeper are you?

THE KIND KEEPER

A sentimental soul with a love of socialising, the kind keeper loves to buy new things and also hold onto the old to remind them of happy times. They may have lived a period of their life when they had very little and consequently embrace the feeling of having more. Sentimentality is a constant barrier and they get lost in the moment when decluttering with trips down memory lane. The desire to declutter and organise their home may stem from an upcoming transition in their life. When they start to work through their things, they may feel pressure from loved ones to let go of things they are not ready to and that causes conflict and anxiety.

THE HAPPY HEAPER

An often deep, sometimes chaotic and possibly neurodivergent thinker, the happy heaper is likely to have a busy life with multiple people, projects and priorities to think about. Consequently, their home falls down on the list of priorities but there are tangible signs of order in heaps of things dotted around the home. Whilst other people may perceive their home as chaotic, they have a sense of knowing where something might be found. Perfectionism often stops them in their tracks too as they procrastinate on doing something unless the conditions are perfect. When embarking on a decluttering journey, the happy heaper is likely to be more tortoise than hare.

THE WARM WEEPER

A warm weeper is likely to have undergone loss, pain and possibly trauma in their lives. The stuff they have chosen to keep has offered them respite from the complications of relationships or the overwhelming sense of melancholy they feel. Because other people care about the struggles that they have been through they may have reached out to help but that help has caused more harm than good as it came at the wrong time or with the wrong motive. The warm weeper is likely to feel judged by those around them and is keen to declutter in their own way and in their own time and not be influenced by those around them.

THE HARASSED HOUSEKEEPER

Let's just say there are a lot of harassed housekeepers around. People who are constantly trying to keep all the plates spinning with an overwhelming fear of them coming crashing down. Their home and the clutter in it may not be of their own making. They feel like they are the only person who is attempting to keep on top of things but the odds are always stacked against them. They may struggle to work through chores at home because they have simply never been taught. But equally, they may know exactly what to do and how to do it but just simply never seem to find the time.

THE NOSTALGIC KNEE-DEEPER

The nostalgic knee-deeper may be knee-deep in clutter either literally or metaphorically but the one thing that is certain is that they feel judged, embarrassed and overwhelmed. The increase in clutter may have been sudden or may have been a lifelong problem but the nostalgic knee deeper is likely to feel defined by their clutter, stuck and disillusioned. However, their journey towards a life with less is no less possible than any other of the personalities we've mentioned.



**Reset Your Home:
Unpack Your
Emotions And Your
Clutter, Step By
Step (Bloomsbury,
£16.99) is out now.**

Now we've worked through some of the traits relating to people who have cluttered homes, and we're sure you will resonate with some of the things we've described. In fact there is a strong chance you may resonate with most of the things we've mentioned.

When clutter takes hold of us, it can be difficult to find the strength to make a change. Delving into your innermost feelings and emotions is confronting and takes time to manage thoroughly

and successfully. Take account of the personalities we've mentioned.

You can be forgiven for thinking that you are the only one who has a clutter problem.

But be comforted in the knowledge that there are other people around who have felt the exact same struggles as you that have come out the other side. And you can do it too.

Our advice? Decluttering is all about emotions first, stuff second. Once you

have come to terms with why you are holding onto certain items in your home, parting with them becomes so much easier. Don't let the baggage of the past drag you down.

Reset your home thought by thought, room by room and day by day. And always keep firmly front of mind, less stuff equals more space.

More space equals more calm. And more calm means a happier you. You've got this!

'I don't know how anybody stays sane without female friends'

Bestselling author Jojo Moyes tells Hannah Stephenson about the joys of midlife and moving on.

Hitting midlife has been a liberating experience for novelist Jojo Moyes. 'One of the benefits is knowing exactly who you are, which sounds like a weird thing, but we care a lot less at this age about what other people think of us,' says the author, 55, whose books have sold more than 57 million copies worldwide and have been translated into 46 languages.

However, she was in a very different place when she turned 50, she remembers. 'It wasn't a great year for me because my mum was dying and I got divorced. Let's say I didn't have a big party. But I keep thinking I should have a late, late 50th party but I don't know if I will,' says the author and screenwriter, whose most famous novel, *Me Before You*, about a young carer who falls in love with the quadriplegic man she is looking after, was adapted into a movie in 2016 starring Emilia Clarke and Sam Claflin.

Readers might be forgiven for thinking that her latest work, *We All Live Here*, a part romcom, part tragi-comedy, might have been inspired by her own life.

It centres on Lila, a bestselling author whose career is in free-fall as she goes through divorce and continues to come to terms with the death of her mother, her husband's departure, and pressure to sell the family home and downsize.

Moyes also split up from her husband, journalist Charles Arthur, with whom she has three children, in 2020 after 22 years of marriage, the year her mother died. She later moved from her seven-bedroom Grade-II listed house, set in 22 acres in Essex, to her current home near Hampstead Heath in North London.



Lila finds new romance, and Moyes has also found a new partner. But the fictional characters in the novel could not be more different from her real friends and family, she insists, and she failed to see that parallels would be drawn.

'I was just really naïve. I've never written about a writer before. For the purpose of the plot I needed her to be writing about her own life and I needed the divorce for the plot, for her to be in an absolute crisis when the book opened. I just didn't think people would ever draw the parallels.'

In the novel, the animosity and anger Lila feels towards her ex is palpable, but Moyes says she wasn't channelling her own feelings.

'I have zero anger towards my ex. We are so cordial, in fact, that the divorce lawyer wrote us a letter saying that they wished everyone could be as graceful to each other as we had been. I don't think I'm someone who feels anger very much. I'm just not made that way.'

This gracefulness comes partly, perhaps, because Moyes is now very

careful about what she focuses on. 'When you know that you've probably lived more than half your life, you become much more careful about how you spend your time and energy,' she says. 'I have people who I absolutely love and would travel across the country to see, while a lot of other people I will just say no to, not because they're not nice people, but because they are not in that kind of top-energy tier. I would rather be at home cuddling my dogs (she has two rescue dogs from Bosnia).

'I like being a little bit more selfish in terms of how I spend my time and I'm much better at carving out time for me now. I ride my horse four times a week, I do Pilates, I make sure I meet friends for lunch — all the things that I didn't do for a very long time.

'Also, there's just gratitude. When you get to your 50s you've probably lost a few people along the way and you know how sweet life is. Every evening I find three things to be grateful for and I'm lucky enough that there are usually more than three to choose from. I'm really happy to still be here.'

Female friendships have helped sustain her mental health, she says.

'I don't know how anybody stays sane without female friends. I don't know what my character would be without the close friends that I've had. I've had my best friend since I was 16 and it's such a privilege to have somebody who has known you for the best part of 40 years and knows every bit of you and can call on you when you're being a pain in the backside or can make you laugh or put things into perspective. I don't know how people survive without that.'

***We All Live Here* by Jojo Moyes (Penguin Michael Joseph, £22) is out now.**

Cobblecation.



Unlock Your Best Life

A city stroll, exploring new streets, and feeling the buzz of urban life can fill you with excitement. Every step counts, and with the right support, you can embrace the energy of the city cobblestone by cobblestone.

Trionic is a supplier of high-quality, unique mobility aids designed to help you maintain your independence on the go. Our products tailored to being more active, every day, through activities such as exploring, hiking and even golfing.

** All prices include VAT relief. VAT exemption allows chronically sick or disabled people to buy eligible items at 0% rather than 20% VAT. Pay in 3 is an unregulated credit agreement. Carefully consider whether the purchase is affordable and how you will make the repayments or paying late may negatively impact your financial status and ability to obtain credit. Pay in 3 eligibility is subject to status and approval. 18+ UK residents only. Available for purchases of £30 to £2,000. Terms and conditions and late fees apply.

Trionic Walker 14er ONLY: £865

Make 3 interest-free payments of £288.33*



Call us at 0330 808 4589
for a price quote.

TRiONiC

www.trionic.uk/boost

OUR PUREST PROTEIN FOR MILES

Yeo
Valley
ORGANIC



YEO GOT THIS!



Available at Asda, Co-op, Morrisons, Ocado, Sainsbury's, Tesco & Waitrose. Subject to availability.