

EXPERT PROFILE

MAGAZINE

CELEBRATING
2025 GLOBAL
SUPER MIND WINNERS



SPECIAL EDITION

SUMMER 2025



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EDITORS NOTE

It is with great pride that we announce and share this year's Global Super Minds Award winners. Every year, I am amazed by the passion, profound knowledge and quiet determination to serve our winners embody. This year is no different, and I am deeply proud to celebrate these brilliant minds with you.

Summer has always felt like a season of happiness, the warmth, the longer days, the ease with which we can smile. But I've come to realise, and perhaps you have too, that happiness is not simply about the season or the circumstances we find ourselves in. Happiness, often, is a choice. It's our responsibility to look for it, to allow ourselves to feel it, even on days that don't feel easy.

We are blessed to be here. To have life. To breathe. To see the world with eyes that are still curious. To pursue dreams that light us up inside. This, too, is happiness.

As we celebrate our Global Super Minds this summer, may you remember to chase happiness not just when everything aligns, but especially when it doesn't. May we live joyfully, irrespective of what the day brings, honouring the simple gift of being alive.

Wishing you a bright, inspired summer ahead.

Rany Athwall



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2025

EXPERT PROFILE MAGAZINE
GLOBAL SUPER MIND WINNERS



Craig Alexander



Andrea Huber



Marsha Parcou

2025

EXPERT PROFILE MAGAZINE
GLOBAL SUPER MIND WINNERS



Anne Anyia



Laila Morcos Zissis



Dr. Jan C. Wulff

OUR EXPERTS

11



CRAIG
ALEXANDER

12



MARSHA
PARCOU

13



ANNE
ANYIA

15



RACHEL
PEARSON

17



BEVERLY
JOHNSON

19



JACQUELINE
GONCALVES

22



DOMINIKA
STANIEWICZ

23



LISA
ANDREWS

& FEATURES

24



JENNIFER
LEGASPI

25



LIDIA
KULESHNYK

28



ANDREA
HUBER

29



MARION
KIRK

31



LORRAINE
CROOKES

32



MARY
SCOTT

33



HELEN
GULLICK

35



SHARDIA
O'CONNER

OUR MENTORS

36



NADIJA
BAJRAMI

37



DR MARGIT
MULLER

39



EMMA
HULL

41



SALLY
ESTLIN

43



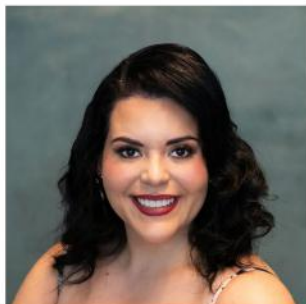
PENELOPE
LAYZELL

44



CELIA
CONRAD

45



NICOLE
ROLON-CARO

47



LUCY
CHAMBERS

& COACHES

48



JEANETTE
SZYMANSKI

49



KIRSTY
VERITY

53



BEVERLEY
SHATLIFF

54



CAROLA
GEODEKE

55



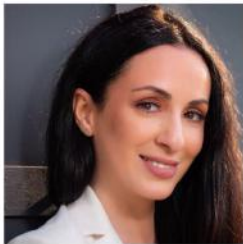
NICKY
ABELL-FRANCIS

56



EMILY
APELL

57



INNA
MEL

59



GEMMA
ROSBIFFI

60



KIRSTIE
PULLMAN

61



MARISSA
CHEREPANOV

62



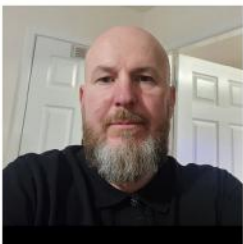
RACHANAA
TULSYAN

63



RACHEL
WEST

64



KEITH
ROE

65



HANNAH
DAWE

66



EVE
OSTROVSKAYA

OUR ARTICLES

67



FELA
ROSA

69



ZITA &
TERRY

71



FIONA
TIMOTHY

72



SAMANTHA
BUHRS

73



AMANDA
WHITEHEAD

74



BEX
THOMAS

75



LOUISE
DICKS

76



CRYSTAL
JOHNS

77



TANEKA
JOHNSON

78



GAIL
TAGARRO

79



BRANDI
VAN

80



SALLY
ARNOLD

81



MAXCINE
WATSON

82



EVA-MARIA
PRELL

83



ANGIE
GRIMES

& MORE

85



YVONNE
SANDOMIR

86



KARINA
JASKOVA

87



CINDY
WHITE

88



NIKKI
HILLHOUSE

89



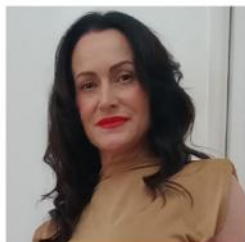
AMBER
BERGER

90



KIRAN
SIDHU

91



KERRY
MAYES

92



JANE
PARMEL

93



JEANETTE
FORDER

94



MAGGIE
PEROTIN

95



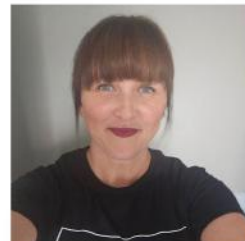
JANYELLE
HUFF

96



DARLENE
WIERSKI-DEVOE

97



LUCY
WADE

98



EVA MARIA
HUNT

99



LUISA
HARRIS

BEYOND THE SCALES



When it comes to obesity and weight management, too many people are fixated on the bathroom scales. It's understandable — weight is easy to measure and easy to obsess over. But if we truly want to support lasting health improvements, we must look far beyond simple weight. Body weight tells only part of the story. Real progress is about changes in body composition, fat distribution, and overall metabolic health.

Today, fitness and health professionals are turning to a range of more innovative tools to measure success, providing a fuller picture of how our bodies are truly changing. Let's explore three important metrics that go beyond the scales: Body Mass Index (BMI), Waist-to-Height Ratio (WHtR), and Waist-to-Hip Ratio (WHR).

Body Mass Index (BMI)

BMI has long been used as a quick screening tool to categorise individuals as underweight, normal weight, overweight, or obese based on their weight relative to height. It's calculated by dividing weight in kilograms by height in meters squared.

$$\text{BMI} = \text{Weight (kg)} \div \text{Height (m}^2\text{)}$$

BMI Range	Classification
Less than 18.5	Underweight
18.5-24.9	Normal Weight
25.0-29.9	Overweight
30.0-34.9	Obesity Class I
35.0-39.9	Obesity Class II
40.0 or higher	Obesity Class III

While BMI is simple and widely understood, it has significant limitations. It cannot differentiate between muscle and fat, meaning a fit, muscular person may be categorised as "overweight" or even "obese" despite having a very healthy body composition. Likewise, someone with a "normal" BMI may carry unhealthy levels of visceral fat that increase their risk for disease.

Takeaway: BMI can be a helpful, broad indicator at a population level, but it's far too blunt to accurately measure individual health.

Waist-to-Hip-Ratio (WHR)

Waist-to-Hip Ratio focuses specifically on how fat is distributed across the body — another major indicator of health. It's calculated by dividing waist circumference by hip circumference.

$$\text{WHR} = \text{waist circumference} \div \text{hip circumference}$$

Sex	Low Risk	Moderate Risk	High Risk
Male	0.90 or below	0.91-0.99	1.00 or higher
Female	0.80 or below	0.81-0.84	0.85 or higher

Interpretation:

Low Risk: Lower risk of cardiovascular disease and metabolic complications.

Moderate Risk: Increased risk; lifestyle changes recommended.

High Risk: Substantial risk of conditions like heart disease, type 2 diabetes, and stroke.

People who carry more fat around their abdomen (apple-shaped bodies) tend to have a higher risk of metabolic diseases compared to those who carry more around their hips and thighs (pear-shaped bodies). High WHR is strongly linked to greater risks of heart disease, stroke, and diabetes.

While WHR can be slightly more technical to measure accurately (you need precise waist and hip measurements), it adds important context when assessing health beyond just "how much" fat there is — it shows where the fat is stored, which can make all the difference.

Takeaway: Tracking the Waist-to-Hip Ratio helps pinpoint dangerous fat distribution patterns that BMI and even Waist-to-Height Ratio (WHtR) might overlook.

Waist-to-Height Ratio (WHtR)

The waist-to-height ratio is emerging as one of the most effective simple indicators of health risks related to obesity. It's calculated by dividing your waist circumference by your height. A healthy target is keeping your waist circumference less than half your height.

$$\text{WHtR} = \text{waist circumference} \div \text{height}$$

WHtR	Interpretation
Below 0.40	Underweight or potential malnutrition
0.40-0.49	Healthy Weight (low risk)
0.50-0.59	Increased risk (overweight or central obesity)
0.60 and above	High risk (central obesity, serious health risk)

Research shows that WHtR is a stronger predictor of cardiovascular risk, diabetes, and even mortality than BMI. It accounts for the dangerous fat stored around the organs (known as visceral fat) that significantly raises disease risk, regardless of overall body weight.

Unlike BMI, WHtR is effective across various age groups, ethnicities, and body types. It's simple, powerful, and actionable: if your waistline creeps over half your height, it's time to reassess your health strategies.

Takeaway: For individuals serious about health improvement, monitoring the waist-to-high ratio offers clearer, more actionable insights than BMI.

Conclusion

True health progress is not about watching the number on the scales drop. It's about improving body composition, reducing visceral fat, and lowering the risk of serious diseases. BMI, Waist-to-Height Ratio, and Waist-to-Hip Ratio each offer valuable insights — but when combined, they provide an even clearer and more complete picture of a person's true health trajectory.

For anyone serious about weight management and health — and for professionals guiding them — it's time to think beyond weight and embrace smarter, more holistic progress tracking.

By Craig Alexander





THE SEASON OF LETTING GO

There are moments in life when we are called to release something deeply woven into our identity - something that once gave us meaning, security and belonging. But what happens when that very thing begins to keep us small, silent or stuck?

Letting go can feel like betrayal - not of the other, but of the version of ourselves we promised we'd never leave behind. And yet, to walk in purpose, wholeness and peace, release becomes sacred.

Every soul will eventually pass through a season of pruning - a divine trimming of what no longer aligns with who we're becoming. Pruning is never painless, especially when it touches long-standing emotional bonds, shared dreams or years of investment. Sometimes, we don't even realise how much of ourselves we've lost trying to keep something whole. We call it loyalty. We call it endurance. But beneath it all may be a quiet compromise that disconnects us from our truth.

This kind of letting go doesn't come with celebration or applause. It often comes with tears, doubt and the slow rebuilding of a self we once forgot. However, it also brings with it freedom—the kind that only truth can offer.

When we're faced with the possibility of letting go, the fears begin to rise:
What if I'm alone from here on?
What if I've wasted the best years of my life?
What if no one ever sees me the way I long to be seen?
What if this is all there ever is?

These questions are not signs of weakness - they are echoes of our humanity. As a coach and a woman who's walked through the valley of these fears, I can tell you this: what you're afraid to lose might be the very thing God is trying to release so you can reclaim yourself.

There is no shame in admitting that you've outgrown a space, even one built with love. Growth does not always mean going forward together. Sometimes, growth means moving forward alone but not empty-handed. You leave with lessons, wisdom and a deeper knowing of who you are.

Not every bond is meant to last a lifetime. Some connections arrive to awaken, teach, or prepare us. And once their purpose is fulfilled, clinging out of fear keeps us from receiving the next blessing.

If you're finding it hard to release someone you once deeply cherished, consider this: What if their role in your story is complete? What if continuing to hold on is costing you the peace, alignment and growth you've been praying for?

Letting go is not abandonment. It is reverence for yourself, for your healing, for your wholeness.

This decision isn't made once - it's made again and again. Some days with tears. Other days with clarity. But always with courage.

You may find yourself having to reclaim your worth, rewrite your beliefs or reestablish your routines. You may have to reintroduce yourself to yourself—and that's okay. This is the work of becoming. And you are not alone in it.

This season, as hard as it feels, is holy. You're not falling apart - you're falling into alignment.

You are worthy of love that is whole, mutual and safe. You are worthy of peace that doesn't require pretence. And you are worthy of a life that reflects your core values - not just in public but also behind closed doors.

This isn't about giving up. It's about honouring yourself enough to walk away from anything that no longer reflects the fullness of who you are.

May you trust the wisdom of your soul. May you choose courage over comfort.
May you stop pretending for the sake of peace and start living from a place of truth.

You are not letting go to lose. You are letting go to live the life ahead, which is far greater than the one you're leaving behind.

By Marsah Parcou



Let It Go...

The Consequences of Not Eating a Healthy Diet

When we consider nutrition, it's easy to focus solely on weight loss. However, the reality is that what you consume affects every aspect of your body and mind. A diet lacking in essential nutrients can trigger a variety of issues, signalling that your body is out of balance. It's crucial to understand the full range of consequences that can arise from poor dietary choices.

Fatigue and Low Energy

One of the most immediate effects of an unhealthy diet is fatigue and a persistent lack of energy. Our bodies require a specific mix of nutrients to function optimally. When our diet fails to provide these nutrients, the consequence is often a struggle to produce and maintain consistent energy levels throughout the day. Research published in **Nutrients** has shown that poor nutritional status is closely linked to reduced physical performance, ultimately leading to feelings of exhaustion.¹

Foods high in refined carbohydrates and sugars—which include items such as white bread, candy, and soda—result in a quick spike in blood sugar, followed by a crash, leaving people feeling tired, shaky, or irritable. Essential nutrients such as iron, vitamin B12, magnesium, and vitamin D are critical for energy production; deficiencies in these can lead to chronic fatigue and even anemia. Additionally, consuming large quantities of ultra-processed or inflammatory foods can disrupt gut health, resulting in bloating and poor nutrient absorption, further contributing to low energy levels.

Moreover, many individuals mistake thirst for hunger, leading to inadequate hydration. Not drinking enough water can hinder various bodily systems, including the conversion of energy from food. Therefore, to enhance energy levels, it is vital to adopt a healthier diet, incorporate more whole foods, and maintain proper hydration.

Digestive Problems

Your digestive system is not merely a machine for processing food; it is a sophisticated network composed of organs, enzymes, and a diverse array of microbes. An unhealthy diet—characterized by ultra-processed foods, high sugar content, and low fibre intake—can significantly disrupt the balance of gut bacteria. This imbalance often leads to uncomfortable digestive issues.² According to a study in the **Journal of Translational Medicine**, diets rich in ultra-processed foods and low in fibre severely impact digestive health, resulting in symptoms such as bloating, constipation, and an increased risk of gastrointestinal diseases. Fiber is essential for regular bowel movements and overall gut

health. A lack of vegetables, fruits, and whole grains can lead to digestive discomfort and irregularities.

Moreover, ultra-processed foods commonly contain additives, unhealthy fats, and excessive sugars, all of which can irritate the gut lining and disrupt digestion. Excess sugar particularly feeds harmful bacteria in the gut, causing them to overgrow, leading to further digestive distress and inflammation throughout the body. Additionally, artificial sweeteners found in many low-calorie products can also be difficult for the gut to digest, potentially causing symptoms like diarrhoea or cramps. Poor digestive health can influence your overall well-being, affecting energy levels, mood, and even immune function. A nutrient-rich, whole-food diet can help restore gut health and improve digestion from the inside out.

Increased Risk of Chronic Diseases

An unhealthy diet significantly heightens the risk of developing chronic diseases. It places long-term stress on the body, particularly through mechanisms such as inflammation, poor blood sugar control, and nutrient deficiencies. Numerous studies indicate that unhealthy dietary patterns, specifically those high in ultra-processed foods, sugary drinks, and unhealthy fats while low in fruits, vegetables, and whole grains, correlate strongly with serious health issues, including heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes, and some cancers.³

Processed foods and excess sugar contribute to chronic inflammation, which can damage tissues and organs over time, paving the way for severe health conditions. Furthermore, consuming high-calorie, low-quality foods can lead to visceral fat accumulation around vital organs, which is intricately linked to cardiovascular diseases, strokes, and liver problems.³ The implications of an unhealthy diet extend beyond immediate physical discomfort; these choices can quietly increase your susceptibility to life-altering and chronic health issues.

Brain Fog

A poor diet also has the potential to impair cognitive function, leading to what many people refer to as “brain fog.” Symptoms may include difficulty concentrating, forgetfulness, and a lack of focus. Malnutrition can disrupt crucial systems that maintain the brain's alertness and optimal functioning, including blood sugar balance, gut health, inflammation control, and overall nutrient status. A study published in **Nutrients** highlighted that diets high in saturated fats and simple sugars can have a negative impact on cognitive health.⁴ This research indicates that dietary choices can influence not just immediate brain function but also long-term cognitive health, including the risk of developing dementia and neurodegenerative disorders in later life.

Conclusion

The consequences of not adhering to a healthy diet extend far beyond weight management. Fatigue, digestive problems, increased risk of chronic diseases, and cognitive decline are just a few of the significant issues that can arise from poor nutritional choices. By prioritizing whole foods, staying adequately hydrated, and being mindful of the quality of nutrients consumed, you can significantly enhance your health and well-being. Recognizing the importance of a balanced diet is a crucial step towards a healthier future.

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BRIDGING TWO WORLDS

VISIBILITY IS THE NEW CREDIBILITY

WHY LINKEDIN'S VIDEO BET CHANGES EVERYTHING

LinkedIn has hit the headlines recently with a renewed focus on video, marking a significant shift in how the platform is evolving and what it means for professionals looking to build a personal brand.

While the rise of video content across digital platforms isn't exactly breaking news, LinkedIn's strategic investment in video signals a deeper transformation: one that places thought leadership, visibility, and premium content at the forefront of the platform's future. One of the most notable developments is the expansion of LinkedIn's BrandLink program (formerly known as the Wire Programme).

This initiative enables advertisers to sponsor curated editorial video content, known as 'Shows', featuring influential voices and industry leaders such as Steven Bartlett, Bernard Marr, Rebecca Minkoff, Allie K. Miller, Candace Nelson, Guy Raz, Gary Vaynerchuk, and Shelley Zalis. With pre-roll video ad placements, brands are aligning themselves with premium storytelling and trusted personalities.

This move underscores a powerful message for entrepreneurs, executives, and business leaders: video is no longer optional. It's a central component of how thought leadership is built, consumed, and remembered in a digital-first, attention-scarce world.

The Rise of Strategic Visibility

Visibility isn't just about how often you're seen; it's about where and how you show up. LinkedIn's emphasis on high-quality, editorial-style video reflects a broader truth: not all visibility is equal.

Many professionals believe they need to say yes to every opportunity to build a strong personal brand. But real authority comes from discernment. Being strategic means understanding where your voice matters most and being willing to say no to opportunities that dilute your message or distract from your goals. When you place your brand beside premium content, such as the shows produced in the BrandLink program, you're not just gaining views, you're gaining trust and credibility. It's about meaningful association, not mass exposure. That's a critical shift in thinking for today's leaders.

Why Business Leaders Need a Visibility Plan

With so much noise online, visibility must be intentional. Business leaders and entrepreneurs can no longer rely solely on word of mouth or organic reach to elevate their profile. Building a standout personal brand requires a deliberate visibility strategy that aligns with your business goals, ideal audience, and positioning.

A visibility plan helps you:

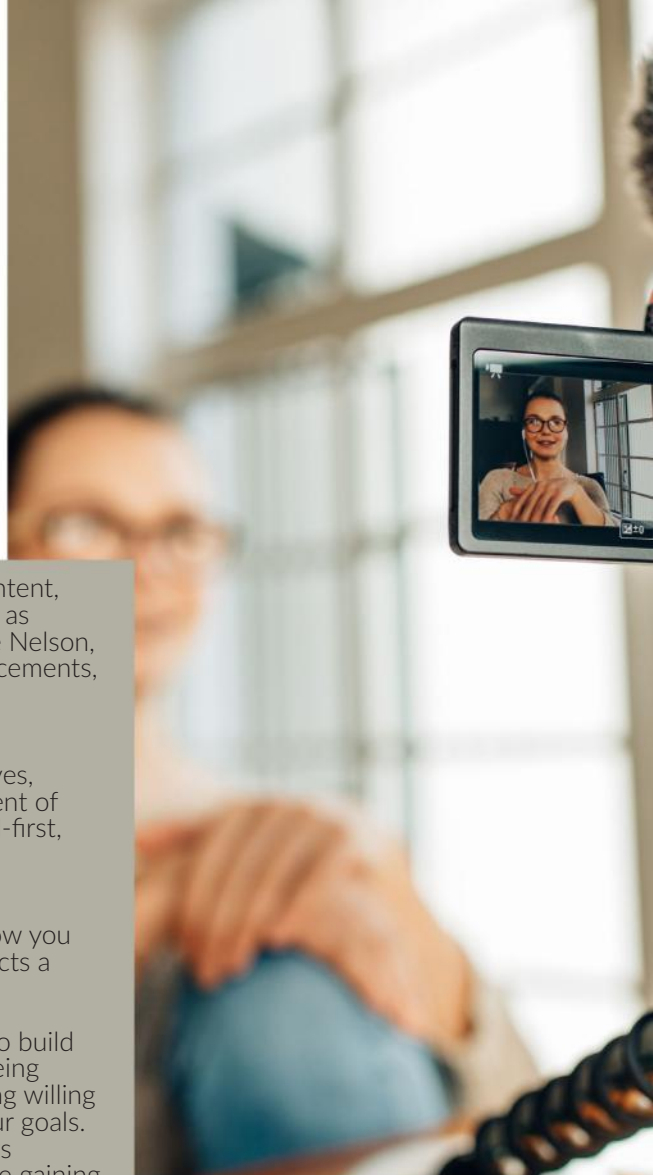
- *Take control of your narrative*
- *Ensure consistency across platforms*
- *Align your public presence with your long-term brand vision*
- *Choose opportunities that amplify your authority*
- *Invest time and resources into the most impactful content formats*

Without a plan, it's easy to fall into reactive content creation or overcommit to platforms that don't serve your brand.

The New Currency of B2B Visibility

In the B2B world, credentials used to be the cornerstone of authority. Titles, degrees, and decades of experience were once enough to command respect and attention. But today, visibility is a new kind of credibility. Being seen in the right places, contributing meaningfully to current conversations, and having a strong digital presence now hold equal, if not more, weight than traditional markers of success. Buyers, collaborators, and partners are increasingly influenced by who shows up, how often, and in what context.

Thought leadership in B2B is no longer about static bios. It's dynamic. It's visual. And it's human. The leaders shaping industries are the ones who are visible, not just accomplished. Video enables professionals to demonstrate their values, insights, and relevance in a fast-moving marketplace.





Whether you're raising capital, selling enterprise services, or building strategic partnerships, your digital presence, particularly through video, will often be your first impression. And first impressions today are made in-feed, not in formal introductions.

The Dominance of Video: Trends You Can't Ignore

It's no surprise that LinkedIn is making this move. Video is rapidly becoming the dominant form of online content consumption, and the data supports this trend. According to Cisco, video will account for over 80% of all internet traffic by 2025. Social platforms are prioritising video in their algorithms, user attention spans are shorter, and audiences are increasingly turning to video for education, inspiration, and connection.

YouTube remains the second-largest search engine in the world, TikTok has redefined short-form storytelling, and now LinkedIn is entering the arena with more long-form, thought-leadership-focused content. The message is clear: if you're not leveraging video, you're not part of the conversation.

This shift makes video a key component of any visibility strategy. It allows people to see your personality, hear your tone, and experience your authority in a way that static content simply can't match. For personal brands, it's one of the most effective tools to build trust quickly. Now Content vs. Evergreen Content: Why You Need Both The trends we see in video also highlight that, in a content-rich world, it's no longer enough to simply post regularly. You need a smart mix of content types that work both immediately and over time.

Now Content: This is timely, reactive, and topical. It positions you as someone who is part of the current conversation and gives your brand a pulse. Think real-time commentary, trend responses, or behind-the-scenes updates.

Evergreen Content: This is foundational, long-lasting, and searchable. It helps you get found months or even years after it's created. Think how-to videos, thought leadership pieces, and expert advice.

Video is an ideal format for both types of content. A live discussion or video response to industry news gets engagement now. A well-produced insight or tutorial builds your visibility over time.

Repurposing your video content across platforms and formats is a strategic move. A single video can be sliced into short clips, turned into quote graphics, transcribed into blog posts, or used in newsletters. This multiplies your visibility without multiplying your workload.

Five Tips for Creating a Personal Brand Visibility Plan

1. Define Your Signature Topics

Start by identifying 2–3 core themes or topics that you want to be known for. These should reflect your expertise, unique perspective, and business relevance. Everything you say publicly should link back to these themes to create a consistent message and recognisable authority.

2. Choose High-Impact Platforms

Rather than trying to be everywhere, focus on the platforms where your ideal audience spends time and where your voice has the most impact. For most professionals, LinkedIn is a prime space for credibility-building. But also consider guest features, industry podcasts, and speaking events aligned with your niche.

3. Incorporate Video Intentionally

Video humanises your message. Whether it's through polished brand videos, interviews, or thought leadership commentary, use video to show your voice, presence, and expertise. Consider investing in higher-quality formats if you're positioning yourself at the premium end of your industry.

4. Set Visibility Goals

What does successful visibility look like for you? It could be securing 5 high-profile podcast interviews, growing a newsletter to 10,000 subscribers, or being invited to speak at top-tier events. Set specific, measurable goals so you can track progress and prioritise what matters.

5. Say No With Confidence

Every visibility decision is a brand decision. Learn to say no to opportunities that don't align with your values, audience, or positioning. The power of your brand often comes not just from what you do but from what you intentionally choose not to do.

Final Thoughts

LinkedIn's video-forward strategy is a wake-up call to thought leaders and business owners: if you want to lead the conversation, you need to be seen and not just anywhere but in the right places. Strategic visibility is the difference between being remembered and being overlooked. Whether you're sponsoring shows, producing your own content, or making guest appearances, every decision shapes your public perception.

In a world where everyone is trying to be seen, those who are deliberate about where and how they show up will be the ones who lead.

The era of passive visibility is over.

Welcome to the era of curated influence.

By Rachel Pearson



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Self Care Corner

By Beverly Johnson



What's Going On...

Father, father
We don't need to escalate.
You see, war is not the answer.
For only love can conquer hate
You know we've got to find a way.
To bring some lovin' here today
Picket lines and picket signs.
Don't punish me with brutality.
Talk to me
So, you can see
Oh, what's going on (What's going on)
What's going on (What's going on)
What's going on (What's going on)
What's going on (What's going on)
"What's Going On", Marvin Gaye 1971

While brainstorming the ideas for articles, I followed my tried-and-true process. I jot down ideas and wait for one to resonate with me. This time, it was different. I found myself being bombarded by the drumbeat of the never-ending news cycle. After a while, the chorus of the same stories began to wear me down. With each passing day, I could feel the sense of helplessness and dread becoming my daily emotion.

Every morning, the cadence of the recurring themes began to take its toll on me. At this moment, I decided to reclaim my emotional well-being and turn the TV off. If you've been keeping up with music, you may be familiar with music sensation Kendrick Lamar. In his

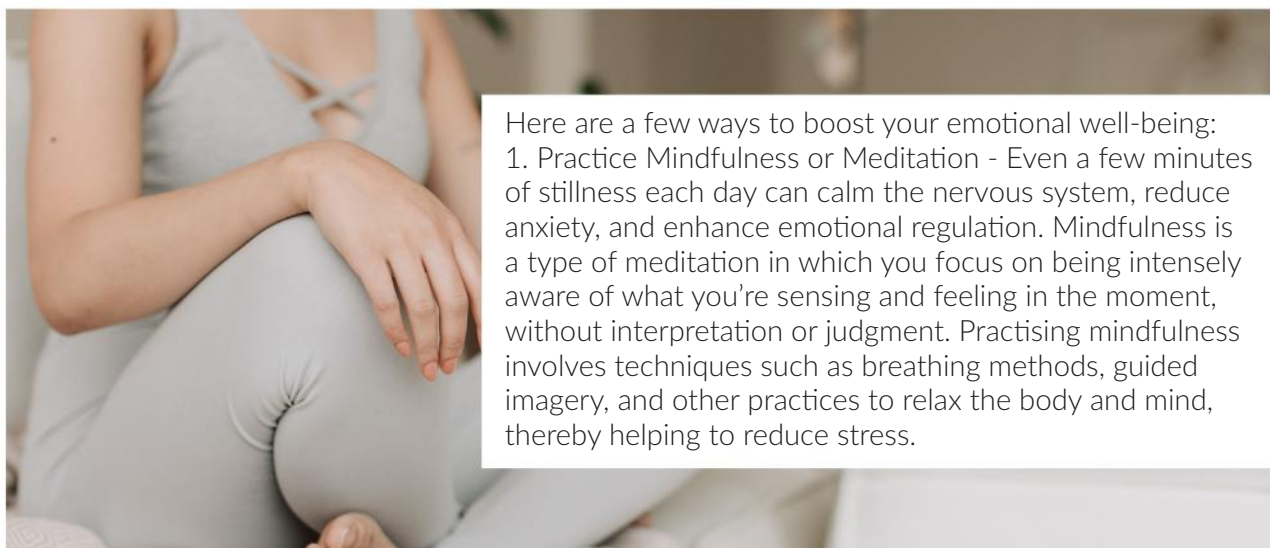
latest album, GNX, a song resonated with my sentiment. In the song "TV Off," Lamar enthusiastically tells us to TURN THE TV OFF. I'm fairly certain that the song wasn't intended for this moment, but it serves as a poignant reminder to nurture our emotional well-being.

What exactly is emotional well-being? Emotional well-being refers to the ability to manage one's emotions, cope with life's challenges, develop strong relationships, and recover from setbacks. It involves experiencing positive emotions, such as happiness and contentment, as well as emotional resilience, self-awareness, and a sense of purpose or meaning. The World Health Organization (WHO) states that it's the ability to cope with the everyday stresses of life. In this landscape, I've heard many people express similar concerns. They've mentioned that they are "not feeling like themselves." As if something is missing. If you can relate, here are some telltale signs:

1. Persistent Irritability, Anxiety, or Mood Swings- When emotional well-being is neglected, people often feel overwhelmed, anxious, or emotionally reactive.
2. Difficulty Concentrating or Making Decisions - Neglected emotions can lead to forgetfulness or poor decision-making.
3. Changes in Sleep or Appetite - Insomnia, oversleeping, emotional eating, or a lack of appetite are often linked to emotional imbalance.

‘Emotional well-being isn’t about ignoring what’s going on in the world. It’s about creating small actions in your day.’

If you’re nodding your head in agreement, you’re not alone. There’s a growing number of people who are expressing similar sentiments. In our fast-paced world, it’s easy to put your emotional well-being on hold. Nurturing your emotional health is a necessity. I compare my emotional health to a garden. A blooming garden requires regular care, attention, and sunlight. Your health requires regular care (sleep, mindfulness, and movement), attention (self-care), and sunlight (increase in vitamin D).



Here are a few ways to boost your emotional well-being:

1. Practice Mindfulness or Meditation - Even a few minutes of stillness each day can calm the nervous system, reduce anxiety, and enhance emotional regulation. Mindfulness is a type of meditation in which you focus on being intensely aware of what you’re sensing and feeling in the moment, without interpretation or judgment. Practising mindfulness involves techniques such as breathing methods, guided imagery, and other practices to relax the body and mind, thereby helping to reduce stress.



2. Move Your Body Regularly - Exercise doesn’t just tone your muscles—it lifts your mood by boosting feel-good chemicals like endorphins and serotonin. Exercise causes your brain to release ‘feel good’ chemicals like endorphins and serotonin that help improve your mood.

3. Get Creative - Colour, paint, dance, write, garden—creative expression helps release tension, enhances joy, and improves self-awareness.

Emotional well-being isn’t about ignoring what’s going on in the world. It’s about creating small actions in your day. Your feelings are valid, and you deserve to nurture them.

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Trusting Your Inner Voice

How one decision led me to an entirely different life.

In the previous issue of Expert Profile Magazine, I discussed the importance of listening to the messages your body has been sending you. That the symptoms we experience are not meant to torture us but are there to inform us. My intentions were to inspire you to begin tuning into yourself, to start trusting yourself and believing in yourself.

We have been detached from who we are since our first breath on this earth. From our earliest milestones to our days in school and into adulthood, we have lived by the beliefs instilled in us, keeping us aligned with one another and often following the same paths, experiencing similar fates.

If you look back to your younger years, were you ever encouraged to seek wisdom from yourself? Did anyone ever tell you that no matter how much you improve your external circumstances, true happiness and health will only occur when you are at peace within?

Every person who influenced our upbringing taught us that all the answers and knowledge are found outside of ourselves. Every aspect of our own well-being should be dictated by those who have a specific degree, and only they can tell us what is “wrong” with us and how to fix it.

We never once sat in stillness and listened to what our hearts were asking for. We never checked in with ourselves, noticing where we feel tension, observing the patterns of our breathing or listening to the various ways our bodies express things to us. We never learned that our emotions were meant to be felt and our inner voices were meant to be heard.

From day one, we were totally detached from our true selves, forgetting all knowledge and connection to our own natural abilities. We have lived in a world where we pray for man-made cures, completely unaware that our creator designed us with an innate ability to heal from the very things we wish to be cured of.

Instead, we follow a path that is designed by man, believing it's the only path that exists. Every so often, someone decides they want to head in a different direction and navigate a new path for themselves. In doing so, those around them will often try to stop them by calling them crazy, mocking them and sometimes demonizing them.

But, as the saying goes, nothing changes if nothing changes. When someone takes a leap away from the crowd and goes against societal norms, they are often listening to their inner voice. The voice within that tells them that there is more to this life than what has been revealed.

I experienced the same type of pushback the day I finally decided to make a bold move that went against everything we were taught about our bodies and the way we approach our health. This was after decades of struggling. I found myself in a bad place, where I was going to be another statistic if I didn't change things soon.

I was always a critical thinker with an extensive background in the sciences, and I was consistently considered a leader in everything I ever participated in. Once a seed was planted that led me to think outside of everything I was taught, there was no turning back. I tried to push it aside, but my inner voice refused to quiet down...and for the first time, I listened.

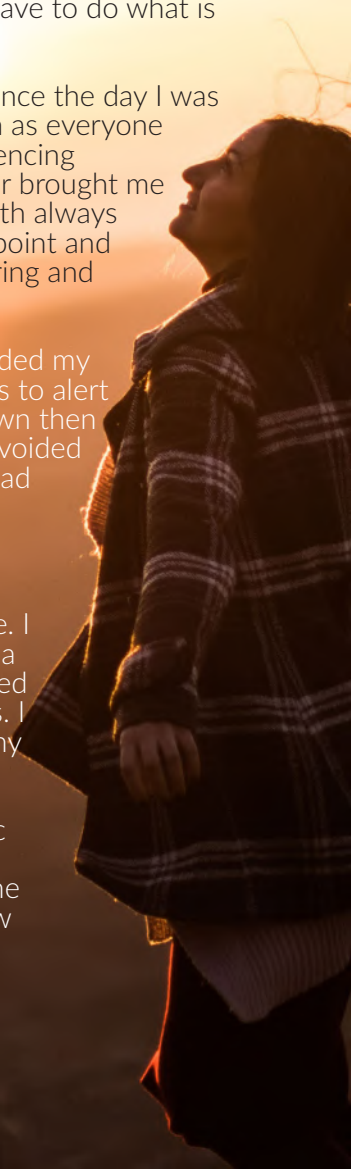
What led me to trust my inner voice for the first time was a combination of multiple factors in my life, dating back to the day I was born. I was a prime example of what happens when we continue to follow a path that leads us in circles.

****Note:** What you are about to read is a personal story of my life and my decisions. I am in no way advising anyone to make any personal decisions based on my life and story. You have to do what is best for YOU.

I struggled a lot with my health since the day I was born and followed the exact path as everyone else when I wasn't well or experiencing symptoms/illness. This path never brought me healing, only suppression. The path always brought me back to the starting point and led me through decades of suffering and eventually to a state of disease.

My body tried to show me it needed my support for years, but all attempts to alert me went unanswered. Had I known then what I know now, I would have avoided years of pain and suffering that had always been avoidable.

After years of health issues and trauma, in 2009, I was diagnosed with my first autoimmune disease. I did exactly as I was told. I visited a Rheumatologist and was diagnosed quickly with Rheumatoid Arthritis. I walked into that office as a healthy 29-year-old woman and left that appointment with a life sentence in my hand and a list of very toxic medications I was forced to take, possibly for the rest of my life. The medicine was horrible, and I knew my body hated it.





Something urged me not to take it, but I took it anyway and suffered the side effects that came with it.

My life continued to go down a path that was heading in a frightening direction. I wished for change, but I didn't know how to make it happen. For years, the medical advice I was given remained the same. My symptoms continued, hospitalizations and illnesses were constant, and not a single voice ever recognized or considered that all of my issues were connected or that these were all red flags my body was begging for me to listen to.

Fast forward to my late 30s, when my health began to decline rapidly. I did not want the meds they tried pushing on me. I began to turn inward, losing trust in the external voices that weren't doing anything to help me and never once took the time to really listen to me. This ultimately turned out to be a positive thing. I began thinking, questioning, researching, and for the first time, I was starting to get a strong gut feeling about my health that wasn't going away.

The more Drs urged me to take very strong medications, the more I felt resistance to their claim that this was my sole solution. I had a gut feeling, a deep intuitive nudge that told me there was more to this. Something within me urged me to continue searching for answers.

I quickly began studying and searching for innovative voices and researchers. I was starting to uncover brilliant studies and research outside conventional medicine, but unfortunately, time wasn't on my side, and my health was worsening. I was not okay, and I had reached a crossroads. I could no longer function and felt I had no choice but to accept the fate they were telling me.

I reluctantly made an appointment with a Rheumatologist. As I sat in the waiting room, I began watching the other patients coming in and out. I was sad and felt defeated. After a few minutes, this fragile man who couldn't walk independently sat down next to me. I suppose he noticed the despair coming off of me. He said to me, "C'mon, cheer up. It's not so bad here. Look, I have been coming here for over 20 years, and I am still alive!" Bless his heart. I know he meant well, but his words didn't help. I thanked him and smiled, and

moments later, I was called in the back. The young doctor I saw looked at my bloodwork and testing from my recent ER visits. She lacked all interpersonal skills and spoke of every diagnosis like it was another notch in my belt or something (at this point, I had a list of diagnoses).

She didn't listen to a word I said and had zero knowledge outside of the pharmaceutical protocols. She told me I was now borderline Lupus, and she was writing out a new list of medications. I was told to sit in the hallway for more blood work. There was a long line of patients, one by one, getting blood work so they, too, could receive their list of medications.

As I waited my turn, I felt myself becoming emotional, frustrated and angry that the doctor ignored every question I had. Not only did she ignore my questions, but she also had the audacity to laugh at me when I tried to discuss alternative ways to help myself and my body. I felt decades of emotion building up in my chest and wanted to break down right then and there.

I sat and waited for my blood work, watching patient after patient come into the office, walking the same path I was. The office felt more like a factory where patients were directed to each station, told the same story and given the same instructions. This is supposed to be a place that knows how to best support our bodies, yet my body tensed up and trembled every minute I was in there.

Finally, I was given my chart and had to wait in a long line at the front desk to get my prescriptions. I observed everyone waiting their turn. My mind couldn't accept that this is all that there is for those with autoimmune issues and diseases. I knew deep down there were answers and solutions. My entire life, I dealt with symptom after symptom, and despite decades passing, the way my health was approached remained the same, and nothing has changed. I was tired of fighting, tired of suffering.

I was becoming angry, not only for myself but for every patient in there that I knew deserved more. My eyes started filling with tears. I don't know what exactly happened next or how, but I distinctly heard a voice telling me to run. An overwhelming feeling took over, and I knew I had to get out of there and never look back. I hesitated, unsure whether I should listen or not. The voice grew louder and louder until I finally got out of the line, ran to the desk, handed them my chart, and ran out the door. I got in my car and called my husband hysterically, crying.

I didn't know what I was going to do. I didn't have a plan, and I didn't have answers. But it was then and there that I decided I was going to find a way to heal, and nothing was going to stop me.

For the first time in my life, I listened to myself and that inner voice I had never trusted before. That inner voice begged me to walk away. Filled with fear, uncertainty and pain, I ran off that line. As scary as it seemed, it was also a moment of empowerment. I was finally breaking free from the ongoing cycle of suffering and choosing to find a new path for myself.

It was at that moment that my entire life would change. One step literally changed the entire direction of my health and life. I had no idea what my next steps were or how I would do it, but that didn't matter then. What mattered was for the first time, I trusted myself and took a major step forward. I made a non-negotiable decision and declared it with every ounce of my soul, and not a single person could convince me otherwise.

People often ask me how I did it or assume I have access to things others don't. The truth is, I was no different than anyone else. I was a disabled woman who was suffering immensely every moment of every day. The only thing that set me apart from others was my belief. I was no longer accepting the limited beliefs they convinced us of. I refused to believe that healing is impossible and made it my mission to listen and learn from new perspectives from all over the world. Those choices led me down a path I never knew existed. All I needed to do was focus on the now, and the how began to reveal itself.

My journey was anything but smooth and took time. In fact, it's not something that a lot of people would choose to go through. But not a day goes by that I don't thank my younger self for trusting her voice within and choosing to step forward onto an unknown path.

It's truly amazing how one decision changed the entire course of my life in ways I never thought possible. It led me to a disease-free life as I set out to achieve, but there was so much more that came from it. When choosing to do what I knew was best for me, despite others thinking I was crazy and doubting me every step of the way, I learned to see life from an entirely new perspective. I uncovered abilities within that I never heard of before. I reconnected with myself and my body, realizing that what I always needed most in every part of my life was myself.

My inner voice was something I had never trusted or listened to before, especially when it came to my health and well-being. I believed wholeheartedly that I was incapable of knowing anything about myself. The truth is, our bodies are brilliant. They are always showing us the way and spend all day and night protecting us and keeping us alive. To underestimate our own abilities distances us from our true self and prevents us from living our healthiest and best lives.

Even after a life of being detached from ourselves, we can all agree that we still feel when something



is wrong and when something is right for us. That feeling is more than just a hunch. That's our intuitive nature, our inner voice that has tried to guide us since the day we were born.

When we begin to listen to our intuition, we start to reconnect with ourselves again. When we reconnect with our bodies, we start to trust ourselves again. Having external professionals and support in our lives is a blessing, and I still do have ones I see regularly. But instead of disregarding myself, as if I am not enough when it comes to making decisions for my well-being, I now have incorporated myself back into the equation.

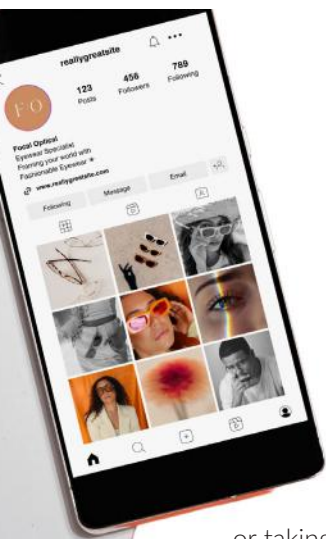
My voice matters and is needed. My body deserves to be heard and supported. Doing so does go against the accepted societal norms, but it's when we do the things others aren't willing to do that we achieve things others do not believe are possible.

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How to Break Free from Social Media Addiction

By Dominika Staniewicz
The Brain Coach



It's evening after a long day at work, or maybe your kids have finally gone to bed. You're exhausted and just want to relax. In the past, people would unwind by reading a book, engaging in conversation, praying, meditating, or taking a walk. But today, we live in an era of constant digital stimulation—especially through social media, a dopamine-driven addiction like no other.

Even toddlers now operate phones and tablets. A staggering 31% of U.S. parents admit to allowing their children to use screens before the age of two. This is alarming for many reasons, but adults aren't much better. During one of my keynote speeches, I asked an audience of over 200 working professionals to check their screen time. None of them worked in marketing or social media. As I called out time increments—2 hours, 3 hours, 4 hours—attendees sat down if their daily phone use was below that threshold. By the time I reached 6 hours, about 70% were still standing. The message was clear: they were addicted to their devices.

You likely already know that excessive screen time can damage communication skills, shorten attention spans, reduce creative thinking, weaken decision-making, and disrupt self-regulation. Yet, despite understanding its negative effects, we continue scrolling. Years pass, and many wake up realizing they've been living on autopilot, disconnected from their true desires and happiness.

The Neuroscience Behind Social Media Addiction

At the core of this addiction is our brain—the control center dictating everything from daily choices to life-or-death situations. Several key brain functions are affected by excessive social media use:

1. Prefrontal Cortex Suppression: This area, responsible for decision-making, impulse control, and future planning, experiences reduced activity. Less stimulation here weakens its efficiency over time.

2. Amygdala Overactivation: Doomscrolling triggers the amygdala, which processes emotions like fear and anxiety. The more it's activated, the more likely you are to experience these emotions regularly, reinforcing a negative cycle.

3. Neuroplasticity and Habit Formation: The brain constantly rewires itself. Every time you engage in social media scrolling, you strengthen the neural pathways that prioritize instant gratification over meaningful, long-term rewards. Just like muscles grow with exercise, these neural circuits become dominant the more they are used.

4. Dopamine Loop: Social media exploits the brain's reward system by flooding it with dopamine—the neurotransmitter linked to pleasure and motivation. This creates an endless loop, making it nearly impossible to stop scrolling, even when the content is distressing.

Breaking Free: Practical Strategies

To regain control over your brain and break the cycle of social media addiction, try these proven techniques:

- 1. Switch Your Phone to Monochrome Mode** – The brain is less attracted to black-and-white screens, reducing compulsive scrolling.
- 2. Set App Time Limits** – Most smartphones allow you to restrict social media use to 30, 60, or 90 minutes per day.
- 3. Use a Phone Lockbox** – If time limits aren't enough, a physical phone jail can prevent access to apps while allowing emergency calls.
- 4. Keep Your Phone Out of the Bedroom** – Making it difficult to access at night helps curb late-night scrolling.
- 5. Celebrate Small Wins** – Each time you resist the urge to pick up your phone, acknowledge and reward yourself to reinforce positive behavior.
- 6. Limit Screen Exposure for Children** – Ideally, children should not have personal devices before age 13, and definitely not before age 5, to allow proper brain development.

Science-Backed Evidence

- A study from the Journal of Behavioral Addictions (2019) found that excessive social media use mirrors substance addiction, leading to withdrawal symptoms and impaired impulse control.
- Research from Harvard University (2021) confirmed that social media platforms hijack the brain's dopamine system, reinforcing compulsive behaviors similar to gambling.
- A Stanford University (2020) study highlighted that reducing social media usage improves focus, mood, and real-life social interactions.

Breaking free from social media addiction isn't easy, but it is possible. By understanding how your brain is being manipulated and taking conscious steps to counteract these effects, you can reclaim your time, mental clarity, and overall well-being.



yourbraincoachd.com

The Energetic Entrepreneur

Aligning Your Business with Your Soul's Purpose



For as long as I can remember, I've experienced the world in vivid colours, energy, and intuition. Deep down, I have always known that my purpose is to help others heal and reconnect with their true selves. However, like many with spiritual gifts, I found myself navigating a world that could be dismissive or uncomprehending. For years, I lived two separate lives. By day, I was entrenched in the corporate world, working within the NHS in well-respected roles that provided both structure and financial stability.

However, after hours, I immersed myself in my spiritual business, offering energy healing, tarot readings, and intuitive guidance to those embarking on their own journeys of self-discovery. This side of my life felt natural and effortless, almost as if I was remembering who I truly was. Yet, I struggled with self-doubt, worrying whether I could really pursue a career in spirituality, fearing I wouldn't be taken seriously, and convincing myself that it was safer to stick with a reliable salary. Looking back, I realize I wasn't excelling in those corporate positions because they didn't align with my true self. I didn't know how to permit myself to leave that life behind.

Then, in 2020, everything changed when I received a breast cancer diagnosis, shaking the very foundations of the life I had created. Facing my own mortality forced me to confront the reality that my dreams could no longer wait for the "right time." It became crystal clear that delaying what my soul already knew was merely an excuse. That pivotal moment marked my complete transformation into an energetic entrepreneur—someone who builds a business from the inside out, guided by purpose and intuition. By stepping into my authenticity, I wasn't just launching a business; I was returning home to myself.

Energy First, Strategy Second

When people ask how I built my business, they typically expect a detailed, structured plan. However, my journey didn't begin with spreadsheets or branding formats; it started with energy. Each time I create an offer or consider a new idea, I first check how it feels within my body. Is it exciting or heavy? Does it feel expansive or draining? If it ignites a spark within me and aligns with my deeper purpose, I take action. The strategy then flows from that energy, not the other way around. I've discovered that when we lead with our souls, things fall into place in ways we cannot foresee or control. The right clients come to us, collaborative opportunities arise, and the work feels effortless rather than forced. This path doesn't mean every moment is easy, but it is always rooted in honesty. In a world overflowing with polished images and flashy programs, authenticity shines brightly.

Your Story is Sacred

A significant turning point in my journey was learning to embrace my entire story. I had always carried the grief of losing a sibling at 21, my lifelong sensitivity, and my experience with neurodivergence (ADHD) along with my cancer journey. For too long, I felt these aspects needed to be hidden to gain respect. Now, I recognize they are the threads that weave meaning into my work. Your story is not a weakness; it is a sacred curriculum. What you've experienced becomes the medicine you can offer to others. When I started sharing every facet of who I am, my clients began to connect with me on a deeper level. They saw reflections of their own journeys in my experiences, and in that connection, they found hope.

Co-Creating with Your Higher Self

Building a soul-led business has enriched my relationship with my higher self. Each time I choose intuition over fear, I strengthen that bond. Trusting my inner voice rather than succumbing to societal expectations has brought me more in alignment with my true self. I now treat my business as a living entity, one that I co-create with. I remain mindful when something feels off, honouring the natural cycles of growth and rest. I celebrate not just the successes but also the integrity behind my actions. This journey is not about proving anything to the external world; it's about becoming more of who I genuinely am and trusting that this authenticity is enough.

The Path Ahead: Community, Collaboration, Connection

As my work continues to evolve, I feel a strong pull toward community-oriented spaces—circles, gatherings, and collective healing experiences that affirm we're not alone in our awakenings. I believe deeply in the power of shared energy and want to create welcoming environments where individuals can come as they are and feel safe to blossom. That's the future I aim to build—not only for myself but for others. Soul-led entrepreneurship transcends individual aspirations; it's about creating ripples of impact when we live aligned with our true selves.

The Invitation

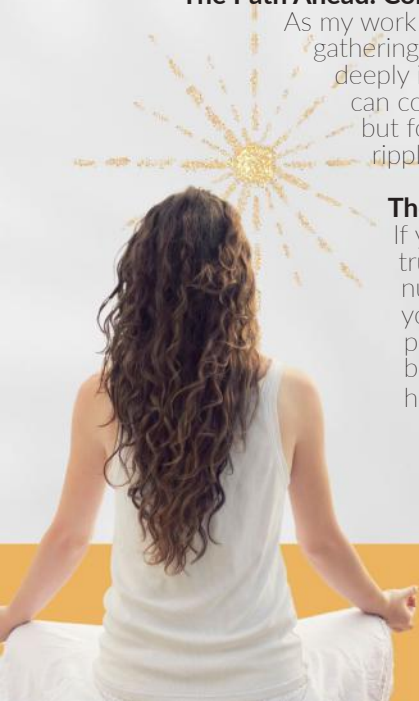
If you're sensing the call to embrace your unique path—to lead with intuition, honour your own truth, and step out of the comfort of the familiar—consider this your invitation. It's a gentle nudge to reflect on what alignment might look like for you. Remember, your path is distinctly yours. I'm here to share what has been true for me, not to dictate your journey. You possess the power to choose, shift, or remain exactly where you are. That's the beauty of soul-led work: it celebrates your autonomy and encourages you to honour your journey.

By Lisa Andrews

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BRAVE LIVING THE COURAGE TO REST

Modern society celebrates hustling and pushing through. But what if the bravest act is to simply stop? Before you say “I can’t. There’s too much to do. I’ll fall behind,” let’s take a closer look. Why is rest so hard?

Why Rest Feels So Hard

When I suggested you “stop,” maybe you felt a bit of guilt, tightness in your chest, or a need to justify not stopping. That reaction reveals the messages you absorbed growing up that equated busyness with worth. Maybe your parents never rested until everything was done (and it never was). Perhaps you only received praise when you were helpful, productive, or achieving. Slowing down may feel unnatural, unsafe even. You might label yourself lazy or selfish, repeating past judgments. And society reinforces this. High performers get promotions and raises. Productivity is “good.” Rest is a luxury to be earned—“Did you hear Jane’s going to Fiji? Yeah, she worked hard—good for her.”

No wonder stopping feels hard—ingrained beliefs and nervous system patterns make rest feel threatening. At its core is the fear of how we’ll be perceived, the fear of failure, and the fear of what we might feel if we stop.



By jen Legaspi

The Nervous System and the Fear of Rest

Our nervous system’s job is to manage stress and protect us. Fight-or-flight is our ‘go’ response, helping us handle perceived threats. In a healthy system, once the threat passes, the ‘stop’ response kicks in, restoring balance. But when we’re in chronic fight-or-flight, the nervous system stays on ‘go.’ This heightened state becomes our norm without us realizing it. In today’s fast-paced, always-connected world, true rest can feel unsafe. Even when we try, our system remains ready for action.

When fight-or-flight persists, the body may shift into freeze—a mix of ‘go’ and ‘stop,’ where exhaustion, burnout, or shutdown take over. It looks like rest, but it’s a survival response to coping with overwhelm. Until the nervous system feels safe, we remain in survival mode, unable to recharge.

Learning how to regulate your nervous system is the way through so that rest feels safe and nourishing.

3 Ways to Regulate Your Nervous System

Shifting out of survival mode requires true regulation, not just temporary relief from coping habits like drinking, doom scrolling, or excessive TV. Here are three practical tools to help your body move from fight-or-flight into real rest.

1 Orienting to Your Environment

When your nervous system is on high alert, one of the fastest ways to signal safety is by orienting to your environment through your senses. Simply take note of colors, shapes, textures, and light in the room. Tune into sounds. Feel the support of the chair beneath you. This gentle practice signals to your system that you are not in danger.

2

Rhythmic Movement

If your body struggles to slow down, rhythmic movement is a great way to discharge excess energy—experiment with swaying, rocking, or repetitive motions like walking. Shaking out tension from your body and heel drops (coming up on the balls of your feet and gently dropping heels to the floor) can also move energy to support relaxation.

3

Extended Exhales Breathwork

Longer exhales activate the parasympathetic nervous system (your body’s natural ‘stop’ response). Try inhaling through your nose for a count of four, then exhaling through your mouth for a count of six or more for at least three rounds. This sends a signal to your body that it’s okay to slow down and rest.

Bravery Isn’t Just About Action

One of the bravest things we can do is make a choice that counters our automatic reactions. The courage to rest is about experimenting with making that choice and noticing which of your beliefs surface to be challenged. I invite you to get curious. Just for today, allow yourself to pause—without guilt or justification—just to see how it feels.

By Jennifer Legaspi

Transformational Coach, Author, Brave Wise Woman

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Moving Beyond Mindset With Ancient Universal Principles

**"At The Center Of Your Being,
You Have The Answer; You Know
Who You Are, And You Know
What You Want" Lao Tzu**

To "know thyself" and "have it all", to live a life of joy and inner fulfillment with a legacy of impact and wealth, is as much a part of the human quest for personal power today, as it was in ancient times.

As a driven high performer, you feel the yearning to create, succeed, achieve your goals and reach your highest potential—to know the depths of who you are and what you want and to find your unique answers. This yearning is your commitment to your self-mastery. As humanity undergoes one of its greatest paradigm shifts, the possibility of living a limitless life full of energy, time, health, and wealth has arrived.

Welcome to my 12th column exploring moving beyond mindset with ancient universal principles. The 12 Ancient Universal Principles of my High Performance Wellness Coaching will help you return to the center of your being: the place of your greatest power, the infinite wellspring of your abundance and success.

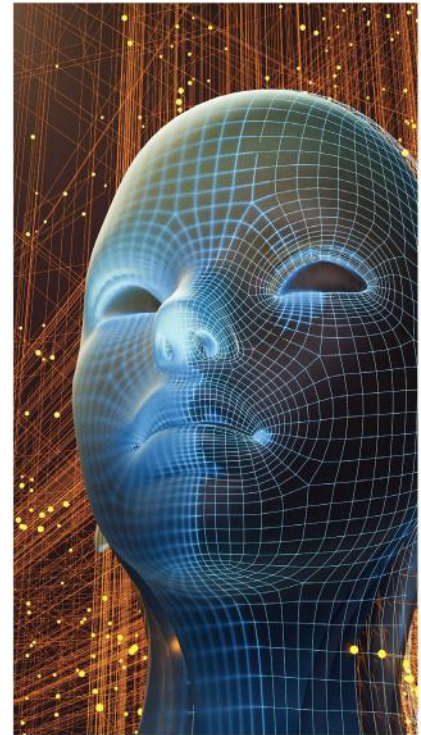
Sacred Intelligence vs. Artificial Intelligence

Change is upon us. Adaptability, resilience, accountability and vision are needed to stay Centered, Connected and Conscious™ in uncertain times. Humans evolved, mastering change. We created tools and resources to help us live in diverse climates under harsh conditions. Our next evolutionary growth is creating tools and resources to utilize rapidly expanding intellectual paradigms within evolving states of consciousness. Artificial Intelligence is here. Like any tool, humanity will decide how to use AI. With conscious leadership, AI will be used for the betterment of all.

As a human, you possess your own AI, Advanced Intelligence. In human AI, mindset tools and resources can be helpful in navigating uncertain terrain. But as a human, you are a spiritual being with a soul created from a divine plan that is beyond the mindset of mortal comprehension. You are part of the Oneness, the infinite ocean of existence. You exist beyond your mind. You are connected with universal wisdom, your Sacred Intelligence. Your Sacred Intelligence (SI) is your higher power that is part of your intuition, instinct and inner knowing. SI is you consciously co-creating with the divine in moments of stillness, silence, self-acceptance and empowerment.

Moving beyond mindset into your Sacred Intelligence releases fear and cultivates confidence that you are the "captain of your ship" and that nothing can take over your life without your free will. My 12 Ancient Universal Principles will help you align with your Sacred Intelligence in the midst of uncertain times. Ancient universal principle #8, "There Is Nothing Identical", reminds you that you are unique and that no machine, even AI, can ever replicate the divine brilliance and power of your essence, of who you truly are.

The rise and integration of computer-generated AI is an opportunity for humans to access the ancient wisdom that exists within. It is those who feel the inner connection and confidence in their wisdom who will step into their power and become conscious leaders of their lives. They will guide their communities and lead



their businesses and nations as the conscious leaders of the world. The ancient science of yin and yang always creates balance, ensuring that when one thing is lost, something else is gained. Universal abundance is maintained. Knowledge can easily be acquired through Artificial Intelligence. Now that knowledge is cheap, wisdom is priceless. Wisdom is the new superpower of high achievers.

It is through your Sacred Intelligence that you will access your inner wisdom, enabling you to achieve your goals with greater efficiency, productivity, meaning, and purpose.

"The Wise Man Doesn't Give The Right Answer, He Poses The Right Questions", Claude Levi-Strauss

As we evolve with the Advanced Intelligence of humans and the Artificial Intelligence of machines, sound decision-making will come from your ancient wisdom, your connection to universal wisdom.

To create new pathways for an evolving paradigm, innovative approaches to making decisions are required, where knowledge is only part of the equation. The final decisions come from the center of your being, from the wisdom of your Sacred Intelligence.

Here are the highlights of my Conscious Decision-Making Exercise. My 12 Ancient Universal Principles are your roadmap and trusted guide to support you in making the highest and best decisions. This benevolent decision-making is a pillar of conscious leadership and success. It involves asking three fundamental questions in combination with my 12 Ancient Universal Principles.

Conscious Decision-Making Exercise:

Step One: Write down your question or the decision you wish to make. Breathe. Look away from the words and start to feel the energy flowing from the crown of your head through your body. Experience this flow of energy until you feel centered.

Step Two: Intuitively choose one of the 12 Ancient Universal Principles. Reflect on it. Write it beside the decision you wish to make.

12 Ancient Universal Principles

1. *Everything is Energy*
2. *Energy Never Lies. You Can't Fool Mother Nature*
3. *For Every Problem, There Is A Solution*
4. *Everything That Happens To You Is What You Lack. All That Is Antagonistic, Unbearable, Is Complementary*
5. *Everything That Has A Front Has A Back. The Bigger The Front, The Bigger The Back.*
6. *Everything That Has A Beginning Has An End.*
7. *Everything Changes (aka change is the Constant of The Universe)*
8. *There Is Nothing Identical*
9. *Divine Alignment, Is Divine Timing*
10. *You Are Only As Strong As Your Weakest Link*
11. *Yin and Yang Are Greater Than Willpower*
12. *The Capacity Principle: Know Your Limit, Live Within It™*

Step Three: When looking at both your decision and your Ancient Principle side-by-side, what first thought or insight arises about your decision? Write down your insight. No one is watching or judging. Express your insights freely and without overthinking or analyzing.

Step Four: Ask yourself these three questions:

- A)** Will I regret or always wonder "what if" if I turn down an opportunity or make a decision based only on my knowledge or intellect?
- B)** Is there a pull in my heart and gut to at least try, even if it's a lot of work with a small chance of the desired outcome? In this question, remove logic and intellect from the decision-making process.
- C)** Can I live with and manage the functional reality "of a worst-case scenario" as a possible outcome, even if I set my highest intentions for my "best-case scenario"?

Step Five: Review your answers to the questions in Steps 3, 4.

Step Six: Intuitively choose another one of the 12 Ancient Universal Principles. Write it beside the answers in Step Five. Breathe. Reflect.

Step Seven: Now that you have accessed your Sacred Intelligence and ancient wisdom, along with knowledge and intellect, breathe and pause. Make a decision. If you feel excited but nervous, that is OK and healthy.





If you feel defeated, depressed or frustrated, reflect, examine possible reasons why and repeat the exercise. The goal is to create a Centered, Connected, Conscious™ state from which you feel aligned, focused, empowered and committed to your decision.

By making decisions from the center of your being, that place of higher consciousness and deeper connection with your soul, you:

- *create new pathways with new potential for success*
- *embrace the flow of universal energy that always supports you*
- *receive new opportunities that you could never have imagined*
- *live a life of no regrets, with inner peace, joy and deep fulfillment*
- *cultivate the confidence that your inner navigation system will always guide you; you live with an eagerness to learn, grow and evolve in any circumstance*

“Everything That We Share With The World Is An Expression Of Who We Are Inside”, Lidia Kuleshnyk, aka Lady Apona

In the quest to “know thyself” and “have it all”, many high performers continue to first apply their drive, passions and talents to create external accolades, in the hope that they will achieve their greatest accomplishment, their inner feeling of fulfillment, joy and security. External success is not mutually exclusive from internal success. But for external accomplishments to contribute to internal fulfillment, they must originate from deep within the center of your being, your greatest, deepest connection to, and inner knowing of, who you are and why you are here.

You have a divine right to evolve with self-mastery and live from your greatest power. It is your birthright. The gateways of universal abundance are open.

Expanding consciousness, “knowing thyself” and accessing your Sacred Intelligence, are part of the new paradigm of high performance wellness, in which inner well-being is a critical element of fulfillment and success.

The time is now to master your inner power. In Shakespeare’s famous words, “This above all: to thine own self be true”. This mantra will help you embody your journey of self-mastery.

When you truly know yourself, you are liberated from the attachments of ego and control. You live in flow and achieve unprecedented heights of internal and external success. You reclaim your sovereignty and become the conscious leader of your life and the world. Join me for my next column, where I will continue to explore Moving Beyond Mindset With Ancient Universal Principles.

Lidia Kuleshnyk is a High Performance Wellness Coach, 4 X Best Selling Author and Founder of AponaHealing.com. As a Renaissance Woman and Thought Leader, Lidia offers pathways, for every stage of personal development, to help you reclaim your sovereignty and live a Centered, Connected, Conscious™ Life.

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Radical leadership now

Why Spiritual Leadership is the only way



Leadership is in crisis. It's not just recent – and not just in companies. Those in positions of responsibility today are faced with five key challenges that determine whether leadership succeeds or fails:

Numbers vs People: Leaders are caught between pressure from above and the needs of their teams. Strong leadership creates both results AND true connection.

Decisions despite uncertainty: Those who always wait for complete facts are not leading – they are delaying. What's needed is an inner attitude that supports them, even when nothing seems certain on the outside.

Growing expectations: Leaders should inspire, provide security, and shape change – while remaining confident. The solution lies not in perfectionism but in conscious clarity.

New structures, new rules: Hierarchies are dissolving, and control is losing power. Effective leaders remain those who lead from inner stability – not from position.

Technological upheaval: AI and digitalization are rapidly transforming the world of work. Expertise is not enough. It requires presence, genuine communication, and strong guidance.

Old patterns, empty phrases, and half-hearted changes will not get us anywhere in the face of these complex challenges. Those who want to shape the future must be radical. Radical in clarity, radical in connection, radical in consistency.

Spiritual leadership offers this kind of radicality because spirituality here doesn't mean avoiding conflict or beating around the bush. And certainly not lighting incense sticks or reciting mantras. It means not softly drifting through everyday business life but doing the right thing with maximum consistency – even if it's uncomfortable. It's about knowing unshakably who I am, what I want, and what I stand for. Radicality doesn't mean loudness. It means freeing myself from fears or societal expectations. It's an uncompromising living of my own truth – so powerful that it has an outward impact.

Connection – the core of spirituality – is the key: What defines me? What are my most important needs? What emotions do I want to experience? And much more.

Leadership is always self-leadership. This also applies to motivation. Being clear about what I want leads to purposeful action – again and again. People see that I don't just preach but also act according to my convictions. This congruence creates trust. People tend to follow authentic individuals.

But how do I find out what truly drives me? How do I recognize which inner attitude gives me direction – regardless of external circumstances? The first step is to connect with my own deepest motivation. Often, the answers don't lie in strategy papers or management seminars, but much further back: in our childhood. What were my favourite games? What leisure activity did I enjoy? What activity did my parents have to forcefully encourage me to eat or sleep because I couldn't get enough? And so on. The answers to these questions (please write them down!) will provide important insights into what I need to be happy and what motivates me.

We're concerned with the motivation behind the game or the favourite subject at school. What feeling made that activity so irresistible? This is a first step. The next step is to put my needs into practice and actively seek out opportunities to experience these emotions again. And by consciously implementing them, I automatically become a trailblazer, a charismatic manager, or an inspiring project leader.

People begin to listen and open up to new ideas. When are people most attractive and interesting to us? It's when they're completely absorbed in what they're doing. When they enthusiastically tell us about a hobby or experience. That draws us in. Why shouldn't the same be possible when it comes to a new project for your team? When you speak enthusiastically about possibilities, your deep conviction about the positive effects of change is evident.

And that's precisely what spiritual leadership is about. It's the only leadership approach that endures in a world characterized by crises, change, and uncertainty. Because it's not based on external control mechanisms but on an inner attitude. Someone who is radically connected—with themselves, with others, with a true vision—no longer needs power games, no superficial motivational platitudes, and doesn't burn out, even in times of change. So, what's your next step toward radical self-leadership?

By Andrea Huber



HOROSCOPE FOR SUMMER 2025

Summer 2025 was always going to be one to watch from an Astrological point of view. It's the completion of what I like to call "The big, slow shift". What do I mean by that? To find out, we must go all the way back to November 2024, when Pluto, the planet of endings, new beginnings and rebirth, took up residence in the fixed air sign of Aquarius, where he will stay for around the next 18 years or so.

Since then, both Neptune and Saturn have moved into the dynamic fire sign of Aries, which took place in March and May, respectively. The planet of luck and abundance, Jupiter, moved into his favourite sign of Cancer in June, and finally, Uranus moved from Taurus to Gemini in July. Whilst this won't be a permanent move for Uranus as he will Retrograde back into Taurus for a short time in November until April 2026, wrapping up a transit which began in May 2018.

The reason this is such a significant period in our history is due to the rarity of all the outer planets changing signs in the same year, not only changing signs but moving from Water and Earth signs into Fire and Air signs. We have been used to a more passive and emotional energy in recent times. However, we are now facing a time where the overarching energy is far more reactive and dynamic, dare I even say, more unpredictable.

2025 is, in many respects, a year of transition, endings and rebirth. Entering into this brave new world that is unfolding before us. Now, I know you are wondering what this means for you and those around you. Read on, and all will be unveiled.

Aries

You're used to being at the forefront of the action, Aries. This summer, you are coming to terms with the changes that have taken place. Yes, it may feel like a fog; this is the Neptune effect, and it's an energy you must learn to adapt to. The hard lessons will continue as Saturn asks you to work harder on yourself and how you approach life. As Uranus moves into Gemini, this may cause you to develop some radical new thinking in terms of how you communicate with those near and dear to you: exciting times ahead, my friend.

Cancer

It's a funny old summer for you, Cancer. On the one hand, the lucky planet of Jupiter is visiting for a year and is bringing joy and expansion. However, it's dulled slightly with Saturn in Aries, causing all sorts of challenges in your career and, perhaps, even how the world sees you. Fear not, as Saturn rewards just as much as he challenges. With this combination, you could end up with that promotion or a big deal that nobody, not even you, expected to land! Trust your intuition; it will not lead you astray.

Taurus

If you are reading this in hopes that all the upheaval, sudden changes, and what has felt like utter chaos in the parts of your life you love the most might be coming to an end, then I have good news for you, Taurus. Mark your calendar because, as of July, Uranus has moved from your sign. Now, it's not forever, but until November, you will have some sense of your new reality. No other sign has been tasked with changing so much. You have been shaken to your very core, and for many, you are a completely different person, and it is glorious to witness! What a glow-up!

Leo

As your birthday approaches or perhaps just gone, Leo, there is a quiet optimism in the air that the past few years have provided you with an extra level of strength and wisdom. Yes, hard-fought battles have ensued, and at times, you wondered if it would ever end. This wisdom you now have needs to be shared with the world. Don't go too bold too soon, as it is in your nature; start with those around you at a family and community level, and watch as the word spreads. Oh, what fun you shall have!

Gemini

Have you been sensing change is afoot? Then you would be right! Uranus comes storming into your sign in July, where he will stay until November; this will give you a taste of what the next 7-8 years will feel like. You are on the precipice of unexpected and surprising changes that could see you waking up one day and deciding to completely change your career, your physical appearance and your approach to life, out with the people pleasing. It's ALL about you now.

Virgo

There is a feeling of inevitability with you this summer, Virgo; your thoughts may even surprise you, with some of you deciding to relocate once you complete a deep dive into your finances and assets. Your friend group is coming under the spotlight with some potential of meeting new people on some surprise trip. Yes, I did say surprise and trip in the same sentence; do try not to freak yourself out. Relax and enjoy a well-earned break. There will be plenty to work on in that new house once you return.



By Marion Kirk
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Libra

Have you been feeling like those closest to you are all of a sudden speaking a different language from you, Libra? It's not just you, the planet of dreams and illusions; Neptune is slowly making its way through that part of your chart. This leads to a bit of turmoil when faced with the negotiation of any contracts this summer, be it business or personal. However, rest assured that with expansion being prominent, your time to shine is on the horizon. Showing your humility will win you the favour of those watching your rise to glory.

Scorpio

Hello, dark and dangerous. How is that Summer fitness programme working out for you? Think outside of the box with this one; the usual approach isn't going to cut it this time. Expanding your mind by learning something new could be just what you have been searching for, perhaps a leisure class on some extinct civilisation, which leads to a trip for further investigation. Uranus moves away from directly opposing your day-to-day relationships and into the areas of intimacy and shared finances. How well do you know your bank account, Scorpio? It may be time to get up close and personal with it.

Sagittarius

Could this be the summer that you will look back on and say, "Yes, that's where it all began"? There is a distinct feeling of dreams coming true, finally, for you, Sagittarius. There have been epic battles where victory wasn't always guaranteed. However, with this "cosmic" change in fortunes, your rewards are on the way. There are some surprise offers that could literally alter the direction your life has been heading until this point. As the adventure-loving soul of the zodiac, you are not in the least afraid; you are, in fact, filled with a sense of optimism that has been lost for so long. Trust and believe.

Capricorn

Your planetary ruler, Saturn, has taken up residence in the area of your chart connected to family, self-care and foundations. This summer sees you exploring who you really are within your family and the role you play in it. Putting yourself first, whilst it may not come naturally to you, is essential for the next part of your cosmic development. Uranus is going to shake things up around your health and wellbeing, so be prepared to dust off those running shoes. There is nobody more surprised than you by this sudden desire to organise your physical and mental health.

Aquarius

This summer, it is time for you to get out and about Aquarius! Reconnect with your creativity. Things have felt very heavy since November, with Pluto taking up residency in the areas of self, attitude, and identity. Is it time you show the world another version of who you are? If anyone is a chameleon, it's you. Be the trendsetter and boldly take us into the new era. We will follow your lead. Trust in your vision. Your feeling at home in your emotions over this time, not exactly your comfort zone, but I suggest using this rare window of opportunity to follow your heart.

Pisces

There is a tug-of-war going on this summer, Pisces. You want to spend and buy all the pretty things, but with Saturn in your money and finances zone, it's proving to be quite the headache to make the books balance. You can keep your head in the clouds, or you can be brave and face the music. I promise it won't be as bad as you think. There is a big shake-up happening with your family dynamics. Pay attention to those subtle changes in energy that you are so good at picking up on, and you will be okay.



Mindful Sex

Deepening Intimacy and Connection

In today's fast-paced world, intimate moments often become routine or rushed. The focus may shift from genuine connection to merely achieving physical goals, leaving emotional and relational depth behind. Enter mindful sex—a transformative approach that invites partners to be present, engaged, and deeply connected. Rooted in mindfulness principles, which emphasize full awareness of the present moment without judgment, mindful sex enhances both physical and emotional intimacy, fostering trust, connection, and deeper pleasure.

At its core, mindful sex is about being fully present during sexual experiences. Unlike the typical rush to reach orgasm or fulfil expectations, it encourages partners to slow down, appreciate bodily sensations, and cultivate emotional intimacy. This approach fosters a richer, more meaningful experience, deepening the bond between partners. Mindfulness involves staying focused on the present moment and removing distractions, mental or external. In the context of sex, it means letting go of performance anxiety and refraining from fixation on appearance. Instead, couples tune into the sensations, emotions, and energy shared between them.

Benefits of Mindful Sex

Incorporating mindfulness into sexual experiences offers numerous benefits for both individuals and relationships:



Tips for Practicing Mindful Sex

Slow Down and Breathe: Mindful sex involves slowing down and focusing on sensations in each moment. Deep, synchronized breathing can cultivate mindfulness, as it calms the nervous system and brings both partners into the present. Synchronizing breaths with your partner deepens the connection.

Focus on the Senses: During sex, tune into your senses. Pay attention to your partner's skin, the sound of their breath, the taste of their kiss, and the scents in the environment. Focusing on these details heightens the experience, making it more immersive and fulfilling.

Communicate Openly: Mindful sex encourages an open dialogue about what feels pleasurable and what needs exploration. By being open to feedback and expressing your needs, you create an atmosphere of safety and respect, helping both partners stay attuned to each other's emotions and physical states.

Let Go of Expectations: Release preconceived notions about how sex "should" unfold. Mindful sex embraces the experience itself rather than focusing on specific outcomes. Shifting your attention from goals like orgasm to the journey can lead to greater satisfaction and connection.

Enhanced Emotional Connection: Mindful sex fosters open communication and vulnerability, allowing partners to be emotionally present with one another. This deepened intimacy leads to stronger relational bonds and trust, as partners feel seen, heard, and valued.

Increased Sensory Awareness: Practicing mindful sex heightens focus on bodily sensations and the tactile, auditory, and visual aspects of intimacy. This enhanced awareness amplifies pleasure and creates more satisfying sexual encounters.

Reduced Stress and Anxiety: By embracing the present and letting go of distractions, mindful sex significantly reduces stress and anxiety. This relaxed state encourages a calm and enjoyable sexual experience, free from the pressure of performance.

Better Sexual Satisfaction: Without the drive to reach a specific goal like orgasm, individuals can appreciate the journey of sex itself. This often leads to more fulfilling encounters as the focus shifts to a holistic, connected experience.

Improved Communication: Mindful sex fosters open dialogue about needs, desires, and boundaries. Greater mutual respect develops through ongoing communication, enhancing intimacy over time.

Create a Relaxing Environment: The setting in which you engage in sex is crucial for fostering mindfulness. Establish a comfortable atmosphere where both partners feel at ease. Soft lighting, calming music, or aromatherapy can help create an intimate and relaxing space.

Practice Tantric Techniques: Tantra, which emphasizes sacred sexuality, incorporates several mindfulness techniques. Eye gazing, synchronized breathing, and gentle touch can heighten emotional and energetic connections. These practices enable both partners to feel grounded, centred, and emotionally in tune with one another.

Activities to Enhance Mindful Sex. To further engage in mindful sex, consider activities that promote intimacy and presence. These can include shared meditation sessions, establishing rituals that prepare you for intimacy, or exploring new forms of touch that elevate sensory experiences. Engaging in activities together outside the bedroom can also enhance connection and emotional closeness, setting the stage for a richer sexual experience.

In conclusion, adopting a mindful approach to sex can transform intimacy, fostering deeper connections and enriching experiences. By embracing presence, communication, and a focus on mutual pleasure, partners can deepen their relationships and enjoy a fulfilling sexual journey together.

By Lorraine Crookes

The Power of the Little Things

Unlocking Joy and Connection

Sometimes, it really is about the little things—the moments that make our hearts sing, the simple joys that add richness to our lives. Yet, in a world that seems to be moving faster than ever, everything can feel complicated. Or maybe that's just me?

It seems as if we've outsmarted ourselves. We're so caught up in progress, technology, and innovation that we've forgotten one of the most vital aspects of being human—our relationships. We've become highly technical, yet somehow, we've lost touch. We text instead of talk. We scroll instead of connecting. We interact through screens rather than sharing moments in person. But at what cost?

We often underestimate how much relationships nourish us—how much a simple conversation, a kind word, or an unexpected gesture can brighten someone's day. These connections aren't just nice to have; they're essential.

Yet, in this digital age, it's too easy to get lost in a never-ending trail of emails, messages, and notifications. Real conversations become rare. The art of picking up the phone and talking seems almost forgotten. And face-to-face meetups? They require planning, effort—sometimes even courage.

But here's the truth: human connection is what keeps us alive, thriving, and fulfilled. In a world obsessed with productivity and hustle, we need to remind ourselves to slow down and embrace the small, beautiful moments that make life truly meaningful.



What are these little things? They're the simple acts that ground us, centre us, and bring us joy.

- *Sitting outside and soaking up the fresh air*
- *Taking a few deep breaths to reset*
- *Meditating, even for just five minutes*
- *Reflecting on what truly matters*
- *Savouring a cup of tea or coffee without rushing*
- *Listening—really listening—to a friend without distractions*
- *Laughing every day*
- *Walking in nature, feeling the earth beneath your feet*
- *Being kind to a stranger*

These moments may seem small, but they hold incredible power. They remind us that life isn't just about doing more, achieving more, or chasing the next big thing.

Why Slowing Down is a Superpower

In today's fast-paced world, slowing down can feel counterintuitive—especially if you're an action-taker, someone who thrives on momentum. But here's the thing: if we don't create space for ourselves, we risk burning out and missing out.

Busyness can be a trap. It convinces us that we're making progress when we might just be spinning our wheels. Taking time to pause allows us to realign with what truly matters. Think about the last time you felt overwhelmed. Was it because you had too much on your plate? Did everything feel like too much? That's a sign to step back and create intentional moments of stillness.

We often tell ourselves we'll call that friend later. We'll visit family when things settle down. We'll plan a coffee

date someday. But why wait? If you have people in your life who matter, nurture those relationships. Pick up the phone. Send a voice message. Make an effort.

Life is busy, but the connection is worth prioritizing. It's not about grand gestures—it's about the little things. A check-in. A shared laugh. A moment of presence.

Here's a list of small, meaningful actions that can make a big impact:

Call a friend just to say hello
Laugh every day—it's medicine for the soul
Step outside and breathe in the fresh air
Visit a botanical garden or park just to be present
Take time to be still and reflect
Listen more—without interrupting or waiting for your turn to speak
Practice kindness
Show gratitude—say "thank you" and mean it
Set aside one day a week to unplug from social media
Make time for deep, meaningful conversations
Learn something new from someone close to you

Stop Being 'Busy Being Busy'

At the end of the day, life isn't measured by how much we accomplish but by how deeply we live. The best memories aren't always in the big achievements but in the simple, everyday moments—the laughter, the kindness, the unexpected joys.

So, take a step back. Breathe. Make the little things count.



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A Summer of Soul...An Invitation to Meditate, Align & Shine

As the gentle awakening of spring flows radiantly into summer, the energy around us quietly shifts. The sense of potential that flows through the spring season is now ready to bloom in full. We are invited to mirror this sacred transition as we move into this new season of light, growth and becoming.

This article explores the peaceful opportunities that arise when we allow ourselves to slow down and tune in. Allow me to guide you through a summer-themed journaling exercise to align your life with your deepest values, introduce crystals that will amplify the light of this season and offer chakra-focused affirmations to awaken your inner radiance. Let this be your seasonal companion to stepping into summer with intention and clarity, radiating the unique light of your soul more freely and fully than ever before.

Summer naturally creates a sense of potential and possibility. In these moments of reflection, we can experience a deep sense of gratitude and appreciation whilst beginning to look forward with hope and a deeper awareness of our soul's potential and purpose.

We are soul beings. Each one of us is a unique droplet in the ocean, which is the universe. Our souls are individual expressions of light, beautifully connected to everything, everywhere. Summer provides us with the perfect opportunity to renew this inner light, recharge, glow, and shine a little brighter.

The energy of summer radiates with a sense of openness and freedom. The sun shines generously, spilling into our evenings and gifting us with longer golden hours. Nature and energy are in abundance; trees are filled with lush green leaves, flowers rise and bloom, and the earth beneath our feet feels warm and alive.

The longer, warmer and more relaxed days of summer often allow us to slow down, easing naturally into a gentler pace and a more rested state. For many, it is a season of travel and adventure, a change of scenery and a switching off from the stresses and worries of everyday life.

As overwhelming emotions begin to melt away, it is at this divine point of stillness that healing and alignment of the mind, body and soul can truly begin. The process of renewing, restoring and creating perfect balance and flow can be wonderfully accelerated during this season. Creating within us a greater sense of peace, clarity and a renewed momentum to move forward in our lives.

Meditation can be gentle, natural and intuitive during this season. A more carefree, simpler approach can be embraced, relaxing on some freshly cut grass, floating in the sea, allowing your body to be held or simply sitting on the roots of a beautiful old tree. Breathe and pause. Anchor into stillness, inviting the summer sunlight to ignite the light within. Allow its warmth to relax your body, quieten your mind and expand your heart.

Spend time this summer doing the things that make you glow with happiness. What brings a smile to your face and fills your heart with love? When we do the things that bring us joy, we strengthen our connection to our authentic soul self, and as a result, our light naturally shines brighter.

The sunlight and the ocean carry pure healing frequencies, direct from the source. They are powerful, pure, and nourishing on every level. Gift yourself with time this summer to bask and breathe in these precious natural resources.

So, I gently encourage you to tap into the wonderful natural warmth and energy of the summer months. There is more than enough room for us all to expand and step into our light...we are here to shine brightly and grow together.

Soul Notes: Awaken your inner radiance with this summer journaling exercise.



Summer Showers and Rainbow Power

Creating an Umbrella Statement for your life...There is deep power in words and thoughts. Written words hold intention, frequency and focussed direction. Weave together this beautiful symbolism and create an Umbrella Statement for your life.

A reflection of your deepest values and desires, focussing on emotions and motivations. Allow your statement to arc like a rainbow over the page, providing divine reassurance that whatever the weather, you are being guided and supported by the universe.

Meditate on the energy held within these words. Embody their power and intention, as their energy ripples through your being.

Inspiration: I live a life of gratitude, service, growth and kindness. I inspire, teach, heal and guide. I am continually grateful for all that I have and all that is to come. I choose to let go of fear, embracing the infinite possibilities that lie before me. I embrace change as an opportunity for growth and welcome new beginnings into my life. I am grateful for every blessing in my life and the abundance that flows to me. I consciously choose thoughts and behaviours that create value, peace and love.



Sunlight & Stone: Crystals for Soulful Summer Living

From a spiritual and energetic perspective, crystals are physical manifestations of vibration, each with their own unique wisdom, frequency and qualities. During the summer months, when the pulse of life surrounds us, the energy naturally feels expansive and alive. Allow these beautiful crystals to amplify your intentions as you meditate and reflect. Responding to focussed energy and intention, these crystals will magnify and gently hold your purpose in place as you journey within.

Meditate outside while the sun rises or sets, inviting the warmth of the rays to cleanse and recharge your stones. Place crystals on or near your chakras, on the earth beside you or hold in your palm. Your intuition and inner knowing guiding you to what feels right, for you.

Citrine: Happiness, Abundance, Creativity

Citrine is the perfect energetic match for the golden, vibrant rays of summer, bringing growth and vitality to every area of your life. This stone will support you in aligning with your unique inner light; bask in the energy of confidence, enthusiasm and creativity. Citrine attracts abundance, prosperity and success. Dream big and allow your dreams to grow.

Sunstone: Radiance, Strength, Optimism

This deeply life-affirming stone awakens the soul, mirroring the way the sun brings life to the world around us. This crystal will fire up your inner powerhouse, igniting the spark within. Shine brightly and expand your aura this season. Look forward into the future with excitement, confidence and hope.

Aquamarine: Cleansing, Intuition, Communication

The ocean-blue tones of aquamarine resonate with the healing qualities of water; soothing, cleansing and deeply calming. This crystal will bring waves of peace and equilibrium as you navigate through life. The clear fluidity of this stone supports in silencing mental chatter, enabling your inner souls voice and intuitive insights to bubble to the surface. Aquamarine promotes authentic self-expression and communication.



Awaken & Align: Chakras for the Summer Season

As nature blooms all around us, the body's energy centres respond in kind. Imagine your chakras as bright summer flowers, opening gently, fully, following the rhythm of the season. Trust divine light to guide their unfolding and feel radiant, alive and beautifully in tune. As you drop into meditation, invite your inner light to gently awaken your chakras. Feel, as they expand and shine brightly; energy and light flowing freely between them, guiding you to a place of perfect balance and alignment.

The Crown Chakra

The Crown Chakra creates a bridge between the physical self and the higher aspects of consciousness. Visualise this chakra opening as you welcome pure love and light, universal oneness and divine unity.

Affirmation: I am pure, radiant, divine light; supported and guided by the universe. Universal wisdom flows through me and I am aligned with my soul's purpose.

The Solar Plexus Chakra

The Solar Plexus Chakra, our inner sun. Situated in the centre, this chakra is our internal powerhouse. Invite the natural life force of the sun to ignite the flames of your inner furnace; bringing you deep power, confidence and strength, helping you to stride forwards in your life with self-belief and purpose.

Affirmation: I shine with inner strength and glowing confidence. My motivation flows with purpose as I move forward with trust in my soul's path.

The Sacral Chakra

The Sacral Chakra comes alive during the summer months, pulsing with inspiration, creativity and pleasure. The core of emotion, vitality, desire and passion. Revive this chakra and feel your creativity and desire for fun and enjoyment gently stir during these carefree summer months.

Affirmation: Inspiration and creativity flow to me and through me. I flow with the natural warmth of the season, nourishing myself emotionally, spiritually and physically.

By Helen Gullick

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Summer Meditation



THE POWER OF SISTERHOOD AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Building Beyond the Status Quo

by Shardia o'connor



There is something transformative about women coming together—not just to converse or occupy the same space but to uplift one another as they grow side by side. In a society that often emphasises competition and comparison, genuine sisterhood serves as a quiet form of rebellion. It highlights the strength found in unity and reaffirms that our success is hollow if we do not uplift others along the way. Sisterhood transcends mere hashtags or fleeting moments; it represents a mindset rooted in shared values, purpose, and truth.

At its core, it embodies accountability—not just in calling each other out but also in calling each other up, inspiring growth and improvement. This philosophy formed the foundation of Thawadar Boutique, which is built on values and principles rather than following fleeting fashion trends. The brand understands that we are not meant to fit into pre-defined boxes; instead, we are designed to break the mould, embracing our whole selves and leading with clarity and confidence.

Sisterhood With Substance

Many spaces claim to promote “women supporting women,” yet true sisterhood is about more than surface-level compliments and connections. It demands intention, depth, and collaboration. Creating real sisterhood necessitates honest conversations and holding each other accountable to our shared vision, even when it becomes challenging. In authentic sisterhood, there is little room for ego or pretension. It thrives on alignment and honesty.

It's about the ability to say, “Sis, you're slipping, but I've got you,” or “You've outgrown this version of yourself; what's next?” This kind of support comes with standards, combining love with structure to facilitate growth with grace.

Accountability: A Love Language

Accountability is often overlooked, yet it serves as a vital love language. It keeps us aligned, even in the midst of life's chaos. Having women around who are willing to reflect our truths and challenge us to stay committed to our purpose is invaluable. In many spaces, we've grown used to either excessive criticism or passive encouragement.

True accountability strikes a balance; it shows we care enough to speak up and love each other enough to share the truth. This is where genuine growth occurs, as we evolve into the women we are meant to be.

Thawadar Boutique: A Brand with Meaning

Thawadar Boutique was not created to fit into the fashion industry; instead, it was designed to stand out and embody something deeper and more meaningful. Each piece in the collection is carefully crafted with intention. It's not just about clothing—it's about how we carry ourselves and present ourselves in the world. Thawadar celebrates timeless tradition, not as a way to remain stuck in the past but to ground ourselves in unchanging values—integrity, self-respect, power, and grace.

We aren't just selling clothes; we're sharing a narrative about what it means for women to walk in purpose, prioritise substance over superficiality, and take ownership of their growth. This brand was built by women choosing to rise above societal expectations, holding themselves to a higher standard—not in pursuit of perfection, but of purpose.

Leadership With Intention

As a leader, I embody this energy in everything I do. I am not here to fit in but to break cycles, shift mindsets, and create spaces where women can grow unapologetically. My role isn't to have all the answers; it's to hold the door open, share lessons learned, and lead by example.

I believe in the importance of inner work, staying aligned with my values, and embracing my identity, even during uncomfortable times. This is the essence of the leadership I aspire to embody and the energy I wish every woman in our circle carries. This journey is not about superficial success; it is about legacy, impact, and becoming women who not only pursue purpose but also embody it daily.

Redefining What It Means to “Win”

Success should not be measured by status or aesthetics; it lies in alignment, peace, and self-awareness. It is about understanding who you are and what you stand for and refusing to shrink for anyone. We are here not to follow a pre-written script but to craft our own narratives. Everything about Thawadar reflects this mission—to disrupt the norm, redefine luxury, and remind women they were never meant to blend in. This brand, this community, and this movement thrive on leading with intention—without waiting for permission. And we do this together—in sisterhood, truth, and with unyielding standards.



BLOOM INTO YOUR POWER - Harnessing The Magic Of Summer For Inner Growth

As the days grow longer, we find ourselves standing on the threshold of a new season.

Summer is not just a change in weather—it is a sacred invitation—an invitation to awaken, to expand, and to step into our light. The energy of summer is bold, vibrant, and alive. It calls us to rise, to grow, to bloom, and to fully embody the empowered beings we were born to be.

Nature does not hold back in the summer. The flowers burst into colour, the trees stand tall and unapologetically rooted, and the sun shines in all its unapologetic glory. What if we, too, allowed ourselves to shine that brightly?

What if we looked within, connected to our own inner sun, and chose this season to grow—not just outwardly, but deeply, soulfully, powerfully?

The Summer shift: a portal to transformation

Each season brings a lesson, a rhythm, and a spiritual nudge. Winter whispers rest. Spring sings of renewal. But summer? Summer ROARS expansion.

It is the season of action, of clarity, and of stepping into the full expression of who we are. The heat, the light, the vitality—they are not just external phenomena. They mirror the fire within us, the energy that has been quietly simmering, waiting to be unleashed.

Use the warmth of summer to melt away old doubts. Let the sun burn through fear. Let the brightness illuminate what is possible for you.

Step into the arena of your own life with

courage, grace, and a knowing that your time is now. Let the sunlight kiss your soul awake. You are not here to shrink. You are here to shine, rise, and bloom with divine purpose.

Look within to rise beyond

While summer encourages outward activity, it also offers a powerful opportunity to turn inward and realign with ourselves in a world that often seeks external validation. Ask yourself: What do I want to create? Who am I becoming? What no longer fits into the next chapter of my becoming?

Journaling under the morning sun, meditating during the golden hour, or simply pausing to feel gratitude in a sun-soaked moment can open powerful doors within. You are a living, breathing creation—and summer gives you full permission to create yourself anew.

Bloom where you are—and then grow bigger.

Too often, we wait for the “perfect” conditions to act, speak, or evolve. But summer reminds us that growth is not optional—it is essential. Flowers do not wait for permission to bloom; they simply respond to the light. You do not need everything to be perfect to start becoming more of who you truly are. Begin now. Speak your truth. Chase the dream. Make the move. Let go of what you have outgrown. Just like the sunflower turns to face the sun, turn your face toward possibility. Trust the season. Trust yourself.

The empowered path forward

This summer, commit to your empowerment as a non-negotiable. Let it be the season where you claim your voice, your power, and your dreams with unshakable certainty. Whether that means launching a project, embracing deeper self-love, setting new boundaries, or simply saying yes to joy—you are worthy of it all.

Remember, empowerment is not about force; it is about alignment. It is about knowing that the same energy that fuels the universe also flows through you. You are not separate from the miracles of the world. You are one. Summer is your mirror. Look into it and see the fierce, luminous, radiant being you are becoming.

An invitation from the Season of Light

Let this summer be your turning point. Let it be the moment when you stop dimming and start blazing. Where you let go of the roles, the masks, the fears—and come home to your wild, beautiful truth.

You are the light. You are the heat. You are the blooming. You are the becoming.

And if you ever doubt, just step outside. Feel the sun on your skin. Hear the song of life around you. And remember:

You are not here to merely survive the seasons. You are here to embody them. You are here to rise with the sun, dance with the breeze, and bloom in the fire of your own becoming.

Shine on, beautiful soul. This is your summer. This is your time.

www.nbhypnotherapy-mindcoaching.com



The Science of Spirituality

Where Ancient Wisdom and Modern Neuroscience Finally Meet

Have you ever closed your eyes during meditation and felt something shift inside you—a sudden clarity, a deep exhale, or a warm glow rising from within? In that quiet moment, it might have felt like magic. But what if I told you that moment was not only sacred but also scientific? We live in a world where the soul is stirring awake.

Where more people are seeking meaning, inner peace, and intuitive guidance. Yet, for many, there's a longing for validation—a bridge between the ancient whispers of the soul and the measurable truths of science.

The science of spirituality is no longer confined to mystical texts or monastic retreats. It's now being mapped by brain scans, peer-reviewed journals, and groundbreaking discoveries in neuroscience. Let's explore how ancient soul wisdom and modern science converge—and how this powerful fusion can unlock your deepest healing and transformation.

Ancient Practices: The Soul's Old Language

For thousands of years, humanity has turned to practices like meditation, breathwork, chanting, energy healing, sacred movement, visualization, and ritual to access altered states of consciousness. These tools were not just cultural traditions—they were technologies of the soul. Ancient Egypt spoke of the Ka and the Ba—soul aspects in constant dialogue.

Chinese medicine mapped energetic meridians—pathways of Qi (life force energy)—that remarkably correspond with today's understanding of the body's bioelectrical and electromagnetic systems. Indigenous shamans worked with the land, the stars, and the unseen to facilitate healing, a process that modern language is only beginning to describe.

These practices created coherence between the body, mind, and spirit. Chanting tuned vibrational frequency. Breathwork regulated the life force. Ritual anchored presence into embodiment. And they still work.

Neuroscience Meets the Soul

Today, MRI scans and EEG machines are revealing what the ancients already knew: spiritual practices change the brain.

Neuroscientific research indicates that consistent meditation enhances grey matter in the prefrontal cortex—the region responsible for self-awareness, compassion, and decision-making. A landmark study by Dr. Sara Lazar at Harvard University demonstrated that meditation leads to measurable changes in brain structure, including increased cortical thickness in areas related to attention and emotional integration.

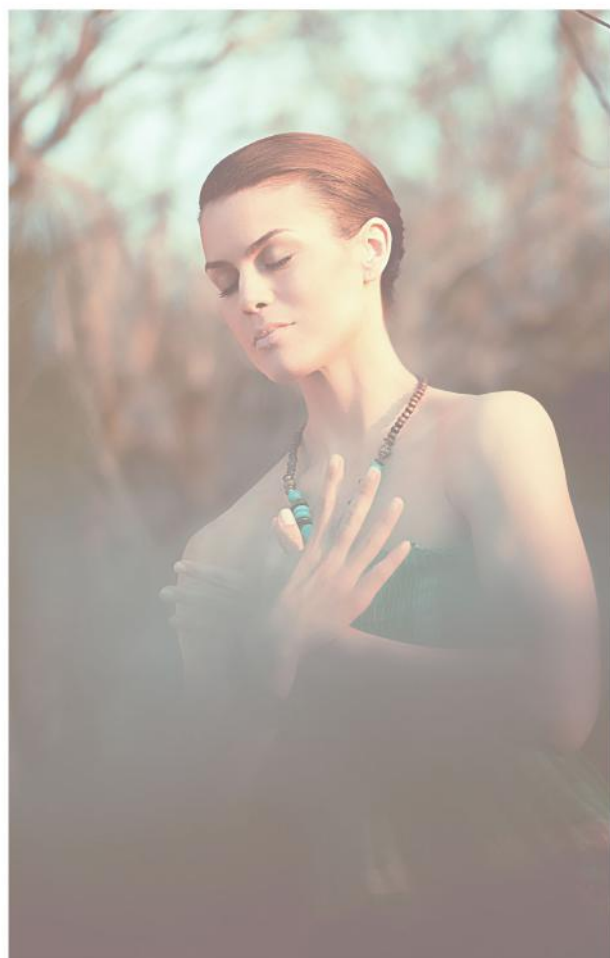
Meditation also decreases activity in the default mode network (DMN), which is associated with mind-wandering and self-referential thoughts. A quieter DMN has been linked to reduced anxiety, enhanced emotional regulation, and greater presence in the moment.

Breathwork and chanting activate the vagus nerve, which governs the parasympathetic nervous system—our body's natural rest-and-digest mode. Research published in *Frontiers in Psychology* reveals that deep, slow breathing enhances heart rate variability (HRV), a crucial indicator of resilience and autonomic balance.

Theta brainwaves—present during deep meditation, hypnosis, and creative flow—are now understood to be powerful frequencies that facilitate neuroplasticity, trauma integration, and subconscious reprogramming. Studies using EEG recordings confirm that these brainwave states enhance memory consolidation, emotional healing, and access to deeper inner awareness.

Energy work, once considered fringe, is now gaining recognition through the lens of quantum biology and biofield science. The NIH National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health has begun exploring how biofields—subtle energy fields surrounding the body—may play a role in health and healing. Quantum physics offers an intriguing insight: subatomic particles behave differently when they're observed, suggesting that consciousness might influence physical reality.

This idea—shown in the famous double-slit experiment—echoes ancient teachings that our thoughts and intentions carry real energetic power. It invites us to consider that we don't just witness life—we shape it. In other words, ancient teachings that intention creates experience and that energy follows thought are now echoed by cutting-edge discoveries in physics, biology, and neuropsychology. While the language may differ, the message is the same: the invisible is not imaginary. It's deeply intelligent.





You Are the Bridge

This isn't about choosing between science and soul. It's about integrating both. The moment we begin to approach healing through both lenses, something incredible happens: transformation accelerates.

In my work, I've witnessed this countless times. One client was plagued by deep, unexplainable anxiety. Through a past life regression, we uncovered a traumatic soul memory that had imprinted her current life with fear. As the session unfolded and healing occurred, a lightness returned. Her nervous system softened. Her sense of inner safety was restored.

Another discovered a past-life pattern influencing her self-worth and released it through a regression transformation. Over the following weeks, her energy shifted, and her outer life began to reflect this inner renewal.

These are not miracles. They are the natural result of honoring the whole human system: mind, body, and soul.

Reactivating Your Inner Technology

You were born with everything you need to heal. But the noise of the modern world has dulled your inner instruments.

Your intuition is a finely tuned compass. Your breath is a healing rhythm. Your emotions are messages from your soul. Your body is an antenna for spiritual information.

It's time to reclaim these forgotten technologies. Intuition is not a gift for the few—it's your soul's language. Breath isn't just oxygen—it's a life force. Emotions aren't weakness—they're gateways.

When we relearn how to use this inner technology, life stops being a series of disconnected events. Instead, it becomes a living, breathing conversation between you and the universe.

And you begin to remember: you are not broken. You are awakening—and so is your soul. As your soul reconnects, it begins to speak more clearly through your intuition, your longings, and your quiet inner knowing.

Three Soulful-Scientific Practices to Begin Today

1. Coherent Breathing

Inhale for 5 seconds, exhale for 5 seconds. Repeat for 3 minutes. This activates your vagus nerve, reduces anxiety, and brings you into a harmonious state of heart-brain connection.

2. Soul Journaling

Each morning, write the question: "What does my soul want me to know today?" Then, write without editing. This integrates subconscious insight with conscious awareness.

3. Theta Visualization

Before sleep, imagine descending a golden staircase into a safe inner sanctuary. Ask your soul one question. Sit with what you receive. This stimulates theta waves and enhances intuitive receptivity.

These practices may seem simple—but their power is real, both energetically and neurologically.

A New Path Forward: Where Science and Soul Walk Together

In a world craving meaning, peace, and healing, we no longer need to separate logic from mystery. The sacred and the scientific are no longer opposites. They are allies.

Your soul holds ancient wisdom. Your brain holds infinite potential. And the journey ahead is not about becoming someone new but about remembering who you already are.

If this message stirs something deep within you—if your heart longs for something more... something ancient, authentic, and profoundly yours—this is your invitation. Come take the first step home to your soul.

By Dr Margit Gabriele Muller

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EVERYTHING YOU DO SENDS A RIPPLE

How Your Smallest Choices Change the World

What happens when a stranger's smile shifts your entire day? That's the ripple effect.

When you meet a stranger's gaze with a smile or a scowl, it creates a response for both of you, which then colours your next interaction and the next ad infinitum. Ripples can augment your experience, and they can detract. The scowl from a stranger might send you spiralling into angry thoughts, shifting your energy and body language into a full-body scowl. The net result is that you will feel crappy and send those gloomy ripples out into the world. Conversely, the smile will likely make you smile, stand a little taller, and maybe even generate a little bounce in your step, and the warm fuzzy ripples will spread like honey. The impact of your actions is always far greater than the immediate outcomes.

Every Small Choice Sends a Message

Think about the various choices and interactions that you make throughout any given day and the ripple effect they have on you and others. Do you get up early or sleep in late? Today, I slept in, which felt wonderful in the moment, but it had the ripple effect of putting me two hours behind. However, since my only commitments are to write this article and go to the gym, I feel okay about it.

The food you choose to nourish your body with will have an impact on your day. Grabbing a sausage and egg sandwich from the drive-through and mindlessly eating it on your commute isn't necessarily a poor choice. However, mindfully and slowly eating a selection of fresh fruit artfully arranged atop a smoothie bowl will foster a sense of groundedness and gratitude while fueling your body with a broad spectrum of nutrients.

Instead of rushing to turn on your computer and dive into your emails, what would happen if you took 2 minutes for a guided meditation before beginning your workday? What if you did a meditation before going home at the end of the day? Intentionally shifting your energy and focus to be present for your colleagues or family has an enormous impact on work-life balance. I'm not talking full-on Severance-style separation here; rather, it's about creating space for the ripples of one environment to smooth out before you step into the next pool.

If you go out for a walk at lunch, you might inspire other colleagues to do the same. Studies have shown that, for the majority of us who work at a desk all day, taking a 20-minute gentle walk outside reduces stress, improves focus, and can lower the likelihood of musculoskeletal injuries. Your ripples can be physical as well as emotional.

These intentional choices, however small, affect how you feel and how you show up in the world.

The Unexpected Echo of Your Growth

Since I made the decision to walk the Camino de Santiago, the ripples have been spreading. One of my email list subscribers has wanted to walk the Camino for years. Reading about my plans inspired her to sign up for my 1:1 coaching container, where she is building the confidence to start making her dreams a reality. As part of my preparation, I am working with a personal trainer and physiotherapist. The ripple effect of taking better care of an old knee injury is having a noticeable effect on my life. I am experiencing less

pain and better sleep, which undoubtedly are helping my energy and mood, creating multiple ripples.

Walking a minimum of 10,000 steps a day and building up to 30,000, I am more actively engaged in the weekly step challenge my brother and I participate in on our smartwatches, fostering a deeper connection between us and encouraging him to walk more.

To mix up my training walks, I have several overnight backcountry hikes planned. This is getting me out of my comfort zone as I learn about wild camping solo in Bear Country. And I know the stories I share from my adventures will inspire other women to expand their comfort zones.

Carrying everything on my back for 32 days means asking myself what is truly necessary, which has the ripple effect of inviting me to reevaluate my day-to-day consumerism and reduce my footprint.

One decision: multiple ripples.

The ripples aren't limited to my journey; they are happening in my clients' lives, too. This week, I coached one of my clients on whether "having a body I feel good in" was a worthy goal. As we talked, she saw the ripple effect this change will have. Her clothes, which fit better instead of digging into her waist, will improve her mood at the office. Enthusiastically saying yes to a game of beach volleyball with her sons instead of making excuses will strengthen her relationship with her kids.



See how one shift has the potential to create myriad ripples in your life and the world beyond?

When the World Sends You Disruption

You always have the option to decide whether you want to participate in the ripple effect. Sometimes, ripples can be disruptive. A client just messaged me seeking guidance because she was upset by a rude salesperson. She has a choice: to carry that around with her all day, or to let it go, to leave it behind in the shoe store. By taking a few moments to self-regulate, my client was able to stop that potentially harmful ripple from spreading out to taint her dinner reservation and beyond.

From Reaction to Regulation

Let's take a moment to talk about about perception and regulation. When you are regulated, the ripples are just that. When you are dysregulated, they feel like tidal waves. You can use regulation techniques proactively to be in a resourced state (where your nervous system feels safe and balanced) by default, and you can use them when life happens to bring yourself back to that resourced state.

Regulation is what determines if a ripple becomes a tsunami or washes gently ashore.

Step One is recognizing when you are dysregulated, which might look like tightness in your chest, feeling hot, raising your voice, shutting down, wanting to run away, and catastrophizing.

Step Two is using somatic tools to restore equilibrium. My favourites are slow, deep breaths, taking a walk in nature, and giving myself a hug while telling myself, "I am safe. I am loved".

This time-out allows you to respond rather than react and regain perspective and lets those giant destabilizing waves soften to a ripple.

A Gentle Invitation Before You Sleep

Before you go to bed tonight, I invite you to reflect. What ripples have you been touched by today? Which ripples have you started? How will you ripple the world tomorrow?

By Emma Hull

Emma Hull is a Life Coach, Speaker, and Author of *Your Goddess Era*:

A Step-by-Step Guide to Reinvention.

She helps women at a crossroads to move forward with confidence.
Sign up for her inspirational emails and book your free strategy session at

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ENERGY MATTERS

Everything Is Energy: How Your Thoughts and Words Shape Your World

We hear the phrase “everything is energy” a lot these days, but what does that actually mean, and why does it matter in everyday life?

Put simply, your thoughts and words aren’t just background noise. They carry energy. And that energy influences how you feel, show up, and even what you attract into your life. It’s not about being positive all the time or trying to “think your way to success.” It’s about becoming aware of the invisible power that shapes your reality every single day. And it starts with what’s going on in your head and what’s coming out of your mouth.

The Science (and Magic) of Energy

The brilliant inventor Nikola Tesla once said: “If you want to find the secrets of the universe, think in terms of energy, frequency and vibration.” At the most basic level, science tells us that everything is made of energy—even our thoughts and emotions. Your brain waves have frequencies. Your words hold vibration. The energy you put out has a measurable effect on your body, your environment, and your overall well-being.

Japanese researcher Dr Masaru Emoto famously demonstrated this in his water crystal experiments. He labelled jars of water with words like love or hate and then froze them. The water exposed to loving words formed beautiful, symmetrical crystals, while the ones exposed to harsh language formed distorted, chaotic shapes. Now consider this: your body is around 60% water. If water responds visibly to the energy of words, what do you think your cells are doing every time you speak to yourself with criticism, blame, or shame?

Your Thoughts Become Your Chemistry

Every thought you have is literally absorbed by every cell in your body. Let that land for a moment. When you think something like “I’m a failure”, “I’ll never get it right”, or “I’m not good enough”, you’re not just saying words. You’re sending messages that ripple through your entire system. Your body listens. It reacts. Over time, these repeated thought patterns can affect your nervous system, stress response,

immune health, and even posture. In contrast, empowering thoughts like “I’m learning”, “I’ve overcome so much already”, or “I’ve got this” send very different signals. They help your body shift into safety, balance and growth. Thoughts create feelings. Feelings create responses. And over time, those responses create your experience of health or dis-ease.

From Inner Critic to Inner Coach

We all have an inner critic. That voice that says.

You’re not smart enough.

You can’t do it.

You’ll never be good enough.

The voice that compares criticises and convinces you that you’re falling short. But what if you started to replace that voice with a more supportive one - your inner coach?

Imagine hearing:

You’re doing the best you can - and that’s enough.

You’ve faced challenges before, and you’ll get through this, too.

This is a learning curve, not a final judgement.

Your inner coach encourages. It lifts you up when things get messy. It reminds you of your resilience.

And it’s always available - you just have to tune in. Words Have Weight - Use Them Wisely
Here’s a simple example: the word should.

“I should go to the gym.”

“I should have done better.”

“I should be further ahead by now.”

Heavy, isn’t it? Should is often rooted in guilt, pressure, and comparison. Now switch it to could:

“I could go to the gym.”

“I could choose to try again.”

“I could do things differently next time.”

Feel the difference? “Could” opens space for choice. It feels lighter, more expansive, and more empowering. That tiny shift in language moves you from shame into possibility—and possibility is where change lives.

Three Easy Ways to Shift Your Energy Through Language

Here are three simple, practical tools to help you become more conscious of your thoughts and the words you use:

1. *Pause and Reframe*

Catch yourself in the act. Notice the thought. Ask: Would I say this to a loved one? Is it helpful? Is there a kinder way to say it?

Reframe it to something supportive - even if it feels unfamiliar at first.

2. *Stop, Breathe, Assess, Reset*

When you're triggered or spiralling into old patterns, take a moment. Stop. Breathe. Assess how you're feeling. Reset with intention. This helps you respond, not react and brings you back to conscious choice.

3. *Get Curious, Not Critical*

Instead of saying, "What's wrong with me?" try, "What's going on for me?" Curiosity softens the energy. It keeps you open to insight rather than shutting you down.



Your Words Are Your Wand

You don't have to get everything right. You don't need to become a guru. But when you start becoming aware of the energy behind your thoughts and words, you give yourself the gift of conscious choice.

You move from autopilot into presence. From reaction into intention. From self-judgement into self-leadership. And that's where real empowerment begins. Remember to have compassion, understanding, and forgiveness for yourself. You're simply a work in progress.



Final Thought: You Are the Energy You Bring

Every word you say to yourself and others has an impact. It sends a ripple through your body, your mind, and your environment. When you choose more empowered thoughts, you lift your own vibration and that changes everything around you.

So next time that old inner script pipes up with, "You're not enough," take a breath and ask: "What's a more empowering thought I could choose right now?" That small choice? It's where big change begins.

Want more support on living with empowered energy?

Visit www.sallyestlin.com for simple tools, empowering card readings, conscious clothing, and real conversations to help you raise your energy - one choice at a time.



By Sally Estlin
Self Empowered Lifestyles
www.sallyestlin.com

The Talent Equation



Why Recruiting the Right People Defines Today's Workplace Success

In the dynamic landscape of today's workplace, the key to sustained success doesn't solely rest on innovative products, cutting-edge technology, or expansive market reach. Instead, it hinges on a factor often underestimated—recruiting the right talent. As businesses evolve in response to globalisation, digital transformation, and shifting employee expectations, the strategic importance of securing top-tier talent becomes increasingly evident.

The Impact of the Right Talent

Recruiting the right individuals influences multiple layers of an organisation. Firstly, it drives productivity. Employees who are not only skilled but also aligned with a company's values and culture tend to be more engaged and motivated. This alignment leads to higher efficiency, improved problem-solving, and a proactive approach to challenges.

More importantly, the right talent increases innovation. Diverse teams with varied experiences and perspectives are the breeding ground for creative solutions. In an era where businesses must continually adapt, having team members who can think critically and innovate is invaluable.

Retention is another critical factor. High employee turnover is costly—not just financially but also in terms of continuity and morale. When recruitment focuses on finding the right fit, both in skills and cultural compatibility, retention rates improve. Employees are more likely to stay with organisations where they feel valued, understood, and capable of growth.

Challenges in Modern Recruitment

Despite its importance, recruiting the right talent has its challenges. The modern job market is extremely competitive, with companies vying for the same pool of skilled professionals. Additionally, the rise of remote work has expanded talent pools globally, but it has also increased the complexity of assessing candidates' suitability beyond technical skills, considering factors like self-motivation and remote collaboration abilities.

Bias in recruitment processes is another hurdle. Unconscious biases can lead to homogenous teams, stifling diversity and innovation. Furthermore, an over-reliance on traditional credentials rather than assessing practical skills can result in overlooking high-potential candidates.

Practical Solutions for Effective Talent Recruitment

Define Clear Role Requirements: Start with a comprehensive understanding of what the role entails beyond the job description. Consider the skills, experiences, and personal attributes that will help a candidate thrive in your specific organisational context.

Focus on Cultural Fit and Add: While aligning with company culture is essential, consider how a candidate can add to and enrich your culture rather than merely fit into it. This approach promotes diversity of thought and prevents echo chambers.

Leverage Technology Smartly: Utilise advanced recruitment tools like AI-driven applicant tracking systems to streamline the screening process. However, ensure these tools are calibrated to promote fairness and mitigate biases.

Structured Interviewing: Implement structured interviews where each candidate is asked the same set of questions, reducing bias and enabling more objective comparisons. Incorporate situational and behavioural questions to gauge how candidates handle real-world scenarios.

Assess for Potential, Not Just Credentials: While experience is valuable, potential often predicts future performance better. Look for indicators of learning agility, adaptability, and problem-solving skills.

Employer Branding: A strong employer brand attracts top talent. Showcase your company's values, culture, and employee success stories through authentic content on social media, company websites, and industry events.

Employee Referrals: Encourage current employees to refer candidates. They understand the company culture and can often identify individuals who will thrive within the organisation.

Continuous Improvement: Regularly review and refine your recruitment strategies based on feedback and outcomes. Stay updated on industry trends and innovative hiring practices.

Conclusion

In today's fast-paced, ever-evolving workplace, recruiting the right talent is not just a human resources function—it's a strategic imperative. By focusing on clear role definitions, cultural enrichment, unbiased processes, and potential-driven assessments, organisations can build resilient, dynamic, and high-performing teams. As the saying goes, 'Hire character. Train skill.' In the end, the right people are the cornerstone of every successful organisation.

By Penelope Layzell

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WORK & GRIEF



We often talk about workplace well-being in terms of burnout, deadlines, or work-life balance. However, there is another quieter crisis that impacts the workforce every day. And one we are far less equipped to talk about, and that is the pain of personal loss.

If this article caught your eye, it may be because you are going through something deeply personal or you know someone who is; perhaps a divorce, the loss of someone close, or a painful life transition. And are only too aware of how difficult it is to show up for work as if everything is fine when, clearly, it is not.

'We are often left to suffer in silence, trying to "power through" pain so we do not appear unprofessional or weak.'

The emotional toll of grief, separation, or major life change does not clock off when we start our workday. We do not leave our emotions at the door to the office. Whether it is a divorce, the death of a loved one, a serious illness, or another life-changing transition, our feelings do not wait until the weekend to manifest.

They impact our working week, striking at any time during our working day, in meetings, and during commutes. They affect how we think, relate to others, and how we show up for work. And while we might be holding it together on the outside, attending meetings, replying to emails, and nodding along in conversations — inside, we are simply trying to get through and keep our emotions in check. And yet, most workplaces are not built to acknowledge that or accommodate employees who are struggling to work after loss. We are often left to suffer in silence, trying to “power through” pain so we do not appear unprofessional or weak.

As someone who supports people going through loss and life transitions and who has lived through deep personal loss, I understand this. Through my own experiences, I have found that what so many people need is permission. Permission to slow down. To be present with the loss. To acknowledge that grief and healing are not things we “get over” on our own time, but that in time, we will move forward. A supportive workplace can help with that process. Loss does not happen in a vacuum.

There is no right or wrong way to grieve a loss. And everyone processes loss differently and at their own pace. You may be experiencing mental fog or forgetfulness, exhaustion, overwhelm at the simplest tasks, a deep sense of disconnection, and sudden waves of sadness or anger. These are all normal reactions. This is not weakness. It is your body and brain processing something which has impacted you profoundly.

As you navigate work during a time of personal loss, be honest with yourself about what you are feeling and what you need. Suppressing pain only extends it. You do not need to explain everything to ask for something. Seek micro-accommodations such as asking for flexible hours, a temporary workload adjustment or if you can take breaks between meetings.

Lean on safe support. Whether it's a therapist, coach, friend, or trusted colleague who truly listens, having someone you can talk to without judgment is essential. You do not have to do this alone. Practise self-care, even if that means taking a few deep breaths between calls or stepping outside for 5 minutes. You will be amazed at how powerful these small resets are. And remember that no feeling is final, and you will not always feel this way. You are not broken, and you do not need fixing. You are grieving. And there is no timeline for grief.

When it comes to well-being in the workplace, the fallout from loss is huge. We spend a significant amount of our time at work, and personal issues can impact our working day—the ripple effects of unresolved loss impact performance, team morale, and retention. However, when organisations offer empathy, flexibility, and structured support, they earn loyalty and trust, creating a stronger culture that ultimately increases morale.

Supporting employees through loss is a crucial element in maintaining a productive workforce.

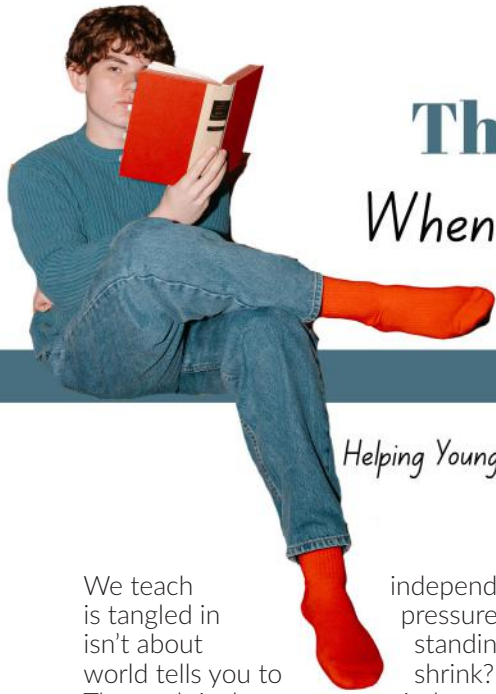
Loss is a universal human experience. None of us are immune. There is no perfect path through separation or change. But there is a way forward—feeling seen, supported, and valued enables us to build resilience during life's most challenging transitions.

By Celia Conrad



Celia Conrad, Your Relationship Guru, is a former family lawyer, a relationship expert and well-being advisor specialising in loss and life-changing events. She supports individuals navigating divorce, break-ups, grief, and other life transitions, and helps employers assist affected employees facing these challenges in the workplace.

www.yourrelationshipguru.com



The Tangled Thread

When Independence Meets Identity



Helping Young Adults Find Belonging, Balance, and Self-Worth in a Loud, Fast World

We teach
is tangled in
isn't about
world tells you to
The truth is that
finding your people, setting boundaries, and learning how to ask for help without shame.

independence as if it's a finish line—but for today's young adults, the path
pressure, perfectionism, and a fear of falling behind. What if independence
standing alone but learning how to stand in your truth—even when the
shrink?
independence isn't always about doing everything alone. Sometimes, it's about

In my work with emerging adults—especially those navigating neurodivergence or mental health challenges—I see the same pattern: a desire to grow and thrive, tangled in a fear of being “too much” or “not enough.” And somewhere in that messy middle, they start losing their sense of identity.

The Summer Thread: Identity in the Face of Expectation

Summer often symbolizes freedom, possibility, and growth. However, for many young people, especially post-graduates or those in transition, summer can also feel like a period of limbo. “What now?” becomes the question that loops in their head.

They scroll social media, comparing paths. They see classmates getting jobs, traveling, moving forward—and begin to wonder if they're already falling behind.

But identity isn't built in comparison.

It's built-in intention.

In choosing who you want to be—even if the world has told you something different.

Unraveling the Noise

“I know I should be doing more... but I don't even know who I am without the pressure,” a client once shared during our session. That moment stuck with me.

Let's pull on the thread that feels tightest:

- Is it the fear of not knowing what's next?
- The weight of family expectations?
- The internalized voice that says, “I should be further along by now”?

Young adults—especially those who are neurodivergent or healing from anxiety, trauma, or burnout—need room to breathe. Not just freedom from expectations but freedom to rewrite their identity on their own terms.

A Moment That Changed Everything

I remember sitting across from a young woman who had just turned 23. She was autistic, non-verbal, and had recently aged out of the school system. Her mother sat beside her, tearfully explaining how the routine and structure that once anchored their lives had vanished overnight. “We feel invisible now,” she told me.

They had called multiple programs, waited for lists that never seemed to move, and navigated a maze of “resources” that felt more like roadblocks. She wasn't asking for a miracle. She just wanted to know how to help her daughter feel seen, included, and capable.

That conversation reminded me why this work matters. Independence doesn't always look like moving out or managing a bank account. Sometimes, it looks like creating a supportive environment where someone can thrive in their own way. That family didn't need more red tape. They needed compassion, direction, and hope. Together, we created a plan that honored her daughter's communication style, built daily anchors for consistency, and connected them to a local support network. It didn't fix everything overnight, but it gave them a thread to hold onto.

Their story is one I carry with me often because it reminds me that support isn't a service—it's a relationship. It's a commitment to hold space for others while they rewrite the rules for themselves.

My Message to Young Adults (and the Families Who Love Them):

You don't have to become someone else to succeed.

You don't have to be the loudest in the room to lead.

And you are not behind—you're becoming.

Support looks like slowing down, being curious instead of critical, and celebrating progress over perfection.

For families, this means shifting from "fixing" to "understanding." It means building a safe foundation for young adults to explore their truth without fear of judgment. When the focus shifts from doing to becoming, growth happens naturally.

Weaving Something New This Summer

What if this summer wasn't about "getting it all figured out"...
but instead about:

- Reconnecting with your values
- Building rituals that support your growth
- Surrounding yourself with people who see your worth
- Unlearning what was never yours to carry

True independence isn't just about paying bills and meeting deadlines—it's about knowing who you are when the noise fades and choosing to love that version of yourself anyway.

The Emotional Labor of Identity Work

For neurodivergent and highly sensitive individuals, forming an identity can feel like swimming against the current. They are constantly processing the world at a different rhythm, often forced to adapt to systems that were never designed for them.

This emotional labor takes energy. And when young adults are met with pressure instead of patience, they disconnect. But when they are offered compassion, flexibility, and opportunity for self-exploration, they flourish. They don't need a rigid timeline—they need room to explore what independence means for them.

Let's teach them to:

- Honor their energy levels and sensory needs
- Set boundaries without guilt
- Express their voice even when it shakes
- Trust that their path—no matter how nonlinear—is still worthy

Final Thought: The Thread Was Never Broken

The thread of identity might be tangled, but it isn't broken.

With intention, support, and self-compassion, it can be rewoven into something stronger—something that reflects the truth of who they are.

So, if you are a young adult in transition or a parent watching from the sidelines, know this:

You don't have to have it all figured out.

You just have to keep choosing yourself—and keep weaving your thread, one choice at a time.

Again. And again. And again.

By Nicole Rolon-Caro



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The Year I Broke My Brain



Once, I got the job of my dreams. It was a leadership role. I had responsibility. I was earning well. I had a seat at the table in important conversations. But I was, in almost every way that mattered, entirely useless.

That year, I had burned out. And I don't mean I was just tired or overwhelmed. I burned out in the bone-deep way that strips you of clarity, confidence, and any real sense of usefulness. I kept going, of course. I turned up. I sent emails. I nodded in meetings. But the energy it took to hold myself together left almost nothing for the work itself. I was showing up in body but not in spirit. Eventually, it turned out this wasn't just a rough patch. It was clinical. I was signed off work. My brain had, quite literally, broken.

Presenteeism

There's a term for this: presenteeism. It's when you're technically there, in the room, on the call, but none of the good stuff is—the spark, the insight, the collaboration, the capacity to see or shape the bigger picture. At the time, I had no name for it. I just thought I was failing. And that I had to try harder.

What I've learned since is that burnout isn't a weakness. It's the body's last resort. A physiological protest when all other signals have gone unheard: the sleep issues, the stress headaches, the loss of joy in things you once loved. If I seemed withdrawn or irritable, it wasn't because I didn't care. It was because I had cared for too long and too hard in conditions that made that care impossible to sustain.

The Rise of Cynicism

One of the most insidious things about burnout is how care curdles into cynicism. I'd once been at the top of my game: leading in my discipline, shaping strategy, pushing for better practice, and manoeuvring brilliant but overlooked women into roles they deserved. I was fuelled by purpose and belief that things could be better and that I could help make them so.

But slowly,
that energy
turned.
The things
I'd once
found

meaningful started to feel performative. I became quick to roll my eyes, slow to contribute. My hope thinned into resignation. I started to believe that nothing really changed, that good ideas went nowhere, and that I had been naïve to try.

That version of me didn't help anyone. Not myself. Not the people I worked with. Not the people I was once so determined to support. Worse, I may have done harm. People who had once been met with warmth and encouragement were now receiving short, snappy replies. I imagine some were left wondering what they'd done wrong.

This is why it matters, not just for our own wellbeing, but for the health of the whole. Feeling OK isn't indulgent. It's essential. We are more useful, more creative, and more generous when we are well. Cynicism might pass for cleverness, but it doesn't build anything lasting.

Coaching Caring People

One of the unexpected upsides of sharing your burnout story online is that people come and share theirs with you. Lots of people. From different industries and levels of seniority, but with striking commonalities.

I've noticed that the people who seek me out are often the most deeply caring. Often, though not exclusively, women. People who've spent years holding things together. The emotional load-bearers. The glue.

It's also shown me what kind of advice actually lands. "You need to rest, or your long-term health will suffer" is usually met with a tired nod and then quietly ignored. But reframing it into terms that talk about the effect on other people, "the cynicism people are starting to feel from you might be making them doubt their own abilities" gets through. That framing has been the only thing that convinced several friends to take time off. Caring people respond when you show them that looking after themselves is also a way of looking after others.

The Solution? Constructive Selfishness

An early facilitation mentor of mine, Allen Gunn, taught me the phrase "constructive selfishness." It's the idea that doing what's good for you, with one eye on what's good for the group, is one of the most generous things you can do. Post-burnout means choosing actions that protect my capacity to care over time.

Burnout taught me that recovery isn't the opposite of leadership. It's what makes it possible.

That experience didn't just shape me; it transformed me. It redirected me. I became a facilitator because I wanted to help shape the environments I once needed. Spaces where people can turn up as they are. Where meetings replenish rather than deplete. Where work is a place we bring our energy to, not one that drains it away.

Because when we feel OK, we do better. Together.

By Lucy Chambers



RALLY

An extreme sport and a job mission where the driver and co-driver's fight for seconds is crucial!

In everyday life, you can apply this metaphor: Imagine that you are in your car, essentially sitting in front of the wheel, acting and controlling your life while keeping your eyes up and looking ahead. Only occasionally can you check the rear-view mirror. There is a reason why the window in front of us in a car is often much larger than the rear-view mirror window; use this as a reminder for different life situations you may be in.

Number two: Reframing! It's not about the situation you're in but about the way you're reframing it. It's about how you perceive your reality from your perspective and the interpretations you give to it, which can change the whole game! For example, you get caught in traffic and come to a red light, and you're afraid of being late for work or an important meeting.

You can then reframe the situation to reflect what you can actually do at this moment. Don't let your inner state and peace depend on something you can't even control, like traffic. So, ask yourself instead, what can I do? This example situation could quite easily be reframed as a recovery pause or a breathing pause. You can also use this time to expand your personal development by asking, 'What can I learn about myself right now?'

Or a quick analysis of what you can do next time to create margins, calm or more consciousness. So, the moment that otherwise would become stressful actually becomes a moment of learning and recovery instead.

Number three: Use a trigger for self-confidence or a power pose that reinforces your body. A trigger can be a single word, an image or a gesture that reminds you of what you can do and what's possible for you! Plan these moves and triggers ahead and practice them so they feel as familiar as, for example, any clothing that you decide to wear in everyday life.

A trap might be that we believe we must do something big and even expensive to manage or succeed in life, but the most precious tools are often free and available to anyone to use. You just have to be able to apply them in the right moment, with full presence as well as with the right intensity and consciousness.

Start practising today or when your life is calm so that when challenges or negative stress come your way, you are ready to create an inner state that supports peak performance in your everyday life.

By Jeanette Szymanski

Jeanette Szymanski works as a Performance Coach. She is also an NLP & Mental trainer, an instructor, and a very popular lecturer based in Finland. For many years, she has been helping top athletes, business executives, musicians, television and radio hosts, and others who wish to develop themselves personally and/or in their careers.

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What can we learn from this sport that can help us in our everyday lives?

Since 2017, I have been working as a performance coach in motorsports for World Rally Championship drivers and teams from around the world. It's not a cultural thing at all, and it's not even about the driving itself (at this level, everyone has unbelievable driving skills, even at a very young age, before they have obtained their driver's licence), but it's about a mindset and mentality. - You must master the inner game to win the outside one! As a coach, I help these drivers to do so.

Most of us don't have a life fighting for seconds, and most of us are not living lives where our job can kill us at any time during the day, even if it may feel like it sometimes. Outside stress and pressure can make us feel lost, afraid, worried, or out of control. Therefore, I would like to share some tips and techniques that have been the most efficient during competition weeks in the World Rally Championships.

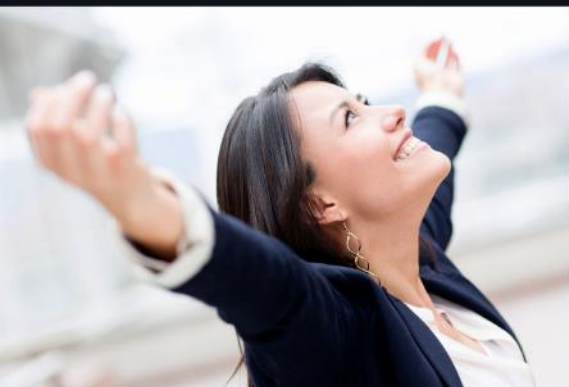
Number one: Being able to stay in the present moment. This is key because if a driver starts to think or process the next corner or the previous stage, they can lose it all in the blink of an eye. The present moment is all we have, and therefore, it's the only place we should be in while performing at a world-class level.

I can still vividly picture that moment. I was sitting on my balcony, sipping a glass of wine, watching the sun setting over Sydney Harbour. From this apartment—the one I'd dreamed of for years—I had the perfect view of everything I'd spent decades building. A thriving business. Multiple revenue streams. The entrepreneurial success others envied.

Yet, instead of contentment, a gnawing, empty feeling crept in. "Is this IT? I mean, I hit every target I set and more! But is this IT?! What's next??"

That question marked the beginning of a journey that would shatter everything I believed about entrepreneurial success, financial milestones, and what it means to be truly free as a business owner. What I discovered—and what I now help other entrepreneurs understand—is that we've all been chasing an illusion. The next revenue target, the perfect profit margin, the streamlined systems, the scalable team—none of these financial achievements will give us the freedom we started our businesses to find.

In fact, they often trap us deeper in patterns that keep us working longer hours, carrying more stress, and constantly reaching for the next milestone that promises to finally set us free.



If you're an entrepreneur who's achieved significant financial success but still feels like you're running on a hamster wheel that keeps spinning faster, this article is for you. It's time to understand the next-level trap that's been keeping you stuck—and discover the path to real entrepreneurial freedom.

THE 'NEXT-LEVEL' FREEDOM TRAP: WHY YOUR NEXT FINANCIAL MILESTONE WON'T SET YOU FREE AND WHAT ACTUALLY WILL!



The Next-Level Trap: The Illusion That Keeps Entrepreneurs Chasing

"Once I hit six figures consistently, I'll finally have enough financial security to take real time off without panic." "When I reach seven figures, I'll have the resources to hire a proper team and won't have to wear every hat in the business." "After I build these systems and processes, the business will run itself, and I can finally step back and have a holiday."

"When I get to eight figures, I'll have enough money to do whatever I want, and I won't need to work any more!"

Sound familiar? I spent years trapped in this exact cycle. Each financial milestone promised the freedom that drew me to entrepreneurship in the first place but instead brought new pressures, bigger problems, and more chasing. The goalposts kept moving, and the "freedom" always remained just out of reach.

The cruel irony is that the more financially successful our businesses become, the more trapped we often feel. That six-figure breakthrough brings tax stuff and cash flow management stress. The seven-figure business requires more sophisticated operations and bigger decisions that keep you up at night. The team you hired to free up your time requires training, effective management, and ongoing guidance. The systems require maintenance, optimization, and someone to oversee them—usually still you.

We hit our revenue targets only to discover that we've climbed the wrong mountain entirely. And somehow, despite our financial success, we feel more exhausted and overwhelmed than when we were bootstrapping from our kitchen table.

This is the next-level trap: the belief that the next financial milestone will transform our daily experience as business owners. We think we're building wealth to buy freedom, but we're actually creating more sophisticated forms of imprisonment.

I've seen entrepreneurs who make multiple seven figures become more stressed than when they were earning \$ 50,000. I've worked with business owners who have achieved every financial goal they set yet feel more trapped than their friends with a traditional job. But here's what I learned through my own journey—and what I now see with every entrepreneur I work with: The problem isn't that we need to make more money. The problem is that we're building our businesses from an energy of "I'm not enough".

The Real Problem: Fear-Based vs. Sacred Desire in Business

One of my clients, Jeannie, built her business to over \$2 million in annual revenue but was convinced her business would collapse without her constant involvement. She was working seven days a week and hadn't had a holiday for 10 years. During the week, she spent her time worrying that others would not do a good job, so she was chasing them up, making sure they were on top of things, and her weekends were reserved for "her" work.



financially.” “If I don’t keep growing, someone else will take my market share.” “I should be further along by now compared to other entrepreneurs.” “I have to work nights and weekends—that’s just entrepreneurship.”

This energy is exhausting because it’s ultimately driven by what we don’t want rather than what we DO want. We’re running away from financial insecurity, business failure, or judgment from others rather than running toward something that genuinely excites us as creators and leaders.

Sacred desire in business, on the other hand, feels completely different. It’s the energy that flows through you when you’re building something that truly matters to you—not because you think you should want it, but because it lights you up from the inside and serves something greater than just your bank account.

She was checking emails at midnight, waking up at 3 am, unable to fall back asleep, and then the cycle continued. From the outside, her business was the entrepreneurial dream—growing revenue, expanding product lines, and gaining market recognition. But Jeannie was exhausted, frustrated, and trapped in a business that felt more like a prison than the freedom vehicle she’d envisioned.

“I thought I was being strategic,” she told me months later. “I thought my relentless drive was what made me successful. I didn’t realize I was actually being driven by fear of losing everything disguised as working hard ambition.”

This distinction—between building from fear-based desire versus building from authentic desire—is the key to understanding why hitting financial milestones never delivers the entrepreneurial freedom they promise. When we build businesses driven by fear-based desires, every decision feels urgent, pressured, and never quite enough.

This energy shows up in our businesses as:

- Constantly checking revenue dashboards and panicking when numbers dip
- Working longer hours because “that’s what it takes to be successful”
- Making decisions based on what competitors are doing rather than what feels right
- Saying yes to opportunities out of fear of missing out, even when they don’t align
- Feeling like the business will fall apart if we’re not constantly monitoring everything
- Chasing revenue milestones because we think they’ll prove our worth as entrepreneurs

Fear-based desire in business sounds like: “I need to prove this was worth the risk.” “I can’t let my family down

Sacred desire in business shows up as:

- Excitement about the problem you’re solving, not just the money you’re making
- Natural energy for work that doesn’t require constant caffeine and willpower
- Decision-making based on what feels aligned rather than what looks most profitable
- Joy in the process of building, not just anticipation of the exit
- The feeling that you’re being pulled toward opportunities rather than forcing them
- Sustainable growth that honors both your ambitions and your well-being
- The feeling that you ARE enough

Sacred desire in business sounds like: “I can’t wait to help more people solve this problem.” “This work feels like the perfect expression of my gifts.” “I’m excited to see what we can create together.” “This business feels like it’s growing me as much as I’m growing it.” “I love the challenge and the process, not just the outcomes.”

The difference isn’t just semantic—it’s the difference between sustainable entrepreneurial success and exhausting business ownership. When Jeannie learned to distinguish between these two energies in her business decisions, everything changed. She realized that most of her “strategic” choices had been driven by fear of not being successful enough, fear of falling behind competitors, and fear of losing what she’d built.

Once she started making business decisions from sacred desire instead, her company didn’t collapse—it thrived in ways she hadn’t expected. She took her first real vacation in three years (in fact, 3 of them in a year!) Her team stepped up and made decisions independently. And...her revenue doubled to \$4 million in less than a year, and her profit margin increased by 50%. She was focusing on what truly mattered to her customers rather than trying to compete on every front. More importantly, she started ENJOYING herself again.

The Sovereignty Solution: True Entrepreneurial Freedom

Real entrepreneurial freedom doesn’t come from reaching the next financial milestone—it comes from transforming your relationship with money, success, and business ownership itself. This is what I call Sovereign Entrepreneurship: the ability to build and lead from your authentic power rather than from fear-based patterns.

Sovereign Entrepreneurship recognizes a fundamental truth: You already have everything you need to be free. The freedom you’re seeking through the next revenue target already exists within YOU.

The question isn’t how to make more money faster. The question is how to access the entrepreneurial freedom that’s available to you right now, regardless of your current revenue or margin.

This shift requires recognizing when external pressures—market expectations, investor demands, competitor actions, and industry standards—are driving your business decisions rather than your authentic vision. It means learning to distinguish between “I should launch this product because everyone else is doing it” and “I’m genuinely excited about this solution because it solves a problem I care about.” Most entrepreneurs have spent years—sometimes the entire life of their business—making decisions based on what they think successful businesses should do rather than what they actually want to create. We’ve been conditioned to chase metrics that don’t necessarily align with our authentic desires as creators. We pursue revenue milestones because they represent success, not because the work required to achieve them feels fulfilling. We scale because growth is what successful entrepreneurs do, not because bigger necessarily means better for our specific vision.

Sovereign Entrepreneurship invites you to step back and ask: “What do I actually want to create in the world through my business? What kind of company would I build if I weren’t trying to impress investors, competitors, or industry publications? What would my business look like if I trusted my own instincts more than market research?” When I work with entrepreneurs through this shift, something remarkable happens. They discover that they can trust their instincts and intuition more than they ever imagined. Decision-making becomes faster and clearer - even CHOICELESS - because they’re no longer filtering everything through fear-based criteria.

Their teams respond differently because authentic leadership naturally inspires higher performance than fear-based management. The business challenges don’t disappear, but the entrepreneur’s relationship to those challenges undergoes a complete transformation. Instead of feeling overwhelmed, they feel energized by opportunities and see something not working out as a massive learning. Instead of being driven by what competitors are doing or what OTHERS tell them to do, they’re pulled by their own vision of what’s possible. Most importantly, they remember why they became entrepreneurs in the first place—not just for financial freedom but for the freedom to create something meaningful in the world.

The Sacred Desire Framework for Entrepreneurs

The path to sovereign entrepreneurship begins with learning to recognize and follow your sacred desires as a business owner—the authentic pulls that emerge from your deepest knowing about what you want to create. Here’s a framework you can start using immediately in your business:

The Business Decision Body Check

Before making any significant business decision, pause and notice where you feel the desire in your body. Ask yourself:

- Does this opportunity feel expansive or contracting in my chest?
- Am I being pulled toward this or pushed by fear of missing out?
- Does thinking about this project create excitement or anxiety?
- Would I pursue this even if no one would ever know about my revenue from it?
- Am I making this decision to prove something or to create something meaningful?

The Sacred vs. Fear-Based Business Test

Sacred desire in business often involves:

- Creating solutions that genuinely solve problems you care about
- Building in ways that feel sustainable and energizing for you personally
- Making decisions that honor both profit and purpose
- Choosing growth strategies that align with your values and lifestyle
- Serving customers in ways that feel like a natural expression of your gifts

Fear-based desire in business often involves:

- Chasing opportunities primarily because they’re lucrative
- Competing from a place of scarcity rather than abundance
- Making decisions that sacrifice your well-being for financial gain



- Scaling in ways that disconnect you from the work you love
- Pursuing strategies that work for others but don’t fit your strengths
- Doing it because you think you SHOULD.

The Entrepreneurial Transcendence Practice

Each week, make at least one significant business decision from sacred desire rather than fear-based urgency. It might be turning down a profitable opportunity that doesn’t align with your vision or investing time in a project that excites you, even if the ROI is uncertain. Notice how differently these decisions feel in your body. Notice how your team responds when you’re operating from authentic passion rather than market pressure.

Notice how your customers react when your products or services come from a genuine desire to serve rather than a desperation to hit revenue targets. Track not just the financial outcomes but also how you feel about your business when making decisions from this energy. Many entrepreneurs discover that their most profitable decisions were the ones that felt most aligned, not the ones that looked best on paper or a fancy spreadsheet.

The Ripple Effect: What Changes When You Build from Sovereignty

When entrepreneurs make this shift from fear-based building to sacred desire, the ripple effects extend far beyond their personal experience and bank accounts. Jeannie's transformation illustrates this beautifully.

Within three months of learning to operate from sacred desire, her team began innovating in ways she hadn't seen before. "They stopped just executing my ideas and started bringing me solutions I never would have thought of," she told me. "It's like they suddenly felt permission to be creative instead of just productive."

Her profit margins increased by 50% over the next six months, even though she was working fewer hours than ever before. "I'm focusing on the products and tasks that actually matter to us instead of trying to spin all the plates".

Her customer retention improved dramatically because she was serving from authentic passion rather than just trying to maximize lifetime value. "When you genuinely care about solving someone's problem, they can feel it". This is the promise of sovereign entrepreneurship: your business becomes an expression of your authentic self rather than a means to prove your worth or escape financial insecurity.

You'll make decisions faster because you no longer have analysis paralysis. You'll lead more effectively, and you'll attract better team members, customers, and opportunities because sacred desire has a magnetic quality that fear-based hustle lacks. Your business becomes sustainable because it's energizing rather than draining. And perhaps most importantly, you model for other entrepreneurs what it looks like to be financially successful without sacrificing your soul or your sanity.

Your Next Step: Breaking Free from the Next-Level Trap

The next-level trap keeps us running toward freedom that we think exists somewhere "out there", but real entrepreneurial freedom begins the moment you recognize that you already have the power to choose how you want to build, lead, and create.

Today, I invite you to take one small step toward sovereign entrepreneurship. Before your next important business decision, pause and ask yourself: "Am I choosing this from fear or from love? Am I being driven by what I think successful entrepreneurs should do, or am I being pulled by what I authentically want to create?" Trust whatever answer emerges, even if it means turning down a lucrative opportunity or pursuing something that doesn't fit the typical success playbook. The path to entrepreneurial transcendence isn't about building your way to freedom—it's about discovering the freedom that becomes available the moment you stop running from yourself and start creating from your authentic power.

Your next financial milestone will never set you free. Are you willing to transform your relationship with money, success, and business ownership? That's where real entrepreneurial freedom begins. The question isn't whether you can make more money. The question is: Are you ready to discover what becomes possible when you stop chasing financial freedom and start embodying it?

By Kirsty Verity



Kirsty Verity is a transformational coach who guides high-achieving women entrepreneurs through the journey from fear-based business building to sovereign entrepreneurship. After building multiple seven-figure businesses while working seven days a week, she discovered a different path to success—one that honors both profit and purpose. She now helps women business owners transcend limiting patterns and build companies that express their authentic power while delivering sustainable financial success.

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From Surviving to Shining

How Summer Can Spark Your Stress-Free Success

As the warm breeze returns and the days stretch longer, summer offers us something we don't often give ourselves permission to breathe. It's a natural reset point. And for many professional women, this season can be a turning point, not just in the weather but in life.

Behind the success stories and polished appearances, I meet countless women who are exhausted. They're spinning plates, meeting deadlines, caring for others, and trying to keep everything afloat. On paper, they're thriving. But inside? They're overwhelmed, disconnected, and silently screaming for space. If this sounds like you, know this: you're not broken. You're just carrying too much.

And here's the truth most people don't talk about - you don't have to choose between success and sanity. You really can have both. But only when you're willing to break the cycle and create a new one.

Why Summer Is the Perfect Season for Change

Nature works in seasons, and so do we. Spring brings growth. Winter invites rest. But summer? Summer is for expansion. It's a time to recharge, reconnect, and realign with what truly matters.

Think about it—when was the last time you gave yourself permission just to be? To stop chasing, fixing, and proving? To stop treating stress as a badge of honour? Most women don't realise how much stress they're tolerating until they hit burnout. And even then, they often continue because stepping back feels like a failure. However, *the truth is that slowing down is a strategy, not a setback.*

The Stress Trap So Many High-Achievers Fall Into

If you're like most high-performing women, you're probably no stranger to high standards. You're used to doing it all and doing it well. You've built success through sheer determination. But somewhere along the way, you forgot to build space for you.

The constant striving, people-pleasing, and never-ending to-do list might have helped you climb the ladder... but now it's leaving you drained. The world often celebrates what we produce, not how we feel while producing it. That mindset keeps so many women stuck in a cycle of doing more while feeling less fulfilled. Stress becomes normalised. Exhaustion becomes expected. And joy? That feels like a luxury.

But here's the truth: you deserve more than just getting through the day. Summer offers the perfect opportunity to redefine what success means on your terms. It's not about abandoning ambition or lowering your standards. It's about asking yourself a powerful question:

"What does success feel like—not just look like—for me?"

That one question can shift everything because real success should feel sustainable. It should feel energising, not exhausting. Fulfilling, not depleting. So many women have been taught to measure their worth by their productivity. But when you start to prioritise peace, purpose, and alignment, you don't lose your edge - you sharpen it.

When you're stuck in stress, it's hard to believe that life can feel any different. But once you begin to shift your mindset, energy, and boundaries, something powerful happens: your life begins to respond. The women I've worked with often report feeling like they've returned home to themselves. They laugh more. Sleep better. Say no without guilt. And start to experience success in a whole new way, one that honours both their drive and their well-being.

They're not doing less. They're doing what matters with more clarity, calm, and confidence. And no, they didn't need to run away to Bali or start over from scratch. They simply needed space, support, and the right tools to reconnect with themselves.

Let Summer Be the Spark

So, if you've been waiting for a sign... this is it. Let this summer be the season you stop just surviving and start truly shining. Let it be the moment you draw a line in the sand and decide: "No more burnout. No more putting myself last." You don't have to have all the answers right now. But the willingness to pause and listen—to your body, your mind, your soul—is more powerful than you realise. You deserve to feel energised. Aligned. Empowered. You deserve to create success on your terms without stress weighing you down. Because when you prioritise your well-being, you don't just cope better...

You lead better.
You love better.
You live better.

This summer, give yourself the gift of reflection. Reconnect with the version of you that's been buried under expectations, obligations, and endless to-do lists.

Let her breathe.
Let her rise.
Let her shine.

By Beverley Shatliff



Beyond Burnout

Recalibrating the Energy System with Micronutrients, Higher Consciousness, and Energetic Work

In today's performance-driven world, the emphasis is often on pushing harder, multitasking, and optimizing every moment. While productivity may rise in the short term, the space for genuine restoration and sustainable recovery is often missing. What is often overlooked is a deeper understanding of what it truly means to replenish our energy—not just physically but also emotionally and spiritually.

Burnout does not happen overnight. It is a slow and subtle process, building up in the body, mind, and spirit over time. Its roots can lie in hidden micronutrient deficiencies, the inability to say no to toxic people or work environments, chronic emotional overload, and a prolonged disconnection from one's personal needs and values. That's why lasting recovery requires more than a weekend off or a temporary break. It demands a systemic reset that strengthens the body on a biological level, calms the nervous system, and reconnects us to our intuition and long-term purpose.

Micronutrients: Fuel for Cellular Resilience

Biochemically, every cell in our body relies on a range of micronutrients to function properly. Elements such as magnesium, B vitamins, zinc, vitamin C, and omega-3 fatty acids are essential for maintaining nervous system balance, emotional stability, brain function, and immune health. When we are exposed to prolonged stress, irregular sleep, or constant mental pressure, these nutrients are depleted faster than they can be replenished. This deficiency often shows up as fatigue, brain fog, irritability, or sleep disturbances, all classic symptoms of burnout.

By restoring these nutrients through high-quality supplementation or micronutrient-rich food, we can rebuild a foundation of physiological resilience. This isn't about quick fixes or supplements such as magic pills. It is about giving the body the raw materials it needs to return to balance. Better sleep, clearer thinking, and emotional calmness often follow naturally when the system is biologically supported.

Transforming Emotional and Mental patterns

However, physical recovery is only one piece of the puzzle. Emotional and mental patterns must also be brought into consciousness and then transformed. Burnout frequently reveals outdated belief systems, such as equating self-worth with productivity or believing that rest must be earned. These internal narratives often go unquestioned for years until the body says, "Enough."

Professional coaching and mindfulness-based practices can help individuals recognize these patterns and make conscious choices that are more aligned with their authentic needs and values. Coaching provides a non-judgmental space to explore inner conflicts, redefine boundaries, and rediscover one's personal vision for a fulfilling life. With the right support, people can shift from reacting unconsciously to acting with intention—and that alone can be profoundly energizing.

The Power of Spiritual and Intuitive Reconnection

Equally essential is the spiritual and intuitive dimension of recovery. In today's overstimulated world, many of us have lost touch with our inner compass. Practices such as meditation, yoga, breathwork, and energetic work offer powerful ways to reconnect with the deeper self beyond logic, performance, or external validation. These modalities are not about escapism or vague spirituality. They are grounded tools for calming the nervous system, regulating emotional responses, and accessing intuitive clarity from within.

When we pause, listen, and reconnect, a shift begins to happen. We stop managing symptoms and start meeting our real needs. We no longer seek healing from outside ourselves but from within.

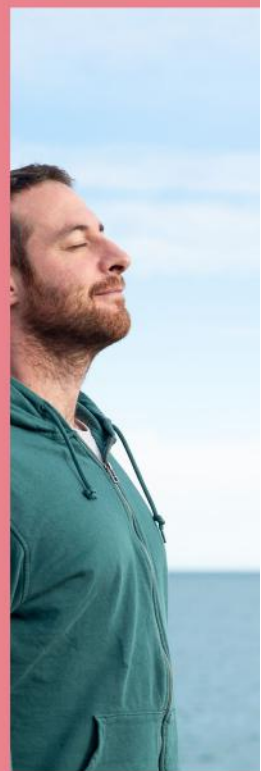
A Truly Holistic Reset

True vitality emerges when all parts of our being—body, mind, and spirit—are acknowledged and supported. A holistic approach helps us move out of survival mode and into a grounded state of conscious, sustainable energy. It's also about balancing the nervous system—moving between sympathetic drive and parasympathetic recovery in a natural rhythm. Burnout then becomes not a failure but an invitation—an opportunity to reset and choose a new, more conscious way of living and working. The future of health isn't found in a single app, supplement, or solution. It is rooted in integration. It is holistic, intuitive, and deeply human.

Disclaimer: This article is intended for informational purposes only and does not replace professional medical advice. If you are experiencing serious health issues or symptoms of burnout, please consult a qualified physician or licensed therapist for proper diagnosis and treatment.

By Carola Goedeke

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(EMFS) ELECTRO MAGNETIC FIELDS

How does this invisible world affect us?

When drained and under par, we look at our social and work-life balance. EMFS could well be the cause for the high sensitivity in us, particularly if we are predisposed genetically or have experienced repeated traumas, our body crashing more than others.

Roy Riggs, a geo-biologist, has written some great research. These EMF fields surround electronic devices. Affecting us in a biochemical way. We, too, conduct an electrical current. People who work with Reiki healing and bodywork are attuned to sensing the energy of others.

The field around us can be examined by specialist cameras, seeing the colours and depth of each layer. A very interesting way of seeing our overall health. Healthy, they are expansive, brighter, and more vibrant. Low mood or disease are seen as greyer, darker and shallower layers.

Some of the many ailments that can be caused range from prickly sensations in the skin, rashes, painful muscles, eye symptoms, foggy memory and thinking, suppressed melatonin production, as well as fertility issues. Many systems can be affected.

We are in modern life surrounded by these invisible fields. Anything wireless-based, such as cordless phones, is a fabulous modern way to have a home phone, but baby monitors are the worst offenders, a worrying concept—encompassing mobile phones, charging pads, gaming modems, laptops, and activity trackers. Even cars have WIFI now.

We are surrounded by a bubble of electricity, along with the rollout of new 5G in many places. The many who are highly averse to these fields cannot escape easily. In or outdoors.

We have all heard that when living close to telephone masts or electric pylons, some people develop ailments. Even if symptomless reactions are going on in the body internally. Our heart has five electrical components that enable it to beat. Cell-to-cell messages constantly jump electrically between each other. Electrocardiograms can see this electricity. We are energy.

Mentally, emotionally, and physically, the body can be disrupted, leading to disease. Our thoughts create electrical impulses, emotions create magnetic elements, and our EMF can be measured up to 3 feet away. The heart's magnetic field is 100x stronger than the brain's.

Light is the main field we see; the invisible micro-world of X-rays, microwaves, and radio waves, with the longest rays being hidden, is the next level. To avoid is the difficult part.

What can be done to reduce our contact?

1. Limiting exposure if we are highly sensitive to things. Particularly if you suffer from Chronic fatigue or fibromyalgia and low immunity, so many of the symptoms of these conditions are similar to EMF side effects. The question is whether the body is not at ease creating these or whether it's your living environment and exposure. Starting to investigate and take steps to avoid this is the way forward.

2. Remove all appliances from the bedroom. Do not charge your phone by the bed or even in the room. Avoid using your mobile as an alarm. Switch off and unplug laptops, gaming machines, modems, and PCs if you happen to have these set up in the bedroom.

3. Some who are critically sensitive need to turn off the main WIFI hub in the house. Smart meters are all using WIFI. TV is normally on standby; both are difficult if recordings are taking place, as it is challenging to switch off completely.

4. Sleeping near a radiator is also not ideal; move the bed further away if at all possible.

5. Keeping mobile calls to a minimum. Heat energy rises rapidly, mobiles are held close to the skull. Young children who now use tech earlier could be affected more, especially when their skulls are still developing. One reason this is vital education. Their skulls are thinner, definitely not near a young infant. Think where do you place your mobile on your body, strapped close to you or in a pocket those rays are beaming out every second. Keep mobile devices also in aeroplane mode if driving, as the signal is constantly roaming to connect. Increasing the EMFs.

6. Energy dots are a new technology that provides a range, applied to devices or the body, helping to reduce emissions entering your biofield. Our body runs at a 7.8-hertz frequency; the dots are programmed to this energy signature and help retune the EMFs being emitted. The world of EMFs is increasing, and it's not surprising that poor health develops as we become more immersed in these fields. Knowledge is key to protecting your body.

By Nicky Abell-Francis





Overcoming Burnout

A Journey Toward Sustainable Success

Burnout doesn't always announce itself with a loud crash. Often, it's the slow build-up of exhaustion, frustration, and emotional depletion until one day, you realize you've lost the passion you once had for your work.

I know this all too well. After years of pushing myself in high-pressure roles in healthcare and office management, I found myself utterly drained. I loved leading teams and solving problems, but the pressure, long hours, and constant demands took their toll. Eventually, burnout hit me hard—I was overwhelmed, emotionally exhausted, and questioning my purpose.

My Burnout Story

At first, I tried to power through it. I told myself to work harder, be more efficient, and manage my time better. But nothing changed. I continued to feel physically drained, mentally foggy, and disconnected from the work that once inspired me.

Burnout doesn't come out of nowhere. It builds up over time. For me, it was a culmination of saying yes to too many things, overextending myself, and not setting boundaries. I thought I was being helpful—but I was slowly running on empty.

"Burnout isn't a badge of honor. It's a wake-up call that something needs to change."

I spent so much time trying to meet everyone else's expectations that I forgot to check in with myself. What did I need? What did I want? The truth hit me: I was giving so much to everyone else that there was nothing left for me.

The Signs of Burnout: Recognize Them Early

Burnout doesn't look the same for everyone, but here are a few of the signs I wish I had paid attention to sooner:

Physical and Emotional Exhaustion: No matter how much you rest, you still feel depleted.

Loss of Passion: The work you once loved now feels heavy or meaningless.

Irritability and Withdrawal: You're easily frustrated or emotionally checked out.

Mental Fog: Simple tasks take longer and focusing feels like a struggle.

If this resonates with you, you're not alone. Many professionals experience burnout—but few discuss it until they're already in it.

The Turning Point: Learning to Say No

My breakthrough came when I made one of the hardest decisions of my career: I started saying no. I had to stop trying to do everything and instead focus on what truly mattered—my health, well-being, and the parts of my work that still brought me joy. At first, it felt like I was letting people down. However, I realized that honouring my limits made me more effective—not less. Letting go of the pressure to be perfect was liberating.

Steps to Recover from Burnout

From my experience, here are the five most important steps that helped me heal and build a more sustainable career:

1. Acknowledge Your Burnout

The first step is admitting something isn't right. You can't fix what you won't face. Be honest with yourself and recognize where you are.

2. Set Boundaries

Saying no became one of my most powerful tools. Boundaries protect your energy, allowing you to focus on what matters most.

3. Prioritize Self-Care

I had to stop seeing rest and joy as luxuries. Whether it was taking a walk, reading, or simply being still, I began treating self-care as essential.

4. Reconnect with Your Purpose

Burnout had blurred my sense of direction. I took the time to reflect on why I initially started this work. Reconnecting with that "why" helped reignite my motivation.

5. Seek Support

You don't have to go through burnout alone. I leaned on trusted colleagues, coaches, and friends who could offer perspective and encouragement.

Moving Forward: Redefining Success

Recovering from burnout taught me that success doesn't mean constantly pushing yourself to the limit. It means building a life and career that sustains you—not one that depletes you.

Today, I'm still ambitious. I still care deeply about my work. But now, I also care about how I feel while doing it. I've redefined success as doing meaningful work without sacrificing my well-being in the process. If you're feeling burned out, I want you to know there is hope. You can build a version of success that doesn't cost you your peace.

By Emily Apell



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Masculine vs. Feminine Energy in Modern Relationships

How to Create Balance Without Losing Yourself

Modern relationships are evolving fast. With shifting gender roles, rising independence, and growing awareness of emotional intelligence, couples are seeking ways to stay connected while remaining true to themselves. One powerful tool? Understanding the balance between masculine and feminine energy.

What Are Masculine and Feminine Energies?

These energies aren't tied to gender- they're universal forces found in everyone. In relationships, they create polarity, which fuels attraction and connection.

Masculine energy is focused, decisive, purpose-driven, grounded, and protective.

Feminine energy is expressive, nurturing, creative, intuitive, flowing, and receptive.

When these energies complement each other, there's harmony. When they're out of sync, we feel frustrated or emotionally disconnected.

Why This Topic Matters

Today, many women spend their days in masculine energy- managing, leading, doing, and men often struggle to embody healthy masculinity, fearing they'll come off as controlling. The result? A lack of polarity that affects emotional and sexual chemistry. Too much masculine energy on both sides leads to power struggles, while too much feminine energy creates emotional chaos without direction. Relationships thrive when polarity is restored.

Step 1: Know Your Core Energy

Ask yourself: Do I feel more at peace when I'm leading and solving or when I'm feeling and connecting? Your core energy is where you feel most like yourself.

- *Do I feel more energized by achieving or connecting?*
- *Do I crave freedom or love more?*
- *When I feel safe, do I want to soften or take charge?*

Knowing your core helps you attract complementary partners and stay aligned with yourself.



Step 2: Heal Your Relationship with the Opposite Energy

Often, people resist or mistrust the opposite energy due to past wounds.

- *A woman may fear softness because she once got hurt.*
- *A man may avoid leading because he was taught that dominance is bad.*

Reframe the story:

- *Feminine isn't weak- it's powerful in its openness.*
- *Masculine isn't controlling- it's steady, present, and grounded.*

Healing comes from recognizing these patterns and choosing to shift them.

Step 3: Practice Energetic Shifts

Balance doesn't mean pretending. It means returning to your core. If you're a feminine core in masculine mode all day, try moving your body, journaling your feelings, wearing clothes that make you feel radiant, or letting someone else take the lead.

If you're masculine at your core, focus on carving out quiet space to reflect, setting goals, taking action, holding emotional space without trying to fix, and leading with calm clarity.

Daily rituals keep you connected to your natural state.

Step 4: Invite Polarity Into Your Relationship

You can't force your partner to change, but you can invite polarity by shifting your energy first.

- *Instead of directing, express what you desire.*
- *Instead of filling space, allow silence.*
- *Instead of leading, lean back and trust.*

This creates emotional magnetism. When a man feels trusted and needed, he steps into strength. When a woman feels safe and seen, she softens and opens.

Step 5: Don't Confuse Avoidance with Polarity

Some behaviors may look masculine but are actually avoidant.

- *Healthy masculine: clear, consistent, emotionally grounded.*
- *Avoidant: distant, confusing, emotionally unavailable.*

True polarity feels like peace, not anxiety.

Step 6: Let Balance Shift Naturally

In real relationships, energy isn't fixed. There are moments when the feminine leads and the masculine rests, and vice versa. What matters is awareness, respect, and the willingness to adapt.

Balance is not a performance—it's a rhythm. A relationship with polarity feels alive but safe, exciting but stable.

Final Thoughts

This isn't about playing roles. It's about returning to your natural state. When you stop performing and start embodying your true energy, love becomes a dance, not a tug-of-war.

Stay grounded in your truth and show up in your full essence. From that place, a real connection begins.

By Inna Mel



selling with soul

WHY CONNECTION ALWAYS WINS

I've never been the loudest in the room—but I've always known how to listen. And that, it turns out, is the real secret to selling powerfully.

After a decade in sales, I can confidently say I've always done things differently. I never loved the idea of pitching or pushing. Instead, I focused on listening, asking the right questions, and truly understanding the person in front of me. That's the magic: when you create space for someone to be seen and heard, you can guide the conversation toward the outcome that serves them best—that's your offer.

I've sold across three industries, but it all began with travel. After I had extensively travelled the world, it felt obvious to become a travel agent. I didn't have formal sales experience and was honestly nervous about selling. But I knew my passion for travel would outweigh my fear. Selling, I realised, was simply a skill I could learn.

I still remember my first sale. A couple walked in, unsure about booking a trip. As we chatted, they shared they were hoping to visit family in Fiji—family they hadn't

In that environment, people weren't just buying a house. They were placing their trust in someone to help them create their future. It wasn't about delivering a perfect pitch. It was about asking the right questions, understanding their story, and offering real support. Clients needed to feel safe. They needed to believe you understood them—and that you could help them bring their vision to life.

That experience cemented my belief that sales, at its core, is always a conversation—a powerful one when it's grounded in empathy, trust, and presence. Now, in this next chapter of life as a new mum, I've launched my own sales coaching business: Heart Led Sales. I'm creating a space for women to sell with connection and relationship building.

I strongly believe that gone are the days of the stereotypical pushy salesperson. In today's world—where information is so accessible—how we connect through our sales conversations matters now more than ever. This looks like listening to understand and showing up with genuine care and belief in your work.

How you show up to demonstrate your expertise and skills—with a level of passion and conviction for what you do—is



seen in years. You could feel how much it meant to them. I got curious. I listened. And through that connection, they chose to go ahead and book. They didn't need a pitch—they just needed someone to hear their story. That moment showed me that selling wasn't about pressure. It was about being present.

I quickly found my rhythm, consistently being ranked among the top new consultants in my first year. I later moved to a flagship store and qualified for our Global Ball in Las Vegas for the highest performers. It was a full-circle moment for the woman who once feared sales. Then, the world shut down in 2020. Most of the business was stood down—but I was asked to stay on to manage cancellations and refunds. It was one of the most challenging seasons of my career. After 12 months, I felt burned out and knew it was time to pivot.

At the same time, my husband and I were preparing to build our first home—and the next step in my sales journey led me into the building industry. Selling new homes brought a whole new level of responsibility. During a volatile market—when interest rates were climbing and builders were collapsing—connection-based selling became essential.

what's going to give you a magnetic edge. People, at their core, want to connect and place their trust in you. When you can show them who you are and how you understand them, they'll see you as the only choice—and they'll trust you to deliver.

Heart Led Sales is for the woman who wants more—

More belief in herself to sell in a way that feels true and aligned to her.

More depth to her conversations, to lead with compassion and conviction.

You are not only empowered in your expertise, but you are also empowered to sell in your business.

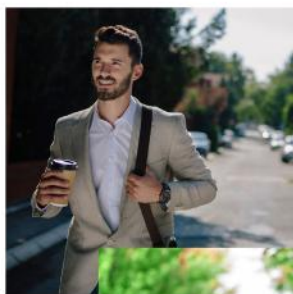
And as a woman in business, you are ready to meet this version of her.

By Gemma Rosbiffi

www.gemmarosbiffi.carrd.co



The All or Nothing Trap and the Recipe for Burnout



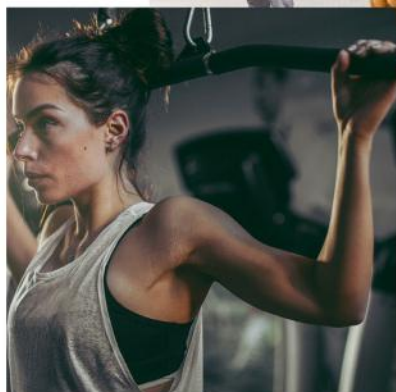
Ever feel like if you can't do it perfectly, there's no point in doing it at all?

That's the all-or-nothing mindset — and while it might sound like commitment, it's one of the biggest barriers to actually making lasting change. You tell yourself you'll start when things calm down, when you have a plan, when you feel more motivated. But life rarely offers that



perfect window. Instead, weeks pass, and you stay stuck, frustrated that you can't seem to get going.

The problem isn't a lack of willpower. It's the belief that anything less than



100% isn't worth doing. That belief is what holds so many people back. You're not lazy — you're overwhelmed. You're trying to juggle work, family, responsibilities, and a packed calendar. Of course, the idea of five workouts, a meal plan, early mornings and cutting sugar all at once feels impossible.

The psychology behind all-or-nothing thinking is rooted in perfectionism and fear — specifically, the fear of failing, of doing something “wrong,” and of wasting time. So, instead of risking a half-hearted attempt, you put it off altogether. But ironically, that mindset is what keeps you spinning your wheels. We go too hard and too fast, and when we inevitably miss a day, we feel like we've failed. So we give up. Again. Sound familiar? It's no wonder so many people feel like fitness isn't for them. With so much noise across multiple platforms these days and so much conflicting advice, it's almost easier to quit before you've even begun!

But here's the reframe: what if success wasn't about perfection? What if, instead of trying to stay disciplined and do high-intensity workouts for six weeks, you aimed to show up imperfectly but consistently for six months?

Because that's where change really happens — in the small daily decisions, the 70% effort that stacks up. In the 20-minute walk before work. The 10 squats while the kettle boils. The one strength session that doesn't look like much on paper but keeps your momentum alive.

We often underestimate the importance of these micro-habits, but the science doesn't. Just 3,900 steps a day has been shown to significantly improve health outcomes — yet the average adult in the UK is only walking around 3,000–4,000. We're also falling short of the recommended movement, with around 36% of UK adults not meeting the NHS guideline of 150 minutes of moderate activity per week. Not because we're not trying — but because we're trying to do too much, all at once, and it never quite sticks.

Strategies You Can Start Right Now That Actually Add Up

Start where you are — even five minutes of movement counts. A short walk on your lunch break, walking the dog before work, or doing some mobility exercises while watching TV is better than nothing.

- Scale your workouts — can't do the full gym session? Do one set instead of three. Or pick four full-body exercises and just do 20 minutes.

- Sprinkle movement throughout your day — take the stairs, walk during calls, stretch between meetings.

- Anchor new habits to your lifestyle — walk to get your morning coffee, prep extra protein at dinner so lunch is sorted, or try a morning class once a week to set the tone.

- Set up systems that make this easier — lay your clothes out the night before, set calendar reminders, or sign up for a class that gives you accountability.

- Track your consistency, not intensity — focus on showing up, not smashing every session. Progress is built on what you repeat, not what you perfect.

When you start seeing movement and nourishment as tools that support your energy, focus and confidence — not punishments for what you ate or missed — your relationship with fitness shifts completely; it stops feeling like something you “have to” do and becomes something that supports you.

You deserve to feel strong, capable and proud of what you're building. But you don't get there by trying to do it all at once — you get there by finding what's doable, repeating it, and slowly building a lifestyle that works with your life, not against it.

It might not look flashy on the outside — but the person who keeps showing up, even when it's imperfect, gets further than the one waiting for the perfect time.

So here's your permission to show up imperfectly. To take the walk. Cook the dinner. Log the workout, even if it wasn't your best. What matters is that you keep showing up, and the compound interest in your health will be exponential.

By Kirstie Pullman





UNMASKING IMPOSTER SYNDROME

WHY CLOSING THE GENDER GAP BEGINS WITH RECLAIMING SELF-BELIEF

Imposter syndrome doesn't discriminate. It finds its way into boardrooms, classrooms, and even the most accomplished minds. And for women—especially those stepping into leadership roles—it's not just a fleeting insecurity. It's a conditioned response to generations of being told we are too much, not enough, or simply not the norm.

I've led high-performing sales teams, built national retail operations, trained emerging executives, and presented to rooms filled with decision-makers. And still, there were moments when I questioned whether I truly belonged. That's the deception of imposter syndrome—it rarely aligns with your capability. It aligns with the subconscious narrative you've absorbed about what leadership should look like.

My journey to executive leadership wasn't linear. It was a climb paved with reinvention, resilience, and a lot of unlearning. Early in my career, I often felt I had to work twice as hard to earn half the credibility. I didn't come from a traditional path, and while my results spoke volumes, I found myself shrinking in moments when I should have been standing tall. I had to learn how to take up space.

I had to train myself to believe that my voice didn't need permission. And I had to stop waiting to feel “ready.”

The truth is, most women don't suffer from a lack of skill—they suffer from a lack of internal validation in systems that weren't built with them in mind. Imposter syndrome isn't a flaw. It's a byproduct of a society that has historically underrepresented women in leadership, undervalued our contributions, and undermined our voices. It stems from walking into rooms where decisions are made and not seeing yourself reflected at the table. And yet, despite the discomfort, we continue to rise.

Through Inspire with Marissa, I've worked with hundreds of women at different stages of their career journeys. The pattern is painfully familiar—brilliant, capable professionals questioning their worth the moment they step into visibility. They fear being “found out” when, in reality, the only thing to uncover is their own brilliance.

What I've learned through coaching and mentorship is this: imposter syndrome loses its power the moment we call it by name and confront the systems that sustain it. We must stop framing it as personal insecurity and start addressing it as a leadership crisis fueled by a gender confidence gap.

According to the World Economic Forum, while the education gap is nearly closed, women still hold less than 25% of C-suite positions globally. Representation matters—not just because it gives young women someone to look up to but also because it reinforces what is possible. When women lead visibly and unapologetically, it creates a ripple effect that erodes outdated norms and rewrites the leadership narrative.

At No Girl Left Behind, this is our mission in motion. We don't just empower women—we equip them. We provide mentorship that dismantles doubt, leadership training rooted in clarity and confidence, and spaces where women can practice taking up space before they're asked to prove they belong.

We teach values-based leadership—because when you lead from a place of alignment, imposter syndrome doesn't stand a chance. When you are clear on your purpose, your values, and your vision, external noise becomes background static. For me, that clarity came from embracing my full story. Not just the polished version but the chapters I once tried to hide.

Once I integrated every part of my journey—failures, reinventions, and lessons—I no longer needed external validation to know I was qualified to lead. I stopped trying to fit a mold and started becoming the example I wish I had seen.

That's what I now help others do. Through coaching, public speaking, and hands-on leadership development, I teach women how to reclaim their narrative and lead from the inside out.

Because here's what I know for certain: you don't need more experience to lead—you need more belief. You don't need to be perfect to be powerful. And you absolutely do not need to shrink to fit the comfort of others.

Imposter syndrome is not a reflection of your readiness—it's a signal that you're stepping into new levels of leadership. The discomfort isn't the problem—it's the invitation. And when we collectively rise above it, we don't just close the confidence gap—we close the leadership gap.

To every woman who has questioned her place at the table:

**You are the table.
Pull up a chair.
Speak with clarity.
Lead with values.**

And know this—when you rise, you give every woman watching you permission to do the same.

By Marissa Cherepanov





CONVERSATION WITH YOUR CHILD

BY RACHANAA TULSYAN



Your child will be as affected as you are during your separation. They pick up tension in little things, such as school drop conversations, your unconscious reaction to an email alert when expecting a reply from your lawyer, and the changing tone of your voice.

Does that mean that you start taking lessons on how to pretend to be joyful when you are going through a tough separation? OR do you sacrifice your sanity for the sake of your child and not go for a separation?

Not giving your child a broken home comes with a great deal of responsibility that parents often tend to overlook. Providing your child with a good education, food, shelter, or even buying them gifts cannot replace or compensate for the emotional investment made. This includes your relationship with the other parent.

Conversation with your child on your separation

It can be difficult, if not the most difficult part of your divorce, to make your child understand what lies therein for them. Some pro tips to help you deal with this situation:

Role rehearsal: It is beneficial to rehearse your message to your child. Even if you cannot stand your partner and discussions lead to arguments, it is advisable to set aside your ego clash and deliver the same message to your child. Pre-empt questions like, 'Where will I celebrate my birthday?', 'Will we be together for Christmas?', 'Does that mean we will not go on holiday?' There is no right or wrong answer.

Acknowledging that they are raising valid points and that you will address them, as you are still in the midst of planning these events, will assure them that you are considering their concerns.

False comfort: Telling your child that nothing will change for them is giving them false hope. Things will change! It is advisable to be as honest as possible. Assuring your child that you are not separating because of them and you will both love them the same way as you have in the past will help in rebuilding the trust.

Delivering the message, not the emotion: We often get carried away during such situations and end up saying things that might make the child very nervous. She or he might not react to it, but be assured that you have started damaging the bond between you and your child as they start feeling unsafe.

Saying things the way they are without adding biases or personal conclusions like, 'Your dad will never ...' or 'Your mom has always....' leaves lasting marks on young minds. They internalise these comments, building stories about themselves from fragments of adult conversations.

Developing new vocabulary and practising phrases like 'your dad handles things differently' and 'that is something to discuss with your mom' leads to effective message delivery without negatively impacting the child's emotions.

Blame game: Steer away from it completely! Even if you have the most abusive partner, refrain from talking negatively about them. You will only end up pushing your child away by doing so. Let them see it for themselves by you being a mentally healthy parent.

Be the healthy parent: A child needs one mentally healthy parent. A mentally healthy parent would look after the well being of the child and avoid unnecessary fights.

They recognise the narcissistic traits of their partner and play a safe game. For example, a healthy parent would organise for the other one to attend their child's sports event together and get seats next to each other so that the child could see both parents together and not have to search for them in different directions.

Wear your oxygen mask first: All the above-mentioned tips will work only when you are well-oxygenated. If you are struggling to breathe, you will be tumbling while trying very hard to safeguard another life.

Taking professional help in situations like this has always worked wonders for me. Approaching someone who sees things from a totally detached perspective and is qualified to advise on the next steps is a wise move.

It is imperative that every human being takes care of their mental wellbeing. We are laying the foundation for our future generations as they imbibe the same personality type they see around them as they grow up.

Rachanaa TulSYan is a qualified Breakup and Divorce Coach focused on helping those in abusive and controlling relationships. Having lived-experience of two difficult relationships – one which was physically abusive and the other which involved coercive control, she now works with her clients to spot the red flags that often go unseen in relationship breakdowns.

Her mission is to normalise divorce by helping both women and men break the cycle of abuse so they can start to live their lives again. Having seen the impact that coercive control can have, and the fact that victims are often not believed as there are no physical signs of abuse, Rachanaa has been spurred on in her mission to help make a difference.

You can reach out to Rachanaa at – www.rachanaatulSYan.com



Protecting Your Start-Up from Yourself

Have you ever found yourself on a call with a lead, pouring every ounce of your expertise into the call only to realize that you've given away the secret recipe for free? I've been there, and it's a hard pill to swallow. As entrepreneurs, we often walk a fine line between providing value and protecting our business.

But here's the truth: setting boundaries, saying "no", and asking for help isn't just about preserving your sanity; it's about ensuring your business thrives.

Why You Shouldn't Give Everything Away

Early in my entrepreneurial journey, I made a classic mistake that many of us fall into - I over-delivered, not in a good way. I remember this consultation vividly because I spent 30 minutes dissecting a potential client's website, pointing out every flaw, and offering detailed suggestions on how to fix them. I was convinced that my in-depth analysis would impress them so much that they'd sign on the dotted line immediately. Instead, they ghosted me. I can only assume they took my advice, implemented the changes themselves, and saw no need to hire me.

That experience taught me you don't have to give everything away upfront to prove your worth. In reality, you might be undermining your own value. Clients need to understand that your insight and expertise are not free commodities but part of what they pay for when they hire you. It's about creating a balance where you provide just enough value to establish trust and interest but not so much that there's no incentive for them to work with you further.



The Art of Setting Boundaries

Think about when you go to a high-end restaurant. You know the chef won't hand you the recipe card. Instead, they give you a taste, so you crave more. That's exactly how you should approach client interactions.

Structure the consultation call in a way that provides value but also sets the stage for a continued relationship. Share some insights, but hold back the detailed road maps and guides that are part of your paid service.

One way to do this is by setting clear expectations before the call. Let clients know upfront what they can expect. For example, explain that the initial call is to understand their needs and discuss potential solutions, with the promise of more detailed guidance

once they come on board. This way, you maintain control over how much information you give and ensure that your expertise isn't undervalued.

Embracing the Power of "No"

As entrepreneurs, we often feel pressured to say "yes" to everything. However, here's the reality: saying "no" can be just as powerful as saying "yes". Your time and expertise are your most valuable assets. By being selective, you ensure that you're working with clients who respect your boundaries and appreciate the value you bring.

I used to think that turning down work was a sign of weakness. However, I've come to realize that being selective about where I invest my time and energy is crucial for my business. Not every client is a good fit, and not every opportunity is worth pursuing. Learning to say "no" has allowed me to focus on the clients and projects that align with my values and goals, leading to better outcomes for everyone involved.



The Strength in Asking for Help

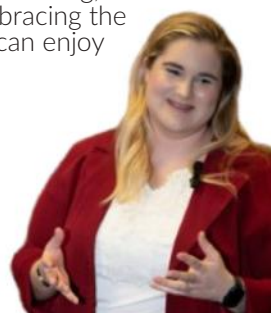
In the high-stakes game of entrepreneurship, asking for help can feel like admitting defeat. But it's one of the strongest moves you can make. No one has all the answers, and pretending you do is a recipe for burnout.

What I've learned is that asking for help is a sign of strength. It shows that you're committed to your business and willing to do whatever it takes to succeed. It also opens the door to deeper connections with others in your network. When you allow others to help you, you're not just solving a problem - you're building relationships that can support you.

Running a business is full of surprises. Some days are thrilling, others exhausting. But by setting boundaries and embracing the power of "no" asking for help when you need it, you can enjoy the ride and come out stronger on the other side.

By J. Rachel West

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WHAT IS IT TO BE A MAN?

What is masculinity, and how is it defined in modern culture? Unfortunately, masculinity still follows past interpretations of what Society States a man should be. Past generations and the current generation still work off the idea that a man should be strong, not show emotion, can deal with anything, has to be a protector, rescuer, successful, and unflappable. This creates a lot of pressure/ stress to live up to these unrealistic expectations, hence the problems men experience with their mental/ emotional well-being.

If society changes its perspective on masculinity and what it means to be a man, a man could be defined as emotionally intelligent, supportive, open, and show vulnerability and insecurities while still



feeling confident. I feel that men at present are confused about their role in society. In my opinion, there is a certain level of Fear that comes from this confusion.

How can society change so that current and future generations of men feel different, supported, and heard and that it's okay to ask for help, be vulnerable, and show insecurities?

It's a domino effect.

1. Education in schools - mental health and emotional well-being lessons become part of the curriculum, taught from reception through to leaving school at 18.

2. More funds, infrastructure, resources, and emphasis are put on the importance of mental health in creating a healthier, vibrant, and successful society for both men and women.

Working in therapy over the last four years running my own counselling practice, the things that keep coming up working with all clients, not just men, are our learnt behaviours given to us as children by parents/ caregivers, the social environment we grew up in and society as a whole, and the effect these have negatively on clients mental/ emotional well-being in adulthood. Some people adhere rigidly to learnt behaviours instilled in them in childhood and continue to follow these learnt behaviours throughout their lives, much like pillars or foundations.

The reality is they were given to us as children, and we aren't children anymore. Some of these learnt behaviours don't work for us as adults or in this modern, ever-changing world. As we grow up and, our world expands, and we experience more, some people lose and replace learnt behaviours that no longer work for them. They replace them with behaviours from experiences in life that work more in line with the life they lead now as an adult. Some people don't do this; they get stuck and continue using learnt behaviours from their childhood because they feel safe and familiar.

No one is in control of our choices other than ourselves as adults. We Are In Control to change things if they are not working for us. However, some people see a problem, a challenge, or a difficult period in their life and feel like it's a dead end, that they're stuck, and have to accept the situation they find themselves in, as they don't feel they can change it.

Others see a challenge, problem, or difficult period in life, and instead of seeing a roadblock, they see a crossroads with options. They have a choice of which direction to take; there is no wrong option because no one else is in charge apart from them. If they make a choice and it doesn't work out further down the road or changes, they simply come to another Crossroads and have options and choices again.

If we live life from a perspective that a challenge, problem, or difficult situation means there is no way out, feeling stuck and trapped, this can feel scary and have a negative impact on a person's mental and emotional well-being. But if we know that no one else is in control of what we do other than ourselves, and we have a choice no matter whatever situation we find ourselves in. Imagine how much that would positively impact our mental and emotional well-being.

Books to read related to this article:

1. *Of Boys and Men* - Richard Reeves
2. *Billy no mates* - Max Dickens
3. *What about men?* - Caitlin Moran

By Keith Roe

www.selfactualisetalkingtherapy.co.uk



TAROT IS YOUR GUIDE

By Hannah Dawe

Energetically, we have been through quite a lot, and it's not even the end of the year yet. We have already had a lunar and solar eclipse, and Mercury and Venus went retrograde. What does this all mean? Most of the time, it is the universe pushing us with certain challenges to shine a light on our darkness (Lunar Eclipse) to get ready to enjoy the new phases that are to come (Solar Eclipse).

Retrogrades are for 're-setting' or 'renewal', whatever that means for you right now. Mercury retrogrades may cause a lack of understanding and clarity and can play havoc with travel arrangements and technology (so always check your junk mail during a Mercury retrograde), and Venus retrogrades can bring up old flames, blasts from the past that we thought we were well rid of - but what is the test? This is where the Lunar Eclipse can come into play. How you respond to certain people that 'pop up' will determine how much you have grown and healed as a person.

Our ego gets tested by the 'instant sense of satisfaction' when someone seemingly seems to be watching more of our stories on social media or receiving an odd, random message, resulting in a strange sense of 'the tables have turned', but have they really? Self-worth is sacred

Repeated patterns normally happen because there is a lesson we need to learn, and more often than not, it boils down to how we truly feel about ourselves. Do you allow external forces to dictate your mood? Have you been guilty of putting someone on a pedestal, and if so, how often have you found yourself doing it? There is always room for growth, self-care and soul nourishment, hence why I created interactive 1-1 courses to help empower and inspire people to realise the power is already within.

The tarot card to join this article (after shuffling the deck and having them face down) is the three of wands. This can predict expansion, particularly when building your own business. If you have been feeling like you've been in a waiting mode, then this card indicates movement. Often, this card appears when you are about to receive an email or phone call regarding a plan you are hoping to proceed with.

Whilst Mercury would have gone direct by the time you read this, it can also indicate a message coming in from someone, maybe a welcomed message or not. A reminder when this card comes up is to always ask for support where you feel you need it. This card comes right before the Four of Wands, which predicts more stability and celebration, so you are just around the corner from experiencing this. Don't rush before you can walk, and don't try to juggle too many things, as this can lead to getting overwhelmed. The bottom of the deck shows the Knight of Wands. A messenger of fire - so passion and high energy may be involved here. This could be a Sagittarius, Aries or Leo.

Remember, if this is a past person, be objective and don't let the 'fire' overtake you; it just might be a test from the universe. If not, then this would predict good news and a 'green light' for moving ahead with a new job, project, or whatever you may have applied for. You can use the knight of wand's energy to amplify your drive to do something, especially as we enter Leo energy in August. Have you created a goal that could materialise in August? That could be an internal or external goal. This combination is a nudge to get the ball rolling, to feel the enthusiasm and not look at past people and situations as a measurement of how things are going to be. This combination challenges you to be your own trailblazer, yet a key factor in maintaining momentum is valuing who you are.

You can use the full moon to help release any residual energies that may be stuck and always show gratitude and appreciation for the unseen. This fire element combination is a message of light and warmth, with a heads up not to be surprised if you suddenly receive a message from a past 'flame'. How you respond will be down to you, but know that to see different results in your life, it always starts with you. See yourself in the light you deserve to be in, and there will be less opportunity for the ones who have no plans to stay.

The good always prevails, and if you keep working towards what sets your heart on fire and follow your joy, then the frequency of joy will have no other choice but to match your vibrational frequency and materialise in your daily life. Smile, good things are on their way!

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WHEN THE INNER VOICE GETS LOUD: RECLAIMING FEMININE WISDOM IN LEADERSHIP



been dismissed or even penalised in the corporate world. I have worked with many male leaders who couldn't get promoted BECAUSE they were displaying more feminine leadership traits and strengths.

I have also met many women in leadership who were trapped in the masculine 'mask' of toughness. Women who adapted to the system. We pushed harder. We worked longer. We sharpened our elbows and dulled our softness. We led with our heads, sometimes at the cost of our hearts. We wore the mask because, for a while, it seemed to work. We gained credibility, respect, and promotions. But the cost was steep. Emotionally and physically. For some, it's burnout. For others, it's a slow erosion of joy. For many, it's the sense that they've abandoned parts of themselves in the climb and don't know how to retrieve them—the 'off' feeling. And then comes motherhood. And it cuts through all of this.

Matrescence: The Great Disruptor

I have a question for mothers in leadership roles. Are you finding yourself succeeding in your career, and yet something feels deeply off? You're ticking all the boxes, reaching the milestones, sitting at the leadership table... but somewhere, something is quietly (or not so quietly) aching. The best way I can describe it is this 'off' feeling. I know it's not specific, but I also know you know.

Maybe it's the fatigue that won't lift. The Sunday dread. The strange and hard-to-describe sense that you're "not quite yourself" anymore. That's the inner voice trying to help. For many women in leadership, that voice becomes impossible to ignore after they become mothers. Because matrescence, the transition into motherhood, isn't just a personal shift. It's a profound, identity-altering rite of passage.

The Masculine Mask So Many of Us Wear



For decades, the path to leadership for women has been paved with masculine ideals: linear progression, constant productivity, competition, results, performance, and control. Traits like intuition, empathy, vulnerability, and cyclical thinking – are still very often associated with the feminine and have historically

Becoming a mother can be the moment when the mask begins to slip because the rules that worked in the boardroom no longer serve in the nursery. You can't control a newborn. You can't push through on 3 hours of sleep forever. Suddenly, you're dropped into a realm where time is fluid, needs are immediate, and success is redefined.

The doing gives way to being.

The outcome gives way to presence.

The rush gives way to surrender.

And for many women, it leads to a realisation that the way we've been working, leading, and living - doesn't fit anymore.

The Reclamation of Feminine Mother Energy

Matrescence invites women to reclaim what has long been devalued: softness, slowness, wisdom, and emotion. And when we integrate this into our leadership, we don't lose power; we gain it. The problem isn't ambition. It's the system that rewards only one version of it.

What if leadership didn't require self-sacrifice? What if success included seasons of rest? What if intuition was as valued as strategy? What if workplaces were designed with the rhythms of real life in mind, including caregiving, hormonal cycles, emotional wellbeing, and community? How different would your life be?

We are in a moment where many women are waking up to this possibility. They are no longer willing to contort themselves to fit a model of leadership that denies their humanity. If you've felt that inner voice lately, tugging at you, whispering that something's off, it's not a weakness. It's wisdom. Your body, your spirit, and your instincts are asking questions. They are asking you to pause and listen.

Matrescence is not a derailment. It is an initiation.

It's here to wake us up, not just to the needs of our children, but to our own as well. It's here to show us a different way to live, work, lead, and thrive. One where the inner voice doesn't have to scream to be heard. One where feminine wisdom is not a liability but a leadership asset. One where the mask comes off, and you lead from your whole self.

By Eve Ostrovskaya





TOXIC WORKPLACES

THE SILENT SABOTEUR OF HIGH PERFORMERS AND HOW TO BREAK THE CYCLE

In healthy environments, high performers thrive. Their excellence is recognized, their efforts are rewarded, and their growth is supported. In such settings, climbing the career ladder can feel like play — a stimulating challenge that feeds their ambition and curiosity.

But even in these environments, there's a hidden cost: with every promotion, every win, every title, it becomes increasingly difficult for a high performer not to entangle their job with their self-worth. Identity begins to wrap around performance. And success starts to mean more than just achievement — it becomes who they are.

Now, imagine placing that same high performer—driven, committed, and deeply invested in their role—into a toxic workplace. What was once a strength becomes an exposed nerve.

Their attachment to performance makes them especially vulnerable. And in an environment designed around control rather than collaboration, they're not just undervalued—they're slowly dismantled.

When Performance Meets Identity

High performers don't just do their job. They live it. They show up early, stay late, take ownership, and hold themselves to impossible standards. They don't just want to succeed — they need to because their sense of self is often riding on it.

This can lead to extraordinary results. But it also makes them susceptible to over-functioning. When things go wrong, they don't assume it's the system — they assume they're the problem. So they double down. They take on more. They push harder. In a supportive culture, this intensity might be balanced with mentorship, autonomy, and mutual respect. But in a toxic culture? It's exploited.

Why Toxic Environments Target the Brightest

Toxic workplaces are rarely dysfunctional by accident. At their core, they're built around preserving power — not nurturing potential. And once a high performer rises through the ranks with ideas, integrity, and influence, they can start to look less like an asset... and more like a threat.

A toxic manager, driven by insecurity or a desire for control, may feel exposed by someone whose brilliance outshines their own, especially when that brilliance comes with a natural leadership energy. So, instead of empowering them, the manager begins to undermine them subtly.

This can take many forms:

- ***Withholding praise.***
- ***Moving the goalposts.***
- ***Assigning blame publicly, then taking credit privately.***
- ***Overloading them with invisible tasks that drain without reward.***

The aim isn't to support — it's to destabilize.

The Setup: When Excellence Becomes a Threat

It's a slow unravelling. Initially, the high performer views the confusion as a challenge. Their growth mindset kicks in: Maybe I need to work smarter. Maybe I haven't proven myself enough yet.

They put in more hours. They absorb the stress of the team. They overcompensate. But here's the truth: they were never meant to succeed. Not because they weren't capable — but because the system didn't want them to. The game was rigged. And because the high performer was used to winning through effort, they didn't see the manipulation until it was too late.

Until burnout hit.

Burnout Isn't Failure — It's a Signal

When burnout arrives, it rarely looks like the collapse at first. It seems like exhaustion that coffee won't fix. It looks like confusion, brain fog, and deep emotional fatigue. It seems that doing everything "right" still leaves you feeling wrong.

And worst of all — it looks like self-blame. Because in the high performer's mind, they've failed. They weren't strong enough. They should've seen it coming. They should've handled it better. But none of this is true. What happened wasn't a failure of resilience. It was a result of prolonged manipulation in a system designed to extract energy without giving safety in return.





Quitting Isn't the End of the Story

Eventually, many do leave. They quit. Or are forced out. And for a moment, it feels like freedom. But only for a moment. Soon after, the feelings that were pushed aside to survive resurface — all at once. The mental fog. The anxiety. The self-doubt. They're no longer buried under deadlines and Slack messages. They're right there. And many are surprised to find that, even in their new job, fear follows them.

They wonder, 'Why am I still on edge?' Why can't I relax? Why do I second-guess everything? This is the nervous system's way of saying, 'We're not done yet.'

The Invisible Healing Most People Skip

Leaving a toxic workplace is a decision. Healing from one is a process. And this is where most high performers get stuck. Because they're used to "handling it." They're used to fixing problems, not feeling them. But what happened to them wasn't just professional — it was psychological. And pretending it didn't leave a scar only makes that scar deeper.

What's needed isn't more resilience. It's recovery. Recovery means:

- *Unpacking why it hurt so much.*
- *Understanding how identity and self-worth got entangled.*
- *Creating boundaries that protect, not punish.*
- *Rebuilding confidence without overcompensation.*
- *Learning to listen to the body, not override it.*

Building a New Kind of Power

You don't need to become guarded or cold to protect yourself. And you don't need to become ruthless to succeed. You need a new strategy — one rooted in clarity, self-trust, and conscious self-leadership.

That's the essence of Corporate Warriors, a coaching approach that combines inner work (identity, self-worth, emotional resilience) with outer strategies (communication, career navigation, boundaries). It's designed for high performers who want to continue rising — without sacrificing their values along the way.

Because real power isn't about proving your worth to toxic systems. It's about knowing your worth so clearly that those systems lose their grip on you.

Final Thought

If you've walked through a toxic workplace and come out the other side disoriented, depleted, or doubting yourself — it's not a flaw. It's a wound. And it can be healed. What happened to you wasn't a reflection of your talent. If anything, your light shone too brightly for a system built on shadows.

But the good news is, that light isn't gone. It just needs space. Safety. And a smarter kind of strength to rise again and come back stronger. You don't owe anyone resilience. But you do owe yourself recovery.

By Fela Rosa

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THE C-LEVEL EXECUTIVE'S GUIDE TO LOSING 20+ POUNDS: 5 PRACTICAL STEPS BACKED BY SCIENCE



BY COACH TERRY & COACH ZITA
FOUNDERS OF SYNAPTIC FIT FUSION PROS ACADEMY

For many high-performing professionals, weight loss isn't just about aesthetics; it's about reclaiming energy, confidence, and control in a life full of demands. Whether you're an executive juggling back-to-back meetings, a founder scaling a company, or a leader navigating high-stakes environments, your brain and body are key assets.

But when your health quietly starts to decline, low energy, stubborn fat gain, disrupted sleep, and creeping self-doubt, it impacts everything: focus, productivity, and resilience.

If you're looking to drop 20+ pounds in a way that fits your lifestyle and actually lasts, here are five research-supported, realistic steps that deliver results without disrupting your career or your sanity.

1. Anchor Your Day with Protein And Fibre Meals

Nutrition is often the first thing to slip when life gets busy. Skipping meals, grabbing quick carbs, or grazing throughout the day sets you up for a rollercoaster of blood sugar spikes and crashes, which fuels cravings and fat storage.

What to do:

- Focus each meal on a lean protein source (20–40g) and high-fibre carbs (like vegetables, legumes, or whole grains).

- Protein supports muscle preservation, which is critical for a healthy metabolism. Fibre helps with satiety, blood sugar control, and digestion.

Example: Instead of just grabbing toast or cereal in the morning, opt for eggs with sautéed spinach and a side of berries. For lunch, try grilled chicken over quinoa and roasted vegetables (but be mindful of the olive oil or other high-fat, ready-made sauces). These meals stabilise your energy and reduce the likelihood of late-night snacking or overeating.

2. Schedule Strength Training Like a Business Meeting

Many high-achievers fall into the trap of prioritising cardio or HIIT for fat loss, but strength training is a more sustainable and effective route, especially when aiming to lose fat without sacrificing muscle mass or energy.

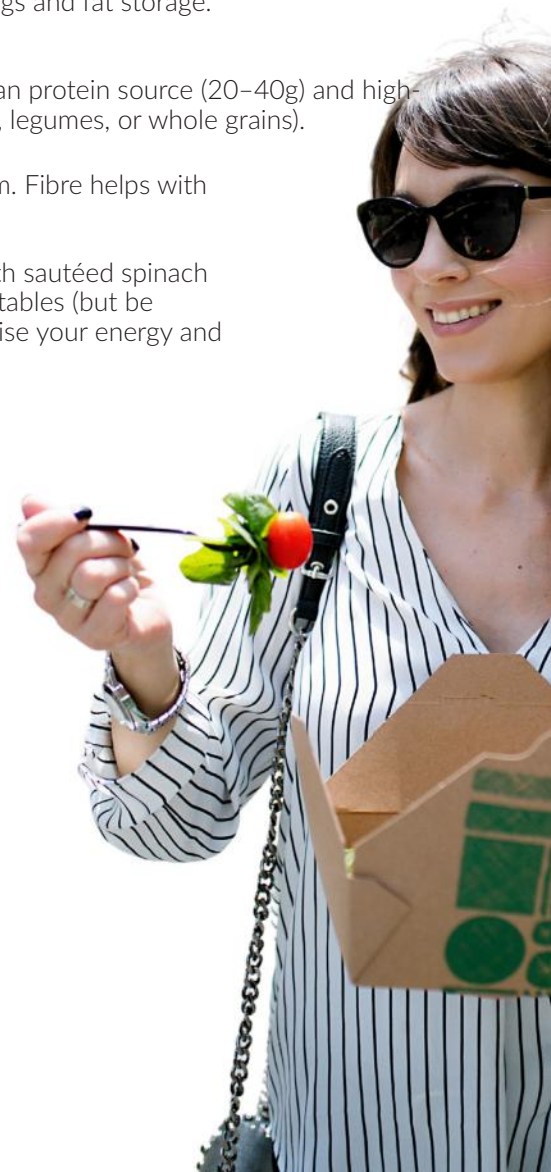
Why it matters:

- Muscle tissue burns more calories at rest than fat.
- Strength training improves insulin sensitivity and supports long-term metabolic health.
- It requires less time per week than most cardio routines to be effective.

What to do:

- Commit to 2–3 full-body resistance sessions per week.
- Focus on compound movements: squats, deadlifts, rows, presses, and lunges.
- Keep sessions short (30–45 minutes) and consistent.

Treat these sessions as non-negotiable appointments. Just like you wouldn't cancel a critical strategy call, you shouldn't skip on your foundational health.



3. Identify and Interrupt Your Habit Loops

Habits often dictate our outcomes more than intention. For example, finishing work late → ordering takeout →, zoning out with food → regret →, "starting again Monday." These loops aren't broken with more willpower — they're changed through awareness and pattern disruption.

What to do:

- Identify one recurring situation that tends to derail your progress (e.g., stress snacking, nighttime overeating, skipping meals during intense workdays).
- Build a small, interrupting action. This could be as simple as taking a five-minute walk, practising deep breathing, or completing a short journaling prompt.
- Over time, this shift reduces your reliance on food as a coping mechanism and gives you space to make a better choice.

This isn't about perfection. It's about upgrading your defaults, the automatic behaviours that run your day.

4. Rethink Your Relationship With Stress and Sleep

Cortisol, the body's main stress hormone, plays a significant role in fat storage, particularly around the abdomen. Poor sleep compounds the problem by increasing hunger hormones and reducing your ability to self-regulate.

For professionals in high-pressure roles, addressing this issue can have a significant impact on weight loss.

What to do:

- Aim for 7–8 hours of high-quality sleep. If that feels impossible, start by improving your sleep hygiene: establish consistent bedtimes, avoid screens for at least 60 minutes before bed, and create a cool, calm, and darkroom environment.
- Incorporate short, daily stress resets. This could be 10 minutes of quiet stretching, box breathing, or stepping outside during your lunch break. Sleep and stress are not luxuries; they are essential tools in achieving sustainable fat loss.

5. Build a System, Not a Streak

High performers love streaks: consecutive days of clean eating, hitting 10,000 steps, and not missing a workout. But when life inevitably disrupts that streak, it can feel like starting from zero again.

Instead, build a system that adapts, not one that collapses when conditions aren't perfect.

What to do:

- Use the 80/20 approach: aim to follow your plan 80% of the time and leave 20% for flexibility.
- Have go-to meals, emergency snacks, and travel routines ready, so you're never starting from scratch.
- Track key habits (sleep, movement, meals), not the scale. Trends matter more than single metrics.

The most effective transformations come from consistency, not intensity. Build your system to support you on bad days, not just good ones.

Final Thought

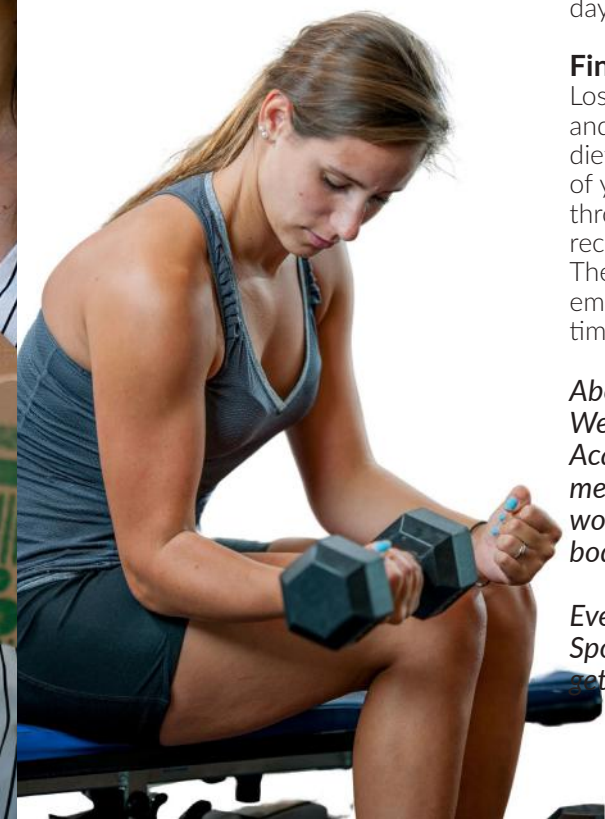
Losing 20+ pounds isn't just about calories. It's about clarity, consistency, and systems that align with your reality. You don't need willpower or a crash diet; you need strategies that work for the long haul with the demands of your lifestyle. You've mastered many aspects of your professional life through structure and intentional action. The same tools — planning, pattern recognition, and consistency — are the key to mastering your health. The transformation isn't just physical. It's cognitive, emotional, and empowering, and it starts with one simple decision: to do it differently this time.

About Us

We are Coach Terry & Coach Zita, founders of Synaptic Fit Fusion Pros Academy. We've created a free online training that breaks down how our method, the Fat Loss Reset Pathway, works and why it's helped men and women over 40 lose fat, regain energy, and finally feel at home in their bodies again.

Every strategy we teach is grounded in the latest empirical research in Sports and Exercise Sciences, so you're not just getting inspiration. You're getting what actually works.

www.synapticfitfusionpros.com





By Fiona Timothy ADHD Coach, Career and Life Coach



Have you ever found yourself struggling with concentration, focus, procrastination and task initiation?

Maybe you have found yourself watching a movie and then find yourself having to rewind it multiple times, because you realise your mind trailed off and you can't remember what one of the characters said, or if the plot took a sudden turn.

Do you often find yourself struggling to be on time, even with the best of intentions and planning, and still struggle to get out the door on time? Do you find that you underestimate time, how long it takes to organise to go somewhere, or to get a task done? How are you with deadlines? Do you find yourself procrastinating and only being able to get the work done on the day of the deadline, but then can hyperfocus under pressure?

It's fair to say that most people experience one or more of the above at some stage in their lives. However, what if this happens more frequently? Is it a symptom of something else? ADHD has received more coverage in recent years. However, there is still very much a lack of awareness about the condition. Many people who are now in their 40s and 50s have only been diagnosed in recent years. This is because there was no awareness about ADHD when those individuals were in primary or even secondary school.

So why has there been a recent surge in people being diagnosed? As there is more coverage in the media and on social media, people are beginning to recognise that they struggle with ADHD symptoms. Many employees who were working from home during the Covid pandemic realised they were having real issues with concentration, focus and applying themselves to tasks.

Many women are also diagnosed as they experience hormonal changes during Perimenopause, the stage leading up to Menopause, as the decline in the hormone Oestrogen affects cognition, which in turn can heighten and expose ADHD symptoms further. Many years ago, ADHD was considered as something that only affected young boys.

ADHD was considered to relate to hyperactivity only. However, this is not the case, as ADHD has two types: Inattentive and Hyperactive, or Combined Type, which is a combination of both those types.

Many young girls who had Inattentive ADHD would have slipped under the radar during their school years. As someone with Inattentive type, I was one of those people who only got diagnosed as an adult.



Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder is a genetic neurodevelopmental condition in which the brain's neurotransmitter chemicals do not work properly. It is characterised by symptoms of inattention, hyperactivity, impulsivity, and emotional dysregulation that impact an individual significantly on an everyday basis.

Every person with ADHD has symptoms unique to them. But typically, people with ADHD experience Executive Dysfunction. Execution Function controls everything we do in terms of organisation and planning; behind every decision we make is our Execution Function. Essentially, the prefrontal cortex of the brain, which controls executive functioning, is not structured the same way in people with ADHD, as neurotypical individuals.

This is why people with ADHD struggle with all those elements that require planning, organisation, focus, time management and decision-making. It can also affect impulsivity, and hyperactivity can be displayed not just as being on the go all the time, but also in Inattentive ADHD type individuals as overthinking.

As more people are getting diagnosed now due to the increase in awareness, often people say, "But doesn't everyone have ADHD now?". This is a statement which does not reflect the true reality. Yes, we can all be forgetful or lack focus at times, but not everyone experiences executive dysfunction every day to the extent that it impacts every aspect of your life.

I heard someone recently say that ADHD is "like a TikTok trend", which is not only a misleading statement, but only adds to the stigma for people who are in the process of getting diagnosed or already have ADHD. Even deciding to get diagnosed can be difficult for people. If people are receiving a diagnosis as adults, it can be difficult to accept that you didn't know this your whole life.

However, over time, the new awareness about your condition really helps you to understand it. ADHD Coaching allows individuals to understand their ADHD so that they can manage it better, and find effective strategies and techniques which help to work with the condition rather than against it.

Over the course of my upcoming articles, I will explore in more detail how to understand and work with your ADHD, rather than against it, in all aspects of your life.

If you are someone in the process of being diagnosed, or have a partner, spouse, child, sibling or friend with ADHD, the first crucial step is building your knowledge of the condition. This arms you with more understanding to either help you manage the condition yourself, or support a loved one with ADHD.

Certified ADHD Coach, trained by The ADD Coach Academy (ADDCA), an internationally recognised coach training program.

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POSTPARTUM DEPRESSION AND SLEEP DEPRIVATION

THE OVERLOOKED CONNECTION

Motherhood is often portrayed as a time of pure joy, sweet baby snuggles, happy milestones, and an overwhelming sense of love. However, what is often left out of this picture is the exhaustion. The crippling, relentless exhaustion that can push new mothers to their breaking point. As a pediatric sleep consultant and the owner of Hello Little Sleeper, I see it all the time: mothers who struggle in silence, waiting until they are barely functioning before reaching out for sleep support. They tell me they thought they had to “tough it out,” that they felt guilty for wanting sleep, and that they believed asking for help meant they were failing. But here's the reality: Sleep deprivation isn't just exhausting. It's dangerous. And it's deeply linked to postpartum depression (PPD).

The Science: How sleep deprivation fuels postpartum depression

Research has consistently shown that sleep deprivation increases the risk of postpartum depression. One study found that mothers who sleep less than four hours at a time are significantly more likely to experience depressive symptoms. Why? Because sleep and mental health are deeply intertwined.

Hormonal Imbalance: Sleep regulates essential hormones like cortisol (stress hormone) and serotonin (mood stabilizer). When sleep is disrupted, stress hormones spike and mood-regulating hormones drop, creating the perfect storm for anxiety and depression.

Emotional Regulation: The brain processes emotions during sleep. Without enough rest, it becomes harder to manage stress, leading to increased irritability, anxiety, and feelings of hopelessness.

Cognitive Function: Lack of sleep makes it harder to think clearly, remember things, and make decisions, adding to the overwhelm new mothers already face.

For many mothers, these factors create a cycle: baby doesn't sleep → mom doesn't sleep → exhaustion leads to stress and anxiety → increased difficulty coping → deeper sleep struggles → worsening mental health.

And yet, despite this clear connection, sleep deprivation is often brushed off as “just part of motherhood.”

The taboo of asking for sleep help

There's an unspoken expectation that mothers should be able to do it all. They should be able to wake up multiple times a night, function all day, care for their baby, manage the household, maybe even work, and never complain. Asking for help? That feels like admitting weakness.

I can't tell you how many families, especially mothers, come to me after months (sometimes years) of exhaustion. They tell me, “I thought I was supposed just to handle it.” Or worse, “I felt guilty for wanting sleep.” This expectation is not only unrealistic, but it's also harmful. No one expects an athlete to perform at their best without rest. No one expects an employee to do their job on no sleep. So why do we expect new mothers to? Why sleep support is crucial The truth is that parents, especially mothers, don't need to suffer through exhaustion.

When families get sleep help:

Mothers recover faster. Getting adequate sleep supports postpartum healing and mental health.

Partners feel more involved. When sleep isn't a constant battle, both parents can share responsibilities more equally.

Babies thrive. Well-rested babies have better mood regulation, stronger immune systems, and improved cognitive development.

Families function better. When everyone is sleeping, the entire household is more balanced, present, and joyful.

How I help as a pediatric sleep consultant

At Hello Little Sleeper, I work with exhausted families to create gentle, personalized sleep solutions for their babies and toddlers. My approach is not about rigid schedules or letting babies “cry it out” without support. Instead, I focus on:

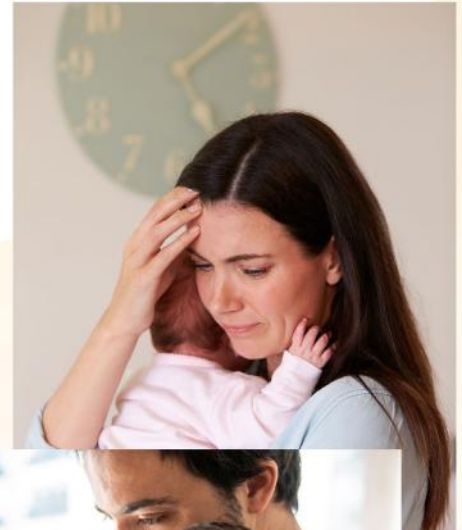
- Understanding your child's sleep needs (because every baby is different!)
- Creating a plan that works for your family's lifestyle
- Guiding you step by step with support and encouragement
- Helping you gain confidence in your baby's sleep routine

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Most importantly, I help parents understand that asking for sleep support is not a sign of failure but rather a form of self-care.

It's time to change the conversation. Motherhood should not mean sacrificing mental health and well-being to meet impossible expectations. It's time to break the cycle of exhaustion and guilt. It's time to normalize asking for sleep support.

If you're a new parent struggling with sleep, you don't have to wait until you're at your breaking point. Sleep deprivation and postpartum depression are deeply connected, but the good news? They are both treatable.

Well-rested parents aren't just better parents; they're healthier, happier, and more present for their families.

By Samantha Buhrs



The Gut-Brain Connection

How Clean Nutrition Supports Mental, Emotional and Physical Wellness

Nutrition is something that is both underrated and misunderstood when it comes to supporting the body and mind to have optimal health. In the world we live in today, it can be a challenge to eat clean all the time, and as I tell my clients, it's not always the food you're choosing but the way you cook and prepare it that makes a difference in how it impacts your body and mind.

In recent years, scientific research has shed light on a fascinating relationship between the digestive system and brain function—often referred to as the “gut-brain connection.” This bidirectional communication network illustrates how the health of our digestive system directly impacts our mental well-being, cognitive function, and emotional balance. At the heart of this relationship is nutrition, particularly clean, wholesome foods that nourish both the gut and brain simultaneously.

Understanding the Gut-Brain Axis

Your gut contains over 100 million neurons connected to your brain through the vagus nerve, forming what scientists refer to as the “gut-brain axis.” This neural highway facilitates constant communication between your digestive system and your central nervous system. Perhaps more surprisingly, your gut microbiome—the trillions of bacteria living in your intestines—produces neurotransmitters like serotonin and dopamine, the same chemicals responsible for regulating mood, sleep, and cognitive function in your brain. When your gut microbiome (gut bacteria) lacks diversity or becomes imbalanced (a condition called dysbiosis), this communication pathway becomes disrupted. Research has linked poor gut health to anxiety, depression, brain fog, and even neurodegenerative conditions. Conversely, nurturing your gut health through proper nutrition can enhance mental clarity, emotional resilience, and overall brain function.

Clean Nutrition: The Foundation for Gut-Brain Health

“Clean eating” is not just another wellness trend—it represents a return to wholesome, minimally processed foods that support our bodies' natural functions. For gut-brain health specifically, this approach provides:

1. **Essential nutrients that feed beneficial gut bacteria.**
2. **Anti-inflammatory compounds that reduce neural inflammation.**
3. **Fibre-rich foods that promote digestive health and microbiome (bacteria) diversity.**
4. **Antioxidants that protect both gut and brain cells from oxidative damage (an imbalance between free radicals and antioxidants, which can cause cell and tissue damage, leading to various health issues).**

Practical Examples of Gut-Brain-Supporting Foods

Fermented Foods

Incorporate foods like kimchi, sauerkraut, kefir, and yogurt containing live cultures. These probiotic

powerhouses introduce beneficial bacteria directly into your digestive system. Studies show that regular consumption of fermented foods can reduce inflammation markers and improve symptoms of anxiety and depression.

Just check the sugar content in yoghurts, and if you don't eat much-fermented food or none at the moment, start with small amounts and build up from there.

Colourful Plant Foods

Fruits and vegetables with vibrant colours contain polyphenols—plant compounds that act as prebiotics, essentially feeding your beneficial gut bacteria. Blueberries, red cabbage, pomegranates, and dark leafy greens offer particularly potent gut-brain benefits.

Omega-3 Rich Foods

Wild-caught fatty fish, such as salmon, as well as foods like walnuts, chia seeds, and flaxseeds, provide essential omega-3 fatty acids that help reduce inflammation throughout both the digestive tract and neural pathways. Regular consumption supports brain cell membrane integrity and gut barrier function simultaneously.

Fibre-Rich Complex Carbohydrates

Sweet potatoes, oats, beans, and other fibre-rich complex carbohydrates provide sustenance for beneficial gut bacteria, which transform these fibres into short-chain fatty acids—compounds that strengthen gut barrier function and reduce inflammation.

Culinary Herbs and Spices

Turmeric, ginger, coriander, parsley, rosemary, and thyme contain potent anti-inflammatory compounds that support both digestive and cognitive health. Research suggests these everyday kitchen ingredients can help maintain gut barrier integrity while protecting neural tissue.

Simple Daily Practice

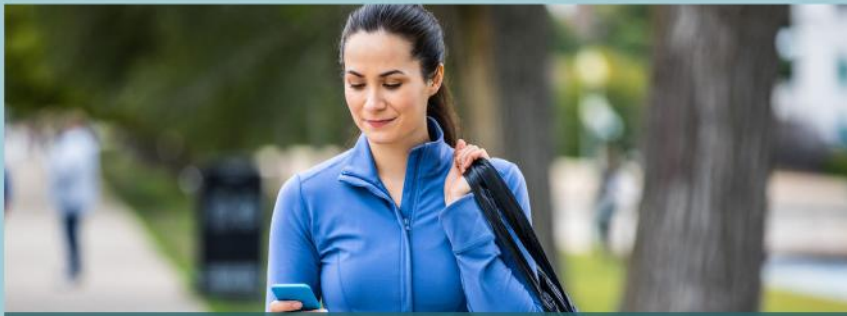
Implementing gut-brain nutrition does not require a complete overhaul of your lifestyle. Start by incorporating one fermented food daily, ensuring each meal contains at least one brightly coloured vegetable, and replacing refined carbohydrates with fibre-rich alternatives. Staying properly hydrated further supports the mucosal lining of your digestive tract, enhancing nutrient absorption and waste elimination.

Drinking warm water with lemon and ginger in the morning is a great way to help flush toxins. By prioritising clean, wholesome nutrition, you are not just feeding your body—you are nourishing the critical connection between your gut and brain, potentially transforming both your digestive health and mental wellbeing for years to come.



Amanda Whitehead

Holistic Health and Nutrition Coach
www.purposefullynourished.com



Your Radiant Return How to Sustain the Glow of Your Sabbatical

The sun is shining, the days are longer, and for many, summer is a time of energy and renewal. But what happens when the radiant glow of a sabbatical begins to fade as business-as-usual takes over?

You've returned to work after a transformative break, refreshed and reconnected. And yet, the culture shock hits hard. Deadlines loom. Inboxes overflow. That spacious feeling you cultivated on your sabbatical starts slipping away faster than a tan in winter.

You're not alone. Many people return from time away with the best intentions, only to be swept back into old habits and rhythms. Without conscious effort, the clarity and growth that blossomed during your sabbatical can quietly dissolve into the background noise of routine. But it doesn't have to be this way.

The secret lies in integration. The intentional weaving of your sabbatical lessons into daily life. It's what transforms a break from work into a breakthrough in life.

Why Integration Matters

A sabbatical isn't just a pause; it's a sacred recalibration. But too often, we treat the return to work like reboarding a moving train. We forget that meaningful change doesn't just happen while we're away; it happens in return. This is where the magic happens. Without space to reflect and integrate, your sabbatical risks becoming a fleeting escape rather than the catalyst for lasting transformation it was meant to be.

So, how do we stay connected to the insight, joy, and balance we cultivated while away? Here are five powerful integration techniques to help you preserve your sabbatical glow and step confidently into your next chapter.

1. Reflect and Reset Your Compass

Before diving into tasks and meetings, take a collective pause. Write down what you learned. What shifted? What felt most aligned? Then, set a few grounded goals that align with your refreshed sense of purpose.

When I returned from my third sabbatical, my husband and I asked ourselves, "What do we want life to feel like now?" We scheduled regular check-ins to course-correct when work threatened to take over. Progress doesn't have to be seismic; it just needs to be intentional.

2. Build Transition Rituals into Daily Life

Integration isn't an event; it's a lifestyle. Rituals, both small and sacred, help bridge the gap between sabbatical serenity and everyday demands. Try starting your mornings with intention setting, journaling, or breathwork. Once a month, create space for deeper reconnection through activities like a medicine walk, a solo beach day, or a vision-boarding session.

Personally, I swear by what I call Joy Days—a non-negotiable time when I unplug and only do things that bring me pure delight. These mini-retreats reconnect me to my purpose and joy.

By Bex Thomas



3. Go to the Happiness Gym

We all know the value of physical fitness. But what about happiness fitness? Mo Gawdat's analogy rings true: **"Happiness is like fitness; you have to train for it."** So, schedule in your joy. Read something that makes you feel alive. Call a friend. Dance. Walk in nature. Happiness doesn't just happen; it's cultivated. And when it becomes part of your weekly rhythm, it fuels resilience like nothing else.

4. Colour-Code Your Calendar

One of my favourite tools for maintaining balance is my visual calendar. I block time each week for all the essentials: work, family, creativity, movement, rest. Each one gets its own colour. This not only gives me a bird's-eye view of how I'm spending my time, but it also reveals imbalances before they spiral out of control. If a colour is missing or fading, I know it's time to realign.

Bonus tip: Share your calendar with those close to you. Clear communication helps set boundaries and expectations, especially when you're rebuilding a new lifestyle after a sabbatical.



5. Choose an Accountability Partner

Sustaining change is easier when someone's walking the path with you. Choose a friend, mentor or coach who can check in on your intentions and who'll remind you of who you became during your time away. Even better? Be that person for someone else. Growth shared is growth sustained.

This Is Your Integration Era

Returning from a sabbatical isn't just about catching up; it's about levelling up. With the right tools and mindset, you can keep your sabbatical alive long after the out-of-office fades.

This summer, as nature bursts into full bloom, let it mirror your own. Let this be the season you step into your "after" era. Not just changed by your break but transformed because of it.

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FROM OVERWHELM TO EMPOWERMENT

The Roadmap That Changed Everything

Overwhelm can impact every part of our lives; however, it can also be an inner signal to step out of the bubble we are in, calm our nervous system, and re-enter with renewed clarity.

I am Louise, Founder of Galena Wellbeing and a woman who has rebuilt her life from the inside out. With three decades in business and 24 years immersed in wellness, I guide purpose-driven individuals, primarily women, to clear their blocks and reconnect with their powerful, true selves.

The Business Years: Smiling Through the Storm

I had my fair share of overwhelm in the business world, smiling through inner blocks and not wanting to appear weak. The perfectionist and inner critic pushing to lead and sabotaging my success, awkward people trying to undermine me. The overwhelming feelings would go under the iceberg, and I would continue working extra hours to try and get ahead of the game, but exhausted.

When Life Changed Everything

In 2009, my beautiful daughter Ella came into the world. What should have been a happy ever after led to embracing new roles and supporting her for 11 years. Instead of crumbling under pressure, pre-grief, and extreme situations, I found ways to cope with overwhelming feelings swelling inside - whether in blue light vehicles getting Ella lifesaving treatment or navigating end-of-life care. Due to her non-hereditary genetic condition requiring round-the-clock care, I needed to find inner strength and be the warrior Mummy I was meant to be.

The Small Steps That Made Big Changes

What helped me was Ella's courageous spirit and gentle nature amid our 'normal' chaotic life. I constantly thought that if she could get through this, so could I. I gradually built a resilient wellbeing toolkit, and Galena Wellbeing was born a year before Ella passed.

My toolkit included meditation, connecting with my spiritual self, breathing, grounding techniques, outdoor spaces, and creativity. I created positive affirmations to instil inner power to step into each day. Most significantly, I kept my joy jar filled - even in the darkest nights, I found glimmers of joy to push forward and fill my soul.

From Personal Healing to Purpose

Now, I support others across the UK and worldwide in navigating overwhelm, emotional pressure, and life transitions, reconnecting with who they truly are and leading from a renewed sense of self and focus. This is not just wellbeing work. It is about reclaiming your power and finally breathing again.

After losing Ella, I had two choices: embrace the day or crumble. Through deep grief layers, I rebuilt my life again from scratch, clearing overwhelm with actionable steps. Her legacy lives on in my heart and in the work I do. I encourage anyone to use their inner strength and lived experience as an anchor, breaking down struggles and finding wellbeing solutions that fit their needs. I am proof that even in the most impossible of situations, there is light and a way forward.

For Anyone Feeling Overwhelmed Right Now

You are not broken, weak, or alone. Overwhelm is your nervous system saying, "I need support."

Start with your breath. Three deep breaths help shift your nervous system from a state of fight-or-flight to one of calm. This became my anchor in hospital corridors. You do not have to do it all. The voice demanding perfection is misleading. Asking for help is not a weakness; it shows true strength. Small steps count. One consistent

wellbeing practice creates profound shifts. Mine started with five minutes of morning stillness.

Your overwhelm has a message. Ask, "What is this telling me?" Perhaps you need to establish boundaries, prioritise rest, or learn to say no more often.

Emergency Kit Ideas:

- *Take three breaths and name five things you see.*
- *Today, choose one thing that can wait.*
- *Drink water mindfully.*
- *Step outside.*
- *Say no to something or someone zapping your energy.*
- *Ask for specific help on one task.*
- *Create one peaceful ritual.*

Listen to your inner rhythms and see the signals your mind, body, and soul are sharing. With these insights, we can map a way forward and stop the overwhelm.

Ready to Reclaim Your Power?

If this story resonates with you and you're ready to transform overwhelm into clarity, I'd love to support you on your journey. Together, we can build your personalised wellbeing toolkit and help you reconnect with your powerful, true self.

By Louise Dicks

Founder - Wellbeing Mentor & Coach | Counsellor | HeartHealing™ Practitioner

Galena Wellbeing

Supporting you to navigate overwhelm and lead from inner strength, in the UK and Worldwide.

www.galenawellbeing.co.uk



HOW LEARNING TO TRUST MY INTUITION

What can I say about this subject? It's such a personal experience for each of us.

Have you ever had that gut feeling to take a different route to work, only to hear later that there was a car accident on your usual path? Have you ever forgotten something at home, ended up running late for a meeting—and then discovered you'd unknowingly avoided a major event, like the collapse of a building?

The delay wasn't just a coincidence—it was your angels at work protecting you. Have you ever had a strong feeling not to board a flight without knowing why, only to later discover that there was a crash or hurricane?

For the ladies reading this—have you ever sensed that your partner was seeing someone else, only to find out later that your intuition was right? These are everyday examples of intuition in action.

Often, you can't quite explain it, can you? Our intuition is always there, working quietly in the background—guiding, protecting, and nudging us. But the real question is: are we listening?

You don't need to be deeply spiritual to receive signs. The universe communicates with all of us. Sometimes, our 'logical minds' get in the way. Intuition isn't always rational—it's a feeling, a knowing.

How Do We Strengthen That Intuitive Muscle?

If you have a feeling about something, follow it through. I often do this and go with what I feel.

Pay attention to your body. I know this might sound "a little out there", but our bodies often give us physical signs when something is off. It could be a headache, tingling sensations, or feeling nauseous—your body has its way of warning you. You can ask God, Source, or the Universe for signs and start jotting them down. For me, it's angel numbers—but everyone's signs are different. If you want a clear "no" from the universe, choose something obvious, like seeing a purple cat.

Let me share a moment when listening to my intuition changed the course of my life completely...

Back in 2021, I was deeply in love with my partner following the pandemic. We had been together for three years, heading into a fourth. I shared my dreams with him—getting engaged, buying our dream home, having children. But life doesn't always unfold the way we expect.

Wedding planning became incredibly stressful. Arguments over money, mortgages, and savings for children became frequent. I had a 'spender' personality, and he was a cautious saver—he was also an accountant. I found myself overworking, trying to make everyone happy—my parents, who wanted a big wedding, and my partner, who preferred something small.

Tensions grew. One evening, after a particularly difficult argument involving my parents, I couldn't sleep. That night, I had a vivid dream. My partner and I were standing on opposite sides of a beautiful garden. I asked myself, how would I feel if I wasn't with him? And in that moment... the stress and anxiety all lifted. To give you

Changed My Life...

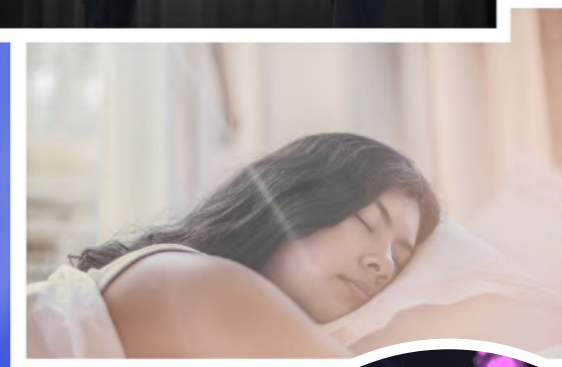
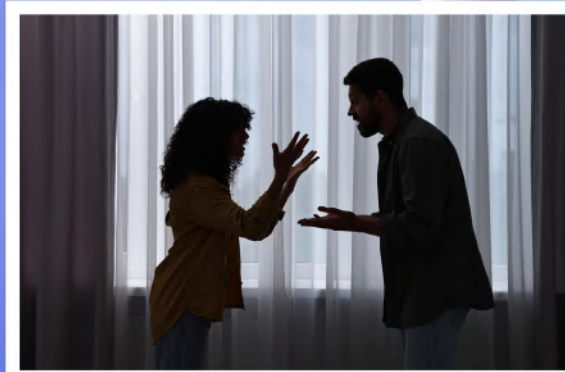
context, I had been experiencing chest pain and headaches for over a year, to the point where I had a device fitted to monitor for medical issues.

In the dream, the image that appeared was of Clapham Common in London, with the sun shining down. I woke up knowing, without question, that I would be okay. That dream was my sign. I returned the engagement ring the next day. We broke up a few days later.

I took the dream as a warning. It was one of the hardest decisions I have ever made, but I know it was for my greatest good. The chest pains stopped, and my headaches eased. I began to heal. The universe truly removes people and situations that are no longer meant for us. Now, I feel like the most healed version of myself I have ever been.

So, if you're reading this little article, I hope it reminds you to trust your gut instinct over anyone else's voice. Although it can be difficult, when your intuition is right, you will be in perfect alignment.

The answers you're seeking are already within you.



By Crystal Johns



www.crystalshealinglights.com

THE SUMMER RESET

Redefining Goals, Values, and Perspectives

Introduction

We've reached the midpoint of the year—a natural pause in the rhythm of time that invites us to reflect, reset, and realign. For many, summer brings with it a strong desire for clarity, space, and a new burst of energy. Some are just now beginning to realize what they truly want out of the year after navigating the ebbs and flows of the first half. Others are in stride, steadily making progress toward the goals they set on January 1, 2025.

Wherever you find yourself right now—whether you're thriving in alignment or struggling to find your flow—this season offers a golden opportunity. Summer gives us permission to reset our rhythm, reconnect to what matters, and reimagine how we'll finish the year. Here's how you can use this seasonal shift to support your #bodyandbusiness goals and create meaningful momentum.

For the Individual in Flow...

There's something magical about waking up in alignment—when your direction is clear, your daily habits are intentional, and your results reflect the work you've put in. If you're in that space right now, that's a beautiful thing. Still, even when things are working, it's wise to slow down and take inventory.

1. Revisit Your Vision and Goals

Even if you're on track, revisit your original goals with fresh eyes. You're not the same person you were six months ago—and that's a good thing. With growth comes refined clarity. Ask yourself: Does this goal still align with who I'm becoming? If the answer is «yes,» amazing—lean in deeper. If not, give yourself the freedom to pivot. Your evolution deserves to be reflected in your vision.

2. Document What's Working (and What Isn't)

Take time to reflect on your systems, habits, and results. What's been a game changer? What hasn't served you? This kind of honest reflection isn't just productive—it's a powerful form of self-awareness. Knowing what supports your natural rhythm enables you to focus on strategies that move the needle and let go of those that drain you.

3. Build a Rewards System

Even as adults, we still thrive on incentives. Creating meaningful rewards for personal and professional milestones builds motivation and deepens self-trust. Think beyond material gifts—consider experiences or time-based rewards. Whether it's buying yourself that new wardrobe after a fitness goal or booking a solo retreat after hitting a revenue milestone, make the win feel worth it.

For the Individual Out of Flow...

If the first half of the year didn't go as planned, take a breath—there's still time. Summer is the perfect moment to recalibrate, not criticize. You're not behind; you're simply being invited into deeper alignment.

1. Re-Center Your Values

You may have started the year with one set of values, but life has a way of reshaping our priorities. This is a good time to ask: What truly matters to me now? If your current direction doesn't reflect your current values, it's no wonder you feel off. Alignment begins with honesty. When you reconnect to what you value, your clarity and confidence return.

2. Quiet the Noise

Let this be your reminder to quiet the mental, digital, and emotional noise. You already know what's taking up unnecessary space in your mind and spirit—it's time to let it go. That might mean reducing screen time, unfollowing content that drains you, distancing from energy-draining people or decluttering tasks that aren't urgent or necessary. Protect your mental real estate like it's sacred—because it is.

3. Re-Strategize with Intention

Once you've made space, rebuild with intention. Consider how your day-to-day life can support your peak energy and creativity. Do you work more effectively in the morning or the evening? Do you need a different environment to spark inspiration? From adjusting your workspace to reorganizing your daily schedule, small tweaks can lead to significant breakthroughs. Incorporate productivity strategies like the Pomodoro Technique, and fuel your body with food that enhances brain function. This isn't just about getting things done—it's about flowing with more ease and less force.

Final Thoughts

Your Mid-Year Moment Matters

Whether you're cruising or course-correcting, summer is your invitation to realign with purpose and power. Let this be your mid-year mirror—a moment to check in, clear the clutter (mentally and emotionally), and recommit to your goals.

The beauty of #bodyandbusiness is that it honors both your humanity and your ambition. It reminds you that how you feel in your body, your mind, and your spirit is connected to how well you show up in your business. When one is off, the other follows. When one is nurtured, the other thrives. This season, give yourself permission to reset with grace. You're not behind. You're not off track. You're just being called to bloom differently!

By Taneka Johnson



IMPOSTER SYNDROME IN WRITING



In my article in the Winter edition, I briefly mentioned imposter syndrome as one of the obstacles faced by aspiring and even multi-published authors when they write their books.

What is Imposter Syndrome?

It's the feeling that your writing isn't good enough. You're overwhelmed by thoughts such as, 'Who am I kidding?' 'Why did I think I could write this book?' It's the worry of being the target of criticism once the book is published. Imposter syndrome often arises from deep-seated feelings of self-doubt and the fear that your skills and writing aren't good enough. It's often accompanied by low self-esteem.

The feelings arise even if you've been told that your writing is good. If, on the other hand, you have no point of comparison and no one to guide you, it can be difficult to assess the strengths or weaknesses of your own writing, and you may err on the negative side. Imposter syndrome can stop you in your tracks, make you question your whole book-writing project, and, unchecked, cause you to give up on it.

Sometimes, imposter syndrome arises from a perfectionist tendency. Writing a book requires accepting that the first draft isn't going to be perfect. My favourite phrase with my coaching clients is, 'There's no book until there's a book.' This means that you need to get the thoughts, ideas, and story out of your head and onto paper or the computer. Implicit in this is the fact that the initial writing, the first draft, is going to be raw.

For many 'ordinary' people who may not have received a tertiary education, imposter syndrome may manifest as thinking they are not smart enough to write a book. Other aspiring writers I work with feel discomfort with the label of 'expert' in their field. Their natural modesty clashes with their desire to share their knowledge.

Even Famous Creatives Suffer from Imposter Syndrome!

Let me assure you that imposter syndrome is an extremely common affliction in writers. I have heard famous, multi-published authors speak of navigating imposter syndrome. The trick is to recognise it, not let it block you, and not give up on yourself.

What can You do about Imposter Syndrome?

Addressing imposter syndrome means first identifying its source. If you're a perfectionist, you need to come to terms with accepting that your first draft will be raw. You must resist the temptation to constantly go back over what you've already written, thereby making slow or no progress. Thinking 'there's no book until there's a book' can be a helpful mantra.

If you don't feel you're intelligent enough to write a book, please revisit your initial passion and reignite the spark that set you on the writing journey in the first place. The book may be a unique legacy for your family, a story you've wanted to write your whole life, or important knowledge to share with the world.

If you're a modest person and you have come up against the thought, 'Who do I think I am to write about this?' you need to step back from the self-doubt. Then, objectively assess your suitability for writing this book that requires the unique blend of knowledge, skills, and experience you have acquired over your life.

Writing groups, where the members critique one another's work, are sometimes recommended for feedback on writing. For these to work well, the writers need to be at a similar level in their craft, and the emphasis needs to be on honest and fair critiquing—critiquing being the operative word, not criticism. Many writers I work with do not resonate with the idea of writing groups, where the skill level is varied, and the topics discussed are not always relevant.

Writers are often introverts. Working with a writing coach on your ongoing manuscript, or requesting a manuscript appraisal on your finished work, exposes you to the professional feedback you need. If you're looking for support in a specific genre, enrolling in appropriate workshops can be helpful.

Encountering imposter syndrome on your writing journey need not signal the end of that journey. Identify the cause, then take the appropriate action to set yourself back on the path. You'll thank yourself when you're holding your published book in your hands.



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THE BOOK WRITING COACH

Intuition vs. Anxiety

How to Tell the Difference



BY BRANDI VAN

Psychic Medium Mentor

Brandi Van has made a career of helping individuals on their personal development journeys. As a seasoned Intuition

Development and Psychic Development Mentor, Brandi supports individuals in building confidence, embracing self-trust, and achieving their fullest potential. She is deeply committed to empowering individuals to live authentically and with purpose.

Have you ever felt a strong pull toward something but weren't sure if it was your intuition guiding you or just anxiety holding you back? Many people struggle with this distinction, which can lead to self-doubt, uncertainty, and second-guessing their choices.

Understanding the difference between intuition and anxiety can help you make aligned decisions, trust yourself wholeheartedly, and strengthen your spiritual awareness. When you learn to recognize which voice is speaking, you can move forward with clarity and confidence.

What Is Intuition?

Intuition is your inner guidance system, a deep knowing that comes without logical reasoning. It's that gut feeling or quiet whisper that nudges you toward a decision, even when you can't explain why.

Intuition often presents itself as:
A gut reaction – a physical sensation in your body signaling what feels right or wrong.
A sudden insight – an idea or realization that appears out of nowhere.
A sense of peace – even when a decision doesn't make logical sense, it just feels right.
Signs and synchronicities – repeated symbols, numbers, or messages that seem to confirm your path.

The key characteristic of intuition is that it feels neutral, calm, instantaneous, and clear. It doesn't scream for attention or create anxiety; instead, it offers gentle guidance that feels aligned with your highest good.



3.

What is Anxiety?

Anxiety often manifests itself as fear and worry about the future, especially about things that haven't happened yet. It creates mental chatter, overthinking, and imagining worst-case scenarios. It's a feeling of dread or uneasiness that can range from mild to severe. It can be a normal stress reaction, but when it becomes excessive, it can interfere with daily life.

Anxiety often presents itself as:
Feeling tense or restless - you might experience muscle tension in your shoulders or back or have a headache.
Fatigue-you might feel drowsy, wanting to rest or take a nap to get away from your negative thoughts.
Poor concentration - because your mind is on a mental overload of thoughts, it can be hard to focus on certain situations and tasks at hand.
Trouble sleeping - your thoughts might keep you awake while you're trying to fall asleep, making it harder to get a good night's rest.

How to Strengthen Your Intuition and Quiet Your Anxiety:

- 1. Practice Meditation and Stillness**
Anxiety thrives on mental noise, while intuition speaks in stillness. Try daily meditation or quiet reflection to tune into your inner wisdom.
- 2. Keep an Intuition Journal**
Write down intuitive nudges vs. anxious thoughts. Over time, you'll start to recognize patterns and learn which voice is guiding you.

Use Body Awareness

Your body reacts differently to intuition and anxiety: Anxiety feels tight, anxious, or heavy. It feels chaotic, makes you feel overwhelmed, and tight. Intuition feels light, open, and grounded. Tune into your body's physical sensations when making decisions.

4. Ask for Signs from the Universe

If you're unsure, ask for a sign (like repeating numbers, a song lyric, or a meaningful symbol). The universe often confirms intuitive guidance through synchronicities.

5. Trust and Act on Small Intuitive Nudges

The more you practice trusting your intuition, the stronger it becomes. Start with small decisions (i.e., choosing a route home, selecting a book, or deciding who to call).

Both intuition and anxiety exist to guide you—but learning to tell them apart is the key to personal growth and self-trust. Recognizing the difference can help you navigate life's challenges with confidence, leading you to make decisions that truly align with your authentic self. The more you listen to your intuition, the less power anxiety will have over you.

The next time you feel that inner knowing, trust it. Your intuition is always leading you in the right direction.

To find out more about Brandi Van and how you can work with her on your Intuition and Psychic Development, go to www.brandivan.com. You can also find free resources and tools from her at www.facebook.com/brandivanmedium and www.instagram.com/brandivanmedium.

WHAT'S YOUR SOUNDTRACK? AND HOW CAN YOU USE IT FOR INTOXICATING RESULTS

In a world dominated by high-stakes decision-making, rapid-fire deadlines, and the relentless push to perform, it's easy for executives to lose touch with the very thing that once made them brilliant. For many, it's their inner drive, creativity, and passion that drive them. That's why I ask every client whether they're running a boardroom or running on empty. It's a bold question.

What's your soundtrack?

Because buried beneath the strategy slides and shareholder reports is a truth many overlook. It's called music, and it doesn't just inspire; it also uplifts. It rewires us and can shake many out of stagnation. Resulting in unlocking new thinking, and, yes, a whole new life is launched.

A Symphony of Reinvention

Take the smart, stylish executive from a national building company who sat through one of my talks, arms crossed, clearly sceptical. She thought my approach, using music as a transformational tool, sounded lovely but rather impractical. Until she did a Visioning process with a piece of Mozart during our first session. I invite clients to ask questions while listening to the music, particularly regarding pressing problems they need to solve. "Creating Encores" process always opens creative pathways that boardrooms rarely touch.

And in this session, she did more than solve a massive challenge. The music moved her. Within weeks, she'd applied for a bold new role and landed it. I congratulated her "call to action" and smiled when a new woman stood before me. She strutted into my office in a silk blouse, red heels, and a pencil skirt. That was just the beginning. She bought a new property, sold her modest car for a prestige model, completed her MBA, and now travels the world for work and pleasure. That's not just a comeback; it's a full-blown remix!

When "Bullshit" Becomes a Battle Cry

Then there's the woman who wanted to Chair a prestigious Property Group here in Australia. But didn't think she was good enough. The organisation was overrun by men; I called that out with one word: "Bullshit." Her song became Helen Reddy's "I Am Woman." It became her private anthem and public accelerator. She got the role. Her business doubled. She's now a sought-after media voice in the property world, with the confidence to swirl a fine Pinot while holding her own in a room full of industry heavyweights. She's not just thriving; she's heard! And when women feel heard in male-dominated industries, everything changes.

The Soundtrack Audit

Here is a starting point for you to try the effect of "feel good" Music on your Brain. You don't need to be a musician to harness these results, as proven by my clients. You just need to listen to yourself.

Here's a fast way to start.

1. Identify Your Current Track:

What's the music that matches your current energy? Is it a relentless drumbeat of stress? Elevator music of apathy? Or something with swagger, like Lizzo on a Friday?



2. Recall a Time When You Felt Unstoppable:

Now, what song takes you back there? It might be Springsteen at full throttle, a Chopin nocturne that makes you tear up, or the dance track you play before every big pitch.

3. Make the Shift:

Use that track to move. I don't just mean emotionally; I mean physically. Put it on. Walk around the block. Tackle your inbox. Plan your next bold move while it plays. Let it infiltrate your "inner self". Remember not to censor. So important! This is the "real you". Music bypasses the thinking mind and goes straight to the emotional core, the Heart. From there, the shift is inevitable.

Why This Process Matters for Executives

I've worked with leaders across sectors ranging from finance to the arts, from not-for-profits to multinationals. And the common thread is: "Burnout creeps in when creativity checks out". Importantly, the right music can reawaken something powerful. It reminds us who we were before the world told us to play it safe. It invites us to colour outside the square, to say "yes" when we've been told "no," and, importantly, to rewrite the rules we once followed without question.

It's not woo-woo. It's Neuroscience. And it works. Just Google major universities, from Yale to Harvard to McGill. For the scientific research results and breakthrough of music on the Brain.

No Link? No Problem. Here's the Invitation.

If you're reading this from an airport lounge, a hotel bed, or between meetings, and something in this article struck a chord, consider it your sign. You don't need a playlist. You need a pattern interrupt. That's what I do. My work blends music, mindset, and unapologetic truth-telling to help executives break through plateaus and reinvent with flair.

Want a taste of what that feels like? Do a Soundtrack Audit today. And if you want to explore more, look me up. I'm not hard to find, and I never play the same tune twice.

By Sally Arnold

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safety travel tips for expecting mothers on the go



Your pregnancy is a memorable time filled with anticipation and a range of emotions. It is also a period when a little relaxation can work wonders for your physical and mental well-being. Taking a break to focus on your needs before your little one arrives is the ticket to helping you stay healthy.

Vacationing offers a fantastic opportunity to indulge in things you love, whether lounging by the pool or relaxing on the beach. It is a chance to recharge and prepare



for the upcoming parenthood adventure.

Is it safe to travel abroad while pregnant?

Many moms-to-be wonder if it's safe to pack their bags or stay close to home. 'Is it safe to fly while I'm pregnant?' This question often circulates on travel boards and in parenting chat rooms. The good news is that with some planning, hitting the road or sky is possible when you're expecting.

Timing is everything

Every pregnancy is different, yet the second trimester often stands out as the golden period for travel. By this time, morning sickness usually tapers off, and your baby bump hasn't grown so big yet to make moving around difficult. Many airlines and travel companies agree that the middle months are ideal for prenatal travelers.

According to Mary Marnach, M.D., from the Mayo Clinic, "Generally, air travel before 36 weeks of pregnancy is considered safe for people who aren't dealing with any pregnancy problems."

What should you do before you leave?

Before jetting off, doing some prep work will go a long way. A key part of travel planning should involve conversing with your healthcare provider. They are aware of your medical history and can approve your travel—or suggest necessary modifications. Worries about flying, swelling feet, and bumpy rides are common. Clearing these doubts with facts from professionals helps ease fears.

Your records may show vaccinations need to be updated. Some destinations require specific shots, and it's crucial to know which ones are pregnancy-safe. Your healthcare professional can guide you, ensuring your little one remains healthy while you travel.

Be aware of any travel advisories, especially concerning regional health risks. Your local health department can offer information or updates on places to be cautious about.

Aside from your doctor, check in with your insurance provider. Ensure you have proper coverage abroad and know what medical services are included. Inquire about coverage for pregnancy-related incidents or complications as part of your policy.

Side note: Only share your travel itinerary with people you trust. This way, they know where to find you in an emergency.

How to reduce pregnancy aches and pains when traveling

Start by creating a detailed checklist. Include prenatal vitamins, a travel pillow, compression socks to prevent swelling, and your favorite pregnancy drinks/snacks. Don't forget toiletries and medications. Keep these specific items in your carry-on luggage, where they will be readily available.

For checked luggage, packing loose, breathable clothing and cozy shoes can make long walks or standing stints

more comfortable. Carrying a supportive pregnancy belt might be a game-changer on those longer excursions.

Keep moving: stretching your legs and walking around every couple of hours is ideal, especially during long flights or car journeys. It maintains blood circulation and provides a refreshing break from prolonged sitting.

Flights often require booking an aisle seat for easier access to the restroom and stretching. Meanwhile, car trips call for frequent stops to move around.

Making the most of your trip

Many destinations now offer services catering to expectant mothers, ensuring your journey is as smooth and enjoyable as possible. Some airports provide pregnant travelers priority boarding or express lanes. Upon arrival, check with customer service about these options.

Some hotels also offer special services. Inquire about activities such as prenatal yoga classes and pregnancy massage services. When booking, inquire about maternity packages or if they can accommodate special room requests.

Contact local guided tours to find out if they have tailored options for those looking to explore without wearing themselves out. Look for tours that cater to slower paces or shorter durations, allowing you to see the sights without the strain.

Bottom line

Catching a break from everyday stress and responsibilities helps give your body and mind much-needed peace. This time should be about you, your happiness, and how blissful being on vacation can be.

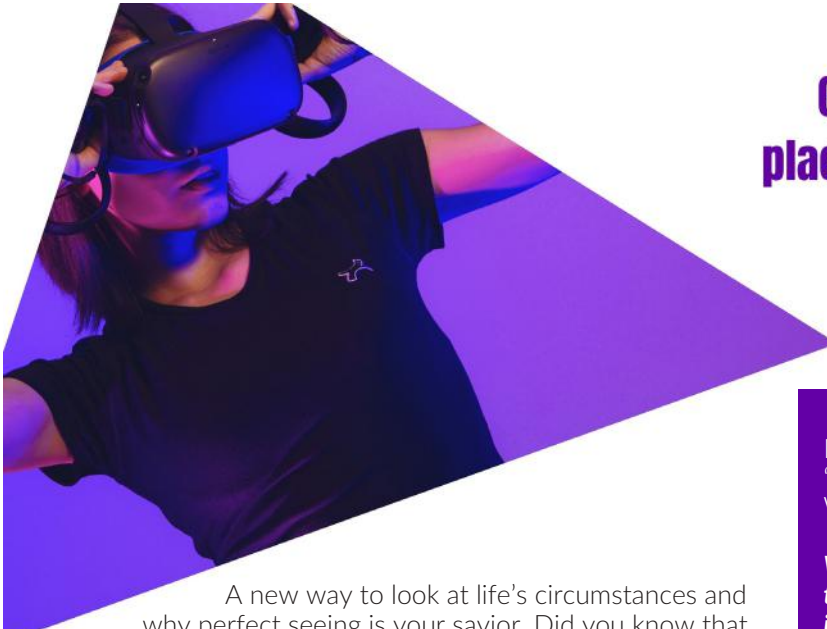
Whether it's a romantic getaway or a family retreat, having time away fortifies relationships before your new family member changes the dynamics. Investing in joyful travel experiences now is priceless, laying the foundation for a happy family journey ahead.

By Maxcine Watson
Life & Fertility Coaching



Maxcine combines her expertise as a Certified Life Skills Coach and international-level Professional Coach with her advocacy for quality fertility care. She incorporates evidence-based research and knowledge from her parenting experiences into her unique coaching style. The result is a client-centered approach that ignites deeper personal awareness while targeting goals. Maxcine helps men and women improve their chances of creating the family they want in their future.

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Getting out of your headset is placing yourself in the pole position

A new way to look at life's circumstances and why perfect seeing is your savior. Did you know that your reality is an illusion? After reading this article, you will never view your life in the same way again. Shift into the next gear; it's going to be fast.

My life comes out of me - as I heard that my eyeballs popped out. I couldn't believe it. My whole life, I was taught life is happening TO me and that I have to find my way to deal with it.

But here comes the game changer: I'm the one who creates it all - 24/7. I'm the happening. What I'm conscious of is what I see as my reflection and projection instantly. It looks solid because everything is energy, constantly vibrating in a certain state of matter.

My life, the circumstances, the people - how can that be an illusion, you might say. I can touch it, smell it, see it... Yes, it's a real experience, like having a dream. But it's not real. Now you might be confused: So what is real then? What can I rely on? ME

What I've found out: I'm the changeless awareness behind it all, constantly observing myself to know the content of my own consciousness. Without that, I wouldn't even have a life experience.

The frames implanted in my consciousness as potential blueprints are waiting to get lit up from me with light speed, and with my human brain's perception, I can barely believe that it's all coming out of me. That I'm creating the flow, the simultaneity, the constant change of my life.

But why create this illusion when none of it is real? Well, how could I know myself as consciousness better than through my experiences? To know the qualia of my own system, I need to have experiences.

By having this illusion where I seem to have forgotten everything about who I am, I can play around and know that I'm joy, Peace, and happiness itself. When I love, hate or fear someone or something, I will find out that there is only love. That I'm love itself.

I will remember that when something feels bad, then it's not who I really am. Can I change something I don't prefer? It seems to be impossible. Yes, the illusion of the so-called physical world melts when I change my assumptions about it.

My physical experience is not happening outside of me. "There is no out there, out there", like physicist John Wheeler said.

When I rise in consciousness and see things as I would like them to be, my physical reality has to change. "Creation is finished", and I choose my experience of it. But without knowing that, I might stick to the same choices.

Not knowing about my power, being one with God, is me choosing to be a poor person, sitting on the treasure box and letting my circumstances decide who I am. But knowing I'm the only cause is me choosing myself and being that abundant person.

I have to leave the headset of my well-known "space-time-world" and remember my true nature as awareness. I have to take on the leading role again and decide where the primary focus of my awareness is and what the illusion in my headset will look like.

Scientist Ph.D. Donald Hoffmann uses the analogy of the "Grand Theft Auto" game - I play a character, and all that I experience "gets rendered on the fly from my consciousness".

I'm 99.999999999999% malleable energy and change starts subtly on the quantum level "in my headset".

When I, AS reality, look at my circumstances differently, everything in my system has to change. The wave collapses through my observing and the quantum particles find their position according to my new state.

I might not see my preferred outcome yet with my physical eyes, but the rearrangement is happening instantly.

Putting yourself in the pole position means you're always the winner. You don't need proof for that.

Decide that you're the version of you that's living the dream life now. Stick to it. Your physical reality must yield. It's law.

By Eva-Maria Prell



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Darkest Day in Court



Last year, I was fortunate enough to embark on a three-month vacation visiting various states in the US. My 9-year-old son, my enormous dog, and I all piled into the car and had a real adventure! However, when we returned home, the energy in the place we called home just felt dead. I looked around and noticed my network and social group had somehow run dry while we were gone. There was some urgency to rent a home, and I was unable to find a place to live. Application after application was rejected despite having a perfect rental history and paying for the year upfront. It was baffling. Everywhere I turned, it simply felt out of sync. This went on for weeks, and it became clear to me that I was being asked by a force greater than myself to relocate.

My son's father and I had never really had any conflict regarding our son. In truth, I took on all the costs and responsibilities of day-to-day life and had him 80% of the time. And I went along with his father, showing up whenever it suited him, so that made any potential for friction nonexistent. And thankfully, he did choose to show up for our son consistently. We never had any court orders, and there was no exchange of child support. The child support was never put in place as I did not want money, or the lack thereof, to be the reason he did not have a relationship with his son. And I wanted the autonomy to make decisions without any influence. Fortunately, this worked for both of us.

As I continued to put rental applications in and get denied, the beginning of the school year was upon us. However, I couldn't enrol him anywhere because I didn't know where we were going to live. We were staying in a hotel, and still, there were no opportunities available. Every door continued to remain closed. I had options elsewhere, just not in the place we used to live. As time continued on, it became clear to me that I was being redirected to investigate moving to another state. It was time to act, and in my haste to move quickly so I could get everything set up before the first day of school, I called his father and dropped the bomb that I was moving two states away, and our son was coming with me. I explained that we'd easily be able to manage his visitation schedule, as the new school schedule was highly conducive, and we could split the cost of plane tickets, making it not much different from our current arrangement.

As you can imagine, this did not go over well. There was a clear knowing on my part that the move was necessary for work opportunities as well as opportunities for me personally, and the school system was also higher ranked, all of which would contribute to positive opportunities for both myself and my son. I was so certain it was aligned that it was what I was doing, period. In hindsight, I can see that my son's father felt that there wasn't even the possibility for discussion available to me. The definitive

force with which I presented it created fear on his part and resulted in an absolute impasse.

He immediately hired an attorney and began preparing for litigation while I was in the midst of moving. I sincerely thought we could talk and work it all out. After all, I had shouldered all the responsibility for our child for nearly a decade, seeking exactly this kind of freedom. I, too, had to find a lawyer.

It only took a week for me to secure legal counsel, find a beautiful home in a superb neighborhood, locate an incredible school, and all of this close to my work opportunity as well. My attorney assured me it was ok for me to go. I scheduled movers and headed out to our new destination. My son was able to begin at a sought-after school immediately; he was really enjoying the new school and his new friends. Everything fell into place seamlessly and felt completely aligned.

My attorney notified me of the legal filings once they became available and informed me that our first court hearing would be scheduled for about a month later. I had to fly back to show up in person. At this hearing, to my surprise, temporary orders were put in place for our son to be remanded back to the state we had just moved from. The judge was clear with me that I did not have to move there, but our son did. I remember walking out of the courtroom in shock and feeling devastated at the thought of what our life would look like if we had to go back to the state we'd just left due to lack of opportunity and with much more limited resources after the move and the attorney fees.

Only about a month had passed, and in addition to the moving and rental expenses, I'd already paid tens of thousands of dollars in legal fees. I quickly became aware that I was heading towards a financial crisis. And it was clear to me that the court itself had no care in the situation. We had never put our agreement, which stipulated that I would pay for all and retain sole decision-making rights, in writing.

So they were trying to fit us into what they considered a standard way of living, which didn't work for us. It felt to me in every interaction with the court that space was fueled by the energy of fear and lack, with a complete disregard for understanding the individual circumstances of the family unit. To compound matters, my son's father made it clear that he was unwilling to cooperate in any way, refusing even to verbally participate in the required mediation, so there was no way a positive end result could be achieved for anyone involved. I wanted no part of this process.





spent quite a bit of time with myself after that hearing, trying to find a solution, and as I might, there was only one clear solution I could see. It was for our son to live with his father and visit me. To say it was the most challenging decision I've ever arrived at is an understatement. I had been the primary caregiver of our son since he was born, and due to the limited time he had spent with his father over the years, our son did not have the same close relationship with his father that he had with me. Despite this, I was aware that it was his father's intention to fight until we had nothing left, literally, and I was not willing for that to be the outcome.

Despite being in the midst of a court battle and against my attorney's advice, I called his father and began the first of the conversations to rebuild the bridge of trust that I had so carelessly, though not purposely, demolished. I spent time laying it all out and explaining our options.

I could abandon this new venture and return, broke, feeling defeated and resentful, with him paying a hefty monthly bill for child support (the court was going to order that), and I would likely want to take it out on him by moving as far away as I legally could. What a WIN that would be for everyone. Or we could come together and do what we'd always done in the past, working together through whatever was available.

It was a time to be thoughtful. After all, he was asking for more responsibility for his son; who am I to deny that? After many weeks of extremely difficult conversations, we arrived at a very tense agreement. We would not continue the court engagement, our son would live with him on a trial basis for the next school year, and I would stay where I had moved to.

We would continue not to pay each other child support, and he would help with half the cost of the airfare to get our son out to see me 1-2 times a month, depending upon his school schedule. This new arrangement was stressful and uncomfortable for each and every one of us, and it has ended up being one of the most profound spaces of growth we all could have shared together.

In that moment, when I called him and showed up vulnerably, sharing what I cared about and what I saw as available to us (even the "ugly" parts), I could feel his desire shifting to show up and assist. And I've come to understand the importance for him of becoming more involved in his son's life at this age. I've watched our son go from being anxious, nervous and not wanting to live with his dad to having a relationship directly with his father, which could never have happened the way it was set up before.

I've watched his father having to step in and show up in ways he could not have imagined and had never made the space for before. I saw myself finding freedom in my own life with the ability to show up for each of them in ways that had never been possible before because I had my own agenda. By bypassing my normal mode of controlling the outcome, I was able to yield to what was and allow something new to be born for each of us.

Ultimately, I've experienced just how much growth and harmony can be achieved in creating an equitable and flexible circumstance for us all to live in, even though it was terrifying and almost unthinkable to me initially. This was an act of true sharing from my heart, and I can tell you that it also felt like an act of insanity from the view of my mind! When we can access our heart, the sharing that comes from this space leads to true equality because it is based on equality.

Our hearts carry this equalizing force - and it illuminates divisions between others by treating everyone with consideration. It was only through first being able to be in my heart and love myself that I was ultimately able to source my love for the others involved and place no one's needs above another's. There was support available for everyone else because there was first support for me. And out of that divinely ordained circumstance came the answer to how we could all find fulfillment in this circumstance, for now. For me to show up this way, I had to completely trust in the wisdom of my heart.

Angie Grimes

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By Yvonne Sandomir

The Devastating Impact of Childhood Sexual Abuse and Why Prevention Is Critical

In the last column, we explored 'WHAT' childhood sexual abuse is and the misconceptions that it's only abuse if there's physical touch. Today, we dive into 'WHY' prevention is crucial to our children's well-being.

The Joshua Center on Childhood Sexual Abuse Prevention documents that even if an abused child has the support of parents after abuse, they still experience some negative after-effects from their traumatic experience. A child without support will likely suffer from severe after-effects. These after-effects indisputably negatively impact a child's normal development and can plague a person their entire lifetime. The severity of the effects dramatically depends on the level of support from the family. (1)

Negative Emotional After-Effects

- 1. Depression** - This is a mood disorder that causes persistent sadness and lack of interest in previously enjoyable activities. Depression may also disturb sleep and appetite. Complaints of tiredness and poor concentration are common. (3)
- 2. Irrational Fear** - An intense and persistent emotion aroused by fear of an imminent threat that is disproportionate to the actual danger posed by a specific object, situation, or activity. (4)
- 3. Repressed Anger** - The result of consciously or unconsciously denying, burying, or pushing down anger instead of expressing it healthily, which could lead to a range of issues, including physical and mental health problems and relationship difficulties. (5)
- 4. Guilt Complex (Irrational Guilt)** - Is the persistent feeling of guilt that's not always tied to a specific wrong. This guilt manifests as shame, judgment, or self-criticism. It can also involve taking responsibility for things beyond one's control. (6)

These negative emotional after-effects could lead to:

Negative Coping Behaviors

- 1. Substance Abuse** - This is a pattern of compulsive substance use marked by recurrent significant social, occupational, legal, or interpersonal adverse consequences, such as repeated absences from work or school, arrests, and marital difficulties. (7)
- 2. Compulsive Gambling** - This occurs when an individual repeatedly risks something they value to obtain something more significant. They are willing to risk it all for the "chance" of winning. (7)

3. High-risk Sexual Behavior - This is sex that puts someone at risk for sexually transmitted infections, unplanned pregnancy, and being in a sexual relationship before they are mature enough to know what makes a healthy relationship. High-risk behavior could involve sex with strangers, multiple partners, or frequent unprotected sex. (7)

4. Difficulty with Affect Regulation - Refers to how individuals modulate their emotions, moods, feelings, and expressions. A person may have difficulty maintaining composure in stressful situations or regulating their emotions, such as anger and sadness. This difficulty with regulation could lead to the inability to manage negative feelings or self-soothe. (7)

These harmful coping mechanisms typically lead to negative beliefs about the self and world, such as powerlessness, hopelessness, self-criticism, and self-blame. These negative beliefs influence how one perceives both the positive and negative aspects of oneself. With a positive self-image, one recognises one's strengths and potential while being realistic about one's weaknesses and limitations.

With a negative self-image, one tends to focus on their faults and weaknesses, distorting their view of failure and imperfections, leading them to believe they are "damaged" or unworthy of love and respect. Childhood victims may become adults who think the world is unsafe and a haven doesn't exist, thus creating major trust issues, losing trust in those they once trusted or struggling to ever trust anyone again.

As you can see, the potential long-term negative after-effects of abuse can devastate a victim their entire lives. There is a profound misconception that children are so resilient they can bounce back from anything, and that isn't the case when it comes to childhood sexual abuse. We must protect our children without question and at all costs.

In my next column, we will explore WHO abuses children, WHO is most likely at risk, and HOW to know if an offender is amongst you. Trust me, they are there.

Reference List:

1. The Joshua Center for Childhood Sexual Abuse Prevention <https://uwjoshuacenter.org/effects-child-sexual-abuse>
2. Mayo Clinic <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/depression/symptoms-causes/syc-20356007>
3. Rula <https://www.rula.com/blog/irrational-fear-definition>
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5. Very Well Mind <https://www.verywellmind.com/guilt-complex-definition-symptoms-causes-treatment-5115946>
6. APA Dictionary of Psychology <https://dictionary.apa.org>

STEP INTO SUMMER AND LET YOURSELF BLOOM.



Summer is a radiant full bloom. As the and short, warm nights, it touches—bringing to life the seeds planted in spring, both around us and within. Summer invites us to pause, reflect, and tend to our intentions, allowing them to blossom into something lasting. This season reminds us that what we nurture with care can truly thrive.

expression of vitality, abundance, and life in sun reaches its peak, casting long golden days nature bursts with energy. The light nourishes all

Summer reflection practice

Set aside some intentional time for this practice—ideally in the early part of the day or evening when the heat is gentler. Choose a moment when you won't be rushed. Bring along some water to stay hydrated, your journal, a pen, and perhaps a few coloured pencils if you enjoy drawing or adding creative notes to your reflections.

1. Mindful observation walk

Select a natural setting where you can observe plants at various stages of growth. As you walk slowly and attentively, notice how each tree, flower, or blade of grass receives exactly what it needs—sunlight, water, nourishment from the earth—to thrive. Let this quiet witnessing become a mirror for your inner growth and needs.

2. Journaling for growth

Find a peaceful, shaded spot to pause and reflect. Let your journal be a space for gentle self-inquiry. Use these prompts to guide your writing:

- *Reflect on the intentions you set in spring: What has taken root? What has shifted? What still needs tending?*
- *What kind of nourishment do I need to flourish—physically, emotionally, spiritually, and beyond?*
- *How can I offer more “sunlight” and “water” to my goals—through time, energy, attention, or support?*

3. Action plan for nurturing

What small, practical steps can help sustain your intentions this season? Perhaps it's setting a spring goal, making space for a creative project, nurturing a relationship, practising self-care, or welcoming something new. Like a flourishing garden, growth depends on steady, intentional care—and summer gently reminds us of the power of consistent nurturing.

10 Summer nature connection ideas

These simple, intentional practices can help you slow down, awaken your senses, and build a more meaningful relationship with nature.

1. **Celebrate the Summer Solstice.** Mark the longest day of the year with a simple ritual or gathering. Light a candle or enjoy a bonfire, share stories, and set intentions for the months ahead.
2. **Stargazing nights.** Take advantage of warm, clear evenings to watch the night sky. Learn to identify constellations, trace the moon's path, or simply rest under the stars in quiet reflection.
3. **Outdoor movement challenge.** Create your summer wellness challenge. Include activities like trail running, cycling, swimming, or gentle morning yoga in the open air.
4. **Eco-friendly picnics.** Enjoy outdoor meals that emphasise sustainability. Choose local, seasonal foods, bring reusable containers, and leave no trace behind.
5. **Beach or river clean-up.** Give back to nature by organising or participating in a clean-up event. It's a meaningful way to care for coastal or freshwater ecosystems while spending time outdoors.
6. **Sunrise meditation.** Begin a day with meditation at sunrise. Whether at the beach, in a park, or on your balcony, let the rising sun centre and energise you.
7. **Hydration and care stations.** On hot days, set out water for wildlife or create a hydration station in your neighbourhood for passersby and pets. It's a small act of community kindness and ecological care.
8. **Water hikes and cleansing rituals.** Visit a natural body of water—such as a river, lake, waterfall, or sea—and take time for a gentle cleansing ritual. Dip your hands or feet in as a symbol of release and renewal.
9. **Nature crafting.** Use natural, found materials like grasses, wildflowers, or stones to create mandalas, wreaths, or simple weavings. Let your creativity flow in connection with the land.
10. **Explore urban green spaces.** If you live in a city, take the time to seek out local parks, rooftop gardens, or small pockets of natural beauty. Even in urban environments, nature is there to meet you.

This summer, may you find the space to slow down, nurture what matters most, and bloom in your unique way.

By Karina Jaskova

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Fire Drills Save Lives

Loud, unexpected, and often inconvenient fire drills have become an integral part of our lives. Though disruptive, fire drills have proven to save countless lives over the years. They show how a proactive approach can be effective during emergencies. The simplicity and repetition of fire drills ensure that people know exactly what to do in case of a fire, helping them stay calm and confident in finding the safest route.

In much the same way, humans experience their own internal "fire alarms" going off throughout the day and can also be disruptive. These alarms, often triggered by emotions like stress, anxiety, or frustration, signal when we are overwhelmed. This is why I am passionate about teaching children emotional regulation techniques from a young age, as it gives them a chance to respond before the 'fire' takes hold. If the 'fire' has already taken hold and they feel completely overwhelmed, they have practical tools to deescalate and soothe themselves.

By practicing these skills regularly, children are empowered to recognise, name, and respond to their emotions in a more balanced and constructive way, boosting resilience, confidence and their mental health and wellbeing. However, developing these skills takes time and practice. Just as fire drills require regular repetition to become ingrained, emotional regulation also requires consistent practice to be effective.

Recent research into brain science has revealed that our brains are capable of change and adaptation throughout our lives. This is known as neuroplasticity. As we learn new skills, new neural connections and pathways are formed in the brain, allowing it to reorganise and restructure. The more a skill is practiced, the easier it becomes, just like riding a bike or swimming. Practicing strategies that help with emotional regulation helps build new neural pathways, assisting children to be less reactive, less impulsive, and better at managing their emotions in a healthier, more controlled way.

Dr. Karyn Purvis, a well-known expert in child development, explains that it takes around 400 repetitions to form a new synapse in the brain. However, when the learning process is facilitated through play, the number of repetitions drops dramatically to just 10-20. This shows how essential it is to make learning both enjoyable and repetitive.

It is important to note that we all need to be in a calm state to effectively learn new skills. Our amygdala, which acts as the brain's internal alarm system, must first feel safe before it can access the prefrontal cortex—the part of the brain responsible for learning, rationalising, and problem-solving. For children to acquire these life skills, they must feel safe, calm and "online" in a state conducive to learning.

Here are a few tips that can help boost children's emotional regulation:

Positive Relationships:

Positive role models who co-regulate with children and teach them how to self-regulate are essential in developing emotional regulation.

Sleep:

Good-quality sleep plays a crucial role in regulating emotions and promoting positive mental well-being.

Mindfulness:

Sensory awareness and breathing help children focus on the present moment, calming their minds, regulating emotions, improving focus, and boosting wellbeing, among other benefits.

Nutrition:

A balanced, nutritious diet contributes to a healthy gut, which in turn supports emotional well-being.

Emotional Awareness:

Teaching children to identify and acknowledge the emotions in their bodies helps them develop self-awareness, a crucial skill for managing emotions effectively.

Energy Release:

Regular outdoor activities and movement help children release pent-up energy and stress hormones, such as cortisol and adrenaline, which help maintain emotional balance.

Education:

Structured classes, such as Relax Kids, teach children mindfulness and other relaxation techniques that calm the mind and body, enabling them to learn and develop skills in a nurturing and fun environment.

Calm Spaces:

Creating a calm corner or opportunities that are soothing for children allows them to calm, reset and refocus when feeling overwhelmed. Sensory toys, blankets, glitter jars, soothing music, mindful colouring and massage are all effective.

By incorporating these strategies into daily life, we can help children thrive and grow with the emotional tools needed to navigate the challenges of life in a calmer and more controlled manner.



By Cindy White

Wellbeing and Parent Coach



The Power Within

How Your Mind, Body, and Energy Are Designed to Heal

What if your body weren't just a collection of cells and tissues but a dynamic, intelligent energy field constantly responding to your thoughts, emotions, and the world around you? In the realm of quantum physics, the body is not merely a physical structure but a vibrating field of consciousness capable of transformation in every moment.

Every cell in your body holds an innate ability to renew, restore, and bring you back into balance. Your body is not static; it is fluid, adaptable, and ever-evolving. The real question is: what energy are you feeding it? What stories, beliefs, and emotions are shaping the environment within you?

"Your body is listening. Every thought and emotion becomes the energy your cells respond to."

Science now confirms what ancient healing traditions have long known: that the mind and body are in constant communication. Your thoughts, emotions, and subconscious beliefs are powerful, energetic signals. They influence your nervous system, immune response, and even how your cells function. Chronic stress, unresolved trauma, and negative beliefs create disharmony, while love, gratitude, and positive intention activate healing responses.

We often think of healing as something external—a pill, a treatment, or a procedure. But what if true healing starts from within? By shifting your mindset, cultivating presence, and releasing the emotional baggage you've carried for years, you activate your body's natural ability to heal, adapt, and thrive.

"Healing begins the moment you choose to see yourself as the creator, not the victim."

Practices like meditation, breathwork, and mindfulness are no longer considered "alternative". They are essential tools for well-being. When you pause, breathe deeply, or enter a moment of reflection, you move from survival mode into a state of creation. Stress softens. Tension dissolves. The intelligence within your cells comes alive, recalibrating your system from the inside out.

In these moments, you remember that you are not a passive observer of life or your health; you are an active creator. You have the power to influence your health and well-being in profound ways. However, sometimes, no matter how many positive affirmations we recite or how much meditation we practice, it feels like we're stuck in a repetitive cycle,

reacting to the same triggers, facing the same health challenges, or reliving the same inner struggles.

This is where the Mind Detox Method offers life-changing support.

Unlike surface-level approaches, the Mind Detox Method dives deep to uncover the root causes of stress, health issues, or persistent life problems. It's designed to identify the unresolved emotions, limiting beliefs, and subconscious patterns that quietly run in the background of your mind, often formed in childhood or during emotionally charged moments, influencing your reactions, your decisions, and your health.

"Your symptoms are not random - they are messengers pointing to what still needs healing."

Many of us carry emotional wounds we're not even aware of. Yet, our bodies feel them. They show up as anxiety, physical symptoms, relationship challenges, or a constant sense of struggle. The Mind Detox Method that I share with my clients helps pinpoint these hidden drivers and gently clears them without years of therapy or reliving painful memories.

By resolving these underlying issues, you free your mind and body from the emotional weight you've carried. Your energy shifts, your cells respond, and your body naturally returns to a state of balance and vitality.

"When you change your mind, you change your energy, and that changes everything."

Imagine what becomes possible when you're no longer operating from old programming; when you create your life, health, and happiness from a place of freedom, presence, and possibility.

The truth is, healing is not just something that happens to you; it's something you actively create. You were born with the ability to regenerate, restore, and thrive.

By reconnecting to this truth and clearing what no longer serves you, you unlock the extraordinary healing potential that has been within you all along.

"Your mind is powerful. Your body is wise. And your potential is limitless."

By Nikki Hillhouse

Nikki Hillhouse is a Therapeutic Coach, Meditation Teacher, Bestselling Author, and Speaker who helps people heal from trauma, reconnect with their true selves, and live with clarity and meaning. Now based in the Turkish countryside, she provides heart-led online coaching and leads restorative wellness retreats.

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5 BEDROOM SHIFTS THAT CAN TRANSFORM YOUR SLEEP

Did you know your bedroom might be the biggest reason you're not sleeping well?

As a wellness coach and midlife health advocate, I've seen clients exhausted despite doing "everything right." The missing link? Their sleep environment. You don't need fancy gadgets—just a few simple shifts can turn your bedroom into a true wellness sanctuary.

Here are five quick wins to improve your sleep starting tonight:

1. Keep it Cool

Set your thermostat between 65°F–67°F. A cooler core body temperature helps you fall and stay asleep. Your body naturally drops temperature as it prepares for sleep, and a cool room facilitates this process. If you tend to wake up hot at night, consider less clothing, moisture-wicking sheets, or a cooling mattress topper.

2. Embrace Darkness

Use blackout curtains or a sleep mask to block light, which interferes with melatonin. Even tiny lights from electronics matter—cover them with tape or unplug them. Our circadian rhythms are especially sensitive to blue light, so remove devices from your bedroom or, at minimum, turn them face down. If you sleep with your phone next to you, try to put it across the room to give your body some space and more darkness overnight.

3. Reduce Noise

Try earplugs or a white noise machine to block disruptive sounds. City dweller? Heavy curtains help absorb outside noise. Sound machines with specific frequencies, like pink noise, have been shown to mask disturbances and enhance deep sleep phases. Earplugs are not just reserved for those long airline flights; it may feel funny at first, but they will become your favorite sleep hack in no time.



4. Upgrade Your Bed

Choose breathable, organic materials and a mattress that supports your sleep style. Replace pillows every 1–2 years. Your skin absorbs what touches it for 7–8 hours each night, so investing in a non-toxic mattress and bedding isn't just about comfort—it's about long-term health.

5. Declutter Your Space

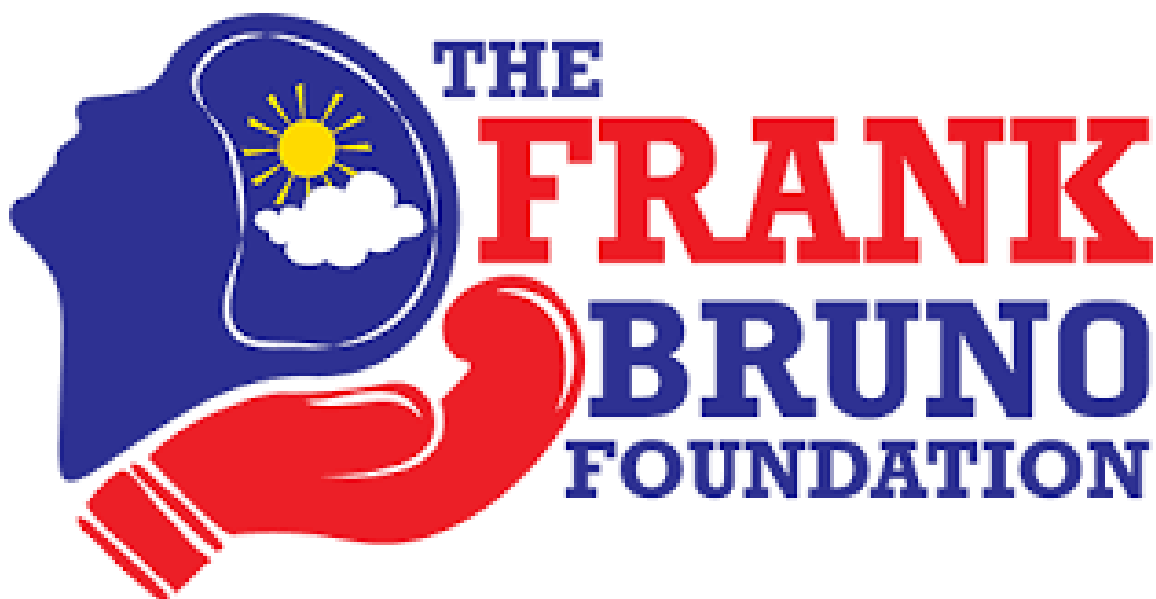
A clean, calm room calms the mind. Add a diffuser with lavender or sandalwood oil for bonus relaxation. Research shows that people sleep better in tidy environments, as visual chaos creates subconscious stress even when your eyes are closed.

Small changes, big impact. Because wellness starts where you rest—not just where you work out.

The bedroom is your personal sanctuary for recovery and rejuvenation. By prioritizing sleep hygiene, we ensure better nights and build the foundation for more energetic, balanced, and healthy days.

Want more sleep-enhancing tips? Visit TheWellDrop.com for my free guide: "The Ultimate Simple Bedroom Makeover."

By Amber Berger
THE WELL DROP



When you died, I never cried

My Nani (grandmother) passed away at home. I saw her lying there in her bed, knowing full well she had gone, but something very common, which happens to a lot of people, happened to me. I dissociated.

It was as if I were watching myself watching her. I thought I should feel sad, upset, or angry, but the truth is I didn't feel any of those feelings; I just felt totally numb.

I thought, 'Cry, please cry. Aren't you upset?' I asked myself, and then came the fear of judgement, crying because people you love, who love your Nani, are around and might notice that you're not as upset as they are (I wasn't wrong). – I did get asked by someone close to me if 'I was okay'. The truth is, I wasn't okay; I knew I wasn't. I had experienced a few close bereavements sadly by this point, and I knew what my usual reaction was, and this wasn't it.

I'll be really honest: I tried to force myself to cry, but it just didn't work. So, instead, I tried to avoid those I loved so I wouldn't get judged for not crying.

Losing my grandmother was one of the saddest experiences of my life, now that I think about it retrospectively. A year before her death, I went through a health struggle, and my Nani was visiting during that time, but I couldn't be myself and converse with her. Not only that, and I'm not sure I should be this honest, but I felt like I didn't really get to get as involved in her funeral as I would've liked to. I actually felt left out on top of questioning my bodily reaction to her passing, and this made grieving her a challenging experience.

*When you died, I never cried
I don't know why
Wait I do
I can't say why
It is taboo*

*So I'll keep it secret
Wish I could change it
Or at least exchange it
Give you mine
If you give me yours
Risky business exchanging doors
Still, you greet me in my dreams
Perhaps you're not as far as it
seems
Watch over me
I think I need it
Too expressive
They think I feed it
Waited for the day I felt it
Wrote this poem*



I never really expressed how I felt because I didn't think people would truly understand for several reasons. So, I kept it to myself and headed my feelings of resentment and self-hatred in addition to processing my grief.

For several months, I did not cry while processing her death; it wasn't until one night I was giving myself Reiki on the crown of my head, which I believe to be the placement of the crown chakra which connects us to a higher power.

Part way through giving myself Reiki, I was washed with feelings of overwhelm, and tears started flowing, and they didn't stop for hours then, without consciously thinking, words started coming out of my mouth, and I started reciting a poem I essentially channelled;

A year or so after my Nani's passing, I had a psychic reading. The reader was a medium, and I'm not a fan of medium readings (it's just a personal preference); however, during the reading, he said that he could feel the presence of someone and if I was open to discussing it to which I responded that I was.

He described the woman and gave me some key dates, which meant something to me and made me realise that it was, in fact, my Nani who had shown up in the reading. He gave me some loving messages from her, which he couldn't possibly have known, as I hadn't mentioned her at all in the reading, specifically regarding her feelings of being left out during her funeral. She validated that I wouldn't be where I am in life if I hadn't had those experiences.

I was lucky enough to receive these messages from the psychic reader, which I wasn't expecting at all. However, it just goes to show how loved ones who have passed are always looking out for us, even after they pass away; we just may not realise it.

If you've lost someone you loved and you're not a fan of mediumship, but you've some things that were left unsaid to that person or about how you coped with their loss, I highly recommend setting up a quiet space, lighting a candle, and writing a letter to that loved one.

By Kiran Sidhu

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Shedding light on the paths that lie ahead

Kerry Mayes, a Spiritual Life Coach and Trance Hypnotherapist emphasizes the importance of engaging in the pursuit of one's divine purpose. She acknowledges that this journey can often bring forth emotions such as fear, self-doubt, and anxiety, which are common human experiences on earth. These feelings may indicate the need for further preparation and personal growth.

The path of self-discovery is rich with valuable lessons that contribute to significant personal development and a stronger connection to one's greater purpose. By welcoming change and allowing oneself to progress at a personal pace, individuals can create a harmonious alignment of mind, body, spirit, and soul.

Everyone possesses unique gifts that are meant to be shared with the world. Actively engaging in the journey toward realizing personal aspirations is crucial, as the timeline for achieving these goals can vary. Upon reaching these milestones, many individuals experience a deep sense of gratitude for the complexities of their unique paths.

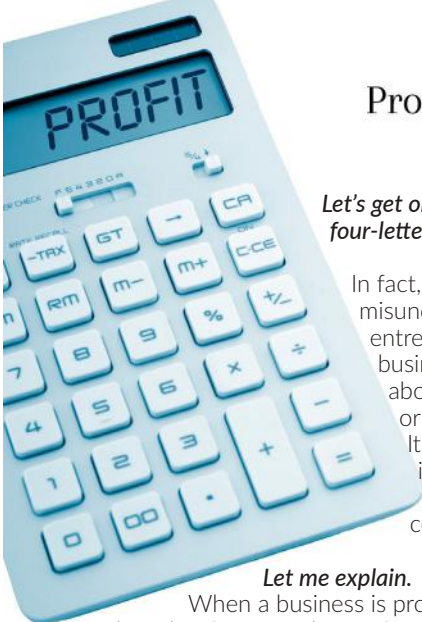
For those interested in starting this journey but feeling uncertain about the next steps, it is beneficial to reflect on essential questions such as: Who am I? What are my innate skills? What are my deepest desires? For further guidance on self-discovery, individuals can reach out to Kerry at enquiries@psychicrus.com. Remember, we are all on this remarkable journey together, shedding light on the paths that lie ahead to become whole as one.

By Kerry Mayes
Spiritual Life Coach and Trance Hypnotherapist
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Supporting





Profit with Purpose: How a Thriving Business Can Change Your Life (and Everyone Else's Too)

Let's get one thing straight— "Profit" isn't a four-letter word!

In fact, it might be the most misunderstood hero in the entrepreneurial journey. For small business owners, profit isn't just about taking home a bigger paycheck or upgrading your office chair. It's about freedom. It's about impact. And yes—it's even about saving marriages and changing communities.

Let me explain.

When a business is profitable, it creates space. Space to breathe. Space to dream. Space to spend time with the people who matter most. And in a world that often feels overloaded with hustle and understocked on joy, space is a luxury—and a necessity.

The Hidden Stress of Break-Even

Ask any entrepreneur what's keeping them up at night, and chances are it's not a branding question. It's cash flow. It's uncertainty. It's an endless game of juggling bills, payroll, and future plans. A business that only survives month to month doesn't leave room for anything else—not creativity, not vision, and certainly not peace of mind.



But when a business becomes consistently profitable, everything changes. Arguments over money at home decrease. Panic over a slow month disappears. Vacations go from guilt-ridden indulgences to well-earned time off. Relationships strengthen, stress diminishes, and you finally get to run the business you originally dreamed of—without it running you into the ground.

By Jane Parmel

Business Development & Profit Acceleration Strategist
www.cardinalprofit.com

More Than Just Survival—Profit Fuels Purpose

A profitable business doesn't just change the owner's life—it can ripple outward in powerful ways.

- You can hire better, invest in your team, and create real career paths.
 - You can give more—whether it's to your church, your kid's fundraiser, or a cause that speaks to your heart.
 - You can volunteer your time without worrying that you're abandoning your business.
- Too many business owners feel guilty for wanting to "make more money." But here's the truth: when you profit with integrity, you become a force for good. You're not just putting food on your table—you're placing purpose into motion.

So, What's the Profit Plan?

Profit doesn't happen by accident. It takes intention, systems, and a strategic approach.

You need to track what matters—your margins, your client lifetime value, and your conversion rates. You need to charge what you're worth, not what you are afraid people will pay. And most importantly, you need to treat profit as a priority, not a byproduct.

Start small. Trim waste. Bundle offers. Raise prices. Cross-sell. Upsell. Improve processes. There are dozens of low- to no-cost strategies that can dramatically increase profits without requiring a single new hire or paid ad.

And once that profit starts flowing?

Use it. Share it. Celebrate it. Let it reduce your stress, strengthen your relationships, and multiply your impact. Because, at the end of the day, a profitable business isn't just a business that makes money. It's a business that makes life better - for you, your family, your team, and your entire community.

And isn't that the kind of business you set out to build in the first place?



Menopause

BEAUTY & THE BEAST

Fairy tales often hold deeper meaning, and Beauty and the Beast is the perfect analogy for menopause. For many women, menopause can feel like the Beast—bringing physical and emotional changes that leave us feeling unrecognisable. But what if we could reframe menopause as a time of growth, empowerment, and renewal? With a shift in mindset, we can transform this stage into something beautiful.

When Menopause Feels Like the Beast

Menopause can bring unexpected challenges: anxiety, self-doubt, mood swings, changes in body image, and even shifts in relationships. Many of us struggle to accept these transformations, feeling like we're losing ourselves. But instead of running from menopause, as I once did, what if we embraced it?

Reclaiming Your Beauty:

Shifting Your Menopause Mindset

If menopause feels like the Beast in your life, here's how you can invite the Beauty back in:

Channel Positive Thoughts & Emotions

Focusing on positive experiences lifts our mood and boosts overall wellbeing. A simple shift in perspective can make a world of difference.

Try an Appreciation Rampage

When negative menopause thoughts creep in, take five minutes to focus on what you appreciate. It could be something small—your morning coffee, a kind gesture, or a moment of peace. This simple exercise quickly shifts your mindset and brings the Beauty back into focus.

Get Creative with Positive Affirmations

Reinforce self-love with meaningful affirmations. Instead of simply saying, "I accept my body," take it a step further: "I love my body because it is remarkable and has carried me through life." This deeper connection can make affirmations more impactful.

Turn Threats into Opportunities

Menopause can feel like a threat—but what if it's an opportunity? If you feel invisible at work, use that space to observe and offer new insights. If menopause has prompted you to reassess your career, consider how this transition could lead to exciting new opportunities. I did just that and haven't looked back!

Menopause is not the end of anything—it's a new chapter, a new chance to write your story in a different way. With a mindset shift, we can move from feeling like the Beast to fully embracing the Beauty within us. Try these simple changes, and you'll start to see menopause in a whole new light.

By Jeanette Forder

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CALM

The Power of Journaling: Your Summer Self-Development Breakthrough

As summer approaches and vacation plans take shape, there's no better time to adopt one of the most transformative habits that many successful business leaders have: journaling.

Whether you're planning beach getaways or lake house retreats, these peaceful moments in nature provide the perfect opportunity for reflection and personal growth.

From Spanx founder Sarah Blakely's collection of notebooks to former Microsoft CEO Bill Gates' disconnected retreats, top performers understand that pen-to-paper reflection is indispensable for sustained success.

Years ago, I started journaling during a particularly challenging period in my career. As a senior leader having a lot to juggle, the pressure and stress were taking the best of me. Once I dedicated 30 minutes a week on a Sunday to journaling, the quiet moments away from chaos allowed me to process my thoughts, recognise my roadblocks and their root causes, and develop the clarity that ultimately transformed both my mindset and results.

The Science Behind Summer Reflection

Research by psychologist James Pennebaker reveals that writing about emotional experiences helps process events and organise chaotic thoughts. The benefits extend beyond mental clarity—journaling strengthens immune function, lowers blood pressure, improves sleep quality, and enhances memory retention.

Here are four transformational journaling methods that I use today, and I invite you to try them this summer.

1. Mindset Maintenance

Finish each day writing five things you're grateful for and three accomplishments you're proud of. This practice maintains emotional equilibrium and helps you sleep **better**.

2. Idea Development

Use peaceful summer moments for brainstorming sessions. Away from daily pressures, innovative solutions emerge organically when you write freely about business challenges.

3. Organisational Planning

Plan your post-vacation goals and projects on paper. This enhances retention and fosters enthusiasm for implementing new strategies.

4. Transformational Reflection

Practice "brain dumps" in nature—writing whatever comes to mind, then analysing patterns. This self-awareness reveals how your mindset drives your actions and how shifts in perspective can lead to better actions and better results.

Your business results reflect your decisions, actions, and perspective. This summer, give yourself the gift of reflection to help you improve your results. Start small with just one method and watch how a simple practice transforms your leadership effectiveness and overall outcomes.



By Maggie Perotin
Business and Leadership Coach
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23
Joe Coffee
FOUNDATION
giving local kids a chance



The Art of Guiding You

You are your own best guide in your life as you learn to trust your way works for you. The truth is the mind creates or projects your reality based on the beliefs and values you hold within your heart and mind. In knowing this, you can change your mind and reality at any time.

Your heart holds your wisdom as a deep-seated feeling of truth, guiding you empathetically. As you go within your heart's center, it allows you to neutralize your mind and receive guidance.

We are taught to ask others what's best for us as if we don't know. This is a false belief that creates an illusion in the mind's reality.

Recall a time when you tried to follow another's advice or way, and it did not work out for you. It's not their fault; it's that their way goes against something within your own values or belief system. You truly need nothing outside of yourself to guide yourself.

Begin to ask yourself what is for you. Be still in the mind, connect to your heart, and use all your senses to interpret your way. Allow it to come to you in all ways and take the first wisdom, answer, and action step you receive to begin creating and living your truth in knowing for you.

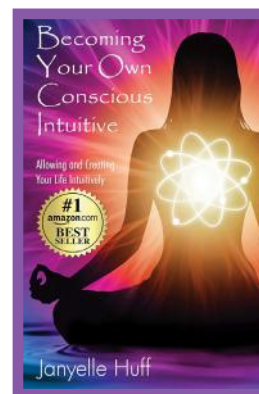
Building confidence in knowing you trust yourself allows you to understand that your way does work for you. Aligning this trust with confidence within yourself is life-changing in positive and healthy ways.

Schedule your private session, and let me guide you in understanding how you trust and know yourself best.

Get started now by reading my latest book, "Becoming Your Own Conscious Intuitive". <https://a.co/d/dOkPa1>

By Janyelle Huff

www.Janyellehuff.com



Let's Get Curious - Part 3

"Rediscovering Strength Through Stillness"

Welcome back to Part 3 of this series! In Part 1, we explored the power of letting go, and in Part 2, we cultivated a garden of self-discovery. Now, let's get curious: what is strength through stillness?

In a world that values constant "doing," we often overlook the profound power of stillness - of "being." Think about it: when was the last time you truly paused? Not to check your phone, plan your day, or zone out, but to simply be? Stillness can often feel counterproductive to some. Outwardly, it may seem like a passive and unproductive state of being.

The reality is that it allows us to remain undisturbed by the chaos of the world around us. Stillness isn't about doing nothing; it's about being intentionally present. There is an opportunity to uncover, explore and discover a world of inner reflection, resources and authenticity that we may not have realized existed, reconnecting with our strength, our oneness and ourselves.

How can we connect in a meaningful way? By embracing stillness - pausing - being mindful, and anchoring to our breath.

You don't need hours of meditation or silence. Even a short 5-minute pause can become a sanctuary. Close your eyes, take a deep breath, and notice the sensations in your body. Listen to your thoughts without judgment. Why is this important? Stillness allows us to recharge and gain clarity. Often, it is where solutions to challenges will appear. It allows us to hear the wisdom that lies under the surface.

Strength is not just the ability to act—it's also the wisdom and awareness of knowing when to pause. Rediscovering strength involves cultivating a practice of stillness that reminds you of your ability to endure and grow.

Amid life's noise, give yourself the gift of stillness—it's where your true power resides. You got this! Visit www.talkbreathelive.com to access a free mindfulness activity and begin your journey to rediscovering strength through stillness.

By Darlene Wierski-Devoe
Wellness Facilitator, Author & Speaker
www.talkbreathelive.com



Supporting

NHS

The Dangerous Myth of “Just Leave.”

This is probably one of the most common statements and is constantly in the spotlight when we talk about domestic abuse and post-separation abuse.

It's also one of the most damaging statements too. Why is it we think if someone leaves an abusive situation that, automatically, the abuse will stop? In fact, the exact opposite is true. The abuser ramps up the need for control over the victim/survivor. They know they are losing control, and this cannot happen. How can the individual be “allowed” to continue a life without them?

Abuse ultimately comes down to this: power and control. And it's important to remember abuse doesn't discriminate. In my work, I talk about not always being in a position to leave the situation you're in because it's not always that simple.

Things to consider: Economic dependency, fear of the abuser hurting themselves or others, shame, embarrassment, humiliation, low self-esteem and isolation. The bottom line is that it doesn't matter who you are. Walking away from an abuser isn't that simple. It's easy to sit back and look at someone else's situation and judge them. But what are we judging that person on?

Our own personal situation?

Everybody's experiences are unique to them, and unconscious bias can have a lasting impact. Domestic abuse and post-separation abuse have no expiration date. Moving forward takes time. And that looks different to each and every individual who is impacted by it. This is why it's so important that we have as many resources and support services available, not only to help victims and survivors but also to support family, friends, and work colleagues who want to be supportive but just don't know how to go about it.

The Myth: Society believes that leaving an abusive relationship means the abuse is over.

The Reality: Separation is often the most dangerous time, with power and control from the perpetrator increasing.

The Blind Spot: As a society, we celebrate individuals who leave but struggle to support and understand those who can't.

Knowledge and understanding can help change perceptions.

By Lucy Wade



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You'll Never Be Alone
ISSUE 1
MAGAZINE

Expert insights on ...
Mental Health, Wellbeing, Fitness & Lifestyle



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**Coming Soon
in 2025
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How to Work with Your Third Eye Daily?

Most people assume that awakening the Third Eye is the ultimate destination, but it's actually just the beginning. In fact, your real journey starts now by learning how to work with this sacred inner compass every day.

Your Third Eye isn't just for big, spiritual downloads. It's a practical, everyday tool.

You can use it to read energy, navigate decisions, and align with your soul's truth. But learning to trust it takes practice because you've been conditioned to override your intuition with your mind.

Start with a simple daily ritual.

1. Create a sacred space in your home, even if it's just a corner.
2. Keep it clean and energetically clear. Use sage to cleanse the energy.
3. Set up a small altar or crystal grid.
4. Begin by breathing deeply. Inhale through your nose, exhale through your mouth, like letting out a sigh.
5. Light a candle to signal your shift into a sacred space.
6. Gaze into the flame and set your intention: "I am open to receive guidance

for my day ahead." You can bring a specific issue and ask about it or just

7. Listen with your entire being. Messages often come as feelings, images, symbols, sounds, etc. Feelings are faster than thoughts. So don't worry if you miss them at first.

8 Journal.

9. Close your ritual by blowing out the candle. Stay open. Guidance often continues to unfold throughout the day in unexpected ways.

Here are a few journaling prompts to deepen your practice:

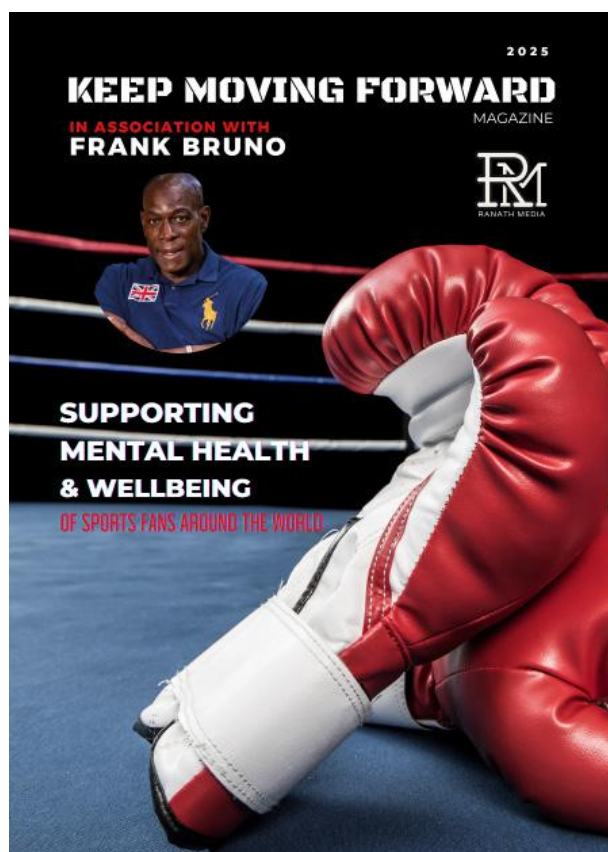
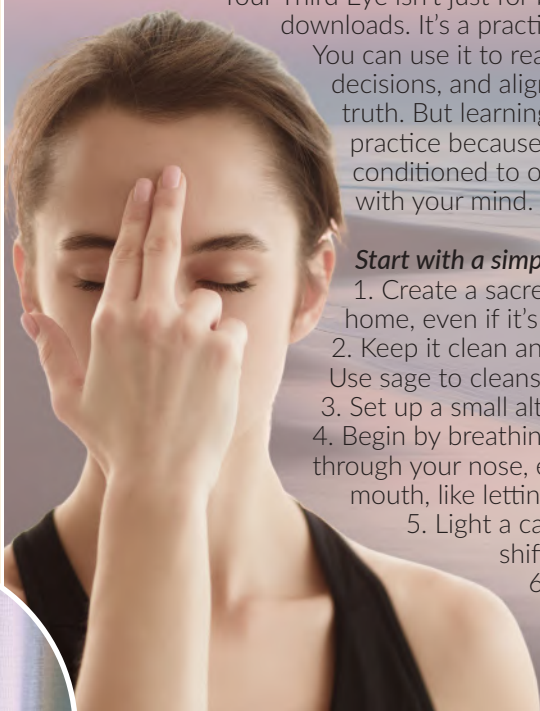
- What signs or messages have I received this week?
- What synchronicities keep showing up?
- When have I trusted (or ignored) my intuition, and what happened?

You can experiment with certain tools that aid the process, such as a pendulum or oracle cards. Let the Universe co-create with you.

The key is consistency. Have fun!

By Eva Maria Hunt

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SUPPORTING YOUR CHILD'S EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE EARLY YEARS (0-5)



A GUIDE FOR PARENTS

The early years of a child's life are full of wonder, discovery, and rapid emotional growth. From their very first cry, children aged 0-5 are constantly learning about themselves, the world around them, and how to relate to others. These foundational years lay the groundwork for emotional resilience, self-regulation, and secure relationships throughout life. Importantly, the 0-5 years is also critical to predicting later mental health outcomes.

For parents, supporting a child's emotional development during this stage can be both deeply rewarding and, at times, bewildering. Big feelings are often displayed by young children, and knowing how to respond to tantrums, separation anxiety, or emotional outbursts can feel overwhelming. Becoming a parent doesn't come with a manual, and parents often don't feel they know all the answers. But the good news is – you don't need them! What children need most is a consistent, caring adult alongside them as they grow.

This article will explore the key aspects of emotional development in children aged 0-5 years and offer practical guidance for two common challenges – tantrums and separation anxiety. I aim to equip you with compassionate, evidence-informed strategies that support both you and your child during this important stage of parenting.

Understanding Emotional Development (0-5 years)

From the day your baby is born, you watch them grow and change in many ways – the outgrowing of an outfit, the babbling, the first few steps. But your baby is also growing in ways which are not so easy to see but are just as important. Emotional development is a process shaped over time by the child's brain development, temperament, environment, and, most importantly, their connection with caregivers. Like with any type of development, all children

grow in different ways, but I will highlight some common developmental milestones and needs across the early years.

0-12 months: Building Trust and Emotional Safety

In the early months of life, babies learn the answer to a powerful question: Can I trust that my needs will be met? Babies' emotional development is primarily focused on attachment at this stage. Babies will form a secure attachment if their primary caregivers provide a nurturing environment and are consistently responsive to their baby's needs. The eye contact, feeding when baby is hungry, soothing the cries, the loving responses – these all help a baby feel emotionally safe.

When the primary caregiver does this consistently, the baby learns that the world is safe and they can depend on the relationships they have. Even if you do not 'fix' the problem when your baby cries immediately, just being with them sends them a message of 'You are not alone. I am here.'

1-3 Years: Expressing Feelings and Testing Boundaries

Throughout the toddler years, children begin to experience a wide range of emotions, often in very intense ways. Autonomy emerges, and your child has the strong desire to do things 'by myself'. However, their language and impulse control are limited, and so this can lead to those big emotions exploding out, usually in the form of what we call 'tantrums'.

These tantrums are a normal part of development. This is due to the part of the brain responsible for managing emotions, the prefrontal cortex, not yet being fully developed. As caregivers, you play a crucial role in co-regulation. These toddlers and young children do not yet know how to manage their emotions independently – they cannot identify feelings or know how to cope with



them when they arise. They look to you to name their feelings and need your presence to feel safe enough to calm down.

3-5 Years: Developing Emotional Awareness and Social Skills

At this preschool age, children begin to show a greater awareness of their own emotions and those of those around them. They can begin to express how they feel in a basic way, for example, 'I am sad' or 'He's being mean'. Empathy also begins to form.

However, managing difficult feelings, such as anger or disappointment, remains challenging for this age group. It's essential for young children to learn that all feelings are acceptable to have – even the uncomfortable ones – but it's about learning to express these in safe and respectful ways.

Furthermore, it is at this age that wider social interactions become very important for emotional development. Friendships begin to matter more at this age as social-emotional skills such as sharing, turn-taking, and problem-solving start to be practised. These valuable opportunities are further supported when a patient, reflective adult is alongside the child.

Managing Common Emotional Challenges

Tantrums

Tantrums are something ALL parents struggle with in their young children and are a normal part of child development, particularly around the ages of 1-3 years old. Tantrums are intense emotional outbursts, often involving crying, screaming, kicking, or refusing to cooperate. Children of this age are still in the early stage of social, emotional, and language development.

Their brains are still maturing, especially the prefrontal cortex, which, as mentioned before, is responsible for impulse control and emotional regulation. Interestingly, the prefrontal cortex is not fully mature until around 25 years old (meaning that older children can still experience tantrums).

Because of this, young children cannot effectively communicate their needs and feelings, including their desire to do things themselves, and so they can become frustrated. And this is where the tantrum comes in. A tantrum is often the only way a young child knows how to express and manage their feelings, as their brain has not yet developed enough to allow them an alternative way. They rely more on the amygdala (known as the emotional centre of the brain), and this leads to more intense emotional outbursts when frustrated or overwhelmed.

While your child is having a tantrum, you are also experiencing a rollercoaster of emotions with them. Something to remember here is that although tantrums can be challenging to cope with, there is always a reason why your child is having one. These might seem trivial to you, but to them, it is really big and important. Common triggers might include hunger, fatigue, overstimulation, a

desire to do things alone, or not getting their own way (to name a few).

Parents may often feel helpless at these times of tantrums, but there are actually strategies that can be used to de-escalate them. The first one I like to talk about is about you. Try to stay calm and regulate your own emotions before responding to your child. This is probably the hardest strategy to implement, but also very important.

If you are also ramped up with emotion and respond to your child in a way which may heighten their emotions, the tantrum will continue. By taking a moment, taking a deep breath, and stepping away to compose yourself, it means that when you turn back to your child, you are more emotionally ready, calm and supportive as a parent.

Your tone is important when responding to your child in a tantrum. A gentle, reassuring tone is best – try not to shout or react harshly. You can also consider lowering yourself to your child's eye level. This can help create a sense of connection and security with your child, showing them that you are right there with them through their emotions. You could offer them a comforting touch, such as a hug or a gentle hand on their back.

Furthermore, validation is crucial in helping the child feel heard and understood. We want to validate the child's feelings by acknowledging their frustration or distress. For example, you could say, 'I see that you are upset because you want the toy'.

A last tip which can help both you and your child in these moments is to do a deep breathing exercise together. By doing this, you are not only regulating your own emotions



but also modelling a healthy coping mechanism for your child. Pretend you have a square window in front of you, and trace it with your finger (or your child's), breathing in for 4 seconds as you go left to right at the top, hold for 4 seconds as you go down the right-hand side, let it out for 4 seconds as you go down the bottom and pause for 4 seconds as you go up the left-hand side. Do this 3-4 times and see how much calmer you both feel.

Separation Anxiety

Separation anxiety is a completely normal, developmentally appropriate and expected part of early childhood — particularly between 9 months and 3 years — though it can appear at any point during the 0-5 years. It makes sense to think that a child who has formed a strong bond with you (healthy attachment) finds comfort in your presence and is distressed when you leave.

The distress they show when you leave isn't a sign something is wrong — it's a sign that you matter to them. That said, watching your child become upset at drop-off or even when you step into another room can be distressing for all involved. It's important to remember that this phase is temporary and manageable, especially with consistency and support.

Separation anxiety emerges as your child begins to understand object permanence — the awareness that things (and people) continue to exist even when out of sight. This means they now realise that when you leave, you're gone — but they don't yet have the emotional maturity to trust that you'll always return. This can create real feelings of fear, uncertainty, or panic for them. I commonly see young children with separation anxiety in the therapy room. Here are some of my top tips to help your child through this time.

Prepare and practice: Talk about separations ahead of time using simple, reassuring language. Role-play with dolls, read books about saying goodbye or use visual timetables to prepare for transitions like starting nursery.

Create predictable goodbye rituals: Whether it's a special hug, a kiss on each hand, or a wave at the window, rituals help children feel grounded and give them a sense of control.

Stay calm and confident: Your tone and body language send important signals. A gentle but firm goodbye — rather than sneaking away — builds trust and shows that you believe they can manage.

Acknowledge the feeling: Say, "I know it's hard to say goodbye. I'll miss you too, and I'll be back after snack time." Validating their emotions helps your child feel seen and supported.

Keep goodbyes short and consistent: Lingering often increases distress. Over time, brief, predictable goodbyes help your child learn that they can cope. If the anxiety continues for an extended period or begins to interfere with daily life (e.g. ongoing panic, refusal to sleep alone, excessive clinginess beyond typical phases), consider seeking guidance from a child therapist.

Final Thoughts

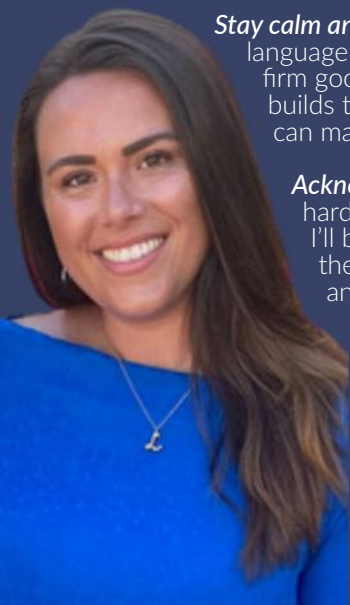
The 0-5 years is an emotional journey with many highs and lows — new discoveries, intense tantrums, moments of connection and much, much more. If you ever feel you are unsure what to do to support your child, feel overwhelmed or wonder if you are getting something wrong — you are not alone, and you are not failing!

Emotional development isn't about doing everything perfectly. It's about being present. Your child doesn't need a flawless parent; they need a consistent, caring one.

Every time you pause to listen, offer comfort, name a feeling, or hold a boundary with kindness, you are building their emotional foundation. Importantly, remember that it's the small, everyday moments — not the grand gestures — that shape a child's emotional world.

By Luisa Harris

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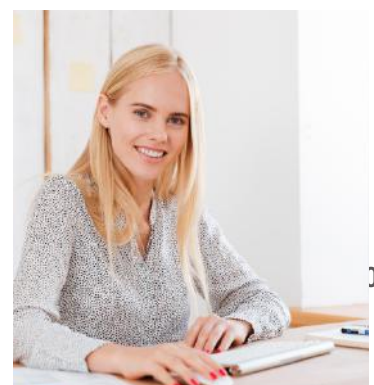
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Passive Aggressive Behaviour

I was having a conversation with a client the other day and they have discussed many conversations that they have with their mum and how they feel once they have spent some time talking to her or spending some time with her. They felt drained, confused and even guilty at times, when they had done nothing at all to feel guilty about. They were left feeling that they should have done something else, something more, been kinder or more understanding of her, but couldn't quite put their finger on why.

We discussed this in length, what was said or done, how have they been towards them in the past, what was expected of them, what they should have done when interacting with her. All of the negativity that they came away with was because their mum is passive aggressive.

What does passive aggressive mean?

Passive aggressive behaviour can be thought of as 'sugar coated hostility'. Firstly, passive aggressive behaviour is not a swing between being passive and then aggressive. It is a combination of them both being used simultaneously. To this end it can be missed and leave you confused, perplexed, irritated or confounded, the feelings that my client took away with her almost every time they spoke.

Passive aggressive behaviour is a pattern of expressing negative feelings indirectly, instead of addressing them openly. A direct contrast and disconnect of what someone says and what they then do. A way of expressing covert negative emotions, that indirectly displays a subconscious aggressive motive.

There is a deliberate inefficiency in behaviour, an avoidance of responsibility. It is there, but it's not, you see it or feel it, but can't put your finger on anything concrete, one phrase I read described it as 'aggression as steam!' Most people who carry out passive aggressive behaviour live in the world of plausible deniability – a way of being able to deny having any knowledge of doing anything wrong. It is designed to get something, to get back at someone without the other person realising what is going on. It is often motivated by their fear of expressing themselves openly and directly and for them to get what they want, without actually needing to say it. It is manipulative at best and destructive at its worst. But it is always a sign of aggression. It is not in itself a mental illness, but gets their needs met in a maladaptive way. And it will definitely have a negative impact on any relationship.

***What are the signs of passive aggressive behaviour?
What do you need to look out for?***

Sulking and Silent Treatment

They will sulk when they don't get their own way or give you the silent treatment for hours, sometimes days and weeks until they get what they want or to punish you. They can sigh a lot, slam doors and cupboards rather than speak to you directly.

They Want You to React

At times, they are looking for a reaction to their actions, wanting to see that they have got under your skin in some way. They want you to know how they feel and they can try and elicit these emotions in you rather than tell you that is how they feel.

Being Cooperative but Uncooperating

They will say yes, but delay carrying out what that is or not doing it at all. When they do carry it out, they can do it badly just because they didn't want to do it in the first place.

Avoiding Direct Communication

Sending emails, texts or even contacting you via social media, rather than speak with you directly. They believe this will avoid any conflict or confrontation. These could be hostile, argumentative, vague, indirect negative comments on their social media posts and no doubt, blue ticking you on purpose!

Excuses as Long as Your Arm

This can be the most annoying of all of the behaviours and likely the most frustrating. No matter what they do or they don't do, there is always an excuse, never a valid reason, or they explain with reasons that you wouldn't dare to challenge or question.

Struggle With Authority

People that have some kinds of authority are often seen as those that they can't say no to, have to or should carry out what is asked of them. Passive aggressive's will struggle hugely with this and so they will do what they can to stop themselves from doing what they have been asked and get very angry doing so. Although, you will never see that anger on the surface.

Procrastination

This is a big sign when it isn't linked to self-sabotage and imposter syndrome. They will drag things out for as long as possible, turn up late for things, to either end up not having to do it, to wind you up because it hasn't been done or just to show their anger or indifference at doing it.

Submissive Behaviour

They will often let someone else take control, especially if it is for that person's benefit. They will then aim to influence the outcomes of what the other person wants or is trying to achieve to benefit themselves or stop them from getting it.

Sarcasm and 'Banter'

I personally dislike the word banter, as to me it always seems that it means I am insulting you or being rude to you and it's only a joke. Passive aggressive's get their point across, but they never really mean it or use sarcasm to convey what they really think and feel. An example of deniability of their true emotions. Giving backhanded compliments is also a passive aggressive behaviour.

Repeated Claims of Being 'Fine'

They say they are fine, when they clearly aren't, or are not mad when they clearly are. This is their inability to express themselves and be emotionally open. To them, they are shutting down the issue and will discuss it no further.

Complaining Indirectly

They moan and complain about someone or something that is bothering them, but this is also going on with you, so you just need to get the hint!

Wistful Thinking

'You know what I wish? I wish that... but knowing my luck it is never going to happen, I guess I just don't deserve it, it's just too much to ask'.

Is something a passive aggressive might say, in their manipulative, this is what I want but I am not going to say it way. Aiming to shift the burden onto someone else to ensure that it happens. When it comes to new relationships then a passive aggressor can be a bit of a ghoster. Disappearing without word, ignoring calls and messages. I even went on a date once and they didn't show up! There are ways in which you can destroy your relationships with passive aggressive behaviours, whether they are new or old.

People: Keep Score

A little bit of one-upmanship, I did this and you didn't, I got you that and you didn't reciprocate. It seems like competitiveness and in cases it is, but it could also be them saying you don't care enough.

Find Faults

No matter what your partner does for you, you will consistently find fault. They can do 99 things well, but you will always pick on number 100, that wasn't so good.

You are focusing on all of the negatives and are quite happy to point those out, but won't remember or compliment the positives. You can also assassinate their character with snide and underhanded remarks. Usually to others and not face to face, unless it is under your breath.

Never Forgive and Forget

Bearing a grudge is a common passive aggressive trait. But you don't tell them you carry this, unless you gently remind them of all of the times they have wronged you.

Indirectly, you could be upset about something and then use every other thing ever to be upset about at the same time.

Get Too Comfortable

Passive aggressive's like things just the way they like them and you can sit in your own convenience zone. Not putting yourself out for anyone, not contributing and just being too damn complacent. Quit

As you never say how you really feel and go about getting results in a nefarious manner, when this doesn't work, you tend to walk away rather than try and address things. Over time these behaviours can cause your partner to give in too. They may get tired of having to ask you for things time and again, resentments can build and this can lead to frustrations and anger as nothing is ever resolved. Wedges are then created and problems become insurmountable.

Do you think that you may be passive aggressive?

Do you recognise some of these traits in your own way of dealing with things? I know that I have acted this way in the past, rather than addressing issues out in the open or expressing my opinion. Going along with things because I felt like I should or had to and then subconsciously not going along with them. It can be easier to recognise passive aggressiveness in others, but you can look at yourself with an impartial eye and these questions can help.

*Do you find yourself sulking when you are unhappy with someone?
Do you avoid people that you are upset with or feel have done you wrong?*

Do you stop talking to or withdraw from people that you are angry with?

Do you punish others by putting things off, turning up late or just not doing them?

Are you sarcastic at times or use banter to avoid engaging in meaningful conversations?

How do these impact on your relationships? I am almost certain it never helps.

If you are doing any of these then it may be an idea to reconsider your approach

You can:

Improve your self-awareness as this type of behaviour is generally subconscious and bringing it into your consciousness will help you to understand your emotions and why they are there. Then choosing to respond differently. Recognising your own behaviours is the first step to change, but give yourself time to implement the changes as you will likely meet some resistance within you to doing so. Be patient and show self-compassion. Practise expressing yourself with people that you trust in a healthier, more appropriate way. Learn how to be assertive rather than passive. Understand where this all comes from in the first place.

Why are People Passive Aggressive?

Almost certainly, passive aggressive behaviour is an environmental thing. Family upbringing will have a big influence on how you address certain situations, including passive aggressive behaviour. Perhaps direct expression of emotions was discouraged, ignored or you may even have been punished for doing so.

There is a link to depression and passive aggressive behaviours, so if you do have bouts of depression, it is likely you will exhibit these traits when you are reacting to distress.

When you are angry, you don't know how to vent this in a healthy way or express your annoyance over a situation, you are not aware of what causes your anger in the first place and the way you deal with it becomes covert rather than overt or self-managed. Being assertive and emotionally open, or vulnerable can be difficult and very uncomfortable, even scary at times. Passive aggressive behaviour may then seem a more comfortable and safe way of dealing with things.

It is all learnt and can be unlearned, putting in new more healthily adapted ways of approaching situations.

If you are on the receiving end of passive aggressive behaviour then you can deal with the situations by doing the following: Firstly, be aware of the signs so that you know it is happening. Keep your own emotions in check and point out to the person, in a non-judgemental way, that you notice that they seem to be angry or upset with something you have done.

Giving them the space to express themselves is likely something they never had and why they are covert in the first place. They may not initially admit to being angry, but offering them the space to do so will hopefully help for them to give themselves permission to speak up and explain.

It also makes it clear that you know there is an issue for them and you aren't going to let it slide or allow their behaviour to continue. Setting boundaries, on the whole, is healthy for any relationship so it is ok for you to say when these have been crossed and their behaviour is unacceptable.

Ask questions about their actions, do they find how they are behaving as acceptable and appropriate. They may not see there and then that there is a problem, but if you keep asking, eventually they will need to consider the question and hopefully answer it themselves truthfully and maybe then be honest with you too.

By John Kenny



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