

EXPERT **PROFILE**

MAGAZINE

AUTUMN **2024**

MARISA PEER

**WORLD-RENOWNED THERAPIST
AND BEST-SELLING AUTHOR**

**AND MORE FROM OUR
GLOBAL LEADERS AND
INDUSTRY EXPERTS**





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EDITORS NOTE



For those who know me, you're aware of how deeply I speak about the divisions that run through our world. It is a message I've repeated often: the critical importance of countering these divides by uniting people and recognising the common humanity behind the masks we all wear.

Today, we find ourselves watching the ongoing Middle East conflict, and it's heartbreaking. The lives of innocent people are being torn apart, and it all stems from this division that keeps us at odds. When will we learn?

What will it take for us to stop destroying each other? The pain ripples through our communities, touching the people we love and our fellow human beings. Our planet is suffering alongside us.

We have a collective responsibility to make this stop. Each of us holds a piece of the solution. Through every edition of this publication, I am proud to celebrate our contributors—those who have embraced this responsibility. They are not only leaders in their fields; they bring hope for our world. Their work reminds us of what is possible when we choose to stand together instead of apart.

Let's continue to celebrate these voices and work together towards a future where unity, compassion, and understanding prevail over division and suffering.

I hope you all enjoy another special edition of Expert Profile Magazine.

EDITOR - RANY ATHWALL

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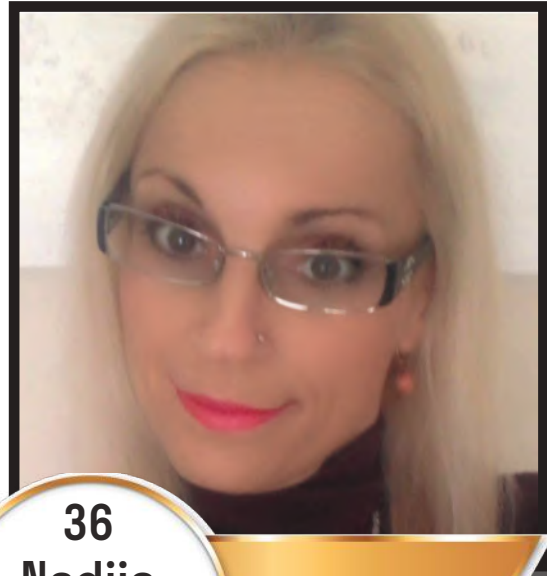


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Q&A with Celebrity Therapist **Marisa Peer**



World-renowned therapist and best-selling author Marisa Peer is one of the most recognized names in the wellness industry. Over her thirty-year career, she has worked with a client list that includes international superstars, CEOs, and Olympic athletes, using her unique approach, Rapid Transformational Therapy® (RTT®).

In 2013, she began the I Am Enough movement, which works to boost inner confidence and help people improve their relationships, careers, health, and self-esteem while eliminating blocks to creating wealth and abundance - and has recently launched her new membership program, Grow and Transform.

After seeing huge success in her private practice and transforming the lives of thousands of clients, in 2015, Marisa established the RTT® School and has helped to train over 17,000 therapists globally.

A sought-after public speaker, Marisa has spoken on stages across the world at major events, including Mindvalley Live, the World Government Summit, Greater Festival, The Royal Society of Medicine, and A-Fest, and has delivered several highly successful TEDx talks.

She regularly contributes as an expert spokesperson across global media platforms, including The Guardian, Marie Claire, Newsweek, NBC's Today Show, Sky News, Supersize vs Superskinny, Celebrity Fit Club, I'm a Celebrity...Get Me Out of Here and The Housewives of Dubai.

She has also appeared as a guest on several top-rated podcasts, including Stephen Bartlett's Diary of a CEO and Laura Cley's Idiot podcast.

In 2021, Marisa created The 5-Day Challenge, a free resource aimed at 6 - 11-year-olds to help them build self-confidence and resilience, which has been recognized

within the education industry as a powerful well-being tool.

She also launched Dietless Life, a unique weight management program that helps people develop a healthy relationship with food - allowing them to lose weight and keep it off for a lifetime.

Marisa has published six books, four of which have been Amazon best-sellers in the UK and US. She has a huge global following, with over 2.6M followers across her social media channels.



1. Can you share a bit about your journey and what inspired you to become a therapist?

I grew up in Cambridge with my parents, brother and sister - the middle child in a seemingly privileged family. My father was a respected headmaster, and my mother was frequently ill, so I often felt overlooked and alone as my parents were preoccupied with their own lives and problems.

As a child, I never felt like I was the priority, which left me with a feeling of not “enoughness”; during my formative years, I didn’t feel attractive, smart, or good enough.

I then went through what seemed like an endless series of rejections in my life - being told I couldn’t have children at the age of 20, developing an eating disorder, having my first manuscript rejected, and dealing with health challenges - the feelings of sadness, not-enoughness, and failure grew.

I moved to LA when I was 25 and became a personal trainer at Jane Fonda’s workout studio. At this point, I knew I wanted to change direction in my career, so I completed an advanced certification in Hypnotherapy at the Hypnotism Training Institute of Los Angeles.

When I met and studied hypnosis with Gil Boyne at the Hypnotism Training Institute of Los Angeles, everything changed. He was a huge leader in the field, and his work had a profound influence on my career. Gil taught me so much and inspired me to dig deeper and look into how far I could take this.

I went on to study hypno-healing, advanced hypnotherapy, medical hypnotherapy, Gestalt Analysis, and anti-aging, health, and long-term wellness techniques. Then, I spent three decades researching, testing, and applying the most beneficial principles of Hypnotherapy, Psychotherapy, NLP, CBT, and Neuroscience to develop my own Rapid Transformational Therapy (RTT) method.

2. How did you transition into working with celebrities and high-profile clients?

I quickly built a reputation for helping clients transform their lives rapidly, and before long, I found myself with a thriving practice and a waiting list of desperate clients, including international superstars, CEOs, royalty, and Olympic athletes.

Then suddenly, I was being invited to speak on global stages and appear as an expert therapist on television shows and networks worldwide—it was a total dream come true!

3. What are the most common issues you see among your celebrity clients?

I have found that there are three common threads that run through the issues we face, regardless of who we are.

These are feelings of not being enough, followed by “I’m different, so I can’t connect” and “I want something, but I can never have it.” For example, I want to be happy, but I have the depressed gene; I want love, but I never have it. I want to be smart, but I didn’t go to college. But the core one tends to be “I’m not enough.”

While many of us may believe that the celebrity lifestyle is ideal, it can be far from it. Particularly in the age of social media, where there is constant scrutiny, comparison, and pressure to live up to expectations - personally and professionally.

This can lead to many issues, including chronic stress and anxiety, an unhealthy body image and eating disorders, substance abuse, and addiction issues.

Despite fame and success, many celebrities also struggle with feelings of inadequacy and low self-worth—not feeling enough or worthy and deserving of the success they have achieved, which often leads to imposter syndrome and being encompassed by the core fear of being exposed as frauds.



the root cause of the problems holding people back - giving them the power and tools they need to rapidly change their beliefs, habits of thought, and action - and transform their lives.

A session involves going back and asking the client, "What happened to you?" rather than "What's wrong with you?"—and I go on a journey with them as they tell me their story.

I have the unique honor of making sure that the story they have been telling themselves can change direction - so they leave feeling much happier and on the path to living their best life. It's one of the joys of being a therapist - seeing the transformation in people.

5. How do you help your clients manage the pressures of fame and public scrutiny?

The rise of social media and 24/7 news feeds has added an extra level of pressure for those in the public eye. With every area of their lives under constant scrutiny—from what they eat to who they date—it can feel like there is no escape.

The demanding nature of their careers, including long hours, constant travel, lack of privacy, and constant media attention, can lead to feelings of vulnerability, intrusion, stress, and burnout - and make finding and maintaining genuine relationships difficult.

4. What therapeutic techniques do you find most effective for your celebrity clients?

Whether I'm working with a major movie star or a local business owner, I tailor each session to the individual client - addressing their specific issues and the root cause behind them - rather than adopting a 'one size fits all' approach.

RTT is so effective because instead of just looking at the surface symptoms, it gets to

Building mental and emotional resilience, confidence and self-esteem, self-love, and self-care is important for anyone, but particularly for those who live life in the spotlight.

As with any of my clients, I use RTT to help them get to the root cause of any issues holding them back in their careers or lives. We then replace any negative habits of thought and action and limiting beliefs with more empowering ones by rewiring their minds for success - and combine this with goal setting and visualization techniques to help them stay focused and motivated despite the intense pressures of their high-profile lives.

I also equip them with practical stress management techniques, such as deep breathing exercises, mindfulness, and relaxation practices, that they can employ at times of heightened anxiety.

6. In your opinion, how has the conversation around mental health in the entertainment industry evolved?

We must start having more open and honest conversations about mental health. By breaking the silence and shedding light on our struggles, we can chip away at the stigma, make it feel more normal, and help people find the support they need and deserve.

Think about all those celebrities who, at face value, seemed to have it all and yet chose suicide over their superstar lifestyle. Glamour, success, and riches don't always add up to happiness. I have worked with so many millionaire clients who, on the surface of it, have everything - but it doesn't mean they are happy!

It is great to see celebrities like Selena Gomez and Lady Gaga speak out about their own mental health battles in the media. It's powerful because it shows everyone that even those living seemingly perfect lives can face these challenges and reminds us that we're not alone in this. But we need to see more of this.

7. Are there any upcoming projects or initiatives you're excited about?

I have always had a passion for working with children. One of my main priorities has been to look at how we transform the lives of children in an age where we are seeing an alarming rise in anxiety levels among young people - because anxious children turn into anxious adults - and so many of the clients I see have issues rooted in unresolved childhood trauma.

So, in 2021, I developed the 5-Day Schools Challenge—'I Can't to I Can'—to lovingly equip children with the tools they need to navigate their emotions and nurture a strong, positive inner voice.

It has been such a huge success that we are now developing a year-long program.

My dream is to leave a lasting legacy by empowering children worldwide to unlock their full potential and live confident, joyful, fulfilling lives.

By instilling these principles early on and making these teachings part of the school curriculum, we can nurture a generation of resilient, self-assured individuals with the bounce-back factor - who are able to face life's challenges with positivity and have the mindset they need to reach their full potential as adults.





Power in Partnership

How Brand Collaborations Are Shaping the Future of Business



Every film seeks to get publicity around its premiere. The film 'It Ends with Us', an on-screen adaptation of the hugely popular novel by Colleen Hoover, didn't get the desired attention. Blake Lively, known as one of Hollywood's most 'PR-friendly stars due to her fame from the cult noughties show Gossip Girl and her marriage to Ryan Reynolds, has now become the focus of negative headlines.

The film itself has mixed reviews. It is the brand collaborations which have created worldwide furor.

The plot tells the story of a young woman, Lilly Bloom, who is played by Lively, and the unravelling of her relationship with an ambitious neurosurgeon. The film explores highly sensitive and complex subjects of domestic and emotional abuse.

Following the film premiere, the after-party involved themed drinks supplied by Lively's own alcoholic drinks brands. There were bespoke cocktails named after the characters of the story, including 'Ryle you wait' named after the main abusive character. The commercial move provoked an uproar. The problem was the association of alcohol, and the film's subject came across as tone-deaf. Studies have shown that the more alcohol people drink, the more violent they become.

With an evidence-driven link between alcohol and domestic violence, it seemed that Lively was putting her own commercial interests first rather than the important attention, conversations and support that the film can offer domestic violence victims. There is a saying, 'Your network is your net worth', meaning who you know can significantly advance the opportunities available. As Lively's recent experience shows, it's not this clear cut.

Brand partnerships and collaborations have the potential to drive awareness of your brand, but when not considered in context, they can negatively impact your reputation. Why do brand collaborations hold such power? In simple terms, brand collaborations allow your audience to experience your brand in a different way and create a deeper connection.

This emotional connection helps people align with your brand's value and feel that you, as a brand, are for them.

There has been a recent surge in brand collaborations for this very reason. As brands seek more innovative ways to engage with their consumers, we've seen some unexpected collaborations. One example of this was the collaboration between the snack brand Pringles and the footwear brand Crocs. A limited number of Crocs were designed to mimic the colours and style of the distinctive Pringles crisp tubes. The range even featured a 'Crush Boot' with a stacked crisp heel, and custom-made Pringles can holster.

The range was initially designed for the US market but became a global success, with people desperate to get their hands on the quirky limited edition shoes. Another example is the fashion collaboration between Cruel Pancake, a creator-based street-wear brand, and Lipton Ice Tea, a drinks brand. The two brands collaborated to create a 25-piece 90s-inspired clothing collection. The clothing collection proved popular among new consumers of Lipton Ice Tea, namely Gen Z (aged 12-27). Numerous pieces of clothing turned up on the clothing website Vinted for a higher value than the original retail price.

Why is it that brands are venturing into these collaborations, often with unusual partners who don't seem like a logical 'fit'?

It's well documented that consumer buyer habits are shifting more toward looking beyond the product and price and understanding a brand's values. This is especially true with younger consumers, like Gen Z, who do not tend to buy based on their 'age' but rather on their interests, values, and beliefs. This means that if brands want to stay relevant and stand out amongst their competitors, they, too, need to start thinking of different ways to highlight their values.

The 'Cruel Pancake' X 'Lipton Ice Tea' collaboration brings together two brands from very different times. 'Cruel Pancake' has bold designs, led by Hugo Philip and his 1.2



million Instagram followers. In contrast, 'Lipton Ice Tea' grew into a global brand from humble beginnings out of a small corner store in Scotland.



What brings these brands together? Pop culture. 'Cruel Pancake' rides the new wave of Pop Culture, worn by influencers. 'Lipton Ice Tea' became a staple lifestyle brand associated with nostalgia. Brands that emerged in different times but at their core hold similar values. As a heritage brand, "Lipton Ice Tea" recognised that it cannot rely on the same approaches to move with new consumers. Pepsi Lipton global digital marketing director Victoire Binet notes that the number one way to engage consumers today is not about how much attention you can get; it's the "ability to engage consumers in a way that feels organic and valuable to them".

Positioning your brand so that it is bigger than advertising and becomes part of culture and community is how it will stay relevant.

Of course, this is a wider effort than one collaboration, but brands like Lipton Ice Tea are already thinking in a way that means they stay top of mind for younger consumers.

What do these trends in personal brands mean for small businesses and personal brands? Collaborations and partnerships offer ways to gain visibility and drive new revenue for smaller businesses. However, as the case with Blake Lively has shown the suitability and context of these partnerships needs to be carefully considered. When done right, you can create a powerful platform to get in front of new clients and customers.

When it misses the mark, it can lose trust in your reputation and require damage control. So, how do you ensure that you are seeking out and executing collaborations that enhance your brand?



1. Focus on authentic alignment

Both brands need to feel like the partnership reflects and contributes to furthering their core ethos and values. Working with a brand that is very different from you may get attention and social media buzz. What we've seen is that this quickly fades as consumers feel the relationship is inauthentic. Brands that are different can add value and get you in front of new audiences, but there has to be shared common ground. You don't need to change the core of your brand to reach new audiences. In fact, the brands that double down on staying true to their brand will create long-lasting relationships.

2. Clearly outline your success metrics

A successful collaboration will create long-term change in how the brand is seen and received. New ways may mean new metrics. If you are collaborating in new ways, it may mean that the 'traditional' way you measure success isn't as relevant. For example, partnering with another brand (and this can mean a personal brand) may not immediately result in more enquiries, sales or clients. However, it may increase brand awareness, social media reach and customer loyalty. In time, these metrics can significantly impact your bottom line. If you are running a collaboration, think outside the box in terms of success metrics and make sure both sides agree on what 'success' looks like.

3. Be proactive about collaboration opportunities

If collaborations or partnerships can shake things up for your business, then start treating them as marketing opportunities. It's all too easy to respond to opportunities as and when they come up. It's likely that the last collaboration you did, whether that's a speaking opportunity or social media collaboration, approached you or seemed a very easy fit for your work.

When you shift to proactive thinking around your brand values, you will see innovative collaboration opportunities that you hadn't considered before. This is going the extra mile that your competitors aren't. However, the old saying still rings true: 'You can't do the same things and expect different results.'

Those who are willing to think creatively around collaborations and stand boldly in their values have the potential to reach new audiences and market themselves as leaders. Collaborations have been used as a marketing approach for years, however, the innovation and variety we now see marks a different approach that places culture, community, and connection at heart.

I'm excited about the creative direction household brands are taking. Just don't expect me to step into my Pringles Crocs. My core belief is crisps are to be eaten, not worn, so I'm staying true to that.

By Rachel Pearson

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Self Care Corner

WHEN LIFE GIVES YOU LEMONS... HOW TO MANAGE DISAPPOINTMENTS AND SHIFT OUR PERSPECTIVES

Summer has just passed. What did it mean for you? Was it the beginning of your annual pilgrimages to the beach? The sunsets, sounds of waves, the sand, and the chance to create memories with our favorite people.

Or, if you're like me, you decided it's the perfect time for a home improvement project. I can hear the collective sighs because you're having flashbacks of



the last project you attempted. The highs and lows. The frustration. The questioning of your sanity, asking yourself if this was worth it.

In my mind, this was the perfect time to begin. After doing my research and setting my budget, it was time to start.

Contractor vetted and hired- CHECK!
Supplies purchased- CHECK!
Scheduled agreed upon- CHECK!
READY. SET. AND GO!

Phase One went smoothly. I'm starting to feel optimistic, so I decided to add on additional work. As the character Hannibal from the TV show *The A-Team* would say, "I love it when a plan comes together!"

Then it happened. Everyone's worst nightmare while amid a project. With no explanation, my contractor quit.

As I sat at my kitchen table, I looked around and took in my home's scenery: Furniture covered with tarps. Dust everywhere. Supplies are sitting in the corner. One homeowner was left in disarray.



There are times when your best plans will fall apart. When it happens, we're all tempted to abandon our goals and assume they're unattainable. My initial response was to have a pity party and give up on my project. While it was good to imagine giving up, I couldn't. I've committed to the project. My house was a disaster, and sitting in the chaos wasn't optional. One of my favorite quotes comes from Gene Kranz, the NASA Flight Director at the helm of the Apollo 13 Moon Landing mission- "Failure is not an option!"

Learning to navigate these situations is crucial when life throws us a curve. These moments teach us resiliency and how to look at problems differently. We can all agree that these are moments that we can gladly skip. This is one lesson that I would have gladly skipped!

What's the best thing to do when life gives you lemons?

You make lemonade! You allow the experience to teach you the lesson and apply it to the next one.

Here's how I made lemonade:

1. Acknowledge the emotions and process them. It's essential to recognize and accept the feeling without judgment. When my contractor was a no-show, I felt upset and confused. I had to figure out how I would continue with no support. "Whether it's disappointment or anger, you must feel it and let it out. A healthy way to achieve emotional health is to confide in your friends, family, or therapist. You could also channel this kind of tough emotion into a creative outlet. Try writing in a journal or doing something physical like taking a long run."
2. Reframe the perspective. "Your mindset can determine whether you experience negativity or positive thinking. If you can reframe a negative situation, you can see the good in any experience, helping you focus on happiness. Your perception can change any experience, but you must know how to reframe a situation." I thought it was a massive disaster with no chance of recovery. When I finally calmed down, I realized the moment was not as detrimental as I imagined. I could complete the rest of the project on my own. Ask for help. While it's tempting to solve my problem independently, there's power in the community.

When my friends found out what happened, everyone was prepared to help. Everyone was ready to roll up their literal sleeves and paint. Others offered names of contractors that wouldn't abandon me. "Social support also helps people to cope with stress. Stress has been shown to have serious health consequences ranging from reduced immunity to increased risk of heart disease. Being surrounded by caring and supportive people helps people see themselves as better capable of dealing with the stresses that life brings."

Learning how to navigate disappointment is crucial; developing it can take a while. If you're still learning to make lemonade, it takes time to master the recipe. Acknowledging, reframing, and asking are just a few tools to help turn your setbacks into opportunities. Without taking the time to regroup, I would've given up on myself. How did my project turn out? I'm almost done. It turns out that I'm pretty good with a set of tools and a paintbrush! Look out, HGTV, here I come!

1. "Ways to deal with disappointment", <https://www.betterup.com/blog/>
2. "How To Reframe A Negative Situation", <https://www.powerofpositivity.com/negative-situation-reframe/>
3. "How Social Support Contributes to Psychological Health", <https://www.verywellmind.com/social-support-for-psychological-health-4119970#toc-health-benefits-of-social-support>

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Time to Heal

A Vision of Tomorrow

The beautiful colors of orange, red, and yellow are beginning to spread across our land, and the smells of Summer are slowly fading away. It's beginning to feel a bit chilly in the morning as kids are returning to school, and our pools are closing up. The warm summer breeze has passed, and the air now has a crispness to it that instantly lets us know that a change of season is upon us.

The magnificent change of seasons often inspires and motivates us to begin making changes in our own lives. This is a natural response to our world, as we are not separate from nature but are a part of it. Like the earth itself, our lives are constantly in motion, continuously changing, shifting, growing and evolving.

Like the seasons of nature, changes in our lives are inevitable.

Of course, not all changes in our world arrive so expectedly. Unforeseen events such as illness, loss, financial struggles, accidents, etc., can shake up our lives and quickly change the course of days. Those are times we have no choice but to adapt to the storm that has altered our path. We grieve, feel deep emotions we cannot avoid, and go through a period of time it takes for us to accept a new chapter of our lives we didn't know was coming.

More often than not, the shifts of change in our lives come with many cues that let us know where we are heading. Despite our own resistance to change, our lives never remain stagnant. In fact, if you look back 12 months ago, your life likely looks significantly

different today. You are not the same person you were one year ago and are a very different version of yourself from how you were twenty years ago. So much so that you know you could go back to your younger self, teach them a new way of thinking and point them in a direction that will help prevent them from making choices you are wiser about today.

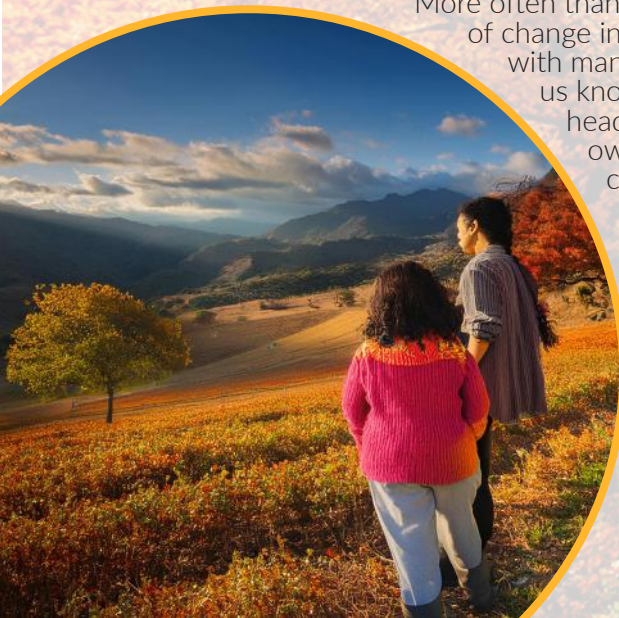
It's interesting when you start noticing how we respond to the change of seasons vs how we tend to participate in the changes of our lives. Notice how we acknowledge the transition into a new season with special care and attention.

We even get excited and ensure we prepare ourselves for what is to come. We reorganize and make adjustments to our homes, wardrobes, food, schedules, etc. We decorate and participate in traditions that honor the season and make it memorable. Step by step, we consistently take action, ensuring we do what is possible to enjoy and embrace the change that is coming our way.

As humans, we endure personal changes throughout the year, as each new year brings us new experiences. Like nature, our lives are forever in motion, growing and adapting to our environment. The difference is that we often lack awareness of subtle shifts within ourselves and the willingness to be a part of that change.

When it comes to being proactive in our personal journeys and phases of life, we have grown comfortable becoming stagnant and waiting for change to happen to us rather than taking action and steps to bring forth positive change that can happen for us.

Of course, we cannot predict every part of our future or prepare for what is to come. But we can significantly influence our future and take action to shift the direction of our lives. With each passing day, we have an opportunity to support the needs of our own bodies and minds. We have the ability to



adjust when we aren't feeling our best and make our own changes in order to prevent our situations from worsening. The truth is, we are not victims of our reality, and it's time we stopped living that way.

For example, many of our suffering from unexpected changes is something that we have been warned about for quite some time. Our bodies have been showing us exactly when we need to pay attention, revealing where there is imbalance and how it needs our support. Unfortunately, we were never taught to listen to those messages (symptoms), and they often go unheard or silenced.

As a society, we were conditioned to believe that we are powerless in our own skin and aren't capable of helping ourselves. Even when our bodies are pleading with us with ongoing symptoms, we have never understood that those symptoms were the cues we should have been attentive to.

Having lost total connection with ourselves, with zero awareness of our own power to heal, has resulted in a tremendous amount of unnecessary suffering and the realization that an enormous amount of untimely deaths could have been prevented.

We didn't know any better and did what we always thought was best. Now we know better, and there is no better time than right now to do better.

The first step in becoming the navigator of your journey is understanding and truly believing in your ability to do so.

You have the power to be the greatest influence of your reality. Becoming proactive in your path by listening to your body, shifting your beliefs, observing and changing your thoughts will ultimately modify and adjust your behaviors. Your entire perspective of how you view yourself and the world around you will begin to shift. This will be what changes the course of your life in ways you never imagined before.

When I work with people who are struggling with health issues, symptoms, or diseases, my goal is always to create awareness and show them how to reconnect with their own bodies again. They then begin to take the steps needed to shift the direction of their health and their lives.

It doesn't necessarily take massive changes to make a major impact. Small, consistent steps will lead to real, sustainable results. Before I explore their symptoms and discuss their current struggles, I always start by asking them to create a vision.

You may have heard or seen others create vision boards before and have an idea of what that looks like. People create visual pictures of what goals and desires they are focusing on achieving throughout the next year. This is a wonderful tool to begin

getting excited about what your future could look like and what you can do to get there.

The vision I ask my clients to create does not include a vision board (although there is nothing wrong with that if that is what you wish to do). The purpose of creating the vision of their lives 12 months from now is to not only clarify what they truly want and desire but also begin teaching them to embody what that future will feel like.

For instance, if you want to own a new home, get a clean bill of health and land your dream job, writing down those goals is only part of the process. To truly begin to bring things forward into your life and reality, you must embody each goal as if it is already happening. Your body and brain do not know the difference. If you are deeply feeling the emotions that you would feel when achieving those goals, your brain and body will believe that they are already happening in the present time.

The visions my clients create are as detailed as possible. They then take steps to begin becoming that person they want to be 12 months ahead. What does that person eat, how do they dress, what time do they wake up, etc? After creating this vision, they read it daily and practice feeling the emotion behind their vision, as if they are living it in their present-day life.

The next step is to take action by doing one small thing in their routine that their future self would do. This is a powerful method that allows them to orchestrate and embrace change. They are no longer watching their lives happen to them but are now becoming the navigator of their own journey and creating the life that they desire for themselves.

The idea is to step into the shoes of the person you wish to become, and you are already stepping in the direction needed to take you there.

If you find yourself procrastinating to make changes, try creating your vision and see where it takes you. Fact is, change is hard!

I have made massive changes in my life when embarking on my own healing journey. It was not pretty at all. It was uncomfortable, often painful, but at the same time, just like nature shows us, the transformation was a beautiful one. Growth





didn't happen overnight, and my body didn't heal from one magic solution. Time, commitment, and the non-negotiable decision to heal believing with every inch of my soul that I would heal, is how I completely changed my life from being disabled with "chronic diseases" to being healed without a single health issue.

Imagine what life could look like if you began to become the author instead of waiting for it to be written for you. You know without a doubt that over the next year, your life will change in various ways. I urge you to start listening to the cues that your body provides you.

Be observant of the symptoms and messages your body shows you, with the understanding that it is asking for your attention and not trying to hurt you. Learn how to support your body and get a true understanding of your own current needs. Get excited about what is possible, and most importantly, be gentle with yourself every step of the way.

Life is precious and so much more miraculous than we have ever comprehended. We do not have to live our lives by chance anymore. Be the one who creates your own journey ahead. Allow yourself to choose paths unknown, and have faith that you will always find your way. Love yourself through each season of change, and celebrate you as you always have the world around you.

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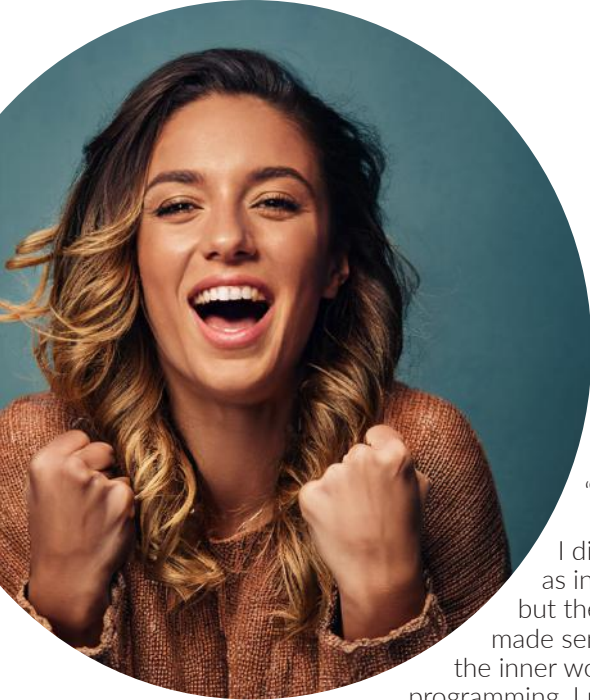
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Living Bravely

How to Go After a Life That Feels Exciting

When I moved to Mexico, friends told me, “You’re so inspiring,” and “You’re my hero.”

I didn’t see myself as inspiring then, but their comments made sense. I had done the inner work to heal my programming. I used to fear making mistakes, seeking external validation, and avoiding risks.

Your Life Is a Choice

In life, you either stay in your comfort zone or choose to grow. Your higher self will nudge you toward new experiences. Your nervous system will keep you in familiar patterns—no matter how unhealthy or unsatisfying they are.

We all dream. Maybe you want to run a bed-and-breakfast in a quaint town or live in another country. When we imagine these experiences, we see ourselves feeling different and becoming a new person. But taking steps toward what we want can be overwhelming if it’s unfamiliar. It’s not because you don’t want it. It’s because your nervous system is protecting you.

Your Comfort Zone Is Not a Fixed State

Early experiences with caregivers shape our nervous system, teaching us what is safe and unsafe. These experiences create neural pathways that influence our stress responses and perceptions. Your sense of safety and threats forms your comfort zone, shaping your behavior and choices. The good news is that whatever you desire can become your reality. You can take steps toward a life that lights you up by expanding your comfort zone and diminishing the threat of the unfamiliar.

Is It Scary or Exciting?

When you want to make a change, a good first step is to notice if the change you’re desiring feels tolerable in your body. Going from scary to exciting is about expanding your nervous system’s capacity to handle the change.

One way to do this is to break what you desire into smaller doses so the change doesn’t feel overwhelming.



Sit with This Question

Ask yourself: How can I give myself a small taste of what I desire so I can experience a sense of safety with each smaller step?

Let’s say you want to live in another country. Tiny steps toward that could be:

1. Checking your passport status. Renew it if needed, or get your passport photo.
2. Research the country by joining online expat groups or finding vlogs by people who are living the lifestyle you want.
3. Take a short trip. Talk to locals or other expats about their experiences. If traveling itself is beyond your comfort zone, try visiting somewhere closer first, perhaps within your own state or country.

By taking tiny steps toward what you want to create, you gradually acclimate your nervous system to new experiences and begin to feel safe going after what you want.

Don’t Leave Your Body Behind

Change, with its unknowns, can be stressful. Your nervous system triggers a fight, flight or freeze response to protect you from perceived threats while dimming logical thinking. By working with the body daily to reduce stress, you can approach each step toward your dream with curiosity rather than fear. Combining actions with body wisdom makes stepping outside of your comfort zone doable.

Somatic techniques you can try include:

- **Breathwork:** Deep, slow breathing calms your nervous system and reduces stress.
- **5-Senses Grounding:** Noticing what you can see, touch, hear, smell, and taste in the present moment can shift you out of anxiety.
- **Body Scanning:** Noticing body sensations and areas of tension can help you recognize your stress responses.
- **Movement:** Gentle activities like walking ground you and reduce stress.

What You Desire Can Be Yours

What would life look like if you finally gave yourself permission to pursue your biggest dream? You deserve to have that experience and feel excited about your life. Your growth comes from expanding your comfort zone while building confidence through tiny steps taken toward what you want in life.

Jennifer Legaspi
Transformational Coach
Author, *Brave Wise Woman*





The Imperative of Stillness

Enhancing Clarity and Wellbeing in the modern world and professionally.

Finding moments of stillness these days can seem impossible.

Everything seems so fast-paced. Gone are the days when we had to wait patiently for most things. Now, with everything being so accessible, often at the touch of a button, we have become familiar with our lives being rushed.

Embracing stillness is not a luxury but a necessity for enhancing clarity and wellbeing. Throughout my life, I have had various corporate roles, each demanding and each pulling me in multiple directions. Today, I run my own spiritual business, and this shift has illuminated the profound impact that stillness can have on our daily lives, regardless of our circumstances.

My life was a whirlwind of deadlines, meetings, and constant connectivity for many years. With its relentless pace, the corporate world often left little room for pause. Each job came with its own set of challenges, requiring quick thinking and even quicker actions. While I thrived on the adrenaline and the sense of accomplishment, I could never quite shake off an underlying current of stress and fatigue. The constant pressure to perform and deliver often led to burnout, leaving me yearning for a respite that never seemed to come.

The turning point came when I decided to follow my passion and start my own spiritual business. This transition was not just a career change; it was a transformation in how I approached life. The nature of my work now requires a deeper connection with myself and others, having a space where stillness is not only welcomed but essential. Running a spiritual business has taught me the invaluable lesson that true productivity and fulfillment are rooted in moments of quiet reflection and stillness. Through my journey, I have learned that stillness is a powerful tool that can enhance clarity and wellbeing, no matter where you find yourself. Here's how:

Quieting the Mind

Stillness allows us to quiet the constant chatter in our minds. In moments of silence, we can sift through the noise and find clarity. This is crucial in both personal and professional settings. For example, in my corporate days, taking even a few minutes to sit in stillness before a big meeting would often bring forth clearer insights and solutions. The ability to pause and reflect can make the difference between a reactive decision and a thoughtful, strategic one.

Heightened Awareness

When we allow ourselves to be still, our awareness sharpens. We become more attuned to our surroundings and our inner thoughts. This heightened awareness can lead to better decision-making and a more profound understanding of our goals and values. In my spiritual practice, this awareness is the cornerstone of meaningful interactions with clients and the development of services that truly resonate with their needs.

Creative Solutions

Stillness fosters creativity. In moments of quiet, our minds are free to explore new ideas and perspectives. This was particularly evident when I was transitioning to my spiritual business. The clarity that came from stillness helped me develop innovative ways to connect with clients and grow my practice. Creativity often thrives in the spaces between actions, in the quiet moments where the mind is free to wander and

One of the most immediate benefits of stillness is stress reduction. We allow our bodies and minds to reset by taking time to pause. I struggled with this during my corporate career, but incorporating stillness into my routine has significantly improved my overall stress levels. The act of being still, even for a short period, can lower cortisol levels and bring about a sense of calm and balance. Stillness helps us connect with our emotions in a non-judgmental way. It provides the space to process feelings and find balance. This emotional equilibrium is vital for maintaining healthy relationships and a positive outlook on life.





In my spiritual practice, encouraging clients to embrace stillness has led to remarkable transformations in their emotional wellbeing, helping them navigate life's challenges with greater resilience. Numerous studies have shown that practices involving stillness, such as meditation and mindfulness, can lead to better physical health. These benefits include lower blood pressure, improved sleep, and a stronger immune system. Personally, I have experienced these benefits firsthand, and witnessing similar improvements in my clients reinforces the importance of integrating stillness into daily life.

A few minutes of meditation each day can make a significant difference. Find a quiet space, focus on your breath, and let your thoughts come and go without attachment. This practice can be done anywhere, anytime, making it an accessible way to incorporate stillness into your routine. There are plenty of apps to help with this. I often have clients say they find meditation difficult as they start to think of things like their shopping halfway through. That's the whole point; we begin to catch ourselves in the thought. We recognise when we are doing it; by recognising it, we are able to change it. Eventually, it becomes easier.

During the day, take short breaks to practice mindfulness. This could be as simple as closing your eyes, taking deep breaths, or paying attention to your surroundings. These brief moments of stillness can reset your mind and provide clarity amidst a busy schedule. Set aside time to disconnect from technology. This could be during meals, before bed, or a nature walk. Allow yourself to be present in the moment. Disconnecting from the constant barrage of information and stimuli allows your mind to rest and recharge.

Writing down your thoughts and feelings can be a powerful way to cultivate stillness. It helps to clear your mind and provides insights into your inner world. Journaling can be particularly helpful in processing emotions and gaining clarity on complex issues. This particular practice is one I credit for helping me transition from stress to reflection. I journaled daily and saw a fast improvement. I was able to see that many of my anxious thoughts didn't actually come to fruition.

Spending time in nature is also a natural way to embrace stillness. The tranquillity of natural settings can have a calming effect on the mind and body. Whether it's a walk in the park or a hike in the mountains, nature provides a perfect backdrop for stillness and reflection. When I worked in an office, I started prioritising stepping out of the building, taking a quick walk, and changing the scenery.

Simple breathing exercises can induce a state of stillness and calm. Techniques such as deep breathing or box breathing can be practiced anywhere and provide immediate benefits in reducing stress and enhancing focus. One of my jobs was pressured with lots of responsibility. When I had a stressful day, taking three deep breaths at my desk immediately helped. Simple but helpful.

Embracing stillness has transformed my life, providing me with the clarity and wellbeing needed to navigate both the demands of corporate roles and the rewarding path of running my own spiritual business. Regardless of your circumstances, integrating moments of stillness into your daily routine can lead to profound improvements in both mental clarity and overall wellbeing. In a world that constantly pushes us to move faster, taking the time to be still and slow down might just be the most powerful step towards a healthier, more fulfilling and calmer life.

By Lisa Andrews

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MOVING BEYOND MINDSET WITH ANCIENT UNIVERSAL PRINCIPLES

“If You Want To Fly, Give Up Everything That Weighs You Down” Buddha

Achieving great success without debilitating stress is a journey of self-mastery that high performers throughout the ages have travelled. Drive, yearning, growth, breakthroughs and pressure are all part of success and the natural resistance to feeling stress. It can be an exciting adventure if you so choose. The secret is to master your highest state of balance and flow without attachment so that you are fully supported in your quest.

Welcome to my 9th column exploring moving beyond mindset with ancient universal principles. The 12 Ancient Universal Principles of my High-Performance Wellness Coaching are your foundational pillars for turning stress into success. These principles will help you find your center and achieve your goals with more energy and focus while eliminating the chronic stress that leads to exhaustion, burnout and chronic illness.

For Every Problem, There Is A Solution

This Ancient Universal Principle #3 reminds you that you don't have to be weighed down by your problems. If you want to fly with inner ease and flow as you live your passion, purpose, and mission, you must release the unnecessary friction and frustration, the burden of resistance, that makes your life harder than it needs to be.

There is one thing we can all agree on no one is without problems. We assume that challenges create stress. But is that always true? What if you could shift your relationship with the problem so it is no longer a burden? What if you viewed your challenge as a mystery to solve, an inner adventure to activate a part of you that is yearning to grow and breakthrough yet needs a resistance to push against to go forward?

You have the power to find solutions to your problems. My mentor and coach, Michio Kushi, taught, “If the solution didn't already exist, then the problem would not have appeared.” In other words, you already know the solutions to your problems deep within yourself. You are wise, strong, and powerful. You are brave and courageous. Own your power. Stop overthinking and eliminate the distractions that confuse and exhaust you.



“Sometimes You Need The Mind Of Sherlock Holmes To Find The Solution That Is Right For You” Michio Kushi, Macrobiotic Forefather

When faced with a problem, expand your perspective. Connect with your deepest self to activate new pathways and possibilities to move forward. Success and stress are interwoven as the essence of growth itself. Like the yin-yang symbol, they co-exist as complementary antagonists in the wholeness of your being.

There is always a bit of one in the other. To achieve success in all areas of your life, create a balance of stress and accomplishment. Practice this daily and in your long-term perspective. Where there is drive and yearning, there is growth. With growth comes expansion, which leads to breakthroughs. As you breakthrough to your next level of success, there is pressure. With pressure, there is resistance. Where there is resistance, there is stress.

Healthy stress is the natural resistance of growth that creates more energy and focus. It supports you. Like a seed that pushes through the soil to break through into the sunlight and air, healthy stress is required to grow.

Chronic stress is the artificial resistance of the mind, the overthinking and instability that arises when dealing with new and uncertain circumstances. It depletes you. Moving beyond an intellectual mindset into an expanded state of consciousness helps you explore and embrace possibilities in thought, belief and action. My 12 Ancient Universal Principles ignite your insight, expand your awareness and align your vision at the right time. In an instant, they can lighten your burdens and release chronic stress as you step into the unknown and evolve into your highest potential.

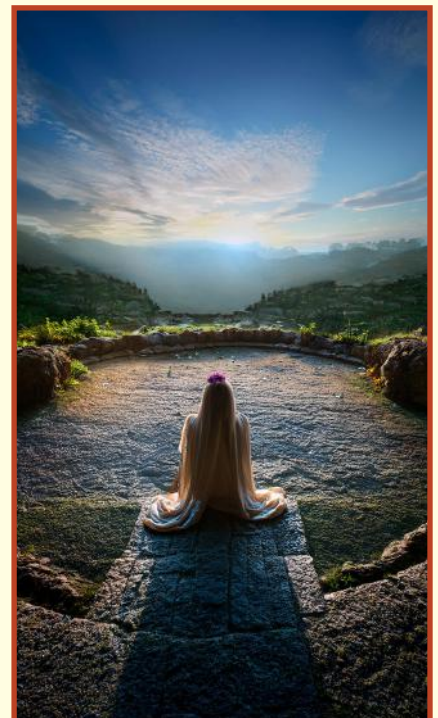
To release chronic stress, review my 12 Ancient Universal Principles.

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™***

Focus on one principle. Breathe. Center. Reflect. Imagine what it would feel like, deep within your center, if you could discern and deflect any external stressor. What would that do for you? What insight has been ignited? As you move through your day, let the circumstances of life flow around you, not drown you. Feel the strength in the center of your being. You are a powerful Buddha in the middle of a burning inferno, untouched by the fire. With Taoist non-attachment, you create security, stability, alignment and clarity. You can prioritize your next steps based on clear judgement, focus and balanced analysis.

As a high achiever with great visions and goals, you don't have to live with chronic stress. Ending this destructive drain is critical in creating more energy, achieving your goals and living your health and wealth potential. You will not be able to fulfill your destiny in a state of endless



frustration and energetic decline. Ignoring the ancient principles that govern life is depriving yourself of the gifts and abilities you have been given as your birthright.

Everything Changes (aka Change is the Constant of The Universe)

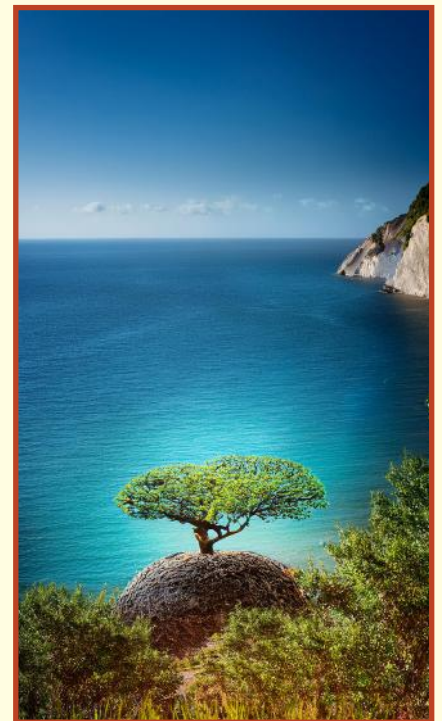
When you are in the most difficult circumstances, remember that nothing lasts forever. The change will come just as the light of dawn emerges from the darkest night. Embrace change. Flow with it. Create. Be a pioneer of consciousness. Humans do not like change. We have an innate need and desire to feel secure. What is inner security? It is your state of being, the strength and quality of your energy, and your conscious relationship with yourself. Your inner security is your inner power. When you expand your awareness and your capacity from your center, you feel secure as you flow with the natural energies of change.

Recognizing that there is always a solution to any problem lifts the heavy burden that can “depress” you and weigh you down. Action paralysis or reactive choices made from overwhelm, fear, and confusion come from depletion and stagnation. How you manage change and uncertainty is a major factor in determining the quality of your life and whether you embrace healthy stress or create chronic stress. By mastering ancient universal principles, you optimize a flow state to support the inevitability that you can turn lead into gold and create positive change.

Moving beyond mindset by connecting with your inner knowing, mastering your instinct and intuition and becoming Centered, Connected, and Conscious™ is a powerful gateway for limitless growth and lasting success. You become confident that you can navigate through every challenge, hardship and celebration.

No one said life on Planet Earth would be easy! When you learn how to fly and move forward with balance and flow, your life can be an incredible adventure, a fast-track to the greatest fulfillment, joy and empowerment you could ever imagine. With my 12 Ancient Universal Principles as your guide, you live with the power of Taoist non-attachment, create more energy and release that which weighs you down. You turn stress into success in the new paradigm of High-Performance Wellness. 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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You can change your life right now!

YES, you can..... you know deep down that you can!

You know those negative, icky feelings and thoughts that creep over your body and into your mind...

You should know that you CAN change those around you so that you feel differently and think much more positively. Doing that will also help you have a spring in your step, uplevel your mindset, and change your energy and aura, too.

It may feel hard and difficult and testing, especially if you're in the eye of a storm and there are issues going on and things that you're dealing with in life. Life is here to test us so that we can set boundaries, choose a different direction, or learn the lesson we need to learn from an experience.

All of this can be hard to take, swallow, and deal with in the moment. The burden of what happens each day can get us off track, and so we feel out of sync. Then, our feelings are negative, such as sadness, anger, frustration, and maybe being overwhelmed.

Have you felt that way?

I'm not saying at all to brush these feelings under the carpet, as we all get moments like this when we question stuff—it's natural. I completely understand. As you navigate through the seasons of your life, you are evolving, growing, and expanding. You have moments of reflection and pondering so that you can make sense of these things.

It gives you time to be patient with yourself, forgive yourself, nurture yourself, and be kind to yourself! Yes, you.

It gives you time to see what's working and what isn't, what aligns and what doesn't, where your life is taking a different direction, where you need to charge yourself up, release the drama and chaos and slow the timeline down to work on your mindset and your wellbeing.

ULTIMATELY, KNOW THAT YOU CAN CHANGE YOUR LIFE RIGHT NOW!

It's a choice and decision for you to realise and make. It doesn't mean you need to go at 60 mph, but it does mean that

you are in control of your thoughts, feelings, and emotions, and you can turn them around. You can do this because you may have reached a stage in your life where you think, "Enough is enough. I'm not doing this anymore." This could be a business, a project, work, a relationship, a friendship, etc.

It could be that you don't want to keep repeating the same thing, going around in circles, and nothing is changing.

It could be that what once was filling your cup up, isn't anymore and you want to change direction. Know that it's never too late.

Know that you're not too young or too old.

Know that you're not alone, either.

Your time is now, and you CAN do this. Go with conviction, make the courageous decision, make it non-negotiable and go all in 100%!!

So, I want to ask you right now.....

~ **What or who do you want?**

~ **Where do you want to go?**

~ **Who do you want to empower or impact?**

~ **How do you want to feel?**

~ **What do you want to do in your life or business or work?**

~ **What doesn't align or feel great anymore?**

~ **What's your legacy?**

~ **How will you feel?**

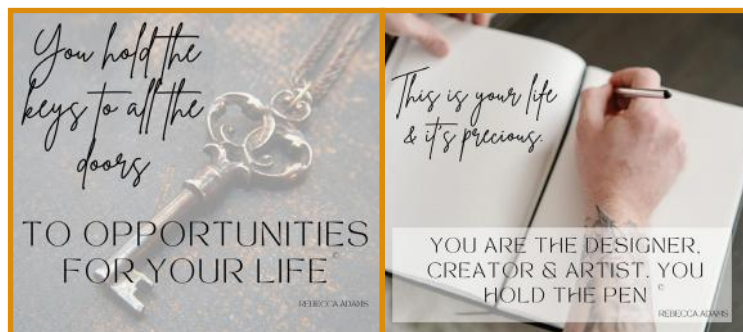
~ **What does your future life look like?**

~ **Where are you and what are you doing?**

Tap into the feelings and emotions of experiencing your new life – the one you create daily in pen.

These are powerful questions when you slow your life down and really sit and ponder them. Give yourself that time. You are important, and you deserve to give yourself the time to really think about your life and future. It's okay to change your mind, and you don't need anyone else's permission to do so.

Remain present in the moment and know that life is precious - don't fuff about it! Go for it!



As you go through this exercise, acknowledge the feelings that show up for you as you answer the questions. Know that life is always evolving, and so are you. Have blind faith and belief in yourself.

The universe is supporting whatever you decide to do. Put all your love and energy into it and concentrate on your

mindset above everything. You've got this, and I'm here to support you every step of the way.

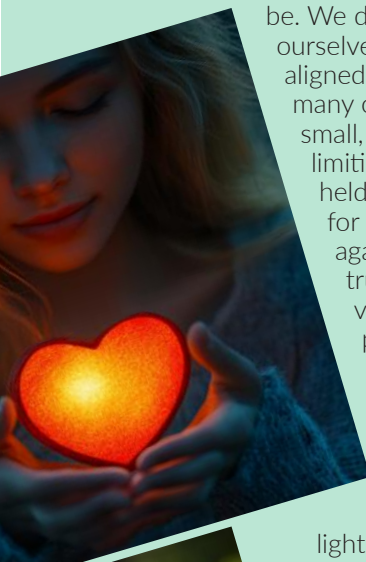
MINDFUL MOMENTS

by Rebecca Adams


www.rebeccaadamsbiz.com



I-Luminate: From Shadow Worker to Lightworker A Journey of Emotional Alchemy to HEART'S HOME

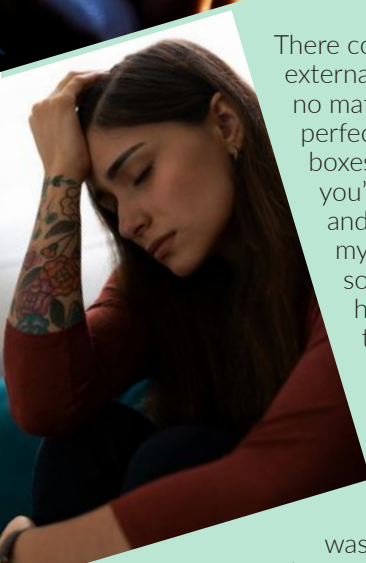


We all have a vision of who we truly desire to be. We dream of living boldly, fully expressing ourselves, and manifesting a life that feels aligned with our deepest purpose. Yet, so many of us find ourselves stuck, playing small, and unable to move past the same limiting beliefs and fears that have held us back for years. This was me, for the longest time, over and over again. Until I learned the truth. The truth is, the journey to becoming the version of ourselves we dream of is a process of **BEcoming**. This process invites us to step into the role of a lightworker—someone who illuminates every aspect of life, starting with their own.




But before we can embrace this light, we must do what I call the **HEART Work**. Heart Work is not the heavy, soul-crushing “hard work” we often associate with personal growth. Instead, it is the act of getting to the heart of the matter, peeling back the layers of wounding and limiting beliefs that keep us stuck in the shadows. The **HEART** work invites us to return to our essence, truth, and deepest wisdom. And while this journey may seem daunting, it is also one of the most liberating and empowering paths we can take. We get to choose to allow it to be joyful, uplifting, and beautiful!

The Breakdown Before the Breakthrough




There comes a moment in life when the external world no longer makes sense, no matter how much effort we put into perfecting it. You've checked all the boxes—success, relationships, status—but you're left feeling hollow, disconnected, and lost. That's exactly where I found myself not too long ago, after veering so far off my path that the universe had to intervene. I was living a life that I identified as mine, yet deep down, I knew it wasn't what I wanted. It felt hard, heavy, and unfulfilling. I would look in the mirror and not even recognize myself. It was as if the spark in my eyes had been snuffed. I

was searching for worth and validation outside of myself. I believed that if I could just get everything to look perfect on the outside, then, finally, I would feel worthy and happy.




But the universe is a mirror. It reflects back to you what's going on inside. At the time, I didn't know that. I was trying to fix the reflection in the mirror without realizing that in order to change what I saw, I first had to change myself. When life became unbearable, and nothing I did seemed to work, the universe gave me the massive wake-up call I didn't know I needed. I hit rock bottom—more than once!



It was a series of unfortunate events that shook me to my core. My life, carefully constructed like a house of cards, suddenly collapsed. And when I finally “fixed” it, it tumbled again. I had spent so much time outsourcing my love, my self-worth, my validation—seeking it in relationships, success, and external accomplishments—that I had lost sight of who I truly was. I was empty. The earthquakes that shattered my life on more than one occasion felt unbearable at those times, but they were the catalysts I needed. In those moments of breakdown, I began the journey that would lead me back to myself, back to the home I had always been seeking—my own heart.

The Power of the Heart



At the core of the HEART work is the process of healing and expanding the heart. The heart is not just the physical organ that sustains life but also the seat of our emotions, desires, and deep wisdom. Through the heart, we connect with the Divine, our true, authentic Self, and the world around us. And it is often through the heart that we experience our deepest wounds—wounds that stem from limiting belief systems stored in the unconscious and subconscious mind.

These limiting beliefs, hidden in the shadows of our minds, keep us playing small. They manifest as fear, doubt, and self-sabotage, preventing us from becoming the version of ourselves we know we can be. To move past these blocks, we must first uncover and heal the core wounds that formed these beliefs in the first place.

The Unconscious and Subconscious Mind: The Key to Transformation

To fully understand this process, we need to explore how the unconscious and subconscious minds operate. These parts of the mind act as a reservoir of feelings, thoughts, urges, and memories that lie outside of our conscious awareness, yet they affect everything we perceive in the world around us. Our subconscious is like an



operating system, continuously running in the background, influencing how we think, feel, and act. Every experience we have is filtered through this operating system.

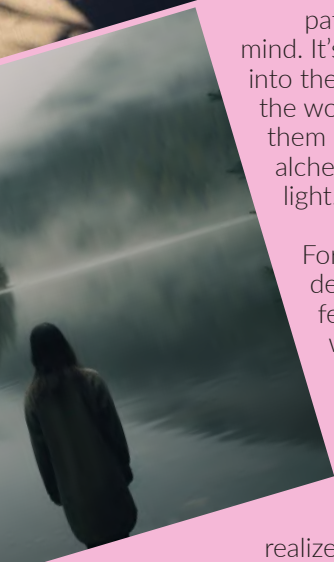
The unconscious and subconscious minds process information very differently from the conscious mind. They are responsible for long-term memory, storing our past experiences, attitudes, values, and beliefs. This includes the beliefs we hold about ourselves, which often form in early childhood based on experiences with caregivers, society, and our environment. These beliefs are literal—they don't judge or filter the way the conscious mind does. They simply record and store.



My subconscious was running on outdated programming for most of my life—beliefs about unworthiness, fear of failure, and the need for external validation. These beliefs kept me stuck, repeating the same patterns and never feeling fully satisfied or aligned. It wasn't until I began to rewire this operating system that my life started to shift.

The HEART Work: Illuminating the Shadows

This is where the HEART work comes into play. The HEART work is the process of illuminating the shadows—the unexamined beliefs, core wounds, and unconscious patterns stored in the subconscious mind. It's about bringing these limiting beliefs into the light of consciousness and healing the wounds that created them—integrating them into the light. I call it emotional alchemy, transmuting the shadows into light.



For me, the shadows were made up of deep feelings of unworthiness and a fear of rejection. I had outsourced my worth, looking for it in relationships, achievements, and external success. But no matter how much I tried to make the outside look perfect, it never satisfied that inner longing.

The more I tried, the more disconnected I felt. That's when I realized the work wasn't on the outside but

within.

Shadows often come from early life wounds—experiences of rejection, abandonment, or fear. These wounds shape our beliefs about ourselves and the world. For example, if you experienced abandonment as a child, you may have formed a belief that “I am unworthy of love” or “I will always be left behind.” These beliefs, stored in the subconscious, continue to influence your actions and experiences well into adulthood.

The HEART work invites you to return to these core wounds with compassion and curiosity, to understand where these beliefs came from, and to gently release them. This process is not about reliving the pain but about integrating it, learning from it, and allowing it to transform into wisdom and strength.

Rewiring the Operating System

As I embarked on this journey, I used powerful tools and practices to rewire my internal operating system: Yoga, breathwork, meditation, Reiki, and PSYCH-K®. I developed methods like **hypnotic journaling** and **Divine Source Codes**, which helped me tap into the deeper layers of my subconscious and begin to release those old limiting beliefs.

These practices became my daily rituals, my non-negotiables, as I rebuilt myself from the inside out. As I did this work, something profound happened: I realized that the love, the worth, and the validation I had been searching for outside of myself were already within me. I was my own greatest love story.

The journey I had been on wasn't a journey to find something external—it was a journey back to myself. And the more I healed and cleared those old patterns, the more aligned my outer world became. The universe, constantly reflecting back to us our inner state, began to mirror the changes I had made within. The people, opportunities, and experiences that came into my life began to match the vibration I was now operating from. It was as if the entire universe was conspiring in my favor—what I now call **pronoia**. When you realize you are in co-creation with the universe, you experience that everything is available to support your growth and expansion.

Stepping into the Role of Lightworker

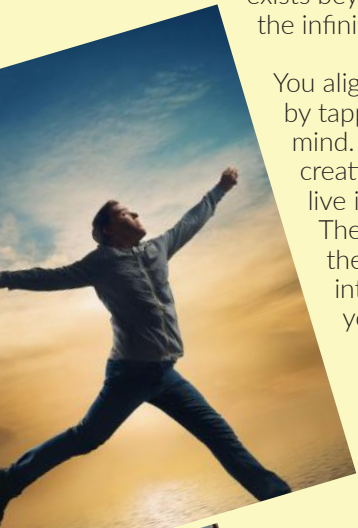
As I moved through this process of the HEART work, I realized that I had become (and had always been) a **lightworker**—someone who shines a light on their shadows and the shadows of the world. By healing my core wounds and transforming limiting beliefs into empowering ones, I had become a beacon of light for others. I began to show up in the world as my true, authentic Self, unafraid to be seen, heard, and fully expressed.

This is the essence of BEcoming the version of yourself that you truly desire to be. It's not about trying to become something else but rather remembering who you already are at your core—your highest, most expanded Self. As I stepped into this role of lightworker, I knew I had found my purpose: to help others do the same.

The Superconscious Mind: Tapping into Infinite Potential

Beyond the layers of the subconscious and unconscious minds lies the **superconscious mind**, also known as the highest Self or inner being. The superconscious is the seat of pure awareness, the part of you that is directly connected to all that is, was, and ever shall be. It is your spiritual guidance system, omniscient, omnipresent, and omnipotent.

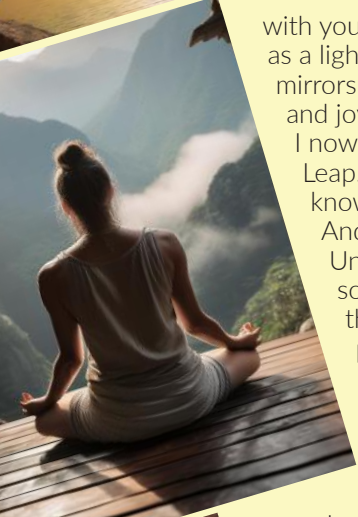
The superconscious mind sees the big picture of your life path. It understands your unique purpose and your dharma, and it helps guide you toward the experiences that will help you fulfil that purpose. Unlike the subconscious, which operates based on past programming, the superconscious is infinite and can process information at unlimited speed and capacity. It exists beyond time and space and operates in the infinite now.



You align yourself with your highest potential by tapping into your superconscious mind. You gain access to divine wisdom, creativity, and intuition, allowing you to live in alignment with your soul's purpose. The more you integrate the shadow and the light, the more clearly you can tune into, hear, and trust the guidance of your superconscious mind.

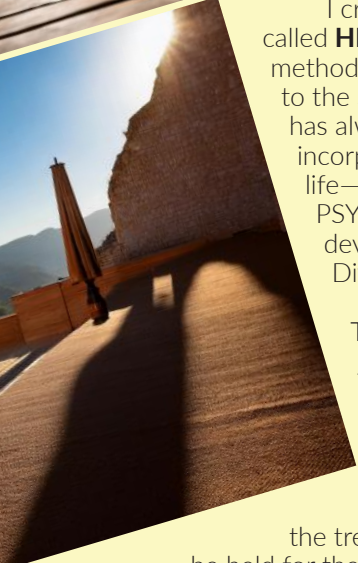
Trust. Expect. Leap.

This is the essence of the journey back to yourself. It's about trusting the process, expecting miracles, and leaping with faith. When you do the inner work, when you align with your true Self and step into your role as a lightworker, the universe responds. It mirrors back to you the love, abundance, and joy that are already within you. I now live by this mantra: Trust. Expect. Leap. Every time I take a leap of faith, I know that the universe will catch me. And when it does, I say, "Thank you, Universe! More, please!" and "This or something better." Every single time, the universe delivers. It hears my prayers and responds in even greater ways than I could have imagined.



The HEART'S Home Process Through this personal journey of breakdowns and breakthroughs,

I created my podcast and process called **HEART'S HOME**. It's a comprehensive method for guiding myself and others back to the Self, to the heart, to the home that has always been within. The program incorporates the practices that saved my life—yoga, breathwork, meditation, Reiki, PSYCH-K®, and the unique methods I developed, like hypnotic journaling and Divine Source Codes.



The beauty of this process and journey is that it can be broken into smaller "trips" and meet people where they are—whether through one-to-one sessions or group programs. Sometimes, people are in the thick of it, in

the trenches, when they need space to be held for them and supported as they safely experience and integrate the darkness in my program

"Illuminate the Shadows". Or if they are already on the journey of ascension and now stepping into their role as a lightworker, my certification program, **"I-Luminate: Energy Healing and Channeling for Lightworkers"**, is the perfect container to hold and support their evolution.

I also host and facilitate in-person, gridworking retreats where lightworkers come together in sacred locations to transmute energy, anchor in frequencies, and uplift collective consciousness while expanding their own horizons, literally and metaphorically! I work with people from all walks of life, in all places around the world, both online and in person. I am so grateful that I am blessed to realize—see with my REAL EYES—my dharma, manifest in this lifetime, and express myself as all of who I came here to be!

The heart is home. Home is where we find ourselves, where we return to our essence, and where we begin to create the life we've always desired. The HEART'S HOME process is a roadmap for anyone who is ready to take that journey, to do the HEART work, and to become the lightworker they were always meant to be.

Whether you choose to walk this path on your own or seek support, trust that the answers are already within you. By tuning into your heart, embracing daily practices like meditation or journaling, or reaching out for guidance, you can navigate the shadows and step into your true light. The universe is always supporting you, and each step you take—whether alone or with others—brings you closer to the life you are meant to live. Trust yourself, trust your journey, and leap into the life you've always desire

By Lizzie Siegel

To connect with Lizzie further for more teachings, mentorship, retreats, and to receive her latest offerings, follow her on **Instagram @lizzienamasteplantbased** or email her at **namasteplantbased@gmail.com**



Train Magic

Embracing the Power of Mindful Living

I watched in fascination as the steam train inched forward, gently pulling its six red carriages. It came to a stop, then shunted backwards for a couple of minutes.

The guard stood at the back of the last carriage. He stepped down onto the tracks, opened the gates for the train to be shunted further down the line, and eventually came to a standstill undercover. They parked the train with deliberate precision.

It seemed to take forever. I was enthralled and fascinated by the train's pace; it caused me to slow down. I felt it, and in that moment, I was observing my breath, intrigued by the slow pace. The actions of the guard were slow and deliberate, like the train, and that made me smile. I wondered if the train driver and guard realized how mindful they seemed in their work.

This got me thinking about how we live in a very fast-paced world. We push buttons for our coffee, start our cars, lock our houses, our phones, lights on, lights off, computers on, and cooking—so much of our everyday activities are pushing buttons or using remotely operated systems. Our houses can be automated. Does this mean we are not even thinking about what we do anymore? Are we missing out on being present in our own lives? Are we unconsciously going about our lives without real intention, like robots?

I believe the fast pace of today's world stifles self-awareness and contemplation. I have observed that we often move from one task to another without much consideration or thought. Observing the slow and deliberate pace of the steam train piqued my curiosity about being fully present and staying in the here and now. I decided to dedicate an entire day to being fully conscious, or should I say that was my intent! I wanted to deepen my awareness of myself and my surroundings. What I found was that my mind wandered off to other things rather than the task at hand (which was to be present).

To be perfectly honest, I started talking to myself, coaching myself through the experience of right now. The moments seemed to be going too fast for me to stay in the now, the now, and then the now. I was shocked at the pace, even though my intent was to stay consciously aware of everything around me. I felt I was going too fast. I decided to sit in the sun and be still, looking at the beauty of the clouds above. Before I knew it, I was

off-creating stories about the shapes of the clouds and their meanings. I brought myself back to being on the chair, my feet firmly on the ground, watching the colourful flowers and the bright green leaves. I wondered how long I could sit and observe the day and stay present. Like everything else we learn, it is about practicing. Clearly, I need more practice at being present.

So, practice, I did.



This “being” is an active thing, not a passive thing. Up until this point, I thought “being” was present in activities like meditation and yoga. My two standard poodles seem to be good at “being” in the here and now. Have you noticed that about dogs? They can be sound asleep one minute and then be acutely on guard in a heartbeat. Taking a day out of my busy schedule to practice my conscious living and deepen my awareness has been a pivotal moment for me.

Since that day, I have found myself checking in with myself to see where I am at: “Am I conscious right now, and what do I notice?” I notice a phenomenal number of things—my breath, the colour of objects around me, how I walk and talk—the list goes on. I am determined to lead a more conscious life, both personally and professionally. I feel richer for the experience of observing the steam train. Living a more conscious life has profoundly expanded my horizons.

“Awaken to the moment; your consciousness is the gateway to a richer, fuller life.”

Confidence Coach

Mary Scott



www.maryscottinfluence.com



Embracing Motherhood After 35, A Working Mom's Journey

In recent years, more women are choosing to have children later in life, with many embarking on the journey of motherhood in their late 30s. This shift reflects changing societal norms, career priorities, and advancements in healthcare. For many, the combination of established careers and newfound family life brings both challenges and rewards. As someone who had her first child at 38, I'm here to reassure and provide insights into the benefits and practical aspects of being a working mom after 35.

Breaking the Misconceptions

There are several misconceptions about having children after 35, including concerns about health risks and career setbacks. However, data shows a growing number of women successfully balancing late motherhood and professional success.

Thanks to advancements in medical care, later-in-life pregnancies can be just as healthy as those in younger women, providing peace of mind to many. Additionally, the economic challenges of the past decade have led many potential parents to postpone having children until they feel financially prepared.

Myth: Women who postpone motherhood prioritize their careers over family.

Contrary to common misconceptions, most working women are not choosing their careers over love, marriage, and motherhood. Many strive to excel in their careers to support their children better. Unfortunately, the current work system penalizes women who have children early by keeping their salaries low and limiting their advancement opportunities. This systemic issue forces many women to delay starting a family until they feel financially secure and professionally established. Moreover, societal pressures and stereotypes often compound their challenges, creating a need for better workplace policies that support work-life balance and recognize the dual roles women often navigate. Flexible work arrangements, comprehensive maternity leave, and affordable childcare are essential reforms that can help mitigate these challenges and enable women to thrive at work and at home.

Myth: Women who delay motherhood past 35 are unlikely ever to get pregnant.

It's true that women in their late 30s may experience more difficulties conceiving and, in some cases, face increased risks during pregnancy and delivery compared to women in their late 20s or early 30s. However, fertility decline is a continuum, not a cliff, and it varies from woman to woman.



While medical professionals don't necessarily recommend waiting to have children, many women appreciate having more flexibility in their family planning. Advances in fertility technology, such as in vitro fertilization, egg freezing, frozen embryos, donor eggs, and surrogacy, have made it more viable for women to delay motherhood until they are ready.

The Benefits of Late Motherhood

Research indicates that children of older mothers tend to stay in school longer, achieve higher scores on standardized tests, and are more likely to pursue higher education compared to those born to younger mothers. One significant advantage of having children later in life is the wealth of life experience and maturity that older parents bring to the table. These attributes contribute to making well-informed parenting decisions and creating a stable family environment. Additionally, being established in a career often means greater financial stability, which can significantly benefit the family. For many women, the satisfaction of having built a career before starting a family reduces potential regrets about missed professional opportunities. This career satisfaction can translate into a more balanced and fulfilling family life.

Balancing Work and Motherhood

Effective time management is crucial for working moms, especially those who start their families later in life. Creating schedules, prioritizing tasks, and setting clear boundaries can help manage the demands of both work and home. Exploring flexible work arrangements, such as remote work or part-time schedules, can also provide the necessary balance.

Building a robust support system is essential. Partners, family members, friends, and professional childcare services can all play pivotal roles in helping manage the dual responsibilities of work and parenting.

Health and Well-being

Maintaining physical health through regular exercise, a balanced diet, and routine medical check-ups is essential for older mothers. Equally important is mental well-being, which can be supported through mindfulness practices, yoga, and effective stress management techniques. Self-care should not be neglected, as taking time to recharge helps avoid burnout.

Many women have successfully navigated the path of late motherhood and a thriving career, myself included. I never really thought about having kids in my 20s or early 30s. The experience and stability I gained in my career allowed me to confidently provide my family with a better life and approach motherhood. Additionally, I feel that in my 20s, I lacked the self-awareness that I now consider essential for being a conscious parent. Waiting until I was older to have children gave me the opportunity to develop a stronger sense of self, which has positively impacted my ability to nurture and guide my daughter.

This balance between career and family has allowed me to model resilience and determination for my child. Moreover, I have found that being an older parent has given me a greater sense of patience and perspective, enabling me to handle the challenges of parenting with a calm and measured approach.

Furthermore, the advancements in medical care available today have revolutionized the possibility for many women to safely and successfully conceive later in life. The support systems and resources that exist now are far more accommodating than in previous generations, making late motherhood a viable and often preferable option for many.

Having children after 35 while maintaining a career is possible and can be immensely rewarding. With the right support system, effective time management, and a focus on health and well-being, late motherhood can be a fulfilling journey. Remember, you are not alone, and numerous resources and support systems are available to help you navigate this exciting new chapter of life. The journey has been immensely rewarding, affirming that there is no one right time for everyone when it comes to starting a family.

By Inna Mel





What is second-hand trauma?

Vicarious trauma, also known as second-hand trauma, refers to the emotional and psychological impact experienced by individuals who are exposed to the trauma of others, even if they are not directly involved in the traumatic event. This can arise in professionals who work with trauma survivors, such as therapists and social workers, or among friends and family members of those affected by trauma.

Constant exposure to the trauma of others can lead to emotional exhaustion, making it difficult to maintain empathy or a sense of accomplishment. Over time, this can contribute to burnout. Seeing the constant suffering of others may cause increased feelings of anxiety, fear, or helplessness. Individuals may become hyper-vigilant, fearing similar events might occur in their own lives or the lives of those close to them. The emotional toll of second-hand trauma can lead to depressive symptoms, including persistent sadness, loss of interest in activities, and feelings of hopelessness or worthlessness.

In severe cases, individuals may experience intrusive thoughts, flashbacks, or nightmares about the trauma they have witnessed or heard about, resembling symptoms of PTSD. To protect themselves from emotional overload, individuals may become emotionally detached or numb, distancing themselves from others and having trouble forming or keeping close relationships. Exposure to traumatic events may alter an individual's feeling of the world, causing them to see it as inherently unsafe or unjust. This can lead to feelings of distrust or disillusionment.

The stress from second-hand trauma can manifest physically through symptoms such as headaches, fatigue, difficulty sleeping, and gastrointestinal issues. For those who experience vicarious trauma in a professional setting, it may lead to decreased job satisfaction, compassion fatigue, or even withdrawal from social interactions due to emotional exhaustion.

To reduce the effects of second-hand trauma, individuals can seek therapy or counselling. These can help individuals process their feelings and develop strategies to cope with the emotional toll of the effects. Engaging in activities that promote relaxation and emotional well-being, such as mindfulness, physical exercise, or hobbies, can be protective against burnout.

Learning to establish emotional boundaries by separating work from your personal life can help in managing emotional strain. Also, engaging in debriefing sessions with peers who understand the nature of second-hand trauma can provide validation and reduce isolation.

Setting boundaries is a vital part of self-care, especially in a toxic environment, as toxic people often violate personal space, time, and emotional boundaries, which can lead to burnout and emotional exhaustion.

Communicate your limits with others, whether they are emotional boundaries, personal space, or workloads. It is okay to prioritise your well-being over others' expectations. Saying no is a powerful tool to avoid overcommitment and energy depletion. If possible, reduce your interactions with toxic individuals or minimise time spent in toxic spaces.

As professionals working within the mental health sector, it is vital that we take responsibility for our mental well-being and take the necessary steps to ensure we are supported in our roles.

Second-hand trauma can affect anybody who is indirectly exposed to the traumatic events experienced by others, whether that be in the workplace, within a family or in a social setting. Recognising and addressing the impact of second-hand trauma is essential for maintaining mental health and preventing long-term emotional distress.

By Shardia O'Connor



www.shadesofreality.co.uk



EMBRACE THE MAGIC OF AUTUMN

TRANSFORMING EMOTIONS WITH THE SEASON

Seasons affect moods and behaviours. Summer is now behind us, and Autumn is on the horizon, and many of us feel a pang of melancholy and nostalgia. The days grow shorter, the temperatures drop, and the vibrant greens of summer give way to a range of golds, reds, and browns. For some, this seasonal transition can be emotionally challenging, indicating the end of sunny days and the onset of a darker, colder season.

For many, this transition from the warmth of summer to the cosiness of Autumn can bring a mix of emotions. Understanding that these emotions are natural responses to change can be the first step toward embracing the season's unique beauty and opportunities.

Autumn is a time of reflection and renewal. It encourages us to slow down, go within, and reconnect with ourselves. This season invites us to let go of what no longer serves us, much like the trees shedding their leaves. By reframing our perspective, we can see Autumn not as an end but a beginning—a chance to cultivate inner strength and resilience.

Empowering tips for a beautiful Autumn

Embrace the outdoors

Despite the cooling temperatures, spending time outdoors can be incredibly uplifting. Embracing the Autumn season and caring for your mental well-being can be wonderfully simple and effective through regular nature walks. The crisp air, the rustling leaves, and the rich colours can invigorate the senses. Take daily walks in nature, visit local parks, or simply sit in your backyard with a warm drink. Nature has a profound ability to soothe and inspire.

Create a cosy sanctuary

Transform your living space into a haven of comfort and warmth. Use soft blankets, warm lighting, and autumnal decorations to create an inviting atmosphere. Aromatherapy with scents like cinnamon, clove, and vanilla can also enhance the feeling of cosiness. A well-curated space can be a sanctuary from the outside world and a place where you feel safe and nurtured.

Nourish your body and soul

Autumn is the perfect time to indulge in nourishing foods supporting physical and emotional health. Enjoy hearty soups, stews, and seasonal produce like pumpkins, apples, and root vegetables. These foods are comforting and packed with nutrients that can boost your mood and energy levels. Warm and nourishing foods bring inner comfort.

Stay active

Regular physical activity is essential for maintaining mental well-being, especially during the darker months. Engage in activities that you enjoy. Exercise releases endorphins, which can help fight feelings of depression and anxiety.

Cultivate mindfulness

Practising mindfulness helps you stay grounded and present. Meditation, deep breathing, and journaling can be powerful tools for managing stress and enhancing emotional resilience.

Take a few moments each day to reflect on what you are grateful for, focusing on the positive aspects of Autumn.

Reconnect with loved ones

Autumn is a time for gathering. Reconnect with family and friends through cosy dinners, bonfire nights, or simple coffee dates. Social connections are vital for emotional health, and shared experiences can create cherished memories and foster a sense of belonging.

Engage in creative activities

Channelling your energy into creative activities can be incredibly therapeutic. Whether it is painting, writing, knitting, or gardening, engaging in a hobby can provide a sense of accomplishment and joy. Creative expression allows you to process emotions and tap into your inner strengths.

Establish a routine


As the days become shorter, maintaining a consistent routine can help regulate your mood and energy levels. Ensure you get enough sleep, eat regular meals, and set aside time for relaxation and self-care. A structured routine provides stability and can help mitigate the effects of seasonal changes.

Final words...

Autumn's falling leaves remind us that letting go can be beautiful, and the cooler days invite us to find warmth within ourselves and our connections. As you navigate through this Autumn, remember that each season has its rhythm and gifts. By aligning ourselves with Autumn's natural flow, we can uncover new strengths, rediscover joy, and emerge more empowered than ever. Celebrate the magic of Autumn and let it inspire you to create a season of growth, comfort, and inner peace.

By Nadija Bajrami





Beyond the Mind

Unlock the Soul's Power

for Profound Emotional Healing

1. Introduction: The Importance of Healing from Within

What if everything you've been taught about mental health is incomplete? For years, we've been told that mental well-being comes from medication, therapy, and behavioral changes. While these methods are essential, they often only scratch the surface. The truth is, no amount of external treatment can heal the deeper emotional wounds buried in the core of our being. Real mental well-being begins with healing from within—at the level of the soul.

We live in a world where anxiety, depression, and emotional distress are rampant. According to the World Health Organization, more than 970 million people globally suffer from some form of mental disorder, with anxiety and depression leading the way. In the U.S. alone, nearly 1 in 5 adults experience a mental illness in any given year, and the economic burden of untreated mental health disorders is estimated at \$2.5 trillion annually. But rather than seeking short-term solutions, what if we could look deeper—into the emotional root causes that often drive mental health struggles?

When the soul is disconnected or misaligned, it often leads to emotional pain, which in turn affects our mental health. In this article, we'll explore how spiritual practices like soul alignment, mindfulness, energy clearing, and self-compassion can lead to lasting emotional freedom. It's time to rethink how we approach mental health—not as a problem to be managed but as a path to deep, transformative healing from within.

2. The Role of the Soul in Emotional and Mental Healing

Traditional mental health approaches focus on the mind and body but often neglect a critical aspect of healing: the soul. The soul is the core of our being—the place where our true essence, emotions, and purpose reside. Emotional pain doesn't just live in the mind; it often stems from a disconnection or misalignment with the soul. When this misalignment occurs, we experience deep emotional distress, anxiety, or depression, signaling that we are out of sync with our soul's truth.

The soul represents the essence of who we are—beyond thoughts, emotions, and experiences. It is the wellspring of our most profound truths, spiritual well-being, and connection to our truest self and the divine. When we lose touch with this sacred connection, emotional wounds and unresolved pain rise to the surface, often manifesting as mental and emotional distress.

Unresolved emotional trauma, grief, or spiritual disconnection creates internal blockages that weigh us down mentally and emotionally. By reconnecting with the soul, we unlock the potential for deep emotional healing and restore balance in our lives. This soul-centered approach addresses not only the symptoms but the root causes of our suffering, allowing us to heal at the deepest level of our being.

When we heal emotionally, we are also healing the mental layers of our well-being. Emotional healing paves the way for greater mental clarity, resilience, and overall balance.

3. Spiritual Awareness as a Tool for Releasing Emotional Pain

Spiritual awareness plays a pivotal role in emotional healing, offering a pathway to release the deep emotional pain that often traps us in cycles of suffering. When we become spiritually aware, we understand that our mental and emotional struggles are not just confined to the mind but are part of a larger, interconnected system involving the body and the soul. This awareness allows us to approach healing from a holistic perspective, where we engage in practices that not only soothe the mind but also realign and reconnect the soul.



Mindfulness and Reconnection with the Soul

Mindfulness is one of the most accessible and powerful tools for developing spiritual awareness. By practicing mindfulness, we learn to observe our thoughts and emotions without judgment, creating space to understand the deeper layers of our emotional state. This practice calms the mind and helps us reconnect with the soul, healing the disconnection that contributes to emotional and mental distress. As we become more present, we open ourselves to the messages of the soul, addressing the root causes of our emotional pain rather than just its surface manifestations. In fact, studies show that regular mindfulness practice can significantly reduce symptoms of anxiety and depression. Research found that mindfulness interventions reduced symptoms of anxiety by 30% to 38% and depression by 20% to 25%. This powerful shift occurs by altering our mental state and bringing us back to a deeper sense of alignment with who we are at our core.

Energy Clearing: Releasing Emotional Blocks

Emotional pain is often stored in the body as blocked or stagnant energy, especially when the soul is misaligned. This emotional stagnation can manifest not only in mental struggles but also in physical symptoms such as chronic tension, headaches, or digestive issues. Practices like energy clearing work to release these blockages, enabling emotional flow and healing.

Techniques such as Reiki, chakra healing, or even simple breathwork help move stuck energy through the body, allowing us to feel lighter, freer, and more connected to our true selves. When we engage in energy clearing, we are not just addressing emotional pain on a surface level but releasing the energetic imprints of past trauma, grief, or unresolved wounds. This restores balance to the mind-body-soul connection, helping us break free from emotional and mental distress caused by misalignment.

4. Self-Compassion: A Path to Emotional Healing

While spiritual awareness helps us reconnect with the soul, self-compassion is the key to unlocking deep emotional healing. Self-compassion is a powerful tool for breaking the guilt, shame, and self-blame cycle. Rather than judging ourselves in moments of distress, self-compassion teaches us to treat our emotional wounds with the same kindness and understanding we'd offer a loved one. This self-care nurtures both emotional and mental healing.

The Power of Self-Kindness

By practicing self-kindness, we soften the impact of emotional wounds. Research shows that self-compassion can reduce anxiety by 34%, depression by 27%, and emotional resilience by 22%. This practice nurtures emotional healing from within and strengthens our mental well-being.

Letting Go of Self-Judgment

Self-compassion also helps us release self-judgment, allowing us to accept our emotions without labeling them as "bad." Emotional acceptance doesn't mean resignation—it's a vital step toward healing. By recognizing and accepting our emotions, we move from emotional suppression to emotional healing, ultimately improving mental health by addressing the root causes of our suffering.

Conclusion

True emotional and spiritual healing is a continuous process that deeply enhances our mental health. By understanding the vital role that the soul plays in our healing journey and reconnecting with it, we unlock the potential for lasting emotional well-being. When we address the soul's misalignment and reconnect with our true essence, emotional wounds begin to heal, and mental clarity and resilience emerge.

I'm currently developing a groundbreaking, comprehensive program that considers these insights and is designed to guide you further on your journey toward lasting emotional and spiritual healing. To stay informed and receive updates, feel free to connect with me directly for more information.

Dr. Margit Gabriele Muller is an award-winning Certified Mental Health Coach specializing in Inner Dynamics, Professional Certified Coach by the International Coaching Federation ICF, Master Life Coach, NLP Master, Certified Meditation Teacher, Certified Advanced Trauma-Sensitive Mindfulness Practitioner, award-winning author, and sought-after speaker.

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This Easy Daily Practice Will Transform Your Life

What can I do to improve my life? As a life coach, I am often asked that question. While many factors affect each person's wellbeing, one overwhelmingly powerful strategy has a positive impact for everyone. Gratitude is the most impactful way to improve your mood, success and health.

Why Is Gratitude So Beneficial?

In my life coaching practice, I teach clients tools to improve their daily lives. Gratitude positively impacts every aspect of your life and is at the core of my philosophy as a life coach.

- ***Gratitude is a booster shot for your relationships, strengthening interpersonal connections. When you feel grateful, it creates a self-sustaining cycle of contentment and generosity***
- ***If you tend to gripe and complain, you will be in a negative mindset, seeking fault and seeing the downside. A gratitude practice is the antidote to negativity, frustration, and aggression. Instead of grumbling, look for the glimmers, and you will find more joy in your life.***
- ***Studies show that those who practice gratitude have better heart health and experience less stress. Gratitude calms the nervous system, slows your breathing and can reduce the risk of heart disease.***

You have taken the first step in understanding the benefits of gratitude, now let's explore some practical tips to bring a gratitude practice into your day.

How Do I Incorporate More Gratitude into My Life?

Sometimes, finding gratitude can be challenging, and you are not alone if you overthink it. Some people find the notion of gratitude overly sentimental or perhaps even a sign of weakness. Others might believe that expressing gratitude puts them in debt. Sometimes, an inability to express gratitude might be an indicator of depression. When I was working with a life coaching client, they had difficulty understanding the concept of gratitude.

Although they recognized the importance of being grateful for their health, it didn't feel genuine to them. However, everything changed when my client realized that it's okay to appreciate the little things, such as sunshine, a stranger's smile, or seeing a hummingbird. They began to seek moments of gratitude in each day and found a more positive outlook on life.

No matter if you express appreciation with ease or if feeling grateful is alien to you, everyone can benefit from a regular gratitude practice. Can you spare a minute each day to reduce the risk of heart disease, improve your relationships, and find more happiness? Of course, you can! Read on to learn an easy way to add gratitude to your day.

A Simple Daily Gratitude Practice

The rose, thorn, and bud exercise is a self-reflection practice that guides you to find positive moments. It only takes a minute each day to complete this gratitude exercise, and the benefits are immediate.

Picture a rose bush with a blooming flower, a thorn on the stem, and a bud ready to emerge the next day. The rose represents a highlight, the thorn is a challenge you overcame, and the bud is something you look forward to.

The Rose.

Your daily gratitude practice begins with the rose. Think about your day, flicking through your memories like a movie, keeping your eye out for glimmers. A glimmer is a micro-moment of joy in your day; these are the moments that lift you up. They can be little things like seeing a butterfly, finding a feather or feeling the warmth of the sunshine. Or they might be more substantial events such as signing a new contract, catching up with a friend, or passing an exam. And, of course, all orders of magnitude in between. Sometimes, choosing from many highlights of your day may be hard. You aren't diminishing moments of joy by choosing one over the other. When you find yourself in this situation, delight in the abundance of the day and allow one memory to represent them all.

Even for the most optimistic person, there will be days you struggle to find a rose. I am a lollipop and unicorn gal, and even as a life coach, I sometimes struggle to find gratitude in my day! This might be because your day was particularly awful or because it was so dull that nothing stands out. Keep digging and scratching around until you see a glimmer in the dirt. You will find it easier to spot the many little shiny moments in your day with practice.

The Thorn

Again, reflecting on the day, think about your challenges and how you overcame them. Maybe you were feeling blue but were able to rally and show up for your clients, or you forgot your lunch at home and decided it was an opportunity to intermittent fast; perhaps you slept in and missed your morning workout but didn't let it ruin your day. Just like your rose, the thorn is going to vary each day. The beauty of this part of the exercise is in how it asks your brain to identify how you were able to turn low points around, training you to see the good in what you might consider bad situations.





The Bud

Cast your mind forward to tomorrow and ask yourself, "What am I looking forward to?". As with the other elements of this practice, there will be times when the answer is clear and times when it eludes you. Remember that just like the rose, your bud can be tiny. Here is a brilliant hack for you; if

you are struggling to find something to look forward to tomorrow, create something! Plan to have a bubble bath, grab a latte, or phone a friend. You are in control of your life, destiny, and happiness, so take action and create a life you look forward to.



You see, your rose, thorn, and bud can come from any aspect of your day. Spending a few minutes each day contemplating them will have an enduring impact. This simple and focused version of a daily gratitude practice helps reprogram your brain to default to the positive. What If I Can't Think of Anything to Be Grateful For? If you find it hard to identify your rose, thorn, and bud, don't worry. The strategy I suggest to my life coaching clients is narrowing down the scope to make it less overwhelming. Start by looking at your basic needs, such as sleep, shelter, food and water. For example, your rose might be having fruit and yoghurt for breakfast. Your thorn is the grocery store not having the ingredients you wanted for dinner, but you adapted and tried cooking something new. Your bud is looking forward to getting into your comfy bed tonight.

Resist the temptation to repeat the same things each day. Doing so diminishes this into a list-writing exercise and removes the benefits. I encourage you to write your rose, thorn, and bud down each day. When you are stuck for

ideas or feeling down, look back through your notes and see real examples of bright moments in your life, your resilience, and the many things you look forward to.

How To Bring Gratitude to Your Day

As a life coach, I am constantly learning from my clients, and I love the variety with which they have each found ways to incorporate the rose, thorn, and bud gratitude practice into their lives:

- **One family takes turns sharing around the dinner table. Although sometimes it can seem a lot with five of them, it gives the whole family an opportunity to celebrate and support each other.**
- **Another client likes to journal after work each evening and enjoys the gentle transition his practice brings from work to rest. He also appreciates the ability to look back and reflect on his thoughts.**
- **I run through the practice silently first thing in the morning before I get out of bed and last thing at night before I go to sleep. Bookending my day with gratitude helps me start my day in a positive mindset and drift off with contentment.**

What If I Miss My Daily Gratitude Practice?

It is completely normal to skip a day, especially when creating a new habit. Don't beat yourself up, and don't let missing a day or even a week be an excuse to quit on yourself. Remember that you are incorporating daily gratitude to make your life better. When you notice you missed your daily gratitude practice, simply do it at the very next opportunity. Stacking your daily gratitude practice with something else you already do is a great way to make the habit stick.

During one of my weekly sessions with my life coach, I shared that I was feeling overwhelmed and down on myself. She asked me insightful questions that led me to realize I hadn't done my daily gratitude practice for almost three weeks. I reimplemented it that day and felt better right away.

A daily gratitude practice doesn't need to be lengthy or complicated. Taking a few moments to reflect on a highlight, a challenge, or what you are looking forward to is an easy, fun, and effective way to bring gratitude's benefits to your life.

Emma Hull is a transformational life coach and founder of Life Untethered Coaching. She teaches you to have unshakeable confidence so you can achieve your audacious dreams. Get ready to meet the version of yourself you've always wanted to be; sign up for her inspirational emails and book your free strategy session at www.lifeuntethered.com.

By Emma Hull



Nurturing Gen Z Talent

The Power of Effective Onboarding in Building Lasting Loyalty

In today's fast-paced work environment, attracting and retaining top talent is more critical than ever. A well-crafted onboarding process is not just a formality; it's a strategic tool that can significantly enhance employee satisfaction and loyalty.

Companies like Imperial Brands have recognised the strategic nature of nurturing new hires right from the start, creating an environment where employees feel valued, supported, and eager to contribute.

Imagine two scenarios: the job offer comes with a text or email from the hiring manager asking for personal details, and the offer letter comes via email for you to print and sign. Then you wait, wait, wait for the references and start date, and finally, you can start, but with no apparent training or nurturing.

Compared with an alternative, a message from the hiring manager congratulating you on your offer and explaining the next steps clearly. An electronic offer letter and email follow-up, constant updates, assignment of a mentor for your first day, and a comprehensive training plan in place before starting.

Which scenario would you choose?

I am sure that many of you would prefer the latter option. It gives you a sense of belonging and acceptance, which is a fundamental human need. This is particularly true for Gen Z.

The Importance of Onboarding for Gen Z

Gen Z is entering the workforce with distinct expectations. Unlike previous generations, they prioritise workplace culture, professional development, and mental well-being over traditional perks. This generation seeks roles where they can grow, feel part of a community, and

make a difference. As a result, the onboarding process plays a pivotal role in shaping their perception of the company and their long-term commitment. Effective onboarding goes beyond basic orientation. It's about immersing new hires in the company's culture, values, and mission. For Gen Z, this means creating a sense of belonging from day one, providing clear career paths, and offering continuous support.

When done right, onboarding attracts top talent and fosters a sense of loyalty that can lead to long-term retention.

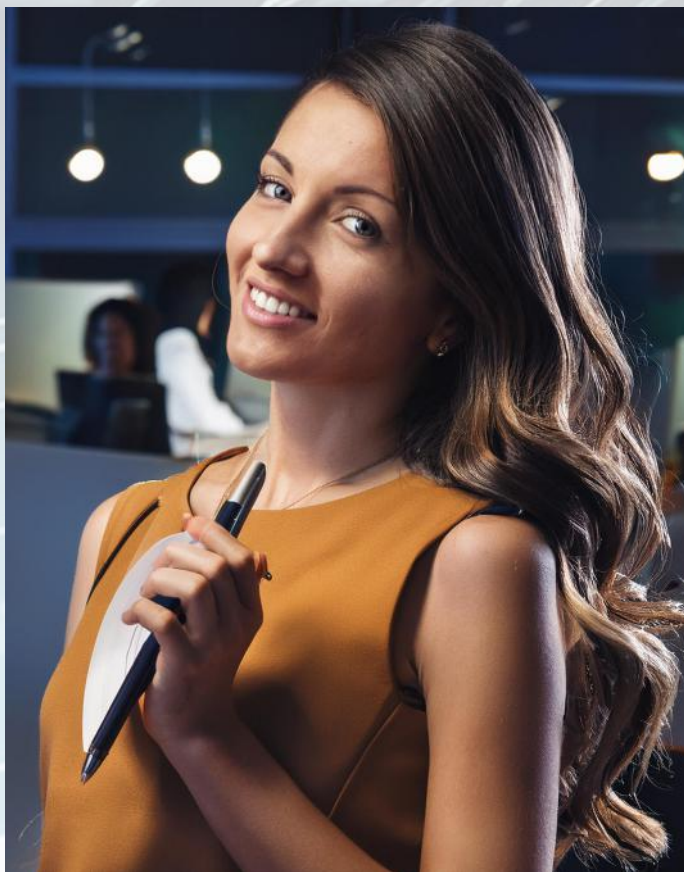
The Key Elements of Successful Onboarding

When companies prioritise a comprehensive and thoughtful onboarding process, they create an environment where new hires feel genuinely cared for and eager to contribute. Here's what effective onboarding looks like:

1. Personalised Introductions: The onboarding process should begin with a warm and personalised welcome. This might include introductory meetings with key team members, a tour of the workplace (or virtual introductions for remote employees), and a thoughtful welcome package that reflects the company's culture. Personal touches show that the company values each individual and is committed to making them feel part of the team.

2. Clear Communication and Expectations: Clear communication is key from the start. New employees should be given a detailed overview of their role, the company's expectations, and how their work contributes to the overall mission. Regular check-ins during the first few weeks and months help reinforce these expectations and allow for open dialogue. This ensures that new hires feel supported and clearly understand their path forward.





The Long-Term Impact of Effective Onboarding

When onboarding is done right, it profoundly impacts employee satisfaction and retention. A well-nurtured Gen Z employee is more likely to feel a strong loyalty to their employer, leading to longer tenures and higher productivity levels. They are not just employees; they become advocates for the company, contributing to a positive workplace culture and driving the organisation's success.

In contrast, a poorly executed onboarding process can leave new hires feeling lost, undervalued, and disconnected. This often leads to higher turnover rates and a lack of engagement, costing the company time and resources.

In conclusion, effective onboarding is a crucial investment in any organisation's future. By creating a welcoming, supportive, and growth-oriented environment, companies can attract top Gen Z talent and build a workforce that is not only skilled but also deeply committed to the company's mission. The benefits of such an approach are clear: higher retention rates, greater job satisfaction, and a team of eager employees to contribute to the organisation's long-term success.

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3. Ongoing Support and Mentorship: Mentorship is one of the most effective ways to integrate Gen Z employees into a company. Pairing new hires with experienced mentors can provide valuable guidance and help them navigate the complexities of their new roles. Mentorship also offers a support system, giving new employees someone to turn to with questions or concerns. This approach accelerates onboarding and builds strong relationships that contribute to job satisfaction and retention.

4. Opportunities for Growth and Development: Gen Z employees are eager to learn and grow. An effective onboarding program should include access to training resources, professional development opportunities, and a clear path for advancement within the company. When new hires see their employer is invested in their growth, they are more likely to remain committed and motivated.

5. Fostering a Sense of Belonging: Beyond the technical aspects of the job, onboarding should focus on helping new employees feel like they are part of a community. This can be achieved through team-building activities, social events, and initiatives that promote inclusivity and diversity. Employees who feel connected to their colleagues and the company's mission are more likely to stay engaged and loyal.

By Penelope Layzell

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Can You Really Make Long-Distance Relationships Go The Distance?

It is said that absence makes the heart grow fonder. It is also said that out of sight is out of mind. But when it comes to long-distance relationships (LDRs), why do some couples thrive despite the distance between them, whereas others struggle?

Communication is essential in relationships, but it is how connected parties are that keeps them together; it is where there is a disconnect that communication breaks down. And by connected, I do not mean only physical connection, as otherwise, in the case of LDRs, they would all fail. I am referring to a deeper emotional connection and a level of mutual respect, trust, commitment and understanding, which is ultimately the glue that holds every relationship together. Or put it this way, it enables couples to navigate obstacles that life throws their way and to maintain a healthy relationship.

If you are in an LDR, think about maintaining regular and meaningful communication, particularly in different time zones. The frequency and quality of communication are important, but the gift of modern technology is that it enables us to remain connected despite the distance.

I have been with her partner for nine months when he told her he had been offered a job overseas and wanted her to join him. But for various reasons, she was anxious about the move. At the same time, she was afraid of saying “no” and jeopardising the relationship. But I encouraged her to address this head-on. Whatever her concerns, she needed to discuss them with her partner and be honest and open about her feelings. His response would give her a clear indication of how he felt about their relationship long-term. They formulated a clear vision for the future they envisaged together and how they would make the relationship work.

Distance can exacerbate insecurities and lead to jealousy, so an LDR is a real test of trust and mutual commitment. If these are issues for you, then consider where they come from. Are they related to your past and something that you are carrying forward from a previous relationship or something that has happened between you to doubt your partner’s commitment? Insecurity and neediness are not appealing and will drive a partner away. In an LDR, high levels of trust are especially critical. Couples who trust each other fully are more likely to successfully



Having realistic expectations is also key. If you meet someone whose work involves extensive travel or long stints away - in the armed forces, for example - and you are aware of that right from the start, you must consider whether this is something you will be able to cope with long-term and how you will both make the relationship work.

If you know that you are someone who cannot manage to be on your own for short, let alone long periods of time, and must have your partner around constantly, then this will not be a workable arrangement for you. Complaining about your partner’s absence when you were aware that this was a factor in the relationship right from the beginning is unrealistic. Open and honest communication by both of you about each other’s feelings and expectations will give you a far better chance of working through any issues that might arise.

You might be in a situation where your relationship becomes an LDR. I recently worked with a client who had

navigate distance challenges. Both parties must be equally committed to making the relationship work, which means consistent effort.

And yes, sometimes it is a lonely existence and missing someone’s physical presence, intimacy, and the simple act of being together can take its toll. Individuals who are emotionally independent and have a strong sense of self are better equipped to handle the challenges of LDRs. They can find happiness and fulfilment within themselves, reducing the pressure on the relationship.

You must enter an LDR with your eyes wide open. LDRs are undeniably challenging, but with the right approach, they can be incredibly rewarding. By understanding and addressing common pitfalls, you can build a resilient and thriving relationship despite the miles between you.

By Celia Conrad

Celia Conrad, your Relationship Guru, is a former family lawyer and relationship expert offering emotional and practical support on dating, thriving relationships, break-up and divorce, personal loss and bereavement.

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Menopause and Tantra

Reawakening Pleasure and Power in the Next Chapter of Life

Menopause is often framed as the beginning of decline—a loss of vitality, sensuality, and connection to pleasure. But what if we saw it differently? What if menopause was actually a gateway to deeper intimacy, self-discovery, and sexual empowerment? Through Tantra and tantric massage, we can reframe menopause as an opportunity to reconnect with our bodies, rediscover pleasure, and step into a new kind of sexual and emotional freedom.

Menopause isn't just a physical change; it's an emotional, energetic, and spiritual shift. Rather than a time to shrink, it's an invitation to embrace our full power. Tantra offers the tools to connect with our bodies, reignite sexual energy, and cultivate pleasure in a holistic way.

Tantra: Reclaiming Sensuality and Energy

Tantra teaches us how to be fully present in our bodies and how to connect deeply to our own energy.

During menopause, as our bodies change, many of us may feel disconnected from our sensuality. Tantra offers ways to reconnect and reignite that sexual energy, allowing us to find new pathways to pleasure.

Menopause invites us to slow down and listen to what our bodies truly need. Instead of seeing these changes as losses, Tantra helps us embrace them as a new chapter of exploration and self-acceptance. It's about being present, finding joy in the process, and learning to celebrate this new phase.

Tantric Massage: A Tool for Healing and Pleasure

Tantric massage is a powerful tool, particularly during menopause, for awakening the body's sexual energy, releasing emotional blockages, and creating deep relaxation. Beyond the physical, tantric massage works on an energetic level, allowing you to reconnect with parts of yourself that may have been neglected during life's busy phases.

For many women, menopause can bring feelings of loss—of youth, sexual vitality, or desirability. Tantric massage reminds us that sexual energy isn't confined to youth. It's a lifelong force, and this practice can help you reconnect with your body in a loving, nurturing way.

The benefits of tantric massage during menopause include:

Reawakening Sexual Energy: Menopause impacts libido, but tantric massage helps stimulate the body's natural flow of energy, reigniting desire and connection to pleasure. Menopause can

stir up old wounds. Tantric massage releases emotional blockages, allowing space for healing and transformation.

Body Acceptance: As the body changes, it's common to struggle with acceptance. Tantric massage helps you reconnect with your body, fostering deep love and gratitude for its beauty and power.

Stress Reduction: The changes and challenges of menopause can be stressful. Tantric massage promotes relaxation and easing tension and anxiety.

Enhanced Intimacy: Whether single or in a relationship, tantric massage can deepen intimacy by encouraging a fuller connection with your body and others.

The Power of Sexual Energy in Menopause

One of the most beautiful aspects of exploring Tantra and tantric massage during menopause is the empowerment it brings.

Menopause doesn't have to mark the end of sexual vitality—it's an opportunity to redefine your relationship with sexual energy. Sexual energy is the energy of life—it fuels creativity, passion, and joy. Tapping into it during menopause can lead to a greater sense of aliveness and fulfillment. This energy isn't just for sexual pleasure; it's the force that makes us feel vital and connected to ourselves. Tantra shows us that this energy is always available, waiting to be reawakened at any stage of life.

Embracing the Next Chapter

Menopause is a time of self-discovery, and Tantra provides the tools to navigate this journey with grace and joy. Exploring these practices helps us embrace our bodies in their current state without judgment. Tantra and tantric massage invite us to celebrate the beauty and pleasure of our bodies, reconnect with our sexual selves, and feel empowered at every stage of life.

This is not a time to shrink; it's a time to expand, to rediscover ourselves, and to step into the fullness of who we are. If menopause has left you feeling disconnected or uncertain, consider this your invitation to explore Tantra and tantric massage. Reawaken your sexual energy, embrace your body, and rediscover the endless possibilities of pleasure, joy, and intimacy.

By Lorraine Crookes





How to start your day less stressed

*Two preschoolers in daycare.
Demanding corporate leadership role.
An immigrant couple living in Canada without the kind of village support that helps you raise your family.*

Most mornings, by the time I was getting my kids out the door to daycare so that right after I could hop on a phone conference while driving to work, I was already irritated and stressed. I was also impatient with my little ones as they were practicing key life skills like putting on coats, hats, and boots.

The only thing that was saving me from a heart attack was my naturally low blood pressure. There's nothing worse than the guilt of a working mom of not being patient enough with her kids, of not spending enough time with them because of work. I could not just simply accept feeling like the worst mother in the world. I was starting to realize that this wasn't the way I wanted to continue living my life. Even though, at first, I had no idea how to change that. I just knew I had to.

Change starts with awareness of the need to change and the lack of acceptance of the status quo. I was ready. As per Buddha, "When the student is ready, the teacher will appear."

One summer, we visited my sister in Germany. One of her books called me out, so I started reading it: "Mindfulness: An Eight-Week Plan for Finding Peace in a Frantic World" by M. Williams and D. Penman.

It took me four months to complete the eight weeks, but it was worth it. Slowly but surely, as I implemented the small things suggested in the book, I changed how I operated every day. Instead of my days having control over me, I took control of them.

It started with my morning. How you start your day carries you through the rest of it. It all started slow and simple, yet within days, I felt the amazing results from the practices I implemented: feelings of calm, patience with my kids and work (no matter what was thrown at me), and a clear mind to make better decisions. This then gave me the motivation to keep growing.

Fast-forward a few years, and I cannot imagine starting a day without my morning practices. Being here, writing this column for you as a business and leadership coach, all started with me picking up a book and deciding to implement one small practice at a time to feel less stressed.

So today, I want to give you three simple ones. They won't take longer than 10 minutes of your time, yet the improvement of how you feel and experience your days will be invaluable.



1) If the first thing you do after waking up is look at your phone or listen to the news, stop. This is the main contributor to your stress, impatience, and irritability. Give yourself 10 minutes without a screen and no news. Most of my clients are astounded by how this one simple shift positively changes how they handle their days.

2) Take four deep breaths. It takes less than 30 seconds. It's called a box breath. You inhale through your nose while counting to four, then hold your breath while counting to four. Next, you exhale through your mouth while counting to four. Hold again while counting to four. Repeat it four times. Even if you stopped here and didn't implement the 3rd practice, your daily stress levels will decrease within a couple of days.

3) After the box breath, add 10 minutes of quiet time. Whether you're sitting with your cup of coffee and being present with it (smell the aroma, enjoy the taste), Or maybe you want to meditate. Because my brain barely stops, I use guided meditations so I can focus on listening to whatever is being said. Or try listening to relaxing music for 10 minutes or prayer. Whatever it is, give yourself 10 minutes of peace and quiet. That time will fill your emotional cup. You will better handle whatever comes your way during the day.



*Those three practices changed my life.
I hope they will help you improve yours.*

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Transformative MUSIC by Sally Arnold

Are there days when a piece of music gets stuck in your head? And you just can't get rid of its beat, rhythm, and sound. It is so intoxicating, perhaps bringing back memories from your past or present. Maybe an outstanding performance, show, or concert that excites and inspires you, similar to meeting up with a good friend that you see irregularly.

This is one of the many ways music affects our lives. When neuroscientists start pulling apart the effect of music on our brains, life gets interesting because the structure and function of music affect the mechanisms of Neuroplasticity, which is the brain's ability to reorganize itself by forming new neural connections. Listening to music, in all styles and forms, is a key factor that reduces anxiety, stress, and day-to-day challenges in our lives. Or, add Music Therapy into the equation with the Medical world, confirming deeply moving results from Patients with Dementia to returning Veterans.

Here is an example that has been seen frequently on Social Media. A former Dancer in a wheelchair appears almost asleep. Then, a track from Swan Lake is played, and her face comes alive. She shows recognition of the music, with her hands and fingers coming to life. She creates beautiful dancer movements that are so different from the stiff, almost lifeless woman in a wheelchair. I watched this video with tears streaming down my face. She is back as a dancer in the Ballet!

The Military uses Music and Songwriting to help veterans reclaim their lives after war injuries, mental and physical. Part of the program asks veterans to write songs with a musician accompanying them. This project aims to help service people voice deep, repressed, traumatized parts of their lives. These psychological blocks are brought out into the open, thus significantly reducing their inner challenges. You can see two very different medical-based situations where music is the conduit to transformation.

Are you curious now to explore how immersing yourself in music powers up your brain and shows brain plasticity at work again? A great way to get going is by listening to more music daily, whether relaxing at home, with your favourite tracks swirling around, or walking the dog during the day. But the best and ultimate immersion is attending a live performance of your choice, which could be Orchestral, Rock, Musical theatre, Ballet, Opera or Jazz. They are all different styles of music, so trust your instincts. During these experiences, there can be an energetic connection between yourself, the performers and the music.

It's similar to being drawn into a beautiful piece of art that beckons you and makes you stop to engage. Music has a pull that reminds us of our inner desires to let go, dance, sing and be happy as if we are on stage performing!

I'd like to introduce a Metaphor that quickly shows Musical transformation. I call it the Superpower of Music. Imagine driving along a familiar highway. Suddenly, the traffic slows to a stop. You can't move and see masses of cars ahead in the same predicament. You turn your head, and to the side, there's a winding road leading off this highway never seen before. Maybe you've been driving on automatic? Anyway, it's time to get off the highway onto this road. And WOW, suddenly, a new vista opens up. One that resembles the story of **"The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe"**. You have opened a locked door that reveals an intoxicating vista.

One of potential, new directions, inspiring scenery, and more. It was time to move off a familiar path in your (Brain/Mindset) and let music open up new neural directions towards inspired solutions and answers to stuck challenges. Many times, a solution appears without much effort. And here is a strong story to elaborate on.

Several years ago, I headed The Australian Ballet Business Team, which was responsible for millions of dollars worth of Sponsorship. CEOs of major companies enjoyed coming along to performances. One day, I was astounded when the CEO of the company, which was the Major Sponsor, said to me in a quiet voice that "he had just solved a massive problem that had been challenging him for weeks. And it happened during a ballet performance". Not in his office, but when he was relaxed and away from the situation.

The solution literally popped into his head! He said he felt relieved, less stressed and a little unsure of "how and why" this had happened; I'd had been a professional Flautist, so I quickly told him that he had joined the club of individuals who use music to transform their lives, challenges especially.

Here's a quick way to experience the Power of Music. Listen to a short piece of your favourite music when you are tired, exhausted, or stressed. No more than 5 minutes. When the music finishes, remember how you felt at the start, so how do you now feel now? Less stressed, peaceful, perhaps?



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The Mirror Effect

Unlocking the Hidden Power of Your Internal Blueprint

The universal law of correspondence which states 'As within, so without', suggests that the world and everything we experience in it is a reflection of us. If we're unhappy with what we see, it's like saying it's the mirror that's the problem – rather than us being reflected in that mirror. This intriguing concept raises a powerful question: How can we use this law to tap into its transformative power?

Understanding Universal Laws

Before delving into how the world is a reflection, it's important to understand universal laws, of which there are many. These laws govern our existence, even though we can't see them. Gravity, for example, is a universal law that everyone understands. We know that what goes up must come down, and we live according to this law - no stepping out of high-rise buildings in the hope we can fly!

Of course, we could attempt to work against the law of gravity and it would probably lead to a painful experience (quite literally). Similarly, working against any universal law, including the law of correspondence, can lead to unnecessary struggles. If we ignore how our inner world shapes our outer experiences, life may feel more difficult than it needs to be.

The Power of Perception

So, what does it mean that the world is a reflection of our inner state? More importantly, how can we use this understanding to our advantage?

The world we experience isn't actually real; rather, it's our perception of reality. Everyone's perception is different, shaped by our beliefs, memories, values, personality, attitudes, and the meanings we attach to external circumstances. Our entire life experience is filtered and interpreted through our unique internal lens, creating a reality that is distinctly our own.

For example, imagine two colleagues receiving the exact same feedback from their boss during a meeting. One sees the feedback as constructive, a sign that their boss recognises their potential and wants to help them grow. This interpretation leaves them feeling motivated.

The other colleague, however, interprets the same feedback as criticism, a sign of their inadequacy, which leaves them feeling defensive and disheartened. The same external event leads to two completely different experiences.

The Boss Is Just a Mirror

So, was the boss supportive or critical? Here's where it gets interesting; the truth is, it has nothing to do with the boss! The boss is simply reflecting to the employees what already exists within them. Every interaction, whether with a boss, a partner, or even a social media post, reveals something about our inner world.

Any emotional response triggered within us, must be present to begin with for us to experience it (as within, so without). Their boss reflects back to each of them what they already believe to be true about themselves.

Resistance and Responsibility

It's natural to resist this idea, especially when it seems like our emotions are caused by someone or something external. You may even question, what if the boss is just not nice and had ill intentions? Even then, how we feel and respond to the situation is more about us than the person who brought it into our awareness.

For instance, if someone is secure in their relationship, a passing comment about their partner being inattentive likely won't bother them. But if the same comment triggers anxiety, defensiveness or any other negative emotion, it may be highlighting an underlying insecurity that already exists. The external comment is merely reflecting a doubt they hold within.

Breaking Free from the Inner Prison

This perspective is powerful because it's constantly showing us where we are blind to our self-imposed limitations. These constraints prevent us from pursuing our dreams and experiencing the life we truly desire.

Imagine your inner constraints as a prison, with the door wide open and a flashing arrow pointing to the exit. Our responses to the outside world reveal what needs healing so we can walk through that door to freedom - freedom from negative thoughts, unhelpful behaviours, and the constant resistance to life as it is, always wishing it were different.





Taking Responsibility for Your Life

This way of looking at life can be uncomfortable. We're often taught to externalise responsibility, to blame others, society, or the world for how we feel about our lives. This approach, while common, gives away our power, making us dependent on others to change so that we can feel good.

It's not your fault if you've been living this way. We become a product of environment and adopting a victim standpoint whereby we have no control over our life is encouraged. However, while it's not your fault, it is your responsibility to change it. Only you have the power to create a life you're passionate about, and the first step in making that change is becoming aware of where you currently stand.

This is where the world as a mirror becomes the most powerful tool available to you, every second of the day.

Keeping an Open Mind

It's important to note that this perspective requires an open mind, and you may find yourself challenged at times. Interestingly, the more something challenges you, the more it's likely bringing a deep-seated issue into your conscious awareness - something ready to be acknowledged and worked through. Resisting it, or blaming others, only keeps you stuck.

Three Steps to Start Using the Mirror

Here are three practical steps to help you start using the world as a mirror for self-discovery and growth:

1. Recognise Your Triggers

Change begins with awareness - you must first know it exists. Many of our triggers operate on autopilot, falling outside our conscious awareness. Whenever you experience a negative emotional response, take a moment to acknowledge what you felt and the thoughts that accompanied it.

2. Turn the Mirror Inwards

Consider what the emotion is showing you about yourself. I invite to get curious about what causes the response you have to events and people, keeping in mind the earlier example - the boss's feedback is a neutral event - it's only the employee's interpretation that gives it meaning.

Ask yourself: What is this experience showing me about myself? What must I believe is true for this to be my experience?

3. Shift Your Perspective

It's common for people to beat themselves up when they become aware of what many would call a shortfall - some way in which they see themselves as inadequate or not enough. This is adding fuel to an already roaring fire. Instead, approach these insights with compassion. Recognise that a limiting belief often stems from fear, hurt, or a desire to avoid pain. Understand that you're always doing the best you can with the resources available to you. With this new awareness, you can make different, more empowering choices.

This journey isn't about striving for perfection. As you grow and evolve, new triggers will emerge. The goal is empowerment - the ability to understand yourself and make changes that support your growth. By recognising the world as a mirror, you can unlock a deeper level of self-awareness and ultimately, create a life that aligns with your true desires.

By Sian Hill

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Why your mind is the most sophisticated virtual reality system ever created—and how to reprogram it.

In an increasingly blended world of virtual technology and reality, these rapid advancements have left some feeling that humans have the potential to lose their grip on reality.

Many concerns range from being mind-controlled to imagining a future in which we may live in a computer-generated fantasy world where it would be difficult to distinguish virtual from real experiences.

What if I told you that, in a sense, we're already there? The truth is, each of us is walking around with our own personal VR headset - our own mind. We've all heard the phrase "Perception is Reality", but how many of us ever step back to fully comprehend what this means for us and our own sense of reality?

Have you ever woken up in the middle of the night (if you're anything like me, it's usually around 3 am!) and been consumed by thoughts stomping through your mind?

Anything from money worries to relationships to problems that you feel can not possibly be solved. These thoughts seem to go on a rampage, so much so we cannot get back to sleep. Yet, when the sun finally comes up, everything seems a little bit better; it's nowhere near as bad as it was in the middle of the night. Reality has not changed. The situation is exactly the same. Our perception of it has changed, and in turn, the way we feel about it has changed.

As a transformational coach, I've guided many individuals through the process of recognizing and adjusting their personal "VR settings." But it wasn't until I faced my own personal crisis that I truly understood the profound implications of this concept.

My wake-up call came in the form of a breakdown. I found myself unable to get out of bed, overwhelmed by tears and a sense of failure. At almost 50 years old, I had achieved everything I thought I wanted

- the successful business, the lifestyle, the outward signs of "making it." Yet here I was, watching my bank account drain away, unable to muster the will to chase success any longer.

In that moment of utter despair, I realized I had been living in a virtual reality of my own making.

My "VR headset" had been programmed with fears, external expectations, and a definition of success that no longer served me. I had built my reality based on what I thought I should be doing, not what I truly wanted.

It was in the depths of this crisis that I heard a whisper from within: "What if this had to happen to show you something BIGGER is waiting for you?" This thought was the first crack in my old perception, the first glimpse of a new reality. On that day, as I finally managed to drag myself to the shower and felt the water flow over me, I felt a sudden lightness. I realized that this breakdown was actually a breakthrough—an opportunity to remove the limiting VR glasses I had been wearing and see the world and myself in a whole new light.

This experience taught me that our perceptions truly create our reality.

I had been so caught up in my fear-based, externally-driven virtual world that I couldn't see the possibilities beyond it. It was time to consciously choose a new perception that I could create from a place of authenticity and purpose rather than fear and expectation.

This personal journey became the foundation of my work as a transformational coach. I now help others recognize their VR headsets, guiding them to adjust their perceptions and create realities aligned with their true selves. It's not about forcing positive thinking or denying challenges but about understanding the power we have to shape our experience of the world.

As I've worked with countless individuals, particularly women in their late 40's and 50s, I've witnessed firsthand how our perceptions shape our reality. Having achieved much outward success, these women often find themselves at a crossroads, realizing that the reality they've constructed doesn't align with their true selves.

At this time of their life, they're taking up the mantle of growth, courageously diving into the dark areas and patterns that have held them back from knowing their true worth.

Melanie came to me struggling with moving forward with her business vision and fearing expressing her vision to the world. Her "VR headset" projected a world where everyone was judging her—that she wasn't good enough, that people would either laugh at her or not take her seriously. This perception caused her to withdraw, reinforcing her beliefs. Through our work together, Alison learned to adjust her "reality settings," gradually seeing this expression as opportunities for connection rather than threats.

The implications of this are profound. If we're creating our own virtual reality, then we have the power to change it. But how?

In my coaching practice, I guide clients through several strategies:

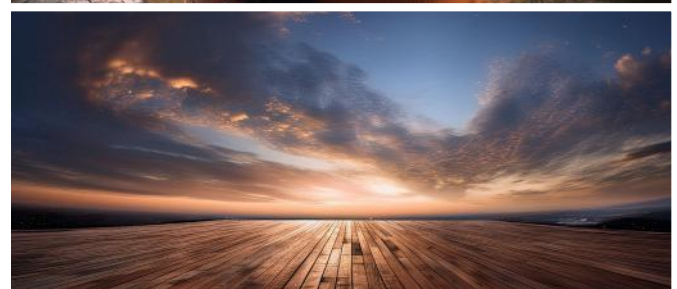
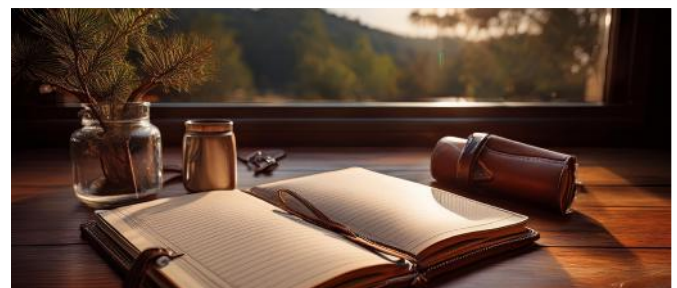
- 1. Intentional Mindfulness Practice:** Regular meditation and silence - with intention - can help you become aware of your thought patterns and how they shape your perceptions.
- 2. Journaling:** Writing down your thoughts and considering them—without judgment—can help you witness how you feel about these thoughts and whether these feelings are being swayed in some way.
- 3. Get Curious:** Stepping back from a situation, imagine you were counselling a friend; what questions would you ask your friend to help them get further clarity on their thoughts and feelings and ask them of yourself?
- 4. Cognitive Reframing:** This involves challenging negative thoughts and consciously choosing more positive interpretations of events. For instance, instead of thinking, "I'm terrible at public speaking," try "Public speaking is a skill I'm working on and enjoying improving."
- 5. Visualization:** Visualizing yourself as the person you want to be and consistently doing the things you want to do helps shift you to that new way of being. Athletes have long used this technique to improve performance, and it can be powerful in other areas of life, too.
- 6. Higher Perspective:** Ask yourself, "What would my highest self think, do, and act when faced with

this circumstance?" This allows you to quickly drop any limiting belief or pattern and broaden your "reality lens."

Personally, a powerful tool I've found is the use of a "higher" mantra or affirmation.

As an example, I write in my journal daily, "Your Vision is BIGGER Than 'YOU.'"

This simple phrase encourages me to look beyond my personal limitations and align my actions with a greater mission. It's a reminder that our perceived reality often constrains us more than actual external circumstances. You might be thinking, "If we create our own reality, why can't I just think myself into a millionaire?" It's important to note that while our perceptions greatly influence our experience, they don't negate external circumstances. However, changing our internal landscape can dramatically alter how we navigate and respond to the external world.





It's crucial to understand that this isn't about forced "positive thinking." We have thousands of thoughts daily, with a significant portion being negative and repetitive. Simply trying to plaster positivity over these ingrained thought patterns often feels disingenuous and ineffective. Instead, the key is to recognize these thoughts, understand them without judgment, and consciously choose how to perceive and respond to our circumstances.

Take Rachel, a business owner who wanted to grow her business but felt like she was hitting a growth ceiling and was constantly stressed, overwhelmed and exhausted. By shifting her perception from "I have too much to do" and "the business is not growing" to "My mission is BIGGER than me, and I am making a significant impact," her experience of work transformed. Not only did she feel more fulfilled, but her performance and relationships improved.

Recognizing that we're the architects of our virtual realities is incredibly empowering.

It means that at any moment, we have the ability to adjust our perception and, consequently, our experience of life. As we enter different seasons of life, our perceptions and the realities we create often shift. Many of us grow up believing that by a certain age, we'll have it all "sorted out." But as I've experienced personally and observed in others, this is often when we begin to question the reality we've constructed. It's not a crisis or breakdown but rather a gradual shift in perspective, moving from "What am I supposed to DO?" to "Who am I?" and "What am I here for?"

This shift can be uncomfortable, as it often requires us to challenge long-held beliefs and perceptions. However, it also opens up a whole new world of creativity and vision. It allows us to create a reality driven by what truly matters to us rather than external expectations or judgments. It's important to remember that this isn't about denying reality or ignoring real problems. It's about understanding that our interpretation of events shapes our experience

of them. By becoming aware of our "VR settings," we can make conscious choices about how we want to perceive and interact with the world.

Here's a simple exercise to start with: The next time you find yourself in a challenging situation, pause and ask yourself, "How else could I interpret this?" For example, if you're stuck in traffic, could you see it as an opportunity to listen to a podcast or enjoy a moment instead of fuming about the delay?

As you contemplate your own "VR settings," remember that your vision is more significant than your current perception of yourself. What reality could you create if you looked beyond your individual story? How might this shift your daily actions, interactions with others, and approach to life's challenges?

In a world where we're often wary of emerging technologies changing our reality, perhaps it's time we embraced the virtual reality we already live in – and learned how to program it for our benefit. Your mind is the most sophisticated virtual reality system in existence. Learn to use it wisely, and watch your world transform.

The next time you see someone wearing a VR headset, smile to yourself.

You know a secret: we're all already living in our own virtual realities. The question is, are you ready to take control of yours?

The power to adjust your lens and create a new reality is always within your grasp. As a transformational coach, my mission is to help you switch and remove those limiting VR glasses and see the world – and yourself – in a whole new light.

By Kirsty Verity

Transformational Business Coach for Mission Driven Women

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Spiritual Leaders — Brave Superheroes of our time

Employee trust forms the foundation for engagement in the workplace and, thus, for better performance and higher productivity. Trust is a valuable commodity – and it is on the decline: Bad experiences in the past, micro-management, a lack of communication, etc., have led to less and less trust in employees in their own company and even in their direct managers. An atmosphere of fear occurs. It drops work ethic, results in quiet quitting, makes people mentally and physically ill and hence skyrockets costs within the company.

Connection – the core of spiritual leadership – can (re) build trust. Therefore, managers truly living this value are the key to motivated, committed, and productive team members who can profitably use their talent, potential, passion, and ambition. Everyone benefits the company with above-average productivity: the leader who becomes indispensable to the company and automatically attracts success and professional recognition, and the team members who feel seen, heard, and understood, a basic human need for well-being. But true connection causes vulnerability and requires courage. That makes spiritual leaders the real superheroes of our time.

For example, since it is about allowing mistakes, dealing with them constructively is not common in our society. Mistakes are often seen as a weakness and a degradation of oneself – although every person, employee, manager, and leader makes mistakes. Admitting wrong decisions, bad behaviour or poor communication is often accompanied by the fear that one's image will be lost. However, the opposite is true: Overcoming this fear and confessing one's shortcomings shows respect for others. It creates trust and a close connection within the whole team.

For example, since it is about showing feelings, many people believe that managers must always show themselves to be strong while giving the team confidence. To put on a good face when confronted with problems – in other words, to maintain the facade despite any adversity. But, not showing yourself as a person with feelings creates distance from those around you. Anyone with the courage to show themselves vulnerability and admit that the current situation is really challenging comes across as authentic. Communicating visions, personal longings or maybe insecurities also make a leader human. People can identify with this; they get committed and are willing to go the extra mile.

For example, since it is about giving employees personal responsibility, The basis for excellence is the joy of doing. It's about trying, playing, and gaining experience. Depriving employees of this behaviour and their ability to act independently will result in a group of people with a "Please advise" mentality. Nobody takes the initiative. Innovations get lost. However, if I, as a team member, am entirely responsible for a project – with all the freedom, decision-making options, and consequences – I can fully identify with it and will do my best to achieve a great result.

A trusting supervisor allows me to exploit my full potential. For every leader, it takes a lot of courage to let team members do the job their own way and embrace that their approach is not always what they would do. Thus, taking risks, letting go, and trusting are challenges for managers. **Braveness is always rewarded** – in that case, through connection, commitment, and productivity in the department.

A German "Job Portal" survey in January 2024 among 3,000 skilled workers showed that a good culture of trust in the company is very important for employees. 71 per cent stated that it is essential, and 28 per cent answered "important". However, only 23 per cent rated their employer's current culture of trust as very good. Even a quarter are dissatisfied – 21 per cent think the situation is not good, and four per cent say it is not good at all. The numbers are similar across Europe – according to Statista, trust in employers in Germany, France, Italy, and the UK is at a comparable level and below the global average.

Spiritual leadership is the treasure that needs to be uncovered – for more connection, trust, and, finally, monetary success. Like every superhero, the leader requires courage. The reward is professional success, work relief, well-being and a team that shows commitment and willingness to perform even in critical times. Let's discover the superhero within you.

By Andrea Huber

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A Comprehensive Guide To Understanding and Managing Stress:

Stress is a common experience in today's fast-paced world, affecting individuals across all walks of life. It's the body's response to any demand or threat, whether real or perceived.

While a certain level of stress can be beneficial, motivating us to perform better, chronic stress can have detrimental effects on our physical and mental health. Understanding stress and learning how to manage it effectively is crucial for maintaining overall well-being.

The Nature of Stress

Stress triggers the body's "fight or flight" response, releasing hormones such as adrenaline and cortisol. This reaction prepares the body to face or flee from danger, leading to physical symptoms like increased heart rate, heightened alertness, and muscle tension. While this response is essential for survival, chronic activation can lead to health issues such as anxiety, depression, heart disease, and a weakened immune system.

Common Sources of Stress

Stress can stem from various sources, including:

- **Work Pressure:** Deadlines, workload, and job insecurity.
- **Financial Concerns:** Managing expenses, debts, and financial planning.
- **Relationships:** Conflicts with family, friends, or partners.
- **Health Issues:** Chronic illness or injury.
- **Life Changes:** Events like moving, changing jobs, or losing a loved one.

Symptoms of Stress

Stress manifests in various ways, including:

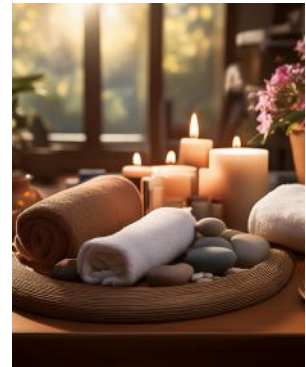
- **Emotional Symptoms:** Anxiety, irritability, depression, and mood swings.
- **Physical Symptoms:** Headaches, fatigue, sleep disturbances, and muscle tension.
- **Cognitive Symptoms:** Difficulty concentrating, forgetfulness, and negative thoughts.
- **Behavioural Symptoms:** Changes in appetite, procrastination, and increased use of alcohol or drugs.

Strategies for Managing Stress

Effective stress management involves a combination of techniques that address both the mind and body. Here are some strategies to help manage stress:

- **Exercise Regularly:** Physical activity can significantly reduce stress levels. Exercise releases endorphins, which are natural mood lifters. Activities like walking, jogging, yoga, and dancing are excellent ways to relieve stress.
- **Healthy Diet:** A balanced diet rich in fruits, vegetables, lean proteins, and whole grains can improve overall health and reduce stress. Avoid excessive caffeine, alcohol, and sugar, which can exacerbate stress.
- **Adequate Sleep:** Quality sleep is essential for stress management. Aim for 7-9 hours of sleep per night. Establish a regular sleep routine, create a comfortable sleep environment, and avoid screens before bedtime.
- **Mindfulness and Meditation:** Practices like meditation, deep breathing exercises and progressive muscle relaxation can help calm the mind and reduce stress. These techniques enhance self-awareness and promote relaxation.

- **Time Management:** Effective time management can prevent the overwhelm that leads to stress. Prioritise tasks, break them into smaller steps and set realistic goals. Use tools like planners or digital apps to stay organised.
- **Social Support:** Building strong relationships with friends, family, and colleagues provides emotional support and can help buffer against stress. Talking about your feelings with someone you trust can provide perspective and relief.
- **Hobbies and Interests:** Engaging in activities you enjoy can be a great stress reliever. Whether reading, gardening, painting, or playing a musical instrument, hobbies provide a mental break and joy.
- **Professional Help:** Sometimes, stress can be overwhelming, and seeking professional help is necessary. Therapists, coaches, counsellors and psychologists can provide strategies and support to manage stress effectively.



Long-Term Strategies for Stress Reduction

In addition to immediate stress relief techniques, adopting long-term strategies can contribute to sustained stress reduction:

- **Develop Resilience:** Building resilience involves developing the ability to cope with adversity. This can be achieved through positive thinking, setting realistic goals, and maintaining a hopeful outlook.
- **Healthy Boundaries:** Learn to say no and set boundaries to avoid taking on too much. This is essential in both personal and professional settings.
- **Self-Care:** Regularly engage in activities that promote self-care and relaxation, such as taking baths, listening to music, or spending time in nature.
- **Continuous Learning:** Equip yourself with stress management techniques through books, workshops, and online resources. Being proactive about learning new ways to handle stress can be empowering.



Stress is an inevitable part of life, but it doesn't have to control you. By understanding the nature of stress and implementing effective management strategies, you can reduce its impact on your life. Regular exercise, a healthy diet, adequate sleep, mindfulness practices, time management, social support, engaging hobbies, and professional help are all valuable tools in your stress management toolkit. Remember, the goal is not to eliminate stress completely but to manage it in a way that enhances your overall well-being and quality of life.

By Beverley Shatliff
Green Tree Holistics



How to feel safe in your body

By Carola Goedeke

One of the most fundamental human needs is the sense of security. To guarantee this essential requirement, it is necessary to comprehend the human body as a complex system and an intelligent natural- network of cohesive biophysical and biochemical components. Especially in a world that is becoming increasingly artificial, it is essential to reconnect with one's natural balanced state as much as possible.

Living safely within its own natural network is inherently about reestablishing equilibrium. It is essential to restore balance at every level, from the smallest particle to the outermost component of the human body.

The following biohacking and self-love strategies are designed to help you cultivate a sense of safety within yourself and your body.

Become an inner networker and alchemist.

1. Protect your cells

Humans respond to their environment on many levels through various senses, ensuring their survival and well-being by enabling them to adapt. Sometimes, the body needs conscious input and support in new environments or stressful situations. Support your body's microcosm on a cellular level by taking electrolytes. Their positive and negative charges allow the body to return to homeostasis easily. To protect your cells from cellular stress, provide your body with antioxidant nutrients such as astaxanthin. It helps your body become more resilient and safer.

2. Stabilize your blood sugar

Blood sugar levels are linked to the adrenal glands, which regulate resilience by producing the appropriate stress hormones and promoting a stable emotional state. Therefore, it is important to maintain stable blood glucose levels for as long as possible. This can be achieved by having a warm porridge in the morning and eating regularly. Avoid sugar, alcohol, and caffeine. Feeling physically balanced contributes to feeling safe.

3. Regulate your nervous system

Your vagus nerve, the data network of your body, runs directly from your brain to the left and right sides through your stomach and into your gut, helping you regulate your nervous system and regeneration. Use meditation to fade out external triggers, such as noises, lights, and other people's energies, before or after going to crowded places. Massage your vagus nerve on your neck's left or right side while turning to the opposite side. This can reduce anxiety and increase resilience to stress, fostering a sense of inner calm and safety.

4. Balance your microbiome and emotions

The microbiome comprises approximately 2-3 kg of gut bacteria, regulates the digestive and immune systems, and is directly linked to the brain. It is recommended to support this inner network component by utilizing lactic acid bacteria. This ensures the production of the happiness hormone serotonin in the small intestine, which plays a pivotal role in regulating mood and behavior. Moreover, you can stabilize your inner network by releasing negative emotions such as anxiety or panic

that occur in certain situations. Find out what is programmed in your subconscious mind and release it through energetic tools and affirmations to let emotional blockages and negative beliefs go.

5. Become the natural network

Before going into a stressful situation, walk barefoot. While doing this, your body, which is made from 70% of water, can be charged with negative electrons. This reduces body inflammation and makes you feel calmer.

Use the natural forest communication network to support your gut and immune system. Inhale macromolecules, bacteria, and fungus spores from the forest or absorb them through the skin. Terpenes are secondary plant substances that also reduce inflammation and natural killer cells. They reduce blood pressure and the release of cortisol, which is crucial for feeling safe in the body.

Get ready for a refreshing dip. Whether you're putting your feet or your whole body in water, in a river or the sea, you're in for a treat. This is a great way to cool down and support your nervous system.

Go outside once a day and exercise your cardiovascular system. Walk 10-15 minutes fast. It will replenish your body with oxygen and make you feel more alive and connected.

Implementing these highly alchemic strategies can help you feel more naturally connected and secure in your body. Remember, going at your own pace and following your inner network needs is key.

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What are the benefits of physical fitness on mental health?

Each year, the middle of May marks Mental Health Awareness Week. Aiming to raise awareness of the many challenges that one in four of us will experience each year, the week aims to open up conversations to address the stigma associated with such conditions. While this should be every week of the year, this year's theme of 'Moving more for our mental health' strongly resonates with us all here at Hussle.

According to the World Health Organisation, just under 1 billion people globally live with a mental disorder on an annual basis. There are a considerable number of factors that can affect and help manage mental wellbeing. When it comes to physical activity, the evidence is unanimous. Exercise, of any form and intensity, can help reduce the risk of suffering from poor mental health and help manage periods of ill health if and when they occur.

Here are just a couple (amongst many) significant statistics that we like to share when communicating the true impact that fitness can have:

On average, an individual has 3.4 poor mental health days per month. Among those who exercise, this number drops by 40%.

Workers who exercise are 46% better at handling stress than those who do not.

As we seek to continually grow Hussle's offering of fitness as an employee benefit, one of the strongest motivations for our work is the valuable impact that exercise can have on employee well-being. We know that we can help them become more resilient to work stresses and financial pressures and better equipped to handle the challenges they face outside of work.

How can exercise help with mental wellbeing?

Firstly, the science. Being active reduces levels of adrenaline and cortisol, the body's essential stress hormones, helping reduce any existing mental distress. Additionally, it triggers the release of endorphins – natural mood elevators that give us a mental 'lift'. Ever heard of 'runners high'? That's our endorphins at work. Beyond the physiological changes that help us feel good, fitness can have a profound psychological impact. Working to achieve our exercise goals isn't easy (so long as we challenge ourselves enough!). When we achieve our targets, it helps build an improved sense of confidence and self-worth.

Exercise also helps improve our sleep quality, which is a crucial contributor to our overall well-being. The factors I've just mentioned help contribute to this, but exercise also helps regulate sleep patterns. The relationship then becomes cyclical. When we sleep well, we are better energised to participate in activities the following day. When we realise it's having a positive impact on our overall well-being, this helps boost our motivation, too. Social connections are also an important factor in our



mental health. Exercise can be a great way to help build social interaction. Whether through team sports, finding a gym partner, or joining a group workout class, it can be a great opportunity to meet like-minded individuals and build lasting, trusted friendships. Many top athletes have spoken openly about how their fitness routines have helped support their mental health. English Cricketer Ben Stokes and heavyweight boxing legend Frank Bruno are noteworthy examples. Both have advocated for the routine that fitness has helped provide them with, offering a reliable and constructive outlet for stress.

What are the best types of exercise for good mental health?

The short answer? All kinds.

However, it's important to choose an activity that you enjoy. While there might be gruelling periods within a particularly high-intensity class or long-distance run, for example, it should still bring you satisfaction and enjoyable moments along the way!

It really could be anything. You don't have to be a fitness fanatic or professional athlete in order to benefit. Outdoor walking or gardening can be really worthwhile. You might also enjoy lifting weights in the gym, a specific class like spinning or circuit training, or swimming. For those looking to start something new, I'd really recommend trying a few different activities and finding out what is best for you. There are countless forms of exercise, sport and physical activity out there. They are all beneficial to long and short-term health, both physical and mental. The most important step? Get started. After that? Keep going! It's not always easy at first, but with time, you'll learn to enjoy it, feel the benefits, and depend on it.

For any business leader, wellbeing specialist, or HR professional looking to support the mental well-being of their staff, Hussle's employee fitness benefits are a fantastic option.

We partner with thousands of amazing fitness facilities, including gyms, pools, spas and online fitness apps. Thanks to our extensive UK coverage, we see uptake levels as high as 25% within the companies who partner with us. We'd love to hear from you as we continue on our mission to elevate employee well-being, one workout at a time!

By Neil Harmsworth

Co-founder and Chief Operating Officer at Hussle

Neil is the co-founder of Hussle, a leading UK fitness marketplace which enables companies to invest in the wellbeing of their employees through highly inclusive, affordable, multi-brand gym access, available in 94% of UK postcode regions.



www.hussle.com/employers

Mapping out an effective personal brand strategy that stands you out



You may have heard before that you are building a personal brand, whether you are doing it consciously or not. And guess what? Your personal brand is like a reputation that precedes you, your business, or your profession. Now, the question is this - are you consciously building a personal brand? If yes, are you building the personal brand that you want? If not, why not?

Personal branding is essential to building a digital presence, whether you are a business owner, a career person, or someone who aspires to be either. It is no longer news that people like to do business with those they know, like, and trust. I also believe there is no personal branding without "impact" or "value." You need to deliver value and make an impact.



In my line of business, intentionality is critical to building a lasting brand. If you want your brand to stick, garner the right attention, and build a loyal audience, then you need to be strategic in building your personal brand.

Do you have a personal brand strategy? A personal brand strategy is essential to building an effective personal brand. As a personal brand strategist, here are some things I would have you include in your strategy.



● **About:** What is your brand about? What value do you want to add to the lives of others? Why should people pay attention to what you have to say?

These are some of the things you need to include in the About section of your personal brand strategy. The About section forms the basis of the direction of your personal brand.

● **Brand purpose:** Your brand purpose is the aim of your personal brand. In this section, the following are some of the questions you need to ask yourself. What do you hope to achieve with your brand? What is the overall goal of your personal brand? You need always to keep your purpose in mind so your personal brand is not derailed.

● **Brand goals:** Here, what you need to do is break down your brand purpose into actionable goals that are SMART - Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Time-bound. SMART goals are essential to the success of every personal brand as they give you clear directions as to what to measure, how, and when to measure it.

● **Vision:** The vision for your personal brand is where you see yourself as a personal brand. For instance, where do you see your personal brand five years, ten years, or even 20 years from now? You must have a clear picture of how you envision your brand and the impact that it would make.

● **Mission:** Your mission is how you see yourself achieving your vision. It is the things you see yourself doing to achieve your vision.

● **Brand positioning:** When people think about your personal brand, what do you want them to think about? What thoughts, perceptions, and opinions do you want them to form about it? Your brand positioning is critical to building a strategic personal brand.

● **Brand message:** Your brand message is what you want your audience to know. It is woven into your content and consistently highlighted when people interact with it across different channels. Your personal brand needs to have an overall brand message.

● **Content strategy:** Your personal brand needs a content strategy that harmonises the above points. Your content needs to reflect the key things your brand is about; otherwise, there will be dissonance in your brand. You need to have a plan and roadmap for your content.

● **Promotional/visibility strategy:** It is not enough to post great content; you need to plan how people can find the great content you produce and how more people can find out about your brand.

● **Consistency mechanisms:** You need to plan how you want to enable and ensure consistency. Consistency is how you get your message out there. Your ideal audience may not remember your brand message if you are not consistent.

● **Offers:** Whether you intend to do it now or later, you need to start thinking about the kind of free or paid offers you want to provide your audience. It could be consultations, digital products, physical products, training, etc.



By Ayishat Olanrewaju

Do you want to learn more about building a viable personal brand?
Visit brandingwithayishat.com
or book a personal brand consultation with me today at calendly.com/ayishatolanrewaju.

Your Signature Style

Imagine walking into a room and immediately capturing attention without having to say a single word. Well...your outfit speaks volumes, reflecting not just your fashion sense but your essence, values, and confidence. This is the power of a signature style—a distinctive, personal look that sets you apart from the crowd and helps to tell the world who you are.

However, a signature style is more than just a collection of clothes; it's a curated expression of your individuality. It's the unique blend of pieces, colours, and accessories that consistently make you feel like the best version of yourself. Whether it's the timeless elegance of Audrey Hepburn or the minimalist uniform of Steve Jobs, a well-defined signature style can become your personal brand, effortlessly conveying your identity to others in both business and your personal life.

In an era where personal branding is becoming more important, having a signature style helps create a consistent and memorable image. Whether you're a professional aiming to make a lasting impression or an influencer building your online presence, a distinctive look sets you apart and reinforces your identity. It acts as a visual shorthand that people associate with you, enhancing your recognition and, in turn, your influence. Throughout history, certain individuals have become synonymous with their signature styles, leaving an indelible mark on the world of fashion and beyond. These iconic figures have demonstrated the power of both a consistent and recognisable look:

Known for her timeless elegance, Audrey Hepburn's signature style included little black dresses, tailored trousers, ballet flats, and a chic pixie haircut. Her sophisticated yet understated fashion choices embodied grace and simplicity, making her an enduring fashion icon. Steve Jobs, the co-founder of Apple, embraced a minimalist approach to his wardrobe. He famously wore black turtlenecks, blue jeans, and New Balance sneakers. This uniform not only simplified his daily routine but also became an integral part of his personal brand, symbolising innovation and focus.

Tailored suits, pillbox hats, oversized sunglasses, and pearls characterised Jackie O's signature style. Her impeccable fashion sense and polished look made her an American icon of elegance and sophistication. Renowned for his eclectic and ever-evolving style, David Bowie, like many in the music industry, used fashion as a form of artistic expression. From his Ziggy Stardust persona to his sleek Thin White Duke phase, Bowie's bold and unconventional choices challenged norms and influenced generations of musicians and fashion enthusiasts. These examples highlight how a signature style can transcend fashion to become a powerful tool for personal branding and cultural influence.

Your Signature Style

So here are a few practical steps for discovering your own signature style, building a wardrobe that reflects it, and maintaining your look over time.

Analysing Your Wardrobe

The first step is to take a close look at your existing wardrobe. Lay out your clothes and assess them for common themes. Notice which pieces you reach for the most and which ones make you feel confident and comfortable. Pay attention to recurring colours, fabrics, and styles. Are you drawn to neutral tones or bold hues? Do you prefer structured garments or relaxed fits?

Creating a Fashion Mood

A fashion mood board is an excellent way to visualise your style preferences. Gather images from magazines, Pinterest, or other online resources that reflect outfits, accessories, and colours you love. Pin or cut out these images and arrange them on a board. This visual representation will help you identify patterns and preferences, providing a clearer picture of your ideal style.



Assessing Your Lifestyle and Daily Needs

Your lifestyle plays a significant role in shaping your signature style. Consider your daily routine and the environments you frequent. Do you work in a formal office setting, a casual workspace, or from home? Are you often in meetings, on the go, attending social events, or engaging in outdoor activities? Understanding your lifestyle needs will help you create a wardrobe that is both practical and stylish.

Balancing Practicality with Personal Taste:

Strive to find a balance between practicality and personal taste. If you love wearing high heels but spend a lot of time walking, look for stylish yet comfortable footwear options. If you adore elegant dresses but have a casual lifestyle, find ways to dress them down for everyday wear. Ensuring your wardrobe fits your lifestyle guarantees that you feel both authentic and comfortable in your clothes whilst obviously looking great!

Blending Influences

Don't be afraid to blend influences to create a style that is uniquely yours. Combining elements from various sources can lead to a rich and diverse wardrobe that reflects multiple facets of your personality. For example, you might mix the elegance of Audrey Hepburn with the modern edge of street style to form your distinctive look.

Colours And Personality

Selecting a cohesive colour palette is essential for creating a signature style. Choose colours that complement your skin tone and make you feel great! Neutrals form a versatile base, while accent colours add personality and vibrancy. Start with a few neutral base colours like black, white, navy, or beige. Then, add a couple of accent colours that reflect your personality—perhaps a bold red, a calming blue, or a playful pink. This palette will ensure your wardrobe feels cohesive and harmonious and show off your personality.

Key Style Elements

Establishing key style elements involves identifying and incorporating specific pieces that consistently define your look and resonate with your personal taste. Begin by reflecting on the types of clothing and accessories that you naturally gravitate toward. Consider the silhouettes, fabrics, and overall aesthetics that make you feel most comfortable and confident. For instance, if you find yourself drawn to tailored blazers, high-waisted trousers, and structured handbags, these items could form the core of your signature style. Identifying these elements requires a balance between introspection and exploration, ensuring that the pieces you choose authentically represent your personality.

Next, focus on building a cohesive wardrobe around these key elements. Start with versatile, high-quality basics that can be easily mixed and matched to create a variety of outfits. These might include a classic white shirt, a well-fitted pair of jeans, a little black dress, and neutral sweaters. These foundational pieces should align with your key style elements and serve as the canvas for more personalised touches. By having a solid base, you can effortlessly integrate statement pieces that showcase your unique style, such as bold jewellery, patterned scarves, or vibrant shoes. This approach ensures that your wardrobe remains versatile and adaptable to different occasions while maintaining a consistent aesthetic.

Incorporating key style elements also involves understanding how to adapt and evolve your look over time. As trends change and your personal preferences shift, staying true to your core style while embracing new influences is important. For example, if your key style element is minimalist fashion, you might update your look by incorporating modern, sleek accessories or experimenting with contemporary cuts and fabrics. This evolution allows you to stay current and express your individuality in new ways. Regularly revisiting and refining your key style elements ensures that your wardrobe continues to reflect your personal growth and remains an authentic representation of who you are.

In conclusion, finding and embracing your signature style is a journey of self-discovery and expression. It's about celebrating the quirks, the bold choices, and the subtle nuances that set you apart. Your wardrobe should be a testament to your individuality, a visual representation of your experiences and personality. By confidently wearing each outfit, you showcase your creativity and reflect on your personal journey and growth. Remember, true style is not about adhering to fleeting trends but about staying true to yourself and letting your authenticity shine through. So, step out with pride, embrace your unique style, and let the world see the remarkable person you are!

**By Angela Haynes-Ranger
Style Coach**

Angela is a Style Coach, No.1 International Bestselling Co-Author, Speaker & Award Winning Mentor. She is passionate about helping women elevate their style and to feel both confident and empowered. Connecting women to a feeling of confidence, whilst celebrating their individuality, has enabled her to share her expertise both as a speaker and a mentor, supporting women to look good and feel great whilst living their best lives.



Part 4

THE GLORIOUS RESPONSIBILITY OF HAPPINESS

Many of us around the world have been impacted by cancer. My own experience with this devastating disease has spanned decades.

At 16, after losing my mother and grandmother to breast cancer, the weight of the world crashed down on me. It was a devastating blow that left me grappling with grief and fear. Many years later, at age 45, I was also diagnosed with breast cancer, then a second time, aged 50, with Stage 4 breast cancer.

Little did I know that nine years ago, as I was in the midst of treatment, it would be the beginning of an adventure that would teach me the profound responsibility of happiness.

My feelings around such experiences may be difficult for many people to understand. I am grateful for cancer. However, I didn't come to feel that way overnight; it was a process. The loss of my mother and grandmother left a void in me filled with dread and sadness. As a teenager, I felt overwhelmed by emotions I couldn't fully understand. Their deaths lingered in my days, with an overshadowing darkness.

Throughout my life, I always lived with the fear that I, too, may one day fall victim to disease. Learning that because of my family history, I had a 50% increased risk of developing cancer myself, I lived the constant paradox of reckless abandon for my wellbeing, but also terror that I may die young.

After being affected by such immense trauma, by the time I reached my mid-30s, I was at an emotional breaking point. Unhappy in a toxic marriage and trying to cope with raising three children while working full-time, I resigned myself to the belief I didn't deserve to feel happy. One morning, I remember standing in my walk-in robe and saying to myself, "You're ok; you can pretend. This is as good as it gets."

Several years later, after drawing on my deepest strength and resilience, I sought help. I went through therapy and worked with a healer for years before finding the courage to leave my husband. After a terrorising twelve months of separation and divorce, I was finally free to be myself. My motivation became to protect the wellbeing of my children, and even though I was still wrestling with my inner critic and self-doubt, my purpose was survival.

One morning, after showering, I looked in the mirror. With my dripping wet hair falling around my shoulders, I stared at myself. At that moment, I met the hidden parts of me and cried. I felt ill. In my darkest moment, I was afraid of my vulnerability and hadn't yet realised it was my greatest strength. As I continued my steps through healing, I slowly rebuilt my confidence. I still felt a deep sadness for my mother but accepted the sense of loss as my expected normal.

Two years later, I met a wonderful man who became my second husband. We became a blended family with six children, and although we weren't without our challenges, I felt a level of happiness within the relationship I had not experienced before. He was the man of my dreams, and I couldn't believe how lucky I was to have met him.

After four years together, we married. We enjoyed a beautiful ceremony on a grassy hill with a view. I wore a glamorous crystal-adorned gown with bare feet. The girls wore pretty dresses, and the boys wore shorts and straw hats. It was a joyous celebration with our extended families and closest friends, followed by an adventurous honeymoon on a cruise around Asia, ending in Singapore for several nights.

After the distraction of the wedding ended and I returned to work from extended leave, I felt somewhat dissatisfied. I was no longer enjoying my job after many years, and the reality of life as a blended family was consumed with school lunches, sports, music lessons, homework, and endless cooking. Preparing meals for eight people every day became a chore. Each night I arrived home from work, I threw my bags down and rushed around the house to throw another load of washing on and prepare dinner and lunches for the next day.





One morning, as I pulled into the parking lot at my job, I turned off my car, threw my hands in the air, and shouted, "I've had enough. There must be something more. Give it all to me; I'm ready." I didn't care who heard as I bellowed it loudly to whatever greater force might be listening. I stomped into my office and said to my colleague, "Well, here we are again, the rat on the wheel!"

It was supposed to be the happiest time of my life, but the sparkle was quickly wearing off, and I was back to my old feelings of disappointment and internal criticism. Six months after the wedding, I realised I had neglected my yearly breast health checks. I commenced these at the age of 31 due to my family history, and they involved a mammogram and an ultrasound to check my dense tissue. My mind was nagging me to hurry up and make an appointment.

The day before I was due for the mammogram, I thought to myself I should examine my breasts. I had become quite relaxed with the frequency of my self-checks. To my shock, I discovered a large lump under my left nipple. I had no idea how long it had been there. Sure enough, I received the dreaded phone call after my initial tests. "We've found a significant lump, and you need a full screening." The terror rose in my throat. When my husband drove me to the clinic to collect the report, I mistakenly opened the envelope. All I saw was the word malignant circled in red pen.

It would take me an essay to truly honour the story of all the events in those first few weeks, how immense the fear was, and how horrendous it was to tell our children and families the news. My children's first question was, "Are you going to die?" Heck, my first question was the same! Although difficult to explain, something interesting happened the day after diagnosis.

As I walked along the beach the next morning, I felt a profound sense of peace. Somehow, I experienced a deep knowing in my heart that everything would be ok. I smiled and said to my husband, "This is bigger than me. This all means something. I don't know what, but I just know it does."

Losing my breast was hard, chemo was hard, radiotherapy was hard, and eight surgeries from mastectomy to completing breast reconstruction were hard. But in the middle of it all, my connection to gratitude began for the first time in my life. I was finally free of my greatest fear. I wondered my whole life if I would go through breast cancer, and it happened. What a relief it was to finally let it go. I made the decision to take responsibility for my healing.

Through therapy, working with mentors, and exploring a new interest in mindset growth, I discovered that I could give myself permission to release the trauma. I learned how my negative emotions held my happiness to ransom and that it was possible to change my thoughts and feelings. I also discovered information about epigenetics and the effect of our emotions on how our DNA is expressed.

From all the research and information I studied, I experienced the light bulb moment of understanding that I had chosen to do the majority of life the hard way. I embraced meditation and grounding practices and walked along the beach every day. I stopped rushing and allowed myself to be vulnerable. I learned to be still and embrace silence.

I softened, became more present, and woke up feeling joyful and peaceful each day. Even in the continuing challenges of being a full-time patient and life admin, each day was tipping the scales towards good vibes rather than devastation. I needed to check in with myself. Was I in denial or avoiding my emotions? Toxic positivity was regularly talked about in therapy circles, and I was also learning about what it meant to become a "super survivor" when people who have recovered from a serious condition or illness take on an I'm-invincible-and-I'm-gonna-change-the-world feeling.

It became apparent to me and many others that I was transforming. The truth was cancer gifted me the opportunity to heal and change my life. I developed a burning desire to teach others. I knew others needed to know how to give themselves permission to heal and change their lives, and my purpose was born. I studied formally at university, started writing a blog, created a private Facebook community that grew to over 1,000 members, and started my therapy and coaching business. Since 2017, I have been working with women all around the world.

In April 2021, several months after turning 50, things changed again. I was experiencing pain in my left hip that wasn't improving. Walking, laying on the lounge, and rolling over in bed became excruciating. My doctors acted swiftly as I once again plummeted into the chaos of appointments, scans, and scary conversations. It was confirmed that the breast cancer had metastasised in my body, showing up in my hip. The tumour caused a fracture, hence the pain. Thankfully, that spot in my hip was the only cancer that presented. Hearing the words



Stage Four was terrifying, and telling our children and families again was heartbreaking. The blessing was knowing that treatment options would give me a wonderful chance at reducing the cancer tumour and hopefully preventing further metastasis.

After a seven-day course of radiation and targeted therapy (low-level chemotherapy medication), the cancer has not spread further. My life has carried on how it was before, mostly, other than various side effects from the medication that is part of my daily management plan. There is much to be joyful about.

As I continued healing and holistic practices, I also embraced fun activities. One Sunday morning, I attended an art class run by a previous client. Before we started the class, my client took us through a meditation. While in that altered state, the idea of writing a book came through. It was a detailed inspiration for how to write the book, which needed to be a simple, uncomplicated reminder to work on our mindset to create happiness.

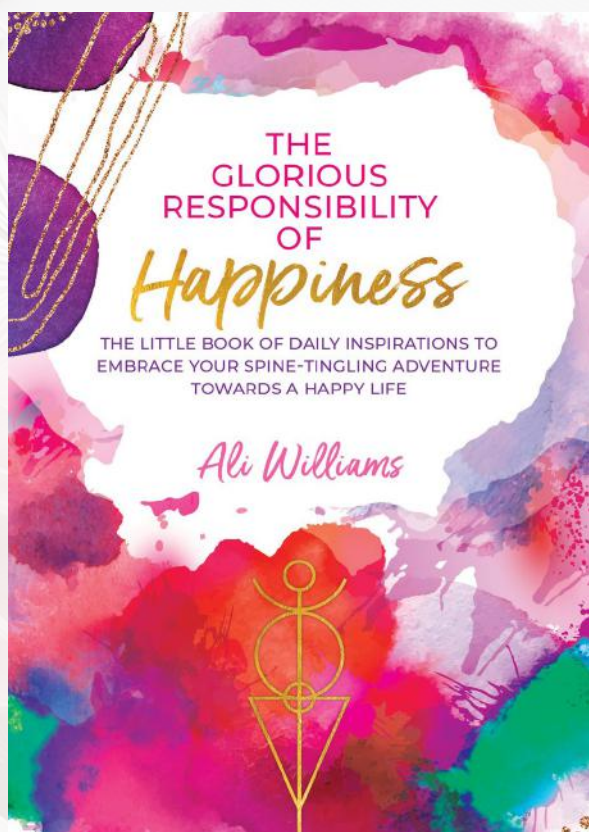
And so, *The Glorious Responsibility of Happiness* was created. It is a book that everyone should read and keep next to the bed. Open a different page each day to read a message of inspiration. It is an invitation to consider your perspective. My life is no longer defined by fear or sadness but by my choices to create happiness. This can be true for others as well. Cancer taught me to believe that regardless of the circumstances, there is always a chance to seek out joy.

You may not realise it yet, but you absolutely have the power within yourself to create whatever life you want. Joy, peace, love, success, health, and happiness can become your everyday experience. Owning who you are right now and creating change is glorious. Glorious because of the richness of life's experiences that will take you to the next level. Glorious because of the depths of understanding you will reach about yourself and your world.

Glorious because of the wonder you will embrace when waking each day to the excitement of possibilities that await. Glorious because of the soul-filling connections you will create with other powerful humans who love you for all you are. And, glorious because of the knowing you've attracted it all after you made the decision to take back control of your life. Oh, how glorious is such a responsibility when you transform your pain into a life of happiness." Page 10.

What have you experienced in your life that may be holding your happiness to ransom? Take this as your sign that you can begin the healing work to live your life of joy and contentment. As a therapist and Reiki Master, I witness the truth of what's possible every day. You only need to be willing to start; the rest will fall into place.

By Ali Williams





Be the CEO of Your Career

Taking Charge of Your Professional Destiny

Exactly, you have read it. You are the only person who is responsible for their career. It might be your manager to a certain extent, but the main accountable person is you and only you.

With that in mind, you are your own CEO.

You can say:
Chief Executive Officer
Chief Emotional Officer
Chief Empowerment Officer
Chief Energy Officer

How you want to call yourself, or all, is up to you. And as the CEO of your brand, you need to take ownership.

But how shall we take accountability? What are the most essential ingredients?

Create your career strategy. What is your vision? Where do you see yourself in 3 or 5 years from now? Having a vision board helps you visualize your professional future self.

Once you have the vision set in your eyes—and don't get me wrong, it can change as well—you need to start with something so your ship will have a destiny that you can drive towards and overcome obstacles.

Now that you have your vision, it's time to create your goals to achieve them.

Each little step counts. Create your goals and action plan according to your circumstances and availability. If you put too much pressure on yourself, you will not even start, as it will be seen as overwhelming.

So, **"SMART"** goals are the essence.
Or **SMART-ER.**

I added an "E" and an "R" at the end, which stands for:

E- Exciting
R-Rewarding

In essence, the goal you set for yourself should excite you and make you happy even just thinking about achieving it. The feeling of "Rewarding" on any step you take is equally important.

And celebrate each step and be proud of yourself. I have a saying: Work Smart and not hard. What do I mean by that? Participate in any meetings, offsite meetings, or town halls. Keep your eyes and ears open about what is going on in the organization.

Take advantage of any workshops or courses that your organization offers. Moreover, invest in yourself by learning something to help you achieve your career goal. It can be to reach out to a coach, have a mentor, or any webinars.

With that, create your own Board of Directors. A CEO does not work alone. You shall make a list of people inside and outside your organization who can support you and sponsor you. In return, you can offer them your own experience or volunteer in a project.



Expand your network by having coffee or going out for lunch with someone who might be interested in your career. Take accountability for your failures and successes. Be honest and authentic. Leaders and employees love humans who walk the talk.

Articulate your successes objectively. I call this "Guilt-Free Promotion" and use a framework called "STAR." The exact definition and instructions for using it are in my accredited workbook "Drive & Thrive Your Career" and my book "Break Free from Your Hamster Wheel."

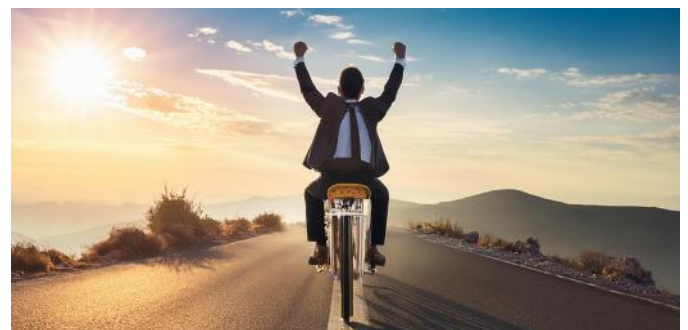
Life changes drastically, specifically now, with AI in play. To learn, you must be flexible, agile, and curious and embrace the changes to be at the forefront.

Finally, online presence. Review your LinkedIn profile. Your tagline needs to be interesting, explaining what you do and what you bring to the table with the keywords important in your profession or the profession you want to do. You have 220 characters that you can explain yourself. Don't leave only the title; that does not give much information about you.

Act, do it, and whatever it is, do it.

Try fast, fail fast, learn fast.

Enjoy the ride to the top. You are the CEO of your career



by Hulya Kurt
www.innkick.com





The one I call Papa

The loss of my parent has been a particular sort of experience for me. We believe there should be a natural sort of order to death based on age. But the truth is, no one escapes it nor consciously determines when it arrives.

This year, my father exited this earthly plane. If you'll indulge me, I'd like to share some things about the man I called Papa.

My father and I were not close in terms of what a traditional family looks like, but there was always an unspoken and knowing undercurrent of vast love between us that spanned beyond time and space. He was the oak tree that stood mighty and grounded. My childhood was extremely challenging, and I wanted to fly away much of the time, but he kept me tethered to this world. His roots were deep and strong enough to support us both, and I could not help but deeply feel who he was in my life.

I could see all his qualities so clearly because he was so consistent. He valued doing things, even the smallest of them, with care and attention. He would labor for days, weeks or even months on projects, whatever it took. He ensured they were completed "the right way" so they would withstand the test of time. He lived his life as that of a craftsman.



He showed uncharacteristic integrity, which meant he did what he said and never needed to say what he did. In this way, he could show up for others with what I will refer to as a 'light touch'. He



allowed space for people to be who they were while supporting and offering an elevated expression of what was possible.

He faced death with courage, even with fear being ever-present. His was a painful and difficult death. About six months before he passed, he shared with me all the things he did not want to experience. And in hindsight, I now realize it was all a premonition of exactly what he experienced. But he orchestrated the perfect circumstance to support his facing of all the things he was afraid to, and in true fashion, he did it with humility and grace. This is probably what I admired most, and this became the last lesson he imparted to me.

Now I know that we usually share all the wonderful things about a person when they pass, and even so, what I shared is not one iota of who he was. That being said, my father was not a saint. As a matter of fact, he had some characteristics that were very 'unsaintly'. And isn't this part of the true beauty that makes us all who we are? I love and honor all of him, I'm proud to call him my Papa.

What comprises each of us is so complex. And yet, we all experience fear. In every single second, we are all bringing both light and shadow with every breath we take. And in so doing, we are creating the opportunity for all the dark areas to be exposed to the light. This is a death of sorts, when something that lived in the dark is exposed to the light, it can no longer function as it did. And death is what we are really all afraid of. But what may not always be realized is that there are many layers to this fear, and



this fear of death does not only apply to physical death.

At the personality level, there is our outer fear; this is the prime fear pattern you are here to traverse. This personality-level fear then grows to include collective fears, such as the fear of change. But at the very deepest level, at the very precipice of consciousness, lie the most ancient of human fears. These stem from one prime source—the fear that there is no underlying order to the universe. This is, in fact, a very normal state of consciousness for the mass of humanity.

The fact of death leads directly to the question of the purpose of an individual's life. Life is about transformation, and death is the symbolic movement from one stage of consciousness to another. When death is faced, it is a symbolic letting go of your hard-earned knowledge. It is the ultimate purification in which you meet your own end and are reborn in a higher plane. In the transformative sense, death is available to each of us in every moment and takes tremendous courage.

When confronted, this transformational death gives you an edge in life – putting you under pressure to find your life's purpose and take the risk of following your dreams. The amount of life you feel is directly proportionate to your willingness to face the fears that appear to 'threaten your dreams'. And the truth is that fear never really threatens your dreams; only your mind sees it that way. When you are entrenched in the dialogue of your mind, and let's face it...most of us are, then you will fail to see the true nature of your fear.

To live in the continual acceptance of death means to live in the continual thread of the unexpected. Your mind would have you believe that your life's purpose lies in the future rather than in the here and now, but that simply is not true.

You must look deeply into your fears now in order to find your purpose because your purpose actually lies within your fears. This is why, in many mystical



traditions, it is said that you must die before you can live.

Survival has given us a powerful purpose. In The West, fear for our survival has been greatly diminished. Because of this, fear has shifted to the fear of purposelessness. Now, instead of individuals being afraid to die, we are more afraid to really live. The fear of not finding your purpose is still really dressed up as the fear of death.

Most individuals do not even want to consider whether they are fulfilling their true purpose, as it is a deep-seated and prominent fear. Instead, we choose to compromise and just fall in line with the belief that we are trapped by the system – by money, by responsibilities, by government.

People are afraid to appear selfish and follow their dreams, even though those dreams will be of far greater service to the planet than anything else they do.

No one can take your fears from you. Others can only help illuminate those fears so that they can be accepted. Wholeness comes about as all your deepest fears are embraced. Only once you are able to see those fears for what they are – yourself holding you back from your own potential – can you begin to see how to live so entirely within the present moment that death cannot exist.

When you can make a conscious choice, with awareness, to continually surrender yourself to your deepest fears, and in doing so, dying, then you can begin to realize that your true purpose is to live as an ultimate creation of the creator, co-creating creation itself.

By Angie Grimes

Quantum Architect
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The Importance of Intensity in the Workplace

Lessons from Elite Sport and Adventure

In today's high-performance environments, both in the boardroom and on the playing field, the notion of intensity plays a pivotal role. Intensity is not about endless effort but strategic bursts of focus, energy, and drive to achieve excellence. To understand the actual value of intensity, we can look at two domains where it's not just encouraged but essential: elite sports and high-altitude adventure.

When you think about top athletes and adventurers, you don't picture them grinding away endlessly without rest. Instead, what sets them apart is their ability to give everything they've got during critical moments, then recover and return stronger. The same principle applies in the workplace. Sustained success is not about constantly operating at 100% but about harnessing focused intensity during critical tasks and knowing when to pull back to regroup and recharge.

Elite Sport: Focused Intensity Over Sustained Effort

I remember when, as a young sixteen-year-old professional athlete, our strength and conditioning coach, who was a bit 'old skool' in his approach, to say the least, told us that we wouldn't stop running until someone was sick. In his mind, I guess it was to demonstrate that we had physically given our all. In reality, professional rugby was in its infancy, and the knowledge and science behind achieving elite performance was derived from the amateur era, where those teams that could train together more consistently could reap the visible benefits.

We quickly learned that elite athletes train to achieve peak performance and don't do it by constantly running themselves into the ground. For example, a rugby player in a game will only spend a fraction of their time actively engaged in a high-intensity sprint or tackle. The rest of their energy is spent positioning, assessing, and preparing for the next big moment. Their training mimics this, with carefully timed bursts of maximum effort followed by recovery. This concept—known as interval training—is widely used across sports.

Interval training allows athletes to push their physical limits in short bursts while building the capacity to recover and go again. The same principle applies in the workplace. Imagine a high-pressure project that demands your best creative and strategic thinking. By focusing intensely for a few hours or even a full day, you can often achieve more than you would by dragging the task out over several low-energy days. But this only works if you build in recovery periods



to prevent burnout and consistently preserve your ability to perform at a high level.

Let's take rugby as a specific example. A typical training session might include 30-second all-out sprints followed by a minute or two of low-intensity movement or rest. These bursts of intensity simulate the moments in a match when an athlete needs to give their absolute best—think of a sprint to score a try or a powerful tackle in defence. However, the key to this method is the structured rest periods, which allow players to go full tilt during the sprints.

In the same way, an effective work environment encourages intense focus on critical tasks for short periods. A marketing team, for example, might pour all their energy into a product launch, then take time to evaluate the results and recalibrate their strategy. Trying to sustain that intensity indefinitely would lead to exhaustion and errors, but in short, focused bursts, it leads to breakthroughs.

Adventure and High Altitudes: The Power of Returning to Base Camp

Adventurers, especially those climbing mountains or exploring extreme environments, understand the power of retreating to base camp. Whether summiting Mount Everest or navigating uncharted

territory, climbers don't simply push forward endlessly. Instead, they ascend in stages, returning to base camp to rest, recover, and adapt to the altitude before going higher.

I liken this approach to the air being thin at the peak of a mountain, so we are not meant to be, or indeed, able to stay there for long periods. This rhythm of intense effort followed by deliberate recovery is what makes success at extreme altitudes possible. Without these moments of retreat, climbers would quickly burn out, and their bodies would fail to acclimatise to the increasingly harsh conditions. But by stepping back, they can go further and higher than they would otherwise.

Base camp is the metaphor for recovery time in the workplace—whether taking a break from a high-stress project, setting aside time for reflection, or simply stepping away to recharge mentally and physically. Just as a climber cannot stay at the summit indefinitely, employees and teams cannot maintain peak performance without returning to their version of base camp.

Yet, so often in business, we push forward relentlessly, believing that more hours, effort, and intensity will automatically result in better outcomes. For transparency, I am often guilty of slipping into my old ways of doing more 'reps' thinking it will lead to me smashing through the other side, and whilst I remain a firm believer in the correct effort leading to success eventually, if done incorrectly, the opposite is often true.

By pausing and recalibrating, individuals and teams can return to the task with renewed energy, clearer thinking, and a fresh perspective. This doesn't mean shirking responsibilities or avoiding hard work—it means recognising that intensity is a tool to be used strategically. The adventurer's ascent provides the perfect analogy for tackling significant projects: push hard when needed but recognise when to retreat and recover, knowing that doing so will ultimately enable more remarkable success.

The Balance Between Intensity and Rest

Both elite athletes and leading adventurers understand the necessity of balancing intensity with rest. The workplace can learn from these examples. In today's fast-paced corporate environments, there is often an unspoken expectation that employees should always be "on." However, sustained intensity is impossible without moments of pause and deliberate recovery.

The best leaders and managers understand this balance and foster an environment where intensity is encouraged, but burnout is prevented. These leaders push their teams to excel during critical moments—during a product launch, a major presentation, or a deadline-driven project. But they also ensure



their teams have time to step back, reflect, and recharge, just like athletes after a significant match or climbers back at base camp. I remember a great former non-exec director I had the privilege to work with, reintroducing me to the four stages I was very familiar with from my sporting career. Still, he invited me to view them in a business context, and I want to share them with you.

The peak performance model is a sports psychological model that consists of four sections: (1) Warm-up, (2) Peak Performance, (3) Warm-Down, and (4) Quality Recovery Time (QRT).



Consider the sprint model many tech companies have adopted and are famously using by organisations like Google and Spotify. Teams work intensely for short periods, followed by a period of reflection and adjustment. This mirrors athletes' interval training and climbers' rhythm in extreme environments.

Creativity and productivity can flourish in these bursts of high-intensity work, but it's only sustainable because of the built-in time to recharge.

How to Build Intensity into the Workplace

Creating an intense, high-performance workplace requires more than just encouraging hard work. It's about strategically designing periods of intense effort and deliberate recovery. Here are a few ways to implement this:

1. Define Critical Moments: Just as athletes and adventurers know when to push themselves, employees should understand the moments that require maximum effort. Leaders should communicate clearly about critical milestones, deadlines, and strategic initiatives that need bursts of focused work.

2. Encourage Rest and Reflection: High-performing teams and individuals don't just work hard—they also take time to rest and reflect. Whether through structured time off, post-project reviews, or simply creating a culture where breaks are encouraged, it's essential to ensure people have time to recover.

3. Use Short, Focused Work Periods: Instead of encouraging endless hours at a desk, adopt a short, intense work period model. The Pomodoro Technique, for instance, advocates 25 minutes of focused work followed by a five-minute break. This method mirrors the intensity-recovery cycles found in elite sports and adventure.

4. Foster a Culture of Trust: Teams need to feel trusted to manage their energy levels. Micromanagement and constant surveillance erode trust and make it difficult for employees to find their rhythm of intensity and recovery.

Take Away

Intensity is an essential ingredient for success, but it must be applied strategically. By learning from elite athletes and adventurers, businesses can create environments encouraging short bursts of intense focus, followed by periods of recovery and reflection.



Just as rugby players give their all during crucial moments in a match or adventurers retreat to base camp after a challenging climb, employees can achieve sustained excellence by balancing high-intensity effort with deliberate recovery. When applied correctly, intensity leads to success and longevity, resilience, and innovation in the workplace.

Action

Next time you look at your diary and can see a back-to-back schedule of meetings, be those on Teams, Zoom, or face-to-face, just adopt the QRT approach from the Peak Performance model. Allow yourself time to decompress from each meeting to take stock, take notes and agree on actions before launching straight into your next one. Much like an athlete, you must prepare appropriately if you want to perform at your best.

Where Practical Experience
Meets Academic Excellence





Finding Wisdom In the Temporary Elements Of Life

In Autumn, the seeds we planted in the Spring have grown and are ready for harvest, and the leaves that served their purpose drop. The cycle then shifts into winter, where we feel the cold, the sun hidden behind the clouds, and the evening darkness comes early. Spring brings back the sunshine, and the soil is nourished and ready for planting new seeds. In summer, the sun's light shines longer, the fauna's and flora's colors bright as the days draw out into the warm and starry nights.

Life, like nature's cycles, is inherently transient. Seasons change, flowers bloom and wither, and time marches forward without pause. Understanding and accepting this impermanence unlocks a great reservoir of wisdom, and we can reap the rewards of appreciation for the fleeting moments that make up our existence.

Our world is filled with constant distractions and ever-changing circumstances. It's easy for us to lose sight of the beauty and wisdom found in the present moments of our lives, and this can slowly diminish our wonder.



When we allow ourselves to be fully present in the now, we open ourselves up to a world of possibilities and insights that would otherwise pass us unnoticed. The laughter of a loved one, the warmth of the sun on our skin, and the gentle rustle of leaves in the wind are the gems of existence that too often go unappreciated yet hold the key to our fulfillment.

Recognizing the parallels between human life and the rhythms of nature, we begin to see the interconnectedness of all living beings and the inherent beauty in the ebb and flow of existence. As the seasons transition seamlessly from one to the next, so must we learn to navigate the inevitable changes and challenges that come our way with grace and resilience.

It is during these moments of transition and uncertainty that our true strength and character are revealed. Like a tree weathering a fierce storm, we can stand tall in the face of adversity, drawing upon our inner reserves of courage and determination to see us through the toughest times.

Embodying a mindset of resilience means acknowledging that life's challenges are not meant to break us but to shape us into stronger, more resilient individuals. By cultivating gratitude for the joys and hardships that come our way, we can glean valuable insights and lessons that contribute to our personal growth and evolution.



Through self-reflection and introspection, we can better understand ourselves and our place in the world. In these moments of quiet contemplation, we uncover hidden truths and revelations about our innermost desires, fears, and aspirations.

As we journey through life's ever-changing landscape, let us remember to pause, breathe, and appreciate the fleeting beauty of the present moment. Let us embrace the temporary elements of our existence with an open heart and a curious mind, knowing that each experience, whether joyful or challenging, is a stepping stone to self-discovery and enlightenment.

I invite you to reflect on the profound wisdom found in life's transience and embrace each moment with a sense of wonder and gratitude. May you walk this journey with an open heart and a resilient spirit, knowing that the lessons you learn along the way are invaluable treasures that will guide you toward a life filled with purpose, passion, and fulfillment.

As the seasons change and the winds of change blow through your life, may you find solace in the knowledge that you are a brave and resilient soul capable of weathering any storm that comes your way.



Embrace the temporary elements of life, for within them lies the greatest lessons and the most profound truths of our existence. Our lives and the Universe are interconnected and flow in cycles. Each moment affects our health and wellness and the overall health and well-being of the earth, the Universe, and all its species.

By Tania Abouzaki





N a r c i s s i s m

Narcissism is the second-hand smoke of our time, if you stand too close to it, you are going to get sick!' Dr Ramani Durvasula. It is a word that is used a lot more frequently than it used to be and comes up a fair bit in my sessions with clients. The label "narcissist" is widely deployed to refer to people who appear too full of themselves, and there's also a growing sense that narcissism is on the rise around the world.

What may be seen as an increase in narcissism is the inability of people to be told they are incorrect or can't always have things their way. It is just an awareness of the term and behaviour in the past that wasn't labelled and is now being given this label, whether correctly or incorrectly.

Narcissism is properly viewed on a spectrum, with most people somewhere near the middle and a few at either extreme.

Traits of Narcissism

It's easy to describe someone who spends a bit too much time talking about themselves or who never seems to doubt themselves as a narcissist, but the trait is much more complicated than that. Narcissism isn't about having a surplus of self-esteem but is based on insecurity and fragility in self. There is a hunger for appreciation or admiration, a desire to be the centre of attention, and an expectation of special treatment reflecting perceived higher status, a grandiose sense of self-importance, a lack of empathy for others, entitlement, superficiality and a tendency to manipulate and exploit other people. A high level of narcissism can be damaging in romantic, family, or professional relationships.

What are the types of narcissists?

Overt Narcissism

Or 'Grandiose' narcissism is probably what most people think of when they think of a narcissist. Grandiosity refers to having an 'unrealistic sense of superiority' and involves overestimating one's abilities, asserting one's dominance over others and having a generally inflated sense of self-worth. Predatory in seeking vulnerability in others, highly competitive and showing aggressive tendencies. They are likely to feel good about themselves and overestimate their emotional intelligence. Overt narcissists can be charming but lack empathy. In conversations, they don't relate to people but rather aim to one-up them and enjoy seeing others hurt and confused.

Covert Narcissism

These tend to be shy and self-effacing despite still being highly self-focused. They can appear inhibited, manifestly distressed, hypersensitive and chronically envious. They crave people's recognition and get defensive in the face of criticism as they internalise a deep sense of not being good enough. Covert narcissists believe their suffering is worse than anyone else's, tending to present themselves as victims and stage crisis to gain attention. Their manipulative behaviours are exhibited as passive aggression.

Malignant Narcissism

These are manipulative and malicious, show signs of sadism and aggression, and are the most severe type. They are often mistaken for psychopaths and sociopaths due to their aggressive, hostile, paranoia, sadistic and dehumanising behaviour. This type of person will hurt you physically, emotionally, financially, and sexually and not have any remorse. They get pleasure from seeing people in pain and discomfort.

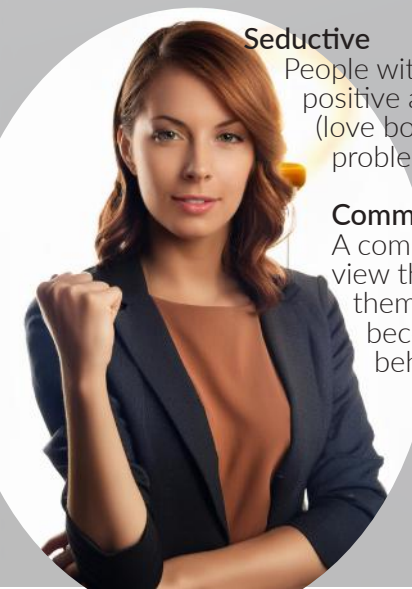
Subtypes of narcissism

Seductive

People with seductive narcissism understand the power of flattery, making someone crave positive attention. They'll freely shower targets with compliments and gifts to get admiration (love bombing). When they're not getting enough praise from someone, they have no problem dropping that person and moving on to a new target.

Communal

A common trait between many types of narcissists is a gap between the way they view themselves and how they behave. People with communal narcissistic traits perceive themselves as highly generous and altruistic but behave the opposite way. They can become outraged when they witness injustice but don't apply that same view to their behaviour.



Antagonistic

Competitiveness is especially noticeable with antagonistics. Low trust in others creates a tendency to see the people around them as rivals, arguing frequently with others and treating most social interactions as a competition.

Sexual Narcissism

They feel entitled to have their sexual needs met. They have a self-centred view of sex and not be skilled at emotional intimacy; therefore, they are not very interested in their partner's needs. They frequently overestimate their skills in the bedroom, yet need and expect a lot of praise for their performance and react angrily to sexual rejection. They expect sex in return for gestures and will pressure, trick, or manipulate you into having sex with them. They feel entitled to get sex elsewhere if you do not meet their sexual requirements and blame you for them doing so.

Exhibitionist Narcissism

They need constant attention and think they are better than others physically and intellectually. They look down on others, are very status-conscious, and are materialistic. They think they are very special and have an enormous need to be admired.

Hypervigilant Narcissism

These tend to be highly sensitive to the body language, facial reactions, tone, and reactions of others. They take things personally and are hypersensitive to criticism. Prone to feeling shame or humiliation, can be self-effacing and prefer not to be the centre of attention.

Narcissism falls into a spectrum, and in small amounts, it may even give you a healthy edge in getting ahead in the world. This is termed as: Healthy Narcissism Each person has a bit of healthy narcissism within them. They will feel proud of their accomplishments and want to share those accomplishments with others because it makes them feel good. Narcissism also includes the ability to feel a sense of entitlement and know that you belong in certain spaces and deserve good things. These feelings, though, are in line with reality. To big yourself up is very positive and can lead you to achieve in many areas of life.

By John Kenny

John Kenny is an award-winning Love and Relationship Coach to people who want to attract or create healthy loving relationships. He is also an Author, Speaker, Documentarian and host of The Relationship Guy Podcast.

He has been involved in the field of personal development for nearly twenty years and in that time has not only helped thousands of clients, but has also completely changed his own life.

John spent his life full of self-doubt, carrying negative beliefs from his childhood that impacted in every area - his relationships, his career and even his time as an International Athlete.

He noticed that when seeing clients, their relationships, past and present had the biggest impacts, whether positive or negative, on their lives. It has become his passion in life to help people find the healthiest, most fulfilling relationships possible and understand the complexities of human behaviour when it comes to how we relate to one another.

His approach is a fusion of Coaching, Counselling, Psychology and NLP and is used to unlock the things that keeps people stuck and unfulfilled in relationships and to finding the love that they want.

Connect with John

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Living a Life We Don't Need a Holiday From

Balancing Micro Adventures with Mindful Downtime

In our fast-paced world, the idea of “micro-adventures”—small, manageable bursts of excitement and exploration—can be a game-changer for our well-being.

Popularised by British adventurer and author Alastair Humphreys, the concept revolves around finding adventure and excitement in everyday life in small, manageable ways that don't require extended time off or elaborate planning. What I love about these adventures is that they remind us that we don't need extensive holidays/ vacations to find joy and fulfillment. So many opportunities can be found nearer to home than you often realise. There is an opportunity to get really creative, and I have found that thinking back to my childhood has been a good source of inspiration. Here are some ideas on how to incorporate micro adventures into your life:

Explore your local area: You don't need to travel far to have an adventure. Explore parks, nature reserves, or historic sites/ museums in your nearby city or town that you may have overlooked. Have a look with fresh eyes. Even finding old books about the area in charity shops and seeing the differences can be intriguing. Make it a Staycation with Road Trips planned; there will be hidden gems to discover.

TRY A NEW HOBBY: Pick up a new hobby or skill that excites you. Whether it's painting, pottery, playing a musical instrument, or glass blowing, the process of learning something new can be an adventure in itself. You don't have to master it; just approach it with curiosity. Camping and hiking: Plan short camping trips or day hikes in nearby natural areas. Even a night under the stars in your garden can feel like a mini-break.

CHALLENGE YOURSELF: Set personal challenges and goals. If you are going to a different country for work or pleasure, why not learn some of the language? Complete a home DIY project. Run that 5K you have often thought about but have not gotten around to. Achieving these milestones can be highly rewarding.

EXPLORE YOUR CULINARY SKILLS: Experiment with cooking new recipes from around the world. Use that Tagine you bought on that trip to Morocco all those years ago! Have themed dinner nights with friends and family. Cultural experiences: Attend local cultural events, such as concerts, theatre productions, or art exhibitions. Exploring different forms of art and entertainment can be a rich source of adventure.

VOLUNTEER: Give back to your community/ pay it forward. Find a cause you are passionate about or something you want to see survive in our era of modern technology. The sense of purpose and fulfillment from helping others can be incredibly rewarding.

DOCUMENTING: Document your micro adventures in a journal or blog. Reflecting on your experiences can help you appreciate the small but meaningful moments in life. Keeping a calendar or diary (personally, I like a wall chart) lets you see what you have to look forward to. Having things to anticipate can boost your overall well-being.

Remember that the key to micro adventures is not the scale or cost of the activity but the sense of excitement, discovery, and personal growth it brings. By incorporating these small adventures into your life, you can create a fulfilling and well-balanced lifestyle that doesn't require you to constantly seek a getaway.

However, it is essential to strike a balance, ensuring enough space is left for relaxation and spontaneity. While having a diary full of activities is exciting, it's crucial not to fill every available slot. Prioritise the most meaningful experiences and limit commitments to ensure there's always room for downtime. Focus on the quality of your experiences rather than the quantity. One deeply meaningful adventure can be more fulfilling than a series of rushed, superficial ones.

Incorporate mindfulness and meditation into your routine to stay grounded and appreciate the present moment. This practice can help you avoid the constant need for new adventures, making each experience more fulfilling. It will also support you to evaluate your energy levels. If you're feeling overwhelmed or fatigued, it might be a sign to scale back on commitments and focus more on self-care.

Take the opportunity to do a digital detox. Disconnect from screens and social media to fully engage with the present moment and your surroundings. Create a life that is both fulfilling and sustainable, allowing for relaxation, reflection, and the spontaneous joys of life. So go ahead, plan something and live a life you don't need a break from—your well-being will thank you.

Do take a look at my journal for some inspiration:

By Wendy-Anne Steer



www.facebook.com/wendy.alchemy
www.instagram.com/the_wellbeing_chemist/
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Embracing the Changing Seasons of Your Life

When I first heard the term “seasons of a woman’s life,” it seemed misused and, honestly, a little fluffy. I thought of a season as something cyclical, like the return of autumn leaves or a television series. However, as I delved deeper into the concept, I realised its profound relevance, especially as a health and wellness coach.

The idea of life having seasons is not new. We all pass through biological stages: infancy, childhood, adolescence, and adulthood. However, for women, there are additional, uniquely defining seasons—most notably, perimenopause and menopause. Unfortunately, these natural phases often come with dread, primarily due to societal conditioning and a lack of education. We aren’t taught how we move through our life seasons and why we should understand and appreciate them to support ourselves better.

Menopause, often portrayed negatively, is preceded by a lifetime of physiological changes, starting with puberty—a notoriously challenging period marked by emotional and physical upheaval.

As we age, the narrative surrounding menopause adds another layer of fear, highlighting symptoms such as hot flashes, mood swings, weight gain and anxiety. However, it’s essential to recognise that not all changes are quite so obvious, and many seasons of our lives bring subtler shifts that equally deserve our attention.

As women, we tend to strive for perfection, pressured by societal expectations to do and have it all. We live in a world where social media acts as a mirror into which we want to reflect ourselves and our lives. This relentless pursuit can be damaging, leading to stress and burnout—something we’re seeing rise significantly among women.

It’s crucial to acknowledge that your capabilities and needs vary throughout life, and trying to push through every challenge without recognising your limitations can exacerbate health issues. Reflect on your life stages—leaving school, studying in further education, starting a career, building relationships, perhaps becoming a parent. Each phase brings its own set of challenges and joys, requiring us to adapt both mentally and physically.

Recognising the different seasons of life allows us to prepare and protect ourselves. Preparation is not about fear but about readiness. When you understand and anticipate changes, you can navigate them more

effectively, maintaining your well-being. For instance, knowing the potential impacts of menopause can encourage proactive measures, such as adopting healthier lifestyle habits well in advance.

I firmly advocate for a proactive approach to health. Waiting until issues arise can often mean it’s too late to reverse them, only manage them. Shift yourself from fire-fighting problems to taking control and building strong health to prevent them from happening in the first place. By investing in your health from the outset, you create a strong foundation that supports you through all of life’s seasons. This proactive approach would involve regular movement, a balanced diet, quality sleep and rest, and mindfulness and stress management practices.

In my corporate days, I lived by the mantra, “It’s all in the planning.” I’m sure you know the famous quote, “Fail to plan, plan to fail.” This approach applies equally to your health and wellbeing. Being prepared and protecting

yourself with healthy habits ensures you are better equipped to handle life’s inevitable changes. Embracing each season, rather than resisting or resenting them, leads to a more fulfilling and happy life.

This mindset shift fosters appreciation for the present moment and builds resilience for the future.



Each season of life brings its challenges and triumphs. Some may be difficult, others empowering and joyous. The key is acknowledging them and seeing that each brings its own lessons and growth opportunities. By understanding this cyclical nature, you can approach each season with mindfulness and positivity, recognising that every phase, no matter how challenging, will pass and make way for new experiences.

How well do you know the seasons of your life? Are you creating a healthy mind and body to support you through each season? Embracing the principles of healthy living - at every stage - ensures that you can live a full, happy, and long life. Embrace them, prepare for them, and let them shape you into the resilient, vibrant person you deserve to be.

By Nicola Farndell



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WONDER WITHOUT OVERWHELM

MOVING THROUGH TRANSITION TO TRANSFORMATION

By Elizabeth Chanter

*"Within every ending is a fresh new beginning.
Within every beginning, there is an ending."*

Butterflies are very close to my heart.

According to the Greeks, butterflies are psyche (originally soul or breath). Their "medicine" is transformation. They are powerful allies in all transitional work. When I see one dancing joyfully in my garden, I know its arrival heralds either further transformational work or affirms my inner work so far.

Whether or not you are being visited by butterflies, are you going through a time of transition yet feeling unready for change?

- Are you feeling lost and vulnerable?
- Does it bring up grief, anger, resentment or disconnection?
- Do you find yourself weeping without really understanding why?
- Do you feel alone?
- Does it bring up a loss of hope?

Does it simply all feel too much?

Transition and Change are a Natural Part of Life

Change can be a wonderful opportunity for self-growth, although it can feel overwhelming.

The butterfly has to pass through stages of transition to become its fullest self. This may be your journey, too. The butterfly has to become the "gloop" in the chrysalis to change its form. This was always in its DNA. Like the butterfly, you have DNA programmed into your heart and soul, which has always been intended to shift you from potential into joy and wonder about who you truly are.

Change Happens for Many Reasons

*"How does one become a Butterfly?" she asked.
"You must want to fly so much that you are willing to give up being a caterpillar." (Hope For The Flowers)*

Life is full of transitions: birth, death, puberty, menopause, coming of age, pregnancy, giving birth, children leaving the "nest", marriage, serious illness and gender transition. Bereavement is a life change. So is losing a job, planned future, relationship, home, or income.

Sometimes, change happens because we know we are ready for something different. Sometimes, life seems to take a hand and force change upon us. Sometimes, we do feel ready, yet we are not sure how to move forward. Hidden obstacles seem to prevent us. Anger and frustration may surface, entangled with grief and loss and sometimes a sense of injustice and "why me"? All of these responses are natural and human. Sadness is a natural part of grief and is not to be confused with depression, although it can play a role.

To be Alive is to be Everchanging *"Everything has its season."*

Change is all around us, not just in our personal lives but in the natural shifting of the year. Spring and autumn are transitional seasons, moving us from the restful time of winter to the lush glories of summertime. To move smoothly through change, we must recognise the essential transition stage, when we are neither fully in the old place nor the new. This can feel very uncomfortable.



Celebration, Gratitude, Letting Go and Surrender

"Is it time to let go of the life you have planned so as to have the life that is waiting for you?"

Resistance to change can create further pain. Instead, ease the process, begin to celebrate every win of your life, and offer gratitude for all your blessings. When you are ready, begin to let go and surrender to the release. As you do so, you will create a spaciousness in your life for new experiences and opportunities. Be ready to open your arms to this, even if you have no idea what life will offer you yet. Become the transformed butterfly!

Come Home to Yourself: Tune into the Full Beauty of Your Being

Transformational processes enable growth. Inner work ultimately enables you to tune in to the full beauty of your Being—this, I call, coming home to yourself. Then optimism and joy return. You feel lighter and calmer, increasingly centred and balanced as you heal, transform, and evolve.

Overwhelm is replaced by wonder...

Email me for your free copy of my beautifully illustrated 5 Steps To Wonder Without Overwhelm.

For the past 20 years, shamanically trained Reiki Master, Elizabeth Chanter of Honour Being has been transforming lives by honouring all aspects of being. She does this through interweaving the gentle healing art of Golden Way Reiki, compassionate listening, energy medicine and Dreaming Your Inner Child Sacred Art Workshops and Retreats. She is passionate about helping others to create bright, beautiful and balanced lives through in person and remote healing.



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The Power of Womb Healing

A Path to Fertility You Haven't Tried Yet

Have you tried everything to get pregnant, only to find yourself still waiting? The constant cycle of hope and disappointment can be draining. You might be thinking, "Why isn't this working for me?"

You're not alone. Many women face infertility, and despite following medical advice, they still struggle. But what if there's a missing piece to your journey?

Womb Healing: The Missing Link

Womb healing might be something you still need to explore. It's not just about physical health—it's a holistic practice that addresses emotional, spiritual, and energetic aspects of your being. It creates harmony within your body, mind, and spirit, making conception feel more achievable.

Why Infertility Can Be So Challenging

Infertility isn't just a medical issue; it's deeply tied to stress, trauma, and emotional well-being. Here's how these factors can affect your fertility:

- **Stress and Pressure:** Societal expectations can add stress, hindering conception.
- **Emotional Trauma:** Past experiences like miscarriage or societal pressures can block your womb's energy.
- **Disconnection from Your Body:** Modern life often makes us lose touch with our body's signals, which can impact fertility.

What Is Womb Healing?

Womb healing focuses on clearing emotional and energetic blockages from your womb. Your womb is more than an organ; it's the center of your feminine power. Over time, unresolved emotions and trauma can create barriers to conception.

This healing practice helps release blockages and reconnect you with your body, creating a nurturing environment for new life.

Why Turn to Womb Healing?

If traditional treatments haven't worked, womb healing might be your answer. It addresses not just the physical but also the emotional and energetic layers that could impact your fertility.

- **Releasing Trauma:** It helps clear unresolved emotional pain, creating space for new possibilities.
- **Reconnecting with Feminine Power:** In a fast-paced world, womb healing helps you reconnect with your inner strength and ability to create life.
- **Balancing Energy:** It balances your womb's energy, making it a more inviting space for conception.

The Emotional Toll of Infertility

Infertility can take a significant emotional toll. You might feel like your body is failing you or that you're alone in your struggle. The constant ups and downs can be overwhelming.

- **Feelings of Inadequacy:** Many women feel "not enough" due to their struggles, but remember, you are far from broken.

● **Loneliness:** It's easy to feel isolated as if no one understands your pain.

● **Emotional Burnout:** The ongoing stress of trying to conceive can deeply affect your well-being. Womb healing offers a space to release these emotional burdens and lighten your journey.

How Womb Healing Can Transform Your Journey

Womb healing is more than preparing for pregnancy; it's about reclaiming your power as a woman. It helps clear emotional baggage and opens up space for new beginnings.

- **Clear Emotional Blockages:** Heal the trauma stored in your womb and make room for new possibilities.
- **Reclaim Your Power:** Connect with your inner strength and embrace your feminine energy.
- **Create a Nurturing Space:** You foster a peaceful environment conducive to conception by healing your womb.

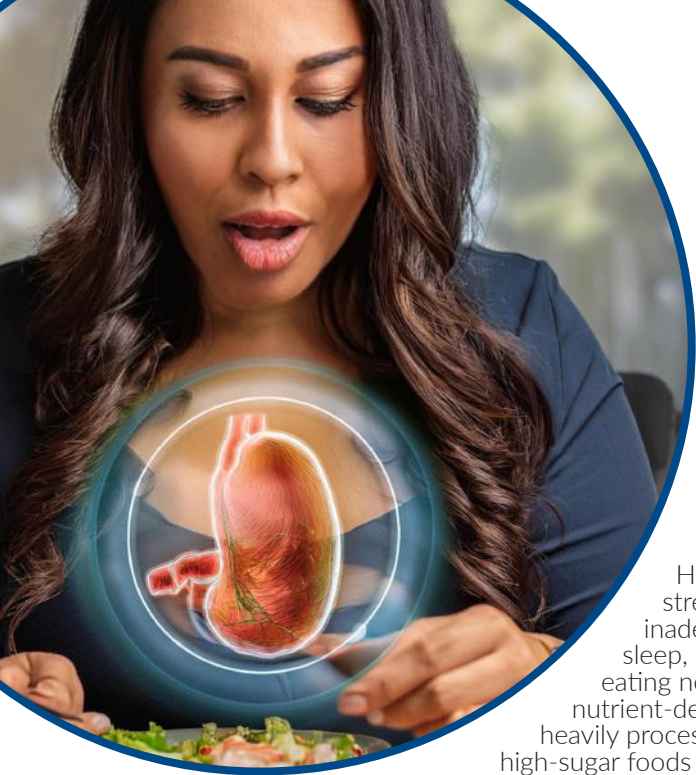
You Are Not Alone

If you're feeling stuck or hopeless, know that many women share your struggle. The path to motherhood may be different from what you expected, but it's still within reach. Womb healing provides a holistic approach that complements modern medicine. Ready to explore this deeper path? My book, "Unblock Your Womb with the Five Steps Healing Technique," offers guidance on clearing emotional blockages and creating a nurturing environment for conception.

Don't wait another month feeling powerless. Visit me at ohmymamabody.com and take the next step toward reclaiming your path to motherhood. Together, we can create space for new beginnings.

By Vicki Renz





Impact of Stress on your Gut

Several lifestyle changes can positively affect your overall and gut health. Slow down! Enjoy your meals. Try to make them as well-balanced as possible. Working through meals or skipping them will cause more issues with your gut. We often eat more when we skip a meal, leaving us feeling too full. When you eat meals, slow down and chew your food thoroughly. Make mealtimes relaxed and enjoyable.

Adequate water throughout the day will also help with digestion. It helps move the food smoothly through the digestive tract, helping break down the food and allowing the nutrients to be absorbed by the body. We get some water from fruits, vegetables, and other foods, but we must ensure we are adequately hydrated. The average male needs about 15.5 cups, and the average woman needs 11.5 cups of water a day.

Sleep! How can you ensure a good night's sleep? Try to go to bed and wake up at the same time each day. Avoid excess large meals, sugar, alcohol, and caffeine before sleep. Minimize the use of electronic devices or television a few hours before bed. Try using dark curtains or an eye mask. Exercising during the day will help promote solid sleep and relieve stress.

Relaxation! What can you do to alleviate stress? Meditation is a great way to trigger the body's relaxation response by helping you train your mind to stay in the present moment. Yoga and tai chi are also great relaxation tools. Breathing exercises help calm the nervous system by increasing oxygen to the brain and releasing excess carbon dioxide, making you feel calmer. Breathing in for 5 seconds through your nose and then out your mouth for 5 seconds has a calming effect.

Journaling! By writing down how you feel each day, you may start to identify certain patterns between what you eat and how you feel. Certain foods may trigger bloating or gas, and you may see that it was a stressful day. You can see what made you stressed and give you some perspective on how to prevent it in the future. Other benefits of journaling include keeping your memory sharp, boosting your mood, and improving immune function. Therapy! Seeking a qualified therapist to talk to is often a great way to help you recognize some areas you may not see but could use some help with.

They help objectively identify what leads to your stress and how to manage it. Therapy is a neutral setting that can help boost your mood and improve your quality of life. Balancing stress and self-care will help maintain your overall health.

Wellness is not a constant. It is constantly evolving and changing. The personalized plan you set for yourself is yours alone. You create your life to help you be your best self. There are no right or wrong answers on how you can achieve your goals. What is holding you back from making the necessary changes to be well?

High stress, inadequate sleep, and eating non-nutrient-dense, heavily processed, high-sugar foods can damage our gut microbiome.

Diet and stress affect the gut microbiome negatively, often increasing gut barrier permeability. This results in a leaky gut when the bacteria, food, and other toxins cross the intestinal barrier and leak into the bloodstream. The body sees these foreign organisms and creates an inflammatory response. The increase in inflammation common with stress allows the harmful bacteria to flourish, creating dysbiosis of the gut microbiome.

How did we get here? When stressed, our bodies trigger the "fight or flight" response. The body slows digestion and uses all its energy to fight the threat. Sometimes, the stress is significant, like a death or major life event. Sometimes, the stress is minor, like public speaking, financial, or other temporary events. Chronic stress has become standard for most people. Both chronic and acute stress can alter the gut bacteria. If there are chronic gastrointestinal issues, this can increase anxiety and stress.

What we eat when we are stressed affects our gut. Even mild stressors can cause us to eat unhealthy, highly palatable foods.

We often enjoy comfort foods that are high in sugar and carbohydrates, artificial sweeteners, and unhealthy fats, and we eat and drink alcohol and caffeine in excess when we are stressed. What we eat plays a significant role in our microbiome. The traditional Western diet leads to low gut microbiota diversity. This leads to a greater leaky gut, which is a contributing factor to chronic disease, including weight gain, obesity, diabetes and heart disease. Diet, or what you eat, determines which bacteria will thrive in the gut and help digestion. Slight changes in your diet and lifestyle can positively affect the gut within 24 hours.

A diversified diet can dramatically increase the diversity of the microbiome. The best diet consists of whole grains, fruits and vegetables, and unsaturated fats. High-fiber fruits and vegetables and foods high in omega-3 fatty acids help the gut heal. Probiotic foods help the production of good bacteria in the gut. Bananas, berries, carrots, onions and potatoes are a few examples. Foods naturally containing probiotics aid in the healing process. These foods are fermented, like sauerkraut and kimchi. Probiotic-rich foods react differently for everyone, so it's best to try small servings to see how you react.

**By Alayne Morena BS,
NBC-HWC**



How to Take an Honest Look at Your Drinking Habits with These 3 Compassionate Questions

by Jessica Betancourt



Without judging yourself or attaching any sort of shame or guilt to the ways that you consume alcohol, give yourself a moment as you're reading this article to gain some personal insight into this very popular and culturally acceptable pastime and how it may be influencing your overall life experience more than you think.

You may consider that your drinking habits are simply a part of your daily routine. If you regularly drink after work, or perhaps you are a stay-at-home parent and you 'look forward to' having some glasses of wine while you're making dinner.

Or maybe you don't necessarily drink every day, but when you do drink, you drink excessively. Perhaps according to your friends and family and by reflecting on your environmental and social norms, the ways you drink do not necessarily set off alarm bells or set you apart from the communities to which you belong.

1) Do you constantly feel stressed and pressed for time or a constant rushing and then crashing? Then you might consider - How much time do you spend drinking?

Time spent drinking could not only include the act of consuming alcohol itself but also thinking about when you will get to have a drink, procuring the alcohol itself, and remedying yourself from how much you drank afterwards. It all adds up.

For example, if you are a daily drinker, and you tend to have your first drink at 5 pm and last at 10 pm, that is 5 hours multiplied by seven days a week, which equals 35 hours per week. And let's say, on average, that you spend 1 - 2 hours upon awakening trying to shake it off. That's an additional 7 - 14. So, 42 - 49 hours per week are spent obtaining, consuming, and being under the effects of alcohol.

If you feel like there is never enough time to do everything you want to do, here is an opportunity to consider where you could gain some time back.

It can be hard to break this cycle of drinking because, generally, people drink to make themselves feel better!

But what ultimately is happening is that drinking is making you feel worse. The first step to creating change is having the awareness that something actually needs changing! Then, you can move forward with taking act

2) Do you feel discomfort, live with disease, or are you generally unwell?

Take stock of how you physically feel inside your body on a day-to-day basis, especially after drinking the night before. Do you wake up with nausea, headaches, or stiff joints? Do you feel rested and that you got quality sleep? Or do you awaken with irritation and general malaise, and has it been this way for quite some time? Perhaps you should assess that this is just your general state of homeostasis.

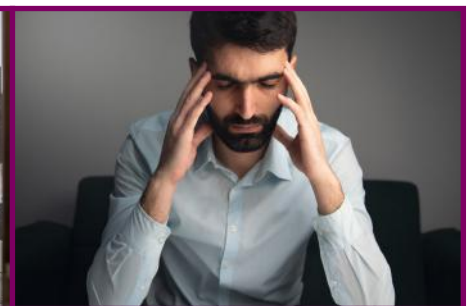
It is not necessarily that every uncomfortable bodily sensation is due to drinking. The question is, if you were NOT drinking at the intensity and frequency you are currently accustomed to, how much better might you feel? What would be your new baseline as it relates to your health and well-being?



3) Do you like your thoughts?

Something relevant about alcohol use is that it has a real defeatist nature to it. Notice, feel, and appreciate the contrast between days you drink (any amount) and days you do not in the quality of your thoughts.

In the aftermath of drinking, our brains are in a period of trying to repair neurons, our livers are working hard to filter our blood, and all of our systems are trying to regain balance, which causes us to feel edgy, impatient, and anxious or depressed. And it is the thoughts that we entertain during this process of repair that can then lead to another day of drinking. Thoughts that sound like, "I'm so tired. When is this day going to be over? Why is he/she so annoying? I wish I could be left alone. I don't have the energy, the time, the money to do what I want..."



Jessica Betancourt is a certified Rapid Transformational Hypnotherapist and Life Coach, working with people to heal their relationship with alcohol since 2021. You can find her on Instagram and via the podcast - The Mindful Drinking Movement.



Digital Marketing for Start-Ups

7 Steps for Getting Started by J. Rachel West



Starting your own business can be overwhelming, especially realizing most aspects aren't your zone of genius. Maybe you started a jewelry line to help people express themselves, not to become an influencer. But how else are you going to be seen by your target audience?

The foundation of any digital marketing strategy is defining your target audience. Your ideal client/target audience is the people you want to reach with your brand. For example, if you're selling custom tumblers, you want your products to be seen by people who buy tumblers.

But how do you identify your target market? It starts with research.

Think about who you envision using your brand. You created your business to be the solution to someone's problem. Visualize the customer with that need and how your brand will help them. For example, if you're a cleaning service, consider what you clean and who would benefit from your services. Once you understand who will benefit from your brand, begin to research your market. Using the cleaning service example, say you want to clean apartments. You can Google "apartments near me" to see the market size.

Once you've identified your target market, dig deeper into their pain points. What keeps them up at night? What makes them purchase what they do? The answers to these questions will help you create a detailed avatar of your ideal client, which in turn will help you develop strategic marketing plans. Now that you better understand your target audience, you can develop an online presence that aligns with their needs. But how do you do that?

Don't worry! Here's my step-by-step guide that I've used to help brands of all sizes create and expand their online presence.

1. Develop Your Branding

Your branding is the cornerstone of your business and the catalyst for how people will remember you. Developing a strong brand identity will help you maintain consistency across all platforms. Be strategic when you select your brand colors, fonts, logos, and voice, and remember that brands evolve, and so can yours!

2. Create a User-Friendly Website

Choose a website hosting platform that offers templates and easy customization. Popular options include Wix, Squarespace, and WordPress. A good rule of thumb with websites is to have the home page act like your house's welcome mat. Invite people into your space and guide them where they need to go.

3. Purchase Your Website's Domain (URL)

Buying your website domain is one of the easiest ways to build credibility. Many hosting platforms allow you to purchase your domain name directly from them, making it convenient and easy to connect your domain to your website.

4. Optimize Your Website for SEO

Use Search Engine Optimization (SEO) best practices to make your website more discoverable on search engines. Research keywords using tools like Google Keyword Planner to see what your audience is searching for. Use these keywords in your headings, body text, and image descriptions. YouTube has tons of easy-to-follow SEO tutorials if you need extra guidance!

5. Connect Your Website to Google

To be found on Google, you need to tell Google that your website exists. Many start-ups assume Google will automatically find them, but you need to connect your site to Google Search Console. There are numerous tutorials to guide you through this process as well.

6. Set Up Your Social Media Platforms

You don't need to be on every single platform, but from your market research, understand which ones your audience is on. For example, if you're targeting elderly women in a nursing home, you most likely don't want to be on TikTok.

7. Create Consistent Content

Some content ideas for start-ups are testimonials & reviews, who you are, what you offer, who you serve, behind the scenes, and educational posts about why your product or service is better than the others on the market.

Starting and growing a business can be challenging, no matter which industry you're in. However, having a clear understanding of your target audience and a solid digital foundation can set your business up for success. Stick to these steps to create a strong online presence that attracts and converts customers.



J. Rachel West is a seasoned marketing expert with a passion for marketing, business, and events. With over a decade of experience in the marketing and business industry and two degrees in the subjects, she has honed her expertise in crafting impactful marketing strategies. Now, as the Founder & CEO of JRW Consulting LLC, Rachel is dedicated to helping brands of all seasons with their business needs. Beyond her professional pursuits, Rachel actively advocates for women's rights and supports various charitable initiatives. Committed to leveraging marketing as a force for positive change, she embodies the ethos of making a meaningful difference in the world.



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WHY BEING AUTHENTIC MATTERS TO OUR WELL BEING.....

In today's fast-paced and technology-driven world, losing sight of what truly matters in life can be easy.

We often find ourselves caught up in the hustle and bustle of everyday life, constantly striving for success and material possessions.

But amidst all the chaos, it's important to remember the importance of authentic living—living a life that is true to ourselves and our values.

Authentic living is about being genuine and true to ourselves rather than conforming to societal expectations or pressures. It means living in alignment with our beliefs, passions, and desires and being honest and transparent in our relationships with others.

Authentic living is about being vulnerable and open, allowing ourselves to be seen and heard for who we truly are.

One key aspect of authentic living is connection—connection with ourselves, with others, and with the world around us. When we are truly connected, we can cultivate deep and meaningful relationships that enrich our lives and bring us joy and fulfillment.

Authentic connections are built on trust, honesty, and vulnerability, and they allow us to be our true selves without fear of judgment or rejection.

In today's society, where social media and technology often dominate our interactions, it can be easy to lose sight of the value of authentic connections. We may constantly compare ourselves to others, seek validation and approval from external sources, and feel disconnected and isolated.

But true connection comes from within—from being present, listening actively, and showing empathy and understanding toward others.

By Jennifer Boyce
Rooted Vision Wellness



Embracing Change

How to Navigate Life's Transitions with Faith and God

As Autumn approaches, I write this on the first day of Fall in Florida. The sun is shining, and I can feel the gentle sea breezes as I sit out on the deck by the pool, sipping my pumpkin spice coffee.

Life often surprises us with unexpected changes—some we welcome with open arms, while others catch us off guard. In moments of loss or transition, it's natural to feel disheartened or question why things are happening the way they are.

But here's a beautiful truth to cling to:

God never removes anything good from our lives without already planning something greater for us.

Think about it: every time we face a closed door, it's a divine reminder that something wonderful is about to step into our lives. It may be hard to grasp at the moment, but when God clears a path for us, it's often to lead us toward His best.

Whether it's a relationship that hasn't stood the test of time, a job that felt secure until it didn't, or a dream that seems out of reach, remember that you are being repositioned for blessings beyond your imagination. God knows your heart's desires; He sees the bigger picture, even when we're stuck in the blur of our current circumstances.

Hold onto faith and be open to the new opportunities and experiences that await. Embracing change can be daunting, but it's vital to remember that every ending is a step toward a brand-new beginning. With every challenge, there's an opportunity for growth, learning, and, ultimately, a deeper connection with our Creator.

So, when things seem to be taken away, take a deep breath and trust the process. Seek out the beauty and possibilities that lie ahead. Each change crafted by God's hands promises something magnificent that's on its way!

Keep this in mind: the best is yet to come! Embrace change with grace and prepare your heart for the blessings that are approaching. Of something magnificent that's on its way!

If you are in a season of change, God is refining you and taking you to the next level. Do you believe that?

Keep this in mind: the best is yet to come! Let go with grace and prepare your heart for the blessings that are approaching.



Angeline Mitchell

www.letsbreakthesilence.com



What Keeps You Feeling Insecure

It all boils down to just two thoughts...

People often say, "I'm not a confident person." But really, they're just buying into some thoughts their brain throws at them! The two main culprits are:

1. I'm not good enough.
2. Something must be wrong with me.

That's it! These two thoughts are the root of it all. We all have them pop up now and then, but the difference is that some people don't believe them (the "confident" folks), while others take them as gospel (the "insecure" ones). What if it really is that simple?

Why Do We Think Them?!

Remember, our brain's job isn't to make us happy; it's to keep us alive! So, it's not exactly handing out the BEST thoughts ever. It's recycling what we've been thinking, assuming if it kept us alive yesterday, it must be good enough for today! Our brain's motto might as well be, "If it ain't broke, don't fix it!"

Where Do They Come From?

Back in our caveman days, survival meant sticking with the tribe. Alone = dead. So, our primitive brain, still stuck in those times, tosses us these primitive thoughts to keep us from being different and, therefore, alone (and dead!).

These two thoughts have great intentions!

- "I'm not good enough." This thought checks to make sure we're loved by others, helping us stay surrounded and, you guessed it, not dying alone.
- "Something must be wrong with me." This one ensures we fit in, so we're accepted and kept alive by the tribe.

Seeing the good intentions behind these thoughts helps make peace with them. Understanding them makes them less powerful.

What You Think - Reality

Here's the kicker: just because you think something doesn't make it true! We have about 60,000 thoughts daily, and they're more interpretations than facts. Our thoughts shape our reality, so what we believe becomes our truth. The first step? Becoming more aware of what we're thinking.

Our Thoughts Generate Our Emotions...

Those two pesky thoughts ("I'm not good enough" and "Something must be wrong with me") stir up emotions. What emotions do they trigger for you? My clients often say they feel insecure, unsure, vulnerable, or fragile. Pinpointing out how we feel when we think about these thoughts can be enlightening. On the flip side, thinking "I've got this" or "I'll figure it out" can spark confidence.

There's No Right or Wrong Way to Feel!

Remember, believing we're "insecure" is just shorthand for "I sometimes believe thoughts that make me feel insecure." We are not our thoughts, and we are not our emotions. Understanding this distinction is key!

Be More Intentional with What You Think!

Discovering that we have more control over our thoughts than we realize is empowering. Our thoughts generate our emotions, so you can feel more confident by nurturing thoughts that make you feel this way!

Thoughts to Feel More Confident!

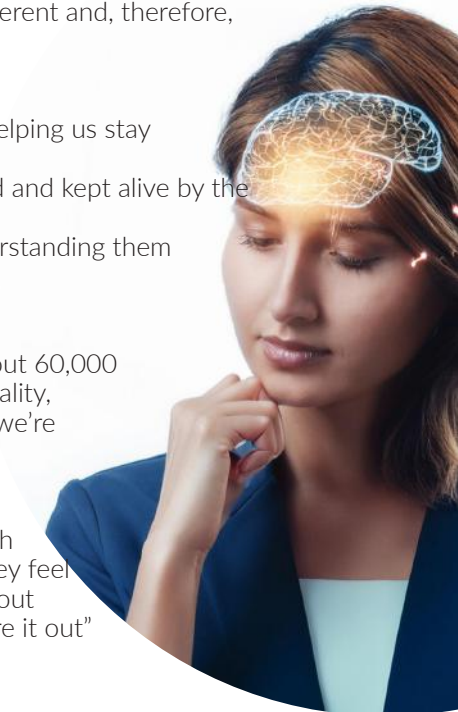
Try on these confidence-boosting thoughts like you would a new sweater in a changing room:

- Nothing's wrong with me.
- I have control over what I'm thinking.
- I can do this!
- I can figure it out!
- This can be fun!

You've got this! Good luck!

By Tamara Pflug

Your FUN & CONFIDENCE coach
www.personal-development-zone.com



Unlocking Deep Connection

Transform Your Communication and Relationships

Welcome back to our journey into the heart of relationships. As we conclude our series together, I want to leave you with some of the most profound communication tools I've developed to help transform not just your relationships but the way you relate to yourself and the world around you.

In previous discussions, we delved into the Marriage Mindshifts that set the foundation for healthier relationships. We also introduced the Inner Mosaic Method, a powerful approach that helps us navigate and harmonize the various parts of ourselves to regain control over our thoughts, emotions, and behaviors. Today, we will briefly recap those tools and dive deep into the 4 Levels of Communication—a holistic framework designed to improve your ability to connect, understand, and communicate with yourself, others, and the world around you.

Recap of the Marriage Mindshifts

The Marriage Mindshifts represent core truths that serve as the foundation for transforming any relationship:

- **Your Partner is a Perfect Reflection of Your Beliefs:** Our partners mirror our subconscious beliefs. If you want to change the outcomes in your relationship, first identify and transform the beliefs you hold about yourself and your partner.
- **All Healthy Relationships are Built on a Foundation of Self-Trust:** Trust starts within. We must cultivate deep trust in ourselves before we can truly trust others.
- **It Only Takes One Person to Transform Any Relationship:** When one person initiates change and personal growth, it can shift the dynamic of the entire relationship. You don't need both partners on board to start the transformation.
- **Everything is a Relationship:** Whether it's with people, your body, your environment, or even time and money, life is a web of interconnected relationships. By recognizing this interconnectedness, we can engage with the world more mindfully.

These mindshifts serve as guiding principles to reshape how we approach our partnerships, but to integrate these into daily life, we need practical tools.

Recap of the Inner Mosaic Method

In previous articles, I introduced the Inner Mosaic Method—a transformational tool designed to help you recognize the different parts of yourself that show up when you feel triggered or stuck. Just like a mosaic is made up of different pieces, we are made up of various parts—parts shaped by our experiences, traumas, and life stages.

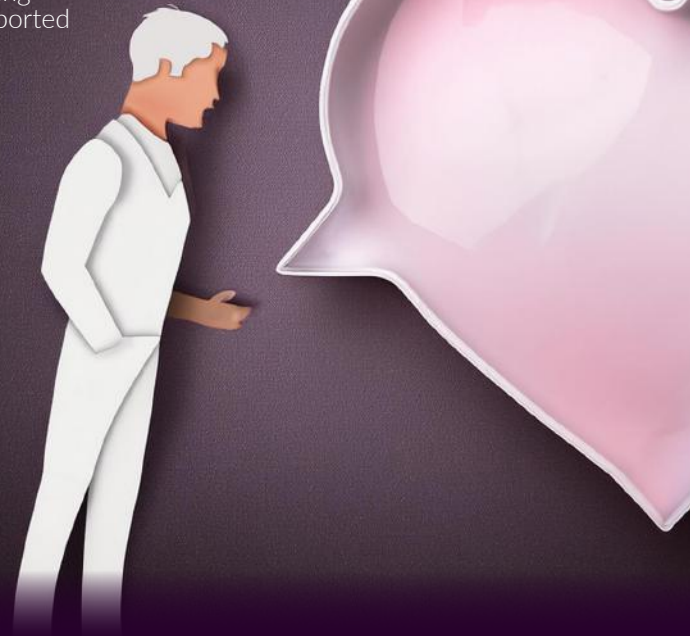
This method encourages us to pause when we feel triggered, identify which part of us is reacting, and gently support that part with wisdom from our higher self. This allows us to regain control over how we respond to the world rather than letting our circumstances dictate our thoughts and emotions. By consistently practicing the Inner Mosaic Method, you will see positive changes in yourself and your relationships.

Now, let's explore how the 4 Levels of Communication tie everything together and offer new tools for deepening your connections.

The 4 Levels of Communication: A Holistic Framework
The 4 Levels of Communication take us beyond the surface level of talking and listening and help us understand that communication starts long before words are spoken. At each level, we engage with ourselves, our bodies, and others in ways that can either strengthen or weaken our relationships.

Level 1: Communication with Source

The first and deepest level of communication is with Source energy, God, or the Universe—whatever higher power you resonate with. This level reminds us that before we can have meaningful connections with others, we must first align with something greater than ourselves. When we feel disconnected from Source, it can manifest as a lack of trust in life, a sense of aimlessness, or feeling unsupported in our



relationships. But nurturing this connection brings peace, clarity, and an internal compass that helps guide our actions.

How to Deepen Communication with Source:

- **Meditation or Prayer:** Set aside time each day to meditate, pray, or simply sit in silence to connect with your higher power.
- **Gratitude Practice:** Keep a gratitude journal to thank the Universe for your life's challenges and blessings. Acknowledging the good invites more into your life.
- **Trusting the Process:** When difficulties arise in your relationship, trust that the Universe has your back instead of trying to control the situation and let go of the need for immediate resolution.

By maintaining this connection, you build a solid foundation that influences your approach to every other level of communication.

Level 2: Communication with Self

Once connected to Source, the next step is communicating with ourselves. Often, we neglect this vital connection, allowing our inner dialogue to be filled

with criticism, self-doubt, or fear. Communicating with ourselves means building a relationship with all parts of who we are—our strengths, vulnerabilities, and wounded parts that may still be seeking healing.

This is where the Inner Mosaic Method becomes invaluable. By acknowledging the different parts of ourselves and learning to listen and respond to them, we establish trust and harmony within. When we trust ourselves, we can navigate challenges in our relationships with greater ease.

Tools for Communication with Self:

- **Journaling:** Start a practice of daily reflection. What did you feel throughout the day? Which parts of you were triggered, and why?
- **Self-Compassion Mantras:** When you notice self-criticism creeping in, gently remind yourself, “I’m doing the best I can,” or “I am worthy of love and understanding.”
- **Inner Dialogue:** Speak to the different parts of yourself with love and curiosity. Ask them what they need from you to feel supported and heard.



Level 3: Communication with the Body

We often overlook our body’s role in communication. However, the body speaks to us constantly—through tension, discomfort, relaxation, and energy. Ignoring the body’s messages can lead to physical and emotional burnout, but listening to them can help us understand where we need more care, rest, or healing.

When we’re triggered in a relationship, our body reacts first. We may feel our chest tighten, our stomach churn, or our shoulders tense. By tuning into these signals, we can process emotions more effectively before they spill into our conversations with others.

Tools for Communication with the Body:

- **Body Scan Meditation:** Practice scanning your body from head to toe when you feel overwhelmed. Notice any areas of tension or discomfort and ask what emotions are being stored there.
- **Movement:** Engage in regular physical activities like yoga, walking, or stretching to stay in tune with your body’s needs.
- **Breathing Exercises:** Take deep, slow breaths when you notice physical tension. Inhale for 4 counts, hold for four

counts and exhale for 4 counts to calm the body’s stress response.

Level 4: Communication with Others

At this level, we finally reach what most people consider communication—our interactions. However, the key to communicating effectively with others is mastering the first three levels. Only when we’re aligned with the Source, connected to ourselves, and in tune with our bodies can we communicate with others in a meaningful way.

Tools for Communication with Others:

- **Active Listening:** Practice truly hearing what the other person is saying without jumping to respond. Reflect on what they said to ensure they feel understood before offering your thoughts.
- **Empathy Over Assumption:** Instead of assuming your partner’s intentions, ask them to clarify their feelings. Avoid phrases like “You always...” or “You never...” that trigger defensiveness.
- **Vulnerability:** Share your feelings from a place of openness rather than blame. Use “I” statements like “I feel hurt when...” instead of “You made me feel...”

Bringing It All Together: The Path Forward

The 4 Levels of Communication and the Inner Mosaic Method are powerful tools that, when used together, provide a roadmap for lasting relational transformation. Whether you want to improve your relationship with your partner, deepen your self-awareness, or simply communicate more effectively with those around you, these tools can help you on your journey.

Remember, real transformation doesn’t happen overnight. It requires patience, consistency, and a willingness to engage with these practices regularly. By mastering communication on all levels—beginning with the Source, the self, the body, and others—you can unlock deeper connections and create the relationships you truly desire. As we wrap up our journey together, I want to thank you for participating in this conversation.

Continue to implement these tools, and remember that every relationship begins within. By nurturing your inner world, you have the power to transform the world around you.

Until next time, keep growing, keep questioning, and keep loving fiercely.

**By Samantha Kaaua,
Marriage Mindshift Coach,
International Bestselling Author,
and TEDx Speaker**

www.thegemms.com



Echoes of Wellness

Unveiling the Science behind Sound Healing

All living matter is energy vibrating at different rates and frequencies. When we alter the vibration, we can change the structure of living matter.

This principle lies at the core of sound healing, a therapeutic practice that uses specific frequencies and vibrations to promote physical, emotional, and mental well-being. Sound Therapy uses a range of instruments, such as tuning forks, singing bowls, and even the human voice, to restore balance and harmony within the body.

This process is believed to work by resonating with the body's natural frequencies, thereby encouraging cells and tissues to realign into healthier patterns. Scientific studies have shown that sound can reduce stress, lower blood pressure, and even aid in pain management, providing a compelling case for its effectiveness. As our understanding of vibrational medicine grows, the potential applications of sound healing continue to expand, offering new avenues for enhancing health and well-being.

Different frequencies play a critical role in key scientific frameworks, such as Dr. David Hawkins' Scale of Consciousness. This profound scale categorises human emotions and other states of consciousness based on their vibrational frequency, ranging from low-frequency emotions like shame and guilt to high-frequency states like love and peace.

According to this theory, lower frequencies correlate with negative emotional states and hinder personal growth, while higher frequencies align with positivity, healing, and personal or spiritual development.

Similarly, modern scientific studies explore how specific frequencies impact brainwave patterns, neurotransmitter release, and physiological processes. For instance, alpha waves (8-13 Hz) are associated with relaxation and creativity, delta waves (0.5-4 Hz) are linked to deep sleep and healing, while Theta waves (4-8 Hz) are associated with heightened clarity, intuition and deep meditative states. These insights underscore the profound influence of

frequencies on human consciousness and well-being, bridging ancient wisdom with contemporary scientific inquiry in the realm of sound healing.

Understanding The Neuroscience:

Neuroscience Research into Sound Therapy reveals a fascinating connection between auditory stimuli and brain function, highlighting how specific sounds can induce therapeutic benefits on a cellular level. Listening to certain frequencies and rhythmic patterns can directly influence brainwave activity, inducing the Theta state and ultimately promoting heightened states of relaxation, focus, and even deep meditation.

This process, known as brainwave entrainment, occurs when the brain synchronises its activity to the rhythm of external auditory stimuli. For example, listening to binaural beats can encourage the brain to enter alpha or theta states associated with relaxation and creativity. This is exactly what happens when the brain listens to high-frequency crystal singing bowls for a period of time. The brain waves are able to mimic the stable frequencies offered by the sound healing tool and, as such, tap into a Theta state.

Furthermore, sound therapy has been shown to modulate the release of neurotransmitters like dopamine and serotonin, which are critical for mood

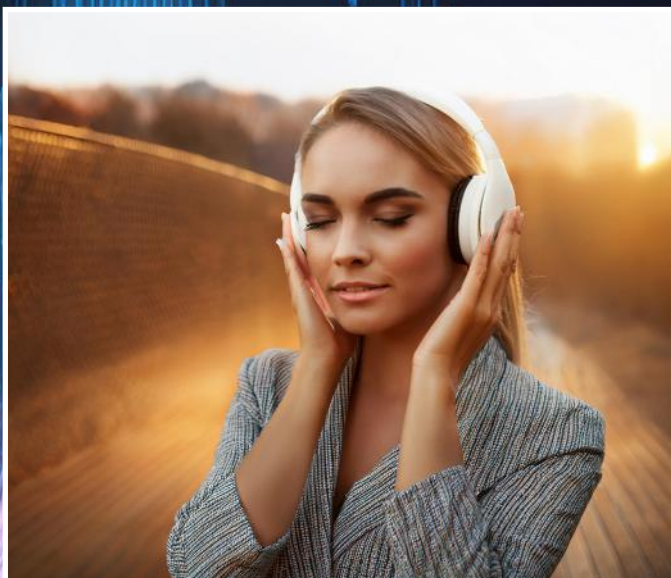


regulation and emotional well-being. This release can reduce symptoms of anxiety, depression, and stress, offering a non-pharmacological approach to mental health care and stress management. By leveraging the brain's natural plasticity, sound healing can facilitate neurogenesis and neuroplasticity, supporting cognitive health, emotional regulation, and cellular resilience.

In addition, the ability to induce certain brainwaves, such as the Theta state, plays a crucial role in memory formation and learning processes. They are particularly active during REM (rapid eye movement) sleep, aiding in the consolidation of information and

emotional processing. Theta waves are also involved in accessing and retrieving memories stored in the hippocampus. Theta brainwaves are associated with enhanced intuition and insight.

People who engage in meditation and sound healing practices often report enhanced feelings of clarity, problem-solving abilities, and increased creativity. This is why theta wave stimulation is sometimes used in cognitive therapy and creative arts therapies. Research also indicates that Theta frequencies are conducive to healing processes and stress reduction.



Five Reasons To Try Sound Healing

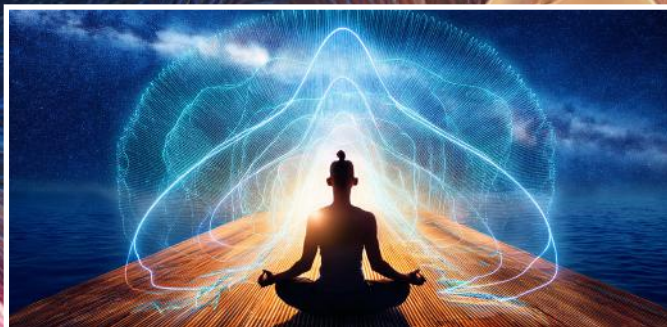
1. Stress Management & Relaxation: Sound healing uses vibrational medicine to induce deep states of relaxation, which can reduce stress, alleviate anxiety, and promote a sense of calm.

2. Physical Healing: Certain frequencies, such as 432 Hz, used in sound healing promote physical healing by stimulating the body's natural healing processes. The benefits include reduced pain, reduced inflammation, improved circulation, and heightened immune function.

3. Emotional Harmony & Regulation: Sound healing can facilitate emotional release by allowing individuals to let go of pent-up emotions and achieve emotional balance. It is the perfect safe space to achieve somatic release and restore overall well-being.

4. Enhanced Cognitive Function: Sound healing sessions can promote improved mental clarity, concentration, and cognitive function. This can help individuals gain insight into personal issues, improve problem-solving abilities, and enhance creativity.

5. Spiritual Growth and Connection: Sound healing sessions often create a conducive environment for spiritual exploration and growth. They promote introspection and can enhance spiritual awareness, facilitate deeper meditative experiences, and foster intuitive inquiry.



By Aditi Kumar

Aditi Kumar is a 'Coach, Speaker & Writer' from Sydney, Australia. Her mission is to support heart-led individuals to reach their full potential, shatter glass ceilings, and align with their purpose. Aditi's journey is multifaceted, spanning the landscapes of Education and Corporate Finance, into the Coaching & Personal Development World. Her pivotal transformation from burnout to brilliance forms the foundation for her world-class coaching, which is described as a unique fusion of Neuroscience, Positive Psychology, and Energetics.

Aditi is passionate about supporting high-achieving, impact-driven individuals to overcome chronic stress and rewrite the script for their success.

To explore the path of living in alignment, scan the QR code below and find out how you can work with Aditi. Follow Aditi on Instagram @lifewith_aditi





Choosing to Parent— How do you know you're ready?

As people continue to plan for the future, many consider parenthood in their decisions. According to a 2023 survey conducted by Pew Research Center, when asked about having children, 51% of young adults who were not yet parents said they would like to have children one day. Their decision factors include age, health, partner willingness, and financial means.

The survey also covered other topics, such as marriage and respondents' relationship with their parents. Although the analysis suggests that people desire parenting at some point, it did not indicate their readiness for this change. If your next step is to become a parent, how will you know if you are ready?

Knowing why you want to become a parent is one of the most critical steps to take in life. Ask yourself why you feel this desire. Is it a personal wish, or are you influenced by outside pressures or cultural expectations?

Imagine what your life will be like as a parent versus reality. Your expectations can often differ from day-to-day life. Raising a child involves both incredible joy and serious challenges. Having honest conversations with current parents about their experiences provides a lot of wisdom. Their parenting style, successes, and mistakes can be beneficial. Think about what works for you and what you want to do differently. Understanding and learning from their experiences can help you better decide how you might approach parenting.

What Does It Take to Become a Parent?

Becoming a parent is much more than a title; it's an ongoing journey requiring emotional, financial, and practical preparedness. This means developing patience, resilience, and the ability to handle stress. Being financially secure goes a long way. Raising a child involves various expenditures, from basic needs like food and clothing to education and leisure activities. Having a financial plan and savings is essential for a stable and nurturing environment. Practical readiness involves making changes to one's daily routine and lifestyle. Parents often rearrange their schedules and endure personal sacrifices to meet their children's needs.

Becoming a Parent Changes You

Everything takes on new meaning when you're responsible for another person. This shift changes how you see your career, hobbies, and social life. Suddenly, everyday decisions are weighed differently, all through the lens of what's best for your child. Your relationships will also experience changes. Friendships evolve as your priorities shift, and the relationship with your partner will transform. Navigating parenthood as a team can strengthen your bond or require more adjustments.

Personal interests and hobbies might take a backseat, but you'll discover new joys in the time spent with your child. Activities like playing at the park or reading bedtime stories become some of life's most cherished moments. Caring for a child requires endurance and resilience.

These traits will help you through sleepless nights, tantrums, and the inevitable ups and downs. Each obstacle you overcome builds confidence and adds depth to your character. Whether it's figuring out how to soothe a crying infant or guiding a teenager through tough times, these experiences shape who you are in profound ways. They will expand your capacity for love and empathy. You'll find yourself more compassionate, patient, and understanding. Overall, these attributes don't just make you a better parent; they make you a better person.



Making the Decision: Are You Ready to Be a Parent?

The best thing that you can do is take the time to evaluate your current situation. Consider your emotional, reproductive, financial, and practical readiness.

Are you in a stable relationship or prepared to parent solo? Do you have a support network? Answers to these questions will play an essential role in your decision. There are resources available on parenting: books, parenting classes, experienced parents, and coaches focusing on families, all of which can offer valuable insights. If you're looking at movies and celebrity lifestyles, they provide entertainment but often need more authenticity of real-life experiences. Instead, seek advice from people you trust.

Try this: Make a list of the pros and cons of parenthood and discuss the possibility with your partner or a close confidant. Moreover, consider speaking with a mental health professional for an unbiased perspective.

Lastly, remember that choosing not to become a parent is entirely valid. Parenthood is a different path for everyone. Sometimes, the choice that seems like an omission is a powerful, deliberate decision. Embrace whichever route makes you happiest and most fulfilled.

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.

www.maxcinewatson.com



Why Yoga is for Every Body

Desk Yoga



How long do you sit at your desk every day? 8 hours? 10 hours? 12 hours? Do you suffer from headaches or neck and shoulder pain?

This is a common complaint for many of my students. They come to class each week and think this will solve the hours and hours sat at their desk. Of course, it helps, but there are small daily habits, which, when practiced consistently over time, can make a big difference. Let's start by asking how your setup is. In this world of working from home, hot desking, and working from cafes, the tendency is to spend hours a day looking down at a laptop. This means overstretched and weak muscles in the back of the neck and upper back, which leads to pain. Working for the odd hour here and there is okay, but prolonged work in this position is very damaging. Improving your setup is an act of self-care. So, how should we sit?

- **Choose a chair that supports your spine and adjust the height so that your feet rest flat on the floor. Your thighs should be parallel to the floor, so you may need a footrest. The chair should swivel so that you don't twist your body awkwardly.**
- **Position the top of your desk high enough so that your arms remain parallel to the floor when typing.**
- **Monitor height: Place your monitor roughly an arms-length away from your eyes and just high enough that the top line of your screen is at eye level.**

Standing desk? This concept has grown in popularity over the last few years and can definitely help the problem of sitting all day. However, ensure you are standing evenly on both feet, and each time you change positions, ensure the monitor's top is at eye level.

Where does yoga come in?

Once you have the optimal setup, a sprinkling of yoga throughout the day can make a huge difference. I recommend setting an alarm on the hour throughout your working day for a few minutes so you can pause, rest, and stretch. This can feel tricky when you are really busy, but why not try it for a week and see the benefits?

Each hour:

Rest Your Eyes & Meditate:

To combat eye strain, which leads to headaches and dry eyes, take a minute to close your eyes. Sit back in your chair and focus on your breath. Inhale for the count of 5, then exhale for the count of 5. Feel yourself slow down, and allow any stress and strain to leave your body on each exhale. Remember, a calm mind is much more productive, so this minute is invaluable.

Choose a different yoga stretch to do each hour; if you have time, do more than one!

Neck Stretch

Place your right hand on your left shoulder and gently push down. Bring your right ear to your shoulder and feel a stretch in the left side of your neck. Relax the muscles in your face and jaw. Hold for 5-10 breaths and repeat on the other side.

Side stretch

Place your right hand on the seat of your chair, then reach up and over with your left arm, enjoying a side-body stretch. Hold for five breaths and then repeat on the other side.

Twist

Place your right hand on the back of your seat, bring your left hand to your outer right thigh, and twist. Hold for five breaths and repeat on the other side.

Hip Opener

Cross the right ankle over the left thigh. Gently press down on the inner right thigh to increase the stretch. Hold for five breaths and then repeat on the other side.

Upper back stretch

Stand behind your chair and place both hands on the back. With feet hip-distance apart, walk back until your upper body is parallel to the floor. As you hold for 5-10 breaths, enjoy a stretch in the upper back.

Sarah Brown is an experienced yoga teacher, personal trainer, Reiki & energy healer, writer, and after-dinner speaker. She holds weekly group classes in her bespoke studio in South London and via Zoom. Sarah facilitates workshops and retreats internationally and corporate events.

Her book 'Healing with Yoga' is available on Amazon.

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Fall into Somatics

The Body Talks

"My body knows," I shared in response to a colleague who had asked what my tagline would be if we were part of a therapist reality show. A chorus of agreement from himself and the other psychotherapists we were gathered with followed, because among them, I am known for my knowledge and passion for the integration of somatics in therapeutic practice.

What is Somatics?

The word somatic is defined as that which relates to the soma or the body. In a therapeutic context, somatics refers to body-oriented forms of therapy that look at the mind-body connection. Today, it is a multidisciplinary field with increasing substantiated research; however, it's important to acknowledge through a decolonizing lens that many somatic therapies are rooted in ancient embodiment practices, which many cultures around the world have engaged in for centuries.

Our bodies are a valuable source of information. Somatic modalities allow us to access this information while safely processing emotions and traumatic experiences. The process itself always reminds me of alchemy, as there is an element that resonates as transmutation in terms of somatic work's ability to transform our embodied experience.

Somatic Prompt for the Fall Season

We can begin to explore somatics this season by tracking our internal landscape as we shift externally from Summer to Fall.

What do you notice during this transition? Do you feel energized by the cooler weather? Does it feel like part of you shuts down or turns inward as the hours of daylight decrease? Once we tune into our internal landscape, we can explore what might feel supportive to meet these arising needs. Perhaps it's sitting near a window to soak up more natural light, or like myself, indulging in a warm, sensory-rich bath to soothe the nervous system. Tuning into our bodies and sensations can serve as a foundation for this exploration.

Engaging in this practice offers an opportunity to become more attuned to the different ways in which our bodies communicate with us, and is just the beginning of our ability to connect more deeply to ourselves with somatics.

By Justine Allen

Justine Allen is a Relational and Somatic Dance/Movement Therapist located in Toronto, Ontario, Canada. As an integrative practitioner, she engages talk therapy and cognitive approaches with psycho-spirituality, expressive arts and somatic modalities for a holistic approach.

Outside of her practice, she facilitates movement sessions through the National Centre for Dance Therapy (NCDT) for Connected North, an organization geared towards fostering student engagement and enhanced education outcomes in remote Indigenous communities. She is also a Board member for Wonderfully Made, a youth empowerment initiative, and has served as an elected Board member for the Dance Movement Therapy Association of Canada (DMTAC).



www.theembodiedpath.ca

EMBRACING SISTERHOOD

THE KEY TO HIGH-ACHIEVING WOMEN'S SELF-CARE AND THRIVING LIVES

As a feminine leadership and empowerment women's coach dedicated to helping high-achieving women prioritise themselves, I often see the immense power of sisterhood. In a world where women are expected to juggle countless roles and responsibilities, other women's support, understanding, and encouragement can be transformative. Sisterhood isn't just about friendships; it's a lifeline, a source of strength, and a pathway to self-care and personal growth.

The Power of Connection

In the hustle and bustle of life, it's easy for high-achieving women to feel isolated, overwhelmed, and drained. We often pour from an empty cup, giving all to our careers, families, and communities, with little left for ourselves. This is where the magic of sisterhood comes into play. Connection with like-minded women offers a safe space to share experiences, challenges, and triumphs. It provides a network of support that understands the unique pressures of being a high-achiever.

Emotional Support and Validation

One of the most profound aspects of sisterhood is emotional support. Having a tribe of women who genuinely understand and empathise with our struggles is incredibly validating. It's a reminder that we're not alone in our journey. This emotional support is crucial for mental well-being and can significantly reduce stress and anxiety. As High-achieving women, we often carry the weight of the world on our shoulders, and knowing there are others who've been there and can offer advice or simply listen can be immensely comforting.

Accountability and Growth

Sisterhood fosters accountability and personal growth. We're more likely to stay committed to our goals when we surround ourselves with women who inspire and challenge us. These women can provide constructive feedback, celebrate our successes, and gently push us to step out of our comfort zone. This kind of support system is essential for continuous personal and professional development.

Encouraging Self-Care

Self-care is often the first thing to be neglected by high-achieving women. Sisterhood, however, encourages and sometimes demands self-care. Whether it's organising a spa day, a weekend retreat, or simply reminding each other to take a break, sisters hold each other accountable for maintaining balance. We recognise the importance of recharging and ensure that self-care becomes a non-negotiable part of our routine.

Collective Empowerment

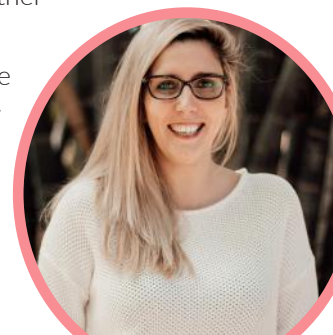
When women come together, our collective power is undeniable. Sisterhood can be a force for change, not just on a personal level but within communities and beyond. When united, high-achieving women can advocate for policies that support work-life balance, gender equality, and mental health awareness.

This collective empowerment amplifies individual efforts and leads to broader societal impacts.

Practical Steps to Cultivate Sisterhood

- 1. Find Your Tribe:** Seek out groups, clubs, or networks where you can meet like-minded women. Online communities, local meetups, and professional organisations are great places to start.
- 2. Be Vulnerable:** Authentic connections are built on honesty. Share your struggles and triumphs openly to foster deeper relationships.
- 3. Support Others:** Be an active listener, offer help, and celebrate other women's successes. Sisterhood is a two-way street.
- 4. Create Rituals:** Establish regular get-togethers, whether it's a monthly dinner, a book club, or a group workout session. Consistency strengthens bonds.
- 5. Prioritise Self-Care Together:** Encourage each other to engage in self-care activities and hold each other accountable.

In conclusion, sisterhood is more than a social network; it's a crucial element in the journey of high-achieving women towards self-care and thriving lives. By fostering these connections, women can create a supportive environment that nurtures their well-being, personal growth, and collective empowerment. Let's celebrate and cultivate sisterhood, for in lifting each other, we rise together.



By Ana Salido
Counsellor / Life Coach / Mentor
www.anasalido.com

Exercise and Clearing – A Path to Healing



Experiencing grief can have a significant negative impact on an individual and can be quite challenging to comprehend. During times of trauma, such as the end of a relationship, a career setback, or other significant life changes, it is expected to feel a sense of loss and struggle to cope. It is essential to acknowledge these feelings and treat them as you would any other traumatic event.

Taking the time to reflect and plan your path to healing is crucial in rediscovering yourself. While this process may be time-consuming, grieving a loss can be particularly difficult as it requires introspection to identify what has been taken away. Have you lost your spark, confidence, or motivation?

The next step is determining how you will reclaim these aspects of yourself. It is up to you to make the necessary changes, which may sometimes require assertiveness and prioritising your needs to move forward.

Exploring new interests and distancing yourself from individuals who bring negativity into your life is essential, even if it means letting go of long-standing relationships. You aim to become a new version of yourself who can embrace life and find fulfilment.

One helpful exercise is to list all the positive and negative aspects of your current situation, including people, and work on eliminating the negative influences. While it is impossible to surround yourself only with positivity, strive to create an environment that brings you joy.

Consistent journaling can help you identify and address challenges promptly, while meditation can provide a sense of calm and positivity. Make time for self-care and prioritise activities that promote a peaceful mindset.

Finally, engaging in physical activity, such as exercise, can benefit your mental and physical well-being. While it may not be everyone's preference, consistently completing even small tasks can help restore balance to the mind and improve overall health and fitness.

Focusing on a specific goal can help shift your focus away from grief and enable you to progress.

Finally, engaging in physical activity, such as exercise, can significantly benefit your mental and physical well-being. While it may not be everyone's cup of tea, consistently completing even small tasks can help restore balance to the mind and improve overall health and fitness.

Focusing on a specific goal can help shift your focus away from grief and enable you to make clear decisions about your desires. Whether it's aiming to run a certain distance, conquer a challenging hill, or participate in a marathon, having a goal provides a sense of purpose and determination.

You can pursue these goals independently or join a club or group. With the availability of apps and virtual communities, there are numerous ways to achieve your objectives. The only obstacle may be your need for discipline, but seeking support can help overcome this barrier.

Upon reaching your goal, you will experience numerous victories, leading to a clear mind, improved physical appearance, and heightened self-esteem. You will have successfully navigated through the challenges by allowing your mind to process grief and achieve your goals.

By Maxine Brown



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UNVEILING THE HIDDEN THREATS

How Environmental Endocrine Disruptors Upset Your Hormone Balance

In today's fast-paced world, our health often takes a backseat to the relentless demands of daily life. Yet, one critical aspect of our well-being is frequently overlooked: hormonal balance. As a functional nutritionist specialising

in menopause health, I aim to shed light on a silent yet pervasive threat lurking in our environment—endocrine disruptors.

Endocrine disruptors are chemicals that interfere with our body's endocrine system, the network responsible for hormone production and regulation. These insidious compounds can mimic or block hormones, leading to a cascade of health issues, particularly affecting metabolism and hormonal balance.

One of the most common sources of endocrine disruptors is plastic. Bisphenol A (BPA) and phthalates, found in everyday items such as water bottles, food containers, and even children's toys, are notorious for their hormone-mimicking effects. BPA, for instance, mimics oestrogen, potentially leading to oestrogen dominance in both men and women. This imbalance can result in weight gain, mood swings, and reproductive and menopausal issues. Pesticides such as glyphosate and neonicotinoids are

regularly used in the UK and pose significant risks to health. Glyphosate, commonly found in weed killers, has been linked to endocrine disruption and potential carcinogenic effects. Neonicotinoids, used in some insecticides, can also interfere with hormonal balance and thyroid health.

Moreover, personal care products—shampoos, lotions, and cosmetics—are often laden with parabens and synthetic fragrances. These chemicals can disrupt the endocrine system, affecting everything from adrenal function to insulin regulation. Opt for natural, paraben-free products to minimise this risk.

The air we breathe can also harbour endocrine disruptors. Chemicals from household cleaners release volatile organic compounds (VOCs) that compromise hormone balance. Investing in an air purifier and using eco-friendly cleaning products can help create a healthier home environment.

Addressing the impact of endocrine disruptors is crucial. We can support our hormonal balance and overall well-being by becoming aware of these hidden threats and taking proactive steps to minimise exposure. Let's prioritise our health by making informed choices to protect ourselves and our loved ones from these unseen adversaries.

By Marie Cherrett

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Want Your Words to Pop on Stage?

5 Tips for Vocal Variety

Have you ever edited a picture to make it pop? Have you cropped it, brightened it, or added a filter? I have, too. Want your words to pop? Do the same thing. Be intentional about how you deliver your ideas. No one is inspired by monotone presentations that ramble.

Always aim for good writing, authenticity, and vocal variety. Here are five ways you can spice up what you share with your audience so that they tune in - rather than sneaking peeks at their phones.

1. Pauses. These beautiful creatures give you a chance to catch your breath and allow what you've just said to your audience to sink in. When used artfully, they can add drama and suspense.

2. Pace. Even if your idea is genius, when you speak at the exact same cadence the whole time, you will start to lose people. Choose places to speed up and places to slow down. (Careful not to speak too quickly. You don't want to sound rushed.)



3. Volume. Just like your favorite songs, find moments to be bright and loud and moments to be quieter.

4. Pitch. Mixing up your pitch is one of the best antidotes for monotone boringness.

5. Sentence Length. Short sentences can really help you – they are easier to say, and they tend to be memorable. Long sentences can work really well in articles, blog posts, and white papers. But what works on the page won't always work on the stage. Make sure your longer sentences flow when you say them.

Try this: listen to your favorite podcaster or actor. Take note of what keeps you engaged. Their ideas or humor may be what draws you in, but I bet you'll start to notice some of these vocal variety techniques.

By Amanda Hennessey

Public Speaking Coach & Author Let's connect! LinkedIn:@AmandaHennessey

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Supporting

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Hypnotherapy for Autumnal Fears: Finding Calm Amidst the Changing Season

As the leaves begin to change and the crispness of autumn settles in, many people feel a sense of renewal. However, for some, this season brings more than just a temperature change – it can bring anxiety, fear, and even a sense of foreboding. Known as “autumnal fears,” these feelings can manifest as a result of shorter days, colder weather, and the pressures that accompany the end of the year. Fortunately, hypnotherapy can offer an effective and natural solution to help individuals navigate this seasonal transition with calm and confidence.

Why Does Autumn Trigger Anxiety?

Autumn is a season of change, and change, while beautiful, can often trigger feelings of instability. The transition to longer nights can disrupt circadian rhythms, leading to increased feelings of tiredness or even mild depression for some. The psychological pressure of approaching holidays and year-end deadlines can also heighten stress. These anxieties can be amplified for individuals prone to Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) or those who associate autumn with difficult memories, such as the loss of a loved one or previous life changes.

Hypnotherapy as a Tool for Managing Seasonal Anxiety

Hypnotherapy is an ideal treatment for those experiencing seasonal anxiety or fears, as it allows individuals to access the subconscious mind where many of our deep-seated anxieties are stored. Through hypnotherapy, clients can explore the root cause of their seasonal fears, reframe negative thought patterns, and install positive coping mechanisms that help them manage their emotional response to this seasonal shift. One of the key benefits of hypnotherapy is its ability to instill a deep sense of calm and relaxation. By guiding clients into a relaxed state, hypnotherapy bypasses the critical mind and allows positive suggestions to take root, helping clients view the changing season in a more balanced and positive light. These suggestions include affirmations around stability, embracing change, and cultivating inner peace regardless of external circumstances.

Reframing Autumnal Associations

During hypnotherapy sessions, clients are encouraged to reframe their perception of autumn. Rather than focusing on the feelings of loss or dread that can sometimes arise, hypnotherapy can help individuals associate the season with renewal, warmth, and personal growth. For example, the falling leaves can be seen not as an ending but as a natural part of the cycle of life, preparing for new growth in the spring. Through guided visualisations and personalised affirmations, hypnotherapy allows individuals to reshape their emotional landscape around this season.

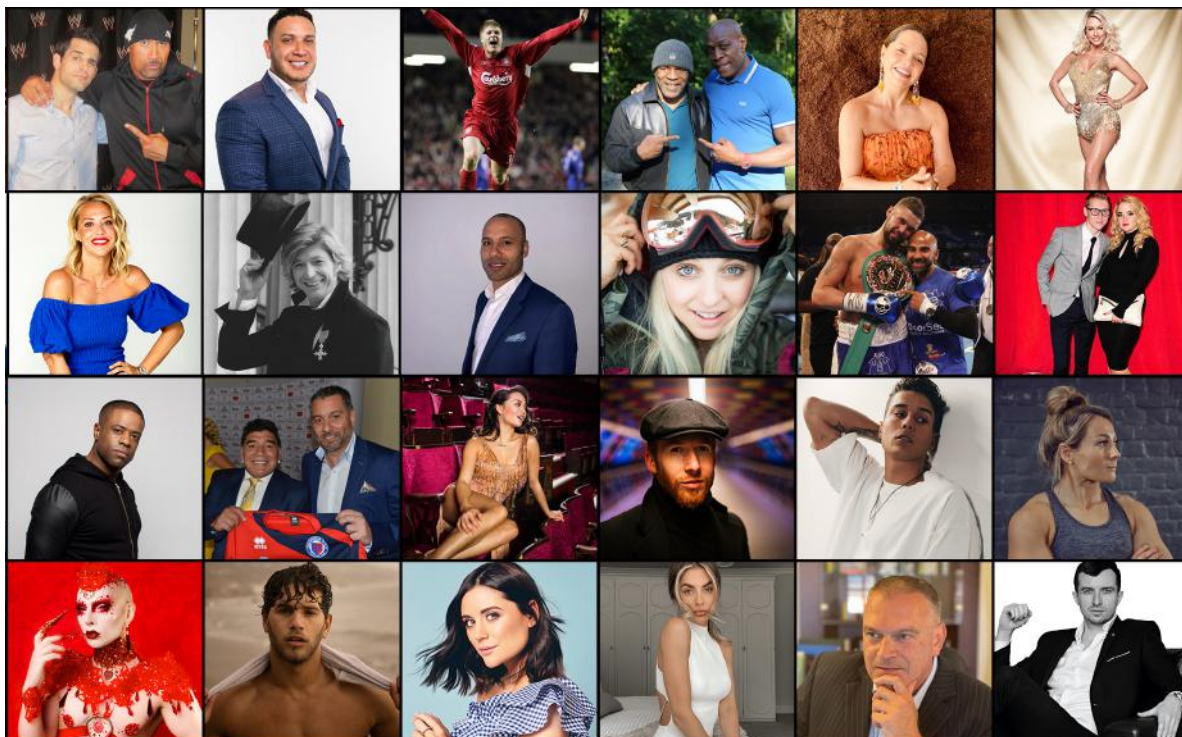
Practical Applications: Self-Hypnosis and Coping Strategies

For clients who experience recurring seasonal anxiety, self-hypnosis can be an empowering tool. By teaching clients to enter a relaxed state on their own, they can utilise self-hypnosis techniques to manage their anxiety in real time. Visualisation exercises, such as imagining a warm, comforting environment or mentally rehearsing calm responses to potential stressors, can be beneficial in moments of seasonal anxiety. Additionally, anchoring techniques can be used to trigger feelings of relaxation and safety during high-stress moments. By associating a physical gesture, such as touching the thumb to the forefinger, with feelings of calm, clients can access this state quickly and effectively whenever they feel overwhelmed.

By Angie Doig-Thorne

Get in touch for information or a free confidential telephone consultation with Angie, details on her website

www.yorkhypnotherapist.com



Trust your instincts or in this case my guides by Tanya Brown



Many times, we have issues with trusting our gut instincts. Years back, I had a booking with a radio program. I was very nervous because it would be live.. So, I did what I always do in those situations. Over prepare. For a week, I meditated on the host's name, "Uncle Jonny", but his co-host "Rachel", the name kept popping up as I asked my guide questions. I am trying to focus on "Uncle Johnny" while getting images and information and taking notes, but "Rachel's name keeps popping up. I keep shrugging my shoulders, go back, and focus on "Uncle Jonny's name again, and the same pattern keeps popping up (Rachel's name) it's like "rinse and repeat.

The day of the call comes, and I am sweating bullets. I am speaking with the producer who preps me to the format of the call and queues me as to when I go on... I proceeded to connect with the host, who is very amiable, and then we moved to my reading of what I saw in his life and future. I proceed to rattle off all the things from my notes and what I remember. I just hear a polite Uh huh. Yeah.. responses before we go to break.. The producer says he is really enjoying this segment we would like to extend the time.. The original 15-minute segment went to 45 minutes.

I returned from a commercial break, and the host said everything you said did not resonate with me. But it resonates with Rachel. She is sitting there, scared, as you share childhood references. The funny thing was I was asking my guides to give me information on him, but they just wanted to provide information on her. Ultimately, I always trust my gut or, in this instance, my guides.

Supporting





3rd Eye Opening

“Who looks outside dreams, who looks inside awakens”

The Third Eye, a mystical energy centre of intuition and insight, resides on the forehead. According to Hinduism and Buddhism, it is a gateway to the soul and higher consciousness. When the veil of illusion falls off the third eye, your intuition comes online, and you get access to your soul's wisdom. It is a unique experience, sometimes caused by traumatic events.

In the spring of 2008, I couldn't pinpoint what wasn't right in my life. It felt like everything came crashing down. My thoughts and emotions were running on a loop, taking me on a never-ending roller-coaster ride with no escape or relief. I was desperate to find help to get me out of the prison of my own mind whilst waiting for my talk therapy to commence, as I was diagnosed with depression. I felt like I reached a dead end.

Amidst a whirlwind of emotions and struggles, I embarked on a quest for solace. I came across a website that led me to the discovery of angels as energy beings and the spiritual concept of the Universe.

Out of the Blue, I was presented with two choices: to keep relying on knowledge and the outside world or to explore this inner wisdom I suddenly had access to.

A chance encounter with angel oracle cards marked the beginning of a transformative journey of spiritual awakening, pushing me towards exploring energy healing. It only made sense later when it turned out this was my mission. Although I wasn't aware of my 3rd Eye-opening at the time, I paid more attention to nudges and signs from then on.

Sixteen years later, I am fully aware that the third eye-opening is walking through a portal to recognise our true nature, our magical soul self, and slowly but surely shifting from the human perspective to the soul's perspective.

By Eva Maria Hunt

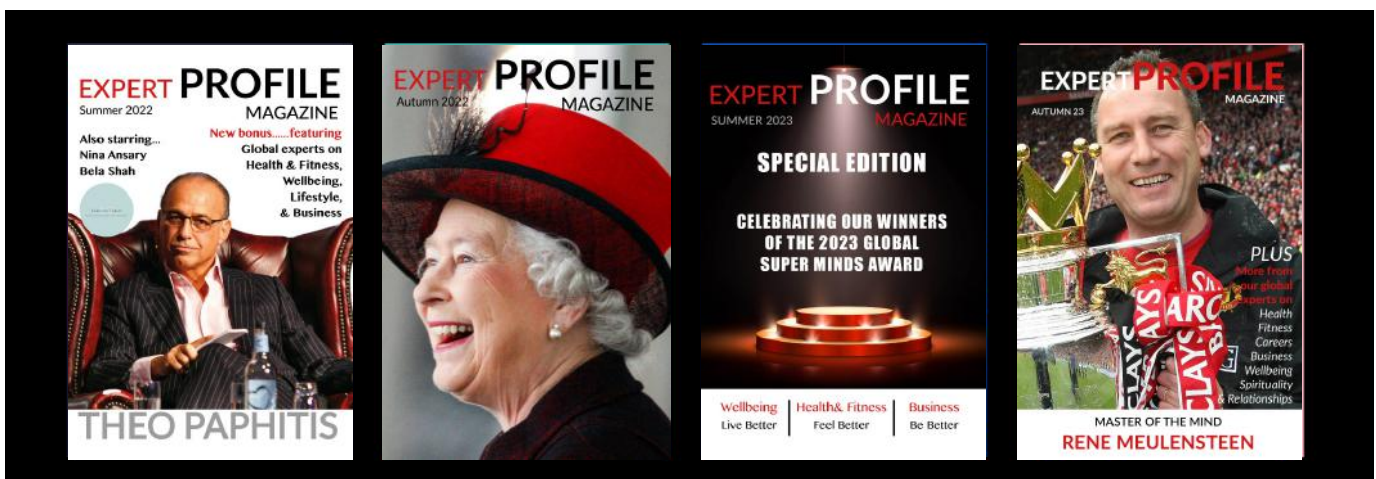
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Breaking Boundaries: How Multiple Citizenships Offer Security and Freedom



The importance of securing dual or multiple citizenships is more evident than ever. Beyond the allure of possessing multiple passports, this strategy offers unparalleled freedom, security, and a wealth of opportunities. As more people seek to diversify their lives and protect their assets, acquiring additional citizenship has become a cornerstone for those looking to thrive in a globalized economy. Enhanced mobility is one of the most significant benefits of dual or multiple citizenships. With more passports, individuals can access visa-free travel to a broader range of countries, making it easier to conduct international business, explore new markets, or enjoy the freedom of global exploration. This flexibility can mean the difference between seizing an opportunity and being restricted by bureaucratic red tape for entrepreneurs and business owners.

Beyond mobility, multiple citizenships offer a crucial layer of security and peace of mind. In times of political unrest, economic instability, or unforeseen global crises, having citizenship in more than one country provides a reliable safety net. It allows individuals to relocate to a safer environment or a more favorable jurisdiction without delay. As the world faces ongoing uncertainties, including conflicts, pandemics, and economic fluctuations, the ability to choose a stable, secure country to reside in is a priceless advantage. Financial benefits are another key reason many seek additional citizenships. Some countries offer more favorable tax regimes, allowing citizens to reduce their tax burden legally and strategically. Whether through lower income tax rates, wealth management structures, or investment opportunities, holding citizenship in a low—or no-tax country can significantly enhance one's financial health.

In addition, dual citizenship opens doors to new business opportunities. Many countries prioritize citizens when granting business licenses, contracts, or other incentives. By holding multiple citizenships, entrepreneurs can access exclusive benefits and opportunities within several economies, providing a competitive edge in the global market.

Ultimately, multiple citizenships are more than just a symbol of global freedom—they are a strategic asset. As the world becomes more unpredictable, the ability to choose where to live, work, and invest offers both security and flexibility. For those seeking to expand their horizons and protect their future, acquiring additional citizenship could be the key to breaking boundaries and thriving globally.



By Sally Pederson
www.GlobalCitizenLife.org

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Planning Ahead of Time

By Dayle Adams



Respect is a major part of our lives—the respect we have for others, the respect they have for us, and most importantly, the respect we have for ourselves.

However, I learned of a new type of respect when my Mum, who had Lewy Body Dementia, went into hospital for an operation. We were shown a **ReSPECT** form, which stands for Recommended Summary Plan for Emergency Care and Treatment. It was quite a shock at the time, being asked for her wishes if the operation didn't go to plan and whether she would want them to attempt resuscitation. However, I have since come to know it to be an empowering form that enables a person who is at risk of sudden deterioration to state their wishes for their clinical care in emergency situations where they are unable to speak for themselves.

In a recent conversation with Sarah McDonald, a Secondary Breast Cancer Nurse Specialist, her very poignant comment relating to planning for the end of life was, “We only have one chance to get dying right. If we don't, it can lead to loss of dignity in dying and result in a traumatic event for all involved.” She was talking specifically about when someone is in their final stages of life, stating, “The **ReSPECT** form is an essential document that can be given to medical professionals, who may not have access to the person's medical history or prognosis, to give a clearly written escalation plan to ensure they know what to do without causing harm”.

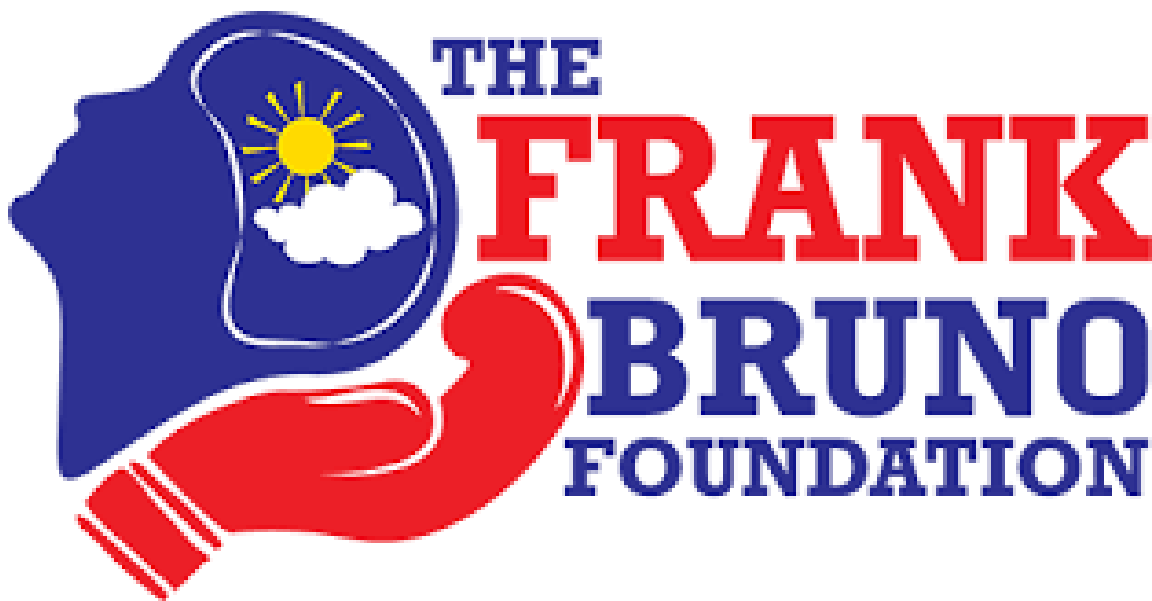
A **ReSPECT** form is most often completed with the support of a medical professional. It opens up meaningful conversations around end of life care, from the realities of attempting cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) to prioritising comfort or sustaining life. It allows for really careful planning to ensure that things go as smoothly as possible. Being a 'recommended summary plan', it is not a contract or an agreement. Therefore, it can be changed as circumstances change, and the patient can also withhold it. Visit your GP or speak to a health professional to document your wishes on a **ReSPECT** form.

It is never too early to think ahead. Planning Ahead of Time's services give you the platform to make informed choices and have peace of mind that your needs and those of your family will be known and respected when you reach the end of life.



www.planningaheadoftime.com

Supporting



SPORTS PERFORMANCE

AND BRAINSPOTTING

Brainspotting can enhance physical performance through optimizing mental and emotional states.

Brainspotting is a therapeutic approach developed by Dr. David Grand in 2003. It's used to help individuals access, process, and overcome trauma, emotional distress, and psychological blocks by identifying specific eye positions that correlate with unprocessed trauma in the brain.

Brainspotting can be particularly useful for athletes in the following ways:

- 1. Performance Anxiety:** Athletes often experience anxiety that can hinder their performance. Brainspotting helps in identifying and processing the underlying causes of this anxiety.
- 2. Injury Recovery:** Psychological trauma from injuries can be a significant barrier to recovery—brainspotting aids in processing trauma and enhancing the recovery process.
- 3. Focus and Concentration:** Brain spotting can help athletes achieve a state of flow by clearing mental blocks and emotional distress, improving focus and concentration.
- 4. Enhancing Mental Toughness:** Processing past traumas and emotional challenges can build resilience, aiding in developing the mental toughness necessary for high-level competition.

Brainspotting is a powerful tool for athletes to enhance their mental and emotional well-being, directly impacting their sports performance. By addressing and resolving psychological blocks, athletes can achieve higher levels of focus, resilience, and overall performance. It can help manage the pressure of high performance, facilitate breaking through plateaus, overcome persistent challenges, and achieve goals to unlock one's true potential. Also, enhances and boosts performance, onfidence, and offers personalized strategies to overcome obstacles and achieve peak performance.

All repetitive sports performance problems, such as the yips and severe slumps, stem from underlying traumas that



function beyond the athlete's conscious awareness and control. Unless these underlying physical and emotional traumas are identified and directly addressed, the issues may diminish but not be fully resolved. (Grand, 2011)

Brainspotting helps with what self-talk, mental imagery, concentration, and relaxation techniques won't address. Residual effects from these past negative performance experiences create a sense of danger, physical tension, and self-doubt, which hinder optimal performance.

Traditional therapeutic approaches address only the athlete's conscious mind instead of reaching the foundation of the problem deep in the athlete's body and subconscious. This biological stress response significantly impairs the athlete's ability to remain relaxed, composed, and focused, which is essential for peak performance.

Brainspotting addresses past physical and emotional traumas without the need for conscious discussion. Athletes are not prompted to recount or analyze previous events. Instead, the technique focuses on the areas where these traumas are stored in the brain and body.

Practical Applications

- **Individual Sessions:** Athletes can work with a certified brainspotting professional to address specific performance issues.
- **Team Workshops:** Teams can incorporate brainspotting techniques to improve overall mental health and performance.

By Bonnie Kimpling

www.coachbonniekaye.com



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Being Powerfully Aligned

“All power comes from within you; as you fully align into your truth, your power increases.”

Being congruent within your heart and mind fuels the energy of your experiences in manifesting and creating your life in the highest and best way to experience and express the joy and peace within you.

Congruent energy is created when the heart and mind fully agree on what is, without waiver or doubt. Take a moment and remember a time when you were 100% confident in knowing what you desired and notice how it came to fruition.

What part did you play in creating this? Notice how you honored yourself through this creation. What did you not believe, and what did you believe through this process? Feel the alignment that happened within you as you went through this process, and notice how you created it.

Your confidence and trust will naturally grow stronger as you choose and honor the ways that work for you. Knowing what beliefs work best for you creates ease in knowing and experiencing how powerful and unlimited you truly are in creating your reality.

The beliefs you hold within you are important as they guide you into creating your reality. Tapping into the unconscious mind and finding out how you have been programmed to believe in something is the key to changing your beliefs, which in turn changes your perspective to create a unique or new reality for you. Your inner perception is your outward projection of reality.

What is waiting within you that you desire to create today? Connect with me, as I can read and shift your energy to give you insight and wisdom that will align your heart and mind in creating the experiences you desire in life for you!

By Janyelle Huff

www.Janyellehuff.com



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The Extraordinary Life of ADHD

ADHD isn't what people often assume it to be. We're misled and muddled by stigmatized views, misguided by deficit-based understanding models. When you think of ADHD, I imagine the first images conjured still depict disruptive young boys or daydreamy girls.

What if I told you it's far more complex and exponentially more exciting?

Whilst I don't want to minimize the very real challenges that ADHD can impose on one's life, such as differences in executive functioning capacity, emotional dysregulation and huge difficulties navigating workplaces and relationships, all of which I have personally suffered devastating consequences with, I want to highlight that it's not all doom and disorder.

Many of us lack awareness of neurodivergence's duality. Herein lies a treasure trove to be unlocked, with vast possibilities stretching to every domain.

You see, ADHD has both broken me and rebuilt me anew. It's threaded throughout every fibre of

my being as a neurodivergent person, and now that I've learnt to embrace and harness it, I wouldn't change it for the world. I attribute my struggles, strengths and achievements to it. One of the mistakes I see time and again when I'm working with organizations is that they tend to label ADHD as a detriment rather than a difference and, in doing so, miss out on the multiple ways that truly neuro-inclusive practice could benefit them.

If we reframe our understanding of ADHD, we can expect truly extraordinary outcomes. Here are just a few examples of remarkable ADHD-related strengths:

Creative problem-solving skills due to the different ways in which we can process information. Spontaneity and adaptability due to the variations in our nervous systems, executive functioning and neurotransmitting chemicals such as dopamine. High levels of resilience developed from many years of navigating a world that forgot to design us into it.

By implementing appropriate support and creating psychologically safe spaces, we embrace the exponential talents and strengths of a diverse cognitive kaleidoscope for one of the most fulfilling and rewarding investments yet.

BY BETH THOMAS

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