

EXPERT PROFILE WELLNESS

Magazine

ISSUE
8

**MORE FROM OUR
GLOBAL EXPERTS**



**DR TERRY
MCIVOR**

A STORY OF RECOVERY,
INTEGRATION, AND RECLAIMED LIFE



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EDITORS NOTE



As the pace of life continues to pull us in countless directions, it becomes clearer that our greatest challenge is not how much we can take on, but how intentionally we choose the things that genuinely matter.

We often fill our days with tasks, obligations and routines, yet the moments that stay with us, the ones that nourish us, are usually the ones we slow down enough to create.

In this edition of Expert Profile Wellness, I wanted to focus on that gentle but powerful shift: pursuing what truly holds value in our lives. Whether it is spending more time with friends and family, giving attention to our wellbeing, or carving out space for the experiences that bring meaning and joy, this pursuit is at the core of a healthier, more fulfilled life.

Connection remains one of our most important sources of strength. When we invest in the people we love, offer our time, share conversation and show up with presence, we are reminded of what really counts. These moments anchor us far more than any achievement ever could.

As you move through this issue, I hope it encourages you to pause, reflect and realign your energy towards the parts of life that deserve it most. Chase what matters. Honour what lifts you. And make time, real time, for the people and experiences that give your days purpose.

Editor - Rany Athwall

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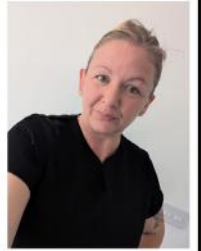
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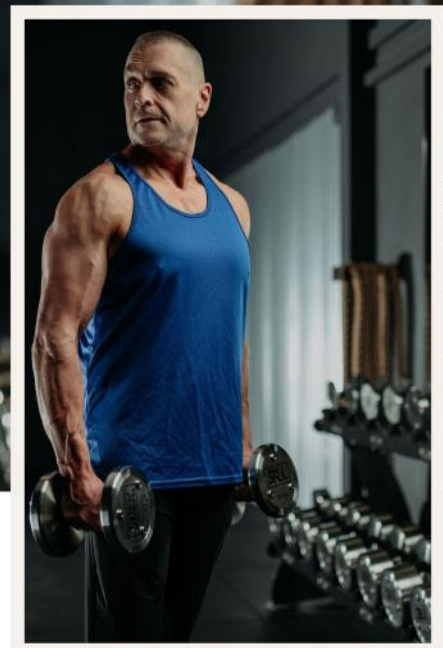
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Early Life, Identity Formation, and the Quiet Construction of Disconnection

I want to begin this story not with bulimia, weight, or recovery, but with atmosphere. Long before behaviours appeared, before labels or symptoms, there was a way of being in the world that shaped everything that followed. My early life was not defined by obvious trauma or dramatic disruption. What defined it instead was something far quieter and far more difficult to name, a gradual learning about what was expected, what was permitted, and what was best managed internally rather than spoken aloud.

I learned early how to be capable. Not exceptional, not extraordinary, but reliable. I learned how to read a room, how to anticipate the needs and moods of others, and how to adjust myself accordingly. This did not feel like a skill at the time. It felt like common sense. You notice what is required and you meet it. You do not make a fuss. You do not draw unnecessary attention to yourself. You keep things moving.

Looking back, I can see how this orientation toward responsibility and self-containment laid the groundwork for how I would later relate to my body, to food, and to distress. There was no explicit message that emotions were unwelcome, but there was a strong implicit sense that they were something to manage privately. Feelings were not dangerous, but neither were they central. What mattered was functioning, coping, and continuing.

As a child and young adult, I did not experience myself as disconnected. I experienced myself as competent. I did what needed to be done. I adapted. I coped. And because there was no obvious crisis, no external marker of difficulty, there was no reason to question this way of being. It worked. At least, it worked well enough to avoid scrutiny.

Food entered this landscape quietly. It was present, normal, and unremarkable. Yet even early on, food offered something beyond nourishment. It provided comfort without conversation. It created a pause in the day. It filled emotional space without requiring explanation. Eating was one of the few moments where attention could turn inward without justification. That mattered more than I understood at the time.

As I moved into adulthood, life became more demanding, not necessarily harsher, but more complex. Responsibilities multiplied. Expectations increased. The internal pressure to remain capable intensified. I was good at appearing steady. I was good at meeting obligations. What I was not good at was recognising strain before it accumulated. I did not know how to register overload until it expressed itself through behaviour or physical symptoms.

This is where regulation becomes important. I did not have language for this then, but I can name it now. I did not have reliable ways of regulating my internal states through connection, expression, or rest. Instead, I relied on suppression and distraction. I stayed busy. I stayed useful. I stayed outwardly composed.

Food gradually became more central as a regulating tool. Not consciously, not strategically, but functionally. Eating softened emotional edges. It dampened intensity. It provided relief that did not require negotiation or vulnerability. Over time, this relief became something I relied on, particularly during periods of stress or emotional overload.

The emergence of bulimia did not feel like the arrival of a problem. It felt like the discovery of a solution. That is difficult to admit, but it is true. Purging did not begin as self-harm or self-punishment. It began as a way to manage the aftermath of eating without losing the sense of control that mattered so deeply to me. It offered relief, containment, and quiet. For someone who had learned to manage everything internally, this made sense.

What is often misunderstood about bulimia is that it is rarely about food itself. It is about regulation. It is about managing internal states when other options feel unavailable or unsafe. For me, purging reduced anxiety. It restored a sense of order. It allowed me to continue functioning without disruption. In that sense, it aligned perfectly with the identity I had already constructed, capable, contained, uninterrupted.

Because bulimia functioned so effectively in the short term, it embedded itself quickly. It did not immediately interfere with my external life. I continued to work, to relate, to meet expectations. This reinforced the belief



that I was in control. If anything, I felt more in control than before. I had found a way to manage something that previously felt unmanageable.

Shame came later. At first, secrecy felt practical rather than emotional. This was simply something private. Something unnecessary to explain. But secrecy has a cumulative effect. Over time, what begins as privacy becomes separation. And separation gradually reshapes identity.

As the years progressed, bulimia became more frequent, more structured, more ingrained. What had once been an occasional strategy became a central organising principle. My days were increasingly shaped by internal negotiations that no one else could see. When to eat. When to purge. How to ensure privacy. How to manage the physical consequences without drawing attention.

Despite this, I did not experience myself as ill. I experienced myself as managing. This distinction matters. Illness suggests loss of control. Management suggests competence. I was still working, still functioning, and still appearing stable. The disorder lived beneath that surface, invisible and therefore unchallenged.

During this time, my relationship with my body became increasingly instrumental. My body was something to manage rather than inhabit. Sensations were data points rather than experiences. Hunger, fullness, fatigue, and tension were interpreted through the lens of control rather than care. I did not ask what my body needed. I asked how to keep it compliant.

Living Inside the Disorder, Weight Gain, and the Slow Erosion of Energy

Weight gain occurred slowly, almost imperceptibly at first. This was confusing and deeply unsettling. I believed, as many do, that bulimia should prevent weight gain. When it did not, I assumed something was wrong with me. I did not consider that years of metabolic stress, hormonal disruption, and nervous system dysregulation might be shaping my physiology. I internalised the contradiction as failure.

Emotionally, my world narrowed. Not dramatically, but steadily. Joy dulled. Fatigue normalised. Life became something to manage rather than inhabit. I did not experience this as a loss. I experienced it as adulthood.

By the time bulimia was firmly established, it no longer felt like something I could step outside of and observe. It was simply the environment I lived in. Like background noise in a busy city, it was always present, but rarely questioned. I did not wake up each morning thinking I had a disorder. I woke up thinking about how to get through the day.

This period of my life was defined not by crisis, but by repetition. Eating, purging, managing the physical consequences, concealing the behaviour, then returning to work and responsibility. Everything continued externally, which reinforced the illusion that things were under control. If I could still function, still perform, still meet expectations, then how serious could it really be?

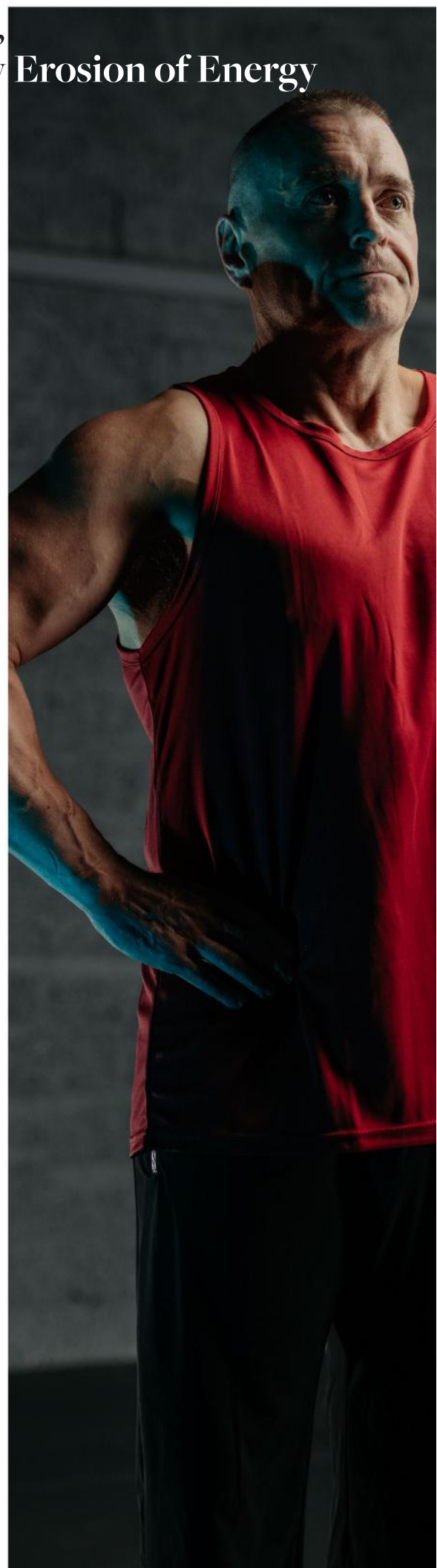
Internally, however, enormous energy was being diverted into maintenance. Not growth, not development, not connection, but maintenance. Every purge required planning. Every meal carried anticipation. Every interaction carried the question of whether I would be able to manage my body afterwards. This constant vigilance consumed cognitive resources. It left little space for creativity, spontaneity, or rest.

I became adept at tolerating physical discomfort. Sore throats, fatigue, dizziness, and digestive problems all became familiar. Rather than interpreting these sensations as signals, I treated them as obstacles to navigate. The body was something to get through, not something to listen to. This stance extended beyond eating behaviours. I ignored tiredness. I overrode stress. I dismissed emotional signals as inconveniences.

Predictably, my energy declined. Not suddenly, but steadily. I felt tired even after sleeping. Mental sharpness dulled. Tasks required more effort. I compensated by pushing harder, staying busier, and remaining outwardly engaged. Rest felt dangerous. Slowing down risked awareness, and awareness risked disruption.

Weight gain continued gradually. This was one of the most confusing aspects of this period. From the inside, it felt deeply unfair. I believed I was doing everything to prevent it. As the scale continued to climb, I responded with increased control. More rigid patterns. More frequent purging. More internal rules. Each escalation made the system more brittle.

What I did not understand at the time was that my body was responding logically to prolonged stress. Years of bingeing and purging altered hormonal regulation. Insulin sensitivity changed. Cortisol remained elevated. The nervous system stayed in a state of threat. In this context, weight gain was not a failure. It was an adaptation.



Psychologically, my sense of possibility narrowed. Long-term goals felt abstract. Life was lived in short increments, meal to meal, day to day. Relationships existed, but intimacy was constrained. Secrecy shaped the connection. Vulnerability felt risky, not because others were unsafe, but because honesty threatened the structure that allowed me to function.

At some point, I reached twenty-one stone. The number registered without drama. There was resignation rather than shock. Asking for help did not occur to me. Help would have required explanation, and explanation felt unsafe.

What stands out to me now is the absence of kindness toward myself. Not overt punishment, but a quiet

for decades. I knew instinctively that if I approached this the way I had approached everything else, by forcing myself, by setting rigid rules, by trying to overpower what I felt, I would simply recreate the same system under a different name. I did not need more discipline. I needed a different relationship with myself.

I went to the gym not to fix myself, but to inhabit myself. That distinction is subtle, but it was everything. My body had become something I managed, something I punished, something I tried to keep compliant. I needed to rebuild trust, not just physical capability. Resistance training offered structure without chaos. Clear movements, rest, and feedback. It required attention. It required presence. It did not allow me to disappear into my head.



I trained with Zita, whose approach was steady and grounded. There was no dramatics, no harshness, no pressure to prove anything. She treated my body with the respect I had not been giving it. We worked with what was possible. We progressed gradually. If fatigue arrived, we acknowledged it. If a movement felt unstable, we adjusted. That approach was unfamiliar. I was used to overriding discomfort, dismissing signals, and pushing through. In those first weeks, the impulse to do that surfaced constantly.

The early sessions were humbling. Strength was limited. Stamina was poor. Even basic movements exposed how disconnected I was from my own body. It was not simply that I was unfit; it was that my body did not feel like a place I lived in. It felt like a vehicle

neglect. I did not ask whether I was coping. I asked whether I was functioning. That orientation, once adaptive, was now eroding me. Eventually, the system reached its limit.

I dragged around. That disconnection is difficult to explain to someone who has not experienced it. You can be inside your body and still not feel present in it. You can move and still feel absent.

Rebuilding Trust, Embodiment, and a Life Beyond Survival

The moment on the floor did not arrive with panic. It arrived with clarity. I could no longer explain away the cost of how I was living. My body was no longer cooperating with the story I had been telling myself for years, that this was normal, that tiredness was simply adulthood, that I could keep pushing through. In that stillness, there was no space for rationalisation. Lying there, I said to myself, this has to change.

What followed was not urgency. It was honesty. And honesty matters because urgency had been part of the trap. Urgency fuels control. Control had already shaped my relationship with food, my body, and my emotions

But something began to shift. Not dramatically. Quietly. When I showed up, my body responded. It responded slowly, but reliably. Movements that felt awkward became smoother. Weights that felt impossible became manageable. Recovery improved. The changes were not spectacular, but they were undeniable. That mattered because my life had become full of internal contradictions. I did not trust my perceptions. I did not trust my body. The gym gave me evidence that effort could lead to response, and that consistency mattered more than intensity.

The gym also challenged my old beliefs about what effort had to look like. For most of my life, effort meant endurance. It meant ignoring limits. It meant functioning regardless of cost. Resistance training taught me a different lesson. Effort paired with attention is not weakness; it is intelligence. Rest is not failure; it is part of adaptation. Progress is not something you force; it is something you build.



That lesson began to reach beyond training. I started paying attention to sleep, not as an inconvenience, but as information. I began noticing tension, rather than automatically suppressing it. I began recognising stress earlier, before it turned into something that required drastic coping strategies. This was not some sudden emotional awakening. It was gradual and practical. I simply started listening.

As my training became more regular, my nervous system settled. Predictable movement reduced the background buzz of anxiety I had carried for years. Physical effort gave me a channel for energy that previously had nowhere to go. Sleep improved. Mood stabilised. My thinking sharpened. It was as though a fog I had accepted as normal began to lift. I could focus again. I could plan again. I could sustain attention without feeling drained.

This shift had a direct effect on my relationship with food. As my body experienced predictability and safety, eating became less chaotic. Hunger cues became clearer. Fullness became less threatening. I began to recognise that part of what had kept bulimia alive was dysregulation, the constant swinging between tension and relief, the constant need to reset my internal state. When training gave my body another way to regulate, the urges did not disappear, but they weakened.

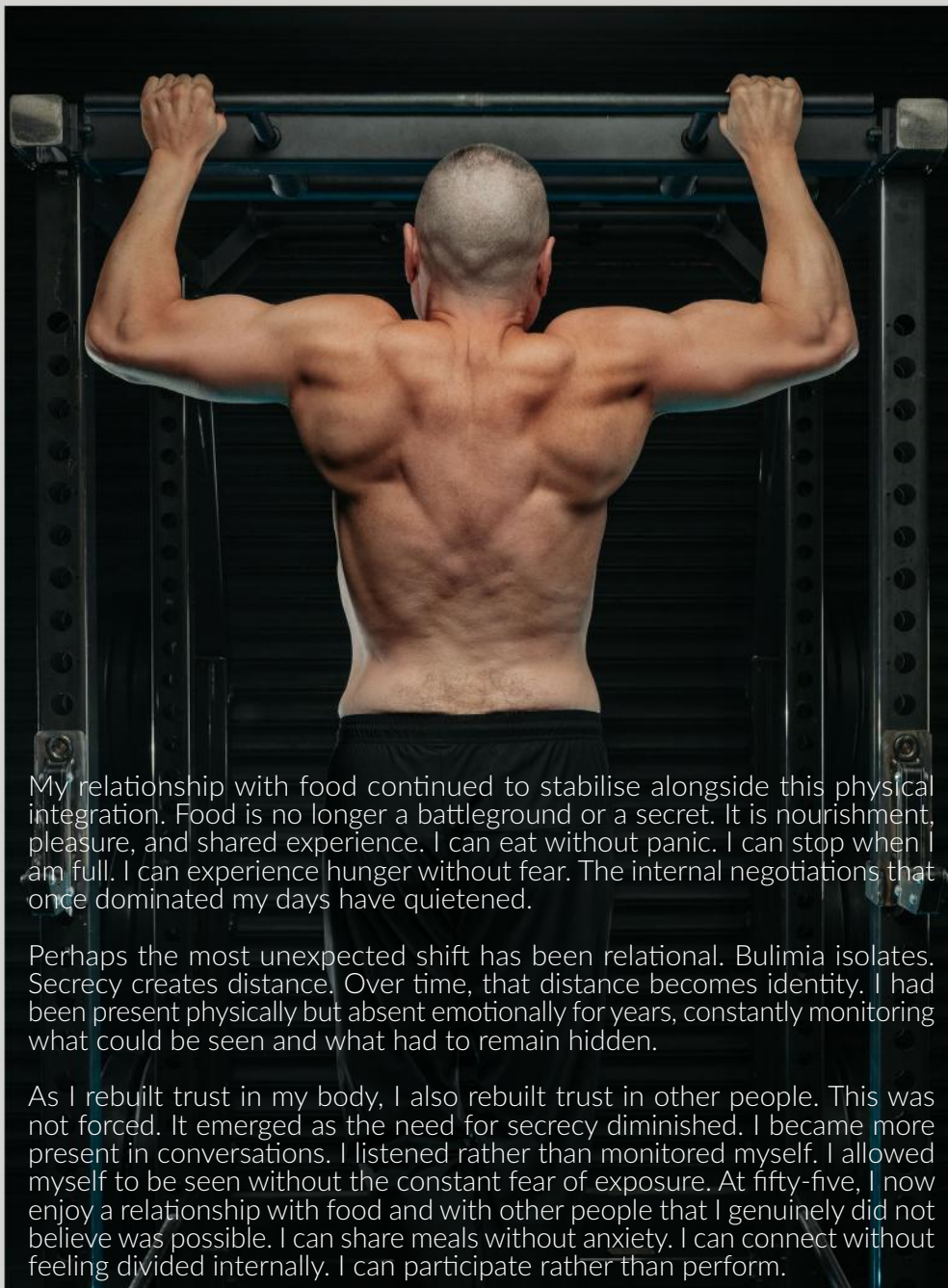
Let me be clear, bulimia did not vanish overnight. Letting go of it meant letting go of a coping mechanism that had shaped my life for more than twenty years. There were moments of grief. People do not talk about that enough. When a disorder has been with you for decades, it is not only destructive, it is familiar. Familiarity can feel like safety, even when it is harming you. There were moments where eating without purging felt unsettling, even risky, because my body and mind had learned that purging was how tension was resolved.

But those moments gradually changed. The urges became signals rather than commands. I learned to pause. I learned to sit with discomfort without immediately trying to erase it. This is where support mattered. I was no longer alone with the internal noise. Structure mattered. I was no longer improvising my days around secrecy. And embodiment mattered. I was no longer living exclusively in my head.

Over eighteen months, I lost ninety pounds. Weight loss was visible, but it was not the most important outcome. What mattered more was that my body became responsive again. Life required less effort. I could move without feeling crushed by my own weight. I could breathe more easily. I could climb stairs without dread. I could do ordinary tasks without feeling as though I was spending my entire energy budget in the first few minutes.

Eventually, movement stopped feeling rehabilitative and began to feel expressive. This is where kickboxing entered my life. Kickboxing demanded focus, timing, coordination, and presence. It pulled me out of rumination and into action. It gave me a sense of power that was not aggressive, but embodied. It required me to stay alert, to engage, to participate. At fifty-five, I enjoy kickboxing and weight training. That sentence is not small. For years, I did not believe I would enjoy my body. I believed I would manage it, tolerate it, fight it, but not enjoy it.

Weight training remained a cornerstone. It grounded me. It reinforced capability in a way that was not tied to appearance or punishment. Strength became something I felt rather than something I chased. There is a difference between pursuing an ideal and building capacity. Capacity is real. Capacity changes how you live. It changes what you believe is possible.



My relationship with food continued to stabilise alongside this physical integration. Food is no longer a battleground or a secret. It is nourishment, pleasure, and shared experience. I can eat without panic. I can stop when I am full. I can experience hunger without fear. The internal negotiations that once dominated my days have quietened.

Perhaps the most unexpected shift has been relational. Bulimia isolates. Secrecy creates distance. Over time, that distance becomes identity. I had been present physically but absent emotionally for years, constantly monitoring what could be seen and what had to remain hidden.

As I rebuilt trust in my body, I also rebuilt trust in other people. This was not forced. It emerged as the need for secrecy diminished. I became more present in conversations. I listened rather than monitored myself. I allowed myself to be seen without the constant fear of exposure. At fifty-five, I now enjoy a relationship with food and with other people that I genuinely did not believe was possible. I can share meals without anxiety. I can connect without feeling divided internally. I can participate rather than perform.

Out of this lived experience emerged Synaptic Fit Fusion Pros. It was not created as a branding exercise. It emerged from a realisation that lasting progress does not happen in silos. Fitness alone is not enough. Nutrition alone is not enough. Insight alone is not enough. When these are fragmented, people struggle and blame themselves. When they are integrated, stability becomes possible.

Delivering the programme online was intentional. Isolation sustains suffering. Shame thrives in silence. Access to consistent support matters, not as a luxury, but as a foundation. I know this because my own struggle lasted as long as it did, partly because I lived it alone. At this stage of my life, I do not measure success by extremes. I measure it by presence. By the ability to move, eat, connect, and rest without internal conflict. By the quiet confidence that comes from living in alignment rather than opposition.

This is not the end of my story. It is an ongoing practice. But it is no longer a life organised around survival. It is a life shaped by participation, strength, and connection. And if there is meaning in what I have lived, it is not that recovery is dramatic or heroic. It is possible, even after decades of struggle, even later in life, even when you believe the patterns are too entrenched to loosen.

They are not.

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WHY YOU DO THE JOB YOU DO

William worked 60-hour weeks as a Senior Commercial Advisor, excelling at negotiations. He felt overwhelmed and couldn't understand why. "I'm good at my job," he told me during our first coaching session. "I'm very much appreciated by my colleagues. Yet I feel like I'm drowning." When I asked William about his own needs—what

he enjoyed, what energized him—silence filled the room. After several minutes, he whispered, "I honestly don't know. I've never thought about it."

I see this pattern frequently: clients who excel professionally but struggle to prioritize themselves. They carry an intense sense of responsibility toward their work and colleagues while neglecting their own wellbeing entirely.

My first session always includes questions about the client's family of origin. After clients describe their family, my next question is always: "How would you describe your role within your family?"

William's story unfolded gradually. When he was eight, his mother abruptly moved them from the US to Germany, abandoning his father forever. Alone with a mentally ill mother, William stepped into a role far beyond his years—shopping for groceries after school, managing household responsibilities, ensuring their fragile world didn't collapse. The eight-year-old who learned that survival meant serving others had grown into a 45-year-old man who couldn't identify his own desires. William's career choice wasn't really a choice at all—it was predetermined by an eight-year-old's survival strategy. His exceptional listening skills and ability to sense what others want or need made him brilliant at negotiations, but this same pattern was slowly destroying him from within. He was experiencing depressive feelings and felt constantly on edge. "I think I might have a burnout," he told me—a self-diagnosis many of my clients arrive with after months of trying to understand their exhaustion.

Here's what I've learned from working with hundreds of clients: those who grew up with family members who were sick, addicted, or emotionally unavailable often made a childhood decision to become the family's stabilizer. They developed an exceptional ability to read what any environment needs and automatically provide it—whether that's emotional support, practical help, or simply not causing additional problems.

William had perfected this skill. His colleagues loved him, his bosses valued him, and his negotiations succeeded brilliantly. But this very competence was suffocating his authentic self. People who adopt this pattern are often unaware of their own feelings, needs, or desires. They excel at caring for others, yet struggle to care for themselves. Some clients spend decades in roles that drain them before recognizing the pattern.

Understanding these patterns creates an essential foundation for conscious career choice.

Your Family: The Ultimate Career Blueprint

Have you ever wondered why you gravitated toward your particular profession? Why do some people naturally become leaders while others prefer behind-the-scenes roles? Why do certain workplace situations trigger you, while others energize you?

The answer lies not in your education, resume, or personality tests, but in your family of origin. Most of us never consider our family as a system, yet it operates exactly like one. Just as organizations have hierarchies and defined roles, families create invisible positions that children unconsciously adopt to keep the system functioning.

Picture a fountain where water flows naturally from one tier to the next. In a balanced family system, the emotional resources and energy you deserve cascade down from parents to children, providing the security and attention each child needs to thrive.



But when the source is blocked—due to addiction, mental illness, absence, or trauma—children sense the system's instability. To restore balance and ensure their own belonging, they step up to fill the void. They become the caretaker, the

achiever, the peacekeeper, the rebel, or the invisible one.

They take up a role that was never meant for a child. In William's fountain, his father was physically absent in the US, and his mother was emotionally unavailable due to her mental illness. So William moved up a level, taking on responsibilities that should have belonged to his parents.

These childhood survival strategies keep families together, but they also become the invisible blueprint for our adult careers.

As William grasped this concept, recognition flooded his face. “That’s exactly what happened,” he said. “I was the caretaker. I did everything for her. I never questioned it.” “How does this pattern show up in your work?” I asked him. William paused, then looked directly at me. “I have the feeling that if I don’t do it, nobody will. I find it difficult to delegate because deep down, I believe others won’t handle things. When colleagues are stressed, I automatically absorb their problems as if they’re mine to solve.”

At that moment he realized his overwhelming work feelings had both a name and an origin. He wasn’t failing at success—he was succeeding at the wrong job description. William’s breakthrough reveals how childhood roles operate below our conscious awareness, shaping how we show up in all our relationships and interactions. These patterns are universal, but understanding how they manifest professionally can transform your entire career experience.

How Family Patterns Shape Professional Life

Your childhood family role doesn’t just influence what job you choose—it determines how you show up at work and in other parts of your social life, what triggers your stress, where you excel, and where you struggle.

The Caretaker gravitates toward roles where they can prevent system breakdown—whether fixing struggling teams, repairing broken processes, or stabilizing dysfunctional systems. They burn out from feeling responsible for everything and everyone.

The Achiever becomes the high-achieving CEO, doctor, or lawyer—roles where they can prove their worth through performance. They work excessive hours and fear failure above all else.

The Invisible One seeks independent roles in IT, research, or creative fields where they can avoid attention and conflict. They struggle with visibility and speaking up for themselves. They have a strong belief that they need to do everything themselves because no one is there to help them.

The Rebel chooses entrepreneurship or consulting—careers that challenge and change existing systems. They resist traditional structures and hierarchy. They may even move far from where they grew up to escape the family system.

The Peacekeeper is drawn to mediation, diplomacy, and customer service—anywhere they can eliminate tension and discord. They avoid difficult conversations that might create conflict. They have an unconscious drive to rescue every situation and every person.

These broad patterns are just examples. Your family role was shaped by your specific circumstances, birth order, family dynamics, and unique experiences. Only you know what your role truly entailed.

The Hidden Cost

When our childhood role completely takes over our adult life, we lose touch with our inner self—our true needs, desires, and beliefs. William’s caretaking role made him skilled at his job, but the same pattern trapped him completely. He couldn’t delegate, couldn’t set boundaries, and felt responsible for everyone’s wellbeing—while ignoring his own needs entirely.

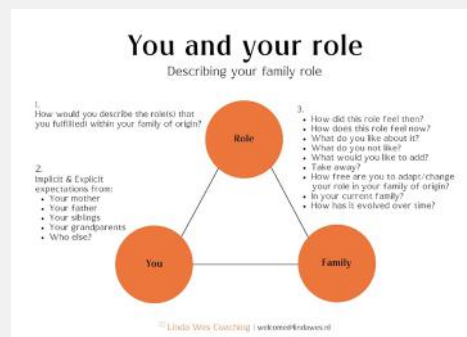
The result:

- Success without satisfaction
- Exhaustion despite recognition
- Inability to identify his own needs
- Feeling trapped in a life he built but didn’t actually want

This is why understanding your family of origin matters. It’s not just psychology—it’s about recognizing the invisible forces that have been steering your career without your conscious input.

Your Career Archaeology Begins Now

Understanding these patterns is the first step, but recognizing YOUR specific pattern requires something most professionals resist: slowing down. We’re so busy moving from task to task, checking items off lists, that we never pause to notice our automatic responses. This assessment isn’t another quick checkbox exercise—it requires the kind of honest reflection that only happens when you slow down enough to truly see yourself.



‘Don’t overthink it—often your first instinct reveals the truth you’ve always known but rarely examined.’

From Automatic to Conscious Choice

Understanding your family role doesn’t invalidate your skills—William genuinely was talented at negotiations. But awareness interrupts the automation. When you catch yourself in an old pattern, you suddenly have options you never saw before.

Are you in your current role because it aligns with your authentic interests, or because it replicates familiar family role patterns? This awareness is the first step toward conscious career choice. Your eight-year-old self did what they needed to belong. Your adult self deserves to choose free of old patterns and roles, finding work that truly energizes you and brings fulfillment to all parts of your life.

Once you complete the assessment, start noticing when you slip into your old role. Even recognizing it after the fact is progress. Step by step, you’ll become more aware, and soon you’ll have the power to choose differently. Start by choosing one meeting this week where you’ll pause before automatically saying yes to extra responsibilities. That pause is where your freedom begins.

What would change in your career if you chose your responses instead of defaulting to old patterns?

By Linda Wes

Executive Life Coach



Horoscope for

Welcome, to a period of re-evaluation. Between December 2025 and March 2026 is not a time to be rushing into the new year with frantic energy, but about a necessary pause for deep recalibration. We are navigating a cosmic slow-down, designed to ensure our foundations in both our careers and our closest relationships are built to last.

Jupiter Retrograde in Cancer (November 2025 – March 2026): Jupiter, the planet of expansion and fortune, is moving backward through the sign of home, security, and emotion. This isn't a time for immediate, massive outward growth; it's a four-month period dedicated to emotional alignment. We are collectively asked the question: What makes me feel truly safe? Am I investing in the right emotional and personal foundations? This will profoundly affect career stability and the emotional root of our relationships.

Saturn in Pisces: The taskmaster of the cosmos continues its transit through the mystical, boundary-less waters of Pisces. This is where we learn to put structure around our intuition, compassion, and creative projects. Expect tests in areas where you lack clear emotional and financial boundaries. What have you been enabling? What do you need to sacrifice to build a more authentic future?

Let us now take a look at how these transits are showing up for each sign.

Aries

Jupiter Retrograde activates your 4th House of Home/Foundation, suggesting a need to reassess your career's emotional cost. Does your work truly support your sense of belonging? You may feel a pull toward working from home, or dealing with family matters that distract from professional goals.

Saturn in the 12th House demands you build structure around your rest and mental health. Burnout is a risk if you don't. From January to February, Mars in your 10th House of Career provides powerful energy to push through major projects, but the foundation must be solid first.

Taurus

Jupiter Retrograde in your 3rd House is a call to review your communication strategies and local networks. You may revisit old contracts, courses, or business ideas you previously abandoned. It's a powerful time for editing and refining your message. Saturn in the 11th House provides the structure needed to consolidate your network and social capital.

Be discerning about which groups or alliances truly serve your long-term vision. Money moves through your 8th House of shared resources and 9th House of higher learning/travel, suggesting a time to review investments or educational costs.

Gemini

Jupiter Retrograde in your 2nd House is a four-month audit of your income, self-worth, and spending habits. This is not the time to take huge financial risks, but to review your relationship with money. Are you charging what you are truly worth? Saturn's transit through your 10th House of Career continues to demand discipline and maturity in your professional life.

Promotions and recognition are possible, but only through consistent, hard work and a willingness to take on new, serious responsibilities. The Mercury Retrograde in this same house in March requires you to triple-check communication with authority figures or in public statements.

Cancer

Jupiter Retrograde is happening in your 1st House, placing your personal goals and identity under a microscope. You may revisit old professional paths or feel a deep need to align your career with your authentic self.

The money focus is on the 8th House of shared resources/debt through Mars's transit; this is a time for assertive action during January and February in resolving financial entanglements. Saturn in the 9th House asks you to ground your higher education, travel plans, or spiritual philosophies into a practical structure. Commit to one course or belief system rather than chasing every shiny new idea.

Leo

Jupiter Retrograde in your 12th House signals a time for behind-the-scenes reflection. This is not a period for big launches or public fanfare; focus on editing, finishing old projects, and clearing away mental clutter. Saturn in your 8th House of Shared Resources and Debt demands a mature, responsible review of loans, investments, or a partner's finances.

This is the time to pay off or restructure debt. The most dynamic professional energy comes from the Mars transit in your 6th House in January and February, allowing you to assertively clean up routines and daily work habits.

Virgo

Jupiter Retrograde in your 11th House is a time to revisit old contacts, networks, and long-term goals. An opportunity with an old friend or group may resurface. Saturn is transiting your 7th House of Partnerships, demanding structure and realism in all one-on-one working relationships, including collaborations and client dynamics.

You must define clear terms, boundaries, and expectations. Money is dynamic in your 5th House of speculation and investment due to Mars moving through it during January and February.

Winter 2025/2026



Libra

Jupiter Retrograde is happening in your 10th House, the very top of your chart. This is a powerful time for revising career ambitions and public image. An old boss, professional project, or public reputation issue may resurface, requiring a mature re-handling. Saturn in the 6th House continues to demand that you structure your daily work, routines, and health habits.

You cannot expand your career with Jupiter's assistance unless your daily life is efficient and disciplined, allow the Saturn transit to do this. Mars in your 4th House in January and February could create energy/tension around working from home or property matters.

Scorpio

Jupiter Retrograde in your 9th House is a cue to re-evaluate your long-term goals, beliefs, or educational path. You may revisit a major publication, a legal matter, or a travel plan. Saturn in the 5th House asks you to bring structure and responsibility to your creative projects and romantic life.

Creative blocks are possible, but only to force you to commit seriously to the work. Money flows through your 2nd House with Mars providing assertive energy to increase your income, followed by intense communication related to money when Mars moves into your 3rd House.

Sagittarius

Jupiter Retrograde in your 8th House is a deep-dive into shared finances, debts, or investments. You may need to revisit loan applications, tax filings, or renegotiate terms with a bank or partner. This is a time to release financial baggage. Saturn in the 4th

House continues to demand maturity and structure in your home environment. Property matters may feel heavy, or you may need to take on new responsibility for family members. Mars in your 2nd House during January and February provides the drive to earn money assertively, but be mindful of aggressive spending.

Marion Kirk has worked with tarot and astrology since the 1990's, she is a fourth generation intuitive from Scotland. An International divination conference presenter, author and creator of The Grief Journey Oracle and organiser of The Oracles Rebellion Divination Event.

Capricorn

Jupiter Retrograde in your 7th House of Partnerships is asking you to re-evaluate your collaborations and client relationships. You may revisit an old contract or partner, deciding if the dynamic truly supports your growth. Saturn in the 3rd House continues to apply discipline to your communication style, local environment, and learning efforts.

Commit to learning a new, tangible skill. Mars in your 1st House over January and February gives you a huge boost of personal energy and drive, use this to assert yourself professionally and launch projects. Money is addressed by Venus in your 2nd House around the same time, linking charm and value to your income.

Aquarius

Jupiter Retrograde in your 6th House is a call to review your daily work habits, routines, and relationship with service. This is the perfect time to clean up your professional efficiency and commit to a sustainable wellness plan. Saturn in the 2nd House continues to demand structure around your income and self-worth.

You must be disciplined about saving, budgeting, and clearly defining your value in the workplace. Pluto, having recently stationed Direct in your 1st House, is an ongoing theme of personal power and transformation that impacts your entire professional path. Mars in the 12th House during January and February may lead to hidden work or energy draining efforts, be mindful of what you do behind the scenes.

Pisces

Jupiter Retrograde in your 5th House of Creativity and Joy asks you to revisit old creative projects, passions, or speculations. What brings you genuine joy? How can that inform your professional path? Saturn in your 1st House of Self and Identity is the main theme: this transit requires you to mature, take responsibility for your life, and define your personal boundaries.

This is a powerful, though sometimes heavy, period of self-definition. Mars in your 11th House in January and February gives you the energy to network and pursue group goals assertively. The inner work must precede the outer push.

**By Marion Kirk
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WINTER'S QUIET LIGHT

A SEASON OF GRATITUDE

As winter settles around us, the world begins to soften into stillness. The days are shorter, and the air carries a sharper chill, nature offering a sanctuary of peace. This is the season that calls us inward - not to achieve or to strive, but to soften and reflect.

In this article, we look to winter as a sacred pause, a season that guides us to gratitude and renewal. Together, we will reflect on the gifts of the year gone by, explore a gentle journaling practice, and discover how crystals and chakra work can support in this time of rest and transformation. Winter reminds us that even in peace, light is quietly gathering within.

For many, winter is a season of magic, where wonder reveals itself in the smallest moments. As the year folds gently behind us, this season provides an opportunity to look back with a grateful heart. Like snow covering the ground, appreciation lays a soft blanket over our memories, transforming even the most complex paths into moments of wisdom and growth. Winter encourages us to recognise the gifts hidden inside every life experience. In the depths of winter, meditation becomes a guiding light. A time to honour what has been and rest in the warmth of gratitude. Sitting quietly, allow the heart to open and give thanks for the people who walk beside us, for the growth we didn't expect, and for the strength we discovered within.

In the practice of meditation, winter becomes more than a cold season; it is a reminder that, within stillness, transformation quietly unfolds. In the soft glow of a candle or in the silence of the early morning, we are reminded of what it means to sit with ourselves in acceptance. To honour all that has been, without

rushing to what is yet to come. Winter's wisdom is simple and profound. Harness this opportunity to pause, reflect and give thanks.



Soul Notes: Winter Gratitude Journaling & Reflection

Gratitude is one of the highest emotional vibrations. When we shift our focus from problems to blessings, the light in our lives becomes magnified. Gratitude lightens the weight we carry and generates joy, peace, and renewed energy, no matter the circumstances. It lifts us from dwelling on what is missing and anchors us in the beauty of what is already here.

This winter journaling practice invites you to sit quietly with a warm drink and write down what you are thankful for, for the year that is now almost over. Include the people, experiences, and lessons you feel most grateful for, honouring the moments of joy and ease, and also the ones that tested you, shaped you, and revealed strengths you may not have known you carried.

Place gratitude at the heart of your spiritual practice this winter; gratitude shifts everything. Even in the moments of challenge, there are threads of expansion, resilience and unexpected gifts.

Inspiration

Gratitude for the Year Past: Which moments, people, or lessons from this year am I most grateful for? How have they shaped me, guided me, or helped me to grow?

Inner Light: In the quiet of winter, what light do I sense glowing within me? How can I nurture and protect this spark through the colder, darker months?

Rest, Renewal & Simplicity: Where in my life am I being invited to slow down? What would it look like to honour rest, create more space, or choose simplicity?

Release & Surrender: What am I ready to gently let go - old patterns, fears, or stories that no longer serve my Highest Good? How can I release them with love as I step forward into the New Year?

Seeds of Intention: What quiet dreams or intentions am I planting, trusting they will take root and flourish in their own time?

When your words feel complete, close your eyes and rest your hands over your heart. Breathe slowly, letting gratitude flow through you like a warm light.

Whisper softly:

*I am grateful for all that has carried me to this moment.
With an open heart, I honour the lessons, the blessings, and
the growth.
I trust that gratitude will continue to guide me forward with
peace, abundance and grace.*

Grounded in Gratitude: Crystals for Winter Alignment

Crystals are not only stones of the earth, but they are also allies of the soul. In winter, they become gentle companions, amplifying gratitude, offering clarity, and steadying you for the path forward. Crystals carry ancient vibrations that support us as we reflect on the year gone by and gather strength for what lies ahead.

Invite your chosen crystals into your winter rituals. Place them near a candle during meditation, hold one gently as you write down what you are grateful for, or rest them by your bedside as you sleep. Trust their presence to ground you, comfort you, and remind you that even in the quiet, transformation is taking place. Trust your intuition to guide you to the stones you need most.

Snowflake Obsidian Purification Balance Transformation

- *Dark volcanic glass marked with soft white patterns like falling snow, Snowflake Obsidian is the stone of winter's truth,*
- *It teaches us that within shadow there is always light, and within endings, the promise of new beginnings.*
- *Like winter itself, Snowflake Obsidian offers both stillness and renewal, guiding you through transformation with grounding and grace.*

Clear Quartz Clarity Amplification Healing

- *Clear Quartz shines like frost-kissed ice beneath the winter sun, pure and luminous.*
- *Known as a master healer, it amplifies energy and intention, magnifying whatever you focus on.*
- *Clear Quartz helps you see beyond the surface, bringing clarity to your reflections and illuminating the quiet growth unfolding within.*

Amethyst Peace Wisdom Spiritual Connection

- *Amethyst carries the silence of winter twilight, offering peace to the mind and nourishment to the soul.*
- *This soothing stone eases stress and restores balance, inviting clarity through calm contemplation.*
- *A crystal of wisdom and higher connection, Amethyst opens the way to deeper intuition and spiritual renewal, reminding us to trust the stillness of the season.*

Quiet Radiance: Nurturing the Chakras in Winter

The chakras, like the seasons, move in rhythm with the cycles of nature. In winter, their energy draws gently inward, no longer seeking to bloom, creating depth and renewal at a soul level. This is a time of quiet presence - a season for gratitude, for release, and for tending the inner flame that carries us through the darker months.

International Usui Reiki Master Teacher, Angel Reiki Master, Advanced Crystal Therapy Healer, Professional Practitioner Diploma, Manifestation Coach, Holistic Partner at Tara Rose Salon UAE & Insight Timer Teacher.

By attuning to the Crown, Third Eye, and Heart chakras, we open to winter's wisdom. Grounding in gratitude, deepening in vision, and resting in peace as we prepare for renewal.

In meditation, imagine your chakras like stars in the winter night sky, glowing softly and aligning themselves with calm precision. With every inhale, draw in clarity, light, and peace. With every exhale, release any heaviness the year has left behind. Allow your breath to be the gentle thread that guides you through the body, pausing at each chakra to notice, to listen, and to honour. Whatever arises, meet it with acceptance and compassion.

The Crown Chakra

The Crown Chakra is our bridge to higher wisdom. Throughout this season, it reminds us of the sacred thread that connects us all to something greater. Sitting quietly, invite gratitude to flow upward, offering thanks for the unseen guidance that carried you throughout the past year.

Affirmation:

I am connected to the infinite light of the universe. I give thanks for the guidance that flows through me in every season of life.

The Third Eye Chakra

Winter is a season of deep insight, a time to look back at the year with thanks and to see more clearly the wisdom it has offered. The Third Eye Chakra opens us to inner vision and truth, sharpening our awareness beyond what is seen.

Affirmation:

I trust my inner vision. I see the wisdom in my journey and carry it forward with clarity and grace.

The Heart Chakra

The Heart Chakra is a sanctuary of love, compassion, and forgiveness. Winter asks us to open our hearts and create space for peace. Place your hands over your heart and breathe warmth into this centre.

Affirmation:

I honour the past with gratitude. My heart is open to love, forgiveness, and the healing presence of peace.

By Helen Gullick



Winter meditation



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Why You Overreact

The Trigger Trap Explained



You know that moment when you explode over something tiny and immediately think 'Where did that come from?' We're often left feeling regretful or shameful, wishing time travel truly existed. I've been there, and I suspect many of you reading this will relate.

Contrary to what you might think, you're not broken or overly sensitive. These intense reactions aren't about what's happening in the present moment; they're merely your ancient protection system kicking in, doing what it was biologically designed to do. And understanding how it works changes everything.

Understanding Your Internal Supercomputer

I'm not a neuroscientist by any means, but I'll simplify and break down this process to give you a different perspective on why you react the way you do, potentially creating space for a new relationship with your reactions. Imagine your mind as a sophisticated computer system that's still operating on ancient survival programming, made up of three components.

Your unconscious mind is the hard drive of this system. It's been recording and storing everything you've ever experienced since the moment you were born. Research suggests it processes around 11 million bits of information per second, operating completely outside your conscious awareness. It also regulates your bodily functions.

Your beliefs about yourself and the world are formed here, primarily during your formative years by age 7. Research shows that around 95% of our decisions happen at this unconscious level, meaning most of what we think are conscious choices are actually being made by this part of our mind based on past experiences.

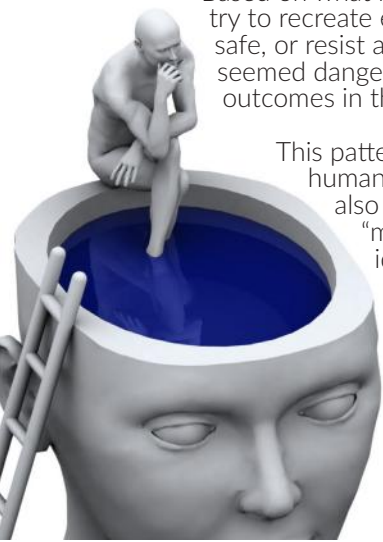
Your conscious mind is the processor of this system – your immediate spotlight of awareness, your current conscious thoughts, your deliberate choices, your ability to analyse and reason. Its processing capacity is limited to only about 40-120 bits of information per second.

Your ego or protector mind is the third part of this sophisticated computer system and acts as the internal anti-virus software.

This software has been running the exact same way for millennia. It constantly scans new experiences against the stored data in the unconscious mind, looking to answer one specific question: Is this safe or dangerous?

Based on what it finds, your ego mind will either try to recreate experiences that felt familiar and safe, or resist and guard against things that seemed dangerous or resulted in unfavourable outcomes in the past.

This pattern-matching system has helped humans survive for millennia. This part also creates your sense of "I" and "me," giving you your individual identity and personality.



The problem? Your protective mind can't tell the difference between a physical threat in the wild and an uncomfortable conversation with your boss – it just knows "familiar and safe" or "unfamiliar and potentially dangerous."

The Lightning-Fast Process Behind Every Trigger

Here's what happens in that split second when you get triggered:

A new experience enters your unconscious mind. Your protective mind then immediately does a lightning-fast scan, comparing it to your stored data. Within milliseconds, before your conscious mind even becomes aware of what's happening, a feeling is generated, and then a thought is created to match and justify that feeling.

At this point, your conscious mind is really just trying to make sense of what's happening without consciously understanding the underlying motivators or the automatic response that has already occurred. It immediately latches onto the automatically generated thought by continuing to create a narrative to explain the emotion that has already been triggered.

This is why you react before you think. Your immediate emotional & thought responses aren't something you're consciously creating – they're automatic reactions based on your past experiences. You're not choosing to feel triggered any more than you're choosing your heartbeat. So, if this process is automatic and biological, it begs the question: why do we allow ourselves to get stuck in judgment and suffering?

The Real Problem

While it may feel like the problem in the moment is that you're so triggered, the real problem is that you're attaching to this automatic process as if you chose it, fully identifying with it and making it who you are in that moment, without realising you have a choice in the matter.

Next time you feel triggered, pause and remind yourself: 'This is just my protection system activating.' This simple reframe creates space between you and the automatic response.

My next article will cover tools to practically work with thoughts and emotions. Until then, be gentle with yourself.

By Chantelle Dantu | Depth Coach

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PUTTING OUT THE FIRE

Let me ask you something: how many fires have you already put out today? And no, I don't mean actual flames—though some days leadership really does feel like the building's about to burn down. I'm talking about the inbox inferno. The “urgent” text messages. The drama that somehow lands squarely on your desk.

If you're a leader, manager, or business owner, chances are you've already fought off a few blazes before your first sip of coffee. Someone resigned unexpectedly. A client sent a frantic email. The budget numbers didn't quite line up. And there you are again—hose in hand, racing from one blaze to the next like a one-person fire brigade. It's exhausting. And yet, here's the strange part: it also feels good.

Why We Secretly Love the Fire

Firefighting gives us a rush. The drama, the speed, the chaos—it all makes us feel alive, needed, even necessary. And there's a scientific reason for it. Neuroscience tells us that in moments of crisis, our bodies flood with adrenaline and cortisol. That surge sharpens us in the moment. It makes us quick, decisive, and laser-focused. Solving a last-minute crisis feels like a win. The ping of a new message, the thrill of saving the day—it can be strangely addictive. But here's the uncomfortable truth: that constant chemical flood is quietly frying your system. Over time, cortisol overload shrinks the part of your brain responsible for focus, creativity, and memory. It drains your energy, dulls your problem-solving, and sets you on a fast track to burnout. In other words: while you're busy saving the day, your brain is whispering, “We can't keep doing this.”


The Embers We Ignore

The thing about fires is that they rarely appear out of nowhere. They start as embers. We often overlook small warning signs because we're too busy, such as the staff member who's unusually quiet in meetings. The client seems a little distant in their tone. The outdated system that everyone complains about but nobody fixes. Strong leaders aren't defined by how many flames they put out—they're defined by how early they notice the smoke. That means slowing down, listening actively, asking questions, and creating an environment where people feel safe enough to tell you the truth before things explode.

Prevention might not feel as glamorous as the late-night pizza in the office or the rush of a crisis averted—but prevention beats reaction every single time.

Duct Tape Leadership Doesn't Work

Too many leaders fall into the trap of quick fixes. Something breaks, and we patch it up. Someone leaves, and we shuffle the roster. A project goes sideways, and we throw more hours at it. But duct tape doesn't hold up



to heat. The same problem always comes roaring back. The shift comes when you stop thinking like a firefighter and start thinking like a fire marshal. Build firebreaks instead of band-aids. That means clear role expectations, regular check-ins, smarter systems, and processes that catch sparks before they ignite. It takes longer, yes—but once it's done, you won't be running back to the same blaze again and again.

Stop Hogging the Hose

Here's a tough truth: if you're the only one who knows how to put out the fire, you don't have a team—you have spectators. And spectators don't build sustainable businesses. Many leaders secretly love being the go-to problem solver. It strokes the ego. It feels heroic. But it also keeps you trapped in an endless cycle of dependence. True leadership is about passing the hose and training your people and empowering them to handle sparks themselves. Yes, they'll stumble. Yes, they'll get wet. But every fire they put out without you is one less blaze dragging you away from the bigger picture.

Protect Your Oxygen

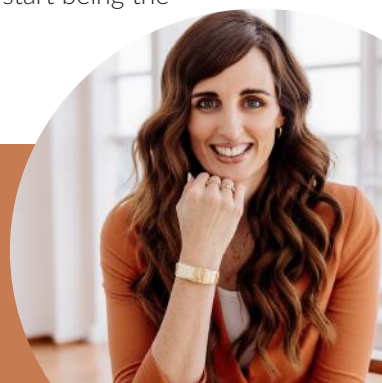
Ask any firefighter their first rule of survival: don't run out of oxygen. Yet leaders ignore this all the time. Running on empty, skipping rest, sacrificing health—it's like sprinting into smoke without an air tank. You might survive a few rounds, but eventually, you'll collapse. Protecting your own energy isn't indulgent—it's leadership. A calm, clear-headed leader creates far more impact than a burnt-out one frantically waving a hose.

From Firefighter to Firestarter

Here's the reframe that changes everything: leadership isn't about putting out the most fires. It's about knowing which flames deserve to burn. When you stop living in reaction mode, you create space for the good fires. Fires of innovation. Fires of creativity. Fires of human connection. These are the sparks that inspire teams, ignite cultures, and light the way forward.

So yes, keep your hose handy for true emergencies. But don't confuse constant firefighting with leadership. The leaders we remember aren't the ones who spent their lives dousing flames. They're the ones who lit fires that changed the world. And maybe, just maybe, it's time to stop being the firefighter—and start being the firestarter.

By Janice Elsley



This is the first edition of “Putting Out the Fire,” a series exploring the hidden habits that drain leaders—and the practices that help them thrive. I'm Janice Elsley, a leadership and change expert, international author, and podcast host who blends neuroscience, psychology, and human connection to help leaders stop burning out and start building legacies that last.



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Perfect on Paper

Perception isn't the whole story

office, the smallest setback sends your temper spiking or leaves you reeling.

- You live in a comfortable house, drive a nice car, and, from the perspective of others, seem to have it all—yet you enter an empty house and suddenly your world feels isolating, small and hollow.
- Or perhaps—like me at the time—outwardly functioning but broken from the inside out.

These moments, invisible to the outside world, reveal the subtle gap between perception and reality—the very essence of seeming **Perfect on Paper**.

A relatable thread among clients

I've spoken to and coached clients who, from the outside, seem to have everything—successful careers, admired by colleagues, loved by friends—and yet they feel disconnected from their own lives, unsure of what truly matters.

In their stories, I hear the same thread:

- The pressure to be perfect
- To meet expectations
- The quiet cost it exacts on their wellbeing and relationships.

From awareness to authenticity

The challenge is recognizing the difference between a life that looks perfect from the outside but hides private pain, or one that seems Perfect on Paper yet doesn't truly reflect who you are or who you want to be.

The moments where perception and reality diverge are also moments of insight—opportunities to pause, reflect, and start noticing the patterns we maintain, mostly unconsciously.

Even a small step matters. Today, you might ask yourself:

- Where in my life do I seem Perfect on Paper but out of sync with how I feel?
- Where am I holding onto old behaviours or habits that no longer serve me?
- Where am I hiding behind appearances rather than showing up in my authenticity?
- Am I chasing success, but at huge personal cost?
- Where could I allow a little more vulnerability?

In light of your reflections, what could be a first step toward rebuilding a life that brings what you feel and what you show closer together?

A first step towards rebuilding

Noticing these gaps in yourself is not about criticism or blame. It's about awareness—the first step toward rebuilding a life that is meaningful, connected and true to you is to be aware of the foundation upon which you are building. When perception aligns with reality, life feels lighter, more authentic and deeply satisfying.

The phrase Perfect on Paper is a reminder that what may look good to the world is only part of your story. True resilience, fulfilment and impact come to you when the life you live reflects the way you truly feel.

By Martine Garabette PhD



I went on a date with someone I had known for many years—who knew me and my family well. During our conversation, he said:

“You're perfect on paper—I need to understand why any man would leave you.”

It was both a compliment and a damning indictment of my character. I was stunned. I hadn't considered that I might seem to have everything—a life that looked privileged, stable, successful—while the reality was quite different.

Appearances can be deceiving

Exactly one year earlier, my husband of ten years had left me. Without warning. Without discussion. He had simply left a note. I had slowly been rebuilding my life, yet hearing those words, Perfect on Paper, brought his exodus back—emotions raw once more.

The phrase pierced through the surface of what looked perfect and revealed the truth underneath: appearances can be deceiving, and perfection on paper can camouflage heartbreak or disappointment.

That moment forced me to reflect on my own life and on the lives of the people I interact with.

The gap between perception and reality

How often do we feel the need to present a life, a role, a persona that seems flawless on the outside, while inside we feel uncertain, disconnected or unfulfilled?

Perhaps you, too, can relate?

- You appear confident, capable and in control. Others see achievement, composure, and success. Yet inside, you know you are hiding vulnerability, feeling overlooked, overwhelmed or out of alignment with who you truly are.
- At work, you may be admired for staying calm under pressure, for always having a solution, for projecting competence. Yet the moment you leave the order of the

Martine is a woman of remarkable resilience and determination, having faced more challenges in a few short years than she would have wished for in a lifetime. With a PhD in neuroscience and leadership experience as Managing Director in medical communications, she blends sharp insight with intelligence and deep empathy. Drawing on her ADJUST Coaching™ framework, Martine helps people navigate life's transitions with clarity, courage and confidence.

Resisting the Rush Finding Calm in the AI Race



If you've ever felt like you've been left behind by the AI boom, this piece is for you. My aim is to reinstate a small feeling of calm by pointing out a few things about AI, and the way many people talk about it, that are widespread yet not worth losing sleep over.

I recently opened an email from a mailing list for product leaders that boldly proclaimed: "If you're not putting AI first, you're already behind."

As someone who has worked in tech for years, I've seen plenty of hype cycles. And as someone who cares deeply about both mental health and common sense, today's AI narratives feel particularly egregious and anxiety-provoking. I know from many conversations with leadership teams of various organisations that this quiet fear of being left behind haunts many leaders and, in some cases, promotes behaviours that don't serve the organisation's needs.

To be clear, AI isn't the villain and I'm not an "all-AI-is-bad-avoid-at-all-costs" skeptic. I use certain tools both with gusto and with a healthy dose of caution in my own work. "It" (insofar as "AI" is a single thing) saves me a lot of time. I also recognise that there are many challenges and downsides to using it, environmental impact being one of them.

Back to the email: I rolled my eyes and unsubscribed, saddened that a promising mailing list had become another source of breathless AI nonsense. But the confidence with which the email was delivered, as if this stance was such a no-brainer that anyone not delegating their blank pages to AI was clearly misguided, rattled me.

Where is this messaging coming from?

Unlike many past tech trends, many AI tools are steered by human language, making them more accessible and seductive, even to people who don't code. However, that very accessibility is what makes the "you're already behind" message so dangerous; everyone and their uncle can try it, and everyone has an opinion. Public discourse on the

topic has become a veritable cacophony of opinions. The flames are fanned by the marketing messaging of the big tech companies, who have a vested interest in you believing the promises they preach.

So what do we do?

Below, I'll outline some of the advice I live by and offer to leaders of organisations to stay calm and make sensible decisions in a maze of claims about the promise of AI.

Tip one: Spot FOMO messaging. Statements like "everyone else is doing it" or "you're already behind" are usually untrue and irrelevant. They are also dangerous. Panic rarely leads to good decisions; it won't lead to a nuanced and sophisticated approach to AI in anyone's organisations and can encourage risky behaviour such as signing up for contracts you don't need or uploading sensitive data to a service. Remember: many of these messages are indirectly parroted from those selling the tools.

Ask yourself: Are you really running a business or organisation where you need first-mover advantage, or would you benefit more from observing and learning? Rest assured, most people really don't have this figured out (I have talked to many); you are far from a laggard.

Tip two: Articulate the problem first before deciding whether AI is an appropriate solution. In product management, we stress understanding the problem before jumping to solutions. AI's allure often short-circuits this step, tempting us to reach for the shiny new tool without clarity on what we're actually trying to solve.

Tip three: Use AI in areas where you can critically evaluate advice. For instance, "start with an AI draft before thinking" ignores how human brains actually work. We anchor on initial drafts, particularly when they seem coherent, making it harder to imagine alternatives. When we let AI steer from the start, we risk limiting our creativity. Always use AI where you can confidently assess its output, knowing it can "hallucinate" and persuasively present incorrect information.

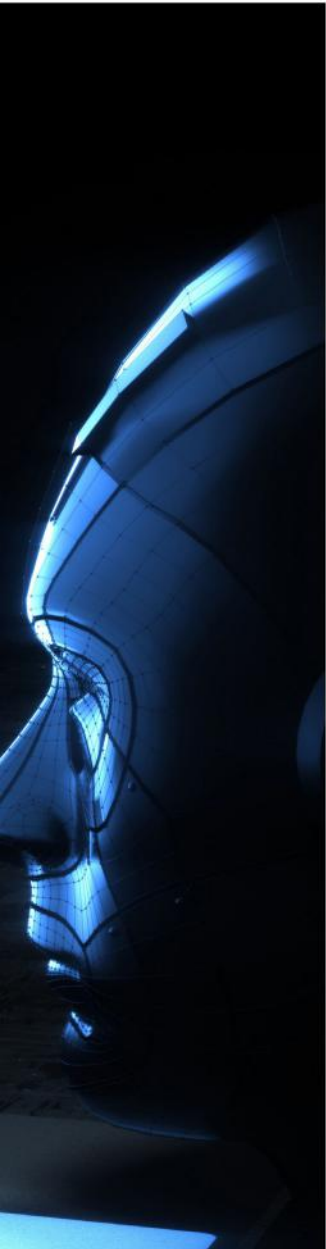
Tip four: Encourage play and safe experimentation. These tools are evolving quickly. Create space for them to play in low-stakes contexts. This builds confidence and understanding without jeopardising important work.

Finally, remember it is not magic.

Arthur C. Clarke once said, "Any sufficiently advanced technology is indistinguishable from magic." Remember that these tools do incredible things and have shifted our sense of what's possible, but they aren't magic.

So, the next time you hear that siren call which sounds something like: "If you're not putting AI first, you're behind"... pause. Take a breath. Ask yourself what problem you want to solve. Think about it conceptually first. Then, and only then, invite AI to help you shape and enrich your ideas. You're not behind. You are exactly where you need to be.

By Lucy Chambers



Learnings and takeaways for your business from Rally world championships in Finland

31.7-3.8.2025 – Behind the scenes!

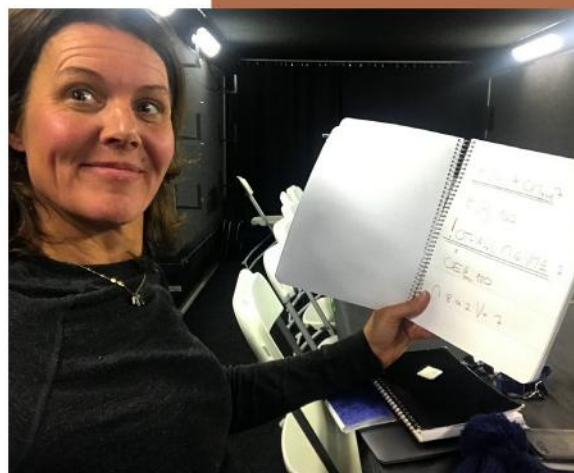


World-class rally teams include about 60 persons (engineers, mechanics, hospitality staff, meteorologists, tyre specialists, medical staff, coaches, and caterers). These individuals possess a distinct approach, in terms of strategies, planning, and mindset, to perform during a world championship competition. Especially the week before the start, specific preparations and techniques are applied to optimise every aspect of the week in cooperation with time, to succeed in these very demanding workdays.

Since 2017, I have coached and trained various teams, drivers, and co-drivers in rally and rallycross, both during training camps and competitions. My clients are from all over the world and from every continent. These past nine years, I have participated, either by being in place or in different digital ways, in hundreds of competitions around the world.

In this article, I will outline a day-by-day schedule to illustrate these methods, allowing you to derive your own insights for your business.

Day one – Sunday. The first members of the teams arrive on Monday to prepare the pre-tests. The week begins with reviewing all the necessary material for the upcoming week. Essential is planning for the two following days, when drivers and co-drivers will work very hard by marking the pace notes for the upcoming stages.



Day two – Monday. Test the car to ensure all the setups are correct. This is also the time when the final adjustments are made to achieve perfection and ultimate precision in how the car responds to the driver's commands. The teams use a simulation of the same roads, which have the same characteristics as those in the real rally. The streets in Rally Finland run through the forest, and typically, this rally features a lot of jumps that must be navigated. The drivers in this rally have an average speed of 130 km per hour (81 miles per hour) on roads that are not larger than 3 meters.

Day three – Tuesday. First day of recce "la reconnaissance" of pace notes. This is a true persistent training day. From early morning, the driver and co-driver take their civilian car and go through every meter and corner of every special stage in the competition. They also need to take notice of bigger stones or pits in the road, and make a note of them in a booklet.

Day four – Wednesday - Second recce day starts again very early in the morning and ends late in the evening.

Day five – Thursday. The very last preparation must be done, and then competitors are getting ready for the start by attending the shakedown. This "shakedown" is a final test opportunity to check the car's setup and adjust any previous technical issues. All drivers undergo this test on the same stage, which allows for a comparison of their performance with that of other competitors. The purpose of this event is also to enable spectators to see the drivers several times on stage.

Day six to eight – Friday to Sunday. Competition days involve competing on six to nine stages per day, from approximately 6:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.

About three hours after the finish line on Sunday, teams meet up for debriefing and to analyse the driver's feedback. The team defines successful moments, but also analyses errors and mistakes to learn and grow even more before the next competition.

This competition is the largest event in Finland and has almost 300.000 spectators. Sponsors, media, cooperation partners and guests are coming from all over the world to witness high performers in their peak states. This is truly a fascinating experience.

What two most essential insights or lessons did you take with you from this rally week? How do you prepare before important meetings or demanding workweeks?

Are you or your company interested in attending a seminar with lecturers and workshops to learn how to apply these methods and techniques in your everyday work?

In that case, feel free to contact me for a tailored offer!

By Jeanette Szymanski

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BEYOND THE MIRROR

I can still remember the first time I realised my body didn't 'fit' the mould society had set for me. I was a teenager, standing in a shop changing room, tugging at a dress that wouldn't sit right across my chest. In that moment, I decided my body was the problem. I decided I was the problem.

It didn't matter that I was healthy, active, or happy in so many other ways —the message I had absorbed was clear: to be accepted, I had to look a certain way, and my body didn't measure up.

THE DECISION THAT CHANGED NOTHING

Over the years, that insecurity grew louder. Comments from others, casual comparisons and the endless stream of "perfect bodies" in the media only fuelled the insecurity. I'd convinced myself that if I changed that one thing, my breasts, I'd finally feel confident.

So I did it. I had breast augmentation surgery, certain it would change **EVERYTHING!**

But here's the truth.... Nothing changed inside! I still looked in the mirror and picked myself apart. Because my lack of confidence had never really been about my boobs, it was the voice I'd carried for years, the one that whispered- "you're not good enough!"

THE REAL TRANSFORMATION

That realisation was the turning point for me. For so long, I thought confidence was only something you could buy, stitch or sculpt. But the real transformation came the moment I stopped chasing perfection and started looking inward.

Through mindset work, self-care and personal development, I began rebuilding my relationship with myself. Slowly, I started to see myself differently. Not because my body had changed, but because my perspective had!

BEYOND THE MIRROR

Now, as a body confidence & self-love coach, I help others see what I wish I had known years ago: the mirror only shows the surface! True body confidence isn't about flawless reflection. It's about recognising your worth, appreciating what your body allows you to do and silencing that inner critic that says you're less than.

Here are three shifts that helped me and can really help you, too-

- 1- Question the narrative- Is this belief really yours, or was it handed to you by society?
- 2- Find gratitude for your body now- focus on function over form. Celebrate what it achieves for you.
- 3- Build confidence through action- Move your body in ways you enjoy and learn to set boundaries that protect your energy.

YOUR REFLECTION IS NOT YOUR FULL STORY

The biggest lesson I've learned is this: Confidence isn't a dress size, a cup size or a number on those scales. **It's a mindset.** Your reflection is only part of you. The real transformation is when you choose to see beyond the mirror- and recognise the incredible person staring back at you. Because when you shift your mindset, you don't just change how you see yourself.... You change how you live your life.

By Samantha Rayford

Body confidence & Self love coach. Body contouring specialist. Loulabelles brand ambassador. Silhouette: Becoming You
Insta- @silhouette_becomingyou



GOALS



Why Most People Fail at Their Goals - And How to Do It Differently

Have you ever set a goal, felt fired up for a couple of weeks, and then slowly watched your motivation fade until the goal was left behind? If so, you're not alone because most people follow this exact cycle, and it's one of the biggest reasons they feel like they are "starting over" every January. The truth is that it's not because you're lazy, undisciplined, or broken; it's because the way most people set goals sets them up to fail before they've even started.

When people choose goals, they usually play it safe. We often tell ourselves, "I'll just aim for something small, something I already think I can manage." It feels logical. Why set yourself up for disappointment? Yet this mindset is actually the reason most goals fizzle out. A safe goal doesn't excite you or stretch you, and because it doesn't demand growth, it's all too easy to shrug and give up when life gets busy.

On the other hand, when we set a goal that truly matters, one that feels a little scary and that we don't fully know how to achieve yet, that is when the magic happens. Big goals require us to grow into the person who can achieve them, and they spark energy, creativity, and persistence in a way that "safe" goals never can.

A big part of this comes down to how we see failure. Most of us avoid bigger goals because we're afraid of what failure will mean. If you tie failure to your identity, i.e., "I failed, so I'm a failure," then, of course, it will feel painful and embarrassing. But if you reframe it, failure becomes a tool. Failure is feedback, it's learning, and in many ways it's the actual goal itself.



You can't fail at something you never attempted, so trying and failing is already proof of progress. When you stop giving failure the power to define you and instead see it as a stepping stone, it loses its sting. In fact, failure is one of the best signs you're pushing yourself further than you would have on your own, and that is how growth happens. So what does it look like to set goals differently? Here are a few principles I coach people through:

Start with a vision, not just a target. Instead of asking "What should my goal be?", ask "What kind of person do I want to become?" Goals are stepping stones toward that bigger vision.

Make it SMART, but not small. SMART goals help you stay focused:

Specific - define exactly what you want to achieve.

Measurable - track your progress with clear markers.

Achievable - realistic, but not so easy that it doesn't stretch you.

Relevant - tied to your bigger vision and values

Time-bound - set a clear deadline to create urgency

The trap is confusing "achievable" with "uninspiring." A SMART goal should stretch you while still being possible with effort. For example, instead of "I'll try to eat healthier," you could say, "I'll cook three home-prepared dinners per week for the next month."

Break it down. A big goal without a roadmap feels overwhelming, and that is when procrastination creeps in. Breaking your big goal into weekly or daily actions makes it feel doable, and ticking off small steps builds momentum and confidence.

Focus on actions, not outcomes. You can't always control the scale, the promotion, or the race day result, but you can control the actions that lead you there: showing up for workouts, preparing your meals, or sending in that job application. Action creates results.

Build accountability. Willpower is fragile, but accountability makes the difference between a goal that stays on paper and one that sticks. Find a coach, a friend, or a group who will keep you honest and cheer you on.

One of the best feelings in the world is ticking something off your list, and those little wins matter more than you think. Each one gives you a hit of confidence and proof that you are capable. This is why breaking your goal into mini-steps is so powerful; every time you follow through, you're teaching yourself that you can do this and that you are the kind of person who sticks to their word.

Right now (September, October, November) is when most people throw in the towel. "I'll just relax now and start again in January." But how has that worked out for you in the past? The truth is, there's nothing magical about January. Change happens when you decide it does, and if you start now, imagine how different you'll feel by the end of the year: proud, confident, and ready to step into the new year without the heavy weight of "starting over."

If you've given up on goals in the past, learn to set them differently. Dream a little bigger, then break it down into manageable steps. By reframing failure as part of the process, it loses its power, and you may be surprised at what you achieve when you're not getting in your own way!

By Kirstie Pullman

@highlevelhealthandfitness



Overwhelms Hidden Driver: Redefining Your Inner Perfectionist Self

By Louise Dicks

Is your inner perfectionist in charge? The relentless voice that pushes you to work longer hours, demands flawless presentations, and creates that familiar feeling of overwhelm when nothing feels quite perfect enough.

For decades, I believed this voice was my ally, driving me toward business success.

What I discovered through my own journey of rebuilding life from the inside out was that my perfectionism was not the problem. It was simply working the wrong job, creating the very overwhelm it was trying to prevent.

The Old Job Description

Traditional perfectionism operates like an overenthusiastic quality control manager. Its job description reads: "Ensure external validation at all costs. Eliminate any possibility of criticism. Work overtime to meet impossible standards. Never show vulnerability." This perfectionist thrives on external pressures, the perfect work proposal, the flawless reputation, and the image of having it all together.

But here is the hidden cost: this approach creates constant overwhelm. When everything must be perfect, nothing ever feels complete, and the mental load becomes too much.

I spent years smiling through inner blocks, not wanting to appear weak. The overwhelming feelings would go under the iceberg while I worked extra hours, trying to get ahead of the game, but I was always exhausted. The perfectionist who was supposed to help me succeed was actually drowning me in overwhelm.

The Promotion Opportunity

What if we could offer our perfectionist a promotion? Instead of a quality control manager focused on external appearances, what if it became our Chief Wellbeing Officer? This is not about eliminating your perfectionist tendencies or your purposeful drive; it is

about redirecting that energy toward what truly matters: your sustainable wellbeing and authentic success.

The New Job Description

Your perfectionist's new role as Chief Wellbeing Officer focuses on ensuring energy levels remain sustainable, to prevent overwhelm. Whilst maintaining personal boundaries with precision, treating self-care practices as non-negotiable, scheduling rest and recovery with meeting-level importance. Recognizing overwhelm as a signal to pause and recalibrate, rather than push harder. Instead of perfecting your image, your inner perfectionist becomes focused on protecting your peace. Instead of working longer hours, it insists on working smarter hours. Most importantly, it learns to recognize overwhelm as valuable feedback, rather than a failure to manage everything perfectly.

The Reset Process

Week 1-2: Awareness training, notice when your perfectionist kicks in. Pay attention to moments when perfectionism moves into overwhelm. That is your cue. It is working the old job.

Week 3-4: Boundary setting, let your perfectionist apply its standards to your boundaries. "If I'm going to do this perfectly, I need to protect my energy perfectly too."

Week 5-6: Quality control shift, instead of perfecting presentations, perfect your morning routine. Instead of crafting the perfect email, craft the perfect wind-down ritual.

Ongoing: Performance reviews, regular check-ins. "Is my perfectionist helping me thrive or creating overwhelm?" If it is the latter, it is time for a gentle redirect.

The Transformation

When your perfectionist becomes your wellbeing champion, something remarkable happens. The constant overwhelm that once felt permanent begins to lift. The quality of your work often improves because you are operating from genuine energy rather than forced performance. Your relationships deepen because you are showing up authentically rather than as a polished version.

A Personal Testament

Through my own journey, from business overwhelm to navigating my daughter's end-of-life care and ultimately building Galena Wellbeing. I have learned that the most perfect thing we can do is honour our whole selves. My perfectionist no longer demands I have all the answers; instead, it ensures I am asking the right questions and creating space for authentic solutions and sustainable living.

Your perfectionist is not broken; it has just been working in the wrong department. I invite you to promote to Chief Wellbeing Officer and watch how it transforms from your harshest critic into your most dedicated advocate. Watch how the overwhelm that once felt unavoidable becomes a gentle signal to pause, breathe, and recalibrate.

Because the most perfect life is not one without struggles, it is one where you navigate those struggles with grace, authenticity, and unwavering commitment to your wellbeing, free from the crushing weight of perfectionist-driven overwhelm.



Ready to Transform Your Perfectionist into Your Wellbeing Champion? If this resonates with you, I would love to support you on your journey to shift from perfectionist overwhelm to sustainable success. Louise Dicks, Founder of Galena Wellbeing | Turning perfectionist pressure into personal power, worldwide support available. www.galenawellbeing.co.uk

HOW SLOWING DOWN HELPED ME TO TRUST MY INTUITION

Now, in everyday life, we're all so busy—getting the children ready for school, doing the school drop-off, or rushing to get to work. Our lives are filled with daily chores and duties that need to be completed. When our minds are in overdrive, it becomes hard to connect with our intuition. This creates a chaotic frequency, which can block intuitive messages.

You may ask, how do we listen to and trust our intuition? Well, the answer lies in the silence. My coach and other great teachers have taught me that as human beings,



we always want to know what the next step is. Logically, that's how we are programmed. But the magic happens in the silence. Sometimes, when you're too focused on a problem, you can't come up with the solution—but if you allow your mind to slow down, the solution often hits you right away.

It's essential to connect with your heart, and your intuition will guide you to the answers you've been seeking. If you're feeling stuck, here are some helpful tips:

- **Try some breathwork, meditation, or journaling.** These practices can help shift your energy from overdrive to calm, allowing intuitive messages to come through more clearly.
- **Create a peaceful environment, free from noise and interruptions.** I understand this might be difficult, especially if you have a demanding schedule or young children. Try to make it work for your lifestyle, even if it's just for 20 minutes.
- **Take a short digital detox from your devices.** This helps cut through the noise and reduces distractions.
- **Go for a walk in nature.**
- **If you use crystals in your daily life (I do!), you can work with amethyst, labradorite, and fluorite.** These help you connect to your intuition and support a calm state where you're more open to receiving messages.

If you're still unsure, try one of my personal favourite methods: communicating with the universe by asking for signs. I do this throughout the day. I might ask the universe for a sign about a decision and request a "yes" in the form of an angel number—such as 2222. If the answer is "no," I'll ask for something more unusual or obvious—like

a purple elephant! The universe is always working in our favour—we just need to learn how to spot the signs. I've had a lot of success with this and received very clear answers.

As you may know, I receive intuitive dreams. For a long time now, I've kept a dream journal. A while ago, I had a dream in which I was carrying a set of house keys and walking out of a flat. The flat was beautiful—and it was all mine. I also had a recurring dream about a house with double blue doors and patterned stained-glass windows. In that dream, I was with my partner and children, so we'll see what happens with that one! Reflecting on the dream about the flat, I recall feeling incredibly happy.

For context, I used to live in London while working in my previous nursing role. After a breakup, I moved back in with my parents. I started a business, which seemed like the right next step. However, living in my old family home has been quite challenging at times—especially with us all living on top of each other. All fighting to use the bathroom!

My dream is to move into a flat or a house. Yet I found myself stuck in logical thinking: How could this even happen? The truth is, sometimes we don't need to know the how—but that's often how the mind works. This week, the opportunity to rent a place has come up—and I can't ignore the signs or the synchronicities the



universe has been giving me. I had that recurring dream more than once. At first, I found it hard to believe—but the universe will provide. We just have to trust and leave the "how" out.

This is a little message to say trust that inner voice of yours.

When was the last time you sat in silence and listened to your intuition?

By Crystal Johns



Energy Matters

The Future of Wellness

Exploring the Power of Frequency Medicine

There's a popular quote often attributed to Albert Einstein: **"Future medicine will be the medicine of frequencies."** While it's debated whether he actually said those exact words, the sentiment is strikingly relevant today. As our understanding of energy, vibration, and biology evolves, frequency is fast becoming a key part of the wellness conversation.

It might sound futuristic, but the truth is: frequency medicine is already here and it's much closer to your everyday life than you might think.

What Exactly Is a Frequency?

In simple terms, a frequency is the speed at which something vibrates. Everything in existence vibrates at its own natural rate, including light, sound, thought, and yes, your body!

Each of your organs, cells, and systems has an ideal vibrational frequency at which it functions best. When you're healthy, your body is in harmony. But when you're stressed, rundown, or unwell, those vibrational patterns shift. You may feel "off," fatigued, emotionally flat or even physically unwell. Frequency-based healing aims to bring your body back into its natural rhythm, gently returning it through sound, vibration, or electromagnetic pulses.

You're Already Experiencing Frequency Medicine

This isn't some mystical idea. Many common therapies already use frequency to help the body heal.

For example:

- Ultrasound therapy, often used in physio and sports rehab, uses high-frequency sound waves to stimulate tissue healing.
- TENS machines (Transcutaneous Electrical Nerve Stimulation) deliver small electrical impulses to help manage pain and stimulate circulation.

- PEMF therapy (Pulsed Electromagnetic Fields) is used to promote bone healing, reduce inflammation, and support injury recovery.

These are all frequency-based tools. And as we understand more about how the body responds to vibrational input, we're seeing new methods emerge that support emotional, mental, and energetic health, not just physical repair.

Your Body: A Symphony of Vibrations

Think of your body like a finely tuned orchestra. Each part, such as your brain, heart, liver, immune system, nervous system, etc, has a "note" it naturally plays. When all the parts are in tune, you feel energised, clear, and well. But when one area falls out of rhythm due to stress, trauma or environmental strain, it can affect the whole performance. Introducing supportive frequencies through sound, breath, or electromagnetic input helps guide the body back to resonance. This doesn't override your natural healing ability; in fact, it supports it.

Solfeggio Frequencies: Ancient Sound, Modern Science
One of the more accessible entry points into frequency healing is through Solfeggio frequencies—a set of sound frequencies used in ancient sacred music and increasingly in modern wellness practices.

Here are a few of the most common:

- 396 Hz – Helps release guilt and fear
- 417 Hz – Supports change and transformation
- 528 Hz – Known as the "love frequency," often linked to cellular repair and emotional healing
- 639 Hz – Enhances relationships and connection
- 741 Hz – Aids intuition and detoxification
- 852 Hz – Supports spiritual alignment and inner clarity



Listening to these tones through music, sound healing, or guided tracks can help shift your brainwave state, calm your nervous system, and restore emotional balance. It's a gentle but powerful way to work with your own energetic field.

Tuning Into the Earth: The Schumann Resonance

The Schumann Resonance is another natural frequency often mentioned in the context of healing. It's a very low electromagnetic frequency generated by lightning strikes in Earth's atmosphere, which is approximately 7.83 Hz. This resonance is thought to be the Earth's natural vibrational rhythm.

Interestingly, this frequency aligns with the brain's alpha state - a calm, meditative mental space linked to rest, creativity, and reflection. When we spend time in nature like walking barefoot on grass, swimming in the ocean, or simply being still outdoors, we often feel more grounded, calm, and clear. That's frequency in action.

A Brief History of Frequency Healing

While frequency medicine might seem modern, its roots stretch far back into ancient times. Civilisations across the world intuitively understood the power of sound and vibration in healing.

In Ancient Egypt, sound chambers were built inside pyramids to harness acoustic resonance for spiritual and physical rejuvenation. The Greeks used lyres and flutes in healing temples, believing that specific modes and scales could affect both mood and physiology. Pythagoras, the Greek mathematician and philosopher, taught that music was not just an art but a science of healing, describing it as "music of the spheres."

In Eastern traditions, instruments like Tibetan singing bowls, gongs, and tuning forks have been used for centuries to balance the body's energy. Chanting, mantra, and prayer were also seen as vibrational tools that aligned the mind, body, and spirit.

What all of these systems recognised is now being validated by science: sound and frequency influence our nervous system, our emotions, and even our cellular biology. Frequency healing may feel like a new frontier, but in many ways, it's a return to ancient wisdom updated with modern tools.

The Science Is Catching Up

While frequency healing might once have been seen as fringe, it's now being taken seriously across a range of fields from neuroscience to sports medicine to mental health.

Emerging research is exploring how frequency-based treatments can:

- Improve sleep and mental clarity

- Reduce inflammation and chronic pain.
- Support recovery from trauma and emotional distress
- Help regulate the nervous system and reduce anxiety.
- Promote cellular regeneration and tissue healing.

This is not about replacing traditional healthcare; it's about complementing it with a more holistic understanding of how energy and vibration influence every system in the body.

Practical Ways to Explore Frequency in Your Life

You don't need a medical device or specialist appointment to start experiencing the benefits of frequency wellness.

Here are a few simple ways to begin:

- Listen to frequency tracks: Explore Solfeggio frequencies or 432 Hz music while resting, journaling, or sleeping.
- Spend time in nature: Let your body recalibrate by syncing with natural rhythms. Walk barefoot, breathe deeply, and unplug.
- Use frequency intentionally: Speak kindly to yourself listen to soothing sounds, and minimise noise and stress where you can.
- Try a guided healing session: Many practitioners offer frequency-based sessions using sound bowls, tuning forks, or vibrational tools.

Explore My Frequency Healing Tracks

At www.sallyestlin.com you'll find a collection of guided frequency healing tracks available for purchase, each one carefully designed with 432 Hz music and tailored to themes like:

- Stress and anxiety relief
- Energy and empowerment boost
- Heart healing and emotional balance
- Deep sleep and nervous system reset

You can also explore my 7-Day Frequency Reset Program, a self-paced experience combining audio, reflection and energetic clearing.

These tools are perfect for anyone ready to feel more aligned, clear, and grounded, no matter what life's throwing your way.

Final Thoughts: Healing Happens in Harmony

The more we understand the role of energy and frequency in human wellbeing, the more empowered we become to support our health in simple, meaningful ways. Whether through a sound, a breath, or a track that shifts your whole mood, frequency has the power to gently guide you back into balance.

We're not just made of matter. We're made of movement. And when we tune into the frequencies that support us, we give our bodies the space to heal, restore, and thrive.

*By Sally Estlin - Energy Expert
Self Empowered Lifestyles*

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Is the gut our super brain?

We all have a gut instinct that leaves a feeling of unease when a person or situation doesn't seem right, even though our brain says yes to a deal or relationship. Our bodies never lie. When a decision is needed, take a moment to check in on how you feel. What sensations are you feeling? Good or bad?

Tissues in our brain and gut are very similar. Developing from the same cells as they are reorganised in the embryo. The blood-brain barrier is one cell thick, just like the gut lining. Any disruption of the balance of the cytokines (inflammatory signals) sent out from the brain to the gut or in reverse can cause the coordination of the autonomic system to go awry. IBS kicks in, and digestion becomes poor, which slows down and creates bloating. How we react to stress creates this fight or flight sensation to cause a cascade of chemical reactions.

Constipating us with any deep-seated fear. We become stuck or run from the danger and have a loose gut. The Parasympathetic and Sympathetic nervous system needs to be examined. Are you relaxed or het up? Eat on the run or sit and savour food? How we respond to life will lead to how we function.

The microbiome is important too. Some have SIBO, a small intestine bacterial overgrowth. Dietary changes are needed, but not all the answers are known. Our gut and brain are constantly talking to each other. Serotonin is one hormone that's required to make our gut work efficiently. Cortisol, our stress hormone, can interfere with this. Stress is picked up first here in our gut. We have more nerves situated here than anywhere else. So how we react to stressors will accumulate over time, triggering the system to stay switched on to our caveman reaction of fight or flight.

Any past traumas can make us highly sensitive, however small. Our brain overreacts, creating a repeat pattern in our body. Meaning situations can trigger this unease on a frequent basis. Causing low-grade reactions of butterflies, anxiety or more dramatic responses of gut pain.

Even Prebirth patterns are created and can set up a stress response leading to chronic illnesses later in life. We can pick up stress via our mother in the womb, being bathed in cortisol through no fault of our own. We have to learn to adapt to our sensitivity. Everyone is individual.

Our gut is indeed our second brain. Immunity starts here. To calm our HPA axis (hypothalamus, pituitary and adrenals), we need to treat the body too. Conscious awareness of our emotions is key, but treating the Vagus nerve, which is the longest and carries most of the parasympathetic nerves, is also important.

This guy is vitally important to tune into for anxiety or exhaustion on a constant loop. Our autonomic responses are not conscious, controlled by the brain, so tapping into this nerve in some way to alter the subconscious state we're in is vital.

One physical part of our body is the Psoas muscle, lying deep in the bowl of our pelvis. It extends halfway up our lower back and connects

the top to the bottom half, conveniently lying behind the gut. It's said to absorb a lot of our emotional rubbish. Remember, we are a wash of chemical reactions soaking every physical part, which is why gentle movement, stretching the deep muscles in all directions, can literally wring out past emotions.

If we get stuck without this response to calm the stress, then we remain bathed in the adrenaline and cortisol that's circulating around our bodies. Being stuck in this hypervigilant state can lead to the parasympathetic system becoming desensitised, and the feedback loop won't react—no calming response to control our hyper-sympathetic system. So, we stay ready to fight that tiger.

We end up exhausted. Leading to immunity and infections. Our thyroid gland and blood sugars start to be affected, toxin overload occurs, and we become intolerant to foods—even healthy foods or supplements we take. Before we know it, burnout kicks in. Emotions that cause stress can have a powerful effect on our systems.

Learn to listen to our gut. What is it saying to you?

By Nicky Abell-Francis



The Empowered Leader's Mindset Building Confidence and Impact

Reframing Leadership

What if becoming a strong leader wasn't about transforming into someone else, but about rediscovering who you already are? That was my realization as I moved through different roles—from healthcare to management to coaching. Leadership, I've come to learn, is not about reinvention. It's about tapping into the strengths already within you.

The Myth of Reinvention

When I stepped into my first leadership role, I was riddled with doubt. I assumed great leaders had an entirely different toolkit and that I needed to rebuild myself from scratch. But as I gained experience, I noticed something surprising: the abilities I needed weren't foreign at all. They had been with me all along, shaped by my past experiences, waiting to be seen through a leadership lens.

Uncovering Strengths Already Within

Through communicating with patients, coordinating teams, and solving problems under pressure, I had already established a foundation for leadership. These were not just work skills—they were leadership qualities. Once I reframed them that way, I began to lead with more clarity and ease. The turning point wasn't when I learned something new, but when I chose to own what I already knew.

"Leadership isn't about changing who you are. It's about embracing the strengths you already have."

The Confidence Shift

Confidence doesn't come from a title or a flawless track record. It comes from trusting your ability to navigate uncertainty. Like many new managers, I second-guessed my decisions early on. But over time, I realized that confidence grows when you stop striving to be perfect and start believing in your experience. Your lived wisdom, your successes, even your missteps—these become the foundation of authentic leadership.

I once had to give feedback to a direct report who believed they were doing everything right and saw others as the issue. It was a tough conversation to prepare for. I rehearsed it multiple times, grounding myself in facts and clarity.

I spoke honestly but with empathy, knowing the truth could be hard to hear. I was confident in my approach because I trusted my perspective and knew the data supported it. That moment became a powerful turning point. It gave them space to grow and reminded me how confident, grounded leadership can open doors for others, too.



A New Model for Growth

In my coaching work, I help leaders replace self-doubt with self-assurance. The Empowered Leader's Mindset is built on uncovering the strengths you already possess, working through imposter syndrome, and leading not through authority, but through meaningful influence. Again and again, I've seen the transformation when someone finally recognizes their own readiness. Leadership doesn't have to feel like a costume. It should feel like coming home.

Steps to Build an Empowered Mindset

- 1. Reflect on Your Strengths.** Consider the skills and instincts that have guided you through your career. These are your leadership assets, even if you haven't labeled them that way before.
- 2. Reframe Doubt into Trust.** Self-doubt is natural, but it doesn't have to define you. Let it serve as a reminder to refocus on your capabilities, not your limitations.
- 3. Connect Through Influence.** Leadership isn't about power; it's about relationships. Influence is earned through empathy, trust, and consistency.
- 4. Communicate with Intention:** Your words can build connection, motivate action, and resolve tension. Practice active listening and clear, honest communication.
- 5. Inspire with Purpose.** Let your team see the bigger picture. A shared vision is what turns everyday tasks into meaningful progress.

You Already Are a Leader

Leadership doesn't demand perfection or a total transformation. It asks you to see yourself clearly and lead with what you already have. Confidence, clarity, influence—these aren't traits you acquire from the outside. They grow from within when you trust your path and lead with authenticity.

"True leadership is influencing others by confidently being who you are."

By Emily Apell



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Your Sales Conversations Don't Need More Convincing... They Need More Clarity

The art of the sales conversation is not about convincing—it's about communicating with clarity. You might think you need to win someone over, prove you're the right choice, or secure the sale on the spot. But when you rush in with reasons why someone should work with you, it often backfires. Instead of creating a connection, it creates resistance.

You see a flicker of interest and immediately push to close the sale—maybe because you're chasing a goal, such as meeting your sales targets, or are passionate about growing your business and feeling the pressure to prove yourself. You are extremely ambitious in pursuing the deal, and there is nothing wrong with that. But when your sales energy has its foundation in proving something, the conversation can quietly shift from being about the client to being about you.

This is where things often go off track.

When you're focused on your targets or your timeline, it's easy to overlook the very real and nuanced reasons your potential client is in the room with you. Their desires, fears, internal struggles, and hopes can get drowned out by your eagerness to show instead of listen. But trust is built when you slow down and take the time to deeply understand what your client is actually navigating—and then reflect on how your offer aligns with solving that particular challenge.

If you skip this and jump straight into pitch mode, you're more likely to trigger resistance. You'll hear, "I need to think about it" or "it's too expensive"—but often, these aren't the real objections. They're surface-level barriers. It's easier for a client to say that than to say, "I'm not sure I trust you can achieve my desired outcome yet."

But the good news? Sales is simply a conversation—and one you can absolutely master when you remove yourself from the spotlight and focus fully on the person in front of you. Every client is different. Every buying decision is personal. Your job is to uncover their journey.

Start by understanding where your client is currently and where they want to go. What brought them to this point? What have they tried before—and what worked or didn't? But most importantly, what is their vision and their goal, and how can you create the excitement and trust to take them there? When you listen deeply, you gather powerful insights. You begin to position your offer not as a generic solution, but as their solution. A tailored solution that only you can solve.

This is where you stop convincing and start leading with clarity. You can explain what you do and how you do it in a way that speaks directly to their needs. You can highlight your point of difference and help them see why you're the solution they've been looking for. Clarity creates safety. It builds trust. It positions you as the expert—without needing to prove it.

As a Heart-Led Sales Coach, I often see clients fall into the trap of convincing—believing this is what selling has to be. That belief creates internal resistance. They pull back from showing up in their business because deep down, they don't want to sell in a way that feels pushy or inauthentic.

One of my clients—a teacher building her education coaching business—came to me with that exact story. She believed sales had to be "pushy and persuasive," and it didn't sit right with her. Through our work together, we uncovered her unique brilliance and shaped her sales conversations and offers that positioned her as the expert she truly is. Within five weeks, she signed her first five clients. Her confidence soared. She went from a quiet idea to launching a brand-new offer with sign-ups rolling in overnight.

This is the power of sales with clarity and conviction—not force.

Sales doesn't need to be pushy or manipulative, and you don't need to become someone else to do it well. When you stand firmly in your expertise and the value you bring, that energy does the work for you. You speak with authenticity. You ask the right questions. You connect, guide, and support.

You're no longer creating resistance—you're building relationships. And that's what converts.

By Gemma Rosbiffi



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What do you see magic as? Maybe you have experienced something you consider to be a miracle or magical event.

Magic, according to the Oxford Dictionary, is:

- 1) *The secret power of appearing to make impossible things happen by saying special words or doing special things.*
- 2) *The art of doing tricks that seem impossible in order to entertain people.*
- 3) *A special quality or ability that someone/ something has, that seems too wonderful to be real.*

I am Indigo Psychic, and I have a passion for the occult (hidden wisdom), divination (psychic readings) and spirit communication (mediumship).

From a very young age, I experienced a peculiar phenomenon: my name was called, and I had visions. During my childhood, I was continuously told, "I had a very overactive imagination; it's not real".

My adventure with magic and tarot cards began when I was 17, at a house party with a friend. Out of the blue, one of the hosts, a complete stranger, walked over to me and handed me a gift. Swaddled in a soft blue silk scarf was a tarot deck.

The only words he ever spoke to me were "there is a time when things need to be passed on". This was my first mature experience of magic; if it had never occurred, I may well have never been writing this to share with you today.

People often ask during psychic readings, "Will I be a psychic reader?" Even though I believe everyone has their intuitive ability they can tap into, I also understand "if something is meant for you, it will not pass you by".

***"Those who believe in magic will surely entice it into their world",
Indigo.***



THE ESSENCE OF ALL MAGIC



When you have a passion for a subject, focused study and hard work will always be rewarded, such as athletes, musicians, artists, and many other vocations. Your spiritual work will become more potent with practice and perseverance.

Magic, to some people, is conceived as fiction. This is not the case as magic is an interpretive concept that varies from person to person. It could mean a type of entertainment, a personal memory, a deep emotional feeling, or even the devotion of a pet.

To myself, it is something I appreciate every day of my life. I believe it is always transmutation or transformation of energy. So I want you to consider what magic represents for you.

I have had many magical experiences within my psychometry, mirror scrying, mediumship, and spiritual apports.

In my psychic development class, we worked with psychometry. We placed objects on a tray, then chose one to hold and read into psychically. From the watch I chose, I received details and visions, and I heard "John" and "James". When we shared our findings, I mentioned John James, assuming it was his first name. The person the watch belonged to looked in shock and said, "The watch is my grandad's, and his name was John James".

During mirror scrying, I gave a complete description of a lady's face I could see, which, sadly, was missing part of it. I trust my guides, following the event, I spoke to my sitter who informed me her mother had to have part of her face removed due to illness. "

One evening, on my social media platform, I was giving a live mediumship reading. Sometimes I hear, see, or feel words I do not understand. I have learnt over the years to give my client the information and trust the moment. I heard the word "Nomaili"; it turned out to be his mother's special term between them in his native language.

Many years ago, I attended a psychical medium retreat in a remote area. We held hands in a dark room and sang. Within minutes, flowers, fur-cones and small leaves fell from the ceiling. The cottage had no landing, and we never stopped holding hands. Even to this day, it excites me. The event completely changed my outlook on life's possibilities and my belief in magic.

Every day in life, we make choices; each of us is unique and holds individual beliefs, shaped by our life experiences and traditions. For myself, all the magic I cast is for self-empowerment, seeking direction, healing and personal development.

If you fancy delving into this further, I recommend researching sigils, candle magic, ritual burnings (paper or bay leaf) or using tarot/tarot readings for self-discovery.

Whatever ritual you create, your belief is the most important aspect. Whether it is a placebo effect or true magic, transformation will occur.

In conclusion, the essence of all magic is the intent, but that all begins with YOU! YOU are magic!

By Indigo Amy Packman

www.indigopsychic.com

BY GAYLE SWAFFIELD

FENG SHUI

WHY YOU'RE NOT USING THE MOST POWERFUL TOOL YOU ALREADY OWN FOR SUCCESS



When my client walked into her apartment in London, she had no idea that the key to her dream life in Dubai was already sitting in her living room. Three and a half months later, she packed her bags for the life she had been visualising for years. Even as a Feng Shui consultant, I was really struck by the speed and precision of the alignment, and what I mean by this is that I know Feng Shui works; otherwise, I wouldn't be where I am today, but even I was amazed. It reminded me that when energy, intention, and environment fall into supportive flow, life can shift faster than we expect.

We are often taught that success is something out there, beyond ourselves, beyond our routines, and so we look for clarity, opportunity, and progress, investing in self-development, mentorship, and wellbeing practices, while believing the next strategy or habit will finally unlock the life we want, without even considering the one important factor quietly influencing our success every single day is often totally overlooked: the energy of our home. This is the most powerful tool we already own and one that often remains underutilised, and I'm here to change that thought pattern.

Why Most People Aren't Using It

The impact of the environment is underestimated.

It is often believed that success comes solely from effort, habits, or mindset, without realising that the space you live and work in is constantly shaping your focus, energy, and opportunities. Feng Shui reveals that your environment is an active participant in your life—far more than a place to showcase your interior design skills, however confident you feel about them.

I don't want to offend anyone by writing this, but you can have a pristine, show-home-worthy space that guests ooh and ahh over, offering endless compliments on how beautiful it looks, yet the energy can still be working against you. Energy flow is subtle but powerful, and until this is more widely understood, many people unknowingly overlook the most influential tool already in their hands: their home.

Feng Shui is misunderstood as superstition or décor.

Feng Shui is often dismissed as something related to luck or decorative trends, and it is often assumed it's just a practice for placing an object in a certain corner or rearranging a sofa is all there is to it but there is so much more to consider. Feng Shui is an ancient system for aligning energy with intention and the environment; its depth is underestimated.

People don't know how to use it.

Even when someone senses the effect of their environment, they don't know where to start or what to adjust and without guidance, the power of Feng Shui remains untapped.

Life and routines get in the way

Clutter, busy routines, and distractions keep people from noticing the subtle messages their space is sending, so their environment stays unaligned by default. Coupled with the busyness of life, energy stagnates, opportunities leak, and focus diminishes. Even high achievers can find that subtle energy misalignments in their space can slow progress and block opportunities.

Your Home Mirrors Your Life

Walk into any room and pause. Take a deep breath. Notice what you feel. Is the feeling uplifting, or is it heavy? This reaction happens before a conscious thought, and your nervous system responds to spatial energy long before your mind interprets it.

***A cluttered hallway can trigger overwhelm before you reach the kitchen.
A dim bedroom can make mornings feel heavier than they need to be.
A chaotic desk can sabotage focus before you even start the day.
A stagnant corner can create inertia that seeps into creativity, productivity, and relationships.***

Your space is communicating to you constantly, and when that energy is obstructive instead of supportive, life can feel somewhat like wading through treacle, no matter how committed or disciplined you are. This is where Feng Shui

becomes transformative; its purpose isn't to decorate or add "lucky" objects, but to help you create a space where energy flows in ways that strengthen your intentions, magnify clarity, and support your goals, because when your home is aligned energetically, it becomes an active ally in your life. Feng Shui is a 4,000-year-old practice rooted in the study of the natural world, cycles, and stars.

Feng Shui observes how energy flows through space and interacts with people, helping to align intention, environment, and opportunity, and while aesthetics play a part, what we see impacts how we feel, but the true power of Feng Shui lies in what cannot be seen: the subtle movement of energy that shapes our lives.

I Guide Energy Into Alignment

I've seen homes that support and homes that block potential, and my role as a Feng Shui consultant is to help people notice what their space is whispering and then guide it to work for them. By applying structured Feng Shui methodology alongside my energetic intuition, subtle shifts spark tangible change, a workspace realigned can sharpen focus, amplify productivity, and open doors to opportunities, a refreshed bedroom can create mornings that feel lighter and more energised, and a living room cleared of stagnant energy can reignite creativity and connection. Your environment is ready and waiting, and Feng Shui teaches you how to unlock it.

What Feng Shui Really Means

True Feng Shui is the study of energy flow and how chi moves through a space, interacting with the people who inhabit it.

*Every room has a flow.
Every doorway carries influence.
Every placement has a psychological and energetic impact.
Every home holds its own blueprint—its strengths, challenges, and unique potential.*

When energy flows freely, life follows, but when energy stagnates, even the most disciplined efforts just don't land.

Feng Shui is definitely not just a trend, and of course, in the 80s, Feng Shui had its moment when someone would point at a piece of furniture and announce out loud, "That's bad Feng Shui" as if this practice was solely based on furniture placement, but it's so much more than that. Why do you think Hong Kong Feng Shui Consultants are often engaged to guide everything from office layouts to investment decisions? It's a disciplined practice that makes your home work for your goals, that turns the environment around you into an ally, one that supports your intentions with clarity, momentum, and precision.

Small Adjustments, Big Outcomes

One of the most empowering truths about Feng Shui is that small adjustments can create profound results, and what surprises most people is that you do not need to drastically overhaul your home to shift your life. Thankfully, there's no knocking down walls or completely redecorating,

For example:

- *Repositioning a desk so you can see the door may immediately enhance focus and confidence.*
- *Activating a neglected corner with light, movement, or a personal touch can spark creativity and motivation.*
- *Removing clutter from key entry points opens the flow of energy, allowing opportunities to arrive more easily.*
- *Balancing elements in a room—wood, water, fire, earth, metal—can harmonise energy and bring calm, clarity, and inspiration.*



Consider my client who manifested her dream life in Dubai, through intentional Feng Shui adjustments, activating her career corner, repositioning her desk, and clearing stagnant energy, she aligned her environment with her ambitions and within three and a half months, she received the offer she had been visualising and moved. These shifts weren't magical they were precise Feng Shui strategies that aligned her space with her success.

Your Home as a Partner in Success

Consider this: your home knows you, stores your patterns and emotions, witnesses your distractions, and reflects your inner world with brutal honesty. You can set intentions for success, abundance, or creativity, but if your environment contradicts those intentions, your energy becomes divided. Your Wealth area may be congested, your bedroom may feel heavy or misaligned, and your offices may be energetically confused. Feng Shui brings coherence, allowing you to connect your intentions with your environment and bridges the gap between where you are and where you want to be, and once your environment begins to support your energy, momentum naturally follows.

The Invitation

As 2026 begins, instead of asking yourself, "What else do I need to do to succeed?" begin asking: "What is my home telling me?"

Look at your environment with curiosity and notice where energy feels stuck or stagnant really take time to observe which spaces support clarity, creativity, and calm and those spaces which drain you. Consider how small Feng Shui adjustments could bring momentum, alignment, and flow.

Just like my client who manifested her dream life in Dubai, your home could be the space that aligns your energy with your ambitions. Are you ready to let Feng Shui work for you?

Your Space, Your Success

Whether you are just stepping into your ambitions or are already operating at a high level, 2026 could be the year your home aligns your energy with your next level of success.

Sometimes, success isn't something you chase; it's something you unlock at home. Your home is ready, and your success may be closer than you think.

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Gayle offers Virtual 1-1 consultations & in-person consultations.



RITUALS FOR EVERYDAY EMPOWERMENT

BY CLAIRE CHITTY



What if your daily ritual could supercharge your energy field, like Reiki on steroids? You may be familiar with Reiki, a Japanese healing system founded by Mikao Usui in 1922. The method involves the practitioner channelling universal life force energy via their hands to clear, heal and restore balance and emotional calm to the receiver's body.

Now, amplify this energy in today's world, and there's an acceleration to Dimensional Healing, which embraces deep levels of consciousness and soul-level recalibration to clear patterns and programming. Add in accessing higher frequencies, multiple layers of existence and interdimensional guidance to shift timelines; past, present and future, and it's deeply transformative. This is the work I'm passionate about, returning the individual back to their sovereign state of being through energetic shifts.

We forget we are electrical beings, and that everything in the universe is energy. Quantum scientists have proven that energy can never be destroyed, simply transformed into other forms. Take, for example, fire: it is created by burning wood, producing light and heat. Chemicals contained in a battery are converted into electrical energy. Our breath, essential for life, inhales oxygen, which is then taken into the red blood cells and converted into vitality for our body to fully function. Water is another perfect example of energetic receptivity.

Masaru Emoto, a Japanese researcher, showed how the mind is interrelated to matter by altering the molecular structure of water through thoughts, images, music and words when frozen into crystalline form. When the water received positive expressions, exquisite, symmetrical-shaped crystals formed. Less attractive structures occurred when the water was exposed to negative vibrations, including fear.

Let's distil this into essence. Sacred practices have been an integral part of humanity since the beginning of time, from sun worship and seasonal celebrations to religious and cultural events, weddings, graduation ceremonies, and dance and meditation. Few people understand that the simplest actions, from cooking a meal, taking a refreshing shower or cleaning teeth, are daily rituals we do without giving much thought to the process. But bring mindfulness into the practice, and the energy shifts. A meal made with love converts into nourishing and satisfying; add in a gratitude blessing prior to consuming, and the food becomes noticeably more flavoursome. Placebo? I think not due to the power of intention.

'Quantum scientists have proven that energy can never be destroyed, simply transformed into other forms.'

As a collective, we've been entrained away from our intuition and influenced by the external world of power, control and manipulation. But the real secret comes from mastering your innate inner power. Recognizing that rituals are more than symbolic practices and gestures, they're neurological resets, that start with intention, they are a conscious decision to create a desired outcome. Lighting a candle with intention and focus to invite harmony into a home will amplify peace for those who dwell within. In contrast, a wish, for example, a New Year's Eve resolution or blowing out birthday candles, is generally fleeting.



Going deeper, ritual is a bridge between an ordinary life and a more meaningful one, realizing that every second, every thought, every decision is creating the next moment and the moment after that. Mindfulness is a game-changer that doesn't require hours of meditation. When I was first introduced to Louise Hay, the Queen of Affirmations, in 1987, I'd place post-it notes on mirrors as reminders to change my mindset. The results were extraordinary as the unseen world collaborated to answer my prayers.

Affirmations are powerful when said with intention; they anchor energy. A mantra or short phrase that resonates with you may include 'Peace begins within me,' 'I know the Universe supports me,' 'I am safe.' Practical self-empowering tools are designed to be simple; stopping for a few minutes to take a breath, noticing the small things - the clouds, a gentle breeze, the way steam drifts up from your coffee. Use all your consciousness - sight, sound, touch, taste, smell and sense. Another effective practice is to set a gratitude reminder. Every time you sip water, think of one thing you're grateful for. It shifts energy, big time.

In conjunction with gratitude, intention, followed by trust, is essential to supercharge your life. Your soul is here to evolve, so what do you want to learn or experience in this lifetime? Write this down to ground and cement the energy. Now visualize a seed containing your intention being sown into fertile soil. Allow your heart to feel into the desire, bringing it to life by 'watering' daily through visualization, meditation and gratitude.

Now let go of any perceived outcomes, allowing your dream to be gently nurtured over time so grows into a healthy, strong plant. The next important key to materializing and manifesting is aligning, letting go, surrendering and allowing Universal cosmic energy to deliver in perfect divine timing. You may be ready for your soul mate, but are they ready? Or does the universe have a better plan for your personal growth? I encourage clients to let go of control, trust the process, and know that things will unfold when everything lines up.

Over the last 3 decades, I've come to understand the flow and importance of mastering energy and the mind through exploration, lessons, challenges and wins. It's been quite a journey, and yes, I have the occasional moment of fear or doubt, remembering that we are all on an evolutionary journey through time and space. That's the time to return to the breath to stabilize and recentre.

So, how have I incorporated ritual into my life? Each morning upon waking, I sense into the energy of the day, then feel into my body and chakras. If anything feels out of kilter or there's pain, I'll send energy to rebalance and realign. I acknowledge my spirit team, welcome the day with joy, say five blessings I'm grateful for, then declare to the universe that 'Something wonderful is destined to happen today.' And it always delivers.

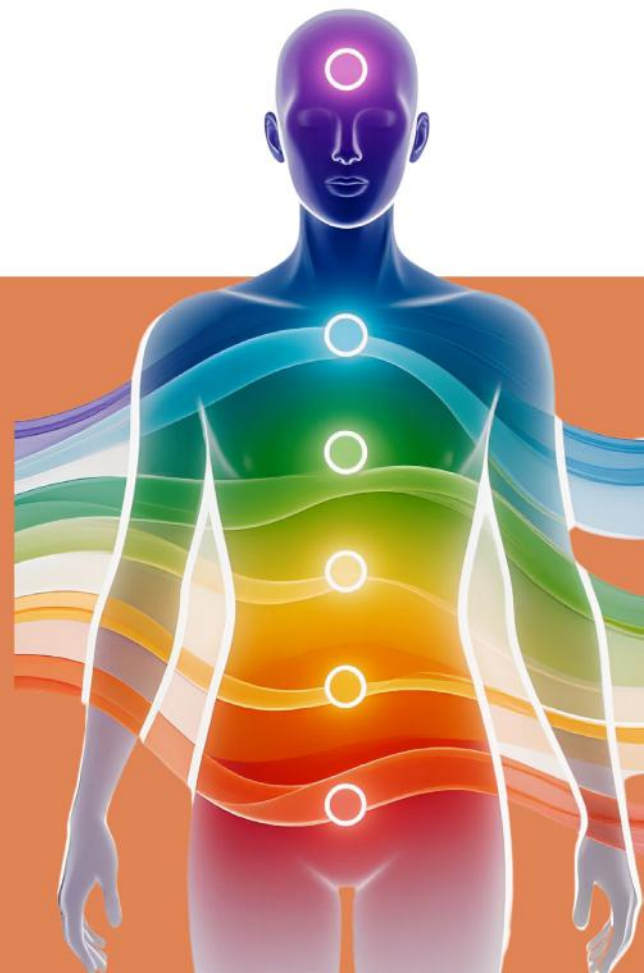
My life is full, and I've never been happier or felt more blessed. During the day, there's self-care, intentional meditations, listening to frequencies, supporting clients on their journeys, writing programs for upcoming workshops in 2026 and pottering around our organic garden. To reset and recharge my energy, paddleboarding, beach walks, and rock and roll dance add vibrancy and enjoyment in a world that's currently undergoing major transformation. At night, rather than being mesmerized by television, I'm either out listening to live music, mastering swing dance or journaling, reflecting upon another glorious day on Planet Earth.

As we fast-track into a new year and a new cycle, if this resonates with you, I encourage you to explore ritualistic intention and focus with consistency, patience and simplicity to access layers of existence. That morning routine you now choose to implement could be the gateway that unlocks the key to your next amazing evolutionary chapter.

'In conjunction with gratitude, intention, followed by trust, is essential to supercharge your life.' Your soul is here to evolve, so what do you want to learn or experience in this lifetime?

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www.possibilitiesandpotential.com.au





The Healing Power of Crystal Skulls

Spiritual Tools to Awaken Inner Consciousness

By Alphedia Arara

Crystal Skulls are intriguing and powerful metaphysical tools supporting deep soul healing, inner transformation and spiritual ascension.

Over the last 20 years, their popularity has increased as meditation tools to access higher

consciousness. Those on the path of inner enlightenment and spiritual growth treasure them, often curating vast collections to meditate with. Yet others find them intimidating and even frightening.

The power of Crystal Skulls helps us to move through our shadow self, which keeps us from fully embodying our Divine Light, instead holding us limited by fears, distrust, and separation from the Whole. As our consciousness evolves, we become aware of the limitations of the ego mind, enabling us to see beyond the conditioned perception most humans live within. The Crystal Skulls connect with our intuitive selves, perceiving the truths beyond the physical world.

The crystal skulls are gateways, portals to accessing higher consciousness. They are wisdom keepers, teachers, energy healers, and spiritual protectors who assist in developing our inner intuition, higher-dimensional awareness, and support us on our ascension to full soul embodiment.

My Journey of Discovery

My love of crystals began as a child, drawn to their beautiful colours, shapes, and the way they captured light. I went on to study them at University, but it wasn't until I met my first crystal skull that I understood the depth of their spiritual powers and realised my mission with them as a spiritual channel and healer. Thousands around the world have benefited from their connection with Crystal Skulls, many of which were sourced through me.

Crystal skulls are exquisitely carved, human skull-shaped, some ancient, others modern, crystal carvings. Available now too are dragon, unicorn, raven and star being skulls. They all have different energies and consciousness, and it's very individual; which variant speaks to your soul, allowing you to connect with it.

Connecting with Crystal Skulls

Crystal skulls will come into your awareness when your soul is ready to evolve and remember its Divine nature. Each Crystal skull contains a facet of greater consciousness known as the Crystal Skull Conclave, which is how it's distinguished from an ordinary crystal of that stone.

The conclave has its own specialities of wisdom, spiritual insight and healing skills. They communicate telepathically with those who have developed this skill, or through visions, intuitive guidance and by downloading Divine understandings. Some Crystal Skulls like to just sit and hold healing space, while others enjoy travelling and clearing the land energies for Earth Healing. Each personality is unique.

Think of Crystal Skulls as the computers of the spiritual world. Like your desktop, unless someone shows you how to use it and what it can do, its potential in your life remains untapped. Once activated, your crystal skull can give you access to vast healing programmes of frequencies, Divine guidance and life insights.

When you meet or become a guardian of a crystal skull, you have the opportunity to unlock a library of healing frequencies and wisdom. Always start by surrounding yourself in Divine light and asking for spiritual protection from your guides.

Let the crystal skull make an energetic connection; notice how you feel in its presence. Perhaps it calms and soothes you, or maybe it challenges you. Each sensation offers you insight into your own state of being and what is ready to shift and heal.

Once you are familiar with the crystal skull's energy, ground yourself, becoming present in your body, and imagine a connection of light flowing between your third eye point in the centre of your eyebrow gap and the crystal skull's third eye. Take a few deep breaths and ask the skull a question about what help and support you would like at this point in your life.

Start by meditating with the crystal skull for 5 minutes, building it up as you become more confident in working together. Notice any feelings, ideas, thoughts you have and journal each experience with the skull.

If at any time you feel uncomfortable, notice what the crystal skull is showing you. It wishes to help you heal. The more you connect with the crystal skull, the deeper a connection you can develop together.

Crystal Skulls can support many areas of healing. They can work with you individually or as part of a group, receiving healing. As multidimensional consciousness, they dissolve energetic blocks, clear past-life and ancestral traumas, unlock abundance, dormant spiritual skills, and inner talents.

They can take you off into other dimensions, astrally journeying, and invoke euphoric states. When you choose to welcome crystal skulls into your life, it changes forever.



For more information
www.elementalbeings.co.uk

THE MANTOVANI METHOD®

The Microbiome, the Biology of Identity, and the Future of Human Performance

The Microbiome: The Origin of Human Alignment

When people ask how the Mantovani Method® was created, I always begin from the same place: the microbiome. Not the simplified version trending online, but the real one – the regulatory network behind hormones, neurotransmitters, inflammation, stress response, cognitive clarity, emotional tone and, for many, identity. Across more than twenty years of clinical work with thousands of patients and high-performers, I've observed the same pattern: **When the microbiome destabilises, the person becomes a different version of themselves. That isn't a metaphor. It's biology.**

Imagine if the anxiety you feel isn't "you"... but a microbial signal misfiring.

Imagine if your loss of confidence isn't personal... but biochemical.

When the ecosystem shifts, everything shifts.

When Biology Interrupts Identity

During a very dramatic period of my life, my microbiome collapsed so deeply that my emotional responses no longer matched who I knew myself to be. My vagus nerve froze, my clarity disappeared, and the scientist in me kept asking: **"Why is this happening biologically?"**

That question led me into trauma physiology, neuro-immune pathways, frequency medicine and research such as the work on Borna virus (BoDV-1), a neurotropic virus capable of influencing behaviour through the gut-brain-immune axis. It confirmed what I had witnessed for years: A Biological interruption can imitate a psychological breakdown. This insight became the foundation of the Mantovani Method™.

Beyond Mindset: A System-Level Reconstruction

I don't just coach mindset, hand out supplements or give nutrition advice. I integrate DNA-based nutrition, targeted natural remedies and high-level coaching into one coherent strategy – keeping clients aligned, accountable and fully supported through every layer of their transformation. High-performers don't lack motivation – they lack biological clarity. My work is a structured integration of microbiome science, frequency analysis, emotional physiology, cognitive pattern mapping and environmental interpretation. Because a human being is not a symptom;

A human being is a system, and the microbiome is that system's control centre. Imagine if every behaviour you struggle with had a biological signature.

Imagine if your thinking patterns, reactions and emotional tone were simply data waiting to be decoded.

We're not fixing problems.

We are restoring internal communication.

By **Letizia Mantovani MSc**

*Microbiologist, Integrative Health Expert & Multi-Awarded Founder of The Mantovani Method®
Internationally Recognised for Pioneering Microbiome-Based Transformation*

The Test Is Only the Beginning

Many believe the breakthrough lies in the test – the microbiome analysis, the frequency scan, the full-body assessment. But the test is not the transformation.

The test is the beginning.

It is the moment when your biology speaks in data rather than symptoms. The real work unfolds in weekly coaching sessions where we interpret your results together:

Where did the disruption start?

Which pathways are blocked?

Which microbial shifts explain your emotional or cognitive symptoms?

How does your biology reflect your thinking patterns? From there, the Mantovani Method™ becomes a personalised reconstruction of your microbiome, stress response, nervous system, emotional regulation, cognitive clarity, energetic stability and identity expression. This is not just a protocol.

This is a redesign of the human system.

Twenty Years. Thousands of Cases. One Pattern.

Across two decades of practice, one truth has remained constant:

When the microbiome recovers, the person returns.

When the microbiome is unstable, the person fades.

High-performers know exactly what it means to drop from 100% to 60% for reasons they cannot explain.

And they always feel the misalignment before anyone else sees it.

If your biology hasn't been matching your ambition,

If your clarity has dipped without explanation,

If you feel yourself operating below the level you know you're capable of, this is not failure – it's your system asking for intervention.

The test gives us the truth.

The Mantovani Method® gives you the transformation.

Spaces for this work are intentionally limited to ensure depth, precision and results.

Executives and high-performers who resonate with this approach are invited to submit an enquiry and request an eligibility review.

If you qualify, we begin with a full assessment and build your personalised strategy immediately – ensuring that data, clarity and biological alignment support every step you take from this point forward.

Your system is already signalling.

What you do next determines your trajectory.

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When We Stop, We Heal

Reclaiming Rest in a World That Never Slows

by Pamela Redford



Mindfulness can be described as focusing on the present moment and what is happening right now. At this minute, you may be reading this magazine, feeling the gloss of the paper beneath your fingers, or seeing the text glow softly on a screen. You might hear the faint swish of pages turning, or the quiet hum of the space around you. How easy was it to be mindful just then? You did it without effort or instruction. You were present before you even noticed. Now, try to pay attention again.

Moments like this can feel surprisingly rare in a world that constantly asks for our attention. The mind is encouraged to move ahead, to what comes next, what still needs doing, what remains unfinished. We are taught how to plan and produce, but rarely how to pause. Over time, presence can feel unfamiliar, while busyness becomes the norm. Yet it is often within these small, overlooked pauses that a sense of grounding begins to return. So, let me share with you what happened when I had the “lightbulb” moment to pause, notice and be present.

The World That Never Stops

We live in a culture that rarely pauses or pays full attention to the present moment. For many of us, speed is rewarded, productivity is praised, and being busy is quietly encouraged. The message is subtle but consistent: keep going, do more, move faster. Silence can feel uncomfortable, stillness unproductive, and rest becomes something to fit in once everything else is complete.

This is particularly evident in fast-paced industries such as marketing, sales, and the corporate world, where targets, deadlines, and performance metrics shape the working day. There is always another email to answer or a result to review. Time is measured in output, and value is often linked to performance. Even moments intended for rest can feel interrupted by the unspoken expectation to stay “switched on.”

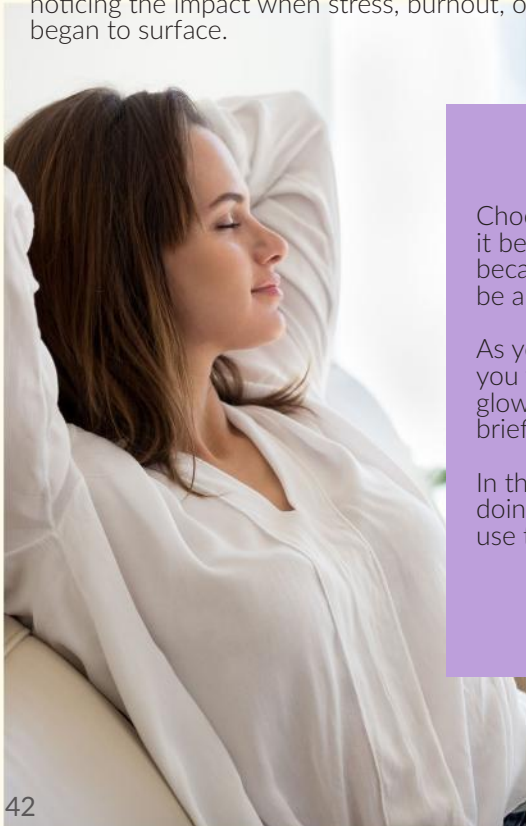
Over time, this pace became familiar to me. I overlooked tiredness, and it became part of my routine. I learned to prioritise momentum over listening to myself, often only noticing the impact when stress, burnout, or disconnection began to surface.

What Happens When We Pause

A life without pause is not how the natural world operates. Seasons change, tides retreat, and growth is followed by rest. Nothing moves continuously without recovery. Yet people have created systems that often value speed over rhythm, forgetting that we, too, are part of nature.

When we pause, even briefly, something softens. Thoughts lose some of their urgency, and clarity begins to emerge. The body responds as breathing deepens and tension eases. This is not inactivity; it is restoration. Creativity can return, and emotions that were pushed aside have space to be acknowledged, rather than overwhelm us.

This was my “lightbulb” moment - pausing helped me reconnect with presence. I discovered that stopping did not mean falling behind, but moving forward with more awareness and balance.



Choosing Presence in a Culture of Rush

Choosing presence does not require a dramatic change. Sometimes it begins with recognition, reading something that resonates with you because it reflects how you are feeling in that moment. That awareness can be a gentle wake-up call, approached with an open mind rather than fear.

As you reach the end of this piece, you may notice the same small details you were invited to observe at the beginning. The feel of the page, the glow of the screen, the sounds around you. In choosing presence, even briefly, we create space to rest, reset, and begin again.

In the next article, we will explore how mindfulness often comes not from doing more, but from noticing what is already here, along with tools we can use to be more present in everyday life.



FROM SOLE TRADERS TO MULTI-MILLION POUND SMES

HOW AI IS TRANSFORMING BUSINESSES IN 2026

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in 2026 face an ongoing challenge: juggling admin while maintaining momentum. Admin might not be glamorous, but it underpins everything. Whether you're a sole trader or a large service provider with a multi-million-pound turnover, a delayed invoice means delayed cash flow. Missed communications during an onboarding process can sour a customer relationship early on. A mismanaged client relationship can erode trust and prompt your clients to seek better service elsewhere.

Thanks to a powerhouse of AI-driven tools designed to scale to any budget, admin can now be smoother, faster, and less prone to error. Current trends for AI admin include the automation of repetitive tasks, such as emails and reminders, and invoice generation without the need for human input. Tools that analyse sales and predict stock needs before they run out.

Sole Traders: Make AI Your Digital Assistant

When you're working alone or with one assistant, time is your most valuable resource. Admin can eat into the hours you'd rather spend on production. AI tools can significantly reduce this burden.

- **Chatbots (Tidio, ManyChat):** Simple AI chat widgets can handle FAQs, order updates, or basic customisation queries, freeing you from constant email replies.
- **Invoice Automation (Zoho Books, QuickBooks AI features):** These platforms use AI to pull invoice details from emails or order forms and auto-generate paperwork.
- **Scheduling (Calendly AI Assist):** AI-enabled schedulers that eliminate the back-and-forth of finding a time. For sole traders, the future points towards plug-and-play AI tools: affordable apps that integrate with your existing email, website, or accounting software without requiring technical expertise.

Small SMEs: Juggling Growth with Limited Resources

A small operation still has a fair amount of moving parts. Job tracking and customer management can quickly overwhelm traditional spreadsheets. AI tools at this stage are about bringing order without adding admin work.

- **AI-Powered CRMs (GoHighLevel, Pipedrive with AI add-ons):** These predict which enquiries are most likely to convert and remind staff to follow up.
- **Inventory Management (inFlow with AI Reorder Predictions):** Instead of running out of materials, AI predicts when you'll need to reorder based on historical demand.
- **Email Drafting (Microsoft 365 Copilot, Grammarly Business):** These tools can draft responses to customer queries, while still letting staff personalise the tone before sending.

Expect to see more AI tools designed specifically for SMEs that blend order management, job tracking, and design previews into a single system.

Mid-Size SMEs: Efficiency at Scale

Once you're handling hundreds of orders a week, manual admin can spiral out of control. Mid-size SMEs benefit most from AI that integrates across multiple functions.

- **Workflow Automation (Zapier with AI triggers):** Links your order forms to accounting, inventory, and customer updates without human intervention.
- **AI Analytics (Tableau with Einstein AI, Power BI with Copilot):** Goes beyond standard sales reports by highlighting seasonal demands or flagging underperformers.
- **Customer Service AI (Zendesk AI):** Provides ticket sorting and instant answers to common order-tracking questions, so human staff can focus on bespoke requests. The future here is about predictive business intelligence. AI won't just tidy up admin - it will help plan your staffing and marketing months ahead.

Large SMEs: Multi-Million Pound Turnover and Complex Operations

At this scale, large SMEs often serve international clients, manage multiple locations, or run large online shops. AI tools here focus on integration and advanced forecasting.

- **Enterprise Resource Planning with AI (NetSuite AI, SAP Business One with AI modules):** Brings together finance, products, HR, and customer data into one system. AI forecasts material needs, highlights inefficiencies, and automates compliance reporting.
- **Supply Chain Optimisation (Coupa Supply Chain Design powered by Llamasoft AI, Oracle AI SCM):** Ensures smooth delivery of bulk orders, predicting potential delays and suggesting alternative suppliers.
- **AI-Enhanced HR Tools (BambooHR AI, Deel AI):** Automates payroll, flags compliance issues, and even analyses staff engagement through communication trends. Future developments are pointing towards AI co-pilots that sit across entire organisations, making proactive recommendations: what to prioritise, which customers to target, and where to trim costs.

Embrace these tools now to not only reduce admin costs but also to be better positioned to compete.

By Seb Brantigan

AI and Marketing Automation Expert
Co-founder and COO of DBSS Digital

www.DBSSdigital.co.uk



THE IDENTITY SHIFT OF MOTHERHOOD & HOW TO FIND YOURSELF AGAIN



Motherhood changes everything — and not just your schedule. We're often prepared for the practical shifts: nappies, sleepless nights, feeding routines, and calendars that revolve around tiny humans. What we're far less prepared for is the internal change — the quiet but powerful identity shift that arrives the moment your baby does.

As a mum of two boys, I expected my body to change. I anticipated recovery, tiredness, and learning a whole new rhythm of life. What I didn't expect was how much I would change. Suddenly, you're "Mum" before you're anything else — before woman, partner, professional, friend. And for many women, there's a deep, unspoken guilt attached to missing the version of themselves they were before.

Let me say this clearly: feeling a loss of identity does not make you any less of a mother.

The Hidden Identity Loss Nobody Talks About

Motherhood redefines every part of your life.

You gain overwhelming love, purpose, and connection — but you can also lose space, autonomy, and self-recognition. Your needs move to the bottom of the list. Your body feels unfamiliar. Your time is no longer your own. And some days, you don't recognise the woman staring back at you in the mirror.

This feeling is often intensified when women are navigating postpartum symptoms such as:

- Diastasis Recti
- Incontinence
- Prolapse
- Back or pelvic pain
- Extreme or chronic fatigue

These aren't "minor" issues. They affect how you move, how you feel, how you show up — and ultimately, how you see yourself. When your body doesn't feel reliable, strong, or comfortable, it can quietly erode confidence and identity.

Missing who you were doesn't mean you love your children any less.

It means you're human.

Movement: A Path Back to Yourself

For many women — myself included — movement becomes the turning point, not as a way to "bounce back," but as a way to reconnect. When done correctly



and safely, movement is profoundly healing. Pilates teaches women how to breathe, control, and trust their bodies again. Strength training restores a sense of capability — reminding you that your body is not broken, but adaptable and powerful. Working with a pre- and postnatal qualified professional ensures that exercise isn't about pushing through symptoms but addressing them with care and intention.

When women feel supported, movement becomes more than exercise. It becomes identity work.

It's the moment you realise I can still feel strong. I can still feel like me.

The ReformHer Framework for Rebuilding You

At ReformHer, I support women through a holistic, compassionate approach built around five key pillars:

1. Strength

Not just physical strength, but emotional resilience and confidence. Strength changes how you carry yourself — in your body and in your life.

2. Autonomy

Creating space that belongs entirely to you. Time where you are not needed by anyone else — and that matters more than most women realise.

3. Connection

Being surrounded by women who understand without explanation. Community reduces shame, isolation, and the feeling that you're doing motherhood "wrong."

4. Education

Learning what's normal, what isn't, and how your postpartum body truly works. Knowledge empowers women to advocate for themselves.

5. Collaboration

Working alongside trusted pelvic health physiotherapists. True recovery is never a solo journey — it's a team effort.

This framework allows women to rebuild themselves safely, sustainably, and without pressure.

You Haven't Lost Yourself — You're Becoming More You

Motherhood doesn't erase who you were. It adds layers.

Strength, you didn't know you had.

Softness, you never expected.

Depth, resilience, and perspective that only experience can bring.

Yes, there may be moments where you feel lost — but you are not gone.

With the right support, you don't rebuild the old version of yourself. You create a stronger, wiser, more grounded version of her — one who honours both who she was and who she's becoming.

You don't need to choose between being a brilliant mum and being yourself.

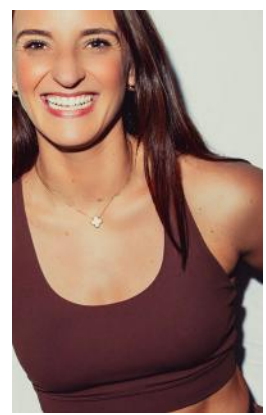
You are allowed to be both.

By Lauren Kay

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Change Starts With Choice

How One Wee Thing Can Shift Your Life During a

CRISIS

Have you ever felt completely stuck? Like you're trapped in your own life, watching everyone else move forward while you're standing still? If you're nodding right now, you're not alone. And here's something that might surprise you: the answer isn't found in making massive, life-altering changes. It's actually much simpler than that.

When Life Hands You a CRISIS

Let's talk about the word CRISIS for a moment. We usually think of it as something terrible happening, losing a job, ending a relationship, or facing a health scare. But what if we looked at it differently? What if CRISIS simply meant Circumstances Requiring Immediate Change in Strategy? Suddenly, it does not sound so scary. Life is telling you your current approach isn't working. Try something new.

The Power of One Wee Thing

Here's where Change Starts With Choice comes in. You don't need to flip your entire world upside down. You just need to change one wee thing. One small choice. One tiny shift in your daily routine.

Think about a butterfly for a moment. It doesn't wake up one morning and suddenly decide to grow wings. The transformation happens gradually, from egg to caterpillar, from caterpillar to chrysalis, and finally emerging as something completely new. Each stage is necessary. Each step matters.

Your life works the same way. That overwhelming feeling you have about needing to change everything? That's your inner caterpillar panicking about becoming a butterfly. But transformation doesn't happen overnight, and it doesn't require you to change everything at once.

Real Talk: Small Changes, Big Impact

Sarah was stuck in a job she hated, coming home exhausted every day, scrolling social media until midnight, then dragging herself to bed only to repeat the cycle. Her CRISIS wasn't dramatic; it was the quiet desperation of feeling trapped in her own routine. Instead of quitting her job or moving across the country, Sarah chose one wee thing: she started going to bed 30 minutes earlier.

That one choice gave her more energy the next day, which led to taking a walk during lunch, which led to feeling more confident, which led to speaking up in a meeting, which led to being offered a new project, which led to discovering she actually had valuable skills. One choice. Thirty minutes earlier bedtime. It changed everything.

Your CRISIS Toolkit

When you're facing your own Circumstances Requiring Immediate Change in Strategy, remember that you already have everything you need. You have the power to choose differently. Think of CHOICES as clarity, honesty, ownership, intention, courage, energy, and support that you bring to each small decision. Maybe your one wee thing is

- *Saying "no" to one commitment that drains your energy*
- *Taking five minutes to write down three things you're grateful for*
- *Choosing water instead of that third cup of coffee*
- *Sending one text to reconnect with an old friend*
- *Spending ten minutes decluttering one small space*

Change starts with choice, and choice can be beautifully simple.

The Chrysalis Moment

Right now, you might feel like you're in the chrysalis stage, that uncomfortable in-between space where you're no longer who you were, but you're not yet who you're becoming. It's messy. It's uncertain. It feels like nothing is happening.

But here's what's really going on: you're dissolving and rebuilding at the same time. Every small choice you make is adding to your transformation. Every one wee thing matters.

Your Next Move

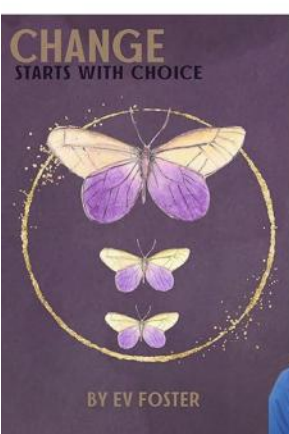
So what's your one wee thing going to be today? Not tomorrow, not next week, not when you feel more ready. Today.

Remember, change starts with choice. Your choice. And it doesn't have to be perfect, permanent, or life-changing in an obvious way. It just has to be different from what you did yesterday. The butterfly doesn't emerge from its chrysalis by making huge, dramatic movements. It pushes gently, consistently, until one day, a breakthrough.

Your CRISIS isn't a catastrophe. It's an invitation. It's life asking you, "Are you ready to choose differently?" The answer can be as simple as one wee thing.

What will you choose?

By Ev Foster



<https://www.amazon.com/dp/B0G4KPB19F>

<https://www.skool.com/changestartswithchoice/about?ref=667d9ad595ed482fb452049a3da73198>

WHAT IS ANXIETY?

Ask anyone what they think anxiety is, and you'll probably get a plethora of different answers and interpretations. So what is anxiety? Why do we get it? And how can we manage it and stop it from affecting our daily lives?

When working with clients and doing some psycho-education work on anxiety and how it comes about, I break it down into three stages: 1. How it comes about. 2. How it works. 3. How to reduce and get rid of it.

Stage 1 - How it comes about

Imagine a funnel? Within that funnel is stress. Depending how we manage stress in our lives will dictate where the stress level sits within the funnel. If we aren't managing the stress in our lives very well, it won't take long for the stress to reach the top of the funnel. It becomes like a pressure cooker or a volcano waiting to explode. It's pouring over the top of the funnel, bubbling, and like a pressure cooker, it's going to have to release that pressure.

When it does explode, the two ways in which you will see it/feel it are external anger or internal anxiety. The first one (external anger) is relatively easy to detect because it is visible, such as an out-of-character outburst or snapping at people/loved ones. The second way it shows itself isn't as easy to detect as it goes internally and shows as anxiety. Because society in the past viewed mental health as a taboo subject, we haven't been equipped with the knowledge to detect, recognise and deal with it in the same way as we recognise anger.

Modern-day life is stressful; we have all these different responsibilities, including job, career, family, kids, money, and finances. In this fast-paced, ever-changing world, it's a lot. Stress is natural, but it's only supposed to be present in short bursts when we need to decide whether we are in danger or not, for example, in a fight-or-flight scenario. Caveman explanation: Do I stay and fight or run away from this thing?

If stress is in our lives constantly, it starts to build up in the funnel till it reaches the top of that funnel, and that is when anxiety can rear its ugly head.

We can't escape the fact that life is stressful and we have numerous responsibilities, but what we can do is take time out for ourselves, do things we enjoy, and that make us feel good. Suppose we detect our stress levels rising or are experiencing a challenging period in our lives. In that case, we learn to recognise this (self-understanding, self-awareness, internal locus) and counter it by taking time out for ourselves, doing things for just us, not others. I explain it like this: "When you get that feeling inside, like I really got something from doing that, it made me feel good".

Be honest with yourself. You can do these things on your own or with others. You just need to check in with yourself after doing these things, or trying new things, "how did that make me feel?". And if it's a positive emotion, keep it, retain it and use it as a tool/power to manage and maintain your stress funnel.

If we start to recognise and detect when the stress in our stress funnel is rising, we can take steps to counter it, thereby maintaining stress within the funnel at a level that is fine and won't result in us experiencing things like anxiety. This can then be a tool for your mental health toolkit, one of many, hopefully, which, when needed, you can reach in and grab.

That's an overview of stage 1, on how I work with clients experiencing anxiety in my own private practice. In the next edition, I'll move on to talking about stage 2, how anxiety works. Take care, stay safe, and see you next time!

By Keith Roe

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Why are so many adults being diagnosed with ADHD nowadays? There are multiple reasons. ADHD has garnered more media coverage in recent years, which has resulted in people identifying and relating to the symptoms described. Another reason is that adults whose children have been recently diagnosed begin to investigate ADHD further, on hearing that it is a genetic condition and start to reflect on their symptoms. Additionally, there is less stigma nowadays; if people think they are affected, they seek a diagnosis to better understand the condition and support themselves.

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder is a genetic neurodevelopmental condition, whereby the prefrontal cortex of the brain is structured differently in people with ADHD than in those without. Interestingly, this difference in the structure of the prefrontal cortex of the brain can be seen on MRI scans. Secondly, the chemical neurotransmitters in ADHD brains don't work in the same way as those in neurotypical individuals. The prefrontal cortex of the brain plays a crucial role in executive functioning, which includes organisational skills and planning, impulse control and emotional regulation.

There are three types of ADHD:

Predominantly inattentive: primarily related to inattention, task initiation, task application and sustaining focus. Difficulties with organisation, time management, retaining information and memory.

Predominately hyperactive and impulsive: Hyperactive type can be described as feeling like you are running on a motor, being overactive, very talkative and energetic. The impulsive aspect can be displayed by speaking or acting without considering the consequences of one's actions.

Combined: This type is a mix of inattentive symptoms and hyperactive and impulsive symptoms.

How do ADHD symptoms play out in someone's life? It presents daily challenges, such as struggling to organise work and home-related tasks. Many individuals with ADHD experience procrastination due to symptoms like inattentiveness, distractibility, and difficulties with time management and organisation. These factors can make it challenging to start tasks, known as Task Paralysis, or complete tasks, leading to a cycle of avoidance and delay.

Task paralysis can result in increasing overwhelm and anxiety when tasks mount up, and can relate to any task, such as work tasks, personal and home-related tasks, including personal administration, housework, or accounts. You might start cleaning a room, but quickly get distracted by another task, leaving both tasks unfinished. This can result in overwhelming clutter. This doesn't mean that you don't care about being organised, but essentially, your brain struggles with task initiation, focus, and follow-through. Leaving work or admin tasks to the day of the deadline is another typical symptom of ADHD. But then it can often result in hyperfocus when the deadline is imminent.

People with ADHD often feel shame in relation to task paralysis, which causes anxiety and overwhelm when the list of tasks is not yet started, is getting longer and is being pushed out day by day. In relation to Hyperactive and Impulsive ADHD, people find it difficult to deal with impulse control; for example, in a work-related environment, this can result in talking out of turn or interrupting others during discussions or meetings, or the impulsive side can result in saying an inappropriate thing or telling your manager exactly how you feel about them. I spoke with someone recently, who has Hyperactive-Impulsive ADHD, who was sternly asked to sit down as she was frequently walking around the office on mini breaks from her desk, as she just needed to move around and couldn't sit at her desk all day. It is disappointing in 2025 to think somebody would be called out for something like this.

This is a reminder that we shouldn't judge or question what people need to do to be comfortable; nobody knows the reason behind it, or the challenge someone might be experiencing in private. Many people choose not to disclose their ADHD to their employer, which is their own choice. However, if people wish to disclose their condition to their employer, they can check their country's government work-related legislation to determine if reasonable accommodations are offered in their specific country.

Treatment options for ADHD include medication, ADHD Coaching, talk therapy and lifestyle changes. Regarding medication, it is a very personal choice; people can choose to start medication and find it very beneficial, while others decide not to use medication. As an ADHD Coach, I understand the condition, with lived experience myself, which led me to train as an ADHD Coach with ADD Academy (ADDCA) to help support others with the condition.

ADHD Coaching allows people to have a better understanding of their condition, how it affects them, and subsequently build awareness, implement strategies and techniques, and embrace a new perspective overall, which helps people to work with their ADHD rather than against it. Lifestyle changes such as daily exercise and a well-balanced, nutritious diet, rich in protein, with fruit and vegetables, are also extremely beneficial, which helps the brain to produce neurotransmitters, which help regulate mood and improve focus. Proteins, broken down into amino acids, are essential for creating these chemical messengers in the brain.

In my next article in the Winter edition of Expert Profile Magazine, I will share my own experience of being diagnosed with Inattentive ADHD as an adult, and how I have since learned, adjusted and evolved as part of that journey.

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The Fear of Inaction

One quiet and rather unremarkable morning, I awoke in the usual stillness of my room. The sunlight filtered softly through the blinds, touching the room with a golden calm. Nothing was different from any other morning, but I could feel that everything inside of me was shifting. Within me, a restless thunder was building, a feeling that something long buried was stirring deep beneath the surface. I sat up in my bed, the sheets tangled around my legs, and felt the strange, aching weight of a realization I couldn't ignore any longer. I didn't know who I was anymore.

And somehow, that truth, as disorienting as it was, also brought with it a kind of strange, unspoken relief.

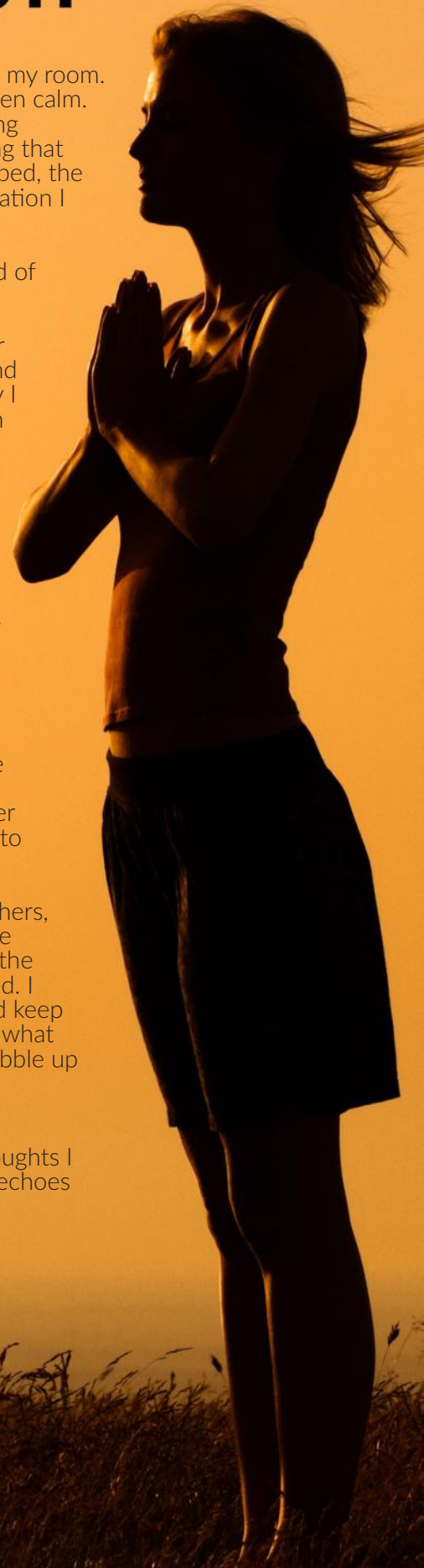
It was the start of a shift that wasn't prompted by an outside force: no career change, no loss, no major life event. This shift came from within, a gradual and steady deconstruction of everything I believed. It made me question the way I saw the world. The notion of right and wrong, success and failure, protection and vulnerability, all of it started to unravel.

What came instead was not clarity, or at least not at first, but a deep kind of wonder. I was slowly beginning to peel back the layers of my identity, having no idea what I might find beneath. And in the middle of all this inner unraveling, a single repeating thought kept returning like a gentle drumbeat in my mind: I want to know myself to the farthest edge of the farthest edge so that I can trust myself. That phrase echoed through me, not as an answer, but as an invitation.

The more I thought about it, the more I found that this was not just about my knowing myself in isolation. It was about understanding where I fit in relation to everything...my surroundings, the people in my life, the thoughts that passed through my mind, and the emotions that shaped my actions. The deeper truth became clear: everything is in relationship. The way I viewed the world was a reflection of the way I viewed myself. The way I treated other people reflected the way I treated the pieces of me I didn't necessarily want to acknowledge.

I began to examine the ways I'd adapted to engage with life. Like so many others, I'd been following invisible rules that I had established, and that others before me had established as well...rules about what kinds of friends I should have, the way I should talk, which dreams were 'safe', and which emotions were allowed. I had picked these rules as much as I'd been 'given' them, believing they would keep me safe. And somewhere along the line, I'd started mistaking them for truth, what was right, what was wrong, what was possible, these beliefs continued to bubble up within me.

And that's when the deeper work began, the quiet, but persistent process of unlearning. I was forced to come to the hard realization that many of the thoughts I held, many of the beliefs I clung to, were not in my best interest. They were echoes



of other voices—those of society, family, religion, culture. I began to take inventory and question things I had never dared to question.

Did I really believe this? Or was I just holding on to it because I felt like I should? Was this fear mine, or did I inherit it? Who was I, in all this noise? The more I asked, the more layers I shed. And as I shed them, I didn't feel smaller; I felt more alive. Each time I put something down that had never really been mine, I made room for something more authentic, more real, more true, more Me. It was as if I had lived in a room my whole life, but had never turned on the light, until now.

As this inner transformation unfolded, I was aware of something profound beginning to shift within me: a reorientation of energy. For so long, I'd been hurtling through the world in a predominantly masculine manner, always doing, striving, achieving, proving. I believed that strength meant not needing help, never slowing down, never having anything bother you too much. But there was another part of me, a softer, quieter, deeply intuitive part, that had been waiting a long time to be listened to.

That energy within me didn't want to conquer. It wanted to create. It didn't quantify my worth by how much I did, but instead by how present I could be. It invited stillness. It encouraged trust. It did not move in linear, straight lines, but in spirals, rhythms, and cycles. Learning to recognize both waves of energy, the masculine and the feminine, was like discovering a tune I had forgotten I knew, my own melody. There was no need to push so hard. I wanted not to have to prove anything outwardly. I started to flow, rather than using force, and listened, rather than defending.

But this has not been an easy path. We all have a unique blueprint that has been designed for our lives, although many of us are unaware of it. So for many of us, it's more like a game we're thrown into without instructions. And often, we never bother to even wonder about the game we're playing. We jump from second to second, from past to future, rarely, if ever, savoring the here and now. And yet, all of life is happening in the present moment. That's where the shift lives. That's where we can find our clarity.

I began to actually practice presence, being in the here and now, not just as an idea, but as a way of being. I began to notice the breath moving through my body, the sensation of sunlight on my hands, and the space between thoughts. And I found that, when I really grounded myself in the present moment, the fear gradually melted away. The anxiety about tomorrow, the depression about yesterday, all of it lost its grip.

In the presence, I could meet myself, honestly. I could discern which beliefs were mine and which were not. I could feel when I was acting from love, and when I was acting from fear. And bit by bit, I

began to move from a life of conditions; "I'll love myself if"... "I'll be enough when"...to a life made up of my own, aligned conditions. And in this way of living, I became aware that worth wasn't something to be proven, but was instead something to be received.

This change has not been linear. Some days I still forget. I have days when the old patterns sneak back in, and I find myself grasping again, striving once more. But even in those moments, there is now a deeper awareness, a silent loving voice that whispers to me, "Come back, this isn't for you any longer." In some sense, we are all being asked to return to ourselves.

We're being invited to question, to unlearn, to remember. And although it can feel isolating at times, this kind of deep, inner transformation is anything but. It is the return to the original self. The one untouched by fear, by shame, by conditioning. The one who knows how to trust, how to love, how to create.

And so I walk this path, not with all the answers, but with a growing conviction in the unfolding. I've stopped needing to arrive. Rather, I'm allowing myself to become. I'm not searching for who I ought to be. I choose, instead, to show up for who I am now.

To know myself to the furthest edge of the furthest edge is not a destination. It is a devotion. A sacred vow to live awake, to love with intention, to honor every single part of this wild, unfolding journey. And somewhere in that promise, I've found not just myself... I've found freedom.

Angie Grimes

Freedom Facilitator
www.angiegrimes.com





Julian Gilbey



Rethinking Male Vulnerability

For generations, we've been told that a "real man" is someone who's tough, self-reliant, and keeps his feelings to himself. That image of the strong, silent type has been handed down like a family heirloom. And while it may have helped men appear strong on the outside, it's come at a heavy cost: their mental health, their relationships, and in some cases even their lives. It's time to question that old idea of masculinity and start building something healthier. Something that allows men to express themselves without fear of retribution or scorn.

Where It All Came From

This version of manhood didn't come out of nowhere. Society has long encouraged men to hide their feelings and value logic over emotion. Expressions like "man up," "boys don't cry," and "take it like a man" send a clear message from a young age: emotions are weakness. We can even trace it as far back as the ancient Greeks, who valued expression of thought over expression of emotion.

This model may have once made sense in a world where physical toughness was key. But today's challenges—relationships, parenting, mental health—require emotional awareness and connection. Yet many men are still stuck in a mindset that discourages vulnerability.

The High Cost of Staying Silent

This emotional lockdown has created a quiet, devastating crisis. A clear sign of that came in the 2023 Samaritans study, which showed that the male suicide rate was 17.1 per 100,000—compared to 5.6 for women. That's more than three times higher. Suicide is the leading cause of death for men under 50. Not because men are weaker or suffer more, but because they're less likely to talk about what they're going through.

Bottling things up doesn't just hurt mentally—it takes a physical toll too. Men who suppress emotions are at higher risk of depression, anxiety, substance abuse, heart disease, and other health issues. Emotional stress keeps the body in "fight or flight" mode, which over time can wear it down. And in relationships, this emotional distance can lead to disconnection, loneliness, and breakups.

Julian Gilbey is a mindset and resilience coach, helping men build emotional resilience and redesign their lifestyles, aligning with their true values and aspirations.

www.juliangilbeycoaching.com

What's Holding Men Back

When men don't speak up, it's usually not because they don't want to—it's because they're afraid. A few key fears tend to get in the way:

Fear of Judgment: Many men worry they'll be seen as weak or "less of a man" if they open up. This fear isn't just internal—other men often reinforce it, too.

Fear of Being a Burden: There's a deeply held belief that men should protect others, not weigh them down with problems. But staying silent creates distance and leaves loved ones feeling shut out.

Fear of Losing Control: Emotions can feel messy and overwhelming. Some men fear that if they let even a little out, they won't be able to stop the flood.

In addition, men tend to have a "Fix-It" Mindset: they are often taught to solve problems, not sit with emotions. When there's no clear fix - because emotions can't be 'mended' - they may feel stuck, or avoid the conversation entirely.

What Needs to Change

Changing deeply rooted ideas about masculinity isn't easy—but it's essential. The shift starts in two places: with men themselves, and with the people around them.

For Men: Redefine Strength

Real strength isn't about staying silent. It's about having the courage to be real—even when it's uncomfortable. As researcher and author Brené Brown puts it: "Vulnerability is not weakness; it's our greatest measure of courage." If talking feels intimidating, start small. Open up to one trusted person—a friend, sibling, or partner. Doing something side-by-side, like walking or driving, can make talking feel easier. Journaling can also help you understand what you're feeling. And therapy? That's not failure—it's a smart, healthy step toward healing.

For Friends, Partners, and Family: Create Safety, Not Pressure

You can't force someone to open up, but you can make it safe for them to try. That means listening without trying to fix things. Show empathy. Use phrases like "That sounds really tough" or "Thanks for sharing that." Ask gentle, open-ended questions—model vulnerability by sharing your own emotions. And when a man does open up, recognise the courage it took.

The Bottom Line

The old idea of the "strong, silent man" might have made sense in another time—but today, it's doing more harm than good. It's leaving men isolated, overwhelmed, and under pressure to hide their humanity.

We need a new version of masculinity—one where strength means honesty, where vulnerability is seen as brave, and where men feel safe to be fully human. Let's talk.



Energy First: The Simple Shift to Optimise Your Performance

You've probably heard the law of physics:

Energy cannot be created or destroyed – only changed from one form to another. What most people don't realise is that the same applies to you. Your energy drives how you think, feel, act, and perform – and whether you're thriving, stuck, or sliding towards burnout.

That's why energy is the true secret to greater productivity, emotional balance, better relationships, creativity, sharper decisions, effective communication – and of course, less stress.

Think about it.

When you procrastinate, there's usually a block: fear, overthinking, worry about what others may think, or waiting for the perfect conditions before you start (a huge mistake, by the way). All of that is energy – but of the draining, destructive kind.

It shows up in relationships, too. Some people leave you buzzing, others leave you flat. Some inspire, others stress you out. This isn't random – it's shaped by values, beliefs, behaviours, environment, and even how you're feeling that day.

If you want to optimise your success – to keep pushing boundaries, achieve more than one big goal at a time, get the best out of others, and lead impactfully – then you need to optimise your energy.



How?

Through a system I teach in **NAIL-IT Leadership**: the blueprint for optimal performance. It's called **IMERSE** – six energetic influencers you can use to lift or protect your energy when planning tasks, tackling challenges, or preparing for important conversations.

I: Identity – Which beliefs, values or judgements that define you could be upgraded?

M: Mental – What cluttered thoughts need clearing? What helpful ones need adding?

E: Emotional – How can you regulate what you're feeling?

R: Real – Check the physical. Are you tired, under-fuelled, or overdue for rest? Adjust accordingly.

S: Social – Who around you energises, and who drains?

E: Environmental – Is your space helping or hindering? Think light, noise, clutter, and temperature.

Next time you set a goal or face resistance, take two minutes to run through **IMERSE**. With practice, it becomes a habit – one that makes progress faster, smoother, and infinitely more energising.

Dr Rana Al-Falaki

Founder, NAIL-IT Leadership | Author | Speaker | Optimal Performance Strategist

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Healing the Inner Child: A Path to Wholeness

“The essence of trauma is not what happened to you, but what happens inside you as a result of what happened to you.” – Dr. Gabor Maté

Within each of us lives an inner child – the tender, unguarded part of ourselves formed during our earliest years. When childhood is marked by neglect, abandonment, criticism, or trauma, this part of us carries unhealed wounds into adulthood. These wounds often reveal themselves through anxiety, shame, disconnection, or difficulties in relationships.

Understanding Inner Child Trauma

Trauma occurs when core needs for love, safety, belonging, and acceptance go unmet. To survive, the nervous system adapts through coping strategies like perfectionism, people-pleasing, emotional shutdown, or hyper-independence. While these patterns once protected us, they often keep us from fully living and loving as adults.



The Purpose of Inner Child Work

Healing begins when we turn toward our pain with compassion rather than judgment. Inner child work involves reconnecting with and nurturing the wounded parts of ourselves that were unseen or unheard.

It allows us to reframe our experiences, soften self-blame, and create new, life-affirming beliefs.

Core practices include:

- *Recognizing emotional triggers rooted in childhood*
- *Validating past pain without minimizing it*
- *Re-parenting the inner child through kindness and safety*
- *Using somatic tools to regulate the nervous system*

The Role of the Body

Trauma lives in the body. Through breathwork, grounding, gentle movement, and other somatic practices, we begin to release stored tension and teach ourselves that it's safe to feel, express, and heal.

Pathway to Transformation

Inner child healing is not about reliving the past but reclaiming your wholeness. As Gabor Maté teaches, when we meet ourselves with compassion, we open the door to authenticity, emotional freedom, and deeper connection – with ourselves and others.

By Kimberly Trickey MS LPC

www.transcendent-journey.com



Supporting



Fasting, Hormones, and Midlife: The Simple Truth You Need to Know



Whether you're a man or woman in midlife, one thing becomes clear: your body starts sending new signals. That extra weight won't budge. Energy dips. Sleep gets tricky. You feel off, even when you're "doing everything right."

Here's the truth: your biology is shifting. But you're not broken—you just need a better strategy. And one of the simplest, most powerful wellness habits you can start right now, from the comfort of your own home, is fasting.

Fasting is the ultimate at-home longevity hack. Backed by Dr. Valter Longo's groundbreaking research and adapted by hormone expert Dr. Mindy Pelz for women, fasting supports cellular repair, reduces inflammation, and improves metabolic health—all without supplements, apps, or gym memberships.

Why It Works for Everyone:

- Fasting gives your body a break from digestion, allowing it to shift into repair mode.
- It improves insulin sensitivity and blood sugar regulation—key for energy, mental clarity, and long-term disease prevention.
- It strengthens your metabolic flexibility—your body's ability to efficiently switch between burning sugar and fat for fuel.

Start with a simple 12-hour fast overnight (for example, 7 PM to 7 AM) and build up to 14–16 hours as your body adjusts.

Women: Sync Fasting with Your Hormones

Because estrogen and progesterone fluctuate throughout your cycle, adjusting your fasting window can make all the difference:

- **Days 1–10:** Estrogen rises—try 14–17 hour fasts.
- **Days 11–15:** Lighten up—12–14 hours max.
- **Days 16–28:** Nourish, rest, or skip fasting if needed.

Postmenopausal? Use Moon Fasting Cycle

Moon Phase	Fasting Window
New Moon (Days 1-7)	12-13 Hrs
Waxing moon (Days 8-14)	15-17 (1-3 days/week)
Full Moon (Days 15-21)	13-15 Hrs
Waning Moon (Days 22-28/29)	14-16 Hrs

Male? 16:8 fasting windows. Stick to consistency, but stay flexible based on sleep, stress, and activity.

This fall is the perfect time to begin your fasting journey. As nature slows down, our bodies naturally crave more rest and repair—exactly what fasting provides. The cooler weather makes it easier to stay hydrated and comfortable during fasting windows.

Build Your Wellness Foundation

Fasting is more than a fat-loss tool—it's a foundation for a lifestyle of longevity. It teaches you to listen to your body, manage cravings, and build metabolic strength—all starting at home.

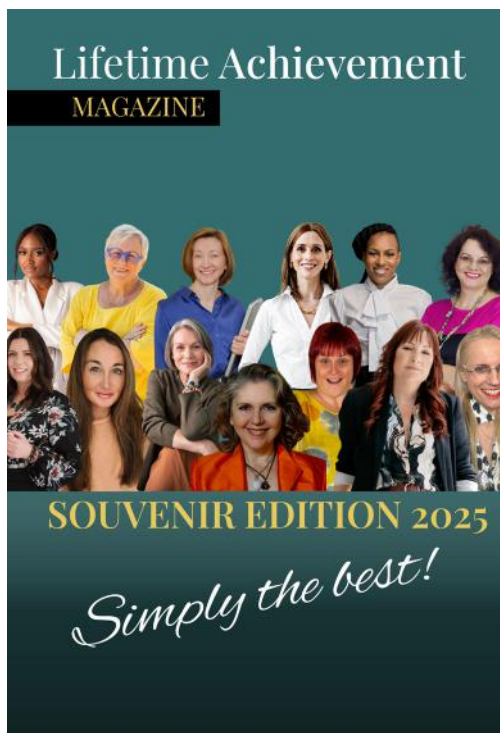
You don't need fancy gadgets to feel better. You just need a plan that works with your biology. Here's to owning your wellness, starting now.

Your Wellness Friend,

By Amber Berger

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Stress and the Immune System

Peeling Back the Surface



Stress is not just a mental state; it is a whole-body disruptor. At the heart of this link lies the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal (HPA) axis, which, when chronically activated, floods the system with cortisol. In the short term, cortisol calms. But over time, immune cells resist its signal, leading to uncontrolled inflammation, and this is a hallmark of many autoimmune diseases.

This is not speculation. A comprehensive meta-analysis by Segerstrom & Miller (2004) reviewed decades of studies and confirmed that chronic stress both suppresses vital immune defences and elevates inflammatory activity. Early life adversity accelerates the problem: childhood trauma leaves lasting scars on the immune system, weakening its ability to regulate inflammation in adulthood.

At the centre of hope is the vagus nerve, our physiological peacekeeper. It is the nervous system's way of whispering "rest," engaging what is known as the cholinergic anti-inflammatory pathway—or the "inflammatory reflex." This neural arc dampens

inflammatory signals via acetylcholine acting on immune cells. Animal studies confirm direct vagus stimulation curbs cytokines like TNF- α , IL-1 β , and IL-6—and even shields against overwhelming inflammation.

Emerging human studies offer early promise. Non-invasive vagal nerve stimulation (tVNS) reduces stress-induced cortisol spikes, while specific protocols lower pro-inflammatory cytokines in controlled trials. Meanwhile, a pilot vagus-stimulation trial in IBD patients saw meaningful relief and reduced gut inflammation.

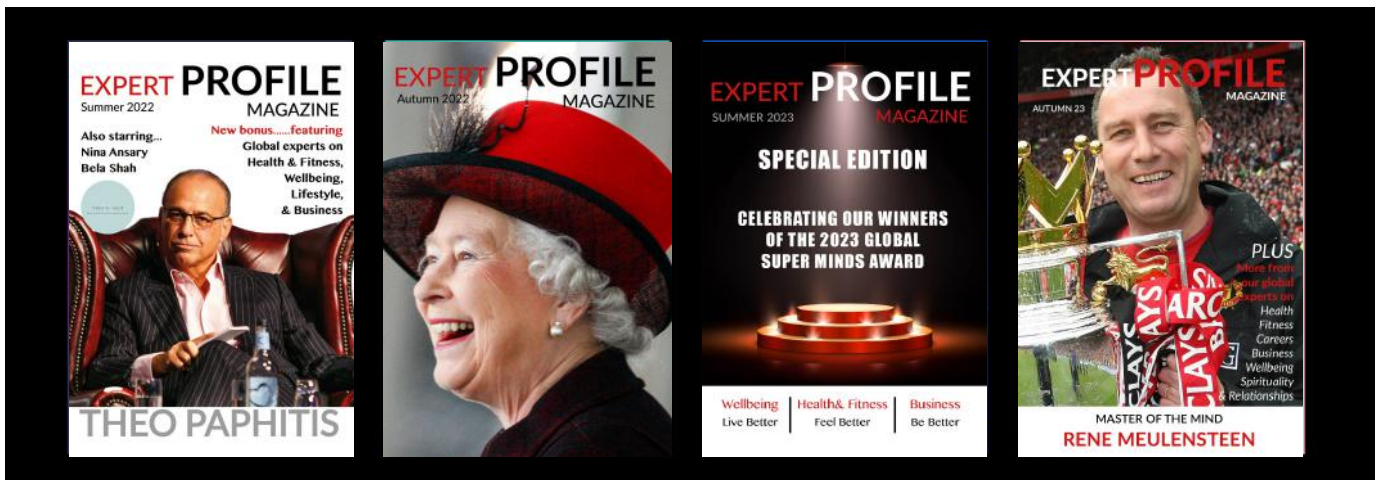
The take-home message?

Stress is profoundly biological and rooted in ancient systems that link mind, nerve, and immunity. Autoimmune conditions are not simply symptomatic—they emerge from this disrupted dance. But there's hope: interventions—whether therapeutic, somatic, or tech-assisted—that soothe the vagus and repair the inflammatory reflex are not just poetic—they are scientifically promising.

*Healing begins not at the symptoms,
but at the stress-immune crossroads.*

By Emma Toms
IEMT Practitioner, SSP Provider
& Reiki Master Teacher

www.emmatoms.com





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Victim/Survivor. What Comes Next?

What do we call individuals who feel the terms victim/survivor of domestic abuse are not applicable to them? I understand and appreciate that for some people, these terms just don't work for a multitude of reasons. So, what can we suggest for those individuals who feel as though they are fumbling around in the dark, unsure if there will ever be a word that they feel best describes their experience?

I have worked with some amazing people who are trying to move forward with their lives, having experienced domestic abuse. And I can completely understand why the terms above don't suit everyone.

It's hard to find a word that encompasses everything. But for me, it would be the word human. Because, before the abuse and throughout the abuse, the one thing that remained was that the person was human. They were human when they believed that they were falling in love. When they forgave the abuser every time, they were abused and manipulated.

They were human when they believed that the abuser could change. And they were human when they started to see the hell which was their life. Unbearably human when they fought every battle they faced through post-separation abuse. And they were human when they felt they were completely alone.

I think being human is truly at the centre of what has been, what is and what is to come for the individual—moving forward and progressing - as slowly as necessary. Now, just because I think that this is a good fit does not mean it works for everyone. What works for one person may not work for another.

The individual has been labelled and stereotyped by the words "victim" and "survivor" for so long, it is time to let the individual decide what word best describes them. Because, in truth, that word might change many times over the years as their life moves forward.

Taking back control of their choices and life means everything. In my view, it's time to let the individual decide.

By Lucy Wade

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THE IMPORTANCE OF SLEEP

FINDING BALANCE FOR BETTER LIVING



Sleep isn't just downtime; it's the foundation of our well-being. While we sleep, the body and brain carry out vital tasks such as repairing tissue, consolidating memories, and regulating hormones. These processes support clear thinking, stable moods, and overall physical health.

Yet in today's fast-paced, success-driven world, sleep is often neglected. Some still see long hours and late nights as a badge of honour, but the cost is steep. Persistent sleep loss is linked to cardiovascular disease, obesity, lowered immunity, and mood disorders. Our brains and bodies inevitably keep score. At the same time, growing awareness of sleep's importance has led to another issue: the pressure to optimise. Tracking every detail or striving for "perfect rest" can increase anxiety, making restorative sleep harder to achieve. Balance is key - we need to value sleep without becoming consumed by it.

So, how can we embrace the benefits of good sleep without obsession? The best approach is to treat sleep with the same respect we give to exercise and nutrition. Both require consistency, but also flexibility. Just as it's fine to miss the occasional workout or enjoy a sweet treat, it's also fine if your sleep isn't perfect every night. No one sleeps brilliantly all the time.

It's also important to remember that sleep is highly individual. There is no one-size-fits-all routine. What matters is finding strategies that suit you, whether that's simply ensuring you give yourself the opportunity to get the amount of sleep you feel you need to be genuinely rested and restored, creating a calming wind-down routine, or improving your sleep environment. When making changes, start small. Overhauling everything at once can feel restrictive and, much like a strict diet, often leads to slipping back into old habits. Incremental steps are far more sustainable and lead to long-term improvement.

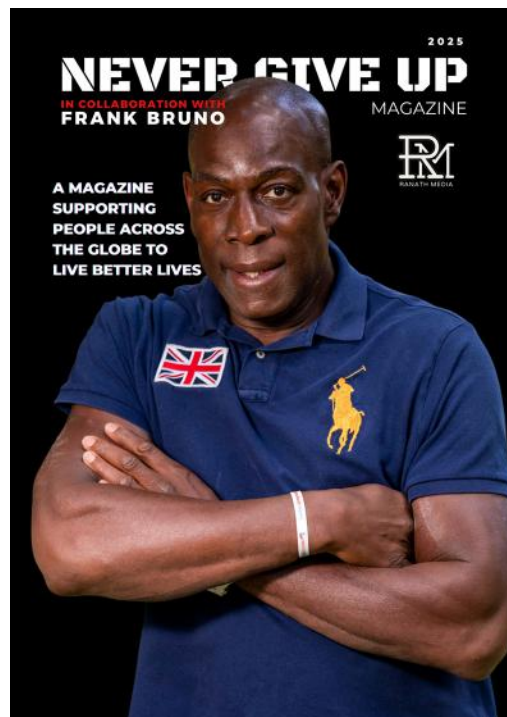
Ultimately, sleep should be seen as an ally, something that supports you rather than another task on the to-do list. When you strike a healthy balance, sleep fuels clarity, energy, and resilience. And with that, your best days naturally begin with your best nights.

Because sleep is not a luxury.

By Sam Sadighi
Certified Sleep Practitioner
Easy Sleep Solutions



www.EasySleepSolutions.co.uk



New Year, More You.....

Yes, I know that is not how the saying goes, but maybe this year, instead of trying to change things by committing to resolutions and promises you feel you should make to yourself, you could focus on releasing the pressure, pausing, and taking moments to simply be... Not only that, perhaps you could plant the seed of intention to be more of you, the most you that you have ever been....

When you were little, you were not focused on the 'should's' and the 'should not's'. You viewed the world with curiosity and wonder, and you probably didn't pick yourself apart for the external things you notice so quickly now. In the Early Years, children learn best through curiosity, discovery and trial and error, all through play. Their natural ability to be present, to explore, and to follow what feels right is something we often lose as adults.

So, ask yourself: when was the last time you allowed yourself to be curious? When was the last time you paused and welcomed fun and joy into your world? When was the last time you truly recognised what you are good at?

Children can teach us so much about how to be, but here is something important: the little version of you is still inside. They have witnessed every lesson and every blessing that has shaped you until this moment. They want you to grow, to thrive, and to become whoever you wish to be.

In Soul Plan work, we talk about the blueprint you arrived with- the energetic map of your gifts, challenges and talents, present from the moment you were born. Your

Soul Plan is laid out in the form of a star, which means that, quite literally, a star was born the day you came into the world. That inner child within you remembers this blueprint.

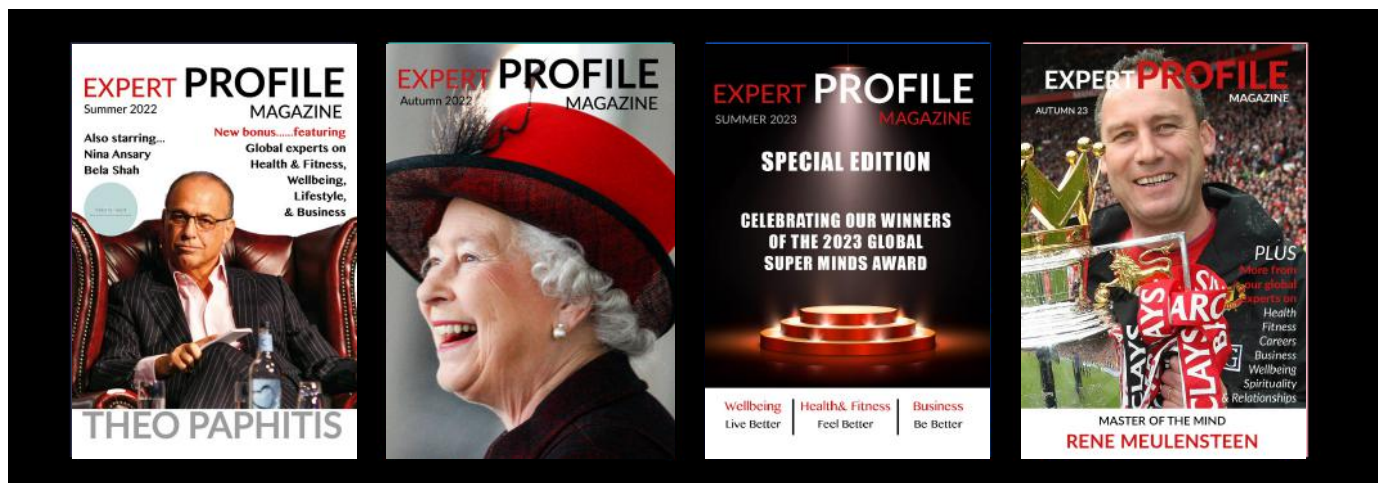
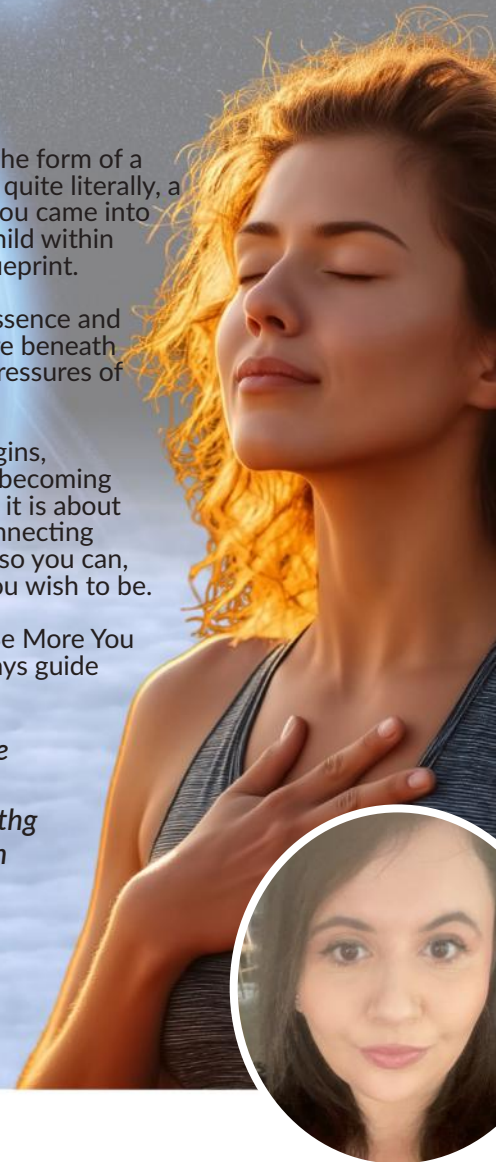
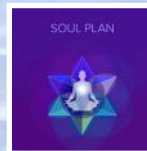
They remember your essence and the truth of who you are beneath the expectations and pressures of adult life.

So, as this new year begins, perhaps it is not about becoming someone new. Perhaps it is about remembering and reconnecting with who you truly are so you can, in turn, become who you wish to be.

2026 is simply saying Be More You & the Little Us will always guide the way!

By Georgina Goldstone

Instagram: @justbe_withg
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