

ISSUE 01

SUMMER 2026

older sister

YOU'VE GOT MAIL!

MEET THE GIRLS KEEPING SNAIL MAIL ALIVE

IN THE GIRLS' ROOM
WITH RACHEL MOSS

HOW TO FIGHT
SUMMER FOMO

ROLE MODEL:
INDIA BURNS





older sister

SUMMER 2026

in this issue

6

WELLNESS

how to fight summer FOMO

9

POP QUIZ!

what should you do this summer?

11

MOVIES

your summer watchlist

12

PLAYLIST

songs for the road ahead

14

BOOKS

your summer reading list

15

IN THE GIRLS' ROOM

*an interview with author
rachel moss*

17

ROLE MODEL

*the long way home with india
burns*

22

YOU'VE GOT MAIL!

*the snail mail clubs delivering
joy to your mailbox*

25

ASK FIFI

your burning questions, answered

26

TWO BAROQUE GIRLS

*the shell sisters of natural history
illustration*

28

THE ART OF SHELL COLLECTING

the do's & don't's of sustainable shelling

30

CRAFTS

*make your own memory boxes, fairy
wands & more!*

34

SUMMER BUCKET LIST

moomins, olivia rodrigo & more!

36

HOROSCOPES

*what the stars have in store for you
this summer*

38

FIELD NOTES

what we've collected along the way

41

JOURNAL

your very own journal!



page 171





FROM THE EDITOR

Welcome to the very first issue of Older Sister Magazine!

In May, I finished up my graduate internship as a school social worker. In the last few weeks with my students, we kept coming back to the same question: what do you take with you when something ends?

In my final session with a girl I had been working with all year, I gave her a parting gift: American Girl's *A Smart Girl's Guide to Middle School*. I watched her face light up as she flipped through the pages.

I realized that while I grew up with these guidebooks and magazines made specifically for me, the girls growing up now seem to have whatever their algorithms decide to show them.

I created Older Sister Magazine to bring back media that's intentional, fun, smart, and made with girls in mind.

This is our Summer Issue. We're celebrating the end of the school year — the goodbyes, the fresh starts, and the season ahead — with snail mail clubs, journaling prompts, playlists, a Girl Scout documentary, DIY crafts, and more. And for the first installment of our Role Model series, I sat down with actress and writer India Burns in her childhood bedroom to talk about the ultimate self-confidence hack: returning to the first thing you loved.

So — what do you take with you when something ends? It turns out that for me, it was creating this magazine for you!

Happy reading! I'm so glad you're here.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'amy' followed by a heart symbol.

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older sister

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Thank you to:

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Best Summer

BY AMY WESSON
ART BY EMILY LORD

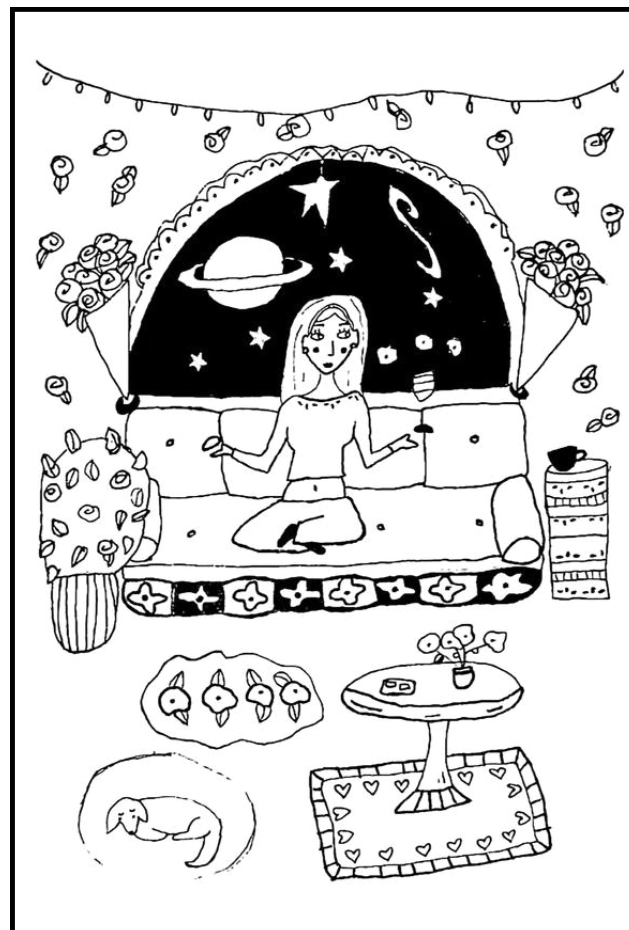


Ever?

Instagram came out when I was fifteen. I vividly remember the moment when one summer, while lying in bed on a Saturday night, I scrolled past photos of my friends hanging out by a pool at someone's house. They were tan and smiling and laughing in their matching neon bikinis, having a great time hanging out without me, or so I told myself. I felt a weird combination of anger, boredom, and loneliness that I didn't really have a name for yet.

When you're comparing yourself to a highlight reel of everyone else's best moments, you're always going to feel like you're losing.

That feeling is now, of course, known as the **fear of missing out, aka FOMO**, and it's been around longer than you might think. The term *FOMO* was coined in 2004 to describe what was happening on early social networking sites, and it made its way into the Oxford Dictionary in 2013. Psychologists define FOMO as the feeling that others are having rewarding experiences that you're not part of. Basically: the anxiety that everyone else is living their lives while you're just watching it happen.



What's actually happening behind the feeling of FOMO is what psychologists refer to as *upward social comparison*: aka comparing yourself unfavorably to others. And when you're comparing yourself to a highlight reel of everyone else's best moments, you're always going to feel like you're losing.

Unsurprisingly, studies show that high levels of FOMO are linked to increased anxiety, depression, and low self-esteem.

HOW TO FIGHT FOMO

DON'T: believe everything you think.

When you see that pool party photo, your brain might immediately jump to: *My friends don't like me anymore or I'm always being left out.* This is **all-or-nothing thinking**, and it's almost never true!

It may feel true because your anxiety is signaling to your body that something is urgent and dangerous — the same way it would if you stumbled upon a bear in the woods. Our nervous systems haven't evolved much.

DO: rewrite the story.

The next time you encounter all-or-nothing thinking, rewrite the story in a more realistic, grounded way: *They had plans, and I just wasn't there. It doesn't mean anything about me or my friendships.*

DON'T: doom scroll.

This one sounds obvious, but with the way our phones and social media have permeated every waking second of our daily lives, intentionally taking a break might be harder than you think.

You don't have to go offline forever, but try putting your phone away when you're eating a meal, hanging out with a friend, or even watching something on TV.

DO: redirect your attention.

Throw yourself into something else that fully captures your attention. Your attention is valuable — *social media platforms and advertising companies are making money off of it!* — and it deserves to be redirected toward something that brings you joy.

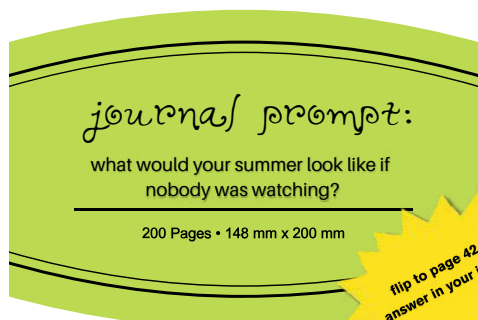
Get so completely absorbed in something — a book, an art project, a new recipe, yoga, the sound of birds in the trees outside your window — that you forget your phone even exists.

DON'T: let FOMO keep score.

FOMO wants to shift your focus to what you don't have, instead of reminding you of all the wonderful things that you *do* have.

DO: make a gratitude list.

It can be simple! Your family, your home, your pet, your favorite meal. Maybe the reason you're feeling left out is because you value your friendships so much — **and isn't it a gift to have such good friends?** ✨



SOURCES:
COLLEEN O'GRADY, LPC
FRONTIERS IN PSYCHOLOGY (2023)
WORLD JOURNAL OF CLINICAL CASES (2021)

stuck in a spiral?

before you freak out, start here:

1. put your phone down for thirty minutes.
2. write down three things you're grateful for.
3. do something with your hands — *cook, draw, organize.*
4. go outside.
5. remember: you can't be present in your own life if you're busy watching someone else's!



Emily Lord is 26, a Virgo, and designs art and animations inspired by mental health and girlhood. You can find her online at @emilyelaineart.

BINGO!

the art of noticing

BY MIZZ
@MIZZ.NOT.MISS

something in your favourite color	a moment of soft light	something that feels nostalgic	a small detail you've never noticed before	something that makes you pause
a quiet moment	a beautiful sound	something that feels like you	a tiny act of kindness	something that feels a little magical
a reflection	something imperfect but still beautiful		something that feels comforting	something that makes you smile
something that reminds you of your childhood	a shadow or silhouette that looks interesting	something moving slowly	a place that feels calm	something you would photograph
a small moment of connection	something that feels warm	something that feels like a "main character" moment	something that surprises you	something you want to remember



your summer

- go on a nature walk
- have an at-home spa day
- journal
- cook a new recipe
- get some sun (wear SPF!)



- try a new hobby
- stretch
- go for a swim
- watch the sunset
- make a summer playlist

ART BY SKYLER COONS
@SKYECOONSILLUSTRATES

self care CHECKLIST!

YOUR SUMMER WATCHLIST

10 movies that feel like your last exam, first dip in the pool, and “Ribs” by Lorde on repeat.

BY SOPHIA POWERS
@welcometosophiasisland



Mamma Mia! (2008)

Eighth Grade (2018)

Barbie (2023)

Aquamarine (2006)

Moonrise Kingdom (2012)

The Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants (2005)

Ferris Bueller's Day Off (1986)


The Princess Diaries (2001)


The Parent Trap (1998)

Booksmart (2019)



PLAYLIST



 Secrets From A Girl - Lorde
(Who's Seen It All)

Falling - HAIM 

The Ambition - Zara Larsson

24 - sundial

The Middle - Jimmy Eat World

 One Day Left - LOVA 

To Love Somebody - Holly Humberstone

Follow Your Arrow - Kacey Musgraves

Dreams - The Cranberries

Make Your Own
Kind of Music - Cass Elliot

I know A Place - MUNA



Lifeboat. - RAYE



role model



India Burns

styled & photographed by her older sister, manzi burns

YOU'VE GOT MAIL!

Meet the Snail Mail Clubs Delivering Joy to Your Mailbox

If you're like me and spend the majority of your time on the internet saving ideas for DIY arts & crafts, you may have noticed an uptick in snail mail clubs making their way across your screens. Girls, artists, and creatives around the world are creating monthly mail clubs to connect with like-minded, creative people, sending handmade art prints, stickers, and keepsakes straight to your mailbox. We talked to snail mail club founders about the creative process, the experience of running a business, and why analog connection is making a comeback. - *aw*



ART BY JAMES PARIS

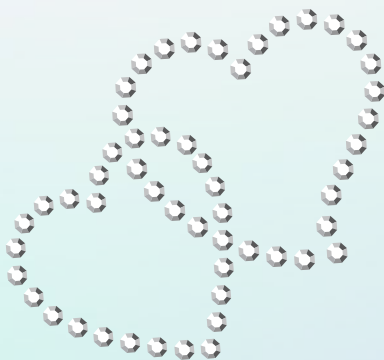
WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- ★ Plain jeans that need a little sparkle!
- ★ Fabric Scissors
- ★ An iron
- ★ parchment paper
- ★ iron-on rhinestone appliqué

Transform your Jeans!

BY NICOLE RANDONE
@MISS2005

- 1** Try on your jeans and use a marker to draw a line where you want to crop them.
- 2** Lay the jeans flat and cut straight across the line on each side with fabric scissors.
- 3** Remove the backing from the iron-on appliqué and position it onto the area of your jeans that you want to bedazzle.
- 4** Using parchment paper as a protective shield, press the iron onto the appliqué for about 30 seconds.
- 5** Wait for your new bedazzled jeans to cool - then try them on and *strut like you mean it!*



Inspired by Marisol in *The Cheetah Girls 2!*

ART BY EMILY LORD

aries



taurus

gemini



cancer

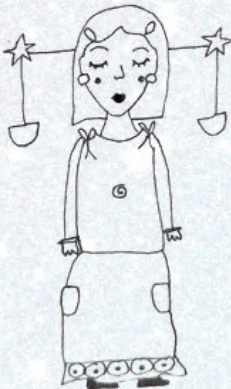
leo



virgo



libra



scorpio



sagittarius



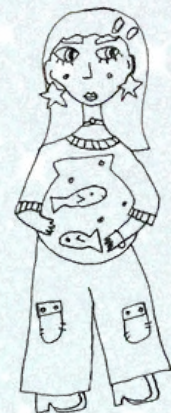
capricorn




aquarius



pisces





Read more in our
print issue!

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