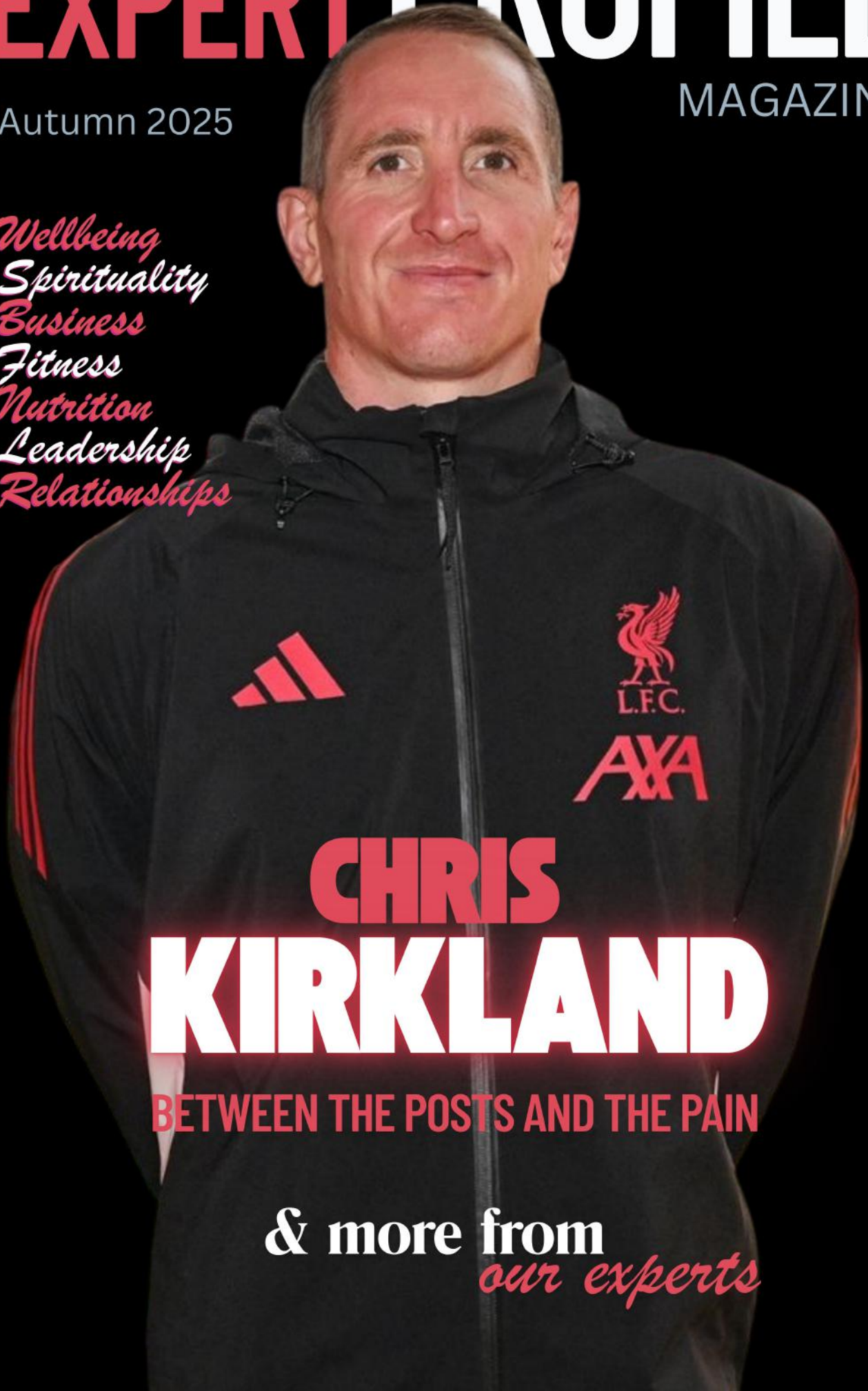


EXPERT PROFILE

Autumn 2025

MAGAZINE

*Wellbeing
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**CHRIS
KIRKLAND**

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EDITORS NOTE



Life has a way of testing us when we least expect it. Sometimes those tests come through our own struggles, and sometimes through the pain of someone we love. Watching someone dear to us face unimaginable challenges can leave us feeling helpless, searching for ways to bring light into a place that feels far too dark.

But even in those moments, we still have the power to make a difference. A steady hand to hold, a gentle word, a small act of kindness, these can mean more than we realise. Hope doesn't always roar; sometimes it whispers through presence, compassion, and the quiet strength of standing beside someone without needing to fix everything.

As I write this, I'm reminded that love, in its purest form, is often found in these small gestures, the ones that remind us that no one is truly alone, no matter how hard the days become.

So if someone you care about is going through a storm, stay close. Remind them they're still surrounded by love, by belief,

and by the quiet promise that brighter days are worth holding on for.

This issue is dedicated to strength, compassion, and the power of being there for one another, especially when words aren't enough.

Editor - Rany Athwall

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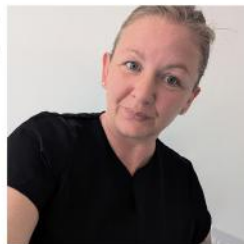
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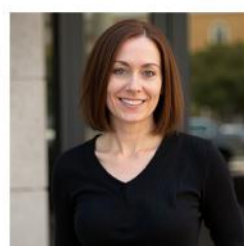
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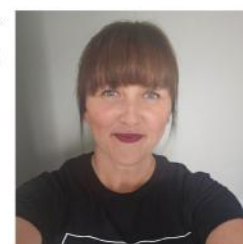
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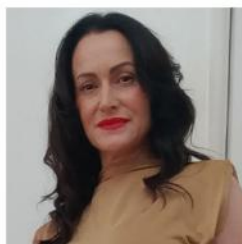
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Finding Strength Beyond the Struggle.....

There are moments in life that redefine a person, moments when everything familiar, career, success, purpose, fades beneath the weight of invisible battles. For former Liverpool and England goalkeeper Chris Kirkland, that moment came long after the roar of the crowd had quieted. What began as a way to manage pain slowly turned into a silent war that nearly cost him everything.

Kirkland's story is not about glory between the goalposts; it's about survival beyond them. It's about the hidden cost of pain, the danger of silence, and the courage it takes to ask for help.

The Beginning of a Vicious Circle

"It all started in 2012 when my routine changed when I signed for Sheffield Wednesday. I was commuting for long hours and started feeling anxious about being away from home for long periods. The painkillers masked the anxiety, but it was a vicious circle because I had to hide and plan my day around taking them."

The words are calm, but behind them lies a quiet unraveling. In 2013, Kirkland joined Sheffield Wednesday after spells with Liverpool, Wigan, and others. The move seemed straightforward, a seasoned goalkeeper extending his career, yet it marked the start of something much darker.

He began taking painkillers for back pain. At first, the medication offered relief. Soon, however, it offered something else, a way to numb anxiety. "Football was the escape," he says. "It allowed me to switch off. But away from playing, the anxiety and bad feelings just kept on getting worse."

Publicly, Kirkland has spoken about using tramadol, a painkiller known for its addictive potential. What started as medical necessity became dependence. The pills didn't just dull the pain, they dulled the noise of worry, travel, and solitude. But like so many who fall into the same cycle, he didn't notice how the line blurred between treatment and addiction.



Breaking Point and the Power of Speaking Up

By 2016, Kirkland's life on paper still looked steady. He was a professional athlete with a decorated past, a family man, and a respected teammate. Yet internally, things were collapsing. The losses he experienced that year were emotional triggers that finally pushed him to open up.

"I lost my dog Max and a close friend, and I couldn't take it any longer; I had to tell someone. He reached out first to his wife, Leeona, whose understanding and strength became a foundation for his recovery. Encouraged by close friend and former teammate Neil Mellor, he contacted the Professional Footballers' Association (PFA), who guided him towards counselling and early intervention.

For the first time in years, Kirkland wasn't fighting alone. "I just wished I had told someone back in 2013," he reflects. "I could have saved ten years of pain and heartache. It is nothing to be ashamed of, you'll be amazed how many friends and family just want to help and make you better."

It was a brave admission, but as he would learn, recovery is rarely a straight line.

Retirement, Relapse, and the Edge of Collapse

When Kirkland retired from professional football in 2017, his daily structure disappeared. The routine that had once anchored his life was suddenly gone, and with it, his distraction from the deeper struggles.

"The feelings began to resurface and before long I was back on the painkillers. Again, it was a period of hiding and lying, and this time it was worse, because I was having hallucinations and breathing difficulty."

His relapse was devastating. Without football to occupy his mind, the old anxieties flooded back. The dependency deepened, and the side effects became terrifying, hallucinations, exhaustion, panic.

By 2019, Kirkland realised that without drastic change, he might not survive. "To save my life, I had to go to rehab," he says. "For three months, I was being tested regularly and having group sessions with other addicts. It made me realise I wasn't on my own and that I could recover from this nightmare."



'It was a brave admission, but as he would learn, recovery is rarely a straight line.'



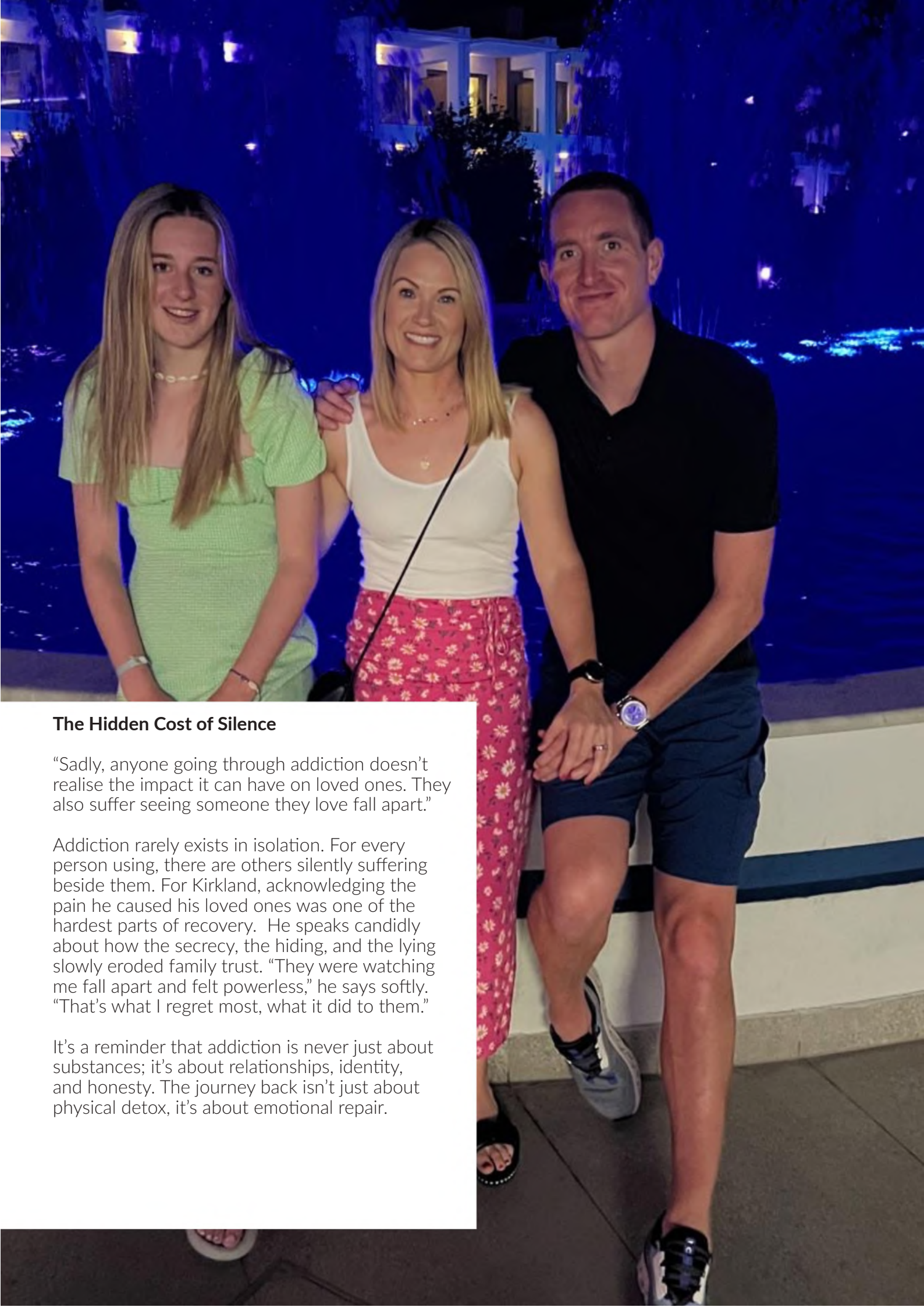
In rehab, surrounded by others facing addiction, he discovered a powerful truth, recovery begins not with perfection, but with honesty. The illusion of control that addiction feeds on is shattered when shared out loud. "Hearing other people's stories made me realise how far I'd fallen, but also that there was a way back."

Rebuilding Trust and Finding Purpose

Accountability became a key part of Kirkland's recovery. Publicly, he has spoken about how his wife administers home drug tests and how his family play an active role in keeping him on track. "You can't have secrets anymore," he has said. "That's what addiction thrives on."

Rebuilding trust takes time, but for Kirkland, service has been his therapy. His involvement with the Liverpool FC Foundation and local mental health projects allowed him to turn his pain into purpose. By sharing his experiences, he has helped countless others realise that addiction and mental health issues don't discriminate, they affect the strongest, the fittest, the most disciplined.

"Exercise also helped me. It's played a huge part in my recovery. Keeping busy, working with the Foundation, it all gives me purpose." He also acknowledges that during the COVID-19 lockdown, isolation led to another relapse. "I did have a relapse during lockdown and was prescribed antidepressants," he admits. It was a setback, but not a failure, it became another reminder that recovery is a daily choice, not a single event.



The Hidden Cost of Silence

"Sadly, anyone going through addiction doesn't realise the impact it can have on loved ones. They also suffer seeing someone they love fall apart."

Addiction rarely exists in isolation. For every person using, there are others silently suffering beside them. For Kirkland, acknowledging the pain he caused his loved ones was one of the hardest parts of recovery. He speaks candidly about how the secrecy, the hiding, and the lying slowly eroded family trust. "They were watching me fall apart and felt powerless," he says softly. "That's what I regret most, what it did to them."

It's a reminder that addiction is never just about substances; it's about relationships, identity, and honesty. The journey back isn't just about physical detox, it's about emotional repair.



A Voice for Change

“Football clubs can do more by recognising players who are struggling, although I must admit Liverpool FC were great. My advice is, speak up, tell someone, get help, don’t wait.” In a sport defined by strength, performance, and stoicism, conversations about mental health have often been taboo. Kirkland hopes his openness will change that.

He’s been vocal about the need for football clubs and governing bodies to take a more active role in supporting players, not just when they’re on the pitch, but when they step away. “There are lads right now who are struggling, hiding it, and thinking they can’t speak up,” he says. “But they can. And they must.” Kirkland praises Liverpool for the way the club has supported him, but he believes the game as a whole must do more to spot the sign early. He’s now using his platform to encourage players and fans alike to take mental health as seriously as physical fitness.

His story has resonated widely, not just in sport but across society. As a respected figure who once stood under the brightest lights in English football, he now stands as an example of vulnerability turned into strength.

A Lesson in Humanity

Addiction doesn’t care about fame or success. It creeps quietly into the lives of doctors, builders, teachers, and footballers. Kirkland’s journey shows that asking for help is not weakness; it’s courage in its purest form. He’s found that speaking openly brings not only freedom but also healing. “It’s nothing to be ashamed of,” he says. “Instead, you’ll be amazed how many friends and family just want to help and make you better.”

Through community work, public speaking, and continued involvement with mental health charities, Kirkland has transformed his past struggles into a mission to inspire others. He doesn’t sugar-coat it, recovery is hard, and relapse is real. But so is hope. Today, he lives a quieter, more mindful life with his family, staying close to his roots in the North West. His message is simple but profound:

“Speak up. Tell someone. Get help. Don’t wait.”

For Chris Kirkland, football once provided escape. Now, sharing his truth provides purpose. His story isn’t about the trophies or the stadium lights, it’s about the light that returns when you finally stop hiding.

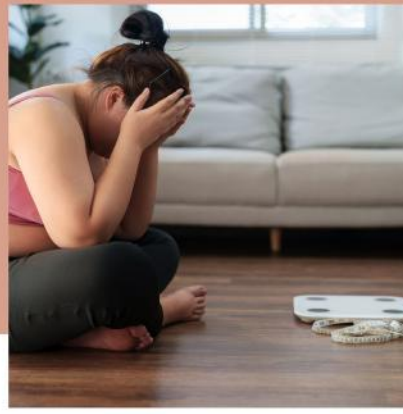


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Why You're Not Losing Weight (Even Though You Think You're Doing Everything Right)

You're eating better. You've started training. You're doing your best to stay consistent, but the scale just isn't moving. It's frustrating, disheartening, and can leave even the most motivated person wondering, "What am I doing wrong?" The truth? You might not be doing anything wrong, but you could be missing a few key pieces of the puzzle. Let's break down the common blind spots I see when working with clients, and how to fine-tune your approach for real, lasting results.

1. Are You Really Tracking Everything?

Most people underestimate what they eat, not intentionally, but because some calories sneak in unnoticed. A splash of milk in your tea, a drizzle of olive oil on your salad, a dollop of butter in the pan. These small additions add up fast.

If you're tracking your meals but skipping the extras like drinks, sauces, condiments, and cooking oils, you're likely underestimating your calorie intake. That "clean" chicken and rice dinner becomes a 150-calorie surplus with a bit of extra oil and a sugary drink on the side.

Tip: Be honest, not perfect. Track everything for a week, even the splash of milk or spoonful of peanut butter. You might be surprised by how much those little things matter.

2. Portion Sizes: Are They Sneakily Sabotaging You?

Even with healthy foods, it's easy to go overboard. Nuts, avocado, cheese, rice, and pasta are all great in the right quantities. But eating from the bag or not weighing portions can lead to consistent overeating.

Solution: Use a digital kitchen scale for a few meals. You don't have to weigh food forever — but it helps calibrate your eye and reset what a true portion actually looks like.

3. Do You Go Off-Track on Weekends?

Many clients are diligent Monday to Friday, then relax their structure on the weekends, more meals out, more drinks, less movement. A weekend calorie surplus can easily undo a week's worth of progress.

Ask yourself: Are your "just one treat" weekends turning into 2,000+ extra calories? If so, it may be time to build more balance and mindfulness into your social plans without feeling deprived.

4. Is Your Body Helping or Hindering Your Efforts?

Fat loss isn't just about food and exercise. Stress, sleep, and recovery play huge roles, too. Poor sleep increases hunger hormones, stress raises cortisol (which can impact fat storage), and general fatigue makes you less likely to move your body.

Are you:

Sleeping less than 7 hours a night?

Chronically stressed?

Tired all day, training hard but not recovering?

If so, your environment could be working against your goals.

5. Are You Moving Enough Outside the Gym? (NEAT)

Non-Exercise Activity Thermogenesis (NEAT) is the energy you burn doing everything outside of formal workouts, walking, fidgeting, and household chores. It's a major part of your daily calorie burn, and it matters a lot.

Someone with a sedentary job who only trains for an hour three times a week may still not be moving enough. Even with training, your total daily movement could be low. Simple fix: Track your steps. Aim for 8,000–10,000 a day if possible. Every bit counts.

6. Are You Using a Generic Calorie Number?

Many people base their intake on a generic app suggestion like "2,000 calories a day", but calorie needs are highly individual. Age, weight, muscle mass, activity level, and metabolism all play a role. When I work with clients, we don't guess. We meet them where they're at. We look at:

Daily steps

Calories burned (typically tracked with an Apple Watch)
Calories consumed (tracked via food diary or app)

Then, we ensure calories burned are consistently 500–800 more than calories consumed. That's the magic number to start creating steady fat loss.

7. What If You're Still Not Losing?

If the scale isn't moving after a week of accurate tracking, we reassess:

Are we really tracking everything?

Are our steps and activity levels high enough?

Can we increase NEAT or add another workout?

If not, can we reduce calories safely?

Still stuck? Let's focus on increasing muscle mass (which increases your resting metabolism) or add more resistance training to raise daily expenditure.

It's a process of elimination, but a logical, supportive one. The key is data, patience, and consistency. Weight loss isn't about working harder, it's about working smarter. The body doesn't lie, but sometimes our perception of effort can be off. Track what matters, move more than you think you need to, and don't underestimate the "small stuff" because that's often where the significant breakthroughs happen. And most importantly, meet yourself where you are. That's where real change begins.

By Craig Alexander



A PROMISE DELAYED

There are seasons when we do all the “right” things. We show up. We let go of what no longer serves us. We trust the process.

And yet... nothing seems to move. The doors remain closed. The answers stay quiet. The promise feels suspended in a place just beyond reach.

This is the in-between — the sacred pause that comes after surrender but before arrival. It can feel like standing in the stillness between two waves: not where we once were, not yet where we’re going. And while it may seem silent on the surface, it is anything but empty.

As a coach, I’ve had the honour of walking beside people during some of their most defining transitions. But lately, I’ve found myself here too — in the deep kind of waiting, the kind that doesn’t come with a timeline or visible ending. And in this space, doubt can creep in.

You might question your path, your pace, even your worth. The ego whispers, **“What’s taking so long?”** And the heart aches for resolution. But here’s what I’ve learned — and am still learning: waiting is not wasted time. It’s not punishment. It’s preparation. **It’s an invitation to deeper trust.**

There’s something alchemical about delay. It slows us down just long enough to really listen to ourselves, to the whisper of the Spirit, and to the quiet work happening beneath the surface. It reveals the parts of us still trying to control the outcome. It stirs up unhealed timelines and the fear that maybe we’ve been forgotten. But it also creates space to soften, without giving up. To remain rooted when momentum disappears. To recognise that the promise hasn’t been denied — only deepened.

We live in an age where convenience reigns supreme — from instant messaging to one-click purchases and next-day deliveries. We’ve become so accustomed to instant results that we often overlook the value of slow growth. But in a world saturated with instant gratification, I’ve discovered the quiet, life-changing wisdom of delayed fulfilment. This isn’t just about changing habits — it’s about embracing a deeper process that refines every part of who we are. When we resist the urge to rush, we begin to uncover strength, patience, and clarity that fast-forward living can never offer.

We grow out of the need for shortcuts and into the slow, sacred rhythm of becoming. “Even if I don’t see it yet, I believe something is unfolding for my highest good.” We often think progress must look like motion. But sometimes, growth looks like stillness. Sometimes, the greatest leap forward is staying still long enough for the ground beneath you to rise and meet your feet. Not everything beautiful grows in the sunlight. Some of the most sacred transformations happen underground — out of sight. I return often to nature for wisdom.

A seed doesn’t panic in the darkness. It lets the soil shape it. It allows time to refine it. And when the moment is right, it rises — not because it rushed, but because it was ready.

The same is true for us.

This season has asked me to:

- **Re-evaluate what I thought I needed.**
- **Reconnect with the quiet strength beneath my identity.**
- **Rebuild trust — not just in the timing of life, but in my ability to hold what’s coming.**

I recall a time when a dream seemed so close I could almost reach out and touch it. Everything pointed to yes — and then... pause. Silence. Delay. I wrestled with doubt. But over time, something unexpected began to form: a gentler voice within me, a clearer sense of direction, and a rooted peace that didn’t need external movement to feel anchored.

And when the door finally opened, I wasn’t the same woman who had first knocked. I had become someone who could actually receive what I had asked for. If you’re in the waiting—for clarity, for healing, for timing to align — know this:

The delay is not denial. The pause is not punishment. It is the divine rhythm of something being prepared — not just for you, but within you.

So maybe it’s time to stop asking, **“When will it come?”** And instead begin asking,

“Who am I becoming while I wait?”

Because that version of you — steady, refined, open — is a promise fulfilled in itself.

By Marsah Parcou





Why Diets Fail

The Real Keys to Sustainable Fat Loss

We've been told that fat loss is all about willpower, calories, and cutting out carbs. But if that were true, wouldn't most diets actually work?

The truth is: most people don't fail diets – diets fail them.

As a nutrition coach working with clients across London and beyond, I've seen it time and time again: women trapped in cycles of restriction, followed by guilt, confusion, and rebound weight gain. The problem isn't a lack of discipline – it's the lack of a sustainable approach rooted in biology, behaviour and balance.

In this article, I'll walk you through the real reasons most diets don't deliver – and the simple but powerful shifts that can lead to long-term fat loss without obsession or overwhelm.

Diets Fight Against Your Biology

Human beings, to a large extent, have the same DNA. But the differences in our genes determine the things that make us unique – our hair, colour, body shape and, yes, even our ability to lose weight. A study published in the International Journal of Molecular Sciences has found a whole host of genes associated with obesity, impacting appetite, metabolism and fat storage.¹

The brain plays a key role in controlling body weight by managing appetite and energy expenditure.

Most diets involve heavy restriction – slashing calories, eliminating food groups or following rigid plans. Your body responds by slowing your metabolism and ramping up hunger hormones. It's not sabotage – it's survival. Fatigue, cravings and plateauing are biological responses, not personal failures.

A study published in StatPearls found that when calorie intake is reduced, the body can adapt by lowering its metabolic rate, making it harder to lose weight over time.²

One-Size-Fits-All Doesn't Fit Anyone

A diet that works for your friend, neighbour, or a fitness influencer online might be entirely wrong for your body, lifestyle or goals.

A study published in Nature Medicine found that a "one-size-fits-all" approach to fat loss is ineffective due to significant variations in individual responses to food and exercise. The study also showed that even identical twins, with nearly identical DNA, can have vastly different blood sugar, blood fat, and insulin responses to the same meals.³

Sustainable fat loss starts with understanding your needs – your schedule, medical history, stress levels, preferences, and relationship with food.

Diets Teach Rules, Not Habits

Many diets focus on what to cut out or avoid. They give you a temporary structure but no long-term strategy. Once the rules are gone, so is the progress. Fat loss that lasts comes from daily habits – not diets. Learning how to eat, how to shop, and how to manage cravings is far more valuable than simply knowing what to eliminate.

They Create a Fear-Based Relationship with Food

Diets often label food as "good" or "bad," creating guilt, shame, and sometimes binge eating. This black-and-white thinking disconnects us from our own hunger and satiety cues.

A study published in the Journal of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics found that starvation and self-imposed dieting appear to result in eating binges once food is available. It also found psychological manifestations such as preoccupation with food and eating, increased emotional responsiveness and anxiety, and being easily distracted. Healing

your relationship with food means learning to eat with awareness, not fear.

They Overlook Gut Health, Sleep, and Stress

Fat loss is influenced by more than food and exercise. Chronic bloating, poor digestion, high stress, and disrupted sleep all affect how your body stores fat and burns energy. If you're ignoring gut health or living in a constant state of stress, your body may resist fat loss even with a "perfect" diet.

A study published in Nutrition and Microbes found that gut health, specifically the composition and diversity of good gut bacteria, significantly influences fat loss. It showed that individuals with a healthier gut characterized by a greater diversity of the good bacteria, tend to have an easier time managing their weight and reducing body fat. Conversely, those with obesity often exhibit a less diverse gut microbiome, potentially hindering their weight loss efforts.⁵

In another study of people undergoing 14 days of calorie restriction, participants lost less fat when they slept for 5.5 hours per night compared to 8.5 hours.⁶

So, What Does Work?

If we move away from dieting and towards a more holistic, sustainable approach, here's what you need to focus on:

Balanced Blood Sugar

Keeping blood sugar balanced reduces energy dips, cravings, and mood swings. Structuring meals with the right balance of fibre, protein, healthy fats, and complex carbs supports hormonal health and sustainable fat loss.

Supporting Gut Health

A healthy gut isn't just for digestion – it affects everything from mood to metabolism. Reducing bloat, supporting digestion, and eliminating trigger foods can improve both comfort and fat loss outcomes.

Joyful Movement

Fat loss isn't about punishing workouts – it's about consistency. Whether it's strength training, walking, yoga, or dancing, moving your body in ways you enjoy helps build muscle, improve metabolism, and boost mood.

Mindful, Nourishing Eating

Instead of obsessing over what to eliminate, we focus on what to add: more fibre, more protein, more colourful veg, more water, more joy. Eating slowly, chewing properly, and tuning into hunger/fullness cues makes a huge difference.

Lifestyle Alignment

If your nutrition plan doesn't fit your real life, it won't last. Consider everything – your stress, your sleep, your mindset, and your routines – to help you create a fat-loss approach that's doable and does not feel like punishment.

The Bottom Line

If diets worked, we wouldn't need new ones every year. Real, lasting fat loss isn't about restriction – it's about connection. Connection to your body, to nourishing food, to your needs and your goals.

So next time you feel like you've "failed" a diet, remember: you didn't fail – the approach did. And there's a better way.

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BRIDGING TWO WORLDS



Style as Strategy

How Fashion Shapes Women's Personal Brands in Business

The clothes we choose to wear for work have always been more than fabric. They are a signal. They tell the world how we want to be seen, how seriously we expect to be taken, and what story we're writing about our careers.

For women in business, fashion has often been loaded with expectation. It has swung between invisibility and visibility, between conformity and rebellion, between fitting in and standing apart.

Today, as more women build businesses and personal brands outside the corporate mould, what we wear has become a quiet but powerful lever in how we position ourselves. As we step into autumn and winter, the question isn't just what's in season. It's: What does your style say about your brand, your values, and the standard you're setting?

The history of women's workwear

Women's workwear has always been political. In the early 20th century, women entering the workplace during wartime dressed in uniforms that echoed men's practicality: trousers, sturdy jackets, functional boots. Clothing signalled both competence and conformity. When women stepped into offices in the post-war years, the suit became the standard, but softened. Skirts replaced trousers, silk blouses softened starched collars, but the message remained the same: professional meant mirroring the masculine.

By the 1980s, "power dressing" defined corporate women. Shoulder pads, sharp tailoring, dark colours. The goal was clear, to project authority in a male-dominated boardroom. Fashion became armour, a uniform designed to say I belong here. But this came with compromise.

Individuality was often stripped away in favour of blending in. Creativity and softness were sacrificed for neutrality. Fast forward to today and the narrative has shifted. Women in business are no longer just fitting into systems; they are building their own. Their style reflects that freedom.

What has changed recently in women's dress

The pandemic accelerated this shift. Working from home blurred the lines between workwear and personal wear. The sharp suit was replaced by elevated comfort: knitwear, softer tailoring, relaxed silhouettes. Women realised they could still be taken seriously without the armour of rigid dress codes.

At the same time, social media and digital visibility changed the landscape. Many women now meet clients first through a screen, where a frame shows only head and shoulders. Accessories, colour, and detail carry more weight than a full tailored look. What you wear is no longer just about the office you walk into, it's about the feed, the stage, the story you're telling online.

Recent fashion also celebrates range. Women can step into a boardroom in a structured dress one day, jeans and a blazer the next, and a silk co-ord for an evening client dinner. The rules are looser. The emphasis is on alignment: does the style match the identity and message you want to put forward?

Luxury fashion houses have leaned into this duality. Brands like The Row and Totême present minimal, architectural silhouettes that speak to authority and simplicity. Others, like Stine Goya or La DoubleJ, celebrate boldness and colour as a statement of identity. Women now have permission to choose their lane whether it's quiet luxury, expressive statement, or a blend of both.

Style as part of your personal brand

Your personal brand is not just what you say. It's also what people see before you speak.

Clothing is often the first story you tell. It communicates taste, values, and identity without a word. A sharply tailored jacket says structure and strategy. A statement necklace says creativity and flair. Neutral tones say restraint and refinement. Bright colour says energy and boldness.

In business, this matters. Clients, investors, collaborators - they're all reading the signals. But this isn't about following trends or dressing expensively. It's about coherence. When your style is aligned with your message, there's no dissonance. People trust what they see and hear because it feels consistent.

Recently, I saw a piece of content go viral on LinkedIn. A woman in business called out Hugo Boss for evolving its menswear collections while leaving women's workwear largely untouched. Her post struck a chord. It wasn't just about clothes, it was about representation. About whether women in business are being reflected and respected by the brands that claim to serve them.

The CEO of Hugo Boss saw the post. Rather than dismissing it, he invited her in to share her ideas. That moment is telling. It shows that our personal brand isn't just built through what we wear, but through the conversations we're willing to open. Conversations about whether style reflects who we are, what we stand for, and whether it keeps pace with the standards women are setting today.

For women building businesses and personal brands, style isn't vanity. It's a strategy.

What to think about as we move into Autumn/Winter.

Autumn/winter dressing has always been about layers, both literal and metaphorical. It's the season to think intentionally about how you present yourself in moments that matter: meetings, events, networking, stage appearances.

Here are some reflections as you shape your personal brand through style this season:

1. Elevate the basics.

Invest in foundational pieces that read as quality without needing logos: a tailored coat, leather boots, a structured knit. These become your brand staples, the pieces people remember you by.

2. Play with texture, not just colour.

Autumn/winter gives permission to layer textures that signal depth: wool, cashmere, leather, silk. A monochrome outfit in cream or black looks elevated when the fabrics are rich.

3. Choose your signature.

Decide on one or two consistent style elements that people associate with you - a red lip, gold hoops, a sharply cut blazer, an oversized tote. Repetition builds recognition.

4. Think stage, not just screen.

With in-person events rising again, your style needs to hold both in a room and on a feed. Colours that pop under lights, tailoring that reads on stage, accessories that frame you on camera.

5. Let your clothes tell the story of where you're going, not just where you are.

Dress for the brand you're building, not just the one you have. If you want to be seen as a category leader, let your wardrobe reflect innovation, confidence, and clarity.

As we step into autumn and winter, it's not just about what coats or boots are trending. It's about asking whether the way we dress reflects who we are now. The Hugo Boss example is proof: even the most established brands are being challenged to evolve, to represent women in business on their own terms.

That's the same opportunity we have as individuals. To let our wardrobes reflect the category we're defining, not the one we inherited. To treat style as a living part of our personal brand - not static, but evolving with us.

Why this matters now

As women, what we wear has never been neutral. History shows it. Culture reinforces it.

But now, unlike the decades before, we have the freedom to decide how our clothes serve us. To use style as a tool of identity, not assimilation. To let our wardrobes reflect the categories we're building in business and the legacies we want to leave.

The viral Hugo Boss post is a reminder: even the biggest fashion houses are being asked to evolve. To listen. To reflect women in ways that match who we are today.

That same responsibility sits with us. To question whether our own style represents the businesses we're building, the standards we're setting, and the future we're claiming.

Because fashion will always shift with the seasons. But the story your style tells about your brand is in your hands. It should evolve with you, it should align with the woman you already are, and it should signal the category you're here to lead.

In business, before you say a word, people are already reading the signals. What you wear is the opening line. And you get to decide how the rest of the story unfolds.

By Rachel Pearson



Self Care Corner

I served for several years in the military. As I prepared for my separation and transition into civilian life, I often imagined what life would look like.

No fatigues and boots.

No mandatory physical training or exams.

No more insanely early mornings.

I romanticized what my new life would look like. My first offer post-military was as a financial advisor. I was drawn in by the corporate name and its brand recognition. I even fantasized about my new business card, "From soldier to advisor". I was enamored by the possibility of "unlimited income potential". That was a long way from being paid twice a month. I visualized being in Forbes Magazine and being heralded as a financial genius.

One evening, I decided to leave for the day. I figured that I'd have time to hit the gym and decompress. With the door in my line of sight and laser-focused on the doorknob, my team lead catches me. You could hear the sigh that I released at that moment. In a sarcastic tone, he says, "It's 5:30, you're leaving pretty early. You can go, if you want. But you won't make it as an advisor. We usually work until 7".

The unspoken rule was that everyone worked at least an 11-hour day. That would translate to 55–60-hour workweeks. As a newcomer to the organization, I wanted to demonstrate that I had the "right stuff". For another eleven months, I took myself through the paces. I wanted to show that I belonged. To no avail, nothing worked out. My financial advisor "career" resulted in chronic headaches and a sense of dread that manifested in stomach pains and anxiety. One quiet evening, I packed my things and walked out. It was one of the bravest things I'd ever done.

I used to think I just needed more coffee. More hustle. More late nights and early mornings. What I needed... was less.

Less noise.

Less pressure.

Less pretending everything was fine while my nervous system was begging for a timeout.

If you've been feeling lately foggy, irritable, and drained, no matter how much you sleep, it's not just a sign of aging. It's overstimulation. It's a body and mind fatigued from endless input. We're living in a culture where attention is under constant siege: Notifications at 6 AM. Emails during breakfast. Social media comparison loops. Group chat buzzes.

With the constant flux of information, there's never a time when we're disconnected. In a study conducted by Anthonnette Adayin, Adayin seeks to understand the impacts of technology on our behaviors. It was noted that "Even leisure apps feed our craving for novelty and feedback—adding to anxiety and mental exhaustion" [1] What Does Feeling "Off" Really Mean? It's the feeling of being on autopilot. It feels as if we're going through the motions. When we share, we're exhausted but anxious, foggy yet wired at night, losing joy even after sleep—it's less about hormones alone, more about depletion. Same amount of sleep, but nothing restores.

Energy is drained by the end of the day.

Focus fades. Interactions feel harder.

That brain fog? It's a symptom, not destiny.

Being overstimulated—whether mentally, emotionally, physically, or digitally—can have wide-reaching effects on your nervous system, decision-making, relationships, and overall well-being. Here are a few ways that our nervous systems are impacted:

1. Constant stimulation: (noise, screens, multitasking) keeps the sympathetic nervous system ("fight or flight" mode) turned on, which can exhaust your adrenals and dysregulate your cortisol rhythm.

2. Sleep disruption: Overexposure to blue light, social media, or even emotional stressors can disrupt circadian rhythms and make it hard to fall or stay asleep.

3. Increased inflammation: Stress-related overstimulation contributes to low-grade, chronic inflammation—tied to issues like joint pain, fatigue, digestive problems, and more. [2]

In short, everything is impacted.

'The unspoken rule was that everyone worked at least an 11-hour day. That would translate to 55–60-hour workweeks.'

From Hustle to Healing: My Awakening

When I first stepped into leadership, I equated long days with impact. I was early in, late out, and constantly “on”. The cost? Chronic tension, burnout, and a reflection I didn’t recognize.

My realization happened after working an almost 14-hour day. Our team was responsible for testing a new accounting software system. I remember sitting there in a haze and going through the motions. I realized I was functioning, but not present.

Take action:

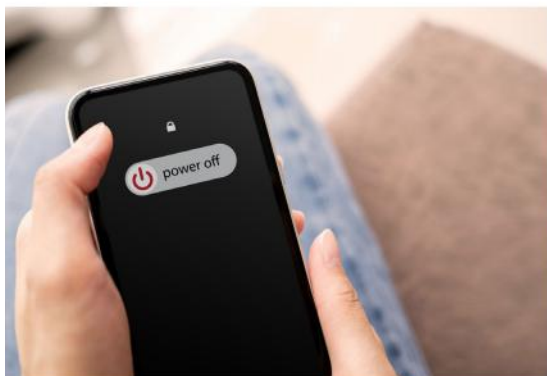
- *Screen curfews 30 minutes before bed*
- *No phone zones at meals or bedtime*
- *Limit your time on social media*

A technology boundary isn’t deprivation—it’s restoration.

4. Reclaim Joyful, Whole-Body Nourishment

Nourishment shows up in small ways:

- *A warm journal ritual*
- *Walking barefoot on grass*
- *Stretching with your favorite music*
- *Saying “no” without guilt*



My nervous system was defaulting to survival mode, not clarity. I learned that rest is not optional; it’s strategic because you cannot lead effectively from a state of chaos.

Your Reset

Your reset doesn’t need to wait for New Year’s Day. You don’t have to wait until the perfect moment. You need small practices that anchor you here, now.

Here are a few practical strategies you can implement to support your reset. Add these tools to your self-care toolbox. And when you’re feeling overstimulated, reach into your toolbox and grab one!

1. Breathe to Rebalance: Intentional breathing is regulation in action. Box breathing- inhale, hold, exhale, hold for four seconds each—can lower cortisol, reduce blood pressure, and activate the parasympathetic system. Just 2–3 minutes can reset your mindset before stressful situations.

2. Schedule Sacred Silence- You schedule meetings, why not quiet time? Block 10 minutes daily to sit in stillness, journal, or walk without stimuli.

Try: “What am I carrying that’s not mine?”
This intentional space begins rewiring how your nervous system responds to noise.

3. Set Real Tech Boundaries - Studies show heavy social media and compulsive screen use increase stress, anxiety, and comparisons—especially midlife users with doomscroll habits. [3]

Your nervous system doesn’t differentiate mental and physical rest—they’re both signals of safety. Reimagining Strength - Society teaches that endurance is a form of strength. I say: true strength is recognizing when to stop carrying what’s not yours.

It’s choosing presence. Peace. Clarity. No more crumbs of calm. No more borrowing rest. You’re not meant to perform through exhaustion. You were meant to lead from clarity, grounded in your rhythm. Your next chapter begins with a pause—not a retreat.

Before checking your phone or filling out your schedule, ask:

“What would it look like to nourish myself right now?”
Then carve space for that. You’re worthy of it!

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The Space Between

The missing pieces of a quick fix

To heal in ways you never have before, you must be open and willing to do things in ways you have never done before.

People often ask me about my healing journey, and it is a lengthy story to tell. It's not something I can summarise in a paragraph or in a brief comment on social media. I started from a place that many are in right now, suffering every moment of every day with numerous autoimmune diseases and health issues. I was desperate for help and answers, but even after years had passed, nothing changed, and my health continued to decline.

My health didn't drastically decline overnight; this was a result of decades of symptoms and red flags that never received the attention or response that was needed from me. From childhood to adulthood, layers of exposures, experiences and trauma all added up to the place of imbalance that was keeping me in a debilitated state.

To heal from all of this naturally was going to take a lengthy journey that required me to be open to various perspectives, as well as to learn as much as I possibly could about myself, my body and everything that brought me to the state of disease I was suffering with.

For the first time in my life, I wasn't sitting idly while suffering from symptoms; I was stepping back and observing symptoms. I began listening to them and learning from them. I was honoring my own needs and no longer feeling ashamed and guilty for having those needs.

At the starting point, my goal was to save my life and no longer suffer from illness. I made a decision to find a way, and nothing could stop me. I had no idea where to turn, nor did I have a plan or the resources you would need to take such a journey. So I began with a step forward, which led me to the next step. I had to find ways to cover future steps financially, and we didn't have the money at all. I learned quickly that when you make a decision that is unshakable and wholeheartedly something you will not budge from, you will find a way, somehow. I was determined as if my life depended on it, because it did!

Every step led me to the next, which in turn led me to new people, new voices, new knowledge, and an entirely new way of perceiving my health. It didn't take long before my perception of the journey itself began to shift. I wasn't hyper-focused on the imaginary finish line because the reality was that

there wasn't any real finish line.

The finish line no longer existed. I began to see that healing is a continuous process, and our own needs are forever changing as we continue to age, evolve, and grow. My journey became so much more than getting better quickly or ridding myself of symptoms. It was a total transformation of my life that not only brought me healing but also introduced me to an entirely new way of living and a new perception of the world around me.

It was the space between, the journey itself, that changed everything. I never expected it to become a metamorphosis of who I once was. I never knew that healing is something so deeply personal that it can't truly be understood unless you are walking the path yourself. I peeled back layers of pain and released decades of emotional weight that gave my body the

release it needed. For the first time in decades, my body genuinely believed I was safe and no longer needed to remain in a survival state.

Suppose you want to begin your own journey and learn what it takes to truly heal. In that case, you must first understand that your diagnosis and/or symptoms have manifested over a long period of time. Therefore, for healing and reversing your illnesses to occur, you must be willing to take the journey one step at a time, without the need to rush towards that imaginary finish line.

I know the wellness industry is expanding around us, and it seems that everywhere you turn, there are new methods, supplements, and promises of quick-fix solutions. It is a marketing tool that targets people just like you in their most vulnerable state.



While there are fantastic companies that genuinely create innovative and high-quality products, there are also a massive number of major companies jumping on the wellness bandwagon that aren't providing the quality and results they claim.

Everywhere you turn, there is a new supplement or method being advertised, promising to be the one thing you need to transform your health. You see reviews and fabricated stories, and begin to feel a false sense of hope that it will be the solution that works for you, too!

This is not your fault, and falling into the temptation to grab the product is nothing to be ashamed of. I have done it myself more times than I can count! However, the truth is that whether it is conventional medicine or holistic medicine, there is no such thing as a magic pill. Any so-called quick fix will be short-lived and will usually bring you right back to the very place you started.

If you look a little deeper into this, it becomes very clear why we are so easily swayed to believe that a new supplement or magic solution will be what brings us to our goals.

I often speak of how we are taught since childhood that whenever we have a symptom or a health issue, we see our Doctor and will be prescribed medication for it. The process itself is relatively quick and usually doesn't extend further than that. We take our medication, our symptoms subside, and we are under the illusion that the health issue has been resolved. This mindset is all we have ever known and how we have always lived.

We are accustomed to quick fixes that require little to no effort on our part, except for a drive to an appointment and our pharmacy, and then picking up the prescription that was written for us.

This way of taking care of ourselves is the only way ever shown to us. It's a deeply ingrained mindset that was instilled in us from the day we were born.

If you ever find yourself falling for an advertisement that has made big promises but didn't provide you with the expected results, don't be hard on yourself. Understand that our mindset has been one way for

our entire lives, and this too will take time to change and break free from. Always remember that every step and experience, while sometimes frustrating, teaches us and provides us with greater awareness, allowing us to avoid repeating similar situations in the future.

While some in the wellness industry are profiting from us in our most vulnerable states, try to remind yourself that healing is not about rushing to the result. Those results are not where the transformation happens. The changes within you are a byproduct of steps, choices and efforts made by you over an unsolicited period of time.

When you have been through years of any healing journey, you will not be the same person you were when you started your journey. That transformation doesn't happen from a man-made pill.

That transformation happens gradually, every single time you choose to take a step forward, every single time you choose YOU.

It's not at the starting point or the finish line; it's the space between that only you can experience for yourself. That is where you will find the change you have been praying for, because you are creating it.

What the wellness industry needs to remember is that supplements are there to support us and our bodies on our journeys. Don't get me wrong, there are plenty out there that are fantastic and have been a tremendous support for my health and my family's wellbeing over the years. But we cannot allow the quick pill fix mindset to take over and forget that every symptom has a root cause that needs our attention. Supplements are an important part of our health journeys, but they are not there to fix us and certainly aren't the sole solution our bodies have been asking for.

Your healing journey won't be easy by any means, and there are no shortcuts to achieving real, sustainable change. It will test you in every way imaginable, and it will have you doubting yourself and questioning if it's even worth it. This is when you push forward harder; this is where you reach out for help and guidance from those like me who have walked this path before you.

I would never promise to heal you; that's up to you. But I promise it will be a light for you as you navigate this path, which can sometimes feel unsteady. I will support you and teach you everything I know. That is the kind of help you need to search for. It's that support that will help you reach the next phases of your journey and get you back up, no matter how many times you fall.

The thought of a long health journey may sound intimidating, and rightfully so. If it does, then you are still continuing to worry about the finish line. There are no finish lines, but there are significant milestones that you will never forget. The imaginary finish line becomes blurred as you gradually transform into the person who had been hidden behind your pain for too long.

The transformation you will experience, along with the healing you have been searching for, is truly worth everything.

Here are a few of the many things that are missing in a quick fix:

- *Understanding your subconscious and limiting beliefs: How your beliefs created in childhood continue to impact every part of your adulthood.*
- *Getting to know your nervous system: Moving your nervous system out of survival mode and into a more flexible place where it no longer needs to be hypervigilant and on high alert.*
- *Creating a diverse microbiome and ensuring the harmful bacteria are no longer in charge...putting infection in a dormant state where it should be, creating long-term results.*
- *Learning and understanding your own body's cues and how to respond to them.*
- *Practicing being in the present moment and enjoying the present moment again.*
- *Understanding your identity.*
- *Community, compassion and grace become one of the most significant parts of your wellness journey.*
- *Learning to pause and observe rather than immediately react.*
- *Learning information and creating lifestyle shifts that will not only help you, but will help your family's well being too.*
- *Embracing a new empowerment as you are now in the driver's seat of your own wellbeing.*
- *Feeling inner peace.*

These are just some of the many events that have occurred in the space between the day I began my journey and today. It takes patience, commitment, and a burning desire to heal from everything our society claims you cannot heal from.

This journey starts off as something you must do to survive. It begins because you no longer want to suffer from the ongoing symptoms that are holding you hostage every day of your life. But after only a couple of steps, this movement towards wellness starts to reveal a new way of seeing, loving and healing yourself.

I know that having instant results is tempting, and sometimes that is all you are looking for. But if you truly want to achieve significant, long-term changes for yourself, I urge you to take a moment and pause before you act.

Pause, observe and perhaps remember some of the things I have mentioned above. When it's time for you to make a decision for yourself, remember, we do not wait for the end results of our journeys to rejoice in our progress and celebrate ourselves. The joy isn't a final ending; it's found in the small steps, the space between, where we care for ourselves in ways we never have before and heal deeper than we ever imagined.

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The Female Brain Advantage

How women's Intuition and Neuroscience create a new style of Leadership

Since the beginning of time, leadership has been based on the male perspective and processes, as well as milestones, task lists, and procedures. Which is, we might add, highly effective in manufacturing environments or repetitive, often mindless activities.

But there is a but....For decades, women leaders have been associated with the idea of intuition—that almost magical ability to anticipate challenges, read the room, and make decisions that defy pure logic yet yield exceptional results. Science is now catching up to what many women have always known: intuition isn't a mystical gift; it's a powerful, neuroscience-backed leadership tool.

The Neuroscience of Female Intuition

The female brain is uniquely wired for holistic decision-making, emotional intelligence, and rapid pattern recognition. Studies on over 200,000 brain SPECT scans show that women have a larger anterior cingulate cortex, which enhances their ability to assess risks and predict outcomes. Additionally, a highly active corpus callosum allows for seamless integration between logic and emotion, making female leaders adept at balancing analytical thinking with human-centric leadership.

Moreover, neuroimaging studies highlight that women exhibit heightened activity in the mirror neuron system—the network responsible for empathy and social intelligence. This isn't just about being “nurturing”; it's about leveraging deep interpersonal awareness to navigate complex workplace dynamics, resolve conflicts, and foster high-performing, psychologically safe teams. It is important to notice that this is the overall general trend and outcome of those analyses, but every brain is unique.

Intuition: The Leadership Superpower

Intuition in leadership isn't about guessing—it's about rapid, subconscious data processing. Women often pick up on subtle nonverbal cues, micro-expressions, and shifts in the office and their team or client's energy before they manifest as full-blown challenges. This ability to “read between the lines” gives them a strategic edge in negotiations, talent development, and crisis management.

In multiple studies, women have outperformed men in decision-making, collaborating, and achieving outcomes (HBR 2011). This is not to say that men are incapable. They are absolutely capable and have proven that their style of management does work and that leadership can bring results. And at the same time, what if there is another way of leading, inspiring, and managing that we have not really tapped into because of our complicated past?

In an era where agility, adaptability, and emotional intelligence define success, the female brain's ability to synthesize information quickly and act decisively makes women exceptional leaders. Organizations that recognize and harness these strengths gain a competitive advantage in innovation, employee engagement, and long-term growth.

A recent study, HBR 2021, showed that when female CEO's are appointed in comparison to their newly appointed male counterparts, they bring on average 12% more revenue and growth to companies than their male counterparts.



Dominika Staniewicz
The Brain Coach



Embracing the Science, Elevating Leadership

In world history and even in present times, female intuition has been dismissed as “soft” or unscientific. The truth? It is one of the most underutilized assets in leadership today.

Neuroscience affirms that intuition, far from being irrational, is an advanced cognitive function that allows women to lead with both confidence and clarity.

Intuition is a gift and can be developed not only by women but also by men, allowing them to tap into this brain resource with almost mystic knowledge that is stored and hidden by our brain.

It's time for companies to stop asking women to lead like men and start leveraging the unique strengths of the female brain.

When organizations embrace the neuroscience of intuition, they don't just empower women—they create smarter, more resilient leadership at every level.

The future of leadership isn't about choosing between logic and intuition. It's about integrating both, and women are leading the way while working with men side by side.



There's a quiet revolution happening not in boardrooms or political arenas, but in living rooms, therapy offices, and spiritual circles around the world. It's not loud. It's not breaking news. But it's transforming how people lead, love, heal, and live.

I call it The Psychic Renaissance.

Not so long ago, most people would hesitate before admitting they pulled a Tarot card for guidance, saw repeating numbers as signs, or trusted their gut over what seemed logical. Even now, many still whisper these truths in safe company. But more and more, people are waking up to their intuitive gifts and realising they were never something to fear or hide.

The Rise of the Intuitive Leader

So why now? Why are we suddenly seeing this global return to intuition, energy, and unseen wisdom? It's simple: people are exhausted and burnt out by hustle culture, overwhelmed by constant technology, and disillusioned by systems that promised fulfillment but delivered only burnout. The old ways of doing things, chasing success, ignoring gut feelings, and living disconnected from our inner world, are no longer effective. The pandemic accelerated this. When everything external became uncertain, people had no choice but to turn inward. They asked bigger questions. They noticed synchronicities. They trusted their feelings in a way they hadn't before.

The Psychic Renaissance

Why More People Are Trusting Their Intuition Again

Alongside this, we've entered an age of hyper-logic and artificial intelligence. Ironically, the more we rely on data, algorithms, and machines, the more we crave something human, soulful, and real. Intuition is our ancient technology. It reminds us that not everything can be measured, and not everything true is visible.

From Woo-Woo to Widely Accepted

I've watched with fascination as the things once dismissed as "woo-woo" have become everyday tools for guidance and growth. Tarot, energy healing, psychic development, and astrology - these aren't fringe anymore. They're in corporate wellness programs, podcasts, bestselling books, and leadership retreats. The shift isn't just about the tools. It's about people reclaiming trust in themselves. For generations, especially women's intuition was something to silence. Too sensitive. Too emotional. Too weird.

However, now sensitivity is being rebranded as a strength. Intuition is being recognised as a legitimate leadership skill. Empathy is viewed as essential for connection and collaboration, rather than a weakness. And those of us who've been walking this path quietly for years? We're no longer apologising for our gifts. We're leading with them.

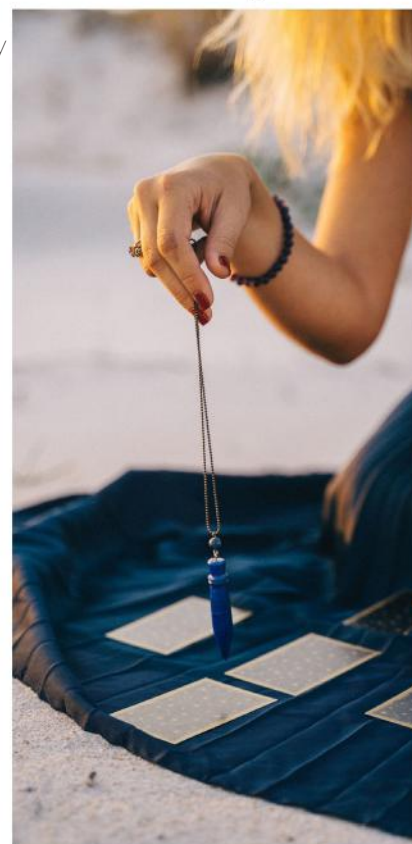
The Rise of the Intuitive Leader

What's beautiful about this renaissance is that it's not confined to healers and psychics (though we're certainly having our moment). It's showing up everywhere, from entrepreneurs trusting their gut in big decisions, to creatives channelling bold ideas, to leaders prioritising emotional intelligence over spreadsheets alone.

The intuitive leader doesn't just make decisions based on numbers; they sense timing, energy, and alignment. They don't separate logic from feeling; they see them as partners. This way of leading is more sustainable, more connected, and, frankly, more human. We're realising that being psychic isn't about predicting the future. It's about reading the present moment more clearly, energetically, emotionally, and spiritually. It's about attuning to the subtle so that we can act with clarity.

Healing the Collective Witch Wound

This renaissance is about more than business trends. It's about healing a long, deep wound, which many call the 'witch wound.' The inherited fear of being too visible, too powerful, too intuitive. Speaking truths others don't want to hear. For centuries, intuitive gifts were silenced through fear and shame. Now, they're being reclaimed through love and courage. Every time someone trusts their intuition, pulls a card, speaks their truth, or honours their energy boundaries, they contribute to this healing. Reclaiming our psychic selves is, in many ways, reclaiming our spiritual authority. It's a reminder



that the answers we seek aren't always outside us. Often, they've been waiting within us all along.

The Future Belongs to the Intuitive

This isn't just a passing trend. It's part of a larger evolution, a return to wholeness, where we no longer see the spiritual and practical as separate. As the world becomes increasingly complex, we require more than logic to guide us. We need visionaries. Sensitives. Healers. Leaders who can feel into what's unseen and speak to what's unsaid.

The psychic renaissance is an invitation to trust yourself more deeply, to listen more intently, and to remember the power of your own inner knowing. Whether it's through Tarot, energy work, meditation, or simply quiet moments of intuition, you already hold the map. The question isn't whether the world is ready for intuition. The question is: are you ready to trust your own?

By Lisa Andrews
Holistic Therapist,
Psychic & Speaker



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.

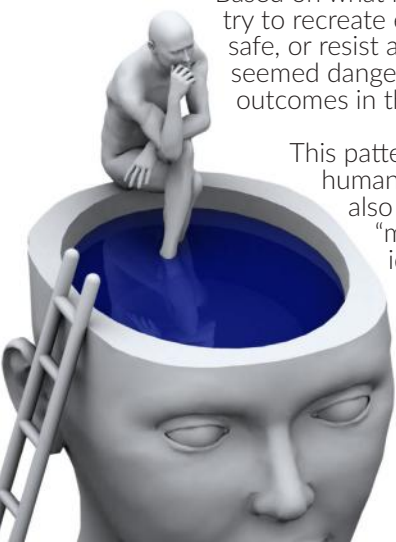
Your conscious mind is the processor of this system – your immediate spotlight of awareness, your current conscious thoughts, your deliberate choices, your ability to analyse and reason. Its processing capacity is limited to only about 40-120 bits of information per second.

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

www.thefemininelead.com



Moving Beyond Mindset With Ancient Universal Principles

"If We Live Our Lives In That Spirit Of Balance, We Don't Have To Worry About The Future. It Will Appear, Because We Made Room For It" Michio Kushi, Macrobiotic Forefather

The concept of balance is now respected not just for health and well-being, but as a key to personal and professional success. Work-life balance, managing energy and stress, preventing burnout, valuing both your inner and outer accomplishments, and the principle of "give and you shall receive" are part of the collective awareness that consciously creating balance benefits both you and the planet. Balance is good for your soul.

Welcome to my 13th column, exploring how to move beyond mindset with ancient, universal principles. The 12 Ancient Universal Principles of my High Performance Wellness Coaching will help you master the most fundamental principle in the Universe . . . balance. When you create balance, you create the space for limitless growth. You live your birthright of abundance and peace.

"A Miracle Is Mother Nature, Coming Into Balance" Lidia Kuleshnyk, Lady Apona

The ancient symbol for yin-yang, the circle with the wave in the center and a speck of one in the other, is recognized as a universal symbol of balance . . . to live in harmony, wholeness, freedom . . . to be Centered, Connected and Conscious™.

In the midst of the rapid change of our uncertain times, "balance" is the key to unlock the door to your greatest growth and inner power. When in balance, you are grounded, energized and focused. Balance is the essence of the most ancient science on the planet, yin and yang. Balance will not only restore your connection to yourself, creating a life of fulfillment and purpose, but it will also catapult you onto the upward spiral of infinite growth, the fast track to achieving your goals with flow, ease, and unprecedented heights of success.

In our modern world, we often think of miracles as something outside of us, a monumental event that leaves us awestruck, an occurrence that is both unexpected and seemingly impossible. But miracles are just an expression of Mother Nature, the universal principles of yin and yang, coming into balance. From the smallest subatomic particles to your greatest hopes and dreams, miracles are always in creation.

My mentor and guide, the great macrobiotic forefather Michio Kushi, reminded us that "every cell in your body is constantly trying to achieve balance, to detoxify, repair and regenerate, despite your bad behavior". It is comforting to know that the Universe never judges. It always "has your back". The Universe supports you, unconditionally, in creating balance.

"From Nothingness, All Is Created" Lidia Kuleshnyk, Lady Apona

Balance is the epicenter of your existence.

When faced with a challenge or desire that seems insurmountable, there are times when the best course of action is to do nothing, to "not try so hard", to surrender, let go and Be. As a high performer, your drive can lead you to push so hard that you exceed your capacity for energetic sustenance. In this state of strain and depletion, you become out of balance. Perspective is lost. Solutions are strained. The path forward is shrouded in stress, angst, frustration and exhaustion.



In my own experience, when I pull back, rest, reset, and release attachments to my mental constructs of what I am experiencing, I free myself from the constraints of the mind. I move beyond mindset into the flow of the most powerful and benevolent force in the Universe . . . nothingness.

"From nothingness, all is created" is the inner power of becoming an empty mind, an empty vessel where neither thought nor resistance exists. It is the zero point of universal balance, the space of infinite abundance where anything is possible. Becoming "empty mind, empty vessel" returns you to a state of balance that allows you to deflect external stressors while maintaining peak performance. Solutions appear in a flash. Burdens dissolve in an instant. Energy is restored.

"Your Destiny Is Determined By What You Say and What You Eat", Ancient Proverb

In ancient teachings of energy balance, the center of your being is the throat area. The throat is the place of true balance of body, mind and spirit. The center of your physical body is in your lower abdominal area, near your belly button. The center of your spiritual and mental bodies is in your head, specifically your forehead and the top of your head. The energy of the body meets the energy of the mind and spirit at the throat. The throat area is the energetic center of your Being.

Understanding this balance in the body will help you live with more discernment, responsibility and flow. With greater awareness of the importance of what you say (or don't say) and what you eat, you can give greater consideration to these choices and how they impact you now and in the future.

To begin to create balance in your life, connect to your inner power by utilizing my 12 Ancient Universal Principles as your guide and your roadmap.

Here is a brief exercise as a first step to consciously create balance.
First, take a moment to breathe. Pause. Set aside two minutes to reflect on the following:
When you think of balance, what first comes to mind?

On a scale of 1 – 10, how much stress are you feeling?
Then ask yourself:

- 1. Does my life feel balanced?**
- 2. What feels strained or drained in my life, consistently?**
- 3. Have I outgrown my present circumstances in life? Am I ready to grow to my next level?**
- 4. Have I identified what brings me the greatest joy, passion and purpose?**

How often am I living this?

Then refer to my 12 Ancient Universal Principles. Each principle is an expression of the essence of yin and yang. The principle you choose will help bring you greater balance.
Without overthinking, choose one of my 12 Ancient Universal Principles.

12 Ancient Universal Principles

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

Write down the principle in a journal, notepad or sticky post. Post it on your wall, laptop, over your kitchen sink, mirrors or on your phone. Let the energy of this principle speak to you throughout the day and as you fall asleep. Allow the essence of this principle to naturally move through you.





In 3-5 days, return to questions 1–4. Write down any new insights or awareness for those questions. Notice how you feel in your body, in your chest, in your throat center. On a scale of 1-10, how much stress do you feel?

With this simple exercise, which requires no meditation or time commitment, my 12 Ancient Universal Principles will begin to guide you back to balance. You will become more Centered, Connected and Conscious™, get unstuck and feel the inner relief that you can direct your life, in your own time, in your own way.

“Life Is A Balance of Holding On, and Letting Go” Rumi

Balance is the foundation of the new paradigm of high-performance wellness. Creating balance is the art of living . . . learning when to apply yourself and when to pull back. This dance of yin and yang is meant to be playful and authentic. Every experience, ambition, and desire illustrates the balance you need to grow and achieve your goals. When you reflect and make decisions with discernment and connection, you create a pathway of balance where ease and flow lead to long-term, sustainable success.

As you commit to creating balance in your life, you honour your essence and power. In the empty space of nothingness, miracles are created, and potentials are limitless. You trust in yourself and the Universe. You need not worry about the future, because you have embraced the path of self-mastery. You have become the conscious leader of your life, and a conscious leader of the world. You reclaim your sovereignty and live with abundance and peace.

Join me for my next column, where I will continue to explore Moving Beyond Mindset With Ancient Universal Principles.

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





Goat Shed Instead of Achieving Goals

Recently, I was standing there again – in rubber boots, with a pitchfork in hand, amidst steaming goat poop and shovelling, sweeping and carrying away. I regularly support the owners of a small farm in Italy. The goats there produce wonderful milk, from which farmer Pino makes cheese that's unforgettable. But before you can milk or make cheese, someone has to clean out the stable. After all, the bleating ladies need to feel comfortable so that the outcome is right. And time and again, that someone is me.

It took a while for me to understand how much this experience has to do with leadership. Especially with Spiritual Leadership. With connection as its core. In our working world, we frequently discuss transformation, new beginnings, the «future of work,» and «employee empowerment.» This often creates the impression that something needs to be integrated. Spiritual Leadership, too, is about MORE connection. But perhaps something needs to be disintegrated? Maybe it's about taking care of the crap that's already there? Outdated structures, complicated processes, excessive control? Cleaning up before new ideas find fertile ground? What if it's about clearing out? Leaving things out?

Leadership doesn't begin with brainstorming, but with tidying up – both internally and externally. Spiritual Leadership – connection – is the key: Perceiving what is. Even the heaviness. Even the chaos. It's being present and connected when things smell. Here are a few suggestions for anyone who's just noticing: Something smells funny here. Time to clean things out again. And it all starts – as always – with oneself.

It doesn't require supervision; sometimes an honest look in the mirror is enough: What don't I want to see? Where have I become too comfortable? Where am I avoiding a decision, a conversation, or the next step? What have I been putting off for weeks – even though I've long known it's time?

Don't gloss over it. Speak it out. If something stinks, lavender oil won't help – only openness will. Say what needs to be said. Kindly. Clearly. Genuinely. Spiritual Leadership means bringing even unpleasant truths to the table with dignity. For example: «I notice there's something unspoken...» This openness creates trust and thus reliability, consistency, and security. Key factors for teams to work productively.

You aren't a cluttered mental storage. Consciously decide what you no longer want to carry with you: expectations, loyalties, outdated role models. You can restart. Even in the middle of things. Even as a leader. Write down everything on a piece of paper that can go, and symbolically throw it away. Then it's back to honest communication. What do I expect from my colleagues? How do I understand my role as a spiritual leader? Those around you need to know where they stand.

Authenticity, not perfection – that's what people long for. This creates role models that people follow. In the team, you can simply say: I don't have a solution right now – but I'll stick with it. Spiritual Leadership means not having to shine, but being tangible, being connected. Mini check-in with

yourself: Am I authentic right now – or am I trying to appear «perfect»?

If you see crap you can't clean up, you need an outlet – an inner washing area. A conscious ritual at the end of the day helps: Write down what you've carried today – and what you can hand over. Because those who don't let go regularly become cynical. Or exhausted. Or both.

Spiritual Leadership doesn't mean having to turn everything upside down. It means staying true to oneself and staying connected, even in chaotic times. When the professional environment, the company, isn't (yet) ready for change, or has its own dynamics. You don't have to reinvent every encrusted process. But you can consciously decide why you're here despite everything: What is your

contribution? What is your attitude? What is your sphere of influence – and what isn't? Be clear about where your responsibility ends. Find allies. Maybe just one person. Maybe an informal exchange. You don't have to carry this alone. Only connect.

Sometimes leadership isn't about revolutionising the system. It's about staying clean inside despite everything.

Clear. Genuine. Connected. Your team will thrive.

By Andrea Huber



HOROSCOPE FOR AUTUMN 2025

As the heat of Summer fades into the coolness of Autumn, and the leaves begin to change colour and fall, so do changes appear in the skies.

Some of the highlights are: Eclipse Season begins, asking us what we want to change or what needs to change, we will experience the eclipses in the signs of Virgo and Pisces.

These events will have an impact on all of us, regardless of what our sun sign is.

As well as the Eclipses in Virgo and Pisces, various planets will be retrograde over the next few months. Despite what may go around on social media when a planet retrogrades, it's a time of reflection and introspection. Some aspects of our lives may need adjustment, and the retrograde can give us the time, space and energy to carry out those changes.

To understand how this will impact you, let's take a closer look at each sign. Remember to read for your Sun, Moon and Ascendant signs.

Aries

Your area of focus: Partnerships, Contracts, and Emotional Depth

With Libra season activating your 7th house, relationships both romantic, business, and social come into focus. Negotiations and agreements may become prominent. In October, the eclipses shake up your personal identity vs. partnership dynamics. Expect shifts in who you are in relation to others. November turns your attention to shared finances and intimacy.

The key themes during this time: Relationship transformation, identity balance and healing inner fears.

Cancer

Your area of focus: Home, Family, and Emotional Security
September brings your 4th house into play, home moves, family dynamics, or inner emotional rooting may demand attention, you are comfortable in this energy and you will deal with this in your usual kind way. The October eclipses activate your 4th and 10th houses, shaking the foundations of home and career. By November, Scorpio energises your 5th house, reawakening your joy, hobbies, or romantic desires, time to let your hair down Cancer! Go on, have some fun!

The key themes during this time: Redefining security, balancing career/home and emotional creativity.

Taurus

Your area of focus: Health, Work, and Relationship Adjustments

September activates your 6th house of health and routine, it is the perfect time for refining habits, yes I see you giving the refrigerator the side eye! If you've ignored work-life balance, now's the time to give your daily routines the once over. Eclipses in October fall in your 6th and 12th houses, highlighting burnout vs. productivity. I know you can push through, but it will catch up with you in the end. November invites new relationship themes as Scorpio lights up your 7th house.

The Key themes during this time: Lifestyle overhaul, hidden stressors, partnership evolution.

Leo

Your area of focus: Communication, Education, and Domestic Restructuring

September sharpens focus on 3rd house matters for example: writing, short travel, contracts, and communication, this might look like lots of mini or City breaks, oh the culture Leo! October's eclipses challenge your beliefs and bring shifts in learning or local networks, this could be sparked by something you see or read on one of those trips you will be taking. November brings your attention to your 4th house, suggesting a need to reconnect with roots or restructure living situations. Who is that friend you have been meaning to contact and now somehow four months have gone past and you still haven't reached out?

Gemini

Your area of focus: Creativity, Joy, and Daily Discipline

The 5th house of pleasure and creative expression lights up in September which is ideal for your fun loving nature and pursuing art, romance, or children-related matters. October eclipses push you to integrate your passions with your responsibilities, it can't always be a party Gemini. By November, Scorpio energises your 6th house, calling for renewed attention to your health and work details.

The key themes during this time: Passion vs. duty, new routines and creative breakthroughs.

Virgo

Your area of focus: Finances, Self-Worth, and Mental Clarity

Libra season highlights your 2nd House of money, values, and confidence, however this shows up for you Virgo, it feels like it's permanent. October's eclipses could give you a boost and may bring financial changes or realisations about shared resources. In November, Mercury and Mars energise your 3rd house, giving you sharp mental focus, but be mindful of arguments or over analysing, not every battle needs to be participated in.

The key themes during this time : Money mindset shift, communication boost, trust themes.

Libra

Your area of focus: Identity, Life Direction, and Relationship Upgrades

The Sun lights up your 1st house in September, in other words, happy birthday Libra. This is your annual reboot. You're rethinking your image, goals, and leadership style. October's eclipses in Virgo/Pisces bring turning points in both personal and relational life, there might be some new information that comes to light during this time. November brings Scorpio energy to your 2nd house, encouraging deeper value alignment and financial empowerment, perhaps it's time to show off those secret purchases Libra?

The key themes during this time: Self-rediscovery, relational recalibration, money rebirth.

Scorpio

Your area of focus: Intuition, Healing, and Self-Renewal

September activates your 12th house. It's a quieter phase favoring reflection, rest, and spiritual reconnection. October's eclipses may bring up health or subconscious patterns, be aware Scorpio, even if you think it's nothing, it's better to get these things looked at. In November, the spotlight shifts to you! Happy Scorpio! This season this activates your 1st house initiating bold changes and personal clarity, it's your time to regenerate who and what you are and exactly what you want to do going forward.

The key themes during this time: Deep release, inner strength and powerful new beginnings.

Aquarius

Your area of focus: Expansion, Belief Systems, and Career Alignment

The 9th house of higher learning, travel, and faith is emphasised in September. It's time to explore new philosophies or cultures, you can do this online or perhaps a last minute break to a historical site is just the adventure you have been searching for. October eclipses may bring insight into how your worldview shapes your career, remember at your core you are the humanitarian of the zodiac Aquarius. November brings intensity to your 10th house, with transformative career developments or shifts in public roles. Maybe that nagging thought about running for office should be taken more seriously?

The key themes during this time: Educational growth, speaking your truth, career breakthrough.

Sagittarius

Your area of focus: Community, Dreams, and Subconscious Clearing

Your 11th house lights up in September Sag, which is ideal for team projects, future goals, or group involvement. October eclipses challenge your social circles and romantic ideals, you know you can be flighty in these areas, however use the energy of this period to really work out what it is you want. In November, your 12th house activates, marking a time of solitude and closure before your next solar rebirth. I don't want to go with the stereotype here, but, we both know the thrill of planning a trip is almost as much fun as actually going!

The key themes during this time: Reevaluating dreams, releasing outdated friendships, spiritual prep.

Capricorn

Your area of focus: Career, Visibility, and Inner Authority

September energizes your 10th house of career and public image. You're being seen more, use it wisely, make those first impressions really count, don't be afraid to show them what you've got Capricorn! The eclipses in October hit your 4th/10th houses, possibly shifting work/life balance, sometimes we need to feel unbalanced to appreciate something new. In November, Scorpio activates your 11th house, great for connecting with new allies or long-term visioning, have a look at your contacts and networks, there is potential in collaboration at this time.

The key themes during this time: Career evolution, support systems, redefining success.

Pisces

Your area of focus: Transformation, Trust, and Big Picture Planning

September's focus on your 8th house brings topics of intimacy, joint finances, and deep inner work, all your favourite things Pisces! You get to feel the feelings. October's eclipses highlight shifts in your resources, only you can decide if this is to increase or decrease them. If it's the latter, time to put a plan in place. November activates your 9th house which suggests that you embrace expansion, study, or new adventures that reflect your evolving truth. You have been through quite the transformation over the last few years Pisces, keep going, it will all be worth it. Clarity will return once again.

The key themes during this time: Rebirth, resource realignment, embracing new beliefs.

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By Marion Kirk
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Meta-Health

How Emotional Blocks Around Sex and Intimacy Can Impact Our Health

When most of us think about health, we picture a balanced diet, regular exercise, and a good night's sleep. These are certainly important, but health is never just physical. It is a dynamic blend of body, mind, emotions, and relationships. This is where the science of Meta-Health offers us a fresh perspective: the idea that the symptoms we experience in the body often reflect unresolved emotional conflicts or stress patterns in our lives. One of the most overlooked areas in this conversation is sex and intimacy. While openly discussed in some circles, for many people this remains shrouded in cultural conditioning, fear, or shame. These emotional blocks don't simply affect our relationships; they ripple outwards, influencing our physical health, mental wellbeing, and overall vitality.

What Is Meta-Health?

Meta-Health invites us to view illness not as a "problem to be fixed" but as a biological message. The body, brain, and emotions form a single, intelligent, and interconnected system. When we experience an emotional shock or unresolved conflict, that stress is imprinted on the nervous system. Over time, if left unprocessed, the imprint may show up as physical symptoms.

For instance, someone who grew up feeling ashamed of their body might later experience persistent digestive issues, sexual pain, or chronic pelvic tension. The body isn't "broken"—it is simply holding on to unprocessed emotions and trying to get our attention.

This perspective shifts the way we relate to symptoms. Instead of fearing them, we can listen to what the body is trying to communicate.

Emotional Blocks Around Sex & Intimacy

Sex and intimacy are two of the most powerful and vulnerable parts of human life. They are tied to our sense of identity, belonging, safety, and joy. When these areas become entangled with shame, trauma, or negative conditioning, the body often holds those emotional stories for years, sometimes decades.

Common sources of emotional blocks include:

- Cultural or religious shame around sexuality
- Past experiences of abuse, betrayal, or rejection
- Fear of abandonment in relationships
- Negative body image or low self-worth
- Lack of emotional safety in intimate connections

When intimacy is bound up with fear or pain, the nervous system often gets stuck in patterns of hypervigilance (always on guard) or shutdown (numb and disconnected). These states are not just psychological; they also affect the entire body's function.

The Health Consequences

Unresolved emotional blocks around sex and intimacy can create wide-ranging health challenges, many of which are surprising at first glance. Some of the most common include:

- Reproductive health issues such as painful intercourse, menstrual irregularities, or erectile difficulties
- Chronic pelvic floor tension or pain
- Lowered immunity, leaving the body vulnerable to illness

- Sleep disturbances and restless nights
- Mental health struggles such as anxiety, depression, or emotional disconnection
- Relationship breakdowns, which often lead to isolation and loneliness—two of the biggest risk factors for poor health outcomes

But the impact doesn't stop there. Carrying unresolved shame or fear around intimacy is strongly linked to elevated cortisol, the stress hormone. High cortisol levels are associated with heart disease, high blood pressure, weight gain, and reduced immune function.

Some people suppress their sexual or emotional needs entirely, which can manifest in chronic fatigue, migraines, or digestive issues. Others experience tension headaches, autoimmune flare-ups, or low energy.

In short, the mind-body system is constantly in a state of dialogue. When intimacy is blocked, the body will often "speak up" in the only way it knows how: through symptoms.

Healing Through Awareness and Connection

The empowering message of Meta-Health is that symptoms are not enemies, but signals. They are invitations to look deeper, to understand what the body is really asking for.

When approached with curiosity and compassion, symptoms can guide us back to wholeness.

Healing emotional blocks around sex and intimacy often includes:

- Awareness – Gently noticing where shame, fear, or avoidance shows up in the body and in relationships.
- Compassion – Meeting yourself with kindness instead of judgment; recognising that the need for love, touch, and intimacy is profoundly human.
- Safe expression – Finding a trusted therapist, coach, or community where intimacy and wellbeing can be explored without stigma.
- Body-based practices – Breathwork, somatic therapy, mindful movement, and tantric or energetic practices that help release stored tension.
- Reframing intimacy – Understanding intimacy as more than sex. It includes touch, vulnerability, emotional safety, and authentic communication.

Step by step, these practices help the nervous system shift from survival mode back into connection, trust and opening the door to healing both emotionally and physically.

Sexuality is about vitality, connection, and life-force energy. When emotional blocks cut us off from intimacy, the body often signals us with symptoms, urging us to pay attention. Through the lens of Meta-Health, these signals become valuable guides. They invite us to release old patterns, heal past wounds, and step into a healthier, more vibrant relationship with ourselves and others.

True health is not simply the absence of disease. It is the freedom to live fully, love deeply, and connect authentically in our body, mind, and heart.

By Lorraine Chapman





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

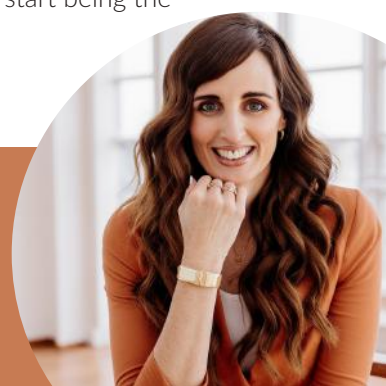
Here's the reframe that changes everything: leadership isn't about putting out the most fires. It's about knowing which flames deserve to burn. When you stop living in reaction mode, you create space for the good fires. Fires of innovation. Fires of creativity. Fires of human connection. These are the 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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Falling into Peace

A Season to Let Go



As the golden days of summer fade into the gentle hush of autumn, the energy around us begins to slow down. The days grow shorter, the air feels crisp and the rhythm of life shifts. Autumn arrives gradually, bringing with it a quiet invitation to pause, reflect and return. This is the season of surrender. A time to let go of what no longer serves, to realign with what truly matters, and to root deeply into presence.

In this article, I invite you to walk alongside the quiet wisdom of the autumn, a season that encourages us to explore what it truly means to release with grace and acceptance. Together, we'll explore a soul-stirring journaling prompt to support intentional release and introduce grounding crystals to anchor your energy during this time of transition. We will also consider how the shifting energies of autumn can realign the chakras, especially those connected to authentic expression, heart connection and deep-rooted grounding.

As the trees release their leaves in the autumn winds, we too are called to let go. Autumn is a sacred season of unburdening, shedding old patterns, outgrown identities and anything that no longer resonates with the truth of who we are at a soul-level. Amid autumn's gentle unravelling, meditation offers a way of staying rooted as the world transforms around us. A quiet stability, as nature reminds us to cleanse with intention. As the daylight fades and the natural world prepares to rest, autumn offers us a moment to gather our energy for the quieter months ahead.

Meditation can be found in stillness, cradling a warm mug, walking mindfully through falling leaves, or curling up beneath a blanket. Let your meditation practice become a steady rhythm, a place to root and reconnect as everything around us begins to fall away. Change is so often associated with action, yet autumn teaches us that transformation also unfolds in the quiet, in the slowing, in the sacred space in between.

This season whispers... 'It is safe to let go.' The autumn doesn't ask us to strive or to bloom, but rather to lean inwards and reflect. Nature doesn't question the fall; it leans into it, releasing in perfect rhythm with the earth's wisdom. Each breath is an act of conservation, gathering warmth for the winter months. This season offers us a time for rooting, not reaching. A time to draw our energy inward, nourishing our

inner flame. As you sit in stillness, feel yourself supported by the earth beneath you. This is not a time of loss, but of wise preparation, a gathering of soul resources that will carry you with grace through the colder, darker days to come.

In the practice of meditation, this season invites us to mirror the trees as they gracefully give back their leaves to the earth, with complete trust and without hesitation, knowing that the letting go is part of their becoming.

Soul Notes: Release & Realign with this Autumn Journaling Practice

Words are powerful tools for transformation. When written with deep intention, they become strong anchors of release, healing and alignment. In this practice, you're invited to create a soul-centred expression of what you are ready to let go. Let your words fall like leaves onto the page, landing softly, truthfully and without judgement.

Allow this exercise to be an honest reflection; a declaration of what you're ready to clear and an opening to what you're now ready to invite in.

Take a few quiet moments to sit with your words. Close your eyes and follow the soft rhythm of your breath, flowing through you like an autumn breeze. Notice what you're still carrying, and with each exhale, begin to soften your hold.

I release what no longer serves me. I trust the cycles of change. I am creating space for my divine potential and purpose to unfold...

Roots & Radiance: Grounding Crystals for Autumn Transitions

Crystals, like the shifting seasons, hold ancient wisdom and grounding frequencies. During the autumn months, when the energy around us becomes quieter, certain stones become powerful allies for grounding, healing and release. Allow these crystals to hold space and amplify your inner transformation.

Place grounding crystals around your root chakra or feet. Visualise roots growing out from the soles of your feet and invite anything that is no longer serving you to flow down through these roots, deep down into the earth below.





Place crystals on your journal as you write or hold them in your palm on a crisp, autumnal walk through fallen leaves—your intuition and inner knowing guiding you to what feels right for you.

Tiger's Eye: Grounding Inner Strength Protection

Tiger's Eye reminds us that courage doesn't mean rushing forward. Stand still when needed, listen within and move from a place of strength. As this season reminds us that change is a natural part of life, we too can release what no longer aligns, trusting that our roots are strong and our inner light will guide the way. As we make way for new growth, Tiger's Eye will act as a protector, providing an energy of safety, security and grounding.

Amber: Purification Warmth Balance

Amber serves as a powerful emotional healer, drawing out stagnant energies, raising your vibration, bringing clarity, empowerment and peace. It is infused with a sense of nourishment and support as healing takes place. As the temperature drops, Amber gently radiates warmth, soothing and illuminating the heart space. Allow it to gently guide you toward release, restoration and soulful transformation.

Black Obsidian: Truth Transformation Release

Like a polished mirror, Black Obsidian reflects inner truth with clarity and depth, encouraging honesty and deep self-awareness. In this season of release, Black Obsidian will help you face what must be seen, in order for you to let it go lovingly. A strongly protective stone, it forms a shield against negativity, providing support during times of change and creating space for growth and renewal.

Autumn Alignment: Ground, Release, Revive

The chakras sense the shifting energy of this season and gently follow its lead. No longer blooming brightly like the flowers of summer, they begin to draw inwards. Creating depth at a soul level, anchoring down into the earth below.

As you settle into meditation during this season, imagine your chakras like autumn leaves, changing and gently falling into alignment. With each inhale, allow yourself to root more deeply into the present moment. With every exhale, imagine releasing any energies, habits or emotions that no longer serve your highest potential and purpose. Let your breath be your guide as you move gently through your body. Anchor your awareness to each chakra, trusting your intuition to show you what needs your attention. Whatever arises, meet it with love and acceptance.

The Throat Chakra:

In the stillness of the crisp autumn air, truth can be heard more clearly. As we slow down and reflect, the voice of the soul becomes easier to hear. Take time to slow down, breathe and listen.

Affirmation:

'I express myself from a place of authenticity and soulful intention, speaking my truth with kindness and compassion. I use my words to uplift and inspire others, communicating honestly and listening attentively.'



Autumn Meditation

The Heart Chakra:

Deep within the heart chakra lies our place of love, compassion, and forgiveness, for ourselves and others. Sit quietly, place your hands over your heart, and feel the gentle warmth of autumn radiating within. Give yourself permission to release, creating space for change and renewal.

Affirmation:

'I honour the changing season by gently releasing all that weighs heavily on my heart. I am open to love, compassion and forgiveness, welcoming the healing energy of peace and grace.'

The Root Chakra:

Our anchor during seasons of transition, the root chakra invites us to ground deeply in the earth, within ourselves, and in the present moment. In meditation, connect with this chakra by visualising rich autumn soil beneath you, supporting every part of your being. With each breath, feel held and safe, a grounded sense of belonging.

Affirmation:

'I am held and supported by the earth, releasing what no longer serves me and trusting in life's natural rhythm of change. I root myself in the energy of peace, connection and strength.'

By Helen Gullick

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The Frequency and the Form

Manifestation Isn't Magic Without the Container

Why Soul-Led Success Requires Both Being and Becoming—And Why You Don't Need to Follow My Way to Find Yours

Let's get one thing straight right out of the gate: You don't manifest what you want. **You manifest what you ARE becoming through your BEing.**

This work isn't about bypassing your humanity. It's about embodying your divinity through it. You've probably been told you either need to vibe higher and surrender—or hustle harder and “trust the process.” But let's be honest: neither one alone works because the truth is, **both frequency and form matter.**

Without a container, your magic spills.
Without structure, your soul gets scattered.
Without embodiment, your vision stays an idea.

So let's dismantle the old dogma—both the hustle cult and the high-vibe-only fantasy—and remember the real path: the one that honors the full-spectrum YOU.

The Integration Era Has Arrived

This is not about picking sides.
Masculine or feminine.
Structure or surrender.
Strategy or soul.
It's 2025. We're integrating now. We're not here to play in polarity—**we're here to alchemize it.**

Your soul craves freedom. Your frequency flows through feeling. But your impact? It requires form.

Your nectar needs a chalice. Your magic needs a channel. Your mission needs a map.

Polarity and duality are part of third-density consciousness. But as we raise our frequency and shift into fourth-density awareness, we begin to see the truth:

Everything is a spectrum. Everything is a spiral.

It's not about choosing sides anymore.

We're done with polarization. The new era is wholeness. Integration is the initiation.

And that's where the **Frequency First Framework** meets **soul-led strategy.**

Being and Becoming: The Dance of Consciousness

Let's talk cosmic truth:

Being is your divine essence. It's your still point, your source code, your self-realization.

Becoming is your human experience. It's the evolution, the expansion, the soul-in-motion. It's how we express the infinite through the finite.

You are pure consciousness and human clay. You came here to BE—and to BECOME.

To have the moments of bliss, enlightenment, and deep inner knowing? That's being. To create, learn, stumble, stretch, and shine? That's becoming. And the truth? **You need both.**

Not as a contradiction—but as a cosmic choreography.

Manifestation Isn't About Templates or Timelines

I used to follow all the formulas. The high-ticket offer templates, the 'irresistible' email sequences, the perfectly branded reels. On the outside, it looked like alignment. But on the inside, my soul was whispering: "This isn't it." It wasn't until I slowed down and started building from my frequency—not fear—that everything shifted. Clients came in. Not because I was louder. But because I was realer. This isn't about doing it my way. You won't find a cookie-cutter formula here—no one-size-fits-most strategy.

Because your way? Is the only way that works.

"What I do is hold the space for you to remember how to architect your path—from the inside out. From the frequency. Into the form." I guide people to build **soul-led strategy for soul-led success**—not the kind that cages you, but the kind that sets your essence free. Because real manifestation isn't about wishing harder or faking it till you make it, it's about **anchoring your truth into reality**. And anchoring takes structure.

The Frequency First Framework (With Form)

Shadow integration looks like witnessing the part of you that doubts, fears, or hides—and choosing not to exile it, but to listen to it. To love it. To lead it into the light. Because you don't heal through rejection, you heal through remembrance.

This is the foundation of my work:

- **Soul Level** — your divine blueprint and YOUNique Signature Frequency
- **Subconscious Level** — the BS (belief systems + bullsh*t) you've inherited or absorbed
- **Somatic Level** — the body's wisdom, trauma, and activation patterns
- **Subtle Energetic Level** — the field you broadcast from and attract with
- **Strategic Level** — the container that holds it all, your aligned expression in the world

This isn't about rejecting strategy. It's about building one that fits your soul. Strategy doesn't work without soul. And the soul needs structure to truly serve.

Ego Isn't the Enemy. It's Your Avatar.

Here's a truth bomb most spiritual circles avoid:

Your ego is sacred.

It's the costume your soul chose for this game of life. It's how your essence expresses in the world.

"I'm not here to help you transcend your ego. I'm here to invite you to play with it." To co-create with it. To style it like the spiritual fashion icon it is.

When your ego is in service to your truth, it becomes art.

Marketing becomes expression. Visibility becomes devotion. And your presence becomes medicine.

The WELLthy Life: Wellness + Wealth Across Every Dimension

"This isn't just about six figures (and beyond)." This is about multi-dimensional wealth.

WELLTH is:

Spiritual WELLth: Devotion to the divine within

Emotional WELLth: Emotional fluency, honesty, and grace

Mental WELLth: Thoughts that empower and energize

Physical WELLth: Vitality, movement, and nourishment

Relational WELLth: Soulful, expansive, mutual connections

Vocational WELLth: Purpose-driven, passion-infused service

Financial WELLth: Flow, expansion, and joy in receiving

Social WELLth: Creating ripple effects that uplift the collective



Abundance isn't something you chase. It's something you become. And then? You get to build the form that holds it.

The Final Transmission: You Are the Frequency and the Form

Before we close, let's drop into a deeper space together. This is your moment to tune in:

Soul-Whisper Tune-In:

Close your eyes. Take a slow breath in through the nose and out through the mouth. Place one hand on your heart and one on your lower belly. Now, ask your inner knowing:

"Where am I trying to manifest from performance, and what would it feel like to manifest from truth?" Pause. Listen. Let your soul answer in whispers, not words.

Shadow Illumination Prompt:

Write this down in a journal, voice note, or even a sticky note:

"The part of me that still believes I'm not ready yet is..."

Let it speak. Don't fix it. Don't fight it. Just feel it.

Witness it. Thank it for trying to protect you.

Because once seen, shadow becomes signal.

Somatic Integration Cue:

Stand up. Shake out your hands. Wiggle your toes.

And repeat out loud:

"I am safe to embody my frequency. I am safe to be seen in my truth."

Now, take one small aligned action today. A post.

A call. A decision. A declaration. Not because you

"should"—but because your soul says so.

Ascension isn't about floating higher. It's about landing deeper.

It's the integration of shadow. The embodiment of frequency. The realization that manifestation is not about reaching up—but rooting in.

You don't need to hustle. You don't need to vibe your way through bypass. You don't need to follow another formula.

To connect with Lizzie further for more teachings, mentorship, retreats, and to receive her latest offerings, follow her on

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or email her at namasteplantbased@gmail.com

You need to remember who you are—and create the strategy that expresses it.

This is the work I live, breathe, and guide:

- Frequency-first foundation
- Shadow integration and nervous system regulation
- YOUNique-aligned soul strategy

Because without the container, the nectar spills.

Because without the structure, the signal fades.

Because without the form, your frequency never fully lands.

If you're ready to walk this path—not mine, but yours— If you're done with diluted templates and craving full-spectrum truth— If you're ready to embody your frequency and build the form that holds it—then let's co-create the soul-led success you came here for.

My clients don't come to me to follow steps. They come to me to find their signal. And when they do? Their offers land. Their relationships shift. Their nervous system chills out. They stop chasing—and start receiving.

The world doesn't need another expert.
It needs YOU.

Full-spectrum. Soul-led. Signature-you.
Let it rise.

By Lizzie Siegel

Manifestation Embodiment
Mentor & Ascension Guide



ISSUE 1

SOLACE



The Nourished Table

Soulful recipes, seasonal ingredients, and rituals around food as nourishment.

IN COLLABORATION WITH

**NINA
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Mindful living
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LIFESTYLE MAGAZINE

TOXIC FEMALE SISTERHOOD AND ITS RIPPLE EFFECT

HOW IT'S HOLDING BACK BUSINESSES, FAMILIES, AND COMMUNITIES

Women have long been the nurturers of society, the life-bearers, the quiet architects of homes, communities, and even nations. We are the torchbearers of empathy, collaboration, and resilience. It is often said that life itself comes from us, and that's not just in the physical sense. Our power is generational. It is cultural. It is spiritual. But when the feminine force is distorted, when sisterhood becomes toxic, the damage doesn't just linger in our personal relationships. It spills over, infecting boardrooms, family homes, community spaces, and grassroots movements.

This toxicity is subtle, often socially accepted, and rarely addressed with the same urgency as other systemic issues. But make no mistake, the ripple effect is real, and it's holding us all back.

We often discuss external oppression, and rightly so. But what about the internalised behaviours, the silent betrayals, whispered judgments, cliques, power games, and masked competition that exist between women? This article isn't about blame. It's about awareness. It's about healing. It's about responsibility, and the power of women to either perpetuate harm or catalyse radical, generational healing.

The Silent Saboteur in Business and Workplaces

One of the most overlooked forms of sabotage is the phenomenon of women turning against each other in professional settings. In offices, boardrooms, start-ups, charities, and even purpose-led businesses, toxic female dynamics quietly destroy the foundation of trust, creativity, and collaboration.

It doesn't always look dramatic. It can be a smile that doesn't reach the eyes. The feedback that cuts too deep. The meeting where someone deliberately withholds information. The "sisterhood" group that only champions a specific type of woman, those who fit the right aesthetic, personality, or level of influence.

Transactional relationships — where support is given with strings attached — become the norm. Women are pitted against one another, fighting for the one seat at the table instead of building longer tables. Silent competition masquerades as ambition, while insecurity wears the mask of professionalism. There's a constant undercurrent of who's "in" and who's "out."

The result? Workplace culture suffers; teams fracture; innovation stalls. Women burn out not because they aren't capable, but because they are navigating emotional politics while trying to do the job they were hired to do.

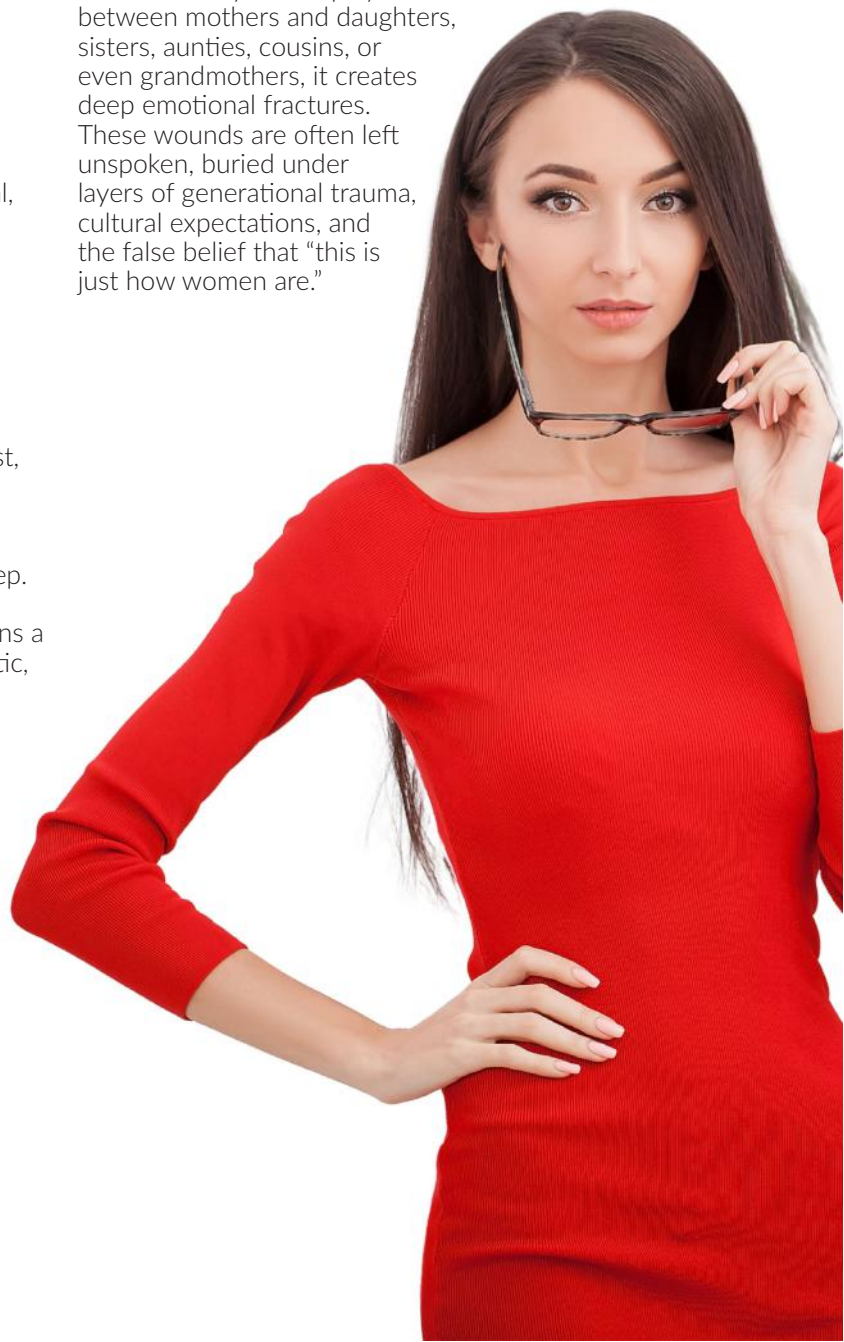
And the saddest part? This behaviour often mirrors the very patriarchal systems we claim to reject. It's not that we don't want equality — it's that we haven't fully detoxed from the systems that taught us to see each other as threats.

When women learn to lead with trust, authenticity, and humility — rather than comparison and performance — entire workplace ecosystems shift.

The Fracture in Families and Home Life

Now let's take it closer to home. Sisterhood isn't just about friendships or networking circles; it begins within the family.

When toxic dynamics play out between mothers and daughters, sisters, aunts, cousins, or even grandmothers, it creates deep emotional fractures. These wounds are often left unspoken, buried under layers of generational trauma, cultural expectations, and the false belief that "this is just how women are."



‘When toxic dynamics play out between mothers and daughters, sisters, aunts, cousins, or even grandmothers, it creates deep emotional fractures.’



Silent battles. Judgments disguised as advice. Resentment passed down like heirlooms. Conditional love. The expectation to compete, for validation, for attention, for male approval, for respect. These dynamics don't just exist within women; they permeate how we raise children, build relationships, and perceive ourselves.

When the emotional anchors of the family are caught in cycles of distrust, shame, and unhealed trauma, the family unit becomes a battlefield rather than a sanctuary. Children grow up learning that love is a currency, that women tear each other down, and that safety is conditional.

Toxic sisterhood in families isn't always loud — but it's always felt. It's the undercurrent that shapes our identity, our self-worth, and our capacity to love. If we want to heal society, we must first heal the maternal line.

Organisations and Communities Caught in a Loop

Beyond the home and workplace, the ripple effect extends to our wider communities. Grassroots organisations, charities, and social enterprises, many of which are led or heavily supported by women, should be the heartbeat of change. However, when internal politics, rivalry, and power struggles enter the picture, the mission often takes a backseat to personal agendas.

You'll see it in women's groups that exclude rather than empower. In community spaces where one woman's success is seen as a threat rather than a triumph. In activist circles, cliques form and gatekeeping silences emerging voices. The potential for impact is lost in petty disputes, elitism, or performative leadership.

This dynamic is particularly dangerous in movements that claim to be about empowerment or transformation. Because if the message is empowerment, but the culture is toxic, then the entire foundation is built on illusion. True community care starts with humility. It begins with asking ourselves: Are we creating safe, nourishing, inclusive spaces? Or are we recreating hierarchies under the guise of progress?

Toxic Femininity: When Power Is Distorted

Toxic femininity isn't about being soft or emotional, far from it. At its root, toxic femininity is the manipulation of feminine energy to control, compete, or dominate through emotional tactics. It's when empathy becomes a tool for guilt-tripping. When nurturing becomes smothering. When influence is wielded through shame, gossip, or passive-aggressive behaviour.

This is not the true essence of the feminine; it is a distortion—a survival strategy. A performance learned in a world where power was historically denied to women, and so we learned to find it in indirect, often harmful ways. But in this era, where female leadership is rising, where businesses are being built with purpose, and where community and collaboration are vital, these toxic tactics are no longer acceptable. They are not sustainable. They damage more than just individuals. They damage the culture.

The Cost of Not Healing

Let's not sugar-coat it: the cost of ignoring these patterns is massive. We lose energy. We lose trust. We lose time and potential. We lose the opportunity to lead from a place of power that is rooted in integrity, not fear or performance.

Families remain fractured. Organisations fail to evolve. Communities remain stuck in a loop of performative empowerment rather than authentic transformation. Toxic sisterhood drains the very life force that women are known for. And when that life force is compromised, the entire ecosystem suffers because when women hurt, the world hurts.

But There Is Another Way: Radical Sisterhood

The antidote to toxic sisterhood isn't performative positivity or forced collaboration. It's radical healing. It's doing the uncomfortable work of self-inquiry, accountability, and transformation.



'You'll see it in women's groups that exclude rather than empower. In community spaces where one woman's success is seen as a threat rather than a triumph.'

It means being honest about our wounds and where we have wounded others. It means choosing wholeness over hustle, honesty over harmony, and healing over hierarchy. True sisterhood is not easy, but it is revolutionary. It's not about everyone liking each other; it's about building spaces where women can grow, be challenged, be seen, and be safe. It's about creating networks rooted in trust, not transaction.

When we do this, the ripple effect flips. Instead of toxicity spreading, healing does. Trust spreads. Safety spreads. Leadership spreads. Legacy spreads.

We Are the Nurturers, It's Time to Show Up That Way

The world doesn't just need women in power; it needs women in their power. We carry the blueprint to restore families, rebuild organisations, and revitalise communities. That restoration begins with how we treat one another and how we treat ourselves.

Toxic sisterhood is not inevitable. It's a pattern that can be broken. And when it is, everything changes.

Let this be a call not just for awareness, but for action. Let's detox from illusions, unlearn sabotage, and rise into a new era of leadership —one that begins within.

From the Inside Out: What Helped Me Heal Toxic Sisterhood

I've lived it: the tension, the jealousy masked as support, the microaggressions disguised as advice. And for a long time, I stayed quiet. My part? I allowed it... just to keep the peace. Because the moment I started speaking up, setting boundaries, and holding mirrors, I found myself alone.

But I learned that peace built on silence isn't peace at all, it's self-abandonment. And I couldn't keep betraying myself to belong.

Here's what's helped me find clarity and healing:

1. I Chose Truth Over Tolerance

Silence was my survival once, but truth became my freedom. I stopped shrinking to make others comfortable.

2. I Let Go of Performative Circles

Support that shifts when you speak your truth isn't real. I walked away from connections that couldn't handle my authenticity.

3. I Built the Community I Needed

Real sisterhood doesn't flinch when you grow. I started creating spaces rooted in honesty, depth, and emotional safety.

4. I Faced the Fear of Being Alone

And I was, for a while. But being alone in truth is more powerful than being surrounded by pretence; healing from a toxic sisterhood is hard. But reclaiming yourself is worth every uncomfortable moment. You don't lose people when you grow; you lose illusions. And that's liberation.

By Shardia O'Connor

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Perfect on Paper

Perception isn't the whole story

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

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

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.

www.ADJUSTcoaching.com





THE MYSTERIES OF CONSCIOUSNESS: WHAT IF THE BRAIN ISN'T THE BOSS?

Introduction

We were told the brain runs the show.

Every thought, every flash of genius, every memory—all neatly boxed into grey matter. But what if that isn't the whole story? What if consciousness isn't confined to your skull at all?



Because sometimes, the facts don't line up. A man with almost no brain tissue lives a perfectly normal life. A child receives a heart

transplant—and wakes up with memories and language he never learned. Patients recall pain in parts of the body that match injuries from supposed past lives.

It sounds impossible—until you see it happen again and again.

So what if the brain isn't the origin of consciousness, but simply a translator?

When There's No Brain... But Still Intelligence

In a now-famous case, a 44-year-old man complained of mild leg weakness. A scan revealed his brain was 90% fluid. And yet—he was living a completely normal life. Married. Employed. Functioning. How? Neurologist John Lorber found other cases like this—people with extreme hydrocephalus (a buildup of fluid in the brain), whose skulls were mainly empty space. One student had an IQ of 126, despite having just a millimetre-thick layer of brain tissue. If the brain is the full source of intelligence, these cases make no sense. But if the brain is a receiver—a translator of something bigger? Then maybe it's not so crazy after all.

The Body Remembers. Even When the Brain Doesn't.

Organ transplant recipients have reported receiving more than just organs. Cravings they never had before. Sudden changes in personality. Dreams, phrases, feelings that

match their donor's life. One boy who received another child's heart hugged the donor's mother and called her "Mommy" in the donor's unique baby talk. Coincidence?

Maybe. But there are too many stories to ignore. Dr Paul Pearsall documented dozens of these cases. They suggest something wild: our memories, our preferences, even our emotions might be stored in more than just our brains. Could our organs carry memory? Could our consciousness be more like a field—relational, distributed, flowing through the body like music through an orchestra?

Think of the Brain as a Radio, Not a Generator

The brain lights up when we think. But so does a radio when it's playing music. That doesn't mean the music originates from inside it. What if consciousness exists in a universal field—a kind of living internet of awareness? The brain just tunes into it.

Damage the brain, and like a broken radio, the signal gets distorted. But the consciousness? It's still out there. Still broadcasting. In this view, your brain is the translator. Your soul is the unique address. And your body is the instrument through which the music of life plays out.

The Heart and Gut: Your Hidden Intelligences

Ever felt a deep truth in your chest before your mind caught up? Or a strong gut reaction that turned out to be right? Science is finally catching up with ancient wisdom. The heart has its own neural network and produces the strongest electromagnetic field in your body. The gut is home to the enteric nervous system, also known as the "second brain." These aren't just poetic



metaphors. They're biological realities. Your heart and gut process information faster than your thinking mind. They know before you do. Many healing traditions

associate emotions with specific organs. Grief in the lungs. Anger in the liver. Fear in the kidneys. These mappings are more than symbolic—they reflect how your body stores unprocessed experiences.

Trauma Fractures the Field. Healing Restores It.

When trauma hits, the system fragments. The body tenses. The soul goes silent. The brain goes into survival mode. But when we restore coherence—when heart, brain, and body reconnect—healing accelerates. Through regression therapy, energy work, or somatic release, people often reclaim forgotten parts of themselves. Past-life memories surface. Undiagnosable pain fades. Decisions become clearer. This isn't about belief. It's about repeatable patterns.

The Soul Remembers More Than You Think

Across time and cultures, people have reported memories, emotions, and even physical symptoms from lifetimes they never consciously lived. In one regression session, a client vividly recalled dying from a spear wound in a past life—right in the spot where they'd carried unexplained shoulder pain for years. After processing the memory, the pain disappeared. Are these literal past lives? Symbolic echoes from the unconscious? That's still up for debate. But speaking from my own direct experience, past life regression doesn't feel like a metaphor. It doesn't feel like a memory. It feels lived. And the healing? It's real. The results are repeatable.

What If Consciousness Lives Outside the Body?

Let's take a step back. Imagine a vast ocean. Each human life is a wave. The wave rises, falls, and returns. But it was never separate from the ocean. In this metaphor, the ocean represents universal consciousness — the vast, interconnected field of awareness from which all life emerges. Each wave is a personal expression of that field — your individual awareness, distinct in form but never separate from the whole. And the current that moves beneath the surface?

That's your soul's signature — the unique energetic thread that carries your essence across time, space, and lifetimes. This would explain intuition, synchronicity, reincarnation, and why your body can hold stories your brain doesn't remember because consciousness isn't inside you. You are inside consciousness.

Practical Tools to Access the Field

Want to experience this for yourself?

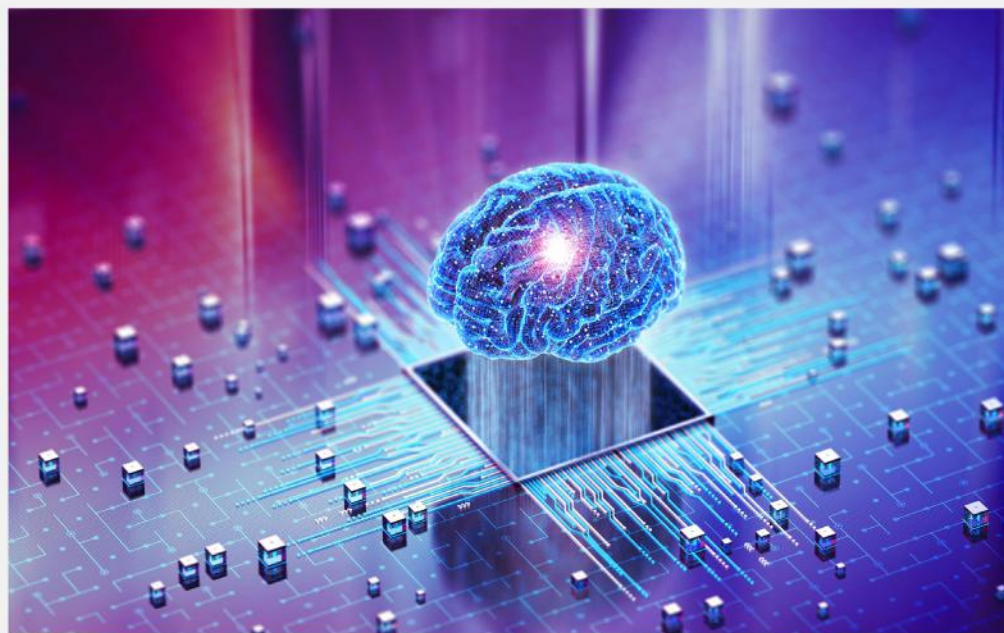
Start simple:

- **Heart breathing:** 5 seconds in, 5 seconds out, hand on your chest. Feel. Don't analyze.
- **Ask your body:** Where am I holding tension? What are you protecting?
- **Before making decisions:** Pause for 20 seconds. Ask, "What does my soul want me to know right now?"
- **Daily coherence practice:** Music, nature, humming, journaling—anything that returns you to inner stillness.

When you slow down and tune in, the field becomes easier to hear.

This Isn't Woo. It's Emerging Science + Ancient Truth.

You don't have to reject science to believe this. In fact, science is starting to confirm it. Fields like neurocardiology, quantum biology, and consciousness studies are pointing toward the same idea: Consciousness isn't local. It's relational. Memory isn't only neural. It's energetic. Healing isn't just physical. It's a reunion with your whole self.



Final Thought: What If You're More Than Just a Brain in a Body?

When your body aches but doctors find nothing, when you know something before it happens, when you meet someone and feel like you've known them forever, you're not imagining it. You're remembering. You are not a machine. You are a wave of consciousness. Your soul is the signature. Your body is the instrument. And your job? To play your music, fully and fearlessly. Dr. Margit Gabriele Muller is launching a new 4-week course Path of Soul Remembrance this January—a powerful journey to tune into your soul's wisdom, restore coherence, and activate embodied healing. Learn more at drmargit.com.

By Dr Margit Gabriele Muller



www.drmargit.com

Friendships Come and Go — Or Do They?



Lately, I've been thinking about friendship. Real friendship. The kind that doesn't just drift in and out of your life with the changing tides — but stays, evolves, and endures. In our fast-paced world, where people often move on quickly and connections can be fleeting, I've come to appreciate, now more than ever, the rarity and depth of true, lasting friendship. I'm lucky. I've had one of those friendships for over 45 years. Her name is Mal.



We met in the 1980s, brought together by our shared love of sport — cricket and squash. I remember the first time I saw her play cricket. She stepped up to bat, took one stride forward, and sent the ball flying over the bowler's head for six. I thought, "Who the hell is this woman?" Natural ability poured out of her. She didn't stay at the crease long — she made her runs quickly, efficiently, then exited, knowing her job was done. She was a team player through and through. Squash revealed another side of her. Fierce, fiery, and passionate. Her temper flared when she didn't meet her own high expectations — I even saw her break a racket or two in frustration. It became a running joke: "Did you bring your spare racket today?"

Mal worked hard in every aspect of her life. She bought a house early, later redeveloped the land into units, and she and her partner built a beautiful life together. Through it all, she remained grounded, steady, consistent, and fiercely **loyal**.

And that's the word that keeps coming up for me when I think of Mal: loyal.

We've travelled together, explored overseas destinations, marvelled at the Grand Canyon, soaked in the glitz of Las Vegas, and stood in awe at the Kennedy Space

Centre. We've shared meals, milestones, and quiet moments. We've laughed (a lot) and supported each other through life's inevitable curveballs.

The bottom line is this: Mal is still here. And so am I. Our friendship hasn't just endured — it's deepened. What's the secret? I've reflected on that a lot lately. Yes, we've had our bumps. No friendship is perfect. Communication isn't always easy. Sometimes we've had to stay the course, even when things got hard or testy. But we did — and we do — because the foundation is strong.

That foundation is built on **values**. Shared values, I've learned, are the invisible thread that binds long-term friendships together. Mal and I don't agree on everything, but we value many of the same things: honesty, kindness, hard work, loyalty, and respect. Values help us navigate the tough conversations. They guide how we treat each other. They remind us that when the chips are down, we don't walk away — we show up.

Over the decades, I've come to believe that certain ingredients are essential for any friendship that stands the test of time:

- **Mutual respect** — seeing and valuing each other's perspective
- **Laughter and fun** — never underestimate the power of shared joy
- **Kindness** — in words, in actions, in presence
- **Cooperation** — friendships, like gardens, need tending
- **Flexibility** — allowing space for each other to grow and change
- **Trust** — the currency of any real relationship
- **Acceptance** — letting each other be perfectly imperfect
- **Grace** — especially when things get messy
- **Forgiveness** — because hurt happens, but healing is a choice
- **Simplicity** — sometimes it's the little moments that matter most

But perhaps above all, it takes a willingness to stay — not just physically, but emotionally. To show up when it's not convenient. To lean in when it would be easier to pull away.

In a world where so many connections feel temporary, having a friend like Mal has been one of the great gifts of my life. She reminds me that not all friendships come and go.



Rewire Your Mind, Reclaim Your Life

How Hypnosis Can Transform Your Inner World

There comes a time in many people's lives when they feel stuck—caught in an endless loop of self-doubt, limiting beliefs, anxiety, or unhealthy and destructive habits. Despite trying positive thinking, reading all the right books, or pushing through with willpower, they find themselves pulled back by invisible strings tied to the past.

But what if there was a way to gently and effectively release those strings and forge a new path forward?

That is where hypnosis comes in—not as magic, but as a science-backed, deeply transformative therapeutic tool to rewire the brain and reprogram outdated subconscious patterns.

The moment you choose to reprogram your mind is the moment you reclaim the pen to your own life story.

The science behind hypnosis

Hypnosis is often misunderstood—some think of stage shows or losing control, but clinical hypnosis is the exact opposite. It is a powerful therapeutic tool that guides individuals into a focused, relaxed state where their subconscious mind becomes more receptive to positive suggestions.

According to neuroscientific research published in *Cerebral Cortex* (2016), hypnosis changes brain activity in three key areas: the dorsal anterior cingulate cortex (involved in decision-making), the insula (which helps regulate emotions and body awareness), and the default mode network (associated with self-reflection). These changes help reduce mental chatter, increase focus, and unlock the brain's capacity to adapt—known as neuroplasticity.

Dr. David Spiegel, a professor of psychiatry at Stanford University, explains, "Hypnosis is a state of highly focused attention and increased suggestibility, during which positive suggestions can have a powerful impact."

In other words, when your conscious mind relaxes, your subconscious becomes more accessible—ready to release old beliefs and embrace healthier, more empowering patterns.

Rewiring the brain, rewriting the story.

From childhood experiences to societal conditioning, many of us carry mental programs that no longer serve us. These programs run in the background of our lives, shaping how we react, think, and feel. Hypnosis allows us to go straight to the source: the subconscious mind.

Clients often seek hypnosis for issues like anxiety, low self-esteem, trauma recovery work, smoking cessation, weight management, and more. Why does it work? Because it does not just treat symptoms—it addresses the root cause.

With repeated hypnotic sessions, positive affirmations, and guided visualisations, new neural pathways are created. As Dr. Norman Doidge, Canadian psychiatrist and psychoanalyst, explains in *The Brain That Changes Itself*, the brain is constantly remodelling itself in response to new experiences and focused attention. Hypnosis provides the fertile ground for this remodelling to occur with intention and purpose.

Imagine replacing a lifetime of "I am not good enough" with "I am worthy and capable." Imagine replacing fear with confidence, pain with purpose, and doubt with clarity. That is the essence of transformational hypnosis.

Empowerment through hypnosis

When you understand that you are not broken—just wired with old code—you realise your power lies in rewriting it.

Hypnosis is not about fixing people—it is about reminding them who they truly are beneath the layers of societal expectations, conditioning and inherited fear.

Clients often report feeling lighter, freer, and more aligned with their authentic selves after hypnosis. They start making better choices, setting boundaries, stepping into leadership roles, and nurturing healthier relationships—not because someone told them to, but because their subconscious finally supports the change.

A journey back to you

Hypnosis is not a quick fix. It is a gentle, soul-centred journey inward—a dialogue between your conscious desires and subconscious programs. It teaches you to trust yourself, listen deeply, and take aligned action.

And perhaps most importantly, it reminds you that you are not your past, your trauma, or your mistakes. You are the creator of your present and the architect of your future.

Final thoughts

Whether you are looking to break free from destructive habits, heal emotional wounds, or live with more joy and intention, hypnosis can be the catalyst that transforms your life from the inside out. So, take a moment. Breathe. Tune in. Your subconscious is listening.

And remember:

The moment you choose to reprogram your mind is the moment you reclaim the pen to your own life story.

Your story is not over—it is just beginning. And this time, you get to write the next chapter.

By Nadija Bajrami



Balancing AI and Humanity in Recruitment

Recruitment is changing at a pace few of us could have imagined even five years ago. Artificial intelligence is rewriting how we source, screen, and select candidates. Whilst at the same time, jobseekers are redefining what they want from employers, and a new generation is stepping into the workplace with different expectations altogether.

As someone who has worked in recruitment for over two decades, I have witnessed the rise and fall of various tools. However, one constant remains: behind every CV, algorithm, or job advert is a person. It is this human connection that truly drives the success of recruitment.

The AI Revolution — Promise and Pitfalls

AI has become the latest buzzword in recruitment. From CV-screening algorithms that rank candidates, to chatbots answering queries, to video interviews scored by machine learning — the promise is speed and efficiency. For busy recruiters and hiring managers, this can feel like a gift, cutting out the tedious time often associated with hiring new staff.

But speed comes at a cost. Algorithms can reinforce bias rather than remove it. Automated systems often lack transparency, leaving candidates unsure why they were rejected. And in some cases, the process can feel cold and transactional. This doesn't mean we should avoid AI altogether. Used effectively, it can free recruiters from repetitive administrative tasks and allow them to focus on what matters most: building relationships. The key is balance. Technology should enhance, not replace, human judgment.

Candidates Are Redefining What Matters

The other side of the story is what candidates expect. Flexibility is now top of the list — but it isn't just about remote work. Candidates want a choice in hours, compressed work weeks, autonomy, and genuine respect for their well-being.

Authenticity has also become critical. An Employee Value Proposition (EVP) can no longer be a glossy brochure or a catchy line on a website; it must be a comprehensive and engaging representation of the organisation's values. Jobseekers — particularly Millennials and Gen Z — are quick to spot when there's a gap between marketing and reality. They are looking for proof that organisations live their values every day. And then there is transparency. Salary, benefits, career progression, and culture are no longer hidden topics. They are essential to building trust. Many candidates now interview companies just as much as companies interview them.

For employers, this means recruitment messaging must shift. It isn't about selling a job. It is about telling the truth — and creating an experience that feels authentic at every stage.

The Next Generation — Early Careers in Focus

Perhaps the biggest shake-up is happening at entry level. Today's graduates are applying with AI-polished CVs and cover letters. While this can level the playing field, it also makes it harder for employers to see the real person behind the words. More organisations are moving beyond degree-based hiring. Instead, they are assessing skills, adaptability, and potential through gamified tests, project-based tasks, and work simulations.

But attracting young talent isn't just about how we assess them — it's about what we offer. This generation values career pathways, mentoring, and purpose above perks. They want to feel they're contributing to something meaningful, and they want employers who invest in their growth. Hiring early-career talent isn't about filling a vacancy. It's about building the future workforce, and employers who recognise this will gain a competitive edge.



“

Algorithms can reinforce bias rather than remove it. Automated systems often lack transparency, leaving candidates unsure why they were rejected.

”

**TECHNOLOGY + HUMANITY =
FUTURE-READY RECRUITMENT**

So, where does this leave us? AI will continue to transform the mechanics of recruitment. Candidate expectations will keep evolving. Graduates and entry-level candidates will bring fresh perspectives and different demands.

But the thread that ties all of this together is humanity. The future of recruitment isn't about choosing between people or technology. It's about using the best of both to build workplaces where individuals — and organisations — can thrive.

Recruitment isn't just about filling roles; it is about shaping the future of work, one person at a time.

By Penelope Layzell





By Celia Conrad

Loss is the root

Why we need a holistic approach to mental health and well-being

We speak a lot about mental health today, and rightly so. But what's often missing in these conversations is one of the primary drivers behind declining mental health: loss.

Loss is the silent thread that runs through so many of the struggles people face. And I'm not only talking about bereavement, though that's certainly one of the deepest kinds of grief. I'm talking about the full spectrum: loss of a job, loss of a relationship, loss of health, identity, certainty, purpose and even loss of dreams.

As a society, we've made progress in acknowledging mental health. But if we don't acknowledge what causes people to spiral — what sits at the heart of so many anxiety disorders, breakdowns, burnout and even physical illness — then we are simply treating symptoms, not causes.

As someone who has worked in law, banking, and now as a therapeutic coach and workplace well-being consultant, I've seen firsthand how unprocessed loss infiltrates every part of a person's life, including the workplace. It's the grief behind the presenteeism. The heartbreak behind the absenteeism. The silent stressor behind the burnout.

There's a prevailing myth that we can (or should) "leave it at the door" when we walk into work. But that's not how humans operate. When you're navigating a divorce, a bereavement, a child's diagnosis, or the slow fade of your own physical health, it doesn't matter how professional you are. It comes with you. It sits with you at your desk. It wakes you up at 3 am. It affects your decisions, focus, energy, and confidence. And often, people keep it hidden, especially in environments where they fear being seen as "less resilient" or "not coping." That's when loss turns inward. It shows up as fatigue, irritability, brain fog, anxiety, and eventually depression.

Mental health doesn't operate in a vacuum. Our emotional, mental, physical and even spiritual health is deeply connected. When someone is carrying unresolved grief, it may manifest as insomnia, digestive issues, chronic pain or fatigue. Loss can disrupt hormone levels, impact immunity, and increase inflammation, all of which affect how we feel and function. I often say, "loss lives in the body." People might not talk about it, but their bodies are screaming it.

That's why a holistic approach to well-being is not a nice-to-have; it's essential. We need to create environments, at work and in society, where people feel safe to express, explore and heal from loss. Not simply "manage" it. Part of the problem is that we often associate loss with death alone. But in my work, I've seen people grieving the end of a relationship just as deeply. Others are mourning the future they thought they'd have, their sense of identity after a job loss, or the changes that come with becoming a full-time carer for a loved one. In all of these scenarios, the emotional toll is real. And it requires more than a wellness webinar and a box-ticking exercise.

Employers must recognise that life transitions can impact performance. It's not weakness — it's part of our human condition. I developed the W.O.R.K. I.T.™ framework to help organisations proactively support employees navigating loss and change. For individuals, my H.E.A.L. I.T.™ method provides a structured, compassionate pathway through grief, allowing them to rebuild their lives and avoid rushing back to "normal." Because here's the truth: we don't "get over" loss. We grow around it. But only if we're supported.

It's time to stop separating mental health from emotional and physical health. It's time to stop treating grief like a side issue or a personal matter with no workplace relevance.

Instead, we must take a whole-person approach; one that acknowledges the impact of loss, creates space for recovery, and fosters genuine human connection. As I often say to clients and employers alike, supporting someone through loss is not about being their therapist or coach; it's about human kindness. In a world of KPIs, deadlines and "business as usual," let's not forget that well-being isn't only about yoga classes and smoothie bars, although they certainly have their place. It's also about people feeling seen, heard and supported, especially when life gets messy.



Back to You

Your September Reset Starts Here

By Emma Hull



Whether you have kids or not, summer tends to invite a loosening of the rules. Maybe you've been staying up later than usual, indulging in sweet treats, or letting the household chores slide. Think of September as the new January—an invitation to reset. Breaks are healthy. But eventually, that desire to feel clear and purposeful kicks back in.

You're not alone in finding it hard to get back on track. Each year, I help my life coaching clients regroup after the holidays and re-establish the habits that help them thrive.

In this article, I'll share three powerful tools that can support you in reviving healthy routines: sleep, accountability, and motivation. Treat this as a gentle guide. Pick two or three suggestions that resonate and feel doable. Then check in with yourself along the way, asking what's working, and what's not?

Getting A Good Night's Sleep

Too much or too little sleep can quietly chip away at your physical, mental, and emotional capacity—yet it's something so many of us struggle with. Most adults thrive on 7 to 9 hours of sleep each night, though some may need more or less.

How To Get Up at the Same Time Every Day

One of the most powerful habits? Waking up at the same time every day. This becomes your anchor point. Sleeping in might feel like a treat, but it actually resets your internal clock and makes it harder to get up during the week. Give yourself a reason to get out of bed. Maybe it's fresh coffee, a sunrise walk, or a refreshing shower. Expose yourself to bright light early—preferably sunshine, if possible, or indoor lights if not.

How to Get to Sleep

Figure out your bedtime by working backwards from when you want to wake up, aiming for that 7–9 hour window. Set a bedtime alarm about 30 minutes before sleep to give yourself time to wind down. Dimming lights and putting screens away helps your body prepare for rest.

How to Stay Asleep

It's normal to wake up at times, as sleep happens in cycles. But there are ways to help your body settle into deeper, uninterrupted rest.

If you find yourself awake, resist the urge to scroll. Try a Non-Sleep Deep Rest (NSDR) protocol, such as yoga nidra. Find one you like and keep it handy.

How Accountability Helps Healthy Routines

Having a plan and actually following through on it are two different things. And often, the missing link is accountability.

How Clear Goals Help You Stay Accountable

When you know what you're working toward and why, it's easier to stay on track. Choose two or three goals: maybe one personal and one professional, or one physical and one emotional.

Break those goals down into smaller, doable actions. Then assign yourself weekly and daily tasks that contribute to them, like walking 10,000 steps, reading a chapter a day, or speaking at a networking event. Post your goals somewhere visible so you're reminded of them, and celebrate your progress as you check off each item.

Tools To Promote Self-Accountability

Pre-commit to your routines. Pay for your yoga class when you book it so you're less likely to skip. Use technology to your advantage by setting alarms, creating widgets, or using reminders to keep your goals top of mind.

Plan for what might get in your way. We all have those go-to excuses. If rain tends to cancel your walk, consider finding an indoor track or having a treadmill as a backup. Lay out your gym clothes before work so they're waiting for you when you get home. Little visual cues make a big difference.

How to Leverage Others for Accountability

You don't have to do this alone. In fact, external support can be a game-changer. Make a public declaration of your goals, share it



with a friend, write it on the fridge, and post it on social media. Saying it out loud instantly raises the stakes (in a good way).

Even better, get yourself an accountability buddy. Find someone who shares a similar goal or challenge and support each other. Join the gym together, text each other at 7 a.m., or swap photos of your meal prep. If you're not in the same place, you can still show up; call while folding laundry, or agree to clean the car at 11 a.m. on Sunday and check in when it's done.

How to Stay Motivated



You might start the week feeling excited and full of energy... but by Thursday, your motivation has packed a bag and quietly slipped out the back door. Sound familiar?

Motivation isn't something we can rely on to always be there, but we can build systems to help it show up more often.

Use Rewards to Keep Momentum Going

Rewards are a powerful motivator. Knowing there's something enjoyable waiting on the other side of effort can help you push through the hard stuff. Plan small rewards throughout your day. Maybe you take a 15-minute break after checking off five things on your task list, or let yourself tackle a fun task after completing one you've been dreading. These little incentives give your brain a hit of dopamine and help you stay engaged.

Track Progress, Not Just Tasks

To-do lists are great, but they can also be overwhelming if they never seem to come to an end. Balance yours with a 'Done' list—a space where you write down everything you accomplished that day. Seeing what you have done (instead of everything still waiting) gives you a very different, more empowering emotional experience. End your day with a quick review of your 'Done' list and take a moment to feel proud. You showed up. You moved forward. That matters.



Reconnect With Your Why

When motivation wanes, come back to your bigger vision. Why are you doing this in the first place? Maybe it's about feeling stronger, having more energy, creating space for joy, or setting a powerful example for your kids. Whatever it is—name it, feel it, and let it guide you. If the goal feels far off, zoom in. Celebrate the little wins. Progress is still progress, even if it's quiet and slow.

Start Small, Call in Support, Be Kind to Yourself

Be kind and compassionate with yourself as you explore what works best for you. There's no one perfect system—just a process of learning, adjusting, and growing. Start with a few small changes, then check in and notice what's working. If something isn't flowing the way you'd hoped, don't give up. Instead, look at what is going well and how you

might build on that. What needs tweaking?

What needs letting go?

With patience, curiosity, and a little persistence, you'll find the right rhythm. One that supports your energy, honours your needs, and helps you move through life with more clarity, accountability, and motivation.

You've got this.

*Emma Hull is a Life Coach, Speaker, and Author of **Your Goddess Era: A Step-by-Step Guide to Reinvention**. She helps women at a crossroads to move forward with confidence. Sign up for her inspirational emails and book your free strategy session at <http://www.lifeuntethered.com>*

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.

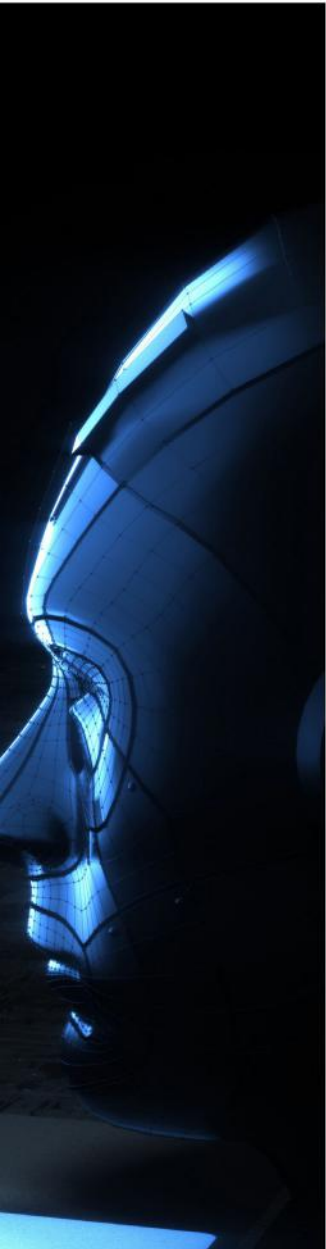
Tip four: Encourage play and safe experimentation. These tools are evolving quickly. Create space for them to play in low-stakes contexts. This builds confidence and understanding without jeopardising important work.

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!**

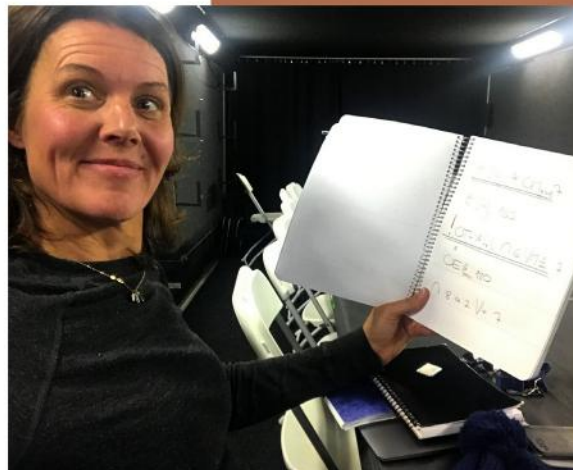


World-class rally teams include about 60 persons (engineers, mechanics, hospitality staff, meteorologists, tyre specialists, medical staff, coaches, and caterers). These individuals possess a distinct approach, in terms of strategies, planning, and mindset, to perform during a world championship competition. 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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Parenting from Presence

Healing the Thread That Was Missing

Let's pause together. Not to problem-solve or push through—but to breathe, feel, and reimagine how we parent from the inside out.

Because as we head into fall, a season full of routines, expectations, and fresh starts, I want to talk about something tender—something that doesn't always get named, but lives quietly in many of our homes: emotionally inattentive parenting.

It's not neglect. It's not indifference. It's not a lack of love.

It's the result of generations of parents doing their best without the tools for emotional presence. It's showing up for the calendar, the carpool, the homework—but missing the emotional cues. It's caring deeply, but parenting from a place of depletion, disconnection, or survival.

And it's more common than we think.

I meet parents every week who say, "I'm doing everything right, but something still feels off." Their child may be thriving on paper, but at home, there's resistance, shutdowns, or constant overwhelm.

The truth is: many of us were taught to manage behavior, not emotions. We know how to get things done, but not always how to stay emotionally steady while doing them.

But here's the hope: emotional presence is not something you either have or you don't. It's a skill. And like any skill, it can be practiced.

It looks like:

Pausing before we react. Naming our own stress out loud so it doesn't spill onto our kids. Letting our child say, "I'm not okay," without rushing to fix it. Sitting in silence sometimes, without needing to fill it with advice.

This kind of presence creates a different type of safety. Not just the physical, logistical kind—but the kind where our kids feel seen and known, even when they're struggling.

One mom I worked with had a teenager who'd just started college—and was already on the verge of burnout. They had a strong relationship on the surface, but every phone call ended in frustration. "I don't know what she needs," the mom told me, "and she won't tell me."



We talked about how this stage of life requires a shift—from managing to witnessing from doing for, to being with. She started asking, “What kind of support feels helpful today?” instead of jumping into problem-solving. Over time, her daughter opened up—not because the mom had all the answers, but because she finally had the space.

And that’s the heart of it. Emotional presence isn’t about fixing everything. It’s about being the steady thread that helps your child feel safe enough to grow.

So if you’re a parent who was never modeled this kind of connection, take heart: you are not too late to change the pattern. Even naming the gap is powerful.

This fall, as we all settle into new routines, let’s ask:

Can we slow down just enough to notice?

Can we lead with curiosity instead of control?

Can we build the kind of connection we wish we’d had?

Because presence is the foundation of every system that works—and every relationship that heals.

And even if your thread feels frayed, it’s still strong enough to weave something new.

By Nicole Rolon-Caro



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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.

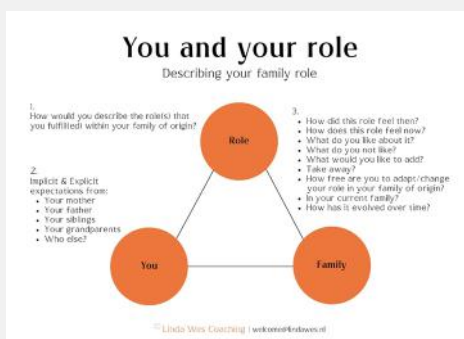
The result:

- 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 fulfilment 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



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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.
Loulabellies brand ambassador. Silhouette: Becoming You
Insta- @silhouette_becomingyou*



From People-Pleasing to Personal Power Reclaiming Your Self-Worth

by Angela Haynes-Ranger

Many women grow up internalising the message that being agreeable is synonymous with being good. We're taught to put others first, avoid conflict and keep the peace, often at the expense of our own needs and boundaries. While this behaviour may be rewarded with praise or acceptance, the long-term effects can be quietly devastating. People-pleasing is often mistaken for kindness. But when it's driven by fear of rejection or disapproval, it becomes self-abandonment. Over time, constantly saying "yes" to others can mean saying "no" to ourselves, leading to burnout, resentment, and a diminished sense of self.

When saying "Yes" Means saying No to Yourself

In the workplace, people-pleasing can show up as taking on extra tasks, avoiding direct communication, or tolerating unfair treatment to avoid being labelled "difficult." In the home, it might mean managing the emotional needs of others while ignoring your own. It's pretty common to feel indispensable yet invisible - valued for what you do rather than for who you are. Making the shift begins by pausing to ask: "Am I doing this out of genuine willingness or fear of disapproval?"

Tip: Try practicing a thoughtful pause before giving your commitment. Ask yourself, "Does this align with my values and my current capacity?" Remember that a respectful "no" is a powerful act of self-respect.

The Relationship Toll

People-pleasing often keeps us in unbalanced relationships, friendships or partnerships where we feel undervalued, criticised, or even emotionally drained. The fear of being seen as mean, selfish, or disloyal can make it hard for us to step away. But maintaining peace with others should not come at the cost of inner peace. Reflecting on the advice we would give a friend or a loved one on how they deserve to be treated can sometimes offer us clarity. Setting boundaries shouldn't be seen as a betrayal; it's a form of self-care.

Tip: Start by noticing how you feel after spending time with certain people. Do you feel uplifted or depleted? Begin to protect your energy by limiting time with those who refuse to respect you or your boundaries.

The Social Media Mirror

Online spaces can amplify people-pleasing tendencies. Women especially face constant pressure to present a curated version of their lives that aligns with societal ideals of beauty, success and happiness. Seeing highlight reels of others' lives can also trigger self-doubt. In response, some feel compelled to post carefully staged content in hopes of gaining affirmation. But the pursuit of online validation often leads to emotional exhaustion.

Tip: You are not required to package your life for public approval. Consider curating your feed to include ones that promote authenticity and self-compassion. Take regular breaks to reconnect with what's real and what positively aligns with you.

Reclaiming Your Power

Moving from people-pleasing to personal power doesn't require dramatic rebellion. It requires alignment. Here's how to start:

- 1. Clarify Your Values:** Identify what truly matters to you. When your actions align with these values, the need for external validation decreases.
- 2. Practice Assertive Communication:** Use clear, respectful language. Saying "That doesn't work for me" is not rude; it's honest.
- 3. Create Self-Worth Rituals:** Small habits like journaling, affirmations, or mindful movement can help you stay grounded in your own worth.
- 4. Build Supportive Connections:** Surround yourself with people who respect your boundaries and support your growth. Empowerment also involves learning to tolerate discomfort, especially the discomfort that comes from standing firm in your truth. At first, saying no or asserting your needs might feel awkward or guilt-inducing. But over time, these acts of courage reinforce your self-worth. You're not being unkind, you're being clear. You're not rejecting others, you're honouring yourself.

Equally important is forgiving yourself for the times you silenced your voice or overextended yourself to gain approval. Growth starts with compassion. Every boundary you set, every truth you speak, is a step toward a more authentic and fulfilling life. You are not here to be palatable or endlessly accommodating. You are here to be real, and real is sometimes complex, opinionated, and bold - and that's not a flaw; it's your power.

Reclaiming your self-worth is not a one-time act but a daily choice. Choose honesty over harmony, boundaries over burnout and self-respect over approval.

And remember.....You are enough as you are. No performance or approval required.

Style Coach & Award Winning Mentor
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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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www.mindsetmuse.org



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.

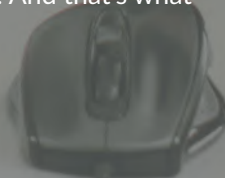
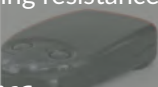
One of my clients—a teacher building her education coaching business—came to me with that exact story. She believed sales had to be "pushy and persuasive," and it didn't sit right with her. Through our work together, we uncovered her unique brilliance and shaped her sales conversations and offers that 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



GOALS

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

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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.





THE RAZOR'S EDGE OF LEADERSHIP - WHERE LEGACY IS BUILT

It is often said that leadership can be a lonely endeavour. Not because you stand alone in the room, but because the weight of the role demands a balance few truly understand. The modern leader walks a razor's edge. You must be approachable, but not overly familiar. Warm, but unwavering. Accountable, but empathetic. Visible, yet disciplined. Every handshake, every Zoom call, every decision signals who you are, and whether your team will follow you into the next quarter with energy and conviction, or quietly disengage. Culture shows up in metrics. Authenticity shows up in retention rates. The way you lead when the spotlight fades has a significant impact on revenue, just as it does for any marketing campaign or product launch.

Leadership is not simply about what you achieve. It is about how you achieve it, and whether the bridges you build outlast the storms you endure. Because in the long game, your legacy will not be defined by titles or headlines. It will be written in the loyalty of your people, the resilience of your culture, and the strength of the bottom line you leave behind. Here are five principles for leaders who want to win the quarter without losing the team

1. Accountability is the Core Currency of Leadership

Accountability is the lifeblood of performance. Without it, teams drift, silos grow, and execution collapses. Yet accountability without humanity breeds fear, and fear destroys innovation.

The strongest leaders set clear expectations, measure relentlessly, and deliver decisive feedback, while never forgetting that a human is behind every number. When accountability is framed as growth rather than punishment, teams rise, retention strengthens, and results multiply. Accountability done right isn't just leadership, it's strategy in motion.

2. Culture is the Hidden Engine Behind Every Metric

Every number tells a story. Sales, retention, and loyalty are all fueled by the culture beneath them. Great leaders don't treat culture as a side project. They are the culture. Their behaviors set the standard, their actions set the pace, and their energy sets the tone. When culture aligns with vision, execution accelerates, customers feel it, and profits reflect it. Culture is not intangible. It's the most powerful driver of measurable results.

3. Consistency Builds Trust, and Trust Builds Revenue

Your brand isn't built in campaigns; it's built in every decision, every meeting, every interaction. When leaders are steady, fair, and transparent, teams execute more efficiently, customers remain loyal, and stakeholders become engaged. Inconsistency breeds doubt, and doubt kills growth. Trust is not a soft skill; it's a competitive advantage that accelerates everything.

4. Relationships are Capital—Never Burn a Bridge

The most valuable asset you'll ever have as a leader is your network. Treat every connection as future capital. Today's rival may be tomorrow's ally, today's intern may become tomorrow's CEO. Even in conflict, lead with respect. Even when people leave, let them go with dignity. Bridges are hard to rebuild and easy to destroy. Protect them, they're the currency of opportunity.

5. Authenticity Under Pressure is the Ultimate KPI

True leadership shows when the stakes are high and the pressure is crushing. Teams can sense when a leader is authentic versus when they are simply going through the motions. Authenticity builds trust, encourages bold thinking, and fuels innovation, exactly when it's needed most. When leaders remain genuine in the most challenging moments, they don't just save a quarter; they lay the groundwork for long-term growth and resilience. Authenticity isn't optional. It's the engine of sustainable success.

The Leadership Legacy: Beyond the Quarter

Leadership is not about the spotlight you stand in, but the light you leave behind for others to follow. The true mark of a thought leader is the ability to inspire action, even in moments of uncertainty. When pressure builds and the path forward is unclear, people don't just look for answers; they look for steadiness, courage, and vision.

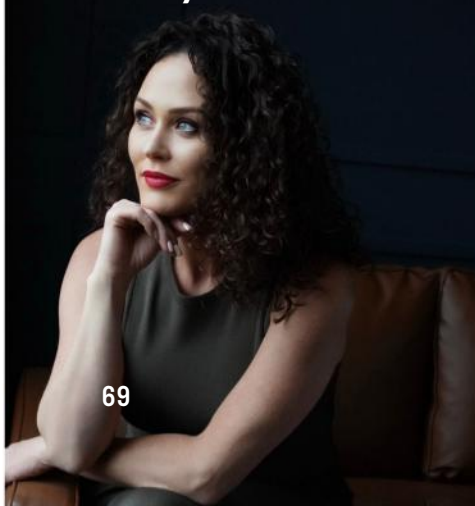
This work demands a delicate balancing act between emotion and execution. It requires the solitude and discipline of leading in protection, standing strong when others cannot, while constantly reaching back to extend a hand and guide others forward.

Your legacy isn't captured in titles or headlines. It lives in the culture you've built, the bridges you've protected, and the lives you've helped transform. Lead with purpose. Protect the connection. Build something that lasts.

Because anyone can influence for a moment, but only a few ignite movements that shape the future.

By Marissa Cherepanov

'Leadership is not simply about what you achieve. It is about how you achieve it, and whether the bridges you build outlast the storms you endure.'



Dad-O-Dad – Single Fathers

By Rachanaa Tulsyan

Stacey passed away 3.8 years after her divorce. Tim is now a SINGLE DAD to his 9-year-old daughter, Nina. Life has its own way of keeping everyone occupied. The minute you feel a little settled, it will throw another curveball that will unsettle you in ways you never expected.

Tim and Stacey's marriage had its own challenges. They were very cautious around Nina not to bring their personal differences, but there were days when they were savage, which Nina witnessed. However, they adored Nina, and she looked forward to being with both her parents post the separation.

Now, it is just Tim and his preadolescent daughter! Tim took this incident as an end to his fatherhood and began substituting for Stacey, to Nina. He took on more responsibilities than he could manage and attempted to do things he had never done before. Tim is 46 and was frequently on dating sites. He stopped going on dates completely now. He would mostly work from home and avoid meeting his friends for drinks or dinners.

He would not take their phone calls as he felt uncomfortable with answering all the questions that might pour in. Shed a tear or two in the shower, but wore a strong appearance on the outside. Started gaining weight, always stressed, became a home boozier and snappy!

Nina ended up losing both her parents as a result... She needed her dad the most at this time, who was busy becoming her mother. She found herself lonely, spent hours in her bedroom, mostly avoiding her dad.

One night, she thought she would die like her mother, when suddenly she found blood stains all over her. Tim equally freaked out and rushed her to the EMS.

Nina got her period!

She felt embarrassed and isolated herself. Tim and Nina hardly spoke to one another. Whilst Tim was busy with his self-proclaimed responsibilities, Nina was just surviving.

Suddenly, a happy father-daughter duo turned into two pillars holding the roof in a house, but Far Apart! If this feels familiar, here are my top tips for Single Fathers:

BE a FATHER: Your child needs YOU, and they feel more comfortable around the familiarity of knowing you the way you are. The moment you try to replace their mother, they end up losing their father and the ways in which they know him. This can add to their loneliness and their likelihood of drifting away. It can be stressful for the fathers, too, to suddenly assume dual roles, which will only make matters worse.

Do what is needed: It is one thing to take care of your child in the best possible way, but another thing to protect them from pain, losses and failures.

You want to make your child resilient yet kind. Give them a sense of security without taking away their power to lead their own life. Hence, as a parent, you empower your child and do not become a barrier for them in learning life's ways.

Share your feelings: Processing the loss of a loved one is a Universal Right! Take your time and give your child the time and space that they deserve to process it. Pretending to be strong will only make them avoid sharing their feelings with you.



Share how much you miss their mother. Although separated, you were co-parenting and you admired her for that.

Tell them that you cannot replace their mother, but always be by their side when they need you, that you will together overcome this challenging situation and always cherish the time spent with their mother.

Your Support Group: You must wear your Oxygen mask first! Your support group comprise your close friends, your divorce coach/therapist or counsellor, your parents or any close member of your family.

Keeping your support group near will help you in ways you cannot imagine. They are your leaning wall and will enable you to climb the ladder to cross over the negative emotions.

Dating to Replace: Going out on a date with the thought of finding a stepmother to your child can be very stressful. It can ruin things for you and your date.

Go out to meet new people and relish the time spent together. You never know what destiny has in store for you!

Ask for help: Do not shy away from doing so. Asking for help is a sign of great strength and a healthy mind. Challenging situations can have the best of us, so we must take care of our emotions and seek the right support

Rachanaa Tulsyan is a qualified Breakup and Divorce Coach focused on helping those in abusive and controlling relationships. Having lived-experience of two difficult relationships – one which was physically abusive and the other which involved coercive control, she now works with her clients to spot the red flags that often go unseen in relationship breakdowns. Her mission is to normalise divorce by helping both women and men break the cycle of abuse so they can start to live their lives again. Having seen the impact that coercive control can have, and the fact that victims are often not believed as there are no physical signs of abuse, Rachanaa has been spurred on in her mission to help make a difference.

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

www.selfactualisetalkingtherapy.co.uk





When Uranus enters Gemini

When you read this article, Uranus, the planet of innovation, rebellion and sudden change, would have already entered Gemini on 7th July 2025. Uranus moves slowly (taking about 84 years to orbit the Sun), so when it changes signs, it marks a significant shift in collective trends and generational themes.

Uranus in Gemini and what it means.

Gemini is an air sign ruled by Mercury. It represents:

- Communication, learning and language
- Information, intellect and curiosity
- Media, technology, and travel (especially short distances)

When Uranus enters Gemini, the Uranian qualities of disruption, innovation, and liberation get filtered through the Gemini lens. What can you expect? There will undoubtedly be a revolution in communication (Mercury aspect). New forms of communication will emerge, and you may see sudden advances in technology appear more quickly than anticipated. You can expect potential disruptions to the educational system, people will start to question things more, and you may notice more solidarity from one person to another. You may find that the way the media is reported will change. Due to the shift in consciousness and how we are using our voice, the way news is reported will seem to change to adapt to the ever-changing consciousness.

You may notice a certain restlessness in your own thinking and the way you are living, or in people as a whole. There will be more questions about authority, systems and traditional beliefs.

Get prepared for the awakening of the mind, body and soul! Gemini rules how we think and speak, and Uranus (the disruptor) comes to liberate you from your outdated thinking, old habits and toxic energies which no longer serve you. Hence, you may have found a certain intensity with the need to change on or around the 7th July 2025.

You may experience a crisis of faith, or a sudden shift in how you perceive your life or the world. You may start to spiritually question everything; some things you may have seen as the truth may start to show some cracks. You may break away from the mainstream in favour of persona or esoteric patterns.

Uranus governs the nervous system, and Gemini rules the mind and communication pathways in the body. Spiritually, this can result in an energetic surge that feels electrical and, often, emotionally overwhelming. You may feel overstimulated, hyper-aware or even anxious as your energy field adjusts. There will be a strong need for grounding, breath-work and meditation to process rapid insights.

What is REALLY interesting, and this blows my mind, is that people can often develop telepathic communication when a slow-moving planet moves into another sign. You may sense things more, feel like you know what someone is thinking, or notice synchronicities between what you think and what someone might say. You may feel more drawn to writing, or other creative endeavours, or feel like any thoughts and visions you have would have come from 'a higher source'.

If you have been thinking of learning a new skill or reading about a different subject, this transition may bring out that need. Who knows, it could bring about the next great opportunity for you. You may expand in more soulful connections that expand your conscious awareness and feed your soul! Whilst there may seem to be change and upheaval, it is always for the greater good to help develop our awareness, grow and learn – that is essentially what we are here for.

Some tips on how to get through this transition would be to ground yourself daily (nature, breath, body-based practices such as yoga). You can journal your insights – Uranus can bring in some fast information that's easy to forget. Practice discernment – not every idea or download is the truth! Use silence and solitude to integrate new awareness, and be open to changing your mind. Do not rush to fill the void.

Overall, you are here to be a better, more aligned spiritual version of who you were last year. You are supposed to be a trailblazer, raising your frequency to new heights and experiencing the sweet spot of life! To achieve this, we must adapt to the planetary transitions and listen to what they are telling us. You can even get a personal guide with tarot, and this can be booked with me. Please do feel free to take a look at the links on this page. Until then, stay centred, focused and excited for the unseen!

By Hannah Dawe



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When was the last time you celebrated being

“good enough”?



It's a radical thought in a world that often worships at the altar of perfectionism. Especially if you are a Gen X or older Millennial, like me, you will likely have grown up with a parenting style that fostered a culture of perfectionism. Whether that's the spotless house, the flawless presentation at work, or the seamless parenting experience. But as a leadership coach and a parent of three, I see “good enough” not as settling, but as a decisive shift —a secret superpower that parents often develop through the messy, unpredictable reality of raising children. And it's a superpower that translates beautifully into leadership.

Perfectionism vs. Good Enough in Parenting:

Anyone who has been a parent knows that striving for perfection is a recipe for burnout. From the moment your child is born, you are faced with decisions: breastfeeding or formula, sleep training or co-sleeping, screen time or no screen time, dummy or no dummy, nursery or childminder, and every choice can feel like it's loaded with expectations.

None of us get it perfect. And yet, when we embrace “good enough,” we discover that what truly matters isn't ticking every box or making every perfect choice. This shift from perfectionism to “good enough” can be liberating. It's the difference between being perpetually exhausted by chasing an unattainable ideal and being present and engaged in the moment, both with our children and ourselves.

The Leadership Lesson:

What fascinates me is how this same “good enough” mindset can transform our approach to leadership. Perfectionism in leadership often manifests as micromanagement, overpreparation, or an inability to delegate. I have seen this firsthand with many clients I have worked with, both in HR and in Coaching. Leaders who cling to the illusion of perfection can inadvertently create a culture of fear and self-doubt, where teams feel like nothing they do will ever be enough.

You all know that team; you have been on that team, perhaps you still are. Perhaps you are the leader of that team... Keep on reading. Parents who've learned the value of “good enough” at home often bring a different energy to work. They know that: Progress is better than perfection. My gold standard saying I learned from a Change Management colleague years ago. Bloody love it still!

People learn and grow through the process of trying, failing, and trying again. Holding space for imperfection, both their own and others', actually fosters psychological safety and innovation. In my coaching work with parents in leadership roles, I consistently observe how the experience of parenting reshapes their leadership style. They become more empathetic, more willing to delegate, and more understanding of the inevitable bumps in the road. They become better at prioritising, focusing on what really matters rather than chasing every shiny object. They also become less self-centred and more other-centred.

www.workingparentcoaching.co.uk

Good Enough as a Superpower:

When parents in leadership bring their “good enough” mindset to work, they model resilience and authenticity. They permit their teams to bring their full, imperfect selves to work too. They show that it's possible to lead with both competence and compassion.

This isn't about lowering standards or accepting mediocrity. It's quite the opposite! It's about recognising that real leadership is about empowering others, not about controlling every outcome. It's about creating an environment where people can thrive, even if things aren't always perfect.

My invitation to Leaders (and Parents):

If you find yourself stuck in perfectionism—at home or at work—ask yourself:

- *What would it look like if “good enough” were actually the gold standard?*
- *How might it free you, and those around you, to show up more fully and authentically?*
- *How might it help you focus on what truly matters, both in your family and in your leadership role?*

Let's embrace the power of good enough. Let's redefine success in both parenting and leadership as the ability to show up, messy, human, and real, and to create the kind of environments where others can do the same.

Because in the end, that's what authentic leadership looks like: not perfection, but connection.

By Eve Ostrovskaya



WHY YOUR DISCIPLINE ISN'T THE PROBLEM: THE NEUROSCIENCE OF STUCK BY SYNAPTIC FIT FUSION PROS

If you're a high-achiever who constantly feels like you're falling short, whether with fitness goals, food choices, or life routines, this article is for you. You've likely told yourself: "If I could just be more disciplined, I'd finally succeed." But what if the real issue isn't a lack of discipline at all?

The latest in neuroscience tells a different story, one that offers not just compassion, but a scientific pathway to lasting change.



The Myth of "More Discipline"

For decades, personal development culture has glorified willpower. The belief is: if you're not consistent, you just need to try harder. But research in neuropsychology, behavioural science, and trauma-informed care has shown that willpower is a finite resource, not a personality trait. It gets depleted, especially under stress, and isn't meant to carry the full weight of long-term behavioural change.

What appears to be "laziness" or "self-sabotage" is often the brain protecting you. When the nervous system is overwhelmed by work pressure, emotional stress, or unresolved trauma, it shifts to survival modes that prioritise short-term relief over long-term goals. It's not a failure of willpower; it's a predictable, adaptive response.

The Brain on Stress and Habit

Let's break this down neurologically. Your brain has multiple systems working in tandem: the prefrontal cortex, which governs rational thinking and planning, and the limbic system, which governs emotions and survival instincts. When you're calm and regulated, your prefrontal



cortex is in charge. You meal prep, you go to the gym, you make aligned choices. But under chronic stress, the limbic system takes over. Cortisol rises. The amygdala hijacks your decision-making. You default to habits that provide fast relief, such as skipping workouts or reaching for sugar, not because you're weak, but because your brain is trying to protect you from perceived threat.

Old neural pathways also play a role. If your childhood coping mechanisms involved food, avoidance, or perfectionism, those responses become deeply encoded. Over time, they fire automatically, especially when you're tired or triggered.

Freedom Over Force: A New Model of Change

So, what's the solution if white-knuckling doesn't work? At Synaptic Fit Fusion Pros, we advocate for food freedom, movement joy, and emotional resilience, three pillars grounded in both neuroscience and compassion.

● **Food Freedom** doesn't mean ignoring structure or "eating whatever you want." It means releasing rigid rules, ditching restrictions, while building awareness and trust through guided strategies. We help clients recognise hunger, satiety, emotional triggers, and patterns,

not through guesswork, but with grounded tools that create long-term consistency. This style of intuitive eating is a skill, not a switch. And structure isn't the enemy, it's the bridge to freedom.

● **Movement Joy** reframes exercise from punishment to pleasure. Neuroscientific studies confirm that intrinsic motivation (doing something because it feels good) activates reward systems more effectively than extrinsic pressure.

● **Emotional Resilience** is the foundation. Building tolerance for discomfort, learning nervous system regulation (like breathwork or somatic practices), and healing past wounds creates a brain environment where change is possible—and sustainable.

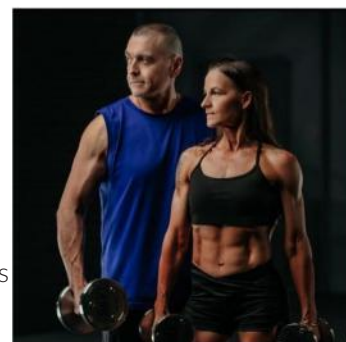


From Stuck to Sustainable

Change doesn't start with more willpower. It begins with understanding your brain, meeting yourself with compassion, and creating an environment where your nervous system feels safe enough to grow. Start by noticing where you're pushing through instead of listening in. Replace shame with curiosity. Begin with one sustainable action, like a joyful walk, a nourishing meal, or a 2-minute nervous system reset.

Momentum isn't built in a day. It's built by meeting your biology with compassion, not combat. And that's not weakness, it's wisdom.

Ready to unlearn the willpower myth and unlock real, lasting change? Your brain and your future are waiting. We have a FREE training on how to ESCAPE the DIET PRISON and build the body you love, CLICK HERE to get instant access: <https://www.synapticfitfusionpros.fit/funnel/61979/fat-loss-reset-pathway>





Corporate WARRIORS

When Good Hearts Become Corporate Play Balls

High performers often believe their work speaks for itself. They imagine that if they deliver results, remain kind, and maintain a strong work ethic, they will naturally rise. Logic seems to support this: great performance creates value, and value should be rewarded.

But once you operate at higher levels, another layer emerges. It is not only about KPIs or outcomes. Power dynamics and politics shape the playing field. And if you refuse to acknowledge this, you risk becoming the play ball of corporate politics.

You will be the one absorbing chaos, taking on more responsibility, and covering for others while quietly being sidelined. Your work may be used, your effort consumed, and your presence overlooked. Over time, the consequences are predictable: either burnout or silent suffering.

This is not a question of talent. It is a question of strategy.

Why Good Hearts Become Targets

High performers are especially vulnerable when they combine ambition with optimism. They tend to believe in good intentions and assume systems reward effort fairly. That is not always the case. In toxic environments, traits like loyalty, resilience, and a growth mindset can be exploited. The harder you work, the higher the bar is raised. The more you adapt, the more responsibility is piled on. And the less you protest, the more the system assumes it can get away with.

Across coaching conversations and stories shared in the community, the same patterns appear. Good-hearted high performers fall into predictable traps:

1. Attaching worth to performance and feedback.

When self-worth rests on recognition, you become easy to manipulate through vague or selective feedback.

2. Confusing authority with legitimacy.

Not every leader has earned their position through competence. Corporate authority often reflects politics, alliances, or opportunism. Assuming legitimacy without question leaves you unprotected.

3. Believing winning means staying.

High performers treat every challenge as a puzzle to solve. But in broken systems, the game itself is designed for you to lose. Sometimes walking away is the true win.

4. Underestimating narcissistic injury.

Narcissistic leaders chip away at confidence in subtle cycles of praise and dismissal. This makes driven, self-aware professionals question themselves instead of the system.

5. Overfunctioning in underfunctioning systems.

Becoming the go-to person feels like pride, but it often means holding together chaos that others avoid. Responsibility grows without matching authority, and the cost is exhaustion.

6. Being kept in a fog.

Unclear expectations, shifting priorities, and vague instructions keep you confused. Confusion is not random. It prevents you from strategising for yourself.

7. Isolation.

High performers are often kept useful but not powerful. Key relationships and opportunities are managed to ensure you remain indispensable but not influential.

What Toxic Bosses Will Not Tell You

No manager will admit they are exploiting loyalty or blurring priorities, but their behaviour communicates it. High performers under toxic leadership can expect:

- More work framed as “growth” but designed to see how much you will tolerate.
- Praise is given just enough to keep you hooked, while opportunities are withheld.
- Success is minimised to prevent you from becoming a visible threat.
- Confusion is maintained deliberately to reduce your power.
- Your silence is noted and used as proof that the system is working.

None of this means you are weak. It means you are being managed. Awareness is the first step to reclaiming your power.

Why High Performers Stay Too Long

Many high performers stay in toxic environments for reasons that have little to do with a lack of options. They stay because they want to win. They stay because they believe resilience will eventually pay off. They stay because walking away feels like failure. But in these systems, resilience is not rewarded. It is consumed.

Another overlooked reason is the erosion of confidence. When self-trust is worn down, leaving feels riskier than staying, even when staying is clearly unhealthy.

A Different Way Forward

The solution is not to abandon your values or become ruthless. You do not need to play the same game to protect yourself. But you do need a new operating system — one that pairs excellence with boundaries and visibility.

See the game. Stop pretending it is only about performance. Power dynamics exist whether you like them or not. Recognising them allows you to protect yourself without losing your integrity.

Anchor your worth internally. If your confidence rests solely on external praise, you are vulnerable. Build your identity on values, skills, and competence. This way, feedback becomes information, not identity.

Position your work. Visibility is not vanity. Document contributions, share outcomes, and frame impact in strategic terms. Do not wait for someone else to advocate for you.

Focus on relationships. Toxic workplaces have high turnover. While leaders play politics, peers often move on — and those relationships endure. A colleague who values you today can open a door tomorrow. Invest in networks that outlast the company.



Document reality. In dysfunctional systems, clarity is power. Keep records, track outcomes, and write down agreements. It protects you against gaslighting and ensures you remain grounded in facts.

Stay mobile. Options equal freedom. Knowing you can leave changes how you show up. It shifts your posture from desperation to choice, which is the strongest position you can hold.

From Play Ball to Player

Good-hearted high performers do not need to become cold to survive. They do not need to sell their soul to succeed. But they do need to adjust. Excellence without boundaries will drain you. Loyalty without reciprocity will trap you. And optimism without awareness will blind you.

The future of career success is not about choosing between kindness and strategy; it's about embracing both. It is about combining them. When you root yourself in inner worth, protect yourself with boundaries, and stay conscious of the politics at play, you stop being the play ball.

You become the player.

By Fela Rosa





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.

By Fiona Timothy
ADHD Coach, Career and Life Coach





By Samantha Buhrs

7 GENTLE SLEEP TIPS EVERY PARENT SHOULD KNOW

From a Pediatric Sleep Consultant

As a parent, you hear it all the time: "Sleep when the baby sleeps," or "It gets better with time." But what if your baby isn't sleeping at all? Or your toddler fights bedtime like it's their job? Sleep challenges are incredibly common in the first few years of life. And yet, many parents are left to navigate it alone, exhausted and unsure of what to do next. As a pediatric sleep consultant, I've worked with hundreds of families who felt stuck and overwhelmed. And what I've learned is this: baby and toddler sleep isn't just about a schedule or a perfect bedtime routine. It's about understanding your child's unique needs, rhythms, and cues.

Here are seven gentle, proven tips to help your little one (and you!) get more restful sleep:

1. Watch wake windows, but prioritize sleepy cues

Yes, wake windows are helpful. They give you a general idea of how long your baby can be awake before becoming overtired. But they aren't a one-size-fits-all solution. Every baby is unique, and their needs can shift from day to day. Pay close attention to sleepy cues, such as zoning out, red eyes, rubbing eyes, losing interest in play, or turning their head away. These are your baby's way of saying, "I'm ready for rest." Maintaining a balance between tracking wake windows and following your baby's natural cues is crucial for avoiding overtiredness and bedtime battles.

2. Expose your baby to natural light

Morning light exposure is one of the most powerful tools for regulating your baby's circadian rhythm. Try to get outside within 30 minutes of waking up, even if it's just a quick stroll around the block. Evening light matters too. As the sun begins to set, dim the lights at home and create a calm environment. That natural shift in lighting helps boost the production of melatonin! (The sleepy hormone)

3. Have a consistent wake-up time

After the newborn phase (usually around 8–12 weeks), having a consistent wake-up time can help set the tone for the entire day. It supports nap timing, encourages more predictable sleep patterns, and helps your baby's internal clock find its rhythm. Even if the night was rough, waking up at roughly the same time each day creates much-needed stability.

4. Create a simple, predictable bedtime routine

Your bedtime routine doesn't have to be long or complicated. What matters most is that it's consistent. A short routine, such as a bath, pyjamas, story, cuddles, and a lullaby, tells your child's body and brain, "Sleep is coming." Repeating this routine each night helps your child feel safe and secure, which is essential for a good night's sleep.

5. Fill their sensory cup before bed

A well-regulated body makes for smoother sleep. Babies and toddlers often need a chance to move, explore, and connect before they can settle. Ensure your child receives a variety of sensory input throughout the day, including tummy time, crawling, outdoor play, music, and snuggles. About 30–60 minutes before bed, focus on calming activities that help "fill their sensory cup" without overstimulating, such as gentle movement, bath time, massage that includes light squeezes, or dim-light reading. When their sensory needs are met, their body can more easily wind down for sleep.

6. Respect regressions and growth spurts

Sleep isn't always linear. Just when things are going well, a sleep regression, developmental leap, or growth spurt can throw everything off. This doesn't mean you've done something wrong. It means your baby is growing. Offer extra comfort, stay consistent with routines, and know that these phases do pass.

7. Work with a pediatric sleep consultant

Sleep is complex. If you're exhausted, second-guessing everything, or just not sure where to start, you're not alone. Working with a pediatric sleep consultant means developing a plan tailored to your child, your parenting style, and your specific goals. It's not about strict schedules or letting your baby "cry it out." It's about responsive, informed support that gets results. When families feel supported, their sleep improves. And when sleep gets better? Everything gets better.

Final thoughts

You're not a bad parent if your baby doesn't sleep through the night. Sleep challenges don't mean you've failed; they mean you and your child are both still learning. Gentle shifts, consistency, and the right kind of support can make a world of difference. And most importantly: you're not alone. Let's make bedtime something you actually

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The Food-Stress Connection

How Nutrition Shapes Your Nervous System

In our stress-filled world, the food we eat plays a crucial role in how we experience and manage stress. The intricate relationship between nutrition and our nervous system reveals that what we consume directly impacts our body's stress response.

Understanding the Stress Response

When we encounter stress, our sympathetic nervous system activates the "fight or flight" response, releasing hormones like cortisol and adrenaline. While this system evolved to help us escape immediate threats, modern life keeps it chronically activated, leading to anxiety, digestive issues, and weakened immunity. The hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal (HPA) axis serves as the command center for stress responses, regulating not only stress hormones but also inflammation, immune function, and mood. When dysregulated by chronic stress, this system can create a cascade of health problems and lifestyle illnesses.

The Gut-Brain Connection

Recent research has illuminated the profound connection between our digestive system and brain, known as the gut-brain axis. I have spoken about this in the previous articles more in depth. The gut contains approximately 500 million neurons and produces about 90% of the body's serotonin, our "happiness hormone"; 70% of dopamine, the hormone associated with flexibility and motivation; and GABA, the hormone responsible for rest and relaxation.

The gut microbiome communicates directly with the brain through the vagus nerve, influencing mood and stress responses. When we're stressed, blood flow is redirected away from digestion, disrupting gut bacteria balance, which causes dysregulation resulting in malabsorption of nutrients and digestion not taking place. Conversely, an unhealthy gut sends inflammatory signals to the brain, creating a cycle in which stress affects gut health, and gut health, in turn, influences stress resilience.

Foods That Fuel Stress

Certain foods exacerbate stress and create nervous system dysfunction: **Refined sugars and processed carbohydrates** create blood sugar spikes and rapid drops, triggering the release of stress hormones and leaving us anxious and fatigued. **Caffeine** amplifies stress responses by increasing cortisol production and activating the sympathetic nervous system, potentially putting the body & mind into fight-or-flight mode.

Inflammatory foods, such as trans fats and processed meats, trigger inflammatory responses that can impact brain function and mood regulation. **Ultra-processed foods** disrupt gut bacteria balance and contain chemicals that can affect neurotransmitter production, which again can lead to lowered energy levels, lack of concentration, anxiety and more.

Nutritional Building Blocks for Calm

Other foods provide essential support for nervous system health: Omega-3 fatty acids from fatty fish, walnuts, and flaxseeds reduce inflammation and support neurotransmitter production. B vitamins found in leafy greens, legumes, and eggs are crucial for maintaining nervous system function and

managing stress.

Magnesium in nuts, seeds, and whole grains acts as a natural relaxant for the nervous system. Complex carbohydrates provide steady energy and support serotonin production without triggering stress responses.

Antioxidants in colorful fruits and vegetables protect the nervous system from oxidative stress. This is where an imbalance between free radicals and antioxidants in the body can occur, potentially causing damage to cells and leading to various health issues. Berries, especially blueberries, are amazing antioxidants, as is kale and dark chocolate of 85% and above.

Foods That Calm

Specific foods have particularly calming effects:

- Chamomile tea contains compounds that promote relaxation
- Fatty fish provides omega-3s and tryptophan for serotonin production
- Fermented foods support gut health through beneficial probiotics
- Dark chocolate (85%+ cacao) may help reduce stress hormones and stabilise blood sugar regulation
- Adaptogenic herbs like ashwagandha and saffron help the body adapt to stress

Practical Implementation

Creating a stress-supported diet doesn't require dramatic changes:

- Focus on whole foods and maintain stable blood sugar by pairing carbohydrates with protein and healthy fats
- Practice regular meal timing to prevent hunger-triggered stress responses. I personally recommend eating every 3-4 hours
- Stay hydrated, as even mild dehydration can increase cortisol levels
- Eat mindfully to activate the parasympathetic "rest and digest" response. Chewing your food well will help with this.

The Bigger Picture

While nutrition plays a crucial role in stress management, it is most effective when combined with a holistic approach that includes regular exercise, adequate sleep, stress management techniques, and social connection. By understanding how food affects our nervous system and making informed choices, we can significantly improve our resilience and response to life's challenges.

Remember that small, consistent changes in your diet can lead to meaningful improvements in how you experience and manage stress. Your nervous system has a remarkable capacity for healing when given the right nutritional support.

Feel free to join my community and learn more about how you can support your body and mind through the holistic and alternative approach. Here I share education, stories, recipes and more, and you can connect with other like-minded people too.

By **Amanda Whitehead**
Holistic Health and Nutrition Coach
www.purposefullynourished.com





Time for
a break!

Why Community Is the Secret Ingredient to a Successful Career Break

When I first considered taking a career break, I envisioned freedom. Freedom to wake without an alarm clock.

Freedom to wander through a new city, sip coffee slowly, or finally start that project I'd been dreaming about for years. Freedom to rest, reflect, and travel the world. What I didn't imagine was the silence. The silence of being the only one in my circle, stepping away from the traditional path. The silence that follows after telling friends or family and hearing concern or scepticism instead of encouragement. The silence of no longer having colleagues to chat with or a routine to anchor my days. Even though I was excited, there were times when it felt strangely lonely.

The Hidden Loneliness of Career Breaks

If you've ever taken or thought about taking a sabbatical, you may know the feeling.

- **At the planning stage:** Excitement was mixed with uncertainty. Where do I begin? How do I budget? Am I doing the "right" thing? With no one around me who had done something similar, it felt like I was making it up as I went along.

- **During the break itself:** I loved the freedom but also found it disorienting. Without colleagues to check in with or a structure to follow, some days felt slightly adrift.

- **When I started thinking about returning:** The questions got louder: "What's next?" "How do I explain the gap?" "Do I even want to go back to my old career?"

Each stage brought unique challenges, but the thread connecting them was a sense of being alone in the experience. Friends and family cared, but unless they'd walked this path, they couldn't truly relate.

Why Community Matters

That's where community came in, and it changed everything for me. Community isn't just about having company; it's about being surrounded by people who 'get it'. When you're connected to others on the same journey, you stop feeling like you're the odd one out. You start to see that you're not irresponsible for taking time out, you're brave for daring to pause and reimagine.

Here's what community gave me during my break:

- **Validation and understanding.** Instead of defending my decision, I could share my hopes and fears openly and feel seen and heard.

- **Inspiration.** Hearing how others retrained, volunteered, or simply recharged gave me fresh ideas for my own journey. Stories from people a little further ahead lit the way when I wasn't sure where to step next.

- **Learning and guidance.** I picked up practical tips about structuring time, handling finances, and preparing for re-entry. That wisdom saved me from a lot of unnecessary stress.

- **Emotional support.** On days when doubts crept in, encouragement from peers kept me going.

- **Networking and opportunities.** Some of the people I

met on my break became friends, collaborators, and even future professional contacts.

- **Momentum.** Being surrounded by others moving in a similar direction helped me keep my own energy alive.

For me, community was the scaffolding that allowed me to fully live my break without second-guessing myself at every turn.

Why I'm Partnering with BreakSpace

Given the significant impact of community on my own experience, I was thrilled to partner with BreakSpace. BreakSpace is a dedicated space for professionals who are contemplating, planning, navigating, or returning from a career break. It's exactly the kind of support I wish I'd had at the start of my journey.

Inside BreakSpace, you'll find:

- **Direct access** to two leading break experts who provide quick, personalised guidance.

- **A supportive network** of fellow career breakers, at every stage of the journey, ready to share encouragement and wisdom.

- **A safe, welcoming space** where you can explore ideas, vent frustrations, and celebrate milestones without judgment.

- **A step-by-step process** to help you make the most of every phase of your break with courses, resources and live coaching calls to support you

It's designed for people who've thought things like:

- "I'd love to take a break but feel overwhelmed with where to start."

- "I've been going back and forth for years and can't decide."

- "I want the confidence of having a solid plan."

- "I'm on a break but struggling with what's next."

BreakSpace is where you go when you don't want to go it alone.

A Final Thought

Taking time away from your career is one of the most life-shaping choices you can make. But it doesn't need to feel isolating.

When you have a community, you gain more than support; you gain courage. You gain clarity from shared experiences, relief from knowing you're not alone, and the motivation to keep building the life you want.

Your break isn't just about stepping away from work. It's about stepping into possibility. And with the right people alongside you, that possibility becomes something you can truly live.

Ready to find your people?

You can explore everything BreakSpace offers at <https://www.gobreakspace.com/join> and if you decide to join, feel free to use my code BEX30 for 30% off your first month.

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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





PIVOT FOR PURPOSE: REALIGNMENT, MINDSET, AND THE GRACE TO SHIFT IN Q4

As we approach the final quarter of the year, many business owners and creatives find themselves at a powerful crossroads. Maybe you've been executing a plan that no longer excites you. Maybe you've hit a wall, or your growth has plateaued. Or perhaps your internal voice has been whispering—gently nudging you toward a new direction. This moment isn't a sign of failure. It's a divine checkpoint.

One that asks: Are you still in alignment with the business, mission, and life you truly want to lead? In the world of #bodyandbusiness, we recognize that success isn't just about strategy. It's about synergy—between your mind, body, soul, and the work you do. And sometimes, honoring that synergy means having the courage to pivot.

What Does It Mean to Pivot With Purpose?

Pivoting isn't always about a dramatic overhaul. Sometimes, it's a subtle shift in focus, a decision to walk away from what's "working" because it no longer feels aligned, or a brave step toward something new and untested. Pivoting with purpose means making choices that are not just strategic, but also soulful. It means asking:

- *Is this still what I want to be doing?*
- *Does this still feel good in my body?*
- *Am I energized by the direction I'm moving in—or drained by it?*

When your mind, body, and soul are no longer aligned with your current path, it creates friction—leading to overthinking, procrastination, doubt, and anxiety. But when you pivot in the direction of alignment, peace follows—even if the process feels uncomfortable at first.

Releasing the Guilt Around Change

One of the hardest parts of pivoting is giving yourself permission to change your mind. We're often taught to equate commitment with rigidity. But honoring your evolution means letting go of what no longer fits.

Here's your reminder:

You're allowed to evolve.

You're allowed to shift strategies.

You're allowed to stop doing something that no longer feels good.

You're allowed to let go of things that were once "the dream" but now feel heavy.

Give yourself grace in this season. Grace to pause. Grace to choose differently. Grace to pursue what feels most aligned now, not what once was.

Locking in for Q4 With Clarity and Confidence

Pivoting doesn't mean starting from scratch—it means moving with deeper clarity. And Q4 is the perfect time to re-evaluate your approach with bold, honest reflection.

Here's how to reset with intention:

1. Audit Your Energy, Not Just Your Metrics

Look beyond numbers and ask: Where am I feeling most alive in my business? Where am I constantly exhausted? Your body holds clues about what's aligned and what isn't.

2. Choose Peace Over Pressure

Just because Q4 is the "make or break" season for many businesses doesn't mean you have to burn yourself out chasing outcomes—set goals—but release attachment to how they must unfold. Flow and flexibility can still coexist with ambition.

3. Double Down on What Works

If you've found something that brings you joy and revenue, lean into it. Maximize your existing strengths rather than forcing yourself into something new out of fear or comparison.

4. Create Space for New Strategy

Sometimes the best ideas emerge when we step back. Give yourself room to brainstorm, dream, or explore new offers and directions without immediate pressure to monetize them.

5. Fuel Your Body for Decision-Making

Your physical well-being directly impacts how you think, feel, and lead. Eat well. Hydrate. Move your body. Get sunlight. The clarity you're seeking might not come from another business podcast—but from a well-rested, nourished nervous system.

Mindset Is the Bridge

The bridge between your pivot and your next season of purpose-driven success is your mindset.

Not a toxic, hustle-fueled mindset—but a grounded, self-trusting one.

The kind of mindset that says:

- Even if this is new, I trust myself to figure it out.
- Even if I've never done this before, I'm equipped for the next level.
- Even if others don't understand, I don't need their permission to evolve.

Final Reflection: Alignment Is the Strategy

At the end of the day, strategy matters. But alignment matters more. Your business cannot flourish if you're at war with yourself. Q4 doesn't have to be about pushing harder. It can be about aligning deeper. Let this be the season where you pivot with purpose, move with clarity, and lead with integrity. You don't have to finish the year doing what no longer fits.

You can finish strong—by choosing what aligns with you.

By Taneka Johnson



Seeking Feedback on Our Writing from the Wrong People – and too Soon



When we want to improve our craft as writers, and our goal is to publish our work, it's important that we:

- Seek out and accept feedback on our writing from individuals who are qualified to give it
- Request feedback at the right time.

Why Do We Need Feedback?

Why not just go ahead and publish?

Because we get too close to our own writing. It's the 'can't see the wood for the trees' syndrome: we fail to notice the errors, the inconsistencies, the plot holes, the gaps in logic, and so on. Regardless of the number of times we read the document and the number of drafts we produce, inaccuracies still slip through.

Here is an example from my first historical novel, where my editor spotted a technical boo-boo. I'd referred, correctly, to a specific sailing vessel at a particular time in the story. What she picked up was when I referred to the same sailing vessel being used at an earlier time. However, that type of sailing vessel was not in service at that time. Whew, she saved me!

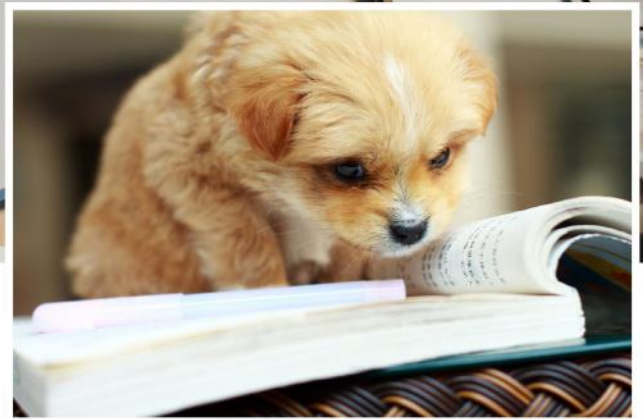
Benefits of Feedback

Naturally, after spending months or years writing and honing our book, it can be confronting to step out of the writer's closet and lay our souls bare by putting it before someone else. However, we overcome that psychological hurdle because we want to know that our stories are engaging and interesting; that we've got our message across; and that we don't make boo-boos that leave us with red faces. Positive feedback, coupled with constructive critique, helps us add polish to our writing and improve our craft, increasing the likelihood of positive reviews when the work is published.

Seeking the Right Feedback

It's important to seek feedback from a professional or, at the very least, from someone who reads extensively in our genre and who has our best interests at heart. That doesn't mean stroking our ego; it means that the person is willing and able to provide an intentional, honest opinion.

On the contrary, what happens if we put our book draft in front of the wrong person? Someone who has no credentials or experience in writing critique, and who doesn't understand what's at stake? Then we risk receiving, at best, noncommittal platitudes that, while well-intentioned, are unhelpful, and at worst, harsh judgment from unqualified individuals. This can smash our self-confidence and, in the worst case, may stop us from ever writing again.



Seeking Feedback at the Right Time

As important as seeking the right type of feedback – from qualified individuals – is seeking it at the right time. If we present an unfinished draft to an unqualified person who doesn't understand what's at stake – our fragile ego! – we are doing ourselves a disservice.

I get why some writers do it. We're proud of our writing attempts. We've put a lot of heart and soul into the book so far. We're on the way to becoming an author! We haven't finished the book, but on a certain day, we find ourselves on a writing high, and we just want someone to tell us that it's as good as we think it is. So, we gather our courage and send it off into cyberspace to a friend or family member, or our latest squeeze, holding our breath but deep down, expecting a positive response.

Top Three Tips

Here are my recommendations when you are seeking feedback on your writing.

1. Resist the temptation to ask for an opinion before you've finished drafting your book. Wait until you've made it as perfect as you can.
2. Ask only qualified people. They will give you professional, considered feedback. If you ask friends or family, they'll generally give you opinions.
3. Ask more than one qualified person. If they all say the same thing about the same aspect of your writing, then seriously consider changing it.

With the right critique and our intentional response to it, the quality of our book improves, we become better at our craft, and we keep the egg off our faces!

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Living an Intuitive Life

How Trusting My Inner Voice Led Me to Speak with Pets

We all have intuition, that quiet inner knowing that nudges us toward the right decision, warns us when something feels “off,” or reminds us to pay attention. The challenge is that in our noisy, busy world, intuition is often dismissed as coincidence or imagination. But when we learn to trust it, life opens in extraordinary ways.

For me, intuition wasn’t just about deciding whether to take a new job or follow a hunch on a road trip. It became the foundation of my work, the doorway that led me to discover a gift I never imagined I’d be using professionally: talking with animals.

The Whisper That Changed Everything

Before I became a pet psychic, I worked as a medium giving readings for people who had lost loved ones. I was already familiar with subtle impressions and words from the spirit world. But there was a whisper in my mind: “If you can hear people in spirit, maybe you can hear animals too.”

I decided to trust that whisper. And almost immediately, the world of animals opened to me in ways I never expected.

A Story of Intuition in Action

One of my most touching experiences came during a reading with a sweet dog named Bella. At first, Bella hesitated to open up. Some pets need reassurance before they feel safe to share. I trusted my sense that she simply needed encouragement, so I let her know she could trust me. Once she felt that, her personality shone through.

Bella’s first message was clear: she needed more exercise. She also expressed deep gratitude for the love she felt from her family. But then she revealed something her family hadn’t realized.

When her owner left her at home by herself, she wasn’t upset from separation anxiety. She was unsettled by the lack of routine in her life. She never knew who would pick her up or when. Combined with not getting enough exercise, Bella carried a quiet sadness. What looked like “acting out” was really her way of saying, “Please give me consistency and help me feel secure.”

Had I ignored my inner knowing, I might have missed the chance to bring this clarity. By trusting subtle impressions, Bella’s voice was heard, and her family gained both practical insight and emotional comfort. That’s what intuition is about: listening, trusting, and allowing the unseen to guide us toward deeper connection.

What It Means to Live an Intuitive Life

That reading taught me a lesson I now live by: intuition connects us to truth in a way logic alone cannot. Living an intuitive life doesn’t mean abandoning reason. It means balance. Alongside logic and planning, we also have an inner compass designed to guide us toward alignment and healing.

When we listen to our intuition, we:

- **Make better decisions.**
- **Feel more connected because we notice subtle cues.**
- **Experience peace because we trust ourselves instead of second-guessing.**

For me, intuition uncovered my calling as a pet psychic. For you, it may be knowing when to say no, choosing the right relationship, or following a dream you’ve been afraid to pursue.

How to Bring Intuition into Daily Life

Here are a few ways to practice:

1. Notice the First Impression

Ask: “What do I feel in the first four seconds?”

Intuition speaks first; logic comes later.

2. Pay Attention to Your Body

Notice how choices make you feel. Light and open? Or tense and heavy?

3. Create Quiet

Spend five minutes each morning in stillness. Ask, “What do I need to know today?” and listen.

4. Trust Small Hunches

Start with little choices: which route to take, which meal to order, whether to call a friend who comes to mind.

The Gift of Trust

I didn’t become a pet psychic because I had all the answers. I trusted a whisper. That nudge led me to the most fulfilling work of my life: giving animals a voice.

Living intuitively isn’t about being mystical. It’s about remembering you already have guidance within you and being brave enough to follow it.

So, I’ll ask you: what could change in your life if you gave your inner voice the chance to speak?

By Brandi Van

Brandi Van is a professional pet psychic. She helps people connect deeply with their pets, whether they’re alive or in Spirit.

Learn more at

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Supporting Emotional Wellbeing in 6-10 year olds

Between the ages of six and ten, children's emotional world becomes more intense and complex. There is significant growth at this age, but also many emotional ups and downs that parents may not feel prepared for. Worries about school, frustration which is brought home, and struggles with change are all examples of common challenges. This article provides an overview of what emotional development looks like at this age and how, as parents, you can support your child in addressing common challenges that they have yet to understand and manage on their own.

What Emotional Development looks like at ages 6-10
Children aged 6-10 go through profound stages of emotional development. Here are some key aspects of their development at this age:

- Children develop a stronger sense of self and an increase in independence.
- Children begin to understand that others have thoughts and feelings which may differ from their own.
- Empathy emerges, and children begin to focus on concepts like fairness and justice.
- Emotional vocabulary expands, but they can still struggle with ways to express or manage big feelings.
- A sense of social acceptance and peer relationships start to matter more, which brings a sense of pressure to the child.

Common Challenges: Anxiety, Transitions, and Big Feelings

Many children of this age can struggle with anxiety, with signs of anxiety commonly first being shown in this age group. Worries might include concerns about friendships, being away from home on sleepovers or school trips, and worrying about their own or others' safety and academic performance. Commonly, children find it difficult to express their worries, and instead report physical symptoms of anxiety, including stomach aches, irritability or stopping activities they once enjoyed.

Transitions are also a common challenge for children of this age group. Change, even positive ones, can lead to children feeling unsettled. For example, the start of a new school year, changes in living arrangements, moving house or even going away for the summer can be tricky.

Emotional outbursts are also very common for these children, particularly at the end of the day when your child returns from school. This is not them being 'difficult', but actually very common and known as 'restraint collapse'. Many children mask or hold in their feelings at school, and then come home to their secure base (you!) and release their feelings. Although this can be tough, understanding why this happens can help parents respond with empathy.

How Parents Can Help: Practical Strategies

As parents, you play a vital role in helping children build the tools they need to understand and manage their feelings. Here are effective, yet simple ways to support your child's emotional development at this stage:

1. Name and Validate Emotions: Help your child recognise and label what they're feeling: "You

seem disappointed—it's hard when things don't go the way we hoped." Naming emotions helps reduce their intensity and builds self-awareness.

2. Model Emotional Regulation: Children learn by watching. Talk about your own emotions in a calm, age-appropriate way: "I'm feeling a bit overwhelmed, so I'm going to take a few deep breaths." This shows them that emotions are normal and manageable.

3. Create Routines and Predictability: Consistency gives children a sense of safety. Predictable routines—especially around mornings, bedtimes, and transitions—help reduce anxiety and emotional overwhelm.

4. Support Transitions with Preparation: Talk through upcoming changes using storybooks, drawing, or role play. Give your child time to ask questions and express how they feel.

5. Offer Calming Tools: Breathing exercises, movement breaks, sensory play, or having a calm-down corner can help children self-soothe when feelings get big.

6. Focus on Connection, Not Perfection: Children need to feel seen, heard, and loved—especially when they're struggling. A calm presence and a listening ear go further than trying to 'fix' every feeling.

Seeking Support and Final Thoughts

If your child's anxiety or emotional struggles are affecting their sleep, eating, school attendance, friendships, or day-to-day life, it may be time to seek professional help. Start by speaking with your child's teacher, GP, or a qualified child therapist (contact details for me below). Early intervention can make a lasting difference.

Emotional development is a journey. Your calm presence, gentle guidance, and willingness to listen matter more than being the 'perfect' parent (if there is such a thing!). Be kind to yourself—supporting your child's emotional wellbeing starts with compassion for both of you.

By Luisa Harris

Counsellor & Psychotherapist for Children, Adolescents and Families MBACP





Knowing yourself as the source of everything is experiencing the life you've always dreamed of by Eva-Maria Prell

The undeniable truth about the real you and how being aware of it reveals everything you desire

Are you ready to leave behind the illusion of being a human? This may sound delusional and scary. But who thinks that? It's the character you're believing in. Who you truly are is prior to thoughts, beliefs and an illusory identity. So take a deep breath and 1-2-3 jump!

I thought I'd understood what reality creation means, but I wasn't seeing the results I wanted or experiencing what I wanted. I was at a point where I was about to give up, thinking manifestation is a scam.

I had tried all the techniques and was exhausted from doing everything to make it work. Thinking the right thoughts, trying to get the conditions right.

And then one day, after a challenging experience, it hit me like a wall! I realized I'd entered the finish line of the human me that thinks it gets everything through willpower.

Just do it! Take massive action! Work hard! That's what we're taught to DO. And the unconscious part of me believed in "the doing" as a means to an end to fulfill its desires. To feel safe in unwanted circumstances while hustling to earn a living.

But guess what - that's what kept me thinking I'm stuck! Self-optimization held me back from the life I had always dreamed of. It was never about that. This human character is an illusion, emerging from a bundle of beliefs that are changing in every moment.

Being unconscious about the character was set up in me as a state of consciousness by default to get to know myself. Making up stories for various experiences. It's not the human part that's bringing in my desires. It's me, the formless and changeless awareness behind it all, which nature it is to be aware of something.

Through the illusion of a character, PhD Donald D. Hoffmann calls it the "interface" or the "headset", consciousness can experience itself from various unique viewpoints, aka "conscious agents", he says, and I am one of them.

It can get to know all the blueprints, aka stories, implemented in the content of my own consciousness. To know myself as source of love, abundance, health...

That's what fulfillment means - I'm already given everything I need. I'm the supply of my life. I never have to worry about earning a living. Everything will always be provided while I'm flowing with it.

It's the character that interprets my desire to expand as something is missing. But my urge to experience something new through my human vessel is natural. That's why I have this illusory body, aka interface.

In dropping the illusion of a character and identifying completely as the source, I leave behind all effort and struggle in made-up circumstances. I finally make space for my desires to show up. I remember again and again that I already am everything that I want and need. I'm aware of myself as fulfillment and walk through my life in that knowing.

Through the space I allow in doing less, following my true nature as beingness, I become aware of everything. My desires are revealing themselves to me because I'm looking through "my lenses as source". People suddenly show up, money flows from unexpected places, and job offers are presented. I experience it more and more, and it's amazing! I even got approved for a TV Show.

Nothing is outside of me. All comes from my consciousness and my awareness of being the source. I naturally and literally project out my whole life in space and time.

This experience is conceived through the higher mind and perceived with the lower mind. All created through my current focus and happening 24/7. Your dream life is always there. If you cannot see it, then you're still looking through the lenses of a character, the seeker who has not and is not yet.

But this can end right now. You can remember yourself as the source and see through this illusory wall. Everything waits on you. Embrace your true nature and let the limitlessness you are reveal itself to you.



Hidden in Plain Sight

Understanding Who Abuses and How to Protect Your Child



In our last column, we explored the lasting impact of childhood sexual abuse and emphasized **WHY** prevention is vital to our children's safety and well-being. Today, we continue with an equally urgent discussion: who is most at risk of abuse, who is likely to perpetrate it, and how to recognize a potential predator.

WHO IS MOST AT RISK?

Child sexual abuse crosses all boundaries—race, religion, socioeconomic status, education level, and culture. No child is immune. However, emotionally vulnerable children are particularly at risk. Abusers often seek out children who are lonely, insecure, or struggling emotionally. They may present themselves as caring confidants or “rescuers,” exploiting the child's emotional needs to drive a wedge between the child and their caregivers. This manipulation is a classic grooming tactic, designed to create secrecy, dependency, and isolation.¹

WHO ABUSES?

The heartbreaking truth is that in most cases, the abuser is not a stranger hiding in the shadows—it's someone the child knows, loves, and trusts, such as a family member, teacher, coach, clergy member, or close family friend. In fact, 90% of sexually abused children know and trust their abuser.¹

Grooming doesn't just target the child; it targets the family and the community. Abusers are often charming, helpful, and seemingly trustworthy. They might volunteer, babysit, or go out of their way to help families—anything to gain access to children while lowering adults' defences. The manipulation is deliberate and calculated.

HOW TO SPOT A POTENTIAL PREDATOR

If someone has a history of abusing children, they should never be allowed near children again—period. Abuse can and does happen anywhere, including your own home, even in the presence of others. A predator will exploit any opportunity.

Here are a few of the many key red flags to be aware of: Inappropriate focus on children:

Be cautious of adults who pay excessive attention to children who aren't their own. Watch for unusual involvement, such as brushing hair, tying shoes, or physical closeness that doesn't seem appropriate.²

Your discomfort is a signal:

If an adult's behavior around children makes you feel uneasy or “off,” don't dismiss that instinct. You don't need proof to set a boundary. Prevention is about reducing risk, not waiting for confirmation.²

Inappropriate behavior or exposure:

Adults who expose themselves in front of children—even if disguised as a joke at a party—or show pornography or discuss sexual topics in front of children, should not be trusted. Even seemingly benign comments about a child's body or development are red flags.²

Over-identifying with children:

Adults who have no adult friends or interests and who prefer spending time with children over peers should raise concerns, including adults who dress like teens or use youth-oriented language to “fit in.”²

Using “kid bait” to attract attention:

Be cautious of childless adults who create unusually child, focused environments, such as trampolines, playsets, or toys meant to attract children into their space.²

Overly emotional or reactive:

Watch for adults who seem inappropriately hurt or jealous if a child shows attention to others. Excessive emotional dependence on a child is a warning sign.²

Seeking One-on-One Time with Children:

Be cautious of adults who consistently seek alone time with a child, especially in settings that lack visibility or supervision—like bedrooms, cars, or secluded areas. Predators often use privacy as a shield to build trust, deepen secrecy, and ultimately exploit the child.

The bottom line: trust your instincts. If something feels wrong, protect your child first and ask questions later. You don't owe anyone the benefit of the doubt when it comes to your child's safety. I encourage you to visit the Safe Kids Thrive link for the complete list of red flags.

Protecting our children starts with awareness, vigilance, and the courage to act on our instincts. While predators often hide in plain sight, knowing the warning signs can empower you to set firm boundaries and reduce risk.

No concern is too small when your child's safety is at stake. In our final column, we'll explore when to be alert that something may have happened, where actual prevention begins, and outline a clear, proactive plan to help safeguard your family.

By Yvonne Sandomir

Reference List:

1. Lauren's Kids <https://laurenskids.org/about/the-issue-of-child-sexual-abuse>
2. Safe Kids Thrive <https://safekidsthive.org/the-report/introduction/other-warning-signs/>



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.

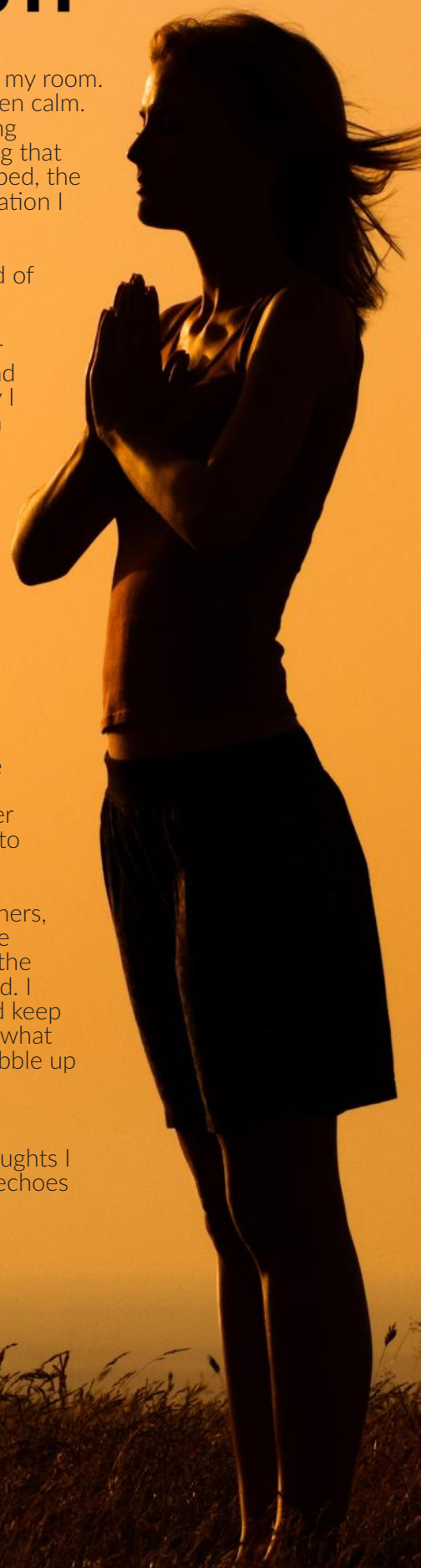
It was the start of a shift that wasn't prompted by an outside force: no career change, no loss, no major life event. This shift came from within, a gradual and steady deconstruction of everything I believed. It made me question the way I saw the world. The notion of right and wrong, success and failure,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

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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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ROOTED IN CONNECTION

How Love Languages Can Help Modern Families Thrive

Every family is beautifully unique, and that's something worth celebrating. Yet, in my work as a coach, I've seen a growing number of families struggling to stay connected. The demands of work, evolving family structures, and the constant presence of social media are just a few of the challenges making it harder for families to stay emotionally close.

What we must remember is this: we all connect differently. And not only is that okay, it's also essential. Recognising and embracing these differences is a decisive step toward creating inclusive, resilient, happier, thriving families.

At the heart of strong family units are safe, loving, and supportive connections. These relationships form the foundation for healthy development. For families touched by trauma, such bonds can be instrumental in helping to regulate the nervous system and begin the healing process.

One powerful framework that can help families connect more meaningfully is Dr. Gary Chapman's Five Love Languages, developed through his work with couples seeking to understand and support one another better. These five languages are:

1. *Physical Touch*
2. *Words of Affirmation*
3. *Quality Time*
4. *Receiving Gifts*
5. *Acts of Service*

Whether your family is biological, blended, chosen, or otherwise, understanding and applying these love languages can strengthen your connections. No family is perfect, but by leading with authenticity and empathy, we can create relationships that are both meaningful and lasting.

The Science Behind Connection

Research consistently shows that human connection is vital to resilience and wellbeing—especially within the family. Secure attachment in early relationships provides the emotional safety necessary for the healthy development of the prefrontal cortex (the part of the brain responsible for emotional regulation, decision-making, and executive function).

Children raised in nurturing environments learn to co-regulate with caregivers, which in turn supports the development of independent emotional regulation over time. In this way, strong family bonds aren't just nice to have; they're biologically essential.

When we feel connected, our bodies release a powerful blend of neurochemicals, including oxytocin, serotonin, dopamine, and endorphins, that foster trust, bonding, and a sense of safety. At the same time, stress hormones like cortisol decrease, supporting nervous system regulation, lowering blood pressure, and reducing inflammation, among other physiological changes. Simply put - connection heals!

Using Love Languages in Everyday Life

Incorporating the love languages into your family doesn't require dramatic changes. Small, thoughtful actions rooted in awareness can have a significant impact.

Here's how to begin:

1. Acknowledge the desire for deeper connection.

Start by consciously deciding you want to enhance your family relationships.

2. Observe what's happening at home.

Take a step back and notice patterns. Who do you connect with most easily? Who feels harder to reach? This awareness can reveal where attention is needed.

3. Understand your own love language.

How do you prefer to give and receive love? Becoming aware of your own tendencies is the first step to recognising others.

4. Be a love-language detective.

Watch how your family members show love. A teenager might roll their eyes at a hug but place their feet on your lap during a movie, that's still a connection. A partner might deeply appreciate a shared morning tea or sitting down to share a new Netflix series with you.

5. Meet people where they are.

Consider age, communication styles, ability levels, and interests. For instance, a teen might respond more to a funny TikTok than to a long conversation.

Start Small, Start Now

Using love languages in your family is a practical, evidence-based way to strengthen emotional bonds at any age. With patience, curiosity, and commitment, you can foster a home where every member feels seen, valued, and loved.

Why not give it a go? You might find investing some time in love languages might be the game-changer your family needed.

By Cindy White

Somatic Trauma Informed Coach



The Hidden Cost

How Holding Onto Unforgiveness Affects Your Health

Discover the surprising ways unforgiveness impacts your body and how Mind Detox can help you find true healing and peace.

We often hear that forgiveness is important for our emotional well-being, but many don't realise how deeply unforgiveness can impact the body. Holding onto resentment, bitterness, or anger can quietly harm your physical health, keeping your nervous system on constant alert and draining your energy day after day.

When you hold onto unforgiveness, your body stays stuck in a stress response, releasing hormones like cortisol and adrenaline that are meant for short-term emergencies, not for carrying long-term grudges. Over time, this chronic stress can lead to high blood pressure, tension headaches, and muscle pain. Many people also experience digestive issues, poor sleep, and a weakened immune system, making them more vulnerable to illness.

Emotional pain that is never released often finds its way into the body. Tight shoulders, clenched jaws, or a heavy chest can reflect the emotional burdens we carry. Even when we try to distract ourselves or push down our feelings, our bodies remember, and the stress remains just beneath the surface.

Research has shown that forgiveness can lead to measurable improvements in health. Studies have found that individuals who actively practice forgiveness experience lower blood pressure and heart rates, sleep better, and report feeling more energetic and vital. Forgiveness isn't about excusing hurtful behaviour or pretending nothing happened. It is about freeing yourself from the ongoing damage of holding on.

You may think that holding onto anger protects you from future hurt, but it often keeps you connected to the pain of the past. Each time you replay what happened, your mind and body react as if it is happening again, reactivating stress and emotional wounds. Unforgiveness punishes you, stealing your peace and limiting your ability to live fully in the present.

Forgiveness is a process, not a one-time decision. It doesn't mean you have to forget or allow harmful behaviour to continue. It means you are choosing to let go of the emotional hold the situation has on you, reclaiming your energy, health, and peace of mind.

How Mind Detox Supports Forgiveness and Healing

This is where Mind Detox can be a powerful ally. Mind Detox is a therapeutic process that helps identify and clear the root causes of unresolved emotional issues that often hide beneath unforgiveness. Sometimes, we are not even aware of the hidden beliefs we formed during hurtful events, such as "I'm not safe" or "I'm not good enough," which keep us stuck in cycles of pain. Through Mind Detox, you can gently explore these beliefs and dissolve the emotional charge connected to the original hurt, allowing you to forgive with greater ease and authenticity.

By addressing the root cause rather than just the surface emotion. You don't have to carry the weight of past hurts forever. You can choose to release them, creating space for healing, peace, and better health.

Forgiveness takes courage, and it often requires the support of others. I work closely with my clients to help them navigate the layers of their emotions and gently release what no longer serves them. Together, we uncover hidden beliefs and clear the emotional blocks that keep unforgiveness alive. This compassionate process allows for more profound healing and greater freedom.

Remember, forgiveness is not about denying the truth of what happened. It is about deciding that your health and peace are more important than holding onto pain.

In a world that often tells us to "move on" without addressing what hurt us, forgiveness invites us to move forward with intention and freedom. Your body deserves to rest. Your heart deserves to heal. And you deserve to live your life unburdened by the silent poison of unforgiveness.

By Nikki Hillhouse

Nikki Hillhouse is a Therapeutic Coach, Meditation Teacher, Bestselling Author, and Speaker who helps people heal from trauma, reconnect with their true selves, and live with clarity and meaning. Now based in the Turkish countryside, she provides heart-led online coaching and leads restorative wellness retreats.

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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.

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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.





GRIEF UNINVITED

I contemplated this article ahead of time. I had already written about bereavements that were extremely close to me, and I didn't feel like I was 'close enough' to the others to write about them. However, the truth is, you don't need to be extremely close to someone for their death to touch you and leave a lasting impact, for better or for worse.

A couple of months ago, I attended a wellness event where I met someone whose newsletter I was already subscribed to. I recognised them because they had a picture of themselves on it. I spoke to them, and they were so warm and inviting. I shared that I had similar interests and that I was also working in the holistic field, like them.

Weeks later, this person died in an accident.

Their death touched me in more ways than I could make sense of. I felt low for weeks afterwards. I spoke to some family and friends about it briefly; however, I wouldn't say I fully grieved this person's death. I almost felt like I didn't deserve to, because I wasn't 'close to them'. However, I was physically close to them, sitting right next to them during one of the talks at the event we attended. Yet when we parted ways, we were granted completely different destinies; not only did they die, but the day they did, I was out singing and dancing the night away at a Beyoncé concert. It was a bittersweet experience, a feeling I can't describe in words which still lingers within.

Fast forward several weeks, and a relative of mine died unexpectedly, and I couldn't stop recalling his face, and I couldn't quite process the disbelief that he had gone, leaving behind his legacy. I threw myself into my work and my extracurricular activities. I thought I was fine, until a friend of mine called and asked me, 'Are you okay?'

Instead of my automatic response, which is usually 'I'm good' without actually thinking about it, I paused this time. And that pause told me everything. I was not okay. I was a 'high-functioning grieving person'; by that, I mean, I was being dragged down by the weight of my grief and just pulling myself through life. Perhaps you can relate?

But the truth is, my grief started years ago, with an unexpected life-changing event I went through. You see, grief is not reserved for death. Grief also extends to other painful endings we experience. I wish I could say I was completely through the other side, 4 years down the line, but the truth is I'm not. Some days, I'm still in the thick of it; others, it's like it never happened. Grief is a silent attacker; it creeps up on you most of the time when you least expect it.

The solution? There isn't one.

The closest one I can think of is to FEEL it, allow the emotions to pass through you. Name the emotion, yes, but don't make it mean anything about you, don't let it define you. Allow the feelings to flow through you like a river. And know that, like a dirty tap, once the dirt is finished filtering through, the clean water appears. In our case, happier emotions appear.

The trouble only starts when you say things like 'this is just who I am.' We may be conditioned to certain behaviours and beliefs; however, our emotions can change, and so can we. We may be left with an imprint of our grief; however, we can move through this, and life can change and be different for us.

By Kiran Sidhu

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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

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Supporting





Why Your Competitors May Be Your Best Collaboration Partners



When most business owners hear the word competitor, their instinct is to brace for battle. “Protect your ideas”, “guard your client list”, and “win new clients” at any cost. Let’s flip the table on this and think another way: What if your competitor is actually your best collaborator? What if the person a few miles away, offering nearly the same products or services, could be the key to doubling your reach, reinforcing your credibility, and scaling your impact?

At Cardinal Business Advisors, our advisory team is a living example of collaboration over competition. I specialize in uncovering hidden profit and building systems; Celeste DeCamps helps leaders and teams step into confidence and presence; and Patrycja Marocola provides the financial clarity owners need to stay in control of their growth. Alone, each of us does good work. Together, as a collaborative team, we deliver transformational results.

Here’s why this works—and how you can apply the same approach.

How Competitors Become Collaborators

1. Fill the Gaps You Can’t

No one can be everything to everyone. And you shouldn’t lose a client because you cannot provide a specific service or product. Your competitor might be strong where you aren’t. Partnering can deliver a more complete solution. For example, I may help a restaurant identify \$50,000 in hidden profit, but if their staff isn’t trained in customer experience, those gains won’t stick. That’s where Celeste comes in. Together, we ensure that the company’s mission and vision are reflected by everyone on staff and in their marketing efforts.

2. Be Cautious When Considering the Right Partners

Not every competitor will make a good collaborator. Look for:

- Complementary Skills: Do they bring expertise that enhances—not duplicates—yours?
- Shared Values: Do they put the client’s success above ego?
- Proven Results: Have they demonstrated consistency and credibility in their field?

When these elements align, you’re no longer working against one another — you’re creating a powerhouse together.

3. Expand Your Market Without More Hustle

Collaboration allows you to extend your reach and offerings without spreading yourself too thin. When Patrycja and I partner, clients don’t just get profit strategies—they get financial systems that sustain long-term growth. By sharing the client relationship, we multiply results without multiplying our stress or burning ourselves out.

4. Protecting the Partnership

Collaboration without structure is a recipe for disaster. Legal agreements for all partners are non-negotiable. They should detail:

- Who owns the client relationship?
- How revenue is shared.
- How decisions will be made.

It’s not about not trusting someone — it is about clarity, which keeps the partnership strong.

5. Accountability to the Whole

Finally, collaboration works when all parties are accountable not just to the client, but to the partnership itself. We hold each other to deadlines, standards, and agreed-upon roles. When one of us signs a client, we all show up. That accountability ensures the client experience is seamless, and it protects the reputation of everyone involved.

Change your mind – Change your business.

Collaboration isn’t just smart business—it’s a mindset shift. It’s moving from scarcity to abundance, from guarding turf to creating opportunities. You’re not alone anymore. Competitors can become allies when you see them as partners, not threats - delivering a level of excellence you might not achieve alone. And in today’s business climate, that’s not just a nice idea. It’s a competitive advantage you can’t afford to ignore.

By Jane Parmel

Business Development & Profit Acceleration Strategist

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From Duckling to Swan

Embracing Menopause for a Healthier, Happier Future

Let's face it — menopause doesn't always feel magical. Hot flushes, mood swings, brain fog... it can feel like your body has taken on a life of its own. But what if we flipped the script? What if, like the ugly duckling who grew into a beautiful swan, menopause was just the beginning of your transformation?

Now is the perfect time to embrace this change by shifting your focus to your future health. Mental well-being, hypertension, and digestive health are all key players during menopause. And while the symptoms may not be glamorous, they're a wake-up call: it's time to put you first.

Why is menopause a game-changer?

As oestrogen levels dip, your body shifts — blood pressure might rise, your gut might rebel, and sleep can become elusive. But these changes aren't the enemy. They're your body's way of saying, "Hey, let's take better care of me now so I can keep thriving later."

Here's how to make the rest of your life the best of your life:

Eat like you love yourself

Swap the processed stuff for whole foods, leafy greens, and omega-3s. Your heart, gut, and hormones will thank you — and so will your energy levels.

Stress less, live more

Take 10 minutes a day to breathe deeply, stretch, or just be. Stress exacerbates everything — from your sleep and mood to your blood pressure. Give yourself permission to slow down.

Move your body, move your mood

You don't need a gym membership — a brisk walk or a dance in the kitchen works wonders. Movement boosts happy hormones and keeps your metabolism humming.

Sleep like it's your superpower

Create a calming bedtime routine, ditch the screens, and embrace magnesium-rich snacks like almonds or avocados.

Love your gut

Feed it with fibre, probiotics, and kindness. A healthy gut helps balance hormones and even lifts your mood.

Menopause isn't the end — it's your metamorphosis. So spread those wings. You're not the duckling anymore. You're the swan. And the best is yet to come.

By Jeanette Forder

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CALM

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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Joe Cooper
FOUNDATION
giving local kids a chance

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
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Let's Get Curious - Part 4

"Living Authentically, Breathing Freely"

Welcome back to the final part of this series! We've explored the power of letting go, cultivated a garden of self-discovery, and discovered strength through stillness. As we wrap up the series, there is one more piece that is incredibly important: living authentically.

How can we align with our true selves and breathe more freely in life? This piece offers inspiration to fully embody who you are, unapologetically and with deep intention. What would life feel like if you showed up as your "most authentic self every day" — unapologetic, aligned, and free? Authentic living isn't just a goal; it's a practice of courageously choosing yourself, no matter the expectations of the world.

Living authentically means aligning with who you truly are rather than with who the world expects you to be. It's about stepping into your truth and breathing freely without the weight of masks or expectations.

Authenticity requires self-awareness.

For self-awareness to grow, some degree of curiosity is beneficial. Reflecting on questions such as "What matters most to me right now?" and "What are my core values?". These questions act as a compass, guiding your decisions and helping you set boundaries that honour your true self. Perhaps: "What do I stand for?" and "What lights me up?" These answers act as your compass, guiding decisions and setting boundaries.

Choose one area of your life: your work, relationships, or self-care, and ask if it reflects your true self. If not, what small change could you make? Perhaps it's saying no to something that drains you or pursuing a passion you've put on hold. Authenticity isn't a destination; it's a journey. With each step, you'll feel lighter, more empowered, and aligned with your purpose. What's one thing you can do today to live more authentically?

Own your story and celebrate who you are. You are enough—just as you are.

You got this! Visit www.talkbreathelive.com to access a free mindfulness activity and begin your journey to rediscovering strength through stillness. This article is the fourth of the four-part series "Let's Get Curious."

By Darlene Wierski-Devoe
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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.

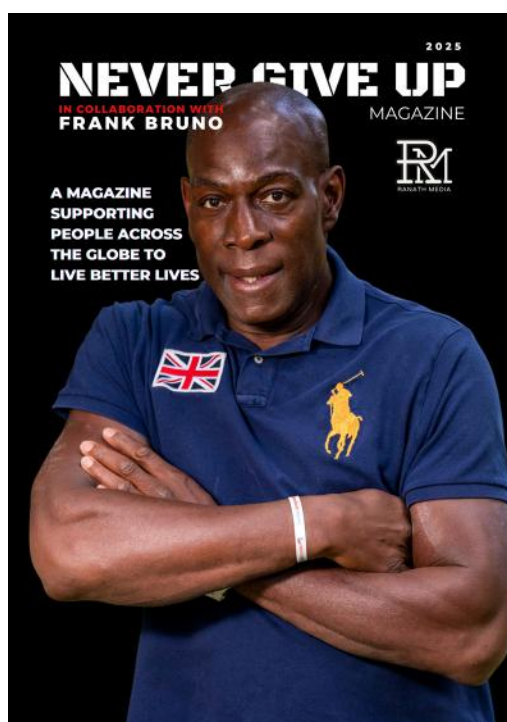
Ultimately, sleep should be seen as an ally, something that supports you rather than another task on the to-do list. When you strike a healthy balance, sleep fuels clarity, energy, and resilience. And with that, your best days naturally begin with your best nights.

Because sleep is not a luxury.

By Sam Sadighi
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The mind is a powerful tool that you can use to accomplish anything you desire in life, especially when it comes to manifesting your goals. However, it's important to recognise that it's not just about the mind alone. Many parts of you operate like mechanisms within the body, and they are all interconnected. If one part fails, it places pressure on the others to help kick-start the system. Sometimes, when the mind lacks the necessary energy, you can rely on the body to step in and reboot the entire system.

We are made of energy; energy cannot be created or destroyed, only stored and transferred. This energy exists both within us and around us. Properly using these energies is essential for your mental health and well-being, especially in today's challenging times.

An imbalance in your energies can alter your state of mind and perception of reality, which then affects your body, spirit, and soul. This imbalance can lead to issues like depression, addiction, anxiety, and a lack of motivation for activities you once enjoyed, trapping you in repetitive cycles of negative thoughts and behaviours for months or even years.

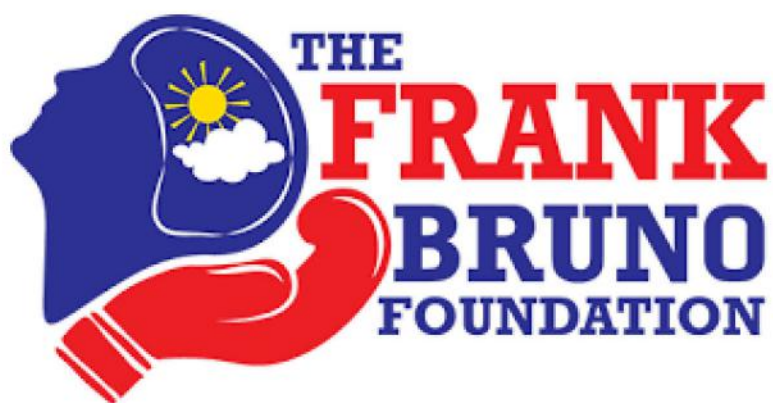
So, how can we break this cycle? Starting with small changes can be a good approach to avoid feeling overwhelmed. For instance, instead of waking up and reaching for that cup of tea, consider jumping straight into a cool shower. A cold shower is even better, but do what feels right for you. Adding some salt to the shower before you step in can help cleanse any impurities that may have accumulated during the night. Visualise your mind, body, spirit, and soul being cleansed and purified, releasing negativity down the drain—negativity that no longer serves you. By starting your day fresh and open to clarity, you set yourself up for a positive path forward. Remember, if you change everything within you, everything around you changes for the better.



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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 or male? 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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