

EXPERT PROFILE

Summer 2026

MAGAZINE

Celebrating
**GLOBAL
SUPER
MIND**
2026 Winners

Inside this issue

*Health & Wellbeing
Business & Leadership
Mindset & Performance
Personal Development
Relationships*

Success doesn't have to change who you are.

SIMON RIMMER
The Normal One

REAL STORIES | REAL EXPERTISE | REAL IMPACT



Expert Profile Magazine is now available to read on PressReader!

Read full issues of Expert Profile Magazine and thousands of other magazines with the PressReader app.

Download the PressReader app and enjoy!



Editors Note



As we enjoy the summer months, it's hard to believe just how much has already happened this year. It has been an amazing start to the year for all of us at Ranath Media.

We've introduced new titles, started exciting new collaborations and welcomed some fantastic people into what continues to be a growing community. There has been so much happening behind the scenes, and it's been great to see many of the ideas and conversations we've been having begin to come to life.

One of the things I've always loved about what we do is the people we get to work with. Everyone has their own story, their own area of expertise and their own reasons for doing what they do. Over time, many of those relationships have grown into something much bigger than simply appearing in a magazine. We've got to know the people behind the businesses, the expertise and the success, and that has always been an important part of what Expert Profile is about.

At this time of year, we also have the opportunity to celebrate our Global Supermind Award winners. These are individuals we are incredibly proud to be working with and people who continue to stand out in their own fields and industries. Each of them has achieved something very different, and each brings their own knowledge, experience and personality to what they do. Individually, they are doing some

incredible work. But what I particularly enjoy is seeing how well everyone complements one another as part of the wider Ranath Media family.

We work with people from so many different backgrounds and industries, and yet there are often far more connections between them than you might initially imagine. Over the years, we've seen conversations begin, introductions made and relationships develop simply because people have found themselves connected through what we do.

For me, that's a big part of what makes this so special.

Expert Profile has always been about the individual. It's about giving people the opportunity to tell their story, share their knowledge and be recognised for the work they do. But as Ranath Media has grown, it has also become about bringing those individuals together and seeing what can happen when great people are connected with other great people. So, in this issue, I'm particularly proud to celebrate our Global Supermind Award winners and to recognise the contribution each of them continues to make. There is still plenty more to come as we move through the rest of the year, with new publications, new collaborations and some exciting plans ahead.

I hope you enjoy this latest issue of Expert Profile and, as always, enjoy getting to know some of the incredible people we are very fortunate to work with.

SPECIAL FEATURE - PAGE 14

Speaking of amazing people, I'm delighted that our cover feature for this issue is the brilliant Simon Rimmer. Simon is, of course, someone many of us know as a hugely successful TV presenter, chef and entrepreneur, but what really stood out to me was the person behind all of that success.

He is incredibly genuine, down-to-earth and someone who truly wants to make a difference and help others. It was a real pleasure to have the opportunity to speak with Simon and to discover more about his journey, his experiences and the person behind the familiar face we have come to know over the years. I'm incredibly proud to have him on the cover of this issue.



Published by Ranath Media

All rights reserved, this magazine cannot be reproduced, copied or printed without the express permission and authority from the publisher.

DISCLAIMER

Expert Profile Magazine is a personal development magazine designed to support peoples businesses and personal needs. The magazine is provided with the understanding that the publisher is not offering any of the advice. And is not rendering any professional services. Whether you are reading about business, financial, mental health, physical health or lifestyle advice. The publication is for informational purposes only, it is up to the reader to do their due diligence when making choices and decisions from the advice of the contributors. The advice is solely from the contributors and Expert Profile Magazine accepts no responsibility directly or indirectly for any liability, loss or risk, which has incurred as a consequence from the material and writing. Readers of the magazine retain full responsibility for their actions, well-being, emotions, behaviour and the like.

CONGRATULATIONS

Global.Super Mind Winners

2026



CONGRATULATIONS

Global Super Mind Winners

2026



Our Established Experts





Rachel Pearson 18





Lidia Kuleshnyk 20





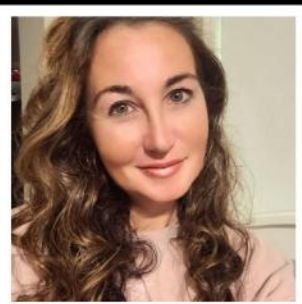
Andrea Huber 23





Beverly Johnson 24





Jacqueline Goncalves 26





Nadija Bajrami 29





Dr Margit G Muller 30





Lisa Andrews 31

Our Established Experts





Lorraine Chapman 33





Mary Scott 34





Celia Conrad 35





Penelope Layzell 36





Nicky Abell-Francis 37





Craig Alexander 38





Marsha Parcou 40





Helen Gullick 41

Our Established Experts

EXPERT PROFILE MAGAZINE

Expert Profile Magazine's
Established Experts



Anne Anyia 42

EXPERT PROFILE MAGAZINE

Expert Profile Magazine's
Established Experts



Laila Morcos Zissis 44

EXPERT PROFILE MAGAZINE

Expert Profile Magazine's
Established Experts



Dr Terry & Zita 46

EXPERT PROFILE MAGAZINE

Expert Profile Magazine's
Established Experts



Angela Haynes-Ranger 48

EXPERT PROFILE MAGAZINE

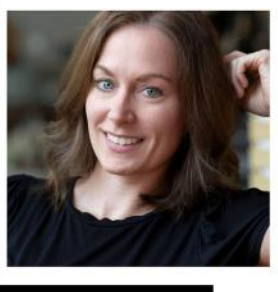
Expert Profile Magazine's
Established Experts



Amanda Whitehead 49

EXPERT PROFILE MAGAZINE

Expert Profile Magazine's
Established Experts



Emily Apell 50

EXPERT PROFILE MAGAZINE

Expert Profile Magazine's
Established Experts



Nikki Hillhouse 51

EXPERT PROFILE MAGAZINE

Expert Profile Magazine's
Established Experts



Angeline Mitchell 52

EXPERT PROFILE MAGAZINE

Expert Profile Magazine's
Established Experts



Sally Estlin 54

EXPERT PROFILE MAGAZINE

Expert Profile Magazine's
Established Experts



Darlene Wierski-Devoe 56

EXPERT PROFILE MAGAZINE

Expert Profile Magazine's
Established Experts



Taneka Johnson 57

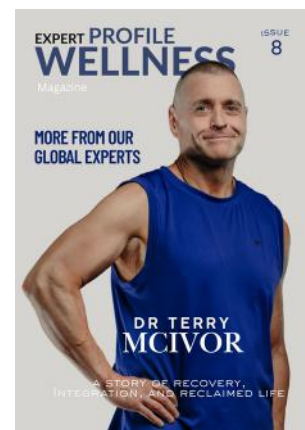
Invest in Wellbeing. Inspire Success.

**FREE
ACCESS**
THROUGH
PRESSREADER

Give your team, clients and community **FREE** access to premium personal development & self-help magazines.

Our magazines empower, educate and motivate – covering every aspect of wellbeing, mindset, success, health, relationships, business and more.

A simple way to support your people – and help them thrive.



PERFECT FOR:



EMPLOYEE
WELLBEING



WAITING
ROOMS



CLIENT &
VISITOR AREAS



HOTELS &
HOSPITALITY



HEALTH &
WELLNESS SPACES



BUSINESSES &
ORGANISATIONS



ENHANCE WELLBEING.
BOOST ENGAGEMENT.
CREATE A POSITIVE IMPACT.

Provide your people, clients
or visitors with the opportunity
to learn, grow and be inspired –
completely free.

GET FREE ACCESS TODAY

ranathmedia.com
info@ranathmedia.com

More from our Experts



Linda Wes 58



Jennie Sutton 60



Gena Bradshaw 85



Gayle Swaffield 64



Claire Chitty 66



Chantelle Dantu 68



Martine Garabette 69



Debbie Bryan 70



Sue Campanella 71



Alphedia Arara 72



Indigo Amy Packman 73



Kate Kleeberg 74

More from our Experts

EXPERT PROFILE
MAGAZINE



Letizia Mantovani 76

EXPERT PROFILE
MAGAZINE



Jodie Hayward 77

EXPERT PROFILE
MAGAZINE



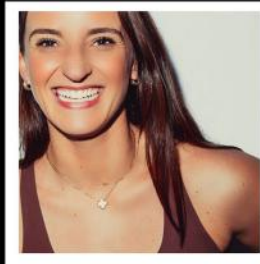
Pamela Redford 78

EXPERT PROFILE
MAGAZINE



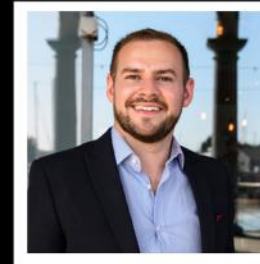
Ev Foster 79

EXPERT PROFILE
MAGAZINE



Lauren Kay 80

EXPERT PROFILE
MAGAZINE



Seb Brantigan 82

EXPERT PROFILE
MAGAZINE



Sam Rayford 84

EXPERT PROFILE
MAGAZINE



Georgina Goldstone 85

EXPERT PROFILE
MAGAZINE



Dr Rana AL-Falaki 86

EXPERT PROFILE
MAGAZINE



EMMA TOMMS 87

EXPERT PROFILE
MAGAZINE



Sam Sadighi 88

EXPERT PROFILE
MAGAZINE



Kimberly Trickery 89

CARDIFF BUSINESS COMMUNITY IS COMING TOGETHER AGAIN

Join business leaders, innovators,
entrepreneurs and decision-makers
at Cardiff's leading business
networking and exhibition event.

ORGANISED BY
B2B GROWTH HUB

To Be Officially Opened by
CLLR MICHAEL MICHAEL
LORD MAYOR OF CARDIFF

**2ND
YEAR
OF THE
SHOW**



THURSDAY
29 October 2026



CARDIFF CITY STADIUM,
CARDIFF CF11 8AZ, UK



10:00 AM–4:30 PM



A brilliant event that brings together the best of Cardiff's business community.
The connections we made there have been invaluable to our growth.

— PAST EXHIBITOR



100+
EXHIBITORS



2000+
**BUSINESS
VISITORS**



30+
**SPEAKERS &
WORKSHOPS**



**COUNTLESS
CONNECTIONS**

WHY THIS SHOW IS DIFFERENT

Now in its second successful year, Cardiff Business Growth Expo is more than just an exhibition – it's a dynamic platform designed to create real opportunities, spark collaboration and support the continued growth of businesses across South Wales and beyond.

WHO ATTENDS?



BUSINESS OWNERS



DIRECTORS & MANAGERS



START-UPS & ENTREPRENEURS



MARKETING PROFESSIONALS



TECH COMPANIES



INVESTORS & FINANCE



RETAIL & E-COMMERCE



HOSPITALITY & LEISURE



PROFESSIONAL SERVICES



AND MANY MORE

WHY EXHIBIT?



GENERATE LEADS

Meet targeted business decision-makers and generate high-quality leads face-to-face.



BUILD BRAND PRESENCE

Position your business in front of a highly engaged and relevant audience.



LAUNCH PRODUCTS & SERVICES

Showcase your latest innovations and get real feedback from potential clients.



NETWORK WITH INDUSTRY LEADERS

Create partnerships, collaborate and grow your business network.

Organiser's Note

WHY NATIONAL BUSINESS EVENTS MATTER MORE THAN EVER

In today's fast-paced digital world, real relationships still drive real results.

Our mission is simple – to bring people together, create opportunities and strengthen Wales business ecosystem.

When businesses support each other, everyone grows. Cardiff Business Growth Expo is our way of championing Wales talent, encouraging innovation and building a stronger, more connected future.

Nagendra Mishra

Show Director of B2B Growth Expo



EVENT HIGHLIGHTS



KEYNOTE SPEAKERS



NETWORKING SESSIONS



BUSINESS WORKSHOPS



AI & INNOVATION ZONE



START-UP SHOWCASE



EXHIBITOR MARKETPLACE



We've exhibited every year and the value just keeps getting better. The quality of visitors, the organisation and the connections are second to none!

— RETURNING EXHIBITOR

BUSINESSES RETURNING YEAR AFTER YEAR



AND MANY MORE...

SECURE YOUR TICKET BEFORE THEY SELL OUT!

Scan to Book Now!



VISIT OUR WEBSITE

www.cardiffbusinessexpo.com



EMAIL US

hello@b2bgrowthhub.com



CALL US

+44 (0)203 451 7166

The Normal One

There are some interviews where you come away thinking about the achievements. There are others where you come away thinking about the person.

After spending time with Simon Rimmer, it's the latter that stays with you. The chef, restaurateur and television presenter has enjoyed a career spanning more than three decades, yet throughout our conversation he repeatedly returns to the same themes: family, friendship, food and helping people.

The Restaurant That Started It All

When I ask Simon what moment changed the direction of his life, he doesn't hesitate. "Probably opening Green's in 1992. At the time, being vegetarian was more about what you couldn't eat rather than what you could eat." He explains that the aim was always to celebrate ingredients and show people what great vegetarian food could be. "The Guardian did a piece on us and that really became the springboard for everything that followed." Looking back, Simon sees that period as the moment everything changed.

"Being vegetarian was more about what you couldn't eat rather than what you could eat."



The Normal One

Ask Simon how he would describe himself away from the cameras and he laughs. "You know when Jürgen Klopp used to call himself the normal one? That's probably me." He talks warmly about family life and the importance of keeping things simple. "I'm very family-orientated. I like good food and I like being around the people I care about. If there was a fly on the wall watching my life, there probably wouldn't be much to see." It's a comment that says a lot about the man behind the television personality.

Why Food Still Matters

When asked what will never change about food, Simon answers immediately. "Excitement." He pauses before explaining further. "Whether it's something you've never had before or something you eat all the time, people still look forward to it. That first bite. Seeing people enjoy food like that is a fantastic feeling." For Simon, the emotional connection people have with food remains as powerful today as it has ever been.

Before Everyone Else Caught Up

Long before vegetarian dishes became mainstream, Simon believed attitudes would change. "We've got fantastic produce in this country and brilliant vegetables. For years they were treated as the thing that accompanied the meat. I always felt it should be the other way round." As healthier lifestyles became more important to consumers, the wider industry began moving in the same direction. "Today it's completely normal to see good vegetarian options everywhere, which is great to see."

The Reality Behind the Glamour

One of the biggest misconceptions about being a chef, Simon says, is that the profession is glamorous. "It's not glamorous. It's hard work." He laughs as he describes the reality of long hours and endless preparation. "People see the finished plate. They don't see all the work that goes into getting there." The same applies to television. "Live TV might look relaxed or unstructured at times, but there's a huge amount of planning behind it. That's what makes it work."

Twenty Years of Friendship

When the conversation turns to Tim Lovejoy, Simon smiles. "We're like an old married couple." After more than twenty years working together, the pair know each other exceptionally well. "We're a similar age, our kids are a similar age and we've shared a lot of the same experiences. At the end of the day, we're just two good mates who enjoy working together."



The Sunday Brunch

Rather than focusing on celebrity names, Simon talks about the atmosphere created by the programme. "People like Bob Mortimer, Jason Byrne and Gyles Brandreth have been brilliant, but what I really love is seeing people connect." He describes the show almost as a private members' club. "People come on, get talking and often end up becoming close friends. That's one of the lovely things about the show."

"People come on, get talking and often end up becoming close friends. That's one of the lovely things about the show."

Hospitality's Future

Simon acknowledges the challenges facing hospitality but remains optimistic. "The industry needs a more level playing field." He points to rising costs, VAT and wider economic pressures, but is equally passionate about the value hospitality brings. "People talk about hospitality as if it's unskilled. It isn't. You're dealing with people, solving problems and creating experiences. Those are real skills."

A Lesson Learned

Asked what advice he would give his younger self, Simon doesn't need long to think. "Be more confident." He admits there were times when he underestimated his own abilities. "Looking back, I could probably have pushed myself a bit more. Not because I wasn't capable, but because I didn't always realise I was."

Liverpool, Boxing and Life Beyond Work

When asked which Liverpool legends he would invite to dinner, Simon's choices are immediate: Jürgen Klopp, Bill Shankly and Fernando Torres. Away from football, he reveals another side to his personality. "I box three times a week. Proper boxing. I spar as well." He also talks about his love of nature and art, interests that provide balance away from the demands of work.



A Decent Bloke

As our conversation comes to an end, I ask Simon how he would most like to be remembered. His answered. "I'd like to be remembered as a decent bloke." He then shares a piece of advice passed down from his late father. "Anybody you work with, anybody you employ, anybody you connect with, try and give them something that helps them succeed."

For Simon, that philosophy has shaped both his life and career. And perhaps that's the real story here. Beyond the restaurants, television programmes and public profile is a man who values people above all else.

The advice his father gave him clearly became more than just words. It became a way of life. And judging by the man Simon Rimmer is today, I suspect his father would be immensely proud.....a decent bloke who has spent a lifetime helping others succeed.

*"Anybody you work with,
anybody you employ, anybody
you connect with, try and give
them something that helps
them succeed."*





Your Network Is Not a Numbers Game

The Principles Behind Relationships That Actually Build Businesses

By Rachel Pearson

Most advice about professional networking focuses on volume, visibility, and follow-up cadence. Rachel Pearson argues that this misses the point entirely and that the most commercially powerful relationships are built on a different set of principles altogether.

We have created a culture, particularly in online business, where the default is to ask for something first. Fast transactions. Immediate reciprocity. The assumption that if you give, you should see a return within the same news cycle. I understand where it comes from.

The economics of digital business reward speed. But that logic breaks down the moment you move into higher-value territory, and it breaks down badly. The relationships that have shaped my career most significantly did not operate on short time horizons. The opportunities that have had the greatest commercial impact came through people I had invested in without agenda, sometimes years earlier.

This is not the same as giving your time away without discernment. Knowing what you are willing to do and what makes you feel undervalued is part of the same principle. Generosity without boundaries is not a strategy; it is a pattern that leads to resentment. The point is to give without expectation of immediate return not to give without limits.

The Currency of Rooms Is Not Contacts, It Is Positioning

Getting into rooms matters. But most people go into rooms incorrectly. They arrive with the vague intention of seeing what happens, or with the goal of collecting as many conversations as possible. Neither of these is a positioning strategy. What



Generosity Is a Long-Term Commercial Strategy

The first thing to understand about high-value relationship building is that trust does not accelerate on demand. You cannot shortcut it with a well-timed introduction or a visible act of generosity. Trust accrues slowly, through repeated evidence that you are not transacting.

I think about this through the lens of a jeweller my family has worked with for years. He has supplied every significant piece I own - pieces that mark engagements, weddings, the births of children. What keeps us returning is not price or range. It is the fact that he holds a file.

He knows the details. He understands what each piece represents. When my husband approached him about a recent purchase, he already knew the context. That level of attention creates something that no amount of clever marketing can manufacture: the feeling that you are genuinely known.

That is what trust feels like at the premium level. And it is built through exactly the same mechanism in professional relationships: paying attention, showing up without an immediate ask, and being the person in someone's network who makes things slightly easier without attaching a cost.

actually converts from events into referrals, introductions, media, collaboration, clients is being remembered in a specific way. Not remembered as what you do, which is immediately forgettable, but remembered for what you stand for. The mission. The bigger purpose behind the work.

When I meet someone new, I am not reciting my service list. I am sharing the thing that, when someone later encounters the right opportunity, will prompt them to think of me. If I position myself as a business mentor, I become one of many. If I position myself as someone who exists to change how women think about wealth, I become specific. I become the person someone names in a particular kind of conversation.

This is how introductions happen without your involvement. It is how recommendations arrive unexpectedly, months after an encounter you had almost forgotten. The quality of your positioning in the room determines the quality of what follows from it.

I watched this operate at a level I rarely see in the UK at a business event in Dubai. The women there treated every break, every transition, every shared meal as intentional time. They knew who they were trying to speak to and why. One participant had secured a substantial amount of new business by the end of two days, not because she

was aggressive, but because she was focused. She knew what she stood for, she communicated it clearly, and she followed up immediately. The room was the beginning. Everything after it was the work that led to business opportunities.

The Follow-Up Is Where Relationships Become Commercially Real

Most people understand that follow-up matters intellectually. Fewer people treat it with the seriousness it deserves. The conversation in the room is the introduction. The follow-up is where affinity either develops or dissolves.

A personal message specific to the conversation you had, without a hidden agenda, is not a small thing. It signals that the exchange meant something. It opens a door. It begins the longer arc of a relationship that, in time, becomes commercially meaningful in ways that are impossible to predict at the outset.

A collaboration I am currently developing with a US-based businesswoman began at an event. We spent time together. When she later visited London, she sought

context, I facilitate rather than simply forward. That level of care is what ensures the introduction has value when it arrives and what ensures both people remain confident that I understand the weight of connecting them. Building slowly matters here too. One genuine connection is worth more than ten loose ones. The goal is not a large network. It is a trusted one.

Values Are the Mechanism, Not the Message

The longest professional relationships I have are built on shared values. Not identical businesses, not the same services, not even the same industry but the same underlying commitments to how work should be done, what clients deserve, what standards mean.

This is why sharing your values in content, in conversation and in how you show up is not a branding exercise. It is a sorting mechanism. When you are clear about what you believe and how you operate, you attract people who operate in the same register. And those are the people with whom relationships develop naturally, without force, over time.



me out for dinner. From there, we began exploring how our respective expertise might combine across different markets. None of that was planned. All of it followed from a conversation, a follow-up, and a consistent investment in the relationship over several months. The follow-up is not a tactic. It is part of the same principle: that relationships are worth tending, without knowing exactly what they will become.

Protect the Network You Have Built

There is a version of networking generosity that actually undermines what you have built. The impulse to connect people freely - to name-drop contacts, pass on details without consent, position yourself as a connector - can erode the trust that makes your network valuable in the first place.

Every person in your closer network has a relationship with you built on trust. When you introduce them to someone without their knowledge or consent, you are spending their time and their attention without asking. You are also implicitly vouching for the introduction, which means your credibility is attached to how it lands.

I am protective of my network because I have invested in it seriously. When an introduction is appropriate, I make it carefully: I check with both parties, I explain the

A client I worked with seventeen years ago, and I have remained loosely in each other's orbits ever since. We are now meeting for coffee. There was no grand reconnection strategy. There was simply enough shared ground - values, standards, a similar orientation toward the work - that when we crossed paths again, the relationship picked up without friction. Values are what make that possible.

The practical implication is this: the most effective thing you can do for your network, over time, is be consistently and clearly yourself. Not a performance of professionalism. Not a carefully curated version of your best moments. Yourself - with enough clarity about what you stand for that the right people recognise it, and over time, come to trust it.

There is no formula for this. What there is: a set of principles, applied with consistency, over a longer time horizon than most people are comfortable with. The relationships that build businesses at the level I am talking about are not built in a quarter. They are built across years. The return, when it comes, is rarely traceable to a single moment. It is the accumulated result of showing up, giving without immediate expectation, and being clear enough about what you stand for that the right people remember exactly where to find you.

MOVING BEYOND MINDSET WITH ANCIENT UNIVERSAL PRINCIPLES

"The mind is like water. When it's turbulent, it is difficult to see. When it's calm, everything becomes clear."

Ancient Proverb

Qualities of the mind and water are illustrations of the ancient universal principles that govern life. When flowing, both the mind and water cleanse, clear and strengthen. When stagnating, both the mind and water become congested, clouded, and weakened. For thousands of years, humanity has struggled with this balance of the mind . . . how to utilize the gifts of the mind without being controlled and destroyed.

This duality is part of the prevalent overthinking today. The awareness of overthinking dates back to medieval and ancient times. As we experience epic planetary growth individually and collectively, the human mind has the greatest opportunity to break free from its confines and expand into the limitless unknown.

Welcome to my 16th column exploring moving beyond mindset with ancient universal principles. The 12 Ancient Universal Principles of my High Performance Wellness Coaching help you release overthinking and live in flow. In this new paradigm of conscious leadership, success is measured by the fulfillment of your soul, not just the intellectual analysis of control. You can achieve your goals with inner focus and ease, releasing worry, stress and fear. You can trust your inner knowing that what you create will be good for you and the highest good for all.

"The human mind can rationalize anything", Lidia Kuleshnyk, aka Lady Apona.

Self-rationalization and self-justification are two of humanity's greatest challenges. When overthinking is expressed in this extreme, it is the source of devastation and destruction. When the intellectual mind is both stagnant and worshipped, the interpretation of thoughts, beliefs, values and choices leads to actions that do not consider the impact of consequences . . . the human awareness of cause and effect.

"Energy Never Lies. You Can't Fool Mother Nature"

is my Ancient Universal Principle #2. It does not let the intellect escape responsibility.

When "something feels off", even if you don't mentally acknowledge the feeling, it is a message to pay attention and course-correct. When you have a "gut feeling", a flash of inner knowing, when your intuition causes you to pause before you act, you are connecting with something greater than your mind. You are connecting with the divine.

"Knowing takes you to the Threshold, but not through the Door" Rumi.

Born in 1965, I have been living through this incredible paradigm shift in human consciousness. In my youth, science was worshipped, and intellect was revered. Knowledge was king, and obedience was queen. Yet my intuition, heart and spirit always spoke to me. They called me to join them in freedom and sovereignty. It was through spending hours alone in



nature, with animals and horses, that I could feel the essence of my soul. The immediate peace felt like home. This is where I first discovered the power of living in flow.

Living in a flow state is reported to help release stress, calm anxiety, end procrastination and cultivate feelings of deep fulfillment. In flow activities, you get out of your head and conquer overthinking. You feel Centered, Connected, Conscious.™

The simplest and easiest way to get into a flow state is to do what you love. When you use Ancient Universal Principles as your guides, you create your unique pathway to release overthinking, access your intuition and connect with the divine.

Conscious Flow Exercise

1. Find a quiet place with no distractions. Breathe.

2. Remember the things you love to do or your favorite activity. If you aren't sure what that is, think of your favorite activity as a child. When did you lose yourself in the experience? Feel the magic and mystery of simply being, forgetting about time, deadlines, responsibilities, and rules.

3. Ask yourself: "When was the last time I engaged in any of these activities?" If it has been a while, ask yourself why.

4. Imagine fully immersing yourself in that activity. Breathe into it. Embody the feeling, the smells, the sights, the sounds. Experience them as if they are happening now. Write them down.

5. Go to my 12 Ancient Universal Principles. Intuitively pick one. Write it down.

6. This Ancient Universal Principle is your anchor to keep you connected to your flow state. It is always there to liberate your mind and awaken the divine.

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™

As you live more in flow and less "in your head", return to this simple exercise again and again. Each time, you can choose another Ancient Universal Principle as your anchor.

"When you honor the divinity in all of life, you honor the divinity in you", Lidia Kuleshnyk aka Lady Apona.

Once I am in my flow state, anchored with my ancient universal principles, I expand my intention to receive guidance and support. This is a process of more deeply cultivating my intuition and uniting with my heart and spirit. I call it "co-creating with the divine". I know that I am guided by something greater than myself.

By honoring the divinity around me, I more deeply honor the divinity within me. My mind no longer ruminates in downward spirals. Life feels lighter. Stress releases. Energy returns. The walls dissolve.



These are my 7 steps to access your intuition and co-create with the divine.

1. *Listen to the messages*
2. *Honor and value the importance of your spirit*
3. *Feel the fullness of your emotions*
4. *Center in your power and connect with your clarity*
5. *Embrace your faith and inner knowing*
6. *Take aligned actions*
7. *Trust the journey . . . you create miracles often unbeknownst to yourself*

It is with trust and faith that you expand into new paradigms of living and being. You experience outcomes that you once considered “unbelievable”. You create space for miracles to unfold.

In flow states, your mind wanders. When your mind wanders, your awareness expands. With greater awareness, your mind is free to “play out” scenarios without attachment to the outcome. By “analyzing” without attachment, you are mastering your mind to honor your soul, without definitions or control. This is the beginning of a free mind. An intellect that assesses without fear. A mind that flows like a river, in One with the soul. This is not overthinking. This is the unified consciousness of limitless living.

“It is no bad thing to celebrate a simple life.” J.R.R. Tolkien

Simple acts of doing what you love, on a regular basis, can help conquer overthinking, confusion and analysis paralysis. Like water flowing down a mountain, the river shapes the mountain, and the mountain shapes the river. Both are governed by the principles of life.

Ancient Universal Principles are not intellectual. They are visceral. They are your roadmap, your North Star, your anchor to living a Centered, Connected, Conscious™ Life. Ancient Universal Principles are a stable constant in a rapidly changing world. They have always existed, and will always be there, just for you.

The time is now for the gifts of the mind to be opened from the treasure chest of your soul. In the new paradigm of High Performance Wellness, the mind does not control; it flows. Overthinking is surrendered to trust and faith, the divine knowing that your sacred wisdom always acts for the benefit of the whole.

When you unite the mind with your infinite soul, you embrace the journey of lasting freedom while achieving your goals. You reclaim your sovereignty. You become the conscious leader of your life. You create a legacy as a conscious leader of the world.

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



Lidia Kuleshnyk is a High Performance Wellness Coach, 4X Bestselling 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.

Connect with Lidia Kuleshnyk

www.AponaHealing.com

The Bigger Picture



Spiritual Leadership

In the early days of your career, when you started out after finishing university, you had it – excitement, purpose, a willingness to create something. It's a kind of start-up vibe. There is a particular kind of energy. You stayed longer than you had to. Not because anyone asked you to – but because you didn't want to leave. There's a sense that something is being built together. Something that matters. For a while, that feeling is enough. And then, at some point, it fades. Not dramatically. Not all at once. Just quietly. Decisions become slower. Conversations are less engaged.

The same happens in teams. Maybe you've experienced it yourself as a team leader: People start focusing on their part instead of the whole. Not because people change – but because the bigger picture disappears. What vanishes is not the willingness to contribute. It's the shared understanding of what everything is for. At the beginning of a visionary project, everyone talks about the same idea. Decisions are made in the same direction. Over time, that clarity begins to blur. Structures grow. Processes multiply. New people join. And slowly, the connection to the overall context gets lost.

I noticed something similar when I started my new role recently. Not in the sense of losing motivation – but in the small, almost invisible weight of not fully understanding what everything connects to. Without the bigger picture, onboarding became complicated. Even simple decisions felt insecure.

**Who's the right person to send the e-mail to?
Who has to get which information, and who mustn't?
Why does a specific process look the way it does?**

I had to memorise a ton of single steps, many isolated tasks – and felt completely overwhelmed.

The moment I began to see how things fit together, everything shifted. Not the actions. Not the workload. Just the context. And suddenly, decisions became obvious. I didn't need to check so much. I didn't need to hesitate. And I also understood, for example, why it is so important to be on time with invoicing: My supervisor – the company's CEO – has to pay great sums of money to his suppliers and therefore needs the income from the customers promptly. As a result, I was way more willing to finish one more task to support the company – even when it was already time to leave. I simply knew what made sense and why.

Maybe what people miss most is not motivation. Maybe they miss orientation. Because when people understand what they are part of, they don't need to be pushed. They stay longer – not because they are told to, but because they want to. They take ownership – not because it is required, but because it feels natural. It's about feeling important, relevant to the whole system. Work becomes lighter. Not because there is less to do, but because less needs to be questioned. People stop asking for permission. They start making decisions.

And this is where spirituality – connection – comes into play once again. As a spiritual leader, you can help people see the whole: the overarching structure that holds everything together. Connection allows you to meet people where they are – and guide them towards the bigger picture. Direction is the foundation on which productivity and success grow.

The question becomes whether you yourself know what "the whole" is, what it's all about. Why are you doing what you are doing? What do you need from your team members? Which support do you need from them to succeed? Not in a detailed executive process, but to paint the overall context again and again. Have you ever made the vision visible? Have you established a connection? A connection between you as a spiritual leader and your collaborators, a connection between the team and the purpose of your work.

Almost 25 per cent of all start-ups – roughly one in four – do fail because of team-related issues. In most cases, it's not that the people are wrong but that they lose their shared vision and mission on their challenging way to success. See your team as a start-up. As a spiritual leader, you offer them the connection they need. Give them orientation as a result. And motivation, engagement and productivity – and ultimately economic success – will emerge naturally.

By Andrea Huber



andrea-kristina@web.de

You're Not Tired You're Overstimulated

Many people in midlife experience something we don't often discuss. You sit down after a long day. The house is quiet. The emails have stopped for now. You've done enough today, or at least enough to feel you can pause. You even try to rest. But something still feels off. Not exactly tired. Not exactly anxious. Just... unsettled.

Maybe you reach for your phone, thinking a little scrolling will help you decompress—but somehow, you feel worse. More scattered. More drained. So, you assume you need more rest. But what if rest isn't the problem? What if the real issue is overstimulation?

The Misunderstanding: When Fatigue Isn't Fatigue

For years, women have been told to respond to exhaustion with one solution: rest. I remember sitting in doctors' offices, trying to explain how I could sleep and still wake up depleted. How could I take a break and still feel overwhelmed? I wasn't looking for sympathy. I was looking for understanding. Instead, I received the usual guidance: Sleep more. Take a break. Slow down. And while rest matters, it doesn't always address what's happening in the body, especially in midlife. Because during perimenopause and menopause, your nervous system becomes more sensitive to stress, input, and disruption.

Hormonal shifts—particularly fluctuations in estrogen and progesterone—play a direct role in how the brain processes stress and regulates mood. As these hormones fluctuate, many women experience what clinicians describe as a “wired but tired” state, in which the body feels exhausted, but the mind remains overstimulated (Briden, 2021; Gordon et al., 2015).

It's that feeling of lying in bed, physically drained... but your mind is still running through conversations, to-do lists, and tomorrow's responsibilities. Or, like many of us, you find yourself doomscrolling for hours. You're not imagining it. Your capacity has changed.

What Overstimulation Really Means

Overstimulation isn't just “being busy.” It's what happens when your nervous system receives more input than it can process—without enough time or space to reset. And in midlife, that threshold lowers. What used to feel manageable—back-to-back meetings, background noise, multitasking, constant notifications—now feels like too much.

Research suggests that hormonal changes during perimenopause can heighten sensory sensitivity and stress reactivity, making everyday stimuli—noise, light, multitasking—feel more intense (Epperson et al., 2012).

In simple terms: Your nervous system isn't broken. It's overloaded.

How to Recognize Overstimulation (In Real Life)

This is where awareness becomes powerful—because overstimulation doesn't always look like stress.

Sometimes it looks like:

- Sitting in a quiet room... and still feeling restless
- Reading the same sentence three times and not absorbing it
- Snapping at someone you love—and immediately wondering, “Why did that feel so big?”
- Wanting to be alone... but not knowing what to do once you are

It often shows up as:

- Mental fog that doesn't lift with sleep
- Irritability that feels disproportionate
- Difficulty focusing—even on simple tasks
- Feeling “on edge” without a clear reason
- Wanting rest—but not feeling restored by it
- Reaching for your phone... but feeling worse after

So, what you're feeling isn't random.



“Overstimulation isn't just “being busy.” It's what happens when your nervous system receives more input than it can process—without enough time or space to reset.”



Why Midlife Changes Everything

Midlife doesn't just shift your hormones—it reshapes your entire stress response system. It's the season where you might be managing a career, supporting family, navigating your own internal changes—and still expecting yourself to function as you did ten years ago. According to the North American Menopause Society, these hormonal shifts can significantly affect mood, sleep, and stress tolerance. The result? Your nervous system is processing more... with less margin for error.

Why Rest Alone Isn't Working

You can sleep for eight hours and still wake up overwhelmed because rest doesn't automatically regulate your nervous system. If your body has been operating in a constant state of low-grade stress, that pattern doesn't simply switch off when you pause. Neuroscientist Bruce McEwen described this as “allostatic load”—the cumulative burden of chronic stress on the body (McEwen, 2007). It's like your body never fully powers down—it just hovers in the background, still alert, still processing. Your body isn't asking for more rest. It's asking for regulation.

What Actually Helps

This is where the shift happens. Not by doing more—but by gently removing what's overwhelming your system.

1. Reduce input before adding recovery. Before adding another routine or wellness tool, look at what's constantly coming in.

- Notifications buzzing throughout the day
 - Multiple tabs open—mentally and digitally
 - Background noise you've learned to ignore... but your body hasn't
- Sometimes the most powerful reset is simply less.

2. Create a sensory space. Your nervous system resets in simplicity.

- Turning the TV off earlier than usual
- Sitting in a quiet room without needing to “fill the space.”
- Letting silence exist without reaching for stimulation

At first, it might feel uncomfortable. That's often a sign your system hasn't had space in a while.

3. Move gently, not aggressively. In this season, movement should support your nervous system—not push it harder.

- Walking without a goal
- Stretching at your own pace
- Breathing deeply without rushing to the next thing

This isn't about doing less—it's about doing what your body can receive.

4. Let your mind land somewhere. When your mind is overstimulated, it needs a place to release—not more to absorb.

- Journaling your thoughts instead of carrying them
- Sitting in stillness, even for a few minutes
- Allowing your mind to slow down without forcing it

It's not about silence being perfect; it's about giving your mind somewhere safe to settle.

A Softer, Smarter Approach to Wellness

There's nothing wrong with needing more space. There's nothing weak about sensitivity. In fact, it may be your body becoming more intelligent. More discerning. More honest.

So instead of asking: “Why am I so tired?”

Try asking: “What is my system carrying right now?”

Because in this season, wellness isn't about doing more.

It's about creating enough space... for your nervous system to finally exhale.

Beverly Johnson

References

- Hormone Repair Manual Briden, L. (2021). Hormone Repair Manual: Every Woman's Guide to Healthy Hormones After 40.
- C. Neill Epperson et al. (2012). “Neurobiological effects of estrogen in the brain.” *Biological Psychiatry*.
- Jennifer L. Gordon et al. (2015). “Perimenopausal depression: The role of hormones.” *Endocrinology and Metabolism Clinics of North America*.
- Bruce S. McEwen (2007). “Physiology and neurobiology of stress and adaptation: Central role of the brain.” *Physiological Reviews*.

beverlyjohnson.com
IG handle: imbeverlyjohnson
Facebook: Coach Beverly K. Johnson
Email: hello@coachbeverlyjohnson.com



TIME TO HEAL

The mid-life transformation

What every woman in her 30's, 40's and 50's needs to know



There was a moment back when I was in 5th grade that has stayed with me throughout my life and adult years. It wasn't a big field trip or concert; it wasn't a party or special event. Our teachers had separated the girls in our class from the boys and brought us into a different classroom. We were given a pamphlet and sat down to watch a video.



The purpose of this girls-only meeting was to teach us about our menstrual cycles and discuss the many physical and emotional changes we would all be experiencing over the next few years. The very idea that we were even having this discussion was exciting to us.

Knowing that we were so close to being all grown up, perhaps wearing makeup and even needing bras was something we were all elated about. I know in my own home and in many homes back in the 80's and early 90s, these topics weren't openly discussed and mentioning them felt uncomfortable and humiliating.

Having this time together in this classroom to ask anything we wanted and say anything we were feeling or were worried about provided us with support and information that helped us ease into this next phase of our lives. We were also given little hygiene bags that included various women's products and even deodorant!



In that moment, we felt a sense of relief that we were all experiencing this journey together. We learned we had nothing to be afraid of and were able to let go of nervousness that came whenever anyone had mentioned this topic before. We left that class with excitement and a newfound confidence in what was to come as we would soon take our first steps towards womanhood.

The memory of that day in 5th grade came back to me recently when thinking about what I and so many of us are experiencing right now in our 40s. I can't help but think back to those years and notice just how crucial and beneficial it was for us young girls to be informed, supported and even celebrated as we entered our next phase in life.



I am about to turn 46, and in the last couple of years, it seems like everything about my body and wellness has changed. I am in my final reproductive years, and perimenopause entered my world quite abruptly. Little changes started happening, and they quickly added up to big changes that I certainly wasn't expecting or prepared for.

For example, I was very thin my entire life, often too thin according to society's standards. I always wished I could gain weight and be more curvy. I had 4 children and remained thin. I suffered from numerous health issues throughout my adult years, and in my 30s, I had become very underweight, even for my petite body.

My health improved dramatically, and at the age of 42, I finally started gaining a little weight. I was thrilled to fill in my clothes the way I always dreamed of! But by age 44, my weight started to slowly increase without me even realizing it. Before I knew it, I was going up in sizes and no longer liked what I was seeing in the mirror. This year I realized that my weight still was going up and I needed to go up another size.

I didn't like how I was feeling at all and was growing very uncomfortable in my own skin. Speaking of skin, my skin was something that was also transforming quickly. It was drier, becoming dull, and more wrinkles seemed to appear overnight!

My hair was always very thick and overall healthy, and now it was looking dull, extremely dry, and I noticed shedding beginning to increase more and more. And probably the most significant change was my sleeping patterns.

Sleep became disturbed every single night. I woke up 1-2 hours after falling asleep (if I fell asleep) and couldn't go back to sleep for another hour or so every night. I was not getting the restorative sleep I needed, and while I usually did get some hours of sleep, it wasn't enough, it wasn't consistent, and it absolutely was taking a toll on me.

The lack of restorative sleep was exacerbating all of the other symptoms I mentioned above and negatively impacting my body's overall health and hormonal balance.

I am fully aware of how poor sleep alone can impact our health and was growing concerned as this cycle continued to repeat itself. When I mentioned this to my doctor, he shrugged and said that it's all very normal at my age. I know these changes are considered "normal" and are written off to ageing and perimenopause, but are we meant to age this way?

Are we supposed to feel fatigue, mood swings, brain fog and look and feel like a different person? What if these symptoms of perimenopause truly are just a reflection of deeper issues and imbalances that are begging for our attention?

I realized that I needed to get to work on my own and began researching women's health deeper than I ever had before. I knew that hormonal shifts would cause symptoms, but I also knew that our bodies were not designed to suffer every day throughout this transitional time of our lives.

Hormones play a significant role in our lives, but they work alongside many other systems. Putting all of our focus on our hormones isn't enough, nor is it effective, because our hormones cannot function on their own. This hormone-focused approach isn't capturing the entire picture, nor is it resolving the issues most of us middle-aged women are facing.



For those of you who have never read one of my articles, I spent years on my own healing journey, successfully reversing several autoimmune diseases and secondary illnesses. I have extensive knowledge and awareness when it comes to eating clean and nutrition.

It was an absolute must for me when beginning my healing journey. A complete lifestyle shift was step one of my journey, setting the stage for my body, so I could then go in deeper and peel back those root causes layer by layer.

Compared to anything I had dealt with in the past, my symptoms weren't severe, but before things got worse, I knew it was time for me to take action.

I began working out regularly, usually 5-6 days a week, and eating cleaner again. I also coach soccer, so I certainly do not lead a sedentary lifestyle.

I am not a stranger to nutrition, clean eating, anti-inflammatory foods, supplements and overall wellness. In fact, I am currently finishing my doctorate in holistic medicine. I thought I could easily help myself get back to a healthier weight that I was comfortable in, improve my skin and hair health, improve gut health, get my hormones more balanced, lower cortisol levels, and, in turn, improve my sleep and sleep patterns.

Months went by, but despite all the hard work I was putting into this, I was not seeing any progress. How could this be? Everything I ever learned told me I was doing the right thing for my body. In fact, this work helped my body tremendously years ago when I was determined to heal from autoimmune disease. At this point, I was shocked and quite frustrated, to say the least.

I didn't give up, but instead I continued to research and try things that I thought would help. I knew there had to be more that I was missing and was determined to figure this out. Thankfully, I do have such a strong background in medicine, nutrition, sciences and overall health, because to understand exactly what was happening to my body and why nothing was helping would have taken me a very long time if I did not have prior knowledge in these areas.

In all of my studies, I realized that my concerns were identical to most women my age. Everywhere I looked, I came across the same thing; Women were working hard to try and get rid of the weight and changes that recently came in their 40s, and their efforts were yielding no results. To understand why we weren't getting the results, you must understand why we are gaining weight and feeling less and less like ourselves. Yes, hormonal changes are happening, but there is much more to the story.

What we always learned was that our hormones begin to drop in our 40s as we are reaching the end of our reproductive years. We heard of hot flashes, mood swings, and our periods being off, but never once did anyone inform us of all these other symptoms that too many women are suffering from.

As I stated above, while everything is being blamed on hormones, there are other factors that are being completely ignored. If hormones were the sole issue, then those who take Hormone Replacement therapy would all be feeling their absolute best, and that isn't the case for all. There

are numerous reasons for this, and it all goes deeper than our hormones.

For example, every hormone must get to the cell via a receptor that is on the cell. Sometimes those receptors aren't functioning the way they need to be; therefore, even if there are high levels of estrogen in our system, the hormone cannot get into the cell, and the body cannot use it. This happens when there is cellular inflammation and it's an issue that is far more common than anyone realizes.

It's also something most of us have never even heard of. Not only are the hormones unable to get into the cell, but all of the bad stuff the cell is meant to release also gets trapped in the cell. This alone can and will cause a cascade of issues and symptoms.

Not only is inflammation an issue, but our nutrition, electrolytes and minerals need to be balanced. It became very clear to me that I was experiencing vitamin deficiencies when I began working out consistently and coaching soccer again. I began struggling with severe fatigue and couldn't recover the way I normally would.

The truth is, when I look back on my years of pregnancy and postpartum years, I had several instances where I lost a lot of blood and needed iron. I never thought much about it over the years, but the issue was never fully resolved. I was also low in vitamin D3 and magnesium. My numbers were never severely low, so after supplementing a little bit back then, I felt better and stopped taking them.

Now I was no longer feeling okay. I felt depleted, and I knew I needed to replenish my body immediately. Everything that was borderline years ago was now surfacing and asking for my attention with symptoms.

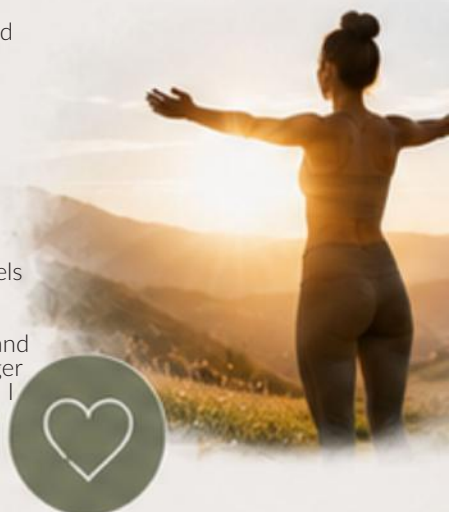
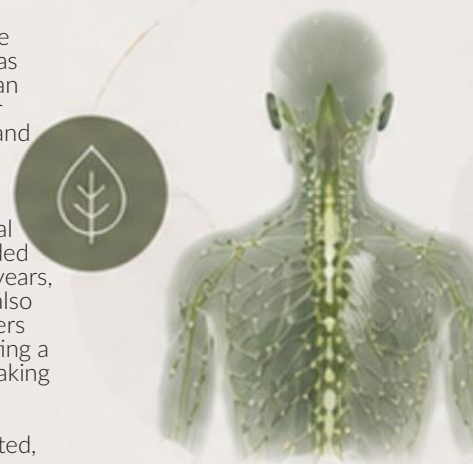
The symptoms my Doctor shrugged off, the symptoms everyone tells us are all about our hormones, and the symptoms that I knew deep down were trying to tell me something all along.

Our bodies don't malfunction when entering this new phase in our lives, as we were led to believe, and we aren't meant to feel the fatigue, mood swings, brain fog, insomnia, etc., that we are told are "normal". Everything we are feeling is a symptom, and symptoms are the only way our bodies know how to communicate with us. Think about it: the longer a symptom isn't addressed, the louder the body screams to get our attention, and the worse our symptoms are going to feel.

Your body's not broken; it's doing exactly as it was designed to do. It's asking you for help and showing you that there are imbalances that need your support. We don't need to fix ourselves during perimenopause; we need to listen and understand ourselves.

The truth is, when we are leaving behind our reproductive years, our body's makeup is changing, and therefore, our body's needs are changing!

For instance, did you know that as estrogen levels drop, our bodies have a harder time absorbing iron? Therefore, someone like me, who often experienced low iron in my reproductive years and who was getting by for a long time, was no longer able to just get by with low levels of iron. When I





began working out more, I sweated a lot more and lost more iron and electrolytes. Instead of feeling better from consistent workouts and activity, I began to feel worse.

It took me some time, but what I finally realized is that what we needed ten years ago isn't what we need right now. What always worked to attain our healthiest weight and feel our best will not work anymore. The foods we eat, the workouts we do and the supplements we take should look different from what we were doing prior to entering this transition.

As we change, so do our needs, and that is the biggest lesson I needed to learn and wish someone had taught me long before I reached my 40s.

I know things could have been very different for many other women and me if someone had sat us down and openly discussed the upcoming phase of perimenopause with us. We shouldn't be waiting for symptoms to arise before we begin taking action. We should be taking action to avoid symptoms from ever arising.

Here are some of the lessons I wish I had learned before entering my midlife changes:

- *Get labs done and check your vitamin and mineral levels.*
- *Ensure your iron, folate, b12, electrolytes, D3, vitamin c and more are at healthy levels.*
- *Learn more about your nervous system: Work on past trauma and release emotional baggage you are still carrying. (This will help your cortisol levels).*
- *Practice breathwork*
- *Learn about your lymphatic system and ensure your detox pathways are open and flowing.*
- *Heal your gut, nourish your gut and ensure you are absorbing the nutrition that you take in.*
- *Understand that in the future your workouts will look different. Learn about low-impact workouts with weights.*
- *Ensure you are listening to your body and never allowing anyone to tell you that feeling unwell is normal. You know your body, you know yourself, and you deserve to feel your best now and through your transitional years.*
- *Remember, your body is changing, and this is normal. Your body's needs are also changing. Ensure you are paying attention to your nutritional levels, electrolytes and overall health.*
- *The stronger and healthier you are prior to entering perimenopause, the better.*

Had I learned more about the changes to expect in my 40s, I could have and would have avoided a lot of symptoms, worry, time and exhaustion. Going into our perimenopause years with the idea that everything we feel is normal and due to hormones is doing nothing but setting us up for a long, difficult battle that we were never meant to fight.

We should not have to feel lost and defeated as we come to the end of our reproductive years. We have done incredible things as women throughout our lives and deserve to go through this phase with more flow and ease. We need to be set up for success, and to do so, there must be far more awareness, education and communication happening before our changes begin.

I think back to the way we were brought together in 5th grade and taught what to expect in our upcoming pubescent years. This is exactly what we need as women in every phase of our lives. We need more awareness and less confusion. We deserve to feel understood, heard, and believed when we speak of our concerns. We all go through our own journeys throughout our adult years as women. We should be able to move forward with confidence and peace, as we reach the completion of our reproductive years.

Jacqueline Goncalves
Wellness Coach and Business Owner
Inspired Healing LLC





By Nadija Bajrami

The Freedom Within Forgiveness

There comes a moment in life when we realise that the pain we carry is no longer coming from what happened to us—but from what we continue to hold onto. That moment is powerful because it offers us a choice. And that choice is forgiveness.

Forgiveness is often misunderstood. We are taught, sometimes subtly and sometimes directly, that forgiveness is something we owe to others—that it is a moral obligation, a sign of goodness, or even weakness. But let me be clear: forgiveness is not something we give to those who harmed us. Forgiveness is something we give to ourselves.

When we refuse to forgive, we remain bound to the very experience that hurt us. We replay the moment, we relive the emotions, and we carry the weight of it into our present and our future. In doing so, we stay trapped—not by the person who hurt us, but by the pain we have not yet released.

Forgiveness, then, is not about excusing what happened. It is not about saying, “*It was okay.*” It is about saying, “*I choose to let no longer this define me.*” It is a conscious decision to reclaim our peace, our energy, and our freedom. And here is something deeply important: forgiveness is a choice. It should never be forced.

There is no timeline for forgiveness. No rule says you must forgive immediately or even at all. True forgiveness cannot be demanded, rushed, or imposed. It must come from within, when you are ready—when your heart begins to understand that holding onto the pain is costing you more than letting it go. This is where forgiveness becomes a liberation process.

When we begin to open ourselves to forgiveness, something shifts. We start to see beyond the wound. We begin to recognise that those who hurt us are often carrying wounds of their own. This does not justify their actions, but it gives us perspective. It allows us to step out of the role of the wounded and into a place of awareness.

And in that awareness, we find space.

Space to breathe.
Space to heal.
Space to move forward without the chains of resentment.

Forgiveness frees us.

It releases the emotional weight we have been carrying—sometimes for years. It untangles us from anger, bitterness, and the need for validation or apology that may never come. It allows us to return to ourselves, to reconnect with who we are beyond the pain.

Because the truth is, as long as we hold onto resentment, a part of us remains tied to the past. But when we forgive, we gently loosen that grip. We begin to step into the present with greater clarity, strength, and self-respect. Forgiveness is not forgetting. It is not reconciling if reconciliation is not safe or aligned for you. It is not allowing harmful behaviour to continue.

Forgiveness is an internal shift.

It is the moment you say, “*I deserve peace more than I need to hold onto this pain.*” And that is powerful. When we understand forgiveness in this way, we stop seeing it as something we owe others and begin to see it as an act of self-love. A courageous act. A transformative act.

Because choosing to forgive is choosing yourself. It is choosing your healing over your hurt. Your freedom over your past. Your peace over your pain.

A guiding framework: The four stages of forgiveness

As beautifully described by Desmond Tutu, forgiveness can unfold through four meaningful stages:

- 1. Telling the story – Acknowledging what happened and allowing yourself to feel the truth of your experience without denial.**
- 2. Naming the hurt – Giving voice to the pain, anger, or betrayal, honouring your emotions as valid and real.**
- 3. Granting forgiveness – Making the conscious choice to release the hold the experience has over you, in your own time and in your own way.**
- 4. Renewing or releasing the relationship – Deciding whether to rebuild the connection or to let it go, based on what serves your well-being.**

This process reminds us that forgiveness is not a single moment—it is a journey. So, if you are holding onto something today—anger, betrayal, disappointment—ask yourself gently: “*What is this costing me?*” And then remember you have a choice. You can continue to carry it, or you can begin the process of releasing it.

Not for them. But for you. Forgiveness is your liberation. And you are worthy of that freedom.

Why Healing Sometimes Doesn't Work

The Missing Layer Beneath Mindset, Therapy, and Self-Care



For many people, the most confusing part of the healing journey is not the pain itself. It is a fact that they have already done so much work. They have read the books, listened to the podcasts, tried mindfulness, attended therapy, invested in coaching, and committed faithfully to every form of self-care recommended to them.

And yet, despite all of this effort, something still feels unresolved.

The mind may understand. The body may even feel calmer. And still, beneath the surface, there remains a quiet sense that the deeper wound has not yet been fully reached.



This is one of the most disorienting experiences in emotional healing: having done the work and still carrying the same patterns, the same quiet sense of emptiness, the same recurring pain. It can feel like failure. But it rarely is. The question that follows is deeply human: Why do I still feel stuck?

When Relief Is Not the Same as Healing

One reason healing can feel incomplete is that we confuse temporary relief with lasting transformation. Meditation creates calm. Therapy builds insight. Rest lowers stress. All of these are valuable and often essential, yet they do not always reach the deeper mechanisms that keep emotional pain recurring. Neuroscience helps explain why.

Psychiatrist Bessel van der Kolk, whose research transformed our understanding of emotional suffering, demonstrated that painful experiences are encoded not simply as memories, but as physiological patterns stored in the body and deeply conditioned neural pathways. Neuroscientist Joseph LeDoux's landmark work on the amygdala further shows that fear responses are processed below the level of conscious thought, meaning the brain can trigger an emotional alarm before the thinking mind has even registered the situation.

This means that you can understand precisely where your fear, self-doubt, or

hypervigilance originates, and still react automatically the moment a trigger arises. The same fear rises, the same overthinking returns. The same sense of inner collapse takes hold. This is not failure. It is the predictable result of healing that has not yet reached the nervous system - the part of you that learned these responses long before language could describe them.

The Missing Layer Beneath the Work

In my coaching and transformational work, I consistently find that the missing layer is not effort: it is connection. Many people are attempting to heal from the mind outward, while remaining disconnected from the deeper emotional parts of themselves. They are doing the work, yet not always meeting the part that still hurts.

“One reason healing can feel incomplete is that we confuse temporary relief with lasting transformation.”

What often remains unresolved is not simply trauma or stress, but the relationship formed with the self because of what has been lived through. Did we learn to silence our own needs? Did we become the strong one too early? Did we adapt so thoroughly that we no longer recognise what we truly feel?

Psychologist Kristin Neff's extensive research on self-compassion confirms this: emotional healing accelerates significantly when self-criticism is replaced with genuine self-kindness - not as a technique practised occasionally, but as a sustained inner orientation toward the self. Healing becomes limited when it remains purely intellectual. Transformation begins when it becomes relational: a genuinely renewed relationship with the self.

Why Self-Care Alone May Not Be Enough

Self-care has become one of the most widely discussed concepts in wellness, and rightly so. Sleep, nutrition, movement, and rest are not optional - they are foundational to emotional wellbeing. Yet self-care can quietly become another form of surface-level management when it does not include emotional honesty.

A healthy routine can support healing, but it cannot on its own restore self-trust. Rest can calm the body, but it does not automatically heal unresolved grief, shame, or the emotional abandonment we may have experienced at an early age. A positive mindset may help us function better, yet still leave untouched the parts of us that learned, often very early in life, to stay small, remain hypervigilant, or disconnect entirely from our own needs.

This is a reminder that true healing often asks for something deeper than maintenance. It asks for presence. For inner listening. For emotional integration. Not how do I fix this? but what part of me still feels unheard?

Reconnecting With the Soul

Many people reach a point where they have worked through their patterns intellectually, supported their nervous system, built healthier habits, and developed genuine self-awareness, and yet still carry a subtle but persistent sense of disconnection. Life may be functioning well on the outside, while inwardly something still feels distant, as though a deeper part of the self has not yet fully returned.

This is where healing asks for something beyond insight or technique. It asks for reconnection with the soul. The soul, as I work with it, reaches beyond what any single lifetime can encompass. Psychiatrist Dan Siegel's concept of the integrated self is the deepest layer of self-awareness and inner coherence that becomes accessible when the nervous system provides useful neurological information about what begins to happen in deep healing.

Yet the soul is something larger still. In the framework of the Path of Soul Remembrance™, the soul carries not only the echoes and adaptations of this lifetime but the accumulated wisdom, imprints, and unresolved experiences of previous ones. This is why some emotional patterns feel inexplicably ancient, or why certain fears arise with an intensity that no single life event seems to fully explain. The soul holds a longer story than the mind remembers. When we have lived in survival mode for too long, across this lifetime and perhaps beyond it, this deeper connection becomes muted.

We continue to function, yet lose touch with what feels deeply alive, meaningful, and true. The soul is not destroyed by this. It is overshadowed by layers of stress, fear, and accumulated adaptation. Reconnecting with it is therefore not a detour from healing. It is, in many cases, its final and most essential step: returning to the part of ourselves that was never broken, only buried, and that carries, within it, far more wisdom than we have yet been able to access.

Three Ways to Begin Going Deeper

If this resonates, here are three practices that support this deeper layer of healing:

1. Ask the question your mind avoids. Each evening, sit quietly and ask: What did I feel today that I didn't allow myself to feel? Do not analyse the answer. Simply let it surface without judgement. This practice begins to rebuild the inner listening that transformation requires and, over time, restores a sense of being genuinely known by yourself.

2. Locate emotion in the body. Anxiety often lives in the chest; grief in the throat; shame in the stomach. Place your hand gently on that area and breathe slowly for

a few moments. This is not a cure; it is a way of communicating to the part of you that is hurting: I see you. I am here. Body-based awareness is consistently supported by research as a key bridge between cognitive understanding and nervous system regulation.

3. Distinguish self-care from self-connection. Ask honestly: is this practice helping me feel more at home in myself, or is it helping me manage, distract, or perform wellness? The distinction is not always obvious, but asking it regularly begins to shift the quality of your inner relationship from one of maintenance to one of genuine presence.

A Quiet Invitation

If you have done the work and still sense that something deeper remains unresolved, know that this does not mean you have failed. It means healing is asking to go further—past the mind, past the patterns, into the quiet truth of who you actually are beneath all of it.

Feel Like Yourself Again and the Path of Soul Remembrance™ offer a structured, compassionate pathway into this deeper layer — supporting emotional restoration, nervous system integration, and a genuine reconnection with the authentic self that has been quietly waiting.

Because healing does not fail, sometimes it is simply a matter of asking to go deeper.

By Dr Margit Gabriele Muller

www.soulilluminary.com





Why Human Connection Will Always Matter in the Age of AI

We are living in a world moving faster than ever before. Artificial intelligence can now write emails, create artwork, plan content, answer questions, and even mimic conversation in ways that once felt impossible. Every week, there seems to be another breakthrough, another headline, or another prediction about how AI will transform the way we live and work. And while I believe AI is an incredible tool, I also believe something deeply important is becoming clearer at the same time: human connection is not replaceable.

In fact, the more technology evolves, the more people will crave authenticity, presence, empathy, and genuine emotional understanding. We are already seeing it. People are overwhelmed by constant information. They are exhausted by performative online spaces and filtered perfection. Many are searching not just for answers, but for meaning. Not just efficiency, but emotional safety. Not just productivity, but belonging.

AI can process data in seconds. It can predict patterns and generate ideas. But what it cannot truly replicate is the feeling of being deeply seen by another human being. It cannot hold someone's hand through grief. It cannot sit in silence and intuitively feel what is not being said. It cannot replace the energetic exchange that happens when two people connect heart to heart.

Recently, I noticed something interesting in everyday life that really highlighted this for me. Someone I know had started talking to someone new, and initially there was a lovely, natural connection between them. But over time, the conversations became more calculated and overly thought-out because outside help was used to craft the "perfect" replies. Ironically, the more polished the messages became, the less energy seemed to come back in return.

The moment the conversations became more natural again, more human, more honest, more reflective of that person's real personality, the connection shifted. The responses became warmer. The energy flowed more easily. And I think that says a lot about what people are truly craving right now. AI can support communication, but it cannot replace energy. People do not just connect to words. They connect to intention, emotion, presence, and authenticity. As someone who has spent years working in healing, intuition, and human behaviour, I have noticed something fascinating: people rarely come to another person purely for information. They come for connection. They want to feel understood. They want to feel safe enough to be honest. They want to know that someone genuinely cares.

This is especially important in a world where loneliness is quietly becoming one of the biggest emotional struggles of our time. Despite being more digitally connected than ever, many people feel emotionally disconnected from themselves and others. We can message instantly, yet still feel unseen. We can consume endless content, yet still feel empty. Technology has given us access, but access alone is not intimacy. Real connection requires presence. And presence is something humans are uniquely designed for.

I think this is why industries centred around human experience will continue to grow, even alongside AI. Coaching, therapy, mentoring, speaking, wellness work, and emotionally-led brands are becoming increasingly valuable because people are searching for something real. They want conversations that feel human. They want leaders who are relatable rather than polished. They want vulnerability instead of perfection.

Ironically, AI may actually push us back towards humanity. As automation increases, authenticity becomes more valuable. The businesses, creators, and brands that stand out in the future will not necessarily be the ones using the most advanced technology. They will be the ones who know how to make people feel. Because people remember energy, they remember how someone made them feel after a conversation, a piece of writing, or an interaction. Long after facts are forgotten, emotional resonance stays with us.

This is something I have seen repeatedly in my own work. Clients often do not remember every word from a session, but they remember the feeling of being understood without judgement. They remember feeling calmer, lighter, clearer, or more connected to themselves. That experience cannot be automated.

There is also a growing conversation around emotional intelligence, nervous system regulation, and mental wellbeing. In a world filled with constant stimulation and rapid digital evolution, emotional grounding matters more than ever. People are not machines. We are emotional, intuitive, sensory beings. We need rest. We need laughter. We need eye contact, conversation, compassion, and community. No algorithm can fully replace the comfort of a genuine human moment.

Rather than fearing AI, maybe we are being encouraged to redefine what makes us uniquely human. Creativity. Empathy. Intuition. Emotional depth. Storytelling. Compassion. These qualities matter enormously, and they cannot simply be manufactured through data alone. I believe this shift is also encouraging people to be more intentional about how they show up online and in business. Audiences are becoming more perceptive. They can often sense when something feels overly curated, detached, or impersonal. People are craving honesty. Not because they expect perfection, but because they are tired of pretending.

Connection is built through humanity, not performance. Some of the most impactful conversations happen not when someone has all the answers, but when they speak with sincerity. When they share lived experience. When they allow others to feel less alone, that is something AI can support, but not replace. And this matters across every industry, not just healing or coaching spaces.

Whether someone works in leadership, education, healthcare, media, or entrepreneurship, human connection remains at the centre of trust. Trust is built through consistency, empathy, listening, and emotional awareness. Without trust, even the most advanced technology loses its impact.

I think the future will belong to people who know how to balance both worlds wisely. Those who embrace innovation while still protecting the human element. Those who use AI as a tool without losing authenticity in the process. Because technology works best when it supports humanity rather than replaces it. At its core, human connection is not a luxury. It is a need. And no matter how advanced the world becomes, people will always seek spaces where they feel genuinely seen, heard, valued, and understood.

Perhaps that is the real reminder emerging from the rise of AI: the more digital the world becomes, the more human we may need to be.

By Lisa Andrews

Holistic Therapist, Psychic & Speaker





How to Fire Up Your Sex Life in Later Life

Let's start with a truth that doesn't get said often enough. Your sex life doesn't disappear with age. It evolves. What many people experience in later life isn't a loss of desire, but a loss of connection. Connection to their own body, to their partner, and to the kind of intimacy that actually reflects who they are now. And when that connection fades, it can leave things feeling flat, uncertain, or quietly avoided.

It's rarely dramatic. More often, it's gradual. Life becomes busy and full. Responsibilities increase. Energy moves and shifts. And intimacy, without anyone consciously choosing it, moves further down the priority list. Over time, something that once felt natural can start to feel unfamiliar, even effortful.

And so people adapt. They initiate less. They touch less. They avoid conversations because they're not quite sure how to start them. It becomes easier to leave things as they are than to risk awkwardness or rejection. Over time, distance can build without either person fully understanding how it happened. But here's the reality. Nothing is fundamentally broken. Your body hasn't stopped responding. Your capacity for pleasure hasn't disappeared. What has changed is the way your body, mind, and emotions want to engage with intimacy.

And when you keep trying to recreate the past, it often leads to frustration. Because later life intimacy is not about returning to how things used to be. It's about discovering what works now.

This stage of life offers something valuable that often goes unrecognised. There is typically greater self-awareness, more life experience, and less need to perform or impress. When used well, that creates the foundation for a more honest, grounded, and deeply satisfying intimate connection.

There is also a quieter confidence that can emerge in later life. A sense of knowing yourself more clearly, being less concerned with external validation, and feeling more able to express what you want. This can be incredibly powerful in an intimate space, where authenticity matters far more than perfection.

However, accessing that requires a shift in approach. It involves moving away from performance and expectation, and towards presence and communication. It may also involve acknowledging that things feel different. Arousal can take longer. Energy levels may vary. Confidence can fluctuate. These are normal physiological and psychological changes, NOT signs that intimacy is no longer possible.

In fact, when these changes are accepted rather than resisted, they often lead to a more relaxed and enjoyable experience. Slowing down allows for greater awareness, deeper sensation, and more meaningful connection.

Equally important is communication. Not overly formal or forced conversations, but simple, honest expressions of where you

are. Statements such as "I feel like we've become a bit disconnected" or "I'd like us to feel closer again" can open the door to meaningful change. These moments of honesty often create more connection than any technique or strategy.

There is also value in rebuilding the foundations. Touch, closeness, and shared moments without expectation can help re-establish a sense of comfort and safety. When touch no longer carries pressure, it becomes something people naturally move towards again.

And finally, there is a need to reintroduce play and fun. Intimacy does not need to feel serious or pressured. In fact, introducing a sense of ease, fun, curiosity, and even humour can shift the dynamic significantly. When people feel relaxed, they are far more open to connection and far more willing to explore.

If your intimate life has become routine, distant, or uncertain, the goal is not to "fix" it in a technical sense. It is to re-engage with it in a way that reflects who you are now.

With that in mind, here are five practical ways to begin.

5 Bedroom Boosters That Make a Meaningful Difference

- **Reconnect with your own body.** Before focusing on your partner, take time to reconnect with your own physical awareness. Slowing down and noticing sensation helps rebuild the foundation for desire and enjoyment.
- **Open up an honest conversation.** Simple, direct communication can be transformative. Expressing how you feel without blame or pressure creates space for reconnection.
- **Remove performance pressure.** Let go of expectations around outcomes. When intimacy is no longer goal-driven, it becomes easier to relax and engage naturally.
- **Rebuild touch without expectation.** Physical connection that is not outcome-focused helps restore comfort and safety. This can gradually lead to renewed desire.
- **Introduce playfulness and variety.** A sense of play and fun, curiosity, and small changes in routine can refresh the dynamic and bring energy back into the relationship.

Ultimately, later life intimacy is not about decline. It is about adaptation. When approached with honesty, openness, and a willingness to do things differently, it has the potential to become more connected, more authentic, and more fulfilling than ever before.

And perhaps most importantly, it becomes something chosen again, rather than something assumed.

By Lorraine Chapman



www.lorrainechapman.com



Why Self-Doubt Is Costing You More Than You Realise And What To Do About It

If you are over 50 and building a business, or thinking about starting one, you are not starting from scratch. You have experience. You have knowledge. You have lived through challenges most people haven't yet faced. And yet, this is what I see time and time again...

People sit on everything they know and don't use it. People over 50, like me, sit on everything they know... and do nothing with it. Not because they don't have something to offer. But because underneath it all, there is one thing quietly holding them back: Self-doubt. It doesn't always show up loudly.

But it is powerful enough to keep people stuck. They overthink. They second-guess themselves. They tell themselves they need more time, more clarity, more confidence. And that moment rarely comes. So they wait... And in the waiting, they delay what they are more than capable of doing.

The Hidden Cost of Self-Doubt

By the time you reach 50, you are not starting from scratch. You have lived experience. You have knowledge. You have gained wisdom. You have solved problems, navigated challenges, and built resilience. In many ways, you are more equipped than ever before. And yet, so many people sit on that wisdom, not using it. They second-guess themselves. They question whether they are "too old." They feel stuck.

They underestimate the value of what they already know. They wonder if they've missed their chance. So instead of taking action, they wait. They wait for clarity. They wait for confidence. They tell themselves they're waiting for the "right time." But what they're really doing... is not moving. And that time often never comes.

It's Not Strategy, it's Self-Trust.

One of the biggest misconceptions I see in business is this: People think they need more strategy. More information. More courses, how many courses are enough? More qualifications. As if that's what's missing. And yet... nothing changes. Most people already know enough to take the next step. What they don't have is trust in themselves to act on what they know. And that is where everything changes.

Because when you don't trust yourself:

- You hesitate
 - You overthink
 - You delay decisions
 - You stay in preparation mode instead of action
- And ultimately, you stay stuck. The turning point is not learning more. It's making a decision. Not a perfect one. Not a fully thought-out one.

Just a decision to stop waiting... and back yourself anyway. To move, even when you don't feel completely ready. And to understand that clarity comes after action, not before it. I know this firsthand.

After going bankrupt, I found myself questioning my ability, my direction, my expertise and what I could create next. But at some point, I had to decide. Not because I felt ready. But because I was no longer willing to stay where I was. That decision led to action. And that action built trust.

Starting or rebuilding after 50 is not a disadvantage. It is one of your greatest strengths.

You bring:

- perspective
- emotional intelligence
- lived experience
- resilience

These are not things you can learn quickly; they are earned. The challenge is not whether you have something to offer. The challenge is whether you are willing to step forward and use it. The work I do now focuses on helping people move from self-doubt to self-trust and from there, build something meaningful and profitable.

Not through overcomplicated strategies.

But through:

- clear thinking
- honest conversations
- consistent action
- personalised cheer squad

Because confidence doesn't come first. Action does. If you are over 50 and feel like you are sitting on something, an idea, a skill, a desire to do more, then the question is not whether you can. The question is whether you are willing to stop holding yourself back. Because the cost of not acting is far greater than the risk of starting. And at some point, you have to stop thinking about it... and be honest with yourself. How much longer am I going to sit on what I know? Because what you have is not just valuable.

It's needed.

At some point, you either use what you know... or you don't.

And that choice is yours.

By Mary Scott



Maintaining Well-being While Working in a High-Pressure Environment



Relationships at work are often spoken about in simple terms. We talk about collaboration, communication and teamwork. But in reality, they are far more complex. And this is particularly evident in high-performance environments where roles begin to shift in subtle ways and become ever more demanding. Once lines start to blur and roles become less defined, morale dips and performance can suffer.

Have you ever found yourself in a situation at work where you soon discovered that the role you signed up for wasn't the role you were carrying out? Not because anything had been formally agreed, but because you stepped in or were asked to step in, helped out, and gradually became part of something which wasn't originally part of your remit?

At first, it might feel constructive. After all, you're contributing, solving problems, and supporting others. But over time, something changes. Expectations begin to alter and become less clear. Your involvement increases. Informal reliance develops, and what begins as support becomes dependency. And without any explicit conversation, you may find yourself carrying responsibility that was never clearly defined. You may feel resentful and undervalued.

It is in moments like this that relationships require careful management, not through confrontation or withdrawal but through clearly redefining roles.

When Support Becomes Assumed

Most professionals don't set out to create this dynamic. They step in, solve problems, support colleagues, and keep things moving. It starts out as a conversation here or a piece of work there. An informal request that becomes a regular one. But over time, this can create unintended patterns.

What began as support can turn into something more permanent, without structure, without clarity, and often without recognition. And because it happens incrementally, it can be difficult to pinpoint when the shift occurred. The risk here isn't simply workload; it's role drift.

The Hidden Impact

The challenge in these situations is rarely capability. It is clarity. When roles become blurred, decision-making becomes harder. You may find yourself second-guessing where your responsibility begins and ends. What are you responsible for? Where is your input required most? How much should you be involved? At the same time, the cognitive load increases.

You are holding more context, navigating more dynamics, and often doing so without clear boundaries. And over time, this affects both mindset and well-being and often leads to burnout. Not because you are unable to manage the work, but because the structure around the work has become unclear.

Reintroducing Clarity

There is often reluctance among people to reset boundaries in professional relationships, out of concern that stepping back may be perceived as unhelpful or difficult. In practice, the opposite is true. Roles and expectations need to be clearly defined. When roles and expectations are clear, they improve efficiency, reduce unnecessary friction, support better decision-making, allow people to contribute more effectively, and ultimately strengthen working relationships, which can only be a positive.

Re-establishing Structure

Reintroducing structure might involve confirming your role and remit, clarifying how and when you are involved, ensuring responsibility sits in the right place and stepping back from informal or undefined contributions. Importantly, this does not need to be confrontational. It is about being explicit about how you are working, and this does mean setting boundaries.

A More Sustainable Way of Working

High-performing individuals are often the ones most affected by blurred boundaries, as they are capable, responsive, and trusted, making them easy to rely on. But sustainable performance requires more than capability. It requires structure. Why? Because structure provides the stability needed to integrate insight and create lasting change. And in complex environments, that structure is what allows both individuals and organisations to perform at their best.

Reflection

If you've experienced this, it can be useful to pause and ask:

- Where did the role begin to shift?
- What assumptions were made by you or others?
- What would you do differently now?
- What have you learned about how you work best?

Final Thought

Managing relationships at work is not about being more accommodating. It is about ensuring that the way you work allows you to remain effective over time and maintain your well-being.

By Celia Conrad





In recent years, the landscape of recruitment has experienced a profound metamorphosis. This transformation is not a consequence of a scarcity of talent; rather, it stems from the fact that a substantial number of the most qualified candidates have ceased to actively pursue employment opportunities.

Emerging across diverse industries is a burgeoning “quiet candidate market.” This market is populated by professionals who find themselves disengaged, uncertain about their career paths, or open to change, yet they refrain from applying for positions through traditional channels.

Organisations may find themselves at risk of underestimating the far-reaching implications of this paradigm shift.

Job Applications Don't Fully Reflect Reality

Traditionally, recruitment heavily relied on visibility. Advertise a role, wait for applications, and interview the strongest candidates.

However, the current reality is that many experienced professionals are wary of recruitment processes that feel impersonal, lengthy, or unclear.

Some have applied for roles in the past and never received feedback, while others are cautious about moving due to economic uncertainty. Additionally, many are simply too busy, overwhelmed, or disengaged to actively search job boards every evening after work.

This doesn't mean they wouldn't consider a move; it simply means the best talent is often hidden beneath the surface.

THE QUIET CANDIDATE MARKET: WHY GOOD PEOPLE AREN'T APPLYING ANYMORE

Employer Brand Matters More Than Ever

In today's competitive landscape, candidates are exercising greater discernment in their application choices. While salary remains a critical consideration, it is no longer the sole determinant. Prospective employees are now evaluating a broader spectrum of factors:

- What is the genuine culture of the organisation?
- Do employees remain and advance within the company?
- Are leaders approachable and communicative?
- Will they receive adequate support upon joining?

Candidates undertake meticulous research on organisations well before submitting applications. They scrutinise LinkedIn content, peruse reviews, and monitor leadership teams, paying particular attention to how organisations articulate their commitment to their people.

In essence, recruitment has transformed into a strategic, long-term relationship-building endeavour rather than a mere short-term hiring process.

The Dangers of Transactional Recruitment

One of the most significant challenges I observe in the current recruitment landscape is the tendency for processes to become excessively driven by procedures and transactional in nature. While the importance of expedited hiring processes cannot be overstated, it is crucial to remember that candidates still yearn for genuine human connection. They seek meaningful communication, transparency, and a sincere understanding of what the organisation truly values and is looking for, rather than merely finding a match with a job description.

When organisations rely solely on job advertisements and adopt a reactive hiring approach, they frequently overlook exceptional individuals who may not actively seek out job opportunities. These individuals could bring unique skills and perspectives that are invaluable to the organisation, yet they remain unnoticed due to the limitations of a process-centric recruitment strategy. Therefore, organisations need to balance efficiency with a more human-centric approach to ensure they attract and retain the best talent.

So, what's the solution?

I believe organisations need to shift from simply filling vacancies to building genuine talent communities.

This involves:

- Building relationships before vacancies arise
- Creating visible employer brands
- Having authentic conversations with professionals in the market
- Improving onboarding and early engagement
- Training managers to foster environments where people want to stay

The organisations attracting the strongest talent right now aren't the loudest. They're the ones creating trust. Ultimately, passive candidates move when something feels right – not just when a vacancy appears. And in today's market, that human connection is becoming a significant competitive advantage.

By Penelope Layzell

penelope@penelopelayzell.com



'When organisations rely solely on job advertisements and adopt a reactive hiring approach, they frequently overlook exceptional individuals who may not actively seek out job opportunities.'



IS SNORING A MODERN EPIDEMIC?

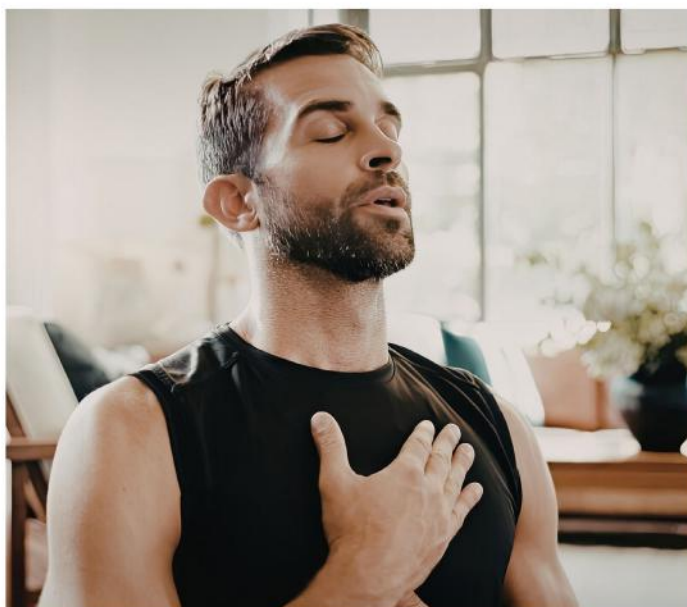
By Nicky Abell

So many of us snore. We suffer from sinus, chest issues, and gasping for breath. More of us mouth-breathe than ever. Researchers have found shorter inhalations are fine, but a longer gap before exhaling is maybe more productive in expelling CO2 gas, a waste product. Akin to rowing a boat with short, rapid strokes compared to strong, long strokes and extended pause, you glide effortlessly with power. Our body can too.

There are lots of techniques from the Wim Hof method, to Buteyko and Tummo. Some techniques work with faster over-breathing for a short, intense time to reset the system. But this must have proper tuition.

Overdosing on oxygen doesn't make the body absorb any more. We inhale about 25% of this gas. Strengthening our diaphragm, which pushes our lungs up to expel air and draws them down to take in air, is vital. We focus on speed and muscle strength for the body, but do we ever look at our inner chest wall muscles?

CO2 is produced in every cell as a waste product, so it, too, is an important gas to encourage breathing. Examining prayers and chants from various religions, an



uncanny finding was made. All were recited or sung with a 5.5 breaths a minute cycle. From Buddhist, Christian to Taoist cultures.

Blood flow to the brain increased with the heart, circulation and nervous system in peak efficiency. Once returning to their normal breath rhythm and speech, the systems went awry. If repeated with the slow breath cycle, efficiency returned. Anxiety and depression improved, too. Looking at this data, you could say prayers can really heal. Panic attacks have been investigated to a possible link to

the brain. A connection issue whereby the person holds breath through being nervous, CO2 rises, and a delayed response triggers a panic attack. Shallow, rapid breathing continues in the upper lungs, adding further stress responses. Proof deeper, slower breaths calm us down, reducing panic.

Avoid mouth breathing, use your nose, and exhale longer. Allow the diaphragm muscle to increase your lung capacity for peak efficiency. Allow the chest muscles to become more toned. Turn on the soothing nervous system in the lower lungs, and the upper stimulates our stress responses. Agitation, fear, anxiety. We see this in laboured breathing with asthma and lung disease. Calm, focused, shorter breaths in but longer ones out, to remove stale air and gain space for fresh air. Once breathing improves, use the 5.5 second rule in, pause and out.

Buteyko was one breathing specialist who had very poor health. Finding a slower breath eased his painful chest and stomach. Returning to rapid breaths, the problems returned. Gasping for air, as chronic chest clients do, can cause muscle stiffness and pain. He went on to develop his own system.

Chew more. Our ancestors 300 years ago had large sinus cavities, straight teeth and a strong jawline. We sadly have mutated with smaller jaws, causing reduced airways as our structure changes. Causing crooked teeth with more removed when young. Braces of the past, pushing teeth back, just made the problem worse. Eat more raw or hard foods. Avoid the over-processed mush we eat now. Chew gum. Thicker gums can be bought to increase chewing action. Not polite, but your body health will beg to differ.

In sleep, our jaw can drop, and mouth breathing begins. We have no idea this is happening. Mouth taping sounds weird, but it can instantly stop this process unless a severe nasal blockage is present. Practised breath work is needed initially when we're conscious to improve the airways. More air passes through the nostrils, increasing the pathways to be efficient. Even short periods of practice with tape can build up.

Sport focuses on VO2 max for more anaerobic endurance. We hit a wall when not enough oxygen is absorbed, so we pant rapidly. But if we train how to breathe, we can utilise a pathway without oxygen to go longer before exhaustion. Long, slow exhaling removes CO2 and reduces lactic acid, the byproduct from this method that can make our muscles seize up.

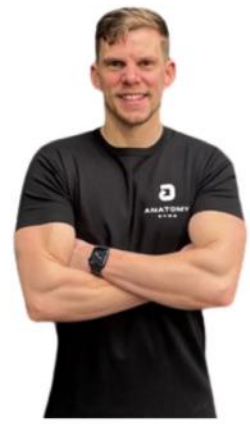
How we breathe has a powerful effect on us. It's taken for granted, but when it's interfered with, or we become lazy, unhealthy conditions will develop.

By Nicky Abell-Francis



The Compliance Problem

Why Most Weight Loss Plans Fail Before They Begin



One of the biggest misconceptions in obesity and weight management is that people fail because they lack knowledge.

They don't.

Most people already know what they should be doing: eat better, move more, and be consistent. The real issue isn't knowledge. It's compliance. And more specifically, it's that most weight-loss plans are designed in a way that makes compliance almost impossible from the start.

Not because people are lazy or unmotivated, but because the plan doesn't fit real life.

The Myth of the "Perfect Time"

A common pattern I see is the idea of waiting for the right moment to begin.

"I'll start after this weekend."
"I'll start when work calms down."
"I'll start on Monday."

The problem is simple: that perfect time doesn't exist.

Life doesn't pause to allow you to focus on your health. There will always be something: work deadlines, family commitments, social events, stress, and poor sleep. If your plan relies on everything being calm and controlled before you begin, you'll be waiting forever.

The people who succeed don't wait for the perfect time. They recognise that life is busy, unpredictable, and often inconvenient, and they start anyway.

Not next week. Not on Monday.

Now.

Because the moment you draw a line and take action, however small, you shift from intention to behaviour. And behaviour is what drives results.

The "Monday Start" Trap

There's something psychologically comforting about starting on a Monday. It feels like a clean slate. A fresh week. A chance to "do it properly."

But this mindset often creates an all-or-nothing approach.

If Monday goes well, everything is on track. If it doesn't, the week is written off before it's even begun.

This is where most plans fall apart.

Real progress isn't built on perfect weeks. It's built on imperfect ones where you keep going anyway.

Starting midweek, after a bad meal, or during a busy period might not feel ideal, but it's far more realistic. And realism is what drives long-term compliance.

Stop Thinking Daily, Start Thinking Weekly

Another major flaw in traditional weight loss approaches is the obsession with daily perfection.

Hit your calories exactly.
Train exactly as planned.
Stick to everything, every single day.

Anatomy Gyms
www.anatomygyms.com



The moment you go over your calories or miss a session, it feels like failure. And that feeling often leads to a downward spiral. "I've messed up, so I may as well start again next week." Instead, we need to zoom out.

Your body doesn't operate on a 24-hour reset cycle. It responds to patterns over time.

When you shift your focus from daily targets to weekly outcomes, everything changes.

If your calorie target is slightly higher on one day, you can adjust across the rest of the week. If you miss a session, you can make it up later. If life gets in the way, you adapt, not abandon the plan.

This approach introduces flexibility without removing structure.

And that's the key.

Structure + Flexibility = Compliance

Most diets fail because they sit at one extreme or the other.

They're either too rigid, demanding perfection, precision, and consistency that don't align with real life.

Or they're too loose, lacking direction, accountability, and measurable targets.

What actually works is the middle ground.

A structured framework that allows for flexibility.

- A weekly calorie target instead of a daily "pass/fail"
- A training plan that can shift around your schedule
- An understanding that not every day will look the same

This doesn't mean lowering standards. It means creating a system you can actually stick to. Because the best plan isn't the most optimal one on paper, it's the one you can follow consistently.

Real People, Real Lives

Most people trying to lose weight aren't professional athletes with unlimited time and resources.

They have jobs.
They have families.
They have responsibilities, stress, and competing priorities.

And things go wrong.

Meetings run late. Kids get sick. Sleep is disrupted. Plans change.



A successful approach to weight management has to account for this, not ignore it.

When someone believes they need perfect conditions to succeed, they're setting themselves up to fail. But when they understand that progress can happen alongside life's chaos, everything becomes more sustainable.

You don't need a perfect routine.
You need a resilient one.

Draw the Line and Start

If there's one takeaway from this, it's this:

Stop waiting.

Stop waiting for Monday.
Stop waiting for motivation.
Stop waiting for life to calm down.

Draw a line, today, and start.

Not perfectly. Not all at once. But intentionally.

Because success in weight management doesn't come from finding the perfect plan. It comes from consistently following a plan that works in the real world.

And the real world is messy, unpredictable, and far from perfect.

But that's exactly where progress happens.

By Craig Alexander

Grace in Everyday Life



By Marsha Parcou

How simple acts of grace can bring hope, healing and purpose?

In today's fast-moving world, many people are searching for purpose, peace and connection. These are often pursued through major achievements, life-changing moments or public success. Yet some of life's deepest meaning is found not in grand displays, but in the quiet acts of grace we extend to others each day.

A kind word to someone who is struggling. A message to a friend who has grown silent. Patience in a moment of stress. Forgiveness when it would be easier to hold on to hurt.

These may seem like small gestures, yet they can have a profound effect on a person's wellbeing. They may also reflect God's love at work through ordinary lives. For many, seasons of hardship become the very places where compassion grows strongest. Those who have experienced disappointment, uncertainty or emotional pain often emerge with a greater capacity to understand and encourage others. In this way, personal struggle need not be wasted. It can shape character, deepen faith and give rise to a clearer sense of purpose.

This is an important reminder at a time when many feel pressure to appear strong, successful and always in control. Real life, however, is often far less polished. It includes questions, setbacks and moments of weariness. Yet even in the middle of an unfinished journey, a person can still become a source of hope and light to others.

One of the most meaningful truths about encouragement is that it does not require perfection. We do not need to have all the answers to be present for someone. Sometimes, the greatest gift we can offer is simply the willingness to listen, to care and to stand beside another person in a difficult season. Often, that quiet presence says more than words ever could.

In homes, workplaces, churches and neighbourhoods, there are countless opportunities to support one another. A thoughtful gesture, a respectful check-in or a few sincere words can make a meaningful difference to someone carrying a burden in silence.

Acts of grace are not always dramatic. More often, they are deeply ordinary. They may take the form of helping someone without being asked, offering kindness to a stranger, praying for someone in need, or choosing calm and understanding in a tense situation. These choices may

go unnoticed by many, but their impact can be lasting. Often, it is in these simple moments that God's grace is most clearly felt.

At a time when conversations around mental health, emotional resilience and personal wellbeing are becoming increasingly important, this kind of living deserves greater attention. Encouragement is not merely a social courtesy; it can be part of the healing process. Feeling seen, valued and supported can restore hope in ways we may never fully measure.

Of course, extending grace is not always easy. There are times when kindness is not returned, when patience is tested, or when others respond with indifference. Still, it is often in such moments that character is revealed most clearly. Choosing compassion over frustration, forgiveness over resentment, or integrity over convenience speaks volumes about the values that guide our lives.

Many people can recall a small act of kindness that stayed with them long after it happened — a message at the right time, an unexpected helping hand, or a stranger's courtesy on a difficult day. These moments remind us that grace does not have to be grand to be powerful. Sometimes, the smallest act can become an answer to prayer.

Perhaps that is where true purpose begins: not only in achieving personal goals, but in becoming someone who uplifts others along the way. For Christians, this calling is deeply connected to the life of Jesus, who showed compassion, served others and reminded us that love is most meaningful when it is lived out.

In a world where many are quietly carrying heavy burdens, small acts of care can shine brightly.

A simple challenge for the week ahead might be to encourage one person, offer one unexpected act of kindness each day, or pause to reflect on the grace you have received and how you might pass it on. Such actions may seem small, but they can create ripples of hope across families, friendships and communities.

In the end, a meaningful life is often built in these ordinary moments. Through grace, compassion and encouragement, we not only strengthen others but also deepen our own sense of purpose.

And when we allow God's love to flow through our lives, even the simplest act of kindness can become a message of hope.

Why Calm Can Feel Uncomfortable

Helen Gullick



In a world that seldom slows, calm has become one of our quietest longings. We crave moments of peace, space to breathe, and permission to pause. Yet for many, when those moments finally arrive, they do not always feel as soothed as expected. Stillness can feel unfamiliar and peace itself strangely difficult to receive. As a Reiki Master Teacher working with clients who are stressed and overwhelmed, I often witness one surprising truth: calm can feel uncomfortable.

What can appear to be a resistance to ease is often something far more compassionate, relatable and deeply human. The body and mind adapt to the environments we live within. When life has been shaped by pressure, urgency or constant stimulation, calm may feel less like home and more like unfamiliar territory. What we consciously long for and what our nervous system has become used to are not always speaking the same language.

A much-needed empty afternoon may bring restlessness rather than relief, and a quiet room can suddenly feel too empty, the silence of loneliness hanging in the air. As external demands soften, the inner world often grows louder. Thoughts begin to race, tension rises, and there can be an immediate urge to fill the space with noise or distraction. If rest is what we so crave, why can it feel so difficult to settle into it?

The answer often lies within the nervous system, and in the energetic patterns we have unconsciously adapted and grown used to over time. Modern life encourages a near-constant state of activation. Many people move through their days carrying an invisible background hum of urgency. Messages to answer, responsibilities to uphold, decisions to make, uncertainty to navigate, and the subtle pressure to always stay productive. Even when nothing dramatic is happening, the body may still be in a low-level stress response, with cortisol and adrenaline circulating quietly in the background. Over time, this heightened state can begin to feel normal.

When the body becomes used to tension, stillness can feel unfamiliar. What feels unfamiliar can sometimes be interpreted as unsafe, which is why rest can sometimes feel most difficult for those who need it most. The nervous system learns through repetition. If we have spent months or even years

caught in patterns of rushing or overthinking, ease may not be something we can simply step into because, we have decided it is time. More often, it needs to be reintroduced gently, not as another task to complete or something to perfect, but rather as a slow remembering of what safety feels like.

This is where practices such as Reiki can be deeply supportive. For those who find traditional meditation difficult, Reiki can offer a gentler doorway into the same restorative state. In many ways, it can feel like an active meditation, helping the body soften and the mind quieten, while what has been tightly held begins to release naturally.

Reiki is a Japanese restorative practice that works with the body's natural energy system, inviting a return to balance, rather than pushing for change. It can help reduce stress, encourage relaxation, and support overall wellbeing. This points to an important truth - healing is not always a mental process. We can understand stress intellectually and remain held within it physically and energetically.

Sometimes what creates the shift is not more thinking, but a different experience altogether: the experience of being still, feeling safe, and receiving rather than chasing. Reiki offers this subtle yet powerful reset, meeting the system where it is, helping to release what has been tightly held and restoring a more natural inner rhythm. In this way, it can become a bridge between the pace we have grown used to and the steadier state we know is possible.

Calm does not always arrive all at once. More often, it returns quietly, like dawn entering a room before anyone notices. It may begin as a deeper exhale, a softening in the jaw, shoulders lowering without instruction, or the mind feeling a little less crowded. It may look like being able to sit in silence for a few moments longer than before, or simply feeling present in your own life again. These moments matter because they teach the body something new: that peace and rest are safe.

When repeated consistently, small experiences of ease begin to reshape old patterns. The nervous system learns that it no longer needs to remain on high alert, and energy once tied up in stress can begin to flow more freely. What once felt uncomfortable gradually becomes natural.

If ease feels difficult for you, it does not mean you are incapable of inner harmony. It may simply mean your system has adapted to survival and is now learning a new way of being. You do not need to force yourself into stillness or become perfect at meditation overnight. Honouring this process often means beginning gently with a few quiet moments, a conscious breath, a supportive treatment, time in nature, or simply the willingness to pause.

Over time, what once felt unfamiliar can become deeply known, and what once felt uncomfortable may become the very place you return for strength, balance, and the peace that was always waiting within you.

Instagram@healingwavesuae

The Truth About Sugar:

What You Really Need to Know

Cutting back on sugar can feel tough, but you're not alone. Sugar often sneaks into our meals and snacks, and craving it doesn't make you weak; it makes you human. In my work with clients on gut health and weight loss, I've discovered that the real struggle isn't sugar itself but the confusion and pressure to be perfect. Let's shift away from fear and find a clear, manageable way to approach sugar in real life.

Why Sugar Feels So Confusing

One of my clients once said, "I feel like sugar is everywhere—if I even walk near a grocery store, I'm consuming it." She had a point. Sugar hides in many foods, including bread, sauces, soups, salad dressings, and even certain brands of chicken sausage.

When I start working with clients, they usually fall into two categories:

- *Some see sugar as a villain, blaming themselves for cravings.*
- *Others think sugar isn't a big deal, believing everyone eats it.*

The truth is more complicated. Sugar is not inherently bad, but it affects your gut, energy, cravings, mood, and weight more than you may think. Understanding these effects can help you manage your intake.

What Sugar Really Is

Sugar is a carbohydrate that your body converts into glucose for energy, especially for the brain. Your brain runs almost entirely on glucose, and your muscles use it for fuel. Without glucose, you wouldn't get far. Your body requires it to function.

Things become unbalanced when added sugars overwhelm the diet and begin to affect insulin, gut bacteria, inflammation, and appetite regulation.

Natural vs Added Sugar: Why the Difference Matters

You've probably heard that "fruit is okay, but added sugar is bad." But why?

Natural sugars in fruit come with fibre, water, vitamins, and antioxidants, helping your body absorb them slowly and maintain steady energy levels. In contrast, added sugar arrives alone, causing quick spikes in blood sugar and leaving you hungry soon after. It's like the difference between sipping orange juice and eating an orange—only the whole fruit keeps you full and energised.

What Sugar Does Inside Your Body

Let's keep this simple and real.

Here's what I see in clients all the time:

1. *Blood sugar spikes lead to crashes.*

A sugary breakfast or snack can feel great at first, but about an hour later, you crash. That's the "tired, foggy, give me coffee" moment so many people blame on themselves.

2. *Sugar can confuse your gut.*

Your digestive system is home to trillions of microbes. When you eat a lot of added sugar, certain microbes overgrow and shout louder for more sugar. It's not a lack of willpower. It's biology.

3. *Sugar makes cravings louder.*

When your blood sugar rises quickly, insulin brings it down quickly. Your body then panics and signals hunger—even when you've eaten.

4. *Sugar doesn't satisfy you.*

It tastes amazing, but doesn't keep you full. So, you end up wanting more food, not less.

5. *Your metabolism prefers balance, not chaos.*

When sugar constantly spikes and crashes, your metabolism works harder. Over time, this can make weight loss feel impossible—until you stabilise those highs and lows.

How Much Sugar Is Actually Okay?

I prefer using ranges instead of strict rules for added sugar intake, as they feel more human. Guidelines suggest limiting added sugar to about 6 teaspoons per day for women and 9 for men. However, many people can reach these limits by breakfast without consuming obvious sweets.

Sugar often hides in everyday items like flavoured yoghurts, coffee creamer, granola bars, smoothies, cereals, sauces, dressings, and convenience foods.

Once my clients realise this, it's a revelation for them. One client said, "I didn't love sugar too much; I just didn't realise how often it sneaked into my diet." Awareness truly changes everything.



Hidden Sugars You Might Be Missing

Sugar can show up as:

- cane sugar
- agave
- honey
- malt syrup
- brown rice syrup
- molasses
- fruit juice concentrate
- evaporated cane juice
- dextrose
- fructose
- sucrose
- high fructose corn syrup

If a label contains three or more of those, it's a sign the food is more processed than it looks.

What Happens When You Cut Back (Without Cutting It Out)

This is where things become exciting. When clients reduce their added sugar intake—without eliminating it entirely—they typically notice the following benefits:

- More consistent energy levels
- Fewer afternoon crashes
- Less bloating
- Reduced cravings
- Improved sleep quality
- Calmer digestion
- Clearer skin
- Easier weight loss

Not once has anyone said, "I miss my sugar crash."

Do You Really Need to Quit Sugar?

No. In fact, strict rules often backfire. When someone says to me, "I'm never eating sugar again," I can predict how that story will end. It's not because they lack willpower, but because restriction frequently leads to rebellion.

My coaching philosophy is simple: enjoy sugar intentionally, not accidentally. Here's what that looks like:

- Choose desserts that you genuinely love.
 - Eat them slowly and take the time to savour each bite.
 - Avoid eating sugar on an empty stomach.
 - Pair sweet foods with protein or fibre.
 - Pay attention to how your body feels afterwards.
- This approach allows you to have control without making sugar feel forbidden.

Simple, Real Life Ways to Eat Less Sugar

You don't need to completely change your life. Small steps can be very effective:

- Start your breakfast with protein instead of sugar.
- Swap flavoured yogurt for plain yogurt mixed with fruit.
- Use a mixture of half-and-half creamer and unsweetened creamer.
- Drink water or sparkling water before reaching for snacks.
- Add nuts or protein to your fruit to help you feel full longer.
- Choose snacks that contain at least 8–10 grams of protein.
- Check the labels and aim for less than 6–8 grams of added sugar per serving.

These small adjustments have helped many of my clients stabilise their cravings within a week.



A Story I See Again and Again

I worked with a client who felt "addicted" to sugar and would reach for sweets every afternoon—often without even tasting them. Instead of cutting out sugar, we simply added protein and fibre to her breakfast and lunch.

Within three days, she said, "This is strange, but I'm not even thinking about sugar." Her cravings faded, not from willpower, but because her body felt better supported.

This is the magic of working with your biology instead of against it.

The Bottom Line

Sugar isn't a moral issue—it's about understanding its effects on your gut, energy, cravings, and weight management.

When you understand that:

- cravings have reasons
 - your gut plays a significant role
 - sugar can be enjoyed mindfully
 - small changes can lead to big results
- ...can help you feel in control, not through restriction but through awareness.

As a nutritionist and health coach, I've seen many people improve their health by learning to work with sugar rather than fight it. You don't need perfection; you just need understanding and a few simple tools to feel your best.

References

American Heart Association – Added Sugars
Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health – The Sweet Danger of Sugar
World Health Organization – Sugars Intake for Adults and Children
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention – Added Sugars
Mayo Clinic – Carbohydrates and Sugar

By Anne Anyia

www.awesconutrition.com



HOW TO MAINTAIN YOUR SPIRIT DURING CRAZY NEWS CYCLES!

By Laila Morcos Zissis



You wake up, reach for your phone, and within sixty seconds, your nervous system is already running a crisis simulation. Pings, notifications ... rushing to check the headlines! What's trending today that didn't exist yesterday but somehow feels like it needs emotional attention, NOW? Sound familiar? Well, there's nothing wrong with you! You are human — and your brain is doing exactly what it was wired to do. The problem is ... it was never wired for this. We do life wrong in all ways!

I know this territory very well – in my bones well. Not just as a board-certified coach, but as a former journalist. For years, the news cycle was my professional habitat. I thrived in it ... or so I thought I was thriving. I was paid to be inside it, to track it, to feel the urgency of what is the strongest pulse of the communities I worked in. And I will be honest with you: I loved it!!!!

And that led to my not protecting my nervous system, which was a recipe for a disaster swirling inside my body. I didn't know how to protect my nervous system. I absorbed stories of trauma, crisis, and conflict like a sponge absorbs water — without a strategy for wringing them out. It cost me. And eventually, that cost became my catalyst to change and the charge to help others avoid the pitfalls I found myself in. Too much wine at night to wind down and too much coffee in the morning to get going. What I learned — through my own unraveling and journey, through neuroscience, nutrition, and deep wellness practice — is what I now teach others. So, let's talk about what is actually happening inside your body when the news cycle won't stop, and more importantly, how to stay spiritually grounded without having to toss the remote in the trash.

Your Brain on Breaking News

It's all about your hormones! By now, you have probably heard of dopamine. Well, here's what nobody tells you about dopamine and news: doomscrolling isn't a character flaw — it's a neurochemical loop. Every time you refresh your feed, your brain releases a small dopamine pulse in anticipation of new information. Neuroscientists Kent

Berridge and Terry Robinson at the University of Michigan identified this as the brain's "wanting" system — the same mesolimbic dopamine pathway activated by gambling and compulsive behavior. Your brain doesn't distinguish between "important" and "urgent" — it just knows something new is coming, and new equals survival potential.

Simultaneously, distressing content triggers your hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal (HPA) axis, flooding your system with cortisol — the primary stress hormone. Stanford neuroscientist and stress researcher Robert Sapolsky has documented extensively how short-term cortisol is adaptive and useful, but chronically elevated cortisol suppresses immune function, disrupts sleep, and impairs memory. We are not supposed to suppress emotions. Research published in *Psychological Bulletin* confirms that chronic stress is associated with suppression of immunity. Perhaps most relevant here: sustained elevation in cortisol dims your capacity for hope, creativity, and connection. In other words, chronic news exposure doesn't just exhaust you. It can quietly erode your spirit.

The Spirit Isn't Separate from the Body

One of the most important shifts I made — in my own healing and in my coaching practice — was letting go of the idea that spirit and physiology are separate conversations. They are not. We are a whole person, and everything is connected to everything. Your vagus nerve, often called the "soul nerve," is the superhighway between your brain, heart, and gut. When your nervous system is dysregulated, your access to what I call "spiritual bandwidth" — the capacity for gratitude, presence, faith, and joy — narrows significantly.

This is biology. A dysregulated nervous system reduces blood flow to the prefrontal cortex, the region responsible for perspective, empathy, and meaning-making. Research cited by Sapolsky and colleagues at Stanford shows that chronic social stress causes measurable atrophy in the



prefrontal cortex and hippocampus. You cannot think or feel your way to peace from a cortisol-flooded brain. You have to work through the body first.

Practical Protocols for Staying Grounded

So, how can you stay informed, feel good, and disconnect in a way that is self-preserving? Here are the protocols I use personally and prescribe in my coaching work.

First, establish a media boundary — not a media blackout. Choose one or two specific windows per day to consume news, each lasting no longer than 20 minutes. Turn off notifications and pings. Your brain needs to know if the alarm can be turned off.

Second, practice what I call the “somatic reset” immediately after consuming difficult content. Box breathing can be very powerful and as simple as four counts through the nose, hold for four, then six counts out through the mouth. This activates the parasympathetic nervous system — your rest-and-digest mode. A 2017 study published in *Frontiers in Psychology* found that diaphragmatic breathing significantly reduced salivary cortisol levels and improved sustained attention in participants who practiced it consistently. A 2023 meta-analysis in *Scientific Reports* confirmed that breathwork was associated with meaningfully lower self-reported stress across randomized controlled trials. Pair your reset with movement: a five-minute walk outside works better than most supplements. Tell yourself, “I am safe. I have peace. Right now, I am love.” Feel that.

One of the most powerful tools I bring to this work is heart coherence training. As a HeartMath® Certified Practitioner, I have witnessed firsthand how learning to shift into a coherent heart rhythm state can interrupt the stress loop at its source. Over 30 years of research by the HeartMath Institute shows that when we intentionally activate positive emotions — gratitude, appreciation, compassion — our heart rhythms become more ordered and stable, increasing vagal tone and reducing cortisol levels. In one study, participants who practiced HeartMath coherence-building techniques for 30 days showed significant reductions in cortisol alongside significant increases in DHEA, the body’s vitality hormone. Heart coherence is not just stress management — it is a direct pathway back to spirit.

Third, anchor your mornings in intention before information. The first 30 minutes of your day set your neurological tone. **DO NOT TURN ON A SCREEN!** Prayer, breath, gratitude, and silence should be the intention for mornings. Research on the cortisol awakening response shows that cortisol rises steeply in the first 30-45 minutes after waking up; this is your brain’s most neurologically impressionable window. How you prime it shapes your cognitive and emotional patterns for hours. What information are you priming it with? Make it good!

Finally, nourish your neurochemistry deliberately. The research here is compelling: a 2021 systematic review published through the National Institutes of Health found that ashwagandha root extract significantly reduced both serum cortisol and self-reported stress in controlled trials. Magnesium glycinate supports parasympathetic nervous system activity and has been shown in clinical trials to reduce cortisol excretion. Omega-3 fatty acids have documented anti-inflammatory effects on stress response, with studies showing reductions in cortisol reactivity. Always consult your healthcare provider before beginning any supplement protocol.

You Are Not the News

I spent years confusing being informed with being responsible. I thought reporting hard news meant I cared more. What it actually meant was that I had no boundaries between the world’s pain and my own capacity to function. That is not service — that is depletion.

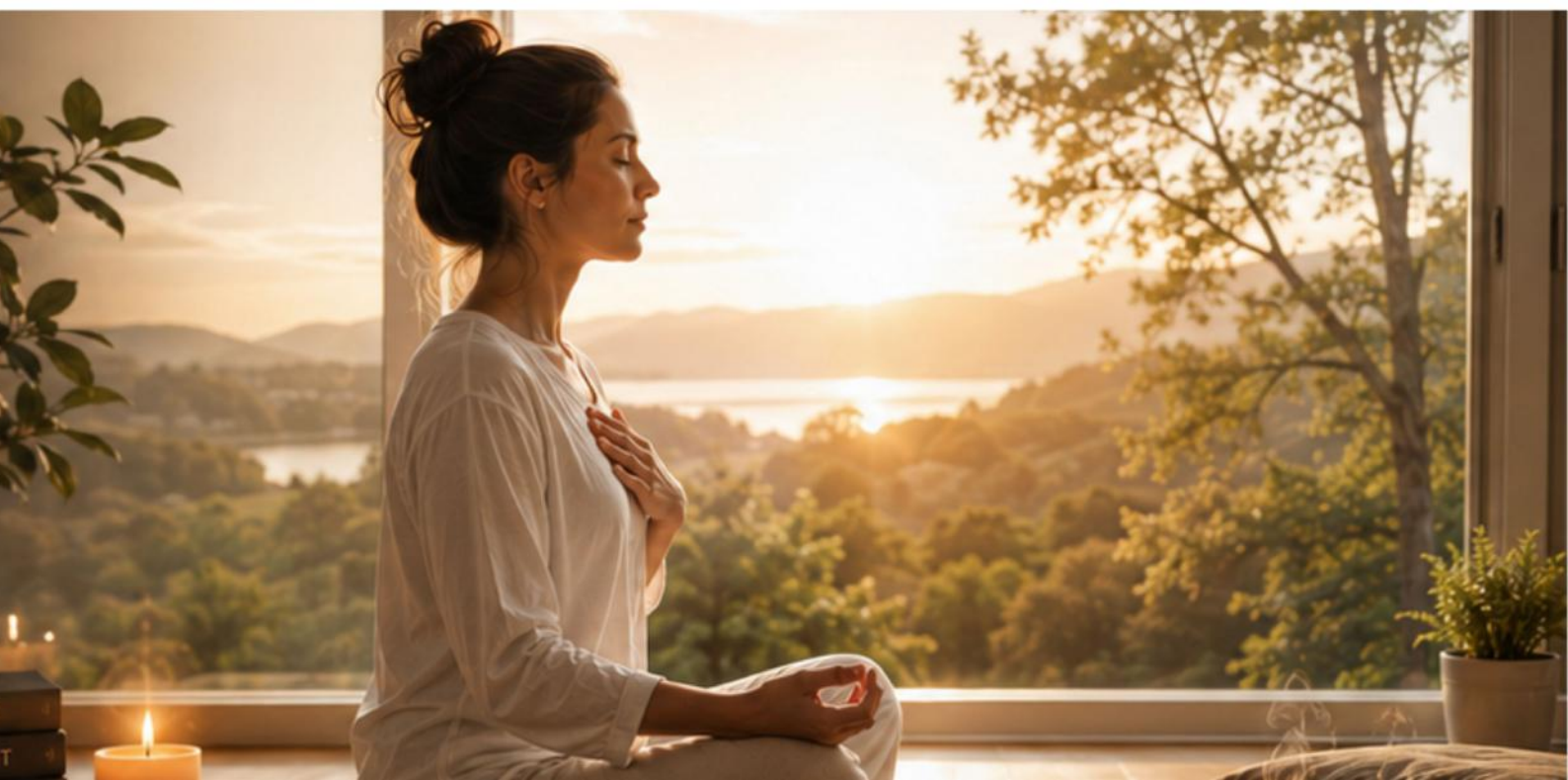
You can be a conscious, compassionate, engaged human being and still protect your peace. In fact, protecting your peace is what makes sustained contribution possible. A drained spirit cannot pour into others. A regulated nervous system can.

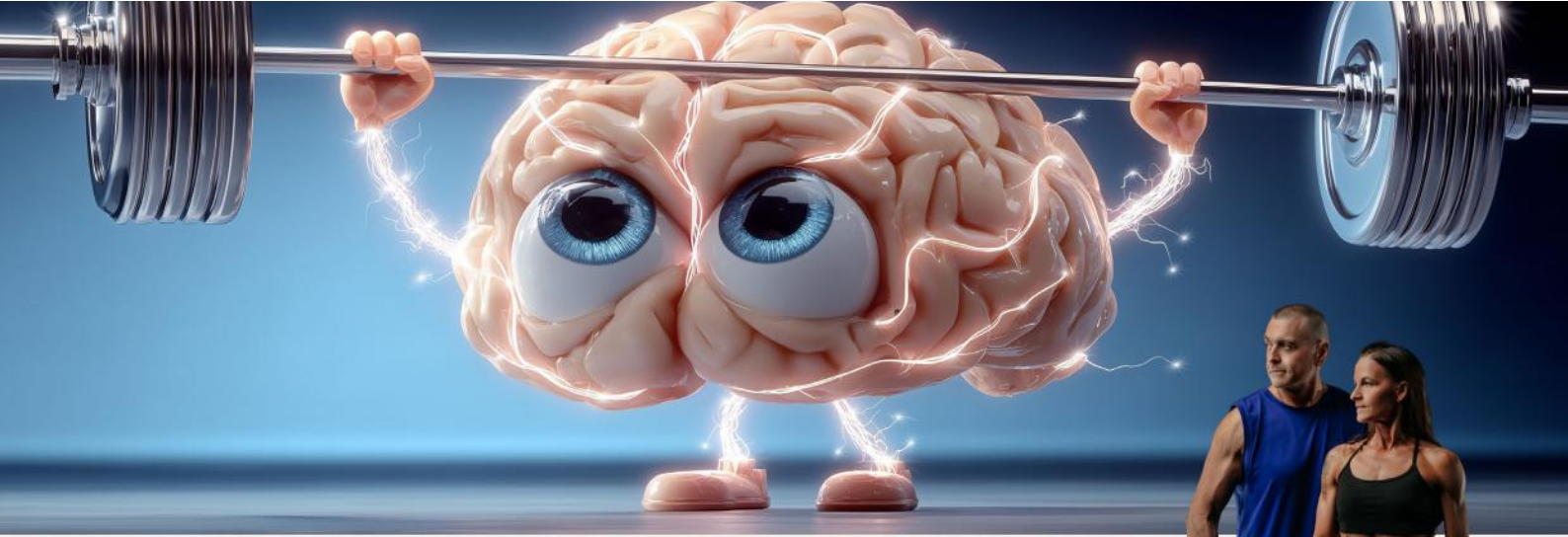
The news will always have somewhere to be. Make sure you do too — grounded, present, and whole.

Professional Certified Coach

Executive Producer & Host of Breast Cancer Unleashed Podcast & Founder & President LikeMinded Ladies

www.lailamorcoszissis.com





THE MIND-MUSCLE CONNECTION: HOW MENTAL HEALTH INFLUENCES PHYSICAL PERFORMANCE

When people think about fitness, they often focus on physical factors such as strength, endurance, diet, and exercise routines. Mental health is frequently considered separately, despite the fact that psychological wellbeing can have a considerable influence on physical performance.

Most people will have experienced days when exercise feels easier and more enjoyable, as well as days when even simple physical activity seems demanding. Stress, poor sleep, low mood, and emotional difficulties can all affect energy, concentration, and motivation. Equally, physical activity itself can influence mood and emotional wellbeing.

Understanding the relationship between mental health and physical performance can help people develop more realistic expectations of themselves and adopt a more balanced approach to health and fitness.

The Brain and Physical Performance

Movement begins in the brain. The nervous system controls coordination, balance, reaction time, concentration, and muscular activity. Because of this connection, psychological factors can influence how effectively the body performs.

Periods of stress or emotional strain may reduce concentration during exercise or make physical activity feel more difficult. Mental fatigue can also affect motivation and decision-making, which may influence exercise habits and consistency.

This does not mean that people experiencing stress or emotional difficulties cannot exercise successfully. Rather, it demonstrates that physical performance is affected by a combination of biological, psychological, and social factors.

Stress and Its Effects on the Body

Stress is a natural response that helps the body deal with challenges and demands. In the short term, stress can improve focus and alertness. However, prolonged stress may have negative effects on both physical and psychological wellbeing.

When the body experiences stress, hormones such as cortisol are released. While this response is necessary, long-term activation can contribute to:

- Disturbed sleep.
- Reduced energy levels.
- Slower recovery.

- Increased muscle tension.
- Difficulty concentrating.
- Reduced motivation.

Individuals experiencing high levels of stress often report feeling physically exhausted even when they have not engaged in significant physical activity. This can make exercise feel more demanding and may affect consistency.

Exercise and Mental Wellbeing

Research consistently demonstrates that regular physical activity can support mental health. Exercise has been associated with reductions in anxiety symptoms, improvements in mood, and enhanced overall wellbeing.

Physical activity may contribute to:

- Improved sleep quality.
- Better concentration.
- Increased energy.
- Reduced stress.
- Improved self-confidence.
- Greater emotional wellbeing.

Importantly, these benefits are not limited to intensive exercise programmes. Walking, swimming, cycling, resistance training, and other moderate forms of activity can all have positive effects. Many people report that regular exercise provides routine, structure, and opportunities for achievement, all of which can support psychological wellbeing.

Motivation and Mental Health

Motivation is often viewed as a matter of discipline or determination. However, mental health can significantly influence motivation, confidence, and energy levels.

Periods of anxiety, depression, stress, or emotional exhaustion may make physical activity more difficult. Low motivation should not always be interpreted as laziness or a lack of commitment.

Establishing realistic goals and maintaining flexible routines may help individuals continue exercising during more difficult periods. Small, achievable goals are often more sustainable than ambitious targets that become difficult to maintain.

Recovery and Rest

Recovery is an important component of both physical and mental health. Sleep, rest, nutrition, and time away from exercise all contribute to recovery processes. Poor sleep can affect concentration, mood, energy levels, and physical performance.

Similarly, insufficient recovery may increase fatigue and reduce motivation. Many people focus exclusively on exercise while overlooking the importance of recovery. However, recovery should be considered an essential aspect of health rather than a pause in progress.

Practical Techniques to Support the Mind-Body Connection

Several practical approaches may help individuals strengthen the relationship between mental wellbeing and physical performance.

Self-monitoring

Taking a few moments before exercise to assess energy levels, mood, and stress can help people adjust expectations and choose appropriate activities.

Questions may include:

- How am I feeling physically today?
- How would I describe my stress levels?
- What level of exercise feels manageable?

Breathing exercises

Controlled breathing may help reduce tension and improve concentration. One simple technique involves breathing in through the nose for four seconds, holding the breath for four seconds, and breathing out slowly for six seconds. Repeating this for several minutes before exercise may help individuals feel calmer and more focused.

Process goals

Rather than focusing exclusively on outcomes such as weight loss or appearance, process goals emphasise behaviours.

Examples include:

- Walking three times each week.
- Attending two exercise sessions.
- Improving sleep habits.
- Completing a daily stretching routine.

These smaller goals often provide greater consistency and can support long-term change.

Recovery practices

Scheduling recovery activities can be as important as scheduling exercise. Adequate sleep, balanced nutrition, hydration, and periods of relaxation all contribute to wellbeing. Activities such as walking, reading, stretching, or spending time outdoors may support recovery and reduce stress.

Looking at Health More Broadly

There is increasing recognition that physical and mental health cannot be separated. Exercise professionals, healthcare providers, and researchers increasingly support approaches that consider both physical and psychological wellbeing. Measures of success do not always need to involve body weight, appearance, or athletic performance. Improvements in sleep, confidence, stress management, energy levels, and quality of life may also indicate positive changes.

Understanding the relationship between mind and body encourages a more balanced approach to health.

Conclusion

Mental health and physical performance influence one another in important ways. Stress, sleep, motivation, recovery, and emotional wellbeing can affect physical activity, while exercise itself may support mental health.

Recognising this relationship allows individuals to approach exercise with greater understanding and realistic expectations. Rather than treating physical and mental health as separate issues, it may be more useful to view them as interconnected aspects of overall wellbeing.

Paying attention to both mind and body may help people develop healthier routines, improve consistency, and support long-term wellbeing.

Synaptic Fit Fusion Pros

synapticfitfusionpros.com

Email: terryandzita@synapticfitfusionpros.com

Instagram: [@synaptic_fit_fusion_pros](https://www.instagram.com/synaptic_fit_fusion_pros)





The Glow-Up You Didn't Know You Needed

"This is the part people often overlook: the external glow-up fuels the internal one"

There's a certain image that comes to mind when we hear the words "glow-up", usually some sort of dramatic before-and-after with a complete transformation, a new body, a new wardrobe, a new perfected face. It's often sold as something that needs to be extreme or requires a complete reinvention.

But the truth is the glow-up you actually need is far more subtle and far more powerful. It's not about you becoming someone else. It's about refining how you present yourself so it finally aligns with who you're becoming. And more often than not, that shift can start with two things you engage with every single day: your style and your look.

The Power of Presentation

Before we even talk about products or outfits, it's important to understand: how you show up sometimes shapes how the world responds to you. Your appearance is not just about vanity—it's also a form of communication. It tells people how you see yourself, what you value, and what level you're operating at. More importantly, it reinforces your own self-image. Take a moment to pause and reflect: does your current style reflect the woman you're becoming—or is it a version of you that you've outgrown? The real glow-up begins when you decide to close that gap.

Style First: Dressing Like the Next Version of You

A true style glow-up isn't necessarily about buying more clothes; it's about selecting ones that align with you. It's the shift from "this will do" to "this elevates me." From comfort zones to intentional choices. Let's start with fit. Clothes that skim your body in the right places, that feel structured and considered, instantly elevate your presence. Tailoring, even in a small way, can totally transform an entire outfit. Then consider your signature style. The women who always look put-together aren't necessarily wearing more—they're wearing consistently aligned pieces, a defined colour palette, their go-to silhouettes and staples that work together for them effortlessly.

This doesn't mean overhauling your complete wardrobe overnight. It just means making small, strategic upgrades such as:

- Swapping worn basics for elevated staples
- Adding one standout piece that pulls everything together
- Letting go of items that feel "safe" but no longer feel like you

The Makeup Shift: Enhancing, Not Hiding

When it comes to makeup, the biggest glow-up comes from doing less, but doing it better. The heavy, full-coverage approach is being replaced with something more refined: skin that looks like skin, which looks radiant, healthy and glowing. The best way is to think of your makeup as an enhancement, not as a disguise.

Start with your base. A dewy, well-prepped complexion will always look more natural than a heavy matte finish. Remember to focus on skincare as much as you do foundation, because that's where the real glow starts.

Then define your features with purpose:

- Brows that frame your face, not overpower it
 - Lashes that open your eyes without looking heavy
 - Subtle contour and highlight placed with precision and not excess
- The goal is to develop a polished look that makes you feel instantly put-together and confident, but more importantly, still feels like you.

The Small Details That Change Everything

What changes a "nice" look to an "elevated" one is rarely down to the main outfit or the makeup - it's the details. Hair that looks healthy and styled (even a simple style), brows that are groomed, and manicured nails. All these elements quietly communicate care and attention.

Accessories also play a powerful role. A structured bag, a pair of quality shoes, or a piece of jewellery can take an outfit from basic to considered in seconds. And then there's fragrance—the invisible finishing touch. Fragrances can linger, leaving an impression and a memory. Although all these details may seem small, together they can create a real impact.

Confidence Is the Real Glow

This is where the transformation really happens....

When you know you look put-together, you carry yourself differently. Your posture shifts, your energy changes, and you probably feel more visible. Your confidence rises; you feel more self-assured as you have stepped into becoming more intentional. And this is the part people often overlook: the external glow-up fuels the internal one. It's really not about perfection. It's about alignment, and the more consistently you show up as the new elevated version of yourself, the more natural it becomes.

Your Everyday Glow-Up Routine

The most effective glow-ups aren't something you decide to do occasionally, but something you do repeatedly. It becomes a part of who you are and who you are becoming. This means creating a streamlined routine that supports your daily life.

Curating a wardrobe where everything works well together and having a makeup bag filled with products you actually love, use and trust. Making those changes and choosing quality over quantity can be a game-changer. Build habits that make it easy to show up well, even on your busiest days. Because elevation shouldn't feel like effort—it should feel like your new standard.

This Is Just the Beginning

The glow-up you didn't know you needed isn't about drastic change. It's about intentional refinement. It's about making small, powerful decisions that bring your presence in line with your growth, and when those two things align, something shifts. You don't just look different—you feel different. Because the real glow-up was never about becoming someone new. It was about finally showing up as the woman you've been becoming all along.

By Angela Haynes-Ranger



My Healing Story

For the last three years, I've been on a deep inner-healing journey, and at times it hasn't been easy. In fact, there were moments when it felt incredibly uncomfortable, confronting, and even overwhelming. But it has also been the most transformative experience of my life.

For as long as I can remember, I was a people pleaser. But what does that really mean? For me, it looked like struggling to say no, finding it difficult to make decisions, and constantly prioritising other people's needs over my own. I rarely shared my true opinions, often stayed quiet in social settings, and felt awkward in crowds. I believed this was what being "a good girl" looked like.

What I've come to understand now is that these behaviours weren't truly me; they were driven by fear. Fear of rejection, fear of getting things wrong, fear of being judged, and fear of letting people down. I spent years stuck in the same patterns, unaware that most of the beliefs and stories I carried weren't even mine to begin with.

For a long time, I thought the way I felt was just "normal." Constant exhaustion, feeling frazzled, living in a state of anxiety (even though I didn't recognise it as anxiety at the time), and dealing with ongoing digestive issues. Yet deep down, there was always a quiet voice telling me there had to be more to life than this; that I was meant to feel better than I did.

Eventually, I reached a turning point. I woke up one day feeling completely disconnected from myself, not knowing who I truly was anymore. But at the same time, I knew something had to change. Even though I didn't know what that change would look like, I knew it was my responsibility to create it.

In September 2023, I made the decision to invest in a coach. That decision marked the beginning of breaking the patterns I had been repeating for years. Patterns that had kept me small, quiet, and "safe." Because staying small meant I didn't have to face the emotions I had been suppressing for so long: fear, shame, guilt, and a deep-rooted belief that I wasn't good enough.

Has this journey been worth it? Absolutely one hundred percent, yes. But has it been easy? Not at all. There have been moments where simply sitting with my emotions felt incredibly challenging. I could feel resistance in both my body and my mind. Everything in me wanted to avoid those feelings. But what I've learned is that this is where true healing happens, not in avoiding discomfort, but in allowing yourself to feel it.

I began listening to my inner guidance—really listening. And what I realised was powerful: the symptoms I had been experiencing for years were actually my body trying to communicate with me. I just didn't know how to hear it before. Now I understand that those signals—those "symptoms"—aren't something to fear or suppress. They're intelligent messages from the body, guiding us back to balance. When we learn to listen, our body can lead us toward healing and toward becoming who we truly are.

This journey has also deepened my awareness of my nervous system and the gut-brain connection. The more I've gone inward, the more sensitive I've become to what my body is telling me. I can now recognise almost instantly when I'm dysregulated—but more importantly, I know how to support myself and return to a regulated state.

One of the biggest lessons for me has been that healing isn't just about what we eat. While nutrition plays a role, it's not the full picture. The beliefs we hold, the stories we carry, and the patterns we repeat all have a profound impact on our health and wellbeing.

I've also learned how easy it is to slip back into old patterns. That's why awareness is everything. Without awareness, we stay stuck. With it, we create the opportunity for change. For me, the foundations of feeling regulated, energised, and well are actually quite simple—but incredibly powerful when practised consistently. Staying hydrated is key. Prioritising rest and relaxation is essential, even though I know so many people struggle with this. Sleep, in particular, is deeply healing—it's when our body repairs, restores, and renews itself.

Movement is another important piece. This doesn't always mean intense workouts. Sometimes it's gentle practices like qi gong, reformer Pilates, or simply going for a walk. Spending time in nature, getting natural light, and supporting our circadian rhythm all play a huge role in our overall wellbeing.

Our environment matters too. The people we surround ourselves with, what we listen to, and what we consume—energetically



and physically—are all things we are constantly absorbing. When those inputs are supportive and positive, they nourish our energy.

And of course, the foods we choose contribute to this balance as well. Together, all of these elements help stabilise blood sugar levels, which directly impact our energy and stress levels—both of which we want to keep as steady as possible.

This journey has changed how I show up in the world. I speak up more. I take up space. I'm more intentional about who I surround myself with. And most importantly, I prioritise my relationship with myself above everything else. Because when that relationship is strong, everything else begins to fall into place.

My passion now is to break generational cycles—both within my own family and by helping others do the same. My work is rooted in lived experience, in what I've learned, and in what I know truly works. I want people to know there is another way. We don't have to keep following societal expectations or forcing ourselves to fit into boxes that were never meant for us. I tried that for years—and it only led me further away from myself.

Now, I embrace being a "lone wolf." I trust myself. I trust my body. I allow it to guide me and communicate its needs. And while the journey doesn't end, the biggest challenge often isn't hearing what your body is telling you—it's choosing to listen and take action.

That's where I now hold space for my clients, just as my coach continues to hold space for me. Because healing isn't something we have to do alone—and when we commit to it, everything can change.

By Amanda Whitehead



Holistic Health and Nutrition Coach
www.purposefullynourished.com



Communication Holds When Pressure Rises

In many organizations, communication appears steady when work is predictable. Teams understand expectations. Leaders feel aligned. Progress moves forward. Then the pressure increases.

Deadlines tighten. Priorities shift. Problems surface. What once felt controlled becomes uncertain. This is where communication is tested. What once felt clear begins to break down. Messages change. Direction becomes inconsistent. Teams start to question what matters most and which direction to follow.

Communication does not fail because leaders do not care. It fails because it was never built to withstand pressure. Clarity must be reinforced, not assumed. Leaders often believe that saying something once is enough. They set direction, share expectations, and move on. Under normal conditions, this may seem effective.

Under pressure, it is not. Strong communication requires repetition. It requires checking for understanding. It requires aligning not only with what was said, but with how it is being carried out. When clarity is assumed, teams interpret information differently. Small gaps grow into larger issues. Misalignment spreads across teams and departments. Clear communication is not about saying more. It is about ensuring what is said is understood and applied consistently.

Consistency builds trust.

Teams do not expect perfection from leaders. They expect consistency. When direction shifts without explanation, trust weakens. When priorities change without context, confidence drops. Teams begin to rely less on what is said and more on what they believe will happen.

Inconsistent communication creates hesitation. Hesitation slows progress and increases rework. Leaders who communicate consistently create stability, even when conditions are changing. They reinforce what matters. They explain shifts. They stay aligned in message and action.

Consistency allows teams to move forward with confidence instead of second-guessing direction. Multiple voices create confusion. As pressure increases, communication often comes from too many directions. Leaders step in to solve problems quickly. Messages overlap. Direction becomes inconsistent across teams. What one leader reinforces, another may unintentionally shift. This creates confusion, not alignment.

Teams begin to question which direction holds. They spend time validating instead of executing. Progress slows, not because of effort, but because of unclear direction. Strong leadership requires alignment across leaders, not just within a team. Silence creates more problems than conflict. As pressure rises, many leaders avoid difficult conversations. They delay feedback. They hold back concerns. They hope issues resolve on their own. They do not.

Silence creates uncertainty. It allows problems to grow without direction. Teams begin to fill in the gaps with assumptions, and those assumptions rarely align. Addressing issues directly does not create conflict. It prevents it. Clear communication requires leaders to speak early and often, especially when conversations feel uncomfortable. It requires addressing misalignment before it spreads beyond one team. Avoidance feels easier in the moment. It creates larger problems across teams over time.

Communication must be structured, not reactive.

When communication depends on the situation, it becomes inconsistent. Leaders respond in the moment instead of leading with intention.

Strong communication is built before pressure rises.

- Expectations are defined clearly
- Priorities are reinforced regularly
- Messages stay aligned across leaders
- Teams know where to go for clarity
- Feedback flows in both directions

This structure allows communication to hold when conditions change. Without it, leaders rely on urgency to drive clarity. Urgency does not create alignment. It creates noise, confusion, and rework.

As a leader, I have learned that communication is not complete when something is said. It is complete when it is understood, applied, and reinforced. That requires staying present in conversations, repeating what matters, and adjusting when clarity breaks down. Communication is not a one-time action. It is an ongoing responsibility.

Communication strengthens accountability.

In the previous discussion on accountability, clarity defined ownership. Communication determines whether that ownership holds under pressure. Without clear communication, accountability weakens. Expectations shift. Follow-through becomes inconsistent. Teams lose alignment across roles and departments.

When communication is clear, consistent, and direct, accountability remains steady. Teams understand their role. They know what matters. They move forward without hesitation.

Leadership requires both.

Accountability defines who owns the outcome. Communication ensures the outcome is reached without confusion. When both are present, teams operate with clarity, confidence, and direction, even under pressure.

That is what allows leadership to remain steady when everything else is not.

By Emily Apell

www.mindsetmuse.org





Breath

The Forgotten Gift That Brings Us Back to Life

“In a world filled with endless wellness tools and techniques, we often overlook the simplest one - the breath.”

In many ancient traditions, breath is seen as far more than a physical act. In Chinese philosophy, it is known as Qi- our vital life-force. In yogic practices, it is called Prana. Across cultures and centuries, one idea remains the same: the breath is the essence of life.

Without breath, what are we?

And yet, for something so fundamental, it's often the very thing we pay the least attention to.

Most of us move through life on autopilot busy, distracted, and caught in a constant stream of thoughts. The mind races, emotions build, and the body can become tense or overwhelmed. Over time, this disconnection can impact our well-being... mentally, emotionally, and physically.

But what if the support we're seeking is already within us?

The breath is always there - quietly, consistently, keeping us alive. And when we begin to consciously connect with it, something powerful begins to happen.

Breathwork, especially practices like conscious connected breathing, can have a profound impact on our health and well-being. Mentally, it helps slow racing thoughts, improve clarity, and create space from overwhelm. Emotionally, it allows us to process what we're feeling in a safe and supportive way, building resilience and balance. Physically, it helps regulate the nervous system, release tension, and bring the body into a state of calm and repair.

It's simple but deeply effective.

For me, this isn't just something I've learned, it's something I live and practice..

Breathwork is powerful because it directly connects the body, mind, and nervous system in a way most other practices can't reach so quickly.

When you slow and regulate your breathing, especially with patterns like longer exhales (for example, breathing in for 4 and out for 6), you send a signal to your nervous system that you are safe. The longer exhale activates the parasympathetic nervous system - the part responsible for rest, repair, and calm. This helps reduce stress hormones like cortisol and brings the body out of “fight or flight.”

It doesn't have to be complicated or time-consuming. Sometimes it's just a few minutes in the morning, before the day begins. Other times, it's pausing during the day to reset, to reconnect, to come back to the breath when we feel pulled into stress or overwhelm.

It's a tool I carry with me wherever I go.

As a practitioner, I've had the privilege of witnessing the impact this work can have on others. I see people arrive feeling anxious, disconnected, or overwhelmed and through the breath, something begins to shift.

They soften, reconnect and begin to feel safe in their bodies again.

In a world filled with endless wellness tools and techniques, we often overlook the simplest one - the breath. Yet it's one of the most powerful and accessible ways to support our mental, emotional, and physical well-being.

No special equipment is needed.

No prior experience is required.

Just a willingness to pause and pay attention.

How often do you take the time to connect with your breath?

Even five minutes a day can make a difference. Sitting quietly, noticing the rhythm, the sound, the gentle rise and fall of your body.

This small act can calm the mind, ease emotional tension, and relax the body... bringing you back into balance.

The breath is always there, waiting.

A quiet guide.

A steady anchor.

So today, take a moment.

Pause. Breathe.

Breathe in for a count of 4, hold for a count of 2, and breathe out slowly for a count of 6. Repeat this 5 times and notice how you feel... you may be pleasantly surprised.

By Nikki Hillhouse

www.nikkihillhouse.com



How to Turn Your Pain into a Purpose-Driven Business

People often see the stage, the podcast, the magazine features, and the business. What they don't always see are the years of heartbreak, healing, uncertainty, and rebuilding that came first. There was a season when I questioned whether my life would ever have purpose again.

After surviving domestic violence, navigating divorce, financial hardship, and the loss of my identity, I felt invisible. I wondered if my story would always be defined by what had happened to me. Then I realized something that changed everything.

Our pain doesn't have to become our permanent identity. It can become our greatest qualification to serve others. Today, I help women reclaim their confidence, rediscover their identity, and step into the purpose God has placed on their lives—not because I read about it in a book, but because I lived it. Your deepest wounds often reveal the people you're called to help.

Pain Leaves Clues

Many entrepreneurs spend years searching for the “perfect business idea.” The truth is, the answer may already exist in your own life. Ask yourself:

- What challenge have I overcome?
- What lessons have transformed me?
- What do people naturally ask me for advice about?
- What experience has given me compassion for others?

Your story is more than a memory. It's valuable experience. Someone else is walking through what you've already survived.

Purpose Begins with Healing

Building a purpose-driven business doesn't begin with a logo, a website, or a social media strategy. It begins with healing. When we ignore unresolved pain, we often build businesses from fear, proving ourselves, or seeking validation. But when we heal, we build from authenticity. People don't connect with perfection. They connect with honesty, hope, and transformation. Your scars become evidence that healing is possible.

Your Story Creates Trust

One of the biggest fears I hear is: “Who am I to help anyone?” My answer is simple. You don't have to have lived a perfect life.

You simply need to be willing to share what you've learned with integrity and humility. People trust those who have walked the road before them. Authenticity builds credibility far more effectively than perfection ever will.

Purpose Requires Action

Purpose is not discovered by waiting. It's discovered by serving. Write the book. Start the podcast. Launch the coaching practice. Speak at the local event.

Encourage one person.

You don't need thousands of followers before making a difference. You simply need the courage to begin.

Small acts of obedience often lead to extraordinary opportunities.

Success Isn't Measured Only by Income

Yes, a purpose-driven business can be profitable. But true success goes beyond revenue. Success is watching someone believe in themselves again. It's hearing a woman say, “Because you shared your story, I found the courage to change mine.”

That kind of impact cannot be measured on a spreadsheet.

Your Pain Has a Purpose

Looking back, I no longer wish away the difficult chapters of my life. They taught me resilience. They strengthened my faith. They gave me compassion. Most importantly, they prepared me for the work I do today. If you're carrying pain today, know this: Your story isn't over.

The chapter you're living today may become the chapter that gives someone else hope tomorrow.

Don't let your pain define you. Let it refine you. And when you're ready, allow it to become the foundation of a life—and a business—that changes lives. Because sometimes the very thing that tried to break you becomes the reason someone else begins to heal.

By Angeline Mitchell



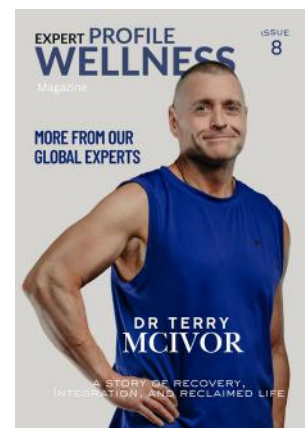
Invest in Wellbeing. Inspire Success.

**FREE
ACCESS**
THROUGH
PRESSREADER

Give your team, clients and community **FREE** access to premium personal development & self-help magazines.

Our magazines empower, educate and motivate – covering every aspect of wellbeing, mindset, success, health, relationships, business and more.

A simple way to support your people – and help them thrive.



PERFECT FOR:



EMPLOYEE
WELLBEING



WAITING
ROOMS



CLIENT &
VISITOR AREAS



HOTELS &
HOSPITALITY



HEALTH &
WELLNESS SPACES



BUSINESSES &
ORGANISATIONS



ENHANCE WELLBEING.
BOOST ENGAGEMENT.
CREATE A POSITIVE IMPACT.

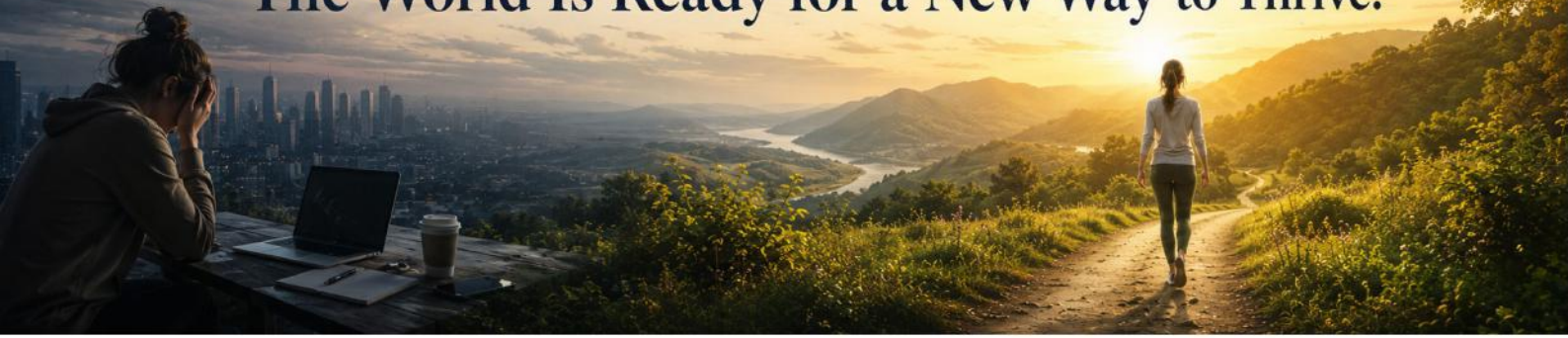
Provide your people, clients
or visitors with the opportunity
to learn, grow and be inspired –
completely free.

GET FREE ACCESS TODAY

ranathmedia.com
info@ranathmedia.com

Stop Doing More. Start Being More.

The World Is Ready for a New Way to Thrive.



Let me ask you something - When did "doing more" stop working? Because for most of the driven, capable, brilliant humans I work with - the ones who give everything to everyone, and who keep showing up, there comes a moment. A quiet, exhausting, hollow moment. Where all the doing hasn't actually delivered the feeling they were chasing. The peace. The joy. The sense of I've arrived. It hasn't come. And the harder they push, the further away it feels. I know this moment. I've lived it. And I'm here to tell you something that might ruffle your logical, overachieving mind just a little: The answer isn't doing more. It's BEING more.

The World Is Experiencing SOS - And It's Not a Personal Failing

Let's look at what's actually happening right now. Burnout rates are at the highest levels ever recorded. The World Health Organization has classified burnout as an occupational phenomenon affecting hundreds of millions of people globally. Stress-related illness accounts for up to 80% of all doctor visits in developed nations. Anxiety disorders are now the most common mental health condition worldwide. And yet - we keep being told to try harder, keep going, and hustle more. That's not wisdom.

That's a system running on empty, demanding more fuel from people who are already running on fumes. I call it SOS - Strong One Syndrome. The double meaning is entirely intentional. Because the people most affected are the strong ones - the capable, driven, deeply caring humans who are brilliant at holding everything together for everyone else, they're not weak. They're not failing. They are literally too strong for their own good, and their nervous system is sending out a very real distress signal. The SOS isn't a productivity problem. It's an energy problem. And the answer isn't more strategies - it's a completely different way of moving through the world.

I call that the FUN Effect: shifting from a stressed-out system into Feeling Free, Uplifted and Naturally Yourself. And it starts with understanding something that changed everything for me - something I've come to know not just as a personal trainer and wellness expert, but as someone who works with energy in a deeply conscious way.

You Have Three Brains. You've Only Been Using One.

Here's something that doesn't get talked about nearly enough in the wellness space, despite being backed by neuroscience: you don't have one brain. You have three.

The head brain - the one we've all been conditioned to trust above everything else - is logical, analytical, and brilliantly designed to keep you safe. It is your protector. But here's the catch: the head brain is deeply fearful of change. It reads anything unfamiliar as a potential threat. It will talk you out of a leap of faith. It will rationalise staying stuck. It will choose the known discomfort over the unknown possibility every single time. Not because it's wrong - but because that's its job. Safety, not growth.

The heart brain - yes, the heart genuinely has its own neural network, with around 40,000 neurons - is emotional, feeling, and beautifully sensitive. But when it's unregulated, it can tip into overwhelm, over-sensitivity, and reactive decision-making driven by old wounds rather than present truth.

The gut brain - the enteric nervous system, comprising over 500 million neurons - is your sensor. Your truth-teller. Your most ancient and intelligent guidance system. It doesn't think in language. It doesn't feel emotional. It knows. It senses. And when you learn to listen to it, it will never mislead you. Most of us have been living head down - letting the logical, change-averse, fear-based mind run the show. But the new world asks us to flip that entirely. To move bottom up - from gut to heart to head - so that your sensing leads, your feeling informs, and your thinking serves rather than controls.

That is counterintuitive. The head brain will tell you it's risky. But it is, without a doubt, the most powerful and accurate way to navigate your life.

And here's the beautiful part - nature already knows this. Nature has always operated this way. Which is exactly why stepping outside every single day is one of the most powerful, most accessible, and most free things you can do for your nervous system, your clarity, and your life.

Your Brain and Body on Nature - The Science Is Extraordinary

Here's where it gets really exciting - because the science doesn't just support this way of living, it validates everything we intuitively know about being in nature. And it all connects through one extraordinary pathway in your body. Meet the vagus nerve - the longest nerve in the human body, running from your brainstem all the way down through your heart, lungs and gut. It is, quite literally, the superhighway of the parasympathetic nervous system. And it is the physiological bridge between everything we've been talking about.

Your nervous system has two modes. Sympathetic - fight, flight and freeze - is the stress response. It's the state most of us are living in permanently: high alert, high cortisol, high beta brainwave activity, constantly scanning for threat. This is 3D energy in neurological form. Always on. Always doing. Always exhausted.

Parasympathetic - rest, digest and restore - is the recovery response. It's the state where healing happens, where creativity flows, where the gut brain gets heard, where alpha brainwaves rise and cortisol drops. This is 5D energy in neurological form. Calm. Clear. Present. Alive. The vagus nerve is the switch between the two. And when you stimulate it - naturally, gently, daily - you are quite literally shifting your entire physiology from stress mode into flow mode.

So what stimulates the vagus nerve? The answers will make you smile:

Walking in nature - gentle, rhythmic movement activates vagal pathways through the brainstem, directly supporting parasympathetic tone

Deep, slow breathing - every slow, conscious breath stretches lung receptors that signal safety to the brain, telling the vagus nerve to activate rest-and-digest

Sound healing - humming, singing and resonant frequencies vibrate the vagus nerve directly through the throat, one of the most powerful natural stimulation methods

Genuine social connection - the vagus nerve is stimulated by the oxytocin released during authentic human connection, warmth and community

Walking barefoot on natural ground - grounding or earthing has been shown to support vagal activity by reducing inflammation and calming the stress response

And the alpha brainwave connection? When the vagus nerve is activated, and the parasympathetic system comes online, your brain naturally shifts from the high-frequency, stress-driven beta waves into the calm, creative, open alpha state - the 8-12 Hz frequency band where you are awake but relaxed, present but not tense, sensing rather than striving.

Studies confirm that just 15 minutes of walking in a natural environment increases alpha brainwave activity and reduces blood pressure. Research across 24 forests in Japan found that walking among trees reduced salivary cortisol by nearly 16% - after just one walk. Forest bathing - the Japanese practice of Shinrin-yoku - has been shown repeatedly to increase heart rate variability (a direct measure

of healthy vagal tone), lower cortisol, and shift the nervous system from sympathetic dominance into parasympathetic activation. Nature stimulates the vagus nerve. The vagus nerve activates the parasympathetic system. The parasympathetic system produces alpha waves. Alpha waves reduce cortisol and stress. The whole chain starts with a walk outside. And here is the most extraordinary, most democratic, most beautifully simple part of all this science:

It is completely free.

No gym membership. No expensive retreat. No specialist equipment, app subscription or waiting list. Just a park, a footpath, a patch of grass, a glimpse of sky - and the simple, powerful, life-changing decision to show up for yourself.

My Outdoor Office - Where the Real Magic Happens

As a personal trainer and wellness expert, people sometimes expect me to talk about reps, sets and training programmes. And yes - movement and strength training is absolutely important, but my most profound work - the clearest thinking, the biggest breakthroughs, the downloads that shift everything - doesn't happen under fluorescent lights or staring at a screen. It happens outside.

I call it my outdoor office. My walks in nature are where I sense my clearest answers, process my biggest ideas, and feel most connected to who I truly am. There's no agenda, no notifications, no performance. Just movement, fresh air, the sound of birds, and the extraordinary intelligence of the natural world doing what it does - flowing, growing, being - without force, effort or any kind of striving whatsoever.

Nature is a living, breathing demonstration of 5D energy. It doesn't push. It doesn't compare. It doesn't hustle. It simply is - and in that being, it produces the most extraordinary results. The tallest trees, the most abundant ecosystems, the most breathtaking landscapes on earth. All of it emerging not from force, but from flow.

And when we immerse ourselves in it - even for twenty minutes, even just a walk around the local park before the rest of the day begins - the vagus nerve activates, the alpha waves rise, the cortisol drops, the gut brain wakes up, and the head brain finally quietsens. I want to be clear: this is not about replacing your gym, your yoga studio, your wellness practitioner or any of the other brilliant tools in your wellbeing toolkit. All of those things are wonderful, and I champion them wholeheartedly. This is about adding the simplest, most accessible, most scientifically powerful foundation of all - a daily walk in nature - as your non-negotiable starting point. The thing you do every day, regardless of budget, schedule or circumstance, because you have decided to take ownership of your own health and wellbeing before the burnout hits.

Prevention, Investment and Choice for your future self.

Two Worlds, Two Frequencies

All of this connects to a much bigger shift happening right now - what many are calling the move from 3D to 5D living.

3D energy - the old world most of us were conditioned in - is characterised by doing, pushing, forcing, proving. It runs on ego, comparison, competition, judgment, and criticism. Neurologically, it lives in the beta wave, the sympathetic nervous system, and the constantly activated fight-or-flight response. It is the river you are permanently swimming upstream in. And it is exhausting everyone.

5D energy - the new world - is characterised by being, allowing and flowing. It is soul-led and gut-guided. It lives in the alpha wave, the parasympathetic nervous system, the vagal tone and rest-and-restore response that most of us are dangerously under-accessing. It is surrendering to the current and allowing it to carry you.

The old 3D way isn't working anymore. The burnout statistics tell us that. Our nervous systems tell us that. And deep down, in that gut brain that never lies - we already know that. Something has to give. And it doesn't have to be our health, our joy, or our best years.

What I Found in Bali - And Why Everyone Deserves This

In May 2026, I joined a Resonance Retreat in Ubud, Bali - one of the most energetically alive places on this planet. And what I experienced there was the most vivid, full-body, living demonstration of everything I've just described.

Every morning began at dawn. I stepped outside into air that felt genuinely alive and walked through impossibly green rice paddy fields as the world woke up around me. The birds were extraordinary - a whole chorus of them, going about their magnificent, effortless, deeply unhurried existence. I walked alongside people from all over the world who had come, like me, searching for something they couldn't quite name. And in that walking, in that connecting, in that quiet morning light - vagus nerve humming, alpha waves rising, cortisol quietly falling - we found it.

We gathered for breathwork sessions that bypassed the head brain entirely - slow, conscious breath by breath, directly stimulating the vagus nerve, dropping the whole system into profound parasympathetic rest. We sat with sound healings - crystal bowls, gongs, frequencies you don't just hear, you feel - resonating through the body, completing what the morning walks had begun. We shared in community circles, honestly and openly, the oxytocin flowing, the vagus nerve responding, the nervous system healing in real time.

By day two, nobody was performing. Nobody was competing. The masks came off. And what was left - underneath all the busyness and striving and effortful doing - was something luminous, joyful and deeply familiar. Something that had been there all along, just buried under the noise.

Every single person said the same thing at the end: I want to come back to this. Not back to Ubud. Back to this feeling. Back to themselves. You don't need a flight to Bali to start. You need a walk outside and the decision to begin.

The Simplest, Most Powerful Choice You Can Make Today

Let me be really practical - because the shift from SOS to the FUN Effect doesn't require a complete life overhaul. It starts with one simple, free, daily choice that, over time, becomes a completely different way of living. Start with a walk in nature. Your local park, a tree-lined street, a beach, a garden. Twenty minutes. Before you look at your phone, let the vagus nerve activate, the alpha waves rise, and the parasympathetic system come online. Free, effective, available right now, today.

Breathe consciously while you walk - slow, deep breaths through the nose. Every deliberate breath is directly stimulating your vagus nerve and signalling safety to your entire nervous system. Pause before reacting - one conscious breath before responding to the difficult email. That's your gut brain getting a word in before the fear-based head takes over.

Trust your gut on the decision your head is overcomplicating. It already knows. Move your body as a joy practice, not a punishment - because when movement feels genuinely good, you'll do it every day, and your nervous system will thank you for the rest of your life. Let go of being busy as an identity - because busy is not a badge of honour. Busy is the sympathetic nervous system, permanently switched on, slowly burning you out from the inside.

And choose, every single day, fun. Genuine, playful, unapologetic joy. Because joy is not frivolous - it's physiological data. It tells you you're in alpha. It tells you your vagus nerve is healthy. It tells you you're in flow, in alignment, and living the way you were actually designed to live.

That is the FUN Effect. Feeling Free, Uplifted and Naturally Yourself. Add it to your toolkit. Build on it. Go deeper when you're ready. But start here - outside, moving, breathing, sensing - because this is where everything changes. And it won't cost you a cent.

Let Go. Step Up. Be More.

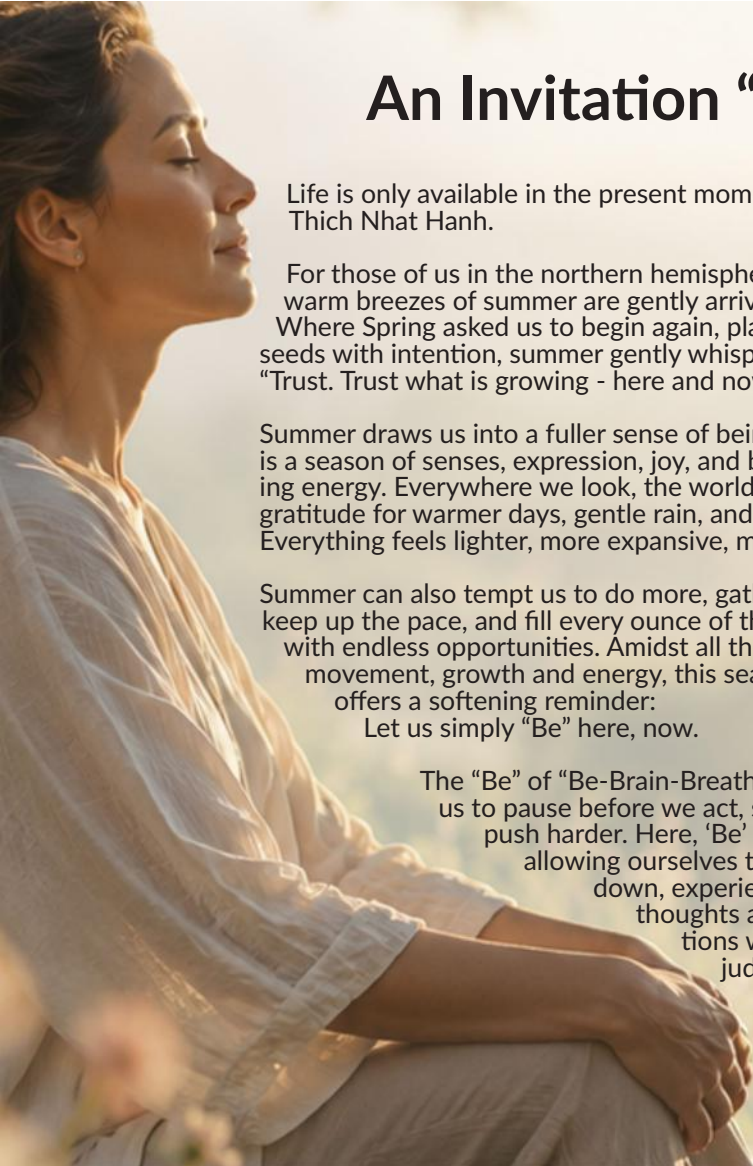
My mantra has always been: Let go. Step up. Be more. Bali deepened my understanding of what that really means. It's not a sequence. It's a simultaneous movement.

The moment you let go of the forcing and the striving, you automatically step up - not through effort, but through presence. And in that presence, you are effortlessly, naturally more. More alive. More clear. More you. The old 3D world says: Do more to be more. The new 5D world knows: Be more - sense more, trust more, feel more - and everything else follows. The science agrees. The vagus nerve confirms it. The birds in the paddy fields have always known it. And your nervous system is quietly, patiently waiting for you to remember it. It starts the moment you step outside.

By Sally Estlin

www.sallyestlin.com





An Invitation “

Life is only available in the present moment.
Thich Nhat Hanh.

For those of us in the northern hemisphere, the warm breezes of summer are gently arriving. Where Spring asked us to begin again, planting seeds with intention, summer gently whispers, “Trust. Trust what is growing - here and now.”

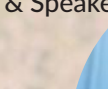
Summer draws us into a fuller sense of being. It is a season of senses, expression, joy, and life-giving energy. Everywhere we look, the world is full of gratitude for warmer days, gentle rain, and new life. Everything feels lighter, more expansive, more

Summer can also tempt us to do more, to keep up the pace, and fill every ounce of time with endless opportunities. Amidst all this movement, growth and energy, this season offers a softening reminder:
Let us simply “Be” here, now.

The “Be” of “Be-Brain-Breath” asks us to pause before we act, to push harder. Here, “Be” is about allowing ourselves to slow down, experiencing the world through our thoughts and feelings, and making judgments.

we
thor & Speaker

m



The image displays four magazine covers side-by-side. The first cover, 'NEVER GIVE UP', features a black and white portrait of Bruno Mars and includes text about supporting wellbeing and mental health. The second cover, 'Solace', features a woman in a blue dress and focuses on wellness tips and personal growth. The third cover, 'EXPERT PROFILE', features a group of diverse people and is themed for the New Year. The fourth cover, 'PAINLESS', features a serene pool scene and is themed for spring awakening and transformation. Each cover includes the 'RM' logo in the bottom right corner.



THE PERFORMANCE PROBLEM NO ONE IS NAMING

Your organisation has invested in training and leadership programmes. Your people are skilled. So why does performance keep plateauing — and why does your best talent leave just when they should be hitting their stride?

There is a conversation happening in boardrooms and HR departments right now that sounds something like this: we have invested significantly in our people, and we still cannot work out why performance is not where it needs to be.

I have been a practitioner in human performance and organisational development for over a decade. And I can tell you with confidence: the problem is rarely what you think it is. It is not a skills gap. It is not a motivation problem. It is an identity gap. And until organisations learn to name it, they will keep spending on solutions that address the symptom while the root cause goes untouched.

What a Performance Plateau Actually Tells You

A performance plateau is the point at which a capable individual — one with demonstrable skills and genuine commitment — stops progressing. Not because they lack ability. But because something interior has not kept pace with their external environment.

This is most evident at two inflexion points. The first: when an individual contributor is promoted into management. The second: when a mid-level leader is being prepared for senior leadership. Both transitions require an identity recalibration that most development programmes simply do not address. The technical skill that earned the promotion becomes less relevant. The inner architecture needed to navigate the new role — the self-concept, the internal narrative, the belief system — was never built.

You can train a person to communicate differently. You cannot train them to believe they belong in the room they just walked into.

The Body Knows Before the Business Does

This is where my framework diverges from most organisational development approaches — and it is the perspective I have been developing through this column under the #bodyandbusiness lens.

The body is not separate from performance. It is the first indicator of it.

When a high-potential leader begins to plateau, physical signals appear before performance data. Chronic fatigue that does not resolve with rest. A persistent sense of going through the motions. Difficulty making decisions that once felt intuitive. These are not wellness concerns to be managed on the side. They are diagnostic data — pointing directly to the identity gap underneath.

Organisations getting this right have stopped separating people development from human development. They understand that sustainable performance is built from the inside out. The PPP Method™: A Framework for What Comes Next

Taneka Johnson is the founder of The Cultivate Institute, specialising in identity-first leadership development and human performance methodology. She holds an M.S. in Industrial-Organisational Psychology, an MBA in Strategic Management, and is a Certified Professional Coach. She is the creator of the PPP Method™ (Plateau. Pivot. Performance.™), the Inner Alchemy Framework™, and the Cultivate Leadership Lab — a licensed curriculum deployed across corporate, government, and nonprofit sectors. Her #bodyandbusiness column explores the intersection of human capacity and organisational performance.

The methodology I deploy through The Cultivate Institute is built on a foundational insight from my I-O Psychology training: plateaus are not problems to be solved. They are data to be read.

The PPP Method™ — Plateau. Pivot. Performance.™

— is a diagnostic and developmental framework that gives organisations and their people a shared language for understanding where they are in their human performance cycle. Plateau is the diagnostic phase. Rather than treating the plateau as failure, this phase uses a proprietary diagnostic instrument to identify precisely why performance has stalled — whether that is an identity misalignment, a capacity ceiling, or a belief constraint.

Pivot is the recalibration phase. This is where the inner architecture of the leader is addressed: who they believe they are, what they believe is possible, and how their self-concept supports or limits the performance their role requires. This is where most conventional programmes stop working — and where this methodology begins.

Performance is the integration phase. Sustainable performance is the outcome of aligned identity and effective systems. The result is not peak performance as a temporary state. It is peak performance as a new baseline.

What This Means for Your Organisation

Behaviour change without identity change is temporary. You can train a person to communicate more effectively in a difficult conversation. But if their internal narrative tells them that authority is dangerous, or that their position is contingent on not taking up too much space — the skill will erode within 90 days — every time.

The organisations generating real return on their human capital investment are the ones adding the layer most development frameworks exclude: the inner layer. The identity layer. The place where sustainable performance actually lives.

The most expensive hire is not the one who leaves — it is the one who stays and stops growing, because the system never gave them the infrastructure to do otherwise.

In future columns, I will walk through specific applications of this methodology: what identity-first leadership development looks like in practice, how organisations can use the plateau as a diagnostic instrument, and what it means to build a workforce whose capacity is not contingent on the absence of pressure.

Because here is the truth every leader who has navigated a plateau knows in their body before they know it in their mind: the breakthrough was always on the other side of the thing they were avoiding. The methodology just makes the path through it visible.

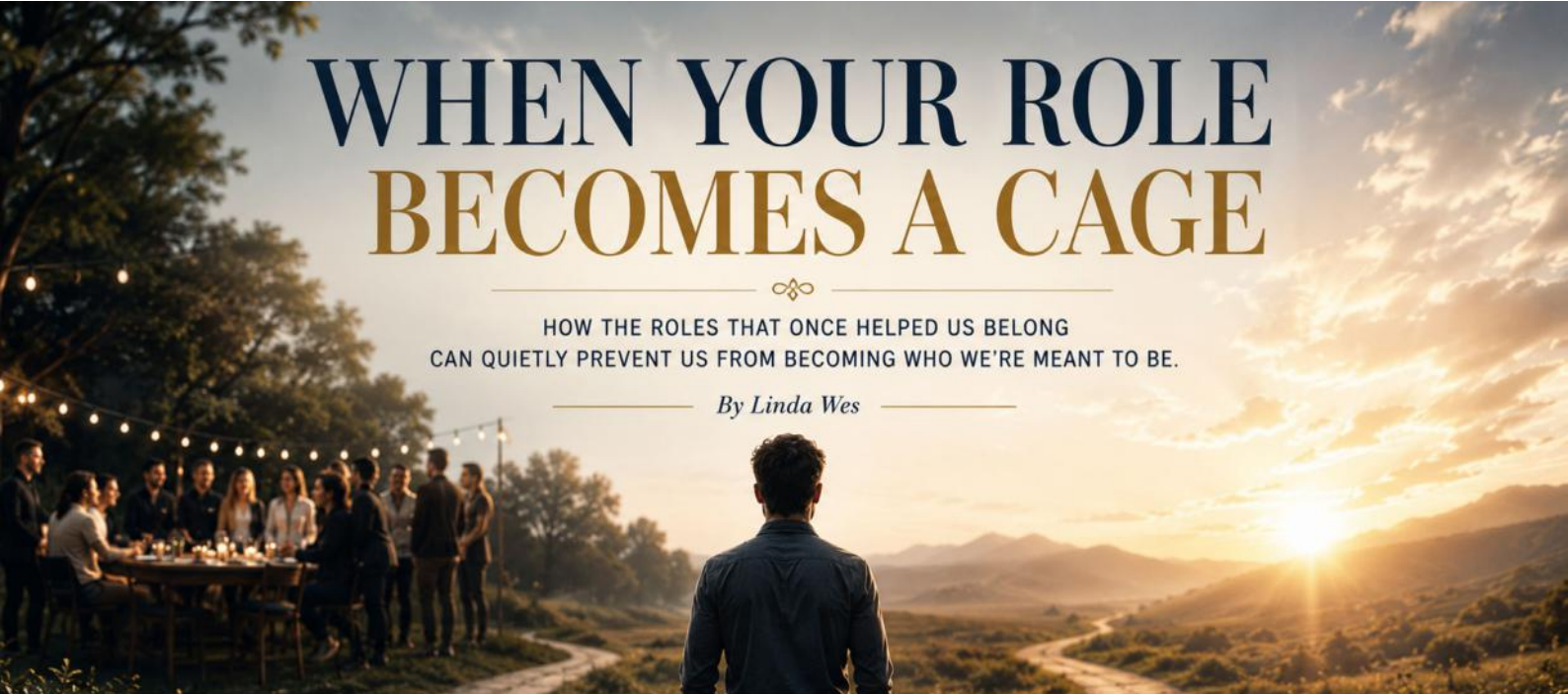
By Taneka Johnson



WHEN YOUR ROLE BECOMES A CAGE

HOW THE ROLES THAT ONCE HELPED US BELONG
CAN QUIETLY PREVENT US FROM BECOMING WHO WE'RE MEANT TO BE.

By Linda Wes



Jim walked into my office laughing. I mean genuinely laughing—at nothing in particular. He was the kind of person who made the whole room lighter just by arriving. He shook my hand, asked me about my week, and made a joke before he'd even sat down. He hadn't come to me because he was suffering. He came because he was stuck.

Jim was procrastinating on the final thesis of a management study he'd started three years earlier. The thesis was the last thing standing between him and a senior leadership role he'd been dreaming about for years. And he simply wasn't finishing it. Week after week, something else filled his time—his job, his friends, his sport. The thesis sat untouched.

"I know I should do it," he told me. "I just keep finding better things to do."

The Boy Who Kept the Party Going

As I do with all my clients, I asked Jim about his family of origin. He was one of two children. His parents had a troubled marriage—tension, distance, then an affair and a period when his mother left the home. For a young child, this is frightening, not because of a lack of warmth, but because of unpredictability. The brain's primary job is to anticipate what comes next. When it cannot—when the rules keep changing, when the person you depend on disappears—the nervous system treats that as danger. Little Jim found a way to manage it. He became the family's stability.

He made jokes when the air was heavy. He checked in on his older brother. He kept things moving, kept things light. The family system needed someone to keep it light, and Jim stepped in. He was very, very good at it.

And here is where it gets interesting: the role worked. People loved Jim. His warmth was real. His care was genuine. And so unlike the rescuers or over-functioners I've written about in previous articles—who often carry a quiet exhaustion—Jim carried joy. His childhood role hadn't become a burden. It had become his identity, and it felt good. Which is precisely what made it so hard to leave behind.

The Comfortable Trap

When Jim became aware of the pattern—that his habit of organizing parties, covering for colleagues, and smoothing everyone's path was the same role he'd taken up as a child—he didn't feel distress. He came back to the next session and said something I don't often hear:

"I get it. But it gives me such a good feeling. Why would I change anything that feels this good?"

Touché.

This is actually the more sophisticated and uncomfortable question. Most of my clients in over-functioning patterns feel drained by them. Jim felt energized. So, where is the problem?

The problem, as Susan Long's work on Organizational Role Analysis describes, is that we never take up a role alone. A role exists in a system. What we do as individuals shapes—and is shaped by—everyone around us. Long describes the interplay between the person and the system as inseparable: when you take on a role, you influence others to assume complementary roles, often without anyone intending it.

And Barry Oshry, in his remarkable book *Seeing Systems*, puts it starkly: the conditions we find ourselves in produce predictable behaviours—not because of who we are, but because of the systemic forces at play. When someone consistently acts as Top (taking ownership, organizing, ensuring things run), others unconsciously drift toward a Bottom position: feeling less responsible, waiting to be managed, stepping back.





Jim was producing his own problem. By always being the sunshine, he was relieving others of the need to bring their own. By organizing everything, he was depriving others of the chance to step up. The system didn't become more alive because of Jim—it became more dependent on him.

Role Conflict: When Two Versions of You Collide

Here is the layer Jim couldn't yet see: he was living in a state of role conflict. Role conflict occurs when the roles we hold make competing demands on us—when who we are in one context clashes with who we need to be in another. For Jim, this conflict was internal. The role of the Happy Caretaker—warm, responsible, always present for others—was in direct conflict with the role of the Ambitious Individual who completes his own work, takes up his own space, and moves his own life forward.

Every hour Jim spent organizing a social event was an hour not spent on his thesis. Every time he covered for a colleague, he reinforced a story about himself: that his value lies in what he gives to others. The thesis asked something different of him—sit alone, do the work, be accountable to yourself. That wasn't a role he'd ever really practiced.

Long's concept of role biography illuminates this precisely. Our history of roles across the different systems we've inhabited—family, school, friend groups, early workplaces—creates an unconscious template for who we are when we enter a new system. Jim's role biography was clear: he had always been the one who held the group together. The part of him that could put himself first, pursue his own ambition, finish something for himself alone—that part had almost no biography at all. This is not laziness. It is a deeply ingrained story about where beliefs live.

What the System Doesn't Tell You

Oshry's most important insight is what he calls "system blindness": our inability to see the patterns we're embedded in, even as we enact them. We experience our behaviour as personal and intentional—Jim is warm because he is warm—without seeing how the system both produces that behaviour and is reshaped by it. I asked Jim to think about his social group. Was there anyone in it who planned things? Who made sure everyone connected? Who cleaned up after the party?

He laughed. *"That's all me." "And what do the others do?"*

A pause. "They show up. They enjoy it. They... wait for me to sort things out, I suppose."

This is Oshry's system in action. Jim's role was producing the very dynamic in which he was embedded. His friends weren't selfish or passive by nature—they had simply adapted to a system where someone else handled the organizing. The more Jim took on, the less they needed to. And the less they took on, the more Jim felt the familiar pull to step in.

Now imagine this in a high-stakes professional context: Jim in a senior finance role, doing everything himself. What happens when he's ill? When he moves on? Organizations built around one person's over-functioning carry hidden fragility.

The Hardest Question

The work with Jim wasn't about convincing him his warmth was wrong. It isn't. His genuine care for others is one of his greatest strengths. The work was about helping him see that staying entirely in that role was costing him something he hadn't yet noticed he was losing.

I asked him: "If you had genuinely finished that thesis two years ago and stepped into the leadership role—what would have changed?" He was quiet for a while. Then:

"I'd have been responsible for a team. Not just helping them. Actually accountable."

"And how does that feel?" Another pause. "Scary. What if I let them down?"

There it was. Underneath the warmth and the competence was a child who had learned that his belonging depended on keeping everyone happy. Leading—really leading—meant accepting that you cannot keep everyone happy. That sometimes you disappoint people in the service of something larger than your value cannot be measured in smiles. The thesis wasn't a productivity problem. It was a threshold.

When the Role Becomes a Cage

What Jim is learning—slowly, because the comfortable trap is the hardest to leave—is the difference between choosing his warmth and being compelled by it, between offering care freely and offering it because he doesn't know another way to belong.

He is beginning to notice the moments when the pull to help is coming from his child self rather than his adult self. When a colleague is struggling, he still feels the surge—fix it, smooth it, take it on. But now he pauses. He asks: Did they ask for my help? Do they actually have a problem—or do I have a need?

That pause is where his freedom lives. He has not yet submitted the thesis. But for the first time, he is sitting with it. Not running toward someone else's need, not filling the room with laughter to avoid the silence. Just sitting. Working. Being accountable to himself.

It turns out that was the hardest thing he'd ever been asked to do.





ASKING FOR A DIVORCE, A DIFFERENT KIND OF ENDING

Data from UK family law sources consistently shows that September is one of the most common months for people to tell their partner they want to separate. After the intensity of the summer holidays, with routines disrupted and families spending prolonged time together, something shifts. It's not always loudly, but quietly, and internally.

Children return to school, normal life resumes, and with it comes reflection. Couples begin taking stock of their relationship and asking themselves a question they may have avoided for years: "Can I keep living like this?"

If you recognise yourself in that question, pause for a moment and breathe.

Before you add to those statistics, consider this: "how you do one thing is how you do everything". If you live your life through the virtues of roundness, kindness, self-awareness, gratitude, moderation, patience, and diligence, then why wouldn't you bring those into your divorce, too? Because this is part of life. A transition, like many others.

I want to acknowledge something important here. Separation and divorce can have a significant impact on the nervous system. They are, for many, deeply emotional and at times traumatic experiences. Yet, I hold a firm belief: they do not have to be driven by animosity. If you set your intention from the outset, you influence not only the process but also the outcome.

There is a societal narrative that divorce must be painful, conflict-driven, and prolonged. The more difficult it is, the more "normal" it is. I don't agree. There is another way.

The conversation that sets the course

In my work as a Divorce Coach and McKenzie Friend (also known as a Courtroom Coach), I often describe the first conversation about separation as the North Star of the entire process. It sets the tone, direction, and emotional climate for everything that follows, whether that unfolds over months or years.

If you begin with blame, anger, or accusation, you ignite defensiveness, tension, and long-held resentment. Yet if you approach it with clarity, compassion, and grounded intention, you create the conditions for a more respectful transition.

This isn't about pretending everything is amicable. It's about choosing how you show up when the going is tough. Ask yourself: Who do you want to be? Who are you becoming?

It's also important to understand what this conversation is not. This is not the moment to resolve everything in one hit. You are not there to finalise finances, decide living arrangements, or map out the next ten years. Trying to do so will feel overwhelming and, quite honestly, be totally unrealistic. Think of this as placing your foot on the first rock.

It's the first step. You don't need to see the whole path. You simply need to begin with a balanced approach.

Your dress rehearsal: preparing yourself

Before you speak to your partner, the most important preparation is internal. Ask yourself a simple but powerful question: "How do I want to feel at the end of this conversation?" Do you want to feel calm? Composed? Compassionate?

Choose three words that define your desired emotional state. These become your anchor. When emotions rise, and they will, you return to those words to guide your behaviour. You might even set them as your phone's screen saver. Start conditioning yourself before you say a single word.

Visualisation is another powerful tool. It's widely used in sport and business, and yet rarely applied to personal conversations of this magnitude. Start by running a mental "movie" of the conversation. Picture the room you're sitting in and what you're wearing, with you feeling confident and grounded in your own energy. Hear your tone: steady, calm, and measured. Notice the pauses. You might choose a physical anchor, such as a ring, your glasses, or a piece of jewellery, that you can touch to bring yourself back to centre. The more you rehearse this internally, the less reactive you'll be in the moment.

Preparation doesn't remove the difficulty, but it gives you steadiness.

Time and place matter

What you say matters. Where and when you say it matters just as much.

Avoid moments of heightened emotion, arguments, stressful evenings, or times when either of you is already overwhelmed. These conditions reduce clarity and increase the likelihood of escalation. Instead, choose a time where there is space, practically and emotionally. A Friday evening or Saturday morning can often work well.

If you have children, ensure they are not present. This is an adult conversation about an adult decision. Protecting children from the immediate emotional intensity is not only appropriate, but it's also essential.

The setting should feel neutral and calm. A kitchen table, a quiet garden, or even a walk can work well. Avoid bedrooms or busy public spaces. Remove distractions: phones, televisions, interruptions. You are creating an emotional container, one that enables the conversation to happen without chaos.

Delivering the message with HEART

When it comes to the words themselves, many people either over-explain or avoid clarity altogether. A simple structure can help you stay grounded.

I use the HEART framework with clients:

H - Honesty

Begin with truth. Not an accusation. Not justification.

"I want to be honest about where I am. This hasn't been easy to come to."

E - Explain

Share your internal experience.

"I've been feeling unhappy for some time, and I can't ignore that anymore. I need to be true to myself."

A - Acknowledge

Honour your shared history.

"I value the life we've built and the memories we've shared."

R - Respect

Avoid blame; it will derail the conversation.

"I want us to have this conversation with respect, even though it's difficult."

T - Tomorrow

Gently shift toward what comes next.

"I believe this is the right step for me, and I hope we can find a calm way forward."

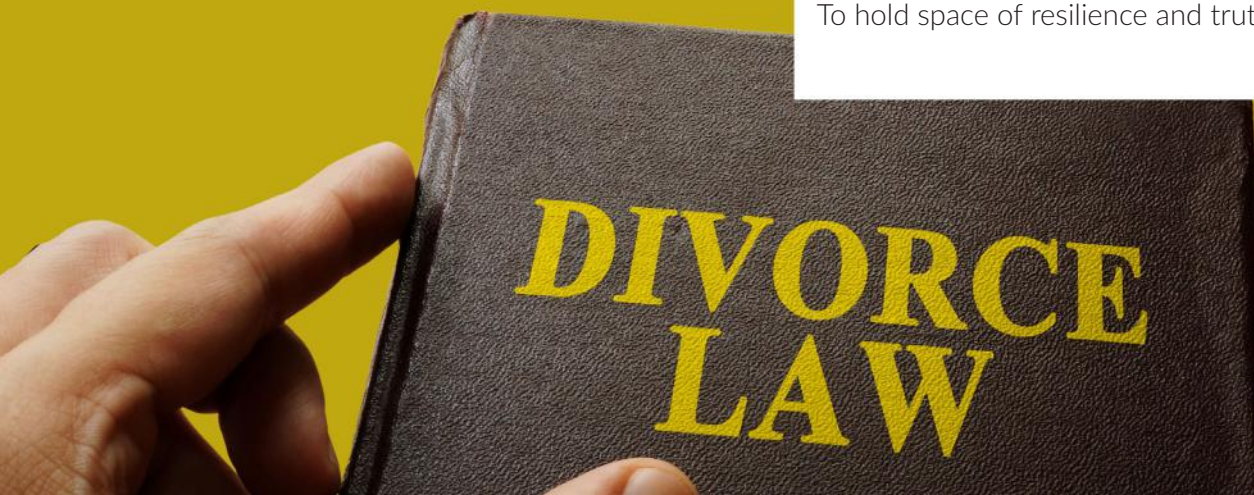
You are not solving the future, you are opening the door to it.

Staying grounded: your "Teflon suit"

No matter how prepared you are, your partner's reaction may be intense. Anger, sadness, disbelief, and denial are natural responses to loss and grief. This is where emotional resilience becomes essential.

I often invite clients to imagine putting on a "Teflon suit". It's a simple but powerful image. Words of blame or hurt may come towards you, but they don't have to stick if you have your imaginary Teflon Suit on. This enables you to stay steady and remain in control of your responses, rather than being pulled into blame, anger, and escalation.

This isn't about becoming cold or detached. It's about staying grounded enough to hold the space. To hold space of resilience and truth.



**DIVORCE
LAW**

Remember, you may have been processing this decision for months, even years. Your partner is hearing it for the first time. You are in different places emotionally.

Your role is not to fix their reaction. It is to remain clear in your decision, while holding space for theirs, provided you are safe. If not, extract yourself and take yourself to a trusted family or friend.

Perspective matters

Another technique I use is “shoe shifting.” Imagine the conversation from your partner’s perspective:

- **What questions might they ask?**
- **What fears might surface?**
- **What might feel shocking or confusing?**

You don’t need all the answers. In fact, it’s often more honest to say: “I don’t know yet, we’ll need to work that out.”

This is the shift from ‘we’ to ‘me,’ and this will take time. There is no rush, just breathe. If emotions escalate beyond what feels manageable, pause. Take a break. That’s not avoidance, it’s emotional responsibility.

What comes next

After the conversation, there can be a strong urge to act quickly. My advice is to let the message land. Then begin to form a plan, together if possible, or individually if needed.

Start by understanding the process within your jurisdiction. Many family lawyers offer a free initial consultation, so prepare your questions and use that time well.

From there, the journey may involve financial advice, legal guidance, and emotional support from a divorce coach. This will enable you to navigate this transition with clarity and dignity.

A different kind of ending

Telling your partner that you want a divorce will likely be one of the hardest conversations of your life. There is no script that removes the weight of it. Yet there is a way to do it with intention.

With preparation, emotional awareness, and a commitment to respectful communication, this moment can become something different.

There’s no drama. There’s no household torn apart. What there is is a conscious and considered transition. Without doubt, it is an ending, yes. Yet it creates the possibility for a healthier beginning for you both.

Remember, how you begin the process of separation often determines how you come through it. And that is something worth taking your time over.

By Jennie Sutton

www.untyingtheknot.me



Your Body Knows Before Your Mind Does

By **Gena Bradshaw Vitale**
Founder, Holistic Human Performance



In a world that encourages us to think our way through every challenge, we often overlook one of the most intelligent sources of information available to us: our bodies.

Many people don't realize that the body often recognizes stress, change, misalignment, and even opportunity long before the conscious mind catches up. Those unexplained headaches, sudden fatigue, tension in the shoulders, digestive discomfort, restless sleep, or persistent feeling that something isn't quite right are not inconveniences to ignore—they are messages worth listening to.

Our nervous system is constantly gathering information from our environment. Every conversation, responsibility, relationship, deadline, and experience creates a physiological response. While our minds may rationalize a situation, our bodies tell the truth. This is why someone can say they're „fine“ while experiencing chronic tension, exhaustion, or overwhelm.

The body has already recognized what the mind has not yet acknowledged.

Modern life has conditioned many of us to disconnect from these signals. We push through fatigue. We override intuition. We wear busyness as a badge of honor. We normalize stress because it has become so common. Yet common does not mean healthy.

When we ignore the body's signals for too long, those whispers often become louder. What begins as mild discomfort can evolve into burnout, anxiety, chronic inflammation, digestive issues, sleep disturbances, or emotional exhaustion. The good news is that the body is not working against us. It is working for us.

Every symptom, sensation, and emotional response serves as valuable feedback. Rather than viewing these experiences as problems to eliminate, we can learn to approach them with curiosity. It is showing us the medicine.

What is my body trying to tell me?
Am I carrying stress that I haven't processed? Do I need more rest, movement, connection, or boundaries?
Have I been living in alignment with what truly matters to me?

These questions create space for awareness, and awareness is often the first step toward healing.

The summer season offers a powerful opportunity to reconnect with ourselves. Nature naturally invites us to slow down, spend more time outdoors, and return to rhythms that support our well-being. Research continues to show that sunlight, time in nature, movement, and meaningful social connection positively impact our physical and mental health. These simple practices help regulate the nervous system, reduce stress hormones, improve mood, and support overall resilience.

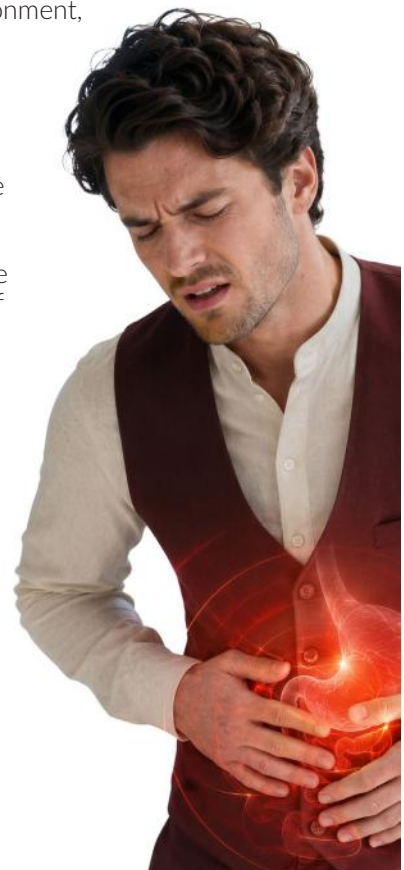
But beyond the science, there is also wisdom in learning to be present. When we create moments of stillness, we become more capable of hearing what our bodies have been trying to communicate all along. Sometimes the message is that we need rest. Sometimes, it's that we need to release something we've outgrown. Sometimes it's that we're being called toward a new opportunity, even if it feels uncomfortable.

Interestingly, periods of personal growth and expansion can create sensations that feel similar to stress. Excitement and fear often activate many of the same physiological responses. This is especially true for entrepreneurs, leaders, and individuals stepping into new chapters of life. The key is learning to distinguish between a body signaling danger and a body adapting to growth.

This requires self-awareness, nervous system regulation, and trust. The more connected we become to our bodies, the easier it becomes to recognize the difference. True wellness is not simply the absence of illness. It is the presence of connection, connection to ourselves, our values, our environment, and our purpose.

When we learn to listen to our bodies rather than constantly overriding them, we gain access to a deeper level of wisdom. We begin making decisions from alignment instead of reaction. We become more resilient, more intentional, and more capable of creating lives that support both our health and our happiness. This summer, instead of asking what you need to do more of, consider asking a different question: What has your body been trying to tell you?

The answer may be the beginning of the transformation you've been searching for.



www.holistichumanperformance.co

@genabshaw

@holistic hp

The Art of Balance: Lessons from the Hive and Feng Shui



*"Just as a hive
thrives in perfect
equilibrium, so
too can our homes
and lives flourish when
aligned with natural energy."*

I have always been fascinated by bees - their organisation, dedication, and the natural harmony within the hive. And, of course, the honey. As a child, I loved Gale's Honey (absolutely in relation to the similarity to my name), and perhaps that early enjoyment planted the first seed of curiosity that would later grow into beekeeping. Years later, I was lucky enough to harvest my own honey each season.

My journey into beekeeping was inspired by Bill Turnbull, the much-loved BBC Breakfast presenter and passionate apiarist. Through his stories, he brought the world of bees to life with warmth and enthusiasm. I had the pleasure of meeting him at an event and sharing how deeply he had influenced my decision to keep bees. Although he is no longer with us, his legacy continues to inspire amateur beekeepers like me.

For four years, I kept bees at the bottom of my garden. During that time, I began to recognise something striking: the principles that sustain a thriving hive closely mirror those of Feng Shui. At first glance, the two disciplines seem unrelated—one rooted in nature and insects, the other in energy and spatial design. Yet both are, fundamentally, practices of balance, harmony, and alignment.

Harmony with Nature

A beehive is a finely tuned reflection of its environment. Bees are highly sensitive to external conditions - morning sunlight, protection from prevailing winds, and access to flowers and water all influence their wellbeing. When these elements are in balance, the colony thrives. When they are not, stress increases, productivity declines, and, in some cases, the colony may not survive.

Feng Shui is equally grounded in alignment with the natural world. A well-considered space takes into account light, airflow, and orientation. The practitioner observes the flow of chi (the vital life force) to identify where energy is either supported or obstructed. The parallel is clear: whether tending a hive or shaping a home, success lies in working with, rather than against, natural forces.

The Importance of Environment

One of the first lessons in beekeeping is that placement is critical. I spent hours carefully positioning my hives—ensuring shelter, sunlight, and access to nectar sources. Even small misalignments could disrupt the colony's rhythm.

Feng Shui operates on the same principle. The placement of furniture, objects, and functional areas directly influences how energy moves through a space. A poorly positioned desk can create subtle tension, while an aligned workspace supports clarity, focus, and opportunity.

Our environments actively shape our experience and outcomes.

Energy Flow and Balance

A hive functions optimally only when balance is maintained. Overcrowding, fluctuating temperatures, or insufficient resources quickly create instability. Every bee contributes to sustaining the hive's equilibrium.

In Feng Shui, the flow of chi must remain smooth and unobstructed. Clutter, blockages, or stagnant areas disrupt this flow, often manifesting as stress, fatigue, or lack of progress. Just as in a hive, a space performs best when all elements are in harmony.

Communication and Community

Bees communicate through intricate systems - movement, pheromones, and highly structured roles within the colony. Each bee has a purpose, contributing to the collective wellbeing of the hive.

I observed this daily: when the colony was aligned, everything functioned seamlessly. When it was not, disruption spread quickly.

Feng Shui recognises a similar dynamic in human spaces. Homes and workplaces are energetic ecosystems shaped by the people within them. When individuals feel supported and connected, the environment becomes more cohesive, nurturing wellbeing, creativity, and prosperity.

Timing and Cycles

Beekeeping teaches patience and respect for timing. Hives follow natural cycles—swarming in spring, producing honey in summer, and conserving energy through winter. Attempting to override these rhythms rarely ends well.

Feng Shui also honours cycles, particularly through practices such as the annual Flying Stars method, which responds to changing temporal energies. Aligning with these cycles allows for more effective and sustainable transformation. Both disciplines remind us that timing is integral.

Attention to Detail

Small adjustments can have significant consequences. In beekeeping, subtle shifts in temperature, hive orientation, or feeding routines can influence the colony's health. Observation becomes a daily practice. In Feng Shui, seemingly minor changes, such as repositioning an object or introducing a natural element, can meaningfully shift the energy of a space. Both cultivate a refined awareness of how interconnected systems respond to the smallest intervention.

The Rewards of Balance

When balance is achieved, the results are wonderful. In beekeeping, it is seen in strong colonies, abundant honey, and the satisfaction of witnessing nature in harmony. In Feng Shui, it manifests as greater ease, clarity, and a sense of support in one's environment. Spaces begin to work with you and support you with greater ease.



My experience as a beekeeper continues to shape my Feng Shui practice. It has deepened my understanding of cycles, sensitivity, and the importance of alignment. Just as a hive flourishes when every element is in equilibrium, so too can our homes and workplaces support us when energy flows freely and intentionally.

The Power of Alignment

Beekeeping and Feng Shui may appear unrelated, yet they are guided by the same underlying principles: harmony with nature, intentional environments, balanced energy, community, timing, and mindful attention.

Both disciplines teach that when equilibrium is present, thriving becomes inevitable.

Reflecting on my journey, the connection feels natural. Working with bees taught me to notice subtleties, respect rhythms, and trust the power of alignment — lessons that now underpin my Feng Shui work.

Just like the hive, when we create balance, we create the conditions for everything else to fall into place.

By Gayle Swaffield



www.fengshui-essence.com

Instagram - [@thefengshuiessence.com](https://www.instagram.com/thefengshuiessence.com)

Email: gayle@fengshui-essence.com





REIKI ON STEROIDS

Have you noticed how things are shifting quickly, not just in the external world of chaos and distraction, but with people waking up to the truth and starting to question big corporations, governments and those holding the balance of power? I'm observing a movement away from 'money grabbing' to kindness, conversations and small communities quietly coming together to share their wisdom and help one another. No fanfare, no ego, simply a desire for connection.

More importantly, we are stepping away from 'me,' the individual, to 'we,' the collective, and ultimately, Oneness. Humanity may be a little way off from the tipping point of fully awakening, but as the unravelling of untruths occurs, more people are pushing back. I witnessed this during a weekend camping reset where people of all nationalities congregated around the campfire to exchange ideas, sing, laugh and enjoy one another's company without prejudice or intolerance.

Maybe you're seeing some of the effects of this energetic shift through synchronicities, manifesting resources quickly; thinking about someone and they phone; the way a family member looks at you in disbelief and says, 'I was just about to say that!' as your thoughts align; the item you've been searching for randomly appears, or the consecutive numbers 111, 222, 333, 444, 10:10, 11:11 that you notice on your phone every day. We are manifesting and materialising faster than ever, which makes it even more important to watch our thoughts and stay aligned with what we truly want to experience and call in.

The Law of Conservation of Energy states that energy cannot be destroyed or created from nothing. Rather, it is transformed from one form to another, such as sunlight is converted into photosynthesis for plant growth. Our brains are energy systems, comprising electrical, chemical and thermal signals, susceptible to emotional effects through choices. When you understand there are two aspects currently at play on the global stage: one - uneasiness, fear, frustration and loss of hope designed to keep people contained; the other, our natural state of being - stability, peace and joy, it's important to choose the latter and shine our light to be a living example for others.

Being a 'glass half-full' kind of person, focusing on solutions rather than fear, I explore ways to make the world a little brighter. Recently, when an opportunity arose to receive over a hundred sterling silver rings inlaid with cubic zirconia, I graciously accepted and offered them to the women in my sacred circles. The first group immediately embraced the sparkling costume jewellery, for who doesn't love a little bling?

From this experience of excitement, I then took them on a meditation to expand upon that feeling of joyful receiving. The second group were more hesitant and cautious, questioning my motives. I assured them there was no catch, no sales pitch, simply an invitation to receive. Once they understood this, their nervous systems softened and powerful conversations unfolded.

One woman insisted on 'paying it forward' and gifted me a Good Friday Children's Hospital charity cruise. Whilst onboard, I bought her raffle tickets: she won a \$100 massage voucher, another person in our group of four won a soft whale toy, whilst a third won a hamper of wine and assorted vouchers. As we were docking, the crew randomly gave us a bottle of wine. Everyone in our party walked away with something, and although I didn't leave with anything tangible, my heart was full watching others receive with unanticipated surprise.

'The Law of Conservation of Energy states that energy cannot be destroyed or created from nothing.'

These moments are a reminder that possibilities and shifts occur when we stay open, when we allow generosity to move through us and when we remember how to receive.

Aligning and allowing miracles also guides us in subtle and unexpected ways. My clients love the profound yet gentle changes I share during our Qigong sessions, another layer of ritual I've incorporated into daily life. I find integrating the breath, movement and warrior spirit energy encompasses the mind/body/spirit connection, opening us up to healing, peace and joy. It is a modality that can be done anytime, anywhere, as it heals the places we've been disconnected from and settles

our nervous system back into us. Another practice I incorporate during meditation is to place my hand upon my heart and simply breathe slowly and deeply. The results are immensely beneficial to 'rest and digest' our entire being.

We may think, as individuals, that we cannot do much to assist the shift, yet we are all generating energy. Think back to natural disasters, and despite adversity and pain, countless individuals selflessly assist without thought of themselves, reward or recognition. When people unite, outcomes can be profound: 'when one or more are gathered, energy is amplified.' Group meditations and intentions are sacred opportunities that have a powerful influence when focusing on a specific intent.

At its core, humanity is kind-hearted. It is becoming more obvious that people have had enough as millions protest quietly in the streets against global conflict. Individually and collectively, they are contributing to the energetic squeeze designed to nudge us back to the natural order of harmony. These powerful intentions for peace, as they ripple around the world, are a reminder that possibilities are what happen when we lead and weave energy, generosity, synchronicity, connection and community together.

It is up to us individually to make conscious choices away from large organisations. This push back will energetically dissipate control, manipulation and deceit, and support humanity's move into higher consciousness coherence and resonance. We need to remember our sovereignty, and that in every moment, every second, collectively we are creating the future. I encourage you to choose peace, choose joy and choose to be the change the world needs to see.

Claire Chitty is an Australian author, teacher in Women's Sacred Circles and multidimensional healing facilitator whose work empowers individuals to reconnect with their innate clarity, emotional wellbeing and soul-led purpose.

With more than 27 years of experience in energetic healing, she weaves together metaphysical kinesiology, spiritual healing, intuitive guidance and ritual design to create transformative experiences that are both grounded and expansive. Claire is also the channel and creator of 26 etheric aura sprays, each one a vibrational portal supporting emotional healing, energetic clarity, and soul alignment.

www.possibilitiesandpotential.com.au



How Triggers Are Your Greatest Teachers



Nobody enjoys being triggered. That flush of heat when a colleague talks over you. The tightness in your chest when someone dismisses your idea. The irritation that lingers for hours after a conversation that should have rolled off your back.

We tend to treat these moments as problems. Something to manage, suppress, or blame on the other person. What if your triggers were **information about your unconscious internal landscape?**

We are mirrors for each other.

When someone triggers you, they may be reflecting a part of yourself that's wounded or unbalanced, or that's asking for attention. **You're not broken. You're being handed vital information, and what you do with it matters.** Paid attention to, it can become the doorway to your deepest healing and a sense of peace you may not have known was possible.

Think about the last person who really got under your skin. What specifically bothered you? Their arrogance? Their neediness? Their refusal to take responsibility? The usual advice here is to ask: where do I do this same thing? Sometimes that helps. Often, it just triggers defensiveness because your honest answer may be that you don't.

Shadow work points to a gentler, truer question: what is it about this quality that feels so unbearable to me? **What am I terrified of being seen as?** The charge in a trigger often comes not from being like that person, but from how hard you've worked to never be seen that way.

A rejected quality rarely disappears, though. It tends to leak out in disguise. The person who despises neediness may show it as control. The one who can't stand arrogance may perform humility so loudly it becomes its own quiet arrogance. So the final question: where might this be living in me, in hidden or inverted form?

The beliefs running quietly underneath.

Every trigger tends to be connected to an unconscious belief. These beliefs often formed early, usually as survival strategies. **"My voice doesn't matter." "I have to be perfect to be loved." "I'm too much."**



These beliefs may once have been protective. The trouble is they can keep running your adult life long after they've stopped serving you. A trigger may be pressing directly on one of these old beliefs, and **the intensity of your reaction is often a clue to how deeply it's embedded.**

This is why triggers are such powerful teachers. They point with remarkable accuracy to what is ready to be examined, questioned, and released.

Two ways to appreciate your triggers more

Knowing that triggers are teachers is one thing. Letting them teach you is another. Two practices can help.

1.) The 60-second mirror practice. The moment you feel triggered, pause and take one slow breath. Name what you feel in your body: heat in your face, tightness in your chest, a knot in your stomach. Naming it creates a small gap between trigger and reaction. In that gap, ask yourself three questions. What quality in them am I reacting to? What is it about that quality that feels so unbearable to me? What is this moment trying to show me? You don't need perfect answers. The act of asking moves you from reaction into reflection, and that is where the learning begins.

In practice, say a colleague's constant self-promotion irritates you. The quality you're reacting to might be visibility. The question becomes: what did I learn about being seen, and where have I been silencing my own need for it?

2) Keep a trigger journal. For two weeks, capture each trigger using five simple prompts. Who triggered me? What exactly happened? What did I feel in my body? What did I make it mean about me? What might this be trying to teach me? Two or three sentences per prompt are enough.

Patterns tend to emerge quickly. You may discover five different people pressing on the same wound. Once you can see the pattern, you can begin to work with it, and you may even feel a strange gratitude towards the people who revealed it.

A word on boundaries

None of this means you tolerate poor behaviour. Boundaries remain essential. Someone can be your teacher and still not be someone you need in your life.

The gift in the discomfort

When you stop making triggers about the other person and start treating them as information about yourself, everything changes. You stop being a victim of other people's behaviour. You start becoming the author of your own transformation.

Your triggers are not happening to you. They are happening for you, showing you where your healing work lives and which parts of yourself are waiting to be reclaimed.

The person who triggers you the most might just be your greatest teacher. Not because they're right and you're wrong, but because they show you what you haven't been able to see on your own.

That is the gift. Opening it is up to you.

Author - Chantelle Dantu

Master Leadership & Depth Coach

Access your gifted visualization to connect with your Confidence



www.thefemininelead.com



Rebuilding your life after heartbreak or loss needs more than time — it needs intention

When something significant ends or is lost – a relationship, a job, a friendship – people often say (according to the proverb) that time is a great healer. But, on its own, time doesn't rebuild a life. There needs to be an intention to bounce back – or more to the point, to bounce forward – and (re)define who you want to be.

When my marriage ended suddenly and without warning, my heart wasn't just broken – it was ruptured; torn from my chest and discarded. From that point on, I was determined that this situation would be the making of me. I was left with a deep question:

Who am I now – and how do I move forward from here?

Time doesn't rebuild identity – intention does

I had been heartbroken before, but nothing on this scale. I knew that the myth of time passing wouldn't be enough this time. It is so easy to stay stuck – replaying conversations, questioning my worth, waiting to feel better before taking a step forward.

But rebuilding doesn't happen passively.

There were days I felt strong and clear, and others where I felt pulled back into old patterns of thinking – doubt, blame, and a deep sense of loss. What I began to realise was this: nothing would change unless I chose it. Not once, but repeatedly.

It has been difficult, and I haven't done it alone – I've been supported by psychotherapists, a hypnotherapist, acupuncturists, coaches, and a huge amount of self-determination. But support alone isn't what creates change. It's what you do with it.

Rebuilding is a series of intentional shifts

From what I've learned – personally and now through my work with clients – rebuilding is not a single decision. It's a series of intentional shifts.

It requires:

- Untangling your identity from what has been.
- Noticing emotional patterns rather than being driven by them.
- Releasing blame – both of yourself and of others.
- Revisiting and redefining your boundaries.
- Leaning into discomfort and the unfamiliar.
- Rebuilding trust in yourself (and others).
- Choosing how you want to show up next.

What matters is not getting it right every time, but noticing what's happening and choosing, again, how you want to respond.

I was never interested in going back to who I was. Perhaps because what had happened forced me to question that version of myself so deeply that I chose to rebuild something new. Someone new. Rebuilding rarely looks neat or linear. You may feel clear one moment and pulled back the next. You might take a step forward, only to question yourself or revisit old thoughts and behaviours.

That doesn't mean you're going backwards. It means you're in the process of change.



What matters is not getting it right every time, but noticing what's happening and choosing, again, how you want to respond. Over time, those small, intentional choices begin to create something new – a way of being that feels more grounded, more self-trusting, and more aligned with who you are becoming.

Growth in rebuilding

Resilience is often framed as returning – bouncing back. But real growth comes from redefining – bouncing forward, with intention.

Whether you've come through heartbreak, loss, or a major life shift, these reflection prompts might help you begin again:

- What part of my identity is tied to what has ended?
- What am I holding onto that is keeping me anchored in the past?
- What would bouncing forward – not back – look like for me?
- What kind of life do I want to rebuild, intentionally?

Rebuilding isn't just about fixing. It's about growth. And defining what comes next – with clarity, courage and choice.



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.

What If You've Already Outgrown Who People Think You Are

There comes a moment in life when you realise the biggest thing holding you back is no longer a lack of knowledge, confidence, qualifications, experience, or even opportunity. It's the version of yourself that everyone else still believes you are.

For years, I was known as, Debbie from Swindon. I wore the title proudly because it represented where I came from, the people I understood, and the journey I had travelled. It felt relatable. It felt safe. It felt like me.

But what I didn't realise at the time was that while I was busy helping other people step into bigger versions of themselves, I was quietly staying attached to an identity that no longer fitted.

The problem with outgrowing an identity is that nobody sends you a memo.
There isn't a ceremony.
There isn't a certificate.
There isn't a giant flashing sign that appears one morning telling you that the person who got you here isn't necessarily the person who will take you where you're going next.

Instead, it shows up as frustration. You know you're capable of more, yet people continue to see the old version of you. You find yourself having the same conversations. Attracting the same opportunities. Being introduced in ways that no longer reflect who you have become. You look around and wonder why people with less experience, less credibility, and sometimes less talent seem to be moving ahead faster than you.

The truth is often uncomfortable. The world responds to the version of you that you present. Not the version that exists quietly in your head. Over the last year, I have found myself standing in rooms I never imagined I'd be in when I first started my business journey.

Not because I suddenly became more qualified.
Not because I discovered a secret strategy.
But because I finally stopped shrinking myself to make other people comfortable.

I stopped apologising for my experience.
I stopped downplaying my achievements.
I stopped introducing myself as the person I used to be and started owning the person I had become.

For many women, particularly those who have spent years building businesses, supporting families, leading teams, and putting everyone else first, visibility feels uncomfortable. We've been taught that confidence is arrogance. Speaking about our achievements is showing off. That waiting for our turn is somehow noble. Yet the irony is that some of the most talented, capable, and experienced women I meet are also the most invisible. Not because they lack value. Because they have become experts at hiding it.

They wait until everything is perfect.
They wait until they feel ready.
They wait until someone gives them permission.

Meanwhile, somebody far less experienced is already on stage, writing the article, launching the podcast, or pitching themselves for the opportunity.

What if this summer became the season you stopped waiting?
Not for confidence.
Not for certainty.
Not for permission.

What if you simply decided that the person you are today deserves to be seen? Because here's what I've learned.
Confidence rarely arrives first.
Visibility comes first.
Action comes first.
The decision comes first.
Then confidence catches up.
The women I admire most are not fearless.
They're simply willing to move before they feel ready.

They understand that growth requires letting go of old identities, old stories, and sometimes even old labels that once felt comfortable. As I write this, I am preparing for one of the biggest projects of my career, helping bring TEDx Railway Village to life as Co-Curator.

It's exciting.
It's challenging.
It's stretching me in ways I didn't expect.
And yet, if I'm honest, the biggest challenge hasn't been the event itself. It's been accepting that I have outgrown the version of me that thought playing small was safer. Perhaps that's true for you, too.

Perhaps the next chapter of your life doesn't require another qualification, another course, another strategy, or another year of preparation.

Perhaps it simply requires you to stop introducing yourself as the person you used to be.

Because the world can only meet the version of you that you're willing to show.

And maybe, just maybe, you've already outgrown who people think you are.

By Debbie Bryan

International Motivational Speaker and Award Winning Business Coach





By Sue Campanella

Moving Beyond Trauma

WHY ENERGY WORK MATTERS

We can, with effort, consciously move past trauma or dramatic events in our lives—whether it's a serious accident, a difficult divorce, or a sudden loss. We can push ourselves to move forward. But the emotions and energies connected to those experiences don't simply disappear. They often remain beneath the surface stored in the body and mind, waiting to be triggered. These triggers can heighten feelings of anxiety, fear, and sadness. When a new trauma occurs, older patterns may resurface.

For example, imagine losing a beloved grandparent at age five. As you grow older, the memory may fade, but the emotional imprint remains in the subconscious mind. Decades later, losing a parent may bring those earlier feelings back, intensifying grief and leaving you feeling overwhelmed, affecting your conscious mind chatter and potentially your nervous system.

Another example might involve childhood comparisons. If you grew up being compared to a sibling, you may have internalized the belief that you “weren't good enough”. As an adult, you may intellectually know you are capable and qualified for opportunities - such as a promotion - but your subconscious may still trigger self-doubt and fear, causing your negative mind chatter to take over.

To understand why this happens, it helps to look at how the mind works:

Your Conscious Mind

Your conscious mind represents roughly 5% of your total mental activity. It is responsible for:

- Logic
- Reasoning
- Willpower
- Creativity
- Faith

This is the thinking part of the mind - the part that plans, analyzes, solves problems and makes decisions.

Your Subconscious Mind

The subconscious mind accounts for 95% of who you are by age 35. It contains:

- Deeply ingrained attitudes
- Unconscious beliefs and perceptions
- Subconscious habits and behaviors

Unlike the conscious mind, the subconscious does not analyze information logically. It absorbs experiences and stores them as patterns that influence how we think, feel, and react.

Your conscious mind doesn't fully develop until around age seven. Everything you see, hear, and experience before that is imprinted in your subconscious as truth. During early childhood—before the conscious mind is fully developed—we absorb information directly from our environment. Family members, teachers, neighbors, and early life experiences can all shape the beliefs we carry into adulthood.

Think about your childhood, your family, neighbors, teachers, coaches. Their words and actions became your truth, your limiting beliefs, your perceptions. Over time, these beliefs can become the internal programs that guide our responses to life, often without us even realizing it.

Releasing Emotional Triggers

So, how do we release subconscious triggers? One approach many people explore is through energy work. Energy work is based on the idea that everything in the universe—including our bodies—is composed of energy. Emotional experiences can become stored in the body as energetic patterns.

When emotional energy becomes trapped or unresolved, it may contribute to feelings of stress, anxiety, or imbalance. Energy-based healing practices aim to help identify and release these patterns, allowing the body and mind to return to a more balanced state.

By clearing old emotional triggers, many people report feeling lighter, calmer, and more resilient. The goal is not to erase the past, but to release the emotional weight that may still be influencing the present.

When those patterns are released, it becomes easier to move forward with greater clarity, confidence, and self-compassion. It also allows your body to live in the frequency of love.

Stay tuned for my next column, where we will explore different forms of energy work and how they support emotional health.

*Sue Campanella, founder of Transformations Life Coaching & Healing, LLC, is an award-winning energy therapist, an acclaimed speaker, and co-author of several books, including *Chicken Soup for the Soul*. She has empowered thousands of awakening women—those seeking to reclaim their voice and truth—through spiritually guided coaching, the Emotion, Body, and Belief Code modalities, and bespoke tools for lasting alignment. For over a decade and a half, Sue has embodied empowerment as a lifestyle, guiding women to live authentically and consciously every day.*

www.suecampanella.com





Transform Your Energy Frequency with Crystal Skulls + Dragons

Crystals have always been a love of mine from an early age. At school, I would spend my pocket money on tumble stones. As I got older and started studying Earth Sciences at University, my collection grew to include crystal geodes.

When I had my spiritual awakening in my mid-20s, I was drawn to the rarer crystals whose frequency was higher to help me heal. At the time, I was in recovery from a life-threatening neurological illness that had left me unable to move for over a year, and slowly I was in recovery, learning to read, write and walk again. I did not realise at the time that the crystals were a portal for me to reconnect with my soul light and find myself, the true me, again.

I decided to write a book on my experiences with Angels and Nature Spirits that started to happen as my body and brain slowly recovered over the coming years, and of course, included a chapter on crystal beings. My days were still short, and my energy levels were limiting my daily activities.

So I spent a lot of time in meditation and resting, while speaking to my spiritual guides, who by now I could hear clearly, having developed my clairaudience. I received their loving guidance on how to navigate my life going forward. Previously, I had been a political advisor in Parliament, a life I was not yet well enough to return to, so I had to be open to new life possibilities.

Meeting First Crystal Skull

It was at the London Olympia Mind, Body and Spirit Show in 2009, where I was promoting my book *Messages from Nature's Guardians* and running talks, that I met my first Crystal Skull. A stunning Clear Quartz skull that my friend Kwali had become guardian of and brought along to show me. She took me to a stand full of crystal skulls and said, "You have to choose one to be a guardian of." I picked Kief, a white jasper crystal skull, and started meditating while holding him.

It took him a while to start speaking to me as our energies settled together, but he said he was to be one of many crystal skulls I was to become a guardian to, but elaborated no more at that time.

As the years rolled on, I was well enough to run a stall offering crystal attunements and to give talks on my book at spiritual events across Scotland. Each time, I would find another crystal skull that I wanted to come home with me. Larger crystal skulls started to join my collection, then Dragon Skulls and Unicorn Skulls joined them.

I started teaching people how to meditate with them, how to use them for energy healing, how to grid their home for psychic protection, and how to Earth heal with them. Over the years, I became a wife and a mother, and I was still in recovery but trying desperately to get off Disability Living Allowance and be well enough to work full time. I founded the Dragon Wisdom School, an online school sharing information on Dragons and how to work with them to support your life, the year after my son was born. It was then that the Dragons told me to start transforming my wealth frequency with their help and to use the crystal dragons and skulls to help me.

Shifting limiting beliefs

I started learning about the subconscious limiting beliefs we often hold, unknowingly, that cloud our vibration and affect our wealth frequency. I set up Crystal Dragon wealth grids and placed money under my Dragon skulls - asking the Dragons to transform my blocks into being wealthy.

I would spend time meditating daily with the Crystal Dragons, asking them to show me my limiting beliefs that were stopping me from earning more money for my spiritual services and from generating and holding monetary wealth in my bank account. I uncreated and deleted the limiting programmes from my conscious mind as the Dragons did the energetic work of removing me from unseen grids and dissolving conditioning I had taken on from society, family, and past-life experiences.

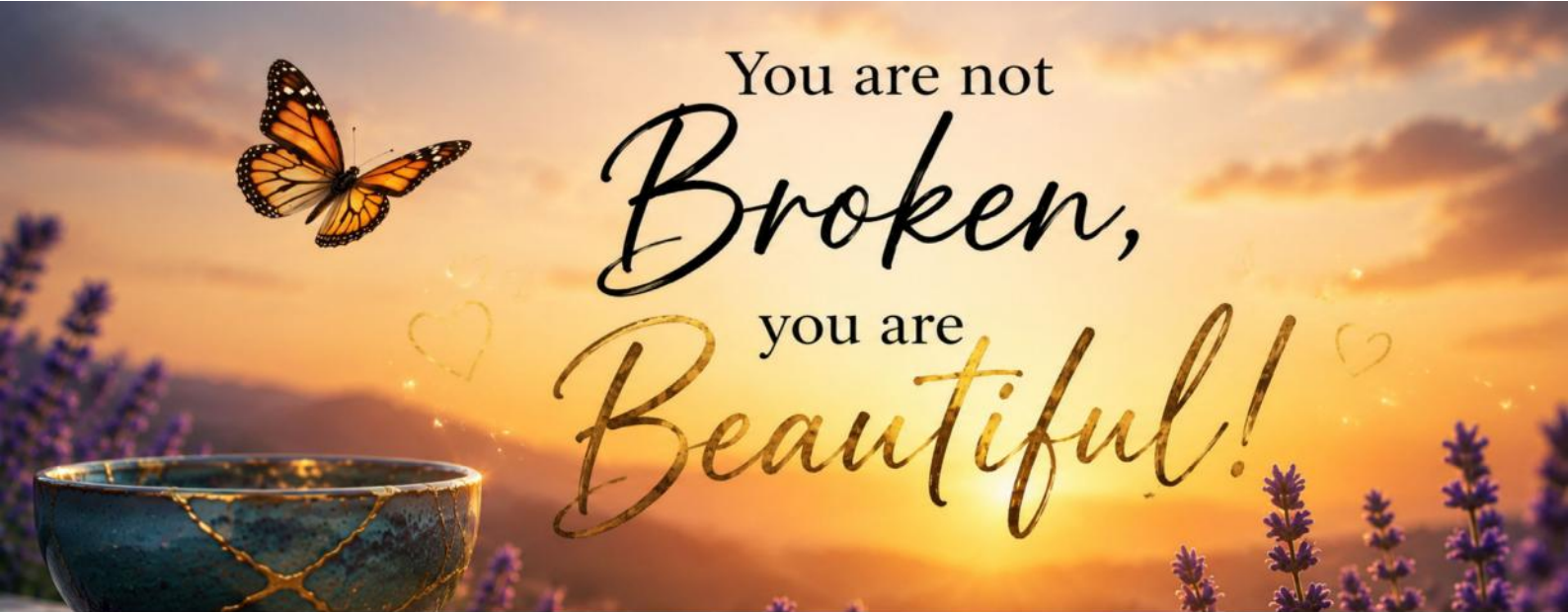
Month by month, new clients came, and our business grew through the channelled courses, one-to-one crystal skull healings and personal soul channellings we offered. As well as by selling beautiful crystal skulls to people around the world in our online shop. I kept following their guidance and asking for their help. When I felt the energies were stagnating, I would ask the Dragons to transform them, and what beliefs I was required to let go of to be shown to me. I fully surrendered to this journey of transforming with Crystal Skulls and the Dragon's guidance.

Within 4 years, I hit my target of us having 1 million pounds in the bank to buy our house cash, have an electric car, and a motorhome in the drive to travel to the sacred sites to perform the Earth-healing ceremonies the Dragons were asking us to. I now help people work with Dragons and Crystal Skulls to transform their lives, recover from illness, and shift their wealth frequency, too.

Although Crystal Skulls are not such a commonly used tool in the spiritual development world, they are powerful and keen to be called upon to help us all evolve spiritually and live life without struggle by bringing their powerful transformative healing light and guidance into our lives.

By Alphedia Arara, founder of Elemental Beings Ltd + Dragon Wisdom School

Alphedia Arara offers twice weekly group remote crystal skull healings on a variety to healing topics. You can also book your own personal crystal skull healing sessions and have Alphedia channel their guidance for you after the healing through her website www.elementalbeings.co.uk



You are not *Broken,* you are *Beautiful!*

As a professional psychic and medium, I often get readings that include very bad events in a person's life. It may be a passing of a friend or loved one, a crime against a loved one, a crime against the sitter or even domestic abuse.

I personally feel we all need to be aware of trauma and know that it affects people differently, and especially at different ages. I recall being so affected by the book "Charlotte's Web" due to the mother spider dying before her babies were born. It really, really hurt my heart.

As an adolescent, I had very vivid nightmares, and some would affect me for days after, sometimes having a fine line between reality and fantasy. In my University days, I was in a car crash in my friend's vintage Beetle; it had no seatbelts, and I am so lucky to still be here. The hardest memory of that was not the crash, but being so alone in the emergency room and in pain and shock. Effectively, I am saying we each have different nerve and emotional triggers.

If something has caused you trauma, then that is yours to own; never let anyone dismiss its importance to you. Psychic readings can assist with the personal recovery from these situations. Ensuring that the sitter is aware that this is not "karma" and that they are not a bad person for having been victimised or hurt.

Here is a list of people's situations I have assisted with their recovery: daughter was kidnapped, physical assault, psychological abuse, theft, loss of a loved one to an accident, manslaughter, amputees, widows, widowers, car accident, miscarriage, amongst many more experiences of trauma.

The most important thing to convey to each person, and to whoever resonates with this discussion, is that you do not need to become a product of the trauma. It will take time and courage to recover, but you can and you WILL! My previous article in the Spring edition was about the power of words. My least favourite word is TRY, as it is one step away from success and also one step away from failure. By WILLING, you are calling out to the universe, I CAN and I WILL. If you just say the words out loud, you can feel the strength and power within them.

I am by no way suggesting that readings are a substitute for a qualified trauma therapist, but they can assist in bringing back self-esteem, hope and a wonder towards the future, which is often diminished after devastating or upsetting events.

I would like to share with you 3 tips that will assist everyone dealing with upset and stress.

1) Positive affirmations really work.

Remember how easy it is for a bully to make someone feel weak, useless and unattractive. This is due to the unkind words they use; they stick, so therefore kind words can stick also. My top 3 affirmations are "I am Powerful", "I choose peace", and the most impactful "I am enough". I invite you to consider what is important to you and write your own.

2) One of the most magical healing tools is our heart.

The shaman beats the drum to echo the heartbeat, the first ever experience we had that felt safe in the mother's womb, with just a heartbeat for company. In times of flashbacks, anxiety or triggers, it is always available.

Close your eyes to shut out the visual "noise", place a hand on your chest, feel the beat and take long and slow breaths until you feel a complete "wave of calm."

3) Remember the word Kintsugi.

It is the name of a very special and revered Japanese art form. Instead of hiding cracks and breakages in

their china, it honours the breakage by highlighting it with precious gold.

The final art piece symbolises resilience and celebrates the beauty of imperfections. You are not your experience; you are not broken; you are beautiful!

By Indigo Amy Packman



YOU'RE NOT UNHEALED - YOU'RE UNPRACTISED

by Kate Kleeberg
Integration coach and
founder of Consciously Evolving



Why the women who've done the most inner work are often the most stuck — and the one thing no one taught them to do next.

There is a particular kind of woman I want to talk to. She has done the work. Years of it. The therapy, the retreats, the breathwork, the books, the plant medicine, the inner child, the shadow work.

She understands herself better than almost anyone she knows. And her life still doesn't look the way she thought it would by now. If that's you, I want to say something early, because I think you've been waiting a long time to hear it. You are not broken. You did not fail at this. And you almost certainly do not need to go deeper.

When the work stops working

There comes a point where the tools that used to crack you open just... stop. The meditation goes flat. The breathwork doesn't move anything. The manifesting feels like words you're saying to a ceiling. And the quiet, frightening thought arrives: maybe something's still wrong with me. Maybe I haven't found the root yet.

I lived in that loop for the better part of a decade. Every time my life didn't change, I concluded I needed more healing — so I went deeper, and deeper, and waited for the breakthrough to finally land in my actual life. It never quite did. Here is what I eventually understood, and it's the thing nobody had told me. The tools hadn't failed.

They'd done their job. They'd given me awareness — a deep, genuine understanding of myself. But you can pour understanding into a cup that's already full. That flat feeling isn't failure — it's full. I didn't need more in the cup. I needed to do something with what was already there.

The smaller life nobody warns you about

There's a part of this I rarely hear anyone say out loud. The healing did work, in a way. I got softer. Calmer. Less reactive — as long as nothing pushed back at me. And because being that version of myself felt good, I began, without noticing, to arrange my life so that nothing would.

I stopped going to the events that might overwhelm me. I avoided the rooms where I might get triggered. I stayed in a life that was small enough to manage. And I called it boundaries. I called it protecting my peace.

It wasn't. It was avoidance, wearing the language of growth. Spiritual avoidance. My world kept shrinking, and I kept calling the shrinking progress. I remember being invited to something I'd once have loved, and standing there feeling utterly disconnected — from the room, from my friends, from my own life, as though I were watching all of it from the outside. After everything I'd done, I

still felt like a stranger to my own life. And the thought surfaced somewhere between anger and grief: how is this still my life? How am I still this unsure of myself, after all of it?

The answer was insultingly simple

I wasn't unhealed. I was unpractised. Healing gives you awareness. It does not give you a life. Those are two different skills, and almost no one tells you that the second one exists. You can understand your patterns completely and still freeze the moment it counts — because understanding a thing, and being able to do it out loud, in real life, under pressure, are not the same. Healing builds the first. Only practice builds the second.

The reason my life hadn't changed wasn't a missing insight. It was that I had never practised being the woman I'd done all that work to become. I'd rehearsed her, privately, for years. I'd just never walked out and lived her on an ordinary Tuesday.

Where my work parts ways with the rest

This is the part that runs against almost everything you'll read. So much of the healing world teaches you to regulate away from discomfort — soften it, soothe it, step back from the edge, come back to safety. And that matters, genuinely. You don't want to flood a nervous system or push it until it crashes.

But if the only thing you ever do is move away from the difficult feeling, you never build any tolerance for it — and tolerance is the one thing that lets you grow. Not regulating away. Leaning gently in.

Let me be precise, because if you've done the deep work you'll want to argue with me here. In a ceremony, you move toward discomfort to understand it. That has its place. But the discomfort of doing something genuinely new in your life is a different thing entirely. It isn't asking to be interpreted; there's no hidden wound to excavate.

It's simply a signal that you've stepped outside the familiar. You don't need to understand it. You need to stay in it — just long enough, often enough — that your body learns it is survivable.

Because change, by its very definition, means moving from the familiar into the unknown. And the unknown is uncomfortable by design. If your system has no practice at feeling that and staying anyway, it cannot change — not because you're weak, but because no one ever showed you that this was the work.

Small, on purpose, again and again

Here is the part that surprises people most. You don't build that tolerance by throwing yourself at the hardest thing you can find. It isn't the big dramatic change everyone tells you to make — move house, leave the job, have the enormous confrontation. That just floods the system and proves the fear right.

You build it the way you build any strength: gently, deliberately, and far smaller than you'd think. In real life it's almost unglamorous. It's telling your mother "I can't this weekend" without offering three reasons to soften it. It's having the conversation you'd normally talk yourself out of by the afternoon. It's saying "I'm at capacity" instead of automatically saying yes. Tiny, deliberate moments of doing the opposite of your default — and staying in

the discomfort of it without fixing or fleeing. Each one is a rep. Done enough times, in the right way, they rewire what your body believes is safe — and one day you look up and you simply are her. Not because you healed more. Because you practised.

You didn't fail at healing

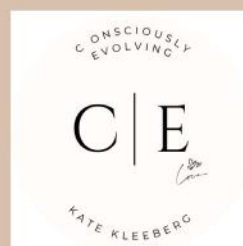
So if you've done the work — the years of it — and your life still doesn't reflect who you've become, hear this clearly. You didn't fail at healing. Healing did its job. It gave you the awareness, the foundation, the deep knowing.

What no one told you is that there's a second half to all of it — and it isn't more insight. It's practice. It's taking everything you now know about who you want to be, how you want to show up, and what you deserve, and carrying it into real life. Leaning into the discomfort of that instead of away from it, one small rep at a time, until the woman you became in private becomes the woman you are out loud.

You didn't fail at healing. Healing worked. You're just still waiting for your life to catch up — and it will, the moment you stop healing and start practising.

Consciously Evolving

Kate Kleeberg is an integration coach and the founder of Consciously Evolving, where she helps women who've done the inner work finally live it — turning years of awareness into the life it was meant to build. Find her at consciouslyevolving.com.au and on Instagram @katekleeberg.



The Power of the Gut Microbiome

Looking Beyond Symptoms and "Normal" Results



One of the most misleading phrases in modern healthcare is this: "You're fine. Everything looks normal." I hear it regularly from high-performers who are still functioning, still producing, still delivering results, yet know something inside their system has shifted. They are not ill. They are not failing. But they are no longer regulated. If you've followed this series so far, you already understand that stress is often a biological state driven by the gut microbiome and that performance declines long before burnout becomes visible. The next question is unavoidable: What happens when the early signals are ignored?

Inflammation Is Not the Problem. It's the Message.

Low-grade, chronic inflammation is one of the clearest expressions of gut microbiome dysregulation. Not the acute inflammation that triggers alarm bells, but the quiet, persistent kind that slowly erodes energy, focus, emotional stability and recovery.

From a gut microbiota perspective, this often involves:

- Reduced levels of anti-inflammatory bacteria such as *Faecalibacterium prausnitzii*
- Loss of microbial diversity
- Increased intestinal permeability, allowing inflammatory signals to circulate systemically. The body is not malfunctioning. It is communicating.

Ask yourself:

Do you wake up tired even after adequate sleep?

Do you react more strongly to foods, stress or people than you used to?

Do minor challenges drain you more than they should?

These are not personality changes. They are regulatory shifts.

Reactivity Is a Biological State, Not a Personal Trait

Many high-performers tell me they have "suddenly become intolerant" of foods, pressure, noise or environments they previously managed with ease. What they are experiencing is not fragility. It is reactivity driven by gut-immune-nervous system imbalance. When the gut microbiome loses stability, immune signalling becomes exaggerated, histamine pathways overactivate, and the nervous system remains on alert.

This often shows up as:

- **Food reactions that appear without warning**
- **Emotional volatility that feels unfamiliar**
- **Reduced tolerance to complexity and sustained pressure**

And yet, routine blood tests are often reported as normal.

Because most diagnostics are designed to detect disease, not loss of regulation.

The Long-Term Cost of Being "Fine"

High-performers are exceptionally good at compensating.

You can override biological signals with discipline.

You can maintain output while recovery capacity declines.

You can keep functioning while regulation quietly erodes.

But compensation is not resilience. Years spent in a state of low-grade inflammation and gut-driven reactivity accelerate biological ageing. Cognitive sharpness dulls earlier. Immune resilience weakens. Metabolic flexibility declines. Longevity is not simply about lifespan. It is about preserving clarity, adaptability and performance capacity over decades. And the gut microbiome sits at the centre of that equation.

What Supports Regulation Without Guesswork

Preventative care does not mean doing everything. It means doing what matters.

At a foundational level:

- **Reduce inflammatory pressure from ultra-processed foods and erratic eating patterns**
- **Prioritise consistency in sleep and meals. The gut microbiome responds to rhythm**
- **Support microbial diversity through variety, not restriction**
- **Stop random supplementation. Guessing often increases imbalance**

These steps stabilise the surface. But surface stability is not transformation.

Beyond Symptoms: Understanding Your Biological Terrain

One of the greatest mistakes in modern health education is assuming that symptoms are the problem. Symptoms are often the final expression of deeper biological patterns that have been developing for months, and sometimes years.

Through my work as a microbiologist and creator of The Mantovani Method®, I have observed that many individuals tend to fall into recurring patterns of biological terrain. Some struggle with chronic inflammation. Others experience histamine-related reactivity, microbial imbalance, poor bile flow, digestive dysfunction, or reduced resilience under stress. Understanding these patterns can help individuals make more informed decisions before symptoms progress and performance declines.

This is the inspiration behind my new educational ebook series:

- **Terrain 1: SCFA Support**
- **Terrain 2: Histamine Balance**
- **Terrain 3: Bile Flow Support**
- **Terrain 4: Yeast Balance**
- **Terrain 5: Inflammatory Regulation**

Whether you are looking to better understand your health, support your wellbeing, or gain deeper insight into the biological patterns that may influence how you feel each day, these guides provide a practical starting point. Combining scientific understanding with actionable recommendations, they are designed to help readers move from information to implementation. Explore the collection at the Mantovani Method® Institute Learning Portal.

Because meaningful prevention begins with awareness. When we learn to identify patterns early, we gain the opportunity to intervene before dysfunction becomes disease.

Knowledge creates clarity. Clarity creates action. Action creates transformation. Understanding the problem is important. Knowing what to do next is transformative. The Biological Terrain Series™ combines microbiome science with easy, practical solutions to help you take informed action towards better health and wellbeing.

By **Letizia Mantovani**

www.letiziamantovani.com

www.linkedin.com/in/letizia-mantovani-msc
BiomedVibes: www.biomedvibes.co.uk



You Know What to Do So Why Aren't You Doing It?

There's a moment that happens, and you'll recognise it the second I describe it.

Your gut says no. Though half the time you don't even clock it as your gut. It's more of a pull. Your stomach is turning inside out. And sometimes it's so quiet you almost miss it. The collaboration that's still selling but no longer lights you up. The client you keep on at the old price because losing them feels worse than keeping them: the PTA spot, the playdate, the favour, when you're already stretched to nothing. Something in you knows the answer. And you do the opposite of what it's telling you. That's the whole thing, right there. Not a strategy gap, not a knowledge gap. Your body knew, but you chose not to listen.

We're told that if things aren't working, we need more. Another framework, another funnel, another course, someone else's certainty bolted on top of ours. And the industry is more than happy to sell you that. But the strategy was never the problem. You've had good strategies for years; I mean, you've probably tried all of them, right? The problem is the moment... the actual moment a decision shows up, and which version of you reaches for the wheel.

And it's not your fault; it's the way you were wired. Our brains are literally wired with a negative bias, wired to take the path they already know, every single time. Picture a field of corn towering above you. There are worn pathways through it, and if I asked you to walk across, you'd take one of them without thinking. That's your brain. It doesn't care that the worn path keeps you small. It doesn't care that it's a form of self-sabotage. It cares about efficiency and what it knows. Because what it knows is safe.

So when you try to make a different choice, of course, it feels hard. You're pushing through corn that's never been walked. And it stays hard. Not just the first time, but the second, the fifth, the tenth, until you've worn that new path enough times that your brain finally decides it's the efficient one. That's the work. It's not glamorous, and nobody online wants to talk about it, because there's no transformation photo for «I paused before I said yes.» But that pause is everything.

Most of the time we're reacting. Reacting is the well-worn path, the one that happens automatically. It's like driving to the supermarket you've been to a thousand times and arriving with no memory of the journey. You weren't there... You were on autopilot, running the old route. Responding is different. Responding is driving somewhere completely new, where you actually have to pay attention to every turn, every junction. It asks you to be present.

And the only way to get there is to give yourself one breath in the moment the choice appears. Not deciding from fear, because fear is just future-thinking. Not deciding from the version of you that's always decided this way before. Just one breath, right there, long enough to drop into your body and understand where it's pulling you, what choice it's actually pulling you towards.

And the thing nobody tells you is what that costs at first. It costs willpower. It's effortful and clumsy, and you'll get it wrong, and then you'll get it wrong again. Give yourself grace for that; it's a process, you're human, having a human experience. But don't mistake the effort for a sign you're failing. The effort is the path wearing in.

Because that's the part worth holding onto, willpower runs out. But a path, once worn, no longer asks for willpower. The choice that used to take everything you had starts to become the one your brain reaches for on its own. That's not a strategy you installed. That's who you've become. Your identity is your ceiling, and this is how the ceiling actually moves, one worn path at a time.

So go back to that moment. The gut-no you talked yourself out of. The «yes» you gave because «no» felt too expensive. It's still there, and it'll show up again this week, through different scenarios, different relationships, a different face on the same old decision. And you get to choose. You always did.

Just know that «I'll do it properly next time» is also a choice. It's the choice to stay on the worn path, to decide from the old version of you one more time. The path forward was never information. It was the breath, the pause, and the willingness to walk through the corn until the new way becomes the only way you know.

By Jodie Hayward

www.jodiehayward.com



'Our brains are literally wired with a negative bias, wired to take the path they already know, every single time.'



How Seasons Awaken Business Growth and Creative Alignment

Have you ever felt that the start of the year isn't a natural time for growth and creativity? You are not alone, as for many people, the beginning of the year can feel like an unnatural start. Between schedules, year-end fatigue, and the pressure to perform, the traditional «new year» often arrives before there is space to think clearly. Goals are set quickly, strategies are rushed, and momentum feels forced rather than aligned.

The spring season offers a different approach.

The Spring Equinox in March marked a natural turning point, one that is far more in tune with how people actually think subconsciously and continuously, create, and operate. It took us out of the winter's slowness. Day and night were balanced, light began to expand, and there was a subtle but powerful shift in energy. For professionals balancing business growth with busy lifestyles, this moment offered something rare: clarity without urgency.

This season was when setting goals and visions became not just a personal practice, but a strategic advantage. Rather than pushing forward out of obligation, spring invited us to pause and recalibrate. It encouraged a more intentional way of working, where decisions are grounded in awareness rather than pressure. For those managing businesses across different time zones, clients, and commitments, this kind of alignment can be the difference between sustainable growth and burnout.

In business, seasonal shifts are particularly relevant.

During the winter months, many of us may find ourselves operating in a planning phase: reviewing performance, refining messaging, and quietly developing ideas. However, these ideas often remain abstract until the environment around us supports action. Spring was when those concepts began to take shape. Messaging became clearer, brand direction felt more defined, and campaigns were executed with greater confidence. This is also where creativity entered the picture.

In high-performance business environments, aspects such as marketing strategy can easily become purely functional. The practice can become about output, consistency, and visibility, often at the expense of originality. Yet the most effective marketing is not just strategic but also resonant. That's why seasonal alignment can connect us to the right opportunities, which feel authentic and considered.

The cyclical approach becomes even more important as we move into summer.

If spring is about alignment and initiation, summer is where growth becomes visible. It is the season of momentum, where ideas developed earlier in the year begin to gain traction. Campaigns launched in spring have the opportunity to expand, audiences become more engaged, and visibility increases. However, sustainable summer growth depends on the foundations set in earlier seasons.

Without clarity and alignment, increased activity can quickly lead to overwhelm. For professionals already balancing demanding schedules, this can result in reactive decision-making and diluted messaging. When spring is used intentionally, as a time to simplify strategy and reconnect with core objectives, summer becomes a period of confident expansion rather than chaotic output.

This is particularly valuable for those operating in fast-paced environments. When your business is not tied to a single strategy, internal alignment becomes even more important than external influence. You may not always control your schedule, but you can control how you approach your work. By aligning your business and strategy with natural cycles, you create a rhythm that supports you, regardless of where you are in your journey.

The idea that the year begins in January is less useful than it is familiar.

For many business professionals, especially those navigating complex, mobile lifestyles, considering spring representing a far more effective starting point may be the best approach to connect you with the season alignment. Spring offers the clarity to make better decisions, the initiative to take meaningful action, and the creative space to build something that truly resonates.

If the beginning of the year felt slow or unfocused, it may not have been a lack of discipline or direction. It may simply have been a matter of timing.

Now, as spring unfolds and the summer months are arriving, we have an opportunity to move forward differently. We're invited to develop greater awareness, adopt a more intentional strategy, and follow a rhythm that supports both performance and well-being, where growth becomes not just possible but sustainable.



By Pamela Redford
www.livingwelldaily.co.uk



A JOURNEY THROUGH THE SEASONS FROM EGG TO CHRYSALIS TO FLIGHT

If you've been following our journey through the seasons, you'll remember where we started. Back in the spring, we talked about the egg stage. We looked at how a CRISIS (Circumstances Requiring Immediate Change in Strategy) can actually be the starting point for something beautiful. We met Sarah, a leader who felt totally overwhelmed and stuck, but who decided to start with just one wee thing.

Then, we moved into the chrysalis stage. This was the quiet, messy, and often uncomfortable middle bit. It was about asking for Help and staying Open to opportunities, even when everything felt like it was shifting underfoot.

But now? The sun is out, the air is warm, and it's time for the best part of the story. It's time to crack that shell open and emerge. In our CHOICES framework, we are moving into the final, most exciting letters: I, C, E, and S. If you've felt like you've been "in the thick of it" lately, this is your invitation to take flight finally.

Intuition & Implementation

The very first thing that happens when a butterfly is ready to emerge is a shift inside. It knows it can't stay in that tight little space anymore. For us, that feeling is our intuition. Sarah spent years overthinking every decision at work. She'd look at the data, ask ten different people for their opinions, and still feel sick with worry. But during her "summer" phase, she started doing something different. She started listening to her gut.

Intuition isn't magic; it's your brain using all your past experiences and values to give you a quick "yes" or "no." When Sarah felt that visceral discomfort in her stomach, she stopped ignoring it.

She used that inner voice to guide her Implementation. Instead of just dreaming about a different life, she started implementing the changes her heart was asking for. Maybe your "one wee thing" today is just sitting in silence for five minutes to hear what your intuition is trying to tell you.

Courage & Change

Here is a little secret about butterflies: emerging from the chrysalis is hard work. They have to push, strain, and squeeze through a tiny opening. It looks like a struggle, but that struggle is exactly what pumps fluid into their wings so they can fly. Without the effort, they'd never have the strength to soar.

The same goes for us. Change requires Courage. It's scary to step out and say, "I'm doing things differently now." It takes courage to set boundaries, to say no to projects that drain you, or to finally lead your team with your full, authentic self. Sarah had to find the courage to have those difficult conversations she'd been avoiding. It wasn't easy, but every time she chose courage over comfort, her "wings" got a little stronger.

www.changestartswithchoice.com

Remember, Change Starts With Choice. Choosing to be brave is the only way to break out of the old patterns that keep you stuck.

Execution & Energy

Once the butterfly is out, it doesn't just zoom off instantly. It has to hang there for a bit, let its wings dry, and gather its energy. In leadership and life, we often try to rush the Execution. We want the results now. But true transformation requires you to manage your energy, not just your time. If you are constantly in a state of overwhelm, you won't have the fuel you need to sustain your new life.

Execution is about taking those intuitive hits and those courageous choices and turning them into consistent action. Sarah didn't change her whole business overnight. She executed her plan bit by bit, making sure she had the energy to stay the course. She prioritised her self-care and her mental health because she knew an empty tank couldn't drive a revolution.

Success

What does success look like to you? For the butterfly, it's that first, shaky, magnificent flight into the summer sky. It's no longer crawling; it's gliding.

For Sarah, success wasn't just about a title or a turnover figure. It was about feeling confident and aligned. It was about waking up without that heavy weight of dread in her chest. Success is the result of all the CHOICES you've made along the way. When you put them all together, you don't just "get through" life: you lead it by design.

Your summer of flight

As we soak up the summer sun, I want you to look at how far you've come. You are not the same person who started this journey in the spring. You've done the hard work of the chrysalis, and now, the world is waiting for you to spread your wings. If you're feeling ready to take that next step but want a little support to ensure your flight is steady, we're here to help.

Whether it's through our intuitive psychology coaching, reading more about the process in our book, or simply reaching out for a chat, remember that you don't have to do this alone. The beauty of the butterfly isn't just in its wings: it's in the choice it made to keep growing.

What is your "one wee thing" today?

By Ev Foster



The Reality of Building a Business While Raising a Family

When people ask me how I manage to run a business while raising two young children, I often smile and say, "Some days better than others."

The truth is that there is no perfect balance. There is no secret formula. There is simply a constant juggling act between business owner, coach, mentor, mother, partner, friend and, somewhere amongst it all, remembering to look after yourself too.

For many years, I believed that success meant choosing one path or the other. You were either fully committed to your career or fully committed to your family. Society often presents these roles as competing with each other, particularly for women. Yet becoming a mother completely changed my perspective.

Motherhood didn't slow down my ambitions. If anything, it strengthened them. It gave me a deeper sense of purpose, a clearer understanding of what mattered most and a determination to build a life that aligned with my values.

Today, I am the founder of ReformHer Pilates & PT, an award-winning Pilates and personal training business dedicated to helping women become stronger, healthier and more confident.

But behind every class, every client success story and every business milestone is a story that many working mothers will recognise.

A story of early mornings, late nights, sacrifice, resilience and a relentless determination to keep moving forward.

Building a Business Around Family Life

When my eldest son was born, I quickly realised that the traditional career path no longer suited the life I wanted to create.

Like many mothers, I wanted to be present for the important moments. School runs. Sports days. Bedtime stories. The seemingly small moments that, in reality, become the biggest memories.

At the same time, I had worked incredibly hard to build my career in the fitness industry and knew I wasn't ready to let go of my passion for helping people transform their lives through movement and exercise.

Instead of choosing between the two, I decided to build something that could accommodate both.

What began as a vision has since evolved into a thriving business supporting women from all walks of life, from busy professionals and new mothers to athletes, menopausal women and those rebuilding confidence after illness or injury.

However, entrepreneurship as a mother often looks very different from what people imagine.

Many of the business decisions I've made haven't happened in boardrooms or strategy meetings. They've happened while pushing a pram, sitting at a football pitch, folding laundry or waiting outside a school gate.

I've written marketing plans during nap times. I've answered enquiries while making dinner. I've scheduled social media posts after bedtime and reviewed business finances before sunrise.

For many mothers in business, work doesn't fit neatly into a nine-to-five schedule. Instead, it weaves itself around family life in a way that requires constant adaptability.

The Pressure Women Place On Themselves

One of the greatest challenges I see, both in myself and in many of the women I work with, is the pressure to excel in every area of life simultaneously.

We want to be present mothers.

We want successful careers.

We want healthy relationships.

We want thriving businesses.

We want to exercise, eat well, maintain friendships and somehow find time for self-care.

The expectation can feel overwhelming. Social media often fuels this pressure by presenting carefully curated snapshots of success. We see the highlights but rarely the reality behind them.

The reality is that no one is doing everything perfectly. There are days when the business demands more attention. There are days when family needs come first. There are weeks when workouts happen consistently and weeks when they don't happen at all.

Learning to accept that balance isn't something you achieve, but something you continually adjust, has been one of the most valuable lessons of my journey.



Why Motherhood Made Me A Better Business Owner

One thing that surprises many people is how much becoming a mother has improved my leadership skills.

Motherhood teaches patience.

It teaches adaptability.
It teaches emotional intelligence.
It teaches problem-solving under pressure.

Perhaps most importantly, it teaches perspective.

When you've spent the night comforting a poorly child, a difficult business situation suddenly feels far less overwhelming.

When you've learned to navigate the unpredictability of family life, you become far more resilient when facing challenges within your business.

As entrepreneurs, we often talk about transferable skills, yet motherhood develops some of the most valuable skills a business owner can possess.

The ability to remain calm under pressure.
The ability to manage multiple priorities.
The ability to communicate effectively.
The ability to lead with empathy.

These qualities have shaped not only how I run my business but also how I support the women who trust me with their health and wellbeing.

Creating A Business With Purpose

One of the reasons I am so passionate about supporting women through fitness is that I understand first-hand how easy it is to put yourself at the bottom of your own priority list.

Many of the women who walk through my studio doors have spent years caring for everyone else.

Their children.
Their partners.
Their careers.
Their families.

Some have lost confidence in their bodies following pregnancy. Others are navigating menopause, recovering from injury or simply trying to reconnect with themselves after years of neglecting their own needs.

What they often discover is that prioritising themselves isn't selfish.

It's essential.

Because when women feel stronger physically, they often become stronger mentally too.

The confidence they build in the studio carries into every aspect of their lives.

Their relationships improve.
Their careers flourish.
Their self-belief grows.

As a mother and business owner, being able to witness and contribute to these transformations is one of the most rewarding aspects of what I do.

The Legacy We Leave Behind

Ultimately, my greatest motivation isn't business growth, awards or recognition.

It's the example I'm setting for my children.

I want my boys to see that hard work matters.
I want them to understand that setbacks don't define you.
I want them to learn that success comes from consistency, resilience and believing in yourself even when things feel difficult.

Most importantly, I want them to see a mother who pursued her ambitions while remaining present in their lives.

A mother who showed them that it's possible to build something meaningful without sacrificing the things that matter most.

The reality of building a business while raising a family is messy, imperfect and often exhausting.

But it is also incredibly rewarding.

Every challenge overcome, every lesson learned and every milestone achieved becomes part of a story that extends far beyond business itself.

For me, entrepreneurship and motherhood are not competing identities.

They are two roles that continue to shape, strengthen and inspire one another every single day.

And while I may never fully master the art of balance, I have learned that sometimes success isn't about doing everything perfectly.

It's about showing up, staying committed and continuing to move forward, one day at a time.

By Lauren Kay

Email: reformherpilatespt@gmail.com

Instagram: @reformherpilatespt



Lauren Kay is the founder of ReformHer Pilates & PT, a women-focused Reformer Pilates and personal training studio specialising in strength, rehabilitation and performance training.

She works with women at all stages of life, from postnatal clients to professional athletes, and has recently supported England Lioness and former Manchester City and England captain Steph Houghton with reformer-based training to enhance strength, performance and longevity

www.reformherpilatespt.co.uk





AI

THE GOOD • THE BAD • THE UGLY

The AI Takeover

Artificial Intelligence is no longer something reserved for science fiction films or Silicon Valley research labs. It has rapidly become part of everyday life, influencing how we work, communicate, shop, learn, and make decisions. Whether you're using a chatbot to answer questions, receiving personalised recommendations on Netflix, or relying on AI to help draft emails, chances are you're already interacting with artificial intelligence every single day.

As AI continues to evolve at an extraordinary pace, opinions are becoming increasingly divided. Some see it as humanity's greatest technological breakthrough, while others fear it could replace jobs, spread misinformation, and fundamentally change society for the worse.

The truth lies somewhere in the middle. Like every major technological revolution before it, AI has enormous potential for good, but only if it's used responsibly.

The Good: A New Era of Productivity and Innovation

Perhaps the greatest benefit of AI is its ability to save time.

Tasks that once took hours can now be completed in minutes. Businesses are using AI to automate repetitive processes, analyse huge amounts of data, generate marketing content, improve customer

service, and streamline operations. This allows people to spend less time on administration and more time on creative thinking, strategy, and relationship building.

Healthcare is another area where AI is already making a remarkable impact. AI systems can assist doctors in identifying diseases earlier, analysing medical scans with incredible accuracy, and accelerating the discovery of new drugs. In many cases, this means faster diagnoses and better patient outcomes.

Education is also being transformed. Students now have access to personalised tutoring, instant explanations, language translation, and learning support that is available 24 hours a day. Instead of replacing teachers, AI has the potential to become an incredibly powerful educational assistant.

For entrepreneurs and small business owners, AI has levelled the playing field. Tasks that once required hiring multiple specialists, including copywriters, designers, analysts, and virtual assistants, can now be supported by AI tools at a fraction of the cost. This allows smaller businesses to compete with much larger organisations.

Ultimately, AI has the potential to make people more productive rather than simply making businesses more efficient.

The Bad: Disruption and Uncertainty

Despite its advantages, AI is creating genuine concerns. The most obvious is employment. Automation has always replaced certain jobs while creating new ones, but AI is accelerating this process faster than many industries can adapt. Administrative roles, customer support, data entry, basic content creation, and many routine office tasks are increasingly being automated.

This doesn't necessarily mean mass unemployment, but it does mean millions of workers will need to develop new skills to remain competitive. Another challenge is accuracy.

AI can sound incredibly confident while producing completely incorrect information. These so-called "hallucinations" can mislead users who assume AI is always right. Without critical thinking and fact-checking, businesses and individuals risk making poor decisions based on false information.

Privacy is another growing issue. Many AI systems rely on enormous amounts of data to improve their performance. Questions around who owns this data, how it's collected, and how it's used are becoming increasingly important. As AI becomes more deeply integrated into our daily lives, protecting personal information will become one of society's biggest challenges.

There is also the issue of dependency. If people begin relying on AI for every decision, every piece of writing, and every creative idea, there's a risk that essential human skills could gradually decline. AI should enhance human intelligence, not replace independent thinking.

The Ugly: When AI Falls Into the Wrong Hands

Perhaps the greatest dangers don't come from AI itself, but from how people choose to use it. Deepfake technology can now create highly realistic videos and voices that are almost impossible to distinguish from reality. This creates enormous risks for fraud, identity theft, political manipulation, and misinformation.

Cybercriminals are also embracing AI. Sophisticated phishing emails, automated scams, fake websites, and social engineering attacks are becoming increasingly convincing. As AI improves, so too do the tools available to those with malicious intent. Bias is another serious concern.

AI learns from existing data, and if that data contains bias, discrimination, or historical inequalities, AI can unintentionally reinforce them. Without careful oversight, AI systems may produce unfair outcomes in recruitment, lending, policing, healthcare, and many other areas.

Then there's the broader ethical question. As AI becomes capable of making increasingly important decisions, who should be accountable when something goes wrong? The software developer? Is the company using the technology? The individual relying on its recommendations? These questions remain largely unanswered.

The Future Isn't AI Versus Humans

One of the biggest misconceptions surrounding AI is that it will eventually replace humans altogether. In reality, the greatest opportunities are likely to belong to those who learn to work alongside AI rather than compete against it.

History has shown that every major technological advancement changes the nature of work. The internet transformed commerce. Smartphones transformed communication. AI is now transforming knowledge work.

Those who embrace continuous learning, develop uniquely human skills such as creativity, emotional intelligence, leadership, and critical thinking, and learn how to use AI effectively will likely thrive in this new landscape.

The future won't belong to AI alone. It will belong to people who know how to harness its capabilities while providing the empathy, judgement, ethics, and imagination that machines simply cannot replicate.

The AI takeover has already begun. Whether it becomes one of humanity's greatest achievements or its biggest mistakes depends less on the technology itself than on the choices we make about how we use it.

By Seb Brantigan

AI and Marketing Automation Expert

Co-founder and COO of DBSS Digital

www.DBSSdigital.co.uk



I'll feel
more confident
when I get...



...in shape



...a better
career



...the right
relationship



...financial
security

CONFIDENCE IS A LIFESTYLE

Have you ever noticed how often we're told confidence is waiting for us somewhere in the future? We'll feel confident when we've lost the weight. We'll feel confident when we've had the treatment. We'll feel confident when we've found the relationship, landed the promotion, reached the goal, or finally become the version of ourselves we've been striving for. For a long time, I believed that too.

There was a time in my life when I thought confidence would arrive the moment I changed enough things about myself. Looking back now, I realise confidence wasn't waiting for me at the finish line. It was being built in the small choices I made every day. The older I get, and the more people I work with, the more I've realised something important: Confidence isn't a destination. It's a lifestyle. And that changes everything.

Because if confidence is a destination, we're always chasing it. Always waiting. Always believing our happiness lives just around the corner. But if confidence is a lifestyle, it becomes something we build every single day. Not through perfection. Not through dramatic transformations. But through the small promises we keep to ourselves.

THE CONFIDENCE MYTH

One of the biggest myths surrounding confidence is that it comes from how we look. Now don't get me wrong. Looking after yourself feels good. Feeling comfortable in your body feels good. Choosing treatments, exercising, eating well and investing in yourself can all have a positive impact.

As someone who works in both body confidence coaching and body contouring, I see first-hand how powerful it can be when someone chooses to invest in themselves from a place of self-worth. But none of these things create confidence on their own. If they did, every person who changed their appearance would automatically feel secure, happy and fulfilled. Yet we know that's not true.

Because confidence isn't created by what you see in the mirror. It's created by what happens in your mind when you look into it. I've met women who are considered conventionally beautiful yet spend every day criticising themselves. I've also met women who have embraced every perceived flaw and carry themselves with a confidence that lights up a room. The difference isn't their appearance. It's their relationship with themselves.

THE SMALL PROMISES THAT CHANGE EVERYTHING

When I think about true confidence, I don't think about grand gestures. I think about the quiet moments nobody sees. Getting up for the walk you promised yourself. Drinking the water. Setting the boundary. Saying no when you usually say yes. Booking the appointment you've been putting off. Speaking to yourself with kindness after making a mistake. Taking five minutes for yourself when life feels overwhelming. These moments might seem insignificant, but they're powerful.

Every time you follow through on something that supports your wellbeing, you're sending yourself a message: "I matter." And over time, those messages build trust. That trust becomes self-respect. And self-respect

becomes confidence. Not the loud, performative kind. The real kind. The kind that stays.

STOP WAITING TO FEEL GOOD ABOUT YOURSELF

I want to ask you something. How much of your life have you spent waiting? Waiting to feel worthy. Waiting to feel attractive. Waiting to feel comfortable in your own skin. Waiting until you've changed something before allowing yourself to enjoy your life. I think many of us have spent far too long putting our happiness on hold.

We've convinced ourselves that confidence is a reward we'll receive once we've achieved enough. But what if confidence isn't something you earn? What if it's something you practise? What if you started treating yourself today as the person you're waiting to become?

How would you speak to yourself? What would you stop apologising for? What opportunities would you finally say yes to? What memories would you allow yourself to make without worrying how you look? Sometimes the most powerful transformation isn't changing yourself. It's changing the way you see yourself.

RENEW. TRANSFORM. RISE.

These three words mean a lot to me because they represent the journey I see so many people take. First, you renew. You let go of old beliefs that no longer serve you. The stories that tell you you're not enough. The expectations that were never yours to carry. Then you transform.

Not by becoming someone different, but by changing your habits, your mindset and the way you speak to yourself. You begin choosing yourself. You begin trusting yourself. You begin showing yourself the same compassion you so freely give to others. And finally, you rise. You stop shrinking yourself to fit into spaces you've outgrown. You stop waiting for permission. You stop believing confidence belongs to everybody else. And you start showing up as yourself. Fully. Authentically. Without apology.

THE CONFIDENCE THAT STAYS

The truth is, quick fixes will always be tempting. We all want results. We all want change. We all want to feel good. But lasting confidence isn't built overnight. It's built in the choices you make when nobody is watching. It's built in the habits you repeat. It's built in the promises you keep.

So if there's one thing I hope you take away from this, it's this: Don't spend your life chasing confidence. Create it. Nurture it. Live it. Because confidence isn't waiting for you in the future. It's being built by the person you choose to be today. And that kind of confidence? Nobody can take it away.

By Samantha Rayford

Novaré Confidence



Big. Bold. Bright.

Summer is here, and while the schools are out, self-discovery takes centre stage.

Let Little You truly roar.

This doesn't mean being the loudest person in the room. It means reconnecting with who you were before life became a list of "shoulds".

As children, we create simply because it feels good. You may, in fact, place yourself firmly in either the "I'm so creative" camp or the "I'm not creative" camp. But creativity isn't reserved for artists. It shows up in so many ways: how you solve problems, nurture others, cook, write, dance, garden, build, connect, or simply see the world. The invitation isn't to force creativity; it's to create space for it.

Flow rather than force.

Notice what naturally emerges when you pause and focus on the process in the present, rather than on productivity. Within Soul Plan, both your worldly and spiritual energies reveal the unique gifts and talents you bring into this lifetime. They can offer insight into how your creativity is expressed, what helps it flourish and how sharing it creates a ripple effect for those around you. When we understand our natural energetic blueprint, we stop trying to fit someone else's definition of creativity and begin honouring our own.

Perhaps that's Summer's greatest lesson.

Despite the sunshine, holidays and longer days, this season can also carry a surprising amount of pressure. We can become so busy trying to make the most of it that we forget to simply be present.

So strip it back.

Whether you have children or not, take a leaf out of their book. Kick off your shoes & feel the grass or sand between your toes. Colour outside the lines. Laugh until your stomach hurts. Watch the clouds. Dance! Give yourself that permission to play without needing a reason. This is when Little You feels so seen & so heard, and, as an adult, you connect with yourself on a soul level, working with what's always been inside you, making space for you to truly thrive!

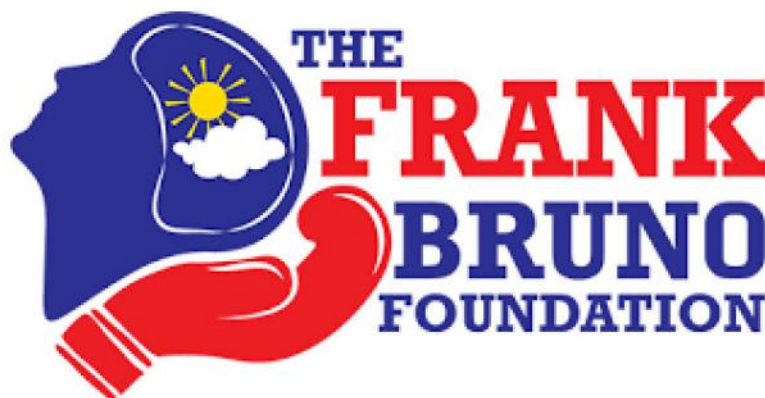
By Georgina Goldstone

Instagram: @justbe_withg

Facebook: Just Be with Georgina Goldstone



Supporting



The Books We Buy, the Advice We Love - and Why Nothing Changes

Every summer, many of us do the same thing. We buy the books we believe will help us become better at what we do: better leaders, more confident decision-makers, calmer, clearer, more effective. They're packed into suitcases with good intentions, taken on holiday, and often returned home only partially read.

And even when we do read them, the outcome is frequently the same. We recognise ourselves in the pages. We feel reassured, validated, even inspired. We finish the book thinking, "That makes complete sense." Then real life resumes, and very little actually changes.

This isn't a lack of intelligence or motivation. It's a misunderstanding of how talent is developed in the real world. Books are valuable. I say that as someone who has written many. My latest, NAIL-IT Leadership: Your Blueprint to Optimal Performance, exists to give people clarity, language, and a structured way of understanding performance, leadership, and wellbeing. But books don't create transformation on their own. They create awareness. And awareness, while essential, is only the beginning.

Reading about leadership doesn't automatically make you lead differently when the pressure is on. Understanding confidence doesn't mean you suddenly feel certain in difficult conversations. Insight does not equal embodiment.

Talent grows at the point where understanding is translated into behaviour. Where ideas are practised, reflected on, adjusted, and repeated, often imperfectly at first. Confidence follows action, not the other way around. And without structure, accountability, or support, most insight quietly fades as old habits take over.

So perhaps this summer, instead of asking what to read next, it's more useful to ask:

- What is one idea I could deliberately apply when I return to work?
- Where am I collecting insight instead of changing behaviour?
- What support would help me follow through - coaching, structure, feedback, or accountability?
- If nothing changes, what am I avoiding addressing?

Books open the door. Practice is what takes you through it. Talent isn't built by consuming more advice. It's built by embedding what already resonates, repeating it consistently, and allowing it to change how you show up, especially when it feels uncomfortable.

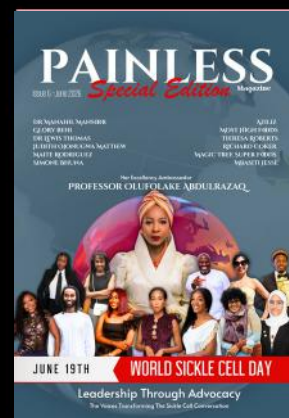
So take the book on holiday. Read it, enjoy it, reflect on it. Just don't let reading be where the journey ends. Real growth rarely comes from knowing more. It comes from practising what already matters.

Dr Rana Al-Falaki

Founder, NAIL-IT Leadership | Author | Speaker | Optimal Performance Strategist
Helping professionals lead better, live fully, and laugh more
www.drranaalfalaki.com



Ranath Media Titles



You Were Never Broken

Why Healing Is About Remembering, Not Fixing

“What’s wrong with me?”

It’s one of the most common questions I hear from people living with anxiety, trauma, chronic stress or persistent health challenges. They’ve tried therapy, mindfulness, self-help books and countless wellness trends, yet they still find themselves reacting in ways they don’t understand.

The problem is rarely a lack of motivation. More often, it’s that the emotional experiences and identity patterns formed over years continue to shape the present.

Integral Eye Movement Techniques (IEMT) offers a different perspective. Instead of endlessly revisiting the past or trying to force positive thinking, IEMT works with the way memories and identity are represented internally. By reducing the emotional intensity attached to experiences and exploring limiting identity patterns, people often discover they can respond differently without having to fight themselves.

The memory doesn’t disappear, but its grip begins to loosen.

This is why so many clients describe feeling lighter, calmer or simply “more like themselves.” They haven’t been fixed because they were never broken. They’ve created enough space for the nervous system to stop reacting as though the past is still happening and to begin making choices from the present instead.

Modern neuroscience supports the idea that the brain is capable of change throughout life. Neuroplasticity demonstrates that new pathways can be created through repeated experience, while therapeutic approaches that



work with emotional processing can help interrupt long-standing patterns of fear, shame and self-doubt.

Healing is rarely about becoming a completely different person. But more about letting go of the beliefs that have kept you stuck and reconnecting with the person who has always been there beneath survival mode.

You are not your diagnosis, your anxiety or the story you have repeated for years. Sometimes the greatest transformation comes not from fixing yourself, but from remembering that you were worthy, capable and whole all along.

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

www.emmatoms.com



Supporting



Orthosomnia: When Trying to Sleep 'Perfectly' Backfires

In recent years, sleep has become something we can track, score and optimise. Smart watches, rings and apps promise insights into our sleep stages, recovery and readiness for the day ahead. While this technology can be useful, it has also given rise to a growing problem known as orthosomnia, an unhealthy obsession with achieving 'perfect' sleep.

The term orthosomnia comes from the Greek ortho (correct) and somnia (sleep). It describes a pattern where people become so focused on sleep data that it actually worsens their sleep. Instead of listening to how rested they feel, they begin to judge their night by numbers on a screen. A low sleep score can trigger anxiety, frustration and excessive efforts to 'fix' sleep, all of which make it harder to switch off.



One of the core issues is that consumer sleep trackers are not medical-grade devices. While they can estimate sleep duration reasonably well, they are far less accurate at detecting sleep stages, awakenings and sleep quality. Yet when an app claims you had 'poor REM' or 'too little deep sleep', it's easy to internalise this as a problem, even if you feel fine. Over time, this can undermine confidence in your sleep.

For people prone to insomnia, orthosomnia can be particularly damaging. Sleep works best when it happens naturally, not when it's forced or micromanaged. Trying to control every variable often increases pressure, reinforcing the very sleeplessness someone is trying to escape.

This doesn't mean sleep technology is inherently bad. Used lightly, it can help identify broad patterns. The key is perspective. Data should inform, not dictate. How you feel during the day, your energy, mood and concentration, are usually far better indicators of sleep quality than any score.

Healthy sleep is flexible, imperfect and human. When smart tech starts to make you anxious about sleep, it may be time to step back, trust your body, and let sleep do what it has always done best (without being graded).



By Sam Sadighi
Certified Sleep Practitioner
Easy Sleep Solutions

www.EasySleepSolutions.co.uk

Ranath Media Titles



A Place Where Regulation Is Met with Compassion

There is something I have come to believe after years of working with trauma, grief, anxiety, and human suffering:

Most people are not struggling because they are broken. They are struggling because the moments they most needed compassion were often met with judgment.

A child cries and is told they are too sensitive. A teenager shuts down and is labeled difficult. An adult feels overwhelmed and is told to just push through. We learn very early that certain emotions are acceptable and others are not. We learn to hide our fear, anger, sadness, and vulnerability in order to belong.

As Gabor Maté teaches, trauma is not simply what happened to us. It is what happened inside us as a result of what happened. Many of the behaviors we criticize in ourselves and others are actually intelligent adaptations developed in response to pain.

What if we viewed them differently?

What if anxiety was met with curiosity instead of criticism? What if emotional overwhelm was met with support instead of shame? What if withdrawal, people-pleasing, perfectionism, and hyper-independence were understood as survival strategies rather than character flaws? That question is at the heart of the space I have created.

It is a space where regulation meets compassion. A space where people can reconnect with nature, with community, and with themselves. A space where nervous systems can finally exhale. Where healing is not rushed. Where there is room for tears, laughter, silence, uncertainty, and growth.

Here, you do not have to arrive healed. You do not have to have the right words, the perfect story, or all the answers. You simply have to arrive as you are.

Because healing rarely happens when we are judged. Healing happens when we feel safe enough to be seen.

If you have been longing for a place where your humanity is welcomed, your story is honored, and your healing is supported with compassion, I invite you to join us. There is a place for you here.

By Kimberly Trickey MS LPC

www.transcendent-journey.com



Supporting

CALM

WHY NATIONAL BUSINESS EVENTS MATTER MORE THAN EVER

By **Santosh Kumar** | Global CEO of B2B Growth Hub & Forbes Business Council Member

In today's rapidly evolving business landscape, one thing has become increasingly clear — relationships still matter.

While technology, artificial intelligence, and digital marketing continue to transform the way businesses operate, genuine face-to-face interaction remains one of the most powerful tools for growth. Behind every successful business partnership, collaboration, investment, or opportunity is ultimately a conversation between people.

That belief is one of the core reasons why the Cardiff Business Growth Expo was created.

Over the years, I have had the privilege of meeting thousands of entrepreneurs, business owners, professionals, innovators, and organisations across the UK. A common challenge I hear is that many businesses struggle to find the right platform to build meaningful connections locally while also gaining visibility beyond their immediate network.

The Cardiff Business Growth Expo aims to bridge that gap.

Now proudly entering its second year, the exhibition has evolved into far more than just a traditional business expo. It has become a meeting point for ambitious businesses, forward-thinking professionals, and organisations looking to grow, collaborate, and create new opportunities together.

What makes national business events so important is the human element they bring to business development.

In a world where inboxes are flooded, social media algorithms constantly change, and online advertisements compete endlessly for attention, live events create something different — trust, authenticity, and real engagement.

When businesses exhibit, speak, network, or attend events in person, conversations happen naturally. Partnerships are formed faster. Opportunities become tangible. Brands become memorable. Relationships become stronger.

The Cardiff Business Growth Expo was built with exactly that vision in mind.

This event is designed to create an environment where businesses of all sizes can come together under one roof — from start-ups and independent businesses to established corporations and industry leaders.

One of the most rewarding parts of organising this exhibition has been witnessing businesses return year after year because of the relationships and growth opportunities they discovered through the show.

We have seen collaborations form between exhibitors, partnerships emerge between local organisations, and businesses connect with clients they may never have reached through traditional marketing alone.

As Cardiff and the wider South Wales business ecosystem continues to grow, events like this play an increasingly important role in supporting local enterprise, encouraging innovation, and strengthening the regional economy.

This year's Cardiff Business Growth Expo promises to be our most exciting edition yet.

With a growing focus on technology, innovation, business growth, networking, and collaboration, we are bringing together an incredible mix of exhibitors, speakers, entrepreneurs, professionals, and decision-makers who all share a common goal — growth.

“Sometimes, the right conversation at the right event can completely change the future of a business.”



Whether you are an exhibitor, sponsor, speaker, visitor, start-up founder, or simply someone passionate about business and innovation, I would personally like to invite you to be part of the Cardiff Business Growth Expo 2026.

I look forward to welcoming you to the show.



CARDIFF BUSINESS COMMUNITY IS COMING TOGETHER AGAIN

Join business leaders, innovators,
entrepreneurs and decision-makers
at Cardiff's leading business
networking and exhibition event.

ORGANISED BY
B2B GROWTH HUB

To Be Officially Opened by
CLLR MICHAEL MICHAEL
LORD MAYOR OF CARDIFF

**2ND
YEAR
OF THE
SHOW**



THURSDAY
29 October 2026



CARDIFF CITY STADIUM,
CARDIFF CF11 8AZ, UK



10:00 AM – 4:30 PM



A brilliant event that brings together the best of Cardiff's business community.
The connections we made there have been invaluable to our growth.

– PAST EXHIBITOR



100+
EXHIBITORS



2000+
**BUSINESS
VISITORS**



30+
**SPEAKERS &
WORKSHOPS**



**COUNTLESS
CONNECTIONS**

Some of the hotels and airlines where you can access and read the magazine through PressReader

