

# **The** Conscious Smile **Magazine**

**Interviews &  
Features from  
the best in  
Dentistry &  
Wellness**

**Building a  
Resilient Mindset  
for the Winter  
Months Ahead**

**The Age of  
Spiritual  
Awakening**

**Dr. Pippa Nicholls  
Erica Ferrar  
Barbara Tritz  
Dr Caroline Crouch  
Dr John Roberts**

**Conventional &  
Holistic**

**MARC**  
**MORTIBOYS**

**BRIDGING TWO WORLDS**

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# NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

Creating The Conscious Smile publication with Ranath Media, is a natural next step, not only to share tools, stories, and insights but to co-create a movement where people remember that their smile is not just cosmetic, it's cosmic. It reflects who they are, how they feel, and how they show up in the world.

I envision a ripple becoming a tsunami of change: transforming fear of the dentist into trust and supreme dental confidence, by taking away the mystery of both conventional and holistic corners of current and emerging modern dental techniques and products. Restoring teeth and smiles with aesthetic less toxic products, inspiring dental disease prevention and claiming optimal oral by guiding families and communities to become healthy Smile Gatekeepers, protectors of the sacred mouth.

By sharing the magic of both the allopathic and naturopathic sectors of dentistry and dental medicine and weaving them together into magical recipes for the greater good of humanity, I believe The Conscious Smile publication will be an inspirational guide for dental health seekers all over the world. For this reason, I feel honoured and so excited to be invited to be at the helm.

I'm here to help awaken the Conscious Smile within us all. Because when we smile from the soul, the world changes. I look forward to witnessing the coming quantum shift in all forms of care but especially dental care.

Much love,  
Smile Healthy  
Dr. Marc Mortiboys BDS  
Editor





# Bridging Two Worlds

## THE CONSCIOUS SMILE



I still remember the moment I first picked up a dental mirror and realised it was not just about teeth; it was about people. Over three and a half decades later, that belief has only deepened. Teeth are the tip of the iceberg. Behind every smile is a human being with stories, stress, habits, and hopes and, often, a health system that is not telling them the whole story.

That is why I am so honoured to join forces and collaborate with Rany Athwall at Ranath Media for the launch of The Conscious Smile. This groundbreaking new publication merges the best of mainstream and holistic/biological dentistry into one intelligent and inspiring space.

As a clinician, educator, and seeker, I have spent my life straddling both sides of the dental world: the allopathic and the holistic. And right now, we are entering a golden age where the two no longer have to oppose one another; they can and must come together. That is what this magazine is here to do. After all, I remember King Charles as a Prince calling for the integration of both wings of healthcare at least 30 years ago. And this, in many ways, is the story of my life, too.

### **My Journey: From Clinical Confidence to Conscious Care**

My foundation is in conventional dentistry. I trained in London at Guy's Hospital, starting in 1982, and went on to create a unique health-centred, integrated Dental Clinic called Mortiboys Dental Spa in Surrey, where my amazing team and I have served thousands of patients over the last 25 years. Our ethos was simple: health- and heart-centred clinical excellence with deep personal care. Prior to my return to the UK after two years in Australia and the Far East, I was fascinated by the

Mind Body Spirit healing sciences and arts. I devoured numerous books and attended many seminars around the world. A huge mentor 30 years ago was Anthony Robbins, and I completed his Mastery University, being taught by eminent health leaders like Deepak Chopra and Brandon Bays. I also trained in hypnotherapy & hypno-healing, and I was inspired to teach transformational psychology to dental undergraduates and open the UK's first Dental Confidence Centre. It was dedicated to helping people who were anxious and phobic about dental care and helping them become confident and fearless when receiving dental treatment. Those years taught me a lot. I learned to weave and



alchemise the science with the art. I refined the craft. I witnessed firsthand the importance of providing patients with both clarity and calmness, as well as guidance, to facilitate more profound healing, whether they were undergoing a routine check-up or major oral rehabilitation.

One of my proudest professional chapters came in the mid-2000s when I was invited to work with elite footballers at Chelsea FC. It was a fascinating time collaborating with medical & dental leaders behind the highly esteemed Milan Medical Lab. We were exploring cutting-edge performance dentistry: the relationship between bite alignment, posture, and athletic performance.

It opened my eyes to a much wider map of what the mouth was connected to, from the feet to the spine to the nervous system. That chapter confirmed something I had always suspected: dentistry was not just about fixing teeth. It was about human optimisation.

### **The Global Classroom: Learning from Tribes and Traditions:**

Parallel to my clinical career, I've always had a deep love of travel and wisdom-seeking. In the late 1980s, after working for two years in a dental clinic, I left the UK. I spent time in Australia and Southeast Asia, eventually living with the Mentawai tribe, an indigenous island community in the Indonesian rainforest of Siberut, Sumatra. They didn't have drills or fluoride, but they had radiant health and strong teeth. Their oral hygiene came from the land: roots, chewing sticks, rituals, breath, and rhythm.

Later, I was initiated into Lakota Inipi sweat lodges and trained as a Sweat Lodge facilitator, as well as a practitioner in Kambo, an ancient Amazonian shamanic practice. I also spent time with Aboriginal elders who taught me to "listen" to the body like a story.

These moments shaped me profoundly. I realised that many ancient cultures held powerful, embodied oral health practices, not in opposition to modern science but in parallel to it. My path began to merge. I wasn't leaving dentistry. I was expanding it.



# The DENTAL SHAMAN



## **The Emergence of the “Dental Shaman”**

Eventually, this integration became the seed of a merging personal brand, The Dental Shaman. It's a term that can raise eyebrows in clinical settings, but at its core, it simply means this: treating the mouth as a gateway to whole-body healing. It's about restoring balance through natural therapies, breathwork, nutrition, sound healing, ancestral practices, and deep listening, all while appreciating the value of high-quality dental care and innovation.

I began offering not just fillings and crowns but ozone therapy, dental detox protocols, vagus nerve activation, and guidance on ancestral nutrition. I also trained in Reiki, hypnotherapy, and Kambo facilitation to support patients through fear and chronic tension. Over the years, my work began attracting those seeking something deeper: not just relief from pain but a return to wholeness. Still, I always maintained a deep respect for mainstream dentistry, and I never stopped looking for ways to bridge the two worlds. That is what brings me here, to this collaboration with Ranath Media.

## **Why The Conscious Smile?**

When Rany reached out and told me about his vision for a new kind of media, one rooted in both truth and transformation, I was immediately intrigued. I've known Rany for only a short time, yet I sensed that he has always had a gift for seeing the bigger picture and felt we could collaborate to create a special, unique publication.



***As we talked more, the idea for The Conscious Smile was born.***

We realised there was a growing hunger among professionals and the public for trustworthy, integrative dental knowledge. Not fear-based. Not dogmatic. But curious, heart-centred, and practical. A publication that respected both the evidence base of conventional care and the embodied wisdom of natural healing. A platform that would feature stories, science, and soul all under one roof. I said yes instantly.



### **What This Magazine Aims to Do:**

Our mission is simple: to bridge the gap between mainstream allopathic and holistic/biological dentistry and to empower people with clear, inspiring, and holistic education.

In each edition of The Conscious Smile, you will find:

- Expert interviews with pioneering dentists, researchers, and health innovators
- Natural health features on ancestral oral care, nutrition, and detox protocols
- Case studies and clinical insights from both mainstream and biological practices
- Profiles of forward-thinking clinics and technologies from around the world
- Personal stories from patients reclaiming their health through integrative approaches
- And much more, including my regular column exploring the “conscious smile”

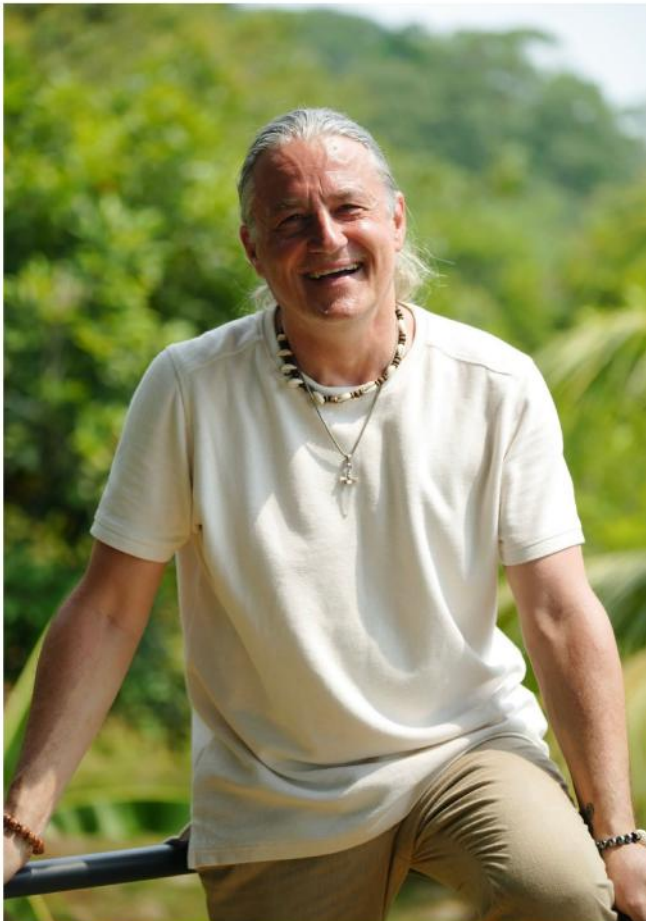
philosophy.

***This magazine is not about choosing sides; it is about elevating the conversation.***

### **Why This Matters Now:**

I believe we are currently living in a time of massive health awakening. More people are questioning old paradigms, seeking non-toxic solutions, and becoming their own advocates. But confusion is rampant. The internet is overflowing with contradictory information, and the dental world is often left behind in the wellness conversation.

That’s why The Conscious Smile is so needed, I feel. It is here to inform, uplift, and connect. To spark collaboration between practitioners. To honour ancient practices alongside emerging science. To help patients feel seen and safe. And to remind us all that our smile is a powerful barometer of our inner and outer health.



For me personally, it is a full-circle moment. A chance to bring together all my experience, from high-level clinical practice to tribal teachings, from sports performance to sound healing, in service of a greater purpose.

### **Looking Ahead:**

As I write this, I’m filled with excitement, not just for the first edition of The Conscious Smile but for the journey ahead. This is not just a magazine; it is a movement. It is a beautiful meeting point for everyone who wants to feel good in their body, live with integrity, and rediscover the magic behind their smile.

***To every dentist, hygienist, therapist, healer, and reader, welcome. Let’s create something extraordinary together. Because when we smile with awareness, we illuminate the world.***

The Conscious Smile

# DR. PIPPA NICHOLLS BDS

Dentist and Founder of Dimples Oral Care



## Rethinking Toothpaste: Why the Future of Oral Health is Rooted in Nature

Over the past few years, there has been a quiet revolution happening in dental care. With more people recognizing the importance of their health, toothpastes containing fluoride and other synthetic chemicals are being re-evaluated. Fuelled by biocompatibility and scientific methodology, a new generation of toothpastes are being formulated. This change in formulation is what I have been observing as a dentist practicing in the UK for close to a decade. It indicates a system ingredient change as well as a change towards more thoughtful and preventive approaches to dentistry.

### The Fluoride Debate

For many years, fluoride has been promoted as the most effective cavity preventative. And when you look from a solely mouth point of view, it strengthens the mineral make-up of your teeth and protects against tooth decay, when applied topically. However, growing evidence and patient concerns have provoked a much-needed re-evaluation. Besides having proven benefits, fluoride also comes with risks, particularly when overexposure occurs.

In the UK, fluoride is incorporated in water supplies in specific areas and is present in virtually all traditional toothpaste brands. This prevalence makes



children especially vulnerable to dental fluorosis as well as more severe forms of systemic toxicity. Neurodevelopmental issues, skeletal fluorosis, and endocrine disruption have all been linked to fluoride toxicity where there is heightened environmental exposure to fluoride(1,2).

Additionally, ingestion of fluoride does not offer any dental benefit. In fact, it puts strain on the body's burden of removing fluoride while offering zero advantages to dental health(3). Adopting a holistic perspective, is it advisable to recommend the everyday use of a potentially toxic chemical when there are safe, equally efficient options available?

### Introducing Hydroxyapatite

The primary structure constituent of human enamel and dentine is the naturally occurring mineral hydroxyapatite. Unlike fluoride, which merely encourages remineralisation, hydroxyapatite is the mineral our teeth are made of. It works by directly replenishing lost mineral, filling in microscopic surface imperfections, and integrating into the tooth structure.

Clinical research has shown hydroxyapatite toothpaste works as well as fluoride in preventing dental caries(4,5), and additionally, it reduces tooth sensitivity and makes enamel smoother and brighter(6). It is also non-toxic and safe to swallow, which makes it ideal for both children and adults.

Patients using hydroxyapatite-based pastes often report improvements in the appearance and feel of their teeth, an indication to its biomimetic restorative potential. It is biomimetic dentistry at its finest - working with the body, not against it.

### The Fall of Mainstream Toothpaste

There is a growing scepticism around the long list of unfamiliar ingredients found in commercial toothpaste: sodium lauryl sulphate (SLS), artificial sweeteners, synthetic dyes, and harsh preservatives. Many of these components serve cosmetic or foaming purposes, but bring with them risks of irritation, allergic reactions, or long-term health concerns(7).



The generic belief that oral care is “one size fits all” is quickly disappearing. The public want products that reflect their values - whether that's vegan formulation, sustainability, or avoiding synthetic chemicals. This reflects a broader societal trend towards intuitive, personalised, and preventative healthcare. People are not only asking what they're putting in their bodies but why—and whether it's truly benefiting them.

### Natural Ingredients Making a Difference

The next generation of toothpastes goes beyond simply removing fluoride—they incorporate powerful, natural ingredients with real therapeutic value. Here are some key components gaining popularity among holistic dental professionals:

- **Xylitol:** A naturally occurring sugar alcohol derived from birch or corn, xylitol is not just a sweetener. It inhibits the growth of *Streptococcus mutans*, the bacteria primarily responsible for dental caries(8). It also helps maintain a neutral oral pH and supports salivary flow, which is essential for remineralisation(9).
- **Coconut-Derived Glycolipids:** These plant-based surfactants help create a gentle lather without the harsh effects of SLS(10). Derived from coconuts, glycolipids enhance the sensory experience of brushing while preserving the delicate balance of the oral microbiome.
- **Calcium Carbonate and Bentonite Clay:** Mild abrasives like these help to polish the enamel and remove plaque without damaging the tooth surface. Bentonite also has detoxifying properties, absorbing toxins and heavy metals from the oral cavity(11).
- **Essential Oils:** Ingredients such as tea tree, clove, and peppermint oil provide natural antimicrobial activity and pleasant flavours, while also promoting gum health.(12)
- **Aloe Vera and Chamomile Extract:** These soothing botanicals support gum health, reduce inflammation, and aid in healing - particularly beneficial for patients with gingivitis or after dental procedures(13).

### The Role of the Oral Microbiome

One of the most exciting topics of research in dentistry is the oral microbiome. Just as gut health is now recognised as crucial to overall wellness, so too is the balance of bacteria in the mouth(14). Antibacterial agents such as triclosan or even high concentrations of fluoride can indiscriminately wipe out beneficial oral bacteria.

Natural, microbiome-friendly toothpaste helps maintain this balance. A healthy oral microbiome not only reduces the risk of decay and periodontal disease but also supports systemic health - given the well-documented links between oral bacteria and cardiovascular, diabetic, and inflammatory conditions(15).

### Empowering Patients with Intuitive Dental Care

As clinicians, we have a responsibility to offer recommendations that follow both scientific evidence and patient preference.

This means embracing the principles of intuitive healthcare—where prevention, education, and personal agency are key.

Encouraging patients to choose toothpaste with clean, natural ingredients is a small but powerful act. It enforces the belief that their daily habits matter, and that oral health is not an isolated concern, but part of a holistic approach to wellbeing.

Hydroxyapatite-based toothpaste, paired with xylitol, gentle natural surfactants, and botanical ingredients, offers a powerful alternative that is both safe and effective. It's not just about avoiding fluoride—it's about embracing a philosophy of care that aligns with the body's own healing wisdom.

### A More Conscious Oral Care Routine

As dentistry evolves, so too must our recommendations. We must move beyond the outdated idea that fluoride is the only protection against decay, and begin to promote biocompatible, holistic alternatives that reflect a deeper understanding of health.

The shift away from mainstream toothpaste is not just a trend - it highlights people's core values: sustainability, transparency, and respect for the body's innate intelligence. By supporting this shift, we not only improve oral outcomes but also create a more empowered and health-literate population.

For patients and practitioners alike, the message is clear: the future of toothpaste is fluoride-free, microbiome-friendly, and inspired by nature.

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“ My goal was to create a brand that had a positive effect on your teeth, your health, and the planet ”

Dr Pippa Nicholls BDS, Dimples Founder & CEO

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# The Female Brain Advantage

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

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

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

## The Neuroscience of Female Intuition

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

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

## Intuition: The Leadership Superpower

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

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

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

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



**Dominika Staniewicz**  
The Brain Coach



## Embracing the Science, Elevating Leadership

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

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

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

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

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

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

# ERICA FERRAR

Dental Hygienist, Health & Wellness Coach and  
Healing Practitioner



**H**ow many of you find blood on your toothbrush, floss or even wake up with blood on your pillow?

If so, do you worry about it, avoid it - or ignore it? Here's an important truth - Healthy gums don't bleed. If you notice bleeding, with or without cleaning, don't dismiss it. Bleeding gums are an early warning sign of disease, not only in the mouth, but potentially in the rest of the body too.

As an experienced Dental Hygienist, diagnosis and clinical treatment of gum disease in particular, is at the forefront of oral disease management, but with emerging research on the connection between oral and systemic health, it is clear that clinical treatment alone is not always enough. Yes, dental professionals can treat the disease through surgical or non-surgical techniques, and offer advice on brushing, flossing, interdental aids and even diet, but there is a much bigger picture in play.

As a Dental Hygienist AND Health and Wellness Coach, I've been drawn to the growing evidence surrounding the link between oral disease and whole body health. If you think about it, historically, the mouth was seen in isolation from the rest of the body. Dentists treated the mouth and doctors treated the rest of the body, and they were viewed very separately - the mouth and body seen as disconnected. But

we now know: What happens in the mouth, does not stay in the mouth -

Oral health has far-reaching consequences for the whole body - physically, mentally, emotionally, and even spiritually. Gum disease is indeed a powerful example of how a seemingly "local" health issue can ripple throughout the entire system, affecting not only physical health, but also energy levels, confidence, self-worth and overall vitality.

### **THE MOUTH: A GATEWAY TO THE REST OF THE BODY**

The mouth is deeply connected to the rest of the body via the oral microbiome, immune system and bloodstream. The oral microbiome - a diverse community of microorganisms - works with your immune system to maintain balance and health, but poor habits like stress, smoking, alcohol and a poor diet disrupt this balance, leading to both oral and systemic inflammation.

For example, infections from untreated tooth decay can release toxins into the bloodstream, potentially affecting the heart or leading to sepsis. Gum disease (periodontitis) in particular, is an inflammatory condition, linked to over 55 different inflammatory conditions, including:

- Cardiovascular disease
- Alzheimer's disease
- Respiratory diseases
  - Rheumatoid arthritis
  - Type 2 Diabetes
  - Inflammatory bowel disease
  - Cancers
  - Adverse pregnancy outcomes
  - Menopause
  - Age-related immune decline

When we are stressed, self-care routines often break down. We may skip brushing or flossing, sleep poorly, and turn to unhealthy coping strategies like smoking, alcohol and eating sugary and processed foods - all habits that promote inflammation.





Chronic stress also weakens the immune system and triggers low grade inflammation making gum disease worse. Grinding teeth, jaw pain and mouth ulcers are other stress-related issues that can impact on the way we clean our teeth and look after our mouths.

### **A HOLISTIC APPROACH TO ORAL DISEASE**

Treatment for oral health disease should follow a clinical and holistic pathway. Dental professionals are essential for diagnosing and treating dental disease, but long term results come from addressing lifestyle factors that influence inflammation, immune health and resilience.

As an Oral Health Coach, I support clients in transforming their habits so that they can achieve optimum health and wellbeing through the following:

- **Supporting Home-Care** – Consistent brushing and interdental cleaning are your first line of defence.
- **Smoking Cessation** – reduces the risk of gum disease and oral cancers.



- **Reducing Alcohol Intake** Aids saliva flow, reduces cancer risk and supports healing.
- **Nutritional Guidance** – A low sugar, anti-inflammatory diet supports gum healing and microbiome balance.

***‘Oral disease is preventable, manageable and even reversible in its early stages, but only with action.’***

- **Stress Management** – Lowers inflammation and encourages healing
- **Mindfulness practices** – increases awareness of oral hygiene and eating practices.
- **Exercise** - Improves circulation, regulates blood sugar and supports immune function.
- **Sleep Management** - Helps your body to repair and fight inflammation.
- **Hydration** – Drinking water creates a stable environment for the oral microbiome to flourish and helps to prevent halitosis (bad breath) by preventing dehydration.
- **Breathwork** – Deep breathing increases blood and oxygen delivery to the oral tissues, helping to support healing and repair, and encouraging nasal breathing over mouth breathing helps to prevent dry mouth and bad breath.
- **Habit Change** – Supports consistent healthy behaviours.



- **Confidence and Self-Worth** – Improved oral health boosts how you feel about yourself and how you show up for yourself.
- **Health and Healing therapies** – Complementary therapies support deeper emotional and energetic balance and alignment.

### **FINAL THOUGHTS**

Your oral health is a reflection of your overall wellbeing. By taking care of your mouth, you are also caring for heart, brain, immune system and emotional vitality.

Oral disease is preventable, manageable and even reversible in its early stages, but only with action.

What else can you do today to take back control of your health and wellbeing?

*Erica qualified as a Dental Hygienist and Dental Therapist from the Royal London Hospital in 1986 and is currently practising as a hygienist part-time in private practice. After experiencing burnout in her own professional life, Erica requalified as a Health and Wellness Coach and Healing Practitioner, and now combines her 39 year experience as a Hygienist with her knowledge as a Health & Wellness Coach, and has developed an Oral Health Coaching programme, supporting and empowering clients to take back control of their own health and wellbeing.*

[www.ericaferrarhealing.co.uk](http://www.ericaferrarhealing.co.uk)

# Moving Beyond Mindset With Ancient Universal Principles

**"At The Center Of Your Being,  
You Have The Answer; You Know  
Who You Are, And You Know  
What You Want" Lao Tzu**

To “know thyself” and “have it all”, to live a life of joy and inner fulfillment with a legacy of impact and wealth, is as much a part of the human quest for personal power today, as it was in ancient times.

As a driven high performer, you feel the yearning to create, succeed, achieve your goals and reach your highest potential—to know the depths of who you are and what you want and to find your unique answers. This yearning is your commitment to your self-mastery. As humanity undergoes one of its greatest paradigm shifts, the possibility of living a limitless life full of energy, time, health, and wealth has arrived.

Welcome to my 12th column exploring moving beyond mindset with ancient universal principles. The 12 Ancient Universal Principles of my High Performance Wellness Coaching will help you return to the center of your being: the place of your greatest power, the infinite wellspring of your abundance and success.

## **Sacred Intelligence vs. Artificial Intelligence**

Change is upon us. Adaptability, resilience, accountability and vision are needed to stay Centered, Connected and Conscious™ in uncertain times. Humans evolved, mastering change. We created tools and resources to help us live in diverse climates under harsh conditions. Our next evolutionary growth is creating tools and resources to utilize rapidly expanding intellectual paradigms within evolving states of consciousness. Artificial Intelligence is here. Like any tool, humanity will decide how to use AI. With conscious leadership, AI will be used for the betterment of all.

As a human, you possess your own AI, Advanced Intelligence. In human AI, mindset tools and resources can be helpful in navigating uncertain terrain. But as a human, you are a spiritual being with a soul created from a divine plan that is beyond the mindset of mortal comprehension. You are part of the Oneness, the infinite ocean of existence. You exist beyond your mind. You are connected with universal wisdom, your Sacred Intelligence. Your Sacred Intelligence (SI) is your higher power that is part of your intuition, instinct and inner knowing. SI is you consciously co-creating with the divine in moments of stillness, silence, self-acceptance and empowerment.

Moving beyond mindset into your Sacred Intelligence releases fear and cultivates confidence that you are the “captain of your ship” and that nothing can take over your life without your free will. My 12 Ancient Universal Principles will help you align with your Sacred Intelligence in the midst of uncertain times. Ancient universal principle #8, “There Is Nothing Identical”, reminds you that you are unique and that no machine, even AI, can ever replicate the divine brilliance and power of your essence, of who you truly are.

The rise and integration of computer-generated AI is an opportunity for humans to access the ancient wisdom that exists within. It is those who feel the inner connection and confidence in their wisdom who will step into their power and become conscious leaders of their lives. They will guide their communities and lead



their businesses and nations as the conscious leaders of the world. The ancient science of yin and yang always creates balance, ensuring that when one thing is lost, something else is gained. Universal abundance is maintained. Knowledge can easily be acquired through Artificial Intelligence. Now that knowledge is cheap, wisdom is priceless. Wisdom is the new superpower of high achievers.

It is through your Sacred Intelligence that you will access your inner wisdom, enabling you to achieve your goals with greater efficiency, productivity, meaning, and purpose.

**“The Wise Man Doesn’t Give The Right Answer, He Poses The Right Questions”, Claude Levi-Strauss**

As we evolve with the Advanced Intelligence of humans and the Artificial Intelligence of machines, sound decision-making will come from your ancient wisdom, your connection to universal wisdom.



To create new pathways for an evolving paradigm, innovative approaches to making decisions are required, where knowledge is only part of the equation. The final decisions come from the center of your being, from the wisdom of your Sacred Intelligence.

Here are the highlights of my Conscious Decision-Making Exercise. My 12 Ancient Universal Principles are your roadmap and trusted guide to support you in making the highest and best decisions. This benevolent decision-making is a pillar of conscious leadership and success. It involves asking three fundamental questions in combination with my 12 Ancient Universal Principles.

### Conscious Decision-Making Exercise:

**Step One:** Write down your question or the decision you wish to make. Breathe. Look away from the words and start to feel the energy flowing from the crown of your head through your body. Experience this flow of energy until you feel centered.

**Step Two:** Intuitively choose one of the 12 Ancient Universal Principles. Reflect on it. Write it beside the decision you wish to make.

#### 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™*

**Step Three:** When looking at both your decision and your Ancient Principle side-by-side, what first thought or insight arises about your decision? Write down your insight. No one is watching or judging. Express your insights freely and without overthinking or analyzing.

**Step Four:** Ask yourself these three questions:

- A)** Will I regret or always wonder “what if” if I turn down an opportunity or make a decision based only on my knowledge or intellect?
- B)** Is there a pull in my heart and gut to at least try, even if it's a lot of work with a small chance of the desired outcome? In this question, remove logic and intellect from the decision-making process.
- C)** Can I live with and manage the functional reality “of a worst-case scenario” as a possible outcome, even if I set my highest intentions for my “best-case scenario”?

**Step Five:** Review your answers to the questions in Steps 3, 4.

**Step Six:** Intuitively choose another one of the 12 Ancient Universal Principles. Write it beside the answers in Step Five. Breathe. Reflect.

**Step Seven:** Now that you have accessed your Sacred Intelligence and ancient wisdom, along with knowledge and intellect, breathe and pause. Make a decision. If you feel excited but nervous, that is OK and healthy.





If you feel defeated, depressed or frustrated, reflect, examine possible reasons why and repeat the exercise. The goal is to create a Centered, Connected, Conscious™ state from which you feel aligned, focused, empowered and committed to your decision.

By making decisions from the center of your being, that place of higher consciousness and deeper connection with your soul, you:

- *create new pathways with new potential for success*
- *embrace the flow of universal energy that always supports you*
- *receive new opportunities that you could never have imagined*
- *live a life of no regrets, with inner peace, joy and deep fulfillment*
- *cultivate the confidence that your inner navigation system will always guide you; you live with an eagerness to learn, grow and evolve in any circumstance*

*“Everything That We Share With The World Is An Expression Of Who We Are Inside”, Lidia Kuleshnyk, aka Lady Apona*

In the quest to “know thyself” and “have it all”, many high performers continue to first apply their drive, passions and talents to create external accolades, in the hope that they will achieve their greatest accomplishment, their inner feeling of fulfillment, joy and security. External success is not mutually exclusive from internal success. But for external accomplishments to contribute to internal fulfillment, they must originate from deep within the center of your being, your greatest, deepest connection to, and inner knowing of, who you are and why you are here.

You have a divine right to evolve with self-mastery and live from your greatest power. It is your birthright. The gateways of universal abundance are open.

Expanding consciousness, “knowing thyself” and accessing your Sacred Intelligence, are part of the new paradigm of high performance wellness, in which inner well-being is a critical element of fulfillment and success.

The time is now to master your inner power. In Shakespeare’s famous words, “This above all: to thine own self be true”. This mantra will help you embody your journey of self-mastery.

When you truly know yourself, you are liberated from the attachments of ego and control. You live in flow and achieve unprecedented heights of internal and external success. You reclaim your sovereignty and become the conscious leader of your life and the world. Join me for my next column, where I will continue to explore Moving Beyond Mindset With Ancient Universal Principles.

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

Connect with Lidia Kuleshnyk  
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# From People-Pleasing to Personal Power

## Reclaiming Your Self-Worth

by Angela Haynes-Ranger



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

### **When saying "Yes" Means saying No to Yourself**

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

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

### **The Relationship Toll**

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

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

### **The Social Media Mirror**

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

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

### **Reclaiming Your Power**

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

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

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

Reclaiming your self-worth is not a one-time act but a daily choice.

Choose honesty over harmony, boundaries over burnout and self-respect over approval.

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

**Style Coach & Award Winning Mentor**  
[www.adourable.com](http://www.adourable.com)





## The Frequency and the Form

### Manifestation Isn't Magic Without the Container

**W**ithout the Container. Why Soul-Led Success Requires Both Being and Becoming—And Why You Don't Need to Follow My Way to Find Yours

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

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

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

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

#### The Integration Era Has Arrived

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

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

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

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

**Everything is a spectrum. Everything is a spiral.**  
It's not about choosing sides anymore.  
**We're done with polarization. The new era is wholeness. Integration is the initiation.**

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

#### Being and Becoming: The Dance of Consciousness

Let's talk cosmic truth:

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

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

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

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

Not as a contradiction—but as a cosmic choreography.



## Manifestation Isn't About Templates or Timelines

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

*Because your way? Is the only way that works.*

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

## The Frequency First Framework (With Form)

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

**This is the foundation of my work:**

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

This isn't about rejecting strategy. It's about building one that fits

your soul. Strategy doesn't work without soul. And the soul needs structure to truly serve.

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

Here's a truth bomb most spiritual circles avoid: **Your ego is sacred.**

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

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

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

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

## The WELLthy Life: Wellness + Wealth Across Every Dimension

This isn't about six figures. This is about multi-dimensional wealth.

WELLTH is:

**Spiritual WELLth:** Devotion to the divine within

**Emotional WELLth:** Emotional fluency, honesty, and grace

**Mental WELLth:** Thoughts that empower and energize

**Physical WELLth:** Vitality, movement, and nourishment

**Relational WELLth:** Soulful, expansive, mutual connections

**Vocational WELLth:** Purpose-driven, passion-infused service

**Financial WELLth:** Flow, expansion, and joy in receiving

**Social WELLth:** Creating ripple effects that uplift the collective

Abundance isn't something





you chase. It's something you become. And then?  
You get to build the form that holds it.

## **The Final Transmission: You Are the Frequency and the Form**

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

### **Soul-Whisper Tune-In:**

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

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

### **Shadow Illumination Prompt:**

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

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

Let it speak. Don't fix it. Don't fight it. Just feel it. Witness it. Thank it for trying to protect you. Because once seen, shadow becomes signal.

### **Somatic Integration Cue:**

Stand up. Shake out your hands. Wiggle your toes. And repeat out loud:

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

Now, take one small aligned action today. A post. A call. A decision. A declaration. Not because you "should"—but because your soul says so. Ascension isn't about floating higher. It's about landing deeper.

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

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

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

**Instagram @lizzienamasteplantbased**  
**or email her at namasteplantbased@gmail.com**

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

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

- Frequency-first foundation
- Shadow integration and nervous system regulation

YOUnique-aligned soul strategy

Because without the container, the nectar spills.

Because without the structure, the signal fades.

Because without the form, your frequency never fully lands.

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

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

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

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

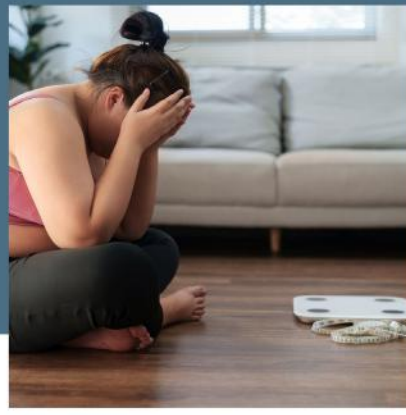
**By Lizzie Siegel**

Manifestation Embodiment

Mentor & Ascension Guide







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

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

### 1. Are You Really Tracking Everything?

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

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

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

### 2. Portion Sizes: Are They Sneakily Sabotaging You?

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

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

### 3. Do You Go Off-Track on Weekends?

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

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

### 4. Is Your Body Helping or Hindering Your Efforts?

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

**Are you:**

*Sleeping less than 7 hours a night?*

*Chronically stressed?*

*Tired all day, training hard but not recovering?*

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

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

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

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

### 6. Are You Using a Generic Calorie Number?

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

#### Daily steps

Calories burned (typically tracked with an Apple Watch)

Calories consumed (tracked via food diary or app)

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

### 7. What If You're Still Not Losing?

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

*Are we really tracking everything?*

*Are our steps and activity levels high enough?*

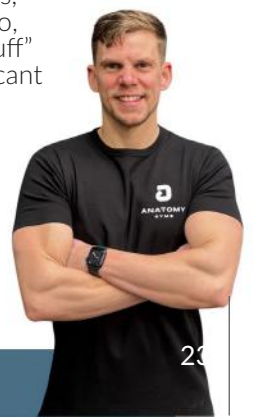
*Can we increase NEAT or add another workout?*

*If not, can we reduce calories safely?*

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

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

By Craig Alexander



# Redefining Success

## How Alignment Leads to True Fulfillment

**E**xhausted from working long hours, Vanessa had no time for a social life. But she couldn't or wouldn't slow down. Her boss needed her, and her team relied on her, right? She'd spent years building her career, proving herself by doing every task better than anyone else, always first in and last to leave. On paper, she had it all: the salary, the title, the lifestyle. So why did she feel so empty?

When Vanessa came to me for life coaching, she wasn't sure if it would help. A friend who had been coaching with me for a year had urged her to try. "I mean, could things really get any worse?" she joked. And that's how she ended up on our first call—half skeptical, half desperate for anything to change.

*(Vanessa's name has been changed, but her story is very real.)*

Before we started life coaching together, Vanessa's day started with checking her emails at 5 am. Work came first—before the bathroom! Her cortisol levels were through the roof, and she was constantly stressed out by emails and back-to-back meetings. At work, she was a legend, but she had no life. Every night, she binged Netflix on the couch, washing down her Skip the Dishes with a glass (or three) of wine.

This wasn't living. This was survival. And she knew she deserved more.

When Vanessa turned down another invitation, her friend messaged back, "Haven't seen you for months. When's the last time you did anything but work?" Vanessa laughed it off, but that question stuck with her. She couldn't remember. And maybe that's where you are right now. You've been pushing forward, doing everything you're "supposed" to do. But when was the last time you felt alive? If you aren't sure, keep reading.

### Discovering Alignment

Through life coaching, Vanessa began to understand that her exhaustion wasn't just about overwork but about misalignment. She had been chasing a version of success that no longer fit who she was. Alignment isn't about giving up ambition; it's about making sure your ambition is directed toward what lights you up.

**Success without alignment is just burnout in disguise.** Hustling for achievements that don't fulfill you will always leave you feeling empty.

**Your body knows before you do.** That pit in your stomach, the tightness in your chest, the constant exhaustion? Those are signs you're out of alignment.

**Saying yes to everything means saying no to yourself.** Something has to change if your calendar is full of obligations but empty of joy.

At first, Vanessa resisted my coaching, asking What if setting boundaries made her look uncommitted? What if saying no costs her opportunities? She worried that slowing down meant falling behind. But the opposite was true: Step by step, as she prioritized alignment, the more successful—and fulfilled—she became.

### Vanessa started making small, intentional shifts:

**She set boundaries at work.** No more checking emails between 8 pm and 8 am.

**She reconnected with delight.** She pulled out her adult colouring books and started hiking on weekends.

**She listened to her intuition.** Before saying yes, she asked: Does this bring me closer to the life I want?

**She made space for rest.** Instead of numbing out with Netflix and wine, she prioritized nutritious meals and sleep.

Little by little, Vanessa started to feel like herself again. She woke up energized, not anxious. She worked fewer hours and got more done. She laughed and felt lighter. Her life felt aligned. Vanessa is not alone. So many of my high-achieving life coaching clients come to me because they find themselves burnt out, stuck on autopilot, wondering where they went wrong. The good news? You don't have to figure this out alone. I've helped countless women find alignment, and I can help you, too.



## Your Turn: How to Step into Alignment

Here's the truth: Small, intentional shifts can bring you back to yourself. Here are a few ideas to get you started:



### 1. Ask yourself: Where are you out of alignment?

*Am I living in alignment with what actually matters to me?*

*Where in my life do I feel drained, and where do I feel energized?*

*If nothing changed in the next five years, would I be happy?*

**Try this:** Journal your honest answers to these questions. Don't filter. Just write.

### 2. Listen to your body.

*The gut clench of regret when you say yes to something you don't want to do.*

*Your heart racing when notifications go off.*

*The exhaustion that doesn't go away, even after a full night's sleep.*

**Try this:** The next time you're faced with a decision, close your eyes, take a deep breath, and ask: Does this feel heavy or light? Expansive or constrictive?

### 3. Define Your Vision: What are you working toward?

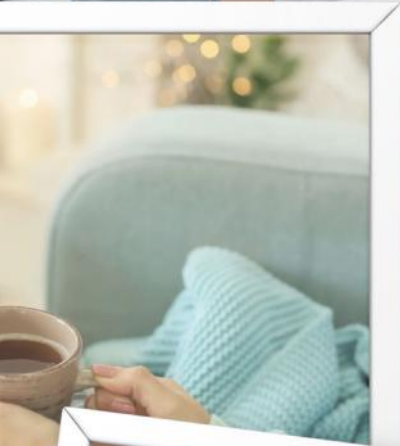
*How do I desire to feel when I wake up in the morning?*

*How do I desire to spend my time?*

*What values do I wish to embody?*

*How do I want people to remember me?*

**Try this:** Journal your thoughts, then craft a single sentence that captures your vision. Let this be your North Star—the version of success that feels aligned for you.



### 4. Start saying no (without guilt).

*Start small and build up to declining bigger things.*

*Practice not offering excuses because No is a complete sentence.*

*Ask yourself, if I say yes to this, what am I saying no to?*

**Try this:** Before saying yes to anything big, take 24 hours to think over the decision.

### 5. Make space for delight.

*The science is solid: delight and gratitude make you healthier overall.*

*You can find delight in tiny glimmers, like sitting in a ray of sunshine or a nice cup of tea.*

*Your brain will focus on what you feed it most, so nourish it with delight!*

**Try this:** Write down three things that delight you for no other reason than they feel good. Now, schedule them into your week as non-negotiables.



## The Truth About Alignment

Alignment isn't about quitting your job, moving to Bali, or making some massive life overhaul. It's about making conscious, intentional choices every day that bring you closer to the life you want to live. Stop putting yourself at the bottom of your to-do list. Get clear on your desire and put it at the top of your list.

Vanessa's story isn't unique. It's the story of so many women who have been giving their energy to everyone but themselves. But, through life coaching, she stopped, reassessed, chose alignment, and everything changed.

*How will you choose alignment today? What is one small shift you can make to align your actions with your desire?*

*Because when you do, everything else falls into place.*

by Emma Hull

Emma works with clients worldwide.

You can connect with her at [lifeuntethered.com](https://lifeuntethered.com) and as @TheLifeUntethered across social media.

Her book "Your Goddess Era: A Step-by-Step Guide to Reinvention" is out now.



# The Science of Spirituality

## Where Ancient Wisdom and Modern Neuroscience Finally Meet

Have you ever closed your eyes during meditation and felt something shift inside you—a sudden clarity, a deep exhale, or a warm glow rising from within? In that quiet moment, it might have felt like magic. But what if I told you that moment was not only sacred but also scientific? We live in a world where the soul is stirring awake.

Where more people are seeking meaning, inner peace, and intuitive guidance. Yet, for many, there's a longing for validation—a bridge between the ancient whispers of the soul and the measurable truths of science.

The science of spirituality is no longer confined to mystical texts or monastic retreats. It's now being mapped by brain scans, peer-reviewed journals, and groundbreaking discoveries in neuroscience. Let's explore how ancient soul wisdom and modern science converge—and how this powerful fusion can unlock your deepest healing and transformation.

### Ancient Practices: The Soul's Old Language

For thousands of years, humanity has turned to practices like meditation, breathwork, chanting, energy healing, sacred movement, visualization, and ritual to access altered states of consciousness. These tools were not just cultural traditions—they were technologies of the soul. Ancient Egypt spoke of the Ka and the Ba—soul aspects in constant dialogue.

Chinese medicine mapped energetic meridians—pathways of Qi (life force energy)—that remarkably correspond with today's understanding of the body's bioelectrical and electromagnetic systems. Indigenous shamans worked with the land, the stars, and the unseen to facilitate healing, a process that modern language is only beginning to describe.

These practices created coherence between the body, mind, and spirit. Chanting tuned vibrational frequency. Breathwork regulated the life force. Ritual anchored presence into embodiment. And they still work.

### Neuroscience Meets the Soul

Today, MRI scans and EEG machines are revealing what the ancients already knew: spiritual practices change the brain.

Neuroscientific research indicates that consistent meditation enhances grey matter in the prefrontal cortex—the region responsible for self-awareness, compassion, and decision-making. A landmark study by Dr. Sara Lazar at Harvard University demonstrated that meditation leads to measurable changes in brain structure, including increased cortical thickness in areas related to attention and emotional integration.

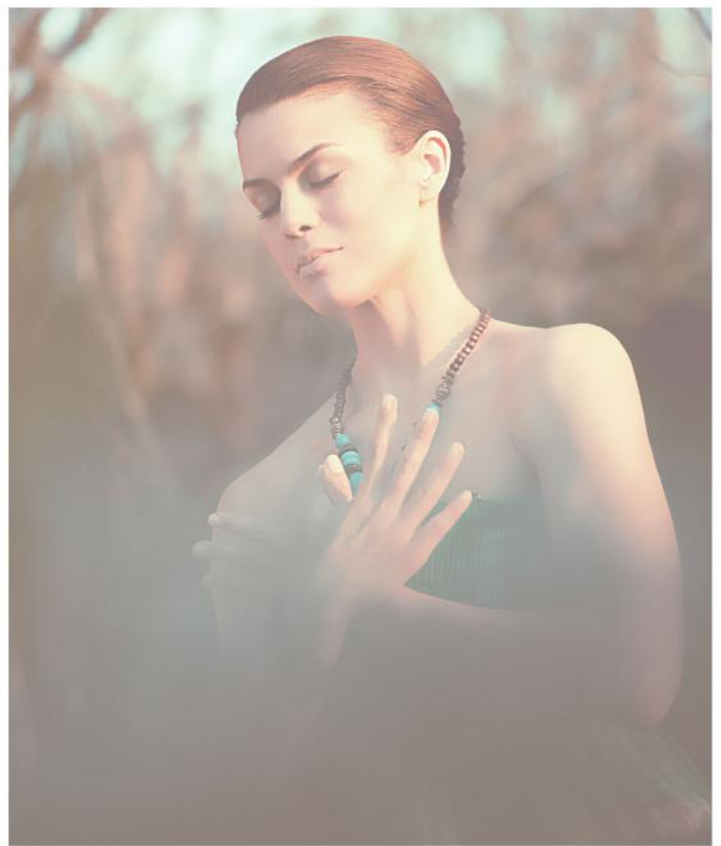
Meditation also decreases activity in the default mode network (DMN), which is associated with mind-wandering and self-referential thoughts. A quieter DMN has been linked to reduced anxiety, enhanced emotional regulation, and greater presence in the moment.

Breathwork and chanting activate the vagus nerve, which governs the parasympathetic nervous system—our body's natural rest-and-digest mode. Research published in *Frontiers in Psychology* reveals that deep, slow breathing enhances heart rate variability (HRV), a crucial indicator of resilience and autonomic balance.

Theta brainwaves—present during deep meditation, hypnosis, and creative flow—are now understood to be powerful frequencies that facilitate neuroplasticity, trauma integration, and subconscious reprogramming. Studies using EEG recordings confirm that these brainwave states enhance memory consolidation, emotional healing, and access to deeper inner awareness.

Energy work, once considered fringe, is now gaining recognition through the lens of quantum biology and biofield science. The NIH National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health has begun exploring how biofields—subtle energy fields surrounding the body—may play a role in health and healing. Quantum physics offers an intriguing insight: subatomic particles behave differently when they're observed, suggesting that consciousness might influence physical reality.

This idea—shown in the famous double-slit experiment—echoes ancient teachings that our thoughts and intentions carry real energetic power. It invites us to consider that we don't just witness







## You Are the Bridge

This isn't about choosing between science and soul. It's about integrating both. The moment we begin to approach healing through both lenses, something incredible happens: transformation accelerates.

In my work, I've witnessed this countless times. One client was plagued by deep, unexplainable anxiety. Through a past life regression, we uncovered a traumatic soul memory that had imprinted her current life with fear. As the session unfolded and healing occurred, a lightness returned. Her nervous system softened. Her sense of inner safety was restored.

Another discovered a past-life pattern influencing her self-worth and released it through a regression transformation. Over the following weeks, her energy shifted, and her outer life began to reflect this inner renewal.

These are not miracles. They are the natural result of honoring the whole human system: mind, body, and soul.

## Reactivating Your Inner Technology

You were born with everything you need to heal. But the noise of the modern world has dulled your inner instruments.

Your intuition is a finely tuned compass. Your breath is a healing rhythm. Your emotions are messages from your soul. Your body is an antenna for spiritual information.

It's time to reclaim these forgotten technologies. Intuition is not a gift for the few—it's your soul's language. Breath isn't just oxygen—it's a life force. Emotions aren't weakness—they're gateways.

When we relearn how to use this inner technology, life stops being a series of disconnected events. Instead, it becomes a living, breathing conversation between you and the universe.

And you begin to remember: you are not broken. You are awakening—and so is your soul. As your soul reconnects, it begins to speak more clearly through your intuition, your longings, and your quiet inner knowing.

## Three Soulful-Scientific Practices to Begin Today

### 1. Coherent Breathing

Inhale for 5 seconds, exhale for 5 seconds. Repeat for 3 minutes. This activates your vagus nerve, reduces anxiety, and brings you into a harmonious state of heart-brain connection.

### 2. Soul Journaling

Each morning, write the question: "What does my soul want me to know today?" Then, write without editing. This integrates subconscious insight with conscious awareness.

### 3. Theta Visualization

Before sleep, imagine descending a golden staircase into a safe inner sanctuary. Ask your soul one question. Sit with what you receive. This stimulates theta waves and enhances intuitive receptivity.

These practices may seem simple—but their power is real, both energetically and neurologically.

## A New Path Forward: Where Science and Soul Walk Together

In a world craving meaning, peace, and healing, we no longer need to separate logic from mystery. The sacred and the scientific are no longer opposites. They are allies.

Your soul holds ancient wisdom. Your brain holds infinite potential. And the journey ahead is not about becoming someone new but about remembering who you already are.

If this message stirs something deep within you—if your heart longs for something more... something ancient, authentic, and profoundly yours—this is your invitation. Come take the first step home to your soul.

**By Dr Margit Gabriele Muller**



[www.drmargit.com](http://www.drmargit.com)



# May I Have Your Attention Please The Messages Your Body Wants You To Hear

Imagine if our bodies were capable of telling us exactly what is wrong.

The truth is that our body has its way of communicating and has been sending out alerts and messages since the day we were born. Unfortunately, we live in a society that has completely disconnected us from ourselves. We have been conditioned since birth to believe that we aren't capable of understanding what our bodies need to support and maintain our overall health and wellness. So much so that when we feel changes or discomfort happening within our body, we immediately turn outside ourselves for answers.

The average person approaches their health from a distance, not understanding their needs and abilities. We have lived our lives believing that we have no business discussing or making any decisions about our health unless we went to Medical School and were taught a very specific way of practicing medicine.

Of course, while the expertise of those who attended Medical School is certainly a vital part of our lives, they are not the only voice we should depend on. We have become fully dependent on their knowledge, placing our needs and concerns in their hands.

In our society, if a new symptom arises, we call our Doctor, who we believe has all the answers. If our Doctor cannot help us, we are then sent to a specialist who focuses on one specific area of the body for further testing and analysis. We are often given a diagnosis, a label of our symptoms, and told our disease/illness is the reason for our symptoms. We are then prescribed medication to silence the symptom(s), or in some cases, we will need some type of surgery or procedure to fix the issue we are presenting.

This is how we are kept stable, and yes, it's a necessary part of our lives, but it should never have been what our entire perception of healthcare looks like. Here is why:

- The care being provided (while necessary for acute situations) never addresses the messages our bodies send but silences/suppresses these messages.
- We assume that once our symptoms are alleviated, we are healthy again, and the issue is resolved...except healing never actually occurred.
- The reason behind the symptom, aka the root cause, was never addressed or considered.
- The root cause that was never addressed didn't go away.
- The root cause continues to manifest, eventually leading to more health issues and new symptoms.





- When new symptoms arise, more appointments are made, new medications are prescribed, and the cycle continues.....

This is where the ongoing cycle of symptoms and illness begins. Those symptoms are the messages our body sends us to show us where there is an imbalance and where our attention and support are needed. Silencing them without understanding the root cause of the symptoms isn't helping or healing our bodies at all. We are given temporary relief that doesn't resolve why the symptoms developed in the first place.

Temporary relief is often necessary, and that is exactly why medication is there, but that is only one fraction of what needs to be addressed in order for real healing to occur. By solely treating our health concerns with medications, and taking no further steps to heal from what caused our symptoms, we are now at risk for further health issues to develop. It's only a matter of time before they do.

Here is an example:

You go to the Doctor complaining of constipation. Your Doctor sends you to a Gastroenterologist. The specialist will likely do some testing and see that your digestion is slow or that you are backed up and need to alleviate this issue. You are prescribed medication to get your bowels moving again (which always comes with side effects you may not see) and possibly advised to add some fibre to your diet. This may work for a while, but you believe you did what was necessary to address the issue before it worsened. Again, this only provides you with relief from the symptoms. This isn't addressing why you are struggling with constipation and how it affects your body as a whole.

I use constipation as an example because it is such a common symptom these days. I could say the same about various symptoms that are becoming so common that they are being normalized. Symptoms such as fatigue, anxiety, joint pain, headaches.....you get the idea.

If you remember anything from this article, I want you to understand that symptoms are not a normal part of life or aging. We as a society suffer predominantly from inflammatory diseases and illnesses, and it's all of these ongoing common symptoms being treated with band-aid solutions that have been our red flags for decades.

I personally had red flags for years that went unnoticed and unresolved. One example is when I was hospitalized six different times for weeks with gastritis. My body was presenting inflammation in my digestive tract; I couldn't digest anything and was in a tremendous amount of pain.



The protocol in the hospital was to stabilize me. Fluids, meds for nausea and pain, and a liquid diet as tolerated until my body calmed down and returned to a stable place. I was discharged, but it didn't take long before my symptoms returned or new symptoms began. It felt like a never-ending battle, and it was! When you look back at how hard my body begged for attention, how loud it screamed for help, only to be silenced again and again.

Eventually, I ended up being diagnosed with an autoimmune disease, and over time, I was diagnosed with a long list of diseases and secondary illnesses.

Sadly, every day, I hear stories very similar to my own, receiving a diagnosis of autoimmune disease, heart disease, diabetes and or cancer. I know for most, it feels like these diseases strike out of nowhere and people are randomly affected, but that is not what is happening.

These diseases and illnesses are developing over time. They are a manifestation of root causes we never knew existed. When we ignore the messages our bodies have been begging for us to hear all our lives, eventually, it leads us to a state of imbalance or disease. This isn't about bad luck or genetics; it results from our environment, food, lifestyle, nervous system, and gut health. It's a result of a total disconnect from being the person that our bodies have always needed support from the most.

I don't write this to scare anyone. I am writing this hoping to encourage everyone who reads it.

We have to be willing to accept that our healthcare is our responsibility and that a large portion of how we address our health should come from ourselves. Yes, we are, in fact, capable of more than we ever imagined. We are designed to heal. There is no such thing as a magic pill or cure, and there never will be. Our bodies are not one size fits all, and our root causes of disease are going to vary from person to person.

The first step is awareness and understanding that we can no longer rely solely on our doctors to do what is best for us and our health. They are there to help keep us stable, but they are not there to do the inner work necessary to address and heal the root causes of our symptoms.

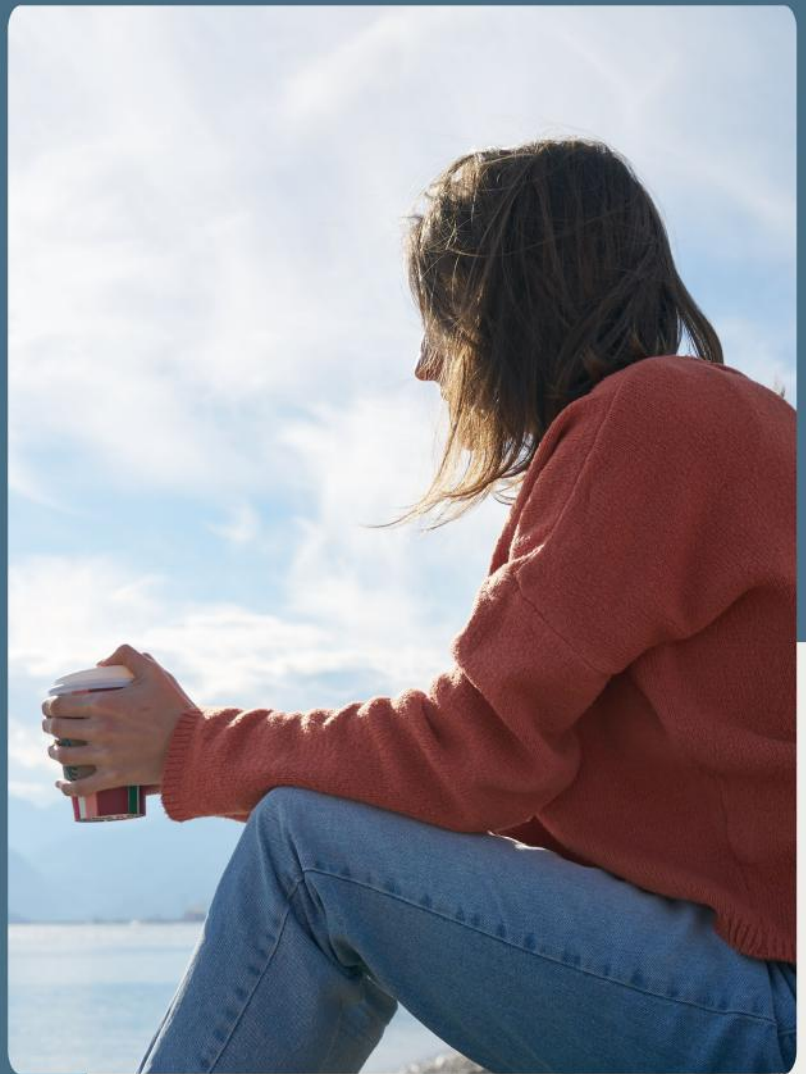
Our healthcare system isn't going to change anytime soon. If we continue to do what we have always done, the growth of disease will continue to escalate year after year. There has been massive growth in technology and pharmaceuticals in the last several years, yet as a whole, the health of our society continues to decline.

It doesn't have to continue this way. The idea of changing the entire trajectory of our society's well-being may sound a little crazy, but the idea of shifting the direction of our own lives and well-being is absolutely doable. It doesn't take a massive 360 for this to happen. In fact, it often just takes a small shift in direction, and the long-term outcomes of your health will look completely different than they would have had you remained on the path you always travelled before.

I meet people daily like myself who were diagnosed with several diseases and secondary illnesses. They live every day with ongoing symptoms that have them living in a state of fear and frustration. Life becomes a daily battle of survival, and you have no idea why this is all happening to you. You feel as if you are a victim in your own body and have absolutely no power over how the illness affects you. This is the life of chronic illness and something I wouldn't wish on anyone.

The reason why I write this and the reason why I speak out so much on this is because I never want anyone to endure what I did with chronic illness. I have proven that it doesn't have to be chronic and that even the most severe cases like me can absolutely heal.

Very often, people who are already diagnosed have a hard time hearing or accepting the fact that despite years of being told healing is impossible, people like me are now telling them the opposite.



It's understandable, and I do not expect everyone to be ready to hear my message. But what I do hope is that everyone who reads this begins to think more about how they are approaching their healthcare.

To clarify, I am not advising that you do not seek professional help when you aren't feeling well. I see my Doctor regularly, but at the same time, I play a major role in my healing and overall well-being. I suggest that the next time you feel a symptom, get curious. Learn to understand your body's own communication, and even more so, learn how to respond to your body and provide the support it has needed from you all along.

Once you are in a stable place, take steps forward to learn more about the root causes of your symptoms. Read more about gut health, nervous system health, toxins, and inflammation.

Next time you feel a symptom that catches your attention, get curious. Here are a few questions you can ask yourself:

- Every symptom has a cause. What could be causing this symptom to arise?
- What is my body trying to show me?
- How can I best support my body right now?

If these questions sound impossible to answer, then it's time to provide yourself with support and



guidance. I highly suggest that you begin working with a wellness coach who can teach you about the possible root causes and show you how to reconnect with yourself. They will provide support and guidance as you begin to listen to your body's needs and show you various ways you can honor those needs.

Providing ourselves with this type of care is not something we are accustomed to. There are many who will resist doing so for a variety of reasons, such as financial or uncertainty around what self-care and healing actually look like.

When it comes to the financial aspect of working with a coach, integrative physician, holistic practitioner, etc, many will immediately say they cannot afford it. In their eyes, if it's not covered by insurance, it won't happen. This is where there needs to be a major mindset shift in our perception of healthcare.

What is more valuable than our lives?  
What is the most important thing in this world for us to invest in?

The truth is that we invest in superficial things without thinking twice. The amount of money spent on Netflix, takeout, Starbucks, Amazon, cell phones, and more adds up quickly. What if we began putting our self care and well being as the top priority of our expenses?

When I began my own health journey, I wasn't capable of working, and we were already struggling financially, barely getting by paycheck to paycheck. The first coaching program I signed up for was the most expensive I have ever joined. The cost was very high, and we certainly didn't have any hidden funds lying around to pay it. But, my decision to heal and save my own life was non-negotiable. I couldn't afford to remain where I was for another minute. I finally found help that could change my life, and I was not allowing money to stand in my way. With that type of unshakable mindset, you will be amazed at how resourceful you become. I was going to make it happen, and I did.

I worked with and studied with numerous coaches, physicians, functional nutritionists, and scientists and ALWAYS found a way. I had enough on my plate with my health, so worrying about money standing in my way was something I refused to accept. My family and I sacrificed a lot back then, and all of us were happy to do so. Getting my life back was an investment that continues to pay us back with interest.

Remember what I stated above if providing additional care outside the conventional norm seems out of reach. When you shift your mindset around finances, you will be amazed at what is possible.

The truth is, if we do not change the way we approach our health, then nothing is going to will traditional way of healthcare isn't changing anytime soon, but more and more people are awakening to the fact that while it's a necessary part of our lives, it isn't enough.

It's time to break the cycle and shift the direction of our health and lives. It's a change in perspective that not everyone is ready for, but everyone is absolutely capable of. If we don't make any changes and remain where we are, we will continue to travel on the never-ending cycle of symptoms and disease.

The next time you feel a symptom, remember that it's your body's communication. Pause, observe, and get curious about it. That curiosity is your first step in reconnecting with yourself. It's a step towards hearing the messages that have been silenced all your life. Every step you take is a step forward in a new direction that will lead to places and outcomes you never imagined were possible.

## **Jacqueline Goncalves** **Wellness Coach and Business Owner** **Inspired Healing LLC**

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# DR CAROLINE CROUCH

Nutritional Coach for Oral Health & Wellbeing



Dentistry found me at the age of 15—a beautiful, chance “coincidence”. I took a job as a dental nurse simply to earn some money and escape the monotony of waitressing. What began as a practical choice quickly revealed itself as a calling, a path where my love for science, art, creativity, healing, and human compassion could all converge, alongside my desire to specialise in medicine.

Studying at Guy’s Hospital—a place steeped in history and home to apothecary alumni—felt like a privileged initiation into a lineage of healers. I emerged as a dentist at 23, and from the very beginning, my clinical practice was rooted in prevention. Yet, loyalty to the mainstream model meant working within a framework dominated by fluoride, antibiotics, pharmaceuticals, and repetitive oral hygiene instruction. While patients followed advice, disease was often managed in incremental, reactive ways, leaving tooth tissue lost and oral ecosystems disrupted.

I began questioning these limitations early in my training. I longed for a more proactive, public health, integrative approach—one that was holistic, community-focused, and socially aware. Yet speaking differently came with risks: ridicule, professional isolation, and financial uncertainty. Despite these pressures, the idea of Conscious Dentistry—the approach that would later define my work—persisted quietly within me, growing stronger with time until it could no longer be ignored. Eventually, I stepped away from conventional general practice.

My background has deeply shaped this vision. Being British Filipina and raised in both English countryside and ancestral Eastern traditions, I grew up with a philosophy of Food as Medicine. I learned that true health begins at the root—in soil, in energy, in sound, in breath, in emotions, nervous systems, family, intuitive eating, lifestyle, and our connection to the natural world. I saw how my mother’s people maintained strong teeth, wide smiles, and steady nervous systems through ancestral diets—until industrial farming, processed foods, and modern lifestyles disrupted this balance.

Conscious Dentistry called me as an invitation: to see the mouth not as an isolated system to be fixed, but as a living portal of communication, nourishment, vitality, and systemic interconnection—where both individual and collective healing can unfold. It was never an easy path. Some of the hardest moments in my career became my most powerful turning points. Witnessing repeated failures of the mainstream model, particularly seeing children suffer despite government preventive advice, ignited my calling to try a more grassroots integrated approach to oral health.

One pivotal moment was when I was offered a secure university position. I declined it to follow the echo I heard in my mind of mothers’ voices, who had previously asked me for genuine prevention and holistic health education, rather than simply reinforcing compliance with toothbrushing. The real shift, however, became deeply personal when my second child, a night-time mouth breather, developed early dental caries. This pushed me to trust my own insights, and fully embrace a questioning, whole-oral wellness path instead of defaulting to fluoride supplementation or dismissing the relevance of mouth breathing.

I now fully hear, understand, and embody the struggle: children and families today are under siege from ultra-processed foods, sedentary lifestyles, and stress—all of which impair bone development, metabolisms, nervous system regulation, and taste perception. Their dulled taste buds often reject healing foods that support growth and oral wellbeing, highlighting the challenges parents face. This insight led me to explore solutions rooted in nature and community.

I spent two transformative years at RHS Wisley, researching and growing healing plants with children, to actively involve them in the journey of growing food for the mouth. I revisited my childhood hedgerows, where every village had someone—often a woman—who understood plants and their medicinal uses. Conscious dentistry came alive not in clinics but in connection with this history, soil, and plants. Here, I learned that the mouth is deeply connected to the body—not only through oral-systemic links or the oral-gut-brain axis, but by first creating the conditions for an optimally healthy oral cavity. Oral and systemic health exist in a co-dependent, reciprocal relationship, much like plants and soil.

Just as horticulturalists study soil, I came to see the mouth as a terrain. Mineral deficiencies, microbial imbalances, and saliva dynamics all shape oral ecology. Healthy saliva is essential for hydration, detoxification, and immunity. I began to see the mouth as an ecosystem—like a garden—where diversity and balance determine whether weeds or healthy crops flourish. Nutritional science became an essential tool, integrated with energy healing, yoga, breathwork, Reiki, and meditation.

This holistic approach allows me to translate ancestral wisdom into a framework that aligns with conventional dental care, enabling families to understand and support oral wellness in harmony with the whole body. At its heart, for me, Conscious Dentistry acknowledges that reductionist dentistry has failed to stem disease. Despite decades of oral hygiene campaigns, cavities, inflammation,





and systemic health issues remain rampant. Big food continues to hijack taste buds with hidden sugars, disrupting the microbiomes that underpin metabolism, immunity, nervous system regulation, and overall wellbeing.

We urgently need a system that empowers people—especially children—to find joy in nourishing themselves, through real food, conscious breathing, healthy saliva, and lifestyle choices. Conscious Dentistry invites complementary approaches to sit alongside conventional care, reclaiming oral health as a fundamental human right, rooted in ancient wisdom yet validated by modern science. It reclaims the body as an ecosystem, the mouth as a gateway, and health as a holistic, interconnected practice.

Beyond individual health, my path to Conscious Dentistry is radical in its preventative and regenerative potential. It nurtures families, communities, and even the planet by promoting sustainable diets, reducing reliance on harmful interventions, and reconnecting people to natural rhythms. Ushering in this new vision would also reduce single-use plastics, minimise antibiotic use, and advocate ecological stewardship—thereby contributing to planetary health and resilience against antimicrobial resistance. Each smile, each bite, and each breath become expressions of awareness, care, and harmony.

If I had a magic wand, implementation could look like a layered vision spanning prevention, education, community, and systemic change:

#### **Start before birth!**

Every pregnant mother would receive guidance on nutrition, oral ecology—connected to the oral microbiome, and conscious self-care, nurturing the child's oral and systemic health from the earliest stages.

health shapes their saliva, teeth, and microbiome. Oral wellness would be embodied and experiential, as ecology in action, rather than simply brushing and sugar warnings.

#### **Community oral wellness hubs**

Clinics would become centres where dentists, nutritionists, herbalists, breath workers, cranio-facial osteopaths, chiropractors, and psychologists collaborate. Families would be empowered with tools for resilience, rather than treated symptomatically.

#### **Research & innovation**

Funding would support exploration of the oral–gut–immune connection: how oral microbes seed systemic immunity, influence the gut-brain axis, and even potentiate cancer therapies. Dentistry would be integrated with immunology, ecology, and systemic health research.

#### **Public spaces of inspiration**

Gardens, from small local food communities to large organisations like the Royal Horticultural Society could champion oral wellness gardens—living science spaces that demonstrate how fertile soil, biodiversity, and vibrant plants support immunity, microbiome health, and reduced reliance on antibiotics.

#### **Shift from correction to regeneration**

Rather than waiting for cavities and extractions, the focus would be on cultivating terrain—strengthening saliva, balancing the microbiome, supporting bone and airway development, and restoring nervous system balance.

Conscious Dentistry is more than traditional dental care. It is a new era that unites oral health, systemic wellbeing, and environmental sustainability. It is prevention, regeneration, and education rolled into one—a call to empower individuals, families, and communities to steward their own health while caring for the world around them. Each mouth becomes a portal, each meal a medicine, and each breath an opportunity for connection, resilience, and conscious living.

Most importantly, at its heart though it returns our bodies to a place born of love and universal energy. By honouring the interconnectedness of life, we can lead dentistry into a future that is truly preventative, holistic, ecological, fairer, and profoundly human.

by GERRARD  
FINLAYSON



## Building a Resilient Mindset for the Winter Months Ahead

### *10 Principles for Lasting Success in Health and Fitness*

As the temperature drops and days get shorter, it's tempting to let motivation slip away along with the daylight. But winter is the ideal time to strengthen both body and mind for the long run. Over my years in health and fitness, I've seen that success requires more than just a routine—cultivating the right mindset. Here are ten principles to fortify your outlook (and your fitness) through the winter season and beyond.

#### **1. Prioritise First Things First:**

We're all climbing life's ladders, but the question is: are they up against the right wall? Winter makes it easier to justify skipping the gym, but take a step back and ask, What am I really working toward? Whether it's improved energy, better mobility, or longevity, prioritising these goals helps you stay consistent. Think of it as deciding to go to the gym instead of hitting "next episode" on Netflix. Spoiler: the gym's probably going to help you feel better in the morning.

#### **2. Embrace a Growth Mindset:**

If you think you're "just not a runner" or "born without abs," let's reframe that. Every skill you have now, from walking to your job, you once couldn't do. If you can learn those, you can certainly learn to do a pull-up. Winter can be a great time to tackle a new challenge: try out that daunting kettlebell or sign up for a virtual race. Remember, growth is about becoming, not just being; every new skill you learn is a step in that direction.

#### **3. Focus on What You Can Control:**

Sure, you can't control the cold, the snow, or the sun setting at 4 PM. But you can control your workout schedule, what goes on your plate, and the energy you bring to the day. Rather than getting worked up over the weather, focus on creating a cosy indoor workout space or perfecting your hot chocolate protein shake (trust me, it's possible). By focusing on what's in your control, you create a routine that lasts.

#### **4. Grit Through Obstacles:**

Winter comes with its own unique challenges. The temptation to skip a workout because it's too cold or dark is real. But let's call those what they are—obstacles that build grit. If you can get up early to hit the gym in January, the rest of the year feels like a breeze. Remind yourself that every session done in the cold is another tick in the "unstoppable" column.

#### **5. Own Your Attention:**

Everyone's vying for your attention, and it's easy to let it slip into Instagram or another Netflix binge. But if your fitness goals are important, treat them with that same level of focus. Make it fun—commit to a "30-day squat challenge" instead of scrolling, or turn "10,000 steps a day" into a game. The result? You take back control of your day, one healthy choice at a time.





## 6. Challenge Self-Limiting Beliefs:

Let's get rid of "I can't do that" and try "I won't do that." Not making it to the gym? Change "I can't go today" to "I won't go." This shift is a great reality check, making it clear what you're actually choosing. So, if it's not happening, you're the one making that call. This is powerful, especially in winter—what can you choose to do instead of letting excuses win?

## 7. Choose Positivity Over Complaints:

Yes, it's cold. Yes, it's dark. But complaining about it only makes it worse. Instead, focus on what winter gives you—warm soups, cosy layers, and maybe even some seasonal activities like skiing or ice skating. Switching your mindset doesn't just make you more enjoyable to be around (trust me, your family will thank you); it builds resilience. After all, complaining never made a treadmill any more appealing.

## 8. Stay Open-Minded:

Don't be that person who scoffs at new fitness trends or dismisses a new workout idea. Sure, maybe your friend is raving about an online yoga class, or someone tells you about a fun winter hiking trail. Instead of brushing it off, give it a shot. Winter's a great time to try something fresh, and who knows? You might discover a new favourite way to stay fit.

## 9. Shift "Have To" Into "Get To":

This time of year, it's easy to think of workouts as a chore. But try framing it differently—"I get to go to the gym" instead of "I have to." It's a privilege to be able to work out, to move, to stay strong. Next time you're shivering as you head to the gym, remind yourself that you're one of the few people choosing to prioritise your health.

## 10. Strive for Excellence:

Excellence is in the details. If you're going to make it to the gym, bring intention to each set. If you're prepping meals for the week, take that extra step to make them something you'll actually look forward to eating. Winter is a season to embrace the small details that lead to long-term progress. Fanatical attention to these little elements is what separates ordinary from excellent.

Winter can be tough, but it's also a time to refine who you are and what you're capable of. Embracing these principles not only keeps you on track with health and fitness but empowers you to build a resilient, adaptable mindset. When spring arrives, you'll feel stronger, more focused, and ready for whatever comes next.



[www.gf-fitness.co.uk](http://www.gf-fitness.co.uk)

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linkedin.com/in/gerrardfinlaysonpt



# Self Care Corner

## The Blur of Busyness

One of my passions in life is to volunteer and serve the community. One of my life goals is to become a philanthropist. I'm willing to lend my time and talents to extraordinary causes. My siblings and I were taught the importance of helping others at an early age. My mother would always share with us "The Tale of the Starfish":

A young girl was walking along a beach where thousands of starfish had washed up during a terrible storm. When she came to each starfish, she would pick it up and throw it back into the ocean. People watched her with amusement.

She had been doing this for some time when a man approached her and said, "Little girl, why are you doing this? Look at this beach! You can't save all these starfish. You can't begin to make a

difference!"

The girl seemed crushed, suddenly deflated. But after a few moments, she bent down, picked up another starfish, and hurled it into the ocean as far as she could. Then she looked up at the man and replied,

***"Well, I made a difference for that one!"***

While I'm not on the Bill and Melinda Gates level, I believe my contributions make a difference to those I assist.

Although I love volunteering, I soon found myself in the vicious loop of overcommitment and ignoring my own wellbeing. I became overextended and failed to take care of myself. At the height of my activities, I was arriving home at 9:00 pm at least four nights a week. I'd leave home around 7:00 am each morning and wouldn't return home for at least 12-14 hours later. That's right, between Monday and Friday, I was working all day, then going to a meeting and lending my skills. I'll admit, it didn't happen all at once.

Little by little, I took on more and more. With each yes, I said no to my self-care and my need to decompress from a full day. I was exhausted and was no longer enjoying the projects. They began to feel like another responsibility that I had to manage. While driving home from another meeting, I remember the exhaustion that swept over my body one night. I gathered my belongings, and as I stumbled into my house, I huffed, "I'm so tired! I never seem to have any time to myself!" At that moment, I had the stark reality that I was the culprit behind my exhaustion.

I failed to acknowledge that I was responsible for my schedule and failed to honor my





boundaries. From that moment, I learned a valuable lesson. While it's good to be involved in activities, it's crucial to recognize when we're busy and not productive.

### ***What's the difference? Let's talk about it!***

What is busyness? Busyness refers to being engaged in various activities, tasks, or obligations. A frantic pace of work, multitasking, and a sense of urgency characterize it. Busy people tend to feel overwhelmed, stressed, and anxious. Busyness is often associated with a lack of focus and feeling constantly behind schedule.<sup>1</sup> A friend would often refer to this as spinning my wheels. It's a Southern colloquialism to say that while you're it looks like you're going places, you're still in the same place. Nothing has happened.



What's productivity? Productivity is about being intentional, proactive, and efficient. It's about achieving results, being practical, and doing things that move you closer to your goals. Productivity requires that your actions have meaning and purpose—you are intentional about what you do professionally and personally.<sup>2</sup>

The primary difference between the two is intentionality. I had to learn that while my desire to serve was honorable, my actions did not lead to tangible results. Our meetings never produced an event, product, or service that helped anyone. We were stuck in the brainstorming phase. Eventually, I removed myself from the organizations and had to learn how to reprioritize my time.

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### **Here are a few strategies to help navigate those moments of busyness:**

- 1.** Schedule your projects into smaller tasks. Set aside some time to disconnect and clear your mind. Taking a break allows you to reset your mental state and approach the task with renewed focus.
- 2.** Permit yourself to say no. Busyness often stems from taking on too many commitments. Learning to say no to tasks that don't align with your goals and priorities allows you to focus on essential tasks.
- 3.** Take care of yourself. This means getting enough rest, following a balanced nutrition plan, and engaging in activities that help you relax.

Do I still volunteer? Absolutely! I enjoy serving and wouldn't have it any other way. However, I've become more selective in the activities that align with my values. Serving with intention allows me to select the projects I enjoy without experiencing burnout. Turns out the adage is true—less is more!

[1] Productivity vs. Busyness: The Difference, <https://terraacademyforarts.com/productivity-vs-busyness-how-to-tell-the-difference-and-make-the-most-of-your-time/>

[2] Productive vs. busy: What's the difference? <https://www.success.com/busy-vs-productive/>

[3] How Constantly Staying Busy Affects Our Wellbeing, <https://www.verywellmind.com/how-the-glorification-of-busyness-impacts-our-well-being-4175360>



# Radical leadership now

## Why Spiritual Leadership is the only way



Leadership is in crisis. It's not just recent – and not just in companies. Those in positions of responsibility today are faced with five key challenges that determine whether leadership succeeds or fails:

**Numbers vs People:** Leaders are caught between pressure from above and the needs of their teams. Strong leadership creates both results AND true connection.

**Decisions despite uncertainty:** Those who always wait for complete facts are not leading – they are delaying. What's needed is an inner attitude that supports them, even when nothing seems certain on the outside.

**Growing expectations:** Leaders should inspire, provide security, and shape change – while remaining confident. The solution lies not in perfectionism but in conscious clarity.

**New structures, new rules:** Hierarchies are dissolving, and control is losing power. Effective leaders remain those who lead from inner stability – not from position.

**Technological upheaval:** AI and digitalization are rapidly transforming the world of work. Expertise is not enough. It requires presence, genuine communication, and strong guidance.

Old patterns, empty phrases, and half-hearted changes will not get us anywhere in the face of these complex challenges. Those who want to shape the future must be radical. Radical in clarity, radical in connection, radical in consistency.

Spiritual leadership offers this kind of radicality because spirituality here doesn't mean avoiding conflict or beating around the bush. And certainly not lighting incense sticks or reciting mantras. It means not softly drifting through everyday business life but doing the right thing with maximum consistency – even if it's uncomfortable. It's about knowing unshakably who I am, what I want, and what I stand for. Radicality doesn't mean loudness. It means freeing myself from fears or societal expectations. It's an uncompromising living of my own truth – so powerful that it has an outward impact.

Connection – the core of spirituality – is the key: What defines me? What are my most important needs? What emotions do I want to experience? And much more.

Leadership is always self-leadership. This also applies to motivation. Being clear about what I want leads to purposeful action – again and again. People see that I don't just preach but also act according to my convictions. This congruence creates trust. People tend to follow authentic individuals.

But how do I find out what truly drives me? How do I recognize which inner attitude gives me direction – regardless of external circumstances? The first step is to connect with my own deepest motivation. Often, the answers don't lie in strategy papers or management seminars, but much further back: in our childhood. What were my favourite games? What leisure activity did I enjoy? What activity did my parents have to forcefully encourage me to eat or sleep because I couldn't get enough? And so on. The answers to these questions (please write them down!) will provide important insights into what I need to be happy and what motivates me.

We're concerned with the motivation behind the game or the favourite subject at school. What feeling made that activity so irresistible? This is a first step. The next step is to put my needs into practice and actively seek out opportunities to experience these emotions again. And by consciously implementing them, I automatically become a trailblazer, a charismatic manager, or an inspiring project leader.

People begin to listen and open up to new ideas. When are people most attractive and interesting to us? It's when they're completely absorbed in what they're doing. When they enthusiastically tell us about a hobby or experience. That draws us in. Why shouldn't the same be possible when it comes to a new project for your team? When you speak enthusiastically about possibilities, your deep conviction about the positive effects of change is evident.

And that's precisely what spiritual leadership is about. It's the only leadership approach that endures in a world characterized by crises, change, and uncertainty. Because it's not based on external control mechanisms but on an inner attitude. Someone who is radically connected—with themselves, with others, with a true vision—no longer needs power games, no superficial motivational platitudes, and doesn't burn out, even in times of change. So, what's your next step toward radical self-leadership?

**By Andrea Huber**





# Mastery, in any field, takes time

As a coach, I am often asked, "What can I do to be more successful?"

There are many things to learn when you are a new business owner, yet I see too many people not prepared to put in the consistent effort required to master the essential skills needed for running a business. On the other hand, sometimes it's the opposite—they are constantly chasing the next shiny object, the newest strategy they see. Many entrepreneurs find themselves overwhelmed by an endless array of free courses and programs, filling their days with webinars and tutorials that promise instant success. They jump from one solution to another, hoping for a quick fix, but they never give any strategy enough time to truly work.

What often happens is they begin to feel defeated. They tell themselves they are the problem—that maybe they aren't cut out for success. But here's the issue: they've become so focused on learning everything all at once that they've forgotten the importance of applying what they learn.

The truth is success doesn't come from simply absorbing information. It comes from the

integration of that information—and that integration happens when we learn and practice the "Art of Repetition."

Repetition builds muscle memory, strengthens resolve, and teaches your body and mind what's possible.

The more you do something, the more capable you become.

Have you ever stopped to think about how naturally we learn as children?

Crawling, rolling, standing up—we do these things instinctively, often falling down but always getting back

up. As adults, however, we often forget this innate ability to learn and grow through repetition. Instead, we expect instant results.

As an adult student, I have found practicing over and over has been the key to my learning process. When I am acquiring a new skill—whether it's learning how to navigate a new social media platform or mastering a new business strategy—I practice it repeatedly until I feel confident enough to apply it in real-life situations.

I repeat the process so many times that it becomes second nature. The task evolves from something that once felt difficult into something I do almost effortlessly. This is how true integration happens: through consistent, deliberate practice. It's no longer a steep learning curve; instead, it becomes part of who you are and how you operate.

Whether it's mastering Facebook for business or starting a new hobby, I've learned that it all begins with one small step, followed by continuous, repeated effort. It's the same principle Bruce Lee spoke about when he said, "After a long time of practising, our work will become natural, skilful, swift, and steady."

Let's face it—There will be moments when you want to give up. I've been there too. The path to success is rarely smooth. There are setbacks, doubts, and frustrations. In these frustrating times, we develop more resilience to keep getting up and putting our best foot forward. But here's the truth: if it is to be, it's up to me.

No one else can do the work for you. Coaches, mentors, and online courses can provide guidance and tools, but ultimately, you must put in the effort. Show up every day and do the work—even when it feels challenging or repetitive.

Success isn't about finding the perfect strategy but consistent execution. What's the first step you can take today? What skill, habit, or dream are you ready to embrace?

Here are a few practical steps to get started:

- 1. Choose one area to focus on. Instead of trying to learn everything at once, pick one skill or strategy that aligns with your goals.**
- 2. Set a practice schedule. Consistency is key. Whether it's dedicating 30 minutes a day to learning or setting aside a specific time each week, do what works for you**
- 3. Track your progress. Keep a journal or log to record what you've practiced and what you've learned. This will help keep you motivated to do more**
- 4. Celebrate small wins. Acknowledge your progress, no matter how small. Each step forward is a victory.**

**Remember - One step at a Time.**

**By Mary Scott**





## The Mouth–Body Code

### Uncovering the Hidden Causes of Dental Disease

**A**re you tired of getting cavities—even when you brush and floss faithfully? Embarrassed by bad breath or dreading that familiar “you need to floss more” lecture at the dentist? You’re not alone.

As a dental hygienist, I’ve delivered difficult news far too often. I’ve told parents their child has 20 cavities. I’ve told adults they’re losing teeth to gum disease and facing costly, sometimes painful treatment. The most frustrating part? Many of these patients were doing everything I recommended—and yet, their dental disease kept coming back. So, I started digging deeper. Why were our best efforts still falling short?

That question led me to biological dental hygiene—a holistic approach that focuses on the root causes of disease, not just the symptoms. It changed everything.

#### **Tooth Decay: More Than Just Sugar and Brushing**

Tooth decay isn’t simply about sugar or brushing. It’s a complex, multifactorial disease—and a powerful clue about what’s happening inside your body.

Teeth are alive. Deep inside each tooth are special immune cells called odontoblasts. These cells are your teeth’s frontline defense against cavity-causing bacteria. But to function properly, they need to be nourished—specifically with fat-soluble vitamins like A, D3, and K2.

Here’s the problem: if your gut is inflamed or “leaky,” your body may struggle to absorb those critical nutrients. Conditions like celiac disease, prediabetes, or irritable bowel syndrome, along with poor diet, chronic stress, and environmental toxins (like glyphosate), all contribute to gut permeability. And when the gut is compromised, so are your teeth.

No nutrients = no defense. The bacteria win, and tooth decay sets in. And there’s more: tooth decay is contagious. Yes, the bacteria that cause cavities can be passed between family members—through kissing, sharing utensils, drinks, toothbrushes, or food. That’s why we recommend treating the whole family at once. If one person has cavity-causing bacteria, others are likely to carry it too. Treating just one person means the infection can return.

#### **The Acid Equation: Saliva, pH, and Mineral Loss**

Saliva is your body’s natural defense system. It protects the teeth, remineralizes enamel, and keeps the mouth balanced. But if saliva is reduced—from medications, illness, dehydration, or mouth breathing—the oral environment becomes too acidic.

Acidic foods and drinks like fizzy drinks, wine, citrus, vinegar, and sour sweets only add to this problem. In this state, your enamel begins to lose essential minerals like calcium and phosphate—a process called demineralisation. Once the enamel is weakened, cavity-causing bacteria thrive and begin breaking down the tooth structure. Traditional dentistry responds with fillings, fluoride, and more frequent cleanings. But unless we address why the mouth is acidic and vulnerable in the first place, the cycle continues.

#### **Nasal Breathing: A Forgotten Key to Oral Health**

One of the most overlooked causes of oral disease is how we breathe. Mouth breathing, especially at night, dries out the mouth, reduces saliva, and changes oral pH—all of which increase the risk for decay, bad breath, and gum disease.

Nasal breathing, on the other hand, supports optimal saliva flow, filters and warms the air, and even produces nitric oxide, a powerful antimicrobial that helps maintain a healthy oral environment. It also supports proper oxygenation, better sleep, and improved immune function.

We teach patients how to improve nasal hygiene, clear sinus passages, and retrain their breathing habits. Tools like nasal sprays, myofunctional therapy, and mouth taping at night can make a world of difference.

Your mouth can’t stay healthy if it’s constantly dry and acidic. Restoring nasal breathing is one of the most powerful tools we have to prevent dental disease.

#### **Gum Disease: Your Mouth’s Inflammatory Alarm Bell**

Bleeding gums aren’t “normal”—they’re your body’s red flag. Gum disease (also called periodontal disease) is not just a hygiene issue. It’s an inflammatory condition rooted in your body’s immune response.

In biological dentistry, we go beyond “deep cleanings” to understand why your gums are inflamed. We take a sample



of plaque from under your gumline and examine it with a phase contrast microscope—right alongside you. This allows you to see your oral bacteria in real time.

A healthy microbiome looks calm and balanced. A diseased one teems with active, aggressive pathogens. The more the bacteria move, the more destructive they tend to be. We pair this analysis with a thorough review of your medical history, sleep habits, airway, medications, diet, and stress levels. Gum disease doesn't start with just plaque—it starts when your body can no longer fight off chronic inflammation. So we investigate gut health, hormonal imbalances, allergies, systemic illnesses, and nutrient deficiencies. Everything matters.

### Tools That Go Beyond the Brush

The tools of biological dentistry may surprise you. Yes, we still brush and floss—but we also use:

- Oxygen-ozone therapy to kill harmful bacteria and stimulate healing.
- Air polishing with gentle powders to remove biofilm without damaging enamel.
- Microscopic analysis to track progress.
- Salivary testing for pathogens, pH, and inflammation markers.
- Nutritional and lifestyle coaching to support whole-body healing.

We often collaborate with other healthcare providers—functional medicine doctors, nutritionists, sleep therapists—to build a team around you. Because healing your mouth means supporting your whole body.

### What Happens in the Mouth Doesn't Stay There

We now know that oral health is inseparable from overall health. Gum disease is linked to serious conditions like:

- Heart Disease
- Alzheimer's Disease
- Diabetes
- Preterm Birth
- Osteoporosis
- Rheumatoid Arthritis

Bleeding gums, enamel erosion, bad breath, and chronic infections are signs that your body is in distress. The mouth is often where systemic diseases show up first.

By paying attention to these signs—and digging deeper to understand them—we can not only save teeth, but protect lives.

### Ask the Right Questions, Get Better Results

If your current dental care feels like a never-ending loop of “clean, fill, repeat,” it's time to start asking better questions:

- Why is this decay happening?
- Why are my gums bleeding?
- Am I breathing through my mouth at night?
- Could my gut health or sleep be affecting my oral health?
- Has anyone tested the bacteria in my mouth?
- What does my body need to truly heal?

### The Conscious Smile Starts Here

A healthy mouth is more than white teeth and fresh breath—it's the foundation for lifelong wellness. Biological dentistry is about curiosity, compassion, and a commitment to understanding the whole person.

Dental disease is not inevitable. It's manageable, treatable, and often preventable—when we address the root causes.

So take a breath (through your nose), ask the deeper questions, and start your journey toward a truly conscious smile. Why it is healthy to ask “why” at your dentist?



# YOUR GUT SECRETLY SABOTAGING YOUR HEALTH

## Is Your Gut Secretly Sabotaging Your Health?

Did you know that over 70% of your immune system is in your gut? Your gut health and immune system are closely linked, and changes to one affect the other. Your gut contains over 100 trillion bacteria (including fungi, viruses, and other microbes – collectively known as the gut microbiome) – more than the number of human cells in your body!

The bacteria help break down food, absorb nutrients and even regulate your mood. When your gut microbiome is balanced and functioning correctly, you feel energised, healthy and energetic. Still, an imbalance can affect more than just digestion – it can affect your energy levels, immunity, and even your skin.

Your gut is like your body's command centre – when it's healthy, you feel amazing. When it's not, you might experience digestive issues, fatigue or even mood swings. Think of your gut as a garden: if you feed it well, the good bacteria will thrive and flourish, and you will feel energetic. But if you have more of the bad bacteria, you will start feeling run down and sluggish. An unhealthy gut can ripple effect on your entire body, affecting everything from digestion to mood and immunity. It is often caused by lifestyle factors, poor diet choices, and stress. Here's how it impacts overall wellbeing:

### Digestive Problems

Your gut contains trillions of bacteria, which play a key role in digestion and nutrient absorption. When there is an imbalance, harmful bacteria outnumber the good ones, known as gut dysbiosis. The harmful bacteria can cause excess fermentation of food, resulting in bloating, abdominal pain, gas and many other symptoms, especially after eating certain foods.

A study published in the *Microorganisms Journal* found that general gastrointestinal problems such as abdominal pain, bloating, gas, diarrhoea and constipation are the main symptoms of dysbiosis (1).

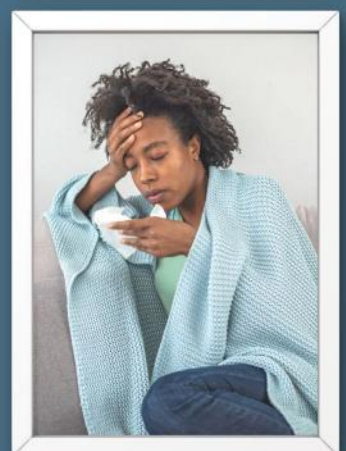
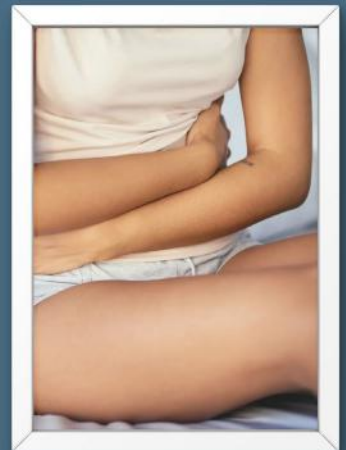
An imbalance in the gut microbiome also promotes inflammation. If this inflammation is ongoing, it can damage the lining of the intestines, allowing toxins, undigested food particles, and bacteria to leak into the bloodstream, a condition known as leaky gut. This can trigger food sensitivity, digestive discomfort, and even immune system reactions.

A study published in the *Food Microbiology and Biotechnology Journal* stated that there was growing evidence which suggests that dysbiosis (imbalance in the gut microbiome) disrupts the integrity of the intestinal lining and significantly impacts the level of inflammation in various tissues including the liver and adipose tissues (2). An unhealthy gut can be the root cause of many digestive problems, but with proper care and attention, you can restore balance and improve your gut health.

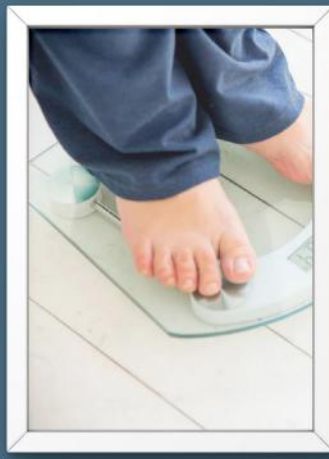
### Weakened Immune System

Nearly 70% of your immune cells are found in your gut lining. Your gut is home to trillions of bacteria, both good and bad. When the harmful bacteria outnumber the good ones (dysbiosis), causing an imbalance, it can trigger chronic inflammation, which disrupts immune function. It lowers your immune defences, making you more vulnerable to infections and even autoimmune reactions.

A study published in the *International Journal of Molecular Sciences* found that if the balance is disturbed, dysfunction of the intestinal immune system occurs, which further triggers a variety of diseases, including IBD (Inflammatory Bowel Disease). Several studies indicated that intestinal dysbiosis causes an abnormal immune response, leading to IBD (Inflammatory Bowel Disease) inflammation and destruction of the gastrointestinal tract (3).







A healthy gut is important for a healthy and strong immune system.

### Mental Health Problems

An unhealthy gut can significantly impact mental health, causing issues like depression, anxiety, brain fog and mood swings. This happens because of the gut-brain connection, also known as the gut-brain axis – a two-way communication system between your gut and brain. A study published in Clinics and Practice found that a healthy gut function has been linked to normal central nervous system (CNS) function. An imbalance in the gut microbiome (dysbiosis) and inflammation of the gut has been linked to causing several mental illnesses, including anxiety and depression, which are prevalent in society today (4).

Gut health and mental health are deeply connected. A healthy gut can lead to better mood, less anxiety, and better focus.

### Skin Problems

The gut-skin axis directly connects gut function and skin, with the gut microbiome significantly influencing the skin's appearance and health. When the gut is unhealthy, it can trigger skin problems like acne, psoriasis, eczema, rosacea, premature aging, and chronic inflammation. When the harmful bacteria outnumber the good bacteria, it can cause a leaky gut, which can lead to toxins in the bloodstream, which can cause redness, irritation and breakouts on the skin

A study published in the CosmoDema Journal found that changes in the gut microbiome may impact the onset and course of skin conditions such as psoriasis, eczema, and acne. In addition, they may cause systemic inflammation, which may worsen skin disorders (5).

Emerging studies suggest that a healthy gut microbiome can improve skin health drastically by lowering inflammation, boosting collagen formation, and reducing various skin problems (5). A healthy gut can lead to clearer, healthier and more radiant skin.

### Weight Gain

Your gut plays a major role in digestion, metabolism, hormone regulation, and even appetite control. When there is an imbalance in your gut microbiome, it can

disrupt blood sugar levels, causing cravings and energy crashes. It can also slow down metabolism, making it harder to burn calories. An unhealthy gut can make it harder to lose weight and even contribute to weight gain.

A study published in the Gut Microbes showed that the composition and function of the gut microbiome have an impact on obesity. It found that people with an unhealthy gut tend to have more of the Firmicutes bacteria, which is linked to a higher calorie absorption and weight gain, and they have a lower proportion of Bacteroidetes, which is associated with a leaner body composition (6)

Both Firmicutes and Bacteroidetes are important, but an imbalance between them can lead to weight gain, inflammation and poor digestion.

Keeping your gut microbiome balanced is essential for better health

### The Bottom Line

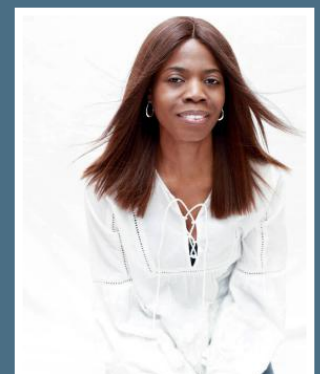
Your gut is the foundation of your health. A healthy gut is important for smooth digestion, better nutrient absorption, and overall well-being.

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# Generation Alpha come of age and spending power

Generation Alpha is characterised by those born between 2010 and 2024. It is the most digitally native, racially and ethnically diverse generation yet, and it is complete 'screen-agers' who have been around screens from an early age and don't know anything different.

As 2025 comes to an end, there are almost 2 billion Gen Alpha, making them the largest generation in the history of the world. But aside from the staggering number of them, what makes this generation so significant? Firstly, the youngest of this generation are hitting their teens. Not only do they have influence over what their parents spend on, but they also have their own spending power. By the year 2029 when the oldest Gen Alpha reaches adulthood and the youngest reach aged 5, the economic footprint of this generation will reach more than US \$5.46 trillion. Secondly, this generation is born entrepreneurs. Research shows that three-quarters (76%) of children aged 8-14 aspire to either establish their own business, run a small enterprise, or pursue a side hustle.

They are the generation whose childhood was formed by the pandemic. Post-2020, they experienced a seismic shift in work culture and family life, which has shaped the way they see the workforce and money-making opportunities. To put it bluntly, Generation Alpha may be small in years, but they are set to dominate the way we do business.

Whether you are developing your personal brand in your corporate role or within your own business, there is one thing which means our reputations continue to stand out. Relevance.

Relevance happens when we continue to evolve and recognise that our brands- the way we're perceived by others- cannot exist in isolation. Generation Alpha may not be something you've thought about in relation to your plans for this year, but I can guarantee it's a generation that impacts your daily life.

*Here's what to consider as Generation Alpha becomes the most important generation in our history to date:*

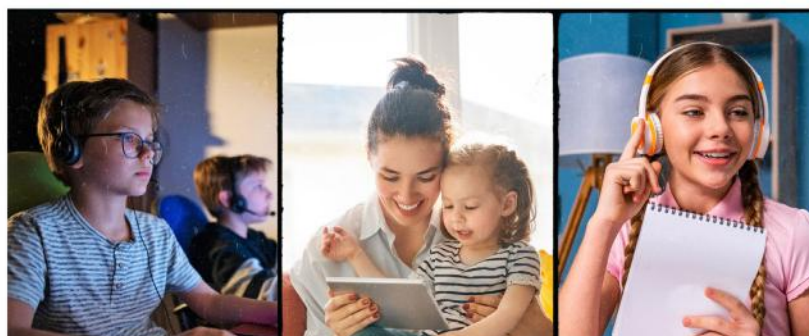
**1. They already influence the decisions of the older generations around you (and you!).** Generation Alpha are heavily influenced by screens from an early age and the information they consume via digital devices. Research suggests that 57% of Gen Alphas spend more than 3 hours a day on digital devices. They are highly socially aware and have been exposed to more globally diverse content than any previous generation. As a result, the conversations they're interested in and the values they prioritise are hugely varied, even at a young age.

If you are in a leadership role, whether in your own company or as an employee, it's key to recognise that these conversations are shaping the way your employees, clients and customers think. I have two young boys myself who are in this generation, and the way I parent and see the world is directly impacted by how they are being introduced to the world around them.

Of course, this raises the obvious concerns about protecting children online and filtering the information they're exposed to as much as possible. However, it's also a big opportunity for me to learn from them. As someone who helps other entrepreneurs build their businesses and personal brands, I cannot afford to rely on the way that I see things now. I need to look ahead to the way communication, perspective, and the economy are being shaped by the generations that are shaping them. Although my children are only in pre-school, I can already see the significant differences in how they perceive opportunities and are influenced by online information.

**Takeout:** It's only a matter of a few years before this generation becomes your peers, employees, or customers, so the key is to start taking note of how they are influencing our culture now.

**2. They are a video-first generation.** When you see Generation Alpha online, there's a good chance that they will be on YouTube. Research shows that 51% of Gen Alpha first hear about brands via YouTube. They engage with interactive content that draws them into an experience. What this means is that we, as corporate or business leaders, can't see video content as simply another way to communicate. For the







next generation, video is how they learn, research, shop, and form opinions.

**Takeout:** Video has long been a focus for companies and brands, but as upcoming generations embed video as their primary source of 'truth' companies and brands need to think more carefully about how they integrate video across their business

**3. They build loyalty via gaming.** Roblox and Fortnite are the platforms favoured by Generation Alpha. We have already seen brands like Adidas move onto Roblox and combine gaming with their virtual store. The store has over 800 items available to purchase and provides users with the ability to add the iconic Adidas three stripes to their virtual lives. Cosmetic brand e.l.f cosmetics followed suit by offering one million complimentary items via Roblox.

Gaming strategies aren't only a way to build brand awareness now, they are a way to establish loyalty and also monetise a very captive generation with high spending power.

**Takeout:** Gamification is central to the way that Gen Alpha discover and stays loyal to brands. They will take this approach to brand loyalty into the companies they work for and brands they associate with as they grow into adulthood. If a gaming strategy is not something that you have considered yet for your business or company, now is the time to start.

**4. Mental health, sustainability and inclusion are top of mind.** Generation Alpha has lived a lot in their young years. They experienced the pandemic and the aftermath of COVID-19 on society. Even if they were 'young,' the impact of 2020 onwards, along with a greater focus on environmental concerns and some of the most tumultuous years in global politics, is a heavy few years to have carried.

But, there are positives from all they have experienced. This generation is acutely aware of mental health and is open to bringing conversations to the open. My son, who recently turned 7, regularly attempts to remind his younger brother (aged 4) to use breathwork to manage his emotions.

Granted, this is usually in vain. However, the skills my eldest is learning at school, and his awareness of when

to use them surpass the emotional regulation I often see in the adults who surround me.

Despite these conversations happening inside the home, as they do for me, they also impact my decisions and what I choose to buy for my boys. My children want to be more sustainable in their choices therefore I am too in what we introduce to them.

And this is the key takeout of them all; whether you are directly in contact with Generation Alpha (like me) or not, they are influencing you. Their choices are impacting upon their parents. These parents are your peers, your clients, or your customers.

Whilst I am not advocating that we all need to be experts in Generation Alpha behaviour to better position ourselves to the world, we need to look beyond our immediate circle to be innovators and influencers of the future.

We stay relevant when we broaden our thinking and continue to learn from what is coming next, not what is already here and becoming outdated. It may be a few years away before Generation Alpha is part of your workforce, your business, or directly spending money with your brand. However, when they reach that place of power, both in influence and with their wallets, they will already have a clear idea of what they like and where they're not willing to settle.

My advice if you want to stay ahead is to keep an eye on Generation Alpha now. Their presence is already felt via their parents—people like me—and millions of others. And as a Generation brought up on YouTube from their early years, you can bet they won't have the attention span to wait and see whether they like what you offer. In the words of my 4-year-old when I take more than 30 seconds to do anything, 'this is like years'.

If you want to be ready for Generation Alpha when they mature in 2029, you best get moving now.

**By Rachel Pearson**

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## Why it is healthy to ask “why” at your dentist?

This article's title could involve so many aspects of the dental care you receive as a patient. The purpose of this article's WHY question is: - why does it seem we don't have enough room in our mouths for all teeth.?

The answer and solutions can affect everyone, from a newborn child, to you as a discerning adult, to your parents, grandparents and everyone's quality of life every day.

Pictures say 1000 words and the illustrations with this article illustrate this point.

The old-fashioned way to explain crowded teeth is to say genetics you have dad's teeth and mum's mouth, the same as you have dad's fingers and mum's hands!!!.

We never questioned why. We know that this is false and today we have health orientated answers to WHY and solutions for treatments.

Why do you see so many more people of ethnic origin have beautiful broad smiles? They seem to have too many teeth.

### **Why not us?**

The answer is simple, though the knowledge has been refined, is over 100 years old. These pictures are from the 1930's where dentists were already understanding what was happening.



*We see adults with broad dental arches (smiles) and worn teeth.*

*We see the next generation with crowded mouths. WHY ?*

Our teeth are caressed into position in our mouth by the action of the tongue pushing from the inside, the lips and cheeks pushing from the outside. These muscles also influence the direction of growth and the shape of the upper and lower jaws. If everything is in balance, we get beautiful jaws (in my opinion) beautiful faces and enough room to fit all the teeth the way nature intended.

If we have weak or incorrectly used muscles, then we do not grow the jaws, do not caress the teeth into the ideal position, resulting in crooked teeth. Weak or muscle imbalance can be due to poor breathing, posture, allergies thumb and dummy sucking and poor quality of “chewing” food.

In the past (and still today) the dentist makes the situation worse by taking teeth, out so everything will look straight but it does not fit and work with the rest of the body.

There is no consideration for the tongue and where it should rest in the roof of the mouth. With small crowded, possibly extracted into mouths there is no room for the tongue, unfortunately it drops to the floor of the mouth leading to none ideal mouth breathing precipitating a whole catalogue of potential health issues.

We now know, orthodontics in many patients, is possibly detrimental for your health for the whole of your life. This is a bold statement.

Here are illustrations of our current understanding and illustrations of young people treated using this concept. The results are impressive.





Unfortunately, for those whose jaws have not grown to the ideal size and shape, worse if they have had extractions and braces, we can state that in many cases this can lead to poor breathing, poor posture, poor sleep and their associated systemic health problems.

There is an ever-increasing number of Dentist and associated health practitioners who recognise these issues and will suggest an alternative to the standard treatment that we have accepted for so long.



For children we can start as early as three or four years old by retraining the muscles we can start to do simple braces from the age of five and six and we would hope by the time they get to their teens everything has dropped into place where they look good and fit together well.

We work to re-educate muscles to improve breathing, sleeping, swallowing and speech. This is significantly more complicated than waiting till age 13 and having teeth taken out. The lifelong health benefits outweigh the extra effort.

For adults, we are now recognising small mouths and teeth not fitting together the way Nature intended can lead to headaches, head, neck shoulder and back problems. It can lead to poor sleep, clenching or grinding and in the older the patient the more likely we have snoring and worse still sleep apnoea.

[www.dentistry4healthandhealing.co.uk](http://www.dentistry4healthandhealing.co.uk)



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