

e BUBBLE *Life*

L a u g h • L o v e • L i v e

Your Authentic Lifestyle Magazine

35th Edition

How to create a more
harmonious life!

Organic food - for
a more balanced life

Happy teeth,
Happy life

How to create
a **sustainable**
wardrobe

Exercising your right
to choose brings
peace of mind

Embracing simplicity
in **beauty**

Peace and
harmony in
your garden

City Slicking:
Become a tourist
in your town



Peaceful Life

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Editors Scribbles



Winter is well and truly entrenched, and lockdowns being enforced every other day due to the ongoing pandemic. We thought it pertinent to look at how to create peace and harmony in your life!

We can easily get carried away with all of this doom and gloom, not to mention the continual disruption to our regular routine. These factors effect everyone

in different ways, so to help prevent any negative and long-lasting results we want to do something about it. Hence the focus of this issue on harmony in life.

Enjoy the collection of new articles, and if you are inclined to follow an author, or investigate a topic, please review the [eBubble Life](http://eBubbleLife.com) website and hit the search icon to find what you are looking for.

Keep looking after yourself, your family and friends, eat healthy and exercise daily.

Laugh, Love, Live
Kevin Kapusi Starow

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Having experienced burnout and illness; Sally has made it her passion by taking women out of survival mode, by removing the spiral to burnout, through the Health that Heals, Thrive and Alive program. Author, burnout survivor, Sally knows what it is like to neglect yourself, living an exhausted workaholic and “hamster – in-the-wheel” existence. She works with women to crowd out behaviors that have lead to burnout and transform women’s lives so they can live with joy and harmony.



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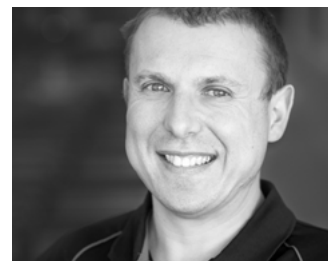
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Sarah has always had a passion for health and wellbeing, having seen firsthand the issues ill health and not looking after yourself can cause. I went on to complete a science degree, and having worked in R&D, and developed my knowledge of health and wellbeing.



How to create a more HARMONIOUS LIFE!

We have all had those mornings where NOTHING has gone to plan. Whether it's that the coffee machine broke, the child was up all night vomiting, your best friend has passed away, you had an argument with your lover, or you just had a really poor nights' sleep.

There are so many opportunities where the ideal 'zen-like' picture for your life can be interrupted. These hiccups (sometimes major disturbances) in life are ALWAYS going to happen and yes, they are annoying. However, there's real benefit in observing what reaction you have in the moment, or shortly after, as this will dictate your experience of harmony in your life.

THE HINDSIGHT WINDOW

Eric Edmeades has come up with a really cool happiness dictator idea called "The Hindsight Window". Basically, anytime something happens to you that has a negative twang, the amount of time it takes for you to find the

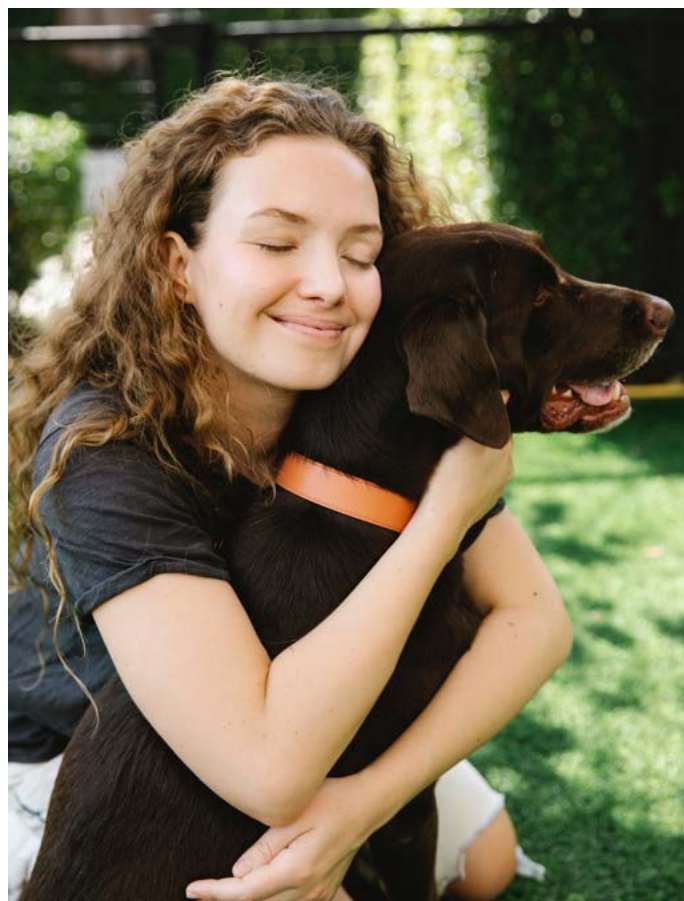
silver lining of that situation, will have an effect on your own happiness.

So, let's say your coffee machine breaks.

One reality is it could wreck the whole day/week of 'oh no I haven't had my morning coffee, I feel like crap. The machine is not insured and I just can't afford the time / money to go and get it looked at.'

The second reality is 'I might take myself out for a treat and go get a café made coffee today, I might even walk to the coffee shop and get some incidental exercise in and build my immune system at the same time ... winning'. Then a week later, you get to buy a new coffee machine that is actually really cool and has more bells and whistles to it. Again... winning!

Two very different outlooks on the same event → coffee machine breaking. However, the amount of time from the event happening to having a positive thought about the



event IS what Edmeades calls “The Hindsight Window”. If the time taken is 5 minutes – your happiness will be more; if it is closer to a week, your happiness will be less.

What if the situation was more extreme like your house has been ransacked and robbed! There is a heap of stuff that you need to do once this event has happened ... call the cops, clean up, work out what has been stolen, put in the insurance claim, go and buy replacement gear, get over the heartbreak of loved items no longer being in your presence ... lots of things.

First, let's agree, this situation SUCKS however, if you allow yourself to stay bogged down in the heartbreak and hassle of it all, your experience of life will be sad, traumatised and frightened for the longer term. The sooner you can move to the point of the silver lining of having new items to play with, the happier your life experience will be.

Sometimes this is easier said than done.

LIFE HARMONY

So much of our experience of harmony in life relates to what our expectations are rather than acceptance of what is actually occurring. If you think about any one ‘thing’ you are unhappy about, you may find that your unhappiness more about an unmet expectation rather than the actual ‘thing’ in and of itself.

Your life partner doesn't do <X>, you are annoyed

at them. Your expectation of what they should have done is different to what they have done. Thus you are sad. If you are conscious enough to be able to let go of your expectation and accept them for who they are and what they have done, your experience will be more harmonious. ... This is Buddha level consciousness!

Or let's say you do not get the promotion you have been going for. The expectation was that you would get the promotion however you didn't and thus you are sad. If there is acceptance of that everything is in its own time, and leave it to Source to dictate what is best for you, you may find your ability to ‘bounce back’ is greater. This letting go and trusting that it is all ok, will provide a much more harmonious experience of life.

IN THE MOMENT TRICK

When you see that you are upset, the key is to STOP! Take a moment and reflect on what your expectation is in that moment, and see how it is impacting your happiness level right now. Think through what would happen if you just accepted what is happening right now. Then, if you can, see if you can find a silver lining in whatever is happening right now and focus on that.

Remember that:

*Where your focus goes
Energy flows
And results show*

Written by [Claire Dunkley](#)

ADDRESS SELF-SABOTAGING behaviors to achieve a peaceful life

BELOW ARE 5 EASY STEPS FOR LIVING A PEACEFUL LIFE

Address Your Stress: If we want to achieve balance and peace in our life, we first have to understand the source of our stress. For example, it could be memories from childhood abuse.

According to the Australian Institute of Criminology:

“A survey of Australian tertiary students found that 1 in four girls and 1 in eleven boys had been the victim of childhood sexual abuse ...”⁽¹⁾

Ignored stressors (traumas) are not only found in our nervous system; they're in our digestive system, integumentary system, and endocrine system, sometimes manifesting as cancer. Stress takes up residence in our brain, hearts, microbiome, bones and frequently entangles our memories. It's what keeps us from sleeping, growing, and learning new habits.

Stress keeps the mind and body in constant conflict and affects how we relate to others. Stress squeezes the urethra tube and negatively impacts prostate health. Stress plays a role in neurodegeneration.⁽²⁾ How we handle emotional health can be a critical factor for improving our chances of peace.

OCD, they say, can be a combination of several stressful disorders keeping you from loving yourself or living in the present moment. OCD involves the need to control others and continued self-sabotaging behaviors can be difficult to break. For example, do you handle your OCD by living on five or more stimulants a day?

Are you an alcoholic, attending AA meetings every afternoon, only to go home to a bottle of wine in the evening? Do you notice your moods are driving people away? Is it hard for you to hear and understand another point of view?

The bottom line is OCD leaves one longing for peace. When we are in constant conflict with our thoughts and habits on a daily basis, this conflict can leave negative footprints on the well-being of our minds. As Dr. Amen would say, “living in pain shrinks your brain.”

Address Dehydration: Forget stimulants and drink water. Water activates healthy neurons and feeds the Central



Nervous System. The brain thrives on water. “Our bodies are mostly water, and water is constantly being lost through sweat, alcoholism, stress, and other means.”⁽³⁾

Change Your View: The mind is a beautiful sphere where it can be influenced, educated, exercised by what we see, hear, and feed it. If we replay fearful memories all our life, we may find it impossible to find peace. How we feel and touch our world impacts everything from our wallets to who we choose to hang with.

How do you break the bonds of the past when your grief is still with you in the present? Take a step to be in the now. Be still, avoid drugs, meditate, and identify the origins of your feelings and your discontent.

Clean The Air You Breathe: Beautiful aromas excite our senses while toxic scents increase disease, depression, and brain drain. Choose to use organic essential oils to clean the air in your home.

Address Anxiety: a) Understand everything will work its way out! Where you place awareness is where energy goes. Recently, I have chosen to become a professional photographer because I found the process peaceful and exhilarating at the same time.. Colors can feed the brain and soul and replace hurtful memories with beautiful memories.

I believe there are healing powers in colors. Soothing colorful seascapes, for instance, can engage the young and the elderly to reduce stress and anxiety, producing an emotional healing response!

b) Take a step out of the darkness by turning off main street media, and make time for exercise.

c) Surround yourself with the music you love, leaving no room for the negative nellies in your head.

Living a peaceful life is about nurturing our mind, body, and soul!

Written by [Connie Rogers](#)

Footnotes:

1- <https://e2epublishing.info/statistics>

2- <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/12080279/>

3- <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5957508/>

How to create your HARMONIOUS APPROACH TO LIFE

Daily existence feels like a constant life juggling act, carrying the burdens of our lives and the sense that life is going through the motions or just surviving. Is there a way to create a sense of sustainable harmony, whilst living in the real world? By way of definition, harmony/harmonious is when “things that go well together, or people and things that get along well”.

WHAT IS HARMONY IN LIFE?

Defining harmony in life, relates to the ability to manage all the elements that are important to you and have a plan to navigate through life's curveballs. Harmony is made up of multiple elements of life for example, health, relationships and career that build to become three elements of primary health, there are 12 elements that make up the primary health cycle.

Creating harmony in life is to ensure you have the ability to manage social, emotional, physical, personal and financial parts of life in combination with work goals to create meaning and contentment. Harmony is about creating boundaries and prioritising what is most important for a person. This may sound daunting, below are some steps to start building your plan to create harmony in life.

Those with harmony in life seek out areas of agreement, and are particularly aware of conflict and dissonance. People that live in harmony can see how people can come together or find agreement and in particular when they are experiencing conflict, because the harmonious will

seek a common chord when there is a sense of discord.

THINK ABOUT TODAY

Whilst rushing around and getting on with the busy days people endure, many people have a tendency to focus on “the next” and the future, rather than respecting the time and space that is current; the now and focusing on that moment with full attention. The repetition builds day-in-day-out to create life as a chore by going-through-the-motions and most of the time not being totally aware of what is happening at any given moment. An example of this could be; driving to a location, arriving and not having any recollection of the journey or being totally disconnected in a meeting, hearing what's going on but not listening, then walking away wondering what happened.

“Most of us spend too much time on what is urgent and not enough time on what's important”

Stephen Covey

Seven Simple Steps to Build Harmony into Life:

1. CELEBRATE LIFE

You are alive, so celebrate this simple fact! Consider the good parts of life. Struggling to find good in life? Then identify what you want to change and research a way to get support to make the change.

2. BE GRATEFUL AND APPRECIATIVE

The smallest things can have the most impact. Being



grateful and expressing gratitude and appreciation to your friends, family, colleagues, neighbours and your coffee barista will nourish these relationships. The impact on self and others is powerful. Try it!

3. COMMUNICATE

Learn how to really communicate. Even if there is not a spoken word, there is communication, each time a person is present there is a message being sent. Remember, the tone of voice has a powerful impact upon the delivery of the communication, something to keep in mind.

4. CULTIVATE COMPASSION

For yourself and others, having compassion links to the creation of harmony in life. Learn to accept others as they are and learn to understand the differences among others. Remove judgmental thoughts and remember, everyone has a story.

5. REMAIN POSITIVE

Life will be challenging at times. Consider what the lesson is that can be taken from the experience. Reframing the negative will help to build resilience and take a positive lesson or message from a sad or bad experience. There is a choice to dwell in the negative or



choose to focus on the positive.

6. KNOW WHAT YOU WANT

Defining what you want is the first and most critical step, know where you are going and make a plan to guide your way. What is missing, that maybe a place to start to create what you want. What do you want to leave as a legacy?

7. RESPECT YOURSELF AND OTHERS

Respecting yourself is the starting point, therefore self-respect will in turn be reciprocated, speak kindly and warmly to yourself and to others. You choose how to speak to yourself, no-one else has that power. Take control of self talk, making sure you speak to yourself as you would a best friend.

THE IMPORTANCE OF LIVING FOR TODAY

Creating a future is important however, constantly focusing on the future and allowing today to pass without acknowledgment or enjoyment is "existing". Many people believe that working hard through the years of youth, with a view to enjoying life at retirement age is the way to achieve goals, and harmony. Whilst this may be true for some, there is little space for life, right now and can compromise your health, wellbeing and the creation of harmony.

Finding stable ground, creating a plan and being true to yourself will reduce the pressure in life whilst giving you the freedom to be yourself, achieve the goals you set and give life purpose and meaning. Balance is not realistic, so focusing on harmony is the sustainable way to truly appreciate and enjoy life's experiences to create a peaceful life.

Written by [Sally McGrath](#)

How to maintain balance prevent burnout in a **MULTITASKING LIFE**



The world is a different place than it was two years ago. We have had to make a lot of changes and adapt in so many areas of our life. A common trend I have seen is that even with lockdowns and restrictions, instead of us having more time, we seem to have less. More and more clients I see are working longer hours and are trying to fit more in to their day.

As we head into the second half of the year I thought it was the perfect time to stop and consider what impact this busyness is having on us, and to identify how we can get our life balance back on track.

These days, families do a lot more multitasking with all members of the household working, parenting, cooking, and cleaning. Instead of having one role or one job description such as the house parent or the full-time worker, we seem to have at least two fulltime roles that

we strive to perfect.

For the single person, the list of expectations for what needs to be achieved in a day has also increased. There are high expectations to look perfect, eat well, go to the gym, have a social media worthy social life and be an entrepreneur in their work life.

What damage are we causing to ourselves trying to achieve it all?

Employers are expecting a lot more than the traditional 9am-5pm work day. We do not have any option to say we are not available as our phones are on us 24 hours a day. It is not uncommon for people to be answering work emails at 9 or 10pm at night, just to get ahead before the new day starts, or to catch up on what wasn't achieved the day before.



With the extra hours being spent on the workday, self-care and that much needed down time has reduced, or even been given the flick.

When we don't have balance in our life, burnout will occur. We are not robots, and eventually, when your body has had enough it will shut down and this will be without your consent! It will not wait for that report to be handed in, or wait until after your child's birthday party. When it happens it happens. Early signs of burnout are fatigue, memory loss, forgetfulness and making errors at work. If these symptoms are ignored, they will escalate and eventually even stringing a sentence together will be difficult and the person going through it will just feel the need to hide away and sleep.

When we are taking on too much, something has to give. You cannot put 100 percent effort into every category, so work might get 40%, kids might get 50%, thus leaving you with only 10% for your relationship, your friends, the household responsibilities and yourself.

TOP 5 TIPS FOR A BALANCED LIFE

1. **Selfcare-** No matter how busy your day or week is, you must have time for selfcare. This can be as simple as having a hot bath or taking a 20-minute walk. You might finish work for the day and sit out in your garden with a book for 10 minutes or cook a meal that you enjoy. It does not have to take hours or be anything costly, but it does have to be regular.
2. **Work Boundaries-** Your work day must have a start time and an end time. At the end time you have to step away from all of it, including those 8pm emails that you can quickly answer.
3. **Be realistic-** Identify what you can achieve in a day.

I often get clients to draw up a weekly hour by hour calendar and write in each hour what they "have to do" - for example, work might be shaded from 8am-6pm and then dinner from 7pm-8pm and so on. After adding in time for sleep, meals, and travel time to events, you will be able to see exactly how much time you have for the day. Once you have this you can then set realistic expectations for anything else you want to achieve each day.

4. **Plan for busy weeks -** We all have busy weeks where those work pressures will be greater, when we do need to do some extra time in the office or there are extra family events to attend. To avoid burnout, identify these weeks and plan ahead. Accept that you will have less time for other household tasks or family commitments. To balance this, grab some precooked meals so you do not have to cook that week or leave the laundry until the weekend. Sacrificing tasks that can wait will allow you to put your best effort into the task at hand.
5. **Have some time off-** Be a sloth, stay in your PJ's, watch Netflix, or read a book but have a day off. Your body needs it to recover from the busyness of the week. This is not laziness - this is you recharging so you can then be productive the following week.

Life is busy. We have a lot that we want to achieve and only 24 hours to get it all done. Be sensible with what you can and cannot achieve. Outsource tasks you do not have time for or reschedule the non-urgent tasks for the following week. Always make selfcare a priority to ensure you are the best person you can be.

Written by [Donna Cameron](#)

How to bring _____ HARMONY to your life?



When you read every advice column and article on what to do and not do with your life, it can get very confusing and overwhelming and unfortunately, contradictory. Although I don't have all the answers, the aim of this article is to give you a few, practical tips and activities that you can do to bring balance and harmony to your life.

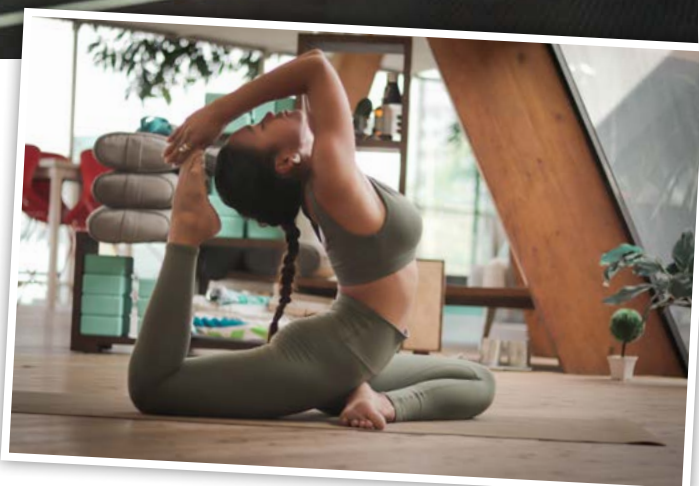
1. **Regular Strength Training** – Regular strength training has consistently been shown as things that you can do to improve long term cognitive function and memory. People who are stronger in middle age have more grey matter in their brain and memory a decade later. The explanation may be because weight-bearing training releases Osteocalcin from the bones. This improves the size and connectivity of the hippocampus, which has a major role in memory and learning. In addition, strength training is linked with higher self-esteem and a feeling of being more capable in all stages of life. Our brain has an unconscious sense of health and state of our muscles and bones system, that makes us feel we “can or can't do something”. As a result, strength training is a powerful tool against anxiety and depression. Sadly though, because of a more sedentary lifestyle, adults today are weaker than adults of the 1980's, with further weakness in the up-coming generation. Regular exercise also reduces the inflammatory process, which inhibits the growth on new nerve cells and secondly, exercises increases the release of a critical nerve growth protein called brain-derived neurotrophic factor (BDNF). Unfortunately, just
2. **Walking and Running to clear the mind** - If you want to be creative, take a walk or easy paced run. Walking temporarily reduces the blood flow to the pre-frontal cortex, responsible for rational, straight forward thinking. This allows you to more easily let creative, free thinking thought to occur. The results continue for 15 minutes after you have finished your walk.
3. **Controlled Breathing** - When you regulate your breathing, specifically at a rate of 6 breaths a minute, you are taking control of your brainwaves and tying them with the rate in which the air travels in and out of your nose. Sensory neurons at the top of your nose, send messages to the brain which spread to the areas of the brain which assign meaning to information, involved with planning and decision making. This rate specifically has shown to most effectively fill the air sacs in the lungs and stimulate the Vagus nerve, which induces calm and reduces stress. Breathing at a rate of 3 breaths per minute synchronises with low frequency delta and theta band brainwaves, which effects the parts of the brain associated with emotional processing, bringing a sense of deep relaxation and a state of “being” rather than “thinking”.
4. **Straightening up** - Activation of the core stabiliser muscles, that are activated during stability exercises, such as Clinical Pilates and Yoga, link to the adrenal



medulla (The inner part of the adrenal gland, responsible for our fight and flight response) through the motor cortex of the brain. Therefore, this may be the reason why exercises that focus on core stability also have a stress relieving effect on our brain.

5. **Learning a new skill** – Learning a brand new skill, especially a new language or dancing stimulate the growth of new brain cells, prevent nerve death and improve neuroplasticity (your nerve's ability to adapt). Although brain-teasers and puzzles engage your cognitive skills, there are not enough to stimulate neural growth, so learning a brand new, uncomfortable new skill that requires repeated practice and concentration makes the biggest difference in brain health.
6. **Keeping in touch with others** – Loneliness and isolation increase the risk of many factors that increase inflammation, including high blood pressure, diabetes, obesity and heart disease, which inhibit neural growth. Having contact with other people, even though passing interactions such as with shopkeepers, neighbours and other people in society improves memory formation, recall and is protective against neurodegenerative diseases.

The key to success is to slowly add these elements



into your life one at a time, not all at once. Start with a regular strengthening routine, once this becomes habit, then add controlled breathing and so on. The most important thing is to start, even if you are not absolutely sure what you are doing at the start, you will learn and your body and mind will thank you for it.

Written by [Michael Dermansky](#)

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PEACE AND HARMONY IN YOUR GARDEN



Pease is defined as the state of freedom from war or disturbance. While we are lucky to live without war in this country, we can all relate to the idea of disturbance in our lives and minds.

To free ourselves from this turbulence, we need to exercise contemplation and understanding. But how to achieve this?

We now know through studies and documented evidence that immersion in nature gives physiological and mental benefits. Simply being in a garden brings relaxation and provides stress relief so that we are in the right headspace to handle our mental wellbeing.

CREATE A PEACE GARDEN

Buddhists achieve inner peace by detaching themselves from the cycle of craving that leads to suffering. Their meditation is aimed at achieving a mental state where they leave passions, needs and wants in life behind. But this process takes practice. It is a skill, not just an activity. So how can we take some of the principles of this wise, ancient practice and apply them to our normal lives? Firstly, we need to gain an understanding of mindfulness and exercise the techniques involved, teaching our minds to move from agitated to harmonious.

What can then assist this learning is having the right space in which to practice. A space devoid of modern constructs and which allows us to connect with nature. Leaving our

usual environment when visiting this space to exercise mindfulness helps the process of detachment.

Create a peaceful sanctuary to nurture yourself on an everyday basis in your own garden. Here are some guidelines to make this space:

- Create an open, flat area somewhere out of the way of access paths and away from the high-use areas in your garden. The choice of surface can be lawn, groundcover planting, deck, gravel or paving. The space will be more successful if it has only one surface material and is not fragmented by the intersections of several surfaces. Old paving can be freshened up with a blast from a high-pressure hose.
- Surround yourself in foliage. Plant tall shrubs as hedges around your garden boundary. Fast-growing *Syzygium australe* (Lilly Pilly) provides dense, dark green glossy foliage as the perfect backdrop for your sanctum. If you do not have a lot of room, some tall bamboo or shrubs in pots can do the trick.
- Plant some lower height plants at the edge of your clearing, between the open area and the tall background hedges. Luscious evergreen foliage which contrasts in texture and/or colour with the background greenery will create a depth through layering and interest in tonal differences. Use shrubs such as *Plectranthus argentatus* (Silver Plectranthus) with its large velvet silver leaves and *Acacia cognata*



'Limelight' with its fine, lacey lime green foliage. Or group together strappy plants such as *Alpinia nutans* (Dwarf Cardamom) for a tropical look, *Arthropodium cirratum* (Renga Renga Lily) for classic green with white spring flowers. The effect of the graded foliage height will cocoon you in your nature hub.

- Add a water feature. The soothing sight and sound of moving water brings tranquillity and the headspace for mindfulness.
- As seen in peaceful Japanese gardens, the introduction of large stones around the edge of the clearing adds an earthy element which appeals to our innate desire to connect with nature.
- Include seating in your clearing. A hammock, Cape Cod chair or a large rock will be the focal point of the Peace Garden and the spot where you can prepare to process your thoughts and be at peace with yourself through mindfulness.
- Tending to your Peace Garden can also bring feelings of peace and contentedness. The activity of raking, pruning and weeding allows you to focus on a positive, immediate outcome and not on the distractions and turmoil of the mind.
- And if you would like some help to achieve your Peace Garden, get in touch with me via my website!

WELCOME A PEACE PLANT

Not all of us can spare the time, energy or the space to create a Peace Garden. If that applies to you, there is a quick fix: grab a Peace Plant. Here are three plants to bring peace and harmony into your life:

1. PEACE LILY (*SPATHIPHYLLUM SP.*)

A beautiful indoor plant which will bring a sense of calm to any room. Place one in a contemporary pot on a shelf, on your coffee table or in a collection of potted plants on a plant stand.

Not only will it add a lush green touch to your decor, this low-care plant will provide oxygen and take in



carbon dioxide, helping to clean the air in your home. They need watering about once a week, a little more in summer, a little less in winter. Once a month use liquid fertiliser. Once a year, add a dose of slow-release fertiliser.

2. Olive Tree (*Olea europaea*)

The olive branch has long been a symbol of peace, used in Greek mythology by Eirene, goddess of peace. The Greeks believed that olive branches drove away evil spirits and represented abundance.

In Christian mythology, the dove brought Noah an olive leaf to show that land was nigh, and that peace would soon be restored to the floating zoo.

Plant an olive tree in your garden or a pot for a contrast of silvery grey foliage against your other green plants. Do not expect them to provide shade or produce masses of fruit for you in the next decade. They are very slower growing. The beauty of the shape and texture they provide are immediate, so you don't need to wait to appreciate them.

3. SACRED LOTUS FLOWER (*NELUMBO NUCIFERA*)

Of Indian, Indochinese and East Asian origin, Buddhism holds the lotus flower as a symbol of inner peace and a disconnect from consumerism and the material world. While a little tricky to grow at home, there are beautiful faux flowers made from silk available to bring this peace flower into your homes without the upkeep of a live plant.

HARMONY DAY TREE PLANTING

If you have no room to plant a garden and you cannot seem to keep an indoor plant alive, then you can join in the next community celebrations of Harmony Day Tree Planting.

Traditionally held in mid-March, Harmony Week is held to celebrate multiculturalism and is about inclusiveness, respect and belonging, regardless of cultural background. Fundamentally, it is about being at peace with each other. Harmony Day is the focus for activities of Harmony Week and is often celebrated by planting a tree in communities around Australia. Planting a tree is such a powerful gesture. It speaks of intention, a brighter future and nurturing.

So connect with your local council or school next Harmony Week and join in the tree planting to feel the harmony in your neck of the woods.

Written by [Annabelle Drew](#)

ORGANIC FOOD

- for a more balanced life

More balance in everyday life. Who would not want that? Whether it is due to poor nutrition, too little exercise or too much stress in work and everyday life, we are often unbalanced, tired and drained. That's enough of that! I will show you how you can bring more harmony into your life with organic food.

Organic food has been trendy for years. Almost every supermarket, every market stall and every hip cafe has organic products on offer. But what exactly is organic? And is organic food really better than conventional food?

WHAT IS ORGANIC FOOD?

Organic food is food that comes from organic farming. Ecologically, this means, for example, that organic fruit and vegetables may not be genetically modified. Genetically modified plants not only threaten health, but also biodiversity and could have a negative impact on insect populations. So if you opt for products in organic quality, then you can be absolutely certain that genetic engineering has not been used in the manufacture of your product.

In addition, you have no “chemical clubs” such as

pesticides and artificial fertilizers on and in your food. Pesticides are poisons that kill various organisms (fungi, rodents, snails, insects) and thus protect the plants from infestation. In this way, farmers want to improve the profitability of cultivation. At the same time, these agents can pose a risk to humans. Organic farmers do not use synthetic chemical pesticides on their fields. In practice this means that the organically produced products have not been sprayed with these poisons during cultivation.

Another advantage is the lack of preservatives. Conventional foods contain a variety of artificial preservatives and flavour enhancers. This is different with organic products. Only natural preservatives are used here. The result is a more natural taste of the food that is often perceived.

Organic animal products come from animals kept in a species-appropriate manner. As a rule, they should not be treated with antibiotics and hormones. There are exceptions, however, if the animal does not get well without other options. Animals that have been given antibiotics twice in their life are no longer considered organic animals.





Processed organic food must also hardly contain any additives. 50 of around 320 additives may be processed in organic food, but only if the products cannot otherwise be manufactured or preserved. Also, these are only the 50 most harmless additives. Some suppliers of organic products even voluntarily forego even more additives.

ARE ORGANIC FOODS HEALTHIER?

Since the organic products are even more strictly controlled than the conventional foods, the bottom line is that they are really a bit healthier. Organic foods, for example, contain less nitrate, more nutrients, have more phytochemicals and are less contaminated and therefore better tolerated.

In meat production, organic is definitely healthier. The animals are kept in a species-appropriate manner, are not given any strong chemical medication, they can run around freely outside, are in the fresh air, the feed is natural and the slaughter is without animal torture measures. This means that the meat has fewer residues of stress hormones and drugs that you would otherwise eat. Keeping and feeding also affects the dairy products. Organic milk and, accordingly, cheese & co. have fewer pollutant residues than products without an organic certification.

In the following I would like to show you some interesting facts, the findings of which are of a general and universal nature:

- More omega 3 fatty acids in organic milk!

An excellent example of this is milk, in which more omega-3 fatty acids were found in the organic variant. Multiple unsaturated fatty acids are said to have a positive impact on health. They should have a beneficial effect on the heart and circulation. According to a study from 2018, the risk of cardiovascular disease is 39% lower when there is a high supply of these fatty acids.

- Organic foods contain more nutrients!
Different types of nutrients can be found in food. These include vitamin C, iron, magnesium and phosphorus, among others. In a 2010 publication, Warner J. Crinnion found that the amounts of these nutrients in organic foods are higher. The author came to the conclusion that a positive influence of organic foods on health due to the higher stock of nutrients is obvious.
- Less pesticide residues in organic food
Some people still believe that pesticides kill insects, but can in no way harm them themselves because if pesticides were harmful, they shouldn't be used in food production.

WHAT A MISTAKE!

Publications recently appeared that glyphosate - one of the most widely used herbicides in the world - is carcinogenic.

It has long been known that pesticides deteriorate the quality of sperm, attack the genetic material, harm babies and are associated with many chronic diseases, such as Parkinson's, asthma, Alzheimer's, diabetes, autism, ADHD and many more.

In addition, it is not even so much a question of the harmfulness of individual substances. The problem is rather that mostly several poisons are used at the same time and the resulting poison cocktails are much more dangerous than the individual poison on its own.

Nothing protects against pesticides, fungicides and herbicides as well as certified organic food!

In order to lead a life in harmony it is not only enough to do something for your health, it is also important to take care of the environment. Therefore we ask ourselves the following question:

IS ORGANIC FOOD BETTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND OUR CLIMATE?

Even though organic farmers achieve lower yields than their conventional counterparts they also release fewer greenhouse gases into the air.

What we eat not only affects our health and productivity, but also air, water, soil and the climate. The greater the organic content in our diet, the greater our contribution to climate protection! When you think of the topic of



“climate protection”, you usually immediately think of road traffic or energy. Did you know, however, that 20% of all CO₂ emissions are caused by food production and the nutrition sector? Meat production in particular is detrimental to the climate. The production of 1kg of industrially produced beef is just as harmful to the climate as a drive of 250km in your car. It's very simple: Less meat and more organic products on your plate make your healthy diet a climatic diet! In the case of plant-based production, emissions can be reduced by around 15%, while the production of animal-based foods according to organic guidelines releases around 10% less climate-damaging emissions into the atmosphere.

An important difference to conventional production is the renunciation of synthetic nitrogen fertilizers. In conventional plant cultivation, the production of these fertilizers consumes roughly half of the total energy input.

In organic farming, on the other hand, the central nitrogen supply is ensured through crop rotations. As a result, organic farmers save more energy per area. Organic farmers mainly use organic fertilizers for fertilization, which they make themselves from forage plants and manure. Organic farming not only protects the

climate, but also ensures an intact environment.

It contains the natural soil fertility through an optimized crop rotation, reduces soil erosion, protects water and biodiversity, as no artificial fertilizers or pesticides are used.

Organic food is considered to be the second biggest friend of the climate - “eating less meat and dairy products” saves even more greenhouse gases.

If you want to make sure that everything is okay with your food and you don't want to have any pesticides, medication, etc. in your food, then organic food is a good alternative. You should also rely on organic food if species-appropriate animal husbandry, the environment and biological diversity are important to you. With this background knowledge, it is clear that organic products ensure more balance and harmony in life, because you are betting on the right card when it comes to nutrition and the environment.

Organic food = for your health, the environment and a good feeling!

Written by [Adriana Krueger](#)

Happy teeth, Happy life



Over the years I've seen lots of miserable people come in to the clinic. Toothaches, broken teeth, crooked teeth and discoloured teeth are either preventable or easily treated and yet so many people suffer and are unhappy. Sometimes I'm at "wits end" trying to work out why intelligent people don't look after themselves.

Most dental issues are easily prevented with very simple measures. Brush your teeth twice a day and floss your teeth once a day is the edict pronounced by dentists over the years. We keep repeating the same message because we know that it works. Then have a general dental check up and cleaning every 6 months just to make sure that everything is in order.

So why doesn't everyone do it? We know that only about 30% of the population attend the dentist on a regular basis. Is it the cost? Is it the inconvenience? Is it the discomfort?

Going to the dentist comes with a cost, but the average person would only need to spend about \$2 a day to cover the cost of visiting the dentist twice a year, and buying toothbrushes, floss and toothpaste. Public clinics are also available throughout Australia for those who find the cost prohibitive. But, I don't think the cost is really the issue. We know from overseas experience and even some groups in Australia, that dental services are underutilized even when the services are free. It may be inconvenient to go to the dentist but so many are now open after

hours including the week-end so the timing should not be a problem. There are also many clinics that offer 24/7 emergency care.

The discomfort can certainly be an issue but there are so many ways of tackling that issue. Some people just put up with the discomfort, while others use sedation administered by the dentist. Hypnosis has been used successfully by many dentists who have done additional training. Laughing gas has also been popular for many years. In some situations a medically qualified specialist anaesthetist can put the patient to sleep by way of a general anaesthetic or intravenous sedation.

Unfortunately, many of these sedation treatments can be quite costly and they all have side effects and risks associated with them.

I think the real issue is that we have become complacent with our health. Most of us don't eat the right foods, do our daily requirement of exercise, sleep enough, look after our mental health, and last but not least look after our teeth. We have become too reliant on doctors and all other health professionals fixing things when there's a problem.

Indeed our whole health system is geared to funding health care when there is a problem and not so much in preventing problems from occurring in the first place. When it comes to government funding of healthcare, our priorities are all wrong. The exception is vaccinations.



The government recognizes the importance of preventing illnesses for which we can be inoculated but most of our hospitalizations relate to preventable lifestyle issues such as abuse of alcohol, drugs and foods.

I am staggered by the number of patients who need to be hospitalized for dental infections caused by tooth decay, a disease which is totally preventable. In 2017-2018 over 26,000 children aged 5-9 were hospitalized for tooth decay related issues. That's more than twice the number that were hospitalized for tonsillitis.

So let's get back to basics. It's never too late to be better at looking after ourselves. From a dental health perspective, there are some simple steps to follow.

1. Brush your teeth twice a day for 2 minutes

Using a manual toothbrush is good but an electric tooth brush can be better particularly if you don't use a manual toothbrush properly. A cheap electric tooth brush, for let's say \$50, is just as good as a \$200 electric brush with all the bells and whistles to reduce the amount of plaque and hence harmful bacteria on your teeth.

2. Floss your teeth very night

Cleaning in between your teeth is just as important as brushing. Whilst flossing is the most common and most effective way to clean in between your teeth, small interproximal brushes and water jet devices are also effective in reducing plaque levels in between teeth.

3. Use a fluoride toothpaste

We have known for many decades that fluoride renders teeth more resistant to tooth decay but it is not a panacea. Using a fluoride toothpaste by brushing and not rinsing your mouth immediately afterwards is a much better way to use your toothpaste. So after you've brush your teeth, spit but don't rinse your mouth for 30 minutes afterwards so that the active ingredients in the toothpaste have more time to work in to your teeth. Rinsing your mouth out straight after brushing, just wastes the availability of those ingredients to work.

4. Use a mouthwash

There are always little nooks and crannies where plaque bacteria will accumulate but the toothbrush bristles or floss cannot access to clean effectively. As a result we recommend to use an anti-bacterial mouthwash after brushing and flossing, to work as an additional method to reduce plaque bacteria numbers even further.

5. Reduce sugars in your diet

When the bacteria in plaque ingest sugars from food and drink, they form acids which attack the enamel of teeth. Over time, the enamel weakens and breaks away to form a cavity which then progresses over time. The key is to reduce the frequency of sugar ingestion and the worst foods are those with added sugars. Even so called healthy sugars such as honey and raw sugar are bad for your teeth because the basic chemical structure of these sugars is still



sucrose. Fructose which is the sugar in fruits, is made up of sucrose and glucose, so it also has the potential to cause damage to teeth.

6. Reduce acidic foods and drinks

An acidic environment is ideal for plaque bacteria to be harmful. Hence, we always see higher decay rates in people who drink fizzy drinks, fruit juices and sports drinks which are very acidic. Salad dressings, red and white wine, and vinegar are also a big issue if ingested frequently.

Being happy is much easier when you're healthy and looking after your teeth is only a part of this. Having healthy teeth can be simple and very easy to implement. Speak to your dentist to find out what is appropriate for you.

To find a dentist near you visit www.ada.org.au/findadentist The dentists who are listed on this website are members of the Australian Dental Association and abide by their laws and ethics.

Written by [Dr Jeffrey Kestenberg](#)

PEACEFUL DRESSING

HOW TO BRING HARMONY INTO YOUR WARDROBE

Are you sick of never finding anything to wear? Trying on outfit after outfit but nothing feels or looks right? Do you dream of waking up for work and getting dressed effortlessly with every outfit you try on feeling and looking amazing? I am going to share with you my steps to bringing harmony into your wardrobe and outfit peace into your life. Now you might think I am going to teach you lots of fashion tips however they would only help you if you were me! Instead, I am going to show you some tricks to love and accept yourself as you are right now. Then we are going to 'feel' your way through your existing clothes, find some styles that feel great to you and then organise outfits and fill in the gaps. Soon you will be peacefully dressing whilst looking and feeling amazing each morning.

ACCEPT YOURSELF NOW

Ok, now this is a big one... Let me repeat, this is a HUGE one! Where are you at in life? Which stage are you in and are you living in the now or in the past or hopeful future??? Accepting where we are right now is so crucial to bringing peace into our lives. This should also be reflected in our wardrobe and might be part of the reason nothing feels right when you try it on. Have you just had a baby and are still trying to wear clothes from your younger or corporate days? Are you in your 30's or 40's but still dressing as you did a decade younger? We need to really sit with this. Who are you now?

A major conversation we also need to have is about your relationship with your body. Accepting and loving your body today, as you are. If half of your clothes do not fit you now because you are a bit bigger, then guess what? We need to get some new clothes! I have often heard women saying – oh there is no point buying new clothes until I have lost X kgs. Sound familiar? I want to tell you there is another way, without trying to change ourselves to a size where we think we will be happier. How many times have you looked back on photos of yourself and thought, wow I looked great and not as bad/big as I thought at the time? Don't you wish the 'you' back then knew that and could stop the incessant worrying about her body and how she looks? Would you love to make peace with yourself today?

MEET SUSIE

I would like to introduce you to my 80-year-old self! She is now my number one companion whenever that little voice in my head questions or criticises. What do you think your 80-year-old self would say? This is the question I would like you to get remarkably familiar with. She



definitely does not sweat the small stuff – cellulite pfft! What about it? Look at how strong your legs and arms are to take you and do whatever you wish! Your 80-year-old self is also extremely compassionate and kind towards her younger self. Hindsight and love are what is important, and she wants to give her wisdom to you – all you need to do is listen! She will bring you the inner peace you crave.

DECLUTTERED WARDROBE = DECLUTTERED MIND

The next step now that we have accepted ourselves as we are today, is to organise your wardrobe! Whilst a big process if you are not used to doing it, I implore you to make this a seasonal ritual. Our bodies change as does our style – I have found myself continually evolving over time. Making peace with your changes and embracing them will help bring harmony into your life.

First step is to pull it all out and try it all on! How does it make you feel? If the answer is not great, then it has got to go! Do this for EVERY item in your wardrobe. If you are unsure of an item, try on a whole outfit with it. How does that make you feel? Great or blah? Remember we are culling the blah out of our wardrobes in order to bring the peace and harmony into our lives! Keeping a dress, you wore 15 years ago and 5-10kgs lighter, will not help you feel amazing when you see it in your wardrobe. Let it go! Start living in the now with a wardrobe full of outfits that make you happy.

I am a huge fan of circular fashion, so I donate all my clothes that are still great quality. Dress for Success is a



fantastic charity that helps supply disadvantaged women with corporate clothing. I find when I am giving to a worthy cause it makes it much easier to let go of the piece of clothing – especially when it still has tags on it! Another option are swap groups or to give them to family or friends. Alternatively, you can sell your clothes on any of the reselling platforms Facebook Marketplace, Gumtree, eBay etc.

Rearrange the items you are keeping in your wardrobe however you like. I personally like to hang them grouped by type, skirts, tops, jackets, casual dresses, cocktail dresses and I am a self-professed dork so I like to colour code them too! Now we have organised what you have, let us coordinate some outfits that will feel amazing the second you put them on.

STYLE, STYLE, STYLE

Do you know what style you like? Knowing your body shape is crucial to helping you achieve looks you might see on others. Are you an apple, pear, rectangle, hourglass or inverted triangle? The internet has so many resources to find this out. Once you know your shape, I recommend searching again for styles to suit your shape – there is so much advice on social media. I have worked out what suits me by trying on 1000's of garments over many years. Let someone else help you – this is the faster way! It will also help you to understand why a particular garment never looks quite right on you. For me that item was hipster jeans. As a pear shape they never work and they never will!!!!

Now we know what clothes we are working with and the style you like, let's organise some outfits! I like to turn up some music and have a bit of fun. Make sure you have a decent mirror for this. Try on different combinations of what you think you might like to wear together. You

will feel if it makes you feel great or blah. Identify which part of the outfit is not working then change that part and repeat. I have some outfits that feel blah just because of boring colour combinations or they need a pattern to make them look better. When you find the combinations you love, take a mental note of them. Some people even take photos of themselves in an outfit they love so they can recreate it easily. Knowing what works will bring peace and harmony into your morning dressing ritual.

This process will also identify any gaps in your wardrobe that need filling. You might have a great skirt and top but not the right jacket to go with it. Keep trying on everything until there is either an outfit combination that looks great or an item is great, but it needs something new to go with it. Then when you go shopping, you know the items that you need to look for. This part of the process could also be done with a friend if you are still finding your unique look and wanted an extra opinion.

There might even be a whole new style you want to try. I was determined to find jeans that suited me after not wearing them for 15 years. I went to over six shops and tried on over forty pairs to find them. Luckily, larger chain stores always have very reasonably priced garments PLUS they always do so many different styles, so it is easy to dress any body shape. I am also a huge fan of doubling down if I find something I love and I buy it in multiple colours.

PEACEFUL DRESSING

Ta da! You now should have a new beautifully organised wardrobe full of items and outfits that only make you feel amazing. I highly advise to perform this process twice a year, at the beginning of Summer and Winter. This will bring you a whole season of peaceful dressing and eliminate the frustrations of not feeling amazing in your clothes. Want to feel harmony in your morning ritual? When you have invested the time and effort into creating a wardrobe that you love, peaceful dressing will follow.

Written by Susie Taaffe

How to create a sustainable wardrobe

The most important thing to do is repeat after me; “Accept the things I cannot change; Give me courage to change the things I can; and wisdom to know the difference”.

This maybe the serenity prayer from AA but I believe it’s relevant for the simple reason is, that, it’s pretty safe to say that if you’re reading this ‘How To’ article, you haven’t made the most sustainable wardrobe choices in the past. And you know that you need and want to do better. It’s also really important to understand that choosing to create a sustainable wardrobe takes time, patience and understanding.

STEP 1: UNDERSTAND YOUR BODY SHAPE, COLOURS AND STYLE

Understanding how to dress your body in the right colours, fits and styles will not only make shopping for clothes easier it will also ensure you’re not buying clothing that will never be or seldom worn.

If you only do one of these steps, this is a MUST. There are many stylists and companies out there that offer styling advise but here are a few of our pointers.

- Don’t dress to cover your problem areas! Dress to highlight your assets.
- Don’t get sucked into the lasted style or colour trend UNLESS it suits you.
- Understand balance and proportions.
- If several people tell you a colour or style looks good on you, you’re doing something right. Very few people will tell you if something you’re wearing looks terrible.
- Colour should be worn to lift your natural colouring not overshadow you or blend in so much your no longer visible (otherwise known as washing you out).

Accept the things you can not change!

STEP 2: WARDROBE AUDIT

Once you know the do’s and don’ts for your body then it’s time to audit your wardrobe.

Have the courage to change the things you can!

This could be a confronting process, but it’s a job that must be done and once it is you will feel better, I promise. You need to be ruthless, there is NO point keeping



something because you might wear it, or you might fit into it one day. If you’re not wearing it for whatever reason it HAS TO GO. The only time I will let you off this rule is if you haven’t found the top/bottom to go with it and the style and colour is perfect for you. Or it’s a special occasion item such as weddings etc, but again it must be right for you!

Many stylists will have wardrobe audit as a part of their service. So if you find this process challenging you might want to look into seeking professional support or enlist the help from a supportive friend.

What do you do with the items you no longer want?

Providing the clothing still offers life here are a few options.

- Donate to a charity.
 - Keep in mind there are specific charities set up for people returning to work and require interview outfits.
- Sell, rent or swap on platforms such as Populace Threads
- Organise a clothing swap with friends or for a charity



What if the clothing isn't wearable?

Access if the clothing can be repaired or altered so that it can remain in your wardrobe. If an item, can't it's time to find it's next step in its lifecycle. DO NOT toss it in the rubbish!

Here are some options.

- Textile Recyclers Australia
- Upparel
- Kids of the Kerb
- Moving the Needle

Ensuring you send your unwanted clothing to it's correct destination is really important in your journey to a sustainable wardrobe.

STEP 3: ADDING VALUE TO YOUR WARDROBE

Once you have completed step 1 and 2 there are two things you will notice

- Your wardrobe is no longer busting at the seams. DO NOT be tempted to fill it ever again!
- You will have holes in your wardrobe. By this I mean there are items that you need to complete an outfit.

Once you have established what your missing items are, make a list including the colour required. Be sure these items will be worn in a multiple of outfits.

Now the fun and perhaps hardest thing to do. Go shopping. We recommend this should take place over time and very thoroughly. There is no need to rush out and purchase all your items on your list. Consider what you can and can't make do without and shop accordingly.

What to shop and where to shop the most sustainable clothing items?

Have the wisdom to know the difference.

This can be difficult and will often depend on your budget but here are some tips

- Try to purchase items that are made from natural fibres.
 - Cotton
 - Hemp
 - Linen
 - Silk
 - Wool
- Try second-hand stores and platforms first.
- If buying online ensure they have an easy return policy. This way if you don't like the fit/style you won't be hesitant to return the unwanted item. It took me a while as I prefer shopping in store. But I now admit to friends and clients that The Iconic is a hard one to go past for it's return policy.
- Fabric thickness is important, especially if your buying tee shirts. Make sure that the fabric not only looks good, but it will wear well. For example, once upon a time, tee shirts were all mostly made in 180gm jersey and they use to last for years. But now it's not uncommon for tees to be made from 130-150gms. The fabric is so thin that they barely last a season.
- Don't settle for a garment that doesn't fit right because you can't find what you're looking for. Go without and just keep looking.
- Buy items that you find easy to care for. If you don't like to iron you might want to avoid 100% cotton and linens. They might be more sustainable to earth but it's not a sustainable item for your wardrobe.
- Beware of greenwashing. I won't lie it's a juggle out there and it's hard to get clear pictures of which brands are doing the right thing. But there are websites available such as Ekko World that can cut through some of the noise and make it easier.

As I said at the very start, building a sustainable wardrobe takes time, patience and understanding. You need to be kind to yourself physically and mentally.

Good luck

Written by [Katrina](#)

IMPROVE YOUR SEX LIFE WITH DOMESTIC HARMONY AND INNER PEACE

Lately, my life has been like living inside a whirlwind of overwhelm. I have been pinched and pulled in all directions! My mind ticks constantly and every waking moment is devoted to problem solving. No wonder I feel wired and switched on most of my day. As you can guess, I've not had any energy or motivation for bedroom folk dancing. Come to think of it, no motivation for vacuuming either. I don't have inner peace, I have an inner riot.

I was thinking about life in general and had an epiphany and it provided an opportunity for some soul searching and a bit of an emotional, quasi-spiritual, relationship reset. The epiphany occurred when I looked at my gorgeous partner and couldn't remember the last time we had been intimate. As it turned out, neither could he, so we chatted about it like two reasonable and mature adults who care about each other's wellbeing. What we discovered was that both of us had succumbed to the sh*tstorm that is sometimes life. We were two whirlwinds rotating in opposite directions! We both needed to find some inner peace and bring our lives, and emotions, into harmony with each other so that we could dance the wild tango again. We weren't ready to hang up our dancing shoes, that's for sure.

SPEAKING FROM THE HEART IS IMPORTANT!

I think half the battle in any relationship is to recognise the problems that are occurring with all honesty and then take the necessary actions to resolve them without hurting feelings and bruising egos. Speaking from the heart comes with risk but also immense reward. BUT...where do you start without making someone feel that you've put a dagger in their heart?

We wanted to avoid a conversation that might escalate into a tit-for-tat melodrama so we started with making a list of all the crap in our lives that required attention. Some of it was outside of our direct control such as issues at work however the ones at home were within our reach. Neither of us realised that our domestic harmony had become slightly fractured and that one of us felt that they were carrying the domestic load more than the other. Not just who cooked most nights or did the cleaning, but an unequal division of the emotional labour required to manage a household, and that's just as heavy as vacuuming!



We certainly unpacked a lot of sore points between us (and yes, there were tears) however we made a pact not to let that come between us as a couple nor as the individuals that we are. We recognised that our relationship needs regular maintenance and we both need to work on self-preservation of our identities and individuality so that we feel valued. That's when I burst out laughing with the question: "Does self-preservation mean I have to make Susan Jam?"

That really tickled my funny bone and gave us a good chuckle and set the mood for both of us spend time thinking about we needed in our lives to stay sane and stay together.

RECIPE FOR SELF-CARE

We recognised and owned up to the knowledge that we both need time alone just as much as we need time together. For my partner, this meant arranging a regular catch up with friends from his Defence days and getting back to spending time with his favourite lens chasing light and landscapes.

For me, I like to retreat away from conversation and noise. To not have to use my brain or voice for a period of time is meditation for my mind and a luxury I rarely indulge in. I'm also a huge nature buff (and like to be in the buff in nature).



To stop myself feeling that all of my mental energy is devoted to others, I now strive to do something for me every day. It doesn't have to be huge. Sometimes it's an extra 10 minute snooze, putting on a beauty mask or driving up to the lookout at sunset. Just the simple act of choosing something that is for MY benefit and no one else's is what makes it feel particularly special. I have always been a fan of self-pleasuring however I've discovered that choosing moments of self-centred actions are just as important as is reaching for my favourite pleasure device!

RECIPE FOR RELATIONSHIP RESILIENCE (WITH SUGAR AND SPICE!)

Here are my tips from our relationship revamp. Since we made a commitment to schedule these activities our relationship has reignited (we're in the 7 year itch phase) and I have to say, we are incredibly proud of how we managed our emotions and communicated with heart, warmth and honesty.

- **Regular massage**
I think this should be mandatory for everyone! The benefits of massage are amazing. It's the greatest stress relief for your body (besides an orgasm). My darling partner is my giver the majority of the time, though when I need that next level up I will see a trained masseuse.
If you have never had a hot stone massage before go and have one!
- **Love and laugh wholeheartedly**
This may mean different things to different people. For us, it's about loving the other person even when they are at their worst and allowing that person to see, and love you, at your worst too. It's also about taking the time to appreciate the smaller things in life and share a belly laugh together.
- **Keeping your Ego on a leash**
Learn to be gracious and open to receiving and giving honest feedback. If your Ego feels bruised you need to self-check this and we wholeheartedly recommend reaching out for support from a qualified counsellor such as a sexologist or psychologist.
- **Schedule time for sex**
When you plan for sexy times together it adds a whole other dimension to the experience. Firstly, the greatest gift you can ever give the person you love

is your time and attention. Locking lovemaking into your diary demonstrates devotion to your amour and commitment to the relationship. Then, there is the sweet anticipation and planning for the sexy interlude. Whether that be a weekend away, a luxury hotel or a new sex toy (check out the best sellers at www.TheSpicyBoudoir.com). The imagination can run absolutely wild and fuel the build-up of desire and anticipation in the lead up to the main event!

- **Communication - checking in with each other**
No relationship will be a great relationship unless there is communication. Never assume (like us) that because nothing has been said that all is A-OK. Make a commitment to check-in and provide a welcome and safe space for hearts to speak freely.
- **Sex is often a barometer**
Sex is not just for procreating and doesn't have to always be about a penis in a vagina! Our bodies are built to give and receive pleasure in many ways. Think of sexual intimacy as the highest form of expression between two people (also considering those who are polyamorous). If sexual expression isn't happening in your relationship then there is a reason behind it and not talking about it will do far more damage than not having sex.



In my role as a sex educator, I hear many personal stories of mismatched libido and this experience is far more common than people realise. Quite often people are not aware that low libido can be related to an undiagnosed medical condition, it's important to get your health checked. Importantly, I stress that ignoring the health of your sexual relationship is not healthy

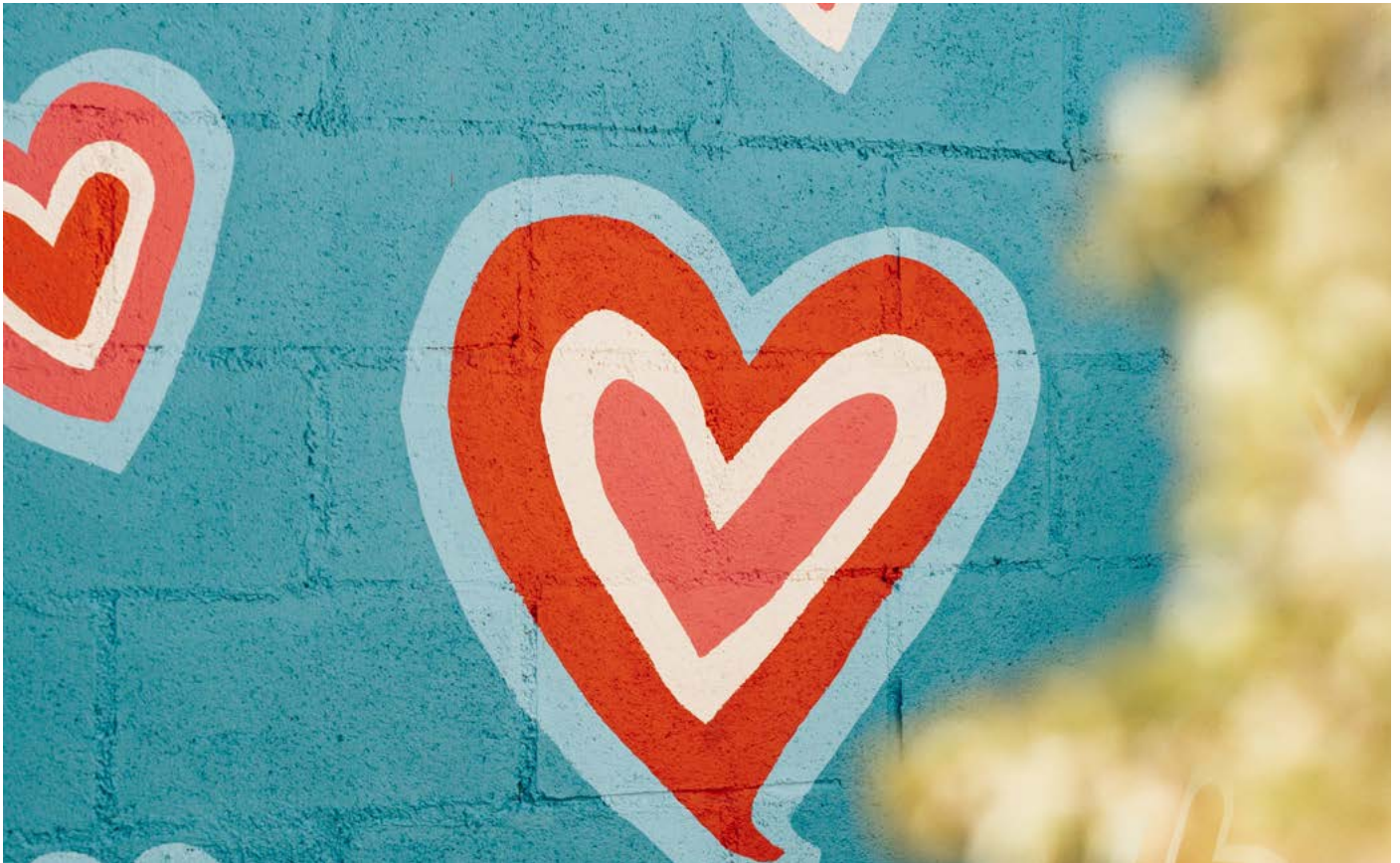
for either party. When two people are committed to each other it is possible to find your way back to that spark. If you have concerns, please speak to your partner and seek out a relationship counsellor to help get your groove back.

WORDS OF WISDOM

What I hope you take away from this article is the understanding that investing time in yourself is the foundation for all of our relationships. That finding a pathway out of the whirlwind of day-to-day living can lead you to inner peace. You will need that inner peace to find harmony in your relationships and in turn, harmony requires nurturing for it to grow and remain in balance. When time and attention is committed to preserving ones' self the returns will be magnificent in many aspects of your life.

PS. Our sex life is now red hot and frequent again! Thank you inner peace and harmony!

Written by [Susan Jarvis](#)



ARE ORGASMS GOOD FOR YOUR HEALTH?

As told by a lover of the multiple kind ...

Can you imagine if we all stayed in constant state of ‘orgasm’? Whoa that would be a pretty zenned out world! Where do I sign up?! As an intimate writer, I guess it is not surprising that I have been researching the delights of the orgasm, sometimes just to describe them better in my stories and other times seeking secrets of how to get more. Recently however, I have been wondering if they could be good for the health of ladies like us, and have compiled some of that research, added some personal experience to come up with a formula to convince us all that it is imperative to have more!

Not long ago I received some skin care tips from my daughter as she was drying and straightening my hair. (I know right? I looovvved it!). #bragging. Anyway, she was telling me that if I used some special cream (that was all blah blah to me) then “I would never get wrinkles”. It made me giggle for a couple of reasons, first, no wrinkles are an Instagram fantasy and my true thoughts on that are reserved for another article, and secondly, I am fifty this year and should not wrinkles already be here? The fact that

she was talking as if they had not happened yet lead me to believe that she had not detected many on my face. Yay!

To continue my mum-bragging, she also organised for Mother’s Day a massage and facial session at an Endota Spa near me that she ‘made’ her brother pay half for. It was amazing and I loved it but as usual they got me to answer questions about my skin on an iPad prior to my session. I couldn’t help myself and just had to answer the one about ‘what do you want more of for your skin’, with ‘more smile lines’! Although the lovely perfect skinned young lady did not understand my humour, the statement was true for me. I will be rapt that at the end of my days I have an oversupply of smile lines proving I had a life that where laughter was my medicine.

Now as I proudly have a knack of making a long story longer, hang in there as I circle back to orgasms! My beauty routine is probably naughty but all I do for face skin care is wear a BB cream sunscreen and cleanse before bed, the latter mostly because my extremely



clean partner gets upset when my mascara ALWAYS ends up on his pillow! I am not suggesting you follow my lead but according to the observation of my closest young and beautiful critic, it must be working. I cannot imagine my super simple skin care routine is the sole source of hiding my wrinkles, so this leads me to believe that there is something bigger at play. I feel that I need to place some weight on the fact that I am happy in my own skin however the only other major part of my life left that could have impact is my pro-orgasm choice and am convinced that a healthy supply must be a secret ingredient and the cause of mascara on his pillow!

There is much to find on the web on the health benefits of orgasms, so have compiled a list of my favourites but first I must set the context of this orgasm study. It is important to understand that an orgasm is an orgasm and the source of one is not the make or break. You DO NOT have to wait to receive one from someone else, there is always the good old self-help version! It was important to me that I cleared that up, especially in a world where lockdown can occur at any moment, we need to have contingencies ladies!!

Here are some great reasons to seek more orgasms in your life ...

NATURE'S RELAXANT

I have always joked about 'having the best sleep ever' post orgasm and it turns out that there is some science behind it. After an orgasm, they say that there is a delightful mix of oxytocin and prolactin released which are relaxant hormones then our amazing bodies add a pinch of endorphins that are unlocked with sex, and you have got yourself into a sleepy state of repair. It is widely known that sleep is the best medicine. Tick ... a health benefit!

COULD ORGASMS MEND A BROKEN HEART?

Ok, if you have ever had your heart broken, then this may be a little farfetched, but it turns out orgasms are still good for your heart. Studies have shown that orgasms reduce your level of cortisol which is a stress hormone, and less stress means your heart benefits. I would not suggest going off any heart medication, but it seems an orgasm is going to assist in keep your heart pumping baby!

IF YOU FEEL GOOD, THEN YOU LOOK GOOD!

Even with post-orgasm crazy hair, I certainly feel amazing laying back feeling like the most beautiful maiden in the land! I was excited to discover an orgasm also causes the human growth hormone to be released which makes the skin look more elastic. Mmmm, maybe that is why I do not have too many wrinkles yet? It certainly looks like that a female orgasm can work on your skin from the inside and ah hem there is evidence that men's orgasm contains vitamin E ... I will leave that thought with you! Anyhoo ... I just need to work out a way to bottle an orgasm ... an odd but interesting concept!



STAY IN SHAPE DOWN THERE

This benefit is an amazing hack for women that an orgasm is a delightful way to do pelvic floor exercises without effort! During an orgasm, the vaginal wall contracts and hopefully pulses, taking you to bliss-ville, and aside from your eyes rolling back in your head, the result is a toning workout for your bits. Research tells me that this is good for bladder control and get this, core strength! So, ladies, drop and give me more of those orgasms, or as my partner would say, "Take two and call me in the morning!"

If you are not convinced that orgasms make you heathier, that is ok, as their simple delightful, indulgent pleasure is also enough of a reason to demand them as a priority in your life. Ladies, as the centre of a community, keeping you in peak condition is not a luxury, it is a necessity as it has a ripple effect. Excuse the pun! My unqualified but highly experienced opinion is to ...

Keep calm and have more orgasms!

Written by [Naomi Radke](#)

Exercising your right to choose brings peace of mind



Dying or becoming incapacitated without up-to-date succession documents can cause serious emotional and financial hardship for those around you. Being proactive about your succession plan however, can provide numerous benefits, putting your mind at rest and bringing peace to your life.

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, there were just over 169,300 deaths recorded in Australia in 2019, with nearly 99% of these deaths being adults. Numerous studies have reported that approximately half of these deaths are individuals without a Will, not including those who died with a Will that did not reflect their up to date wishes or was invalid.

Many people delay getting or updating their Will for numerous reasons; affordability, accessibility, procrastination and misunderstanding or minimization of the consequences of dying without a well drafted Will. The benefits of planning your succession documents with an experienced lawyer outweigh any potential downsides.

YOU DECIDE WHERE YOUR ASSETS GO

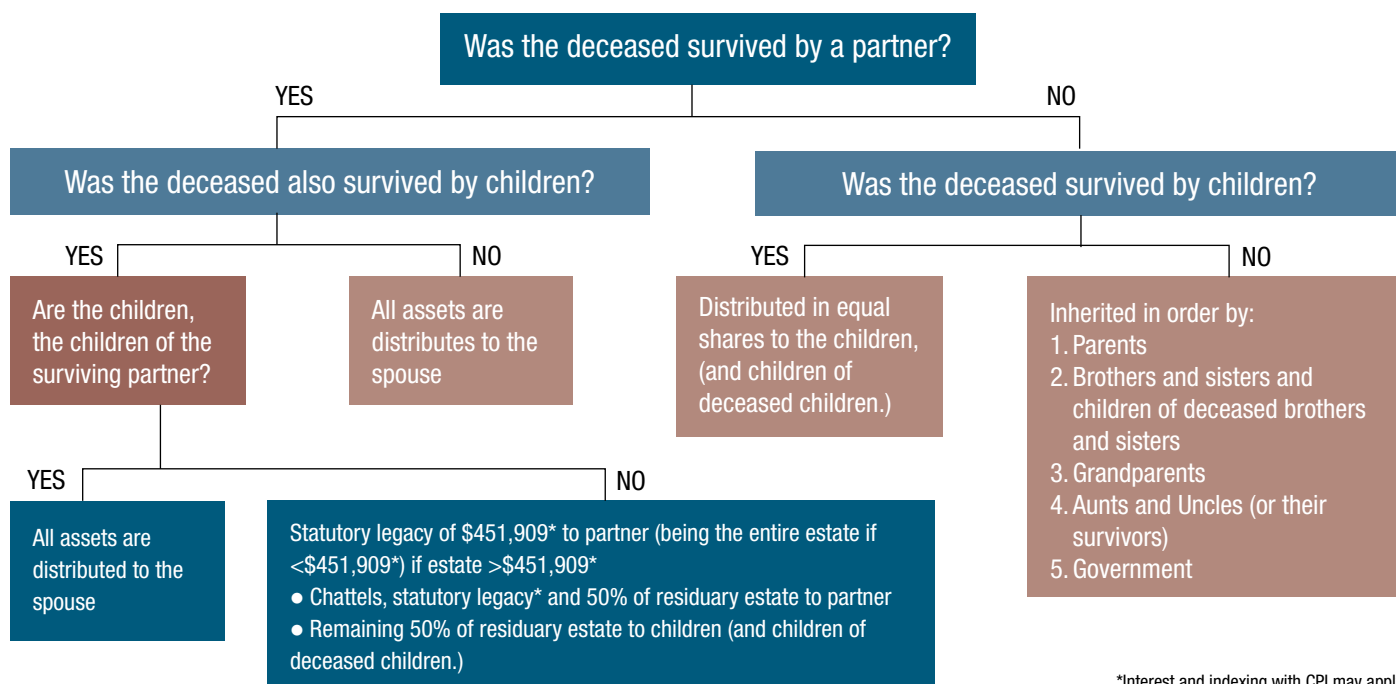
When an individual dies without a Will, the legal term for this is 'intestate'. The laws of each State determine what happens to a person's estate when they die intestate.

The law may or may not reflect your wishes for your estate, particularly where you have a blended family, no family or the law's provisions are inadequate for your beneficiaries. IOOF has a comprehensive easy to read flow chart for each State if you are interested in seeing what would happen in your circumstance to your estate if you died intestate:

<https://www.ioof.com.au/financial-advisers/news-and-insights/adviser-news/articles/dec-2019/intestacy-rules-understanding-variations-across-australia>

For example, if you have no surviving relatives, then the Government will take your estate. Perhaps you would rather see your favourite charity inherit your estate? As long as an individual adheres to the legal requirement to ensure that they have made provisions for the 'proper

INTESTACY IN VICTORIA



*Interest and indexing with CPI may apply

maintenance and support' of a person 'for whom he or she had responsibility to make provision', you have the freedom to make a Will on whatever terms you wish. This means that while you are alive you can write a Will that excludes people from your estate, gives gifts reflective of you wishes and preserves your estate for your children and grandchildren from their partners and any potential family law claims. If you do not make a Will, you have missed the opportunity to exercise your right to decide what happens to your estate when you die.

Even when you have made a Will it is important to ensure it is kept up to date as your life changes. Some life events that should trigger a review of your Will with a Lawyer include starting a business, entering or leaving a relationship, having children or other changes in beneficiaries, and changes in wealth including bankruptcy. It is important to remember that you can only create a Will while you have testamentary capacity.

GUARDIANSHIP

If you have children, you can nominate who you would want to act as your children's legal guardian by including this direction in your Will. If the other natural parent of your child is not fit to act as guardian, then it is imperative that you exercise your right to choose. This can help prevent any family discord or confusion, also in the scenario if both you and the other natural parent were to die.

FUNERAL ARRANGEMENTS

A Will is a good place to outline your funeral wishes, however it is important to detail them in a separate document and speak about it with your loved ones, especially any religious rites or body handling requests you would like to include. If you strongly wish to be cremated, then a direction to do so in your Will is binding on the Executor.

BINDING DEATH BENEFITS & TAX STRATEGY

When you die it is important to have a Will and a Binding Death Benefit Nomination that consider tax implications as part of the estate distribution overall strategy. A Binding Death Benefit Nomination tells your superannuation trustee where to pay any proceeds in the event of your death. If you die without a valid or current nomination, your superannuation company has discretion to decide where to pay the proceeds. They may choose to pay it to your new boyfriend, over your mother who you had nominated, as was the case when REST Super paid Ashley Petrie's superannuation death benefit to Rodney Higgins (<https://www.theage.com.au/national/victoria/magistrate-who-had-relationship-with-young-court-clerk-wins-her-super-benefit-20210616-p581hg.html>).

Where superannuation benefits are paid to non-tax dependants, the beneficiaries will be personally liable for tax. A financial dependant, however, does not pay



tax. Further a testamentary trust structure can be useful for taxation purposes. A testamentary trust is a trust that is established in your Will, only coming into effect upon your death. If established, distributions made to minors within the trust are taxed at adult tax rates, rather than minors. There are numerous other advantages of a testamentary trust from a protection of assets standpoint as well.

ADVANCE CARE/HEALTH DIRECTIVES & ENDURING POWERS OF ATTORNEY

These are legal documents where you can give instructions about your personal, financial and future health care while you are living. An Enduring Power of Attorney can come into effect when certain conditions are met, or immediately upon making. An AHD comes into effect when you lose the capacity to make your own decisions which can occur for a range of different reasons including a brain injury or a disease such as Dementia. By having these documents in place you can ensure that your wishes are known and that you are taken care of the way you want to be if you lose capacity.

KNOWLEDGE

By seeking expert advice and getting your succession documents in place you exercise your right to choose, making a fully informed decision, giving you peace of mind! For specific legal advice in relation to your personal situation, contacting a succession lawyer is advised.

Written by [Brooke Reardon](#)

A peaceful financial life

WHAT THINGS CAN YOU DO TO HELP BRING HARMONY TO YOUR FINANCES?

When living during a pandemic, this idea of a peaceful life, possibly sounds far-fetched to many. Between quarantines, self-isolation, masks, check-ins and hand sanitization; let alone the disruption to family plans, catching up with friends, holidays thrown into disarray, wondering 'to jab or not to jab' and if you can even get to work tomorrow, fear and disharmony seem much more the order of the day. Throw on top of that the impact to our finances, and it is possibly a recipe for overwhelm. Thank goodness this whole eBubble issue is dedicated to 'A Peaceful Life.' So, grab your green tea, kombucha, cuppa or vino, settle in, relax and enjoy.

So, when it comes to money, are you a DIY kind of person, all over it, or keep it in the too-hard basket? Dealing with our finances, managing a budget, and choosing to live within our means, may seem to opposite to seeking harmony, but having a handle on our personal finances, can impact our mental and physical wellbeing. If you are like many and know nothing about financial advice, where to start, what advisers do, or think that professional advice is only for the wealthy, it might be time to think again.

IS ADVICE VALUABLE TO ME?

As a qualified financial adviser, I can tell you this... If I had a dollar for every time I've heard, "I'll see you when I've got some money," I'd have a pretty peaceful financial life myself right now.

So, how do you know if financial advice is for you? IOOF Holdings Ltd recently surveyed nearly 13,000 Australians in conjunction with CoreData and found that the benefits of advice when it comes to managing your finances, transcend age, wealth, and gender. The research revealed key benefits clients experience from receiving professional financial advice. Chiefly, it helps you to identify, prioritise and achieve financial and personal goals:

- 93% believe advice provides clarity around goals and progression towards them
- 91% agreed receiving advice helped them to achieve their financial goals
- 86% agreed advice helped them achieve personal goals
- 82% believe advice helps inspire them to work towards and reach their goals

The True Value of Advice - IOOF

CAN I STILL DIY?

So, what if you are still not ready to take the leap and

see a professional? You might think what you have is not worth their time, that you cannot afford advice or would like to get things a little more ship-shape before fronting up. Where can you start?

Self-education is the key. There are so many resources available that it can be difficult to know where to start. For newbies, the Government provides a great (and free!) resource in the MoneySmart website: [Moneysmart.gov.au](https://moneysmart.gov.au)

It has an easy budget tool and offers basic information for those wanting to know more about superannuation and investments so is a good spot to find free calculators, tips and guidance.

And if you're still curious to learn more about advice, it doesn't hurt to know that many advisers don't charge an upfront fee for an initial consultation to see if they can assist in your particular situation, so it may be worth a visit to see if you find someone you're comfortable with who can still add value to your financial situation.

FINANCIAL AREAS TO CHECK

If you are wondering what area of your financial life need a little more management, here is a few ideas to get you started and see if you are as on top of things as you would like to be.

- Managing Money – covers everything from financial counselling, saving for an emergency, working through a crisis, making ends meet and managing on your income;
- Debt Reduction – taking back control, understanding 'good and bad debt,' knowing when it's worth consolidating debt, paying off credit cards and switching loans;
- Future Planning – starting savings habits, growing your superannuation, starting investment plans, managing insurances and financial planning strategies; and
- Growing Wealth – buying a home, the essentials of investing, choosing investments including shares, managed funds and Exchange Traded Funds.

So, how is it all going for you?

Can you tick the boxes and know your finances are in harmony and providing you peace of mind? Or like many of us, could they do with a little more zen too? A new financial year is always a great time to turn over a new leaf. Just pick one area and start there. See if having a grip on your finances doesn't just add that little sigh of relief to your life.

Written by [Amanda Cassar](#)

What the world needs now is

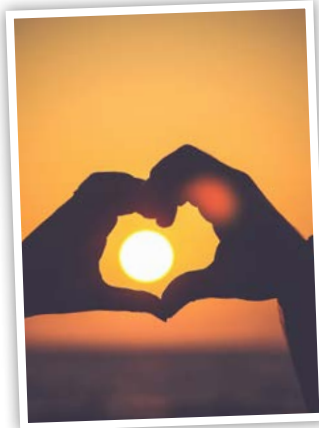
What the world needs now is love sweet...Not just for some but for everyone one. A song written fifty five years ago in 1965 by Burt Bacharach and Hal David at the time the world was diving deeper into conflict and war (Vietnam); is just as relevant today as it was back then.

If we were to look back on today's times some fifty five years from now, what would we say about our modern world of today?

My best guess is historians will conclude. It was time of massive disruption and division on a global scale. Change that effected everyone down to an individual basis. Be it careers, families, health, religion, governments and society.

With all that has been achieved from great leaps in technology and the improvements to people's quality of life, resulting in the majority of the population never feeling more isolated, uncertain and fearful.

John F. Kennedy (USA President) said "The Chinese use two brush strokes to write the word 'crisis.' One brush stroke stands for danger; the other for opportunity. In a crisis, be aware of the danger--but recognize the opportunity."



- Self-interest - division, ignorance leading to increased crime
- Consumerism- waste, wage abuse and pollution.

I'm an advocate for change. Heck I went so far as to uproot and move my financial services and planning business and family from Sydney to Cairns and I couldn't be happier, however change is never easy. Be it that we find change has been forced upon us or we ourselves are the instigators of change. Experience has taught me that the level of growth, success and gratitude we experience is in direct correlation to our level acceptance and empathy regarding the situation. Extending beyond our own situation and to others.

Additionally our resistance to change only elevates the experience of discomfort for ourselves and others, resulting in the process of change taking longer and a lesser/more divided outcome for all.

When I was first trained as a financial planner (last millennia) I was taught 101 sales tactics and it made my skin crawl i.e. find the client's fears and vulnerabilities, dig into these until they bleed and then offer them your solution/a Band-Aid. Shortly after that experience I left that institution and started my own firm. Maybe I'm a soft touch. I definitely prefer to see the good in others and encourage them rather than finding faults and criticizing them.

However today more than ever I believe true success is less about selling more stuff and more about deeper relationships and this is best achieved through acceptance, empathy and non-judgmental encouragement.

Being a financial planner and helping clients live more authentically and with greater confidence is an honour and a privilege. It is at all times both a challenge and at the same time deeply rewarding. Especially when witnessing the profound impact as a change for good in our clients lives. For anyone considering financial planning as a career, or in fact anyone who is seeking to help and improve the lives of others, start with empathy, loose the ego and trust that love sweet love is not for some but everyone.

Written by [Peter Horsfield](#)

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE OPPORTUNITIES IN THE CRISIS WE FACE TODAY?

- Changing working environments- improved work life balance
- Online services and stores- improved time and efficiencies
- Social sharing services- lower cost, convenience, greater choices
- Social activism- improved environment and accountability.

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE RISKS IN THE CRISIS WE FACE TODAY?

- Redundant industries and careers- loss of peoples livelihoods
- Increased isolation- mental, emotional and physical health

VIRTUAL APPRAISAL

Covid restrictions seem to have complicated our lives across Australia. If you are thinking of selling here's something to make life easier.

WHAT IS A VIRTUAL APPRAISAL?

Simply where a Qualified Real Estate Agent assists in giving you a likely value estimate without physically being present in the property.

WHY DO I NEED A VIRTUAL APPRAISAL?

You don't have to, an in-person Appraisal is usually still available to you, should you wish! Call your agent, to do so now.

However, a Virtual Appraisal is convenient for a number of reasons.

- Given Covid 19 restrictions, the Virtual Appraisal assists in the Social Distancing required and is very much a hands-off approach. It is particularly useful if you or a family member is concerned about any health issues
- If you are not in a hurry and want a more accurate idea than an Online Automated Valuation, the Virtual Appraisal is ideal
- If you are in a hurry, want an idea of value, and get started in Marketing, all this can be achieved virtually and contactless, very quickly and conveniently
- You have close friends, family, or elderly relatives concerned about their health, who own a property and need your support or they do not possess the technology needed to make this happen
- You live in the country, a remote or rural area where there's often a lack of reliable real estate services.

HOW DOES A VIRTUAL APPRAISAL WORK?

There are a number of options available to you. It is similar to calling family or friends on a video call.

- Dial-in – chat with our experienced sales team to understand the latest performance in the market with comparable sales to get an indicative estimate on your property.
- Choose a Walk-through using your smartphone with either Messenger, FaceTime, Zoom, Skype, or WhatsApp. This is done in real-time with a member of our team using your smartphone.
- Social Media – use technologies such as Facebook and



Instagram live, to walk-through in real-time with a member of our team

WHAT DO I USE, TO DO A VIRTUAL APPRAISAL?

As this is internet-based, you'll need good Wi-Fi, the NBN, or an Internet connection with a compatible device.

This could be a Smartphone, Mobile Phone with Working Camera, Tablet, iPad, Laptop, or another device that you can comfortably use to walk around the property with.

Then it's a matter of choosing your Preferred Application from those listed above and informing us when you are ready. Ensure a working copy of the Application is loaded on your device. They are free to download from the App Store or Google Play Store.

If you have not used any of these Apps previously, please test it with friends or someone who can assist you to set it up comfortably to ensure it works correctly for you.



WHAT DO YOU NEED FROM ME, TO DO A VIRTUAL APPRAISAL OR EVEN A FACE-TO-FACE APPRAISAL?

- Write down ALL of your questions, whether on a writing pad or electronic device, but not the one you will use to show us around
See also Our Questions & Answers Page
- Locate your house or land, building or site plans as appropriate, SA Water & Council Rates Notices, and anything else you deem important
- Note down the improvements, additions, repairs & maintenance items that you have done over time
- Specify anything unique or particular about your place
- List the local amenities, features, and benefits of living in your area, bus stops, parks, schools, shopping, and so on
- Advise us of anything else we need to know: Is this for a relative or friend? A deceased estate? A divorce or separation? Are you in a hurry, Just getting an update for renewing insurance, or just curious? It does not matter which it is, we'll simply tailor our proposal to suit you and your circumstance. We treat everyone the same, ie respectfully, professionally and courteously, not just the 'same', same

HOW DO WE DO, THE VIRTUAL APPRAISAL?

1. Book a Virtual Appraisal with your agent just the same as you would book a face-to-face meeting, completing the Form on their website, Send an Email, Call them or Click their Messenger Button.
2. They should send you a confirmation with a Before Appraisal email after speaking with you. This should have a link to another comprehensive page of information for your benefit
3. They will contact you, on your preferred Application, at the agreed Time & Date
4. A preliminary discussion will follow so they

understand fully what it is that you are looking to achieve from the Virtual Appraisal. You want to know that they 'Get it'

5. You will give them a Grand Tour of your own property, investment, or family's property that needs your help
6. They should take comprehensive notes as you go around and point out to the various features and benefits the property has & they should ask questions along the way to make sure they do not miss anything
7. They ought to have an open and frank conversation where they ask further questions and you can question them to ensure all your queries and concerns that you wrote down are answered in full
8. They must thoroughly discuss the other things you wrote down in the above list
9. If you like, they'll offer advice to assist you in preparing to sell if that is what you wish to do. This may include decluttering, updating, or painting the property and have trusted service people to assist
10. They will also discuss a price guide comparison to relevant recent sales in the area and give you a full update on the current state of the Real Estate Market
11. Marketing will be discussed in detail as this is the Secret Sauce to get your property sold for top dollar.

IF WE STILL WANT TO MEET FACE-TO-FACE, IS THAT POSSIBLE?

Of course. Contact your agent.

IF WE LIKE EVERYTHING DISCUSSED & FEEL CONFIDENT TO SELL, WHAT NEXT?

If you are happy with everything and wish to proceed to a Sale then they will send an Electronic Agreement containing the details discussed via Email.

They can provide one-on-one coaching via video or phone to ensure you fully understand the paperwork and E-signing of documents.

If you prefer these can be sent via Courier, Post, or we can Hand-deliver them to you.

WHAT IF I LIVE IN THE COUNTRY OR A REMOTE RURAL AREA?

Easy! As long as you have Internet access, this can also be done. So, if you are considering a move when our world is disrupted, here is another way to keep it simple and give you some peace along the way.

Written by [Eriks Draiska](#)

How to save energy at home – Part 3

In June issue, we discussed how to save energy in the laundry, dishwashing machine and in the cooking appliances and in this issue we will discuss how to save energy in the lights, water heating and pools & spas.

LIGHTS

- Replace all old inefficient lights such as incandescent, halogen and fluorescent lights with high efficiency LED type.
- Switch off the lights in the unoccupied rooms.
- Use solar lights for the fencing and path lights.
- Use motion sensors for the external outdoor lights, garage lights and shed lights to avoid forgetting them on all the time.
- Use sensors or timers for security lighting to make sure they only come on at night time, or when they are needed.

WATER HEATING

- Reduce the length of showers and balance the water by reducing the hot water instead of increasing the cold water.
- Use efficient shower heads.
- Make sure the hot water temperature setpoint in the

water heater is set at 60°C and not more.

- Check the hot water pipes insulation and make sure it covers all external pipes and in good conditions.
- Consider installing solar hot water system to utilize the sun heat and reduce your energy consumption.

POOL & SPA

- Reduce the pool pump running time. Read the manufacturer's instructions or consult a pools specialist to advise the number of hours your pump should run.
- Use a timer to control the pool pump running time.
- Reduce the pool pump energy consumption by running it at the lowest recommended speed that still maintains correct pool hygiene.
- Regularly clean your skimmer basket, pool pump basket and pool filter and keep your intake grates clear of debris.
- Check your energy bill to see if you're on a time-of-use energy tariff. If you are, set your pool pump to run during Off-Peak or shoulder times (usually night time), and not during Peak times during the day (unless you have a solar PV system).

Written by [Ahmad Fraji](#)





I want to talk to a human!

If you ever talk to a tech investor, you'll probably hear words like "unicorns", "J Curve" and "Scale". These terms all come from the concept of putting money behind a company so it can grow to a ridiculous size and the investors can make buckets of money. And one way to do this is to commoditise as much of the business as possible so the business can "hit scale", i.e. service as many people as possible with as little cost (effort) as possible. And there's no easier way to do that than using technology to automate tasks (if not whole jobs).

So, you may have noticed, it's getting rarer and rarer to be able to interact with a human, especially one located onshore. That is because the masters of scale will use technology whenever possible to service you, and when not possible, the next option is to use a cheap human resource offshore. Onshore humans are considered to be expensive, but that is a false economy (I'll get to that later).

IT'S ONLY CHEAPER IF IT WORKS

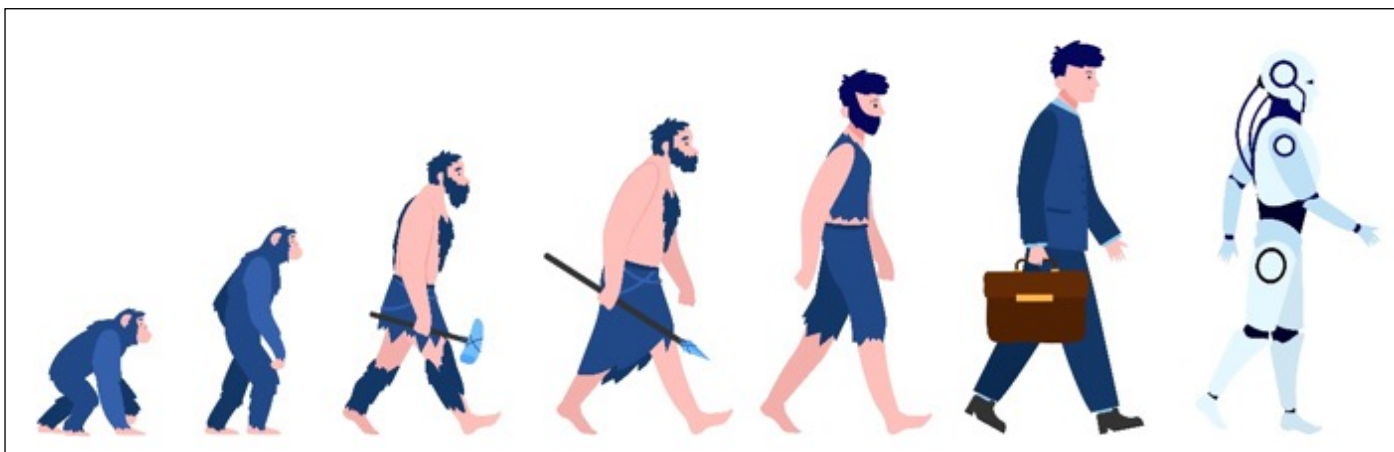
The benefit of all this automation to us consumers, (or so they say), is lower prices. The problem is the solutions

don't always correctly address the problems at hand. Often, the computer (which will interact with you via a software system, chat bot, or an interactive voice response system doesn't always understand the nuances of what you want, or very often, even comprehend the problem being solved. That is because to solve a problem in a commoditised way, it needs to be systematised (I.e., been previously seen and addressed, usually by a human, with a system, which is then captured in software; this is known as "automation").

So, if your problem doesn't neatly fit into the problem set that the system was designed to tackle, then you have a challenge to deal with. And often, things are set up in such a way that it's extremely difficult to get out of the system so that a human can help you.

BUT WON'T AI FIX IT?

Now, you may have heard about how Artificial Intelligence ("AI"), specifically Machine Learning ("ML"), is going to be able to identify the problems that the humans haven't previously. ML is great for finding patterns in data, whether



they be what we're specifically looking for, or exceptions.

The problem is there's no emotion in raw data. And Yes, AI has an area focused on "sentiment analysis", but that is heavily reliant on the quality of the data and often misses things like cultural context and sarcasm. So, algorithms and large data sets (a.k.a. Big Data) won't always get us the solution to our individual challenge; the commoditised version of this is known as "mass personalisation" (sounds like a contradiction to me).

HOW A HUMAN HELPED ME

So, let me tell you about an experience I had the other day - I had an issue with my internet connection, so I thought about whether or not I wanted to lose hours of my life and make a support call. After considering all my options I concluded I had no other choice. Given the size of my ISP, I assumed I would have to go through a myriad of choices on the interactive voice response system, before being put on hold for an hour and hopefully finally get to talk to a human.

So, I dialed the number and switched on the kettle thinking I had plenty of time to kill before I had to engage with someone. Low and behold, my call was picked up by a human in less than a minute. What was even better was that human, Marco, solved my relatively complex problem in less than a handful of minutes and not only that, rewarded my long tenure as a customer by sending me out a brand-new modem that supports dual-band wifi, at no extra charge! So now I'm enjoying double speed wifi and a working system because a human made an intuitive call and decided to reward a long-standing customer. The result is I am now feeling particularly happy with TPG, who up until that point I had assumed would treat me like a number. Thank you to Marco at TPG.

DO IT RIGHT THE FIRST TIME

So, using machines and lower-cost humans (who often work from a series of scripts) may create savings at certain times, but often they cause the exact opposite outcome. There is definitely a time and a place for it, but humans are also needed in servicing humans too. There's no substitute for a knowledgeable, experienced human,



who speaks the same language as you, (and as well as you do, ideally). Or put more simply, if something is done right the first time, it ends up being much cheaper than being corrected multiple times; and I don't just mean in terms of direct costs.

Think about the costs associated with lateness, re-work and most importantly, brand costs.

Ultimately, even if machines can behave like humans, I don't want to be tricked into thinking I'm dealing with a human when I'm not, and nor do I want to create a "connection" with a machine. It's important that only the commoditisable is automated, while the value-add is also catered for (by humans). To me, there's plenty of jobs in the future job market for humans because, at crucial times, I Want To Talk to a Human!

Note: no machines were destroyed in the making of this article.

Written by [Kareem Tawansi](#)

BUILDING SPACE FOR HARMONY IN YOUR LIFE

How scheduling limited, relaxed physical activity can help you live a balanced life

Even when life is going well, there are so many challenges and the grind of daily life, complete with cycling between tasks rapidly or multi-tasking constantly, can leave us feeling scattered and on edge. Although there may be no escaping some of the pressures and craziness of modern life (for all of its faults, the internet really is a great tool) we can still find ways to achieve a peaceful life with balance and harmony.

How one can achieve balance and harmony is a question many have tried to answer. Websites, television programs, podcasts, and entire bookstore shelves are filled with opinions, recommendations, and guides about how you can achieve enlightenment and happiness.

By all means, you should explore these offerings and see what might appeal to you! In the meantime, I'd love to suggest a small step you can take in your daily

life that can bring peace and harmony into your life at a low cost in terms of time and effort: incorporating 10+ minutes of physical activity into your day. Even a small amount of physical activity can work wonders for your mental, physical, and emotional wellbeing. Throughout the rest of this piece, you'll find descriptions of how building a physical activity routine can help you and recommendations for how to make your routine successful.

PLAN IT OUT

For many of us, our days are packed with activities – work, school, making meals, family time, seeing friends – from when we wake up until we are finally able to go to bed. One benefit of a daily physical activity routine is that it can be a break from your non-stop responsibilities and engagements. Taking even a small amount of time for some form of physical activity can be an opportunity to calm down, focus on yourself, and let go of all of the active worry or stress you might be feeling.

In order for this to be successful, however, you need to set aside time for your activity. How you do this will depend on what motivates you – for some people, pre-scheduling





the time does the trick, while for others, having an accountability partner and letting them know one's activity plan helps keep them going. Find what works for you so your activity doesn't get put off in favor of more "pressing" items. Your regular responsibilities aren't going anywhere, so find that time for your activity!

START SLOW

It's ok to dream of running a marathon or being able to do a handstand, but unless you're an experienced long distance runner or the most experienced of Yoga with Adriene students, you should set small, attainable goals for yourself. Rather than pushing yourself too hard too fast, start off with the simple goal of just doing the activity, whether it's getting on the yoga mat or getting outside for your stroll. If you start with running for 15 minutes, you'll be able to gauge how challenging it is for you and figure out how to build from there, if you want to go beyond that at all! Rome wasn't built in a day!

DON'T TRY TO 'MAKE IT PRODUCTIVE'

Other areas of our lives, primarily work, have built the expectation that everything we do needs to be tracked, measured, and then analyzed to understand whether we're meeting some unspecified level of productivity. Try to resist this urge and let yourself enjoy your activity without expectations, pressures, or dreams of something greater.

Physical activity, at its most basic, is rewarding on its own; it doesn't need to build to something greater, it doesn't need to impart life lessons, and it doesn't need to make you sharper or more capable in some other area of your life. Weighing your activity time down with expectations or needing to measure its "success" can crush your enjoyment of the activity and blind you to the benefits to be gained during the time you're active.

SWITCH IT UP!

Don't trap yourself into a single physical activity. Maybe you start off running but quickly find that you hate running and it's agonizing to lace up your shoes and get out the door each day. If that's how you feel, stop running and try a different activity! You might decide that you love swimming or rock climbing. You don't owe anyone anything when it comes to what activity you choose to do and no one is judging you if you decide not to stick with something; all that you should be thinking about is what you enjoy most or are most curious about.

If you have multiple activities that you enjoy, plan to rotate between them to keep yourself engaged. Remember, you aren't necessarily looking to build expertise or experience in a particular activity; rather, you're looking to get active and build time into your life that isn't dominated by your regular responsibilities and commitments.

ABOVE ALL, STAY POSITIVE

Remember: we're generally our own worst critics. Our inner critics usually don't take a nuanced approach to judging progress or outcomes. When doing anything for yourself, it's important to stay positive and ignore that inner critic. Efforts to improve your life aren't zero sum and there is no such thing as "failure" here - you get as far as you get and you can always try to improve from there.

No amount of critiquing or second guessing is going to make your past progress any different. Indeed, critiquing oneself will probably just discourage you from taking action in the future. So, as a more productive strategy, go easy on yourself, stay positive, and celebrate your successes no matter what form it comes in.

Written by [Taly Matiteyahu](#)

Bringing harmony to your life and why it is important



“One must marry one’s feelings to one’s beliefs and ideas. That is probably the only way to achieve a measure of harmony in one’s life.” A quote written by one of my favourite authors - Napoleon Hill - who is best known for “Think and Grow Rich.” In this book, he talks about the power of thought and how your mindset can impact your life.

Our lives are not just busy, they are stressful, and now, more than ever, we are being pulled in so many different directions which creates internal conflict when we cannot find balance and harmony in our lives.

I have spoken about how to be more mindful and tuning into your body but below are the four things that I apply to my own life, outside of the above, when trying to find that balance.

SHOW GRATITUDE

Gratitude is central to my life and I don’t just reflect on things I’m grateful for, I make sure I show gratitude to the people in my life, those who are there for me, who make the time for me and who give without expecting anything in return. Showing people that you care and being grateful provides a perspective on your life and makes you appreciate what you have instead of what you don’t have.

BE PRESENT

We are so disconnected from each other, particularly after the effects and distance that Covid created over the past 18 months. We need human interaction and connection to feel a sense of community and belonging. In every interaction, be in the moment and be present with your audience. The person who is on the other side of your

interaction will feel as though they are genuinely being listened to and you will feel more connected to this person and others in your life.

ALWAYS BE LEARNING

Being curious and sharing knowledge is a way to always feel like you are progressing but also a way to help others in your life. Unlearn what you think you know by keeping your mind open, reading more and gaining insight from other people around different topics. Learning something new is such a rewarding process and is lifelong.

LIVE WITH PASSION

What are we doing here if we are not living our life with passion and purpose? I love what I do and I approach my work, family and my interactions with enthusiasm and joy. The best way to find out what your purpose is, is to think about a time in a role where you were working on a project, in a team or what kind of day you were having where you truly felt joy in what you were doing.

What was it about those people, that day or the impact you were having? The simple answer here is to simply do more of what makes you feel a sense of purpose and follow that path.

There are so many things you can do to bring harmony and peace into your life and simply slowing down, and taking that time out for yourself to discover it, will have positive impacts on not just your life, but your work and the relationships around you. Find out what and who matters most to you and make those areas your priority.

Written by [Tanya Abbey](#)

Embracing simplicity in beauty

Simplify your life by simplifying your beauty routine

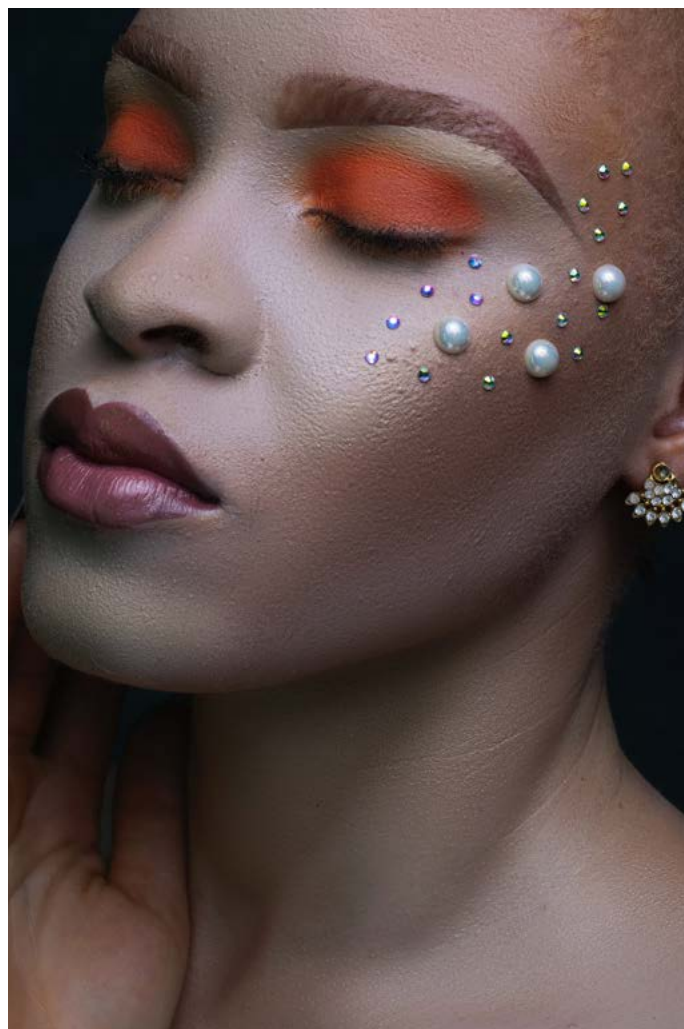
Beauty has become really really complicated. Women spend almost \$4000 a year on beauty products. And back in 2015, the average number of beauty products a woman owned was 40. We can only speculate that with launches of products like the Face Gym Electrical Muscle Stimulation Mask and the myriad of beauty rollers now available, the number of beauty products we own and use has only gone up over the past few years. Put this in context of over 30,000 new products launching a year and it's no wonder we have a hard time keeping up. On top of that, we are inundated with upwards of 5000 ads per day (and that number keeps growing!) and the average person is spending 2 hours and 24 minutes on social media every day. That's a lot of multi-tasking going on!

But back to beauty. The beauty market has become incredibly fragmented as beauty brands capitalize on our desire to be "Instagram ready" with different products and benefits for every part of your body, from eyes to feet to lips and even for your vulva. In haircare, the market has become insanely segmented. Consumers need to choose between many benefits: hydration, shine, color-safe, volume, repair, dandruff, etc. not to mention by hair type: curly, blonde, long, oily, etc. Kerastase sells 16 hair care ranges, which is enough to make me scratch my head!

Most beauty products have also segmented the market by men's products vs. women's products. Take Clinique for example -- their classic Dramatically Different Moisturizer is marketed towards women and yet they have Clinique for Men Moisturizing Lotion, which are essentially the same product formulations. We've been trained to think of men's and women's products as needing to be different. So, our bathrooms require twice the products to meet the needs of me and my husband.

Any way we look at it, this "proliferation of choice" approach is a strategy that serves the brands and beauty corporations by allowing them to capture more shelf space and "dominate" their categories, but it's not at all consumer friendly. After all, who wants to trade off shine for curl-definition? Or hydration for color-safe products? Or volume for healthy hair? We should be able to have it all -- and without confusion. I've often found myself standing for several minutes in front of a skincare or haircare shelf just trying to figure out how to process it all, which leaves me feeling like I am the issue because I have a hard time making a decision. The reality is, the seven companies that own almost 200 of the world's biggest brands are not incentivized to make things simple.

The good news is that there are now beauty brands starting to embrace simplicity as a benefit -- not just from



the perspective of simple formulations that work really well (and not overcomplicating it), but also simplicity in labeling, naming, packaging and the overall experience. You can take a step towards decluttering your life by starting with your beauty routine and eliminating anything extra that doesn't serve you -- and embracing uncomplicated brands that do more. Many indie brands launching now are seeing simplicity as a point of difference -- and that's good news for consumers. And by the way, simplicity is frequently tied to sustainability which is another benefit.

HERE ARE A FEW EXAMPLES

Romer Skincare has one simple regimen consisting of 3 products -- a cleanser, moisturizer and treatment product that work for just about everyone. Plus, Romer Skincare is gender neutral, meaning that both my teenage son and daughter can use their products (one less decision I need to make).



MASAMI Mekabu infused haircare solves the #1 hair issue -- hydration -- but is also color-safe, curl-defining, adds shine and works for virtually every hair type -- all without toxic ingredients. So no need to choose between shine, hydration or color treated formulas any longer. And no need to choose between a “clean formula” vs. a salon quality formula.

Impact Naturals has demystified CBD and wellness by creating supplements that are benefit oriented. So you can get sleep when you want it. And recharge when that's what you need. You don't need to be a scientist to understand these products, just that they will solve a problem. They even offer subscriptions so you don't have to think about needing to reorder, another way brands are simplifying the purchase process for consumers.

Vintner's Daughter launched in 2019 with a single product, their Active Treatment Essence -- a plant based face oil that effectively addresses a broad range of skin concerns. Their

product has garnered a cult following -- without the need for different variants for different skin types.

Bite Toothpaste Bits make your daily routine easier and more sustainable with toothpaste and mouthwash that's plastic-free, cruelty-free and made with clean ingredients. Packing for trips just got easier (you can just bring the amount of bites you need).

The reality is, if you can find a beauty product that works (ideally one with clean ingredients), chances are you don't need 12 other products to add to it. You can start to pare back your beauty routine, which saves you time, space and money. In addition to having a decluttered bathroom, you will also be embracing a more sustainable lifestyle by using the products you need, nothing more. We all could use the opportunity to simplify our lives wherever we can, so your beauty routine is a great place to start.

Written by Lynn Power

SLIVERS OF PEACE IN A HECTIC DAY



Living in this modern world, we're often running around at a rapid pace, and barely have time to breathe, let alone relax and enjoy a moment of peace. How often have you felt light-headed at the pace of our lives? How does this make you feel? Do you wonder if you'll ever find any slivers of peace in your hectic day?

MODERN LIFE

We're constantly bombarded with messages of relaxed looking people in advertising campaigns, and being told why we should get on board with the latest and greatest wellbeing product. We then run around frantically wondering how we're meant to find time to do everything, and still have time to sit and relax with that amazing cup of tea we saw advertised. Then, when we do get time to try it, we end up disappointed because it didn't leave us feeling or looking like the person in the ad. Why is this, and what can we do about it? Even though it seems far-fetched at times, there are things we can do to bring peace to our lives and hectic days, without adding yet another requirement to our day.

THE PHYSIOLOGICAL EFFECTS OF MODERN LIFE

In order to understand some of the things we can do to help bring peace back to our modern lives, it can be

beneficial to understand a little about what is going on at a physiological level. When we are rushing around, our body activates what is commonly known as the "fight or flight mechanism". This results in rushes of adrenalin to the body, which used to help us run away from those sabre-tooth tigers. Unfortunately for us, we're not usually running away from a sabre-tooth tiger, but more likely from a marauding pack of work colleagues or a never ending email inbox. This leads to consistent levels of stress that increase the cortisol in our blood stream. These elevated cortisol levels when they are consistently high for long periods of time, can take significant amount of time to reduce. Often as soon as they start to drop, we are then hit with something else that causes them to fly through the roof again.

This heightened state of stress, and constant level of alarm within our body can lead to issues with our breathing and digestion if we don't deal with it. When we're not breathing properly, our brain function often suffers. When we are consistently stressed, our body diverts blood flow to the muscles to help us run away from that tiger, as opposed to properly digesting our food. Our gut health and nutrition can also have a huge impact on our brain function, and hence our emotions and feelings (Osadchiy, V., C.R. Martin, and E.A. Mayer, The Gut-Brain Axis and the Microbiome: Mechanisms and Clinical Implications. Clinical Gastroenterology and Hepatology, 2019. 17(2): p.

322-332.). However, if we are proactive, we can start to reverse these effects of stress and modern life, and bring more peace.

MODERN OPTIONS TO BRING PEACE AND HARMONY

So many techniques and tools tell us that they will help bring peace and harmony to our lives, but what really works. It can be hard to tell sometimes, so here are a few things that really cut through, and get results.

- Breathing. Even taking a few big deep breaths can have huge effects on the body, many of which have been scientifically proven. (<https://www.npr.org/2010/12/06/131734718/just-breathe-body-has-a-built-in-stress-reliever>). Breathing impacts the Vagus nerve, which tones down the stress response. There is a reason that the yogic practice of pranayama is so effective. Even many modern psychologists will encourage you to stop and take a few deep breaths when you feel a panic attack or similar stress response coming on. If you'd like to learn a few techniques to help with breathing, many yoga teachers would be happy to help.
- Take a few moments out and look at our diet, and consider whether you may need a probiotic. As I've indicated above, stress can have a huge impact on our digestion and our gut health, but lesser known is the fact that gut health also plays a role with the mind, and our stress levels. Supplements such as probiotics can be beneficial and can help with our microbiome, which can also positively impact our mental health and potentially help lower our stress levels. This doesn't need to be time consuming, as there are many options out there which can be popped into a water bottle so you can drink it in the car on the way to work.
- Secondary to that above, drink plenty of water. Water can help detoxify the body, and can help us feel better. (<https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/how-to-detox-your-body#3.-Drink-More-Water>)
- Consider your expectations. Have you ever been disappointed when something didn't live up to your expectations? I went to an event a few weeks ago, and thought it was going to be a whole range of things. When I turned up, it was the exact opposite, and as the night wore on, I felt myself getting increasingly anxious and stressed. When I looked back, I realised this was because I had expected certain things, and the event turned out to be nothing like that. There was nothing wrong with the event as such and it was actually quite a good night. When I looked back, and looked at things in a different light, it could have been considered quite a good event, and quite enjoyable, but I spent half the night stressed off my head, thinking I'd wasted my time. Take a few moments to reflect on whether this may help with your stress levels. This tip on expectations can also help build more harmony at home and with your partner (listen to this podcast from Jay Shetty if this intrigues you: <https://podcasts.apple.com/au/podcast/on-purpose-with-jay-shetty/id1450994021?i=1000526818544>).
- Take a few moments to meditate. Meditation is fantastic for reducing stress levels (<https://www.mayoclinic.org/tests-procedures/meditation/in-depth/meditation/art-20045858>). It doesn't have to be time consuming, and doesn't have to rely heavily on apps or devices. I used to be highly dependent on various apps, and used to think I could only meditate properly with an app and with my headphones in. However, when I actually started to look at this in more detail, and looked at various other techniques, I realised that there were techniques which didn't require the use of an app or other device. This was a huge advance for me, and has meant I'm able to take a few moments of meditation whenever I feel a little stressed and overwhelmed. Obviously, spending 15-20 minutes in meditation is going to provide great results, but even a few moments can be beneficial, and better than nothing.
- Move your body. Getting out and moving your body, even if that is a few minutes walk, will help reduce stress. As our heart rate rises, we generally breathe better, to try and bring more oxygen into our body, and this is beneficial for stress levels. Yoga and running can both be great, but whatever you choose, try and choose something that works for you. Also bear in mind that some high intensity exercise forms can be counter productive and actually place more stress on the body.
- Get enough sleep. Sleep helps our mind to rejuvenate. Even getting a few extra minutes of sleep every day can help. I know when I get to bed before 10:45, I tend to sleep a whole lot better, even if I'm up early the following day. If you're feeling chronically stressed and tired, perhaps try going to bed a little earlier and see if that helps.

Many of these options can be slotted into our modern life, and even implementing one or two of these can have significant effects on our health and wellbeing. As I've mentioned expectations above, also don't let expectations of any of these techniques overwhelm you and create more stress.

There are many people out there who can help you with techniques and options tailored to your life. Many wellbeing professionals would be happy to help with this, so if you're feeling a bit unsure where to start, consult your favourite wellbeing professional, and design a toolkit specifically designed for you, to help you find slivers of peace in your busy, modern life.

Written by Sarah Dower



Tips for your next business event

Hosting events are great ways to build awareness of your brand. It is a chance to reach out to the target audience and bring them all into a single space, creating a conversation around your company and boosting visibility.

They are also a lot of fun.

However, it's easy to get caught up in the excitement of organising and miss pivotal PR and marketing opportunities.

Here are some things you don't want to miss, before and after your event.

3 TIPS BEFORE THE EVENT

1. IDENTIFY YOUR GOALS

Before you do anything, it is essential to identify the key goals of a brand event. Are you trying to boost visibility of your business? Improve credibility?

Increase sales of a new product? The event should then be tailored to this.

For example, if I am launching an event with the aim of boosting visibility, my main focus would be the press - to hopefully get some external media coverage, thereby reaching a larger audience.

This does not just mean making sure they are on my invite list. Instead, it means tailoring the event to what they are looking for. This might include direct access on the day to brand spokespeople, business cards on hand, photo opportunities that they can use online, and brand freebies for them to try and review.

2. BRANDED HASHTAG

A great way to get some traction on your event is creating a branded hashtag, which is specific to the theme of your launch.

Before deciding on a branded hashtag, you should try to make sure it is three things: short, clear, and memorable. If possible try and use one that has not yet been used on that social media platform, as this



will also allow you to measure the event's traction online.

3. PARTNER WITH ANOTHER BRAND

If you are a relatively unknown company and have a limited budget, consider partnering with a larger, more well-known brand. Of course you don't want to be overshadowed, but sometimes simply being associated with another brand will get invitees through the door - especially if it's early days. It builds trust and credibility. Plus, a larger budget can give you more opportunity to create a memorable, unique event.

3 TIPS AFTER THE EVENT

1. FOLLOW UP WITH AND THANK THE JOURNALISTS

Too many brands make the mistake of thinking that just because the event is over, the job is done.

This is a big oversight.

You should be sending out an email the following day thanking those that attended, including the press.

And in my opinion (if you have capacity) you should be creating tailored messages for each journalist.

This means greeting them by name, perhaps making reference to a conversation you had, and including images they feature in from the event.

Show authenticity and genuine appreciation for the fact that they took the time out of their day to attend your event. Build a real relationship.

2. HAVE STOCK AVAILABLE

Hopefully, your event will be a roaring success - and so you need to make sure there is plenty of product stocked! This means following the event too, and not just during.

Do stock calculations prior, and you put the necessary requests in with your manufacturer months beforehand. Make sure to also prepare for any potential manufacturing issues that could delay the products' arrival.

3. LASTING GIFTS

Ideally, attendees should leave with a branded gift that is not short-lived, but lasts long beyond the event to help keep you front-of-mind.

For corporate events, this could be branded battery packs or USB sticks. For lifestyle events, gifts could include branded keychains or small toiletry bags. Each of these are not necessarily unique ideas, but they are items your attendees could find valuable in their day-to-day lives, making them more likely to keep it long-term.

Of course, in saying all of this, we are living in a very unpredictable climate with COVID-19. One week you might be able to have a 100-person event, but the next week be in lockdown. Whatever you plan for the event, whether large or intimate, it is essential that you implement all the necessary safety procedures as outlined by your state government.

Written by [Sophie Richardson](#)

Ingredient Feature

Finger limes – Australia's own rainforest pearls



The Australian Finger Lime (*Citrus australasica*), also known as 'Rainforest Pearls' or 'Citrus Caviar' originate from the lush rainforests of Australia's east coast. These gorgeous fruits have been a traditional bush food for many thousands of years for our Indigenous people who use finger limes for food as well as for medicine.

The fruit is extremely nutritious being high in Potassium and Folate as well as antioxidant rich, containing the vitamins A and E, plus more than three times the amount of vitamin C than you would find in a mandarin.

Due to its high vitamin A, C and E content, Australian Finger Limes can be consumed to bolster the body's natural immunity and ward off infections.

Vitamin C is important to prevent iron and scurvy (vitamin C deficiency), swollen and bleeding gums, and alongside the other antioxidants, supports collagen production, fights free radicals and hence wards off the ravaging effects of ageing. This Potassium rich fruit may help to lower high blood pressure by relaxing the blood vessels within the body, and the fruit is even reputed to contain antiseptic properties also.

With gorgeous names such as Pink Ice, Chartreuse and Red Champagne, there are six different species of Finger Limes that vary in size, shape, colour and taste depending

on which tree they have originated from. However, the outside appearance of a Rainforest Pearl belies its bejewelled interior – it isn't exactly aesthetically pleasing to the eye with narrow, drooping, dark brownish purple or green skin that gives no hint to its' spectacular flesh within – but when you cut open a ripe Australian Finger Lime in half and gently squeeze it, the fruit will reveal gorgeous, glossy vibrant pink/red or yellow/green 'glass-like' beads that look very similar to fish roe (hence the name citrus caviar).

These tiny balls of flesh are bursting with a sour citrusy tang that add flavour, colour and texture to our modern Australian cuisine. They are however quite small and don't produce a huge amount of pearls, so are often used as a stunning garnish to a gourmet dish. In saying this, Finger Limes are very versatile and can be utilised in jams, preserves, cocktails, marinades and cordials. Rainforest Pearls can also be made into delicious dressings that pair perfectly with seafood.

This dish is inspired by Jules Mckie's recipe for Thai fish cakes but I'm adding an Australian twist with a delicious dipping sauce utilising our native fruit and using omega 3 rich Salmon in place of white fish.

Written by [Natasha Zervaas N.P](#)

Thai Fish Cakes with a Finger Lime Dipping Sauce

Time: 20 minute prep, plus 15 minutes cooking time, servings: 4

Ingredients

500 grams of Australian free range Salmon, coarsely chopped
½ a cup of fresh Coriander leaves finely chopped
60 grams of green Beans, finely chopped
Juice and zest of 1 Lime
1 tbsp of Fish sauce
1 tbsp of gluten free Tamari sauce
1 tsp of Sea salt
1 Egg, lightly beaten
3 Spring onions, trimmed and finely chopped
1/3 cup of Coconut oil for frying

FINGER LIME DIPPING SAUCE

1 cup of plain unsweetened Coconut yoghurt
1 red chilli, deseeded and finely chopped
Juice and zest of 1 Lime
1 tbsp of Honey
1 tbs of fresh Coriander leaves
¼ tsp of Sea salt
Juice and pulp of 1 Australian Finger Lime

Method

1. Place the Salmon in the bowl of a food processor and process until smooth.
2. Add the Coriander, Lime juice and zest, Egg, Fish and Tamari sauces, and process until combined.

3. Transfer the Salmon mixture to a large bowl. Add the Sea salt, Spring onions and Beans and stir until well combined.
4. Place a large frying pan over medium heat and melt the Coconut oil. Divide the mixture up into eight equal portions and shape into patties.
5. Fry the patties in two batches (four patties at a time so you don't overcrowd the pan), fry for 4 minutes on each side or until lightly golden and cooked through. Transfer to a paper towel lined plate and repeat with the remaining patties.

FINGER LIME DIPPING SAUCE

1. Place all the ingredients into a medium sized bowl and mix well.
2. Cover and place in the fridge until ready to serve.
3. Serve the Thai Fish Cakes with a green salad, the Finger Lime dipping sauce and extra Lime wedges.

TIP

Make the Finger Lime dipping sauce a couple of days ahead of time and store in the refrigerator to let the flavours infuse.

Written by [Natasha Zervaas N.P.](#)

Images www.foodiful.com.au and www.gardenzeus.com





ATTUNE YOURSELF WITH NATURE IN CUBA: 7 Places to Discover and Reconnect

With the current state of the world, no wonder that people are not feeling grounded, find themselves at the state of unrest and may be even feeling disconnected from their environment. Getting out into nature can help you find harmony and reconnect with yourself.

Whilst we can only do it in our own backyard, it's always nice to have a dream of those wonders further afield. Cuba is not a place many of us think of when creating our next holiday plan, so let me tell you a little about it! It is a beautiful place, with a lot of natural beauty.

The mountains, beaches, waterfalls and the incredible flora and fauna are truly amazing. From the moment you land on the island, you are surrounded by beauty and it's almost impossible not to feel grounded.

So if you come this far, do yourself a favour! Get outside of Havana and discover the natural beauties the island has to offer. The cultural immersion alone will be invigorating, but getting out into this pristine environment will help you recharge at a whole new level!

Visit one of many Biosphere reserves to walk through the forest: the light trekking will get you moving, get you fresh air, will give you access to some incredible flora and the truly amazing birdlife Cuba has on offer. And if you find yourself at a vantage point, I promise you, the views are worth it!

SIERRA MAESTRA

For a more intense hike, or if you are feeling up for it (totally worth it!) take on the Sierra Maestra. The mountains will give you incredible views and you'll feel like an explorer! Make sure you don't do it alone! Take a local guide with you to ensure that you get the best experience on your hike and that you get back safely. Also make sure you take some water with you. The heat at times can get intense.

EL NICHU

For a more relaxing hike, try the El Nicho falls. You can spend hours up there taking in the views. And while you are at it, take a dip in the waterhole. It's great fun

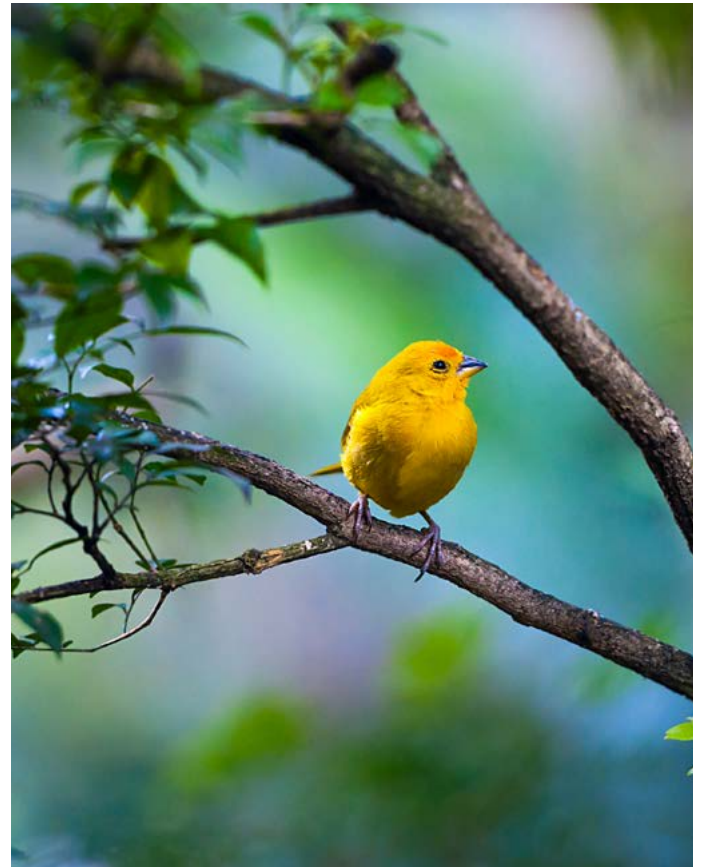


ZAPATA PENINSULA

If you venture further east, you will find yourself at the Zapata Peninsula, a Ramsar site due to its importance to the international ecosystem. It is home to a large number of bird species, one of the most well-known being the flamingo, but it's also the home of many of Cuba's endemics, like the Cuban Trogon. And if you are venturous enough, you can discover the amazing underwater world on offer around here also, which is full of coral reefs and marine life - perfect for wall diving and even discovering shipwrecks.

BARACOA

At the furthest eastern point, you will find Baracoa. The natural beauty surrounding of this place captured Christopher Columbus' heart! It has a black beach, a white beach, many rivers and waterfalls to discover. Venture out to El Yunque in Alejandro Humboldt National Park for an



exploring this natural gem.

CAYO JUTIAS

If forests and waterholes are not your theme, a great spot to get some peace and quiet is Cayo Jutías. This beach will allow you to enjoy the soothing sound of waves crashing on shore as well as wonderful views of Cuba's coastline. Not to mention the white sand beaches, the pristine waters and the stunning sea stars.

VIÑALES VALLEY

And if you make it to Cayo Jutias, you will definitely find yourself at Viñales Valley, a UNESCO World Heritage Site that has been protected since 1989. The valley features tobacco plantations. A benefit of traveling on a Small Group Tour is that we take you to meet the farmers, you can chat to them to learn about their lives, how their tobacco growing secrets have been passed down for generations, you can see how they live their lives. It's an eye-opening experience!

SOROA

Another beautiful place to visit is Soroa, with its magnificent, towering waterfall - the Salto de Soroa of around 100 meters. It is one of the most important protected areas in Cuba and a major source for hydroelectric power - which means it's home to some wonderful natural swimming pools! Due to the large number of water sources in the area, there is also a natural phenomenon of mini waterfalls in the air, which is why this area is often called the 'Rainbow of Cuba'.

amazing hike, dip in a waterfall and stunning views. If you're looking for a place to reconnect with nature, explore Cuba. It's not every day that people get a chance to escape this modern world of ours! Cuba is just the perfect spot for it, you can disconnect from Wi-Fi and find peace among ancient trees, marvel at unique birds or swim at a waterhole all whilst discovering another culture and feel connected to something bigger than you once again. Come on over; spend the next minute reading through our list so you know what treasures await your discovery!

Written by [Orsolya Bartalis](#)

CITY SLICKING:

Become a tourist in your town



As a child, visiting the city was such an exciting experience. Exploring all that my bustling hometown of Melbourne had to offer brought joy and rich memories that have stayed with me.

Today, heading to the city with my little family brings back a flood of memories. As I wander through the arts precinct in Southbank, I reminisce about the countless shows I saw with Mum, and think back to the nervous glee I felt as a little dancer performing at the Arts Centre. As I walk along Swanston street and slip into a laneway, I think about the hours I spent hanging out at the State Library with my sister and friends. Strolling along Bourke street and seeing the beautiful architecture above the street line, reminds me of running excitedly to the Hill of Content Bookshop to trawl the books and find a new read. All cities have something special to offer and provide opportunities for families to create lifelong memories. You need not travel far to build family traditions and memories; sometimes, exploring your own backyard (city) is as far as you need to go.

EXPLORE THE INNER CITY PARKS

Chasing a nature experience doesn't necessarily mean driving long distances to a secluded beach or bush. Some inner cities

provide the tranquility and natural experience you seek nestled in the heart of the town. Learn about different plant species in your local botanic gardens, go bird spotting at a nearby creek, or have a picnic next to a waterway.

HEAD TO THE ARTS PRECINCT

Many cities have a thriving local art scene, and Australia has an abundance of incredible culture and arts hubs. In Victoria, Bendigo city comprises museums, libraries, and galleries, including Australia's oldest and largest regional art gallery. Fremantle in Western Australia has countless artist studios, street art and galleries to peruse. Tasmania is home to the world-renowned MONA and has many smaller galleries plotted around Hobart, Launceston, and across the whole state.

TRY A CUISINE SYNONYMOUS WITH THE CITY

Melbourne is known for its coffee and the Bellarine has a taste trail showcasing the region's finest growers and makers – from cheeses, bakeries to fresh catch seafood. Almost every town across Australia has the go-to destination for a delightful variation of the traditional hot



pie. Find the best eatery in the city and join the queue for a taste of your town.

CHECK OUT THE LOCAL ARCHITECTURE

Some cities offer walking architecture tours, while others have historical buildings open to the public to explore. Take photos, feel the materials with your hand and imagine the people there many years before you. If you are looking for a spooky time, some buildings have late-night ghost tours that are sure to cause a fright.

TAKE IN THE CITY VIEWS FROM ABOVE

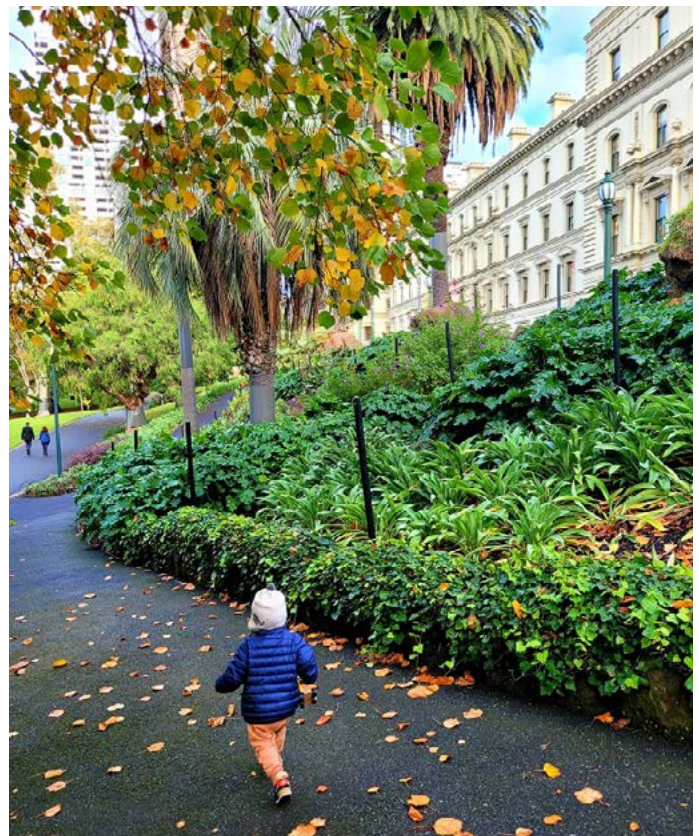
Head to the highest building, hillside or lookout in the area and take in the views of your beautiful city. In Castlemaine, a small, culturally rich city in Victoria, there is a great lookout at the Burke & Wills Memorial. Canberra offers several lookouts of the city, including Black Mountain and Mount Ainslie. If you want to aim even higher, some cities have ferris wheels overlooking the town or sightseeing helicopter rides.

VISIT THE LIBRARY

Libraries are unique to their city and exceptional in their own way. Local libraries provide a variety of books, information and activities specific to the local area, which helps readers learn more about local history and develop even more of an appreciation for the city.

VENTURE TO THE LOCAL FESTIVALS

You will be surprised at what festivals your local city may run and find they are enjoyable for the whole family. Whether it's an arts festival, laneway festival, music festival, food festival, family festival, ride and play festival, flower festival or writing festival, there is sure to be something to fulfill everyone's interests.



TREAT YOURSELF AT THE LOCAL MARKET

The market isn't just where you get fresh fruit and veggies; some markets have an array of offerings for the family to take your pick of. Try a new cuisine, buy some local memorabilia, get a caricature family portrait or purchase a local artist's work to display in your home.

LISTEN TO LIVE MUSIC

With many talented musicians across Australia, venues often have live music playing, creating an enjoyable atmosphere for all. Prahara Market in Melbourne has live music on the weekends where children dance on the makeshift dance floor, local cafes have afternoon acoustic sessions and many music festivals have family areas where children can experience live music in a family-friendly environment. Having children in tow does not mean you have to miss out on the live music experience.

MAKE A NIGHT OF IT

After a day of playing tourist and seeing all that your city has to offer, settle in for a night at the local hotel. Put on pyjamas, order room service or local takeaway, watch a movie or play a board game for some extra bonding time.

SUPPORT LOCAL

With so many businesses feeling the effects of the Covid-19 lockdowns, staying in your city and supporting local is a great way to help the community while also building wonderful family memories.

Written by [Cerise Canon](#)

THE KARATE KID STORY CONTINUES ON THE SMALL SCREEN WITH COBRA KAI



Also playing out is the lives of their children Samantha LaRusso (Mary Mouser) and Robby Keene (Tanner Buchanan), who have their own teenage issues and are invertedly caught up in the decades-old rivalry.

Brian Wright, Vice President, Original Series, Netflix best summed up the series when it moved from YouTube Premium to Netflix after season 2: "The rivalry between Daniel and Johnny is one for the ages and the show has a ton of heart and is a lot of fun."

They say you should never go back. But that is certainly not the case with the TV series *Cobra Kai*. Revisiting The Karate Kid movies from the 1980s – and the story of Danny LaRusso (Ralph Macchio) and high school/karate rival Johnny Lawrence (William Zabka) will only bring you smiles and demonstrate how well acted and developed characters can be revisited and grow up long after the writer's pen has been put down (yup, they probably still used pens back then).

The series is peppered with movie flashbacks (and previously unseen footage), easy to achieve when you have the original casts and movie franchise owners support. These scenes are used to help remind or provide the backstory for who those who don't remember the original stories.

This dramedy TV series does stand-alone though in the 21st century and doesn't rely on the flashbacks. It tackles some thought provoking storylines and real-life issues played out such as bullying, homelessness, violence and, of course the misuse of karate. That said, who doesn't love a good dose of nostalgia when it is Ralph Macchio lining up for that monumental crane kick from the first movie!

Cobra Kai takes place 30 years after the events of the 1984 All Valley Karate Tournament, where a now successful Danny struggles to maintain balance in his life without the guidance of Mr Miyagi and finds himself facing off once again with his old adversary, the down-and-out bad-boy Johnny – who has reopened the infamous *Cobra Kai* karate dojo.



Cobra Kai is written and executive produced by Josh Heald (Hot Tub Time Machine franchise), Jon Hurwitz, and Hayden Schlossberg (Harold & Kumar film series, *Blockers*) via their production company, Counterbalance Entertainment. It is important to also recognise Overbrook Entertainment (actor Will Smith's production company) in association with

Sony Pictures Television – who are executive producers. Macchio and Zabka serve as co-executive producers. The reason for listing all these players is because, until now many proposals, scripts and ideas had come across Macchio's desk to reprise the iconic character but none deemed worthy enough – until now.

Rated PG, each episode is just under 30 minutes long. IMDb rates it 8.6, a little low in my book! It was named 2018's Best Drama by Rotten Tomatoes, earning a rare 100% Fresh rating for its first season. It has also received several Emmy nominations.

The show also stars Courtney Henggeler (*The Big Bag Theory*, *Mom*), Mary Mouser (*The Fosters*, *NCIS*), Tanner Buchanan (*Designated Survivor*), Xolo Maridueña (*Parenthood*), Jacob Bertrand (*Parenthood*), Peyton List (*Gossip Girl*, *27 Dresses*) and Gianni DeCenzo (*100 Things to Do Before High School*). Be sure to binge watch season 1-3 before season 4 launches soon, and if you are still not sure, see the YouTube channel of the same name for clips and some full episodes!

Written by [Ana Jones](#)

How meal prepping promotes a peaceful life?



for dinner three to four nights of the week, rather than making several different dinner recipes. This will save you significant amounts of time and money.

Don't get overwhelmed. If this is a new routine you're establishing and you tend to get easily overwhelmed with change, start by prepping just one course per week. Prep and pack your lunches on Sunday and see how things go. If you feel ready the next week, you can prep lunches, and snacks. Maybe the next week you can add dinners or breakfasts into your meal prep plan as well. Go as fast or as slowly as you need to and find what works best for you.

WHY IS MEAL PREPPING BENEFICIAL?

Meal prepping helps you distribute your time more efficiently. Instead of spending one hour per night cooking dinner, 30 minutes in the morning packing lunches, and scrambling to find something for breakfast before school or work, you can set aside a few hours once a week to get all of this accomplished. During those few hours, you can plan and tackle your household menu for the week, grocery shop, and wash, chop, and cook your food.

Now instead of deciding what to make for breakfast, and then making and packing lunches for the day, you can enjoy your mornings! Turn on the morning news, grab your newspaper, or just sit and relax with a warm cup of coffee or tea. You can head into your day looking forward to the delicious and nutritious lunch you have packed and waiting for you!

Meal prepping will also help you make more conscious choices when it comes to the food you're putting into your body. Rather than making last minute decisions fed by hunger, you'll be able to set out a plan in the beginning of the week with a clear mind. This will help you make informed choices and you won't be caught heading to the drive thru of a fast-food restaurant on your way home from work (I've been guilty of that one too many times).

Let's take back some control in our days and lives and let meal prepping help us make decisions to plan ahead and use our time to our advantage. You can enjoy slower mornings, more quality time with family or friends in the evenings, and have a much more peaceful life. One of my favorite meal prep recipes is my spinach white bean soup. It's perfect for lunches or dinners, and holds up well in the fridge all week long.

Written by [Kelsey Riley](#)

Picture a typical weekday morning in your home. What feelings come to mind when thinking about your usual morning routine? Does this elicit calm, relaxing feelings? Or maybe a typical morning at your house feels rushed and chaotic? Perhaps a mixture of the two? Let's take a few minutes to explore the world of meal prepping and how it can help create a more peaceful life.

WHAT IS MEAL PREPPING?

Meal prepping is just what it sounds like, preparing your meals ahead of time. Any meal of the day can be meal prepped, and so can snacks and desserts. Meal prepping can also be done to prepare different recipe steps ahead of time.

WHAT TYPES OF FOODS CAN BE PREPPED AHEAD OF TIME?

Most meals can be prepped in advance. I love to do this with foods that I know will stay good in the fridge for at least 3-4 days to help carry me through most of, if not all of the week. Some of my go-to recipes to make are overnight oats, freshly chopped vegetables and fruits, pasta sauces, soups, and chilis. I would steer clear of prepping foods that will get soggy, or not hold up well in the fridge for more than a few days.

Try to choose foods and meals that you enjoy and will look forward to. Making a recipe for lunch every day of the week that you don't love will make eating lunch a chore. Remember that you are doing this to have a calmer, happier, more enjoyable life!

MEAL PREP TIPS AND TRICKS

Whenever possible, prep and store foods separately from each other. For example, if you're making pasta and sauce, store them apart from one another. The same goes for things like salad greens and salad dressing, store those in their own containers. If you are making sandwiches, leave any dressing off in order to avoid soggy bread.

Try to make large batches of each recipe/meal. This way you can make a large pot of soup and be able to eat it



Spinach White Bean Soup

Ingredients

4 cups vegetable broth
1 cup cannellini beans can sub any white bean
2 cloves garlic medium
1 yellow onion medium
1 russet potato
2 cups fresh spinach
1 tsp cumin
1 tbsp olive oil
salt and pepper to taste

Method

1. Pour the olive oil into a large pot and turn to medium heat. Add the diced yellow onion and sauté for about 3 minutes, stirring frequently. Add the garlic and continue to cook for about one more minute.
2. Add the vegetable broth, the peeled and diced potato, your well-rinsed beans, salt, pepper, and cumin. Bring to a low boil.
3. Continue to cook on a low boil for about 30 minutes.
4. Remove from heat and add the spinach. Let cool slightly (be careful not to burn yourself!) and use an immersion blender. Blend until you have a smooth and creamy consistency.

Written by [Kelsey Riley](#)

Lemon Poppy Seed Muffin

Prep time: 15 minutes
Cook time: 20 minutes
Rest Time: 20 minutes
Total time: 55 minutes

Equipment needed:

- Muffin tin with 12 cups
- Whisk
- 2 large bowls

- 1 small bowl
- Pastry brush
- Measuring cups and spoons

It's not easy to find a vegan muffin if you walk into the best bakeries in town, right? They almost always have some dairy or eggs added to them. Well, if you are in the mood for an awesome vegan lemon-based muffin, you are in for a treat! These lemon poppy seed, are ideal for those who are venturing into a vegan lifestyle and/or are allergic to dairy and eggs. Drizzle a thick lemon glaze on top for an extra zesty kick.

Ingredients

MUFFIN

| | |
|-----------|------------------------|
| 1 cup | Almond milk |
| 1 tsp | Vinegar |
| 2 cups | All purpose flour |
| 2 1/2 tsp | Baking powder |
| 1/4 tsp | Baking Soda |
| 1/2 tsp | Salt |
| 3 tbsp | Poppy Seeds |
| 2/3 cup | Granulated sugar |
| 1/4 cup | Oil + 1 tbsp |
| 1/2 cup | Freshly squeezed juice |
| Zest of 2 | lemons |
| 1 tsp | Vanilla Extract |

LEMON GLAZE

| | |
|---------|----------------|
| 1/2 cup | Powdered sugar |
| 2-3 tsp | Lemon juice |

Method

1. Preheat the oven to 375F
2. In a small bowl or container, take the almond milk. Add the vinegar to prepare the buttermilk solution. Mix and keep aside for 5 minutes to curdle
3. In a large bowl, add sugar, oil, lemon juice and lemon zest. Mix everything. Add the buttermilk solution to this and mix well.
4. In a separate bowl, add in the flour, baking soda, baking powder, salt and poppy seeds. Whisk till well combined.
5. Add the dry ingredients to the wet ingredients, little by little. Mix until the batter is evenly wet and all ingredients are well incorporated.
6. Grease a muffin pan lightly with butter. Scoop out the batter and fill the muffin pan* with each mold being filled up to 2/3rd.
7. Bake for 18 minutes or until a toothpick inserted comes out clean
8. Let the muffins cool to room temperature in the pan itself. Use a butter knife to help release the muffins from the pan.

Making The Lemon Glaze

1. Add the powdered sugar and lemon juice in a small bowl
2. Whisk it well to get a thick glaze
3. Pour it on to the muffin top.



Written by Midhun Vasan

Partners with



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