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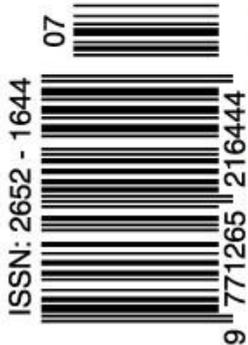


WellBeing

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Issue 07

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Breathe in Cultivate courage • Dance with discomfort • Overcome imposter syndrome
Breathe out Be open to learning • Play to live • Write as therapy • Walk for wellbeing



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nourish

v 1 to sustain with food or nutriment;
supply with what is necessary
for maintaining life.

Being nourished happens not just on a physical level, but also emotionally, energetically and mentally. Nourishment need not only be reserved to food, either; you can nourish yourself with empowering thoughts, honest feelings and kind actions.

You may nourish yourself with a gentle walk in nature, a meal cooked with fresh produce or by feeding yourself loving thoughts. The intention underpinning the nourishment is just as pertinent, if not more, than the act itself.

You can also nourish yourself with mindfulness, which will allow you to extract the most sustenance from the experience. So perhaps the most important thing to remember is being present to any nourishing experience as it unfolds, moment by moment.





Editor's letter

Yesterday afternoon I went surfing at my local beach break on Victoria's Bellarine Peninsula. The wind had swung and I was struggling to catch a wave. From the incessant paddling to missing out on waves, I found myself getting frustrated by the situation. What should have been a joy-inducing experience was riddled with tension and disappointment. Because my mind was attaching to an idea of what the experience *should* be, I was failing to notice the sheer beauty of simply just being in the ocean.

Author, teacher and counsellor Mary O'Malley once wisely said, "What's in the way is the way." She suggests that, "Whatever you are experiencing is a doorway into a more spacious place. So rather than resisting discomfort, you can learn how to open to what you are experiencing and explore it, without any need to have it be any different than what it is." Despite that surfing was *in* the way, surfing also *is* the way.

Not only was the ocean the trigger for my frustration, it was also the catalyst for me to practise mindfulness and return to the calm and contentment available when you're being present. Once I slowed down my breathing and allowed myself to simply just be, I had carved out the space to notice and appreciate the subtle, more intricate details of the moment: an insect curiously scanning the surface of the sea, each ripple in the ocean gently bumping my surfboard, the warmth of the autumn sun shining on my face. What was previously an experience of frustration had turned into an experience of feeling at ease, centred and grateful.

Another way to describe my returning back to presence is the Swedish concept of "*bara vara*", otherwise known as "just being". Nature is not only a place to help you feel grounded, connected with yourself and calm, it's also a place to *bara vara* – just be. It doesn't mean the moment is stripped of any discomfort, but there's a quality of acceptance present that allows you to welcome the experience in its entirety with more ease.

The theme of this issue of *Being* is wellbeing, which is just as much a physical notion as it is a mental, emotional and spiritual one. Sam suggests being open to learning on page 18, Jane explores how to dance with discomfort on page 22, Hannah shows how we can play to live on 32 and Albert uses writing as a form of therapy on page 38. From walking for wellbeing to cultivating healthy expectations, compassionate boundaries and everyday courage, this issue explores health and wellness from a holistic lens to show you that being well is multifaceted, ever changing and vital to feeling balanced, at ease and calm in life.

The tear-sheet activity in this issue of *Being* is a tool to support your wellness journey: a meditation chart. This lift-out acts as an opportunity for you to *bara vara* – just be – whenever you feel called to. My hope is that your copy of *Being* will nurture you wholeheartedly and remind you that the entry into discomfort is quite often also the spacious gateway into presence.

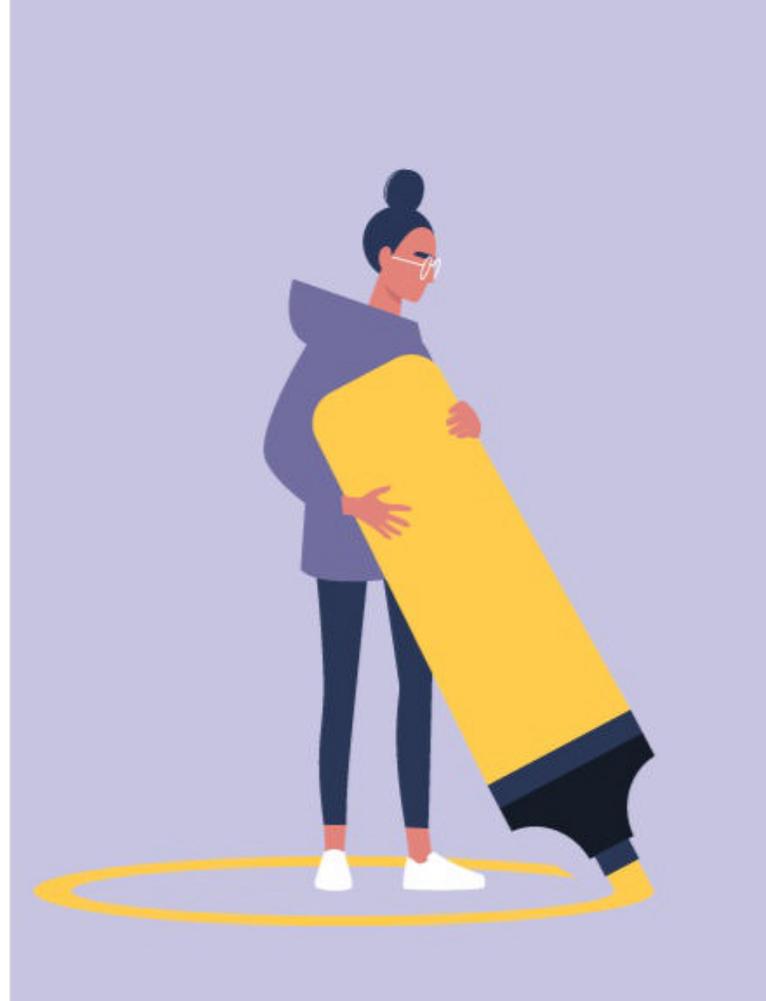
Ally McManus, editor

Being

noun

- 1 existence
- 2 the nature or essence of a person





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Soaking up nature

From visiting the Mornington Peninsula in Victoria to exploring Freycinet National Park in Tasmania, we soak up some wellbeing-inspired escapes in nature.

Words JANE HONE & ALLY McMANUS

“Look deep into nature, and then you will understand everything better.”

~ Albert Einstein

Peninsula Hot Springs

Anyone who has floated out of a deeply relaxing day spa experience knows the feeling of wishing that rather than getting in the car and driving home, you could lay down your weary bones and stay the night instead.

This is exactly what you can now do at Victoria's Peninsula Hot Springs. Nestled in a quiet spot beside a lake towards the back of the property is a constellation of luxury safari-style tents that aren't quite done justice by the word "glamping": each eco tent boasts a king-sized bed, ensuite, dressing room, day bed, heated terrazzo flooring, coffee machine and more.

"There are earplugs in the room in case the sound of the frogs bothers you," the receptionist tells me with a twinkle in her eye as we check in. The frogs she's talking

about are pobblebonk (or Eastern Banjo) frogs, and I've heard that guests often assume they are a recording played for ambience rather than part of the natural soundscape. Even in the comfort of the tents there is a unique sense of being out in the elements.

We arrive on a windy autumn afternoon where the rain gives way to sunshine, so we have the curious pleasure of seeing the place in all conditions. We enjoy a glass of sparkling wine on deluxe deck chairs in the afternoon sun, and then retreat into our tent when the wind sets in. Inside is a space that lends itself to reading a book with a cup of tea on the day bed, penning notes at the timber writing desk and indulging in room service while relaxing in robes atop the silky-smooth cotton bedding. We try it all.

As with every other aspect of Peninsula Hot Springs, the sleeping quarters are carefully thought out and beautifully appointed, with a heavy emphasis on organic elements

that blend perfectly into the surrounding landscape. There is a bespoke timber bedhead, timber ceiling fan and timber drawers in the dressing room, as well as brushed gold tapware in the bathroom and delicate Japanese teacups.

After a bathe in the open-air Bath House Amphitheatre, we head to the restaurant for dinner (hearty veal gnocchi for him; nourishing dhal for me). We then find our way to the Spa Dreaming Centre to luxuriate in the Moroccan hammam and soak in the iconic barrel bath under the stars. We make plans to take advantage of the all-night moonlit bathing available to glamping guests, but at 10.30pm, after being suitably bathed and fed, we can't resist falling asleep in our extravagantly comfortable bed.

In the morning, as my partner slips off to work, I make a beeline for the Bath House. I see only two other souls taking a morning dip. In the half-light I have the hilltop pool (the hot springs' most popular spot, which gives 360 views of the region) all to myself.

Photography Peninsula Hot Springs, Jesse Hunniford, Ian Jeanneret & Aplite House





Slowing down and spending time nestled in nature is more often than not all we need to feel balanced, at ease and calm in life.

Exploring the Freycinet Peninsula

Aplite House is a sanctuary in itself, however there are many other natural wonders to discover in Freycinet National Park.

- ✦ **Coles Bay:** enjoy brunch with a view of the Hazards mountains or Tasmanian-made ice-cream
- ✦ **Wineglass Bay hiking trail:** walk up to the famed lookout and/or hike down to the beautiful beach
- ✦ **Bicheno:** great spot for surfing and swimming, or grabbing a coffee and groceries
- ✦ **Honeymoon Bay:** invigorate the body with a cold dip
- ✦ **Cape Tourville Lighthouse:** gentle and picturesque walk to the scenic lookout, also an ideal spot for whale watching

I leave the baths so I can make my 7.30am yoga class (wellness activities are complimentary to glamping guests); my body already feeling warm and relaxed from my dawn bathe. By the time I'm lying in savasana an hour later, I'm almost levitating.

There is one item left on my itinerary: breakfast. Glamping guests are treated to a hot breakfast made from local produce, plus a fresh juice and tea or coffee. It's hard to think of a better way to spend a morning than this; I sit in the restaurant for a while, feeling more at ease than I have in a long time. The tranquillity of the Peninsula Hot Springs experience can't be bottled up and sold (unfortunately), but spending nearly 24 hours in the place is the next best thing. You'll want to soak up every last drop.

Aplite House

I can't help but feel in awe of Tasmania's raw yet pristine landscape as we meander along the 2-kilometre driveway nestled in 200 acres of native bushland to our off-grid, solar-powered guesthouse, Aplite House. Perched on the fringes of Freycinet National Park, the nature-inspired, minimalist and low-impact design of the house is a testament to its owners, artists Tamzen and Sam Brewster. "Aplite House has been built with love and a strong vision to create a beautiful, self-sufficient eco-accommodation experience within this special landscape," Sam shares. Highlighting natural materials, Sam built the house with his own hands and crafted the earthy furniture inside with timber sourced ethically from a single tree. Named after a quartz-based rock on the Freycinet Peninsula, Aplite House sits



strikingly yet naturally into its location in Friendly Beaches, a small coastal town between Coles Bay and Bicheno on Tasmania's famed east coast.

"It's very easy to feel relaxed here," Lachie says while retreating to the comfy couch in the spacious open-plan living, dining and kitchen area. We're soaking up the afternoon light streaming through the floor-to-ceiling glass windows overlooking the Moulting Lagoon conservation area. The kitchen is a welcoming environment to cook in, while the living area invites in relaxation beside the warming fireplace. This sense of calm is just as present in the two luxurious bedrooms, both with earthy en-suites that have soothing, rain-like showerheads. In the middle of the house sits a cosy lounge room and small deck area, while another larger deck is a natural extension of the main living area that offers breathtaking views of the landscape.

Presence comes naturally as we wander around the property at sunset. Home to a diverse range of native flora and fauna, the surrounding forest feels wild yet pristine. I hear birdsong nearby and the distant sound of waves crashing. I smell smoke emanating from the chimney as the fire warms the house. I feel the crisp, still air on my skin as the sun begins its descent. There's a lightshow of bright orange, yellow and pink hues in the sky. A kookaburra cackling in the distance fades dreamily into the stillness of the moment. The fire inside

and fading light in the sky soon become the only two source of light.

I wake up naturally after a deep and restful sleep at dawn. A gentle breeze makes the leaves of the surrounding gum trees dance in the wind. There's a cool chill in the air as I wander outside to witness the sunrise with a warm cup of tea. It's so still that I can hear the birds fluttering around me. Wispy pink brushstrokes begin to splash majestically across the pale blue sky. I can't remember the last time I felt this calm.

Dappled light filters through the canopy of trees above us as we leave Aplite House. The bush reserve on the fringes of the windy driveway is abundant with curious wallabies and other native wildlife. Slowing down and spending time nestled in nature is more often than not all we need to feel balanced, at ease and calm in life, which a stay at Aplite House so profoundly reminds us. 🌿

The writers were guests of Peninsula Hot Springs and Aplite House. For more information, visit peninsulahotsprings.com and aplitehouse.com.





Less is more

By freeing ourselves from attachments to outcomes
or the weight of unnecessary possessions,
we can live life with a greater sense of being.

Words HANNAH SAINTY

The idea of less is one of those ironic things, as the more you give, the more you receive. When you give your possessions away, you receive more space; when you give your best self, you receive great outcomes, opportunities and interactions; when you give your money away, you receive material, educational or theoretical goods in return (ie shopping, courses).

The constant between these examples is that, while we are losing something, what we gain in return can be far more valuable and beautiful, and can act as a pathway to a greater sense of being.

The past year and a half has been a time like no other; our realities changed beneath our feet. With the constant shifting of our lives, we had to learn how to deal with less immediacy, less plans and

sometimes less access to material things. What this unknown territory highlighted was the notion that less can absolutely mean much more.

The idea of “less is more” extends to our mental and emotional world as well as our physical reality. Needing more material things to stay busy or always feel productive has the potential to control our moods, our experiences and our relationship with our environment (when not managed).

By letting go of this need, there’s an abundance of wealth beneath its veil. Wealth of the mind, body and soul as we shed the external and internal feelings of lack and discover a sense of wholeness within ourselves. This abundance can be discovered and nurtured by looking towards the principles of non-attachment and simple living.





By remaining free from any attachment to outcomes or the weight of unnecessary material objects, we create space in the mind, heart and home.

have less things, but to be content and at peace with or without things – not basing one’s worth and success on material possessions. Danshari highlights that cleanliness and space between material possessions affords an idea, a feeling and a message of clarity, space, freedom and energy to your inner and outer world.

In Sweden, the word *lagom* is a concept similar to danshari, in that it does not teach to own as little as possible or to drown in a sea of excess. It is an expression akin to the Goldilocks philosophy, where to live a good life means owning “not too much, not too little, but just about right”. Lagom asks you to live a life that is not overwhelmed by stimuli from outer-world experiences, while also not wrapped up in your inner world and separating yourself either. It explores having a sense of balance between the two.

By remaining free from any attachment to outcomes or the weight of unnecessary material objects, we create space in the mind, heart and home. It is here where we find our innate selves and being.

Hannah Sainty is a creative entrepreneur, freelance writer and intermedia artist. Drawing inspiration from nature and our intrinsic connectedness within it, Hannah explores the link between wellness and creativity.

Non-attachment

Zen Buddhism and yogic philosophies teach us that the principle of “non-attachment” does not equal a lack of empathy and connection. Instead, it opens a sense of compassion, connection and presence as you begin to own your choices, possessions and plans, instead of them owning you.

In everyday terms, this looks like making plans that are open to change (hello, last-minute lunch cancellation or flight delay) as well as having possessions, yet not feeling the need for more or the need to keep them.

This ability to be detached from outcomes and expectations releases you from a state of desperation and allows you to flow in the river of life.

Simple living

Philosophies from Japanese and Swedish cultures demonstrate how living a life that is simple and minimal can be a life full and fulfilling.

Danshari is a Japanese word and philosophy that loosely translates to: “refusal, disposal and separation”. It suggests that the goal is not to simply



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"I am extremely sensitive to salicylates and have to be meticulous in what I eat and place on my skin. I have now been using Soap Nuts for several months and I have had no adverse reaction and as a delightful plus, my laundry has become brighter and brighter with each wash. I am so delighted, Thank You! I am so thrilled to find something which does not make me itch and break out in a horrible rash, but leave the laundry SWEET. I cannot express how grateful I am." **Phoebe**





Being open to learning

We are all capable of learning, but sometimes our ego gets in the way of us trying new things. Cultivating a beginner's mindset will help to grow your confidence and life experiences.

Words SAMANTHA ALLEMANN

From the moment we are born, we are learning. We remain life-long learners, however sometimes we can lose the passion or confidence to throw ourselves into something completely new, or to try our hand at something we haven't succeeded at previously.

When was the last time you tried something that challenged you? That stripped away any bravado and put you back into the role as the learner? Perhaps it's signing up for a cooking or language class, dipping your toe into a new career, learning a sport or hobby, or relearning a childhood skill.

Becoming a novice again

The latter has often been the case for me. As a young girl I loved to swim, however during puberty, body insecurities kept me away from the pool – no way was I going to be seen in bathers. A decade later, I regretted having let swimming fall by the wayside.

One day while walking to work, I noticed a sign outside a pool advertising adult "learn to swim" classes. While I still remembered the basics, I had completely lost the knack for the breath coordination required for freestyle and the skills



While nerve-wracking, opening ourselves up to learning comes with a host of benefits such as acquiring new skills, broadening your mind and creating opportunities.

to perfect a dive rather than a bellyflop. And most importantly of all, I had also lost my confidence. I signed up and attended the classes once a week.

As well as refining my strokes, I also learned an important lesson: being a learner can be humbling. Progress was slow as I gulped in the pool water and relearned a good kicking

Meditation: a practice of just being

Meditation is a tool that can be used to embrace the present moment with a beginner's mindset. Inside this issue, you'll find a tear-sheet lift-out for your meditation practice. This meditation chart is designed to support your journey with meditation. You can use this chart to encourage a daily practice, or simply return to it whenever you feel called to meditate.

technique with the aid of flippers. It was hardly glamorous but it was worth it. While I won't be a mature-age candidate for the Olympics, I enjoy being back in the pool.

Another childhood love of mine, bike riding, had me in the learner seat once again. While I hadn't forgotten how to ride, I wanted to feel confident on the road. A course at my local neighbourhood house brought me up to speed on the road rules as well as gave me some tips and tricks for riding smarter.

Having a beginner's mindset

While nerve-wracking, opening ourselves up to learning comes with a host of benefits such as acquiring new skills, broadening your mind and creating opportunities. A beginner's mindset also requires a certain humbleness and the vulnerability that comes with knowing you can fail.

Being a learner has given me the tenacity to keep trying at things I'm not good at. One look at the "shorts" I attempted to sew in a beginner's sewing class are proof that we

can't be good at everything. Most dance classes I try start off with me going one way while everyone else goes the other, and the first time I sampled a Pilates class I swore I'd never be able to use my arms ever again.

While the saying goes that practise makes perfect, that's not always the case. Being at ease with not being good at everything keeps us open to trying new things. If you shy away from learning as you don't want to look like a novice, you'll not only miss out on gaining certain skills, but also the life experience that comes with putting your ego to one side and just giving it a go.

With a beginner's mindset and a dash of enthusiasm and humility, there are so many new experiences we can open ourselves up to, leading to a richer life filled with pride, determination and good humour.

Samantha Allemann is a Melbourne-based freelance writer and editor who has written for Being magazine since issue 01. When she's not writing, she's usually daydreaming or reading (preferably surrounded by cats). W: samantha-allemann.com

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Dancing with discomfort

We can't always anticipate discomfort, but we can train for it. Embracing discomfort can be an illuminating step on the path to self-love, self-preservation and self-knowledge.

Words JANE HONE

Most Westerners live in a world where comfort is king: We're able to change the temperature of the room with the click of a button; we can flee from uncomfortable thoughts into a Netflix binge.

It's also true, however, that we cannot truly escape discomfort — in one way or another, things that make us uncomfortable are bound to show up in our lives. It might be in the form of illness or niggles in the body, winding up alone in an unfamiliar environment or having a difficult conversation. As Buddhism teaches us, pain and suffering are part and parcel of being alive. Buddhists believe that the path to

liberation comes from accepting, rather than resisting, this simple fact.

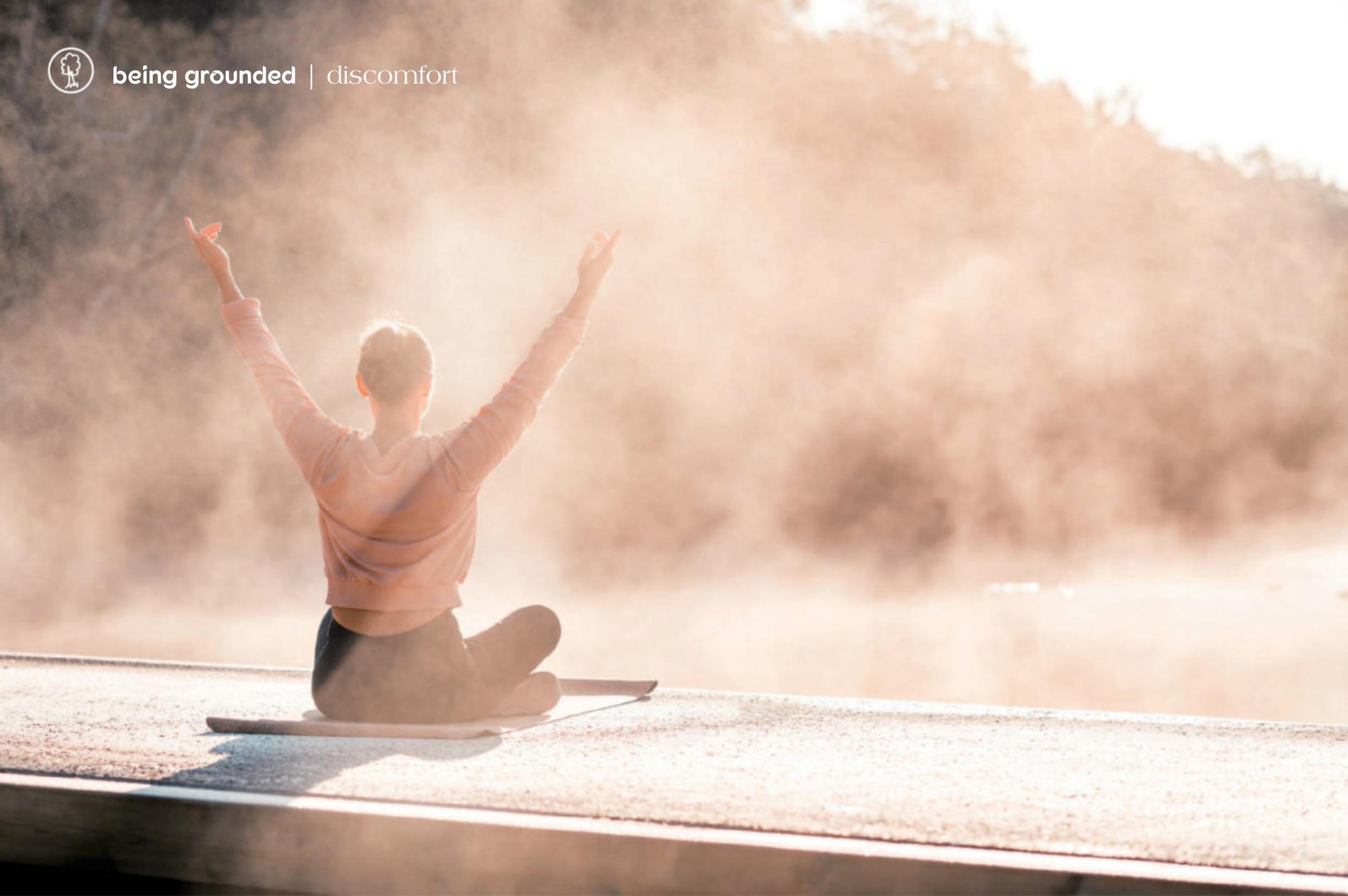
Yet not only do we benefit from accepting the inevitability of discomfort, we can also choose to dance with it. This doesn't mean that we should approach pain and suffering in the spirit of masochism, self-punishment or thrill seeking — instead, practices in discomfort can be an illuminating step on the path to self-love, self-preservation and self-knowledge.

In yoga, this practice is known as *tapas*, and it's one of the *niyamas* (personal

behaviours to observe on the yogic path). *Tapas* involves actively stepping outside of your comfort zone by abstaining from a certain item or activity (for example, alcohol, talking, sex) or introducing a new one (such as a daily meditation or yoga practice) for a set period of time so that you can better understand yourself.

And while comfort can keep us in a kind of holding pattern, discomfort can shake us awake. Think of the magic that happens when you push yourself to get off the couch and venture out into the wildness of nature, or to front up to a climate action protest.





Practices of discomfort

1 Tapas

You might like to start with a *sankalpa* (intention), such as, “To cultivate presence,” and then design your tapas around this. It might involve withdrawing from technology after 5pm every day, for example, or meditating for 10 minutes each morning.

2 Cold water immersion

“We have been alienated from nature, but the cold is capable of bringing us back to what we once had lost,” writes Dutch extreme athlete Wim Hof, who has been largely responsible for popularising cold therapy in the West this past decade. He refers to cold therapy as “positive stress”. You might practise cold-water immersion with daily cold showers (start with 30 seconds, and then work your way up to five minutes) or ocean dips.

3 Yin yoga

Often thought of as a relaxing style of yoga, yin yoga is actually designed to place a small amount of stress on our connective tissues. The sheer practice of

being still, holding postures for several minutes at a time and accepting the presence of juicy sensations is a master class in sitting with discomfort.

4 Breathwork

There are myriad styles of breathing techniques designed to elicit a variety of responses. While these methods often aim to calm the nervous system, they regularly involve breath retention and some level of discomfort (at least to begin with). The yogis use *pranayama*, Wim Hof uses a kind of hyperventilation and Buteyko practitioners teach exercises to slow the breath. Breathing practices can also be an excellent tool to draw on at times of discomfort.

5 Embrace nature

Sometimes dancing with discomfort is as simple as choosing to emerge from the warmth of our homes or offices when we’d rather stay put. You might eat your lunch on a park bench in the cold rather than remaining at your desk, or take a night-time walk after dinner rather than habitually turning on the TV.

This is what author and activist Sarah Wilson calls “going to your edge”.

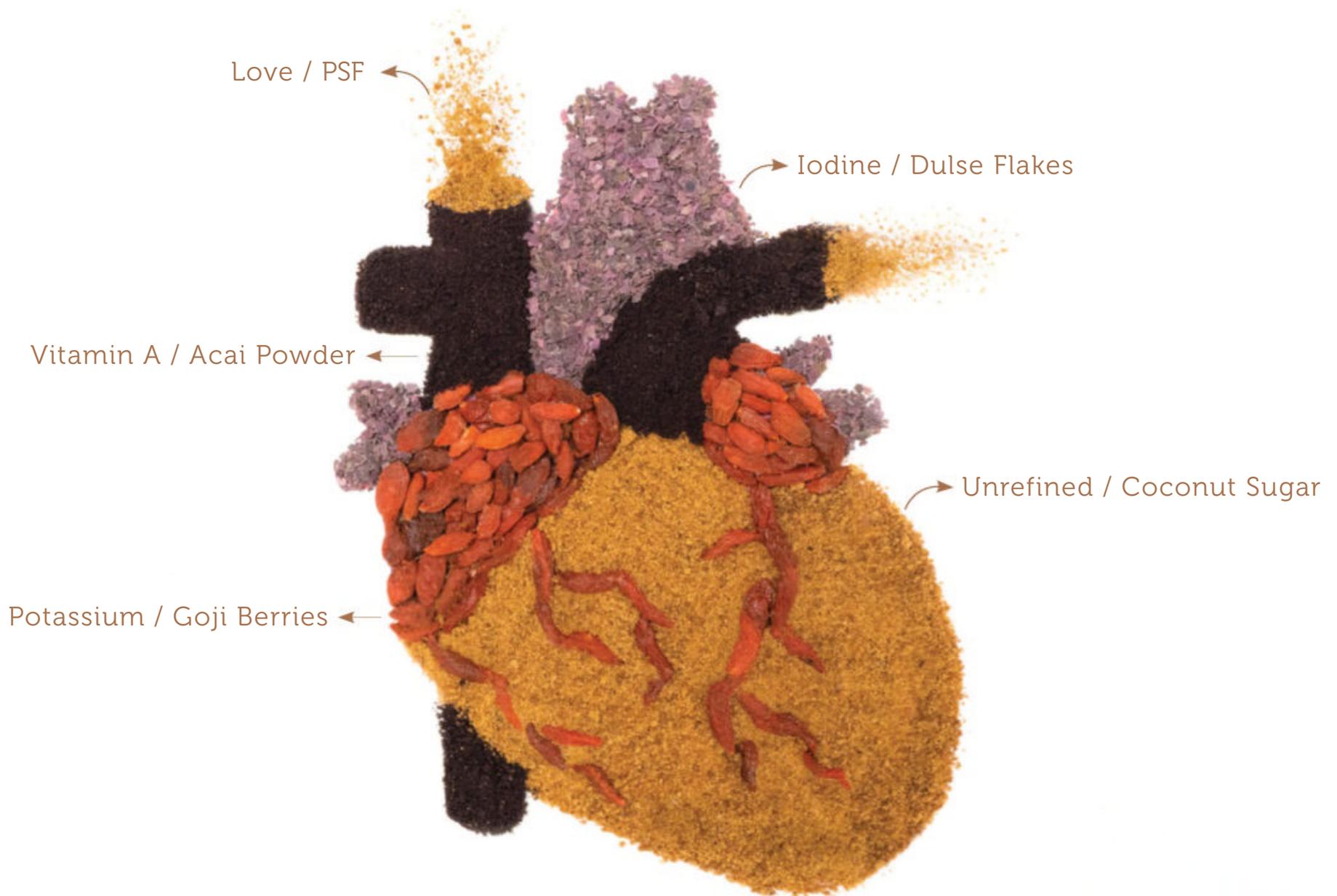
“The edge is where the elements knock you around, where you’re battered by the winds of truth. But it’s out at the edge [that] you are also forced to flex and fend. You have all your faculties on, you are alert,” Sarah writes in her book *This One Wild and Precious Life*. “It’s at the edge that you fully come alive. You experience the sharp air, the harsh light, you see and smell and feel everything. It’s not easy or comfortable, but it’s definitely alive.”

Deliberately leaning into discomfort helps us expand the borders of our comfort zone, meaning we feel more at ease in a wider variety of situations and circumstances. The result is that we have more tools in our tool belt and a greater sense of empowerment. We can’t always anticipate discomfort, but we can train for it. ●

Jane Hone is a freelance writer and yoga teacher based on the Mornington Peninsula. She’s especially interested in how we can live slower, more inspired lives.

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Overcoming imposter syndrome

Noticing and protecting yourself from imposter syndrome takes awareness, courage and compassion.

Words FERNANDA FAIN-BINDA

What do Hogwarts humanitarian Emma Watson and social media yogi Jessamyn Stanley have in common? Both wonder women suffer from imposter syndrome – a feeling of chronic self-doubt – and it can affect anyone. Here’s how to spot it and stop it taking over.

Imposter syndrome, who are you?

First discovered by US academics in 1978, imposter syndrome is “an internal experience of intellectual phoniness” where people believe they have tricked others into thinking that they are more capable than they really are. Pauline Rose Clance and Suzanne Ament Imes focused on women in this study, but men experience it too.

One hundred and fifty women told Pauline and Suzanne that they were terrified of being exposed

as not intelligent enough. Instead, the women were incredibly clever; they just couldn’t believe it themselves. They decided that they were “imposters”.

The nature of the women’s intelligence, mixed with society’s expectations, convinced them that they were faking it. As opposed to being super clever, they used their brainpower to constantly find proof that they were not good enough, without ever looking for proof to believe in themselves.

Why does it matter?

Well, telling yourself constantly that you’re not good enough is bad for your mental health. Imposter syndrome can cause anxiety, a lack of self-confidence and even depression. Plus, imposters tend to have crazily high standards, which are a) impossible to maintain and b) exhausting.





Hearing your doubt and doing it anyway is a powerful step against imposter syndrome.

What makes it happen?

Psychologists now recognise imposter syndrome as something that will affect approximately 70 per cent of us at some stage. It can be caused by a wide range of factors: starting at a new school, going to university or TAFE, your first week at a cool new job, or just being the first person in your family to do any of these things. Imposter syndrome is triggered by feeling like you're straying out of "your" lane.

Our brain kicks up an idea that maybe we shouldn't be here, that there's a reason why we feel shy or nervous; that we're actually faking it and might get found out. Stressful!

What should we look out for?

Pay attention to the feeling of adrenaline when you're in new or challenging situations. Nervous energy is natural, but telling yourself that "I don't belong here" isn't helpful. You are there because you deserve to be!

Listen to your self-talk. Phrases like, "Oh, I only did well because I stayed up

all night," "I have literally no idea how I did that," or "I bet everyone hates my idea," create distance between you and your achievements. Practise saying, "Thank you, I tried really hard and I'm glad it paid off," or "I was nervous, but it went well." Internalising your success is key to fending off chronic self-doubt.

Try this: the next time you receive a compliment, say, "Thank you". Smile. That's it.

What's the bigger picture?

Self-doubt is sadly still seen as an acceptable part of womanhood. Former First Lady Michelle Obama has spoken about her self-doubt as both situational (being at the United Nations, meeting the Queen, media moments where she looks totally Zen) and constant. "I still have a little bit of imposter syndrome, it never goes away, that you're actually listening to me," she told teenage fans in 2018.

Body-positivity advocate and yoga teacher Jessamyn Stanley describes fighting her imposter syndrome as "a daily battle".

Regardless of what background you come from or what you do for a living, we can all feel like an imposter at times. Hearing your doubt and doing it anyway is a powerful step against imposter syndrome.

What if this is happening to me?

Dr Jessamy Hibberd, author of *The Imposter Cure*, says self-doubt can be overcome with self-compassion. "Being comfortable with yourself and confident in your abilities is the ultimate protection against imposter syndrome," she says.

"You have to start by getting those demons out of your head," said Michelle Obama. Replace the voices that tell you that you're not good enough, with a very big voice that says that you are. 🍓

Fernanda Fain-Binda is originally from London, where she grew up surrounded by her parents' piles of newspapers and dreaming of one day being a writer. She now lives with her own family in Melbourne and doesn't want anyone to pinch her.

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alive

adj 1 alert and active; animated
2 in life or existence; living
3 full of life; lively

Right now, as you're reading this page, we invite you to take a deep, conscious breath. Notice the expansive sensation in the body on the inhalation, and the contraction of the body as you exhale. Then, perhaps most importantly, notice the moment of space between the out-breath and your next in-breath.

This simple gesture of breathing mindfully is one of the quickest and most easeful ways to feel alive.

What other things make you feel full of life?
Going on an adventure? Sharing a meaningful experience with a loved one? Spending time in nature?

The late writer and speaker Alan Watts once suggested, "The meaning of life is just to be alive." Whether that means you're doing something that spikes your adrenaline or something that soothes your nervous system matters very little. What's more important is the fact that you're not just living; instead, you're alive.



Play to live

Play is a state of being akin to meditation. Carving out time for play can enhance your energy, productivity, creativity and overall quality of life.

Words HANNAH SAINTY



Isn't it marvellous to witness children run around in circles until they're red in the face? Or see them paint without restraint – fingers and all? Or listen and watch as they act out imagined stories with their toys, friends or sticks and leaves?

It's fascinating how they can simply just do things, for no reason at all, have an amazing time while doing it and feel either more energised or wonderfully sleepy by the end. This phenomenon is called "play". We all used to do it, but somewhere between childhood and adolescence, we begin to believe it is pointless, unproductive, immature and best left for the tiny humans.

But what if I were to tell you that this forgotten practice is the key to becoming just the opposite – a focused, productive, creative, calm and energised big human. That's the dream, right?

So what is play, really?

Play as an activity looks different for everyone, as different personalities find joy and pleasure from various tasks. But play as a concept is akin to meditation. It is a state of openness, connectedness and complete presence in the moment. It is something that you do for the experience and not the outcome.

In order to truly play, like a child in bliss, you move freely, you're present to your surrounds while focused on the task at hand and you don't feel a sense of time or space. It's that juncture where judgements, reservations and expectations are let go, and you are "in the zone", completely immersed in the moment.



Illustration Getty Images



The benefits of play

As children, play is important as it helps to shape our brains, teaching us social and motor skills, emotional intelligence, awareness and connection to creativity. As adults, play has the power to develop our interpersonal and personal skills, manage mental health and decrease tension in our bodies.

Studies have shown that developing and nurturing our playful side is as important to our wellbeing as sleep and nutrition. Here are some of the benefits of play explained:

- Reduces stress through releasing endorphins (the feel-good hormone), which makes you better equipped to deal with stressful situations as you can see situations more objectively – a win for your work, home and recreational life.

- Boosts brain function by exercising its flexibility, while maintaining and potentially renewing neural connections. Through challenging mental games such as chess and crosswords, the brain becomes stronger, responsive and minimises memory loss.
- Improves relationships as less stress means a more centred and relaxed mind, with an ability to connect with others more genuinely and positively.
- Cultivates creativity. When you're in a playful and relaxed state, the imagination is freed and stimulated, opening you up to ideas and insights that were previously blocked.
- Helps heal emotional trauma through behavioural patterns. The behavioural patterns driven by the brain are the same for adults as they are for children when

How to find your “play type”

We each have our own “play personality”, as discovered in research by Dr Stuart Brown of The National Institute for Play and explored on page 36. According to Stuart’s theory, these personalities are split into different archetypes and it is here that we can discover the sort of playful activities that would best suit our personality.

If you think back to the games and activities you enjoyed most when you were a child, this is where you will find the thread that links you to your play archetype and the ways to bring it into your adult life.



in a state of play. These patterns shape and predict emotional health and stability in children and adults alike.

In a society that has championed the “hard worker”, the “responsible one” and the “professional” for so long, engaging in activities with no “productive” outcome can feel silly, daunting and even challenging. But if you’re open to adopting this ideal and a “play practice”, your mental, emotional, physical and spiritual health will evolve.

You might identify with a few of these archetypes and that’s absolutely fine too! We are each made up of our own special “play recipe” and to engage with these archetypes of the self allows you to experience, enhance and nurture the full breadth of your potential.

As adults, play has the power to develop our interpersonal and personal skills, manage mental health and decrease tension in our bodies. Studies have shown that developing and nurturing our playful side is as important to our wellbeing as sleep and nutrition.



Archetype	Personality traits	Childhood games	Adult possibilities
The Joker	The “class clown”, enjoys nonsensical play	Goofy talk and behaviour, silly faces, jokes and practical jokes.	Try stand-up comedy or improv classes; spend time with your friends in social interactions where you can feel safe to be silly and free.
The Kinesthete	Physically active. Needs to use and move their bodies constantly.	Games that involve running, jumping, skipping, swimming, dance, climbing – anything that requires physical activity.	Join a run club, sign up for dance classes or yoga, go rock climbing or climb trees.
The Explorer	Adores new experiences (physical, relational, emotional or mental).	Class excursions to new places, tasting different foods, listening to music and seeing art. Fascinated with anything out of the normal experience.	See galleries in your area, travel, listen to new music, read books, go on spontaneous adventures.
The Competitor	Flourishes with competition and striving to win.	Sports, board games and/or creating things for a prize.	Join your local football or volleyball club, get the old Monopoly board out or see what competitions are available in your local area, eg film festivals, baking competitions.
The Director	Organising, leading and running the show.	Playing “school” and always being the teacher, making up and directing dance shows, planning sports events or just the social outings with your little buddies.	Sign up to coach sporting games, plan events for your friends and family, create and plan meet-ups for people with similar interests as you.
The Collector	Experiences or material possessions, they love to manage and design their collections.	Be it coin or stamp collections, Beanie Kid collections or football cards, collecting, organising and surrounding yourself with your special pieces was bliss as a child.	Collect gadgets you find interesting, records or instruments, or “experiences” that bring you joy.
The Artist/ Creator	The maker of things and/or the teller of stories; always led by imagination.	Loved art class, cooking with parents, performing on stage, reading and writing stories. Anything that used your imagination and hands to create something special.	Bake all the recipes in your favourite cookbook or make your own! Take up pottery or art classes, join an amateur theatre group, write the novel brewing in your heart.

When looking to play, consider how you’re feeling, which archetype you’re more aligned to at that time and play according to that part of you. There is no right or wrong way to play; the only thing that is “wrong” is to not play at all. As adults, we can easily let the need to play fall way down on the never-ending to-do list of life, but in order to be your best self for you,

your work and those around you, carve out the time to play and let yourself be free!

If it’s a sing-along with your favourite CD on the drive to work, playing Suduko or a quick game of hopscotch in the street, remember that you’re never too old to have fun. In the wise words of George Bernard Shaw, “We

don’t stop playing because we grow old; we grow old because we stop playing.” 

Hannah Sainty is a creative entrepreneur, freelance writer and intermedia artist. Drawing inspiration from nature and our intrinsic connectedness within it, Hannah explores the link between wellness and creativity.

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A watercolor illustration of a desk scene. At the top left is a smartphone with a dark screen and a light-colored case. To its right is a circular object, possibly a lamp or a container. Below the smartphone is a large, stylized leaf with blue and orange colors. In the center, a silver pen lies diagonally. To the right of the pen are several paper clips (one orange, one silver) and two black dots. At the bottom right is a notebook with a blue cover and a white page with faint lines. The background is white with light blue washes.

Writing as a form of therapy

Words can change lives.
We explore the healing
power of writing.

Words ALBERT FLYNN DESILVER





Those words not only slayed, but healed me. As if to say, you matter — your voice, your experience, your perceptions and insights have value, and you can write them forth and these very words will awaken you to greater possibility.



One morning when I was 22 years old, I woke up handcuffed to a hospital bed with no idea how I got there. And I was under arrest. It was seven words of the District Attorney, uttered with searing conviction, that saved my life: “You will not get a second chance.” I didn’t tell her that this was my second chance. Two years prior I was at a rowdy party drinking myself to oblivion in order to numb out a recent break up, when I wound up stumbling around outside, then passing out facedown in the driveway. A couple of hours later, my best friend jumped in his car, cranked up the tunes and, with no idea I was there, drove right over me. Another story.

I took my first verbal standardised test when I was 12, scoring in the lower 10th percentile. In the parent/teacher conference that followed, I heard the phrases, “He has trouble expressing himself verbally,” and “He’s showing signs of dyslexia.” I had no idea what to make of their conclusions, except that it meant I was somehow inferior, stupid and couldn’t write or speak my way out of a paper sack. I became promptly riddled with shame. I’d grown up in an abusive and alcoholic household, where most of the words I’d ever heard expressed were soaked in denial, bruised by rage or bent into tight tinfoil creases by lies. And yet I saw my parents constantly reading books and listening to music, repeatedly turning to art (words and writing) for solace,

entertainment, insights, perhaps even glimmers of truth. I finally caught my own glimpses, first in song lyrics — “If my words did glow” — by the Grateful Dead, whom I was obsessed with from the age of 14 onwards. I listened to this song a thousand times in high school and it bled into to my consciousness, giving me, at least, a hazy sense of possibility ... What if my words could glow? It was an invitation to imagine. What would happen if I tossed my ink pen (or camera for that matter) into the creative ring of fire?

In a college interview, how does a shame-riddled kid with dyslexia respond to the question, “What would you like to major in?” “Uh, taking pictures?” was all I could answer. I had helped out a little on the high school yearbook and found I liked looking through a camera lens and making pictures of what I saw. I didn’t know you could major in taking pictures. I studied photography as an undergraduate in Colorado, and then as a graduate student at the San Francisco Art Institute. By the time I arrived in San Francisco, I was newly sober but still anciently wounded. I hadn’t yet dealt with why I drank in the first place. I simply didn’t have words big enough for the wound. I was so bewildered and lost in art school that I failed my year-end review.

One night, bumbling about in the photo lab, I ran into my art history teacher Bill

Berkson, who invited me to a poetry reading. A poetry reading was the last thing I would have attended at the time, were it not for Bill making such a thing somehow sound interesting. Bill was not only an art history teacher, but also an extraordinary art writer and poet. I found myself at the doors of a thousand-seat theater at the release party celebrating the Norton Anthology of Post Modern American Poetry with an all-star cast of poets from all over North America. The evening began with a reading by the editor who shared an excerpt of a poem by 1950s legendary Bay Area poet Jack Spicer. Another seven words that caught me breathless and changed my life:

**“Unbind the dreamers ...
poet, be like god!”**

In that moment, I remember thinking, YES! This is the invitation, the gateway, the permission. This is what I’m supposed to be doing, not photography. I wasn’t sure what he meant by “god”, but I interpreted it to mean “creativity” and it was rippling through me. That was the night I became a writer. Those words not only slayed, but healed me. As if to say, you matter — your voice, your experience, your perceptions and insights have value, and you can write them and these very words will awaken you to greater possibility. And they did and do. This is the credo I have lived by every day since.





Writing as healing

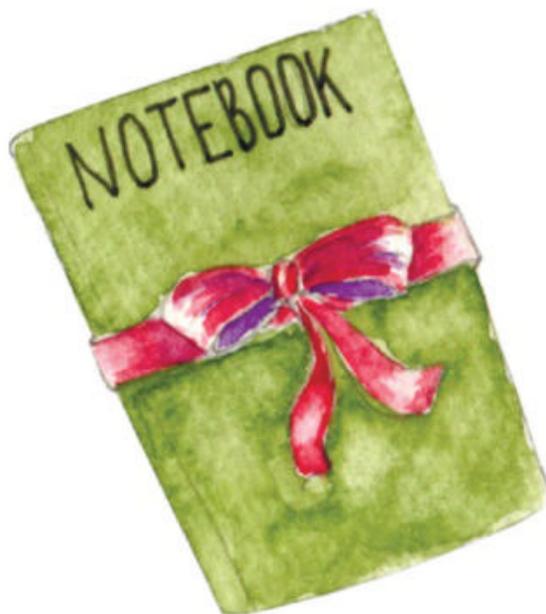
Writing as a healing practice begins with attention and awareness.
This is why I begin all my writing exercises with a mindfulness meditation practice.

Meditation practice

Find a comfortable and quiet place to sit. Close your eyes gently and rest your hands easily in your lap. Begin by taking a deep breath inward and exhale slowly. Take another deep breath and exhale slowly. And a third. Keep your eyes closed gently, breathe regularly and just tune into the rhythm of your breathing body. Feel your body relaxing into the chair or cushion. If you feel obvious points of tension, breathe into those points and let them relax. You might bring your attention to where you feel the breath moving in your body – is it in the rise and fall of your chest or belly? Maybe in the wisps of air at your nostrils?

Simply breathe in, and breathe out. Knowing in this moment that there is nothing to do, no knowledge to gather or remember, no proper way to breathe, nothing to get right or control. Just be, letting all tension and expectations go. There is no right or wrong, nothing to accomplish or learn, nothing to figure out or fix. Allow your mind to rest in an open state, letting thoughts be thoughts, sensations be sensations, attuned to the reality of the present moment, breath by breath.

Bring your hands to your heart centre and tune into what you are feeling right now. Breathe in, and breathe out. Bring as much nourishing attention to this heart space as you can, offering yourself loving kindness and compassion. Continue with this meditation for as little as five minutes or as long as 20. When you are ready, take one more deep breath inwards and on the exhale release your hands and open your eyes.

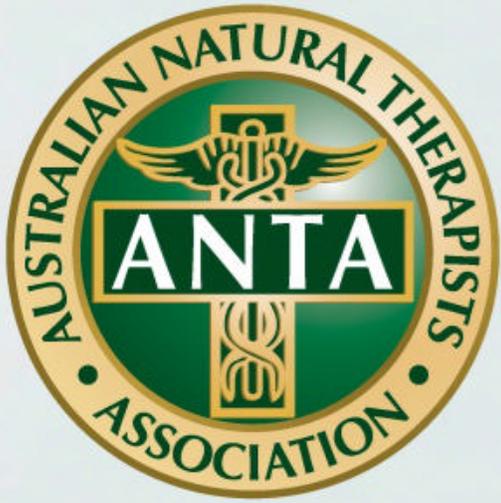


Writing exercise

From tuning into your heart centre, what emotion is arising for you right now? What feeling is present in your heart? Write it down at the top of your paper.

The invitation is to “free-write” a letter to this emotion of feeling. Time yourself for 10 minutes and write without lifting the pen from the page or your fingers from the keys. Begin with, “Dear ____”. Address this emotion as you might a great aunt, wise friend or deceitful neighbor. Personify this feeling as a cloud, landscape or animal. Let your imagination run wild. Write from margin to margin with urgency and speed, allowing whatever is real within you out upon the page, knowing you don’t have to share this with anyone and there is no right or wrong. You can ask questions, write specific details, colours, shapes, add metaphor. Veer from the idea; make it your own. Have fun. Be creatively wild. 🌟

Albert Flynn DeSilver is a master mindfulness meditation teacher and writer living in northern California. His latest popular book from Sounds True is Writing as a Path to Awakening. W: albertflynnndesilver.com



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Walking for wellbeing

From the connection it elicits with nature and ourselves to its ability to enhance creativity and clarity, we explore the wellbeing benefits of mindful walking.

Words ALLY McMANUS





“People usually consider walking on water or in thin air a miracle. But I think the real miracle is not to walk either on water or in thin air, but to walk on earth.” – Thich Nhat Hanh

Walking is one of our most natural, intuitive ways of moving. It’s something we learn in our early years of life and is a lifelong tool we can draw on to nurture our health, and not just physically. When practised mindfully, walking can also nourish us mentally, emotionally and spiritually.

Like a moving meditation, walking is a grounding activity when actioned with presence. It’s a form of doing that takes us into a state of being. From the stress-reducing effects of spending time in the great outdoors to walking’s ability to improve cardiovascular health and release endorphins, there’s a lot to be said for taking a mindful stroll in nature.

The science behind walking

Due to the connection between our mind and our feet, it’s common practice to take a walk to clear our head. When we walk, our biochemistry changes. The heart pumps faster, which circulates more blood and oxygen to the muscles and the organs, which of course includes the brain.

Research has shown that during or after exercise – even mild forms of movement – people perform better on memory and attention tests. Walking regularly also encourages new connections between brain cells, slows down the decline of brain tissue from ageing and increases the volume of the hippocampus, which is the part of the brain associated with memory.

How we walk even has the ability to influence our thoughts. Walking at our own natural pace creates a feedback loop between our body’s rhythm and our mental state. The pace of our walking will naturally oscillate with our mood and even “the cadence of our inner speech”, reveals Ferris Jabr in an article on walking in *The New Yorker*. If we slow down our stroll, this can tone down the pace of our thoughts, and vice versa.

Being in nature

Walking outdoors allows us to tap into the healing power of nature. From *shinrin-yoku*, known as “forest bathing” or nature therapy in Japan, to *friluftsliv*, which refers to spending time outdoors or “open-air living” in Scandinavia, different cultures practise myriad ways of being in nature but they all share the same thread of mindfulness. Humans are hardwired for connection and an integral part of this connection occurs when we’re being mindful in the natural world.

“Being present and feeling a deep oneness with everything around you,” is how Matt Sykes, former luxury bushwalking guide in Tasmania and founder of Melbourne-based consultancy Regeneration Projects, describes walking with mindfulness. “Mindful walking gives us the opportunity to listen to what’s really going on around us. The birds, the animals, water, people – everything is talking to us ... Awareness and presence in nature places us back in our body, in touch with reality,” he shares.

Matt believes mindful walking is best practised while being in nature. “Our minds and bodies can become dull in urban environments. The ground, the sky and sounds become covered up and masked by so much noise ... In forest bathing, they talk about the phytoncides (oils which are released by plants) having so much benefit for you, plus there’s the softness of light which calms your mood and of course vitamin D for your skin,” Matt explains.

The health and wellbeing benefits of walking in nature are not just reserved to physical, either. Matt suggests we’re affected mentally, emotionally and spiritually too. “Walking while being immersed in nature is the ultimate immunity booster. Relief of stress and anxiety is happening at the same time as gently bringing movement through every dimension of your body. I also think that a sense of spiritual connection is part





Walking barefoot

Walking barefoot on natural surfaces such as soil, grass or sand, also known as “earthing”, has a number of health benefits. From increasing antioxidants and reducing inflammation to improving sleep, immune function and potentially regulating both the endocrine and nervous systems, there are a growing number of studies exploring the relationship between our bodies and the electrons in the earth.



Kinhin: a walking meditation

Zen walking, a form of walking meditation also known as *kinhin*, is a present-moment awareness practice that is often done in conjunction with a seated meditation practice. In *kinhin*, the hands are held in the *shashu* position — a mudra where the fingers of the left hand make a gentle fist around the thumb and are held against the body, while the right hand gently covers the left. Moving very slowly and mindfully, *kinhin* usually lasts for six to seven minutes.

Not only is it designed to give the body physical relief from sitting in meditation, *kinhin* also cultivates space in the mind by offering a calm, meditative awareness not only during the practice, but in the rest of life too.

measure how walking influences creativity moment-to-moment. The idea for these studies was unsurprisingly sparked while the researchers were on a walk.

The mental and physical interplay of the body while walking has even been likened to the same processes present in creative tasks such as writing. This parallel between writing and walking, whereby each process requires both mental and physical energy, can help us deepen our understanding of the mind-body connection. When we're walking in a natural environment, our brain has to survey the surrounds in order to discern which direction to walk in. This process is akin to writing, as the brain must also review a (mental) landscape and turn that stream of thoughts into words via the hands. "Walking organises the world around us; writing organises our thoughts," shares Ferris in his article in *The New Yorker*.

Not only does the gentle act of walking with presence nurture us physically, it also supports us mentally, emotionally and energetically by creating the space for us to process our thoughts and feelings. As neuroscientist, author and speaker Abhijit Naskar suggests, "The path reveals itself once you start walking." 🧘

Ally McManus, the founding editor of Being and the editor of WellBeing Yoga magazines, is a freelance writer and editor in magazine and book publishing. When she isn't working on copy or interviewing talent, she is teaching yoga and meditation on Victoria's Bellarine Peninsula.



of it too. It's kind of like going to church or a temple — there's something sacred about it."

It is unsurprising then that research confirms spending time in green spaces such as gardens, parks and forests can rejuvenate us mentally. In a way, it offsets the effects of spending so much time in overstimulating, man-made environments where our attention and energy can be drained. We can turn to nature to feel replenished. A mindful walk outdoors gives your mind the freedom to flow leisurely from one sensory experience to the other. In one moment, your attention may be on the drifting clouds above. In another moment, it might be on the feeling of the soft grass beneath your feet.

Cultivating clarity & creativity

"Walking through nature is the 'well' in wellbeing. From that source, we can tap into limitless potential, creativity and innovation," Matt shares. The soothing nature of the gentle forward motion in walking helps us create internal space to tap into our flow state, which can allow us to connect with our creativity, allowing insights and ideas to emerge.

As there isn't a great deal of conscious energy required to walk, this means our attention can wander freely. This state of mind is what a lot of research links to the cultivation of innovation and creativity. New research has even been able to directly



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Healthy expectations

Create a life of ease, balance and purpose by fostering healthy expectations.

Words EMMA NUTTALL

Many of us have expectations around what our life should look like and what we want to achieve. Have you ever stopped to consider where your expectations originate from and whether they are actually serving you? Are they a healthy motivator for achieving your goals or are they causing you endless stress and anxiety?

Healthy versus unhealthy

Having realistic expectations of yourself contributes to healthy self-esteem.

If you are frequently stressed, unfulfilled and highly self-critical, then chances are you are putting too much pressure on yourself.

Expectations are the internal standards you set for yourself. If you are not living up to these standards, you can become frustrated and disappointed. Over time, this can erode your self-confidence.

Unrealistic expectations can also mean your goals and values are out of alignment. It's hard to fulfil your purpose when you are working from unreasonable standards. You may also discover that although your goals are realistic, your timeframes and resources are not. This may result in high stress from working too many hours or taking on an unmanageable financial burden in order to achieve success.





If your expectations are realistic, authentic and aligned to your purpose, you can create meaning and abundance in a more positive and balanced way.

It can be helpful to make the distinction between passion and drive versus pushing yourself to burnout. Hustle culture has infiltrated Western society – not to mention our social media feeds – and it's easy to get caught up in the momentum. By becoming aware of your internal drivers, you can act with intention while still embracing your passion. If your expectations are realistic, authentic and aligned to your purpose, you can create meaning and abundance in a more positive and balanced way.

Who do these belong to?

Unrealistic expectations that have been placed on you in childhood or early adulthood may have been instilled into your subconscious. This can result in pushing yourself too hard without being consciously aware of the motivation behind this behaviour.

It can be helpful to stop and reflect on the original drivers for your expectations. Are they internally driven or have they been passed down by a partner, a parent, a childhood teacher or your boss? If they are from an external source, have you taken the time to clarify them? You may find that they are no longer valid or that you are living with unspoken expectations from childhood or a past workplace that no longer apply. Perhaps there is someone you seek admiration from, and this is causing you to push yourself too hard in order to impress them. Or maybe you fear disappointing people.

When it comes to defining success, the only person's opinion that matters is your own. Recognising that you are the only person who needs to be proud of your achievements can be liberating!

Letting go of outdated beliefs

When I started a mature-age Bachelor degree, I aimed for high distinctions in all subjects. Trying to juggle studies with work and all my other responsibilities was enough of a challenge, without the added pressure of “needing” to excel in every assessment. I planned on working for myself when I graduated so it was highly likely that no one else would ever see my results, but this knowledge didn’t change the expectations I placed on myself. I had something to prove.

It took a fair bit of reflection to uncover that I was trying to prove to a younger version of myself that I was smart enough, so that I would no longer feel inferior to other people. I was working from the psyche of an insecure 19-year-old who had learned that the only way to manage her lack of confidence was to do everything perfectly, so no one could criticise her.

Since the age of 19, I have pushed my comfort zones, achieved a great deal in my personal and professional life and, most importantly, connected within and expanded my sense of self. This belief I had been subconsciously working from was no longer valid and by clarifying and reframing it, I was able to significantly reduce the expectations I had been placing on myself.

When I received a credit in my next subject, I was prouder of myself than for any of the high distinctions I had received because it signified a development in my emotional intelligence as opposed to simply being graded for academic performance.

You too, can push back the curtain behind your expectations to discover whether your daily actions are aligned with your purpose. You may find that you are hurtling towards burnout due to a set of outdated beliefs that are fuelling unrealistic expectations. Or your internal standards may just need a few small adjustments in order to reduce a significant amount of stress.



Practise self-compassion

Even when we are working with realistic goals, mistakes are inevitable. Do you berate yourself when you make a mistake? Are you ever guilty of exaggerating your failings? We are often harsher towards ourselves than to other people.

Next time you experience a setback, it might be helpful to attempt to soothe your distress by showing yourself kindness and compassion. Research shows that self-compassion reduces feelings of inadequacy.

If you are concerned that self-compassion is indulgent or may result in complacency, you will be pleased to know that the opposite is actually true. A person who allows themselves the freedom to make mistakes and can accept failure without engaging in self-criticism is actually more likely to move forward and try again.

Redefine failure

It can be helpful to acknowledge that mistakes are how we learn. Successful people generally have a trail of failures

behind them. They just choose to reframe mistakes into learnings that they can apply to their next endeavour.

So when you next make a mistake, reflect on the circumstances, behaviours or emotions that caused it and what you will do differently next time.

It's hard to live a happy and congruent life if you are motivated by outdated beliefs or someone else's version of success. It's hard to move forward when inauthenticity and a lack of direction are holding you back. Take the time to define what success and contentment mean for you at the stage of life you are in right now. By embracing expectations that serve you, you can live with greater purpose and ease. 🍷

Emma Nuttall is a nutritionist (BHSc) and freelance writer. She combines evidence-based nutritional medicine with mindset strategies to support her clients in achieving their goals. W: healthservedup.com; IG: @healthservedup

Reflection exercise

Reflect on the expectations you have for yourself in all areas of your life. You may want to consider areas such as career, education, home life, relationships and even possessions. It can be an interesting exercise to stop and reflect on the role that material possessions have in your life and the perceived happiness they bring.

A good way of completing this exercise is with free journalling (otherwise known as "stream of consciousness journaling"). Do a short meditation, or take 10 long, deep belly breaths. Then put pen to paper and write down whatever comes to mind.

For each expectation you have identified, consider the following:

- 🍷 Is this expectation causing me unnecessary stress?
- 🍷 Is this truly what I want for myself or does it come from an external source?
- 🍷 What would my life look like if I let go of this expectation?
- 🍷 If I can't let it go, how can I make it healthy and realistic?

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Compassionate boundaries

While boundaries can sound harsh, they can be kind. They are integral to self-care, keeping your needs from being put last.

Words SAMANTHA ALLEMANN

As a compassionate person, you're likely called in when someone is in need or you're there immediately offering your help before anyone can ask. Whether it's a shoulder to cry on or practical help, you're used to making yourself available to others.

But this offer or expectation of help can become a burden, as you may feel overwhelmed by the dependency others have on you or burnt out by compassion-fatigue. While pulling away can rid you with guilt, it's important to prioritise self-care. Compassionate boundaries will not only protect your energy, they can also lead to healthier relationships and improved self-esteem.





Differentiating between compassion and empathy

Compassion and empathy, while often used interchangeably, are not the same thing. Psychotherapist and counsellor Natajsa Wagner says that we all have a great capacity for compassion, while empathy is finite. “We can’t continue to give empathy without replenishing our own energy reserves. When we move into the dark side of empathy, we can become overloaded,” she says.

While compassion involves being aware of another’s suffering and becoming motivated to take action, empathy can lead us to become overly engaged. This is where lines can blur as to what we feel and what the other person feels, as we move into their experience.

Empathy and compassion can still go hand-in-hand with what Natajsa refers to as being “compassionately detached” – “where we are holding space for ourselves as well as the other person,” she says. “This means that we are not numb or aloof when it comes to others’ pain, but we are also not flooded with their pain. It’s where we can still connect to ourselves but not lose touch with our own body and own emotions.”

Letting go of “should”

So in the past you may have dropped everything when your friend wanted to relay their latest gripe, but you’re now feeling stretched and drained. Maybe your parents are pressuring you to call more often than you’d like, and you feel the burden of what it means to be a good daughter or son.

Let go of the notion of what you should do, as this doesn’t always take into account what is best for you. It is also worth exploring what it means to feel needed and why this is important to you – do you not feel like you are enough without being of service to others? Counselling and journalling can help you make breakthroughs on what is likely to have become a long-term pattern of coming to the rescue.

Comparing yourself to others is unhelpful, too. Just because your colleague is working themselves to the bone or whipping up a batch of cupcakes for the charity bake sale, that doesn’t mean you have to as well.

“We all have different capacities when it comes to what we might be able to offer another person at any given time;

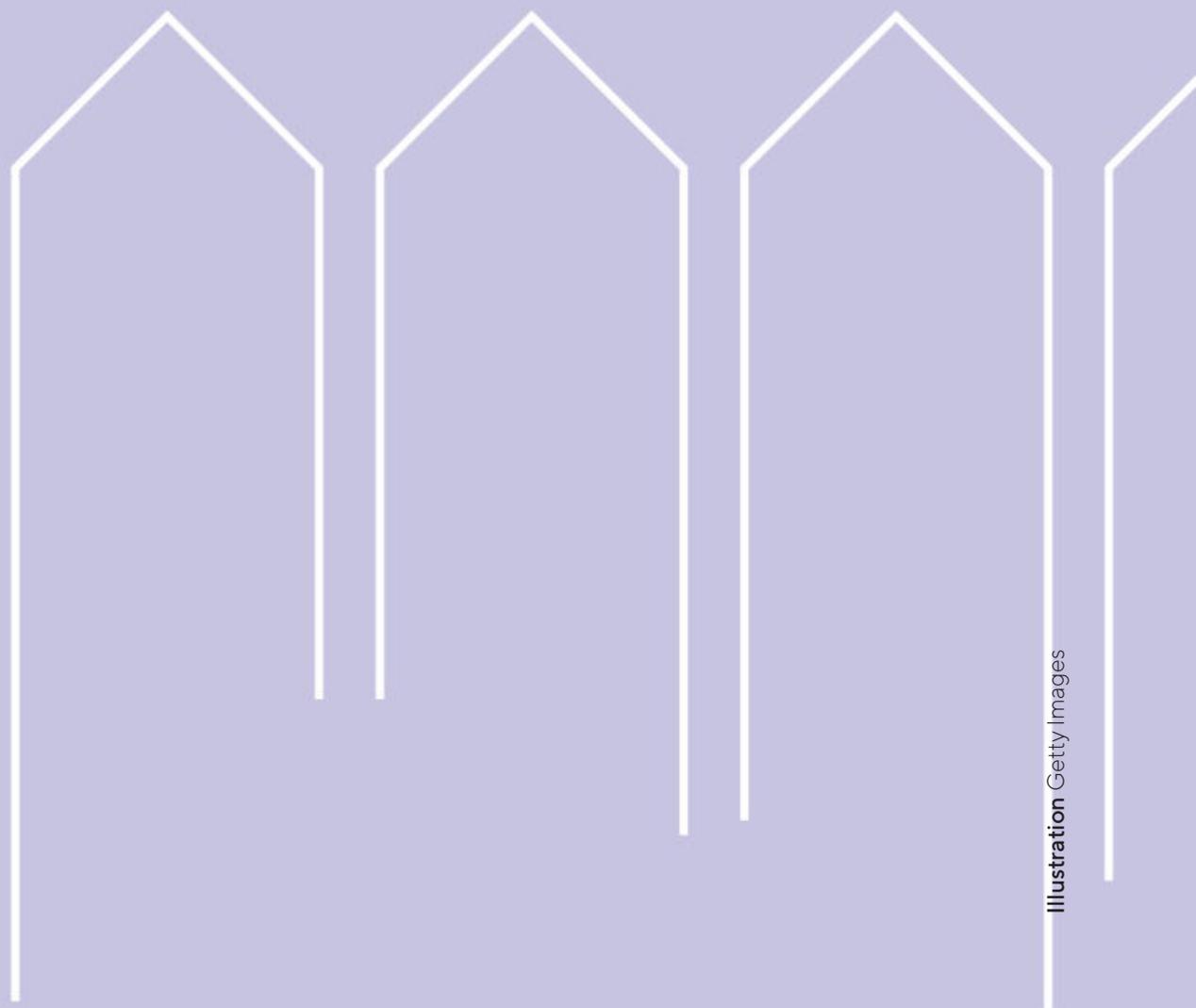
we need to learn to honour our feelings and emotions around this rather than thinking we should be doing more,” says Natajsa.

“People who have taken on roles in relationships as caregivers or are highly sensitive people (HSPs) or empaths are at risk if they don’t have awareness of their own feelings and emotions and find it difficult to express these.”

Examining your guilt

While we know the ability to say “no” is important in maintaining our boundaries, it can be hard to put yourself first without feeling a flood of guilt.

Understanding the role of guilt can help you realise that it’s not always applicable. “Guilt is intended to be a reparative emotion,” says Natajsa. “Guilt happens for people when they feel they have done something wrong and they want to make amends. In the case of people who feel selfish because they put boundaries and limits in place or are putting themselves first, it’s clear that this isn’t something to feel guilty about. There is no repair that needs to happen here because we haven’t done anything wrong.”







Compassionate boundaries will not only protect your energy, they can also lead to healthier relationships and improved self-esteem.

Yet while we can understand this intellectually, we can still feel burdened by the feeling that we are not doing enough, or are enough. In this instance, Natajsa says it's worth embracing the guilt instead.

"While guilt might not feel great, the presence of it is a good sign for over givers," she says. "It means they may be taking care of themselves, and this is something they can usually afford to do more of – even when they think they are being selfish – because usually they lean more towards taking care of others."

Detaching from the response

Not all boundaries are understood or respected by the person at the receiving end. In fact, you'll often find that the people who react the worst to boundaries being put in place are the very people who need them!

"It's important to expect that change can be difficult and that people may react with shock or anger when we start to change the rules of the game," says Natajsa. "We can be prepared to hold our ground and also explain the changes and why we need to make them. We can come from a place of compassion when we are doing this; where

we feel grounded, calm and confident so that we don't get drawn into the other person's shock and pain in the moment."

And if you experience anger or resentment from someone when you set a boundary, it's likely the relationship is not reciprocal. "When there is an imbalance in a relationship, one person requires the other person to give more time, energy and resources, while you're left not receiving anything in return," she says.

Leaning into generosity, not obligation

If you've felt overloaded before, you may be more cautious about lending a helping hand again. What if that "every now and then" food shop for your elderly neighbour becomes a constant obligation? Or that offer to drive a friend to an appointment becomes an expectation that you'll be available at the drop of a hat?

Never helping anyone due to the fear they will overload you isn't the answer, but instead, decide who and what to give your energy to. This decision should come down to mutual respect, as this results in healthier boundaries. "When someone respects our thought, effort and time, this really sets the

tone for all of our interactions," says Natajsa.

Set expectations from the beginning by understanding what is being asked of you, and check in so both parties can talk about how the arrangement is going. For example, if you agree to do a weekly food shop for your elderly neighbour, make sure that you both understand when you'll do this and for how long. If they start expecting daily shops, be open with them about what is and isn't possible – you may be able to do this, but don't feel bad if you can't take this more time-intensive task on.

Remember that while others' needs are important, they aren't more important than your own. "When we decide to put another person's needs above our own, we abandon ourselves and what our needs are," says Natajsa. "This is about recognising and honouring our feelings and emotions as valid, just as we would honour another person's." 🐾

Samantha Allemann is a Melbourne-based freelance writer and editor who has written for Being magazine since issue 01. When she's not writing, she's usually daydreaming or reading (preferably surrounded by cats). W: samantha-allemann.com



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Living from the heart

How to notice and practise acts
of courage in your everyday life.

Words KAITLIN MCMANUS





Brené Brown poignantly and simply describes courage as, “Learning to be brave and afraid at the exact same time.”

Courage may look like ...

- ✍ A willingness to be who you are; to be seen as your authentic self and to witness others as their authentic selves.
- ✍ Sharing your experiences and feelings with others (when things go well and also when things don't).
- ✍ Giving yourself permission to feel and express joy, care, hope or excitement when there is a risk that something won't work out (and that others will know you would feel sad or disappointed if it doesn't work out).
- ✍ Choosing a different path to the one you thought you were meant to take/told to take or the one that didn't work out how you'd hoped.
- ✍ Doing something for the first time.
- ✍ The beginning or ending of a relationship.
- ✍ Taking responsibility for your actions after a mistake or argument, instead of avoiding or blaming others.
- ✍ Speaking up when you have the urge to stay silent.
- ✍ Asking for support and communicating what you need.
- ✍ Letting go of what you can't control and instead practising trust.
- ✍ Being understanding and kind towards yourself and others instead of being judgmental and critical.
- ✍ Listening to your gut feelings to guide your decision-making, despite any uncertainty.
- ✍ Knowing there is no “right” or “wrong” and that it's okay to change your mind, circle back or take a different path.
- ✍ Facing something you've been avoiding.
- ✍ Sharing your creativity with the world.
- ✍ Knowing something won't be easy, but is worthwhile nonetheless.

An invitation

An old friend of mine also shared with me her thoughtful reflections: While living from a place of courage can be really hard, the alternative — living a life without risks — may end up being much harder. So I encourage you to step into the space of the unknown, to take a chance, to back yourself. As psychologist Susan Jeffers suggests, “Feel the fear and do it anyway.” Who knows where your courage practice may take you.

I used to facilitate weekly reflection groups for individuals seeking support with their recovery from an eating disorder. In these groups I invited participants to think of an act of courage they demonstrated in the previous week, to write this down and to share it with the group (if they felt comfortable doing so). Participants would often express discomfort or resistance to this process. Sometimes they would minimise what they shared, choose not to share out loud (understandably), or struggle to come up with any examples. Each week I would gently remind them that everyone in the room had without doubt practised courage throughout the week because, put simply, courage means, “Doing something despite discomfort, fear or anxiety.”

It's a shame how hard it can be for us to acknowledge our acts of courage. Perhaps part of the challenge is that it's sadly more “normal” within our society for us to focus on and express our perceived flaws and failures than it is to own our successes and celebrate our wins (regardless of how small we feel they are).

So on that note, I invite you to reflect on your own relationship to courage; how you understand it, experience it and live it. I also encourage you to consider how practising acting from a place of courage may help you to show up in this world in a meaningful and values-aligned way.

Courage defined

To further explore the concept of courage, let's turn to the wise words of courage, vulnerability and shame researcher, professor Brené Brown, who poignantly and simply describes courage as, “Learning to be brave

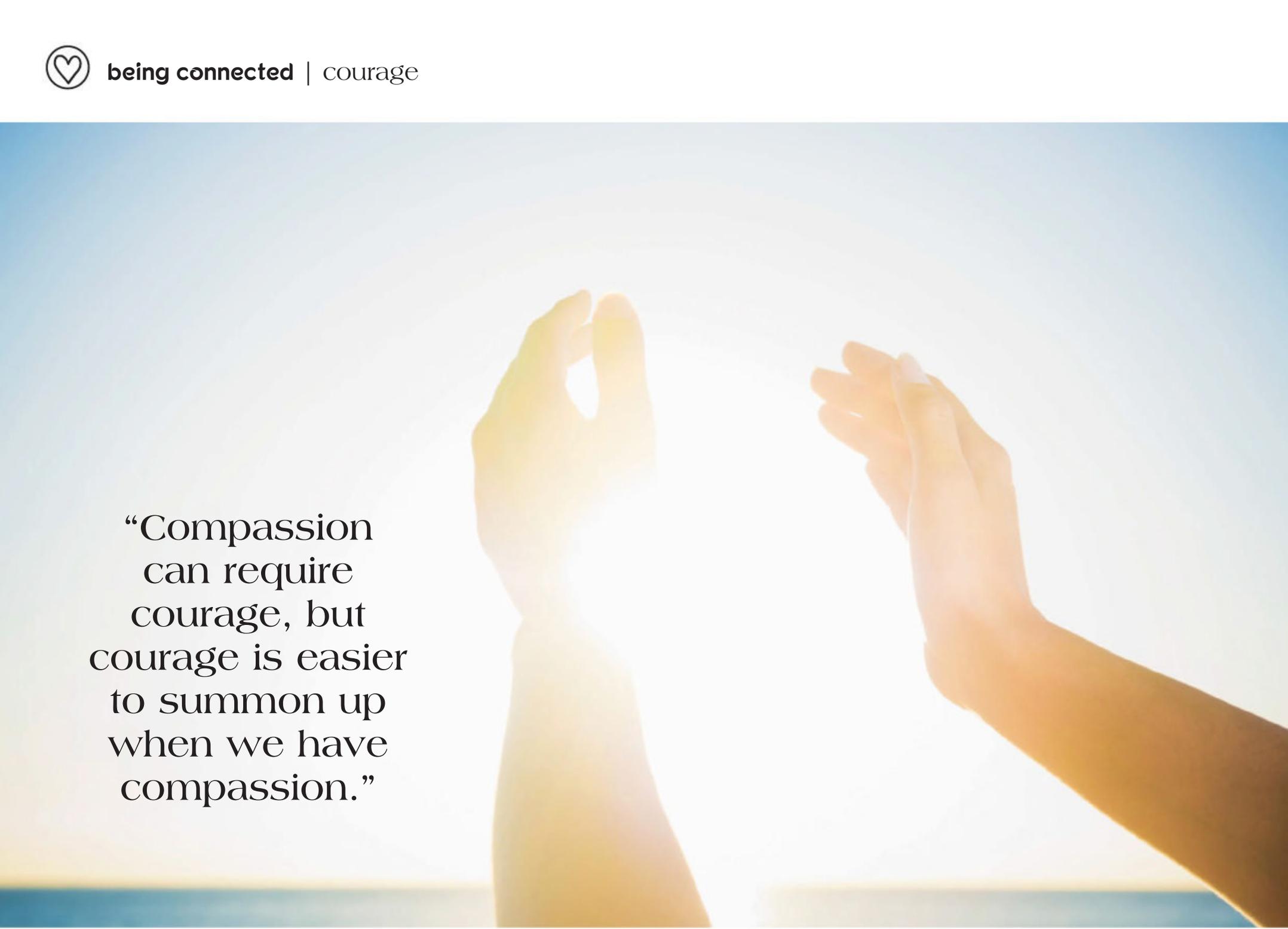
and afraid at the exact same time.” Her definition combats the common misconception that courage means to act without fear or discomfort and also highlights that fear and being brave can coexist. This is actually at the heart of courage.

The path to courage

As captured by Brené in her *The Call to Courage* talk on Netflix, her research has shown that being brave requires a willingness to experience vulnerability. Adding to this, in her latest book *Dare to Lead*, she reminds us, “You can't get to courage without rumbling with vulnerability.” Brené defines vulnerability as the feeling experienced “during times of uncertainty, risk or emotional exposure; the courage to show up, fully engage and be seen when you can't control the outcome.” To distinguish the two concepts, living courageously can be understood as how you choose to act, whereas vulnerability is the feeling you will inevitably experience as part of the process. In her talk she also highlights to the audience that if you live courageously, you don't risk failure, you will *know* failure.

When I asked my dear mum what courage meant to her, she defined it as: “The strength to confront fear and anxiety.” Her words led me to reflect on how in addition to a willingness to experience vulnerability, acting courageously involves drawing on your internal strength in an intentional way. It is important though to remember that how you understand what it means to be “strong” or courageous is subjective. It may be biased and shaped by your past experiences and messages learned from those around you and the broader society you have been exposed to.





“Compassion can require courage, but courage is easier to summon up when we have compassion.”

Reminders for your courage practice

- ✦ **Choose courage over comfort.** Remember that acting from a place of courage is a choice and that the discomfort that comes from acting courageously is temporary, just like the short-term relief that comes from staying within your comfort zone. Courageous acts will leave you feeling both unease and ease.
- ✦ **Be prepared to feel all the feels.** Living with courage requires a willingness to experience both pleasant and unpleasant emotions — from love, joy and belonging to hurt, grief, fear and shame.
- ✦ **Be mindful of assumptions.** When you notice your mind making comparisons and/or assumptions about others and your perception of their sense of ease in doing things, try to let go of these thoughts and remind yourself that those around you may be acting courageously without you realising.
- ✦ **Connect with your values.** Reflect on how you want to show up in the world and within your relationships and use your values as motivation to guide your actions.
- ✦ **The harder path.** Acting courageously is a practice and a forever process; it's often the harder path to take. So showing yourself understanding and kindness (as opposed to judgement) along the way is important. As clinical psychologist professor Paul Gilbert so wisely teaches in his book, *The Compassionate Mind*, “Compassion can require courage, but courage is easier to summon up when we have compassion.”
- ✦ **The ripple effect of courage.** Brené Brown reminds us, “Courage is contagious.” So why not encourage those around you to choose courage, celebrate their efforts and remember to include yourself in this process.

Acts of courage

In Brené's book, *The Gifts of Imperfection*, she writes that historically the word courage meant, “To speak one's mind by telling all one's heart.” However, everyday acts of courage nowadays may in part go unnoticed because courage is not typically understood in this way.

Although courage is a part of the human experience, being brave and courageous may look and feel different for each and every one of us. It is likely dependent on your own unique biology, history and circumstances. What may lead to unease for one individual may be met with ease for another. But if you open your heart and mind, you may begin to see everyday acts of courage all around you. 🌸

Kaitlin McManus is a clinical psychologist who enjoys supporting people on their paths to healing by helping them to cultivate a more understanding and compassionate relationship with themselves and their struggles.

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Freedom to roam

Intrinsic to Norwegian culture, *friluftsliv* is the practice of being in nature with mindfulness, appreciation and care.

What is friluftsliv?

It's widely known that the Scandinavian countries consistently place in the top ranks when it comes to the World Happiness Report – and Norway is no exception. Part of this happiness comes down to a Norwegian term that is not easy to translate but loosely means “free air life”. *Friluftsliv*, pronounced free-loofts-leev, refers to an outdoor lifestyle and Norwegians' love of nature and getting out into the wild. Importantly, the concept also means enjoying nature without disturbing or damaging it – engaging with it with deep respect.

Friluftsliv is integral to Norwegian culture and society. If you don't like the outdoors, you basically have no business being in Norway! What might be considered a casual weekend activity in other countries is treated as religion in Norway – Norwegians' passion for outdoor activities and getting back to nature is part of their character. Children are taught from a very young age how to interact with nature, as well as outdoor activities such as skiing and survival skills. But friluftsliv doesn't mean the same thing to everyone. It can range from an extreme week-long glacier hike or a hardcore skiing expedition, to an easy hike in the forest with a friend or relaxing in an outdoor sauna by a lake.

Norway even has a law for it. The Right to Roam under the Outdoor Recreation Act 1957 states that anyone has permission to roam freely in the outdoors and to camp

Where does friluftsliv originate?

The concept of friluftsliv has been part of Norwegian culture for centuries but Norwegian playwright Henrik Ibsen first popularised the term in 1859 in a poem called *On the Heights*.

Perhaps the Norwegians' intrinsic passion for nature can be attributed to its accessibility. This is a country of breathtaking beauty where snow blankets the stunning scenery made up of grand glaciers, rugged forests and fjords flanked by incredibly steep sides.

anywhere, as long as they show respect and care for the environment. In other words, leave things as you found them and don't cause any damage to nature. This law is based on an ancient right called *allemannsretten* (everyman's right).

I hear you say: “But isn't it too ridiculously cold in Norway for all this outdoor business?” Yes ... yes, it mostly is. But in Norway, this excuse won't fly. Snow, ice, glaciers – what the rest of us might consider deterrents to going outside, Norwegians consider great reasons for going outside! Rather than complaining about the weather or using it as an excuse, it is embraced and appreciated.

What are the health and happiness benefits?

➤ Reduces stress

When you leave the house and head into the outdoors, you are making a step to disconnect from your busy and preoccupied life. It's a way of escaping whatever it is that might be causing you worry, tension or stress. You get to leave that all behind for a while to focus on yourself and the natural world around you. This helps calm the mind and body and reduce stress levels.

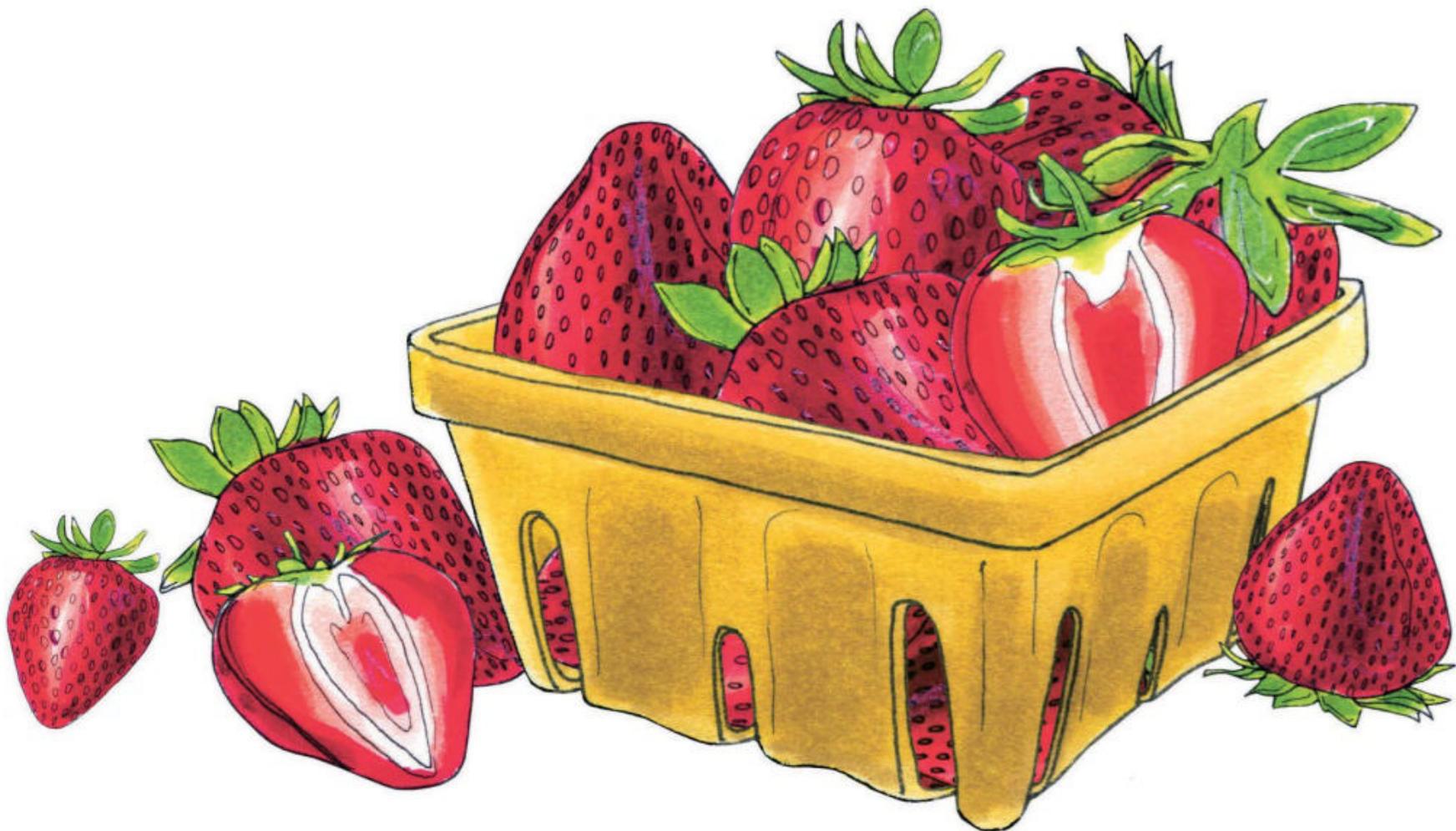
➤ Boosts creativity and productivity

Being out in nature helps to clear the mind and to reset. You give your mind the chance to slow down and think more carefully. Nature can improve your mood and wellbeing through fresh air and this in turn can help boost creativity or productivity at work or at home. Having a bit of a break can help you avoid burnout and get you back to performing at your best.

➤ Helps strengthen relationships

For many Norwegians, friluftsliv is about not just spending time in nature alone, but often as the main social activity with friends and family. Weekend hikes, ski trips and ice-fishing are all ways that people can spend time together in the outdoors, and this helps cultivate relationships and ways to bond together. You're spending quality time away from the normal stresses you might have at home, like trying to get housework or homework done.





➤ **Reduces the risk of illness and disease**

Many studies have shown that exposure to nature and the outdoors can help with everything from reducing cardiovascular disease and the risk of type 2 diabetes to lowering blood pressure and overall boosting the immune system.

➤ **Builds resilience and character**

Being in nature can take you out of your comfort zone and challenge you, particularly for Norwegians who love to engage in extreme outdoor adventures such as ice-climbing, glacier kayaking or even reindeer sledding! By challenging yourself, taking risks and trying something new in what might be tough conditions, you build resilience, courage and mental strength.

➤ **Improves sleep and mood**

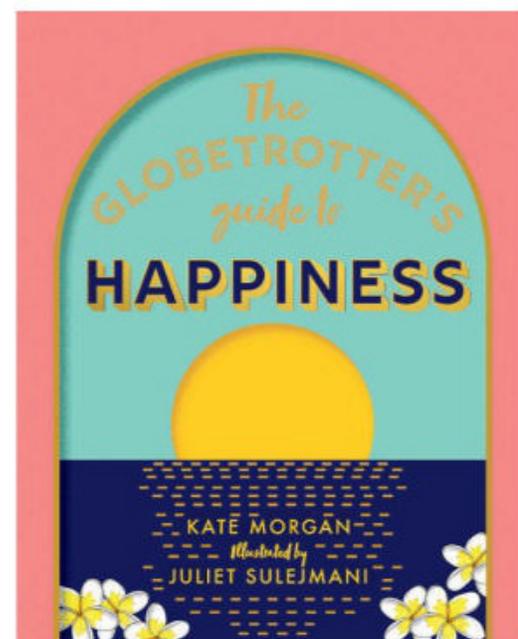
We all know that blissful sleep after a full day out in the fresh air. Nature helps relax us and calm the mind, the first step to getting a good night's sleep. Exposure to natural light, away from the artificial lighting of our home or office, may help to regulate our body clocks, too.

How can I make friluftsliv part of my daily life at home?

Don't have majestic fjords on your doorstep? No huskies pulling sleds around your neighbourhood? Don't worry. You can incorporate the concept of friluftsliv into your life even if you're not fortunate enough to live in Norway's knockout natural surroundings. It's about getting outdoors and into nature. By the time many of us have made it to the weekend after an exhausting week of work and looking after the kids, we might be tempted to order pizza with a glass of wine and lie on the couch indoors streaming TV. And while this is great every now and then, take a leaf out of the Norwegians' book and break the habit and get back to nature. Anyone can do it. It's just a matter of choice.

➤ **Swap the gym**

If your exercise routine usually involves running on a treadmill at the gym, swap this out for a run outdoors instead. Find a local running track, a nearby park, a forest trail, or even just the streets around your neighbourhood if you don't have access to nature close by.



This is an edited extract from *The Globetrotter's Guide to Happiness* by Kate Morgan published by Hardie Grant Travel \$29.99 AU and \$32.99 NZ and is available where all good books are sold. Illustration and cover image: © Juliet Sulejmani



Set up a picnic blanket in your backyard or set and style the outdoor table and invite a bunch of friends over for a long weekend lunch outside.

Go for a walk

It couldn't be easier. If you're not one for extreme adventures or anything too physically demanding, just going for a walk is a low-impact way of getting some physical activity outside. And again, it's best to find a peaceful spot somewhere in nature, but if you can't manage that, just make do with what you have. If you were planning on driving to the shops, walk instead. If you usually sit at your desk for lunch, go for a walk after you've eaten. If you were going to drive to pick up the kids from school, walk instead and all walk home together.

Have a picnic

Grab a bunch of friends or your family and organise a picnic day at your local park, river, beach or head to a nature reserve or national park. Or it can be as simple as opting to have your lunch outside, instead of sitting indoors with the TV on or glued to your phone. Set up a picnic blanket in your backyard or set and style the outdoor table and invite a bunch of friends over for a long weekend lunch outside. You can get great ideas for table settings from Pinterest, but then leave your phone inside while you picnic.

Watch the sunrise or sunset

If you have a favourite viewpoint in your local area, check what time sunrise or sunset is and schedule time to head to that viewpoint and take in the beauty of nature.

Embrace the weather

Ditch the attitude of "I can't go for that run now as it's raining, or cold or windy", or whatever your excuse is. Make like a Norwegian and embrace it. Rug up, grab an umbrella, pop on your gumboots (wellingtons) and get out there.

Start a new hobby

Find a new hobby that will get you outdoors. If you're someone who needs more motivation to get going, you might find it's much easier to try a new hobby in a group setting. Join an outdoor yoga class or a personal training session outdoors. Start bike-riding or nature photography. Find something you enjoy, otherwise it won't last and you'll be in on the couch again in no time. 🌿





Smitten for merino

When everyone started wearing destructive, itchy polyester fleece, Nicola Mason noticed. She has spent the past 14 years cultivating sustainable wool garments with her brand, Smitten Merino.

Q: You've just released your new Smitten Merino winter range. What will we find in the collection?

A: We love winter at Smitten Merino as we're all about wool, warmth and layering soft merino clothing that is relaxing and easy to wear. This year we are bringing out some beautiful pieces in chocolate/espresso: a polo-neck dress and long drape cardigan that works with our mustard skirt and tops. Also, some new dresses coming in gumtree green. This colourway is soft and earthy, works with chocolate and is flattering to most colour complexions. Another new colour this season is navy/ivory fine pinstripe. All our pieces are designed to be easily mixed and matched.

Q: Please tell us about your new sleepwear and dressing gown range. What materials are used?

A: One thing we learned from 2020 was that people really want to feel cosy and safe when the world is an uncertain place. As loungewear turned into work-from-home wear, we realised that merino pyjamas and dressing gowns were the next step for us.

We have used a variety of fabrics in this range. Our pyjamas come in a few different styles. Our snug-fitting leggings and scoop-top combinations are in the soft rib merino and our button-through wide-leg PJs are another option, usually in a silky merino

jersey. Dressing gowns are unisex and come in two different weights – the original dressing gown in medium-weight rib 200G merino and a thicker and warmer 360G ponte version for really chilly winters. Both are 100 per cent merino and, of course, made here in Tasmania.

Q: Your new duffle coats look so warm and cosy! Where did the design inspiration for these come from?

A: There's something so classic and timeless about the duffle coat. We decided we needed a duffle coat in the Smitten range because it has such a long history. The style suits most people and it can dress up your outfit in an instant.





Smitten Merino founder Nicola Mason shares four reasons why we should wear sustainable and ethically produced fabrics:

For us, sustainability and caring for the planet are part of our DNA. When we first conceived the Smitten idea, we wanted to have a business that supported wool growers and was good for people and for Tasmania. Wool has a long history in Australia and we were eager to get people wearing it again. We noticed that everyone started wearing polyester fleece, which is so destructive to the environment — we

thought we should try to make wearing wool cool again.

1 Wool is biodegradable and renewable. Wool biodegrades safely into the earth at the end of its life and the sheep grow another coat every year.

2 Wool is antibacterial, odour resistant and stain resistant so you can wear it for days without it smelling or needing to be washed. Liquid spills

and stains just bead off and barely penetrate the fabric.

3 Wool is wrinkle resistant, barely needs ironing and regulates your temperature — which is why it's the perfect fabric for sleeping.

4 Ethically produced clothing in Australia means we keep jobs here. This way we know who made our clothes and that they are getting a fair wage and not working in a foreign sweatshop.



Q: How does the cool climate of Tasmania influence your designs?

A: The cool climate has a huge influence on my designs. When my family and I moved here from Perth 20 years ago, I didn't really have a cool winter-climate wardrobe. I didn't even understand how to dress in layers! In that time I have figured out that basic pieces in soft, natural and breathable fabrics are the easiest way to dress. The Smitten look is classic, but in an individual way. Smitten basic pieces

allow you to add your own style and personality to whatever you wear. And cardigans are key in Tasmania — you really can't leave the house for 11 months of the year without one! At Smitten we have 12 different styles available in about 10 colours, so there is something for everyone.

Q: What's next for Smitten Merino?

A: There are always exciting things on the horizon. I have so many ideas for Smitten and not quite enough time to

implement them. We recently launched a new website and are excited to be doing a show with the ABC. We now make clothing from head (beanies) to toe (socks) and warm coats to go over the top, and of course we are always thinking about some new chunky cable-knit jumpers. My original plan was to dress Australians warmly in merino from head to toe — we are getting there! 🍷

For more information about Smitten Merino, visit smittenmerino.com

retreat

n 1 a place of refuge, seclusion or privacy
v 1 to withdraw, retire or draw back,
especially for shelter or seclusion

Both a verb and a noun, retreat is an experience of connecting with an inner or outer sanctuary. It's a sacred gesture of self-care and self-love.

What does retreat mean to you? Where do you retreat to in order to find solace? What sorts of experiences feel like a retreat to you?

Perhaps the notion of retreat is just as much about a physical space as it is about a mental, emotional or spiritual state. Wherever you feel at ease, relaxed and calm is an experience of retreat, which can manifest in your external world just as much as in your internal world.





Home is where the heart is

Your body and your heart may be the
key to finding your sense of home.

Words KAITLIN MCMANUS

Recently I made the decision to move house. I went from somewhere that was very familiar and comfortable to somewhere that was new and unfamiliar. While I had known deep down for some time that where I was living no longer felt like home, once I made the actual decision and physically moved, my body's response confirmed what I already knew. In the lead-up to my move, I noticed that I no longer felt at ease in my home; even the environment of my bedroom no longer brought me the same sense of comfort and pleasure that I previously welcomed. Yet once I finally made the move, it struck me how quickly my sense of unease passed and internal ease grew. I felt lighter in my being and experienced an inner knowing that I was now exactly where I needed to be. While the new house I'm now living in still doesn't quite feel like "home", I have trust that in time and with intention, soon enough it will.



Observe what gives you a sense of calm, comfort and pleasure and surround yourself with these things. For me, it's listening to music, being surrounded by fresh flowers and plants, placing photos of loved ones nearby and having fun (often colourful) artwork around me.



Finding your home

According to The Idioms dictionary, "home is where the heart is" refers to: a place you feel connected to emotionally, a place you are happy to arrive back at, somewhere you have fond memories of or being near your family and loved ones. So when pondering what home means to you, I encourage you to use your heart rather than your head as a compass for this process.

Coming home

Whether you're adjusting to a new home, returning home from a holiday, finally in the comfort of your bed in the evening or opening your front door with relief after a long day, know that your home will be there waiting for you. As captured so accurately in this quote by author Wendy Wunder, "The magic thing about home is that it feels good to leave, and it feels even better to come back."

Kaitlin McManus is a clinical psychologist who enjoys supporting people on their paths to healing by helping them to cultivate a more understanding and compassionate relationship with themselves and their struggles.



Tips for cultivating a sense of home

- ✎ **Internal wisdom.** Notice how you feel internally (eg tension versus ease) when you're in different environments, surrounded by different things or in the presence of different people. Pay attention to this, and use it as information to guide what you need and/or where you need to be.
- ✎ **Seek comfort.** Honour your needs by spending time in environments that leave you feeling "at home" (ie at ease, comforted and grounded), especially when you feel you need it.
- ✎ **Connect with your senses.** Observe through your senses (eg sight, sound, touch, taste and smell) what gives you a sense of calm, comfort and pleasure and surround yourself with these things.

For me, it's listening to music, being surrounded by fresh flowers and plants, placing photos of loved ones nearby and having fun (often colourful) artwork around me.

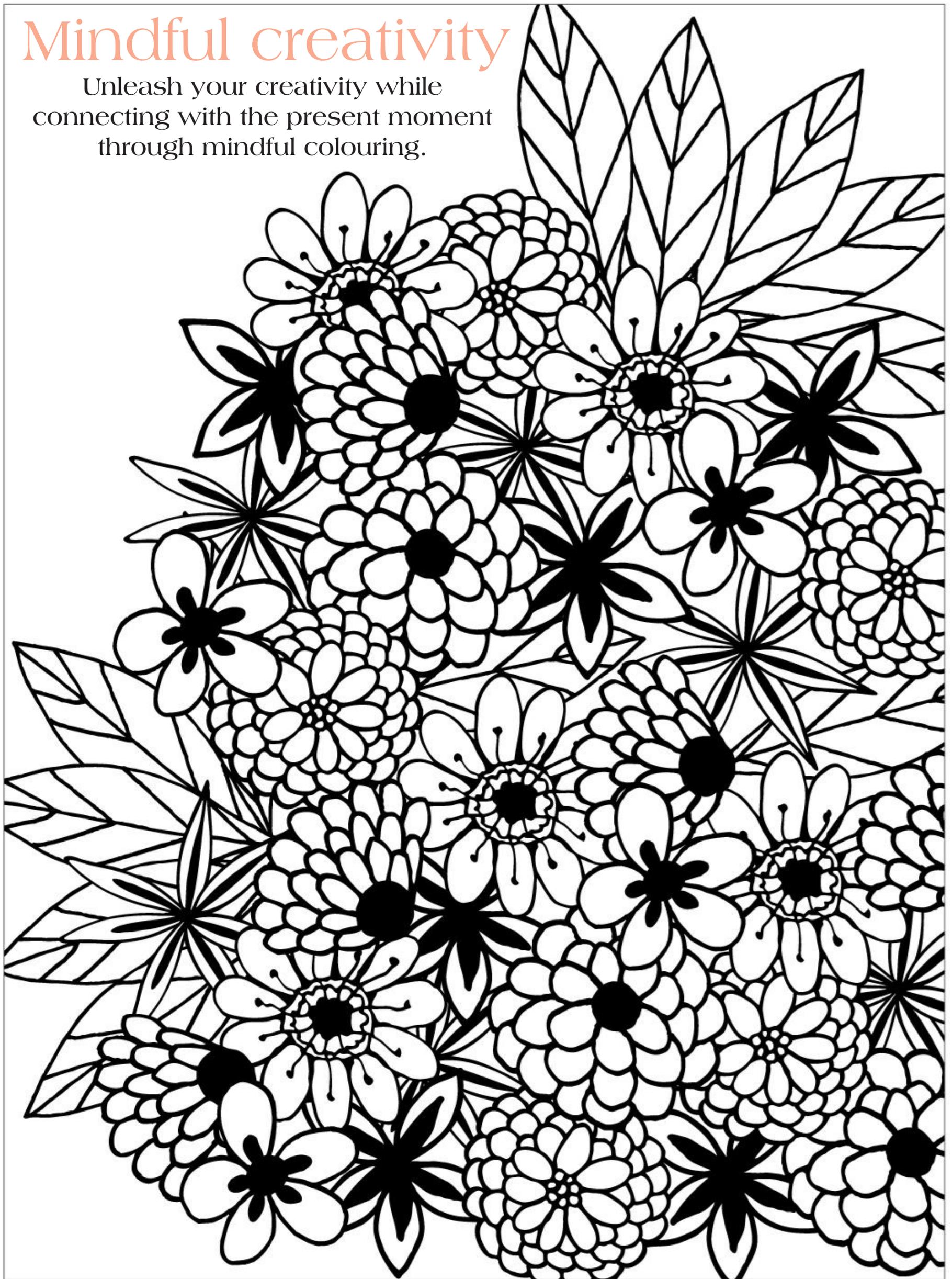
- ✎ **Create comfort.** It doesn't matter whether it be at your old family home, within the comfort of your own bedroom, in the lounge room with your family, in the kitchen cooking a feast with love or in a spot outside in your backyard/garden or front porch, try to have at least one environment that you know you can come to in order to soothe your body and mind via your senses. This may look like finding a space for life's simple pleasures, such as sitting by a window with a hot cup of

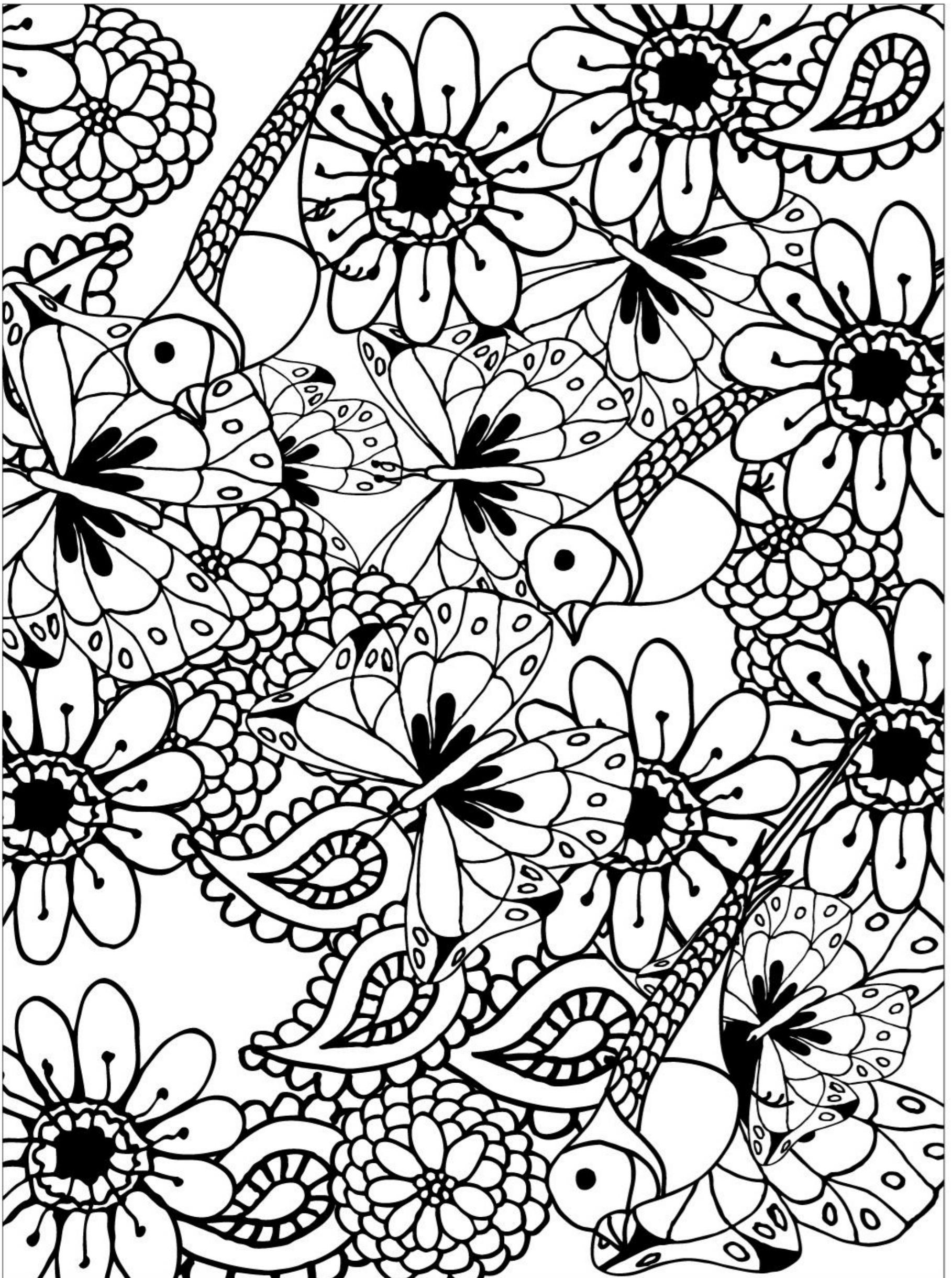
tea while reading a captivating book, or while relaxing with a blanket on your lap and a furry friend by your side.

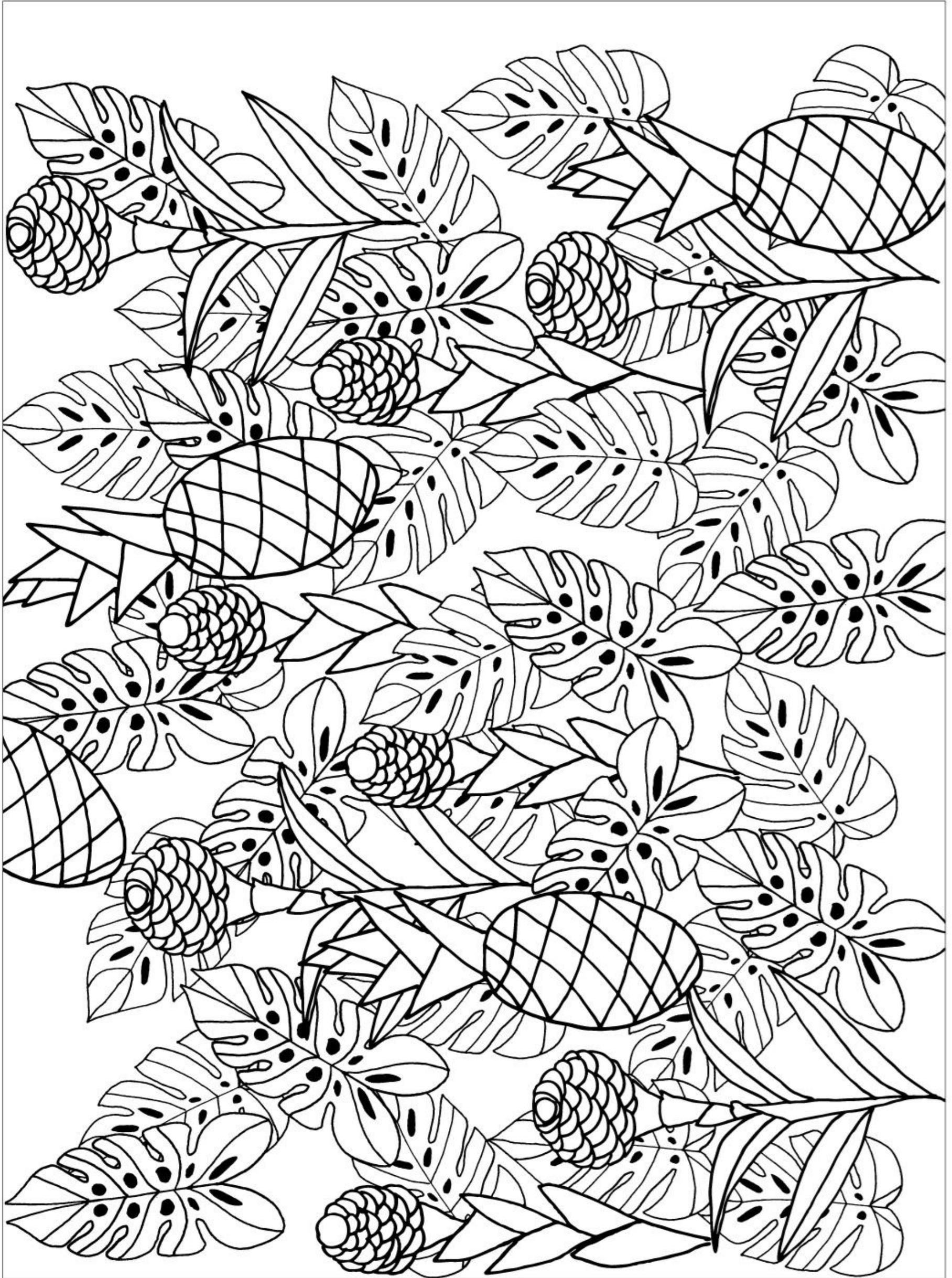
- ✎ **Beyond four walls.** You may feel at ease in a particular spot within your home, or perhaps it's at a loved one's abode — a "home away from home". Maybe your sense of home can be found in an environment outside of your home, such as at the beach, at your favourite book store, on your yoga mat at your local studio or at the park near your house.
- ✎ **Practise being present.** Remember to embrace your home with a sense of mindful presence, as this will allow you to have a richer experience of all it has to offer you.

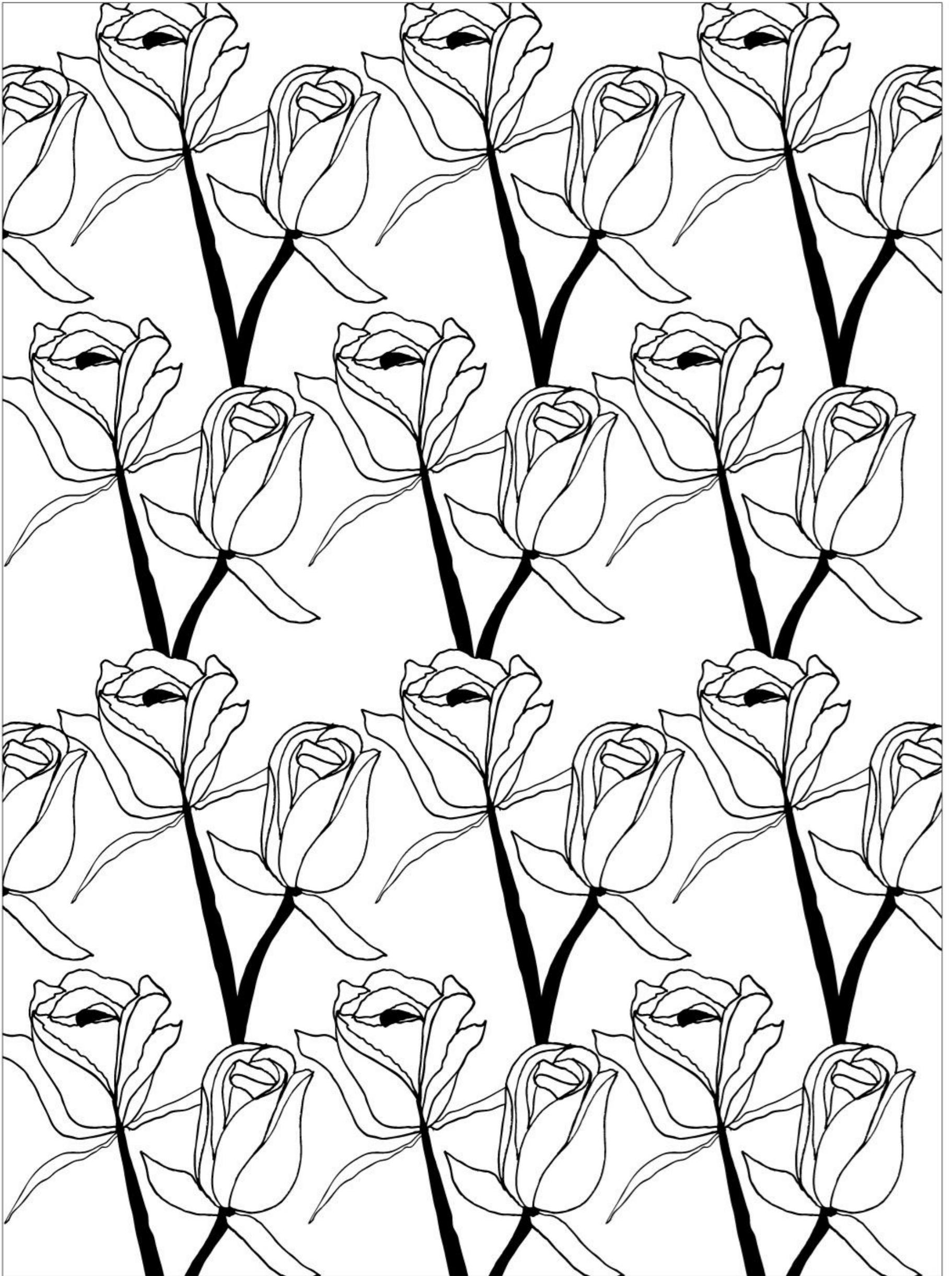
Mindful creativity

Unleash your creativity while connecting with the present moment through mindful colouring.











Being present with your pet

Pets can act as a powerful catalyst
for you to practise mindfulness.

Words ALLY McMANUS Photography ANDY ROGERS

*“Until one has loved an animal, a part of one’s soul remains unawakened.”
– Anatole France*

Pets play a fundamental role in contributing to the health and happiness of humans. Making eye contact with your dog can trigger the release of oxytocin, while cuddling your furry friend can increase the production of serotonin. Not only are they a loyal companion who offers unconditional love, they’re also a great teacher of mindfulness, given their ability to naturally live in the present moment.

Mindfulness is most easily described as bearing witness to the present moment – being aware of the sights, sounds, smells, sensations and tastes – and accepting it all without judgement. And interacting with your pet provides you with an

opportunity to practise mindfulness by focusing your attention on the moment you’re sharing. As spiritual teacher and author Eckhart Tolle once said, “I have lived with several Zen Masters – all of them cats.”

Being mindful with your pet

If mindfulness is a tool we can use to be present, then pets can act as a powerful catalyst for us to put mindfulness into practise. Whether it is a dynamic experience such as playing or a more gentle form of interacting such as resting, you’re invited to share that same sense of presence as your pet by simply tuning into the present moment.



In those quiet moments when I'm witnessing Poppy simply just be, there's an invitation for myself to also practise presence. While watching her gentle breath, I can feel my own; while cuddling her, feeling her heartbeat allows me to become more aware of my own.

Presence in moments of doing

Not only is mindfulness practised in the spaces between the doing – the moments of being – it is also experienced during many forms of doing, such as while walking. The next time you take your dog for a walk, take note of what they're doing. Is their head up high? Is their tail wagging? Are they alert? Are they taking in all of the surrounds? You'll notice through observing your pet's behaviour that they are often open to new sights, smells, sounds, people and other animals, which are all ways of being mindful and living in the moment.

Your pet can also connect you more intimately with nature, which is another gateway into presence. From breathing in the fresh air on a morning or evening walk to observing a light show across the sky with the rising or setting sun, a simple walk can turn into an adventure of discovery, appreciation and awe. Perhaps even a form of moving meditation that allows you to tread the earth with more care.

Presence in moments of being

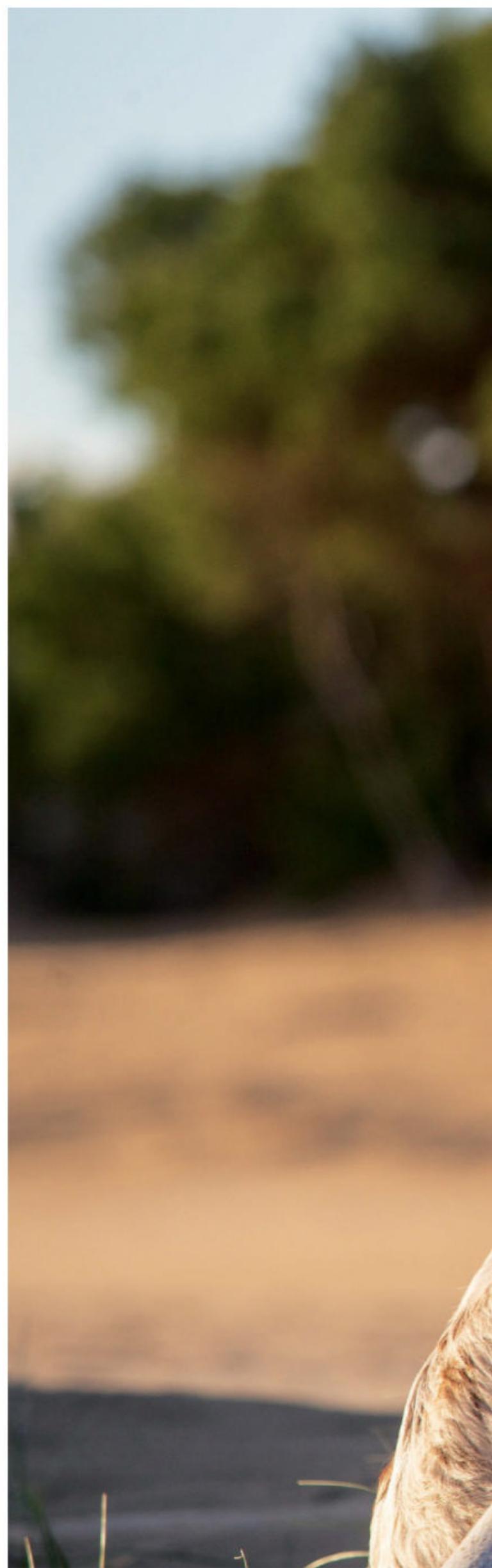
Experiencing mindfulness with a pet can be from tuning into the more subtle qualities of the moment. I'm completely captivated while gazing into the bright blue and green eyes of our puppy, Poppy. It's easy to be enamoured by the feeling of her soft fur between my fingertips, by noticing her soft

blonde eyelashes, tiny teeth or delicate whiskers, or the intricate ways her brown spots intersect with her white coat.

In those quiet moments when I'm witnessing Poppy simply just be, there's an invitation for myself to also practise presence. While watching her gentle breath, I can feel my own; while cuddling her, feeling her heartbeat allows me to become more aware of my own. When she's curiously meandering through the garden, it's a reminder for me to also move more gently and mindfully not just in this moment, but also perhaps throughout the rest of the day.

Mindfulness is a lifelong practice that trains your awareness of being in the present moment. Simply just being with your pet and noticing the way your lives intersect can allow you to cultivate gratitude and joy, along with a sense of calm awareness. The everyday nature of spending time with your pet can turn into an appreciative experience worth savouring. And perhaps the practice of being mindful with your pet may allow mindfulness to become more accessible in other facets of your life too. 🐾

Ally McManus, the founding editor of Being and the editor of WellBeing Yoga magazines, is a freelance writer and editor in magazine and book publishing. When she isn't working on copy or interviewing talent, she is teaching yoga and meditation on Victoria's Bellarine Peninsula.







A spice story

Not only are spices the personality and charm of a dish, they also house the medicinal power of a meal.

Words JENNY LOMAS

Photography by Pratiksha Mohanty on Unsplash



As the fresh summer herbs fade and we transition into the cooler months, I find myself reaching into my drawer of spices. "Spicy" is often synonymous with the generous inclusion of chilli, but while I do enjoy that particular heat, what we are referring to here is the full range of aromatic flavours: fruity, floral, smoky, sweet, pungent and earthy, and occasionally just a mere whisper of an exotic scent that teases with its subtlety.

Spices are the personality and the charm of a dish. Take a simple tomato sauce flavoured with garlic and onion. Add cumin, black mustard and fenugreek seeds and you're heading to India.

Or add paprika, cinnamon and saffron and you're en route to Morocco.

Spices are also the medicinal power of a dish. For eons it has been known that spices (like all plants) have an array of healing qualities, and modern science has backed this up. All spices provide some level of antioxidant benefit through their impressive phytonutrient compounds and, in addition, each provides very specific remedial or protective benefits. Turmeric is anti-inflammatory and has potent anti-cancer properties; cinnamon helps regulate blood sugar; cardamom soothes the stomach; and cloves are anti-bacterial, anti-inflammatory and an analgesic.



Spices situate me in time and space. The story of spices is not separable from the story of human evolution and human exploration.

Spices also situate me in time and space. The story of spices is not separable from the story of human evolution and human exploration. For centuries, spices were considered more precious than gold and have been traded, often with cutthroat intensity, for more than 4500 years. Spices are the “world economy’s oldest, deepest, most aromatic roots,” suggests an article in *The Economist* magazine.

Bought in their whole form (as opposed to ground), spices store well in small airtight containers in the pantry, and for the most part they are cheap to source. If you have an Indian or Asian supermarket nearby, then

go for the bigger packets that are typically excellent value for money.

I’d like to share with you this stunning yet comforting soup. It is easy to make and uses mainly store cupboard ingredients. Its rich, complex flavour belies its simplicity.

Jenny Lomas moved from London to New Zealand (NZ) in 2011, and has held head chef positions in several of NZ’s most respected retreat venues. She is the founder of Te Whenua Retreat in Gibbston Valley, Otago, where she offers plant-focused cooking retreats with a Zen-inspired flavour. W: tewhenuaretreat.co.nz

10 Spice Tomato Soup *Serves eight (stores well in the fridge for five days, or chill and freeze for six months)*

Ingredients

½ onion, diced
1 tsp grated and peeled fresh ginger
2 small garlic cloves
1 tbsp tomato paste
2 x 400ml tins chopped tomatoes
1 tsp salt
1 tsp brown sugar
400ml water
1 cup coconut cream, from a tin
3 tbsp red lentils, rinsed and drained
½ tbsp lime juice

Spice Mix

1 cinnamon stick
1 star anise
¼ tsp whole cloves
1 tsp coriander seeds
1 tsp cumin seeds
tsp cardamom seeds
1 tsp yellow mustard seeds
¼ tsp black peppercorns
½ tsp turmeric powder
1 tsp garam masala

Directions

Add the whole spices to a small pan and dry toast on a medium heat until fragrant, which takes approximately two-three minutes. Transfer to a spice grinder (or a mortar and pestle) then grind to a powder. Add the ground turmeric and garam masala, then set aside.

In a large saucepan, melt 1 tbsp of neutral oil. Sauté the diced onion til soft, then add the garlic, grated ginger and the spice mix. Cook for one-two minutes then add the tomato paste and stir well. Add the tinned tomatoes, water, sugar and salt and bring to a simmer. Put the lid on and cook on low for 15 minutes.

Carefully blend the soup until very smooth, then return to the pan. Add the red lentils and cook for 15 more minutes on low heat. Stir in coconut cream and lime juice and serve right away.





Skin wellness

Find out what to eat to create radiant skin from the inside out with these recipes from *The Healthy Skin Kitchen*.

Crispy Sweet Potato Gnocchi

Serves 2, preparation time 60 minutes, cooking time 30 minutes

Thank me later. Golden and crispy on the outside, and warm and gooey on the inside, just how a good – no, great – gnocchi should be.

1 cup raw cashews	1 teaspoon garlic powder	and finely sliced
2 medium sweet potatoes, scrubbed (about 1 ½ cups when mashed)	¾–1 teaspoon quality sea salt oil of choice	4 large zucchinis/courgettes, spiralized or sliced into thin noodles
½ cup tapioca starch or arrowroot starch	½–1 serving Cashew Cream*	fresh chives, washed and finely sliced
	Serving suggestion:	
	½ cup red cabbage, washed	

If you have not already made the Cashew Cream, soak 1 cup of cashews in hot water and set aside. Line 2 large baking trays with baking paper and set aside.

Bring a medium pot of water to the boil. Peel and cube the sweet potato, then add to the pot and boil until soft (about 15 minutes). Drain, then remove excess water with paper towels or a clean tea towel. Set aside to cool.

Next, place the cup of raw cashews into a high-speed blender and pulse until the mixture resembles breadcrumbs or flour (do not excessively blend as it will turn into nut butter), then add the tapioca starch, garlic powder and salt, and briefly blend. Set aside.

Place the sweet potato in a large flat-based bowl and mash, then stir ¼ cup of the cashew flour mix into the mash. Add another ¼ cup of flour and knead together until the flour is well mixed in. Add the remaining flour as needed. The dough may be slightly sticky. Wrap the dough in some plastic wrap and place in the refrigerator to firm for about 10 minutes.

While the dough is firming make the Cashew Cream if you haven't already, and set aside in the refrigerator. Remove the dough and separate into three balls, and place one onto the lined baking tray. Roll it into a long snake-like piece about 1 cm wide and then cut into gnocchi-sized pieces, about 1 x 2 cm. Press individual pieces down lightly with a fork to make a pattern on the top. Repeat with the other two balls of dough, then set aside and leave to firm (about 10 minutes).

While the gnocchi is firming, make the zucchini noodles with a vegetable spiralizer or peel zucchini strips to create a large, flat noodle shapes. Set aside.

Place a large non-stick pan or skillet on medium heat with a dash of oil and add half of the gnocchi to the pan, cooking until lightly browned (about 1–2 minutes on each side). Remove from the pan and set aside while you cook the rest of the gnocchi.

Once the gnocchi is ready, add the zucchini noodles and cabbage to the frying pan and heat for 1 minute, then place onto a serving dish or into two bowls. Drizzle with Cashew Cream, then place the gnocchi on top and sprinkle with chives.

*Cashew Cream

Makes 1 batch, preparation time 15 minutes (plus soaking time)

A drizzle of Cashew Cream makes savoury dishes look good and taste great – that's why it features in so many of my food photos. Use a squeeze sauce bottle to get the perfect drizzle every time.

- 1 cup raw cashews, unsalted
- ¾ cup filtered or spring water
- ¼ teaspoon quality sea salt
- ¼ teaspoon garlic powder (optional)

Activation soaking method: if you have time, soak the cashews overnight in warm water to activate the cashews – ideally do not soak them for more than 6 hours. Quick soaking method: pour boiling water onto the cashews and soak them for about 30 minutes or until they are soft and swollen.

After soaking, drain and rinse the cashews well using fresh water. Place them into a high-speed blender along with the water, salt and garlic powder, if using, and blend on high until smooth. Store in an airtight jar or squeeze sauce bottle in the refrigerator for up to 4 days.

***Note:** Coconut water is very high in salicylates and amines so it's not suitable for people with eczema, skin inflammation or chemical intolerances.



Text and images from *The Healthy Skin Kitchen* (Exisle 2021), Karen Fischer BHSoc. Dip. Nut.





Hemp Protein Balls

Makes 16 balls, preparation time 30 minutes, setting time 2 hours

Hello strong nails, better bones and healthy hair. This high-protein recipe is my go-to for strengthening my nails and hair – you will see and feel the difference. I have also made this recipe using oat flour instead of pea protein powder (note that oats usually contain gluten).

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| ¼ cup cacao butter | ½ cup hemp protein powder | ⅓ cup plant-based milk of choice (Cashew, Hemp or Rice Milk or Coconut water*) |
| 1 cup pea protein powder (or oat flour – contains gluten) | 2-3 tablespoons pure maple syrup or rice malt/brown rice syrup (optional) | |
| ½ cup rice protein powder (or oat flour – contains gluten) | | |

Line a large flat container that has a lid (approximately 20 x 25 cm/8 x 10 in) with baking paper and set aside. Alternatively, you can use two smaller containers.

Melt the cacao butter on medium heat, using the double-boil method. If you are using rice malt syrup, melt it with the cacao butter. When melted, remove the bowl from the heat and allow it to slightly cool.

Place the remaining ingredients into a food processor, then pour in the cacao butter and process briefly. Scrape down the sides with a spatula or a butter knife, place the lid back on and process again, (ideally) until a dough ball forms. Stop processing immediately

when a large dough ball appears. The dough should easily press into balls and not stick to your hands or the side of the machine. If the dough is too sticky add a little more flour or protein powder; if it forms lots of tiny dough balls it is too dry so add 1 tablespoon of plant-based milk at a time and mix again, until one dough ball forms or until smooth.

Using clean hands and a tablespoon, scoop 1 tablespoon of the mixture and roll it into a ball, and repeat the process. Place the balls into the container. Place the lid on the container and store it in the refrigerator. The balls take 2 hours to set but if you are keen to try them now, place a couple into the freezer for 10 minutes.



Carob Tea

Serves 1, preparation time 4 minutes

Sleep well with the combined calming effects of carob, calcium, magnesium and glycine, an amino acid and neurotransmitter that increases serotonin to improve sleep and mood, heals the gut and enables the production of collagen in the skin. I make this drink with oat milk and without sweetener, but you can add ½ teaspoon of rice malt syrup or real maple syrup if needed.

- | | |
|---|---|
| 2 teaspoons carob powder (roasted or raw) | Milk or Coconut water*) |
| 1-1½ cups plant-based milk of choice (Cashew, Hemp or Rice) | 2 scoops calcium and magnesium powder (Skin Friend PM, also contains glycine) |

Pour a little boiling hot water into a tea/coffee cup (approximately 3 tablespoons). Add the carob powder and mix. Meanwhile, heat the milk in a small saucepan until it's warm, then pour it into the cup and mix well. Mix in calcium and magnesium powder if desired.



Saffron Tea

Serves 1, preparation time 10 minutes

Saffron has anti-inflammatory properties and contains safranal and crocin, which calms minor stomach disorders and soothes coughs. Add calcium and magnesium powder to promote a good night's sleep (optional, of course).

1 cup plant-based milk of choice (Cashew, Hemp or Rice Milk or Coconut water*)	3-4 small strands	saffron	2 scoops calcium and magnesium powder (Skin Friend PM, optional)
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Heat the milk in a saucepan along with the saffron strands and simmer on low for 5 minutes. Add the calcium/magnesium if using. Allow to stand for up to 5 minutes to infuse the saffron, then serve warm. Eat the saffron strands for the full benefits.



Roasted Maple Brussel Bites

Serves 4 as a snack, preparation time 7 minutes, cooking time 20 minutes

Hello, new love of my life. I hated Brussels sprouts until I learnt how to roast them like this. I often make this recipe without the maple syrup for a savoury dish. Serve them on their own or with White Bean Sauce (p. 146) and Lamb Skewers (p. 164) or Crispy Chicken (p. 184).

10 medium Brussels sprouts, stalk end trimmed

1 tablespoon rice bran oil or sunflower oil (low salicylate oils)

1 tablespoon real maple syrup
¼ teaspoon quality sea salt

Preheat the oven to 200°C (and line a large baking tray with a silicon mat or baking paper.

container with a lid, drizzle on the oil, maple syrup and salt. Cover with a lid then shake the pot to evenly coat the sprouts.

or until softened and lightly browned, turning them over after 10 minutes using tongs. Serve them warm or hot. 🌱

Wash the Brussels sprouts and slice them in half lengthwise, then place them into a dry saucepan or

Spread the Brussels sprouts onto the tray and bake them in the oven for 20 minutes



The future of wellness

Being magazine chats with Chalimah Jeanne, the founder of Organic Merchant, about the future of wellness.

Q: Where do you see the future of wellness heading?

A: There is a growing movement towards integrative health that puts the whole person first, utilising conventional medicine, complementary and alternative medicine to create optimal health and wellbeing. This really resonates with me as I've always been interested in this and I've always worked in this way.

This means that the global acceptance and interest in ancient modalities of healing is increasing with exploration into how these can be introduced into modern practice.

I see a shift towards nature, energy medicine and natural rhythms and I'm excited about seeing how these manifest and what new practices start to appear.

Q: Which product in the Organic Merchant range do you recommend most for maintaining good health and wellbeing?

A: If I had to choose one for what is happening in the world right now and going into winter, I would say our Immune Tea from our herbal tea range as it is a beautifully light, floral and slightly minty blend using all the top immune boosting and vitamin C-rich ingredients such as echinacea, ginger, elderberry, rosehip, peppermint, yarrow and elderflower.

I'd also recommend our Spirit Dust, which is a cacao powder mixed with ashwagandha, Siberian ginseng, cinnamon and ginger to support the symptoms of stress, anxiety and adrenal fatigue.

Q: Please explain the role of naturopathy in Organic Merchant's product range.

A: I have been a naturopath for almost 20 years and every product that I have created for Organic Merchant has been strategically formulated to have a specific health benefit as well as a delicious taste profile.

Naturopathy is based on treating the cause and not just the condition, meaning that I will consider the whole system when developing blends. Each blend begins with identifying the organ I want to target, the system that supports that organ and the pathways to either stimulate or balance that system.

I also incorporate energetic practices in my formulations that are similar to Chinese and Ayurvedic medicine.



Q: You have recently launched a rebrand and new website. Please share a bit of information about this.

A: Our rebrand has been several years in the making and takes us from being a tea brand to becoming a wellness brand. I'm passionate about creating an experience for customers where Organic Merchant can facilitate their journey of wellbeing from the inside out.

Q: What's next for Organic Merchant?

A: Organic Merchant is launching new product ranges to complement and

extend our tea range. We'll also be introducing further innovation in our packaging, people, processes, culture and energy responsibilities in order to move us closer to our goal of being a B Certified business.

I'm also looking to get back into practice and offering naturopathic consultations to customers so they can take charge and feel empowered in their health journey. 🌿

For more information about Organic Merchant, visit [organicmerchant.com.au](https://www.organicmerchant.com.au)





Making a difference

We chat with James and Lee-Ann Wilson, founders of eco-friendly business Amaroo Eco, to learn about how their company is making a difference.

Q: How did your journey with Amaroo Eco begin?

A: I was selling microfibre cloths for many years, covering an area of approximately 800 kilometres. Then we had a baby come into our lives – my wife was a university lecturer at the time, so it made sense that I stayed home and became “Mr Mum” (which I loved). But I still wanted to help out, so we created our first eco-friendly business called Go Green at Home more than 12 years ago, which has now evolved into Amaroo Eco. We changed the name because we were getting confused with a business selling solar panels. *Amaroo* is

an Aboriginal name meaning “beautiful place”, and we truly believe that Australia is a beautiful place.

Q: What was the initial vision behind Amaroo Eco, and how has that changed?

A: We wanted to create an online store that sold eco-friendly products at a reasonable price. When we started, if the words “sustainable” or “environmental” were mentioned, people were charging up to four times the price and everyone wondered why people were not making the change. We wanted to change that and make things more affordable.

We did not get into business to make a million dollars; we wanted to make a difference ... and I believe that we are making a difference.

Q: Why is it important to use sustainable products?

A: We only have one planet; there is no back up. There is an island of rubbish floating in the ocean and rubbish washing up on our beaches every day. Recycling is not the answer, as there is only so much we can recycle. Making products out of other materials that does not have to be recycled I believe is the way to go – and



we could do so much more. Every product that we sell, we personally use.

Q: What is your favourite Amaroo Eco product?

A: I would have to say our Soap Nuts. They are simply amazing and straight from Mother Nature herself. These little berries can be used for so many things – as a laundry detergent, shampoo, body wash, floor cleaner, glass cleaner, car wash – I even wash my dogs with Soap Nuts. They are anti-bacterial, antifungal, economical, effective and easy to use. I have seen so many people with skin

allergies get amazing results from switching to these. There are times I cry telling stories of some of the people this amazing product has helped.

Q: What are three things we can do today to be more sustainable?

A: We have a saying in our business: “The hundreds of choices we make each day impact the environment. Sometimes it’s a big decision ... Sometimes it’s as small as changing your toothbrush or the way you clean your clothes.” Change your toothbrush to a more sustainable version. Change the product you use to

clean your home, clothes and self. Tell others what you are doing; share the message.

Q: What’s next for Amaroo Eco?

A: We are always looking to find good quality products to add to our range. So far this year we have added dental floss and cotton buds, with more to come. Our family will stay strong and continue to make a difference every chance we can. 🌱

For more information about Amaroo Eco, visit amarooeco.com.au

The science of skin

Being magazine chats with Chief Brand Officer of NO FACE, Andy Young, to learn about NO FACE's scientific and nourishing approach to treating skin.

Q: How does NO FACE care for people's skin?

A: As a leading research-based skincare brand, NO FACE is heavily involved in the most advanced and scientific aspects of new product research and development. Our marketing teams and scientists are always working together in the front lines to gather the insightful data from consumers to understand different skin issues people are facing and to push through the latest skin ingredients and formulations to target those issues. So there is no doubt that NO FACE is a people-centered skincare brand.

Q: NO FACE believes in a "pro-life approach". Can you please describe what this means?

A: Yes, the philosophy behind NO FACE is that the brand exists to help people achieve desired goals and results. NO FACE believes that skincare

isn't just about packaging, a name or advertisements, but truly about the products themselves and how they support the people using them to achieve their skin goals and better lives. In the process, guided by this incredible philosophical idea, NO FACE has evolved into a skincare brand leader to not only address ingredients and products, but also developed a remarkable 4D Skin Modeling Analysis to help dermatologists, professionals and consumers understand their skin conditions in a multitude of ways. This takes into account their skin risks, which is a novel approach to estimate skin issues based on lifestyles and living habits such as diet and sleep etc. These information and insights are also used to educate consumers to shape their lifestyles in better ways. Therefore, it isn't an overstatement to say that NO FACE is truly an innovative, revolutionary and pro-life skincare brand.

Q: Why are plant extracts good to use on the skin?

A: Plant-based diets work, and have helped many people. When it comes to skincare, we should also follow our natural biological path to discover and use the most suitable natural ingredients. Industrial chemicals have been used on consumers' skin for many years and many of them have later been found to be harmful and caused health issues. Great plant extracts, though, have shown even more powerful active properties to correct and assist the skin without those harmful consequences. Our research and tests have compared our Phyto Active vitamin C properties to other vitamin c products and the results are mind-blowing, as our Phyto Active C has far surpassed other types of vitamin C in terms of biostability and absorption, and the kind of glowy texture and brightening effects from the Phyto Active C is unseen



with other forms of industrial chemical active ingredients.

Q: What are the benefits of using skincare that is formulated with probiotics?

A: The skin has its own ways to deal with bacteria and other microbiomes that are naturally occurring in the skin and from the outside environment. A lot of the latest research results have shown that probiotics help the skin build a better environment so that it becomes healthier naturally. Not all probiotics are the same,

and we use phyto and ocean derived probiotics, which are full of bioactive prebiotic and probiotic properties. So rather than dealing with symptoms, they help target the root to prevent damages.

Q: Why is it important to use research-based natural skincare?

A: There are many types of natural skincare products but many unfortunately lack extensive amounts of research so that consumers are often blindsided by marketing. A research-based leading brand like NO FACE, however, shifts the

focus from marketing to research and passes the resources and benefits on to the end consumers. The ingredients are better tested with more quality assurance to be safe and effective, and the natural active ingredients are better preserved and formulated in the production process, and hence the skin benefits. These are all a part of the reasons why professionals and seasoned skincare lovers became loyal to the NO FACE brand. 🍷

For more information about NO FACE, visit noface.com.au



A holistic experience

IME Natural Perfume takes a holistic approach.
We learn more about the experience with founder Tonia Walker.

Q: What is the holistic approach taken in “the IME experience”?

A: As a natural therapist, the idea that our senses are connected to each other either consciously or subconsciously seems to just make sense to me. So when I set about to create the IME Muses, I knew the fragrances had to do the same – connect our senses. But before all that, the foundation was simple: IME is an experience. It is and will always be about the experience, not just the fact that we offer a range of high-quality natural perfumes. The experience comes first.

That experience is based on capturing the essence of each Muse using as many of our senses as we can. This means combining not only how they smell, but also the colour they radiate and mood they inspire. To me, you can't have one without the others, therefore you can holistically [choose your muse]™ by muse, mood, colour or scent, as they are all connected.

Q: Can you please describe how IME Natural Perfume works with colour, scent and mood?

A: Sure, let's use kalliope [driven] as an example below. This is the approach we have taken with all nine fragrances.

Colour: Why is kalliope [driven] the colour red? Because she is the eldest of all nine Muses. She is the rock, the stable table, the

one who is grounded and embodies the sense of belonging by sharing her words of wisdom as the Muse of Epic Poetry. Red is the colour of our root chakra, which is the energy centre that represents our survival instincts, belonging and the very base of which our lives grow from. She encourages us to be brave and work towards the life we want to create for ourselves. Red is blood and is associated with feelings of love, passion, strength, leadership and determination. Red rocks!

Scent: Why is kalliope [driven] a herbal, earthy scent? Because all these ingredients create a fragrance that is completely grounding – connecting us to the earth from which they came and, ultimately, to ourselves.

Mood: Why is kalliope [driven] the inspiration behind the moods of driven, courageous and brave? Because she is simply all these things. And you can be too!

Q: What inspired your product range?

A: Long story short (skipping a nervous breakdown, trip to Europe and becoming a natural therapist), I wanted women (okay, me) to have a way of embracing their beauty and passion for life and I thought the best way to do that was to inspire a change. The Muse idea came from the role they play as being a source of pure inspiration. The best way to capture the essence of each muse was to use

essence, and so the idea of turning the brand into natural perfume was created.

Q: How does IME Natural Perfume care for people's wellbeing?

A: At the heart of our brand is the belief that a positive change in mood can evoke a change in your thoughts, which can then lead to a positive change in your actions. Fragrance is the most logical way of making this a reality, as the sense of smell is directly linked to the brain (via the olfactory nerve), and the part of the brain responsible for our memories and emotions. A change in mood is instant! Choose a scent that makes you feel good and you can't go wrong.

Q: What is your favourite scent, and why?

A: Ooo, this is a tough one. I really do mix it up according to how I'm feeling or how I would like to feel in that moment. That's the great thing about the Muse range – once you get to know them all, you automatically start to choose them intuitively, knowing you will get the most out of them when you do. But if I had to choose right now, I'd say kalliope [driven], kleio [elegant] and definitely erato [naughty], as it's so warming at this time of the year.

IME Natural Perfumes are available in eau de parfum spray and organic solid perfume sticks. For more information, visit ime-natural-perfume.com.au.





Natural therapy

Australian Natural Therapists Association (ANTA) is committed to the success of natural therapists!

The Australian Natural Therapists Association (ANTA) is committed to the success of students and graduates. For some time, it has recognised the need to provide ongoing support for students and graduates to assist them to pursue their goals and aims in the field of natural therapies.

ANTA Annual National Student Bursary Awards – 12x \$1000 plus one-year complimentary membership awarded to students

ANTA introduced the ANTA National Student Bursary Awards in 2006 and since then has awarded over \$160,000 to more than 160 students. Every year ANTA provides 12 students with \$1000 bursary awards. Students undertaking courses recognised by ANTA in any of the following modalities are eligible to participate: Acupuncture, Aromatherapy, Ayurvedic Medicine, Chinese Herbal Medicine, Myotherapy, Naturopathy, Nutrition, Oriental Remedial Therapy,

Remedial Massage, Shiatsu Therapy, Traditional Chinese Medicine and Western Herbal Medicine – details of recognised courses are available at www.anta.com.au.

ANTA Annual Graduate Awards – 12x \$200 plus one-year complimentary membership awarded to new graduates

As part of ANTA's commitment to graduates and to assist them to enter the natural therapy profession, ANTA has launched the ANTA Annual Graduate Awards.

Twelve ANTA Graduate Awards will be provided annually to graduates to reward their achievements and assist graduates with their careers. The ANTA Graduate Award consists of a 12-month complimentary ANTA membership and a cheque for \$200.

The ANTA Graduate Awards are open to all graduates who have completed courses recognised by ANTA in the modalities of:

Acupuncture, Aromatherapy, Ayurvedic Medicine, Chinese Herbal Medicine, Myotherapy, Naturopathy, Nutrition, Oriental Remedial Therapy, Remedial Massage, Shiatsu Therapy, Traditional Chinese Medicine and Western Herbal Medicine.

All graduates who join ANTA throughout the year will be included in the ANTA Graduate Award program.

When graduates join ANTA, their Academic Transcripts and membership application are assessed by a panel to determine award recipients in the categories of course unit achievement, consistency, clinical practicum, and overall achievement. ANTA Graduate Award recipients will be notified and presented with their award throughout the year.

Courses recognised by ANTA are assessed by an accreditation board to ensure:

- ✓ Corporate and academic governance
- ✓ Academic quality and integrity
- ✓ Responsibilities to students
- ✓ Course design that meets qualification standards
- ✓ Assessment is effective and learning outcomes are achieved
- ✓ Education awards meet criteria



ANTA's high standards with course accreditation ensures course providers deliver high standards of education and excellence in teaching, as well as well-developed processes in place to ensure graduates have the necessary knowledge and skills to provide high-quality health care.

ANTA course recognition provides consistent national quality standards and guidelines for programs of study and assists educational institutions to deliver quality courses.

ANTA is committed to continuing development of an innovative and skilled natural therapy workforce, protecting the standing of the profession and safeguarding the interests of the public. 🌿

For more information about ANTA, visit www.anta.com.au.



Join ANTA today!

To join ANTA as a full member, complete the membership application online and supply all the relevant information including your academic transcripts. Students can apply for free online.

This year ANTA will provide more than \$20,000 to students and graduates. Start your career in natural therapies and participate in the ANTA National Student Bursary Awards and the ANTA Annual Graduate Awards!

Inspired

What's inspiring us to cultivate balance, ease and calm.

Health at home

"Take care of your body. It's the only place you have to live." – Jim Rohn



Standing Desk

Stretch Now

Anyone who works from home or has a desk job knows the lethargy that can manifest from sitting all day. This is where a standing desk comes in handy. Stretch Now's ergonomic standing desk features a modern, earthy design and is super spacious, offering plenty of room for your machinery and knick-knacks. I find myself drawn to standing whenever I feel fatigue kicking in, often in the mid-afternoon, and it's also a great way to begin and end the workday while I'm going through emails. On the other hand, creative processes like writing and editing feel more ideal to do while seated. Being able to seamlessly flow from standing to sitting (depending on your energy levels) with a simple press of a button makes this desk an incredibly helpful (and healthy) piece of furniture to work from. *Ally McManus*



Skypipe Essential Oil Diffuser

Black Chicken Remedies

Whether it's to freshen up your home or to help you ease into a new mindset, the burning of essential oils is a form of ritual. Stock up on your favourite scents (I use citrus and lemongrass to uplift and ylang ylang to calm) and add them to your diffuser. Black Chicken's Skypipe Essential Oil Diffuser has a sleek design and a clever system that enables two settings – one which gives off a continuous vapour, and the other that's intermittent. There are also two light settings so you can adjust the brightness, or leave it off – the black matte ceramic cover is pretty on its own. When empty, the diffuser will switch itself off and it's easy to clean too, not adding any hassle to the relaxation process. *Samantha Allemann*



Kombucha Home Brew Kits

Buchi

There are lots of kombucha brands on the market these days, but Buchi was the very first I tried back when not many people knew what on earth a SCOBY was (a Symbiotic Colony of Bacteria and Yeast). Buchi is Australia's leading company in home brew ferment kits, so you'll have everything you need when you order their starter kit. You'll be sent a 5L glass brewing jar, a cloth, 500ml of organic starter tea, organic teas, organic sugar and the all-important SCOBY. With easy to follow instructions, you'll be brewing in no time. Within a week we had our own batch of kombucha to enjoy, with the ability to keep brewing and gift pals with a SCOBY as the original one divided. It really is the gift that keeps giving! *Samantha Allemann*



Oasis Ultrasonic Diffuser

Oil Garden

From tapping into its calming effects beside your bed in the evening to harnessing its energising qualities in your workspace, an oil diffuser is a great addition to any room in your home. Oil Garden's Oasis Ultrasonic Diffuser has a lovely minimalist aesthetic that makes it a calming feature on my desk. Using ultrasonic technology, the diffuser releases the benefits of essential oils in their purest form without heat, chemicals or toxins. I love diffusing an invigorating scent such as peppermint to perk me up in the morning and a more calming essential oil such as lavender to help me wind down from work later in the day. *Ally McManus*

Natural beauty

"True beauty is the reflection of your inner self radiating and touching others." Ntathu Allen

ICU Intensive Care Eye Serum

Black Chicken Remedies

With Black Chicken being my deodorant brand of choice, I was keen to try their eye serum – would it make me look any less tired? As no matter how much sleep I get (a lot), water I drink (litres) and good food I eat (tonnes), I still have noticeable circles under my eyes thanks to genetics. Each morning I rolled on the ICU serum, which hydrates and brightens the delicate under eye area through the use of natural ingredients such as cucumber seed oil, milk thistle oil and green coffee seed. I still found myself dotting concealer under my eyes some days, but I did notice that I looked more awake and refreshed by using the serum, plus it made other products glide on more easily. Another plus is its beautiful yet subtle scent, and it's a cruelty-free product and Australian-made too. *Samantha Allemann*



Shampoo & Conditioner Bars

Hemp Collective

For many years I've struggled to find eco-friendly hair care that actually works, which made Hemp Collective's handmade Hemp Shampoo and Conditioner bars a very welcome relief. The vegan and cruelty-free bars are made with hemp by Australian growers and producers and are formulated with no SLS or parabens. This makes them an effective and eco-friendly way to care for your hair, and I couldn't recommend them more for taming wavy, frizz-prone tresses. The Hemp Shampoo bar comes in a lovely lavender and rose geranium scent and is made with more than 10 per cent Australian Hemp seed oil, which is rich in essential fatty acids, proteins and vitamins to help moisturise, protect and enhance your hair's natural shine. This bar also doubles as a body wash, making it perfect for travel in its reusable tin container. The Hemp Conditioner is just as great, working to strengthen, moisturise and replenish your hair while nourishing your scalp. It comes in two beautiful scents – lavender and rose geranium as well as lemongrass and grapefruit – and conveniently doubles as a shaving bar. Hemp Collective also has a new Pet Shampoo bar, which we love using on our puppy. Made with natural ingredients and infused with Australian Hemp Seed oil, the bar helps to nourish, moisturise and clean, leaving our pup with a healthy and shiny coat, the natural way. *Ally McManus*

Green living

"Use it up, wear it out, make it do, or do without." – New England proverb



Unpaper Towel

Earths Tribe

You've got beeswax wraps, stainless steel straws, a KeepCup – it's now time to replace those rolls of paper towel as well. Stocked by Biome, Earths Tribe's Unpaper Towels are a sustainable alternative to disposable paper towel. This roll of 20 is made from organic cotton flannelette, double stitched for extra strength and with convenient snap buttons to join them up. Washing them is simple – just rinse or pre-treat stains before putting the towels in the washing machine on a warm cycle (then line dry for extra eco-ness). Not just handy for the kitchen, these towels also give extra protection on a nappy change table or can be used as a washcloth. When they get well worn, add them to the compost where they'll biodegrade. The designs are adorable too, with two different sides per roll. *Samantha Allemann*



PawPacks

Fetchd

You can enjoy fresh "pre-pawtioned" kibble to your doorstep thanks to Fetchd: an Australian start-up premium dog food subscription service. "Fetchd was created to ensure that feeding time was an experience, not a chore," share the co-founders, brothers Carl and Nigel Sandeman from Orange in NSW, who are passionate about offering high-quality, healthy and fuss-free dog food. Made with ingredients that are sourced by Australian farmers, the PawPack kibble has been created by vet nutritionists using human-grade ingredients that are free from grain and artificial additives. Fetchd packs are also formulated with superfoods such as beet pulp and chicory root to support digestion, omega-3 and -6 for healthy skin and coat, natural antioxidants for a healthy immune system and infused with meat for strong active muscles. The kibble is packaged in individual packs to maintain optimum freshness by ensuring there is no oxidation or bad odour. The delivery carton is also recyclable and each PawPack is made from environmentally friendly recyclable plastic that can be returned to any store that has a plastic recycling station. *Ally McManus*

Starter Pack

The Dirt Company

Dirt, an Australian-made laundry detergent, is an online and subscription-based company that offers pure and powerful, ultra-concentrated zero-waste laundry liquid. Dirt laundry liquid is just as great for your health as it is for the planet, as the highly concentrated formula uses organic and plant-based cleaning ingredients that are 100 per cent biodegradable, grey-water safe, vegan and cruelty-free. The formula is an 8x concentrate, and by increasing the concentration and strength of the formula, the amount of packaging normally used has been reduced by half. The glass Dispenser Bottle has a pump that measures the exact amount of detergent required per wash and its silicone bumpers help to eliminate any small drops and tips, making this a super sustainable solution to washing your clothes. *Ally McManus*



Sustainable fashion

"Buy less. Choose well. Make it last." – Vivienne Westwood



Ingrid Leggings & Freja Crop Top & Heal Sweatshirt Mantra

studio.k.yogawear

As a yoga teacher, I spend a lot of time in active wear and believe it's important to wear eco-friendly garments, with studio.k.yogawear's range a great option for this. The organic, ethical and eco-friendly Swedish yoga and casual wear brand creates timeless, high-quality garments for your yoga practice and beyond. Founded by designer duo Miki and Rikard West, the creative and conscious couple combined their passions for fashion, sustainable living and yoga into studio.k.yogawear. The garments are ethically produced in Bali by women in a women-owned factory using organic, recycled and sustainable fabrics and practices.

The Ingrid Leggings and Freja Crop Top work as a great duo for practising yoga. Both are made from recycled fabric from ocean waste and have UV protection. They're breathable and quick drying, which is great for a more dynamic practice, and offer shape retention, two-way stretch and muscle control. "Freja is designed with elegance and movement in mind," shares the brand. This cute crop is made in double-layer fabric for additional support and is lightweight, crease-resistant and features adjustable shoulder straps. The Ingrid Leggings are high waisted and made with a strong, flat-felled overlock stitching. "These yoga leggings have been carefully designed to give you full support through your practice and are tailored for ultimate duration and comfort," reveals the brand, which I can't agree with more after giving them a test run both on and off the yoga mat.

studio.k.yogawear's Mantra Sweatshirt is a cosy and comfortable crew neck sweater made from 100 per cent organic cotton jersey with gold embroidery of the well-known mantra,

"Lokah Samastha Sukhino Bhanvantu". (This translates to: "May all beings everywhere be happy and free, and may the thoughts, words, and actions of my own life contribute in some way to that happiness and to that freedom for all.") The "Honey"-coloured sweatshirt is great worn over the Ingrid Leggings and Freja Crop Top, keeping you warm between practices as well as during savasana and meditation. An additional sweatshirt in the range is a non-profit piece, the Heal Sweatshirt, which features gold embroidery of the phrase, "Crying Heart". As well as donating 1 per cent of all its profits to the A21 Foundation to combat human trafficking, studio.k.yogawear also donates 100 per cent of profits from the sale of "Crying Heart" sweatshirts to the A21 Foundation. *Ally McManus*



Hi-top socks pack

smartass undies

smartass undies is a "profit-for-purpose company" that sells undies and socks made from recycled materials which are adorned with motivational words. Based near Byron Bay, smartass undies recycles and repurposes materials into a range of underwear and socks that are ultra-wicking, breathable, fast drying and comfortable. The "joy-inducing quips" affixed to the underpants offer up to two weeks of options for you to refresh both your mindset and underwear each day. The socks are just as sweet, with their word and corresponding cheeky-but-clever sentence acting as an affirmation for the day. "We're talking socks with values," the six-pack high-top box of socks describes. "Values and skills that improve lives and make the world a better place for everybody's ass." Not only is smartass undies an innovative brand, it's also an environmentally friendly one through its partnership with HalfCut.Org, where 50 per cent of the brand's profits go towards planting trees and protecting our rainforests. *Ally McManus* 🍌



Crazy for cacao

Rich in antioxidants and minerals, cacao is a delicious addition to breakfasts, desserts, snacks and drinks. We chat with Power Super Foods to find out more about the superfood.

Q: What are cacao's main health benefits?

A: If you ever feel a bit naughty indulging in cacao, remember high quality raw cacao has a far superior nutritional profile to cocoa or chocolate, with an abundance of health-promoting benefits that make it a worthy regular addition to your diet and truly deserving of its high status among superfoods.

Exceptionally nourishing, raw cacao is one of the highest plant-based sources of iron and magnesium needed for hundreds of processes in the human body, including blood pressure, energy production, muscle and nerve function, sleep, immunity and mental health.

Antioxidant rich, organic raw cacao also contains flavanols, shown to improve blood flow and enhance cognitive performance.

Divinely uplifting, cacao stimulates the release of several bliss brain chemicals or neurotransmitters that boost memory and focus and help naturally elevate and stabilize mood. It's a natural and delicious way to enhance those buzzy feelings of wellbeing and happiness.

Q: What is the best way to consume cacao?

A: Blend into a smoothie drink or bowl or mix cacao powder with milk or water and a sweetener to make a healthy hot chocolate. Making your own chocolate using cacao powder and cacao butter avoids refined sugars, dairy and other unwanted ingredients

often found in store bought chocolate. Sprinkle cacao nibs (nature's chocolate chips) on smoothies or bowls or add to raw or baked treats. If you're looking to chocolate theme your breakfast (and who isn't?), cacao makes a decadent yet healthy upgrade to overnight oats, granola or chia puddings. Good friends with fruits, berries, spices and nuts, cacao even enhances the flavour of some savoury dishes.

Q: How are cacao nibs formed?

A: Cacao beans are fermented to develop their full cacao flavour, then dried, cleaned and cracked to remove the brittle shell or husk. Left behind are the raw nibs – pure cacao pieces of delicious crunchy goodness.

Q: What makes your organic cacao powder different?

A: We source our cacao from smallholder organic farms in South and Central America growing the finest Criollo beans. The preferred bean of chocolate connoisseurs, the Criollo variety has a delicate yet complex taste and unmatched texture and smoothness.

Unlike cocoa powders that are often heated to more than 150 degrees and chemically extracted, our raw cacao powder is minimally processed at low temperatures for a superior richer taste and higher nutritional benefits.

Our cacao range is fairly traded and certified organic with no toxic chemicals, pesticides or GMOs used in the cultivation or processing.

As an additional step for product purity, we also ensure all our cacao is tested for safe low levels of cadmium.

Q: Why is it important to buy fair-trade sustainable cacao powder?

A: It is essential that producers receive a fair price for their cacao. This not only offers farmers a proper income for their families and livelihoods but also enables investments to be made in local communities, providing opportunities for education and health as well as sustainable agricultural infrastructure.

The majority of the world's cocoa is not fairly traded and is grown by vulnerable small holder farmers or plantations that commonly use child slavery in developing countries.

Fairly traded sustainable cacao helps break the cycle of poverty and brings dignity to indigenous communities. So you can add it to your diet with no guilt ... just good old chocolatey deliciousness.

Q: What's next for Power Super Foods?

A: We are soon to release our improved decadently luxurious cacao powder, Cacao Gold. We will be introducing new superfoods to the family for winter immunity, including amazing elderberry and camu camu, and continuing to share innovative plant-based recipes to add the best taste and nutritional boosts to your culinary creations. 🌿

For more information about Power Super Foods, visit powersuperfoods.com.au



Raw chocolate pie

Recipe by Natalie Zee / nataliezee.com

Ingredients

Base

½ cup pitted dates
(chopped finely)
1 cup raw
macadamias
(chopped finely)
½ cup raw cashews
(chopped finely)
½ tsp salt
1 cup shredded

coconut
3 tsp coconut oil
2 tsp finely grated
orange peel

Top

4 large ripe avocados
¾ cup Power
Super Foods
Cacao Powder

1 tsp organic vanilla
bean paste
⅔ cup Power
Super Foods
Coconut Sugar
2 tbsp of melted
Power Super Foods
Cacao Butter
Fresh berries,
to serve

Method

Base

- Mix all ingredients.
- Press into lined cake tin base or pie plate and chill in refrigerator for 30 minutes (If the base doesn't look as though it will stick, add 1-2 tsp of water to mix and a little more coconut oil).

Top

- Blend all ingredients till smooth and creamy.
- Taste the mix; add more cacao powder or coconut sugar to get desired taste.
- Spread mix on top of base.
- Chill for 1-2 hours, use a sharp knife to cut small slivers (it's very rich). Enjoy!



Paleo Brownies

Recipe by Natalie Zee / nataliezee.com

Ingredients

½ cup coconut oil melted
1 ¼ cup Power Super Foods
Coconut Sugar
¾ cup Power Super Foods
Cacao Powder
½ tsp salt

1 tsp vanilla extract
2 large eggs or egg replacer,
eg chia egg
⅓ cup almond meal
3 Tbs tapioca starch
2 Tbs Power Super Foods
Cacao Crunch or Cacao Nibs

Method

- Preheat oven to 175°C (155°C fan-forced) and line a 20 x 20cm baking pan with baking paper.
- In a large mixing bowl whisk together the coconut oil, coconut sugar, cacao powder and salt.
- Then whisk in the vanilla and eggs or egg replacer.
- Lastly add in the flour and tapioca and whisk until smooth.
- Pour the batter into the lined baking pan and sprinkle on the cacao crunch or nibs.
- Bake for 30-35 minutes. When done the edges should be hard and formed and a toothpick into the centre should come out slightly wet.
- Allow to cool completely in the pan before cutting and serving.



Inspired by nature, elevated by science

Being magazine sits down with La Mav founder and CEO, Dr Tarj Mavi, to discover how she created Australia's first certified organic skincare range that incorporates scientifically proven bio-actives in each product.

Q: What makes you feel most present and mindful?

A: For me, I feel most present and mindful when I'm in nature. I have a huge respect for the natural world; it is where, as a creative, I find my deepest inspiration. Whether I am researching new ingredients and bio-actives to incorporate into our products or simply finding peace and stillness in nature, it is where I feel most at home.

Q: Please tell us about the scientifically proven bio-actives used in your skincare range – how do they work? What does that kind of skin science achieve?

A: As a brand, we are dedicated to creating products that are as efficacious and innovative as they are luxurious. That is why we are so passionate about using bio-actives in each of our formulas. The reason why our science is so effective is due to the methods of extraction we use; we are able to capture the most nutrient-dense qualities of each ingredient and utilise its complete



biochemical profile to reflect its natural qualities – as they exist in nature – and maximise its benefits.

Q: You have recently elevated your award-winning formulas with ancient Ayurvedic traditions. Can you please share a bit of information about this?

A: At La Mav we find inspiration in Ayurveda and, in the same way, take a holistic approach to health, beauty and wellbeing. In Ayurvedic principles, a lot of emphasis is placed on finding balance. Not only in terms of our body, mind and spirit, but also in terms of the energies or doshas that are present within everyone (known as Vata, Pitta and Kapha). While we all have different ratios of these energies in us, with one usually more dominant than the others, it is important to find a balance between them so we can feel healthy, well and vital.

In a similar way at La Mav, we try to ensure that every formula we create is well

balanced and can be integrated into your beauty regimen seamlessly. Not only do we incorporate certain Ayurvedic bio-actives and ingredients directly into our formulas, such as ashwagandha, turmeric, tulsi and amla, but we are also expanding our wellbeing category in order to allow us to further explore Ayurvedic practices and principles. Our Kansa Wand is a great example of this. Kansa massage has been around for centuries and is used to help balance the doshas, unblocking energy channels and improving the body's ability to heal itself.

Q: What Australian botanical ingredients do you use?

A: There are almost too many to count! Some of the native Australian bio-actives that we use regularly are caviar finger lime, Davidson plum, mountain pepper leaf and Kakadu plum. All of these ingredients have an impressive antioxidant profile and help to combat the effects of skin ageing such as fine lines, wrinkles and pigmentation, while also protecting the skin from collagen degradation, boosting hydration, skin firmness and elasticity.

Q: What are you doing to minimise the environmental impact of your brand?

A: As a brand we are incredibly passionate about sustainability and are dedicated to being as transparent as possible so that we can become a conscious leader in the skincare industry.

From our ingredients and how they're sourced to our processes, packaging and product development, we are committed to being as eco-friendly as possible. Our packaging is currently made from eco-friendly and recyclable materials and we are also an Accredited Organic Processor of Cosmetics and Skincare with the Organic Food Chain. This means that we comply with both national and international production standards, guaranteeing quality, integrity and traceability of all our products. For our customers, this provides peace of mind that we are using only the highest-quality, most pure, natural and certified organic ingredients from sustainable sources.

We are also hoping to become paperless and carbon-neutral in the near future.



Q: What are your three top tips for glowing, hydrated skin?

A: Firstly, it's important to cleanse correctly by choosing a cleanser that's well suited to your skin type as well as the season. So often we revert to harsh gel cleansers that can strip our skin of its protective natural oils, so I always recommend taking the time to find the most nourishing cleanser for your skin. I love oil cleansing with our Marula Oil Cleanser that effectively removes makeup and impurities, while preserving my skin's delicate lipid barrier.

The second tip would be to focus on moisture. Our skin's moisture levels can easily become depleted, so it's essential to find products that help to lock in moisture. Hyaluronic acid is a powerhouse ingredient that we include in many of

our formulas and it certainly lives up to its hype. As a humectant, it has the ability to hold 1000 times its weight in water, binding to moisture in the cells and helping to promote a plumper, more radiant complexion.

And finally, it's essential to take a holistic approach and focus on what you can do from within. Our skin is a great indicator of what's going on inside the body, so it's important to nourish yourself and feed your skin from within by drinking lots of filtered water each day and focusing on eating nutrient-dense wholefoods. Enjoy lots of antioxidant-rich leafy greens, fresh fruits, lean proteins and skin-loving healthy fats. 🍓

For more information about La Mav, visit lamav.com



Hemp Collective

Why do we use hemp seed oil in our Australian handcrafted products? Hemp seed oil has so many benefits for you and our planet. Hemp gives your skin and hair a cleansing, repairing and conditioning effect, plus no more plastic bottles! We even have your pet covered with our Natural Pet Shampoo to help soothe their skin and promote a luscious, silky coat. Try Hemp Collective Shampoos, Conditioners, Soaps and our Natural Pet Shampoo and Pet Balance Hemp Oil for your fur babies too.

W: hempcollective.com.au



Optima Nutricosmetics

Everything you need for a happy gut and radiant, healthy skin in one simple, daily dose. With potent, natural ingredients in scientifically proven dosages, we address the four key pillars to universal skin health in one delicious, strawberry-vanilla powdered elixir.

W: optimanutricosmetics.com.au/products/ultimate-1



Clémence Organics

Your favourite Clémence Organics products have had a makeover, making them even better for the environment in 100 per cent recyclable tubes, and keeping them fresher for longer. You can get your hands on these new beauties with 15 per cent off using the code BEING20.

W: clemenceorganics.com

How you're being
Products and services that encourage just being.



Harlo Design Studio

Harlo Skincare is synthetic-, palm oil-, water-, soap-, wax- and cruelty-free. Ethical botanical self-care for the conscious consumer, where every ingredient is nutritious and natural. Bronze Winners of the 2021 Organic Beauty Award and The Editors Choice Beauty Shortlist Award.

W: harlo.com.au



Kaya Jewellery The Goddess Necklace

Kaya Jewellery has created The Goddess Collection using blue Apatite gemstones. It is believed to help decrease sugar cravings and boost metabolism to help achieve a comfortable weight. Kaya's design incorporates luxe gold accents to elevate your goddess appeal.

W: kayajewellery.com



Byron Yoga Retreat Centre

With its amazing location, nestled in a forest clearing close to the beautiful beaches of Byron Bay, Byron Yoga Retreat Centre offers a unique retreat experience. You can choose to cocoon yourself at the tranquil eco haven, relaxing by the mineral salt pool and lush gardens; jump on a bicycle and head to Byron town centre or to the beach; or take a road trip into the rainforest hinterland.

W: byronyoga.com



Organic Merchant

Organic Merchant is an award-winning Australian premium loose leaf tea brand. Founded by Naturopath Chalimah Jeanne in 2011, all blends are formulated using 100 per cent certified organic ingredients carefully selected for their rich nutrient value, traditional therapeutic properties and fulsome flavour.

W: organicmerchant.com.au



Ceres Organics Coconut Rolls – Original & Espresso

Made from fresh cold-pressed coconut cream, these Coconut Wafer Rolls are a crisp yet smooth pleasure that'll plant you right under a coconut tree, exciting your tastebuds while relaxing your soul with tropical aromas. Any time you need a sweet hit or just that moment to yourself, these will go down a treat!

W: ceresorganics.com.au



Humidity Lifestyle

Humidity Lifestyle is inspired and designed in the Margaret River region of Western Australia. Sustainable and ethically designs stocked by some of the best boutiques and lifestyle stores around Australia and New Zealand.

W: humiditylifestyle.com



Acuenergetics®

Heart Level Meditation Intensive will help you uncover and overcome obstacles that hold you back from meditating regularly, or at the level you desire. AcuEnergetics® founder Kevin Niv Farrow, with 45 years of experience, leads this meditation intensive. He is known internationally as a brilliant, unique and practical meditation teacher.

W: acuenergetics.com



Amaroo Eco

Amaroo Eco derives its name from our land's original owners. Amaroo means beautiful place – and we do indeed live in one of the most beautiful places in the world, from our deserts to our oceans to our tropical rainforests and our snow-capped mountains. The environment is something we need to protect. Amaroo Eco believes we all need to be eco-conscious and do our small part to make this world a better place. Its range of eco-friendly products is the perfect first step to making a difference.

W: amarooeco.com.au



La Mav Age Defence Beauty Tea

Sip your way to smoother skin with a delicious blend of skin-loving botanicals handpicked to help with fine lines and aging skin. Goji berries and rosehip are rich in antioxidants, vitamin C and A and help with cell renewal for a more radiant and youthful complexion. Calendula and hibiscus petals protect and nourish your skin from within.

W: lamav.com



No Face

ACTIVITA Antioxinol C is a potent antioxidant power complex to reduce photodamage. The ingredients are proven to reduce pigmentation, signs of ageing and uneven skin tone, perfect for day time usage to combat free radicals and give the skin matrix a boost for rejuvenation.

W: noface.com.au



Power Super Foods

Power Super Foods certified organic raw seaweeds are sustainably sourced direct from the icy cold pristine Atlantic waters where they are harvested by hand, and air dried at low temperatures to retain precious vitamins and minerals. Try the range of delicious superfoods today.

W: powersuperfoods.com.au



Wotnot Natural & Organic Biodegradable Facial Wipes

Unique Australian beauty wipes that not only cleanse but also nourish the skin. Using the finest oils, they are kind to your skin and the environment. They're made using luxuriously soft biodegradable cloth, so it will break down quickly once it leaves your home.

W: wotnot.com.au



NueBar

NueBar shampoo, conditioner and body wash bars are pH-balanced, naturopath-formulated and handmade in Australia. Gentle and effective, they will leave your hair and skin feeling soft and clean without drying. Try NueBar and see how beautiful plastic-free can be.

W: nuebar.com



Young Living

Young Living's Coconut Lime Replenishing Body Butter hydrates and nourishes your skin. Formulated with plant-based ingredients, including coconut oil and lime essential oil, to create a luxurious tropical aroma that leaves your skin feeling soft and smooth.

W: youngliving.com/en_au



Cheeki Bottles

Whether you're a matcha morning person or a flat white fan, a BYO Cheeki insulated coffee mug will keep your brew nicely warm for up to eight hours. The unique pop-up lid is 100 per cent leak-proof and every Cheeki product is toxin-free.

W: cheeki.com



Georgie Skin

Get ready for bright, hydrated, radiant skin with this Dead Sea Minerals Face Mud Mask with Turmeric. The rich, creamy texture and nourishing ingredients of this luxurious mask combines natural herbs, soothing extracts, purifying bentonite and potent mineral-rich mud from the Dead Sea.

The perfect formula to create calm and wellbeing for your skin. Enjoy the treasures of the Dead Sea in your own home with this luxurious yet powerful formula.

W: georgieskin.com



IME Natural Perfume

IME Natural Perfume is a 100 per cent natural, holistic, bliss-inducing olfactory collection based on the nine Muses of Greek Mythology that marries together the finest botanical ingredients to uplift, calm, relax and inspire. Reimagine yourself with fragrances to enhance mind, body and soul – naturally. Available in eau de parfum spray and organic solid perfume sticks. 100 per cent natural, cruelty-free, toxin-free and vegan.

W: ime-natural-perfume.com.au

From our business partners

We want to support the work of the many business partners who support us. Many of these are starting new gigs, or just doing something different in areas that we care about. If you want to know more about their stories, find the pages marked "business storytelling" in each issue of the mag, or find them online, buy from them or tell their stories to others who may be interested.

A holistic approach to wellness

Learn how to foster a life that nurtures a healthy mind, body and spirit with Nature Care College's Diploma of Holistic Wellness Coaching.

Wellness is more than being healthy through eating well and exercise. How we think, feel and engage with the world affects our cellular biology, or put simply, our overall health. Wellness is more than being healthy through eating well and exercise. It is creating a growth mindset, engaging in positive emotional practices and simple but effective "focused" practices, ultimately making long-term beneficial changes in several spheres of one's life.

Learn how to foster a life that nurtures a healthy mind, body and spirit in Nature Care's popular Diploma of Holistic Wellness Coaching. Whether you are looking to join the coaching profession or to enhance your quality of life, this course will provide you with the tools to create a more positive, healthier and happier life, and motivate you on how to inspire others to do the same.

What you will learn

This is a wellness course that facilitates valuable self-development and expansion. In today's world, we need more empathy, kindness, collaboration and other positive qualities. These qualities can be developed within each of us to maintain an effective, lasting personal wellness program that is

Testimonial

"For anyone passionate about a career in health and wellness, Nature Care College provides a firm foundation to springboard into your chosen field. Their tangible approach and holistic courses are not only inspiring and refreshing but also contribute to making the world a happier and healthier place."

Lee Holmes, author of *Supercharged Foods*

focused on a holistic approach to staying well and avoiding illness. As they say, "Prevention is better than cure".

The course program includes studies in:

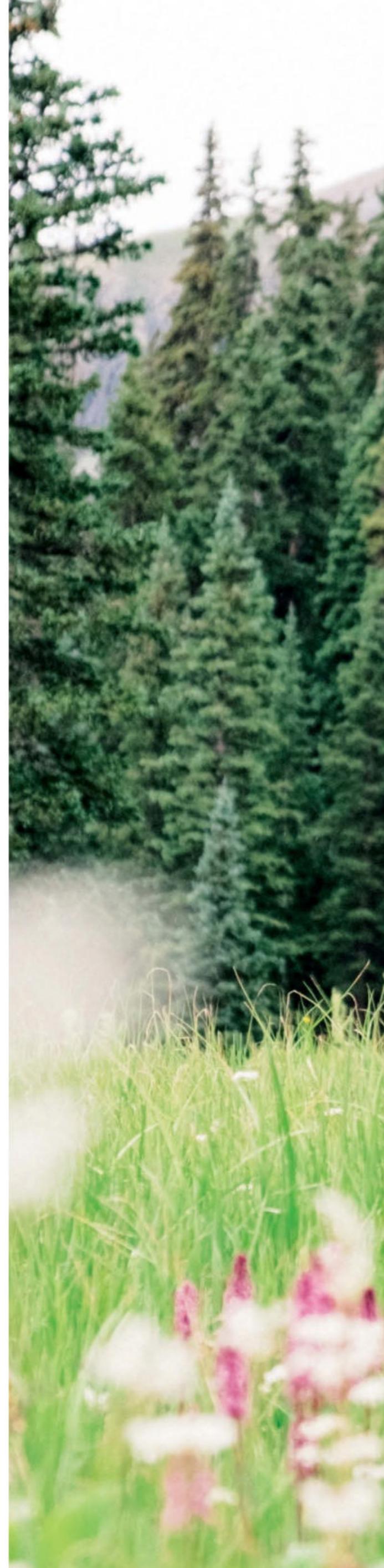
- ✓ Cellular Health – Living for Longevity
- ✓ Mental, Emotional and Spiritual Wellness
- ✓ The Resilient Mindset
- ✓ Creating Self Care Plans
- ✓ Food as Medicine
- ✓ Weight Management Strategies
- ✓ Psychoneuroimmunology – Based Relaxation Therapy
- ✓ Wellness Coaching Skills
- ✓ The Successful Wellness Coach

Who is this course for?

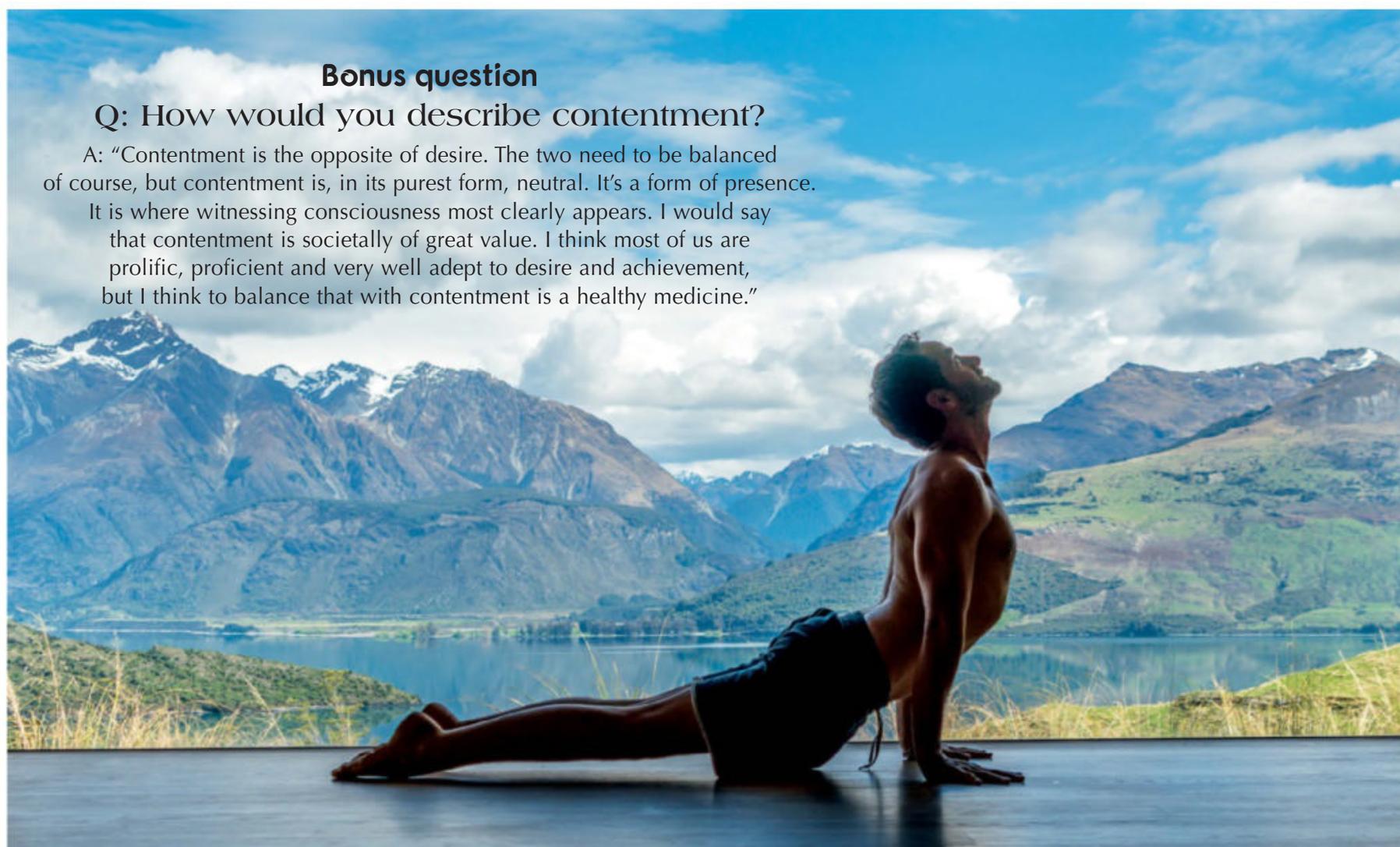
This course is geared towards those who have a holistic approach to wellness and wish to practise as a Wellness Coach. It is also an inspiring course program for people who have a passion for learning about the disciplines and philosophies to achieve a life that fosters and nurtures a healthy, mind, body and spirit.

Since 1973, Nature Care College's roots and purpose have been in educating people to take a holistic approach to health and healing, with a focus on preventative natural healthcare. Whether you are looking to grow or are after a rewarding career, Nature Care offers a diverse range of courses in holistic nutrition, wellness coaching, natural health, herbal medicine, meditation, aromatherapy and energetic health, with virtual classroom learning options so courses can be studied anywhere, any time.

For more information about Nature Care College, call +61 2 8423 8333, email info@naturecare.com.au or visit naturecare.com.au.







Bonus question

Q: How would you describe contentment?

A: “Contentment is the opposite of desire. The two need to be balanced of course, but contentment is, in its purest form, neutral. It’s a form of presence. It is where witnessing consciousness most clearly appears. I would say that contentment is societally of great value. I think most of us are prolific, proficient and very well adept to desire and achievement, but I think to balance that with contentment is a healthy medicine.”

Man of presence

We learn about the practice of being present with “wellness architect” and co-founder of Aro Há wellness retreat, Damian Chaparro.

Interview ALLY McMANUS

Q: I feel most calm when ...

A: “My mind is in my body. When my brain becomes my feet and I’m walking in the grass or feeling a texture. I feel most calm when I *am* my skin, as it feels the sun, enjoys the breeze.”

Q: The last time I felt inspired was ...

A: “When I received support from a couple of people close to me on a project that I’d been dreaming up — to make wellbeing more approachable for more people. Just having their support, it kind of lit a fire inside me; it made me smile. All of a sudden, the creative juices were flowing, I had the realisation that this project had a much greater likelihood of going forward and we were all on the same page. It felt good [giggles].”

Q: When I need to pause ...

A: “I go outside; I climb a mountain, I go flying. I will often find a small or big adventure that almost is always outdoors.”

Q: The last time I laughed was ...

A: “This morning on a call about the [Aro Há] cookbook. I had requested that everyone take a manageable ‘bite’ and set a timeline for achieving that manageable bite, and my manageable bite was the smallest bite of my entire team’s [laughs].”

Q: The last time I cried was ...

A: “Four days ago. I was witnessing some beautiful souls in a closing ceremony here at Aro Há. I was feeling my own heart kind of melt and just

learning, you know — being open and witnessing the humanness of being human. It was really beautiful.”

Q: My favourite way to relax is ...

A: “Usually with a cup of tea and my wife and my dog all on the same small couch. Usually the dog on top — he’s a Labrador, so he’s no small dog — as he gets jealous when we are snuggling and having our tea. He decides he wants to be involved, so he’s always at the very top of the pile.”

Q: I have the most ease in my life when ...

A: “I prioritise contentment. When I prioritise the reminder that everything is more than enough. And when I can couple that with free-form movement — whether that’s just my own morning ritual or whether it’s dance — that’s when it strikes.”

Q: My favourite way to create space is ...

A: “Silence [smiles]; even if it’s space from my own thoughts. Sometimes my wife and I go for walks and even on those walks, while we’re often chatting, we’ll often consciously take time just to be silent. Combining nature, our dog, each other, presence — just walking in silence is quite a gift.”



Bonus question

Q: Where is your favourite place outdoors?

A: "My favourite palace outdoors is one I haven't been to before. I like newness."

Q: Creativity comes to me ...

A: "At about 3am [giggles]. It's interesting ... at first I fought it, at first I thought, *why are you awake?* But these days I've actually created a little practice when it happens. I just assume that my subconscious is interested in telling me something. So I just allow my thoughts to wander, invite some relaxation, invite some allowing ... I can sometimes sit in a fairly creative state for an hour or so before I drift back into sleep. There are often some really interesting flows because there's no distraction and there's no need to deliver anything or actually create anything. The openness of those hours seems to be fertile."

Q: I feel most connected when ...

A: "I'm embodied. When I feel my breath in my toes, in my fingertips, in my scalp."

Q: I define "being" as ...

A: "The part of us that has always been. I experience 'being' as the aspect of myself that first saw through my eyes when I was born into this world and began listening through my ears – perhaps even inside my mother's womb – and that part of me that learned to walk and learned to speak and move through this life. The 'being-ness' is the essential quality. It's the thing that has never needed learning. It's ageless. It's perfect. It can't be damaged. It can't be harmed. It's always home." 🌿



Being

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IMPORTANT: This magazine is intended as a reference volume only, not as a medical manual. While the information is based on material provided by researchers, the magazine does not presume to give medical advice. Be sure to consult your physician before beginning any therapeutic program.

An illustration of two people in a yellow inflatable boat on a blue lake. The person on the left is wearing a white shirt and blue pants, holding a fishing rod with a fish on the line. The person on the right is wearing a blue shirt and dark pants, holding a yellow guitar. The background features blue mountains and white clouds in a light blue sky.

“Stop measuring days by degree of productivity and start experiencing them by degree of presence.”

~ Alan Watts