

ISSUE EIGHT

# Be Phenomenal *Women*





# TQUK Level 3

## Award in Education & Training

This is a **FREE** introductory teaching qualification, which prepares learners for teaching or training in a wide range of contexts. It does not develop competence, as learners are not required to be in a teaching position.

The qualification is suitable for individuals who wish to teach in the Further Education and Skills Sector and forms a foundation for those with little or no previous experience of teaching or training.

**Dates for this course are as follows:**

**12, 26 October • 9, 23 November • 7 December  
4, 18 January 2024 • 1 February 2024**

Each class will run from 10am to 4pm. Tea and Coffee are provided, lunch is not.

All course materials will be provided.

*Participants must be from the Belfast City Council area.*



For more information,  
please contact Heather at TWN,  
[heather@twnonline.com](mailto:heather@twnonline.com) or  
028 9031 9888

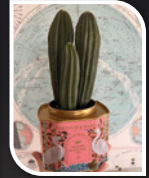


Supported by

**Belfast  
City Council**



If you would like a digital version of this magazine sent directly to your mailbox, please just contact us at [hello@bephenomenalwomen.com](mailto:hello@bephenomenalwomen.com) with your name and email address



# Contents List...

- Page 04** Alison Hammond
- Page 08** Barcelona - A Journey into Catalan Splendour
- Page 12** Rosemary Morrison
- Page 16** Recipes
- Page 24** Menopause Tracking
- Page 26** Find Your Happy Place
- Page 30** Day Dreamer Fashion
- Page 36** Rosie Jones - Am I a R\*tard

- Page 38** Revive Homeware - a local business
- Page 42** Unmasking the Origins of Halloween
- Page 46** Strictly Come Dancing 2023
- Page 52** Autumn Gardening Tips & Ideas
- Page 56** Caroline Quentin - Exploring the Great Outdoors
- Page 60** Book Reviews
- Page 64** Music Rocks
- Page 66** Writing Poetry



*Thanks: Channel 4, Una @ Carlin Creative, Cottage Delight, Dr Deborah Lancaster, Melissa McAvoy, Joe Browns, Lorraine Brown, Dunelm, BBC, Louisa McKee and Sandra Griffith*

# Alison, HAMMOND







## *The Beloved Brummie Who is Bringing Laughter to Bake Off*

Alison Hammond has recently been announced as the new co-host of The Great British Bake Off, replacing Matt Lucas. This is a major coup for Hammond, as Bake Off is one of the most popular shows on British television. She is sure to bring her own unique brand of humour and warmth to the show, and she is expected to be a hit with viewers.

In the world of British television, there are few personalities as beloved and enduring as Alison Hammond. With her infectious laughter, warm personality, and undeniable charm, she has won the hearts of millions

of viewers across the UK and beyond. From her early days as a reality TV contestant to her current role as a beloved presenter, Alison Hammond's journey in the entertainment industry has been nothing short of remarkable.





Born on February 5, 1975, in Birmingham, England, Alison Hammond's path to fame was not a straightforward one. She was bullied at school and was homeless for a time in her early twenties. Before becoming a household name she worked various jobs, including as a cinema usherette and a holiday rep. However, her big break came in 2002 when she appeared on the third series of the hit reality show 'Big Brother.' While she didn't win the competition, her vivacious personality and infectious laughter left a lasting impression on viewers.

Her stint on 'Big Brother' catapulted her into the public eye, and she soon became a sought-after reality TV contestant. She participated in shows like 'I'm a Celebrity... Get Me Out of Here!' and 'Strictly Come Dancing.' Her larger-than-life personality and down-to-earth nature endeared her to viewers, and she quickly gained a loyal fan base.

While Alison initially gained fame as a reality TV star, it was her transition into presenting that truly solidified her status as a beloved figure in British television. Her big break as a presenter came when she joined the popular daytime show 'This Morning' as a regular contributor in 2003. Her segments, filled with

humour and genuine enthusiasm, resonated with viewers, and it wasn't long before she became a permanent fixture on the show.

Alison's versatility as a presenter is one of her key strengths. She can effortlessly shift between heart-warming human interest stories, celebrity interviews, and cooking segments, always infusing her unique brand of humour and warmth into each one. Her segments often go viral, with viewers eagerly sharing her infectious laughter and candid moments on social media.

One of Alison's most beloved segments on 'This Morning' is her celebrity interviews. Her ability to put even the biggest stars at ease and extract candid and entertaining responses from them is a testament to her talent. Some of her most memorable interviews include hilarious encounters with Hollywood A-listers like Ryan Gosling, Harrison Ford, and Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson.

Hammond is known for her sense of humour and her down-to-earth personality. She is not afraid to be herself, and she often speaks candidly about her personal experiences. This has made her a popular figure with viewers, who appreciate her authenticity and relatability.





Alison's success in the world of British television is not just a testament to her talent but also to her breaking down barriers. As a single parent, plus-size black woman, she has faced her fair share of challenges and prejudice in the industry. However, her undeniable talent and magnetic personality have allowed her to overcome these obstacles and pave the way for greater diversity and representation on British television.

She is more than just a TV presenter; she is a national treasure. Her infectious laughter, warm personality, and genuine enthusiasm for her work have endeared her to viewers

of all ages and backgrounds. From her humble beginnings on reality TV to her current status as a beloved presenter, Alison's journey in the entertainment industry has been nothing short of inspirational. She has broken barriers, made people laugh, and touched the hearts of millions. In the ever-changing landscape of British television, one thing remains constant - Alison Hammond's enduring charm and the love she receives from her fans.

***The 14th series of The Great British Bake-Off begins this September and can be viewed on Channel 4 and Channel 4 Catch-Up.***



# Barcelona

*A Journey into*  
**CATALONIAN SPLENDOUR**

Nestled along the sparkling Mediterranean coast, Barcelona stands as a true gem of Spain and a hotspot for global tourism. This vibrant city seamlessly blends history, culture, art, and modernity to offer an unforgettable experience for travellers from all corners of the world. From its iconic architecture and delectable cuisine to its lively street scenes and rich heritage, Barcelona has firmly established itself as a must-visit destination for any avid globetrotter.





### A Glimpse into the Past

The history of Barcelona dates back over 2,000 years, with its roots tracing back to the Roman era. Founded as 'Barcino' in the 1st century BC, the city flourished as an important Roman port and trading hub. Remnants of this era can still be observed in the charming Barri Gòtic (Gothic Quarter), where narrow streets and ancient walls transport visitors to the city's early days.

The Middle Ages witnessed the city's growth and consolidation under the rule of the Catalan Counts. The crowning jewel of this period is the magnificent Barcelona Cathedral, a stunning example of Catalan Gothic architecture. The cathedral's intricate facades and soaring spires stand as a tribute to the city's spiritual and artistic legacy.



However, it was during the late 19th and early 20th centuries that Barcelona truly blossomed into a cultural powerhouse. The iconic architect Antoni Gaudí, a leading figure of the Catalan Modernisme movement, left an indelible mark on the city's landscape.







### Sun-Kissed Beaches and Mediterranean Charm

The city's location on the Mediterranean coastline gifts it with a series of pristine beaches that beckon sun-seekers and water enthusiasts. Barceloneta Beach, with its golden sands and vibrant atmosphere, is a hub of activity where visitors can relax, swim, and indulge in delicious seafood at the numerous seaside restaurants. The beach's proximity to the city centre ensures that the beauty of the sea is seamlessly integrated into Barcelona's urban fabric.

### Tapas and Beyond

The heart of Barcelona's culture can be discovered through its gastronomy. The city's culinary scene is a vibrant fusion of traditional Catalan flavours and innovative techniques,

### Architectural Marvels: Gaudi's Legacy

Barcelona's skyline is forever marked by the whimsical and awe-inspiring works of Gaudí, and his creations, like the Sagrada Família, Park Güell, and Casa Batlló, stand as intricate masterpieces that encapsulate the city's artistic spirit. The Sagrada Família, a monumental basilica, is perhaps Gaudí's most famous work and remains unfinished to this day, inviting visitors to marvel at its intricate facades and breathtaking interior.





resulting in a diverse range of culinary experiences. It's near impossible to visit Barcelona without indulging in tapas - these delectable small plates, often shared among friends, offer a tantalizing array of flavours, from jamón ibérico and patatas bravas to mouth-watering seafood dishes.

### Las Ramblas and La Boqueria: A Lively Tapestry

The iconic street of Las Ramblas is the bustling heart of Barcelona's urban life. Lined with cafes, shops, and street performers, it offers a dynamic tapestry of the city's vibrant culture. One of the must-visit spots along Las Ramblas is the Mercat de Sant Josep de la Boqueria, commonly known as La Boqueria. This bustling market is a sensory delight, offering a kaleidoscope of colours, aromas, and flavours through its stalls laden with fresh produce, spices, and local specialities.

### Immersive Arts and Cultural Scene

Barcelona's cultural prowess extends beyond its architecture and culinary scene. The city boasts a rich assortment of museums, galleries, and cultural institutions. The Picasso Museum showcases the renowned artist's early works, providing insight into his formative years. The Museum of Contemporary Art (MACBA) offers a platform for contemporary artists to showcase their creations, while the Palau de la Música Catalana hosts concerts and events in a stunning modernist building.



### Festivals and Celebrations

Barcelona's festive spirit comes alive during its numerous festivals and celebrations. La Mercè, the city's largest annual festival, takes place in September and offers a colourful array of events, from live music and street performances to fireworks and processions. Another notable event is the La Diada de Catalunya, a celebration of Catalan identity and culture that takes place every September 11th.

Barcelona's allure lies in its ability to captivate travellers with a seamless blend of historical significance, artistic innovation, natural beauty, and an unmatched culinary scene. Whether wandering the narrow alleys of the Gothic Quarter, soaking in the panoramic views from Montjuïc Hill or simply savouring a cup of rich Spanish coffee at a charming cafe, every moment spent in Barcelona is a testament to its vibrant spirit and indomitable charm. As a city that gracefully embraces its past while continuously evolving, Barcelona promises a unique and unforgettable experience to all who have the privilege of exploring its streets and discovering its treasures.







# Rosemary MORRISON

Rosemary Morrison is well known on the entrepreneurial circuit in NI. She has made it her business to provide consultancy, mentorship and business development training to small to medium enterprises and micro-businesses in the UK and Ireland for over two decades. A committed member of Women in Business, Rosemary's company Directus turns 21 this September.

## **Rosemary, your business is 21 years old. How does it feel to be 21 again?**

It's fabulous to be 21 again but this time I'll be able to celebrate more than my actual 21st!

While it would be lovely to actually be 21 again (I am now 61) with age comes maturity and I think I'm now much more confident in my own skin. I was forty before I 'knew what I wanted to be when I grew up. That's why I always encourage clients to look at career options no matter what stage of life they're at. A recent client was planning her next move at 72! "Time flies when you're having fun" and that must be why my last 21 years in business have flown by. I'm incredibly lucky to still love what I do.

## **Can you remember how you celebrated your actual 21st birthday?**

It was without my new husband of just six weeks because he was working night shift. Two days after we got married, we moved to Germany. My German landlady and her Italian husband didn't want me to be alone on my birthday, so they took me out to the local pizzeria.

I spoke neither German nor Italian and neither of them spoke English! It was a great evening, and we became firm friends.

## **Tell us more about Directus? How has it developed and grown?**

Directus came about because I had been in a role for four years as an Information Officer on a Belfast-based project called Belfast First Stop Business Shop. I loved it. My boss, Brian McMillan, was amazing.

He encouraged me to become as qualified as I could while I was in his employment. I then took up a position as Manager of an enterprise agency and soon realised I'd made a bad move, so I resigned one day without really meaning to! After a few months of self-inflicted wound licking, I set up Directus Training and Consultancy on September 17, 2002.

## **How have you seen the world of work change over 21 years?**

There's no such thing as a 'job for life' anymore as there was in my parents or grandparents' day. A career change after five years is now common and while in the past it was seen as a negative to move companies, these days it's much more the norm, as is wearing a number of 'hats', being part-time employed, part-time self-employed providing parents and carers more flexibility in the workplace and a greater work/life balance.

When I started to work as a part-timer in my teens, I remember referring to my boss as Mr or Mrs, and the dress code was also much more formal. I love that a lot of formality in business has been dropped; even more since Covid when Zoom or Teams meetings more often than not involved children and dogs in the background.

Technological change has played a big part in business growth for every size of business and improvements to systems and processes and communications are now affordable to all and have made audiences much easier to reach through Facebook, Instagram, TikTok and other platforms.

The emergence of AI will bring greater opportunities too - I already have a client using AI in his design work.

For my own business and others, LinkedIn plays a huge part in building an online network and community and as 'people buy people' potential clients can see very quickly who they might be investing in even prior to contact.

Unpredictable external political, social, economic, and technological factors can all impact self-employment. While there is a huge amount of support for entrepreneurs in the UK and Ireland, the lack of a functioning executive at Stormont doesn't fill our future entrepreneurs with confidence.

### **Can you tell us about a career high. What are you most proud of?**

Throughout my career, I have had a number of memorable days. On day one in employment for the First Stop Business Shop in 1998, I had the privilege of meeting Mo Mowlam, who officially opened the shop. She had an extraordinary presence.

In 2020, I was honoured to receive an award from the Prince's Trust NI as their longest serving volunteer from actor Colin Salmon. I had previously met Prince Charles. I'm still in awe of what the Trust does for young adults from all walks of life and from all over the UK.

My personal high, was probably even before I established Directus when I was running my Deli business while studying part-time. It took five years of night school to work through the Certificate, Advanced Certificate and finally my CIM Postgraduate Diploma in Marketing.

### **What are the characteristics and qualities needed to set up your own business?**

I believe we entrepreneurs share common characteristics and traits. Top of the list would be resilience followed by flexibility but it's also important to have a vision and know what direction you want your business to go in.

Many of the skills needed can be learned, such as money management, (knowledge of bookkeeping, taxes, VAT etc.) and marketing planning, even though people haven't done a formal marketing qualification. Self-discipline and time management is also key to success in my opinion.

Especially if you're working on your own, you need to be able to juggle your own personal development, market research, marketing, finance, bookkeeping, banking, admin, sales generation and much more.

### **What would your top five tips be to anyone hoping to start up their own business?**

- 1 Have a vision and think it through
- 2 Do your research. That's the foundation on which every successful business is built
- 3 Seek assistance! A lot of it is free
- 4 Ensure you're not going to run out of money before you get off the ground
- 5 Work to a plan

### **You are a member of Women in Business? What are the benefits of being part of a network?**

I have been a Woman in Business member for nearly all of my 21-years in business. I was on the Board for five years not long after the organisation was established but stepped off in 2009 to quote for a piece of work. I'm grateful to say I've been subcontracting to Women in Business ever since.

With a membership of 7.5K members, this is a network with remarkable vision. They offer an extraordinary amount of support to people seeking new careers or those who are looking at self-employment.

I've been a delivery partner on their Yes You Can 'Explore it' programme for a number of years now and I have 16 women on the current cohort. It's a privilege to be part of their journey and love to see their business acumen and self-confidence coming on leaps and bounds.

I would encourage any woman to look at Women in Business and the many other networks in NI for support because self-employment can be a little lonely at times. It's great to have colleagues and friends you can rely on, get encouragement from, and be your cheerleader and advocate. I have formed many friendships through these organisations too.

### **What about the next twenty years - what are your plans for Directus?**

My plans for the next five to ten years include moving some of my courses online. I have delivered my 'Six Steps to Business Success' course, in person, a number of times and it is my first available online start-up programme.

Until my retirement, I hope that I'll still be working for the Enterprise Agencies and WIBNI too delivering training and mentoring to NI's future entrepreneurs.



## Outside work, how do you like to relax?

Living on the Ards Peninsula, provides Gordon, my husband and I, the opportunity to take scenic walks, with a new addition to our family Milly our pointer/collie cross. We are both into classic and vintage cars too and love taking our MX5s out, weather permitting, roofs off, to Portaferry or beyond on a good day.

Gordon and I met a lifetime ago and have been married for 40 years. I must be doing something right because he says he'd do it all over again! We met in one of the first jobs I had. I was a Saturday girl in a shop, and my boss and he were best friends. I still like to cook, and he still likes my cooking so maybe the old adage is actually true.

I am actually also insured as a cookery school because I've been working on an 'Urban Villages' food project for four years to bring cost-saving and delicious recipes to community groups.

My love of cooking started with my first business when I was 24, which was a Deli and food retail and outside catering business. It was called Cuisine and operated across two sites at different times, Belfast, then Ards. It's good to be involved in other things outside of work too because variety really is the spice of life.

Rosemary can be reached through her website [directus-ni.co.uk](http://directus-ni.co.uk).

**Directus**  
BUSINESS TRAINING & CONSULTANCY









# Sticky Chilli Beef 'Brisket

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Cooking Time: 7 hours

Serves: 6

**Deliciously tender Beef Brisket with  
sticky Chilli Jam,  
slow cooked for 7 hours.**

## Ingredients:

0.5kg beef brisket, fat trimmed  
1 tbsp sea salt  
1 tsp coarse ground black pepper  
4 cloves garlic, minced  
227g jar Sweet Chilli Jam  
Baby gem lettuce, quartered and gently  
charred

## Cooking Method:

Trim the fat off the brisket, leaving  
about 6.5mm.

Pat the brisket dry with paper towels.

Season the brisket with the salt and  
pepper and rub the garlic all over it.

Add the brisket fat side up into the slow  
cooker for 7 hours on low heat.

To finish, smother with Sweet Chilli Jam then  
either place brisket under a  
grill for 5 minutes, or gently  
grill on a barbecue.









# Mini Caramelised Onion & Feta Tarts

Prep Time: **30 minutes**

Cooking Time: **25-30 minutes**

Serves: **6**

**Easy and elegant crumbly Feta and Onion Tarts, perfect for sharing!**

## Ingredients:

225g plain flour	200g Gruyere cheese
1 tsp baking powder	3 eggs, 1 separated
1 tsp salt	150g feta, crumbled
60g butter	300ml double cream
1 egg yolk	1 jar Caramelised Onion Chutney
60g water	250g spinach
3 tbsp olive oil	

## Cooking Method:

For the pastry place the flour, baking powder, salt, butter and egg yolk into a mixing bowl. Knead for 2 Minutes. While kneading, add 60g water in a thin stream until the mixture resembles a dough. You may not need all the water.

Remove from the bowl and form into a ball. Wrap in clingfilm and chill for 30 minutes.

Pre heat the oven to 200°C/ 180°C fan/Gas mark 6.

To make the tart shell, remove the dough from the fridge and place on a floured surface. Roll out to a large square and cut to fit tart cases. Prick the bottom with a fork and chill for 15 minutes. Then cover with a piece of greaseproof paper and fill with baking beans. Blind bake for 15 minutes, then remove the beans and greaseproof paper and bake again for a further 5 minutes.

Meanwhile to make the tart mixture, in a mixing bowl crack the eggs, grate the Gruyere and then pour over the double cream in the mixing bowl. Whisk until combined and leave to one side.

To assemble the tart, first scatter spinach in the tart dishes, then pour the cream mixture until three quarters full. Add 1tsp of our Caramelised Onion Chutney and crumble feta over the top.

Bake in the oven for 25-35 minutes. Then remove and garnish with spinach and a sprinkle of cracked black pepper.





# Minted Lamb Lollipops

Prep Time: 12 minutes  
Cooking Time: 8 minutes  
Serves: 12

**Super simple, succulent lamb lollipops with our gardener's mint and yoghurt sauce. Perfect for sharing!**

## Ingredients:

340g ground lamb	½ tsp black pepper
1 egg	3 tbsp breadcrumbs
3 tbsp Gardeners Mint Sauce	Vegetable oil, as needed
½ tsp cumin	300g natural yoghurt
½ tsp cinnamon	4 tbsp Gardeners Mint Sauce
½ tsp fine sea salt	Pinch of salt

## Cooking Method:

In a large bowl, break up the ground lamb into small pieces. Add egg, seasoning and mint sauce. Use your fingers to gently mix together.

Roll the mixture into meatballs, about 2 tablespoons at a time. To keep them tender, avoid over-handling them, simply patting and gently rolling them into balls. Put the formed meatballs on a platter or baking sheet. Damp hands will help keep the meat from sticking.

Heat a large frying pan over medium-high heat. Add 1 to 2 tablespoons of oil to the pan, swirl the oil to spread it over the cooking surface, and add as many meatballs as fit in a single layer without touching (this is key to getting the meatballs to brown properly). Cook, turning to brown on all sides, until the meatballs are cooked through, about 8 minutes total.

To make the mint yoghurt sauce, pour the yoghurt into a bowl, add our Gardeners Mint sauce and stir until well mixed. Add salt to taste.

To finish, add lollipop sticks and drizzle with yoghurt mint sauce.













# Lime Cupcakes

Prep Time: **10 minutes**  
 Cooking Time: **20 minutes**  
 Serves: **12**

**Key lime cupcakes have all the flavours of key lime pie in a pretty little cupcake.**

## Ingredients:

25g salted butter  
 155g caster sugar  
 2 tsp lime zest  
 1 jar Zesty Lime Curd  
 2 eggs  
 150g self-raising flour  
 150g plain flour  
 125ml milk  
 600ml Double Cream  
 1 lime cut into segments (garnish)

## Cooking Method:

Preheat oven to 180°C/160°C fan/gas 4 then line a 12 cup muffin pan with paper cases.

Use electric beaters to beat the butter, sugar and lime zest in a bowl until pale and creamy. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Add the flour and milk until combined. Divide mixture into paper cases. Bake for 20 minutes.

Once cooked, cut a deep hole in the centre of each cupcake and spoon 1 tablespoon of lime curd into the hole.

For the fresh cream topping, whisk the cream until soft peaks and spoon into a piping bag with star nozzle.

Finally, pipe the cream onto each cupcake and garnish with lime segment.



# MENOPAUSE

## Tracking



By Dr Deborah Lancaster, Associate Professor of Psychology

**How tracking menopause symptoms can give women more control over their health.**

Menopause can cause more symptoms than hot flushes alone. And some of your symptoms and reactions might be due to the menopause, even if you are still having periods. Research shows that keeping track of those symptoms can help to alleviate them.

People sometimes talk about menopause as though it were a single event that

happens when you are in your early 50s, which is the average time to have your last period. But the menopause generally stretches between the ages of 45 and 55. And some women will experience an earlier “medical” menopause because of surgery to remove the womb or ovaries.

The menopause often happens at one of the busiest times of life. You might have teenagers at home or be supporting grown-up children, have elderly parents, be employed and have a great social life. If you feel exhausted, hot and bothered, irritable and can't sleep well, you might be tempted to think that it is because you never get a minute's peace. But that is why monitoring symptoms is important.

My team recently tested the effects of tracking symptoms and emotions during menopause. We asked women to rate 30 physical and 20 emotional symptoms of the menopause.

The physical and psychological symptoms included poor concentration, problems with digesting food, stress and itchy skin, as well as the obvious symptoms like hot flushes and night sweats. Women tracked positive emotions like happiness and contentment, and negative emotions like feeling sad, isolated and angry.

There were two groups of women in this study.





One group recorded their symptoms and emotions every day for two weeks. The other group recorded their symptoms and emotions once at the beginning of the fortnight and once at the end.

The results showed that the women who monitored their symptoms and emotions every day reported much lower negative emotions, physical symptoms and loneliness at the end of two weeks than at the beginning, compared to the other group.

As well as this, although the loneliness scores of the group who monitored every day were lower than the other group, women in both groups said that being in the study and thinking about symptoms helped them feel less lonely. Simply knowing that other women were having similar experiences seemed to help.

One participant said: "I feel more normal that other women are doing the same survey and are probably experiencing similar issues, especially the emotional and mental ones."

### Why does monitoring symptoms help?

One reason why tracking might help is that rating symptoms can help you notice changes and patterns in how you feel. This could encourage you to seek help.

Another reason is that noticing changes in symptoms might help you link the change to what you have been doing. For example, looking at whether symptoms spike after eating certain foods or are better after exercise. This could mean that you change your behaviour in ways that improve your symptoms.

Many menopause symptoms are known as 'non-specific' symptoms. This is because they can also be symptoms of mental health, thyroid or heart problems. It is important not to think your symptoms are 'just' the menopause. You should always speak to your doctor if you are worried about your health.

Another good thing about monitoring symptoms is that you can take information about how often you experience symptoms and how bad they are to your GP appointment. This can help the doctor decide what might be the problem.

Websites such as Health and Her and Balance offer symptom monitoring tools that can help you track what is happening to your physical and emotional health. There are several apps you can use on your phone, too. Or you might prefer to note symptoms and how bad they are in a notebook every day.

*This article is republished from The Conversation under a Creative Commons license.*

## MENOPAUSE SYSTEMS



HEADACHES



INSOMNIA



IRREGULAR PERIODS



MEMORY PROBLEMS



BREAST TENDERNES



VAGINAL DRYNESS



WEIGHT GAIN



MOOD CHANGED



NIGHT SWEATS



JOINT PAIN



HOT FLUSHES



THINNING HAIR  
AND DRY SKIN

*Find your*  
**HAPPY  
PLACE**



*Wherever you can...*

ARTICLE BY MELISSA McAVOY

The saying, "Happy Place" is thrown around quite freely but if you really think about it and try to find it, it can be the elixir you need in times of stress, the busyness of day-to-day life or just a moment in your day to lift your spirits.





Let's be frank, days are getting busier, faster and more chaotic. In a family of two teenagers between school and sports, exams and socialising, I have to keep a weekly whiteboard just to remember where everyone needs to be on any given day.

Running a business on top of this and with a husband who works unsociable, long shifts, day and night and sometimes it feels like you're always on catch-up. Add in a dose of brain fog and random hot flushes and it's a perfect storm for the proverbial hitting the fan!

But we are phenomenal, us women; we have the organisational skills of a military officer and the resilience of a pro-athlete and even on those days when we feel like we're drowning, we can power on through, finding our metaphorical life belt to save the day.

When all of life's challenges are going on, if you can find your 'Happy Place', the place that can provoke a thought, a memory or a feeling of calm, it will bring you an inner

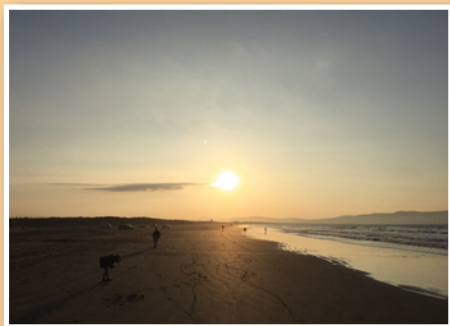
peace that belongs to you and you can call on it at any time.

Even now, as I am writing this and thinking of mine, I can feel the smile coming through and the happiness it brings me. I've been so connected to it for so long, I can just close my eyes for a moment and be there, flooded with memories, smells and sounds that remind me of how relaxed and content I am when I am there.

About 12 years ago when my girls were just 2 and 5, we bought a 25-year-old campervan. We'd been camping a few times and decided to upgrade to life on the road. Not sure if this was right for us, we bought the oldest, cheapest van we could find, gave her a lick of paint, reupholstered the seats and lovingly named her "Miss Daisy" in honour of driving the old girl around!

We were keen to find a new place to explore that was going to create a whole new generation of memories for our wee family and we were recommended Benone on the North Coast.





Other than the odd trip to Barry's as kids and Kelly's as teenagers, our childhoods had been mostly on the beaches of Donegal or Wicklow or a package holiday to Spain, so we actually didn't know the area too well. We had certainly never crossed the far side of the River Bann into the beaches of Downhill and Benone and experienced life on the campsites.

What we found was a place so idyllic and so beautiful, we could not believe we had never been before. The campsite lies in the shadow of Binevenagh, a steep-sided cliff that overlooks the peninsula of Magilligan

with views out to Donegal, Benone and Downhill Beaches with the choppy, brackish waters at the mouth of the Foyle River to the left and the River Bann to the right.

Down on the campsite, Binevenagh looms over the pitches, its imposing view greets you every morning and the various colours it exudes as the seasons change, from the yellow gorse at Easter to the vivid purple of the heather bushes in summer to the golds, reds and browns as Autumn approaches. From that first visit, we were hooked.

You can drive onto the beach at Benone so there were many summers where the





campervan was parked up first thing and the children braved the Atlantic waters, built sandcastles, learnt to bodyboard, then surf, rode our bikes along the compacted sand, in and out of the water, BBQ'd and watched the sunsets to rival any we had seen over the Donegal mountains.

At Easter time, Downhill Forest is filled with the potent smell of wild garlic which we harvest by the bag load and the fields are golden with the crops of rapeseed, as stunning as any field of sunflowers in France!

As time moved on, the campervan became a touring van, and the adventures expanded to all over Ireland, Cornwall and even London, pitching up on the banks of the River Thames but we would always return to Benone several times during the caravan season with a sense of familiarity and peace.

Even on the drive there, I can feel my shoulders relax, any work worries drift away and by the time I pass Castlerock and the outline of Mussendon Temple, Downhill Demesne and the strand comes into view, whatever the weather, I am happy.

These memories and the sense of "Happy Place" have become even more important to me in recent years. When travel was restricted and the world shut down, we were

all housebound and our sense of freedom was gone. I was relying on my imagination to escape and could transport myself and get those peaceful emotions awakened just by taking time out and recalling my "Happy Place". It brought me a sense of calm in the chaos and I was grateful to have the place that I knew I would see again soon.

I have a huge canvas printed out of a sunset on the Beach, a framed photo of the Temple and a phone full of photos of family times that I can just sit, recall and remember. For brief moments, I can hear the constant sound of the sea, feel the wind, rain, sunshine, cold, heat, smell of the BBQ, sounds of children playing, music coming from around the site and people chatting.

The joy of recognising and introducing a "Happy Place" into your life, is that it can be anything you want it to be. It can be a moment, memory, smell, or sound, it can be a warm bath, a quiet room, a book or a photograph. If you can find yours, latch onto it and make it part of your routine when you need that moment to yourself.

You don't need to be great at meditation, or set time aside, life is busy, and time is precious but if you can really focus on what your thing is that will get you to your "Happy Place" you can drift in and out. I couldn't recommend it more.



# Day Dreamer



1

2



- 1 Roxie Denim Jumpsuit £65
- 2 Tiered Tunic Dress £50
- 3 Boldly Beautiful Cardigan £50
- 4 Get Close Tassel Wrap £39



Unburden yourself and set your soul free with the new Joe Browns Day Dreamer mini collection - a delightful escape to a world of liberation and joy. Embrace a deliberate life filled with remarkable moments.

Immerse yourself in a vibrant palette inspired by late-summer night skies, featuring psychedelic patterns and serene hues of violet, teal, rose, and lilacs. Let the Joe Browns touch expand your consciousness with bespoke boutique jackets, boho maxi dresses, and flares adorned with tassels and embroidery.

Find your inner psychedelic goddess with long-line cardigans and floaty fabrics, embodying the spirit of free-spirited nomadic vibes and dance to the rhythm of your own drum.







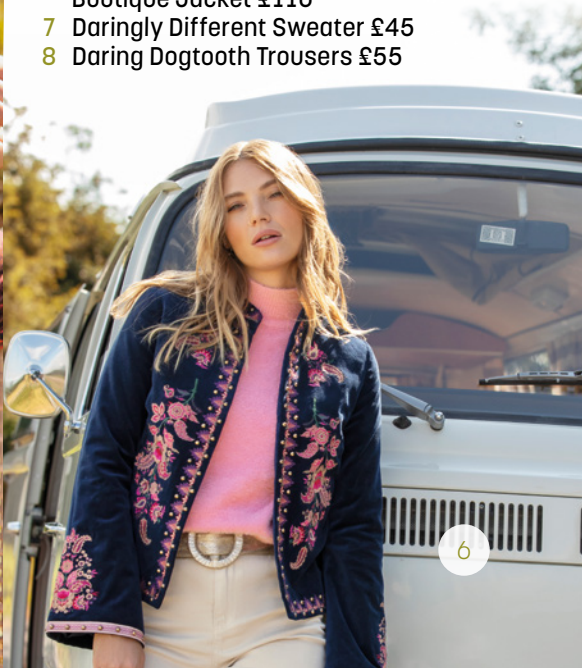




- 1 Ibiza Vibes Dress £80
- 2 Boho Babe Top £50
- 3 Stella Asymmetric Dress £55
- 4 Style Maker Patterned Wrap £39
- 5 Tell All Faux Fur Wrap £69
- 6 Fancy Tassel Cardigan £65







- 1 Scarf Print Tunic Dress £50
- 2 Freedom Wool Fedora £45
- 3 Priya Printed Jersey Dress £55
- 4 Exquisite Embroidered Kimono £80
- 5 Captivating Crochet Cardigan £70
- 6 Simply Stunning Embroidered Boutique Jacket £110
- 7 Daringly Different Sweater £45
- 8 Daring Dogtooth Trousers £55





7

8



# Rosie JONES:

## *Am I a R\*tard?*

Comedy has always been a realm where unique perspectives and fearless wit find a home. Rosie Jones, a remarkable UK comedian, has carved her own path in the world of comedy by fearlessly embracing her identity and challenging societal norms. With her distinctive style and charm, she has become a trailblazer, demonstrating that humour knows no boundaries.





Born in 1990, Rosie Jones has cerebral palsy, a neurological condition that affects motor skills and coordination. Instead of letting this define her, she has used her experiences and perspective to fuel her comedy. From the beginning, Rosie set out to prove that disability doesn't limit one's ability to entertain and inspire. Her stand-up routines touch upon her own life, navigating the challenges of daily tasks, and facing society's misconceptions about disabilities.

What sets Rosie Jones apart is not just her remarkable ability to address sensitive topics with humour, but her capacity to forge connections with her audience. She has an innate skill to make people laugh while also making them think. Her punchlines aren't just about getting a chuckle; they often come with a subtle yet impactful message that encourages reflection and empathy.

Jones has graced various platforms with her talent. From stand-up stages to radio shows and television programmes, her star continues to rise. She's known for her appearances on shows like "8 Out of 10 Cats" and "The Last Leg," where she effortlessly holds her own among her peers with her quick wit and sharp humour.

One of the reasons Rosie Jones has become a beloved figure in the comedy scene is her authenticity. She doesn't shy away from her own experiences, whether they're related to her disability, relationships, or societal issues. Her willingness to be vulnerable and honest on stage allows her audience to connect with her on a deeper level, creating a bond that goes beyond laughter.

In a time where diversity and inclusion are at the forefront of discussions, Rosie Jones serves as a role model for embracing one's uniqueness and breaking down barriers. She champions the idea that comedy is a tool for empowerment and education. Through her comedy, she challenges

misconceptions, dismantles stereotypes, and opens up conversations that might otherwise be considered uncomfortable.

Rosie Jones' impact extends beyond the stage as well. She's an advocate for disability rights and inclusion, actively participating in campaigns and projects that promote a more accessible and understanding world. Her work is a testament to the power of comedy to bridge gaps and spark change.

In the world of comedy, Rosie Jones shines as a true original. Her ability to fuse humour with heart, while shedding light on important issues, makes her an artist who transcends the traditional boundaries of comedy. With her infectious smile, quick wit, and inspiring outlook on life, Rosie Jones continues to leave an indelible mark on the comedy landscape, reminding us all that laughter is a universal language that knows no limitations.

She spends her days bringing smiles and laughter to her audiences on screen and on tour. But ever since her first appearance on television, she's kept a dark and upsetting side of her life in the spotlight private - she is trolled online, daily, and with horrific ferocity, often called the 'R'-word and even receiving rape and death threats because of her disability.

In this unflinchingly personal film, Rosie, sets out to try to understand how prevalent disability trolling is in the UK, and why it's often left completely unchecked. She sets herself the challenge of confronting a troll directly, as well as exploring the role social media plays in the rise of this abuse. Rosie wants everyone in the UK to be made aware of ableism and to stand up to it when they see it. The film is a call to arms for all of us to play our part in ending the suffering of those who are abused simply because of their disability.





# REVIVE Homeware

ARTICLE BY LORRAINE BROWN







The word 'Revive' says it all about this creative, nostalgic and fun business venture that started out just over a year ago in Newtownards, County Down.

Lydia Cassell is a young mother of three who has a creative flare along with a very keen interest in horticulture. A true love of antiques and plants sparked this attractive business idea. Forming a nostalgic way of displaying something old and something new - this is how Lydia describes potting new life into Vintage, pre-loved pieces.



Since she was a little girl, Lydia frequently spent time visiting local antique shops with her mum, Sharon. She recalls how she loved 'going hoking' for unusual pieces even at an early age.

I recently caught up with Lydia who lives close to the stunning and picturesque coastline of Strangford Lough in Co Down. I was very keen to hear her story, to find out more about this snazzy business venture that is sending her happy customers a tad potty!

I first met Lydia at one of the busiest craft fairs of the Christmas period last year. Her colourful and inventive stall drew lots of attention from the many passers-by including myself.

Her stall was filled with various old antique tins, pots and ceramics. Each one contained a real potted plant, carefully sourced by Lydia to bring out the character of the container.

I felt so nostalgic, seeing some of those old tins which I fondly remember sitting in my granny's cupboards or kicking around the backyard with paint brushes protruding. One was an old salt-glazed ceramic milk churn. Took me back to happy times.

Recently Lydia released a new Bake & Brew collection. The old 1920s Salt & Co kitchen scales look amazing with the miniature plants and gravel. F.J. Thornton & Co, Viking Scales made around the 1960s are another sentimental gift, especially for retired bakers.

Most of these vintage ceramic containers and jars are sourced from local antique shops. Lydia loves nothing more than spending hours rummaging through some of the local

traders such as On the Square Emporium at Sydenham Business Park which is full of quirky pieces and accessories. Another great place she enjoys searching is The Old Courthouse in Greyabbey, Co Down. The old tins and ceramics she hunts for are extremely rare. She says that she has eyes like an eagle and can strike it lucky with some of her finds.

During the year she has been setting up shop at quite a few business and craft markets and she's keen to expand into bigger items such as old Belfast sinks, old chimneys and baths etc.

She would love nothing more than to have a pop-up shop within a retail setting and promote her business in a home store which would be a great way of expanding but due to other commitments she's happy with how her small business is progressing.

I was curious to find out if Lydia had any other favourites or had any of her finds been ambushed for her sole possession. In all honesty, she loves each one, but she did have her eye on an old 1950s/1960s Wade Irish Porcelain Musical Beer Tankard, but it was quickly snapped up.

We had a chuckle with this one, imagining the ole man sipping his beer whilst winding the music key to play a lullaby, but to whom?

It really is giving new life and purpose to old bits of history in a simple and creative way which makes the perfect gift.

***Shopping is made easy, as items can be purchased by visiting Revive Homeware Instagram page and also Revive Facebook page.***









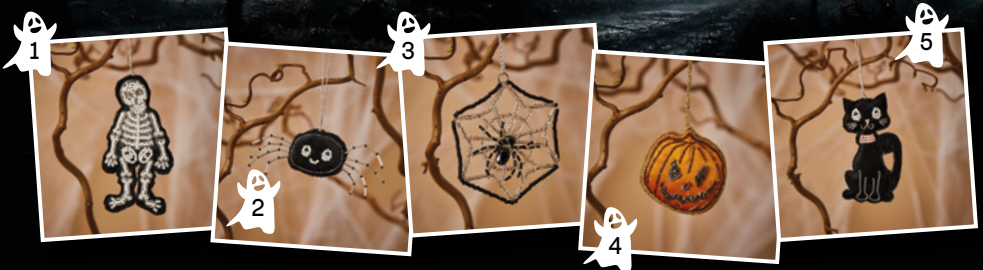


UNMASKING THE  
ORIGINS OF

# HALLOWEEN







### Unmasking the Origins of Halloween

Halloween, with its eerie ambience, elaborate costumes, and abundance of sugary treats, has become a widely celebrated holiday in many parts of the world. But beyond the modern festivities lies a rich history that dates back centuries. The origins of Halloween are shrouded in a tapestry of ancient beliefs, religious traditions, and cultural practices that have evolved over time.

#### Samhain: A Celtic Beginning

The roots of Halloween can be traced back to the ancient Celtic festival of Samhain (pronounced "sow-in"). Samhain marked the end of the harvest season and the beginning of winter, a time when the boundary between the physical and spiritual worlds was believed to be at its thinnest.

This allowed spirits and supernatural beings to cross over into the mortal realm. The Celts would light bonfires and don costumes made from animal hides to ward off these spirits and ensure their protection during the colder months.

#### Christian Influence: All Saints' and All Souls' Days

As Christianity spread across Europe, it incorporated and adapted existing pagan customs into its own traditions. In the 8th century, Pope Gregory III designated November 1st as All Saints' Day, a time to honour saints and martyrs. The evening before, October 31st, gradually became known as All Hallows' Eve, eventually evolving into the term "Halloween." Similarly, November 2nd became All Souls' Day, a day to remember the departed souls of loved ones.

- 1 White & Black Beaded Skeleton Hanging Dec £3.50 • 2 Beaded Spider Hanging Dec £2.50  
 3 Beaded Web Hanging Dec £3.50 • 4 Orange & Black Beaded Hanging Pumpkin Dec £2.50  
 5 Beaded Cat Hanging Dec £2.50 all available at Dunelm



### Merging Traditions: Trick-or-Treating and Costumes

Over time, the various cultural elements began to intermingle. In Medieval Europe, "souling" emerged as a practice where poor individuals would go door-to-door on All Souls' Day, offering prayers for the deceased in exchange for food. This custom evolved into the modern-day concept of trick-or-treating, where children dress up in costumes and collect sweets from neighbours.

The Irish brought the tradition of Halloween to America in the 19th century during the Great Famine, and over time, it blended with other immigrant cultures, resulting in the diverse and festive celebration we know today.

### Modern Halloween: A Global Phenomenon

In the 20th century, Halloween underwent a significant transformation in the United States, transitioning from a primarily community-centred event to a widespread, commercially driven holiday. And this has been replicated throughout the Western world. Costumes have evolved from simple disguises to elaborate outfits inspired by pop culture, horror films, and fantasy. Decorations featuring pumpkins, black cats, and witches' hats have become staples of the season and houses are now being decorated inside and out just as they are at Christmas.

***So get 'Halloween-Ready' and check out what Dunelm has to offer this year.***

- 1 Halloween Twig Tree £12
- 2 Pumpkin wax trio £4
- 3 Mini Campaigns Telescopic Gonk 80cm £15
- 4 Pumpkin Succulent £5
- 5 Spider Web Light £6
- 6 Happy Halloween Plaque £2
- 7 Toadstool photo holder cream £2.50
- 8 Pumpkin oil burner £8
- 9 Black Halloween Bunting with Foil £3







# STRICTLY COME DANCING

Once again, the multi award-winning *Strictly Come Dancing* will return to screens this autumn and the class of 2023 looks set to entertain just as those before them.







Presenters Tess Daly and Claudia Winkleman are back in the ballroom to oversee proceedings and behind the judges desk once again will be the acid-tongued adjudicator Craig Revel Horwood, Let's Dance Germany judge Motsi Mabuse, NTA Award-winning judge Anton Du Beke and The Queen of Latin Shirley Ballas who will return as head judge.

*Strictly It Takes Two* also returns to BBC2 with new co-presenter Fleur East joining Janette Manrara, who returns for her third series presenting the show.

One person who is unlikely to make an appearance on the dance floor is *Strictly* pro dancer Amy Dowden who is currently enduring intensive chemo for the second time. Amy went through a double mastectomy in June but has since shared with fans that she has been told she has a different type of cancer and treatment continues.

Amy is documenting her journey and hopes that frequent posts will raise awareness



and encourage others to check themselves regularly. You can follow Amy's progress on Instagram.





### Amanda Abbington

"I'm thrilled to have been asked to do *Strictly*. I'm actually really shy and self-conscious so this will be a great opportunity for me to overcome those things! Plus, I get to learn to dance which I am incredibly excited about. I'm really looking forward to the training too, I'm quite competitive as my family and friends will tell you. I can't wait to start!"

Amanda is an award-winning stage and screen actor and has starred in some of the UK's top drama TV series, including *Sherlock*, *Mr Selfridge*, *Wolfe*, and *Desperate Measures*, she also had a lead role in the series *The Net* and feature film *The Lost King*.

Her illustrious television acting career spans three decades and she has also performed in various plays in well-renowned theatres across the country.

Her role as Mary Morstan in *Sherlock* won her the Best Supporting Actress gong at the Crime Thriller Awards, alongside nominations for this role at the Critic's Choice Television Awards.



### Angela Rippon CBE

"Having been a fan of *Strictly* since day one, and as a former presenter of *Come Dancing*, this will be quite an adventure for me.

A scary one, considering I'm about to be 79. But I'm really looking forward to the challenge, and perhaps being able to learn to dance the Argentinian Tango".

Angela Rippon CBE is an award-winning journalist, TV presenter, newsreader, and author. Her career spans over 50 years, having presented a wide variety of programmes





from hard news and current affairs to quiz shows and magazine programmes for broadcasters across the world.

She currently presents BBC's *Rip-Off Britain* and is a regular on *Morning Live* and *The One Show*, she presented the original *Come Dancing* between 1988 - 1991 and has fronted shows such as *Top Gear*, *Antiques Roadshow*, *The Holiday Programme*, *Crafts*, *How to Stay Young* and *The Truth About Dementia* to name a few.

In 2004 she was awarded an OBE in recognition of her services to Broadcasting, Charity and the Arts, then in the 2017 New Year Honours Angela was appointed Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE) for services to dementia care.

### Angela Scanlon

"I'm terrified, I'm excited and I have so many questions. Will they make me tan? How itchy are sequins?! Do they do flesh-coloured sports bras? Well - there's only one way to find out, right!? Now I'm panicking a bit... but also secretly thrilled about the prospect of all that glitter. Let's go!"

Angela Scanlon is an Irish television presenter for the BBC and RTÉ. She hosts the hugely successful interior design show *Your Home Made Perfect* on BBC Two. She is the only woman in the UK and Ireland



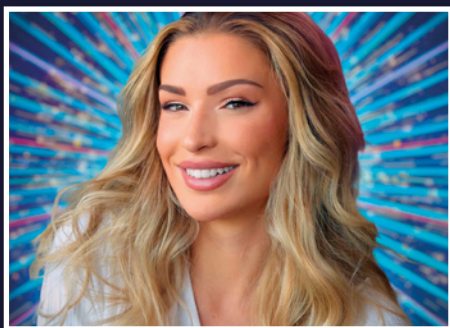
to have their own Saturday night chat show with *Ask Me Anything* on RTÉ One.

Last year, she published her first book *Joyrider*, part empowering guide and part memoir, all about the importance of bringing gratitude into everyday life. Starting off as a stylist, she worked in fashion TV in Ireland, before beginning her UK career as the new presenter of *Robot Wars* along with documentaries for the BBC.

### Zara McDermott

"I am so excited to be joining the world of *Strictly*! I grew up watching it every year with my nan and she was the biggest *Strictly* fan. We would dance around the house, and I have such fond memories of that time in my life.





I even remember the first ever series and being mesmerised by all the beautiful dresses! I can't wait to throw myself into this experience and start training. It's going to be incredible."

Zara McDermott is a broadcaster and content creator.

Zara was a government policy advisor, working for the Department of Energy and Climate Change and the Department of Education before appearing on *Love Island* in 2018.

One of Zara's biggest passions is making documentaries that inspire conversation and educate young people on hard-hitting issues, she has fronted five successful BBC films so far: *Revenge Porn*, *Uncovering Rape Culture*, *Disordered Eating*, and *Gaia: A Death on Dancing Ledge*.

Her other broadcasting work includes presenting the entertainment show *Love in the Flesh* on BBC Three.

Zara's work for young people has been recognised on several occasions; she was invited to Clarence House by the Duchess of Cornwall and Refuge charity and worked with the Duchess on a visit to a SARC (Sexual Assault Referral Centre). Alongside this, she has worked with the government and the Home Office on several campaigns to end violence against women and girls, most notably fronting a campaign that changed the law for victims of digital abuse. Zara is also an ambassador for the Shaping Us campaign for the Centre of Early Childhood, which was launched by Her Royal Highness The Princess of Wales.

### Nikita Kanda

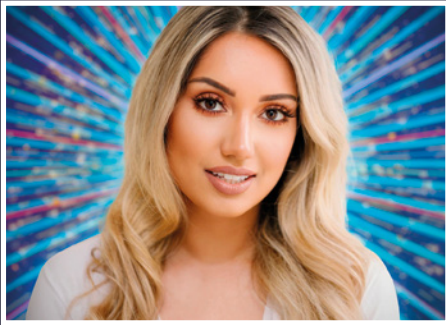
"This is a dream come true. I'm still pinching myself. I don't think it will properly sink in until I step onto the dancefloor. I can't wait to get glammed up and get out there. Throw the glitter on me!"

Nikita Kanda is a radio host and TV presenter.

Nikita is best known for being the current host of the BBC Asian Network's Breakfast show, previously having presented the Saturday afternoon show.







She has interviewed everyone from *Killing Eve* star Sandra Oh, *Bridgerton* actors Kate Sharma and Charithra Chandran, to *Marvel* actress Awkwafina and global pop star Nick Jonas. Recently nominated for Presenter of the Year at the Asian Media Awards, Nikita has also fronted regular reports on BBC One's *The One Show* on a range of topics from the rise of cashless businesses to government support for female sport.

### Ellie Leach

"It still doesn't feel real that I'm going to be doing *Strictly*. It's always been a dream of mine, so I guess dreams really do come true!

Ellie Leach is an actor.

Ellie is best known for portraying Faye Windass for 12 years on *Coronation Street*, nominated for multiple British Soap Awards and Inside Soap Awards for her role, hard-hitting storylines included being pregnant



at 13, discovering she was going through menopause and reconnecting with the child she gave up - which led to her departing the cobbles earlier this year. Prior to *Coronation Street*, Ellie appeared in the independent movie *A Boy Called Dad* and the drama *Moving On*.

### Annabel Croft

"I have always loved watching *Strictly* and can't quite believe I'm going to be part of this magical show - swapping tennis balls for glitter balls and looking forward to finding some joyfulness in the process".

Annabel is a former British Number One tennis player who at 15 years old was the youngest British player to compete at Wimbledon for 95 years.

She also represented Great Britain in prestigious Wightman and Federation Cup competitions and continues to play an integral role in the coverage of Wimbledon each year and has done for many years.

Outside of tennis, Annabel has fronted entertainment shows such as *Treasure Hunt* and *Inceptor* and has enjoyed a long-lasting broadcast career covering all the major tennis events worldwide. Her TV and radio career includes presenting, commentating, and working as a highly respected pundit for all the major broadcasters including BBC, Sky, Amazon Prime, ITV and Discovery.



*Embracing the Beauty of*  
**Autumn**  
**Gardening:**  
**TIPS & IDEAS**





As the vibrant hues of summer transition into the warm and earthy tones of autumn, gardeners are presented with a unique opportunity to transform their outdoor spaces into captivating havens. Autumn gardening offers a chance to not only extend the growing season but also to celebrate the season's natural beauty through thoughtful planting, maintenance, and creative design. Whether you're an experienced green thumb or a novice gardener, here's a guide to help you make the most of your autumn garden.



bloom in the fall, injecting splashes of colour even as other plants are winding down.

### 1. Choosing the Right Plants

Selecting the right plants for your autumn garden is crucial. Opt for varieties that thrive in cooler temperatures and can withstand the occasional frost. Consider incorporating these options:

- A. Perennials:** Plants like asters, chrysanthemums, and sedums burst into a riot of colours during fall. Their hardiness and ability to endure colder weather make them ideal choices.
- B. Ornamental Grasses:** These add texture and movement to your garden. Varieties like miscanthus and feather reed grass can sway gracefully in the autumn breeze.
- C. Fall-Blooming Bulbs:** Flowers like autumn crocuses and colchicums

- D. Foliage Plants:** Consider trees and shrubs with captivating foliage. Japanese maples, for instance, display stunning red and orange leaves.

### 2. Soil Preparation and Maintenance

Ensuring your soil is ready for autumn planting is essential. Clear out spent plants from the summer, amend the soil with compost, and add a layer of mulch to conserve moisture and regulate soil temperature.

### 3. Harvesting and Pruning

Autumn is also harvest time for many crops. Before the frost arrives, make sure to gather your ripened fruits and vegetables.





Additionally, perform necessary pruning to remove dead or diseased growth, which helps promote healthy plants in the following growing season.

#### 4. Embrace Seasonal Decor

Enhance the autumn ambience of your garden by incorporating seasonal decor. Place pumpkins, gourds, and bales of hay strategically throughout your garden for a touch of rustic charm. Hanging colourful wind chimes or decorative lanterns can add a whimsical element.



#### 5. Plan for Spring

While enjoying the beauty of autumn, keep an eye on spring as well. Plant spring-blooming bulbs like tulips, daffodils, and hyacinths in the fall to ensure a burst of colour early next year.

#### 6. Extend the Growing Season

To extend your growing season, consider using cold frames, row covers, or even a small greenhouse if space allows. These structures can protect plants from early frosts and chilly winds, allowing you to enjoy fresh produce and blooms for longer.





## 7. Wildlife-Friendly Features

Autumn is a crucial time for wildlife as they prepare for winter. Create a haven for birds and insects by setting up bird feeders and leaving some seed heads and plants untrimmed for shelter and food sources.

## 8. Maintenance and Clean-up

As autumn progresses, stay diligent with garden maintenance. Regularly remove fallen leaves to prevent them from suffocating your plants. Cut back dead growth and clear debris to ensure a tidy and healthy garden.

## 9. Reflecting the Season in Hardscaping

Integrate the spirit of autumn into your garden's hardscaping elements. Consider using natural materials like stone and wood to create pathways, benches, and other structures that blend seamlessly with the season's aesthetic.

Autumn gardening presents an incredible opportunity to create a captivating outdoor space that embraces the changing seasons. By carefully selecting plants, maintaining your garden, and adding thoughtful touches, you can make your garden a true reflection of the beauty and magic that fall brings. So, don your gardening gloves, grab your pruners, and immerse yourself in the joy of autumn gardening. Your garden - and your soul - will thank you for it.



# *Caroline* QUENTIN

## EXPLORING THE GREAT OUTDOORS

**Channel 4 has commissioned a brand-new series fronted by Caroline Quentin spotlighting the breathtaking beauty and breadth of activity in the UK's National Parks for More4.**







Across the series, Caroline visits the most beautiful locations within the National Parks and learns how they function, what draws people to them, and how they intend to sustain and grow in the future.

Her adventures take her from the Welsh wonders of Bannau Brycheiniog (formerly Brecon Beacons) to the ancient forests of the Cairngorms in Scotland, the historic settlements of the Peak District in England and many more locations among the National Parks.

As a former President of the Campaign for National Parks, Caroline has a special relationship with these vast areas of nature: "My connection with the National Parks goes back years, so to be able to explore so many aspects of them in this new series has been wonderful. Not only do I get to visit the most beautiful places across the UK,

but I also get to meet the people whose lives are shaped by living and working in the parks themselves."

Caroline Quentin is a name that resonates with versatility and talent in the world of entertainment.

With a career spanning several decades, Caroline has firmly established herself as a renowned actress, television presenter, and comedian and has left an indelible mark on the British entertainment industry.

She was born in July 1960, in Reigate, Surrey, England. Her passion for performing arts ignited at an early age, and she began her journey towards stardom through various school plays and local theatre productions.









After studying drama at the prestigious Bristol Old Vic Theatre School, she was well-equipped to take on the challenging and competitive world of acting.

Her career took off in the early 1990s when she appeared in the British sitcom 'Men Behaving Badly.' Her portrayal of Dorothy, the girlfriend of the bumbling Gary (played by Martin Clunes), showcased her impeccable comedic timing and helped the show become a massive success as well as her being nominated and later winning a British Comedy Award.

She went on to star in television favourites Jonathan Creek in 1997 and Blue Murder in 2003 but while she made a name for herself as an actress, she didn't stop there. She diversified her career by exploring the world of television presenting. Her engaging and affable personality made her a natural fit for this role.

Beyond her career achievements, Caroline has been an outspoken advocate for mental health awareness.

She has shared her own experiences with anxiety and depression, aiming to reduce the stigma surrounding mental health issues. Her candour and openness have inspired many and helped shed light on the importance of mental health support.

Caroline Quentin's career is a testament to her remarkable talent, unwavering dedication, and multifaceted abilities. From her early days in theatre to her successful forays into television, comedy, and even the dance floor when she joined Strictly Come Dancing in 2012, she has consistently charmed audiences with her wit, charisma, and versatility. Beyond her professional achievements, her advocacy for mental health demonstrates her commitment to making a positive impact on society.

As Caroline continues to captivate audiences with her performances and appearances, her legacy as a beloved figure in the world of entertainment remains secure.

# Book Reviews



## One Blood *Denene Millner*

Some are bound by the blood in their veins, some are bound by the love they have to give: this is a story of mothers and daughters, secrets and history.

**A birth mother:** Raised by her beloved grandmother in tension-filled, segregated Virginia, Grace is barely a teenager when she is shipped up North to live with her formidably ambitious aunt. She falls in love and ends up pregnant: then, in the ultimate act of betrayal, her baby girl is taken from her and given up for adoption.

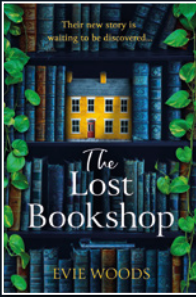
**An adoptive mother:** Lolo has never had it easy, her life riddled with pain and loss. Her brightest dream is to be married and to have a family of her own, and she will tell lies and keep secrets to obtain it. When those secrets start to spill out, Lolo is willing to do whatever it takes to keep her dream intact and those she loves together.

**The daughter to both:** When Lolo's headstrong daughter Rae discovers that she is adopted, and that she is about to become a parent herself, she knows that there is an important reckoning that must be faced about herself and her two mothers.

Spanning decades, from the Great Migration and the civil unrest of the '60s America to the cultural shift of the early 2000s, Denene Millner's intimate yet epic modern masterpiece is poetic, powerful, filled with joy and deep love: a hymn to Black motherhood.







## The Lost Bookshop *Evie Woods*

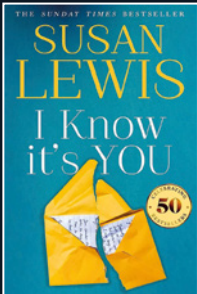
The Keeper of Stories meets The Lost Apothecary in this evocative and charming novel full of mystery and secrets.

'The thing about books,' she said, 'is

that they help you to imagine a life bigger and better than you could ever dream of.'

On a quiet street in Dublin, a lost bookshop is waiting to be found... For too long, Opaline, Martha and Henry have been the side characters in their own lives.

But when a vanishing bookshop casts its spell, these three unsuspecting strangers will discover that their own stories are every bit as extraordinary as the ones found in the pages of their beloved books. And by unlocking the secrets of the shelves, they find themselves transported to a world of wonder... where nothing is as it seems.

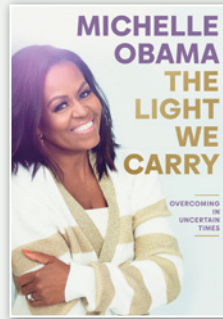


## I Know It's You *Susan Lewis*

The Story.... The first chapter of a manuscript arrives on Publisher Marina's desk. She assumes it's just another novel by another aspiring writer...

**The Secret....** As the chapters arrive one by one, Marina is convinced they are about her past. There's only one person who can know everything about the scandal, the trial, and the trauma that nearly broke her.

**The Silence....** This is one story that should never be told, and Marina is so desperate she will do anything to stop it from getting out.



## The Light We Carry *Michelle Obama*

In *The Light We Carry*, former First Lady Michelle Obama shares practical wisdom and powerful strategies for staying hopeful

and balanced in today's highly uncertain world.

She considers the questions many of us wrestle with: How do we build enduring and honest relationships? How can we discover strength and community inside our differences? What do we do when it all starts to feel like too much? Michelle Obama believes that we can all lean on a set of tools to help us better navigate change and remain steady within flux.

*The Light We Carry* offers readers a series of fresh stories and insightful reflections on change, challenge, and power, including her belief that when we light up for others, we can illuminate the richness and potential of the world around us, discovering deeper truths and new pathways for progress. Drawing from her experiences as a mother, daughter, spouse, friend, and First Lady, she shares the habits and principles she has developed to successfully overcome various obstacles - the earned wisdom that helps her continue to "become".

With trademark humour, candour, and compassion, she also explores issues connected to race, gender, and visibility, encouraging listeners to work through fear, find strength in community, and live with boldness. *The Light We Carry* will inspire readers to examine their own lives, identify their sources of gladness, and connect meaningfully in a turbulent world.





**The Garnett Girls**  
*Georgina Moore*

Forbidden, passionate and all-encompassing, Margo and Richard's love affair was the stuff of legend but, ultimately, doomed.

When Richard walked out, Margo locked herself away, leaving her three daughters, Rachel, Imogen and Sasha, to run wild.

Years later, charismatic Margo entertains lovers and friends in her cottage on the Isle of Wight, refusing to ever speak of Richard and her painful past. But her silence is keeping each of the Garnett girls from finding true happiness.

Rachel is desperate to return to London but is held hostage by responsibility for Sandcove, their beloved but crumbling family home.

Dreamy Imogen feels the pressure to marry her kind, considerate fiancé, even when life is taking an unexpected turn. And wild, passionate Sasha, trapped between her fractured family and controlling husband, is weighed down by a secret that could shake the family to its core...

The Garnett Girls, the captivating debut novel from Georgina Moore, asks whether children can ever be free of the mistakes of their parents.



**The Venice Secret**  
*Anita Chapman*

One hidden painting. Two women born centuries apart. A secret uncovered.

In 2019, Rachel is stuck in a rut when she discovers what appears

to be a Canaletto painting in her grandmother's loft along with a note addressed to Philippa in 1782. With help from Jake at the local art gallery, Rachel endeavours to find out if the painting is an original and uncovers a secret from the past.

In 1780, the governess at Chipford Hall, Philippa is offered the role of mistress by Earl Rupert. She escapes to Venice as a companion to bluestocking, Lady Cordelia who reveals a secret that changes both their lives. They do their best to keep the secret from Lady Cordelia's social circle, but their nemesis is determined to reveal all and ruin them.



**Promise Me**  
*Jill Mansell*

A witty, heart-warming story of love, life and second chances set in the idyllic Cotswolds, from the glorious Jill Mansell.

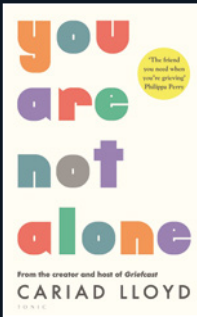
One minute Lou is happily employed, with a perfect flat. The next, her home and job have gone. Suddenly she must start over.

The last thing Lou wants is to move to a tiny Cotswolds village. She certainly doesn't intend to work for curmudgeonly eighty-year-old Edgar Allsopp. But Edgar is about to make her the kind of promise nobody could ignore. In return, she secretly vows to help him fall in love with life again.

Foxwell is also home to Remy, whose charm and charisma are proving hard to ignore. But Lou hasn't recovered from the last time she fell for a charmer. She needs a distraction - and luckily one's about to turn up.

Secrets never stay hidden for long in Foxwell, nor are promises always kept. And no one could guess what lies ahead...





## You Are Not Alone *Cariad Lloyd*

You don't leave once you've joined; it's a life membership. Grief eases and changes and returns but it never disappears.

But you will be okay. Somehow you will be.

When Cariad was just fifteen, her dad died. She became the person-whose-dad-had-died; a mess of emotions and questions; a grief-mess.

Years later, she began trying to unravel this tightly wound grief. What had happened? What effect had it all had on who she was? She started Griefcast, the podcast that talks openly, honestly and at times cheerfully about life's most difficult moment: its end.

Inspired by her own grief mistakes and lessons, and from the profound and witty insights from her incredible guests - including Philippa Perry, Reverend Richard Coles, Isabel Allende, Nish Kumar and Marian Keyes - Cariad provides a road map for all of us. For anybody who has felt lost in grief, who wants to help someone struggling, or just wants to understand this life a little better. You are not alone.



## Wrestling With Demons *Maggie Feeley*

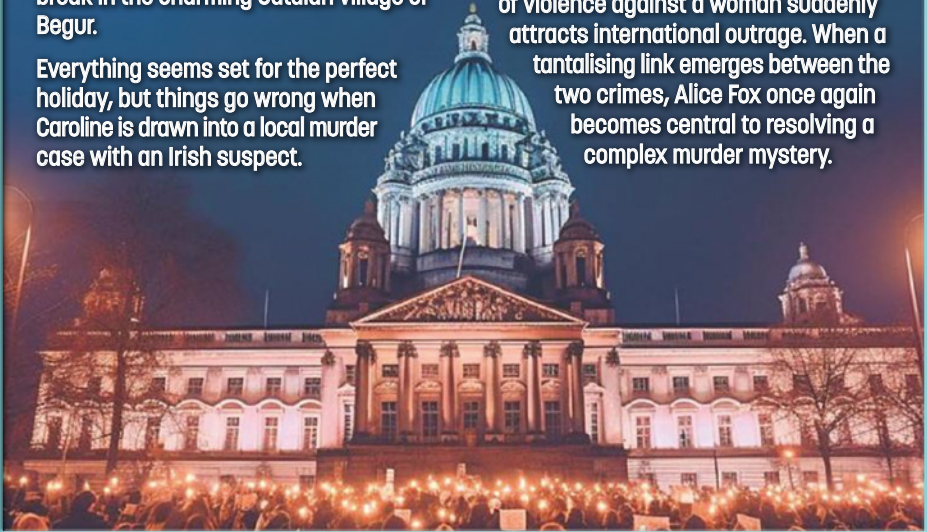
Alice Fox, on research leave in Ireland from City University New York, and Belfast Murder Squad Detective

Inspector, Caroline Paton, take a short break in the charming Catalan village of Begur.

Everything seems set for the perfect holiday, but things go wrong when Caroline is drawn into a local murder case with an Irish suspect.

Alice resents the intrusion on their holiday and tensions mount in paradise.

Back in Belfast, the Murder Squad begins to investigate the brutal family killing of a woman and her two little boys. What at first seems to be an everyday case of violent masculinity becomes complicated when before his arrest the perpetrator is abducted and held by a local gang. A major search begins and a commonplace case of violence against a woman suddenly attracts international outrage. When a tantalising link emerges between the two crimes, Alice Fox once again becomes central to resolving a complex murder mystery.



# Music Rocks



## Speak Now (Taylor's Version) Taylor Swift

Taylor's on a role and she doesn't look to be slowing down anytime soon. 'Speak Now (Taylor's Version)' is the third re-recorded album by the American singer-songwriter.

It's a re-recording of her 2010 album and is part of her counteraction over a master's dispute in 2019. While obviously there are many familiar tracks there are also 6 previously unreleased 'From the Vault' songs. Even though this album is basically speaking a re-release it managed to break the global Spotify record for the most single-day streams for an album earlier this year.



## Balance Lucy Spraggan

A decade on from her first X Factor audition Lucy released her new album alongside her forthcoming memoir Process during the summer. Both the

14-track album and the book see her reflecting on her life till now. Feeling stronger, more positive, and more empowered than ever. Lucy has reunited with music industry supremo Simon Cowell who has signed her to his Syco Publishing and is an instrumental part in the forthcoming album. Lucy was the first contestant in X Factor history to score a Top 40 single and album before the live shows aired.

It's nearly impossible for me to choose a favourite track but 'Caroline', in memory of Caroline Flack, is definitely a contender.



## Euphoria (Deluxe Edition) Claire Richards

With a hit-making, chart-topping, 25-year career already behind her as a member of STEPS, Claire Richards has released her second solo album and pays homage to powerhouse women in music including Whitney Houston, Celine Dion, Cher, Karen Carpenter, Donna Summer, Olivia Newton-John and Barbra Streisand.

In a press release, Claire says of "Euphoria", "Every single song is a banger - listening to this album just makes me feel good! I want everyone to whack it on before they go out and get themselves completely in the zone of having a good time". I can't argue with that; this album showcases Claire's amazing vocal range and reminds me of the best of power ballads from the 80s and 90s, especially 'No More Tears' with the help of Deltra Goodwin.

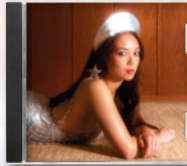






## **The Devil I Know** **Ashley McBryde**

GRAMMY Award winner Ashley McBryde has made a name for herself with her standout, critically acclaimed albums, all of which found the Arkansas native balancing classic country, folk and even slight bluegrass influences. And there's definitely a gutsy rock influence there also. The lead single 'Light on the Kitchen' enters your ears and then swirls around in your brain all day! It's a song which centres around the messages that women give to other women; it's full of love and positivity and acts like a warm blanket wrapped around your shoulders.



## **Bewitched** **Laufey**

Aptly named, this album captivates you almost immediately. It's full of swooning strings and gentle vocals and easily moves from one genre to another without you even being aware. Composer, singer, producer, and multi-instrumentalist Laufey continues her story by writing and recording 'Bewitched', her second album. Inspired by jazz greats and classical masters while possessing a point of view that could only be conveyed by a 21st-century twentysomething.



## **Music Box:** **30th Anniversary Edition** **Mariah Carey**

Grammy-winning and best-selling female recording artist of all time Mariah Carey has dropped the 30th anniversary edition of her debut album, 'Music Box'.

This deluxe anniversary edition includes never-before-released tracks from the vault, brand new remixes, b-sides and extended versions of fan favourites tracks from the original album. Also included for the first time is a remastered audio of Mariah's full concert at Proctor's Theatre in New York in 1993.

It's been a long time since I really listened to Mariah Carey, so it was a real pleasure to reconnect. Her vocals are truly amazing, and they often hit that sweet spot that makes your neck hair tingle. Listening to this album reminds me of how quickly time goes by - 30 years!

# Writing POETRY



## *Nurturing the Soul and Expressing the Inexpressible*

**From ancient civilizations to modern times, poetry has served as a means of expression, reflection, and catharsis. In a world dominated by prose and digital communication, the importance of writing poetry remains undiminished, offering a unique and invaluable mode of self-expression and connection.**

One of the most compelling reasons to write poetry is its power to provide emotional catharsis. Life is a journey filled with highs and lows, joys and sorrows. Writing poetry allows individuals to process their feelings and experiences in a profound and therapeutic manner. It serves as a safe outlet for emotions, enabling poets to release pent-up feelings and gain a sense of closure, healing, and relief.

Writing poetry is an exploration of the self. It encourages introspection and self-discovery, as poets delve into their innermost thoughts and emotions. Through the act of crafting words and metaphors, they often stumble upon insights and revelations about their own lives, values, and beliefs. Poetry can be a mirror that reflects the poet's evolving identity, helping them better understand themselves.

Poetry is an art form that offers boundless creative freedom. Unlike many other forms

of writing, it doesn't adhere to strict rules or structures (despite what your English teacher told you), granting poets the freedom to experiment with language, rhythm, and imagery.

It has the power to connect people on a profound level by tapping into shared human experiences and emotions. When poets express their innermost thoughts and feelings through verse, they often resonate with readers who have undergone similar experiences. This connection fosters empathy, understanding, and a sense of shared humanity.

Life is fleeting, and memories can fade over time but poetry has the ability to capture and preserve moments in a way that prose often cannot. A well-crafted poem can sum up the essence of a moment, freezing it in time for generations to come. Through poetry, we can immortalise our experiences, relationships, and the beauty of the world around us.





Throughout history, poetry has been a powerful tool for social commentary and change. Poets have used their words to shed light on societal injustices, challenge the status quo, and inspire movements for reform. Poetry has the capacity to incite thought, action, and change in the hearts and minds of people, making it a potent force for social progress.

In a world inundated with information and rapid communication, the importance of writing poetry cannot be overstated. It provides an avenue for emotional release, self-discovery, and creative expression.

So, pick up that pen or keyboard, let your thoughts flow, and embrace the beauty and significance of writing poetry.

If you would like to submit a poem and possibly have it published in *Be Phenomenal Women*, we would love to hear from you.

Just send your poems to  
[justsayit@bephenomenalwomen.com](mailto:justsayit@bephenomenalwomen.com)

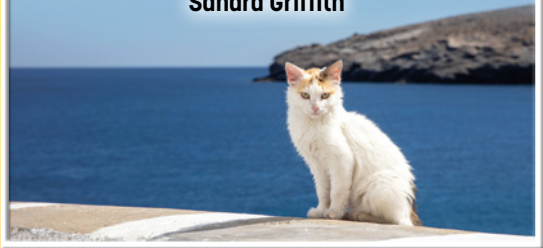
*Our poets, Sandra Griffiths and Louisa McKee, have kindly shared their poetry to inspire and encourage you to try writing for yourself.*

*As Maya Angelou wrote "There is no greater agony than bearing an untold story inside you.", so get creative and see where it leads you!*

## *Komboloi*

Cradling a bottle of ouzo, and a new year  
calendar revealing islands aglow,  
my friend will come. Stumbling into my kitchen,  
wreathed in smiles, bursting with relief.  
He settles beside the tree of Advent Joy  
to share his news, expect my reaction.  
It is not life threatening, the consultant's view,  
though waiting is the hardest part.  
We yearn for our island in Greece  
where mournful cats hunker beneath tables.  
Post cancer, without one kidney and  
the dark spot on his liver,  
he'll go and sit with swarthy men  
whose worry beads, click and clack.

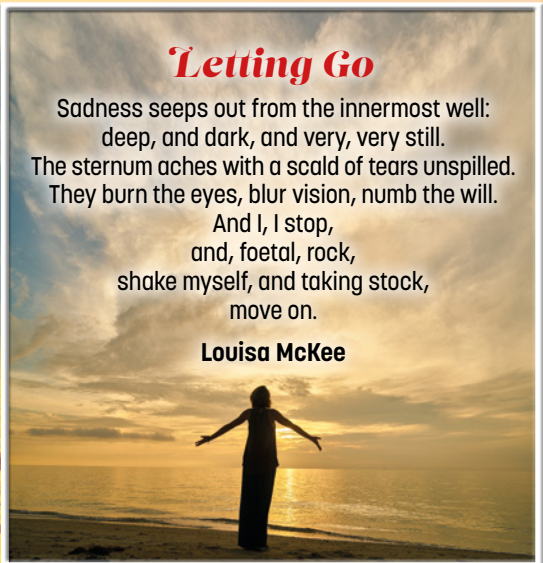
**Sandra Griffith**



## *Letting Go*

Sadness seeps out from the innermost well:  
deep, and dark, and very, very still.  
The sternum aches with a scald of tears unspilled.  
They burn the eyes, blur vision, numb the will.  
And I, I stop,  
and, foetal, rock,  
shake myself, and taking stock,  
move on.

**Louisa McKee**





## Interested in furthering your career, or climbing the work ladder?

Our ilm Level 5 Award in Leadership & Management is for you.

There are 2 units: 'Becoming an Effective Leader' and  
'Making Professional Presentations'

*Delivery will take place from 10am - 4pm in TWN  
on the following dates:*

**26 September • 10, 24 October  
7 & 21 November**



For costs and an application form,  
please contact Heather on 028 9031 9888 or  
email: [heather@twnonline.com](mailto:heather@twnonline.com).

***We look forward to helping you further your career!***