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# 6 Benefits of Sunlight!

**As we prepare to spend more time outside and enjoy the better weather, Lifestyle medicine wellbeing coach, and MD of Sunlighten UK, Joie Risk, explains 6 health benefits of sunlight...which you might not have known!**

# 1. Soak Up Vitamin D

When people spend time outside, particularly when the sun is out, they are helped in the manufacture of vitamin D. This is essential for a number of reasons, inside and out. It strengthens bones and evens the skin's natural complexion. Vitamin D is even related to losing belly fat; the higher the levels of this vitamin prior to starting a plan for weight reduction, the greater the likelihood for success, according to one study. Vitamin D improvement can also be connected to fending off type 2 diabetes. Many windows block UVB wavelengths, which prevents the synthesis of the vitamin, so people do need to go outside for the rays to work their magic.

# 2. Improves Your Mood

Sunlight does not only trip the release of serotonin but other hormones, known as endorphins, as well. These are associated with overall calm, less depression, and happier moods. People may simply notice feeling better when the whole body's system responds to the sun. Seasonal Affective Disorder is also believed to have a link to a lack of sunlight. This form of depression comes when a lack of sun exposure causes a person's serotonin levels to dip low. There are a number of studies tying sun exposure to the treatment of mild depression as well as to alleviating the systems of moderate to severe depression.

### 3. Sleep More Soundly

Sunlight striking the eyes sends a message to the brain's pineal gland. This message is to shut down the production of melatonin, a hormone that assists in sleeping by making people drowsy. When melatonin is overproduced during the day, people experience lower levels of the hormone at night. Sunlight exposure helps to prevent this. Forego sunglasses in the early morning so that the brain and body receive the message that daylight is here and melatonin is no longer needed for the nonce.

### 4. Lowers Blood Pressure

University of Edinburgh researchers found in one study that nitric oxide, a compound which helps to reduce blood pressure, is released into blood vessels once the sun's light touches the skin. This finding was prominent because it banished the notion that sunlight only stimulated vitamin D production. By lowering blood pressure, sunlight also cuts the risk of strokes and heart attacks. In this way, sun exposure does not only improve people's health but prolongs their lives.



## 5. Controls Depression and Appetite

Since lack of sunlight is tied to depression and depression is linked to appetite, sunlight exposure can help positively affect the appetite. The hypothalamus is the part of the brain that controls hunger. It works along with serotonin and aids in relieving hunger. Because of sunlight deficiency causing a drop in serotonin levels, a feeling of fullness sometimes cannot be achieved. Thus, exposure to sunlight can assist in controlling your appetite.

## 6. Boosts Your Immune System

Exposure to sunlight also helps to suppress an immune system that is overactive. This is why sunlight is sometimes used to treat such autoimmune diseases as psoriasis. White blood cells also increase with sunlight exposure. These play a prominent role in fighting off diseases and defending the body when at risk of infection. While best kept in moderation, sun exposure is extremely helpful to the immune system.



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Cheryl Scovell

**Help us help you get the treatment you need.**

This poster features a portrait of Cheryl Scovell, a Black woman with short dark hair, wearing a dark blue NHS uniform with a name tag. The background is a light blue wall. At the top left, the HM Government logo and the NHS logo are displayed. The text is in white and blue.



HM Government **NHS**

Cheryl Scovell

**You can still contact your GP practice, 111 online or call 111 for help.**

This poster features a portrait of Cheryl Scovell, a Black woman with short dark hair, wearing a dark blue NHS uniform with a name tag. The background is a light blue wall. At the top left, the HM Government logo and the NHS logo are displayed. The text is in white and blue.



HM Government **NHS**

Cheryl Scovell

**If you are told to go to hospital, you must go.**

This poster features a portrait of Cheryl Scovell, a Black woman with short dark hair, wearing a dark blue NHS uniform with a name tag. The background is a light blue wall. At the top left, the HM Government logo and the NHS logo are displayed. The text is in white and blue.

Is this the UK's most expensive Easter Egg?





### Editors Note:

This is just nuts!  
A waste of energy  
and resources.

What do you think?

Andrea Zagatti, the private chef behind a £250 'Billionaire' sandwich, is delighted to announce the release of his latest culinary creation – The Tsar Egg.

Inspired by enigmatic design of a Matryoshka doll, the culinary work of art is covered entirely in 24k gold and is being dubbed the UK's most expensive Easter Egg.

"The Tsar Egg represents the ultimate expression of high-end culinary craftsmanship", says Andrea, "Easter is the only time you should put all your eggs in one basket – or in one egg should I say – so why not do it in style!"

The Tsar Egg is composed of 3 individual eggs, each decreasing in size, placed one inside another – much like a Matryoshka doll. The heart (the smallest egg) is made up of bronze chocolate and crystallised violets, and in true Zagatti's style, wrapped in edible rose gold. The

medium sized egg consists of 35% milk chocolate with Difference Coffee Jamaica Blue Mountain beans and hazelnut crumble and is wrapped entirely in edible silver leaves. The outer egg is produced using 85% dark chocolate with pistachio and gianduja cream layers. And the coating? You guessed it, The Tsar Egg is finally wrapped in

24k edible gold, with the entire structure constituting a 35cm luxury delight.

"I've always been fascinated with Russia and its enigmatic culture, so to be able to create something that speaks to Russian

cultural opulence, while sparking my culinary creativity is exciting to me!"

The Tsar Egg will be available to order from [hello@mrzluxurysandwiches.com](mailto:hello@mrzluxurysandwiches.com) and/or <https://instagram.com/mrz.luxurysandwiches>, on the 2nd April 2021 and prices start at £1,000.

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# GRATITUDE

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## and how to use it



Lately, I often think about gratitude. We underestimate it. We neglect it. We don't "use" it enough. Are we afraid to thank someone? To the universe, to the higher power, to someone close to us or even to ourselves? Will it affect our ego in any way if we do it, will we become weaker?

In fact, I want you to look at gratitude in two ways.

First of all, in a more "weekday" plan. Our existence would not be possible without communication with other people. This inevitably creates interesting situations and interactions. Someone is helping us with something, makes a gesture to us, devotes their time and energy. Say thank you to them! But say it honestly. Sometimes a person does not need any gratitude other than this one and strong word.

But to be honest, today I want to talk much more about gratitude as one of the laws of the Universe: **the only way to get more is to be grateful for what you already have.**

Yes, you read that right. I know that your neighbour has a better garden than yours, your son's classmates look like angels compared to him, and your best friend's husband is many times more caring than yours, BUT... this is their life, and in fact you have no idea what it really is.



Focus on yourself. Do you have a roof over your head? Dinner at your table? Eyes that see and ears that hear? A family that loves you and that you love? If you have these things, then you have everything. Look up and say your sincere thanks to the whole Universe. Only with such an attitude will you be able to attract the other things you want in your life.

Make gratitude your daily routine. Try this "exercise" for at least a day. Thank for every little thing that happens to you. And if you accidentally forget the steaks in the oven and they burn out - be thankful that you even had the opportunity to buy steaks. (And yes, I'm aware that using steaks to illustrate the laws of the universe is, to put it mildly, "ridiculous," but why not start with the little things?)

There are so many things we should all be grateful for. And life flies away so fast that we don't have time to start tomorrow. Let's do it here and now.

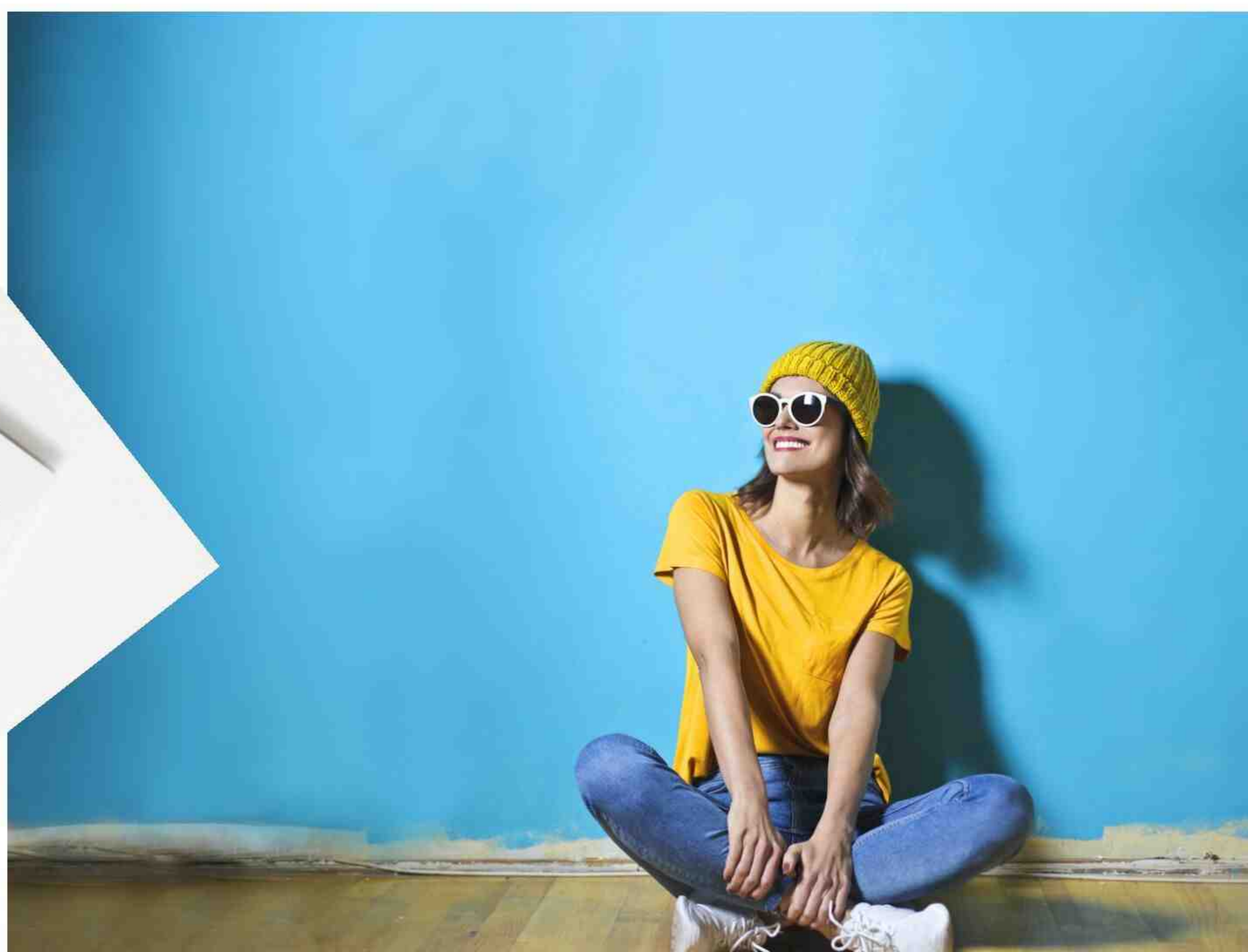
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BEE HAPPY



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THE WISH YOU MADE MIGHT JUST COME TRUE

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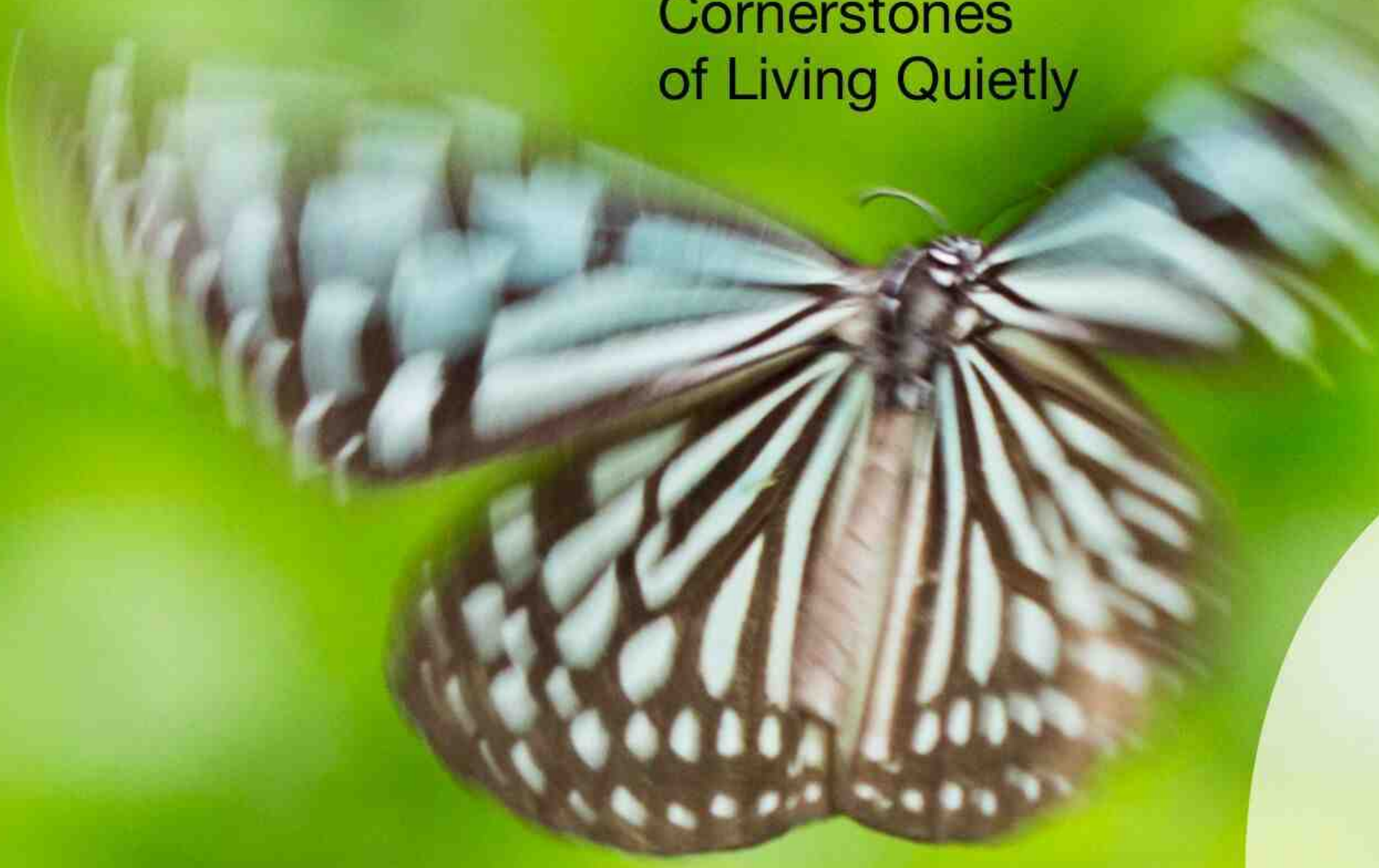
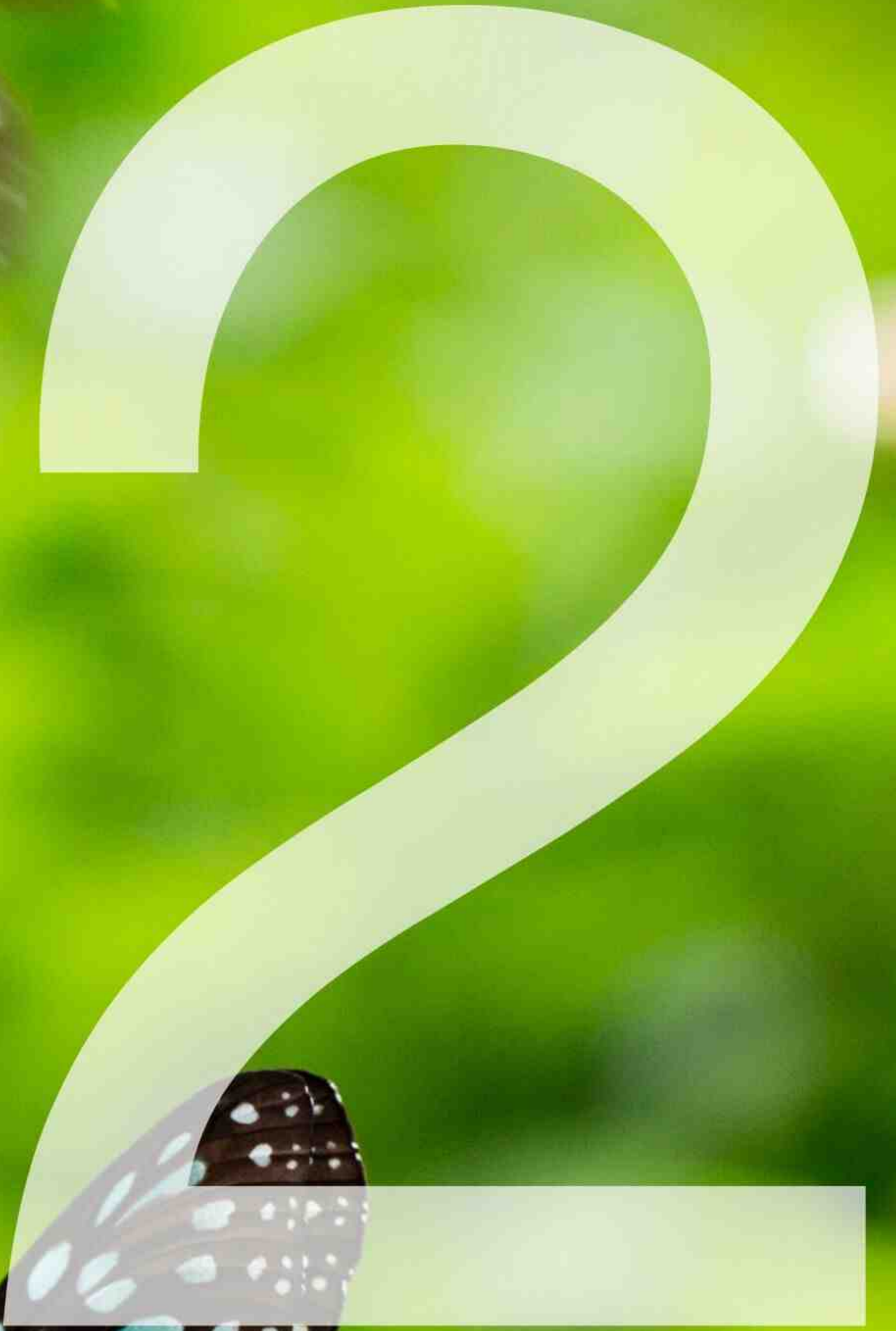




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# A year of lockdown shows and charity work

## **Lockdown live stream: 370 days of daily free concerts:**

The Jive Aces, UK's No.1 Jive and Swing band and Britain's Got Talent semi-finalists, have delivered a whole year of consecutive live-streamed concerts, performing every single day since just before lockdown began. And still going! They have featured many special star guests, including Strictly's Len Goodman, Officer Crabtree from Allo Allo and Kevin McNally from Pirates of the Caribbean – all making 'virtual' appearances on the shows. Over 370 hours of music, banter and fun, have included requests, competitions, comedy and a popular 'boogie-woogie challenge'.

Starting on the 17th March 2020, the band live-streamed concerts on Facebook and YouTube from their rehearsal studio in East Grinstead, with people from all over the world tuning in and the viewers soon routinely topping 15,000 daily. During lockdown, the band were relocated in one household, and continued performing from the 'Red Brick Studio.'

Ian Clarkson lead singer of the Jive Aces said: "When all our shows, including a US tour, had to be cancelled, many of our fans asked us to do a live stream – so we tried it out. Word spread, we continued, and the live audience grew daily, with hundreds of song requests, ideas and positive comments sent in. We realised that in these unprecedented times, this was how music fans could still follow their favourite bands, and we encouraged other musicians and performers to do the same. We

are the artists – it's our job to keep everyone else up! Hence the show's motto, "The Show Must Go On!". He added "we can't wait to perform live again and see our fans. Meantime, the live stream is great to keep in touch with our fans and new

ones and entertain you all! It has created a whole jive community and brought people together"

Fans stream daily from England, Scotland, Wales, Ireland, Italy, France, Spain, Germany, Canada, America, New Zealand and more. Live audience participation became a key part of the shows. One couple created their own T-shirts with the logo "Jive Stream, The #Show Must Go On" and sent them in to use as competition prizes. Another fan created a detailed Lego version of the "Red Brick studio" including the band and their instruments!

The band also raised funds for charity for the Not Forgotten and Rotary Club but also went out of their way by helping gather funds for a wheelchair seat raiser for one of their fans in Eastbourne. Steve Frost, husband of Chermaine said: "A massive thank you to all of you in the Jive Aces for helping us



reach the target for Chermaine's wheelchair seat riser. Without the Jive Aces and JiveStream we would never have done this. Also the JiveStream has given the biggest majority of us something to look forward to everyday, and it's kept a lot of us sane through these difficult times."

The band perform uplifting jive, swing and rock 'n' roll tunes and the feedback has kept the show going: "Your show made me smile despite all this heartache...thank you to you all!". "Brilliant. Thank you so much. It came just at the right time today. Was feeling very down. Made a huge difference. Love you all". "Merci beaucoup guys! You're bringing sunshine to the quarantine!"

They have managed to keep the show going no matter what; despite technical difficulties, the odd network problem, moving location and all while

continuing to do voluntary work for the local community.

The show goes live every day at 8.30pm. Rock 'n' Romance, Vivien Of Holloway vintage clothing reproductions and Big Finish (official Dr Who audio books producers) are among those

that have donated prizes to win on the show.

The Jive Aces love to make feel-good music. They received the prestigious Boisdale Music Award for "Best Band" presented by Jools Holland in London. The six-piece band have a collection of awards for their contribution to music and constant charity work, including one from the Variety Club of Great Britain for their efforts in drug prevention. Their music is also used on TV including the latest Netflix series "Sex Education". They have also worked with many of the top names in the business, including Jamie Cullum, Van Morrison, Status Quo and John Travolta to name a few.

To watch the live stream simply go to Jive Aces Facebook page, or YouTube channel at 8.30pm UK time – it's on every day!



# UK grocery shopping habits changing dramatically to combat food waste

**New research has shown the lifestyle changes UK consumers are making to reduce food waste since the start of the pandemic: almost two-thirds (63%) say they are more likely to shop more often and in smaller quantities, to avoid having to throw away unwanted or spoiled food.**

A similar number (67%) are now likely to buy more frozen food for the same reason, and three-quarters (76%) suggest they are prepared to buy the 'ugly' fruit and vegetables that so often sit unwanted on the supermarket shelf. When asked where the responsibility for food waste primarily lies, UK shoppers felt it was a matter for them personally: 42% said it was down to consumers to do the right thing, twice as many (21%) as those who thought the responsibility lies with grocers and supermarkets.

The survey of more than 1,000 UK adults was commissioned by Proagrica,

a global provider of technology solutions for the agriculture and animal health industries.

It also highlighted the growing number of UK consumers who take ethical considerations into account when buying their food. Almost a third (32%) say the ethical credentials of the retailers and producers (e.g., certification, where food is sourced, field to fork tracking) influence their purchase choices whenever possible.

In addition, 71% say they're more likely to try and reduce 'food miles' by buying more locally-sourced produce. Graeme McCracken, managing director at Proagrica, says: "The UK, like many countries, faces a serious food waste challenge and this

research shows that consumers are changing their shopping habits accordingly. They're shopping more often, in smaller amounts, and buying more frozen food that will stay edible for longer.

**"Even though many consumers feel it's down to them to throw away less food, businesses in the food and agriculture industries need to do their part. They need to actively show they are working together to make their operational processes more transparent and more efficient. That can also help them demonstrate their ethical credentials, which is another factor that heavily influences what people buy and from where."**



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The May issue of National Geographic Traveller (UK) celebrates weekend escapes with 52 ideas for flight-free breaks. With many destinations only a short drive, train journey or ferry ride away — and 21 of them in the UK and Ireland — there's a wealth to choose from. From puffin-spotting in Wales and foraging in the French Alps to exploring Ireland's Copper Coast on wheels and sampling the Slow Food movement in Italy, there are enough ideas to keep you inspired for a year of weekends away.

#### ALSO INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

**Destinations:** We explore the wild and fragile frontiers of Antarctica and South Georgia; eat our way around Portugal's Algarve region; sample local life in the shadow of Cambodia's iconic Angkor Wat temples; enjoy a short break in the idyllic Croatian county of Istria; and examine the rising trend for secular pilgrimages.

Urban stories this issue include Nashville, Ljubljana and Cardiff.

**Smart Traveller:** The National Trust's blossom tree initiative; scuba diving courses that make a difference; the highlights of Liechtenstein's new 47-mile trail; boutique hotels in the Trieste; and a break in the Malvern Hills.

**Author Series:** Marco Tedesco on Greenland.

**Travel Geeks:** Ask the Experts has advice on exploring the UK coast in a campervan, the best resources for planning train travel in Europe, and the best long-haul destinations for visually impaired travellers. Meanwhile, the infographic celebrates Stonehenge, and Hot Topic looks at how this summer is shaping up for travel.

**PLUS:** Win a 10-night island-hopping tour in Scotland for two with McKinley Kidd. [nationalgeographic.co.uk/competitions](http://nationalgeographic.co.uk/competitions)

For a 26-page digital sample of our May 2021 issue, visit: [magazine.natgeotraveller.co.uk/may21](http://magazine.natgeotraveller.co.uk/may21)



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<https://amzn.to/3rKAkbD>



Are women the new COVID-19

# cyclist generation?

As we all are well aware, COVID-19 has completely disrupted life as we knew it. It has completely changed the cycling community and we have seen a huge rise in people getting on their bikes. According to Strava, research suggests that cycling has increased by more than 35% in London and by almost 50% in the South East

(<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-56521006> ).

So many people have turned to cycling as a way to spend their spare time in a healthier way, but who are these people? We wanted to take a deeper look at who this new cyclist is and why they have just sprung on to the cycling scene.

We conducted a survey of which 1,758 people from inside and outside of our community completed. This survey covered demographics, how often people cycle, what type of cycling, reasons for cycling, outdoor/

indoor cycling, how COVID-19 has affected cycling and more around fitness and nutrition. It became clear very quickly that women seem to be the new generation of cyclists in the post-COVID world.

23.7% of the women who completed the survey said they were new to cycling due to COVID-19 and a whopping 53.7% of women are cycling more due to COVID-19. Only 23.7% of women said that they are actually cycling less now which shows just how much of an impact the pandemic has had on female cyclists.

So why is it that women are cycling more since the first lockdown? Simon Klima, from Strava, suggests that one of the biggest barriers for women getting into cycling is safety. Lockdown was the first time people could venture out on to the roads without the impending threat of heavy traffic. Apparently there was a rather large dip in Strava usage just after summer when lockdown restrictions

eased and traffic came back to the roads. It also shows that people dip out of cycling after summer when there are less favorable conditions for cycling.

This suggestion makes sense and correlates with the data we gained from our survey – it seems that most women prefer fair weather cycling and 47.5% of them ONLY cycle in fair weather. Also, almost half of the women who completed the survey (45.8%) stated that they prefer road biking. In a survey we did last year, the highest ranking barrier into cycling was roads/traffic/other road users which shows just how big of an impact the safety of the roads actually has on people, especially women, getting in to cycling. With that being it makes a lot of sense that women have become the new generation of cyclists but doesn't that mean once all the traffic is back and winter comes then we will lose all of our ladies? Apparently not! According to the answers from our survey, 53.6% of women said that they will cycle more after COVID-19 and 41.6% said they will cycle the same amount.

Cycling is very much a sport that's hard to shake off once you've been bitten by the bug. As well as making sure you're getting your money's worth out of that new bike you just remortgaged for. However, it's clear that the sentiment of the cycling community is changing and there is a constant stream of

conversation around inclusivity emerging. It's a conversation happening throughout every industry but especially in cycling where women, people of colour and larger, non-conventional bodies are starkly underrepresented. Is this type of conversation and community mindset also something that is encouraging women to get involved?

Interestingly, women are more likely to take up cycling due to their partner being a cyclist than men. According to our survey, 17.4% of women said they took up cycling due to their partner/spouse compared to only 7.1% of men. Demonstrating that having someone you trust to show you the ropes is a huge part of gaining confidence to get in to cycling for women. This may be why female riding groups are on the rise!

Cycling world watch out, here come the girls...

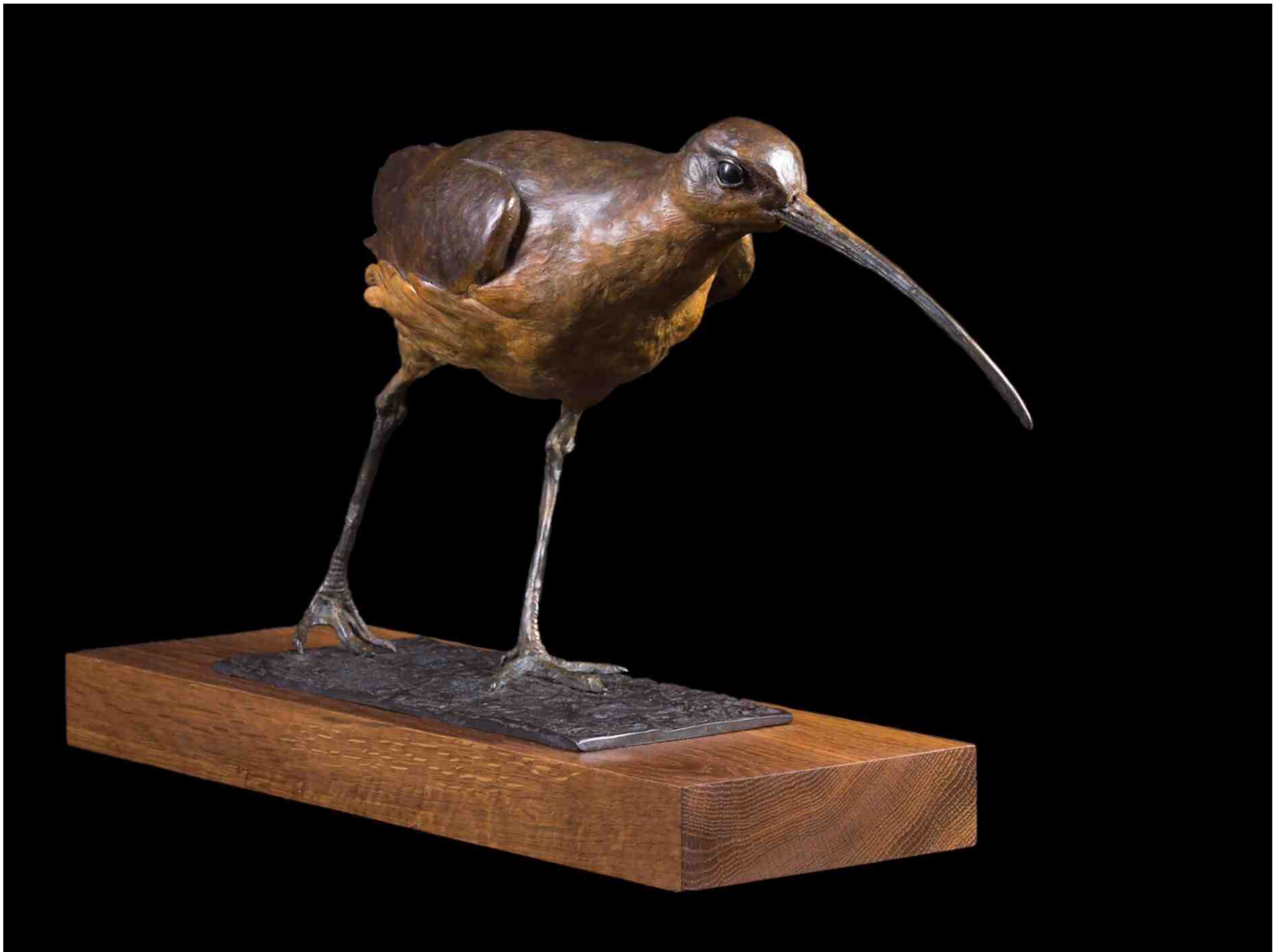
COVID-19 and cycling survey results -

<https://fatladattheback.app.do/polls/2020-cycling-poll/results>

Barriers in to cycling survey results -

<https://poll.app.do/polls/what-are-the-barriers-into-cycling/results>





## Boost your wildlife art collection and support vital conservation research

The GWCT Online Wildlife Art Gallery has welcomed a new guest artist, David Cemmick, to join its online exhibition [gwctgallery.org.uk](http://gwctgallery.org.uk). A selection of David's paintings and sculpture will be available to purchase from the online exhibition from the beginning of April. At the same time, works from Godfrey's Collection, a small private collection of quality wildlife art, will also be offered for sale in the gallery. Twenty-five percent of the proceeds from the sale of David Cemmick's

work and Godfrey's Collection will go to fund the work of the Game & Wildlife Conservation Trust (GWCT), supporting vital research to enhance the British countryside and boost biodiversity.

On being invited to join the gallery as a guest artist David, who is a long-time supporter of the GWCT, said: "I am honoured to be a part of this artist-led initiative to support art and conservation together."

Godfrey's son Edward, a GWCT member, said: "My late father, like so many sportsmen, enjoyed accumulating a wide collection of

sporting art. It is hard to part with pictures you have known since childhood, but the GWCT is a close friend and the idea that it will benefit from 25% of the sale feels right.”

The online gallery was set up in 2020 by the GWCT and renowned artist and GWCT supporter Ashley Boon in response to the effects of the pandemic on charities and artists. Recognising that cancelled events were causing charities to miss out on much-needed fundraising income, and that artists were struggling to find outlets for their work, Ashley suggested creating an online selling exhibition. He offered some of his own work and recruited sculptor in bronze Ian Greensit who, along with Ashley, became the new gallery’s resident artists. Since then, the GWCT Online Wildlife Art Gallery has also featured several guest artists, including Roger McPhail, Owen Williams and Alistair Makinson.

Andrew Gilruth of the GWCT said: “With so many fairs and auctions cancelled, and galleries so often closed, there have been few opportunities

to buy wildlife art. The GWCT Gallery gives people access to some beautiful works by leading wildlife artists. We are delighted to add David’s work to the exhibition. We are also very grateful to Godfrey’s family for giving us the opportunity to sell his wonderful collection.”

Cumbria-based David is a painter and sculptor who is inspired by the natural world. For the past forty years his art has taken him around the globe, from the rainforests of Madagascar and the remote islands of New Zealand, to painting fish underwater in Jamaica and observing wildlife in the African savannah but, he says “the diverse beauty of Britain and her wildlife has always called me home”.

Godfrey’s Collection includes original works and limited edition prints by Rodger McPhail, JC Harrison and William Garfit, amongst others. Find the GWCT Online Wildlife Art Gallery at [gwctgallery.org.uk](http://gwctgallery.org.uk)



# THE MENOPAUSE CLUB

Each week we will bring you advice, comment and real life stories to help you transition smoothly into the most powerful stage of your life

## Panic Attacks in Women over Fifty May Lead to Heart Disease

By Deanna Lynn Sletten

Recent research by Boston's Massachusetts General Hospital has found that women over age 51 who experience panic attacks are three times more likely to have a heart attack or stroke than women who do not experience panic attacks. The study followed 3,300 healthy women ages 51 to 83 in which 10% had claimed to have had a full-blown panic attack in the previous 6 months before starting the study. Over a period of 5 years, it was found that not only were they more likely to have a heart attack or stroke, but they were also twice as likely to die within 5 years of the first panic attack.

### What is a Panic Attack?

Panic attacks are episodes that occur suddenly that cause intense fear as well as physical reactions. According to the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, MN, the symptoms of a panic attack include:

- Trembling
- Sweating
- Rapid heart rate
- Chills
- Shortness of breath
- Dizziness
- Nausea
- Headache
- Chest pain
- Hyperventilation
- Faintness

Panic attacks can last as little as 10 minutes and up to one hour. Because many of the symptoms of a panic attack mirror the symptoms of a heart attack or stroke, it is difficult sometimes for people to tell the difference. Causes of panic attacks include stress, genetics or a disruption in the way the brain functions. People who experience panic

attacks on a regular basis may be diagnosed as having panic disorder.

### How to Manage Panic Attacks

Managing panic attacks can help to reduce the risk of developing heart disease. Ways to manage panic attacks include:

Avoid caffeine, illicit drugs and alcohol, all of which can trigger or worsen panic attacks.

Learn ways to manage stress.

Learn relaxation techniques such as yoga or meditation.

Exercise regularly.

Get sufficient sleep each night.

Join a support group where you can share with other people who are suffering from panic attacks.

In severe cases a doctor may suggest seeing a specialist for therapy or taking a medication that will help prevent panic attacks from happening.

### Managing Heart Disease Risks

Because of the link between panic attacks and heart disease, it is important for women to also carefully manage the other risk factors of heart disease. These risk factors include weight, smoking, high cholesterol, exercise level, stress and diet. Women who are experiencing menopause or are diabetic are also at a higher risk of developing heart disease. By watching these risk factors, women may be able to lower their risk of heart disease.

Because of the correlation between panic attacks and heart disease, it is important for women to monitor the other risk factors of heart disease as well as manage panic attacks. By managing all the risk factors, women may be able to lower their risk of developing heart disease.

# Red Clover Supplements: Do They Relieve Stress?

Menopause is a time when fluctuating hormone levels cause some women to experience mood changes - with sometimes disabling periods of anxiety or depression. In some cases, post menopausal depression and anxiety is severe enough to require prescription medications – which are best avoided due to their potential side effects. Are there natural alternatives for treating post menopausal depression that doesn't require a prescription? A new study suggests that taking red clover supplements could help to relieve anxiety and depression after menopause.

## Taking Red Clover for Depression after Menopause: Does It Work?

Researchers gave a group of 109 post menopausal women age forty and over a red clover supplement or a placebo for three months. To see how well taking it worked, they used two different depression and anxiety scales to measure their symptoms. The results? The red clover supplements beat out the placebo by a good margin. The women on red clover supplements experienced an eighty percent reduction in their symptoms of depression and a seventy-six percent decrease in anxiety symptoms – all without taking prescription medications.

## What is Red Clover?

Red clover, the state flower of Vermont and commonly seen along roadsides in the state, has been used to treat menopausal symptoms for years. It's a good source of isoflavones and phytoestrogens – compounds which have estrogen-like activity in the body. It's often

used to treat menopausal hot flashes, but studies have been mixed regarding its effectiveness – with the most recent research showing little benefit. It also slows down bone loss in post menopausal women according to some studies.

## Is Taking Red Clover Supplements Safe?

One concern about taking red clover is its effect on breast tissue. Because the isoflavones in red clover have estrogen-like activity, they can theoretically stimulate breast cells and increase the risk of breast cancer. Although it's not clear whether red clover alters breast cancer risk, most studies show it doesn't increase breast density which is a positive in terms of breast cancer risk. Some experts even believe that red clover could reduce the risk of breast cancer because it binds to breast cancer receptors and blocks the more potent effects of estrogen. There's also the question of whether taking red clover supplements stimulates the uterus to grow due to its hormone-like effects.

## Taking Red Clover Supplements for Post Menopausal Anxiety and Depression: The Bottom Line?

Taking red clover for anxiety and depression after menopause may hold promise, but there's still concern about its effects on estrogen sensitive tissue such as the breasts and uterus. For this reason, any woman who has a history of a hormone-sensitive cancer should avoid using it until more studies come out.



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# 7 Benefits of Simple Living

Whenever we think about simple living, we have a tendency to give attention to things we can easily see. We think about decluttering and celebrate clear countertops and tidy desks, yet this is just the start of simplicity.

The most rewarding benefits of simple living aren't always visible, and can appear just a little vague until experienced. Once evident though, they can be truly life-changing.

## 7 invisible yet rewarding aspects of living simply

### **1. Under-reacting**

A simpler life permits us to look more closely at our response. When things are too active and complicated, we get lost in a reactionary lifestyle. We say things we don't mean and blow things completely out of proportion. Whenever we contemplate before responding, we can answer properly from a thoughtful place, rather than a fight or flight mentality.

### **2. Lifestyle**

When we reduce commitments and obligations, and eliminate common stressors like credit card debt, unfulfilled careers, and hurtful relationships, we've allowed ourselves to take better attention of our core. We can find the time to take a nap or for writing and being creative, space for meditation, or perhaps a straightforward practice of gratitude.

### **3. Better health**

Even without changing our diet or working out, simplicity can lower blood pressure and decrease the threat of disease. Stress can result in migraines, colds and auto-immune conditions. If you're fed up of feeling unwell and fatigued, simplify your life to aid your best health.

### **4. More meaningful relationships**

It's hard to get the best out of any relationship when we are constantly connected to our computers and phones. Our imaginations are full enough, and when we add tiers of digital information, it's easy to reduce focus during a simple chat. Unplugging gives us a quiet platform, allowing us to pay attention and fully engage.

### **5. Hope**

After experiencing some of the advantages of simplicity, from enjoying a superior liveable space, to growth in our bank account, we are more hopeful and open to new experiences and possibilities. A simple life is a hopeful life.

## **6. Increased freedom**

Whenever we aren't tied to technology, engaged in overreacting or feeling unfulfilled and tired, we feel the joys of freedom. We make smarter decisions, and enjoy lives we've wished for. Instead of aiming to live up to a typical path that someone else set for us, we are free to be exactly who we are. That's freedom.

## **7. Benevolence**

When we free up resources, need less to be happy, and also have the time to think about what we care about the most, we are simply more loving, caring and giving.

These unseen benefits of simple living become completely tangible, and they are the secret behind being more with less. Only a taste of the inner workings of a simpler life inspires us to go after even more simplicity. We naturally want less of the meaningless products and even more of what really matters.

# **Cornerstones of Living Quietly**

- 1. Consciously choosing how to spend your energy and resources**
- 2. Being gentle to yourself and in your environment**
- 3. Creating a supportive space for yourself, both mentally and physically**
- 4. Learning to say NO**



**The Four  
Cornerstones  
of Living Quietly**

**Creating a supportive  
space for yourself both  
mentally and physically**



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Record Entries for the  
2021 Marmalade Awards!

**Organisers of the 2021 Marmalade Awards are delighted to confirm that despite the unique and challenging circumstances, they have received record entries this year. Well over 3,000 jars have been sent from over 30 countries including Kuwait, Honduras, Brazil, Australia, the Channel Islands and Zambia. Once again, marmalade making has brought together communities and people from around the world.**

Awards founder Jane Hasell-McCosh says: ‘The global marmalade making community really is phenomenal. When I started the competition in 2005, I never would have thought it could grow in this extraordinary fashion. The fact that thousands of people sent in their jars despite the challenges of coronavirus means so much to us. We cannot wait to begin the judging, and find our winner!’

Coronavirus lockdowns have led to a renewed interest in marmalade making, not just for celebrities like Elizabeth Hurley, but across the UK. The Rathbones First Timers category has also seen record entries, with people finding joy in having something new and productive to do – and the added bonus of being in with a chance of winning the grand prize! Staff from across Rathbones’ Kendal offices have joined in the fun and made marmalade with their families.

Richard Dawson, Regional Director of Rathbone Investment Management’s Kendal office said: ‘We are delighted to sponsor this year’s Marmalade Awards, supporting local and world-wide charities. Making marmalade for the first

time has united staff across our 15 offices and sparked plenty of competitive spirit. We look forward to the judging.’

The results will be announced on 20th June at Dalemain, as part of the annual Plant Fair. The winning homemade marmalade recipe will be replicated by award-winning producers Thursday Cottage and sold at Dalemain and Fortnum & Mason’s, in their famous Piccadilly store. All proceeds from the Homemade Awards go to support Hospice at Home Carlisle and North Lakeland, as well as other palliative care charities worldwide. The Awards take place with the generous support of Fortnum & Mason, Rathbones, Armstrong Watson, Thursday Cottage and Lycetts.

To find out more about the Awards, visit [www.marmaladeawards.com](http://www.marmaladeawards.com)





A Short Story by Mary Alward

# For Fear of the Little Men

When Lilibeth was a child and living in the country on the family farm her grandmother had told her stories about the fairies that lived in the lilac bush and the brownies that lived behind the henhouse. The fairies were mischievous, and were often blamed by Grandma for toys gone missing, especially Barbie clothes, which she said were just their size. Grandma said that the fairies ate the sugar water in the hummingbird feeder and bathed in the morning dew. She also said that the brownies were helpful sorts of creatures to have around, and were willing to help with the chores and keep the fairies in line, so long as you treated them nicely. To keep in the good graces of the brownies, Lilibeth and Grandma used to place a saucer of milk on the back stoop every night just before the sun went down, and they would occasionally leave scraps of yarn and thread out in the yard for the brownies' clothes and beds. The milk was always gone in the morning, and it was never more than a few days before the brownies had taken all the material left outside for them. Grandma always said that the reason their farm never

lost any chickens to raccoons and opossums the way the neighbors did was because they were such good friends to the brownies.

Years passed in the way that they will, and Lilibeth grew up and Grandma got older. By the time Lilibeth was thirty she lived about as far from the farm country of her childhood as it was possible to get: Somerville, Massachusetts, just across the river from Boston and the other side of Cambridge. The open fields and rabbit-warren woods of her childhood had been replaced in her life by front yards the size of compact cars and narrow streets filled with large homes cut up into tiny apartments. The only echo of her childhood was the huge metal sculpture at the entrance to the Porter Square T station - it always reminded Lilibeth of a windmill.

Over the years, Grandma had become withered as a little stick, and she had left the farm to Lilibeth's parents when she moved into a nursing home. But even after she moved into the assisted living center, the old woman still fed the brownies every day. The staff at the home thought it was one of the more charming habits of dementia among their charges, and neither Lilibeth nor her parents had corrected them since they gave Grandma such good care.

Lilibeth herself had outgrown feeding the brownies at about the same time she outgrew her Barbie dolls. During her adolescence, it had been just one more thing about her family that had embarrassed her; during her college years, it had been a grand story to tell to amuse her friends; and now that she was an

adult, it was a memory she looked back on with fond nostalgia. She found herself thinking of Grandma's brownies whenever she saw the newly trendy garden gnomes, and it always made her smile.

Grandma died in the spring of the year Lilibeth turned thirty just as the crocuses were starting to bloom. Lilibeth borrowed a friend's car to make the drive back to the Berkshires for the funeral, and stayed an extra two days to help her parents sort through Grandma's things and distribute them according to the list she'd left behind. Most of the silver had already been divvied up when Grandma first went into the home, but there were still albums of old photographs to copy for each of Lilibeth's aunts and uncles, and jewelry to shine up pretty and hand out to all the granddaughters. There was also a pair of Dresden shepherd lamps with lace trimmed shades for Lilibeth to take back to Boston where their frilly charm would be wildly out of place in her spare and modern apartment. And finally, there were letters for each of Grandma's children and grandchildren, written when the congestive heart failure had first started to come on and Grandma had sensed that her days were drawing to a close.

Lilibeth hadn't been quite ready to read Grandma's last words to her right after the funeral, so she packed up her unopened letter along with the shepherd lamps. When she got back into the city, she set the letter on top of her bureau and attempted to forget about it.

This forgetting was easier than the distraught Lilibeth had at first expected. There was a lot going on in her life: She broke up with the man she'd been dating for seven months, and that entailed a number of obligatory nights out on the town with her girlfriends. Then she had started babysitting for the kids in the apartment below her to make ends meet since her commissions had been down at the department store where she worked. And, of course, there were always plenty of life's usual petty annoyances to keep her mind occupied: Bills to pay, news events to follow in the papers, neighborhood watch meetings to attend, and groceries to buy. She thought about Grandma's letter every morning when she got her socks out of the top bureau

drawer, but by the end of each day, she felt too drained to open and read it.

It was about a month after Grandma had died, and the letter had become just another piece of clutter in her room, when Lilibeth started to notice that she was losing things more often than usual. First, she'd misplaced her apartment keys, and they remained so stubbornly lost that she'd had to tell the landlord so that he could have the locks changed and issue her a new set. Then barrettes, pens and pencils, library books, and sunglasses started going missing with mounting regularity. Lilibeth assumed that the simple stress of life - losing a loved one and the mundane struggle to make it on her own - were taking their toll on her memory. She thought little about it, except to be disgusted with her own flakiness. She became well and truly disgusted with this bout of petty losses, however, when she lost her purse. Misplacing a handbag might not have been such a big deal, but on that particular day, it happened to contain not only her credit cards but also a hundred dollars worth of babysitting money and a paycheck to be deposited.

She clearly remembered coming home from work on Friday night and setting the purse on the small table beside the front door. She hadn't gone out that night, and had opened the door for no one, but on Saturday morning when she got ready to go to the bank, her purse was gone. She spent a frantic three hours ransacking the apartment from top to bottom, but the bag simply would not turn up. When she had given up on the search, convinced that the purse had vanished into thin air, she sat in the middle of her bedroom floor, surrounded by the contents of her drawers and closet. In that position, she attempted to try to decide whether to have a good cry over her misfortune, or to drown her sorrow in a glass of gin. She had almost decided on the tears when Grandma's letter fell off the bureau and dropped to the floor at her feet.

Lilibeth sniffled a bit, still not convinced that tears were her best emotional option, and then decided that since she was already feeling about as low as she could, it wouldn't hurt to read the letter.

"Dearest Lilibeth - When you read this letter I'll be dead. Don't be sad. I'm not. I've had a good long life, but I'm getting pretty tired

here about the end. I think I'm ready to get rid of this aching old body and go about my business as a soul. Souls don't suffer from lumbago, you know. If I can, I will join your guardian angel in watching over you. That should keep me well occupied. But before I go, I have a few pieces of advice to offer you, gained from the wisdom of my years. First, never trust a man who's prettier than you are. They might be nice to look at, but they invariably know it and will only break your heart in the end. An ugly man is a much better bet for lasting happiness. Second, be careful not to over-water your houseplants. More houseplants have been lost due to an overzealous watering can than to dryness and spider mites combined. And third, don't forget to feed the brownies. I always told you that the brownies were helpful creatures, and it's true that they can be. But I never told you (because a little girl didn't need to know) that they can also be mean, spiteful and altogether wicked. Give them respect as I taught you and they'll give you no trouble. Love, Grandma"

Lilibeth read the letter three times over before bursting out laughing. She then immediately grabbed the cordless phone from where it lay under a heap of silk scarves she'd dumped from a drawer during the hunt for her purse and called her mother. She hadn't known Grandma was getting so dotty toward the end, and she was eager to hear what gems of wisdom she had graced on the other family members. However, when her mother answered the phone Lilibeth was told that most of the other letters had simply contained words of love and apologies for all the slights Grandma remembered giving over the years. The only other person who had received such outlandish pieces of advice had been Lilibeth's younger brother who had been admonished to marry his long-time girlfriend before she realized what a fool he was and found someone more worthy. They had a good laugh over that one and then hung up the phone.

Lilibeth tacked Grandma's letter on her bulletin board beside the other things that made her smile: post cards from the MFA, a ticket stub from a Rollins concert she'd been to in college, a drawing of a mechanical flower on a cocktail napkin, and a photograph of an ex-boyfriend which had been decorated with horns and a tail. She then dutifully picked up all the things she had pulled from closets and drawers while looking for the purse, and went downstairs to

baby-sit for Lisa and Joe while their mother went to work out at the gym.

Lilibeth liked Lisa and Joe all right, but they were definitely city children. Lilibeth was always amazed at the way they could stay cooped up in their apartment on perfectly gorgeous days, doing nothing but playing video games and watching television. Even their cat, Winky, was confined to the indoor world. (Lilibeth always found it odd that the very people who complained most about the city's ever present rats and mice were the same folks who declawed their cats and kept them confined to their three room apartments.)

Whenever she babysat for the children, Lilibeth made a concerted effort to get them out of the house. Their favorite place to go was the local elementary school playground, where Lilibeth played with them on the swings and the monkey bars. In addition to the playground equipment, there was a large multi-purpose field at the school, and Lilibeth had purchased some cheap kites to fly that afternoon. She made sure both of the kids put on heavy sweatshirts since the last of winter's chill was still stubbornly hanging on despite the fact that the tulips had blossomed and the dogwoods were in bloom.

On their way to the playground, they stopped by the building's row of locked metal mailboxes because Joe was expecting a toy he had sent away for using the UPCs from boxes of cereal. Someone had jammed all of the mailbox locks by shoving chewing gum in them. It was the kind of petty vandalism that Lilibeth always found particularly galling because it had absolutely no point. She wished the neighborhood teenagers would stick to graffiti, which was at least occasionally artistic in expression and not just an angry pissing on the rights of others. She helped Joe clean the gum out of the lock with the pocket knife on her keychain, and then soothed him when, after all that fuss, the toy had not yet arrived.

They made it to the playground without further incident and both children had a good time learning to make their kites swoop and soar. By the time they were ready to go home, of course, the kite string was tangled well beyond Lilibeth's ability to sort it out, and Lisa's kite had smashed into the ground so many times that its tip was quite smashed, but both children were happy and

had had a few hours of good exercise. But when they got back to the apartment building, they were confronted with the third domestic disaster of the day. Mrs. Santori, who lived in the apartment on the third floor, was out on the front step waiting for them.

"You kids." She pointed at Lisa and Joe accusingly. "You kids stay outta my flowers, you hear? All my tulips, stomped to death." The woman was so upset that she was close to tears, and while Lilibeth felt sorry for her, Lisa and Joe were indignant.

"We never touched your old flowers." Joe stamped his foot and informed the woman.

"They're pretty. Why would we want to smash 'em?" Lisa's denial was slightly more polite than her brother's was, but no less vehement. Mrs. Santori was not convinced, however, and insisted that Lilibeth come and look at the damage done to the tulips. The flower beds on both sides of the front steps had been thoroughly trampled, the tulips ground down to little more than brightly colored paste mixed in with the black soil. The buds of other flowers which had just been breaking the surface had also been broken and would now never mature. It was a sad sight.

"I'm very sorry Mrs. Santori," Lilibeth comforted her neighbor, "But the damage hadn't been done when we left, and I've had Lisa and Joe with me all afternoon down at the school. I wish I could tell you who did this, but it wasn't the kids. Maybe it was the same vandal who gummed the mailbox locks."

Mrs. Santori did not seem entirely convinced, but having no proof she let Lilibeth and the children go without any further accusations. The kids were subdued when Lilibeth dropped them back off to their mother, and she understood how they felt. The sight of the distraught woman and the crushed flowers had effectively killed whatever good mood the kite flying had created in Lilibeth. She was in no mood to go out, so she called and canceled her dinner date and spent the evening watching television and calling credit card companies to report her cards missing. By the time she went to bed that night, she felt tired and defeated, as if the world had been beating her about the head and shoulders with a blunt object. Her exhaustion was such that

she fell asleep quickly, but her dreams were troubled.

Lilibeth was not normally a restless sleeper, but that night she found that she simply could not get comfortable. Every time she turned over she felt new bedsprings poking her, and her blankets kept slipping off the edge of the bed and exposing her to the chilly night air. These discomforts woke her so frequently that she had no uninterrupted sleep cycles. What little sleep she did get was riddled with nightmares; she kept dreaming of a small, warty man, about the height of a housecat, dancing on her bureau and laughing at her in a mean spirited manner. He wore a fuzzy grey garment the exact color of dryer lint, and was misshapen, with one shoulder higher than the other and a heavy ridged brow. After a few seconds, he stopped laughing and regarded her with eyes that glowed yellow in the dark like an animal. "Feed us, or it will get worse," he told her in thickly slurred words. It sounded as if the words were in a language foreign to the little man, or as if his tongue was not designed for human speech.

"This is a dream," Lilibeth told herself and the little man. She then turned over and the dream ended.

When she woke the next morning, Lilibeth was groggy, and quite disgusted with her subconscious mind for giving her such horrid dreams. She vowed never to eat greasy Chinese food directly before bed ever again. She then made herself a small pot of strong black coffee and sat down in the living room to watch Sunday morning news programs while waiting for the aspirin to kick in. When she felt sufficiently awake and pain-free, she straggled into the bathroom and got herself ready to face the day. She had to buy groceries for the week as well as go to the Laundromat, so as much as she would have liked to crawl right back into bed, she couldn't.

On her way out of the building on her errands, she was stopped by Lisa and Joe who were headed out the front door carrying a shoe box. "Winky got out this morning and got hit by a car," Joe gravely informed her while his sister sniffled with unshed tears. "Wanna see him before we bury him?"

Lilibeth had absolutely no desire to see the dead cat, but the two children looked at her



so expectantly that she could hardly refuse. Joe lifted the top from the shoe box and revealed the stiff ginger cat. Lilibeth swallowed hard and tried to keep her expression neutral for the children. The cat was indeed dead, but she thought it unlikely he had been hit by a car. Winky's neck had been ripped open with such force that it was practically severed, and although it was hard to tell with the dried blood matting the orange fur, it appeared that something had gnawed on the wound. The bite marks on the cat's hind quarters were more obvious, and Lilibeth was reminded of the time she had seen a lamb that had been mauled by wild dogs. She swallowed again, to stop herself from gagging, and tried to smile reassuringly at the children.

"Poor Winky, he was a good cat." She gently took the shoebox top from Joe and recovered the box. "He just didn't know how dangerous the outside could be. Are you having a funeral for him?"

"Yeah," Lisa told her seriously. "Mrs. Santori said we could have a corner of her vegetable garden in the back yard to bury him. She's not mad at us about the flowers anymore. Someone stole all the Sunday papers and she says it's probably the same kids."

"Mom says they must be really naughty," Joe added. "She and Mrs. Santori called the police this morning and there's a cop up in our apartment talking to them now. He said he'd come downstairs and say a few words over Winky in a few minutes."

Lilibeth spent a few more minutes reminiscing about the things Winky had done during his short life and then left the children in the able hands of their mother and Mrs. Santori for the funeral. The sight of the dead cat had unnerved her, and she spent the rest of the afternoon attempting not to think about a dog big enough and mean enough to have mauled the cat to death living in her neighborhood. She had always wondered about the pit bull that lived down the street, but having no proof that it was responsible she decided to keep her mouth shut. After all, there was no sense in two neighbors losing pets until they were sure the dog was the culprit.

By the time she was done at the grocery store and the Laundromat, it was late and getting dark outside. The neighborhood was quiet, and Lilibeth always felt more vulnerable walking by herself on deserted streets than she did in situations where she was statistically more likely to come to harm, like the T during rush hour. So, she was walking as quickly as she could without

upsetting the balance of the little wire cart she pulled behind her carrying her laundry and groceries. Her building was lit up nicely, however, and she could see Mrs. Santori sitting on the front stoop. The older woman often sat outside in the evening hours, nursing a single bottle of beer and watching the sunset. Lilibeth sometimes joined her outside and they would chat about the kind of inconsequential matters that made daily life so interesting, like who on the block was unemployed, whose boyfriend had run out on her, and who was pregnant.

"Lili!" Mrs. Santori called to her as she approached the building. "Come sit and talk after you put those groceries away. You missed lots this afternoon."

Lilibeth laughed and promised that she would be right back down. She liked these neighborly visits, they reminded her of her mother's small town coffee klatches. She put her perishables away, grabbed herself a cold bottle of water, and hurried back downstairs to see what gossip her neighbor wanted to share.

Mrs. Santori, however, had more on her mind than the usual juicy tidbits. As Lilibeth sat down on the stoop beside her, she announced in a mournful tone, "This neighborhood is going to hell in a hand basket. Gum in our locks, all our newspapers stolen, my flowers smashed, those poor children's cat killed, and while you were gone today Mrs. Ruiz's Yorkie disappeared right out of her back yard. And you know she keeps that fence up so well there's no way little Princess could have gotten out on her own. We're being invaded by hoodlums, Lili. I moved here from Jamaica Plain because this was a good safe little neighborhood. I don't want to move again. My daughter lives close. I can walk to her house in Cambridge from here."

"What did the policeman say?" Lilibeth asked her neighbor.

"Oh!" Mrs. Santori waved one hand in disgust. "He didn't say nothing helpful. He wrote down what we told him, but he didn't have a clue who did it. He asked us if anyone new had moved onto the block recently, but we told him no. It must be kids from the next block over. Those police, unless they've already caught someone doing something bad once they don't even know how to begin looking." She paused a moment. "He was nice about that kitty's funeral though. He played along all solemn and sad and then said some real nice words. Joe was so excited I think he forgot to be sad, for a while anyway."

The two women were silent for a moment, and Lilibeth decided that the conversation needed lightening up. "You'll never guess what I saw at the Laundromat today, Mrs. Santori," she proffered.

"That place is full of lunatics. What now, girl?" the woman gamely asked, ready to be distracted from her woes.

"This blue haired little old lady was doing her laundry at the machine right next to me," Lilibeth told her, "And she was taking forever to sort her clothes into the wash. She'd take them out of the bag one item at a time, and she sniffed the crotch of every pair of pants and underwear before she put it in the machine! It was the funniest thing I've seen in ages: The crotch sniffing little old lady."

Mrs. Santori chuckled. "At least it was her own clothes. Every time I'm in that place, I watch my dryers like a hawk. Strange men are always hanging around in the corners and I'm sure they just wait for a chance to steel women's panties. Perverts."

Lilibeth laughed. "What a city we live in!"

"What a world, girl, what a world!" Mrs. Santori corrected her. "Boston, New York, every place is full of lunatics. The human race is nothing but one nut after another."

"Now Mrs. Santori," Lilibeth kidded her neighbor, "I'm not a nut. And you're not much of one."

"Yes, baby, but we're the exceptions. Now, if you'll excuse me, it's full dark and I'm ready to take my old bones up to bed. I'll see you tomorrow."

"Goodnight Mrs. Santori." Lilibeth followed her up the stairs. She hadn't left any lights on in her apartment and it was almost pitch black when she unlocked her front door. She tripped over the bag of clean laundry that she still had to fold and put away and muffled a curse. She swung the bag over her shoulder and trudged toward her bedroom, pausing only briefly to switch on the hall light. The shadow she made as she walked through the apartment seemed huge, and in the dark, her furniture cast strange shadows of its own. She thought she saw one of those shadows move, but when she turned to look, there was nothing there and she shook her head in disgust at her own jumpiness. Even if there were teenage hoodlums moving into the neighborhood, it was highly unlikely

they had gotten into her apartment with Mrs. Santori keeping watch on the front porch all evening.

She dumped the bag of clothes out onto her bed and started folding resignedly. Her usual method was to get the easy things, like towels, out of the way first before moving onto folding her clothing and mating socks.

It seemed colder than usual in her bedroom and she shivered as she mated a pair of striped knee socks. There seemed to be a draft, and she noted with surprise that her window was open a crack. She shut it, and suppressed another shudder of unease. She didn't remember opening it, but it had been a warm morning and she probably had. She was just jumpy.

Lilibeth drew the drapes across the window, turned back toward the pile of laundry, and uttered a short, sharp scream. She clutched at her chest as she felt her heart leap up into her throat. Sitting on top of the stack of clean towels she had just folded was the horrid little man from her nightmare. He smiled at her, parting wart covered lips to reveal teeth like the blade of a serrated knife.

"It's just a dream," Lilibeth told herself, shut her eyes, shook her shoulders, and willed herself to wake up. She opened her eyes again, but the little man was still there.

"Stupid girl." His voice was gravelly, and he hadn't stopped smiling. "I'm no dream."

"What -" she stammered, "What are you?"

"Your grandmother knew," the little man replied. "She taught you. You used to know. You used to feed me, and leave me bits of string for my clothes and bed. How could you forget this face?" The creature's smile broadened and he cupped his chin in the palms of his hands like a 1950's matinee model. "We're brownies."

"We?" Lilibeth asked him, afraid to take her eyes off him for fear he would spring at her and bite her with those horrid teeth.

"We." The chorus of voices sounded from all around her and glowing yellow eyes appeared in the spaces under her bureau, behind her curtains, under her bed, and in the depths of her closet. She stifled another scream, and realized that she was actually trembling in fright.

"What do you want?" she asked the little man.

"Food," he replied slowly, as if she was very dull and he had to speak clearly in order to make himself understood. "Yarn for our beds. That is the bargain. That has always been the bargain. Give it to us or things will get worse. Things you love will die like that cat."

"Where did you come from?" Lilibeth was too scared to have registered the reply, and so she asked another question just to fill the air with sound.

"The country," the man replied. "We came here with you after they put your grandmother in the earth. You were the one she said would know to feed us."

"You don't belong here." Lilibeth shuddered. "This is all wrong. You can't be real."

"We're real. We're real and we're hungry and you are not keeping your half of the bargain. If you do not feed us, we will take what we need and you will not like it."

"I don't know what you mean!" Lilibeth cried. "Just go back where you came from and leave me alone. I'm not crazy! I'm not!"

"We live here now." The ugly man spoke firmly. "We like it here. It's busy and there are things to do. Rats to kill, bugs to kill, plenty of nooks and crannies for a brownie to make a nest. We don't want to go back. And you live here. You are the one who is to feed us."

"I don't-" Lilibeth started, and then slumped to the floor in a dead faint. It was simply too much for her brain to handle, so her body made it all go away.

She came to with a cold washrag on her forehead and a warm weight on her chest. She opened her eyes and screamed, loudly this time. The ugly little man was sitting on her ribcage administering the cold compress, and all around her were other terrifying little creatures straight out of an Escher painting. Little men with beaks, women covered in dark tumors, warts, and worse. She sat up quickly and shoved the little man off her forcibly.

"Get away from me!" she shrieked. "God help me!"

"Stop sniveling. Wishing won't make us go away. We can help you girl. If you keep your

side of the bargain, we'll keep ours. This block will have no rats or bugs, and no dog or cat will be hit here ever again. No one will break into this building, and anything you lose will be returned to you. No more lost keys ever. Or wallets, or combs or earrings. We can be very helpful when we want to be." He waited for her to respond, but Lilibeth could do little more than watch him and shake.

"Come on girl! Your grandmother kept the bargain for fifty years. It hasn't even been fifty days and you've already failed."

"Why can't you just leave me alone?" Lilibeth asked desperately.

"Feed us," the little man replied. "Feed us and you'll never have to see us again."

"I'll feed you!" Lilibeth wailed. "Only just go. Just go away. God oh god you're not real..." She closed her eyes and rattled off a string of Hail Marys. When she opened her eyes again the little man and all his brethren were gone, vanished as if they'd never existed. Only the washcloth on her forehead and an indent in the pile of towels remained to prove to Lilibeth that they had been real.

She sat for a moment, still shaking, but then she squared her shoulders and stood up, knowing exactly what she had to do. She walked to the kitchen, filled a bowl with milk, and carried it downstairs to set it on the front stoop. She then walked back upstairs slowly and untacked her grandmother's letter from the bulletin board. She'd do it, but she'd do it without dwelling on why. She certainly didn't need the daily reminder.

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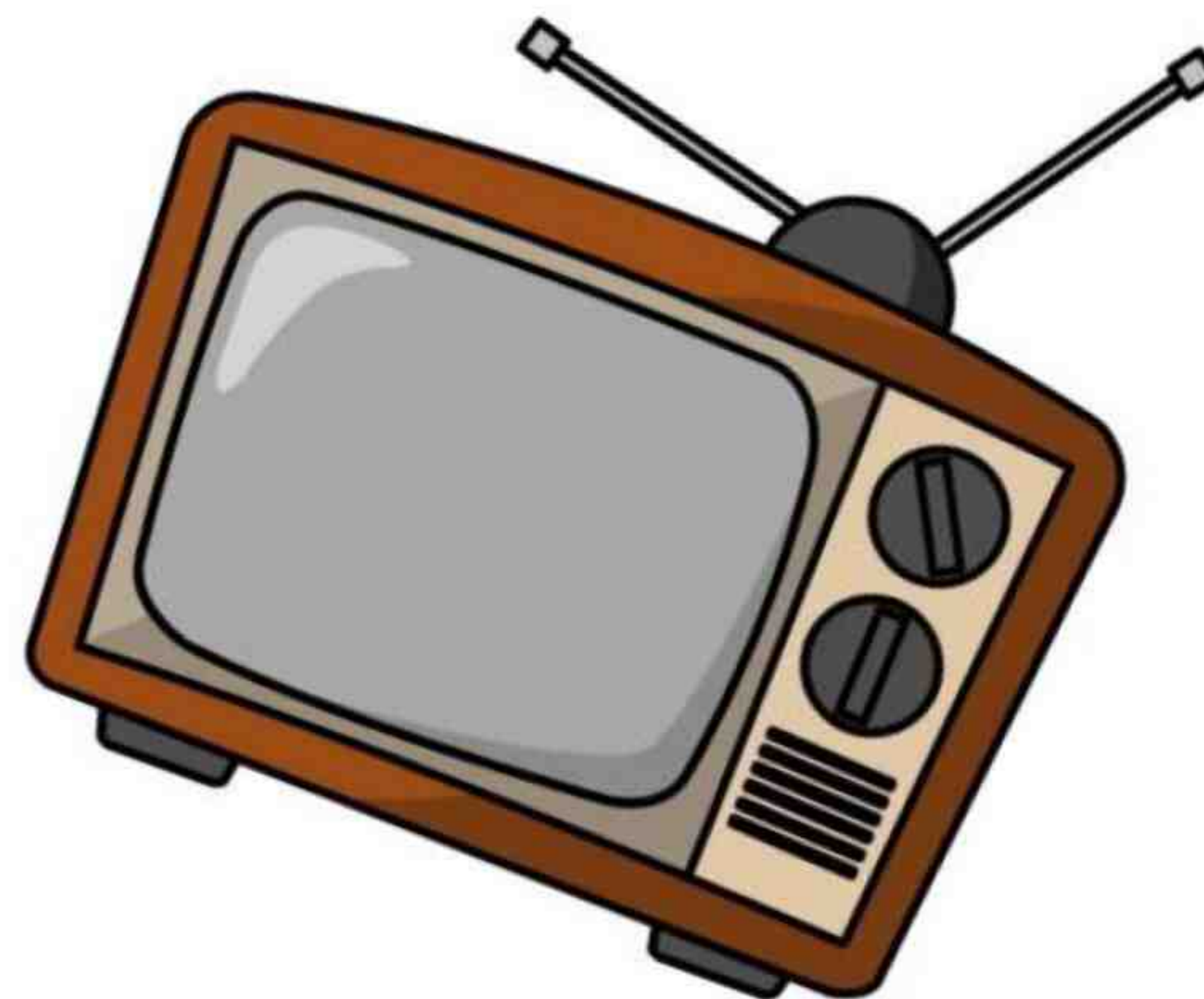
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WHAT **NEW** IS  
COMING UP  
THIS **TV** WEEK  
...and **MORE**



**When Nudes Are Stolen** **NEW**

**Ep.1/1**

Wednesday, 7 April

6:00am



Jess Davies has a successful career as a model and Instagram influencer. She uses her platform of around 150,000 followers to share messages of body positivity and female empowerment. Her social media network is a positive community where she is in control.

But elsewhere on the internet, it's a very different story.

For nearly 10 years, Jess has been battling an army of fake social media profiles that steal her identity and use it to impersonate other women online. Her pictures have been leaked, sold and misused in ways she never consented to. She feels helpless and has been scared to tackle the problem, until now. When she was a teenager, Jess decided to be a glamour model. She doesn't do topless shoots anymore but these photos are still being used all over the internet, on porn sites and by agencies falsely advertising her as an escort girl, without her consent. She has no control over how they are used or where. It feels like there's nothing she can do about it. In this documentary for BBC Three, Jess meets other people whose images have been misused. She speaks to cyber experts, a former scammer and those working to challenge this global issue.

Jess investigates the practice of eWhoring, a type of cybercrime whereby people - mostly women - are impersonated online, and their nude photos are sold. Jess discovers she has been a victim of eWhoring, and her images have been put in a 'pack' which is traded for as little as a \$15 Amazon gift card.

Jess asks, when your intimate images are shared and misused, what are the long term effects on your sense of self and your romantic relationships? Why is it often

women who carry a deep-seated sense of shame after something like this happens, when the person who leaked the photos has done wrong? And what more can be done to tackle Image Based Sexual Abuse?

When Nudes Are Stolen will also air on BBC One on 7 April at 10.45pm.



### **Canal Boat Diaries** **NEW**

Monday, 5 April  
7:00pm - 7:30pm



Robbie Cumming gave up a busy life on land for a supposedly quieter existence afloat on his narrowboat, The Naughty Lass.

Over spring and summer Robbie set off on an adventure navigating his way around the heart of the Midlands and North of England's canal network, soaking up the scenery and enjoying our industrial heritage along the way.

Filming during the pandemic was a challenge. When he was allowed to do so, Robbie escaped the trials and tribulations of 2020 by enjoying a 200-mile journey through some beautiful landscapes.

Starting in Ellesmere Port in Cheshire, Robbie journeys south to the River Severn and Worcester, taking a detour to Stratford-upon-Avon and then up into central Birmingham and its historic Gas Street Basin.

Self-filmed, Robbie captures everyday life aboard his boat, as well as the scenery along the way, in his canal boat diaries.

Canal Boat diaries airs Monday to Thursday on BBC Four.

### **Lights Up** **NEW**

#### **Ep. 1/1 - Half Breed**

Tuesday, 6 April

11:00pm - 12:00am



Half Breed is Natasha Marshall's semi-autobiographical dark comedy about finding your voice.

Created and performed by Natasha Marshall, Half Breed began its life as a poem at spoken-word nights and was developed into a short play through Soho Theatre's Writers' Lab and Talawa Firsts. Shortlisted for Soho Theatre's Tony Craze Award (2016) and the Alfred Fagon Award (2016), Half Breed had its full-length premiere in Scotland as part of Soho Theatre's Edinburgh Festival Fringe 2017 programme, co-produced with Talawa Theatre Company. Directed by Olivier Award-winning Miranda Cromwell, the critically acclaimed and UK Theatre Award nominated production went on to its London premiere at Soho Theatre and a UK tour (including Tash's hometown in the West Country) before performances in Mumbai, Chennai, New Delhi and Bangalore.

Half Breed is presented as part of BBC Lights Up, a major festival of UK theatre adapted for TV and radio at a time when theatres

throughout the UK are closed. Continuing its Culture In Quarantine initiative - bringing arts and culture into the nation's homes - BBC Arts has partnered with theatres across the country to produce this unprecedented season of 18 plays for audiences at home. Half Breed is a Soho Theatre, Tigerlily Productions and Talawa Theatre Company production. It was commissioned for BBC Arts by Jonty Claypole. Director is Miranda Cromwell. Executive Producers are David Luff and Natasha Dack Ojumu.

**Lights Up NEW**

**Ep. 1/1 - Sitting**

Wednesday, 7 April

10:30pm - 11:30pm



Bafta Award-winning Katherine Parkinson's (Home, I'm Darling, The IT Crowd) debut play Sitting is adapted for the screen.

Directed by former Artistic Director of Headlong Theatre Jeremy Herrin (People, Places and Things), who made his television directorial debut in 2020 with Unprecedented, followed by Alan Bennett's Talking Heads (both BBC).

Starring Parkinson for the first time, the one-off special follows three characters as they sit for a silent painter. In these sittings, Luke (Mark Weinman - I May Destroy You, After Life), Cassandra (Alex Jarrett - Les Misérables, Adult Material) and Mary (Parkinson) reveal truths in a play about love, loss and the importance of human connection. Featuring the work of award-winning figurative painter Roxana Halls.

Sitting is presented as part of BBC Lights Up, a major festival of UK theatre adapted for TV

and radio at a time when theatres throughout the UK are closed. Continuing its Culture In Quarantine initiative - bringing arts and culture into the nation's homes - BBC Arts has partnered with theatres across the country to produce this unprecedented season of 18 plays for audiences at home.

Sitting was commissioned for the BBC by Jonty Claypole. It is produced by Avalon with Jon Thoday and Richard Allen Turner as Executive Producers.

**Info and pictures:**

[bbc.co.uk](http://bbc.co.uk)



**Alan Titchmarsh: Spring Into Summer**

NEW

**Ep. 1/9**

Monday, 5 April

8.00pm - 8.30pm



Set in the heart of Hampshire, Alan Titchmarsh will be celebrating the great outdoors and the joy of getting back into the



fresh air and our green and pleasant land. With the warmer months on the horizon and lockdown soon to be lifted the series will focus on our beautiful countryside, nature and being able, once again, to take advantage of our outdoor spaces, no matter how big or small.

From farming and animal life to what, where and when to plant for the coming year, from countryside pursuits to tips on how to get the most from our outside space, we delve into all things seasonally British as we leave winter behind and head into spring and summer.

Each week Alan will be chatting to a celebrity guest as well as getting them involved in some of the planting, nature features and food tastings.

### **The Day Will and Kate Got Married NEW**

Wednesday, 7 April

9.00pm - 10.00pm



"It's a fairy tale beyond fairy tales. We come from really humble stock. My father was a painter and decorator, mum was an accounts clerk and their eldest granddaughter was at Westminster Abbey about to marry the future king of this country." Gary Goldsmith, Kate's Uncle

On April 29 2011, almost two billion people around the globe tuned in to watch as Prince William married his long term girlfriend, Kate Middleton - the first commoner to wed a future British king in 300 years.

Ten years on, The Day Will and Kate Got Married celebrates that momentous day

through the memories of family, friends and insiders who played a part in it, including Kate's uncle, Gary Goldsmith, speaking exclusively in his first ever TV interview, former Metropolitan Police commander Bob Broadhurst who was in charge of security on the day, royal historian Robert Lacey, plus the dress's embroider, the cake-maker, choristers and Middleton family friends and neighbours.

The documentary casts a fresh eye over the couple's courtship and relives the ritual and pageantry of the day – one that united a family, unaware of the future discord that would divide them.

As dawn broke over the capital on the 29th April 2011, 1900 guests were getting ready to head to Westminster Abbey to take part in the first royal wedding of the social media age. It was a welcome distraction for a nation blighted by recession, riots and unpopular government cuts. Foreign VIPs, celebrities and prime ministers stood shoulder to shoulder with people from the village where Kate grew up.

### **Info and pictures:**

**itv.com**



Sea Glass, Sterling Silver Tree of Life,  
Swarovski Crystal Pearl Necklace

<https://amzn.to/2PxZEnY>

# Outspoken mentor says autism makes him a better businessman as he launches trades' profit-boosting 'bible'

A veteran mentor diagnosed as autistic at the age of 54 who says it makes him a better businessman is publishing his new book.

## About Jon

Jon says: I'm Jon McCulloch, the one and only Evil Bald Genius, veteran copywriter on both sides of the Pond, author of the acclaimed Grow Your Business FAST, outrageously outspoken small-business advocate, mentor, and occasional coach and public speaker. I've shared the stage and co-hosted events with the likes of Dan Kennedy and Michael Gerber and hosted more than a few events.

My high-end Elite mentoring group has been running for since 2013 and has attracted members from all over the world.

## Why the EBG?

John says that 'Bald' is obvious, 'Genius' is a compliment and 'Evil' is inspired by his sense of humour.

As National Autism Month gets under way, Jon McCulloch is sharing his expertise to help men and women in construction and the trades supercharge their businesses and profits.

Jon, now 56, also widely known as the Evil Bald Genius, (<https://evilbaldgenius.com/>) is the author of Get Off the Tools – The Smart Tradesman's Business Bible, published in World

Described as a blueprint to help change the way you think about your business, the book focuses on Jon's renowned Trades Accelerator Model™.

Jon, who blogs about autism at Unapologetically Autistic (<https://unapologeticallyautistic.com/>) has made his work available in print and online.

In it, he rails against "snowflakes" and offers a straightforward plan to financial success – for different types of self-employed tradesmen he dubs wallowers, followers, fighters, and flyers.

He says: "This is where the magic happens. You get the benefit of my more than two decades in the business of helping other business owners grow rock-solid, profitable businesses."

Leicester-born Jon is launching Get Off the Tools in World Autism Month, partly in a bid to raise awareness of the benefits of being autistic in business.

He said: "I was self-diagnosing as autistic for 2 or 3 years. I paid for a private assessment in 2019 which confirmed my suspicions. It has been a rollercoaster for me but it has also helped me clearly plan and execute a very successful business.

"Now I have established myself as an expert in helping trades businesses reach serious profit goals."

Dad-of-3 Jon who now lives in Cork, added: "One of the effects of my autism is that I have no, what's known as "affective" empathy. Far from being a hindrance in running a business, I have found this an advantage – I just tell people how it is. You're born autistic, and you die autistic. And what happens between those two bookends of mystery is mostly up to you.

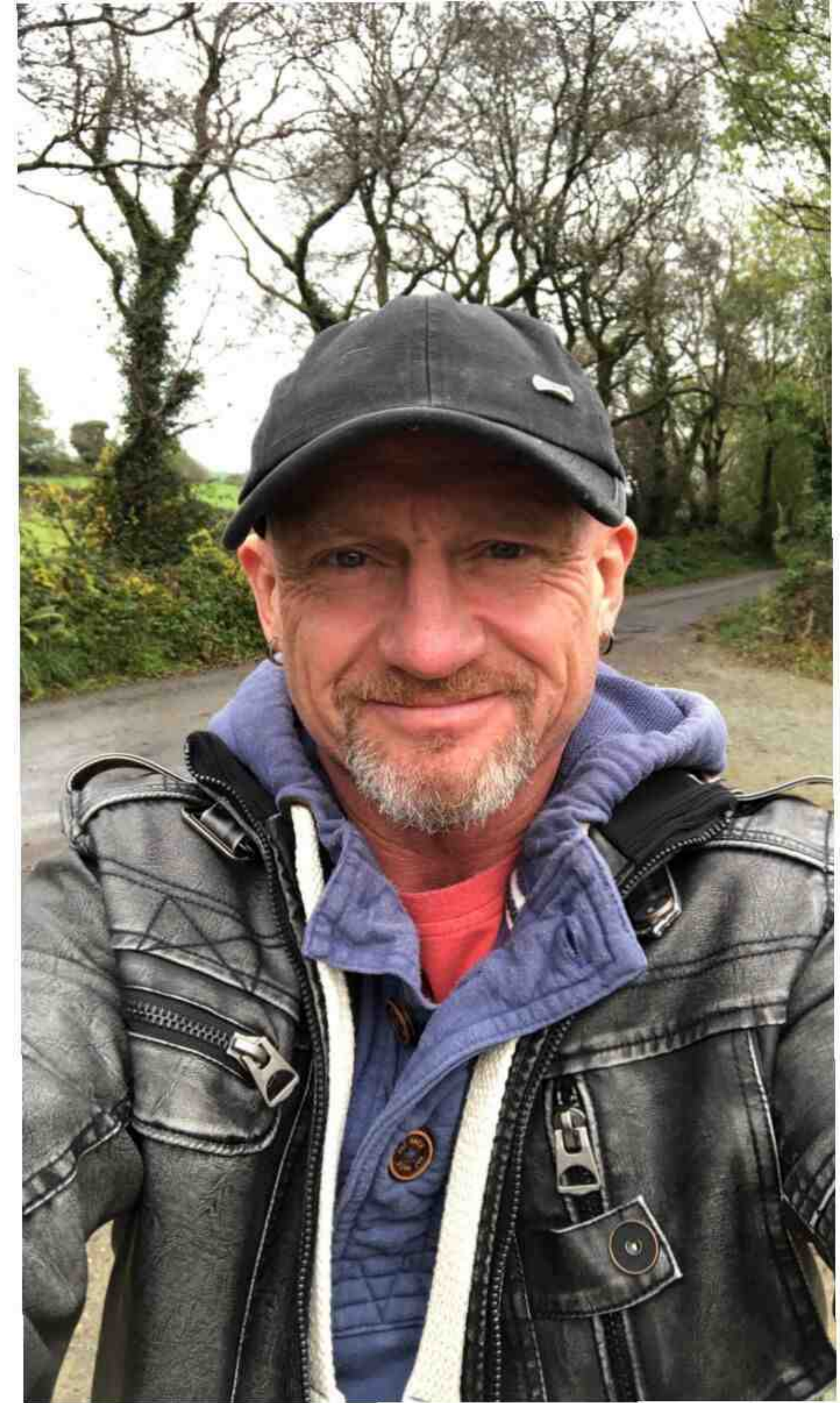
"If you're lacking in affective empathy, in particular, the mainstream view is there's something wrong with you. This isn't true.

"I've a proven record of fixing broken businesses. My book may seem harsh and uncomfortable at times. My clients and readers can take in what I say and learn or they can waste time doing stuff that's never going to get them where they want to be. I focus on personal responsibility, resilience, resourcefulness, and how to get the best clients paying the best prices.

"Growing and scaling your business is hard but it's not complicated and doesn't require you put in 20-hour days to pay off a mortgage on your soul.

"A few simple changes can give you dramatic improvements in your cashflow, quality of clients, and slash the time you waste on unproductive and unprofitable activities. Anyone can get them set up and working within a week."

Get off the Tools is available in Kindle edition, and will be published in print in Q2 of 2021. Contact Jon by email at [media@evilbaldgenius.com](mailto:media@evilbaldgenius.com), or find about more about him and his work through [evilbaldgenius.com](http://evilbaldgenius.com)



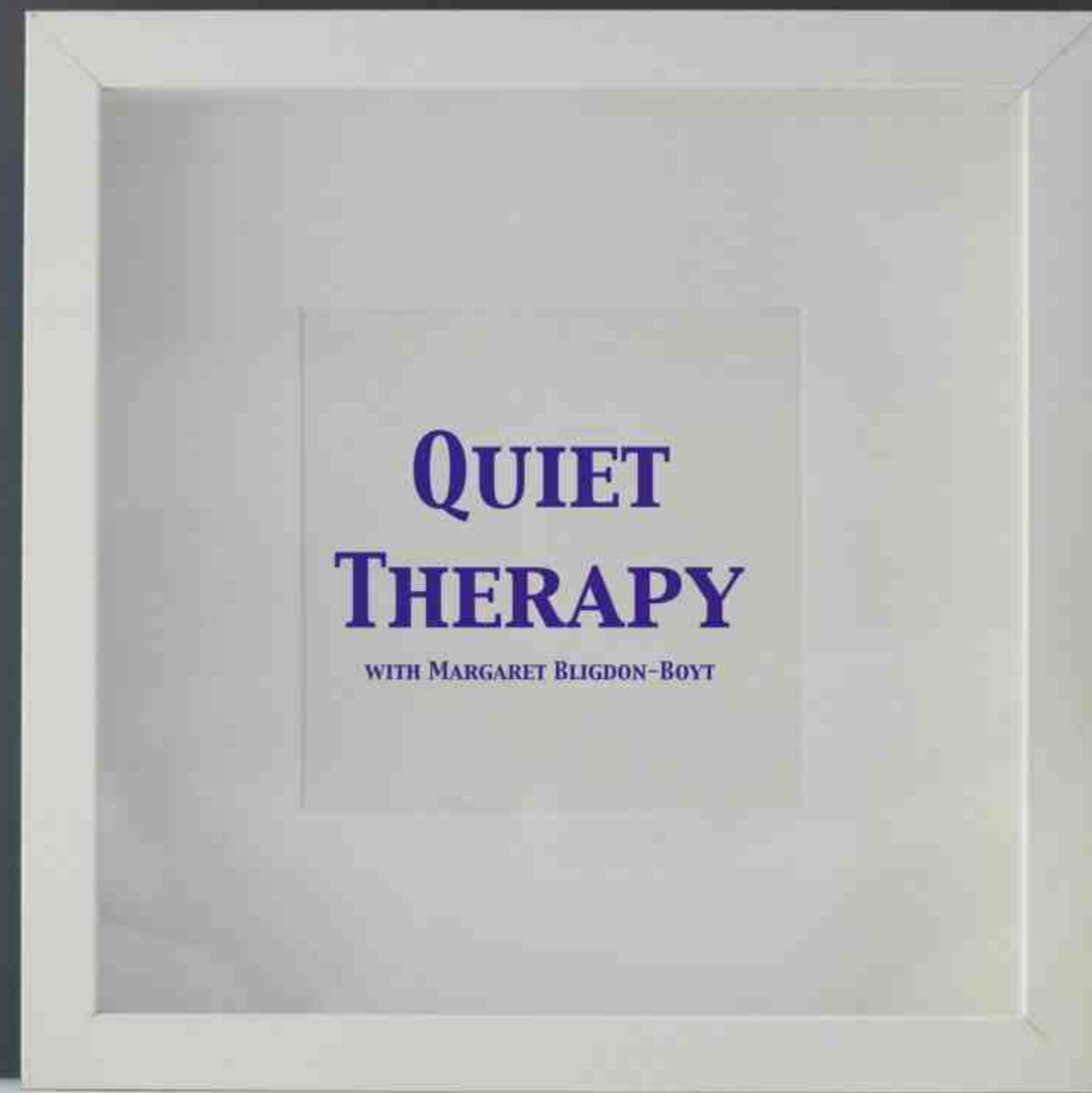


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