

A full-page photograph of two women standing in a field of green grass with fallen pink cherry blossom petals. The woman on the left is wearing a dress made of white balloons and has blue face paint on her cheek. The woman on the right is wearing a dress made of purple balloons. Both are looking towards the camera. The background is filled with the branches of cherry blossom trees in full bloom.

totally mental

FIND OUT WHO YOU ARE
**AND DO IT ON
PURPOSE**

THE FLORAL ESCAPE

BITS & BOBS

THE BRAINS
BEST BOUNCER

RECIPE OF THE WEEK

THE WORLD TODAY

FEED YOUR MIND

GET OUTDOORS

MIRROR CELLS

WHITE-ANTING

THE FRONTLINE

FINANCIAL WELLNESS

A POINT TO PONDER

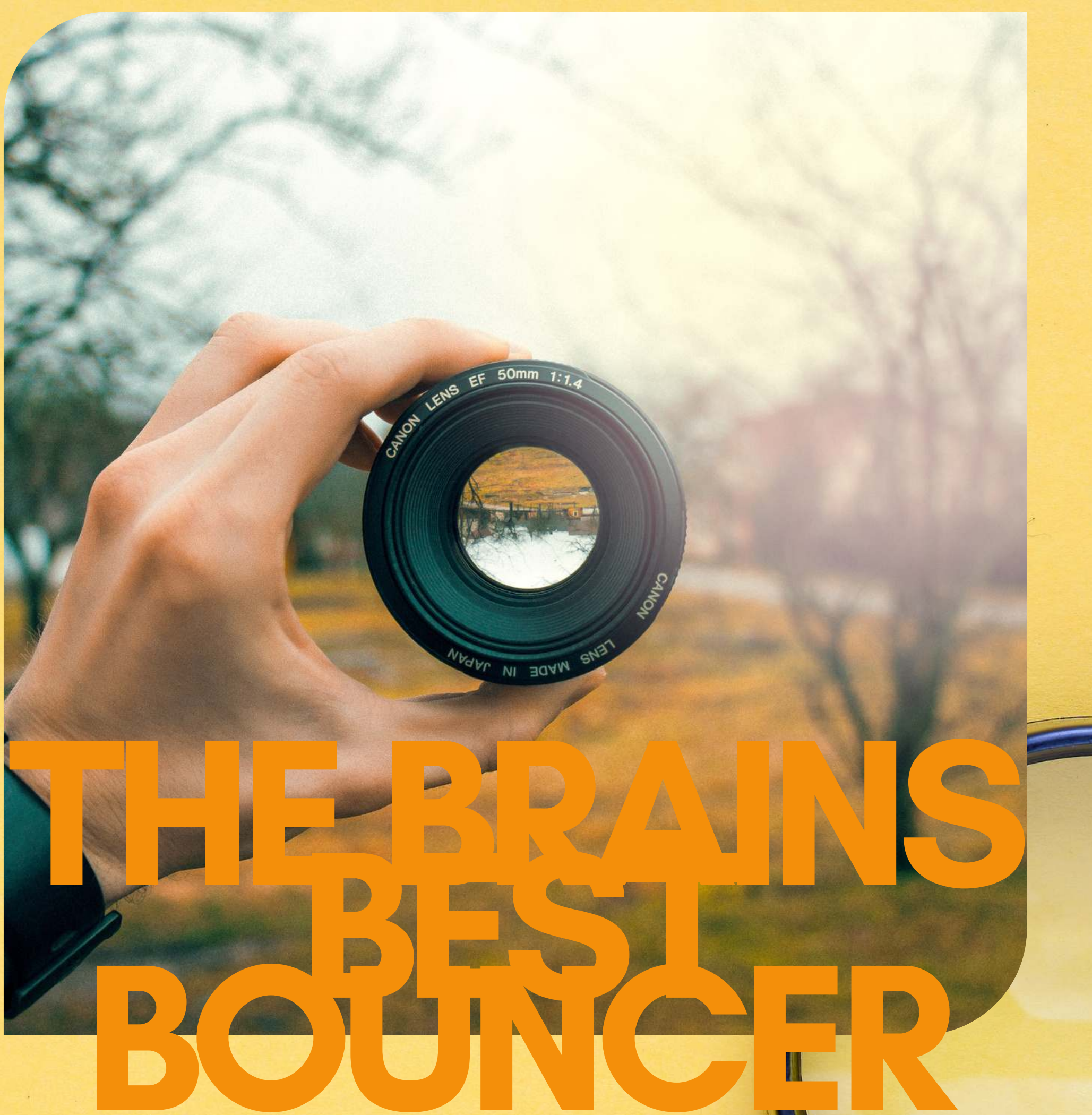
THIS IS YOUR LIFE

REIMAGINING THE WORLD

SAUNA'S

MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES

DAILY GOALS



Deep within the bustling metropolis of your brain, lies a crucial yet often overlooked figure: the Reticular Activating System, or RAS for short. Think of it as the city's best bouncer, not just keeping the riff-raff out, but also directing foot traffic and ensuring everything runs smoothly.

This "bouncer" isn't some hulking brute, but a network of nerve fibers nestled near the brainstem. Its job? Sifting through the constant barrage of stimuli bombarding your senses, deciding what warrants your attention and what can be safely relegated to the background hum.

But the RAS isn't just a passive filter. It actively shapes your experience of the world. It tunes into your needs and priorities, highlighting information that aligns with them. Feeling hungry? Your RAS amplifies the aroma of freshly baked bread, while the chatter of strangers fades into the background. On edge before a presentation? Your RAS amplifies every rustle of paper & squeak of shoes, making everything even more tense.

This selective attention isn't just about convenience; it's crucial for survival. Imagine facing a predator while juggling grocery bags and traffic sounds. The RAS ensures you hear the snarl, keeping you sharp and focused on the immediate threat. The good news is that we can train our RAS. Mindfulness and meditation help us become more aware of our attention filters and actively adjust them.

Choco-chunk Cookie Delights

20 min total time - Makes 9

MIX

- 2 cups almond meal
- 1/4 cup tapiaco flour
- 1tsp baking powder

MELT

- 2 tbsp coconut oil
- 6 tbsp maple syrup

MIX

- Pour maple syrup & coconut oil into the dry ingredients
- Add 1/4 cup of milk
- Add 1tsp vanilla essence
- Stir in choc chips

BAKE

15mins- 17mins in oven @ 180°C

A close-up, vertical photograph of a man and a woman celebrating. The man, on the left, has curly hair and a beard, and is smiling broadly while holding a flute of champagne. The woman, on the right, is wearing an orange halter-neck top and has her eyes closed in a joyful expression, also holding a flute of champagne. A small, bright sparkler is visible near the woman's chest. The background is dark and out of focus, suggesting an indoor party setting.

**BLOOM
WHERE
YOU'RE
PLANTED
AND
GROW
INTO
YOUR
BEST
SELF
THIS
YEAR!**

[click here to listen to this ted talk](#)

TED TALKS

MENTAL HEALTH

FEED YOUR MENTAL HEALTH

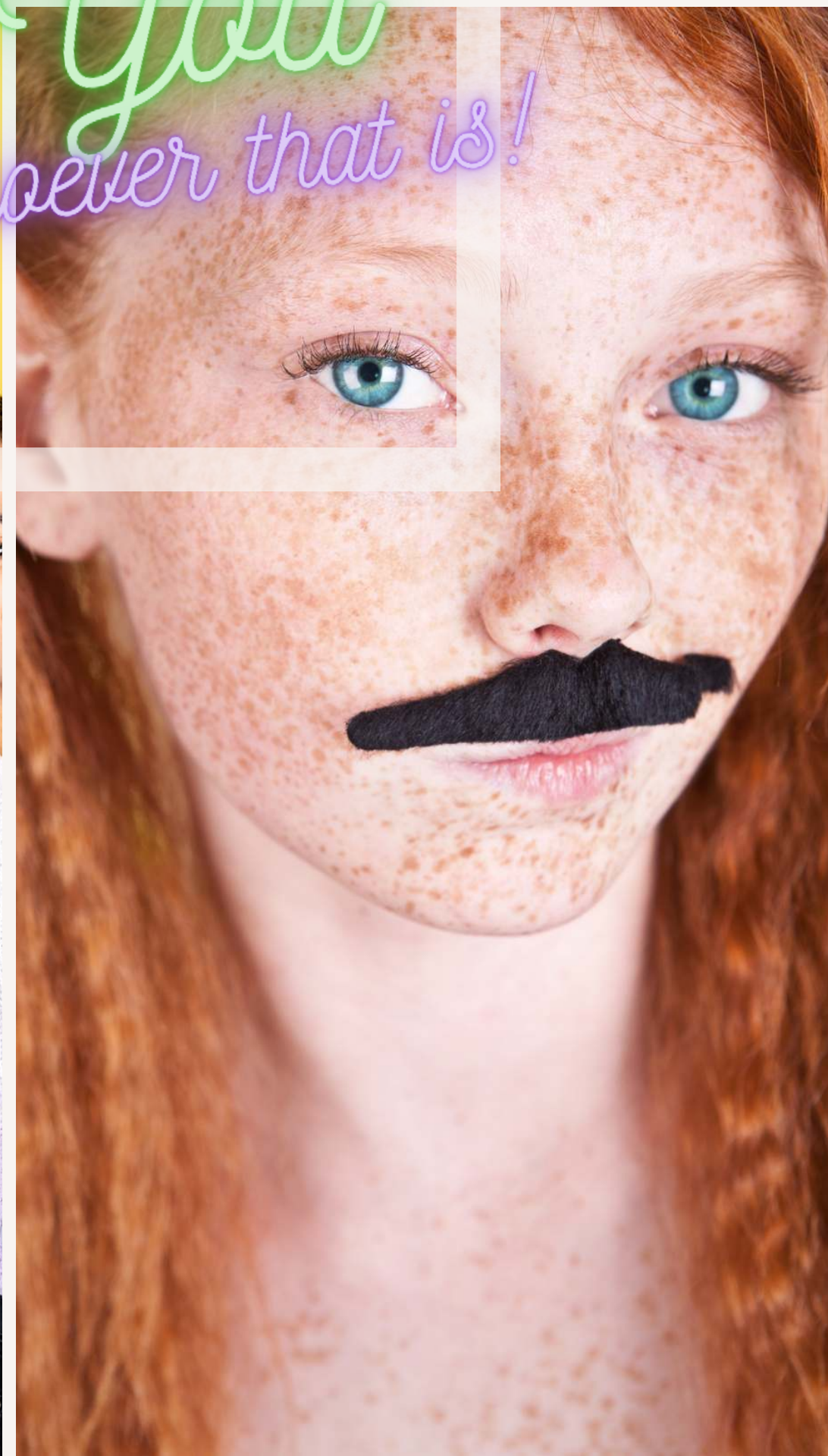
Drew Ramsey

Forget talk therapy, let's eat our way to a happier mind!

Dr. Drew Ramsey, a top-notch psychiatrist with a passion for food, shows us how what we put on our plates can actually boost our mental health. This is no boring lecture, folks – it's a fun and informative journey into the amazing connection between your gut and your mood.



Be You
whoever that is!



whole-person wellness

Somatic Healing

YOU'RE PERCHED ON YOUR SEAT, HEART POUNDING, GOING FOR THE WIN, YOUR BEST FRIEND WINDS UP FOR THE FINAL SHOT. EYES LASER-FOCUSED ON THE PINS, THEY UNLEASH THE BOWLING BALL, ITS SMOOTH ARC WHISPERING THROUGH THE AIR. THEN, WHAM! DEAD CENTER, TEN GLORIOUS PINS EXPLODING IN A CASCADE OF WOOD AND CHEERS. BUT HERE'S THE KICKER: AS YOU WATCHED YOUR FRIEND BOWL, YOUR OWN ARM GIVES A PHANTOM FLICK OF THE WRIST.

THAT, MY FRIEND, IS THE MAGIC OF MIRROR NEURONS, YOUR BRAIN'S SECRET TEAM OF COPYCATS MIMICKING NOT JUST PHYSICAL ACTIONS, BUT ALSO EMOTIONS AND SENSATIONS.

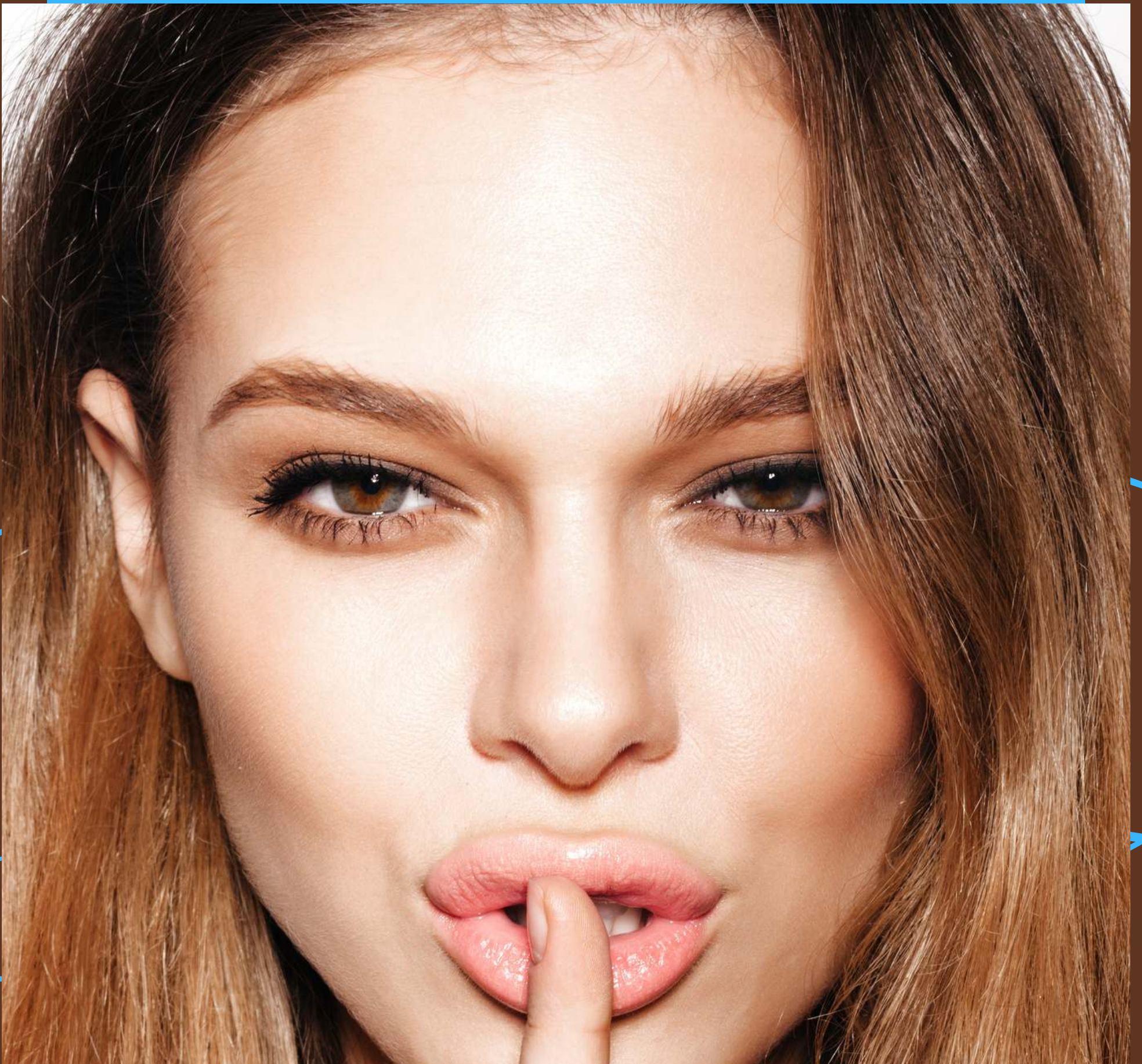
THESE ARE THE HIDDEN GEARS BEHIND OUR ABILITY TO UNDERSTAND OTHERS' PAIN, SHARE THEIR LAUGHTER, AND EVEN LEARN NEW SKILLS WITHOUT BREAKING A SWEAT.

CHECK OUT THIS LINK:

[Mirror Neurons](#)



GOSSIP: THE SILENT TERMITE



Imagine a hidden threat silently eating away at our workplace, just like termites gnawing on a building's foundation. That threat is gossip, the "white-ant" that erodes trust, morale, and the foundation of our teams. It starts subtly: a whisper here, a rumour there. Like termites, gossipers work in the shadows, exploiting cracks in communication and trust. A casual comment becomes a full-blown attack, a harmless joke; a damaging caricature.

**The effects are subtle:
Productivity plummets
Suspicion replaces collaboration,
teammates become wary and hesitant.
Morale crumbles**

The positive atmosphere is replaced by doubt and negativity, leading to valuable employees leaving.

White-anting isn't just a nuisance, it's a serious threat.

So, how do we fight back?

- **Starve the gossip with transparency and trust.**
- **Encourage direct feedback, not whispers.**
- **Separate fact from fiction before they spread.**

**Remember, your workplace is an ecosystem.
Shine a light on gossip, nip it in the bud.**

The retail shop floor can be a whirlwind – a constant buzz of customers, demands, and product knowledge. But amidst the chaos lies a secret weapon: YOU!

Each of us possesses unique strengths that can transform any job from a struggle to a stage for your retail superpowers to shine!

Start by reflecting... What are you naturally good at? Do you light up during customer interactions or excel at organising?

Once you know your strengths, it's time to put them into action!

People person? Seek out opportunities to connect with customers.

Organizational whiz? Volunteer to streamline stock or processes...

Stressed by a demanding customer? Your natural empathy can help you de-escalate the situation and find a solution.

Remember, you're not alone! The shop floor is a team effort.

FRONTLINE

Volunteers

If you have any topics you'd like covered or questions to ask, please let me know...

**DON'T DIM YOUR FIRE FOR COMFORT,
DON'T TAME YOUR VOICE FOR ACCEPTANCE.
LET YOUR LAUGH BE A THUNDERCLAP,
YOUR SMILE A WILDFIRE THAT MELTS AWAY DOUBT.
BE AUDACIOUS IN YOUR AUTHENTICITY.
LET YOUR EYES SPARKLE WITH THE MISCHIEF OF CURIOSITY, YOUR
HEART VIBRATE WITH THE RHYTHM OF YOUR OWN WILD PULSE.
THE WORLD NEEDS YOUR UNAPOLOGETIC SPARKLE, YOUR
INFECTIOUS SPARK OF INDIVIDUALITY, NOT ANOTHER PALE
IMITATION.
YOU ARE A FORCE OF NATURE, A MASTERPIECE IN THE MAKING.
BE A SYMPHONY OF CONTRADICTIONS,
OF MISMATCHED BRUSHSTROKES.
RISE ABOVE THE NEED FOR VALIDATION,
THE HUNGER FOR APPROVAL.
YOUR WORTH ISN'T MEASURED IN LIKES OR APPLAUSE, BUT IN THE
UNAPOLOGETIC BEAT OF YOUR OWN HEART.
SHINE BRIGHT, UNAFRAID, UNAPOLOGETICALLY YOU.
BE BRAZEN IN YOUR BRILLIANCE.**



Financial Wellness

Where can I save?



Buy budget friendly staples: pasta, rice

Freeze leftovers

Bulk buy non-perishables

Explore free events in your local area

Host games nights with friends, everyone brings a dish

Go hiking, biking, walking

Free online libraries

Trial periods for streaming services

Offer skills like babysitting in exchange for a need of yours

Free fruit in the kids basket at Coles

Commit to a NO SPEND day weekly

Minimise travel costs – combine errands

Ways to stretch your paycheck



Is there anything we can
implement as a team to enhance
overall well-being in our
workplace?

Discuss this with your team or leave
your answer in the Comments...





UNLIMITED ABILITIES

Hollywood shines bright, but sometimes the real stars are those overcoming shadows of their own. There are some incredible individuals – actors, singers, athletes, and more – who've blazed trails while navigating the unique challenges of disability. Their stories are proof that talent knows no bounds, and that removing barriers can ignite brilliance.

Marlee Matlin: This deaf actress absolutely smashed Hollywood's glass ceilings by becoming the first deaf performer to win an Oscar.

Haben Girma: The first deafblind Black graduate of Harvard Law School, Haben is now a lawyer and disability rights advocate.

Nick Vujicic: Born without arms or legs, Nick could have let negativity win. Instead, he became a world-renowned motivational speaker, author, and father, proving that resilience and a positive attitude can conquer any obstacle.

HOLLYWOOD'S RED CARPET JUST GOT WIDER... INCLUSIVITY IS THE HOTTEST ACCESSORY THIS SEASON!

These individuals challenge our perceptions of disability and teach us valuable lessons:

- Disability doesn't define potential. With the right support and mindset, anyone can achieve their dreams.
- Removing barriers opens doors to unimaginable possibilities. It's not about fixing people, but about creating inclusive environments where everyone can thrive.
- Representation matters. Seeing successful individuals with disabilities on screen and in society empowers others and fosters a more accepting world.

These people are but a few of the 'pioneers' reminding us that the human spirit shines brightest when faced with adversity. Let's celebrate their triumphs and work towards a world where everyone has the opportunity to rise above limitations and shine their own unique light.





Sauna *life*

- Sauna's increase your blood flow and so promote healthy skin. (Source: 2010 Scandinavian Journal of Medicine & Science in Sports)
- Spending time in a sauna releases endorphins, the body's natural feel-good chemicals, and has a calming effect. (Source: 2018 International Journal of Hyperthermia)
- A study found that sauna use before bed improved sleep quality in those with insomnia. (Source: PLOS ONE journal)
- Studies suggest sauna use is associated with improved mood and reduced symptoms of depression. (Source: 2010 Scandinavian Journal of Medicine & Science in Sports)
- Consult with your doctor before using them, especially if you have any underlying health conditions.
- Saunas should not be used by pregnant women, people with certain heart conditions, or those who are intoxicated.
- Stay hydrated before, during, and after sauna use.
- Listen to your body and stop using the sauna if you feel uncomfortable or dizzy.

MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES

Visit a biological or holistic dentist. They look at your whole body and how your teeth may be affecting you.



Butterfly Foundation's National Helpline 1800 33 4673
(eating disorders & body issues)



Hope Center Thailand
The Life Co
THE BALANCE | Luxury Mental
Health Retreat



Your EAP is strictly confidential, gives 4-8 free sessions of counselling to you & your family. Refer to page 11



**Reach out to P&C if you
need any further assistance
or information**

DAILY GOALS:



TED Talk: How To Discover your Authentic Self at any age
Bevy Smith



Book of the week: "The Happy Me Project"
Holly Matthews



Podcast: On Purpose with Jay Shetty & his wife!



Team activity: The Feelings Wheel Activity



Talking point (Something to talk to your team about): What are the individual strengths of each our team members and where are there knowledge gaps?



Resources: Resources on Authenticity



New research: Your tongue's surface is as individual as a fingerprint

<https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2023/12/231214132635.htm>

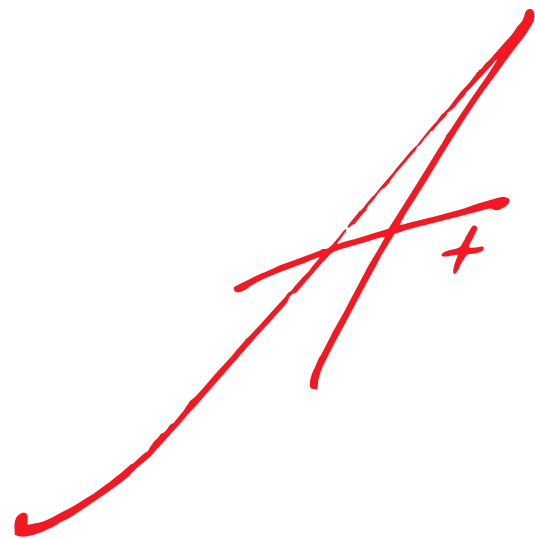


Meditation: Dealing with Codependency

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8779P4rim80>

Don't worry if people think you're crazy. You are crazy. You have that kind of intoxicating insanity that lets other people dream outside of the lines and become who they're destined to be.

THE AUTHOR



Life hasn't always been easy.

By the age of 40, I'd experienced unimaginable loss; from the heartbreaking deaths of loved ones (including my brother, sister, aunt and father) to betrayal of those closest to me, life threw some serious punches. After a devastating motorbike accident, several miscarriages and the loss of a job after my boss took his own life, came incredible joy with the birth of my two children. But life, it seems, has a way of testing us. My daughter struggled with being bullied, self-harm & suicidal thoughts, my husband faced an incapacitating mid-life crisis, and both my children received diagnoses of autism, anxiety and depression.

Facing my own challenges, like recovering from a stroke and navigating a divorce with my first



husband, showed me the importance of support and inner strength.

But all these experiences, as difficult as they were, also shaped who I am today.

This led me to dedicate myself to learning everything I could about mental health over the last 17 years. I became a Master of Neuro-Linguistic Programming, studied Psychology, Child Mental Health, and Mindfulness, functional medicine and growth mindset strategies.

So this "Totally Mental" Mental Health magazine is more than just words on a page; it's a culmination of my lived experiences, my heartfelt empathy, and my unwavering belief in the strength of the human spirit.

Let's face it, life can be "totally mental" at times, but together, we can navigate the challenges and build resilience. My "superpower" is the ability to see things differently, find unique perspectives that can unlock solutions and empower individuals, drawing from my own story to create a space of understanding and empathy.

I'm not just someone who talks the talk. I'm someone who's walked the walk, stumbled, picked myself up, and kept going. I'm here to share relatable stories, practical tools, and evidence-based resources to help you navigate your own mental health journey. From my qualifications, lived experience and general courage to address difficult topics and advocate for change, I am equipped with the knowledge and tools to truly understand and advocate for your mental well-being.

This is my way of giving back, of using the challenges I've faced to build something bigger than myself and help others navigate life's inevitable difficulties.

Becoming your global Mental Health & DEI Advocate and Ambassador is more than just a title - it's a privilege. I'm here to listen, offer support, and empower you on your own journey of whole-person wellness.

Reach out to P&C if you need any further assistance or information