

totally mental

Cinderella is proof that a new pair of shoes and a little effort can change your life. So pull yourself together, slap on some confidence, and get out there!

BITS & BOBS



THE HIGH PRICE OF BEING A CARBON COPY
TOUGH GUYS ARE AN ENDANGERED SPECIES
GLASS SLIPPERS WON'T SAVE YOU

YOUR LIFE. YOUR RULES

THE BODY'S BEST FRIEND

EAP AND OTHER RESOURCES

WHOLE PERSON WELLNESS

THE FRONTLINE

GUARDIANS

WEIRD WINS: THE CASE FOR DOING LIFE DIFFERENTLY

FINANCIAL WELLNESS

A POINT TO PONDER

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES

THE HIGH PRICE OF BEING A CARBON COPY

EVER FEEL LIKE YOU'RE WEARING A COSTUME THAT DOESN'T QUITE FIT?
CAUGHT IN THE UNDERTOW OF "WHAT EVERYONE ELSE IS DOING."

WHY? BECAUSE OUR BRAINS ARE WIRED FOR SURVIVAL.
HISTORICALLY, BEING KICKED OUT OF THE TRIBE MEANT...
WELL, NOT SURVIVING.

SO, WE NOD, WEAR THE TRENDS, AND LAUGH AT JOKES WE DON'T GET.

IT'S A COSY, BUT SUFFOCATING, BLANKET OF BELONGING.



HOW DO WE BREAK FREE?

1. REMEMBER THAT THING
YOU LOVED DOING AS A
KID? FIND IT AGAIN. IT'S
THERE, WAITING FOR YOU
TO TURN UP THE VOLUME.

2. EMBRACE THE "WEIRD":
"NORMAL" IS BORING.

3. FIND THE PEOPLE WHO
GET YOU

LIFE'S TOO SHORT TO BE A
CARBON COPY.

A man wearing a brown beanie, a brown jacket with a shearling collar, and a dark scarf. He is looking directly at the camera with a serious expression. The background is a dark, textured wall.

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

TED TALKS

MENTAL HEALTH

Trigger warning

TOUGH GUYS ARE AN
ENDANGERED SPECIES

DONALD G. 'SKIP' MONDRAGÓN



♡♡
Be You
whoever that is!





**You know, the "where's my fairy
godmother?" moments?
Maybe it was a tough day at work,
a dating disaster, or just...life.
When the inner princess starts whispering,
"Shouldn't someone be fixing this for me?"**

**We've been fed a diet of happily-ever-
afters. Glass slippers, magic wands,
and handsome princes sweeping in
to save the day.
But guess what?
Reality bites, and those slippers?
They're probably giving you blisters!**

**Expecting life to hand you a crown is a
recipe for disappointment.**

You don't need a fairy godmother. You've got this!

**Ditch the tiara and lace up some sneakers.
It's time to rewrite your narrative. Instead
of waiting for rescue, become your own hero.
Turn those "why me?" moments into
"watch me!" moments.**

**You don't need a castle to feel like royalty.
You just need to show up and be you.**

Glass Slippers Won't Save You

Ever feel like your life is a public suggestion box?

Suddenly, everyone's an expert on your choices!

It's like your personal GPS is constantly rerouted by backseat drivers.

**People love to weigh in because, well, we're wired to have opinions
– but you don't owe anyone an explanation. Nada. Zip. Zilch.**

Time to ditch the "justifying your existence" tour!

**Your life is a
dance floor.
You choose
the music, the
moves, and
who you invite.**

**If someone's
trying to
change the
playlist,
politely but
firmly show
them the exit.**

**How?
Boundaries,
baby!
It's not about
being mean, it's
about being
YOU. A simple
"Thanks for
your input, but
I've got this!"**

Your Life. Your Rules

the body's best friend

The Energy You Bring is the
Energy You Get

Notice how some days, it feels
like the universe is after you?

Spilled coffee, missed
deadlines, the whole shebang.

But, thing is: sometimes, **we're**
the trip hazard.

A bad attitude isn't just a mood,
it's a self-fulfilling prophecy.

When you wake up with a
"woe is me" vibe, your brain
starts searching for evidence to
back it up. Cynicism becomes
your superpower.

That's your comfy, but totally
toxic, armchair.

Plant weeds of negativity, and
guess what sprouts?
A whole lot of weeds!

Now, I'm not talking about
slapping a "good vibes only"
sticker on your forehead.

That's toxic positivity, and it's
about as useful as a
chocolate teapot.

But what if, instead of seeing
every obstacle as an attack, you
saw it as a detour?

It's about reframing your
perspective. Not pretending
everything is sunshine and
rainbows, but choosing to see
that **even a broken pencil can
still draw a straight line.**



Own It. Whatever "it" is.

That messy mistake at work? Own it.

That awkward moment when you ruined a presentation? Own it.

That nagging feeling you're not living your best life?

You guessed it – own it!

Why?

When you own your stuff, you take back the steering wheel.

Owning it isn't always fun. Sometimes, it's digging deep and facing the stuff we'd rather bury.

Own the whole messy, beautiful, glorious you! Because when you own it, you don't just survive – you thrive. And trust me, that's a ride worth taking!



FRONTLINE
volunteers



whole-person wellness

**If It Feels Like a Struggle...
Maybe It's Not Yours to Carry**

**Let's cut to the chase: are you actually okay?
If your gut screams "nope", it's time to listen up.**

**You're exhausted, you dread your to-do list, or you find yourself
saying "yes" when your soul is screaming "NO!"
Now, discomfort isn't always a bad thing.
Growth often feels like stretching a tight muscle. That's good pain!
But misalignment? That's a nagging ache telling you you're wearing
someone else's shoes – and they're two sizes too small.**

**What truly lights me up? What drains me?
Listen to your body. It whispers the answers.
Is this struggle yours, or someone else's?
What tiny tweak can you make today?
Celebrate the Small Wins**

You deserve peace, joy, and a life that resonates with your authentic self.

BEYOND YOU

THE WORLD'S WAITING FOR YOU
TO SHOW UP, FULLY.
NO MORE PLAYING SMALL, NO
MORE HOLDING BACK.
TIME TO STEP INTO YOUR POWER
AND LIGHT THAT FIRE.



**Ever tried fitting a square peg into a round hole?
FYI it doesn't work.**

Yet, we spend so much time trying to fit ourselves into societies round holes – jobs, relationships, even hobbies – that we forget we might be glorious, glittery, multi-sided polygons.

Here's the truth bomb: innovation doesn't come from the cookie cutter. It comes from bakers who throw in a dash of chili powder and stardust.

- **Forget "should's" and "must's." Do what sets your soul on fire.**
- **Embrace the Oops: Messing up is where the magic happens.**
- **Find people who celebrate your quirks, not tolerate them.**
- **Recognise your unique perspective is your superpower!**



**WEIRD WINS: THE CASE FOR
“DOING LIFE DIFFERENTLY”**

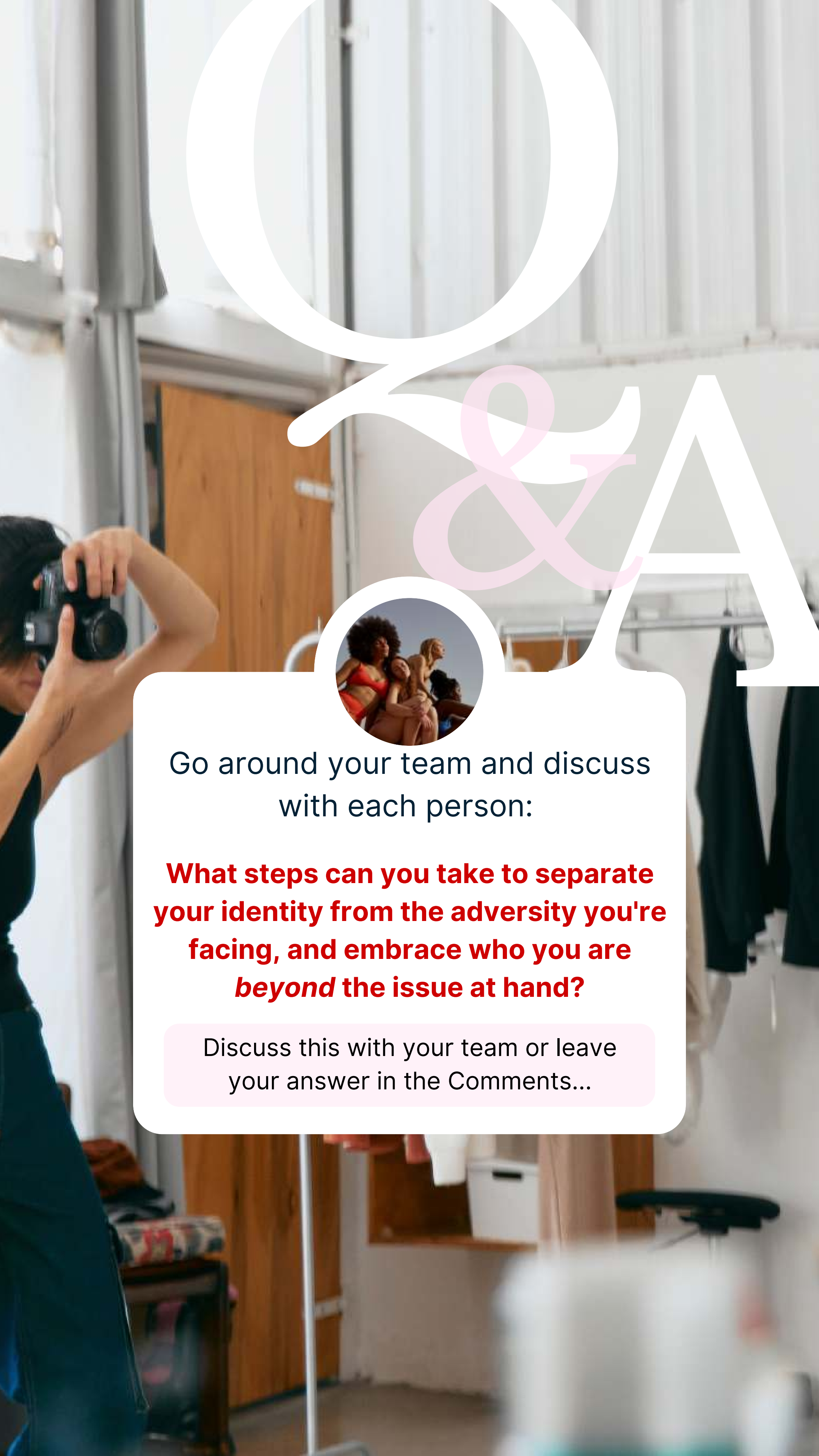


Financial Wellness

The Emotional Side...



**Scarcity mentality = Fear in a fancy suit.
Instead, treat learning about money
like a spa day.
Your money story doesn't have to
be a horror flick.
You're not your past debts,
you're not your old fears.
You're a financial superhero in training!**



Go around your team and discuss with each person:

What steps can you take to separate your identity from the adversity you're facing, and embrace who you are *beyond* the issue at hand?

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

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 child struggled with being bullied, self-harm & suicidal thoughts, my husband faced an incapacitating mid-life crisis, and both my children received life-limiting diagnoses. 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.

Advocating for Mental Health & DEI on a global stage is more than just a task – it's a privilege. I'm here to listen, offer support, and empower you on your own journey of whole-person wellness.

MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES

Cancer Support Community (CSC) – Emotional support for those battling cancer and their loved ones.



The Trauma Recovery Center (TRC) – Specialises in trauma recovery, offering resources, support, and educational tools



Psychology Tools – Offers a variety of self-help resources, worksheets, and exercises on trauma, PTSD, and resilience.



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



FORTNIGHTLY FOCUS:



Talk: “The Hidden Influence of Social Networks” by Nicholas Christakis



Book of the week: “The Body Keeps the Score” by Bessel van der Kolk



Podcast: “Unlocking Us” by Brené Brown



Talking Point: How can we embrace resilience by accepting that setbacks and failures are part of our growth, not signs of defeat?



Team Activity: Resilience Mapping



Resources: Trauma-Informed Care Toolkit



New Research: mindfulness-based therapies significantly reduce symptoms of PTSD and depression



App: Mindful Gnats

Your strength is not found in what you've survived, but in what you choose to become because of it.