

GLAMOUR

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November

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Wisdom.

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New energy*

#NOTJUSTYOU

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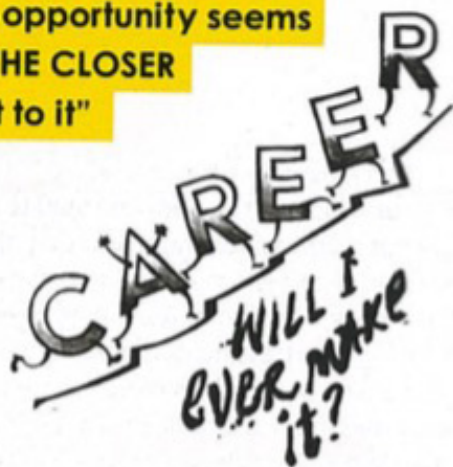


4 "Am I ever going to MAKE IT AT WORK?"

44% of you are losing sleep over your careers; worrying your salary is too low, about job security or whether you're in the wrong job altogether. The biggest work issue of all? Lack of opportunities, say 53% of you who cited this as your biggest worry. It's as if we're all Alice in Wonderland, with our professional aspirations growing larger – not least because everyone tells us they should – but the door of opportunity seeming to shrink the closer we get to it. For Gillian, 31, it's career progression versus growing family that's the demon on her shoulder: "In my large company, there are no examples of women who have achieved career success as a working mum. I wonder if it can be done."

Carbon advises making *yourself* your role model: "Our perception is heavily influenced by what others say, but it's important to see yourself as an individual and ditch comparisons. Empower yourself by using your position as a platform to learn new skills, and consider taking on projects outside your job description. This will give you a level of empowerment and a sense of moving forward." Do one thing, not for your job but for your career, today, even if it's simply spending an hour updating your CV.

"Our professional aspirations are growing larger, but the door of opportunity seems to SHRINK THE CLOSER WE get to it"



5 "I go on health kick after HEALTH KICK"

40% of you are worrying about your health – specifically, that constant feeling you're lifting dumbbells with your eyelids. "I'm in a constant state of wired exhaustion," yawns Aoife, 34, who, like 56% of health worriers, feels tired. All. The. Time. "I rely on caffeine to pick me up and wine to calm me down, and I'm zombie-walking through my social life. I really just want to watch Netflix in my pyjamas."

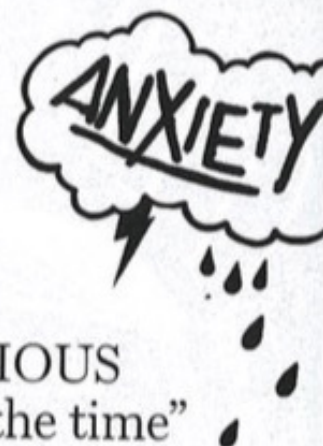


Exhaustion has many causes, but one of the most common is burnout – and in our modern 24/7 culture, from endless deadlines to Tweeting through TV shows, it's not surprising. Our minds are all over the place, which can be tiring. "Put your needs first and pay attention to what is zapping your energy," advises Carbon. That could be anything from pushing back and saying 'no' at work, to addressing a relationship worry, or even going offline after 9pm.

With so many plates in the air, identifying your key 'zapper' isn't always easy, but there is one plate you can deal with right now – yup, the plate you eat off. According to the NHS, making sure you're fuelling your body with a balanced diet and eating a decent breakfast is the best way to maintain energy. "Yes, we've all heard it before, but you need to pay attention to your diet," says Carbon. "And reduce caffeine, as it prompts the body to release stress hormones that may contribute to your 'wired exhaustion'." ➤

WHAT OUR SURVEY REVEALED:

The Big Ones



1 "I'm in my 30s and have HARDLY ANY SAVINGS"

54% of you ranked money as your biggest worry. This will surprise no one, given that UK bedsits now cost approximately the same as luxury yachts on the French Riviera. "I'm embarrassed about still flat-sharing, but I can't afford a mortgage, because the market is so high. I feel like it's all too late for me," says Anjali, 33.

OK, so there's no overnight solution for rising house prices, but with 66% of money worriers citing lack of savings as their biggest headache (strike that - migraine), there is something you can do to act as an instant painkiller: "Tracking your expenses will give you a level of control and empowerment over your goals around money, and reclaiming one's own power is essential for any type of anxiety," advises UKCP psychotherapist Samantha Carbon. "Review your expenses with someone you trust and set yourself one goal - for example, saving a set amount for Christmas." Nicky Lidbetter, CEO of the charity Anxiety UK, agrees: "One of the best things you can do is to make sure you are proactive."



"TRACKING your expenses will give YOU A LEVEL OF CONTROL AND empowerment over your goals"

2 "I am petrified of TERRORISM"

"Whenever my train judders because of a delay, I panic that this is it, and I scour the carriage for warning signs," says Eliza, 26. And she's not alone. The threat of terrorism is an anxiety for 83% of the 47% of you who cited global issues as a major worry. "In times of fear, individuals often regress to coping strategies they developed in early childhood," reveals Carbon. "But what you need are mature ways of coping, by paying attention to your thoughts, feelings and behaviours." Carbon recommends this nifty three-minute breathing technique to stop your thoughts spiralling out of control: First, quietly observe the different noises, sights and sensations you notice around you. Then, gently narrow your focus to your own breathing. Finally, gradually expand that focus to the sensations you experience, in your own body, moment by moment.

3 "I feel SELF-CONSCIOUS all the time"

44% of you worry about your looks. Is there a woman in the world who can't identify with this feeling? 63% of those with in-the-mirror anxiety put it down to feeling overweight, followed quickly by 62% not feeling pretty enough.

"Everyone I work with is gorgeous, fashionable and slim, and I feel like a moose next to them. I'm obsessed with thinking about diet, my clothes, my make-up. It's horrible," admits Amy, 27.

Could our social-media habits be to blame? The uncounted cheekbones of the real world never quite measuring up to the art-directed, filtered feeds of Planet Instagram. Scientists at the University of Pittsburgh have found a direct correlation between social-media use and low self-esteem. The key is to remember the words of Australian Instagram star Essena O'Neill when she quit Instagram: social media is full of "contrived perfection made to get attention".

And next time you find yourself being self-critical, stop and ask yourself: would you treat a friend like this? Of course not. Tell yourself what you'd say to them if they were having a down day. "By doing this you are replacing the running commentary of self-judgement with positive thinking," says Carbon. ➤



AND NOW FOR...

The Niggles



6

YOUR FAMILY 32%

"I worry constantly about the health of my ageing parents and whether I see them enough," says Agnieszka, 29. Now what? "This is perfectly normal (57% of family anxiety relates to your parents' health), and your feelings will be less troubling if you learn *not* to fight them," says Carbon. "Recognise your own limits." How can you realistically help? "And the most important thing, whether you live down the road or on another continent, is to communicate."

7

YOUR RELATIONSHIPS 29%

"I worry no one will love me and that I'm not worthy of a relationship," says Hannah, 36. Now what? "In this swipe-left/right world, there are some flighty people out there who never try to see beyond first contact," says Jo Hemmings, dating coach and behavioural psychologist. The trick is to depersonalise rejection to preserve your self-esteem. "That's easiest to do when you surround yourself with people who love you for who you are."

8

YOUR SOCIAL LIFE 27%

"On my social feeds, all I see are people out with friends, partying. I need a bigger social circle to make me feel like a real person," says Kirsty, 22. Now what? It's hard to admit to loneliness, but 78% of this group feel lonely or worry they don't have enough friends. "Social media has a way of making most of us feel inadequate," says Hemmings. "I take it with a pinch of salt – often their need to brag about their *fabulous* life is to convince themselves."

9

YOUR SEX LIFE 25%

"I have a low sex drive, and I spend a lot of time Googling 'Am I normal?'" says Rachel, 34. Now what? "Libido can fluctuate for many reasons – hormones, illness, fatigue, medications and more," says Hemmings, which is interesting, as 55% of readers in this category worry their sex drive is out of sync with their partner's. "But if you really have a permanently low sex drive then open up about it. It's better to be honest when a partner may feel rejected."

10

YOUR FERTILITY 25%

"I'm 32, and I don't feel anywhere near ready to have a family," says Eva, 32. Now what? We're bombarded by messages that you *must* pop out kids while you're young. However, according to the Office of National Statistics, the number of women giving birth over 40 has more than trebled since 1981. Dr Geetha Venkat, of the Harley Street Fertility Clinic, advises a fertility check-up. "This enables you to make back-up plans, such as freezing eggs."



MAKE WORRY WORK FOR YOU

"Not all worry is equal," says Philippa Perry, psychotherapist and author of *How To Stay Sane*. "There are the worries that give us a kick up the bum and lead to planning, action and acceptance of the things we cannot control or change. And then there's the unhelpful whirling sentences in our heads that start with the 'what ifs...' But if we can think of all worries as stimuli for learning and growth, we are more likely to embrace new challenges."

So, next time you find yourself tensing up, stressing out, or feeling down, see it as an alarm bell; a catalyst for change. Take a step back, take a deep breath and ask yourself what's really wrong. Then break the problem down into tiny manageable pieces so you can work your worries out, rather than letting them wear you down. You got this. ●