

EDWINA INGS-CHAMBERS

OUR BEAUTY DIRECTOR'S HERO BUYS

The 8 wonders of my world

In my final column, I gift you my most important feel-good lessons

It isn't just time that marches on – we must march with it, following its band leader's baton into the future. And so it is that, after five years in this wonderful job, it is time for me to move on and bid you adieu.

In talking about my upcoming projects someone asked me to look back and say which piece I'd felt most proud of having written for YOU magazine.

While I'm proud of everything I put my name to (what is a life – or career – without that?) the answer was simple: a personal essay about my lifelong struggle with body confidence and emotional eating. It even made me a cover girl in my 50s (right).

That article was almost two years ago, so what have I learnt since then? Well, firstly, a problem shared really is a problem halved; daring to talk so openly about my issues led to an outpouring of support – a support that hasn't wavered, and for which I thank you. I have learnt some more beauty-related lessons, too. Don't be misled by the term 'beauty': increasingly brands want to talk about embracing, rather than perfecting, our flaws. This trend chimes perfectly with my own desire to really get to grips with self-acceptance instead of harbouring self-esteem issues. It's still a work in progress (a journey I'll continue on my Instagram account, see opposite, so please join me there), but these are the things that have helped me:

YOU CONFESSIONS OF AN EMOTIONAL OVEREATER

Our beauty director EDWINA INGS-CHAMBERS writes the most powerful account of a woman's battle with her weight you'll ever read

THE WEIGHT ISSUE
A 1000 magazine readers have said change the way you think about your body today

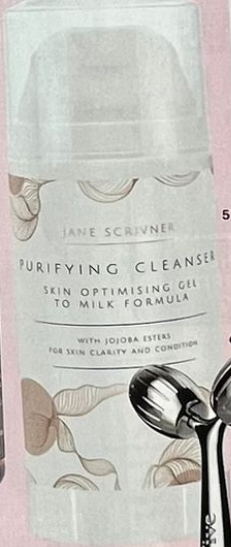


I've learnt it's empowering to love your hair just as it is

Embracing my natural hair
Texture and all. I haven't even coloured it in almost two years (not that I don't question that decision: my finger often hovers above the speed dial for the Nicola Clarke at John Frieda salon as I ponder calling her to blonde-ing action). I've spent years straightening and toning, colouring and toning, but I've let it revert to its default mouse and my hairdresser, Andreas Wild at Larry King, has convinced me to embrace a diffuser head on a hairdryer to bring out the natural waves. Add a little modern

mousse (not sticky but still holds and lends body) and use a good hairbrush – I'm obsessed with **La Bonne Brosse** (1, £128, thegoh.com). I'm finding there's something very empowering about loving your hair just as it is.

Spritzing with confidence
I've always been a 'signature fragrance' wearer. Cartier La Panthere EDP (£100 for 100ml, cartier.com) is my most recent stalwart. But lately I feel bolder if I mix things up and choose according to the boost I need. Still, I have a roster of favourites: Perfumer H Rain Cloud EDP (£150 for 50ml, perfumerh.com), with its ylang-ylang, jasmine and iris, perfectly captures the hopeful spirit of a summer's day temporarily interrupted by a shower. Chanel Le Lion EDP (£200 for 75ml, chanel.com) is an instant flash of sauciness, and Floris Chypress EDT (£100 for 100ml, florislondon.com), with its orange flower and musk, is a strong but feminine choice. To feel more enigmatic, **Diptyque's L'Eau Papier EDT** (2, £90 for 50ml, spacenk.com) fits the



bill. Alternatively, Bamford's elegant **Atomising Diffuser** (£120, bamford.com) can help dispel negative thoughts and shift the energy of a whole room.

Treating blush as a super-boost

A pop of colour and some warmth always help me to feel brighter – and bolder. Try **Elf Putty Blush in Boro Boro** (3, £6, elfcosmetics.co.uk) and **Tom Ford Soleil Glow Bronzer** (£55, tomford.co.uk).

Not hiding from myself

It can be easy to dismiss my own body when I'm unhappy about how it looks and, even though I am a bath lover, I can find it torturous to see myself floating about. But I'm getting better at being kind, of mindfully appreciating what I see. I try to turn bath time into a nurturing moment aided by favourites such as

Soapsmith Bloomsbury Bath Soak (4, £30, soapsmith.com), **Susanne Kaufmann Bath Oil for the Senses** (£55, spacenk.com) and simple but powerful **Westlab Epsom Bath Salt** (£5.50, hollandandbarrett.com).

It's the same with body lotions: instructions should include 'apply with kindness'. My go-tos are **Garnier Body Superfood 48h Nourishing Cream** (£9.99, boots.com) and **Costa Brazil Kaya Jungle Firming Oil** (£95, net-a-porter.com).

Finding rituals

A cleansing ritual helps to put me in touch with myself. It needn't

be long but it helps me connect body and mind. I love **Amarda Lacey Cleansing Pomade** (£95, amardalacey.com) and **Jane Scrivner Purifying Cleanser** (5, £49, janescrivner.com). A **RéVive RéVolve facial massager** (6, £115, spacenk.com) is great for extra self-commitment.

Accepting extra help

Skincare can make a difference but it only can go so far. I've started a course of **EmFace** with cosmetic doctor **Dr Nyla Raja** (£2,500 for four sessions, doctornyla.com). The treatment, a sort of nonsurgical alternative to a facelift, uses radio frequency to deliver toning, high-intensity

stimulation to muscles – so no needles, nothing invasive. (I have always stayed away from fillers but there comes a time when

more support is needed.)

Making conscious choices

To feel good about myself I like to make good choices for others when I can. A key new favourite is **The Natural Africa Rosehip Oil** (7, £45, thenaturalafrica.com), a great face hydrator from a brand that farms responsibly and provides economic opportunities for rural communities.

Taking care of myself in my sleep

Night time is key renewal time. Product wise, if you really are spoiling yourself, **Omarovicza Gold Night Drops** (£200, liberty.co.uk) is a powerful serum. But even just laying my head on a silk pillowcase with **Slip** (from £85) and wearing a **Slip Eyemask** (8, from £50, both slipsilkpillowcase.co.uk) is a final nod at the end of the day to taking care of myself.

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