

Editor **Suzy Brokensha**



I saw a sobering statistic the other day: in two years, there has been a 37% increase in people being admitted to hospital for eating disorders in the UK. I think that's really shocking, don't you? And I don't believe it's restricted to the UK, either.

I know I sound like a boomer here (probably because I am one, as our kids are fond of reminding me), but I'm sure this massive increase has a lot to do with the 'perfect' lives constantly being showcased on social media that inevitably invite comparison – which in turn,

Do it just for the fun of it

inevitably, results in feelings of inferiority, isolation and shame.

I'm increasingly struck by how hard we all are on ourselves, about everything – from what we look like to the choices we make about how we live, what we eat, what we watch, what we wear... even to how we spend our spare time. We are holding ourselves to some kind of impossible account – and we will all fall short of those standards, because it's almost impossible not to.

Features editor Liesl Robertson looks at one part of this in her story on page 48 this month about why we no longer have hobbies. Remember those? Just doing something for the fun of it? The two biggest reasons we've ditched them turn out to be that we don't think we have the time for them (because we're constantly trying to improve ourselves in any spare time we may have), or that we are intent on converting our hobbies into money-making side hustles – in other words, our hobbies become measured in terms of profit rather than enjoyment. I think that's a huge loss.

And, in another angle on the same idea of not measuring up, features writer Charis Torrance looks at imposter syndrome on page 26 – why it is that no matter how successful we are, so many of us think of ourselves as undeserving frauds who are on the verge of being found out.

It seems to me that we are becoming brutal with ourselves on every level, and the best thing we can do for our own sanity (and for each other) is to lean back a bit (pace, Sheryl Sandberg). Breathe out. Let our soft bellies flop over our waistbands a little. The world will not end if we miss a gym session or that Italian language class. Sleep in every so often without feeling guilty. Stop trying to be better all the time, and give ourselves a break. Allow ourselves to be less than perfect. Do something just for the hell of it.

To that end, I wish all of us a gentler, kinder month!

Love, Suzy

PHOTOGRAPHS: LIZA VAN DEVENTER, NETFLIX, SUPPLIED.
HAIR & MAKEUP: SUAAD JEEFE @ ONE LEAGUE

What I'm loving this month...

AFARI BEAUTY PRODUCTS

Margaux Knuppe was assistant beauty editor at FAIRLADY for a while, and she had an incredible understanding and knowledge of product ingredients and what they were really capable of. Now she's taken all that knowledge and experience and created her own high-end skincare range using *Bulbine frutescens*, a flowering plant indigenous to Southern

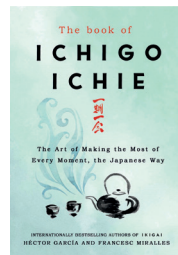


Africa. Traditionally used as a remedy for skin injuries thanks to its anti-inflammatory qualities, it also stimulates collagen synthesis – exactly what my dry skin needs! The Protecting Day Cream worked wonders for me. Have a look at the whole range on afari.co.za

I think it's fabulous.

THE BOOK OF ICHIGO ICHIE BY HÉCTOR GARCÍA AND FRANCESC MIRALLES

'Ichigo Ichie' is defined as one of those tiny, perfect moments in life that we often only acknowledge in retrospect, not while they're actually happening. Literally translated, it means 'What we are experiencing right now will never happen again.' Héctor García and Francesc Miralles aim to teach us how to recognise those moments in the present, and, through that, to learn to live in the moment. This seems to be a good handbook for the kinder, gentler month I've wished us all!



MARRIAGE STORY

I thought this movie (on Netflix) was extraordinary in so many ways. It's about the dissolution of a marriage in which nobody is really the baddie and everyone is trying to be decent, more or less. Interestingly filmed, it's often uncomfortable to watch – there's no pulling away from a fight scene, for example: you watch it right to the bitter



end (in every sense) through every twist and agonising turn. *Marriage Story* will break your heart and give you faith, all at the same time. The performances are all brilliant, but Adam Driver absolutely shines.