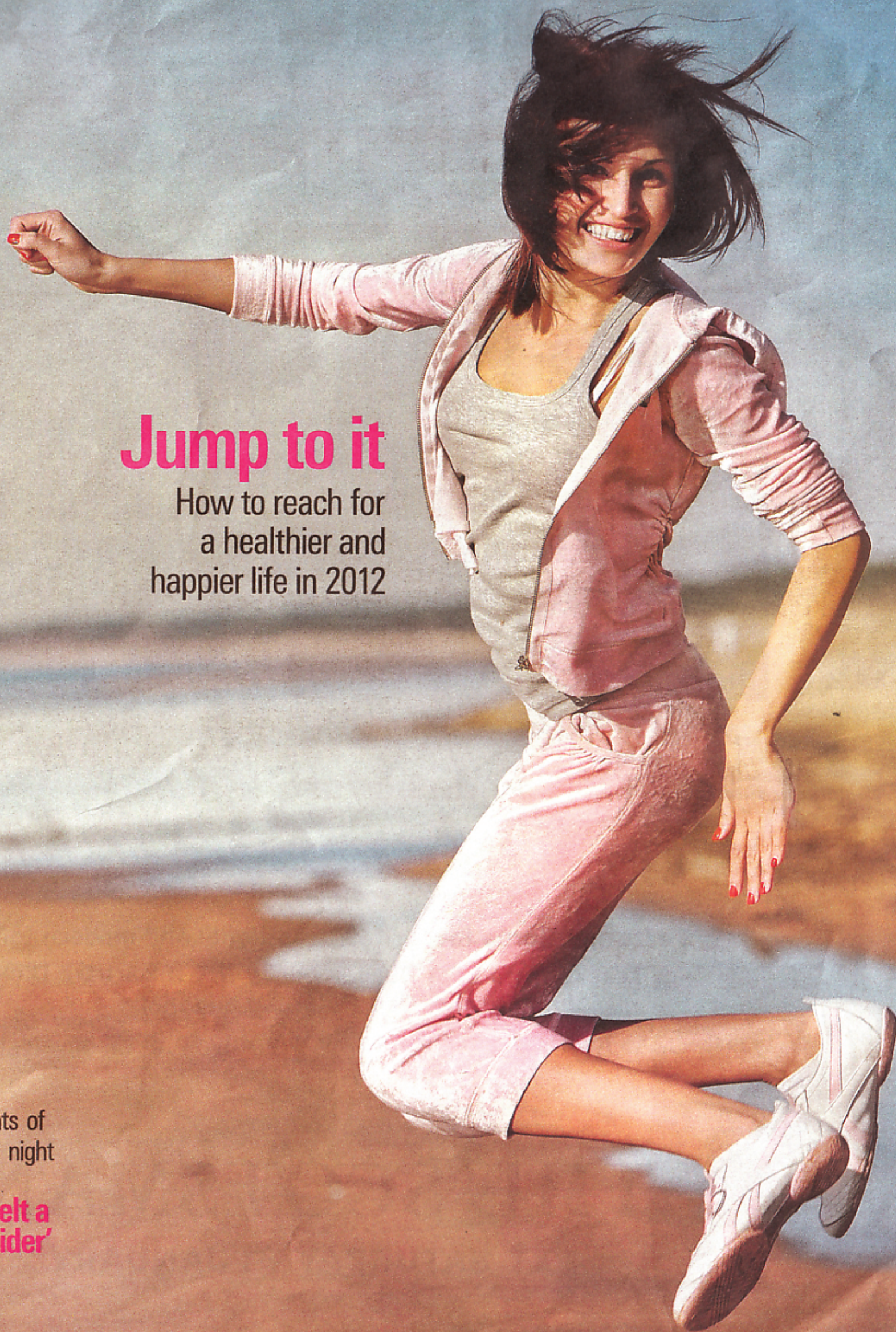


SCOTLAND  SUNDAY

15.01.2012

SPECTRUM



Jump to it

How to reach for
a healthier and
happier life in 2012

Tom Kitchin

The sweet delights of
whisky for Burns night

'I've always felt a bit of an outsider'

Miranda Hart on
the fame game

'WE'RE BORN HAPPY – IT'S OUR DEFAULT SETTING. THEN ADULT YEARS ARRIVE'

WHEN Paul McKenna called Susie Pearl, begging her to come and work with him, she was lying on a beach in Ibiza, having sold her celebrity PR agency and decided to retire to the sun. A house had been bought, the kaftans were in the wardrobe and a life of bohemian leisure beckoned. She wasn't, understandably, in too much of a hurry to give any of it up. Even for the hypnotic powers of McKenna.

But the king of self help wasn't easily put off. He had hand-picked the former vice president of MTV because she was "the most positive person I know", so he kept on calling, badgering her.

You could argue that Pearl has every reason to be happy with her lot. She has had business and financial success, her address book holds an assortment of rock star friends and colleagues, and she has a "lovely son" by Paul Morrison, the Glaswegian music promoter who launched T in the Park. The couple met in Moscow while both were working with the Prodigy, and their son Billy is now 12. And, since his grandparents are in Glasgow, Pearl has close bonds with Scotland. "We visited all the time. My best friend, Heather Suttie, is a Scottish lass, and Angela Reilly, who is an amazing artist. Also, KT Tunstall is a great friend. So, really, my close group is all Scottish women. Scotland has been a very big part of my life."

She may no longer be with Morrison, but she can still boast a jetset lifestyle. "I worked with Madonna, the Spice Girls, George Michael, Michael Jackson ... I've had amazing times. Working in LA and New York and London, it was just an incredible time to be working in music. And the good friends from those days are still friends today."

MIND INSTRUCTIONS FOR HAPPINESS AND SUCCESS FROM SUSIE PEARL

Now a creative mentor to musicians, actors, artists and entrepreneurs, she is a one-woman happy factory. She smiles naturally, her eyes shining, and she oozes enthusiasm. But to assume she has had it easy would be to underestimate what a hard-won quality happiness can be.

"When I was little I was always the beaming, happy one. I think kids are like that, unless they're taught otherwise. They skip, they sing, they chat to themselves. There's a lot of joy going on. That's our default position – to be happy. Then teenage years and adult years arrive, and I had my fair share of trauma. I lost my dad when I was very young. I lost a best friend and I had a lot of grief to deal with. And, actually, Paul McKenna helped a lot. He would call me up and say, 'Are you all right?' He would help me and I would feel so much better. And I thought, 'Wow, there must be something in this. If I can go from such deep grief to feeling much better within half an hour, that's pretty incredible.'"

Eventually, of course, McKenna persuaded her to leave Ibiza behind for a job managing his personal enhancement business. "I said, 'All right, I'll come back, just for a month or two, hire some great people for you, get things up and running, then I'm going to come back here, get on the beach ...' But I had such a great time and started working with some of the greatest people on the planet. And I

learned how powerful our minds are and how much we can do with them. It became my passion."

Through her work with McKenna, she met scientists working on cutting-edge research into the power of the mind. "What I learned was that we are responsible for everything we are feeling. It took away that habit of blaming society, blaming the climate, blaming things around us, and reclaiming responsibility. We can fix the lot ourselves just from how we think about things and how we feel about things. That was a huge shift for me, having that proven by science, that how we feel and think matters way more than the economy, where we're living, what our friends are doing, how miserable our partner is, etc, etc. When you get into the research you realise you can change a lot of things if you begin on the inside, working outwards, rather than reacting to things."

Now she wants us all to benefit from that knowledge. In fact, she's so confident her book, *Instructions for Happiness and Success*, can work for anyone, it comes with a guarantee. "People said, 'Are you sure you want to guarantee this?' She laughs. "But it's based on universal laws. This is science. Science proves that what you think and feel, you create. And if you run your brain more positively, you have to get a better experience of life; you have to feel happier. That's why I can say with authority this is 100 per cent



guaranteed. If you do this, you will feel happier, Fact."

Subtitled *A step-by-step mind manual for creating the life you choose*, this is the self-help book to end all self-help books, and is the first of its kind to come complete with something called brain entrainment, which gets your mind into the best state for receiving the information fast and accurately. Essentially, it 'downloads' the key information into your brain, so you don't just read it and forget it, but have it 'pre-installed' and ready for use when you need it.

"The book is written in three parts," explains Pearl. "Part one is information about what happiness is and how to get it. The middle bit is about the recipe for

SPAS

are encouraged to reward themselves at the end of each day. Take a relaxing dip in the 25m ozone swimming pool overlooking the beautiful countryside or ease those tired muscles in the Crystal steam room and Hydrospa.

ARCHERFIELD

Archerfield Links, Dirleton, North Berwick, East Lothian (01620 897050, www.archerfieldgolfclub.com) Opening this spring at the East Lothian private members golf club that bills itself as modern and unstuffy, with vouchers available for members and non-members

alike, the Fletcher's Cottage spa is a one-off. While other spas embrace Eastern influences or celebrate the Scandic scene, this one celebrates its country setting in a rustic cottage made of reclaimed materials – how many other spas have a potato-box wall? Treatments will include the Rasul mud treatment and Voya seaweed baths, which are enjoyed in private cabins that can be rented for an entire day, and a herb aroma sauna that uses plants grown on the other side of the (mercifully tinted) windows. Well, you wouldn't want to put any golfers off their stroke.

RURAL RETREATS

NORTHERN LIGHTS HOLISTIC SPA

Sound View, UpHouse, Bressay, Shetland (01595 820257, www.shetlandspa.com) Shetland's sole residential purpose-built spa can't be faulted for its breathtaking views. Attached to a Scottish Tourist Board four-star guest house, it has a hydro spa, sauna, Turkish steam room, infra-red detox sauna, aromatherapy hot tub, floatation therapy room and a range of complementary therapies on offer.



ISLE OF ERISKA HOTEL, SPA AND GOLF Benderloch, Argyll, Scotland (01631 720371 www.eriska-hotel.co.uk) Living on a private island is a dream come true at the

Isle of Eriska hotel, where a bridge takes you over to an oasis of grazing Highland cattle, friendly badgers and basking grey seals. A private golf course and sailing are on offer here, and the perfect

antidote to tired muscles is a spot of relaxation in the Espa spa suite, housed in the former stable building. Enjoy facilities including a 17m ozone pool, and indulge yourself with a wrap, massage or facial. If we tell you the hotel has just been snapped up by the Relais & Chateaux group, you'll know what you're in for.

THE HIDEAWAY EXPERIENCE

Balkello Farm, Auchterhouse, by Dundee (01382 320261, www.thehideawayexperience.co.uk) Two's company in these



A POSITIVE GUIDE TO HAPPINESS

1 Smiling helps. It's very hard to be depressed and smile at the same time. So even if you're not feeling it, go there first. Have a smile.

2 Being kind to others boosts your happiness really fast. The research is extraordinary on this. When you're kind, you get it back. It's like a boomerang effect.

3 Be aware how your emotions affect the outcome of events in your life. You have to take responsibility for your

feelings. No one else can make you feel miserable; you make yourself feel miserable.

4 Notice what's going right in your life and stop focusing on what's going wrong. Be appreciative of what you do have. Perhaps do a gratitude list: freedom, health, food on the table, good friends, a family member, a dog, a cat, the sun coming up every day.

5 Hang out with people who make you feel good.

how you can create some really good stuff, and part three is the toolbox. On top of that, you can go to the website and download what are called brain entrainment audios. What these do is, with some really clever science and through music, take you to a particular brainwave that will allow you to enter into the zone of happiness, and it will also take you into the zone of being able to receive the information in the book and get clear on the principles."

So far, so surreal. But in practical terms, she says it's simply a case of think happy, be happy. "Whatever you focus your attention on, you'll get more of. Say we meet for coffee and you say, 'How are you?' and I groan and say, 'Oh God, let me tell you what's going

on in my life.' The book explains why this is the worst possible thing to do for your well-being and happiness. If you talk toxic - bad news, downbeat stuff - you're going to create more in your life. Science shows this is true. Quantum physics proves that what we look at, we're going to get more of. So if you want to get happier you need to stop the gossip, stop the toxic conversations and stop telling one another how awful your life is. I've lost quite a lot of friends from the old days. I can't hang out with them any more because I'm just not interested in the gossip."

Food also plays a vital role. "Yes, it's important what you think and what you feel and what you talk. But it's also important what you eat. Some things

can really bring us down: processed food, dead food, food with no nutrition in it. We're just giving ourselves calories. That's not going to help our bodies, because essentially our emotions are linked to the cells' vibrations. Food affects our vibrations, and when we eat really healthy food - I'm talking about fresh, colourful fruit and vegetables and plenty of hydration - and cut out the fizzy drinks, it affects how we vibrate and that, in turn, affects our emotions dramatically. There is some amazing research to support this."

And let's not forget the role of exercise in lifting the mood. "If we have a good old dance, even if it's just around the living room and you turn the radio up, you notice it's impossible to feel sad. You get these endorphines kicking in. People talk about a natural high that athletes get; well, you can get it too just by moving around and doing a bit of exercise."

With the research collated, brain entrainment recorded and book written, Pearl was shocked and a little humbled to receive a call from Paul McCartney. "He was going out to the White House the following week," she says, "and he

asked me for the manuscript to read. I was quite nervous, so I printed it out on really beautiful paper and put it in a 1960s, hallucinogenic folder and then wondered what he was going to say when I saw him next."

It turns out, happily, that he loved it. "He uses a lot of these techniques himself; he uses meditation and he's interested in well-being from the inside and he really gets it. It was an honour to have his support."

So how happy we are in 2012 all depends on us. "If we believe things are bad, they will be," says Pearl. "If we believe things are good, they will be. So start being a bit more optimistic. This will put you where you need to be to attract success and happiness. And it happens really fast. Better to be happy than gloomy. Better to be positive than negative. And be really clear about what you do want, not what you don't want. Because as soon as you start thinking about what you don't want, you start activating more of it." ■

RUTH WALKER

Instructions for Happiness and Success, by Susie Pearl, Quadrille, £12.99

boutique five-star cottages, designed with couples in mind. With their own sauna, outdoor hot tub, double shower, double rolltop bath and therapists who will come and give you a massage, they are the ideal honeymoon or Valentine retreat.

MACDONALD MARINE HOTEL AND SPA

Cromwell Road, North Berwick, East Lothian (0844 879 9130, www.macdonaldhotels.co.uk) Beautiful coastal location - check. Stunning 19th-century architecture - check. And an invitation to unwind with a choice of



wet and dry treatments in cold rooms, aroma steam rooms and all manner of invigorating showers. Spa breaks, packages and health membership are all on offer at this spa, where the food in John Paul at the Marine may do for your resolutions.

LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION

THE OLD COURSE HOTEL, GOLF RESORT AND SPA
Old Station Road, St Andrews, Fife

(01334 474371, www.oldcoursehotel.co.uk) Having kicked off the new year on a high by being included in the prestigious Condé Nast Gold List for 2012, and being one of only three Leading Spas of the World in the UK, the Old Course is preceded by its reputation. It is also home to the first Kohler Waters spa experience outside the USA, in which the therapeutic properties of the earth's natural mineral-rich waters take on a Scottish flavour with the signature Highland Fling treatment - a version of the dance experienced under a Vichy shower, combined

with the flinging of buckets of water that drench the body - warm, thankfully.

TURNBERRY RESORT

Maidens Road, Girvan, Ayrshire (01655 331000, www.turnberryresort.co.uk) A peaceful haven with breath-taking views over the Irish Sea, the Spa at Turnberry has a 20m swimming pool with whirlpool and outdoor terrace, and state of the art Technogym fitness studio. A jet lag reviver therapy is a signature treatment, among a comprehensive selection of envelopments, body scrubs and massages. Spa

day rituals and packages are a treat, but you could just become a member and stay here for ever.

BLYTHSWOOD SQUARE SPA

11 Blythwood Square, Glasgow (0141-248 8888, www.blythwoodsquare.com) Making the most of its situation, just a hot stone's throw from the heart of the shopping capital of Scotland, the five-star Blythwood Square's spa incorporates treatment rooms, thermal suite experiences, two relaxation pools, a café and relaxation areas