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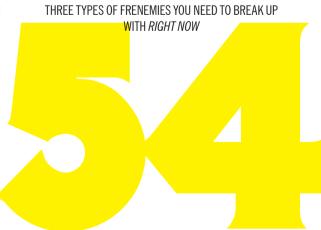
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OUR COVER STAR: AMANDA DU-PONT

Photography Katinka Bester, ative Management Rev Nates and Cler ashion Bev Nates and Cleo arcopoulos Fashion assistant lare Robertson Hair Alet Viljoen/ rnova Creative Management Makeup Renee de Wit/Gloss Artist Management

Re-create her look with beth Arden co



EXPERTISE THAT GOES **BEYOND ORDINARY HAIRCARE**



WHAT'S YOUR #HAIROBSESSION?

NOURISHMENT

COLOUR

STRAIGHT

REPAIR

BECAUSE WHEN YOUR HAIR IS AT ITS BEST, YOU ARE TOO.

FIND THE ONE FOR YOU BECAUSE YOU'RE WORTH IT











ADVANCED HAIRCARE / PARIS



Kerrie Simon-Lawrence Acting editor

kerrie@assocmedia.co.za



It's Not Me, It's **400**

been through wasn't with a boyfriend, a boss or even a family member. It was with a best friend. We often have lines we won't allow people in our life to cross. Your BF knows that if he were to cheat, he'd never see you again; your boss knows there are certain behaviours that just don't belong in the workplace. So it's

weird that, when it comes to friends, we don't

ne of the toughest break-ups I've ever

really have a this-is-my-limit set of standards. I knew enough was enough when, after I told my friend I wasn't feeling great and might skip the boozy night we had planned, she whined about the hours she'd spent on her hair and makeup, and that her night was effectively ruined. Because, you know, gastro. It was while I was clinging to the toilet bowl for the second day running after our cancelled night out that I thought, 'Hang on, she hasn't checked in to see if I'm okay.' And – because when you're sick, and too terrified to venture far from your house in case a get-to-thebathroom-right-now moment arises, you have a fair amount of time on your hands to think - I realised this was just one of many selfish things my friend had done. The week before she hadn't called to see how a date had gone, and when I texted her a few days later to let her know he'd called and we were going out for drinks, she replied, 'Don't wear the jeans that make your butt look huge.' A few months before that, when I'd interviewed for a job I'd really wanted, she'd told me about the wish list

Sitting on the bathroom floor, I realised we needed to break up. And it was tough. We had shared friends and a history, and it seemed too messy to deal with. But I did - because she no longer made me feel good about myself.

for her birthday, rather than ask about the job.

That was years ago, and I still believe it was the best decision I could have made. Do I still think about her? Sure - but only to hope she's happy, and that she's a better friend to the people she still has in her life.

Ever felt like you need to break up with a friend? Check out our story on page 54. You'll be glad you did.











DON'T LET YOUR COLOUR FADE, **COLOUR PROTECT IT**



WHAT'S YOUR #HAIROBSESSION? THE **RED** ONE





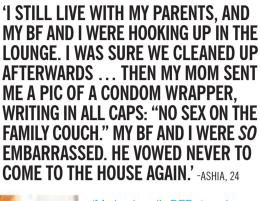


@lorealhair



L'ORÉAL ADVANCED HAIRCARE/PARIS

YOU REVEAL YOUR MOST EMBARRASSING, RIDICULOUS, WHAT-WAS-I-THINKING MOMENTS



'My husband's BFF stayed over at our place. In the morning, we heard the front door slam, so we assumed he'd left – and proceeded to have superloud sex with lots of dirty talk. When I went downstairs afterwards, he was standing there, looking awkward. He'd stepped outside to check the weather, and the door slammed when he came back in. He'd heard everything!' -KARLA, 30

'I WAS DATING A BRAZILIAN GUY, AND I REALLY WANTED TO IMPRESS HIM AND HIS FAMILY. HE PUT ME ON FACETIME WITH HIS MOM. I'D PRACTISED SAYING, "THANK YOU FOR RAISING AN AMAZING MAN. I'M THE HAPPIEST WOMAN IN THE WORLD" — BUT I ENDED UP SAYING, "I'M A HAPPY YELLOW PLANET" IN PORTUGUESE. SHE MUST HAVE THOUGHT I WAS A TOTAL NUT.'

 $^{\circ}$ I was at the mall when I spotted my grandma sitting on a bench. I ran over to perch on her lap – something we still do even though I'm not a kid any more. But it was actually just a woman who looked like her ... and she had weak bones. I hurt her hip by sitting on her lap. My parents had to pay the doctor's bill.'-ELLA, 19



COUPLE CONFESSION

'I was staying at Michael's family's house (and meeting his parents) for the first time. One day when Michael and I got back from being out, his mom said in a serious voice that she had to tell me something. Apparently, his parents' Goldendoodle had got into my room, found my knickers and eaten them — then threw up in Michael's parents' bedroom. His mom had seen my panties. I wanted to die.'

-ELIZABETH. 23. AND MICHAEL. 25

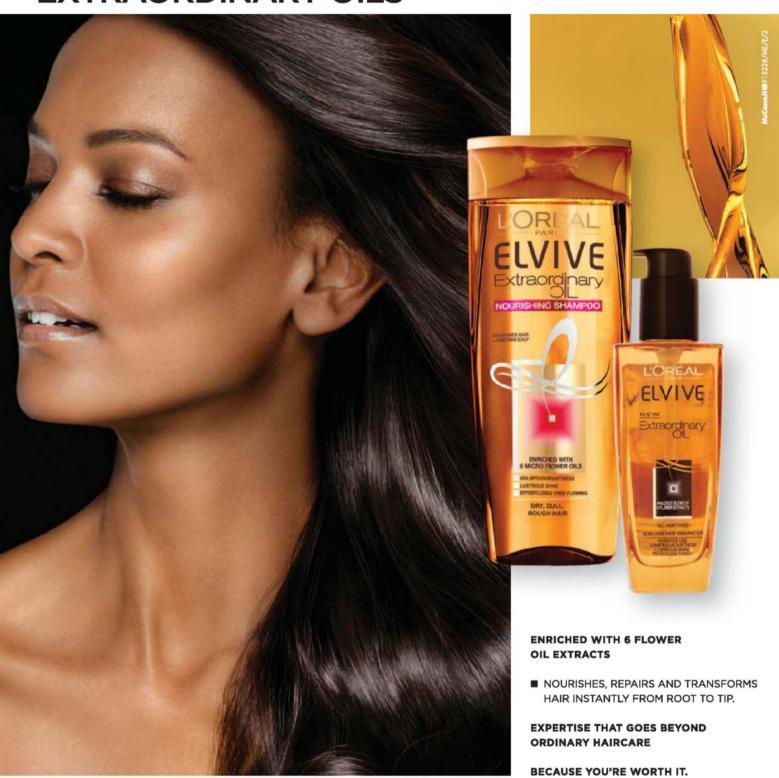


WORST DATE

'On our first date, we met at a restaurant. I showed up and saw him sitting at a table with two other people. When I got to the table, he introduced me ... to his parents.' -SARAH, 22 'This guy took me to a steakhouse on the first date, despite knowing that I'm a vegetarian. When I reminded him, he said, "Oh, you'll drink a few beers and snap out of it." Um, that's not how this works...' -SAVANNAH, 21

'I planned a winter-themed date – ice-skating, dinner, hot chocolate. He said I shouldn't get the hot chocolate because I'd had wine at dinner and all that sugar would make me fat. That was our last date.' -RAE. 25

QUENCH YOUR DRY HAIR WITH NOURISHING **EXTRAORDINARY OILS**



WHAT'S YOUR #HAIROBSESSION? THE GOLD ONE





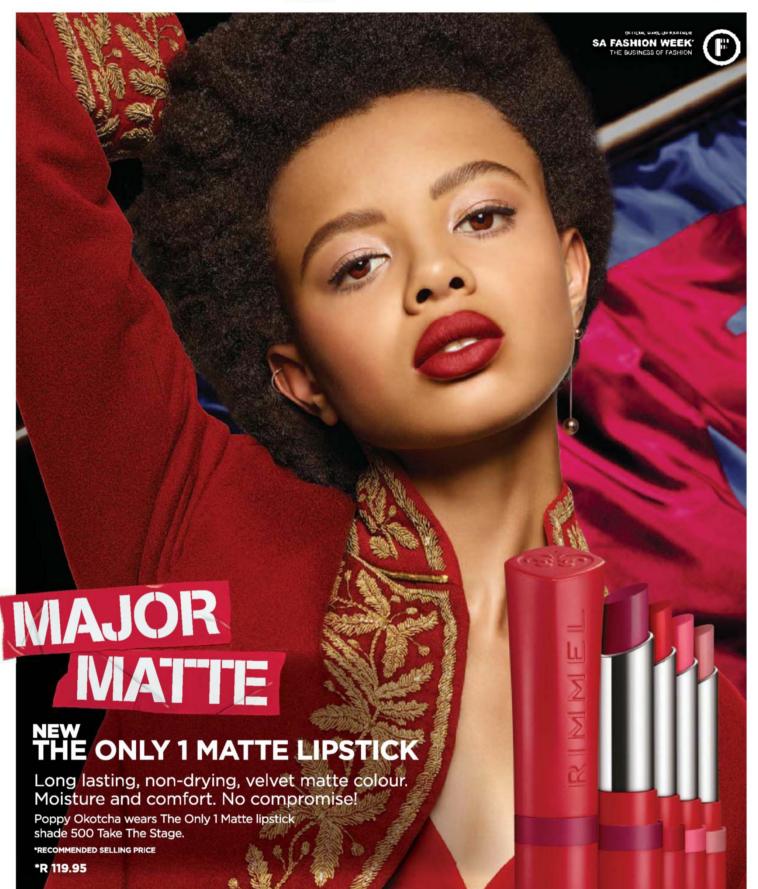




L'ORÉAL ADVANCED HAIRCARE / PARIS











Help! My Mom Is on Twitter!

Yeah, she gave you life – but now she's on social, humiliating you one tweet/Facebook post/Insta at a time. These are hilarious tales from girls who wish their mothers were banned from the interwebs

'I was on Facebook and saw my mom had commented. using the cryinglaughing emoji, on a post about a friend's dog that died. I thought it was a typo. A week later, I saw another post (also about a dead dog) - and my mom commented again with the same emoji. That's when I texted her to explain that it's a laughing emoji, not a sad, crying emoji.' -BROOKE, 19

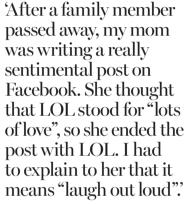
'I'm friends online with my boss and many of my colleagues, so I prefer to steer clear of putting inappropriate pictures on social media. I just recently logged on and saw that my mom had posted a video of me doing shots. Thanks, Mom. -HOLLY, 21

'My mom always comments on my friends' and my pictures on Insta as though she's part of the squad. She'll say things like "Yaaas, baby girl", "slay" and "my girls turnin' up!" Nope.'

-MAYA, 24

'My mother thought Twitter was just direct messages, so her timeline is full of messages she meant to be private between her and her friends. She'll tweet her candid feelings about people she knows or her job – all the things you'd usually DM. And yet she gets retweets!'

-ELISA, 21



-COURTNEY, 22



-COURTNEY, 27



-MADDY, 23















3 WEAR THIS It only takes a quick look at OOTDs from the likes of Kendall and Bella to know that '90s style is having a comeback - which is why we love these chokers by Marzam. Not only do they totally remind us of Spice Girls-era fashion, but these ones are hand-woven by artisans across East Africa. From R400 each at Shopmarzam.com

6 FOLLOW THEM



YouTube
Sibu Mpanza
Sibu MpanzaSA
Sibu is the guy you want
as a BFF, and his YouTube
channel takes you a step
closer to that life goal. His
videos cover everything
from celeb interviews
to social commentary
about the state of SA.
The guy gets it.



KEEPING UP WITH THE KANDASAMYS

Lighten up but keep it local with Jayan Moodley's romcom, starring Jailoshini Naidoo and Maeshni Naicker as rival neighbours in Chatsworth, Durban, who team up when their young-adult kids fall in love, and plot ways to keep them apart.





Instagram Lorraine Loots @lorraineloots

Even if you aren't artsy, you won't find it hard to appreciate her work. Her IG features all her art, which includes portraits the size of a fingernail. With a recent exhibition in Hong Kong, this is one local talent you have to keep your eye on.



Twitter Azania Mosaka @Azania_

The 702 presenter is on the pulse of current affairs. Her account is engaging, informative and entertaining, with links to interesting articles about local politics — or funny celeb feuds.



READ IT

Get grounded with this wicked guide to punctuation by Simon Griffin – something digitally raised Millennials often struggle with, and still a key to impressing interviewers and future bosses. Examples reference the likes of Rihanna. R123 at Takealot



As 'Africa's biggest bridal event', The Wedding Expo promises bridesto-be everything they will need to plan their big day under one roof. Perfect for ticking off all your todos in one day! Check it out on 11 and 12 March (and 26 and 27 August) at Jo'burg's Ticketpro Dome; 10 and 11 June at Cape Town's CTICC; and 5 and 6 August at the Moses Mabhida Stadium in Durban. Wedding-expo.co.za



11 LOVE YOUR HAIR

The Perfect Hair is a South African brand of allnatural hair products free from scary sulphates and parabens. From creamy cleansers that can replace harsh shampoos to styling creams perfect for your natural texture, it also includes products geared towards loving braids, weaves and relaxed styles. Visit *Theperfecthair.co.za* or drop by the Jo'burg store at WorkShopNewTown.

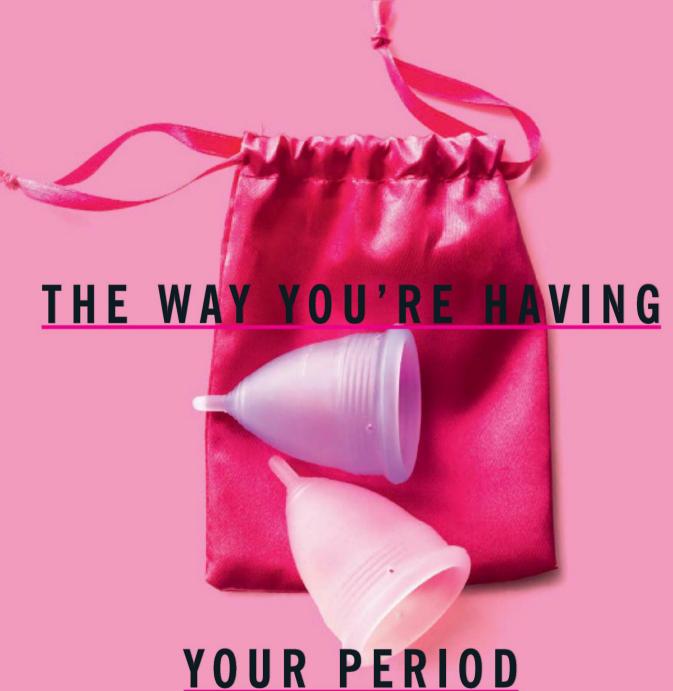




12 JAZZ IT UP The Cape Town International Jazz Festival on 31 March and 1 April features 40 artists on five stages at the CTICC: half local, including Thandiswa Mazwai (right) and Judith Sephuma, and half international, including Laura Myula and En Vogue. Also check out the workshops and masterclasses from 25 March to 2 April. *Capetownjazzfest.com*



YOU NEED TO CHANGE



How about saving more than R20 000 in tampons and revolutionising the way you have your period? The menstrual cup has hit South Africa - we tried it, and we're hooked

#REALTALK

ver wondered how much your period costs you?
Try R24 500* – that's the average cost of a lifetime of tampons. It's also a deposit on a flat, a down payment on a car, a big chunk of varsity fees...
But there's more: 60% of women in South Africa cannot afford sanitary products, forcing them to miss school or work, or to turn to unsafe alternatives such as newspaper or rags to make do. It's not okay – but there's a solution, and it's simple and affordable.

What if we told you just R300 could cover your sanitary products for the next 10 years, meaning you can reduce your lifetime spend of R24 500 to just over R1 000**? Enter the menstruation cup, known as the Mooncup overseas and, locally, as the MPower Menstrual Cup. What is using it really like? COSMO's Danielle Karallis did the test run.

Day 1

'I've been using tampons since I was 13. They beat pads hands down: less bulky, less uncomfy, less obvious. So for the past 12 years I've thought tampons were an inevitability of having a period – until a few months ago, when I heard about the menstruation cup.

'It's a clear, 100% medically approved silicone cup that looks, well, a lot larger than a tampon. It might be soft and flexible, but on seeing it for the first time, I'm not entirely sure how it goes up there. But here's the thing: I always forget to carry tampons, and we all know they leak sometimes. Putting in a tampon on the first day of a period can be damn uncomfortable. Also, they're expensive. What the hell – I'm game to give this cup a try.

'Terrified of having an accident at the office, I try the cup for the first time overnight. (You can leave it in for up to 12 hours.) I figure that if I wake up, cup intact and sheets clean, I'll be safe to brave a day at work.

'Holding it and picturing in my head how I'm going to stick it up there, I have visions of super-awkward squatting and, yes, messy blood fingers. Gross. The rim is quite wide; definitely too wide for my vagina. I fold the open top in half and try inserting it. It's weird, and - yikes! - I have to get my fingers right up in there. Like, right up. I'm used to applicator tampons so this is way out of my comfort zone.

'Fifteen minutes later I'm still fingering myself silly (with no pleasurable results). I take the cup out and try again, this time folding the open top over itself twice to make it smaller. Folded like this, the top of the cup is about the size of a tampon. Progress!

'Now that I have it down to a comfortable size, I realise I have no idea how high up the cup should go, or how I'll know it's sitting right and whether the top is open and ready to catch the flow. Tiny holes on the side of the rim help to form a kind of suction once it's inserted to prevent leaking,

and I'm half-expecting to feel a vacuum-like slurp once the cup is inserted.

'After pushing the device up as far as I can. I figure it's high enough for me give up and see what happens. No suction sensation – in fact, I feel nothing. Out of sheer panic that I'll wake up with the cup floating around in my womb (FYI, your vagina can't "swallow" this thing – but that doesn't prevent me from freaking out), I make sure the thin plastic "tail" at the bottom is just peeking out of my vagina, like a tampon string. It is. Whew. With that. I head to bed.'

'WHY CAN'T
I FEEL IT?
HAS MY
VAGINA
SWALLOWED
IT? HOW
WILL
I EXPLAIN
THIS TO THE
DOCTOR
AT THE
EMERGENCY
ROOM???'

Day 2

'I wake up and shower, get dressed and eat breakfast. I check the weather and take a stab at a bit of makeup. It's only when I'm heading out of the door that I remember the cup, and I panic. Why can't I feel it? Has my vagina swallowed it? How will I explain this to the doctor at the emergency room???

'I check for the thin plastic tail. Nowhere to be seen. As my panic rises, I feel a little deeper. After yet another overly intimate rendezvous with my vaginal canal, I feel the tip of the tail – it's still there. Turns out the cup moves higher up inside as you go about life. The flexible material - part of the reason I haven't felt it all night and morning - means it moulds to your body, and moves. But no leaks, no messy sheets and, as I pull it out to empty it before work, surprisingly no mess.

'You know when you take a tampon out and your fingers get bloody? Because the cup forms a neat suction around its rim. there's no excess blood to deal with as you pull it out. It needs a little more tugging than a tampon, but as it emerges I'm fascinated by what I see. Tampons absorb blood, so everything is dry and clotted by the time you see it - which, BTW, creates the perfect playground for bacteria and can lead to the rare but deadly toxic shock syndrome (TSS). The cup is catching your flow as it's released so there's no drying or absorption, which means zero risk of TSS. For the first time, I can see what my period actually looks like.

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Not for Sale to Persons Under the Age of 18.

#REALTALK

'For starters, there's way less blood than I imagined. The cup isn't even a quarter full – and I get heavy periods. The consistency is kinda gooey and gross, but I start to understand how much easier it will be to see and flag anything abnormal. I feel oddly empowered.

'I wipe the cup with toilet paper and rinse it in the sink. Inserting it is easier this time: I'm less afraid of losing it inside me, and more assured that the process isn't painful. With my new-found confidence, I double-fold the top and push it up with gusto.

'Normally for the first few days of my period, my flow is heavy enough for me to have to change my tampon every two hours. With the cup, I can go the entire day at work without giving it a second thought. It's a relief, because I can't imagine rinsing out my cup in the shared bathroom at the office - but also because (tender boobs and PMS aside) I can forget that I'm on my period at all. All I have to do that evening is empty, rinse and re-insert for the night. Easy!'

Day 3

'It now takes me just a minute to put in the cup — much the same as a tampon. I no longer go into cardiac arrest when I can't locate the little tail at first try. I'm beyond happy about not having to wear panty liners in case my tampon leaks, and I love going places without having to remember to pack spare tampons.

'After two days of using the cup, I also finally have peace of mind that it isn't going to overflow during the day – it's definitely

'I SEE HOW EASY IT WILL BE TO FLAG ANYTHING ABNORMAL. I FEEL ODDLY EMPOWERED'

big enough for even the heaviest of my days.

'It may be Saturday, but I'm moving into my new house in a week, so I spend hours packing boxes and dragging them around. As my heart rate amps up, I'm not conscious of a heavier or lighter flow, and the exercise doesn't feel like it's jolted the cup out of place at all. In fact, I'm relieved not to have to worry about my period while I'm busy worrying about how the heck I'm going to move a million boxes to my new place.

'Day three is usually my heaviest period day but when I peek at the cup in between packing, it's not even a third full. It's good for the rest of the day.

'After a busy day, I'm ready for a drink: I head out to meet some friends. I tell them about the cup. Cue shrieks of disgust: "You put something in your vagina that you can reuse?" asks one. "Isn't it dirty?" asks another. As I explain why they're so wrong, and why the cup is so much safer – and cleaner! - than tampons or pads, I realise that it's the misconceptions that

are the biggest hurdle to the cup going mainstream. As I talk my BFFs through it – not to mention the money they'd save – they come around (or at least say they would be willing to try it).

'It strikes me that our consumer society of "use and throw away" is very damaging for us: we'd rather use a tampon just so we can throw it away, than easily rinse off a medically approved cup and reuse it. We're taught not to get our fingers dirty, and not to know our bodies - not to see our period properly. but rather to hide it and chuck away the evidence. For a few tipsy moments, I ponder these philosophical thoughts ... and then more shots arrive.

'Stumbling home later, I check the time and panic: I've had the cup in for 13 hours, one hour over the suggested time limit. I race to the bathroom to check the cup again but, nope: not even half full. After a quick rinse, I pop it back in and hit the sack.'

Day 4

'As the cup gets less and less full, and the cramps and savage hunger slowly subside, I know my period is coming to an end. Oddly. my totally clockwork sevenday period has only lasted four days. I wonder whether the cup - which, instead of "blocking" flow like a tampon, catches free flow has helped empty my uterus faster than usual. I'm keen to see whether it happens when I use the cup for my next period.

'Until now, I'd considered periods quite stressful. But looking back, apart from the first time trying to insert the cup, using it has made my period easy. I never had to change the cup at work; I had no accidents or leaks; I had no fear of not carrying enough tampons; and had zero pain when handling and inserting the cup.

'I take out the cup, rinse it and place it in boiling water for a few minutes to sterilise it. Then I pack it away, ready for next month.'

THE VERDICT

'I don't think I could ever go back to tampons: the stress, the admin, the expense and the fear of TSS make it easy to kiss anything other than the cup goodbye. It takes a while to learn to insert; definitely use it for the first time at home so you can figure out how to get it inside. I can't believe that such a simple, safe, affordable product isn't more widely known and used. It's a game-changer for women everywhere.'

GET YOUR MPOWER

Currently manufacturing in South Africa, the brand behind these cups is committed to distributing them to underprivileged girls across the country who cannot afford sanitary products. To support this effort and find out more, visit *Mpowercup.co.za*. You can buy the MPower Menstrual Cup at *Desir.co.za* and Takealot (from R249).



COVER STAR



IT'S NOT OFTEN YOU MEET A CELEB AT THE TOP OF HER GAME

WITH AS MUCH HUMILITY AND HONESTY AS AMANDA DU-PONT.

READ ON AS SHE TALKS SELF-CONFIDENCE,

SOCIAL MEDIA, FAMILY AND THE LOVE OF HER LIFE

BY SARAH BROWNING-DE VILLIERS
PHOTOGRAPHY KATINKA BESTER/HERO CREATIVE MANAGEMENT

Real, Refreshing, Rocking!

Amanda du-Pont



WHEN AMANDA WALKS INTO OUR COSMO COVER SHOOT.

there's no big entrance, crazy entourage or divaesque drama. In person, she's surprisingly petite, at just over 1,6-metres tall, and she has a quiet confidence about her. Her fluffy white bathrobe envelops her frame and, as she heads into hair and makeup, it would be easy to forget that this young woman is a powerhouse of note, with 1,1-million Instagram followers and counting, putting her on a par with the Bonangs and Minnies of the South African entertainment industry.

COVER STAR

espite her small frame, once you start talking to Amanda you'll be struck by her star quality: her smile is infectious and (aside from her mass of bouncing curls) it is one of the first things you notice about her. But here's the thing: she's also nice. Like, really nice, And so real, it's unbelievably refreshing. In front of the camera she's a pro, bringing all the heat. But person-toperson, she's all chill.

Perhaps that's because Amanda's rise to fame hasn't been one of those out-of-nowhere, overnight occurrences. She's been acting for more than 10 years; getting to where she is now has been a slog. 'For the longest time doors didn't open for me,' she says. 'I can't tell you why now some have opened, but you just never know. If that's your passion, you have to keep going.'

And keep going she did. Since co-hosting The Real Goboza in 2013 and hitting our screens in 2014 as the villainous Lelo in Skeem Saam – a gig only supposed to last a few months but, thanks to viewers' demands, now one of her longest-running roles - she has become a feature on our screens. Whether appearing in films such as Between Friends or hosting TV shows including Biting About, The Man Cave and BET A-List, she constantly demonstrates her versatility. And that's to say nothing of her foray into fitness and fashion, via a shoe line with Footwork,

street-inspired backpacks with Sprayground and a brand-ambassador deal with Adidas.

'What's been so magical about everything is that I've stayed true on social media,' the 28-year-old actress says. 'Yes, sometimes I'll say, "Let's put up a prettier photo", but I've posted myself in my PJs or dancing really badly. I'm not afraid to show off the real me; I've never felt any pressure to be somebody different.

'We live in a social media generation and it's very easy to get caught up. Social media has opened up a channel where we see how everybody else seems to be living. But instead of pretending to portray those high levels, you have to focus on your real life and work on whatever it is that you're doing. Push it to the point where your current life is actually social media gold – don't pretend. There's no short cut; you have to be ambitious and you need to work hard... I think if you're pretending, it gets very tiring.'

And when you're up at 4am to shoot, often filming several productions back to back, there's simply no time for pretending – on social media or otherwise.

'I always used to do the hair extensions, the blowouts, the laser treatments, the running two hours late for everything because I was perfecting hair and makeup. In that time, I wasn't booking much work. When I started to strip away all that and got closer to my natural self, I became more content and more work came my way.

I feel that when you try too hard, it's almost like you chase it away. When you just chill and are more yourself, everything you've ever dreamt of comes to you.' She pauses. 'Also, during that time, I didn't have the love of my life.'

She's talking about 29-year-old Shawn Rodrigues. They've been dating for two years. Amanda gets cov when asked about how they met. 'That's, um, private,' she says. Her hesitation is understandable: she endured very public highs and lows with previous beaus Molemo 'Jub Jub' Maarohanye, to whom she was engaged; Bonang Matheba's ex, Sivabonga 'Slikour' Metane; and hip-hop artist Cassper Nyovest, who publicly dissed her

'I didn't
always
embrace
my natural
texture...
Now
I couldn't
be happier!'

in his lyrics during a performance at 2015's Metro FM Awards. None of the relationships seemed to benefit from the intense public scrutiny they received – and Amanda's one for learning from the past.

ut she is in an infinitely better place since she met Shawn. In fact, she credits him with helping her lift her game. 'I appreciate his business sense,' she says. 'He backs my inner voice and helps me make incredible decisions. He pushes me to achieve more, to challenge myself, to build a business out of whatever I'm doing. And he's my best friend.'

We even have Shawn to thank, in part, for that mass of natural curls that's become part of her signature look.

'I didn't always embrace my natural texture,' she says. 'Until I was 13, my mom would book an appointment for me every Friday at the salon and I'd go for a blow-dry. I grew up thinking that's what it meant to look "proper" and to look after myself.

'More recently, on days off, I'd let my hair curl naturally and Shawn — he's Brazilian — would say, "I absolutely love your curly hair!" Slowly I wore it like that more and more. Then one of my production guys saw it and said, "That's your character's next look!" and it went from there. I was kinda forced into rocking my curls in public — but I've never been happier!'▶

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'He pushes me to achieve more, to challenge myself, to build a business out of whatever I'm doing. And he's my best friend'

Not that curls are necessarily easy to wear. 'Curls don't listen to you,' she says. 'Every day they're different! I've learnt to just let them do their own thing.'

ike her hair, it's this naturalness that gives Amanda her sparkle and allure. It's a big part of her success, whether she's on set with COSMO or filming in front of the camera at 4am. The real #GirlBoss, kick-ass Amanda is impossible not to love.

Hers hasn't been an easy journey, though, for other reasons too.

'A few years ago I was much bigger, but my weight was not the real issue – it was my epileptic fits that made me conscious of my health,' she says. 'I was diagnosed when I was 18. When doctors start to tell you that you won't be able to live alone, that you can't drive alone ... that's an immediate cap on your entire life. I said, no, I need to change this; I can't live like this.'

Inspired by stories of people with illnesses who substantially improve their quality of life through healthy living, she set out to transform her eating habits and add regular workouts to her lifestyle.

Fast-forward to today and she feels healthier than ever, not to mention that she's three dress sizes smaller. 'That's how I got involved with being an ambassador for Adidas – it was organic. Adidas doesn't expect me to be a body builder or anything; the brand just relates to what's happened in my story – and I think other women can relate, too.'

Her journey has also involved raising awareness of epilepsy – something that she doesn't believe is talked about enough in South Africa. 'Some black communities believe that if you have epilepsy, you're possessed,' she says. 'Some people still don't think of it as an illness that can be medically treated. But things are slowly changing.'

Through all this, how has her family, hailing from the farm town of Sidvokodvo, near Manzini in Swaziland, dealt with her success?

come from a family that's very much into business,' she says. 'I've always felt pressure to create some sort of legacy of my own. My parents didn't think it was possible to do it in this industry. For a while, even though I was on TV. they were distraught that this was what their daughter had chosen. It was only when people started saying, "Oh, I saw your daughter on this show and she was amazing", that they were like, wait, this is a big deal!'

Not that that's stopped her parents from pushing her to be on the lookout for the next big opportunity. 'They're like, "That's amazing, but what more can you do?"' she says. 'It's motivating; it helps a lot.' It's also partly why, when asked whether she thinks she's made it yet, she seems a little taken aback.

'Do I think I've made it? No, I don't think so,' she says. But why not? With a list of accomplishments like hers, most of us would be ready to retire.

'It's not that I don't appreciate what I have done or how far I've come,' she says. 'I definitely had a moment when I saw myself, and my name, in the Adidas store windows. I was like, "Wow!" But I'm not done. I'd like to act in more roles; I want to do new, challenging story lines. I want to get involved in charity work.

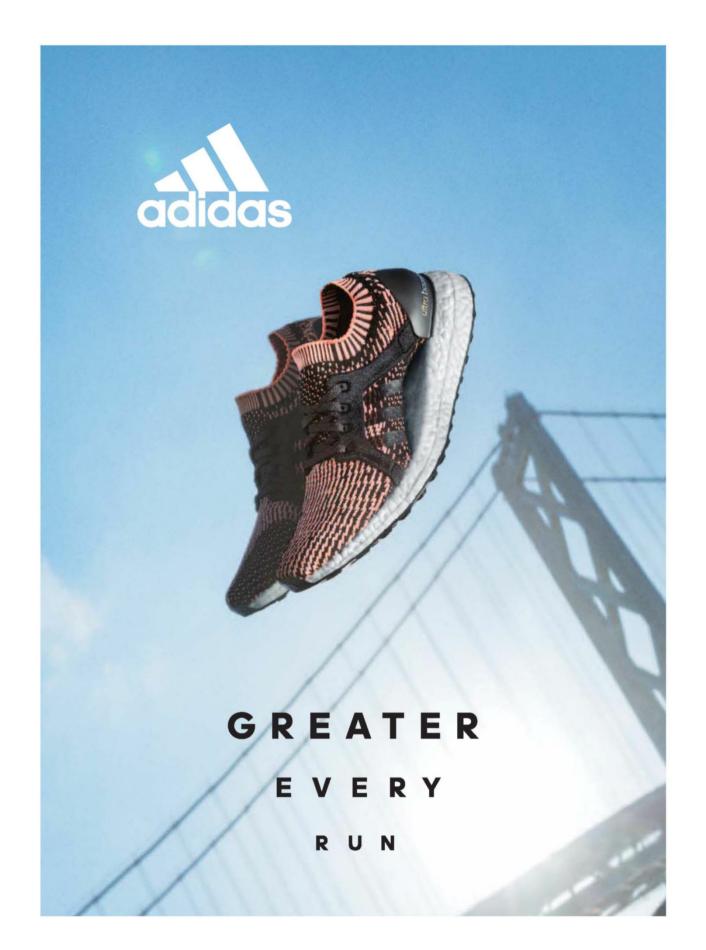
3 SECRETS FOR COVER-READY SKIN

HYDRATE You've heard it before: glowing skin = hydrated skin. Boost moisture by upping your daily H₂O intake and investing in moisturising skin products. We like GlamGlow **ThirstyCleanse** Daily Hydrating Cleanser (R590 at Red Square): it instantly boosts skin's moisture.

2EATWhat you put in your mouth shows on your skin. Tomatoes, green tea and berries all have powerful acnefighting properties to help skin stay flawless.

EXERCISE Just like you get your sweat on to firm up your butt and thighs, facial exercises can help lift and tone face contours by strengthening facial muscles. Try this one: suck in your cheeks, keeping lips pursed. Then smile as hard as you can. Hold for five seconds and then release. Repeat five times.





The product most recommended by doctors for scars & stretch marks.

nsos 2016



"I would just like to say how much I love Bio-Oil and how dedicated I am to it. I started using it for a scar on my chest and it didn't take long before I noticed results. Bio-Oil is the reason my scar is very light and extremely hard to see, I can wear anything and nobody can see the scar unless I point it out to them. It's helped me keep my confidence about wearing low cut shirts and swimwear. I fully intend to buy plenty whenever I decide to have a child too. Please don't ever change the formula — it works perfectly."



EDITED BY JUANA PARATHYRAS

#SkinGoal CAMBRA READY SKIN **GLAMGLOW**

> **YouthMud** Tinglexfoliate Treatment (R850) Created as a 10minute 'facial in a jar' for Hollywood's music and fashion elite, it gently resurfaces skin for a smoother, brighter, glowy complexion.

Star-Power Skin

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a gentle touch.

BEAUTY



Ask

OUR BEAUTY DIRECTOR ANSWERS YOUR QUESTIONS - IN 25 WORDS OR LESS



LorienDJ @loriencher1

@CosmopolitanSA I want to try a new blusher but I don't like powder. What would you recommend? #AskJuana

'After cleansing, my skin still feels greasy, like it's covered in a film. What am I missing?' -Olivia, 25

'Makeup on oily skin can make cleansing difficult. Use an oil cleanser (oil breaks oil) that emulsifies into a milk, so it doesn't cause dryness.

KIEHL'S Midnight Recovery Botanical Cleansing Oil (R650)







'I've heard so much about keratin being the miracle ingredient in shampoos and hair treatments. Does it really work?' -Shelly, 24

'Keratin is a natural hair protein that gets lost over time. Keratin products allow it to build up in hair, making hair stronger and shinier.'

L'ORÉAL Elvive Keratin Straight 72H Shampoo and Conditioner (R69,95 each)

L'ORÉAL Elvive Keratin Straight 72H Oil Replacement (R69,95)



Soothing Balm (R95 each) Tinted

Ultimate Red and Original



Rimmel Roval

Blush Cream Blush (R69,95)

Multipurpose

'A tinted balm adds natural colour — or mix powder blusher with Dr PawPaw Original for a DIY solution. ZIPHO NTLOKO, BEAUTY WRITER



'Pearlescent pigments can leave you looking iced. Try gold or rose-gold highlighters that will accentuate your skin's natural warm tones."

(R450) Goldlite

GOT A BEAUTY Q? EET #ASKJUANA **©COSMOPOLITANSA** (\r



Beauty Ed's Tip Don't allow a clay mask to dry

completely on your face. As soon as it starts changing colour (but is still slightly sticky) wash it off.



'I've heard that clay and charcoal masks are great for oily and acneprone skin. Is this true?" -Milly, 20

'Absolutely! Clay draws out impurities and mops up oil while also exfoliating for a more even skin tone – and charcoal supercharges the process.

L'ORÉAL Pure Clay Detox Mask (R150) THE BODY SHOP Himalayan Charcoal Purifying Glow Mask (R300) ■

PHOTOGRAPHY IMAXTREE, COLLEEN COPPENHALL/DIS COMPILED BY JUANA PARATHYRAS AND ZIPHO NTLOKO PRICES CORRECT AT TIME OF GOING TO PRESS PRICES ARE RECOMMENDED RETAIL PRICES



CHANGE FOR R150!

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PHOTOGRAPHY AT TIME OF GOI

Because who doesn't love a beauty bargain?



Stayfast Eyeshadow Stick (R120) Midnight

LA GIRL Line Art Matte Eyeliner (R120) Pure White



Eye & Brow Contouring Palette (R89,95) 010

BEAUTY

18 Styles to Steal

Whether you've got a minute or an hour, these chill to no-chill looks (for every length!) will have you slaying the style game



Rich silver colour plus a sharp, angled lob equals a sleek style that's out of this world. Too highmaintenance? Rock a wig.

6 OUT WITH A BANG

The only thing edgier than this piece-y texture? Microbangs. Try a clip-in pair if you're not ready to commit.



GARNIER Ultimate Blends Ultra-Nourishing Oil Moisturiser with Avocado Oil and Shea Butter (R39,95)

/ANESSA HUDGENS





TRESEMMÉ Beauty-Full Volume Hair Maximiser (R85,99)

NO-CHILL

10 GLAM SQUAD

Prep damp hair with volumising cream, then curl pieces towards your face using a 2,5cm wand. Brush them out once cool, and sweep to one side for full-on old Hollywood.

11 BANTU KNOTS

Change up this traditional style by adding a braided element. Split hair into 5cm ponytails, braid each one, then twist them like a cinnamon roll, and pin.

12 WARRIOR BRAID

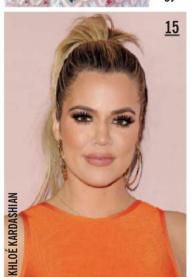
Dutch-braid (like a French braid, only you wrap hair under, not over) a 2,5cm piece from the forehead to the nape of the neck, securing with a hairband. Gather the remaining hair into a pony.





BEAUTY







16 SERPENT BRAID

Truth: you may need a friend for this. Start a skinny Dutch braid behind one of your ears, braiding it up the hairline, then down the parting. Tease the ends to lock it in place.

17 FISHTAIL KNOT

Rock a high pony, then fishtail the tail. The smaller the sections, the more intricate the bun will look after you wrap the braid around itself and pin in place.

Before securing hair into a half-bun, part the section down the middle and make two braids from the hairline backwards - then feed them into your bun. Finish with texturising spray.



CHILL

John Frieda's serum to

texturiser all over and braid the ends. Best

part? The messier it

15 HIGH PONY Sweep strands into a super-tight ponytail, and smooth flyaways with hairspray. Tease the tail to create texture.

gets, the better it looks.

look glossy in the morning.



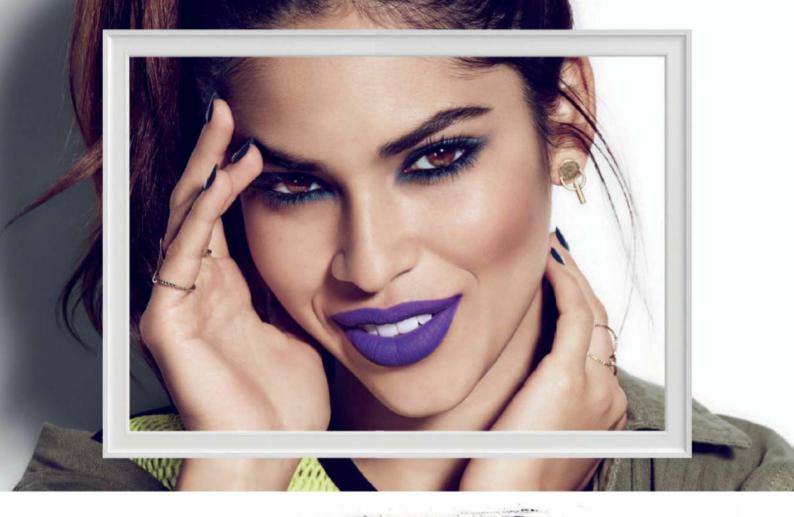


MOROCCANOIL Dry Texture Spray (R395)



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CA SENZA STREETSPORT GET YOUR GAME ON





STYLE EDIT

Dress to Suit Your Job

Whether you're an accountant, a photographer or a writer, give your work wardrobe the makeover it needs with these next-level trendy buys. BY CLEO MARCOPOULOS



A structured tote will have you girl-bossing it up – so ditch the dull, and have fun with colour and cool details.



 $1\,R630$, COLETTE HAYMAN $2\,R2699$, GUESS $3\,R1900$, ANNE KLEIN $at\,Stutta fords$



Out-of-the-ordinary and always interesting, the creative loves trendy features. Velvet, denim, hot pink? Why not!



 $4\,R789$, RIVER ISLAND $5\,R499$, CALL IT SPRING $6\,R8990$, MICHAEL KORS $at\,Europa\,Art\,Shoes$



A hands-free solution to housing the freelancer's stuff, a chic backpack lets you choose a selfie filter and drink coffee at the same time.



 $7\,R699$, forever New $8\,R150$, MRP $9\,R1099$, Steve Madden

The Corporate

A quirky print or interesting silhouette will keep you stylish around the clock.







 $1\,R3599$, DIESEL $2\,R699$, TOPSHOP $3\,R2500$, Tommy Hilfiger



You can be pretty, playful and fashion-forward at work with floral prints or metallic accents.







 $4\,R699, {\rm RIVER}$ island $5\,R749, {\rm TOPSHOP}$ $6\,R789, {\rm River}$ island

The Freelancer

When working from home or a café, sweater weather is always – and comfy statement sweaters are street-worthy AF.







 $7\ R1299$, G-STAR RAW $8\ R2799$, DIESEL $9\ R649$, Topshop

The Corporate

Pencil skirts can transform to sexy for after-work drinks – and leather and wrap details will keep you on point.







 $1~R499, {\it MISSGUIDED}~at~Superbalist \\ 2~R899, {\it MANGO}~3~R529, {\it ZARA}$



Free-spirited and whimsical, the pleated midiskirt is part of an on-fleek work uniform that's anything but boring.







4 *R1299*, FOREVER NEW 5 *R529*, ZARA 6 *R629*, ZARA



Sporty minis in neoprene and denim add to the 'woke up like this (and slayed)' vibe.







- 7R429, Topshop
- ${\color{red}8\,R699,\,\textbf{RIVER\,ISLAND}}$
- **9** *R749*, **TOPSHOP**



Show who's boss in stylish courts that'll make for a noteworthy power walk. Stay sharp with sophisticated pointed toes!



1 R649, DAISY STREET at Superbalist 2 R180, MRP 3 R899, CHARLES & KEITH

Stand tall with shoes that pack a punch: from a glint of metal to fluffy heels, work will be as entertaining as your choice of footwear.



4 R429, H&M 5 R549, CAPE ROBBIN at Superbalist 6 R429, H&M

The Freelancer

Nail the balance between athleisure and girl-on-the-go (that's still workapprops) with modern sliders and kick-ass sneakers.



7 R899, NINE WEST 8 R1299, PUMA 9 R2490, CLARKS

Geek Chic

CHANNEL YOUR INNER GEEK WITH GUCCI-INSPIRED PIECES: ROMANTIC RUFFLES, METALLICS, BOLD FLORALS AND AWKWARD, OVER-THE-TOP SPECS









CHARLES & KEITH

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YOUR FOUNDATION WARDBROBE

WHETHER YOU'RE HITTING THE BEACH OR DANCING THE NIGHT AWAY. WE'VE FOUND THE BEST FOUNDATIONS AND CONCEALERS FROM ESTÉE LAUDER TO MAKE YOU A #BEAUTYKWEEN



■ WARM-**WEATHER** WORKOUT

Whether you're a #walknotrun kinda girl or a total gym bunny, this multitasking mist works to hydrate, revive and soothe skin. It also preps the skin for makeup. Yaaas, please.

SET + REFRESH PERFECTING MAKEUP MIST (R.395)



POOL PARTY

Donning a full face of makeup at the pool can be risky – but with the right product, it's no sweat. This longwearing, lightweight makeup will give vou a barely-there feeling.

DOUBLE WEAR All-day glow BB Moisture Makeup SPF 30 (*R545*)



◆WERK ΙT

Hide any evidence that you made it to last rounds on a Thursday night (nothing wrong with that, TYVM): this soothing, full coverage liquid-creme makeup conceals all skin imperfections. With SPF15, it's also primed to protect your skin.



BEACH BOUND

If you don't do #nomakeup, conquer the beach with this non-stop 24-hour-wear concealer. This full-coverage, all-day wear concealer provides a naturallooking matte finish that lasts day to night. It's also waterproof. and sweat-, humidity- and transfer-resistant. Respek.

DOUBLE WEAR WATERPROOF ALL DAY EXTREME WEAR CONCEALER (R360)

WEEKEND WARRIOR

Ah. the weekend. Have sweeter words ever been uttered? Look flawless all weekend long with this long-wearing, silky-smooth powder makeup: it stays fresh and won't change colour, even through nonstop activity.

DOUBLE WEAR STAY-IN-PLACE POWDER MAKEUP $\mathrm{SPF}\,\mathbf{10}\,(R575)$

THE COSMO TEAM **SHARE THEIR** BEST TIPS & TRICKS

Check out our **#YOUONLYBETTER** videos on Instagram to see how the COSMO team use their Estée Lauder Double Wear Nude Cushion Stick. @cosmopolitansa @esteelaudersa

FEATURING:

DIRECTOR

SHELLEY

MOKOENA

ERIN CARELSE BEAUTY **CONTRIBUTOR**

COSMOPOLITAN

CONTRIBUTOR

JUANA PARATHYRAS BEAUTY

HOUR



This new addition to the Estée Lauder fam is giving us life. The design is on fleek, combining liquid makeup with an applicator. It's perfect for touch-ups on the go. #Beautygoals sorted!

DOUBLE WEAR NUDE CUSHION STICK RADIANT MAKEUP (R480)

having fun at a party, the last thing you want to worry about is your makeup. This worry-free, long-wearing foundation will stay put and on point - all night long.







Touch on, buff and blend to your perfect nude with the new Double Wear **Nude Cushion** Stick Radiant Makeup. The innovative stick combines liquid makeup with an applicator for a healthylooking glow.

ESTĒE LAUDER







The Friendship has turned toxic,

WHEN A FRIENDSHIP HAS TURNED TOXIC, SOMETIMES THE ONLY OPTION IS TO GO COLD TURKEY. THESE ARE THE THREE FRENEMIES IT'S TIME TO BREAK UP WITH. BY AOIFE STUART-MADGE

e all have that one highmaintenance friend who creates massive drama everywhere she goes. Whether it's man trouble, her boss or her endless spats with, well, pretty much anyone who disagrees with her that is lighting her fuse, she's the kind of firework that's constantly going off. And while life in her orbit is dramatic with a capital D, she somehow manages to make everything all about her. She has no interest in what's going on in your life, is aggressively competitive when good things happen to you, and when she is not blabbing your secrets, she's playing on your insecurities for LOLs. Sound familiar? Read on to discover the three types of toxic friends you need to bid TTFE – ASAP.

The negativity magnet

This chick could make complaining into an Olympic sport - and win gold. She's the girl who arrives at work ranting about traffic. She only takes a breath to grab a coffee – except someone else has finished the milk. Cue another moan session. When her computer plays up, she whinges so loudly, you think she might chuck her PC out the window. At lunch, her meal is too bland; when she seasons it, it's too salty. In summer she's too hot, but in winter she's never quite warm enough. Her landlord's a nightmare, her boyfriend is lazy, her boss is a tyrant... In short, she's never, ever satisfied and she's bringing major negativity into your life as a result. She instantly dislikes every person you meet, sulks at parties and moans about every shop/restaurant/ concert you go to. >



FRIENDSHIP



FRIENDSHIP



Don't get us wrong: there's nothing wrong with a good moan once in a while. (Who hasn't woken up on a Monday morning thinking 'FML'?) But when someone is so self-absorbed and caught up in their own drama that they have no time to listen when you have a genuine issue, it's a major red flag.

Psychology says this type of habitual moaner is usually a former spoiled child who has grown up getting exactly what they want, when they want it. In adulthood, when the world doesn't automatically bend to their will, they can't handle it. They constantly moan in the hope that everyone else will solve

their problems, which is a massive waste of time – and a huge bore to listen to.

'There are limits to how often we should moan,' says clinical psychologist Renee Mill. 'Moaning in itself is worthless. It becomes habitual and can involve never-ending repetition. If you moan endlessly, you are perpetuating negative feelings and may even be escalating them.'

In other words, negative people create a negative vibe and ultimately make you feel bad. You deserve friends who make you feel good and contribute to your happiness, not people who bring you down. It's time to step out from under her black cloud and into the sunshine.

Negative people create a negative vibe and make you feel bad. You deserve friends who make you feel good and contribute to your happiness

Start by setting boundaries with this girl so she knows it's not okay to call, text and DM you to rant at any time of the day or night. Explain that you're busy, and you have your own life and problems to deal with. Once she realises you are no longer at her beck and call every waking minute, she'll find some other poor sucker's ear to bend.

The green-eyed monster

While it's totally normal to feel a little spike of jealousy when something amazing happens to your friends, you're chuffed for them too. Yet this girl can't even manage a smile when you tell her about your new job/engagement/trip of a lifetime. Instead of being excited for you, she'll try to one-up you at every opportunity.

If you're buzzing about an awesome holiday you just booked, she'll start talking about a vacation she took last year which - surprise, surprise - was so much better than yours. The second you tell her you like a guy, she makes a beeline for him. Every conversation you have is somehow flipped back to her. She's also the queen of the backhanded compliment ('It must be so freeing not to care what you look like. I could never leave the house with so little makeup!') - which means she has put time and effort into how she can make you feel bad. In fact, you may find yourself playing down the good things in your life when you are in her company (see: 'This old thing? I got it on sale') just to avoid her nasty swipes.

You're happy to share in her excitement when something good happens to her, but she can't bring herself to do the same. Can you really call her a friend?

It's best to confront this girl head on. Pat Heim. author of In The Company Of Women, says it's the only way to deal with this kind of conflict among women. 'It's very uncomfortable but you have to bring up the topic in an overt way,' she says. 'Not in a mean way, of course – but try saying, "Are you angry about this?", "Do you have a problem with this?" or "Do you want to talk about this?"' She'll never admit she's jealous of you, so once you call her out on her behaviour, she's likely to back off.

The flake

Whether it's a night out, a lunch or just a quick afterwork coffee, this girl has cancelled on you so often, you're not even sure she'd show up to her own funeral. She makes new friends and drops them again more often than Kim Kardashian takes selfies. The minute she gets a new boyfriend, you don't see or hear from her for months (so much for sisters before misters!) - then she expects you to pick up the pieces. She puts her flaky behaviour down to being busy, scatty or forgetful – but the reality is that if a better offer comes along, she'll let you down at the drop of a hat. Bottom line? She has no respect for you or your friendship.

Girls like this 'don't feel complete without a multitude of friends at the ready,' says Suzanne Degges-White, a counsellor and author of Friends Forever: How Girls And Women Forge Lasting Relationships. 'She may have party pals, shopping companions and cryingon-the-shoulder friends. Some girls even admit to having groups of friends they choose to hang out with depending on their current level of self-esteem. I interviewed one woman who shared with me that

MOVING ON FROM A FRIENDSHIP

Breaking up with a friend can be worse than any other break-up. Unlike romantic relationships. friendships often come with the expectation that they'll last forever. It's okay for a friendship to end. You don't have to feel guilty. People and friendships change; it's natural. Give yourself permission to move on, says Hamilton Beazley, author of No Regrets. 'Resentment and anger tie us to the past; letting go frees us to live in the present and start fresh.' he says. Acknowledge that some friendships naturally fade with time. If you're the only one making an effort, let go and let yourself off the hook. 'Some friendships last a lifetime; others seem to serve a specific purpose,' says Beazley. 'Sometimes we outgrow our friends, which is sad but it's important to be open to the world's experiences rather than hold on to something that needs to be let go.

she has a set of "I'm feeling fat" friends and a set of "I'm looking good" friends.'

Being popular and having heaps of friends is great – who wouldn't want to be part of Taylor Swift's crew? But the key is to invest in those friendships. This girl is so busy 'collecting' friends that she doesn't value you, or the work you've put into your friendship.

At the end of the day, a friend is someone who will show up for you when you need them the most, not someone who'll drop you as soon as a better offer comes along.

Breaking up with this particular friend is simple, given that she never shows up for you anyway. Stop inviting her out with you - and *definitely* stop the pretence that you think she actually might show up. Instead, make plans with people you can rely on. Chances are she won't even notice you've ghosted her – she'll be far too busy making (and cancelling!) plans with one of her 20 other BFFs... ■

BATH BUBBLES BUTTERFLY

EVERY GIRL NEEDS GYNAGUARD FOR HER CHILL-OUT ROUTINE.

One look at bubble bath and you start to itch down south. That's because ordinary bubble bath upsets the pH balance of your vagina, leading to itchiness, dryness and irritation. If you're like most women who would love to soak in a bubble bath but just can't, here's good news. New GynaGuard Foam Bath is pH balanced and gentle on your lady bits, so you can enjoy lazing in bubbles with no nasty after effects.

For more info visit www.gynaguard.co.za or join the conversation on our Facebook page.









THIS PAGE: JEANS LEVI'S AUTHORIZED VINTAGE CHAIN SILVERLOGY OPPOSITE: ('BEYONCÉ') BODYSUIT WOLFORD (CUSTOMISED BY KATIE GALLAGHER) GLOVE LAUREL DEWITT SHOES PLEASER SHOES ('JOSEPHINE BAKER') BRA NEW YORK VINTAGE INC SKIRT AUGUSTO MANZANARES JEWELLERY MIRIAM HASKELL ANKLETS CLAIRE'S SHOES SHOESISSIMA







REPORT

'NO HEARTBEAT, NO BABY.' This was the devastating sentence Anna wrote on a well-known baby website's messaging board back in 2013. The 26-yearold psychiatric nurse had written that she'd become pregnant 10 weeks before her wedding, only to start bleeding three days before the marriage. An ultrasound revealed a beating heart, and the ceremony went on. Anna had posted that when she returned from the honeymoon, a checkup revealed an empty sac the

first scan had missed. She

had actually been carrying

was gone too. 'It's all over,'

she wrote, and more than

30 women on the message

board chimed in to offer

their sympathy.

twins, and one twin had

died. Now the other one

As Anna grieved, the pregnancy-loss forum became a kind of therapist's couch. 'There's not a day that goes by when I don't think about my angels,' she wrote. She solicited advice on how to honour her twins – she named them Charles and Tyler. 'I want ornaments in memory of our boys,' she wrote. 'I don't want them

Anna struck a chord with women on the forum who had gone through miscarriage, stillbirth or the death of an infant. 'I would absolutely get your babies an ornament or a gift,' one woman wrote. 'They were real, living people.'

forgotten on Christmas.'

Anna soon became pregnant again – this time, with a girl. But three days before what would have been the due date of her twins, she lost that baby too.

Online, she was flooded with sympathy. Offline, she had a bizarre secret: she hadn't had any of the pregnancy losses she'd written about. In truth, she didn't exist.

In the real world, 'Anna' is a 40-something former nurse and an adoptive mom of two. Like a catfish dater, she created fake identities by lifting photos from strangers' social media accounts. But in this case, she used pregnant women's images to prey on women who'd had miscarriages.

'My neighbours would be shocked,' admits Anna, who prefers not to reveal her real name. We are sitting on her patio while her husband is at work and her kids are at school. Her family is unaware of my visit - and of her obsession with lying on the Internet. 'People who live in an uppermiddle-class suburb and have a master's degree, a husband and two children don't do this sort of thing,' she says.

first met Anna more than two years ago through Marc Feldman, a psychologist. Feldman has written several books on what is officially called factitious disorder - when someone pretends to be sick, or literally makes herself sick or imposes symptoms on someone else (usually a child). The more familiar term is Munchausen syndrome. Sufferers have been known to inject themselves with bacteria, drink drain cleaner or stab themselves. Some have falsified their medical history to get an unnecessary mastectomy.

Factitious disorder accounts for an estimated one percent of all hospital patients, according to the American Psychiatric Association. Every year, Feldman hears from nearly 300 people with concerns about those who appear to be faking illness – online, offline and, increasingly, both. Feldman has termed it Munchausen by Internet.

The point isn't to scam people for money or gifts. What's stolen is time - from people who, in some cases. don't have much time left. In one case documented in Feldman's research, a woman joined an Internet list, claiming to suffer from chronic fatigue syndrome, and also posed as her sisterin-law who had the condition as well. She eventually pretended her sister-in-law committed suicide because group members had not been supportive enough.

OFFLINE, ANNA HAD A BIZARRE SECRET: SHE HADN'T HAD ANY OF THE PREGNANCY LOSSES SHE'D WRITTEN ABOUT

It's a new twist on an old affliction – one that strikes primarily young women, he says, especially those who work in the health field. He's seen the phenomenon destroy women's lives while sapping the energy and empathy of those they connect with. 'One person told me being fooled by someone else's illness is akin to being emotionally raped,' he says.

People who lie about their health online are often drawn there by legitimate medical concerns, Feldman says. They're comforted by the community they find. 'In typical cases, the poser is delighted by the support, and there's a change - they start to lie, claiming perhaps that their illness has been confirmed by doctors, they have a particularly severe case, or they are terminal,' he says. 'All anyone has to do is roll up a chair, and the world is waiting for them.'

In another episode, a woman joined a cancer support group, also posting as her own husband and daughter, who gave 'updates' during a gruelling 12-hour surgery. After one of the group's members guessed the truth and the woman confessed to lying, Feldman wrote in the journal *WJM*, it had a profound effect. 'Some members became globally suspicious and started accusing others of deception. Others expressed feelings of shame and hurt about having been duped.' After Anna was outed as a fake online, the group's members reeled at the betrayal. 'I found out I lost my baby yesterday,' one wrote. 'It's horrible that someone would do this. We are all grieving.'

A

nna's fake life started in May 2013. She was

home-schooling and got bored waiting for her child to complete assignments. To pass the time, she went onto parenting sites' chat boards, first pretending to be Kelly, a 40-year-old in her first trimester, then Anna – beautiful, thin and happily married. 'She was everything I wasn't,' she says now.

Anna tells me she's had two miscarriages - years earlier. 'Pretending to be pregnant and miscarrying helps me work through my grief,' she says. She's full of resentment - of a childhood with parents who she says didn't give her what she needed and an adult life struggling with infertility. 'I am insanely jealous of anyone who is pregnant or has a biological child,' she says. 'I walk away from my children's play groups when people start talking about being pregnant.' She's cut ties with pregnant friends and avoids baby showers.

Online, Anna dipped into a few groups but the one she connected with most was for miscarriage, stillbirth and infant loss. 'They were nice and felt really bad for me, especially after my second fake miscarriage,' she says. 'I felt good when people said, "I've been thinking about you."' She made friends, which made it hard to stop. That wasn't all: she claims one of her kids has severe behavioural problems. 'I needed an escape.'

Anna tried to stop herself from posting by creating a password to block Internet access on her phone. That didn't do much (she'd made up the password, after all) – but it did place an extra step between her and her obsession. Still, she returned. 'I felt I was missing out,' she says. 'But I did feel remorse about what I was doing.'

According to Feldman, people who exhibit signs of Munchausen by Internet rarely come forward. 'They're ashamed, and too attached to the behaviour,' he says. But Anna knew she had a problem. 'It's interfering with my daily relationships and with my ability to parent,' she wrote in an e-mail to Feldman.

He referred Anna to a therapist and added that if his recommendation didn't work out, perhaps she should consult with her current therapist, whom she has seen for depression and anxiety. At one point, she wrote an online *mea culpa*, admitting she was faking her identity and her crises.

Amanda Carmody, 31, who moderated the miscarriage, stillbirth and infant-loss group to which Anna posted, says she has suffered 16 losses. She met Anna online after her son was born nearly three months prematurely, then died eight days later. 'I figured that if I could help someone else heal, perhaps I could help myself heal too,' Carmody says. The two became close online. but after a while, Carmody says, she needed distance. 'When you read people's stories over and over, you need a break.'



REPORT

FACTITIOUS DISORDER 101

With up to two percent of us likely to suffer from it, Dr Eileen Thomas, consultant psychiatrist at Cape Town's Tygerberg Hospital, gives us the lowdown on factitious disorder (FD)

WHAT IS FD?

- 'It's the intentional falsification of physical or psychological symptoms of illness,' says Thomas. 'Patients may exaggerate or lie about a condition, "act out" symptoms and interfere with medical investigations to falsify a diagnosis. It's estimated up to two percent of people suffer from it, most being women in their mid-30s.'
- Some people with FD may be or become genuinely physically unwell: some may start out sick, then exaggerate their illness, while others may manifest real symptoms, even if they stem from their mind.

WHAT CAUSES IT?

- 'The cause tends to be unique to each patient,' says Thomas. 'Sometimes it's the patient's illness history perhaps they feel their identity is tied up with being sick, so they want to remain sick even if they're now healthy. FD can also be caused by anything from stress to craving attention.'
 For some pretending to be
- For some, pretending to be sick or suffering a loss keeps them in a position where they feel cared for or empathised with. Others want an excuse to avoid an unpleasant situation, such as a stressful job.

HOW DO YOU TREAT IT?

• 'It's important to understand the function of the deceptive behaviour, e.g. dodging work to avoid stress, so we can treat the root of the lie, such as a poor coping mechanism,' says Thomas. The trouble is, sufferers don't want to undergo psychoanalysis because they're aware they're lying and don't want to be found out. 'Spotting possible FD comes through seeing inconsistencies in someone's claims. Perhaps something in their story does not check out,' says Thomas.

'From a medical point of view, we'd diagnose FD in someone after going through their medical records and corroborating this against information from the patient, friends and family. A GP, psychiatrist or psychologist can then confront the patient in a non-judgmental manner, reassuring them that their support will continue.'

• Be careful about confronting someone yourself. 'Some may feel humiliated and break off your friendship or escalate their self-destructive behaviour,' warns Thomas. 'Treatment should always be sought from a mental-healthcare specialist.'

CAN SOMEONE BE CURED?

'Because treatment is largely via psychotherapy, it often depends on an ongoing willingness by the patient to visit their doctor and receive regular care,' says Thomas.

THINK YOU'VE BEEN LIED TO BY SOMEONE WITH FD?

- 'Family and friends may feel anger at having been "duped", and cheated of their time and support,' says Thomas. 'These are normal reactions. All you can really do is encourage the individual to seek treatment from a professional.'
- Still no luck? If you can identify what may be triggering the behaviour, like wanting to avoid work stress, try suggesting they see someone to help them with this instead. 'They may find discussions about stress and coping strategies more palatable than confrontations about their deception.'

GET PRO HELP

Visit *Mentalhealthsa.org.za* for resources and contact information of mentalhealthcare professionals.

When she returned to the message boards, Anna was nowhere to be found. 'I miss you, Anna!' she shouted out when she couldn't reach her. 'I hope you and Jon are okay!' 'I've been thinking about her too,' another woman wrote. 'She is so sweet, and was so helpful to me.'

Soon one of the group's moderators told the group about Anna's confession. 'It ripped my heart out,' Carmody says. 'I wish my 16 losses were a lie.'

Only a few months after repenting, Anna reappeared online as another pregnant woman. It's not like she was faking a fatal disease, she says: 'A lot of people who do this pretend to have cancer.'

More than two years after Feldman referred her to a psychiatrist, Anna still hasn't seen one. She says the doctor didn't take her insurance and she couldn't justify the fees. Nor has she told her own therapist. 'I'm embarrassed, and scared they'd admit me to a psych hospital,' she says.

Anna has lost track of how many suffering mothers-to-be she has portraved or how many imaginary babies have been miscarried, born dead or ended up in the NICU. She describes herself as an empty person, trying to fill herself up. 'I became obsessed with being someone I wasn't, and I felt like I was trying to have something I never had but really wanted. I don't want money. I don't want someone else's child. I'm not going to go into a hospital and steal a child,' she says. 'All I want is for someone to care about me.'







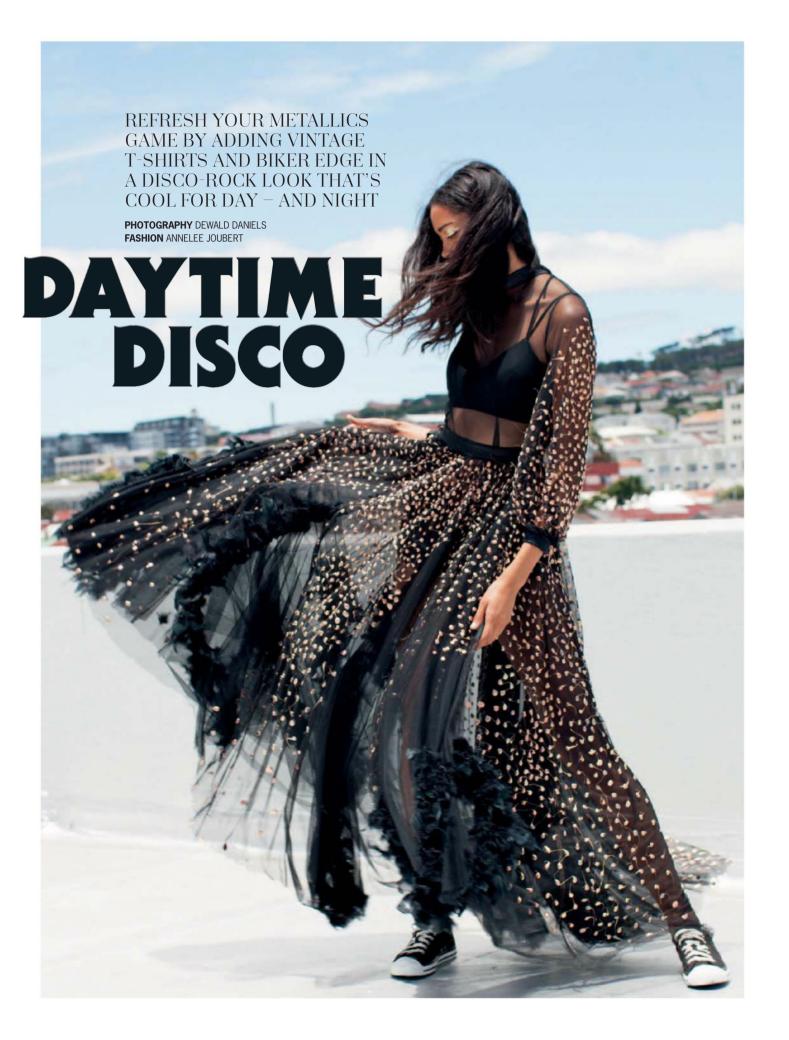






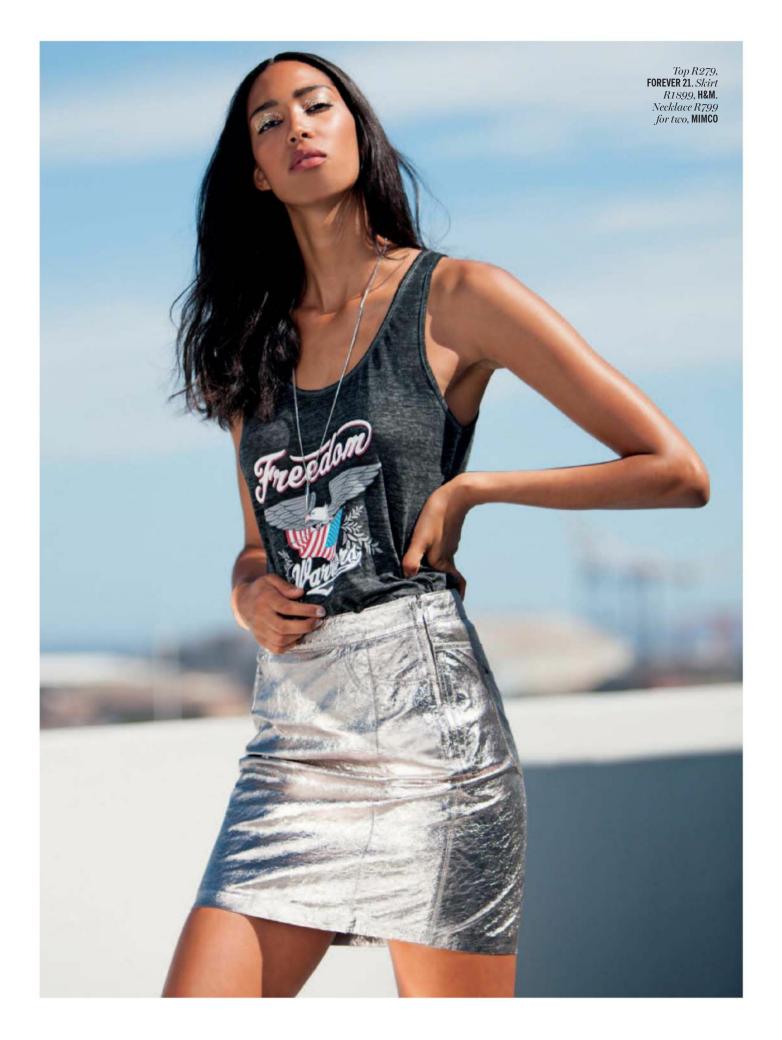


















DressR729, ZARA PHOTOGRAPHER'S ASSISTANT JUSTIN COOMBER JUNIOR FASHION EDITOR
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FASHION INTERNS
DEANDRA GREEN
AND JULIA WOOD
MODEL ROCHANA/TWENTY
MODEL MANAGEMENT
HAIR KEVIN EPSTEIN

MAKEUP ALGRIA
FERREIRA (USING MAC)
PRICES CORRECT AT TIME OF GOING TO PRESS STOCKISTS ON PAGE 125



SIPS & TIPS

YOU'LL BE DRUNK IN LOVE WITH THESE NAIL-ART DESIGNS, INSPIRED BY SEXY COCKTAILS





TALK with Your HANDS

How you hold your glass speaks volumes to those around you. Body language and communication expert Lillian Glass spills the details:

IF YOU HOLD YOUR DRINK WITH...

A FIRM GRASP

Palming your glass sends a signal that you're confident and down for a good time.

BOTH HANDS

This poised position can come off uptight but may be practical for the spill-prone.

A LOOSE GRIP

This relaxed stance signals you'd rather be meeting someone new or catching up with your friends.

YOUR PINKIE OUT

It may be subconscious but could read like you're uneasy in your setting.

IF YOUR NON-DRINKING HAND IS...

FIDGETING

Playing with your hair or purse strap seems innocent but comes off as nervous and insecure.

ON YOUR HIP

A classically seductive posture sends sexy vibes.

ON YOUR PHONE

Constantly checking your feed shows you'd rather be elsewhere (or that you feel awkward).

HANGING LOOSE BY YOUR SIDE

This casualconfidence stance makes you look approachable – great if you're trying to expand your social circle.



STEP 1

Paint on two coats of gold polish – try Morgan Taylor Nail Lacquer (R138 at Sorbet) Enchanted Patina.

STEP 2

Before the second coat is completely dry, press silver nail foil – such as Maskscara Silver Leaf Foil (R10 per pot) – onto nails.

STEP 3

Smooth down the foil. The silver will stick to the gold, creating the chrome-slick effect. Finish with regular top coat – quick-dry can cause the foil to shrink.

APPLE PIE MOSCOW MULE

1 shot apple cider 2 shots vodka 100ml ginger beer Apple slices Cinnamon sticks Lemon wedge

Mix the apple cider and vodka, and pour over ice. Top with ginger beer, apple slices, cinnamon sticks and a squeeze of lemon juice.

COSMOPOLITAN.CO.ZA MARCH 2017 | COSMOPOLITAN 85







PRE-FLIGHT: PIECE OF CLAY

Big flight in the morning? Cathay Pacific flight attendant Tracy Wu recommends applying a nourishing clay mask while soaking in a hot bath of eucalyptus or lemon-grass bath salts to nurture skin before jetting off.

IN-FLIGHT: HYDRATION VACATION

Water is an in-flight essential. Moisture loss is a huge beauty challenge during a flight because of the depletion of oxygen. Flight attendant Fei Yu recommends drinking 250ml of water for every hour in flight to prevent skin from producing extra oil.

TOUCHDOWN: OIL UP!

After a long flight, it's easy to end up looking like an extra on *The Walking Dead*. Flight attendant Kim Manalo advises using olive-oil makeup wipes as part of a post-flight beauty ritual. Not only do they prevent skin from drying out, they can also be easily stored in your handbag. See ya never, parched face!

When you travel well, your trip becomes much more memorable. Share your own **#LifeWellTravelled** experiences by visiting **Lifewelltravelled.cathaypacific.com**.





HOTOGRAPHY AZARUBAIKA/GETTY



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BODY

Nomzamo Mbatha, 26

THE ACTRESS AND MODEL HAS BEEN KILLING IT ON THE RED CARPET LATELY – AND BRINGING US SOME SERIOUS #ABGOALS. THIS IS HOW

SHE GETS HER TUM SO FLAT



FITNESS

Nomzamo is known for her killer abs. Her secret? One word: Pilates. According to the star, it keeps her toned from head to toe – although she does have awesome genes on her side. 'Pilates is a really good exercise and has changed my life and it's good for the mind too,' she says. 'I started doing it when I was at university. But my family in general have always been of muscular form: my mother was a netball coach.'

Nomzamo does a one-hour Pilates class to unwind after a hectic day on set. 'If, like me, you hate the treadmill, take a class,' she says. 'Spinning and Pilates are great for toning muscles.' She also works out with a personal trainer, and squeezes exercise into her schedule any way she can. She recently tweeted a pic of herself taking the stairs instead of the lift, writing, 'Ladies, for the legs, thighs & bums, ALWAYS take the stairs. #ShootDayThings #NubianPrincess'.

MOTIVATION

We're fully on board with Nomzamo's secret abs weapon – an old-fashioned belly laugh to get the stomach muscles working. And what makes her laugh? Hitting back at haters who call her 'ugly'. But, she says, she does work hard to maintain her positive body image. 'I never let [fame] get to my head because, at the end of the day, I am a woman and women have insecurities.

Even if 10 000 men or women tell you something good about you, it will never be a reality until you yourself believe it. It's one of those things that I take in my stride. I wouldn't have it any other way. Nobody wants to be told that they're ugly. You get people who use that word, and I hate it. It's about being comfortable in my own skin. Women need to be appreciated.'

DIET

She admits she had a diet wobble at varsity and got a case of first-year spread. (Er, hello, who hasn't?) "The food at my res was terrible," she says. "To change the taste, I'd add mayo and tomato sauce. I'd have fried chips and a pie, or peanut-butterand-jam sandwiches.

My friends and I were regulars at pizza and burger joints. It was an all-round mess.' Now. she's cut down on red meat, dairy, carbs and sugar. 'I gave up takeaways. I try to eat right. Eating junk food then exercising is counterproductive. Your body can't keep up: it's not going to work towards building muscle or toning; it's just going to work towards breaking down the food you ate, especially if you keep eating heavy things. It's very important to eat well and drink lots of water. It's something we hear all the time so we think it's a cliché – but it really does work.'

Nomzamo fills up on tasty food that won't give her a carb crash. Breakfast is two boiled eggs. She snacks on bananas or dried fruit, and has grilled fish or chicken for lunch. She avoids a mid-afternoon slump by snacking on home-made popcorn. cranberries or macadamia nuts – and then it's a vegetable stir-frv with couscous for dinner. 'I love basmati rice but too much of it isn't good for me. Couscous is a better starch,' she says.

IRYII

Check out *Basipilates.co.za* for a list of Pilates studios offering a mix of Pilates workouts, and reformer and mat-based classes. Since she tried Pilates, Nomzamo has never looked back. 'I encourage women who have a problem with their middle area to give Pilates a try,' she says. 'It's also great to release your mind for an hour and just let go.'

Blake Lively, 29

THERE'S NOT A STRAPLESS DRESS IN THE WORLD THAT THE FORMER GOSSIP GIRL CAN'T ROCK – BUT IT'S NOT JUST HER ARMS THAT ARE SUPER-TONED. HERE ARE HER FIT-BODY SECRETS



FITNESS

After giving birth to her second daughter in September 2016, Blake is back training with celebrity trainer Don Saladino. As a mom of two, the actress is pressed for time, so she focuses on movements that work several areas at once. One key move that helps her tone her biceps and lats (and core) is the bent-over row: stand on your right leg, holding a dumbbell in your left hand, arms by your sides. Bend forward from the hips until your torso is parallel to the floor, raising and extending your left leg behind you. Reach the dumbbell towards the floor, then drive your left elbow behind you to bring the dumbbell up to your ribs. Hello, smoking guns!

Blake tries to work out five to six days a week,



but even if she's working or travelling, she'll make an effort to do at least 10 minutes of exercise every day to keep her metabolism ticking over.

MOTIVATION

Blake signed on to The Shallows not long after giving birth to her daughter James in December 2014, so she felt the pressure to shed the baby weight. This time, though, she's taking it at a more relaxed pace. She says women shouldn't kill themselves trying to ping back straight after having a baby. 'There's pressure to lose [baby weight]... Women are supposed to look the way they did when they were 19 right after they give birth -I think it's silly,' she says.

'Losing weight is not something I have spent much time focusing on. With a new baby, it's just about eating well for her because everything I eat goes right into her system. Your body goes through a lot after pregnancy and birth – so small, gentle workouts feel better.'

DIET

A true foodie, Blake doesn't count kilojoules. Instead, she tries to eat nutrient-dense food packed with quality ingredients. Expect plenty of organic proteins, vegetables, fruit and slow-burning starches on her

shopping list, along with healthy fats such as avocado, coconut oil and grass-fed butter.

She doesn't rely on a pricey food-delivery service to cater to her nutritional needs: she whips up her own meals from scratch. 'If you went to my house and didn't know who it belonged to, you wouldn't think it belonged to an actress,' she says. Her best tip? Don't overeat. She keeps her portions small, and never lets herself become famished. She allows herself sweet treats too, sticking to the 80:20 rule - she's angelic 80% of the time, and eats pizza and pasta the other 20%. 'I can't start the day without a hot chocolate or finish it without a few squares of dark chocolate. It's good for my mood!'

TRY IT

Blake prefers hiking or biking to pounding the 'dreadmill'. 'I hate the gym – I feel like I'm missing out. I would rather rent a bike or go for a hike,' she says.

Make like Blake and take your workout outdoors by signing up with a hiking or biking club near you. Visit *Mountainbackpackers.co.za* or *Jhbhiking.co.za* for details of hikes that are happening near you.

BODY

Khloé Kardashian, 32

IF YOU HAVEN'T BEEN KEEPING UP. THIS FIERCE-AF REALITY STAR HAS GONE THROUGH A SERIOUS BODY TRANSFORMATION OF LATE.



FITNESS

Khloé works out with celebrity trainer Gunnar Peterson, who keeps her body guessing with a series of heart-pounding moves. We're talking sled pushes, battle ropes, rower sprints and medical-ball slams. If you've seen the Instagram video of Khloé busting out back squats, you'll know this chick means business when she hits the gym.

She might be famous for her super-pert derrière, but it's Khloé's ah-mazing legs that got us talking. She recently shared the secrets of her leg workout on Snapchat: standing on an upside-down stability ball, Khloé did one-legged lunges, holding a kettle bell. 'Three sets of 20 with a kettle bell,' she wrote.

Next, still standing on the flat side of the stability ball, she pulled one leg straight back while wearing a weight strap on her ankle. Three sets of 30 on each side. She also did three sets of 20 seated leg lifts.

For cardio, she loves to jump rope with her sister Kourtney.

MOTIVATION

Khloé decided to focus on shaping up after her split from hubby Lamar Odom - so much so thatshe is now fronting her own makeover show, Revenge Body, helping others get back in shape after a break-up. But her awesome body isn't so

much a clap-back at her ex as it is at the haters who have slammed her over the years. 'Yeah, it's a revenge body,' she says. 'But it's just as much for all my critics who called me "the fat one".' Word.

DIFT

To achieve her new look, Khloé cut back on dairy. 'I'm obsessed with cheese and milk, but eliminating them from my diet made the biggest difference,' she says. 'In a month and a half, I lost five kilos.'

TRY IT

CrossFit classes will get you moving like action-girl Khloé (pushing, pulling, squatting, lifting and throwing). Check out Crossfitjozi.co.za for class details and locations.

Boity Thulo, 26

THE ACTRESS AND PRESENTER SET INSTAGRAM ON FIRE THANKS TO A RECENT BUTT SELFIE WITH HER BFF THANDO THABETHE. WE GOT HER TO SHARE HER BUTT SECRETS

FITNESS

Naturally athletic, Boity has always been strong and fit - but when she feels extra weight creeping on, she hits the cardio. Hard. We're talking a 5km run every morning. 'I think cardio is more for weight loss than for muscle gain and toning,' she says. 'I only do it when I want to lose kilos before getting back into weight training.' She teams running with a 30-minute boxing class.

And when it comes to keeping her famous curves toned, Boity is all about the squats. 'To be honest, I do squats for almost everything, except my arms. They work the abs and the bum; they shape my behind beautifully. It's an all-in-one exercise. I depend on squats - for exercise, I'll try to fit in 200 of them. I also love calf raises because I'm obsessed with toned. defined calf muscles.'

When it comes to weight training, she sticks to four-kilogram dumbbells to do a combo of exercises, including star jumps. 'This helps a lot with the arms and shoulders,' she says.



MOTIVATION

If this sounds like a lot of hard work, take some fitspo from our girl, who does it for the feel-good payoff. 'The mission is to look and feel healthy – if I know that's the goal, I will go until I'm done,' she says. 'When endorphins are released, you enjoy the feeling – it keeps you going back to working out. If you're used to working out, you start feeling sluggish and even missing the gym (if you skip it) - but I don't think you miss the pain! I think it's the endorphins you release – they definitely keep me going during a gym session.'

DIET

You don't have to be saintly all the time to get a body like hers.

She loves sugary treats as much as the next girl (Häagen-Dazs is a huge weakness), but when she's training, it's all about fuelling her body. A typical breakfast is fruit, yoghurt or oats, with chicken, kale and avocado for lunch, and a tuna salad with a roast potato for dinner. 'Tuna is always on my grocery list. I use it for salads it's also awesome as part of a post-workout meal,' she says. For snacks, she keeps it simple with a handful of nuts or a boiled egg.

TRY IT

BoxFit classes at The Hype in Cape Town offer a mix of boxing cardio, functional fitness and weight training. Visit Fitkey.co.za, or make like Boity and go online. 'At home, I learn from YouTube videos,' she says. 'There's no excuse − if you have a smartphone, you can exercise!'

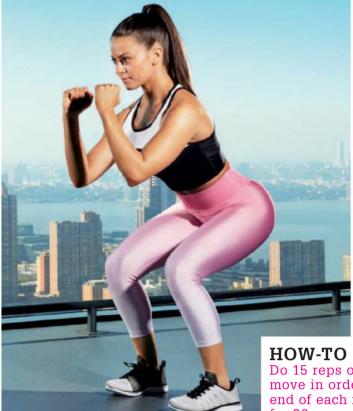
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WORKOUT



Do 15 reps of each move in order. At the end of each round, rest for 30 seconds. Do as many rounds as you can in eight minutes.

SQUATS Stand with feet shoulder-width apart, arms bent, hands in loose fists at chest. Bend knees, lowering butt until thighs are parallel to the floor [left]. Return to start, squeezing glutes at the top. Repeat.

FOCUS ON FORM Squats are simple, but that doesn't mean you can zone out. 'Keep your core tight, your back straight, and your knees behind your toes,' says Gonzalez. 'Sit way back - you won't fall.' >



28 DAYS TO A HIGH, TIGHT TUSH

	DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4	DAY 5	DAY 6	DAY 7
1 MEEK	Snap a #CosmoButt Challenge 'before' pic to track gains.	Squeeze those glutes!	Do the routine again, after booty-boosting cardio such as cycling.		Work out, then text your BFF and ask whether she's doing the Butt Challenge.	Listen to <i>Drop It</i> Low by Mercer as you sweat. It's on Gonzalez's playlist.	Choose your own adventure: Rest, or a bonus day of glutes burnin'.
2	Head to Cosmopolitan.co.za for new moves to master at the gym.	Post-workout, put on your fave lingerie. Feel sexier? We thought so.		Follow up your eight minutes with whatever fat-blasting cardio you love.	Repeat	Your effort has been #! Eke out one more sesh, then celebrate Week 2's end.	Take another butt selfie to show off your progress.
3 MEEK	Halfway there! Go all out with new moves at Cosmopolitan.co.za.	Build that juicy double!	You've been working hard AF, so if you're too sore, Netflix and chill today.	Wear your fave leggings. It'll make today's session easier. Promise!	Give yourself a pat on the backside when those eight minutes are up!	83. 22 P	Week 3 is almost D-0-N-E . Do today's routine twice, maybe?
4 MEEK	Final week! Warning: the new routine at Cosmopolitan.co.za is tough.	Take today off if you need to. If not, fit in some more fitness.	Gonzalez recommends The Weeknd's Starboy for today's session.		The struggle is real.	Second-to-last workout! Extra credit: climb a few flights of stairs afterwards.	Give it all you've got one last time - then post your 'after' shot. You did it!

WORKOUT

PULSING LUNGES
Stand with feet hipwidth apart, arms bent, hands in loose fists at chest. Take a large step forward with right foot.
Bend both knees until right thigh is parallel to the floor and left knee hovers above it [A]. Straighten legs halfway [B], then lower back down. That's one rep. Do 15, then return to start. Repeat on opposite side.

STAY ON TARGET 'Always use your heels – that's what's going to trigger the glutes,' Gonzalez says. When lunging, that means making sure your weight is on your front heel, not your back toes, and that you're pressing through the heel as you come up.



GLUTES KICKBACKS
Get on all fours, wrists
under shoulders, knees
under hips. Lift right leg to hip
height or higher, extending
foot towards ceiling [above].

Lower to start. That's one rep. Do 15, then repeat on opposite side.

RELAX DAT Don't let tension from your lower body creep

into your upper half. 'Drop your shoulder blades down your back and keep your spine neutral, being careful not to arch your neck and back,' says Gonzalez.





HOW TO TAKE THE BEST BUTT SELFIE EVER

If you do the #COSMOButtChallenge and don't post about it on Instagram, did it really happen?

Wear a pair of butt-hugging pants, then hike them up to your natural waist. So what if you end up with a wedgie? It will only help to define each of your buns.

This picture is all about the booty, so show it off! Start with your backside towards the mirror.



 Stagger your feet, angling your back heel towards the mirror and your front foot out to the side.

Twist your torso towards the mirror (this will narrow your waist), holding the camera in your back hand.

Shift your weight to your front foot, lift your heel, and pop that hip out!

FOR MORE INSPO, FOLLOW GONZALEZ ON INSTA @ANGELICAKATHLEEN
OR CHECK OUT HER WEBSITE, STRONGHEREVERYDAY.COM



DEAD LIFTS Stand with feet shoulder-width apart, knees slightly bent, and arms extended towards floor, hands in fists in front of thighs. Shift hips back as you hinge forward, reaching upper body towards floor. Lower as far as possible with a straight back (no rounding!) [left]. Reverse motion to return to start, squeezing glutes at the top. Repeat.

UP THE EFFORT We kept it basic in Week 1 with body weight only, but if dead lifts are already part of your booty routine, this version may feel too easy. Feel free to grab 2kg/4kg dumbbells. Be sure to up the weight as you move on in the plan.

GET FITTER WITH FOOD

'You can strength-train all you want, but if you don't have the proper nutrients, you won't see results,' says registered dietitian Amanda Foti, founder of Eat. Fit. Live. Aim for 80 to 100g of protein per day to increase muscle mass. Have a 10 to 20g protein snack, such as Greek yoghurt or cottage cheese, about 30 minutes pre-workout, then a protein-packed (20g or more) meal, such as salmon with edamame or an omelette with lean bacon, within an hour after sweating.



BRIDGES Lie face up on a mat. knees bent, feet flat and arms at sides. Press down with heels, lifting hips up and squeezing glutes [above]. Pause. Lower, hovering butt above mat. Repeat.

REACH FOR THE SKY

Sure, this move is straight out of an '80s aerobics video, but those women had buns, hon. Send your pelvis as high as possible. 'The higher the hips, the better the contraction.' says Gonzalez.



1 Kick the bubbles

No, we don't just mean champers - we mean anything carbonated, including sparkling water. It's the quickest way to beat bloating, which will help you zip up your ieans come the weekend. Cutting out bubbly beverages can also help with weight loss - filling vour gastrointestinal tract with air (which is basically what bubbles are) can slow down your digestion.

2 Toast your bread

Struggling to kick bread but wanting to trim the muffin top? There's some good news: a study in the European Journal Of Clinical Nutrition suggests that toasting bread lowers its glycaemic index. And that's important because food with a lower index tends to be better for weight loss. Just don't load your toast with peanut butter, okay?

3 Blast some Katy Perry

Or The Weeknd or, well, anything you love that's upbeat. Ronald Milliman's study in the Journal Of Marketing points to the fact that most supermarkets play slow music because it helps keep you shopping for longer (adding more to your trolley). Which means that whacking on a dance tune through headphones is more likely to help you shop smarter and quicker, and stick to your healthy food goals. Also, it's guaranteed to make food shopping much more fun.

4 Focus on food

Yes, we know, it's probably the last thing you want to hear when you're trying to get into skinny jeans. But according to a study by the University of Birmingham, multitasking while you eat makes you more likely to consume more, while people who focus on their food tend to eat less. Really want to take this tip to the extreme? Try eating with chopsticks or with your non-dominant hand. Kimiko Barber, author of The Chopsticks Diet, says this is because eating with chopsticks slows you down - you're more intentional and more aware of feeling full sooner, so you eat less.

5 Chill out

When you're stressed, you produce the hormone cortisol which encourages your body to cling on to fat, especially around the tummy, says James Duigan, author of Clean And Lean Flat Tummy Fast! It's probably a throwback to cavewoman times and anticipating famine. He advises meditating, taking long baths and limiting coffee to two cups a day.

6 Brush vour teeth!

It curbs your desire to eat. Research published in the Journal Of The Japan Society For The Study Of Obesity found that people who brushed after every meal tended to stay slimmer. Try it – and smile on Friday as you slip into your jeans!



Avocados

FREEZE 'EM Go ahead, buy those on-sale avocados in bulk. Open them, purée the flesh in a blender, then divide by the cupful into freezersafe plastic bags. Use up to a year later in sauces, smoothies or dressings. (Thaw first in the fridge.) USE 'EM Brainhealth-boosting polyphenols in avocados are what turns them brown, says Dr Drew Ramsey, author of Eat Complete. Don't forgo the benefits - a smoothie hides

with ice, adding cold water if necessary. TOSS 'EM If they're completely brown or soupy, or

they smell funny.

the spots. Mix avo

with plain yoghurt, milk, spinach, chopped

cashews, cocoa powder

and honey in a blender

Herbs

FREEZE 'EM Bought a giant bunch for a recipe that only calls for a couple of sprigs? Chop, then mix 1/4 cup's worth with a stick of room-temp butter. Spoon into an ice-cube tray, then transfer cubes to a freezer-safe plastic bag the next day. Pop a cube into soup or pasta, or thaw and spread on bread. **USE 'EM When** herbs start to turn, make silky buttered eggs from Maria Rodale's cookbook. Scratch. Melt butter in a pan over low heat, add lightly beaten eggs, and set for about 20 seconds. Slowly drag across the pan with a spatula to form soft curds. Sprinkle with herbs. TOSS 'EM If they're slimy or smelly, or

you can see mould.

Greens

FREEZE 'EM When you're buried under mountains of rocket/ spinach/chard, wash, remove thick stems, then blanch. Squeeze out excess liquid, pat dry and pack in freezersafe bags. Later, thaw partially in the fridge, then steam or sauté. **USE 'EM Wilted** greens look sad in salad, but you won't miss the crispness in soup. In a large pot, brown 500g sausage in olive oil over medium heat. Add diced onion; cook for 2 minutes. Add diced veggies (like carrot, celery or tomatoes); cook for 5 minutes. Add 6 cups each canned cannellini beans and stock; simmer for 15 minutes. Add greens. Cook for 1 minute more. TOSS 'EM If the greens are slimy or smell funny.

FRESH VS FROZEN

Who doesn't

love the

convenience of frozen veggies every once in a while? They're quick, they last forever and they require zero prep – but it's often been said that. when it comes to vegetables, the fresher the better. Well, that's not necessarily true. New studies suggest that vegetables in the freezer aisle have just as many nutrients (if not more) as their fresh counterparts. Fresh produce produces enzymes that cause a loss in colour and flavour just after harvest - but freezing stops the process in its tracks. ■

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MIND HEALTH

says Sherrie Bourg Carter, author of High Octane Women: How Superachievers Can Avoid Burnout, 'We're working close to 17 hours more per week than we were five years ago. But if you don't give your brain time off during the day, it will do it on its own - in the form of decreased attention. reduced concentration and loss of focus. Being chained to your desk all day can also increase susceptibility to infections, colds and other immune system disorders, not to mention chronic medical conditions such as heart disease, diabetes and high blood pressure.'

These expert tips on reducing work stress and upping productivity will make you happier and healthier in your 9-to-5.

CHECK YOURSELF IF...

You're not taking regular breaks

Our brain is not designed to concentrate for long periods of time without coming up for air, says Carter. 'When we force our mind or body to go beyond what it's designed to do. it adds stress and strain (both physically and psychologically), which impacts just about every aspect of our mental and physical health. By setting aside break time, we can improve heart health, blood pressure and concentration, as well as our overall mental and physical health.'

You don't stretch your legs during the day

Getting exercise – even if it's just a 20-minute walk – during the day gets the blood pumping to the brain, so when you return to your desk, your concentration will be improved and you'll be able to think more clearly.

'For people doing a job that makes demands upon their mind, body or emotions, breaks are essential,' says Michael Leiter, coauthor of *Banishing Burnout*. 'No-one can work at max capacity all the time! A yoga class or a walk outside will help you get a complete break from the stuffy office – and it will improve your posture.'

You're constantly multitasking

Ever feel as though you're trying to do three things at once? Stop right there. It's better to do one thing at a time properly, than several things half-heartedly, says life coach Cynthia Grguric. 'Learning how to focus on one task makes a difference in productivity,' she says. 'Studies show multitaskers do not perform well. Know your time and activity limits, and schedule accordingly.'

You eat lunch at random o'clock

One day you're grabbing an early lunch on the go, en route to an 11am meeting; the next you don't pause for breath until 4pm. This kind of chaotic diet could be playing havoc with your metabolism, causing you to pile on the kilos. 'By not taking a regular lunch break, we tend to binge-eat whatever we find when we do get a chance to eat,' says Dr Gabriela Corá, author of Leading Under Pressure: Strategies to Avoid Burnout, Increase Energy And Improve Your Well-Being. 'Our body responds to cycles. Going through too many hours without eating anything puts the body in "keep all the energy you can" mode because it interprets there may be no fuel coming in. This leads to weight gain.'

You get sucked into the Instagram vortex

You may think you've been hard at work on that urgent assignment for hours, when in reality you've been absent-mindedly scrolling through your Instragram and Twitter feeds. 'The most direct impacts of working without a break are loss of concentration. becoming distracted and wasting a lot of time,' says Leiter. When you notice your mind (and mouse) begin to wander, take it as a cue to take a breather. 'Hours can while away in a mental slump. The time gained by skipping breaks is lost many times over in sub-par work,' says Leiter.

You check e-mails late at night

Resist the urge to send that last-minute e-mail before you go to sleep, or to run your eye over a report before you nod off. 'This is not good practice,' says Grguric. 'Your time at home is supposed to give your mind a chance to refocus and recharge. Keep your work and sleep environments separate, so as not to confuse your mental processes. Your mind will more easily kick into sleep mode when entering the bedroom if it knows that that's the place for sleep, and will switch back to work mode when entering the office.'

You can't put your work phone down

Thanks to smartphones, we can now access our work e-mails anywhere. Who hasn't taken a sneaky peek at their inbox while out with friends or family, or even on a Tinder date?

But Carter warns this is a big no-no when it comes to a healthy work-life balance. 'By being constantly "on", our boundaries between work and relaxation time become badly blurred,' she says. 'This increases our stress levels, resulting in loss of sleep and the feeling of always needing to be on high alert for that next ring or beep.'

You're always working overtime

More and more of us are working overtime regularly. but this behaviour can have serious consequences for our mental and physical health, warns health psychologist Melanie Schlatter. 'Mentally, this can lead to stress, anxiety, depression, guilt, and problems with anger management and relationships,' she says. 'Physically, it can result in lethargy, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, headaches, back pain, sore muscles, digestive issues, eye strain and insomnia.'

Your workload is unreasonable

Saying no to your boss when she's piling on yet more work can seem like a daunting prospect, but a fluid conversation about your workload with your manager is essential if you don't want your stress levels to go through the roof. Resist the impulse to say yes to everything that's asked of you. 'Rather than saying no outright, if you feel the workload is too much, ask your boss what he/ she wants you to do first, second and third.' savs Corá. 'It's a much better strategy than point-blank refusing to do something.' ■



IF YOU'VE EVER scrolled through your Instagram feed looking for inspo for a new way to work out or a fresh take on avo toast, you'll know that you don't have to look far to find online fitspiration. Popular Instagram handles such as 'Strong Is the New Skinny', 'Yoga Girl', 'Muffin Topless' and 'Jen Selter' are just a handful of the countless bloggers posting fitness mantras, and detailing their gruelling workout plans and cleaneating recipes online. (Where would we be without their healthy cookie hacks, huh?) And you only need to clock their millions of online followers to know that these chicks are the rock stars of social media. So perhaps it's not surprising that fitness bloggers are said to be even more influential than celebrities when it comes to shaping the minds of female Millennials, according to new research from Flinders University in Australia.

However, while checking out a cool fitness blog can give you the get-up-and-go you need to get moving on days when you just feel yuck, if you become too fixated on the healthy diets being peddled, it can have a very damaging effect – something Angie*, 31, learnt the hard way. 'It started when I went on a diet to lose weight after the birth of my first baby,' she says. 'After dropping a few kilos by following clean-eating recipes and workouts I found online. I became obsessed with diet and fitness. As well as drastically restricting

my diet, I became addicted to the gym, and would often lie to friends and family about my daily three-hour workouts. I became very sly and manipulative. I'd never ask the same family member to baby-sit two days in a row, so none of my family knew how often I was going to the gym.'

All the while, her social media accounts were bombarded with new diet and fitness tips. 'Diet and fitness advice appeared all over my newsfeed - there was no getting away from it,' she says. 'That fuelled my quest for perfection.' She'd spend hours alone in her room meticulously researching the 'perfect' meal plan. As a result, she became isolated from friends and family. 'I skipped family occasions just to be in the gym every day. Nothing else mattered.

'If you
become
too fixated
on the
healthy
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a very
damaging
effect'

One day, I couldn't get a baby-sitter so I couldn't go to gym – and I was in tears. When you're in that mindset, getting to the gym is the most important thing.'

Angie was eventually referred by her doctor to a specialist clinic where she was diagnosed with an eating disorder known as orthorexia, categorised as an obsession with healthy eating. While orthorexia is not clinically recognised in South Africa, cases are soaring at an alarming rate as health bloggers champion gluten-free, sugar-free and raw-food diets.

'Orthorexia is the compulsion to eat a healthy diet,' says Harriette Lynch, a consulting dietitian. 'It can present as veganism, vegetarianism, avoiding dairy or the omission of complete food groups (such as carbs) from the diet. Symptoms include constantly worrying about food, and sufferers feel guilt or self-loathing when they stray from their diet. They feel in control when they are on the diet; they tend to "wear" healthy eating like a badge of honour. They place themselves on a nutritional pedestal, and they wonder how others can possibly eat other food. Food is a constant obsession.'

Worryingly, many of the most popular fitness bloggers have no formal fitness or nutritional training – yet some advocate diets that cut out large food groups. This can have a devastating impact on the people who follow the militant diets they advocate, says Lynch.

'In my clinic, I often see the damaging results of people offering advice through blogs who are not qualified to do so, with serious conditions such as osteoporosis, nutritional deficiencies. muscle wastage and joint damage arising from ingrained misinformation. It's important to remember that everybody is different and will have their own specific nutritional and exercise requirements, and as a consequence generalised advice is often inadequate. One size does not fit all.'

Through expert help, Angie was eventually able to recognise that there isn't a universal prescription for healthy living. 'I've learnt to listen to my body and do what feels right for me, instead of trying to be like anyone else,' she says.

Jacqueline Campion of the Marino Therapy Centre at the Institute for Eating Distress Studies says that while there is no harm in seeking diet and fitness encouragement from the online community, the extreme all-or-nothing advice being offered can sometimes have the opposite effect. Rather than boost your motivation, it can deflate you, rock your confidence and play havoc with your body image. 'There's nothing wrong with the fitness movement, but it's dangerous to tell people what they "should" be doing,' she says. 'It can make them feel less-than. When someone tells you how to "eat right", the inference is that what you're doing is wrong. >

DIET

This perpetuates feelings of inferiority, which can lead to self-hatred. It results in pressure and guilt, not results.'

In particular, Campion takes issue with the culture of fear and pressure drummed up by some sites. Mantras such as 'Let every bead of sweat motivate you' and 'Your body is a sign of strength' are common on Instagram. 'Words are very powerful,' she says. 'With these phrases, I don't sense any kind of body love - I sense body fear and pressure. Your body (and how you feel about it) is a very private thing but increasingly the conversation has become, "What have you eaten and how much exercise have you done?" When there is pressure, guilt and fear driving your actions, this links into eating disorders such as orthorexia. That's something so many of these blogs have legalised. We now congratulate people on destructive behaviour!'

Jordan Younger. 25, the health blogger behind The Blonde Vegan, knows this story well. After amassing 70 000 followers, she developed orthorexia. 'My blog started as a hobby a way of documenting the healthy recipes and colourful food that I was making as a vegan,' she says. 'Within a few weeks. I had several hundred followers. and several thousand in a few months. It became my whole life. Soon, I was spending entire days obsessing about my meal plans.

I was only eating raw vegetables, fruit, and occasionally nuts and seeds. I had a fear of any food that could potentially be harmful for any reason, whether it was sugar, wheat, or fat or oil.'

With thousands of faithful followers spurring her on. Younger was convinced the way she was eating was not only healthy but also something to be admired. It was only when her health began to seriously suffer that she got the wake-up call she needed. 'The blog made it difficult to see that I had a problem,' she says. 'But a year later, my skin was bad, I was constantly tired and my period had stopped, which scared me. I had dropped almost 11kg from my 163cm frame. I realised it had become an unhealthy obsession. Eventually, I decided to see a nutritionist and eating-disorder specialist. I was deficient in protein and vitamins, and have since reintroduced eggs and fish into my diet. I've also rebranded my blog as The Balanced Blonde.

'I think labels as far as food choices go are dangerous. Some of us need more in order to fuel our body properly – especially those of us with extreme, all-ornothing personalities, which happens to be many people who are passionate about health and fitness. You can easily go off the deep end. It's about finding what is right for you.'

*NAME HAS BEEN CHANGED

The Insta-Diet Trap

Their bodies and uplifting quotes are beyond motivational – but that doesn't mean social-media phenoms should inspire your diet

We're not saying you should go on an 'unfollow' spree. But if you spot any of these diet-related traps in a guru's posts, save your money and be sceptical about adhering to her advice:



Alkalinity! Hormones! Metabolism! 'I call this scienceploitation,' says Timothy Caulfield, a health law and policy expert. Such terms carry an air of respectability – but they're usually followed by science-free advice. Take alkalinity. Alkaline diets claim to curb the gut's acid production, thereby preventing arthritis and even cancer. But all food is acidic in the stomach, then neutralises naturally in the intestines.



A zillion followers is awesome but not necessarily authoritative. Peruse social stars' connections. Do licensed health products follow them and like/comment on/repost their diet dos and don'ts? Support from colleagues can indicate legitimacy. Now, scroll through the comments. Does she engage thoughtfully? Inflated influencers tend to have fights, not debates, says Caulfield.



Women rate meals as healthier when they come from slimmer bloggers, says a study in the journal *Health Communication*. But size ≠ expertise. Always check for credentials, says registered dietitian Marjorie Nolan Cohn, a spokesperson for the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. *Guru* and expert sound impressive but say zilch about training or experience. Diet advice should come from a registered dietitian.



Some posts are so well staged, they look casual – but they're really just sales pitches for products the 'pro' has been paid to push. Remember, says Nolan Cohn, even certified trainers aren't taught how to vet the safety and efficacy of herbs or supplements. 'They may have good intentions and can be a great support system – just within the scope of their expertise.'



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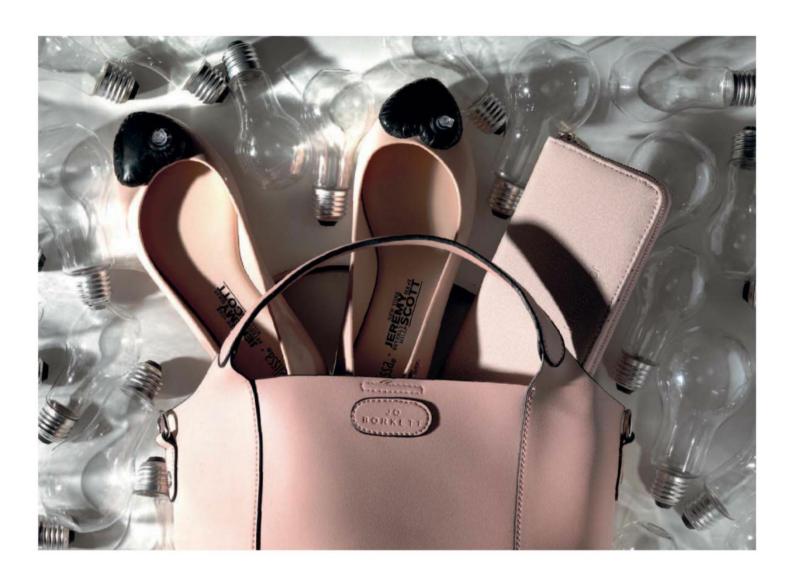
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CAREER

'Start-Up Capital Is No Excuse'

Allegro Dinkwanyane, founder/CEO of Orgella Media; *Orgellamedia.com*

'I started Orgella Media while studying journalism at UJ. I was 21 and had zero cash – but I had a big idea and a solid business plan.

'I tried to find funding but all the potential sponsors I approached turned me down. To them, I was too young and inexperienced to take a risk on.

'I realised no-one believed in my idea as much as I did, and that I'd have to fund it myself. I hustled freelance writing jobs between studies and saved every cent I made. Eventually I'd stashed away R7 000 – enough to register my company name and trademark it, and have a website designed. A few months later, Orgella Media was launched.

'You have to invest in your dream before anyone else does. Once investors see you're willing to risk everything, they start believing in you. Struggling to find financial support taught me independence — and persistence when it felt like no-one would back me.

'Today, Orgella Media is a holding company for seven other companies. I'm proof that not having financial support when you have a dream is no excuse. Saving to fund your business shows you quickly how committed you are to it – and learning to save and spend wisely will always serve you well.'



'Balance Your Energy Input Against Financial Rewards'

Renchia Droganis, CEO of Africology; Africologyspa.com

'Business is about making money. But when I first started Africology, I was selling my soul to clients out of fear of failure, rather than selling my products and trusting that the right people would become loyal clients. I overcompensated for my lack of self-belief by doing more than I charged for. It ate up my energy and depleted my creativity.

and depleted my creativity. Once I accepted the exchange of a product/ service for money as an act of giving and taking, I became comfortable with delivering exactly what I was charging for, and preserving the rest of my energy. Key to this is that the give-andtake is balanced – one party isn't giving more or offering more than the other. Setting boundaries has been a big part of this lesson. I've learnt when to delegate and when to say no. I've left behind the fear of failure – it drives you to give too much to the wrong people. Have faith in what you're offering, do your best and get a financial return that's healthily balanced against your energy input.'



'Dreams Are Not Things to Be Feared'

Zakiyyah Smailovic, creative director of House of ZS; *Houseofzs.com*

'I founded my jewellery brand, House of ZS, when I was 23, and many people told me I was too young and inexperienced. The day I launched my online store, I got an e-mail from someone I didn't know telling me, "This kind of online business won't work." Well-meaning friends and family threw all sorts of criticism my way - things such as, "You don't know how to do business" and "This industry is not for women; you're a dreamer!" It was painful and deflating, and made me question everything I was doing.

'What no-one seemed to understand was that, yes, I was (and still am) a dreamer – and that's not a bad thing! Dreams are not things to be feared, but the means by which each of us is motivated to be our best, whether by starting a new business or taking up a hobby that could turn into a lifelong joy.

'I've had to learn not to take people's opinions personally, and not to let them define me or dampen my self-belief. Sure, I was young and inexperienced; so are most entrepreneurs when they first start out.

'It's easy for people to underestimate you — but I've learnt to see that as an opportunity to prove them wrong. Nothing will keep you on course as much as your own gut, intuition and passions — things that outsiders often don't understand. And FYI: I'm proof there's no such thing as "too young" or "too inexperienced" if you have drive and passion.'

'Know Your Strengths – And Your Weaknesses'

Jandri van Zyl, owner of The Velvet Cake Co; *Thevelvetcakeco.com*

'When I started The Velvet Cake Co, I thought I'd be able to run everything, from the baking to the admin. While it was great to learn about every aspect of my business at the beginning, I quickly learnt that I had to invest in people who were qualified in specific areas and could help me with the workload.

'Building the right team is one of the toughest but most important parts of any business. It's also difficult to let go of the reins in aspects of your own company. When we moved to larger premises, I had no choice but to appoint people to oversee different departments — I just couldn't do it all.

'It was scary at first, but because I'd hired carefully and built trust with my team, it freed me to focus on being the creative overseer of The Velvet Cake Co – vital for keeping the company innovative and flourishing.

'Identify your strengths as quickly as possible so you know where you should remain heavily involved – but also be okay with acknowledging your weaknesses and hiring others to take over in these areas. Don't be afraid to ask for help – the strongest leaders aren't insecure about their shortcomings. Instead, they know them well and hire people to fill the gaps.'





'Always Have a Five-Minute Elevator Pitch Ready'

Mogau Seshoene, founder/CEO of The Lazy Makoti; *Thelazymakoti.com*

'You never know who you might meet at any given moment, so be ready to pitch yourself – and your business – wherever, whenever.

'Recently, I was at a restaurant and recognised a producer. I've always wanted my own TV cooking show as part of my business, and I knew this was my chance to get her attention and impress her. The producer was at a table by herself, so I approached her and asked if we could chat. She told me she didn't have much time as she was waiting to meet someone, so if I wanted to say something I'd need to make it quick. So I did! Within five minutes I'd summarised who I was, what my business was about and how I saw her getting involved in my cooking-show idea. By the end, she'd given me her business card so

we could set up a formal meeting, and now I have a TV show in the works!

'You might meet your next investor or million-rand client at a friend's wedding, a braai or a shop. There isn't always time to set up a meeting, and often you need to impress them quickly to spark their interest.

'A five-minute pitch is essential to have on hand. It should be a short overview of who you are, what you do and what "problem" you're providing a solution to. Think of it this way: if you walked into the same lift as Richard Branson, how could vou best convince him to back you in the time it takes for the lift to go from the ground floor to the fifth floor? That's why I call it the elevator pitch. Know your story and your unique selling point - and always be ready to share them.'

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6 Sneaky Ways to Save More Cash

It's hard to force yourself to sock away money when it's much more fun to spend it *right friggin now*. Train your brain to boost your bank account with these effortless tips

1 Enlist a pickpocket

If hoarding money feels boring, save it before you see it. Save part of your paycheque before it hits your account. 'You won't feel the pinch of a smaller paycheque because you never had it to begin with,' says Douglas Hough, an economist at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. If you're paid in cash, set a monthly auto-transfer from cheque to savings.

Or download Digit, an app that tracks your spending habits and siphons small amounts of cash into a savings account.

2 Carry a savings charm

Ads, e-mail promos, store signs: you're bombarded by cues to spend but rarely to save. Try creating your own savings prompt. When participants in a Duke University study kept a gold coin as a reminder to save, they put away more than twice as much as those who didn't. Carry a written goal in your wallet to keep it in mind.

3 Pay for small stuff in cash

Pay with cash and you'll spend less. Swipe a card and you'll indulge more. Tap your phone and you may be most likely to go wild. Electronic payments erase the pain of paying, says Dan Ariely, a professor of psychology and behavioural economics at Duke University. 'When we pay with cash, we can see the money leaving and are fully aware that we'll have less to spend on other things.' Going all-cash might help but it's inconvenient – so do it when your purchase is less than R100.

4 Clear your wallet

You're less likely to break a big note, a study in the *Journal Of Consumer Research* found. Fatten up your savings by feeding leftover coins and R10 notes into a piggy bank every night, and keep R50s on hand to slow your spending.

5 Make shopping harder

Storing your payment info online makes checkout a breeze, which is the problem. 'Anything that creates friction gives you time to second-guess a purchase,' says Grant Donnelly, who researches financial decision-making at Harvard Business School. To curb a bad online habit, delete your cards from your favourite sites so you have to type in the numbers manually when you shop.

6 Lower your expectations

Falling short of your savings goal? Cut it in half. 'People get ambitious at the start of the month, then nibble away at their savings and end with nothing,' says Katie Waters, the founder of Stable Waters Financial. Ease up on yourself – then step away from the stash! ■

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colour

Apply two thin coats of Sally Hansen's innovative Miracle Gel™ nail polish: in partnership with the top coat, the part-lacquer, part-gel formula delivers up to 14 days of colour and shine, and is more chipresistant than regular nail polish. Use the following shades to create the flower-inspired design.

Saily Hansen Miracle Gel™ (R130* each) Crème de la Crème, Blacky O, Shockwave and B Girl



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Sally Hansen Miracle Gel[™] Top Coat (R130*)



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Because getting it on should happen as often as you damn well please! Also, research shows that having regular sex reduces stress by releasing endorphins and oxytocin – and (get this!) it helps you sleep better, fights off colds and can even make your skin glowy. Here's how to put your more-action plan into, well, action:

Make Every Day a Foreplay Day

It's no secret among sex experts that extended foreplay leads to satisfying sex and better orgasms for women. Sexologist Emily Morse takes it a step further: 'We think of foreplay as what we do during the quick build-up to the main event but it pays to view foreplay as an ongoing seduction that begins immediately after your last orgasm and continues right up until you two are in bed again.'

So once you catch your breath, start revving your engines for your next time — whether that's in an hour, a few days or a week. Focus on the lusty looks you give each other in passing, the sexy texts you send, and the kissing and touching that'll lead to your next session.

Screw Spontaneity

There are two types of desire: spontaneous and responsive. Spontaneous is that magical, musthave-you-now encounter that starts with a flirty glance in his direction and ends with simultaneous orgasms in an outdoor shower. But guess what? Studies indicate that only about 15% of women (compared to 75% of men) experience desire this way. Instead, focus on responsive desire, which you two generate yourselves. Plan a night in to blast The Weeknd, make fancy cocktails and dance really close - and let it lead to bedroom high notes that last all, um, weekend.

TRY IT!

THE 20-MINUTE MAKE-OUT

Set a timer and challenge vourselves to spend a full 20 minutes kissing. This move increases your desire - in less time than it takes to wait for a new Candy Crush life! Start by nibbling on his upper, then lower lip. Take your tongue and trace his mouth, then move slowly down his body with nothing but lip action - and have him do the same to you. By the time the buzzer goes off, you'll both be wild with lust.





Calvin Klein

LOVE LUST

STEP 2 **GET YOURS!**

Yeah, it's good to be a giver - but too often, we put our partner's pleasure before our own. No more of that: prioritise your own orgasm with these bold moves...

Make Oral **Even Hotter**

The next time he's going down on you, encourage him to insert his fingers and slowly stroke inside you while you shift your hips to guide his tongue to just the right spot. This blended-O bliss event will change your life.

Give Yourself the Finger

In missionary, keep your leas bent underneath your thighs while he enters you at the perfect G-spot-loving angle. In this uplifting position, you'll have open access to rub your clitoris in small circles with the pads of your pointer and middle fingers as he grinds.

PUSH YOUR BOUNDARIES

Calvin Kie

Being adventurous in bed can make you two feel like primal pioneers conquering new territories (aka each other). Research shows that frequent sexploration enhances your connection...

Plan a Sultry Surprise

The next time he picks you up for date night, greet him at the door in nothing but your bra and knickers (or just a bath towel), and let him know that you need a few more minutes to get ready. Your restaurant booking can totally wait.

Get a Little Freaky

Blindfold him with something you already have in your house - a scarf, his tie, your cami - and trace your fingers all along his body until he's warmed up. Every minute that goes by will build his anticipation for when you finally remove the blindfold and let him see your sexy self. >

LOVE LUST

BOOST YOUR BEDROOM BOND

When it comes to upping your coital connection, there are two ways you and your guy can go:

LOW-KEY

Ride the Couch, Then Him

Your only mission is to watch TV with boo. A study in the Journal Of Social And Personal Relationships says that couples who don't have the same friend group reported more satisfying relationships when they shared TV shows, books and movies. While you cuddle, binge on a show neither of you has seen. Research also indicates sharing new experiences brings you closer, so dive into that odd doccie about how octopuses mate. Just don't be surprised if he can't control his own tentacles around you later!

HIGH-KEY

Try a Trickier-Than-Normal Move

When you're in your usual GOT (that's girl-on-top, not Game Of Thrones) and you feel him about to climax, guide him towards the edge of the mattress. (Extra points if you two can do this with him still inside you - it's not easy.) Let his arms and head dangle off the side of the bed while you get back to grinding. Not only will you feel like the gueen of his personal Westeros, the extra rush of blood to his head will also give him a full-body experience. It's a skillrequiring manoeuvre that'll have you high-fiving at your naughty teamwork.



SIEP 5

Master the Art of Dirty Talk

Try these stress-free scripts that are steamy, not scary:

Text Him an Emoji Brain-Teaser

Send Him a Hot Voice Note

Be sure to cut it off just as you're about to say the sexy stuff: 'I was in the shower and started thinking about that hot thing you did the other day, and I got so...' The anticipation will drive him completely insane.



STEP 6 TRICK OUT YOUR TOY DRAWER

Spice things up with sexy new playthings we dare you!

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The prongs on the Gazelle Luxury Clitoral Stimulator & Wand fit around your clitoris and rumble like the bass at a hip-hop concert. Use it during doggie, or hold against your cheek when you go down on his lollipop. R1 799 at Desir.co.za



For Making **Even Missionary Amazing**

Place the Bad Kitty Penis Sleeve at the base of his shaft and over the head of his penis, and squirm with pleasure as he becomes a human-sized sex toy that gives your clit a welcome buzz with every thrust. R274 at Passionfruit.co.za



For Doubling the Pleasure

Slip the small end of the We-Vibe Classic inside for OMG G-spot feels while the larger end rests against your clitoris. Then have him enter you too - he'll fit, promise! R2 805 at

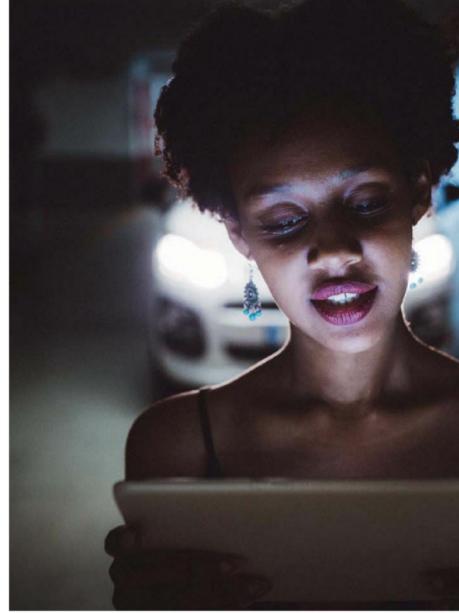
Passionfruit.co.za

LOVE LUST

Should You 'Back-Stalk' Stalk' Before a Date?

IF YOU'RE TEMPTED
TO DESCEND INTO
A DEEP, DARK INSTA
HOLE — OR GO ON SOME
OTHER SOCIAL-MEDIA
FEEDING FRENZY — TO
GAIN INSIGHT INTO A
POTENTIAL BF, READ THIS

BY DANIELLE KAM

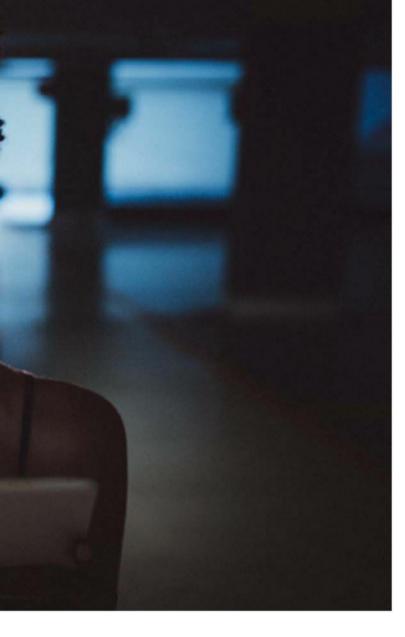


That guy you met last week asked you out and you're feeling fly. The thing is, you only have a first name and a string of digits. Using your sleuthing skills, it takes you two seconds to find him on Instagram. You keep digging and find yourself on his ex's Twitter, screen-grabbing the recent tweets he liked and wondering whether he's still into her. Soon, you're on to his Aunt Judy's Facebook album from some long-ago Christmas. Is that him gnawing on a turkey leg like a starving hyena???

This is back-stalking: when you dive so deep into someone's social accounts, it requires an extra oxygen tank. The intent sounds innocent enough – you want to get a sense of a new guy. Problem is, playing detective to such an extreme can doom a relationship before it starts. Here's why you should curb the urge.

What's your motive?

You're curious about him. You can't remember exactly what he looks like. All legit reasons we look to a guy's digital footprint. 'We seek information to feel more comfortable about a new person,' says Stephanie Tong, assistant professor of communication at Wayne



State University. So there are benefits to looking through his feed. That's how Taylor*, 21, avoided a total D-bag. 'I back-stalked this guy, Will*, who was flirting with me ... and discovered on another girl's page that she was "in a relationship with Will". If I hadn't seen that, I would've gone out with him,' she says.

Beyond the dodgeda-bullet benefit, backstalking can help you suss out what matters in a partner, says Tracy Alloway, a psychologist who's been researching the ways in which social media influences decision-making. If finding a guy's shirtless gym selfie, captioned 'Shred', turns you off, you know he's not your type. Conversely, says Alloway, certain discoveries help you develop empathy. Violette*, 28, agrees. 'I met a guy who was almost 30 and lived with his mom. That was a red flag,' she says. 'But when I figured out from his Facebook that he'd gone back to school and was working towards becoming a professor, I saw him in a different light.'

What's the problem?

With all those advantages, shouldn't we all go on a back-stalking binge every time we have a date?

You Got Busted Back-Stalking. Now What?

After a sneaky spy sesh, slip-ups can happen. Remember that time you accidentally liked his brother's Insta? Cringe. Diane Gottsman, owner of the Protocol School of Texas, offers these recovery strategies:

Own it

Tell him you were checking out his account, really liked the photo and decided to heart it. If you're cool about it, he will be too.

Make a joke

Say something like, 'Don't worry. I'm only a part-time Pl.' By hinting that it's something we all do (yes, guys too), you'll defuse the awkwardness.

Move on

If he doesn't seem to notice, there's no reason to dwell. We are harder on ourselves and tend to overanalyse. Instead, change the convo to the awesome new restaurant you just tried. Well, no. Here's why: at a certain point, back-stalkers know so much about a guy that having a normal conversation – one in which you are naturally discovering things about him – can be a challenge, says Bree McEwan, an assistant professor of communication studies at DePaul University. Plus, all that covert knowledge gives an artificial feeling to the situation.

If you've performed an intensive background check, chances are you have intel you'd be uncomfortable admitting. The fact that he doesn't know you know some very specific stuff about his life casts a shady vibe over the relationship in its earliest stages.

Finally, like most of us, he probably curates his online persona, which gives you a rather limited perspective from which to make judgments. 'We tend to find out what a person makes available, and that's not the full picture,' Tong says. The information you really want about someone is much more nuanced – and for that, you need in-person interactions.

What's your pre-date playbook?

With all this in mind, here's our COSMO-approved back-stalking sweet spot: limit your sleuthing to a cursory search that will make you feel excited about this guy. He's cute in his pics. He just saw a band you love. That sort of thing. After that, step away from the social – and wait for the fun of finding out about him for real.

*NAME HAS BEEN CHANGED

GOOD CATCHES

HOW I MET MY GIRLFRIEND

Some origin stories can give real insight into your relationship future, says Ty Tashiro, author of *The Science Of Happily Ever After*. Here, he assesses real couples' meet-cutes

'I tried to give her a high-five. She blew me off. I took it as a challeng!' -Hayden, 22

TY'S TAKE 'He's playful, she's composed. Differences can be complementary.'

'We were both studying for an exam in our dorm, but we ended up talking instead.' -CJ, 22

TY'S TAKE 'In a study of married couples, ones who met at school had the highest levels of relationship satisfaction.'

'After she and my roomie broke up, we started going out. It made things awkwaro at my apartment...' -CJ, 22

TY'S TAKE 'The thrill of a new love might mask guilt, but eventually it can taint the relationship.'

basketball game. When our team won, we stormed the court!' -Mark, 23

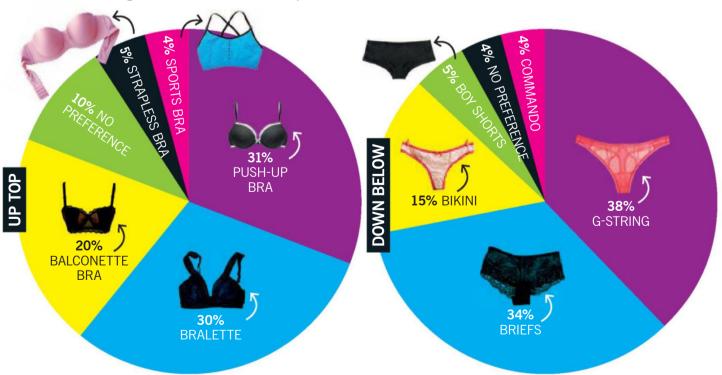
Great

TY'S TAKE 'The excitement of sharing a win can catalyse attraction.'

UNDERWEAR UNCOVERED

WHICH LINGERIE IS HIS FAVOURITE?

2 700 men weigh in via an Askmen.com poll



logy





THE TAKEAWAY 'Go for the Good Guy/Bad Boy,' says Mitchell Berk, CEO of matchmaking service Selective Search. 'He's a calculated risk-taker who will partner with and protect you while keeping things interesting.'



HAIRY TERRITORY

DOES A BEARD MAKE HIM A BETTER PARTNER?

Possibly! According to research from the University of Queensland, men were considered more attractive for long-term relationships when they rocked full beards than when they were clean-shaven. In the study, photographs of the same men were shown with and without facial hair, varying from smooth to stubble to beards. The 8 520 women taking part rated stubble as most attractive overall (especially for a short-term fling), but gave beards the thumbs-up for most attractive long-term material, 'Beardedness may be a signal of intrasexual formidability and the potential to provide direct benefits to females,' says lead researcher Barnaby Dixson. Now in language we understand: back in caveman times, beards could be associated with things such as increased strength, testosterone and fertility ... so, basically, baby-daddy material.



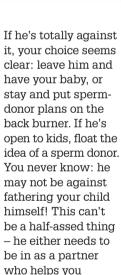
Stephanie Ortigue's research via Syracuse
University may explain why. She found that it takes
just 0,2 seconds after seeing someone for the first
time for that powerful love feeling to kick in. That's
because it takes just this tiny amount of time for
the brain to release chemicals including dopamine,
adrenaline and oxytocin, and it's these hitting your
system that offer a scientific explanation for 'love at
first sight'. It literally makes you (naturally) high.

 \mathbf{Q} I'm dating a guy and he's fab - we've been together a few months and things are going very well. Thing is, I want a baby now - but having his baby feels too soon in the relationship. I've been looking into sperm donors and am keen to move ahead with this - as a 'me' decision rather than an 'us' decision. I don't want to lose him or to pile on the pressure. How do I approach this?

ALL THE ANSWERS.

IS HERE TO HELP

A/ If you want your man to stick around, then this has to be an 'us' decision - even if it ends in the two of you parting ways so you can pursue your baby dreams. You can't expect it not to have an impact on your relationship. Even if he isn't technically your baby-daddy, hoping he sticks around while you go the sperm-donor route is asking him to be a father in a way. Start by being honest: ask him whether he's ready to be a dad.



Q/My boyfriend made the mistake of disagreeing with my dad over politics. How can I fix this?

parent, or out.

A/ There's a reason etiquette warns us to avoid talking politics, religion and sex at the dinner table – things can get pretty heated! man and dad likely have in common is a passion for things they care about. That's probably why they fought. Their political views may not align, but remind them that they should admire each other's enthusiasm for their beliefs. Switching up how they view the disagreement could soften relations for next time they're together. Also, have neutral topics ready - anything they might have in common that will prevent confrontation. Perhaps they both like the same sports, share a hobby or have been on holiday in the same spot? Finding common ground is the key to rebuilding their relationship.

A/ Spiteful things said during a breakup need to be taken with a pinch of salt. and this kind of shade is definitely worth ignoring. (Unless he meant you were so incredible that he'll never find anyone who gets him there like that again – in which case, go you!) If you can't let it go, there are ways to up your skills. Sssh.com offers porn made by women for women, and features real people (a far better reference point than other porn). Read through this issue of COSMO or check out Cosmopolitan.co.za. If you're still worried, see a registered sexologist who can offer pro advice. But let's also be honest: I don't know many guys who'd complain about bad sex. We're generally happy to get laid at all!

O/MY EX AND
I USED TO HAVE
MIND-BLOWING
SEX - OR SO
I THOUGHT. BUT
WHEN WE BROKE
UP, HE SAID I'D
RUINED SEX FOR
HIM FOREVER.
IS THAT EVEN
POSSIBLE?

A/ Spiteful things
said during a breakup need to be taken

GOT A QUESTION FOR OUR GUY? TWEET @COSMOPOLITANSA WITH #ASKHIMANYTHING OR E-MAIL COSMOPOLITAN@ASSOCMEDIA.CO.ZA



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BY AURORA TOWER @AURORAASTRO Venus – the planet of love, money and beauty – spins into retrograde on 4th March, making the first half of the month an ideal time to consider making changes in your romantic and work worlds. Take action after the Sun moves into Aries on the 20th.



21/03-20/04

It's game time, girl! Venus's retrograde hits you on the 4th, forcing your hand with financial decisions you've been postponing. You have all the necessary facts, so make your move. The Sun shifts into your sign on the 20th, giving you a major boost to claim a big win at work.

YOU NEED To trust your gut.

ARIES GUY He has a lot on his mind, so give him space as he sorts through his stuff. He'll come running back for cosy time.



21/04-21/05

Take a break from running on that hamster wheel you've been on – it's not getting you anywhere. After the 4th, you'll have clarity on heart and work matters. Stay calm, and have the courage to press ahead when Mars enters Taurus on the 9th.

YOU NEED To get real about things.

TAURUS GUY He may seem all over the place right now, but if you carve out some alone time, he'll open up in a way that changes everything.



22/05-20/06

You love getting caught up in a social swirl, but pay attention to people you meet around the 6th, when the Sun unites with Mercury. They could be very important to vour career. After the 11th, have fun with new friends and potential beaus.

YOU NEED A smile for the spotlight coming your way.

GEMINI GUY Work is front and centre for him. If he invites you to an office party, say yes: he wants to show off your smart self.



21/06-22/07

Still waters run deep, as you often prove. With a stack of planets in your zone of education, vision and adventure, seize the moment and show 'em what you've got. Say bye to anyone holding you back around the 24th. By the 30th, vou'll be feeling great about future possibilities.

YOU NEED To clear the decks.

cancer GUY Boy is on a mission this month! Go along for the ride and you'll enjoy the benefits of his excess energy.



23/07-22/08

You're usually an act-first-think-later type, but near the 9th. if you slow down and pay attention to what your partner wants and needs, you'll get sizzling results. After the 20th, when the Sun moves into Aries. you'll be on the go and loving it - but watch out for travel snafus along the way.

YOU NEED To stop rushing and start listening.

LEO GUY You've been waiting for things to get deeper – and this month he's finally there too.



23/08-22/09

Think Virgos are all business? Nope. This month, you're a fool for love. If your romance feels rocky, chill. You'll get some clues near the Full Moon in your sign on the 12th. Single? An ex might come back for round two. Look before you leap into his lap again.

YOU NEED To get out of your head and go with your heart.

virgo GUY If his hot and cold swings are making you nuts, tell him! He'll be receptive – and he'll get his act together.



23/09-22/10

Bad news: with your ruler Venus going retrograde from 4th March, everything that can go wrong, might. Good news: by the 18th, you'll have the facts to fix things so they're better than ever – but only if you're honest about how you feel.

YOU NEED To put your health first.
LIBRA GUY With so much on his plate now, the smallest gestures are guaranteed to please. Drop by with takeaways and you might get quite the ... tip!

ARRES LEGGERAL CARRES SERVINGER CARRES

PISCES

GO TO COSMOPOLITAN.CO.ZA FOR WEEKLY HOROSCOPES ()

19/02-20/03

Stellar gifts Your sublime creative talents and boundless imagination help you stand out. Blind spots You feel the littlest things on the deepest level, so drama of any kind drains you. Fashion faves Gold and feathers one day, boho the next your mood dictates your look. *Indulgence* Music is transportive for you, so concerts with friends can be powerful experiences. Seduction style You're a master flirt – but once Cupid strikes, you love to get swept away by romance. Your month The first half of March is bliss. You feel unblocked for the first time in ages and more creative than ever, and there's a special someone curling your toes, especially near the 12th. Don't float off on cloud nine just yet: Venus, she-orb of love and money, is retrograde all month, meaning some restraint is in order. The 27th is the perfect date to set new ambitious goals for yourself and develop a strategy to knock 'em out.

Your vear You'll remember 2017 as the year when everything changed. If you've struggled to find your purpose, enjoy the clarity that now propels you forward. Spend time with others who share your creative vision and outlook. Trust your instincts and make changes in April for a fresh start in May. Travel in July to charge your imagination, and revel in September and November - your steamiest months. You need To stop holding back!

BEST MATCHES

Virgo As opposite signs, you have a complementary connection: he makes you feel like a queen, and you bring out his whimsical side. Scorpio A lusty and passionate pair, you two have the right chemistry to forge an unshakable bond that runs deep. ■



23/10-21/11

Your job's a booty buzzkill ATM but on the bright side it's paying off! You'll get a fab offer to start a fun project, perhaps with a friend, on the 9th. If those around you seem out of sorts, you may need to jump in as a peacemaker.

YOU NEED To be open to change.

scorpio guy He tends to be a little highly strung, and these days, he's super-stressed. Get him outdoors to blow off steam, then enjoy some steamy indoor activity à deux.



22/11-21/12

All you want to do now is stay close to home and kick it with the people who know you best. When Mars angles Saturn in your sign on the 5th, your wish will be the stars' command. If there are unreasonable demands made of you near the 17th, speak your truth and keep on stepping.

YOU NEED To say no sometimes.

SAGITTARIUS GUY Autumn is making him frisky! Plan a getaway or a whole weekend dedicated to Netflix and chill.



22/12-19/01

March will indeed be madness for you, but you'll get all your ish done - especially near the 9th when Mars will be on your side. Sav yes to invitations: networking will be key to killing it this month. Don't let family feuds derail you. Get everyone talking and all will be resolved.

YOU NEED SO much patience...

CAPRICORN GUY He'll need you to help him keep his cool when those around him go a little cray. His thankyou will be hot!



20/01-18/02

Sort your life into 'what's working' and 'what isn't lists, and prioritise accordingly. If detours throw a wrench in travel plans on the 2nd. an open mind could turn it into an adventure. Your social life will be popping with new peeps by the end of the month. Enjoy!

YOU NEED A fresh perspective.

AQUARIUS GUY While he might be all business in the first half of the month, he'll be ready for downand-dirty fun in the second half.



Adam Levine 18/03





LOVES Considerate partners who encourage without being suffocating.

HATES Pushiness and aggressive behaviour that leaves him tense.

DREAM DATE A blissful break at a local hotel where he can splurge on room service and test out the hot tub.

WIN HIM OVER By gradually building trust.



QUIZ

Your favourite couple shot is:

□ a) The photo of our day at the park. which I had a stranger take 22 times to get it just right for Insta. □ b) Locked in an undeletable folder on my desktop. Every time we fake-up. I empty my camera roll in a blind rage - and always end up regretting it. □ c) Impossible to choose. That's why I have a digital frame of our 365day selfie challenge on my bedside table.

When you sleep at his place, you wake up early, then:

- □ a) Swipe a hoodie so I can look chill AF for the Uber home. That boy smell, tho...
- **□ b)** Flush his weed stash down the toilet. His stoner persona really grinds my gears.
- □ c) Fry the latest shipment of the bacon subscription I gifted him and put tiny love notes all over his apartment.

Thoughts on matching couple's tats?

□ a) I'm only inking my skin if it involves erotic body painting. □ **b)** Not into that, but def down with

carving our initials

into a few trees. □ c) Already done. I kept it to an ambiguous quote just in case things go south.

Your BF's ex is behind you in the coffeeshop line. What do vou do?

- ☐ a) Order an extra latte and pretend it's for my guy by giving the barista his name at max volume.
- **□ b)** Tell my guy I found a pube in my latte so he blacklists the spot. God forbid they have a run-in. ☐ c) Introduce myself,
- then FaceTime him for a three-way convo about how much we love his mom.

Your boo is in the ER with appendicitis. You console him by:

- ☐ a) Wearing a nurse's outfit that he won't be able to resist Snapchatting. **□ b)** Bringing him
- his laptop. Better he Netflix and heal than start getting ideas about his lady doctor.
- □ c) Getting my appendix removed too, so I can literally feel his pain.

THE BREAKDOWN

Mostly As SKIMMING THE **SURFACE**

Your relationship is Hiddleswift picturesque. Everything seems swell — but that's 'cause you're not digging deep. If you want more than a fling, get real about your feelings. Next date night, stay in and swap stories, not spit. Your hookup could hold a ton of potential.

Mostly Bs RIDING THE WAVES

One day you're all heart-eye emoji; the next you're blocking each other. Passion is key, but use logic too. Stay cool next time he makes the toilet a splash zone. His — and your! bad habits don't necessarily mean you're not synchronised.

Mostly Cs NEARLY DROWNING

Your love runs so deep, it's hard to tell where you begin and he ends. Make sure you're not falling so hard that you've lost yourself. Go on a girls' road trip, resisting the urge to text bae all day. The time apart may feel wrong, but doing you a little more often will make doing *him* even better. ■





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