

Ask our EXPERTS

OUR PANEL OF EXPERTS HAS ALL THE ANSWERS WHEN IT COMES TO HEALTH, FITNESS, AND LIVING LIFE TO THE FULL

WELLBEING

NUTRITION FITNESS HEALTH

Deborah Smith is a positive psychologist specialising in the science of happiness and mindfulness. She has more than 25 years' experience as a psychotherapist and is here to help, so email her at weightwatchers@seven.co.uk

Q I'm happy to be losing weight but have low self-esteem and feel like I'm being judged, especially when I'm at the gym. How can I relax around others? *Elly Rigden, Colchester*

A Being relaxed and open to other people can be hard if you feel they're making assumptions about you and you're out of your comfort zone, such as at the gym. But this is often due to how you feel about yourself, rather than anyone actually judging you.

I often find people who feel this way are critiquing themselves harshly. If this is the case, work on turning negative thoughts into positive observations. For example,

'I'm never going to get fit,' can simply become, 'I'm exercising, so I will get fit.'

Also, try this simple confidence-boosting exercise before you head out. Stand in a Wonder Woman pose – legs slightly apart, hands on hips, shoulders back – and hold it for two minutes. Studies suggest practising this 'power pose' before entering a stressful situation, could lower cortisol (the stress hormone) and increase testosterone, to help you feel more confident and capable.



TALKING POINT

THREE WAYS TO GO TO SLEEP HAPPY

1

HAVE A DIGITAL DETOX

At least 30 minutes before bed, switch off all digital devices, to help your mind wind down.

2

PRACTISE SELF-WORTH

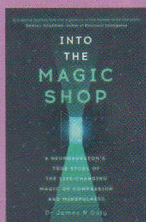
After getting into bed, reflect on something positive you achieved that day. Let a feeling of pride grow within you – this will help you end the day feeling good about yourself.

3

BE GRATEFUL

Before going to sleep, think of three small things you feel grateful for.

TRY IT THIS MONTH



This neurosurgeon's memoir is about how to live with an open heart. *Into the Magic Shop* by Dr James R Doty, £8.99, Hodder & Stoughton

'Life can only be understood backwards,

BUT IT MUST BE LIVED FORWARDS...' WROTE

DANISH PHILOSOPHER SØREN KIERKEGAARD.

MEANING, THE BENEFIT OF HINDSIGHT IS THAT

IT CAN REVEAL HOW SOME NEGATIVE

EXPERIENCES LEAD TO UNEXPECTED POSITIVES.