

CREATE A LIFE YOU LOVE

# psychologies

15-page DOSSIER

## LEARN TO LOVE YOU

- Find out what makes you unique
- Learn to treat yourself like a friend
- Feel happier with self-compassion

## MAKE YOUR DREAMS COME TRUE!

and self-sabotage, make it happen!



## We need to talk about anger

Get in touch with your inner rage and stop the shame

**Christine McGuinness**  
 'I grieve for the life I missed out on, for years of feeling misunderstood'

### EASY WAYS TO BOOST YOUR MOOD WITH EXERCISE

# Q&A

Our agony aunt, Mary Fenwick, offers a new perspective on whatever is troubling you



**MARY FENWICK** is a writer, speaker and executive coach. She is also a mother, divorcee and widow.

**GOT A QUESTION FOR MARY?** Email [letters@psychologies.co.uk](mailto:letters@psychologies.co.uk), with 'Mary life' in the subject line.

**FOR MORE** about Mary's work in leadership and team coaching, her 'Writing back to happiness' programme and free resources, go to [maryfenwick.com](http://maryfenwick.com)

## “Why do I feel so daunted by dating?”

**Q** After years of online dating, I've been introduced to a lovely man in the old-fashioned way, through a friend. The only piece of information I have about what this man is really like is that he is shy. I've forgotten the rules for dating in real-life as opposed to online. Honestly, am I 56 or 16?! For instance, I missed his call – do I call back or wait for him to call again?

It sounds as if there's already a klaxon alert going off in your head saying 'don't mess this up,' or it could be that you're feeling excitement, which manifests very similarly to fear (racing thoughts, heartbeat doing strange things). Either way, sex and relationship therapist Cate Mackenzie asks a simple question that might help: 'What would you do if you had no fear?' What if this was a missed call from a friend you already know? If the answer is that you'd call straight back, then do that. If you usually text to arrange a time to speak, then do that instead.

In some ways, the world has not changed as much as we might think, and, in any case, you are probably dealing with a man who grew up at a similar time to you. Mackenzie says it's easy for women to underestimate how scary it can be for men to make the first move, and this man might

have used a lot of courage to do so – especially since you know that he's shy. Try to think of it neutrally, as 'I owe this person a call'.

Without getting too Mars and Venus about it all, men and women react differently to emotional pressure. You might like to look at the work of American researcher and therapist Steven Stosny, particularly his studies on 'empowered love', in which he talks about how relationship fears can activate our inner toddler. His work is based on having compassion for yourself and for the other person.

In parallel, don't let this distract you from any of your usual sources of enjoyment or relaxation – making arrangements with other friends, massage, exercise, whatever you do to feel good. The aim is to enjoy being yourself, whether or not this particular relationship develops as you might hope. [catemackenzie.com](http://catemackenzie.com)

