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Ask Ursula



Best-selling author and hypnotherapist, Ursula James answers your questions from three perspectives to help you progress on a spiritual, mental and physical level

"I just want to be happy"

I have reached desperation and have recently thought about suicide, although I doubt that I could actually go through with it. My financial situation has gone from bad to worse, and has been up and down for the past five years. It gets critical, my husband finds out, we sort it, and then somehow it gets bad again. I don't buy lots of things – in fact, I can't buy anything as all my money goes on paying the monthly interest.

I have a good job, although I am not happy as my boss is constantly on my case, comparing me to my counterpart, who is very young and dynamic. I am 57 and have worked for the company for more than 20 years, so my management methods are tried and tested, and I achieve my results by quietly getting on with my job. I can't afford to change careers, as I would never be able to get a similar salary anywhere else, particularly in this current climate. Do I have a negative field around me? Will I ever get out of this mire and be truly happy?

Mind... Stand up for yourself

Spending money that you do not have is often a displacement activity. It is important to take a step back and analyse what it is you believe you are getting out of this 'retail therapy'. Putting this down on paper, listing it under 'When I shop, I feel... I think... I act...' and filling in the blanks is a very good way of taking stock of your reasons behind shopping.

It also sounds as if you have a boss who is trying to manipulate you by comparing you unfavourably to your colleague. Your best approach is to ask for a meeting with your boss, and to ask them what it is specifically they would like you to change. Tell them that their approach is making you very unhappy, and spell out to them that you get results. Do it calmly and quietly. Bullies do not like it if you stand up to them. It won't be easy, so rehearse it. Remember – bullying often happens to people who are more competent than the bully. You are showing them up. Stay calm, say your piece, and then be consistently nice to your boss and also to the colleague.

Body... Walk tall

Negativity stems from your feelings about yourself, and others then pick up on these feelings and amplify them.

The easiest way to create a new, positive aura around you is to start to carry yourself like a superstar! Imagine you are on the red carpet and there are lots of photographers clicking away. You carry yourself better, and you smile and look these people straight in the eye.

One of the easiest ways to train yourself to do this is the Alexander Technique. Imagine your head is suspended from the very top by an invisible thread, pulling your spine tall and straight. When you carry your body tall and proud, you lose the negative energy around you as it is associated with being small and crunched up. Fill your space, and push your positive aura around you. Others will respond – especially when you practice your eye contact on them. Even the bullies will back down, but you need to practice every day until it becomes an automatic way of being. After three weeks your unconscious mind will take over and you don't ever need to think about it again.

Spirit... Connect with nature

I am so sad to hear that you would consider suicide, and I truly feel for you if you have come to such a dark place in your life. Life is a precious and wonderful thing. It seems to me that with all that has been happening to you, you have lost sight of the wonders of life. It is time to reconnect with nature, and if you do not have a hobby that gets you out of doors, start walking. Once the sunlight hits your pineal gland you will feel energised and more excited about life. In the evening, bring the light of a candle into your room. Spend a few moments gazing into its light, and tell the elemental spirit of the flame your sorrows. Let it burn them away, and bring light to your evening.

Talk to your husband. The first thing to do is to listen, as you may find that he, too, is unhappy. Remember what you did together when you first became a couple, and try to recapture some of those events. Also, try this affirmation first thing in the morning: 'I have a right to be happy and a responsibility to find out ways of making this happen every day.'

Ursula James presented *Sex, Lies and Hypnosis* on Channel 5 in 2007, and is a regular on the *Fred Macauley Show*, BBC Scotland. Ursula's journey to a new life, and how you can do it for yourself, can be found in *You Can Be Amazing: Transform Your Life With Hypnosis*, (Random House; £9.99). Visit ursulajames.com