

Ripple

OASIS  LIFE

WINTER 2026

THE LONGEVITY ISSUE

WOMEN LIVE LONGER. NOW WHAT?

GLOWING OLDER

THE GLOW-UP THAT COMES WITH AGE

WELLNESS REDEFINED

MEET OUR VITALITY WARRIORS

“ Living here feels calm,
serene & quietly alive
all at once. ”

MEET VALERIE BERNSTEIN
OASIS LIFE CONSTANTIA RESIDENT

GROWING BOLDER

THE RISE OF OLDER INFLUENCERS

REINSPIREMENT

FLIPPING THE RETIREMENT SCRIPT

RETIREMENT REIMAGINED

LIFESTYLE BY DESIGN



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Modern retirement, reimagined

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A photograph of a modern retirement home interior. The space features a large, curved swimming pool in the foreground, reflecting the surrounding environment. Behind the pool is a paved area with two wooden benches. Large floor-to-ceiling windows offer a view of the exterior, which includes arched windows and lush greenery. A white pillar stands near the pool, and a potted plant is visible on the right. The ceiling is white with recessed lighting. In the top right corner, there are three curved yellow decorative lines.

Modern retirement, reimagined

LETTER FROM THE CEO

Dear residents, and friends we are yet to meet,

Today, longevity is no longer just a conversation about health, but a way of living — a thoughtful approach to how we design our days, our spaces, and our sense of community. It continues to shape what retirement can be, not as an ending, but as a deeply meaningful new chapter. At Oasis Life, this belief sits at the heart of everything we do, and it is beautifully reflected in this edition of Ripple.

When we first set out, it was with a simple conviction that retirement could be reimagined as a place where life continues to grow, evolve, and inspire. A place where each day holds something to look forward to.

Looking back over the past eight years, it is incredibly rewarding to see that vision come to life. With nearly 700 completed homes across four estates and more than 1,000 residents now calling Oasis Life home, it is our residents who truly affirm what we hoped to create.

This issue is a celebration of that everyday life, the movement classes, creative workshops, shared laughter at sing-alongs, and the familiar warmth of braais and bowls. It is also a moment to recognise the remarkable nursing professionals whose care, compassion, and dedication underpin so much of this experience. Above all, it celebrates you, our residents, who continue to show that later life can be lived with energy and purpose.

I am also pleased to share a few developments that we hope will further enhance your experience. The Oasis Life Mobile App is now live, offering seamless access to events, bookings, visitor management, maintenance requests, and communications all in one place. Similarly, our Smart Health Watch provides peace of mind, connecting residents to 24-hour care support at the touch of a button.

We continue investing in the everyday pleasures that make Oasis Life special. Whether it's enjoying a Bootlegger coffee at our Clubhouse or enjoying the benefits of our new partnership with Ou Meul,



bringing fresh pies, artisanal breads, soups, and a curated selection of frozen meals, including South African classics like Bobotie to your doorstep.

Luxury lives in the detail...



As we continue to grow, we also celebrate key milestones. Oasis Life Burgundy Estate is nearing final completion, a proud moment for our largest community, while Oasis Life Sunningdale is making wonderful progress, now in its final phase of sales with strong interest from future residents. Thank you for being part of this journey with us, and for helping us shape the Oasis Life vision.

Until next time,

Glyn Taylor

Chief Executive Officer, Oasis Life



**JOIN OUR GROWING
ONLINE COMMUNITY:**

 @OasisLifeRetirement

 @oasisliferetire

 Oasis Life Retirement

LET'S TALK ANYTIME!

Feel free to WhatsApp or
call me on my mobile phone:

 082 775 3206

EDITOR'S *Note*

We have been handed a script about ageing. Most of us absorbed it before we were old enough to question it. It tells us when to slow down, what to stop wearing, which ambitions have an expiry date and when to stop putting ourselves forward. It is, science now tells us, quietly shortening our lives.

The Longevity Issue is not about living longer for its own sake. It is about what happens when purpose, connection and curiosity remain non-negotiable. People who stay engaged, who maintain a sense of meaning, who remain socially connected and mentally stimulated move through later life with a quality of energy that has everything to do with intention and very little to do with age. Living longer is only half the equation. How we fill those extra years with vitality and genuine pleasure is the other half — and the question this issue is built around. It is also, not coincidentally, what Oasis Life is designed for. Good programming, good community and, we would argue, good coffee.

Our cover star, Valerie Bernstein, took a breath before saying yes to the cover. I am so glad she did. What she has given us, in her words and her willingness to be seen, is something I think many of our readers will recognise in themselves. Not the certainty, but the choice to show up without it. That is the invitation this issue extends to all of us. Try the chair movement class. Start a messy, embarrassing painting. Sign up before you feel ready. I for one will be trying three new things this winter, and I'll be joining the Stitch Circle at Oasis Life Constantia to try my hand at knitting and popping in to a few wellness classes.

This issue also celebrates the instructors, nurses and new biokineticist redefining wellness at our estates, and the neighbours who make daily life what it is. The people who show up consistently, push gently and create environments that encourage engagement. That, it turns out, changes everything.

Warmly,

Marizke



Modern retirement, reimagined

www.oasislife.co.za
Burgundy Estate

OASIS  LIFE
BURGUNDY ESTATE

Re*inspire*ment

By Marijke Stedall

By 2030, nearly half of the workforce in developed economies will be over 50. People are living longer, working longer, and rethinking what it means to contribute. What if we started seeing ageing for what it really is — our greatest shared resource?

The most significant longevity discovery of the past two decades did not come from a laboratory. It came from a psychologist at Yale who found that the story we tell ourselves about getting older is not a reflection of how we age. It is the cause of it. People who held positive beliefs about ageing lived, on average, seven and a half years longer than those who did not.

More than the benefit of not smoking. More than regular exercise. More than almost any clinical intervention medicine has to offer.

When we work together intergenerationally, the future of work — and life — is stronger, wiser and more inclusive. But that future begins with the language we use about ourselves and each other.

Your inner critic telling you to slow down, step back and stop starting things is not yours. It was handed to you by society. And as an experienced community, together we can rewrite the narrative. Later life deserves better language. How will you start correcting yours — so future generations can be kinder to themselves? Let's rewrite the terms of ageing together.

Here is where to begin!



The Societal Script vs. The Rewrite You Should Be Using

They look great —
considering...
**They look exactly
as they should**

**We've earned the right
to take up space**

*I don't want to put
myself out there...*

Anti-ageing
Pro-ageing

*I'm
retiring
from...*

*I've had
my turn*

**Why do we think we've
run out of turns?**

*Fighting
the signs of
ageing*

**Wearing
the signs
of living**

*I'm not sure I
can still do that...*

**I won't know until
I try — and trying
is the point**

**I'm
retiring
to...**

*(Thank you
John at Oasis
Life Constantia)*

Winding down
WINDING IN

(Thank you Gail at Oasis Life Sunningdale!)

I should be slowing down by now
**I get to choose my pace — and
change it as I please**

Invisible after fifty

**Impossible to
ignore after fifty**

*Past my prime
Every age we've
ever been
(including now)
is our prime
time*

*They should
dress their age*
**They dress their
personality**

*That's not
really for
someone
my age*

Getting old...

GETTING BOLD

Age-appropriate

**Self-
appropriate**

**Who says,
exactly?**

**And when
did we agree
to that?**

I'm so old!

**I'M LEVEL
[insert age]**

*I'm too old to start
something new*

*I have more
patience,
self-knowledge
and perspective
and than I've
ever had*



*Settling
down*
**Settling in
— to exactly
the life
I want**

Anti-wrinkle

Pro-laughter

Rewirement

instead of Retirement

For a deeper dive into the psychology behind 'self-talk', read our special feature by Prina Fenster on p. 46: **THE LONGEVITY-BOOSTING POWER OF POSITIVE SELF-TALK**



Stillness

FINDING CALM IN CONSTANTIA



**Valerie Bernstein on
creating a home that
breathes, a life that flows,
and the quiet discipline of
living beautifully.**

There is a particular kind of stillness that Valerie Bernstein has spent a lifetime learning to cultivate — and you can feel it the moment you step into her home at Oasis Life Constantia. Light moves through the space in a way that feels considered.

"My favourite room in the house is my sun-filled patio, just beyond the sliding doors," she says. "It's a wonderfully peaceful, light-drenched space where I love to sit on my sofa and read, with the gentle sound of my fountain in the background and birds cheerfully jostling for position at the feeder. It feels calm, serene and quietly alive all at once." This is also where she paints. Surrounded by the soft movement of water and what she calls "the natural beauty of my little garden," Valerie finds herself drifting into what she describes as a different, more creative zone — one where colour, texture and the simple joy of making something takes over. She began painting just before COVID, so it is still a relatively recent love, with a pull that has been immediate and deep.

"When I paint, I move into this quiet state where my senses settle and creativity flows more freely," she says. "It gives me the opportunity to step away from the busyness of my mind and focus on this one thing in front of me."

“ In that space, there is a sense of stillness and grounding that is very restorative.” ”



She is drawn to nature as a subject, and to oil as her medium — specifically for what it allows her to do with texture. "Oils facilitate the use of layering in what seems like a more natural way, which I feel brings a sense of depth and richness into my paintings."

Valerie takes this creative instinct into the group setting of Antoinette's art classes, which are taught across all Oasis Life estates. "What I enjoy most is that it's both fun and social. I find myself looking forward not only to the creative challenge, but also to seeing the familiar faces and the friends I've made." Antoinette's approach, she says, is wonderfully relaxed — there is no pressure toward perfection, only the freedom to find your own voice and develop at your own pace. "It's more than just an art class. It's a small, supportive community and a pause in the busyness of life that is fun."

Valerie's other beloved class is Dom's exercise sessions. "Dom is a precious facilitator who brings sincerity and a depth of wisdom to her classes. She is thorough and careful and plans really well — and she accommodates

each person, whatever their physical struggles at that moment. She's friendly and warm and encouraging and kind, and really, just being around her is uplifting for the soul."

She is equally enthusiastic about the Ageless Grace wellness classes, taught by Salome. "I was initially drawn to it because of its focus on brain health and cognitive expansion, which felt quite different from many other forms of exercise. What may appear at first glance to be light and playful exercises actually carries a surprising depth, with a thoughtful integration of multiple objectives working quietly beneath the surface." Salome, she says, brings a deep love and reverence for her work that is immediately tangible. "It's that balance between the fun and the depth that makes the experience valuable."

The experience these two instructors bring to the wellness programme was instantly recognised and appreciated by Valerie, a former science and biology teacher who also taught yoga for twenty years.



Her yoga teacher training journey began in Johannesburg and over the years advanced her studies under numerous formidable teachers from around the world. Some years later, Valerie lived in Hong Kong and was fortunate to practice with many different international yoga gurus travelling between the East and West. "My goal in teaching yoga for so many years was to support my students with learning the right guided sequences that integrate the systems of the body and the mind through the gentle connection of both breath and movement."



Valerie chose Oasis Life earlier rather than later — a deliberate decision she credits with giving her time and more freedom.

"Choosing to move earlier rather than later gave me the gift of being able to make clear and deliberate decisions about what to keep and what to let go of. That process of detachment was at times emotional, but ultimately it proved to be incredibly liberating. The walking paths across the estate, the Clubhouse culture, activities and wellness programmes along with excellent security means I have so much on my doorstep



Two of Valerie's earlier paintings

whilst also enjoying my own privacy, which is highly important to me."

When her children visited from Australia and saw the life she had made, they felt reassured. "They said, 'Mom, this is home.' What truly sets this lifestyle apart is also the people — every member of staff has been consistently kind, approachable and sincerely helpful. The residents I have met are equally warm and welcoming, and my immediate neighbours in particular have come to feel like family."

When asked how she would sum up what she is reaching for, Valerie pauses.

“To live with greater inner harmony, inner peace and inner joy. I think that's probably it.” ”

Looking at her patio and studio — with the sound of the fountain, the bird chatter by the feeder, and the canvases stacked against the wall — one gets the sense she is well on her way!



- Ends -

WELLNESS *Redefined*

Drawn TO LIFE

Why picking up a paintbrush may be one of the best things you do for your brain

When we make art, the brain does something remarkable. Creativity activates multiple neural networks simultaneously — imagination, focused attention and self-awareness all firing in concert. This complex, cross-network activity builds what neuroscientists call cognitive reserve: the brain's measurable ability to resist age-related decline. Making something is one of the most protective things you can ask your brain to do.



Valerie's artworks from classes with Antoinette's Art



The second mechanism is flow — psychologist Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi's term for complete absorption in a challenging, enjoyable activity. Painting is among the most reliable flow triggers available — that quiet state where the senses settle and attention narrows to the single satisfying task in front of you. Regular flow experiences are associated with stronger emotional resilience and a more positive relationship with ageing. The social dimension of group creative practice adds another layer — reducing loneliness, lowering cortisol and strengthening immune function.



Antoinette's classes are relaxed, fun and free of any pressure toward perfection — which is precisely the environment in which both creativity and community tend to flourish.

- Ends -

STAY INFORMED ABOUT THIS DEVELOPMENT

To register your interest in **Oasis Life Constantia**, please email info@oasislife.co.za

Ageless *grace*

Salome Kraamwinkel has a question she likes to ask at the start of her talks. Not about exercise or diet. **She asks: what do you believe about ageing?**

The answer, she has found, tells her almost everything. Not because belief is a soft factor in how we age — but because, as the science confirms, it is one of the most powerful ones.

"We tend to overestimate the influence of genetics and chronological age," she says, "and underestimate the impact of belief and lifestyle on biological age." The distinction matters. Chronological age is simply how many years you have been alive. Biological age is how well your body has aged — and unlike chronological age, it is not fixed. It is shaped, continuously, by how you live and what you believe is possible.



Salome Kraamwinkel

THE MYTHS THAT **AGE** US

● MYTH 1: **YOUR GENES PREDETERMINE HOW HEALTHY YOU ARE**

More than 80% of old age and chronic illness is linked to lifestyle rather than genetics. Epigenetics shows that our thoughts, emotions, sleep, stress levels and movement patterns can effectively influence how our genes are expressed. We have considerably more control over our cellular biology than most of us have been led to believe.

● MYTH 2: **GETTING OLDER MEANS FEELING OLDER.**

Biological age does not have to match chronological age — and the gap between the two is largely determined by lifestyle. How we feel is shaped far more by how we live and what we believe than by the number of years we have accumulated. Psychology affects the biology of ageing. That relationship works in both directions.



● **MYTH 3:**
**YOUR BODY GETS
FRAIL AS YOU AGE.**

Strength, muscle mass and bone density all improve through exercise and weight training at any age. A recent Harvard University study found that resistance training can add more than seven years to life expectancy. When you are stronger, everything gets easier.



● **MYTH 6:**
**THE OLDER YOU ARE, THE
MORE UNHAPPY YOU ARE.**

Multiple studies have found that people get happier as they age. Gratitude, perspective and contentment tend to deepen rather than diminish over time. Happiness has everything to do with how you choose to look at your world, and very little to do with how long you have been in it.

*"The most important
change you can make
is to change your mind
about ageing."*
- Salome

● **MYTH 4:**
**YOUR BRAIN IS DESTINED TO
DETERIORATE OVER TIME.**

Neuroplasticity means that areas of the brain involved with memory and learning continue to produce new nerve cells every day, at every age. The brain is not a fixed structure. It is a living one. Even dementia and Alzheimer's show a strong link to lifestyle — with only 3 to 4 percent of disease-related gene mutations genetically determined.

● **MYTH 5:**
**YOUR ENERGY DECREASES
AS YOU GET OLDER.**

Energy depends far more on attitude and outlook than on age. It is constantly being generated and can change quickly — boosted by movement, music, restful sleep and positive social connection. The direction it takes is largely up to us.

AGELESS GRACE

Developed over seven years of research into neuroplasticity, Ageless Grace is an exercise programme for both body and brain, performed in a chair to upbeat, lively music. It activates five areas of the brain alongside the body, working to restore cognitive function, improve mobility, lift mood and support general health. The movements are drawn from everyday life — accessible, playful and deliberately unserious. "It does not at all feel like exercise when you are doing it," Salome says. Which is entirely the point. Her perspective on ageing is philosophical, grounded and gently challenging. She sees age not as linear but as layered — "like coins stacked one on top of the next. At any age, you are every age you have ever been." That framing changes things. The person who walks into a Thursday class brings everything they have ever known, felt, survived and learned. "The sooner you change your mindset," Salome says, "the sooner you start to change your reality. It is never too late. And it is never too early."

- Ends -



Dominique Kantey



The Art OF MOVING WELL

The science is clear. Show up. Keep showing up — consistently, joyfully, and at your own pace. This may be the most important thing you do every week.

Dominique Kantey known to everyone at Oasis Life Constantia as Dom — has a gift for meeting people exactly where they are. Her movement classes form part of the Oasis Life wellness programme, drawing on pilates, strength training and yoga to maintain muscle, keep joints flexible and build the functional strength that makes daily life easier, safer and more enjoyable.

Classes are streamed to beginner and intermediate levels with modifications always available, so every body is genuinely accommodated. Some exercises use chairs, others are freestanding. “Everyone works at their own pace,” Dom says. Every class ends with a guided relaxation — a deliberate return to stillness that allows the nervous system to integrate the work.

For all its physical rigour, there is nothing intimidating about Dom’s approach. There is chatting, laughing and the particular ease that comes from doing something challenging alongside people you are getting to know. “While working hard we still have fun,” she says. It shows. Dom has built a core group of regulars whose progress she describes as one of the most rewarding things she has witnessed in her career.

“Consistency, dedication and perseverance — watching that come together in people is extraordinary.”



That consistency, it turns out, is the whole argument. Each discipline Dom integrates into her movement classes earns its place with evidence.

Pilates targets the deep stabilising muscles that support the spine and underpin almost every movement we make. As we age, core stability becomes critical for balance, coordination and fall prevention — built quietly and consistently, without loading the joints.



Strength training slows and reverses the natural decline in muscle mass that accelerates after 60 — known as sarcopenia — supporting bone density, metabolic health and cognitive function. A long-term King's College London study found that older adults who maintained regular moderate exercise had biological markers comparable to people 30 years younger. It was not intensity that made the difference. It was consistency.

Yoga brings flexibility, breath awareness and the mind-body integration the other disciplines do not always address. Regular practice is associated with reduced inflammation, better sleep and a measurable reduction in falls — one of the leading contributors to physical decline in older adults.

Together these three practices create something greater than the sum of their parts: strength without strain, flexibility without force, awareness without anxiety. A body more confident in its own abilities.

STEADY AS YOU GO

Falls are the leading cause of injury-related hospitalisation in adults over 65. Targeted movement can reduce that risk by up to 40%. These exercises require no equipment. Use a sturdy chair or counter for support where needed.

- **Heel-to-Toe Walk:** Walk in a straight line, placing your heel directly against the toe of your other foot. (Improves balance and spatial awareness)
- **Single Leg Stand:** Using a chair for light support, lift one foot and hold for 10–30 seconds per side. (Builds ankle/hip stability to prevent stumbles)
- **Sit to Stand:** With arms crossed, stand up from a chair and lower down slowly without using your hands. (Strengthens muscles needed to rise or recover from a fall)

- **Calf Raises:** Holding a chair, rise onto your toes for 2 seconds, then lower slowly. (Strengthens lower legs for walking on uneven surfaces)
- **Sideways Stepping:** Step side-to-side with slightly bent knees. (Trains lateral stability to prevent sideways falls)
- **Wall Push-Ups:** Perform standing push-ups against a wall. (Builds upper body and core strength to catch yourself if you lose balance)

Consult your doctor or biokineticist before beginning a new exercise programme. If you experience dizziness, pain or shortness of breath, stop and seek medical advice.

- Ends -

Stronger **FOR LONGER**

THE FUTURE OF RETIREMENT WELLNESS
IS **PREVENTIVE HEALTHCARE**



A registered biokineticist, Sam has spent her career at the intersection of exercise, rehabilitation and chronic disease management. Working with older adults, she noticed that much of the physical decline she witnessed was preventable.

“We’ve been telling people to do less — at exactly the moment when doing more, safely and progressively, could change everything.”



The Redefining Wellness in Retirement programme, developed in partnership with Oasis Life and delivered across estates by Sam's team, combines specialised exercise classes, movement screening assessments, health education workshops, biokinetics consult sessions and access to private rehabilitation support. The majority of services are covered by Oasis Life. For those requiring more individualised support, private sessions are available on-site at an additional cost — delivering a seamless progression from preventative wellness to clinical care when needed.

The programme is designed as a collaborative system, shaped continuously around the evolving needs, feedback and health priorities of each community. No two estates run an identical programme. What Sam has witnessed in those who engage fully is quietly remarkable — residents who are stronger, more confident, more independent, managing chronic conditions more effectively and moving through daily life with greater ease.



“Later life can still be active, capable, connected and full of potential.”



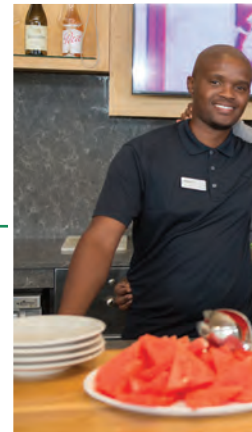
STRENGTH & POWER CLASSES

Empowered Strength:

Progressive strength training for men and women over 60, focused on building muscle mass, bone density, power and confidence in a safe, structured environment.

Pump It Up:

Cardiovascular conditioning for residents wanting to build cardiac resilience and strengthen heart health proactively.



BALANCE & FALL PREVENTION CLASSES

Strong Foundations:

A fall prevention and bone loading class for those experiencing muscle loss, balance challenges or diagnosed osteoporosis or osteopenia.

Grounded Strength:

Gentle guided movement to improve balance, reduce fall risk, ease stiffness, strengthen posture and build everyday confidence.



AQUASIZE CLASSES

Aqua Ignite:

Resistance-based aqua training combining cardio and strength work to improve fitness, endurance and power.

Aqua Revive:

Low-impact aqua recovery to ease stiffness, loosen joints, regulate the nervous system and support safe recovery.

FLOW & RESTORATION CLASSES

Flow & Restore:

Slow, supportive sessions combining guided movement sequences and soothing techniques for ease in both body and mind..

Rebuild:

Back — Targeted work to rebuild back strength, confidence and mobility, improving everyday movement and reducing joint pain.



The programme also includes monthly health education workshops and informational talks — including talks on topics such as enhancing memory and preventing cognitive decline through exercise.

Contact your Clubhouse for the current Wellness Redefined schedule at your estate.

- Ends -

STAY INFORMED
ABOUT THIS DEVELOPMENT

For enquiries about Clara Anna Fontein please email info@oasislife.co.za or visit our website at www.oasislife.co.za.





Time Well Spent

The All About Dermatology Wellness Day at Oasis Life Clara Anna Fontein — expertly curated by Events and Duty Manager Tatum Gough — brought together leading experts, specialist vendors, movement classes and great food for a day that was equal parts educational and celebratory.

Residents heard from dermatologist Dr J du Toit on skin health, and from Tasha, Head of R&D at BluLyte, on HOCl and its role in skin wellness. Wellness Redefined movement classes ran throughout the morning, with a 12-person class limit keeping every session personal and well-supervised.

Vendors included Medwell, BluLyte, IV Bar, Ginger Me, Deluxe Lazer & Spa, Melano Medical Aesthetics, Dermalux and more — with a lucky draw running across all stands. Lunch offered grilled yellowtail with spinach and wild rice salad, pork pho with noodles and egg, or lentil salad with sweet potato and feta. Live FM joined us on the day, playing music and chatting to Oasis Life and partners — turning a wellness event into a proper celebration.

- Ends -





Step **BY** Step

At Oasis Life Clara Anna Fontein, a group of residents gathers twice a week for line dancing. They know close to 30 dances, have a teacher who choreographs originals, and once spent three months secretly learning a routine to perform for her at the year's final class.

Line dancing here was initiated by resident Sandy and is today led by teacher Desiree — known to everyone as Dez — with residents Kate and Rita keeping things running between sessions. Kate calls the steps. Rita does the counting.

Line dancing asks you to listen, count, remember and move simultaneously, making it an effective activity for reducing fall risk in older adults.





What do people get wrong about line dancing before they try it?

Nana: It looks boring to watch. Doing it is genuinely challenging — excellent exercise for movement, memory and spatial coordination. You leave hot and tired — but completely re-energised.

Kate: People assume it's just country and western. We dance to everything — country, Elvis, Kurt Darren, Engelbert Humperdinck. The music changes the whole mood in the room.

What happens in a class that only line dancers understand?

Maybeth: The moment you lose concentration it all goes pear-shaped! I only create my own steps when I forget what I should be doing. It happens often! And I just love it when I nail a dance I thought would never happen.

Nana: When you get it wrong and end up facing everyone going in the other direction — that is the moment. It's very funny, it happens to all of us, and the camaraderie of the group — English, Afrikaans, all loving it — is everything.

Kate: What makes me giggle is when one of us ends up facing the wrong way. I find myself saying the steps in bed at night. And when I hear music we dance to, my feet just seem to know what to do.

What does line dancing give you that other exercise doesn't?

Rita: It's wonderful for self-image, memory and the brain. My personal favourite is Something Stupid — and I will tell you the group is made up of nice girls who share lots of laughs. Just lekker.

Maybeth: Line dancing is the only thing that gets me out of bed twice a week. When you hear the music, your feet just move in the right direction.

Kate: It involves real teamwork — striving for the same goal, keeping an eye on one another. It thrills me to see everyone managing a difficult dance all together. Line dancing is the one thing I do each week that I don't ever want to miss.

Pauline: It's a great way to make friends.

Merryl: Good for the body and the mind.

The surprise for Dez

In September 2025, the group quietly decided to learn a new dance in secret — three months of Monday practice sessions, a routine chosen online, mastered without Dez knowing. At the final class of the year, they performed it for her. The look on her face, Kate says, made every stumble worthwhile.

“There are no mistakes, only variations.”

— Dez

- Ends -

**Line dancing at Oasis Life Clara
Anna Fontein runs weekly. Contact
the Clubhouse for details.**



ALL THE RIGHT *moves*

At the Clubhouse restaurant, the morning finds residents settling in over Bootlegger coffees and delicious breakfasts, catching up with neighbours, and making plans. The day ahead is full of possibility at Oasis Life Burgundy Estate.





The Clubhouse is the beating heart of daily life. A beautiful library invites you to lose an hour or three. The Studio hosts everything from movement classes and creative workshops to informative talks and wellness events. The Wellness Centre offers a heated indoor aerobics pool and a boutique gym. And the games room — overlooking the bowling green — is where the fun can be found.



COGNITIVE TRAINING DISGUISED AS A VERY GOOD DAY!

Bowls and pool do not look like brain training but both are precision games. They require spatial reasoning, strategic thinking, fine motor control and depth perception — the ability to read a situation, anticipate outcomes and plan several moves ahead. These are exactly the cognitive capacities worth protecting as we age, and are most responsive to regular, deliberate practice. Research consistently shows that activities combining mental challenge with social engagement produce stronger cognitive reserve than either element on its own. A game of bowls or a pool match with a neighbour you have known for years brings the banter, rivalry, and ritual of a well-executed shot, which certainly deserves celebratory cheers!

- Ends -



STILL GOING *Strong*

It doesn't look like exercise. That, it turns out, is the whole point. In The Studio at Oasis Life Burgundy Estate's Clubhouse, residents move through a Tai Chi sequence with deliberate stillness. Arms rise and fall. Weight shifts. Breath follows movement. To the uninitiated, it can look rather odd. To the researchers who have spent decades studying it, it is recommended as one of the most effective longevity practices available to older adults anywhere in the world.



Tai Chi originated in 17th century China — developed as a martial art rooted in the Taoist principle of Wu Wei, which translates roughly as effortless action or yielding rather than forcing. For centuries it was practised as philosophy as much as movement: the idea that genuine strength does not announce itself, and that the most powerful response to resistance is often to move with it rather than against it. Modern research has since confirmed that the magic of Tai Chi is as much physiological as it is philosophical.





THE STRENGTH YOU CANNOT SEE

What Tai Chi builds cannot be measured in a mirror. It works quietly — training the body's ability to sense its own position in space, to make the micro-adjustments that keep us upright, responsive and safe in daily life. This capacity, known as proprioception, is one of the first casualties of ageing and one of the primary contributors to falls. Conventional exercise does relatively little to address it. Tai Chi addresses almost nothing else.

It also builds neuromuscular coordination — the ongoing conversation between brain and body that governs every movement we make. As we age, that conversation slows and the signals become less precise. Tai Chi, with its deliberate

weight-shifting sequences and continuous demand for balance and spatial awareness, keeps the conversation going. Regular practice is associated with reduced cortisol, lower blood pressure, improved heart rate variability and better sleep quality — making it one of the most effective tools available for managing the chronic low-level stress that accelerates ageing at a cellular level.

A 2018 meta-analysis in the British Journal of Sports Medicine found that regular Tai Chi practice reduced fall risk in older adults by up to 43%.

Harvard Medical School has described it as meditation in motion — perhaps the single most accessible longevity practice available, requiring no equipment, no particular fitness level and no prior experience.

In an issue built around the argument that how we age is shaped more by what we do and how we think than by what we inherit, Tai Chi makes a quietly radical case. It asks nothing dramatic of the body. It demands no performance, no serious physical intensity. It simply asks you to slow down — deliberately, and with full attention.

- Ends -

**SALES
ENQUIRIES**

For enquiries about Oasis Life Burgundy Estate, please contact
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RAISE YOUR *voice!*

At Oasis Life Burgundy Estate's Clubhouse, a large group of residents gathers around an assortment of instruments and raises their voices together. The science confirms, joining a Sing-A-Long is one of the most powerful wellbeing practices available to people everywhere.





Group singing triggers the simultaneous release of oxytocin, endorphins and serotonin — a neurochemical combination that produces bonding, warmth and elevated mood with a speed and consistency that few other activities can match. Oxytocin, sometimes called the bonding hormone, is released specifically through synchronised activity with others, including making sound together.

Neuroscientist Stephen Porges, whose polyvagal theory has reshaped our understanding of how we connect with others, identified the vagus nerve as the pathway through which we assess safety in the presence of other people. Group singing activates this pathway and sends a biological signal that we are among our people. That sense of belonging is extremely good for our health on all levels.

Research from the Sydney Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council found that people who join a choir report faster improvements in wellbeing than those who take up other new activities. The combination of music, memory, breath control and human connection produces something that is enough to make one giddy. Looking at Gerard — arms wide, smile wider — residents with their instruments, Addy at the Clubhouse piano, and at the faces of everyone gathered around them, the community impact is evident.

Terence keeps the admin running smoothly behind the scenes. The group has performed at a Christmas Carol evening that packed the Clubhouse, pulled off a flash mob at Oktoberfest that had residents reaching for their phones, and offer a gentle presence at memorial services too. They are currently preparing for a Country & Western themed evening.

**This is joy. Uncomplicated,
and entirely contagious.**

- Ends -



**The Sing-A-Long Group meets regularly at Oasis Life Burgundy Estate.
Contact the Clubhouse for details.**



TAKE THE *Plunge*

At Oasis Life Sunningdale, residents settle into the Clubhouse with their morning coffee and various wellness classes. This is the newest Oasis Life estate — and from the moment you arrive, it feels exactly like the others: warm, modern and designed for living well.

The latest addition to Sunningdale's offering is its Wellness Centre — a heated indoor aquasize pool and boutique gym that brings the full Oasis Life wellness experience to the estate's growing community.

WHY WATER WORKS *And why lifting weights matters too*

Resistance training — whether in water or with weights — is among the most researched and substantiated interventions available for healthy ageing. Here is what the science says.

IN THE WATER

Buoyancy reduces joint load by up to 90% compared to land-based exercise — making aquatic movement uniquely accessible for those managing arthritis, joint replacements or chronic pain. At the same time, water provides significantly more resistance than air in every direction of movement, meaning every push, pull and step engages multiple muscle groups simultaneously. Regular



and consistent water aerobics helps with cardiovascular fitness, muscular endurance and strength with substantially lower injury risk than other exercises.

Warmer water helps with reduced inflammation, improved circulation and lower blood pressure. Research finds that older adults participating in regular aquatic exercise programmes shows significant improvements in balance and functional mobility.

WITH WEIGHTS

Resistance training with weights addresses the progressive decline in cardiovascular function that accelerates with age and inactivity. Regular weight-based resistance training strengthens the heart muscle, improves arterial flexibility and reduces resting blood pressure. It also improves insulin sensitivity, supports healthy metabolic function and is associated with reduced risk of type 2 diabetes — a condition whose prevalence increases significantly after 60.

Bone density responds directly to load-bearing exercise. Weight training places controlled stress on bones, stimulating the bone-forming cells that maintain density and reduce fracture risk. For those at risk of or diagnosed with osteopenia or osteoporosis, resistance training actively builds rather than merely preserves bone mass.

Together, aquatic and weight-based resistance training create a complementary programme — one that supports the cardiovascular, skeletal and muscular systems simultaneously, across every fitness level and ability.

The Wellness Centre at Oasis Life Sunningdale offers aquasize classes with the Wellness Redefined team. Contact the Clubhouse for the current schedule.

- Ends -



SALES ENQUIRIES

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UNDERSTANDING *Shadowing*



Supporting loved ones through memory care — a guide for families and caregivers. In partnership with ADASA — the Alzheimer's and Dementia Association of South Africa

At Oasis Life, supporting residents and their families through every stage of later life is central to what we do. Through our ongoing partnership with ADASA, we regularly host wellness talks and awareness initiatives that address some of the most complex and emotionally demanding aspects of the journey — including memory care. This guide addresses one of the most commonly misunderstood behaviours in memory care: shadowing.

What is shadowing?

Shadowing is when someone living with a memory condition follows their primary caregiver constantly — from room to room, rarely out of sight. This behaviour is driven by anxiety and a deep need for reassurance — a way of staying close to the one person who represents safety and familiarity in a world that can feel increasingly confusing.

Why does it happen?

Spatial awareness and short-term memory changes mean your loved one may easily lose track of where they are or where you are. You have become their anchor. Following you is their way of confirming that everything is still okay.

Recognising the signs

Physically following you from room to room. Becoming distressed when you step out of sight. Repeatedly asking where you are. Mirroring your actions or movements.

Strategies that help

Provide gentle, consistent reassurance — a calm voice, a hand on the shoulder, a familiar piece of music in the background. Predictable daily routines reduce general anxiety by making the day feel more manageable. Provide simple, purposeful activities they can do nearby — folding, sorting, leafing through a photo album, or doing a puzzle.

Gradually introduce other trusted people into their daily care, giving yourself essential breathing space to offset caregiver fatigue. Safe, gentle physical activity — a short walk, a slow movement session — can help ease restlessness.

And please, look after yourself. Taking breaks is not a luxury and it is not disloyal. It is what makes sustainable, loving care possible over the long term. Their behaviour is a symptom of their condition — not a reflection of your love or your dedication.

You are not alone

Caring for a loved one with a memory condition is one of the most demanding things a person can do — and one of the most loving. ADASA delivers support groups, resources and a community that understands this journey from the inside. Through our partnership with ADASA, Oasis Life residents and their families have direct access to that support.

Connect with your estate's Healthcare Manager to learn more, or connect with ADASA: adasa.org.za

- Ends -

Sisters Are Doing It For ~~themselves~~ OASIS LIFE

At Oasis Life, healthcare is provided by two specialist third-party providers — Medwell South Africa and TotalCare Living — each operating independently within the estates, each bringing decades of expertise in elder care. We spoke to our nursing leaders on the ground.



Sister Erika

Healthcare Manager, Medwell South Africa at Oasis Life Clara Anna Fontein

Erika did not always plan to be a nurse. She began her career as an X-ray fluorescence spectroscopist in mineral research — impressive title, lonely laboratory. The discovery that nursing combined science with people changed everything. She completed a four-year honours degree, lectured first-year nursing students and joined Medwell in 2012. Today she manages the full spectrum of healthcare at Clara Anna Fontein — from primary health care to 24-hour home-based care, palliative support and memory care. Medwell was founded in the nineties, pioneering in home nursing and ageing in place at a time when neither concept had much cultural currency.

What does having a specialist third-party provider actually mean for residents?

The two main reasons people move into a retirement community are security and access to healthcare — which is precisely why specialist expertise matters here. When a young person gets sick, it's typically one system in their body. In older people there is almost always multi-morbidity — two or more chronic conditions simultaneously. High blood pressure, coronary artery disease, osteoporosis, diabetes, a history of stroke, a tendency to fall. Everyone is unique and there is usually more than one thing going on. This requires ongoing vocational learning. The more we know, the more we can be of service.

What does your day actually look like?

No day is ever the same — and that is one of the reasons I love this work. We offer a full spectrum of services: a primary healthcare clinic, chronic condition monitoring, vaccinations, wound care, annual health assessments, home-based care from one hour a day to 24 hours, convalescent care, respite care, palliative care, memory care. When residents first move in, I do a full assessment — their health status, their medications, their functionality, what they can and cannot do. And then we monitor. Life can change overnight — through general ageing, through a diagnosis, through a fall. The goal is that when it does, nobody is facing that alone.

What do you find most meaningful about this work?

It's often the small interactions — the friendships, knowing people's families, knowing what matters to them. I find particular fulfillment in guiding families through decisions where there are no simple solutions. When is the right time for care? Should mum go into frail care? I've walked that road with many families and I genuinely value using that experience to support others through it. And end-of-life care — it is the greatest act of kindness to ease someone's suffering in their final weeks and ensure a family knows they are not walking that road alone.

If a family member looked you in the eye and asked why they should trust you with someone they love — what would you say?

The advantage of living at Oasis Life is that residents live as independently as they want while they are healthy. But should that change — and it can happen suddenly — they are not alone. Families far away can have genuine peace of mind that someone here will identify a problem, recognise a change, and make sure nothing falls through the gaps.



Sister Celente

Healthcare Manager, TotalCare Living at Oasis Life Constantia

Celente holds a four-year B.Cur degree in Nursing Science, a Master's degree in Community Mental Health Nursing, and a Postgraduate Diploma in Healthcare Management. She is currently completing a Postgraduate Diploma in Nursing Education.

Her 14 years of experience spans community health and psychiatry, primary healthcare, clinical facilitation, and management across both public and private sectors.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, she was among the first trained vaccinators at Groote Schuur Hospital. As clinical facilitator, she helped set up new wards, led staff training in protective protocols, and supported her team through one of the most demanding periods in recent healthcare history. She arrived at Oasis Life Constantia in December 2024 and found her calling immediately. TotalCare Living promotes healthy longevity through a holistic approach to care that prioritises companionship, dignity and fulfilment. For Celente, this isn't simply a mission statement — it's a vocation.

What has surprised you most about Oasis Life Constantia?

From the moment I arrived I was able to engage with residents on a deeply personal level — from their most vulnerable moments moving in, to watching them settle and flourish. I know their likes, their hobbies, who wants coffee on a rainy day and who just needs company. That closeness matters enormously — because when we know someone's history, we can provide the love and support they truly need when it counts.

You've developed a family caregiver support group. Tell us about that.

During my time here, as more residents were admitted into frail care, I became increasingly aware of caregiver strain — the burden that falls on families of people with cognitive or physical impairments. Families are often primary caregivers out of love and duty rather than any lack of resources or knowledge to manage complex conditions. The support group meets fortnightly and focuses on building security and a supportive network, educating families about dementia and Alzheimer's, developing coping strategies, and creating space for people to be genuinely heard. From June, we are collaborating monthly with ADASA — the Alzheimer's and Dementia Association of South Africa — to extend the group to the wider Constantia community. The goal is that no family should face this journey without support.

What does a typical day look like?

There is no typical day in healthcare — every day brings new adventures, challenges, moments of joy and laughter, and sometimes sadness too.

What stands out for me is ensuring continuity through routine handovers from the night team, following up on incidents and emergencies, continuously upskilling and strengthening my

fantastic nursing and carer team through in-service training, strengthening family communication and support for residents, specialist referrals and networking, and ensuring that all residents in the Healthcare Centre as well as on the estate have the care and support they need. I am essentially on call to support my team around the clock.

Being able to make a difference, provide support, hold a resident's hand in a difficult moment, reassure a family member, or add a ray of light to someone's day — that makes every day worth it. This is what turns buildings into a home with a heart.

Sister Mary-Ann

Healthcare Manager, Medwell South Africa at Oasis Life Burgundy Estate

Sister Mary-Ann has been Healthcare Manager at Oasis Life Burgundy Estate for nearly four years — and she will tell you she never expected to still be there. Her career spans 34 years and covers an extraordinary range of settings: paediatric nursing at Red Cross, trauma charge nursing, working in Saudi Arabia, HIV and TB coordination for the City of Cape Town, clinical coordination for the Department of Health, a year caring for an 83-year-old princess with dementia in the Middle East, and home-based nursing with Medwell before she took on the Burgundy Estate post in 2022. She thought she might be bored. She was anything but and now says, she feels like she's settling into the best retirement spot herself!

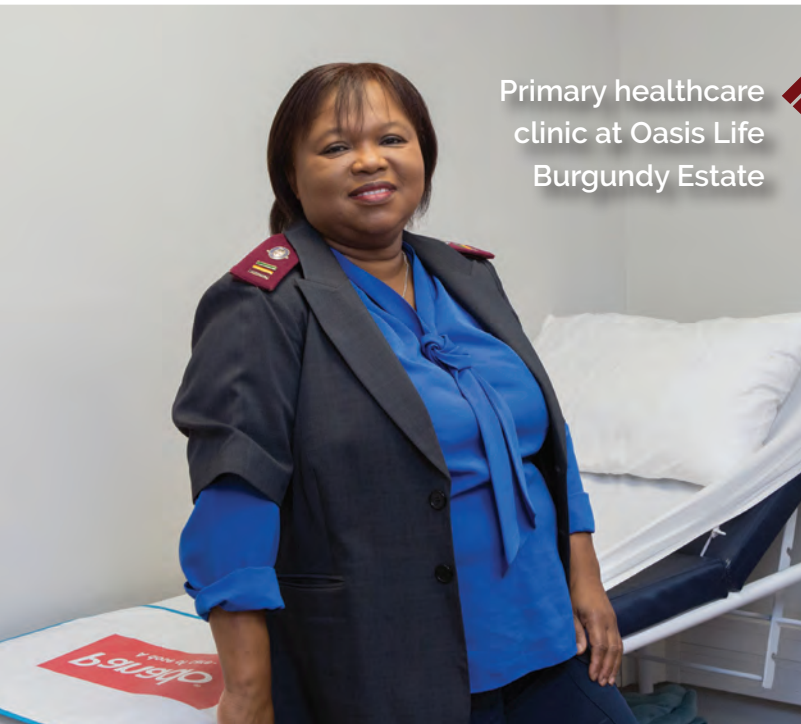
What drew you to working with older adults specifically?

I've never been someone who stays in one place too long — always looking for the next learning experience. But when I arrived at Burgundy Estate, something shifted. Most residents' children are overseas or not nearby — my nurses and I step into that gap. I'm the age many of their children would be. Caring for them reminds me of caring for my own mother and grandmother. We fill those roles for each other and build something genuinely meaningful in the process.



What do you do that goes beyond clinical care?

The pink chair is always open. Sometimes residents just come in to say they don't feel like themselves — and we have a little chat. Sometimes I make time for coffee in the middle of a busy schedule because that moment matters more than whatever else is on the list. I also walk families through the hardest parts — helping adult children who have always known their parent as the strong one in the room navigate what it means when the roles reverse. Many of them don't know how. That is a big part of what we do here.



Primary healthcare
clinic at Oasis Life
Burgundy Estate



Hannah came to nursing by accident. UWC phoned her a month into the academic year, noted she had done exceptionally well in biology, offered her a bursary and gave her until the following day to decide. She said yes and never looked back. Her four-year degree covered general nursing, psychiatry, community health and midwifery. She developed a particular passion for palliative care under a doctor who mentored her through COVID — training her in end-of-life care at a time when that knowledge was urgently needed. She arrived at Oasis Life Sunningdale recently and already knows who prefers their tea strong and who will stop her in the street to ask whether she has found somewhere to live closer to the estate.

Sister Hannah

Healthcare Manager, TotalCare Living
at Oasis Life Sunningdale



What do you bring to this role?

My concern. I cannot go to sleep at night knowing that someone is not safe, happy and as healthy as possible in their current situation. I will not sleep. I always go beyond as much as I possibly can. And I believe strongly in treating the whole person — not just what we see in front of us. Are they eating well? Do they have enough support at home? Are they struggling with tasks they haven't mentioned? That holistic view is what I bring every day.

What has struck you most about the residents here?

Our residents care as much about us as we do about them. I check on them — and they check on me. That's very special!

- Ends -



THE POET ON THE *Patio*

Every morning, Jeanette takes her coffee to the patio of her home on 9th Avenue at Oasis Life Burgundy Estate. She sits among her potted olive trees, she prays, she watches the sun rise, and she writes. It is a ritual that suits her perfectly — quiet, unhurried and entirely her own.

When Jeanette turned her pen to life at Oasis Life, the result was this. We think it says everything.

Find more of Jeanette's poetry on Instagram: @rhyme_or_reasonn

Oasis

BY JEANETTE AURET

It takes a village to raise a child
that's what I hear them say
At Oasis life we have a village that
cares for us each day

I'm grateful for the home I have
at Oasis Burgundy
For neighbours who are also friends
when we meet up in the street

We chat and laugh and talk about the day
and what we did
Drink coffee in the clubhouse
where we sit down and we eat

There's always a friendly face
who will greet you on your way
Who will ask about your health
and will listen to what you say

And when you're ill,
there's always someone near who you can call
For medical attention or for
food brought to your door

There's so many activities
you simply can't get bored
Line dancing and Thai chi,
Pilates and much more

There's music, song, and laughter,
and games for me and you
we play bowls, we play cards,
there's always something to do

The staff are like our family
So helpful and polite
They're always there to lend a hand
and help to do things right

Peaceful and tranquil
is how we live our lives
Occasionally we shake things up
Laughing and drinking wine

If you're looking for a friendly place
that you can call your home
Look no further than Oasis Life
Where you'll never feel alone

FIRE IT UP!

The best ideas start around good company — and at Oasis Life Constantia, one of the best began during a rugby match screened in the Clubhouse. Monique ran with it, and what started as a simple get-together has become one of the most loved monthly events on the estate.

Residents RSVP, arrive with their own labelled meat and contribute a salad, side dish or dessert to a shared buffet table. Braai Masters Rob, Ray and Rob take care of the fires. The Clubhouse team supplies the wood and handles set-up and clean-up — a contribution residents honour with a collective tip at the end of the evening.



"From day one, the braai created the perfect opportunity to meet, connect and form lasting friendships. Add the legendary skills of the Braai Masters, wonderfully creative salads and irresistible desserts — and you have all the ingredients for a truly special occasion," says Marilyn.

"We started it to recreate something many residents enjoyed before moving to Oasis Life — a relaxed braai with good food and great company," say Rob and Monique. "It has become a wonderful way to make new friends."



Helen and Kit
sum it up perfectly:
**“It’s sheer
Monique magic.”**

The Bring & Braai runs
monthly at Oasis Life
Constantia. Contact
the Clubhouse for
details.



COME ON IN!

The opening of the Oasis Life Sunningdale Clubhouse was a celebration in every sense — a moment that marked not just the completion of a beautiful space, but the beginning of something far more meaningful.

At Oasis Life, the Clubhouse is designed to offer a luxurious and fun extension of home — where community gathers naturally, where friendships form over coffee, and laughter spills out of the restaurant and into the early evening.

Oasis Life's CEO Glyn Taylor and the Rabie Property Developers' leadership joined the full Oasis Life team to raise a glass to what had been built — and to the residents who are making it their own.



DESIGNED FOR *Living*

SMART LIVING AT YOUR FINGERTIPS

At Oasis Life, technology works quietly in the background — so residents can focus fully on living in the foreground. Two innovations are making daily life simpler, safer and more connected than ever.



The Oasis Life community mobile app is a single, intuitive platform that puts everything residents need right in their pocket. Designed specifically for estate living, it removes the friction from daily life so that more time is spent enjoying it.



WHAT IT DOES:

Stay informed:

Browse estate updates, news and announcements as they happen. No more missed notices or second-hand information.

Book and RSVP:

View and book upcoming events and activities directly through the app. Your social calendar, sorted.

Submit and track requests:

Log maintenance, landscaping or other help desk requests and track their progress in real time — from submission through to completion.

Manage your visitors:

Invite guests by sharing a secure pin for gate entry. Pre-book delivery drivers. Set up regular visitor access for family and friends.

Gate access:

Open your gate remotely with a single tap. No keys, no fobs, no fumbling.

**Access important documents:**

The resident handbook, community policies, circulars and updates are all stored and accessible whenever you need them.

Connect with management:

Contact the estate management team directly through the app. Fast, simple and fully logged.

Register domestic workers and service providers:

Manage access for regular workers quickly and securely.

Community gallery and classifieds:

Browse community photos, post items for sale or give away, and stay connected with your neighbours.



The app is available on iOS, Android and Huawei.

Ask at your Clubhouse reception for download details.

THE SMART HEALTH WATCH

In partnership with EQiGate, Oasis Life's Smart Health Watch is a discreet, wearable device that ensures help is never more than a button press away. Connected to a 24/7 care coordination centre staffed by trained agents and healthcare professionals, a single alert triggers an immediate, tailored response — from notifying a nursing sister to arranging emergency assistance. Families are updated instantly and every step is logged in real time.

Unlike a traditional panic button, the Smart Health Watch goes wherever residents go. Built-in GPS tracking means that whether you are at home, walking the estate or travelling across the country, coordinated care can reach you quickly. Over a recent two-month period, the system managed over 550 verified emergencies across senior communities nationwide — resolving more than 80% on-site without hospitalisation. Resident dignity protected, unnecessary medical costs avoided and families reassured.

Peace of mind should never depend on being in the right place at the right time.



GLOWING
Older



What *blue zones* can teach us about *food, longevity* and *pleasure*

BY PNINA FENSTER

It doesn't take a special qualification to know that supplements and systems promising wellbeing and longevity are in high demand. The evidence is clear to see on our screens, social media feeds and the shelves of any health and beauty store. But even if these pills and powders have their place, the real solutions may lie in *something far simpler — and far more enjoyable.*



You wouldn't normally turn to fantasy classic *The Hobbit* for insights on the link between what we eat, how we eat it, and longevity. But there's undeniable wisdom in the words of the novel's king Thorin Oakenshield when he declares, "If more of us valued food and cheer above hoarded gold, it would be a merrier world."

And not just a merrier world, but also a healthier one. For despite the ever-growing focus on vitamins, supplements, and biohacking for vitality and positive ageing, science increasingly shows that the keys to that kingdom lie in something far more nourishing on all levels — something that lies at the heart of particular communities.

WISDOM FROM THE *BLUE ZONES*

When researcher and National Geographic Fellow Dan Buettner first began exploring areas where people live significantly longer, healthier lives than average elsewhere, he and his team used blue circles to mark those longevity hotspots on a map. In the 20 years since then, what have come to be known as Blue Zones have captivated, shaped and informed science, inspired lifestyle medicine research and influenced wellbeing initiatives around the world.

And it's not surprising that places like Japan's Okinawa, Italy's Sardinia, Greece's Ikaria, Costa Rica's Nicoya Peninsula and the USA's Loma Linda have captured global attention. Who wouldn't be intrigued by places where life expectancy often reaches the late 90s, heart disease, diabetes and certain cancers are significantly lower, and happiness and satisfaction well into old age are significantly higher than other regions?

"The question was simple," says Buettner.

"How do we help people live longer, better lives?"

What the Blue Zones revealed in answer to that question was what Buettner describes as **"remarkably consistent lifestyle patterns."**

THE TASTE OF *WELLBEING*

"The world's longest-living people don't diet or count calories. They eat simple, whole foods in moderation," notes Buettner.

On the table in the Blue Zones: Uncomplicated, largely plant-based meals with an emphasis on seasonal vegetables, beans, whole grains, nuts and legumes. Meat is rare, produce is often grown in personal or community gardens and processed foods are minimal.

Of course there are regional variations — olive oil as the primary fat in Mediterranean regions, more sweet potatoes, tofu and vegetables and small amounts of fish in Okinawa, plenty of beans and corn in Nicoya. But all of these places share the common thread of whole, minimally processed, plant-forward diets.

And, as compelling as these findings were in themselves, Buettner's research revealed another crucial element. It's not only what's on

the plate that promotes a long, positive life but also the way that a meal is consumed.

"People in Blue Zones don't just eat. They savour, socialise and slow down," says Buettner. All of which brings us to another powerful factor for longevity-promoting eating: the state of mind we bring to the table. Harvard psychologist and mindfulness pioneer Ellen Langer has shown in decades of work that our mindsets and the extent to which we pay full attention to the present moment can directly influence our physical outcomes.

That principle applies quite literally to the way in which people eat in Blue Zones — slowly, attentively and with mindfulness, which is shown to improve digestion, increase satiety and help prevent weight issues.

WHY *SHARED* MEALS MATTER

We're all familiar with movies in which shared meals change everything about how people feel, from their emotions to their bodies. Think of *Babette's Feast*, *Eat Drink Man Woman*, *Big Night*, *Julie & Julia*, *Chef*, *The Hundred-Foot Journey*, *Burnt* and *Soul Food*.

Deliciously, it turns out that science backs the cinematic sentiment. Numerous studies on socialisation, happiness and health have consistently found a powerful connection between social eating, longevity and greater physical and emotional wellbeing. And all of that is exemplified in the Blue Zones tradition of collective eating, whether that means Ikaria's long communal lunches, Sardinia's family feasts or Okinawa's moai friend circles.

The good news:

Research suggests that social eating can be as simple as sharing a meal with just one other person and that even just two or three shared meals per week bring noticeable gains in connection and wellbeing.



THE *HAPPINESS* FACTOR

In direct contrast to regimes based on supplements, restrictive diets and serious biohacking, the Blue Zone approach to living is low on guilt and high on simple daily pleasures. Think of straight-out-of-the-garden vegetables, fresh bread with olive oil, homemade soup. And pleasure is widely underrated as a biological regulator — a mechanism which not only feels good but also improves hormonal balance and digestion. As for a moderate amount of wine as part of a balanced lifestyle which has been shown to improve heart health and reduce stress, that's a natural part of life in Blue Zone Mediterranean regions like Sardinia and Ikaria.

THE POWER OF *PURPOSE, CONNECTION* AND *ATTITUDE*

Ikigai — a Japanese concept meaning 'reason for being' — is the final key in the Blue Zone approach which has benefits no pill or potion can reproduce. That connection to purpose, also known as plan de vida in Nicoya, makes all the difference to our sense of self, our contribution to the world around us and our wellbeing.

So much so that it's linked to lower blood pressure, reduced risk for stroke, depression and cardiovascular disease, and greater mental resilience.

Combine that with the longevity-promoting effects of strong social ties — and Blue Zones communities tend to maintain lifelong bonds — and you have a recipe for a life well lived: vital, resilient, purposeful, joyful and, as The Hobbit's King Thorin would say, "a merrier world".



HOW TO CREATE YOUR OWN *MINI-BLUE ZONE*

- Start with a **few plant-based** and **whole-grain meals** a week and build from there. Some ideas: lentil soup, chickpea stew, minestrone, grains, vegetable salads, stir-fries, roasts and casseroles.
- **Reduce red meat** to once a week or less and consume fish in moderation — two or three times a week and ideally oily fish like sardines, mackerel or salmon.
- **Cook from scratch** whenever possible, reduce preservatives, and buy **seasonal produce** at local markets.
- **Grow your own vegetable** if you can. Even something as small as a tray on a balcony or a pot of herbs on the windowsill can bring a delicious touch to your day and your dinner.
- **Replace processed snacks** with nuts, fruit or yoghurt.
- Use **olive oil** as a primary fat.
- **Eat slowly**, experience the taste, texture, aroma and look of the ingredients, and **make a point of enjoying the meal**.
- Prioritise **shared meals** where possible and at the very least, schedule a weekly shared meal whether that means Monday pot-luck, Friday dinner, Saturday brunch or Sunday lunch.
- Enjoy your meals **at a table** rather than in front of screens, take time to chat, incorporate small rituals like candles and serve courses slowly.
- If you live alone, **give yourself plenty of pleasure** by setting a pretty table, having a lovely view or eating outdoors — all of which help to lower stress, improve digestion and increase satisfaction. Also consider starting a **supper club with friends** in which you take turns to act as host.





THE LONGEVITY- BOOSTING POWER OF **POSITIVE SELF-TALK**

The way we speak to ourselves may be one of the most powerful influences on how we live — and how we age.

—
BY PNINA FENSTER

Some decades ago, when author and speaker Marianne Williamson was establishing her career in the personal development arena, she shared an insight which both playfully and powerfully expressed the mind-body connection between our self-talk and our experiences of ourselves and our world.

"I realised I was worrying about something," Williamson recalled. "And so, for reassurance, I told myself, 'Don't worry, it's only in your head.' Then I thought, 'That's exactly where it is... in my head. The very worst place for it to be.'" What she intuited then is now supported by a growing body of research as the fields of neuroscience, psychology

and psychoneuroimmunology increasingly find that far from being disconnected from our bodies and lives, what happens 'in our heads' is a dynamic interface which affects our perception, emotions, immune and metabolic processes, cognitive performance and longevity.

THE VOICE IN YOUR HEAD: **FRIEND OR FOE?**

"Self-talk is the endless stream of unspoken thoughts which run through your head," says Ethan Kross, professor of psychology and management and author of *Chatter*. "These thoughts can be **conscious or unconscious**, and they influence **how you interpret and respond to the world.**"



If you're one of the people whose internal dialogue is consistently balanced and constructive, you belong to the fortunate minority, notes neurocoach and researcher Dr Simone Boer. For the rest of us, a large component of internal dialogue is a repeating loop of self-criticism and judgment. And yet, Boer notes, this habitual mental script may have nothing to do with actual ability, competence or reality and everything to do with messages we absorbed in childhood.

"Beliefs and perceptions are formed from a young age," she says. "And many of them arise from the brain's early attempts to create safety in an unpredictable world. We might, for example, develop an understanding that a painful event is somehow our fault because it's easier for a child to accept this than face the overwhelming idea that our world might be unstable. And even when we outgrow the need for these thoughts in adulthood, they remain as limiting beliefs which influence how we see ourselves and our capabilities."

In the case of self-directed ageism, that internal messaging may show up as thoughts like 'I'm too old for that group, role or opportunity.' 'The time has passed for a new enterprise, relationship, hobby, or creative project,' or "People like me can't start over and succeed.' Fear of failure, vulnerability and judgment exacerbate the pattern. Media and advertising add to the pressure with narratives that tell us we're falling short in all sorts of ways. And external social messaging plays its part with cultural cues like 'Women should dress their age,' 'Men slow down after 50,' 'Creative careers are for the young,' and 'Success happens early'.

Adding to the impact, neuroscience and behavioural medicine show that fearful or negative self-messaging primes the brain and nervous system to increase cortisol and inflammatory cytokines, thus fuelling a cycle of potential physical challenges and even more avoidance, disconnection, shame and fear along with a greater risk of depression and anxiety.



Happily, the upside of all of this is just as powerful — and far more exciting.

For, in just the same way that negative self-talk has negative effects, positive self-talk has its own measurable and beneficial biological consequences — from supporting neuroplasticity, improving emotional regulation and lowering baseline stress to enhancing immune response to illness and even promoting easier recovery.

Most significantly, landmark studies are showing, our inner dialogue may directly influence our longevity. "Positive attitudes about ageing can add years to your life," says Becca Levy, an epidemiologist and professor whose research at the Yale School of Public Health found that individuals with positive age-related beliefs live on average seven and a half years longer than people with negative perceptions and also that those with negative beliefs were twice as likely to experience cardiovascular complications and were at greater risk of Alzheimer's-related brain changes.

"What we perceive and how we perceive it are guided by our priors — meaning our beliefs about how the world works."

Says Wolf Singer, a neuroscientist and former director at the Max Planck Institute for Brain Research. When those priors are calming, empowering and optimistic, our nervous system often follows suit, enabling us to develop greater emotional resilience and the ability to view stressors as challenges rather than disasters. All of which supports healthier ageing pathways.

And one of the most striking aspects of the brain-body field is the finding that even telomeres (the protective caps at the end of chromosomes) are affected by our inner life. In a 2019 study of adults aged 45–85, researchers found that participants who scored high in qualities like optimism and active coping had significantly longer telomeres — a known marker of cellular health and biological ageing.



HOW TO REWIRE YOUR INNER VOICE FOR LONGEVITY

Dr. Kristin Neff's 6-step self-compassion practice is designed to help shift our inner dialogue from self-critical and punitive to balanced, optimistic and resilient. It isn't about ignoring challenges or simply thinking happy thoughts. It's about choosing a mindset which responds to difficulties with clarity and calm and a self-perception of worthiness and ability.

1. Choose the Process that Appeals to You

The self-compassion practice works with journaling, quiet reflection or speaking aloud to yourself or a trusted advisor. Choose what's easiest and most natural to you.

2. Pay Attention to the Way You Speak to Yourself & About Others

What tone do you take with yourself, especially when you feel vulnerable or you've made a mistake? Is your self-talk cold, judgmental, harsh, disappointed or angry? Would you berate a friend or stranger like this? And can you ascertain where this voice originates and whether it reminds you of someone from your past? Take time to write about this or just note it. No judging, just recognition.

3. Be Compassionate

Respond kindly to your inner critic instead of trying to shut it down. For example, you may tell it, "I know you're trying to help, but this is hurting. What's the deeper message here?" This practice may feel awkward, but it can inspire important revelations, and it makes space for a new, kinder inner voice to emerge.



4. Reframe with Kindness

What would a wise, compassionate friend say to you and what would their tone be? Make a point of replacing blame and harsh judgments with observations which are practical, grounded and supportive. An example: "You aren't a failure because you missed that meeting. You've been exhausted. Let's try getting to bed earlier so you feel more rested tomorrow."

5. Bring in a Physical Gesture

Gently place your hand on your heart or give yourself a hug to anchor the new self-talk somatically. Soothing gestures activate the release of oxytocin, a hormone which promotes bonding, trust and connection, even if the feelings aren't strong when you first do this.

6. And Repeat...

Run through this practice at least once a week over a period of several weeks to anchor self-compassion which underpins your resilience, healing, happiness and longevity. By making your inner voice more of a support and coach and less of a critic, you'll lighten your mental load and bolster your health span.

WHEN TO SEEK HELP

If negative self-talk feels chronic, uncontrollable or overwhelming, see a specialist to explore whether this is an underlying condition such as anxiety or depression. Trauma also creates self-protective patterns which often sound like "I should stay small." "I should avoid risks." "It is safer not to try." If these patterns feel persistent or constraining, get trauma-informed coaching or therapy.

WANT TO LIVE LONGER, LIVE BETTER? TAKE BREAKS!

BY PNINA FENSTER

In a world which extols productivity and momentum, taking a break can feel indulgent. But as growing evidence suggests, regular, deep rest not only restores our bodies, minds and emotions, but may also hold positive answers for living longer.

If ever there was a magazine brand media insiders aspired to it was Vanity Fair at its height. A pop and cultural icon as famous for its annual post-Oscars party as its heady mix of glamorous high-society pieces and potent journalism, the glossy title sold out on newsstands and made a fortune for its owners. So, as you can imagine, I was thrilled when the headline speaker at an industry event I was attending turned out to be Graydon Carter, the magazine's long-established editor-in-chief.

What brilliant insights would he share, what inspiration? You could almost feel the anticipation sweep through the room when the facilitator posed a question everyone — from Vogue editors in vertiginous heels to sharp-minded advertising directors — was hoping Mr Carter would answer.

'What do you think is the key ingredient for a successful career?' Would it be a stand out talent, guideline for discipline or connections, work secret he'd

learned from a gifted mentor? We waited for the response as Carter ruminated. Then he lifted his head, with its trademark bouffant, and made his pronouncement.

"A good sofa," he said. "Something that allows for a nice, comfortable daytime nap or just lying down to do nothing."

It wasn't, to say the least, the answer anyone expected. Particularly in a business where deadlines, competition and workaholism were the order of the day and night. And yet, as with many of his other principles for success, Carter was right. It's wonderful to achieve precious goals and to contribute to society. But the counter-intuitive corollary is to achieve our goals and be in good enough shape to enjoy them, we need our own version of Carter's office sofa — regular rest which is defined by physician, researcher and author Dr Sandra Dalton-Smith as "a biological state in which body and brain shift from effort to repair, restoring energy, consolidating memory and recalibrating stress systems."



THE COST OF CONSTANT DOING AND THE VALUE OF REST

From 'don't waste time' to 'don't be lazy,' our culture applauds busyness, social media glorifies success (even if we know it isn't all authentic), news cycles speed up by the day, and there's a widespread expectation that whatever our life stage or circumstances, we should be constantly plugged in and responsive. Combine that with individual pressures and the ups and downs everyone experiences, and you have a recipe for the kind of stress which affects everything from heart health to relationships — and an incentive to prioritise rest as essential for wellbeing.

"Rest really is a matter of life and death," says Dr. Jamie Richards, founder of Life By Design Inc. "It boosts the immune system, enhances memory, stimulates creativity, strengthens mental health, lowers anxiety, blood pressure and diabetic risk, sharpens attention, improves emotional regulation and normalises the inflammatory process which lies at the core of many chronic health conditions."

Just in case that weren't enough, he adds, "Rest also supports metabolism, benefits the skin and, most importantly, feels amazing."

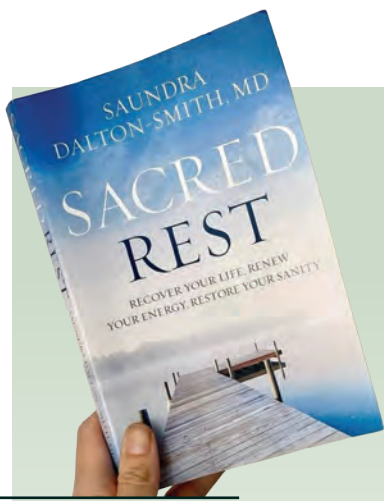
THE **REST-LONGEVITY** LINK

When we slow down with intention, we intuitively sense something which is now suggested by a growing level of research:

Practices which calm and balance us mentally and emotionally also have measurable effects in our bodies.

Research by Alexandra Crosswell, a specialist in stress, and Elissa Epel, psychiatry professor and author of *The Telomere Effect*, suggests that what the studies define as deep rest is associated with healthier biological ageing at a cellular level. Similarly, research in the field of stress biology, including work by mitochondrial scientist Martin Picard, suggests that restorative states may support cellular repair processes.

"The rushed pace of modern life without sufficient restoration is a formula for accelerating ageing," says Epel. "By contrast, deep rest is not simply the absence of activity, but an active biological state which supports repair, resilience and longevity." Her deep rest recommendations: Meditation, yoga, time in nature, prayer, conscious breathing and rhythmic group activities such as chanting, drumming circles and synchronised movement practices like tai chi.



THE EIGHT STAGES OF REST

Dr Sandra Dalton-Smith identifies different types of rest in her book *Sacred Rest: Recover Your Life, Renew Your Energy, Restore Your Sanity*.

01

PASSIVE PHYSICAL REST

Includes "the body's most basic forms of restoration" — seven to nine hours of nightly sleep and 20- to 30-minute naps during the day.

02

ACTIVE PHYSICAL REST

Involves "gentle movement that improves circulation without strain. Think stretching, yoga or walking daily." Even massage can be part of that prescription.

03

MENTAL REST

This means pausing every 60 to 90 minutes to give yourself five to 10 minutes of screen-free time, slow breathing or jotting down lingering thoughts to clear mental load.

04

SENSORY REST

It's about simple switch-offs such as closing your eyes for a minute in the middle of the day or turning off electronics at night.

05

CREATIVE REST

Encompasses exposure to nature and all forms of beauty, from environments to art and music.

06

EMOTIONAL REST

Requires "the freedom to express how you truly feel," says Dalton-Smith. "Prioritise relationships where you can be authentic, reduce people-pleasing and schedule regular emotional check-ins."

07

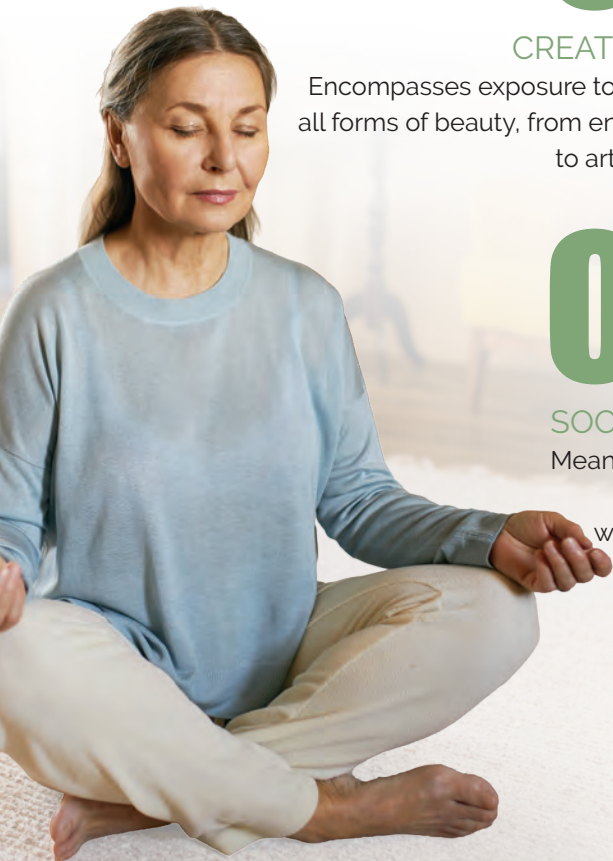
SOCIAL REST

Means balancing social time with solitude.

08

SPIRITUAL REST

Dr Sandra's final step and it involves engaging in something "greater than yourself", be it prayer, reflection, meditation or community involvement and connection.



HOW TO BUILD REST INTO DAILY LIFE

“Almost everything will work again if you unplug it for a few minutes, including you.”

Says Anne Lamott, an author known for works on writing, faith and life. For some people, that unplugging involves walking or gardening; for others, it's meditation, chanting or prayer. You may benefit from singing, feel restored in nature, or you may find calm in creative tasks ranging from sewing to painting. Similarly, rest can be solitary or shared. The only goal is to consistently do what feels good to you.

- Whatever your other choices, **prioritise sleep as a non-negotiable**. Maintain consistent hours, stop screen time an hour before bed, and create a calm pre-sleep routine and sleep-enhancing environment. If you have persistent sleep issues, consult a professional.
- Create a **10- to 20-minute break for stillness every day**. Relax on the sofa, look out the window, read, do some gentle stretching or just sit quietly. Research in cognitive psychology shows that doing this regularly can significantly reduce stress hormones, reset attention and improve mood.
- Find **relaxation techniques** you enjoy — meditating, praying, gardening, walking, music, reading, deep breathing, a pampering bath — and schedule them in your diary.
- If you **enjoy the energy of a group**, sign up for a choir, drumming circle or chanting collective.
- **Activate your creative and visual right brain** by drawing, doodling, arranging flowers, journalling, photography, cooking, crafting or playing music.
- Include **evening rituals** like dimmed lighting, candles, quiet reading or gentle music to cue your body and mind to shift from day into night and a calm state.

HOW TO TURN TWO MINUTES INTO A RESET THAT LASTS FOR HOURS

One of Crosswell's key recommendations for experiencing deep rest is something which can be easily done in almost no time at all — something which has been used since ancient times. Slow, measured breathing. Extensive research including studies in journals like *Frontiers in Psychology* confirms that just a few minutes of slow, conscious breathing helps to switch off the stress response, calm the parasympathetic nervous system, improve digestion and encourage muscular and mental relaxation as well as inspire a growing sense of ease, peace and connection. Try one of these easy exercises, adjusting the count to what works for you. Repeat each cycle for eight or more rounds.

VAGUS BREATHING: Inhale for a count of three, four or whatever feels comfortable, hold for the same count, and exhale for double the count.

BOX BREATHING: Inhale for four, hold for four, exhale for four, hold for four.





DOES MY BOOK LOOK *smart?*

No spoilers, but we can't wait to hear what you think of these new reads recommended by **Danielle Weakley**.

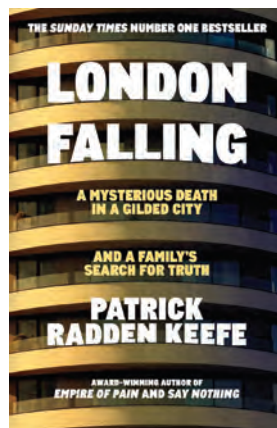
 Follow her book-loving Instagram for more
@doesmybooklooksmart



WILD THINGS NEVER DIE

BY SALLY ANDREW

Grab your koeksusters, Tannie Maria is back! And she is going undercover with her fiancé, Detective Henk Kannemeyer to the Karoo Wilderness Reserve to save the succulents from being poached. Of course someone gets murdered.



LONDON FALLING

BY PATRICK RADDEN KEEFE

Investigative journalist Radden Keefe's latest narrative non-fiction constructs the story that led up to the death of London teenager Zac Brettler in 2019. As always his book makes for fascinating reading – Brettler, pretending to be the son of a dead Russian oligarch, plunged to his death from a luxury Thames high-rise.



THE ENDING WRITES ITSELF

BY EVELYN CLARKE

Six authors are invited to a private Scottish island to compete to write the ending of a famous deceased author's unfinished novel. The challenge quickly turns deadly but I can never resist a locked room mystery! And the characters are all so good!



THE VIOLIN MAKER'S SECRET

BY EVIE WOODS>

What do a baggage claim agent, a retired teacher and an appraiser have in common? Nothing but the search for an old violin's mysterious origins. I am always a fan of historical fiction and this one offers a dash of magic too.



ON MYSTIC LAKE

BY KRISTIN HANNAH

When Annie's daughter leaves for boarding school and her husband confesses to an affair, she retreats to the quiet home of her childhood in a remote lakeside town. Here, she is reunited with her first love and just when life looks like it might be healing her, it up-ends her once more. As always, Hannah dishes a super-emotional read



THE GIRL WITH THE SUITCASE

BY LESLEY PEARSE

If you're a fan of Pearse, you'll love this one – a case of mistaken war-time identity that spirals... After being injured in an air raid shelter, Mary is mistakenly handed back a suitcase, a wad of cash and a ticket to Ireland to claim an inheritance that's not hers.

KIDS, WAIT TILL YOU HEAR THIS

BY LIZA MINNELLI

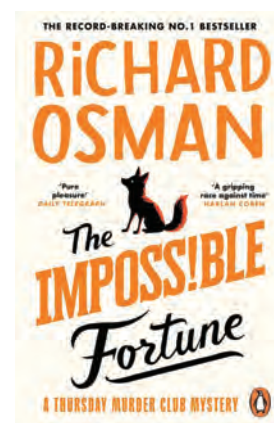
Liza Minnelli turns 80 this year, so you can only imagine how chock-full of anecdotes and gossip this memoir is, recounting her start in showbiz as "the original nepo baby" to the highs and lows that follows. It's a tell-all in the truest sense!



RORY

BY ALAN SHIPNUCK

Subtitled The Heartache and Triumph of Golf's Most Human Superstar, this truly encapsulates the book as it chronicles the highs and lows of this talented, popular, superstar player's golf legacy. Rory McIlroy fans will love it – although it might not improve your golf game!



THE IMPOSSIBLE FORTUNE

BY RICHARD OSMAN

The Thursday Murder Club's cosy crimes are utterly irresistible to me! This is the crew's fifth mystery so you can expect the usual hilarity, nosiness, sleuthing and getting up to no good amongst the octogenarian set. All while also planning a wedding!



THE DOGS OF VIVO

BY SVEN AXELRAD

Both Durbanite Sven Axelrad and his books are cool. This is his fourth and it examines the friendship between Art, Maggie and Felix who spend their time at the Mean Monsoon bar, drinking, loving and dreaming.

THE RISE OF THE OLDER INFLUENCER *and why the internet is paying attention*

Older voices are building some of the most engaged, loyal and joyful audiences on the internet. Not despite their age, but because of it.



JENNY LE ROUX | @jennyaleroux

One of our Ripple cover stars, this former Fair Lady editor and De Grendel fan, Jenny Le Roux, launched her online fashion store at 80. She built a global customer base in the process. Inclusive, elegant and completely age-agnostic, her store proves that great style has no expiry date and no geographic boundary.

DR KAYE CLEAVE | @ageingdisgracefully_

Dr Kaye Cleave does later life entirely on her own terms — with wit, warmth and a refreshing refusal to behave as expected. Her handle says everything. She started her fitness journey later in life and you would never believe it looking at what she gets up to on her feed.



ARI SETH COHEN | @advanced_style

For fifteen years, New York photographer Ari Seth Cohen has documented the most stylish older adults on the streets of the world's great cities. His Advanced Style project — blog, book and documentary — rests on one conviction: the most interesting dressers are often the ones society has stopped looking at.

NICK WOOSTER | @nickwooster

Silver-haired, impeccably tailored and fearless, Nick Wooster's career spanning Ralph Lauren and Calvin Klein gave him an eye his followers trust completely.



LYN SLATER | @iconaccidental

At 61, university professor Lyn Slater started a blog after failing to find fashion content for women like her. She is now a global name in the style-at-every-age conversation. An audience will find you when you have something real to say.

**FOLLOW THEM.
BE INSPIRED.**

Join our community! For more inspired living, make sure you are following us on Instagram: @oasisliferetire

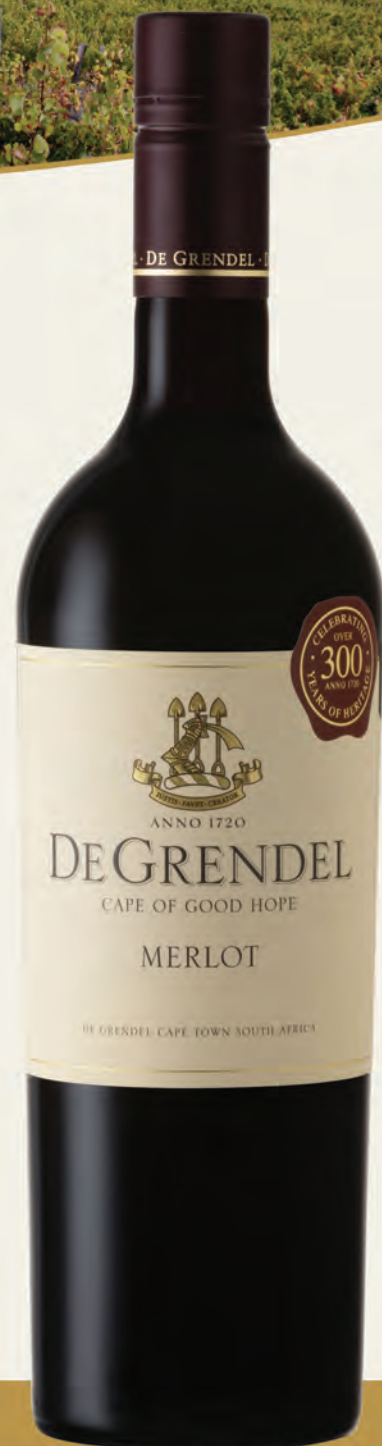


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