

FIT FOR LIFE with Carol Westmorland

Lunch tastes better, sunshine, with a bit of vitamin D

If I told you the English Rose is a blue/red and the peachiest of you out there are red/orange you may be forgiven for wondering what I am referring to.

If I then went on to say that ravishing redheads will be just that, reds, you may be starting to grasp what I am referring to.

I, as a yellow/orange am in contrast to my sisters and niece Jemima who are blue/red.

Confused? Let me explain. In the wonderful Nineties I spent some glorious years working as a Saturday girl in the truly scrumptious Dickens & Jones department store in their beauty department.

It was all glitz and glamour. I would spend many a happy hour drenching myself in fragrance and experimenting with colour. Under very bright lights we were encouraged to wear make-up to stop any of us looking washed out. The ladies I worked with were groomed to within an inch of their lives and to this day I warm to that old fashioned glamour.

During those years I found myself fascinated by a new concept and a brand that today is very well known. They colour-matched foundations to skin colour.

Queues would form whilst I performed my magic. It revolutionised make-up and I can still remember how to find a perfect match.

I was always rather delighted to be a yellow/orange. My skin colour has a yellow tinge that gives me a year round colour. I have an enduring love affair with sunshine and it is at this time of year that I am spellbound. Autumn days always feel very special.

Research now shows that young women



who do not get enough vitamin D are at greater risk of high blood pressure when they get older. Those who get too little of the 'sunshine vitamin' in their 30s are three times more likely to have raised blood pressure – hypertension – within 15 years.

As we enter autumn, and with winter approaching, many of us do not get enough vitamin D because of the dark winter days and the number of hours spent working indoors.

To keep a light colour all year long I use body and face moisturiser with a tint which works really well for me. Even so, I also ensure that on sunny days I do not cover up. It feels too good for that.

Just 10–15 minutes outdoors without sunscreen, two or three times a week, is thought to be enough to get the recommended dose.

Vitamin D is naturally created by the body when it is exposed to sunshine. It strengthens bones, cuts the risk of cancer and may slow ageing.

An al fresco lunch is all it would take. I'm always surprised to see lunch being eaten in cars whilst I cycle by. The countryside is awash with memorial benches placed in spots someone once adored. There really is no excuse and in my belief lunch always tastes better with a sprinkling of vitamin D.

Carol Westmorland lives in the Eden Valley. She is a Cycling Time Trials national champion, clocking up 445 miles in 24 hours. She also teaches pilates. www.pilates-cumbria.co.uk

LIFE COACH with Marion Dunlop

Time to give yourself a break – and think positive

Do you ever reflect on what's been and say 'If only...'? Two little words that can hold so much meaning linked with regret, lost ambition, midlife crisis, guilt or a need for earlier learning.

Hindsight is a wonderful thing and if we had the life experience we have now back then, of course our path through life might have been different.

Or would it? What if you needed your experiences back there to allow you to be who you are now?

Reflection is good if it allows us to take positive learning about ourselves from the past. No matter how tough or challenging situations have been in the past you have grown in your own

strength by going through them.

Give yourself that credit. Use these resources and insight to look forward positively. We're on the planet to learn, live, love and be fulfilled in whatever way is right for us. Part of that is learning to be comfortable with positive beliefs about yourself – not getting tied in to regrets and maybes.

The joy of becoming an adult is that you can make your own sense of who you are, rather than needing to be told by others all the time. That means you can change – and choose – to let go of beliefs that are now limiting you.

We all have a choice to be positive. Research shows that a positive attitude

makes a big difference to our health, energy and self belief. November 4 is National Stress Awareness Day and this year's theme is 'Stressing the Positives'.

For at least one day, be good to yourself, congratulate yourself on anything successful that you've achieved no matter how small.

Stop apologising unnecessarily and be aware of your internal 'chat' – make it positive. Then notice how you feel and if you like the change, allow being positive to become a habit.



Marion Dunlop is a Carlisle-based life coach and therapist www.cumbriatherapies.com