

FAMILY ONE

E-ZINE

ISSUE 1



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CHANGE

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THE Super Squish STORY



EMMA LE ROUX

It is rare to find a child that does not love the supermarket pre-filled food pouches containing yoghurt, purees, jellies or smoothies. Grown-ups love them for their convenience factor and because their children will pretty much eat anything that's in them – an easy way to eat food when out and about, especially during the weaning stage. As great as these pouches are, they can be expensive, are single use, and you can't control the ingredients they contain, such as sugar and salt content. However, taking homemade food out with you for little ones isn't always convenient. Throw a fussy child into the mix, who has started to refuse to eat from a spoon, and you have a problem!

I wanted to find a better way to take homemade food with me on the go, to make weaning my son, Oliver (now 7), easier and so the Super Squish reusable rocket pouch was conceptualised. Important criteria were that it had to be visually appealing and fun, easy to self-feed, reusable, strong and easy to clean. It also had to hold enough food when kids get older so it could be filled with porridge for a quick breakfast on the go, smoothies or yoghurt and popped in lunch boxes or taken on picnics and car journeys.



We've been going for over 4 years now and some of our early customers are only replacing their pouches now, so we know, with proper care, they should last a while. You can put them in the fridge, freezer and dishwasher too. It's great that they are reusable and therefore cost effective, and at the same time we do our bit to reduce plastic waste.

Our mantra at Super Squish is to make real food squishy and fun for babies and little kids from day one. Sometimes, we think 'homemade' tends to be very time consuming, but it doesn't have to be! Simple meal planning, batch cooking in advance and freezing food in suitable portion sizes helps to save time.



EMMA SHARES SOME OF HER FAVOURITE RECIPES:

Beetroot & Pear Puree

This is a super puree to introduce beetroot to your little one! The pear gives it a bit of sweetness which offsets the earthy flavour of the beetroot. It's so simple to make.

You will need:

- 2 beetroots - peeled and roughly chopped
- 1 pear - peeled and roughly chopped

Boil the chopped beetroot in a saucepan until soft. You could also steam or microwave it. Reserve some of the cooking juices for later.

Blend the cooked beetroot and the raw pear until smooth, adding as much of the reserved cooking juice as necessary to get your preferred consistency. You could use a bit of water instead of the reserved cooking juices if you'd prefer.

Serve straight away, pop into freezer portions for later, or spoon as much as you need into a Super Squish pouch for a fabulous meal on the go.



EMMA SHARES SOME OF HER FAVOURITE RECIPES:

Green 'Monkey Juice' Smoothie

"This smoothie was named by a friend of mine while trying to convince her kids to try this nutrient packed green smoothie! It did the trick - they gulped it down and the name has stuck in our house. It's great for little kids and bigger ones (including grown-ups!) too. It can be made dairy free if you use suitable milk alternatives".

You will need:

- 2 or 3 large handfuls of baby spinach (or a mixture of kale and baby spinach)
- 1 large ripe banana (for added sweetness add an extra banana)
- 250ml milk (or milk alternative)
- 4-6 large ice cubes
- Optional/for variation - half an avocado, a tablespoon of flax seeds, a few soft dates or a teaspoon of honey (not for children under 1 year) or alternative sweetener

Pop everything into a blender, whizz until smooth and drink immediately or pour into Super Squish pouches and refrigerate or freeze until needed.



Super Squish



DOGGY PADDLE

BURSLEDON, SOUTHAMPTON

Lynn & Mark Sheridan have owned Border Collies since the 1990's, competing in Dog Agility & Flyball with them. They set up DoggyPaddle Ltd, in 2003, after needing hydrotherapy for one of their own dogs, following a spinal injury. Their dogs fell in love with swimming, even one of them who had previously hated anything to do with water.

DoggyPaddle Swimming Pool for Dogs, in Bursledon, Southampton, has been swimming dogs for over 15 years, in the heated, 30' x 15', in-ground pool. The aim is to provide a safe and comfortable environment for owners and their dogs, whether they are swimming for fun, fitness, pre-or post-operative exercise, to learn to swim, weight loss, to benefit

long-term conditions, or because their dog is unable to enjoy off-lead, quality exercise for behavioural reasons.

The benefits of swimming for dogs, is very similar to those for humans. Swimming involves the use of almost all the muscles required for movement, without the concussive stresses of walking or running.



Because water resistance is greater than air resistance, the muscles and cardio-vascular and respiratory systems have to work harder. To put it in perspective, we work on the basis that 1 minute of swimming is equivalent to about 4 minutes of running, based on analysis by Dr Arleigh Reynolds, a Veterinary Surgeon and Canine Physiologist.

For dogs with medical conditions that restrict or prohibit normal, concussive exercise, swimming is vital. For example, in the case of a Total Hip Replacement operation, it is important to build up the dog's supporting muscles prior to surgery. However, walking and running are unsuitable when awaiting the surgery, whereas swimming enables supported, non-concussive exercise to build the muscles. And after surgery, when exercise is, again, limited, swimming can help to rebuild the muscles, regain cardio-vascular fitness, and give the dogs something

fun to do, to improve their emotional well-being.

For conditions such as osteo-arthritis, hip-dysplasia and cruciate ligament damage, swimming provides weightless exercise to improve joint movement, increase circulation & build muscle, where walking on hard ground can cause discomfort.

In fit dogs, swimming can be used as a supplementary form of exercise to improve strength and stamina, and in most cases, give the dogs another fun and rewarding activity. Stronger, toned muscles help to protect dogs against injuries sustained during normal exercise, such as running or chasing a ball, or during more demanding exercise such as agility and flyball.

Another benefit of swimming at DoggyPaddle, rather than in rivers, ponds & the sea, is that our water is heated to the optimum temperature for canine hydrotherapy.



“SWIMMING CAN HELP TO REBUILD THE MUSCLES, REGAIN CARDIO-VASCULAR FITNESS, AND GIVE THE DOGS SOMETHING FUN TO DO, TO IMPROVE THEIR EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING.”



“AFTER SURGERY, WHEN EXERCISE IS, AGAIN, LIMITED, SWIMMING CAN HELP TO REBUILD THE MUSCLES”

This helps relaxation and assists blood flow, reducing the likelihood of muscle spasm, and improving the dogs' range of movement. And, of course, warm water is more comfortable for our dogs too, making swimming even more enjoyable. The more they enjoy it, the more their loving owners and we enjoy it too.

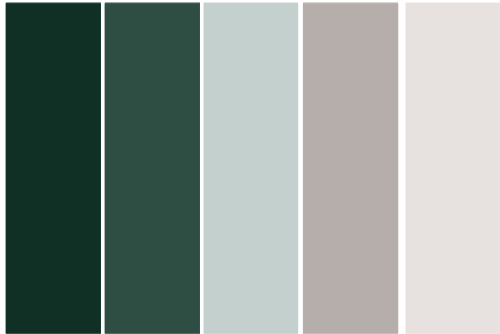
To ensure the dogs have as beneficial and enjoyable experience as possible, we have a hydrotherapist in the water with them, encouraging them, wherever possible, to retrieve toys. This helps the dogs to relax, encourages them to work harder, increasing the benefits, and also giving them fun, which is especially beneficial for the emotional wellbeing of dogs on restricted exercise.



MAKING THAT PERFECT UNISEX

NATURE

THEMED BEDROOM



COLOUR

Creating your little Adventurers bedroom should start with your colour palette, try dark green or muted sage in alcoves or on statement walls to mirror the foliage of the jungle and forest, and use duck egg and dusty pinks as accents to soften and brighten the bedroom.

WALL TEXTURE

To really take your themed room the next level, try adding a faux growing wall on a single wall. These can be purchased in a range of different leaf combinations, so if you're creating a rain forest of a jungle you'll have options

Available from Ever Green Direct



RUGS

A Jute Rug can become your adventurer's desert plain or jungle floor and complements your colour palette, adding texture to the room.

Available from LeRedoute

WALL ART

These whimsical animals prints are available in a range of sizes to suit the wall space you have. They'll create a playful mood while adding a pop of colour.

Available from Juicy Trends



FURNITURE

This minimalist Tipi inspired bed, will have your little one camping in the jungle every night.

Available from Wayfair

CUSHIONS

Using a mixture of textures, patterns and sizes you can create the perfect cushions stack, emphasising your theme and softening your room.

Available from Trouva, Ebay, Hurn & Hurn & The French Bedroom Company



STORAGE

These cute mountain hangers are a great way to keep those essential items like coats and book bags neat and tidy as well as easy to access.

Available from H&M



STORAGE

This modern take on vintage trunks will make great toy boxes, while still fitting the theme with a subtle reference to travel.

Available from Made



LIGHTING

This playful Monkey desk lamp will have them excited for their bedtime stories.

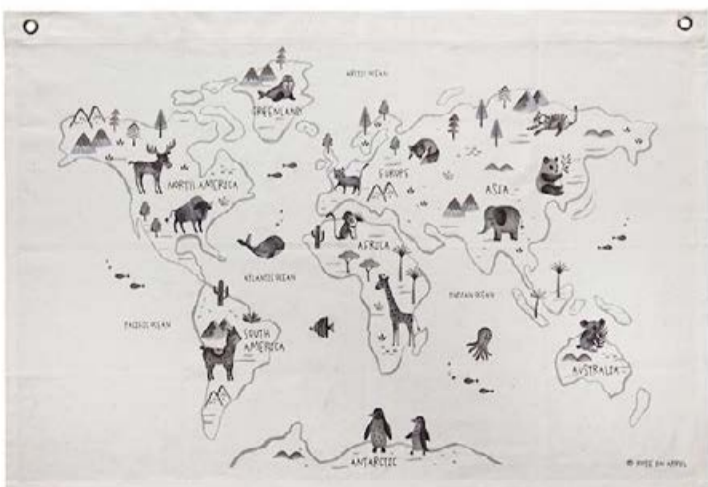
Available from H&M



WALL ART

Let your little one dream big with this illustrated world map wall hanging.

Available from Scandi Born



CLICK THE IMAGES OF ITEMS TO VISIT STORES

3 WAYS TO EMBRACING CHANGE

EVI KATHREPTI



Over the years I often caught myself wishing things stay the same. After all who wants to grow old, leave their friends behind, see their kids leave home, get a divorce or lose a loved one. The

truth is that change is the only constant in nature and in our lives. And if we look beyond the moments we would like to keep frozen in time for ever, we will see that every moment of change is the prelude of an opportunity because no matter how painful the change, it will always facilitate growth.



UNDERSTAND WHY THE CHANGE IS HAPPENING

It is important to face the change and try to understand why it is happening. If you are aware of what is coming you can prepare for it better or even stop it. Sometimes we are so involved with our day to day responsibilities that we fail to notice what is going on around us and by the time we realise it, it is too late. This is why it is important to reflect on your day and your relationships as often as possible and make small adjustments in your life in order to keep unpleasant surprises at bay.

Then again anticipating change can increase happiness according to a 2017 study published in the Journal of Positive Psychology by Kristin Layous. What Layous discovered after conducting an interesting experiment is that people who have the end in mind are more likely to take joy in the present and make the most of the time they have. So, if you know, for example, that your kid is off to college in a few months instead of fretting the prospect just use the time to enjoy quality time with them. This will serve you both much more.



FOCUS ON THE BENEFITS OF THE CHANGE

If the change is inevitable, choose how you will react to it. This will automatically place you in a position of control and responsibility. You will be in a better place to learn and move forward instead of feeling that you are the victim of the circumstance. One of the better techniques to quickly take control of the situation is to focus on the possible benefits of the new status quo. For

example, what will it mean for you if your teenager leaves the house? Will you have more time to focus on yourself and the dreams that you had to put on hold? Will you have more space in the house? Will you enjoy time spent with your kid more during their visits?

Exploring potential possibilities of taking control of the imminent change can be very exciting and surprisingly fulfilling.



ENGAGE IN A NEW ROUTINE

Finally consider a new routine that will serve you better under the new circumstances. Be bold and ready to push the barriers. Enrol in a class that gives you joy, take on a new hobby, engage in activities that will allow you to meet new people. Talk about the change, you will be surprised how many people you encounter are going through or have gone through

the same change. Be inspired and keep moving forward.

Humans are a living oxymoron, they want stability, so they feel safe, while at the same time they want diversity, so they do not feel bored. As change is an inevitable fact of life we will be in a more advantageous position if we know how to handle it and embrace the opportunity it presents.





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Kate Dimmer
Nutrition



NATALIA
Taylor

Taking your child to dance class has so many benefits; reduced obesity, a fun source of exercise, healthier body and happier mind which help maintain a balanced lifestyle.

Dancing builds a firm interest within the subject, unites students in dance, creates friendships and strengthens bonds. It introduces children to a variety of styles and develops an understanding of what is required of them. Classes are held in a safe, happy, friendly, caring and disciplined environment for children of all ages and abilities in all genres of dance.

Pupils come to class to find a new interest or hobby and others train for what they hope will be their future career. Whatever the reason for attending, the emphasis is on respecting the individual learning needs of every child and to share, inspire and enjoy the love of dance. The variety of styles that your child can experience allows them to discover their passion and supports and encourages them to reach their full potential in something they love to do. Whatever your child's interest, there will be a class near you which caters to their needs.

PHYSICAL HEALTH

There are many physical benefits for a child to partake in dance. They learn a vast range of motion, body awareness, muscle strength and endurance. Dance allows children to develop a range of movement which enhances their ability to work within different spaces. They learn to take in their surroundings, with an enhanced insight of what is going on around them. This helps your child to interpret the effect their movement has on the world around them.

The average human body has 642 muscles. Children are naturally active but dancing allows them to make better use of their muscles subsequently, developing the use of their bodies, improving muscle tone and strength. This personal journey is an important life skill to develop which relates to all aspects of life. Movement patterns require your child to utilise their body in a range of motion emphasising their level of fitness unparalleled to other activities. It helps your child to understand how to work their body without injury and provides a safer way to exercise. Also, it develops their kinaesthetic memory and allows your child an alternate way of learning and understanding.

Dancing also improves co-ordination which is significant in your child's development, especially at a time where your child is rapidly developing in an ever-changing environment. Co-ordination is vital to developing skills essential to everyday life for instance, learning to swim or multi-task efficiently.

"Dance provides a positive outlet for children who struggle to express or communicate effectively"



O B E S I T Y

Dance is an aerobic form of exercise. For children who are overweight, it potentially is good way for them to lose weight and improve their eating habits. Its clinically proven that children who participate actively in the arts spend less time sitting in front of computer screens and are at a less of a risk for developing health issues. Children who spend multiple hours a day on screen related pastimes are at a higher risk of developing health issues such as obesity.

S O C I A L I S A T I O N

Dance unites children from a variety of backgrounds and personalities, creating an environment outside that of which a child is accustomed to. Learning to socialise with others from a young age is vital for a child's cognitive development.

At a young age children understand movement can be a response to an idea or problem, creating a cognitive link to a solution or outcome. This type of cognitive development creates an awareness of how to function.

For instance, in a young child's dance class it is common to be taught to jump over a "river" usually represented by a piece of fabric, so they do not get wet. This idea achieves several different concepts, problem solving, imagination, balance, spatial awareness, leg extension, transfer of weight etc. The ability to express emotion comfortably in front of others demonstrates mental maturity and dance gives you a safe environment to do so.

SELF ESTEEM

Dance provides a positive outlet for children who struggle to express or communicate effectively. It helps children who find empathy difficult in a positive way. Dance classes are taken in a disciplined environment where children have to follow instructions to avoid injury and technical precision. It requires their focus, discipline and co-ordination which can help with hyperactivity. This can have a calming effect helping to release their pent up energy.

Dance is known to improve mental functioning. It can make a person feel physically refreshed and improve their mood. It can tackle serious issues including anxiety and depression, it is not only adults. Dancers use their body to express emotion and people suffering mental illness usually find difficulty expressing their feelings, dance provides opportunities to communicate in other ways. Whilst the physical movement of dance reduces stress, anxiety and depression dancing socially aids feeling more connected. Dance classes encourage social bonds and friendships which significantly improve mood and mental health. Dancing elevates your mood levels as when you exercise your body releases endorphins which make you feel good.



TEAM WORK

Dancing as an ensemble is a tool to release daily stress, make friends and distract from everyday worries. Learning a dance routine promotes the importance of teamwork and develops the ability to work as part of a group. Dance allows children to adapt and communicate in new ways. By navigating this new environment through creativity children learn to build trust and effective relationships. It enables children to learn patience, listening and leadership skills as they help each other whilst learning and practicing steps/ routines. It improves their communication skills and teaches teamwork.

PERSEVERANCE

Dancing allows your child to learn to accept vulnerability- it is ok not to be able to do things the first time. That you have to try again (try, try again and again.) It gives them the confidence to ask for help- from the teacher and/or student. It opens their eyes to that there are different paths to solving problems and the importance of trial and error. The sense of success and accomplishment they will have when they have mastered a move can be transferred into other parts of life.

CREATIVITY

Dance is an outlet for imagination and emotion. It provides the opportunity to release creativity. It is as important as exercising and diet in the development of healthy children because of the life skills learnt.

NON VERBAL COMMUNICATION

Non-verbal communication represents 2/3 of all communication. It is an essential for children to realise it is possible to portray a message both verbally and with correct body signals and understand these signals from others. Whilst happy/sad are easy to emote dance enables a child to express physically more complex emotions and how to read and re-act to others. The idea that physical expression gives young ones another way to deal with the world, while their verbal communication develops.

MENTAL DEXTERITY

When dancing, repetition and rehearsal improves mental dexterity. Learning body movement and gestures helps children improve their ability to absorb and hold information. It allows them to regain mental control and focus from too much pent up energy.

"Learning a dance routine promotes the importance of teamwork"



EMOTIONAL MATURITY

Dance helps a child to explore and express themselves freely. Children develop a better understanding of themselves and others. It allows them to have a better understanding of the world around them. It gives them confidence in their own skin and a sense of self. They are able to express personality and emotions without being afraid of the reaction they receive.

MUSICALITY

The relationship between music and movement has a direct correlation. Dancing is a response to the way we interpret music. Taking your child to dance class exposes your child to this relationship allowing them to build on their musicality.

FUN

Most importantly, dancing allows children to stay active in a fun and exciting way. They develop important social and emotional skills without realising. It allows them to make new friends and together their bond over their love for dance. Dance does not feel like work and can decrease school and social stress whilst increasing a sense of wellbeing.



Dance classes for young people prove to benefit children in a variety of ways both mentally and physically. It gives a child a hobby and something to look forward to every week or every time they go to class. The friendships they build are formed over their passion for dance which gives them other friends outside of school and opens their mind to what the world can offer them. If these reasons cannot persuade you to take your child to dance class then your child will miss out on important life skills in which dance provides. Understandably, not all children like dance but the possibilities it offers and provides are endless.

"Most importantly, dancing allows children to stay active in a fun and exciting way"

Natalia Taylor

THE IMPORTANCE OF
FAMILY PHOTOGRAPHY

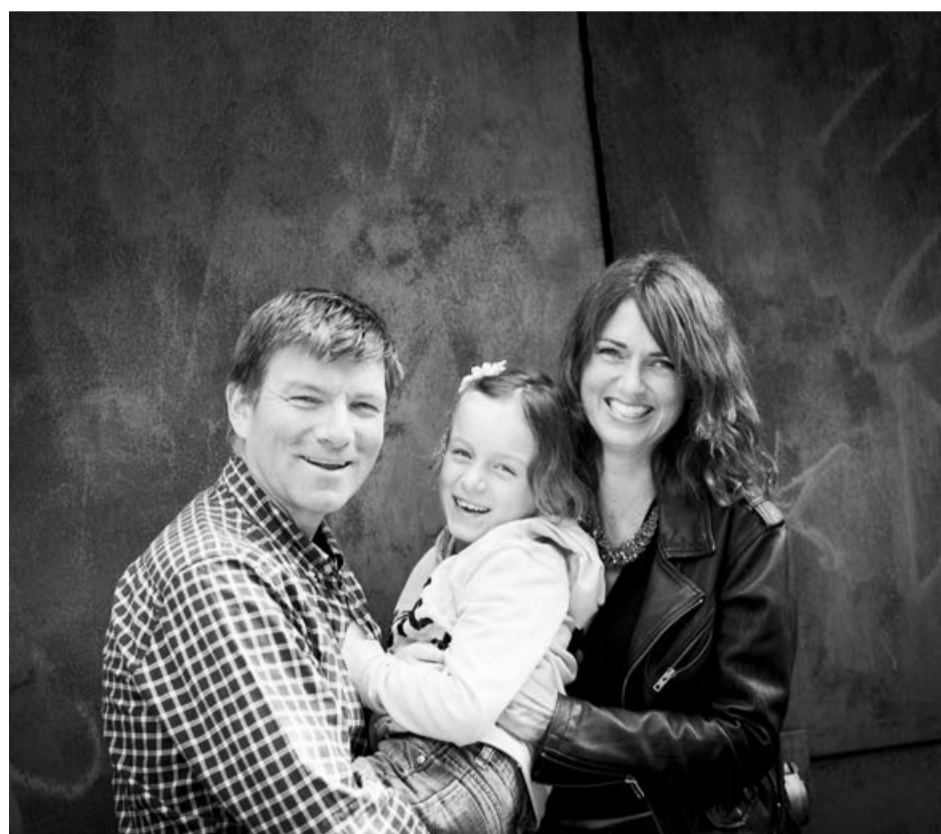


In a world now saturated with photography thanks to social media and the smart phone, you would think that the professional portrait ought to be on a decline. However, more and more people are visiting the professional photographer to make sure they have great looking images that last beyond the moment.

The role of the professional photographer is to bring energy, emotion and imagination to the portrait and not just a record of the occasion. Everybody wants to look better than in real life and that is exactly what a professional portrait does. The shoot gives you and your family the perfect experience to remember the emotion and relationship between each other.

When the tragedy happens, which is all too often, the thing we reach for is photographic memories. That's why our Xperience photographers dedicate themselves to creating images that will bring smiles across generations, helping to give you memories that are made to last a lifetime and beyond.

So don't put off getting your Xperience portrait! Speak to one of our photographers so they can discuss your ideas, your needs and your family.



*“THE PERFECT
PHOTOGRAPHY XPERIENCE
FOR ALL..”*

The Xperience Group is an independent collection of Professional Photographers based in the UK & Ireland, specializing in a variety of photography subjects but with one goal:

The Perfect Photography Xperience for all.







The variety of studios which are spread throughout England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and Ireland, all represent a pursuit of excellence in creativity as well as the perfect image and presentation for the clients home or business.

As experts in our field, we specialise in making our subjects look amazing. From family to pets, our creative use of light guarantees that every subject looks natural with their character being brought forward, no matter who or what they are.

From CEO to the Mail man, Sole trader to Celebrity, Pedigree to Rescue dog, all our clients value the professional images that we have created for them.

"E SPECIALISE IN MAKING OUR SUBJECTS LOOK AMAZING"

After your portrait session, each Xperience photographer chooses the best images before enhancing them to create your personal wall art.

The viewing process is an awesome experience by itself. The Portraits are viewed larger than life in the studio viewing room or in your own home, the unique cinematic show brings the portrait to life.

During the viewing, we will help you make the right selection as well as giving you ideas on how the portraits can bring new life to your home and interior design

Presentation & framing will vary between the different photographer's depending on their individual speciality and style. However, you can be assured they are all professionally printed and framed through our specialist partners. All offer a creative and inspirational design element with specialist finishes making each portrait perfect for your home.

To find out more about the Xperience Group, see your nearest Xperience photographer click the links below.



SPOIL MY DOG
BIRTHDAY
CAKE
BY DIAMOND DOGS





INGREDIENTS

For the Cake:

- 140g Self Raising Flour
- ½ tsp Baking Powder
- 30ml Vegetable Oil
- 1 Egg
- 65g Peanut Butter (not all peanut butter is recommended for dogs, we use Meridian Peanut Butter)

- 75g Apple Sauce
- 75g Grated Carrot

For the Icing:

- 200g Plain Greek Yoghurt
- 65g Peanut Butter

METHOD

1. Preheat the oven to 180 degrees centigrade.
2. In a large bowl, combine the flour and baking powder.
3. In a separate bowl, mix together the vegetable oil, peanut butter, apple sauce and grated carrot. When combined, add the egg and mix well.
4. Add the mixed wet ingredients to the dry ingredients and stir until combined.
5. Grease an 8" cake tin and tip the mixture in.
6. Bake for approximately 25-30 minutes - Insert a toothpick into the centre of the cake, which should come out clean when the cake is cooked - it should also spring back when pressed lightly.





NOTES

7. When cooked, remove from the cake tin and cool on a wire rack.

8. Mix the Greek yoghurt and peanut butter together in a bowl and spread evenly over the cake. Decorate with dog treats. If not serving immediately store in the fridge.

Recipe notes

The ingredients were halved to make the small cake in the photographs. Alternatively the ingredients can also be doubled to create a layer cake.

Roxie's verdict: "Woof , Woof, Lick, Lick" (meaning: Wow this is amazing!!)

Roxie's owner's verdict:
Roxie was completely delighted with her birthday cake and just couldn't get enough! - A fantastic recipe.





For more information on Diamond Dogs Head over to their website
by clicking the logo below.



SLEEP

LEARNING TO TRUST YOUR INSTINCTS

BY COLLETTE ETHERIDGE

As mums-to-be, we all hear those few words – just wait until those sleepless nights – and politely laugh along with it. And the little one (whilst in utero) does its best to prepare for those sleepless nights by kicking and wriggling around just as you settle down to sleep.

But the reality of having a baby is very different. And the very disrupted sleep pattern soon becomes your norm. So how can you make it easier?

When my first born arrived, I thought I had hit gold! Sleepless nights – what sleepless nights? For the first 3 nights, it was an absolute dream. He woke up for his 4-hourly for a feed but settled straight back down to sleep and I barely noticed it. Smug mum alert! However, all of that changed within a week. Suddenly, he didn't seem to need or want sleep. In fact, he seemed perfectly content to sleep for about 1-2 hours and then cry for 1-2 hours - and so this pattern continued for 10 weeks. I could feel myself going slightly mad – with lack of sleep and disbelief that those stories about sleepless were entirely true!

“I WAS SUPPOSED TO BE ENJOYING MY FIRST EXPERIENCE OF MOTHERHOOD BUT IN REALITY IT WASN'T THAT MUCH FUN!”



Those 10 weeks were quite frankly horrific. I stumbled about in a daze. I was supposed to be enjoying my first experience of motherhood but in reality it wasn't that much fun! I loved the few moments of peace and quiet when he did sleep but that didn't seem to happen very often.

So, as a parent, how do you manage sleep so that it works for everyone in the family?

- For night time sleeping, keep the room as dark as possible;
- Put a routine into place as soon as possible;
- Have a snuggle and then put baby down to sleep;
- Don't play with baby when you want him to settle;
- For night times, keep the house as quiet as possible.

All really good ideas.

But for me, key to the process is you. So, whilst being mindful of how to get a great routine into place for your baby, remember yourself in the process.

“WHILST BEING MINDFUL OF HOW TO GET A GREAT ROUTINE INTO PLACE FOR YOUR BABY, REMEMBER YOURSELF IN THE PROCESS.”



The more confident and relaxed you are, the easier it will be to settle your little one. So here are my tips for you: -

- When your baby sleeps, if you need to, sleep yourself. Don't worry about the chores that may need doing, they'll wait – and if you're lucky, someone will come and do them for you!
- If your baby wants a cuddle, give them one. They will absolutely learn to settle by themselves, I promise you – but they have left the safety of their first home (your tummy) and may need some reassurance.
- Trust that you know how your baby will sleep most comfortably. I went against all the advice given to me – but that worked for me and my little one and kept us both relaxed.
- Don't panic over how much sleep your baby is getting. Just like us, all babies are different, and some need less sleep than others, and some need more. The NHS website advises that some babies need as little as 8 hours sleep, whilst others need up to 18 hours.
- Be aware that sleep patterns, once established, will change at the slightest thing – and that's okay. Go with it and follow your baby's needs.
- It may not feel like at times, but remember you are the expert of your baby. You will know what your baby needs and how to meet those needs. Trust yourself!

“WHILST BEING MINDFUL OF HOW TO GET A GREAT ROUTINE INTO PLACE FOR YOUR BABY, REMEMBER YOURSELF IN THE PROCESS.”



Of course, as your baby grows, a routine will need to be established and (relatively) firmly put into place.

As for my son, I feel I should disclose there was a reason for those sleepless nights. He was being bottle-fed and had an intolerance to the milk. At 10 weeks (despite protests from the Health Visitor – remember YOU are the expert), he was put onto Soya Milk. The change was like a tiny little miracle happening – I, once again, had a baby who slept.

So, my last little bit of advice for a baby who simply won't settle, is don't assume you just have a baby who doesn't want to sleep. Keep a sleep diary so you are clear on just how much sleep is happening and then, if the diary shows a very, very unsettled pattern, have it checked out, speak to your GP and get advice.

But I cannot stress enough, even if this is your first child, YOU are the expert of that child – trust your instincts!

“EVEN IF THIS IS YOUR FIRST CHILD, YOU ARE THE EXPERT OF THAT CHILD - TRUST YOUR INSTINCTS!”

HOW CAN PREGNANCY YOGA

BENEFIT YOU?



MIRA CALVEY

YOGA, PRE AND POST-NATAL
YOGA TEACHER



After becoming a qualified yoga teacher, I decided to broaden my knowledge in other areas of yoga and decided to study pregnancy yoga. Pregnancy yoga focuses on breathing and movement techniques, to help women relax and become more in tune with their bodies. These techniques can be helpful when practiced at home and can be called upon for comfort and support during childbirth.

Pregnancy brings changes to the way an expectant mother looks and feels. In a world that gets quicker by the day and can be filled with unrealistic images on social media, yoga can help ease these changes by offering time to quieten the mind, to breath and to connect with the baby.

Breathing exercises used in pregnancy yoga, allows women to connect with their bodies and their babies, and to soften and relax their bodies. Breathing is practised throughout each class to calm and quieten the mind. When the expectant mother is calm, her baby is calm. Breathing is a great feedback mechanism and can be used to signal if someone is pushing themselves too far in poses. Partner breathing is also beneficial when practiced during the pregnancy. It helps ease discomfort and allows partners to spend time together and connect with each other. Partner breathing is an excellent tool when used during childbirth and the expectant mother can feel the support of her partner during this time.



“PREGNANCY YOGA PRACTICE CAN HELP AN EXPECTANT MOTHER TO HAVE TIME FOR SELF-CARE”

Pregnancy yoga teaches women to soften and strengthen their bodies, which can be beneficial during childbirth. Pregnancy yoga poses target and strengthen different parts of the body whilst keeping the belly soft. Strengthening and softening of the body maintains a balance for carrying the baby throughout the pregnancy and in childbirth.

Meditation is another aspect that can support expectant mothers by keeping them aligned and mentally strong. Visualisations can be part of meditation practice which assist both during the pregnancy and in childbirth by keeping the mind calm and in turn keeping the baby calm. There are various types of meditation that can be beneficial such as walking meditation, breath awareness or sound meditation which can consist of chanting 'Om' or repeating a mantra that promotes positive feelings such as 'I am enough, I am already a wonderful mother to my baby.'

Pregnancy yoga practice can help an expectant mother to have time for self-care, as it is very easy to put other people's needs in front of her own.

A good example of needing to look after oneself first is indicated in the safety demonstration on an airplane, just before take-off. In the event of low cabin pressure, passengers are instructed to place an oxygen mask on themselves first before assisting others. We should therefore find time for our own self-care which is even more important during pregnancy.

Some women may be worried about not being able to do a pregnancy yoga class as they might not think they are flexible enough. This is not true, and I can honestly say that a pregnancy yoga class is good for everyone and no prior yoga experience is required. The guidance suggests that it is safe to join a pregnancy class from being 12 weeks pregnant and can be practiced all the way to the due date.

Pregnancy yoga encourages women to come together, create a community and to share experiences during different stages of pregnancy. The classes allow expectant mothers to create a network that can support them during pregnancy and beyond.





PREGNANCY YOGA CLASSES

Yoga can bring lots of benefits into your life from feeling more relaxed, building your strength, flexibility and stability and also builds a connection with your baby. Yoga With Mira offers pregnancy yoga classes that include breath exercises, yoga poses and meditation to create a supportive environment for you and your baby. Classes are open to everyone including complete beginners.

CLICK [HERE](#) TO BOOK YOUR FIRST CLASS FREE BY QUOTING '**HARLOW PREGNANCY CLASS**'
BOOK 6 CLASSES FOR £50

Making MEMORIES



SUE KENNEDY &
WENDY JENNINGS

More often than not, parents are given a baby book as a gift or you may have gone out and bought one for yourself. Also, more often than not, we start filling these with great gusto at the beginning but then when the exhaustion kicks in from just being a parent and juggling all that needs to be juggled, it kind of goes on the back burner. You may then find it hidden in a drawer, open it up for a quick reminisce, then feel guilty that you haven't quite completed it? Sound familiar?

Memory boxes are becoming very popular with parents who want to be able to keep the special bits 'n' bobs in one safe place rather than being scattered all over the house, tucked away in drawers full of 'stuff'.

When families come into my studio who have had an older I child, I ask them what kinds of things they keep and where they keep them. Some parents decorate boxes with paper, photos, and pretty things, others go for the vintage suitcase look that can be handed down through the generations; the boxes are very different, but there is one commonality – we really do keep everything!



“The boxes are very different, but there is one commonality – we really do keep everything!”

Here's a run down of things that we keep:

- Letters (even ones from Santa)
- Clothes
- New born cards
- Birthday cards
- Photos
- Hospital name tags
- The yukky tummy button clip
- First shoes
- School uniforms
- Baby teeth (very kindly returned by the tooth fairy)
- Lock of hair from the first cut
- First ballet or tap shoes
- Awards, certificate and medals
- Theatre and concert tickets – and programmes
- Pre-school/nursery works of art
- First writing attempts
- Fancy dress/play costumes
- Handmade Christmas decorations
- Easter cards/eggs
- Newspaper from the day of their birth
- Sports team shirts
- The unfinished baby book maybe?

One friend started a diary which she wrote in every single day from her child being 6 months old – it's a brave mission, but one that would so precious when it's time for the now grown-up baby to receive his/her memory box.



THE ↑ HIGHS ↓ LOWS

OF MY WEIGHT
LOSS JOURNEY

SARAH CREASEY



Throughout my life, there has been one constant. My weight problem.

Life situations have never been judged by the value of my achievement, but rather my dress size on the day of achieving it. My weight problem started as the chubby kid of a slim Mum. She tried to help, encouraging me to lose weight for holidays, parties etc... but Dad would give me money to pop to the shop and buy some sweets, and so the yo-yo began.

As an overweight teenager I hid behind baggy jeans and over-sized

tops, but at university my weight absolutely ballooned! I didn't know HOW to eat, so I'd starve all day, then gorge on take-aways at night. I hid my anxieties about my weight by joining the rugby team and downing pints of cider. I pretended that I didn't want to be 'girlie'. I had a boyfriend who said he loved me just as I was and proved it by bringing me food and drink!

My first visit to Slimming world was back in 1993 - I was 19 and I was mortified when the scales read 15stone 7pound! I knew I had to make a change and joined immediately... I

will never forget my elation at losing 7lb in week one, 4lb in week 2 and my first stone by week 4. I was so excited, I was learning how to eat... I was eating lots of delicious foods and when I reached a healthier weight for my 5ft 9 frame of around 12 stone, I left. The weight stayed off for years.... until the day I found out I was pregnant. I started eating for two on day one. I convinced myself that I wasn't getting fat, I was pregnant! But when I weighed 18 and a half stone after the baby was born, the truth was inevitable!

BEFORE



Back to slimming world... and by the time my bundle of joy was 18 months old, I was back to a healthy, happy weight – but finding out that number two was on the way stopped my healthy eating in its tracks. The weight was back and ‘Sarah’ was gone. I felt too ashamed to go back to Slimming World.... I’d ‘done it’ twice and let myself down both times. I spent five years living a miserable existence.

I didn’t want to go to parties because I couldn’t find clothes to fit. I could only buy clothes from ‘plus size’ stores and felt that they were older than my years. I was a young professional mum – I should have been full of energy, looking trendy and enjoying my life.... But I was beyond unhappy.

I set up my own theatre company and threw myself into that – I loved seeing young, beautiful people performing on the stage and prided myself in being a vital part of that performance even though I was hiding at the back in an XXXL t-shirt. The world became a much darker place for me when my marriage crumbled. It was all very mutual and friendly, but that didn’t stop it being a difficult time.

Reading a text message from my ex-husband’s mobile phone from a female friend asking about his ‘fat wife’ literally destroyed me. She hadn’t acknowledged my degree or intelligence. She hadn’t acknowledged what a hard-working and loving mum I was. She hadn’t acknowledged the large scale theatre productions I was producing and directing. She hadn’t acknowledged what an incredibly generous friend I am. She ONLY acknowledged my fat.

I needed to change and that change needed to be IMMEDIATE. So I took out a bank loan of £10,000 in 2006 and booked myself in for a gastric band. I honestly believed that this was the only answer. And for the first year it was..... I lost 2 stone quite quickly and committed to band tightening every few months to keep it effective. I met a gorgeous new partner and got married weighing around 14 stone in 2008. I knew my weight was heading in the right direction and was delighted that I’d made such a fantastic life decision – well worth the cost!

But then the problems started.

Nobody told me that to keep losing weight with a band, you have to keep tightening it. A fill costs around about £120 every time and the fill restricts your food. For days, you take sips of water, then build up to soft foods (with the capacity of baby food) and finally build up to hard foods such as pasta, bread, sausages etc.... But to keep losing weight, I had to keep my band tight. That had many side-effects:

- I couldn’t ever eat a meal with my friends and family. Even a small mouth full of food would leave me running to the toilet to be sick.
- I could only take the tiniest sips of water so started to feel quite dehydrated.
- I suffered from terrible acid reflux and simply lying down would make me feel like I was going to drown.
- The CONSTANT vomiting was causing my teeth to rot.



AFTER

I was living as an enforced bulimic. I was starving. I was dehydrated and I was so very tired. I had to make a change. And so I removed fluid from my band enabling me to eat and drink. Immediately, I felt healthier and rested. But the weight started to creep back on immediately.

By Christmas 2016 I was back up to 14 and a half stone. The self-loathing was back. The desperation was back. I knew how to eat well from my past Slimming World experiences so I made a decision to stick to the plan and weigh myself once a week in the chemists.... And I started well – I lost over a stone by the summer – but then the weight loss slowed right down, the willpower diminished and a FACT struck me.

I NEEDED to return to Slimming World. I NEEDED to socialise with like-minded people. I NEEDED the love, support and encouragement that comes with IMAGE therapy and I NEEDED to forgive myself for all my past mistakes. And so I went back.



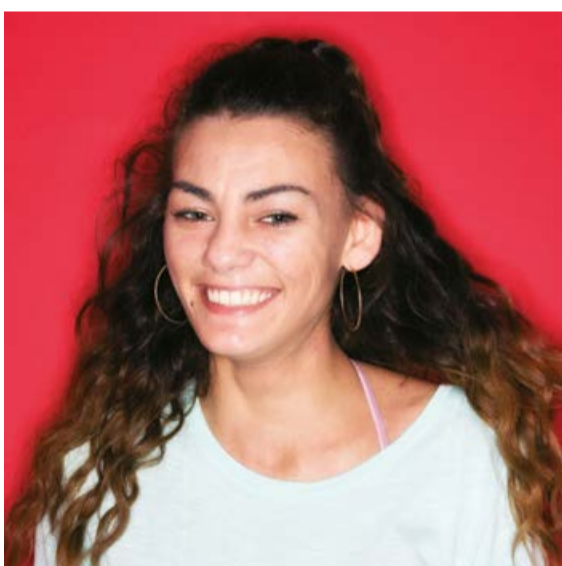
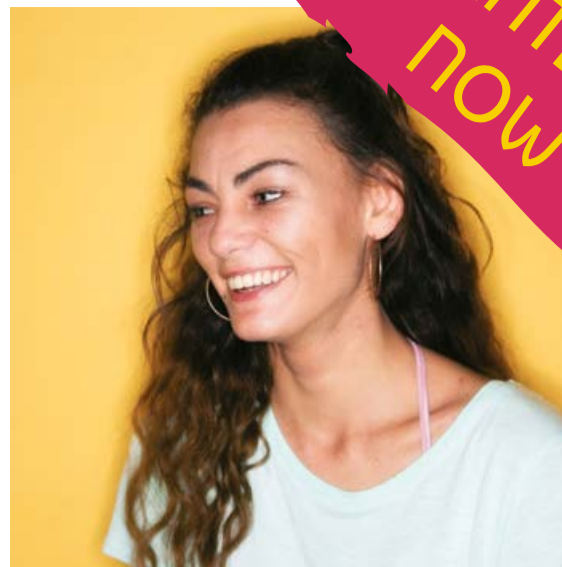
The second I walked through those doors, I felt like I'd come home. I just knew that with the support of my group, I could really do it. I've never reached a target weight at Slimming World before – I usually leave when I get 'close enough' – but there was no way this was going to happen this time! I proudly reached my target weight on February 4th 2018. The picture below shows the difference from Christmas 2016-Christmas 17. I love Christmas.... But this one was extra special because not only did I eat, drink and be merry, I did it on plan!

To feel good about myself in January was a whole new experience! Food optimising is a way of life now... It's just what I do – and it's so easy! I'm desperate to continue to food optimise for life ... and encourage others to slimming world... it's changed my life!

Meetings for my Slimming World are below:
Gladstone Primary school
Tuesdays 5.30pm, Wednesday 5.30 and 7.30pm



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