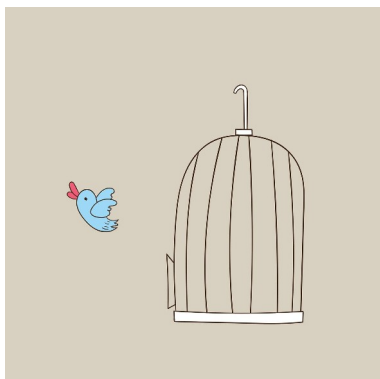


1. IF ONLY I'D HAD THE COURAGE TO LIVE THE LIFE I WANTED – A LIFE THAT WAS TRUE TO MYSELF AND MY VALUES – I WOULD HAVE BEEN HAPPIER



Most of us struggle at some time during our lives with having the courage to either speak or live our truth. Sometimes, though our truth can be buried so deeply, that it's difficult to identify!

Or our truth may be hiding behind work, an over-burdened service to others, compulsive behaviours or just a sad, resignation that life has to be this way; that nothing can ever change.

It's not uncommon to routinely deny our desires to live the life we really want, to put them on the 'back-burner' for sometime soon or 'maybe in the future' or 'never'.

However, the truth is, many of us just don't see that there are often endless possibilities to **live the life we want to live, now!** We just need to engage with the idea that's change is possible. When we give some of our time and energy to the *idea* that our lives can improve and we start taking steps to make positive changes, change starts to happen.

Do you recognise yourself anywhere here?

2. I WISH I HAD EXPRESSED MY FEELINGS MORE TO THOSE THAT MATTERED TO ME

Feelings can often be messy. Some are unpleasant and difficult to own – or even identify in ourselves – let alone express how we feel to others. This can be especially true when other people aren't 'good' with their feelings either! We each have our own levels of unprocessed pain, trauma or just 'blocks' to being able to move forwards in life. Perhaps it's no wonder we often don't want to go there! Yet, when we acknowledge our feelings and find ways to express them honestly to the people that matter most to us, we can transform our lives and begin to flourish.

Guilt, shame, loss, anger, disappointment or sadness can all play their part as we often mistakenly believe we must put on a brave face in the world, pull ourselves together or just get on with life, regardless of how we feel on the inside.

So many people try to cope alone, rather than seek help before it's 'too late'. Reaching the end of life with this regret is too late!

Finding the right support is key.

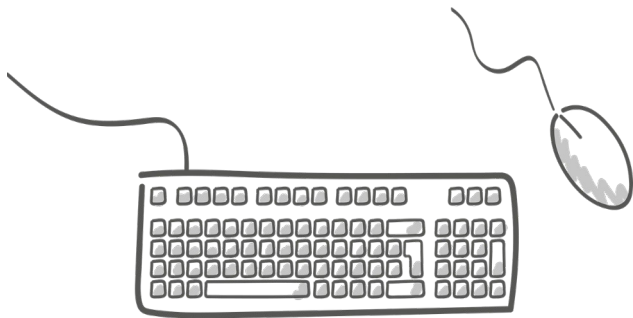
Learning to understand, navigate and eventually love our feelings and emotions is a journey; a process. It doesn't come naturally to all of us. It's common to have difficulties at some time in our lives with at least one or more of our feelings and emotions, but these are challenges that can be overcome when we give ourselves permission to engage kindly with ourselves and get the right support.



Getting to know our inner feelings and emotions not only enables us to be more self-supporting, but we're likely to be much more helpful to others, too. Confidential coaching, counselling and working with others in small groups can really help with this.

3. I WISH I HADN'T WORKED SO HARD, OR PRIORITISED WORK OVER MY FAMILY AND FRIENDS

Working hard is definitely something so many of us can relate to! It's easy to keep going, negate our need for rest or perhaps simply overwork to avoid other important areas of our lives that we may be afraid to face. Overworking can be a sign that we're avoiding intimacy or connection in one or more areas of our lives.



Or, we may believe that we *have* to work hard; that there's no other way to live. Perhaps there's nobody else to support us or we're just on auto-pilot and don't know *how* to slow down and engage with others how we'd like to.

Taking time to pause and reflect on our lives requires us to first make a decision to do just that.

It then involves a commitment to explore who we are, what else we might want (outside of work) and how that might serve us enrich our both our lives and the people we love, around us.

Work is of course, an important part of our lives – in whatever form that takes. A stay-at-home parent or carer still works – very hard in fact! However, when we routinely prioritise our work commitments over engaging with and enjoying other aspects of our lives, such as spending time with family and friends, play, our art or creative pursuits, then we're not really living as fully as we could.

Much of this behaviour can be unconscious reacting; we may be habitually reacting as a result of old, childhood wounds, unconscious beliefs or addictive behaviours we have become accustomed to using. Sometimes, we've 'taken on' the work ethics of the adults or role models we grew up around, without properly considering whether they belong to us or could be swiftly returned!

Getting clear about what we **really** want for ourselves, daring to believe that change is possible, then taking small steps (or giant leaps!) towards those things is what really makes the difference to how we will all live in the end.

4. I WISH I HAD LET GO OF MY ANGER, RESENTMENTS AND SAID SORRY MORE



Who really chooses to carry this heavy load until their deathbed? I don't believe any of us consciously makes this choice! We often just don't know how to let go of our resentments or deal with the inner turmoil they've created.

For many, this can be a big stumbling block to living a great life. Forgiveness, making amends or just letting go of the hurts we've experienced from others is simple to say, but rarely easy to do in practice.

It's highly likely that everyone reading this has at least one person that they are currently struggling to forgive.

Just because we don't **think** about these people or resentments every day, it doesn't mean the hurts have gone away. They stay inside us, often unconsciously disrupting the path we really want to take. Until we find safe ways to release them, they have the power to prevent us from moving on, from making progress or enjoying a happier life.

When we forgive others, **we free ourselves**. Forgiving does not necessarily mean we will repair the relationship going forwards, if that's an unhealthy choice for us. But it does mean that we are no longer willing to carry the bitterness or hurt inside ourselves any more. **We are willing to set ourselves free** and move on.

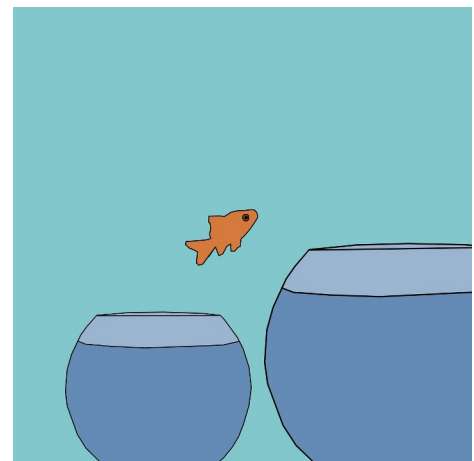
Are you **willing** to let go of your anger and resentments, even if you don't quite know how, yet? Getting to know what we're carrying, then sharing it safely with someone who understands can be the first steps towards recovery.

5. I WISH I HAD TAKEN MORE RISKS IN LIFE;

Risks are always subjective, of course. And both safety and risk are often described as illusions. Something I feel scared to do may not feel risky to you at all. Each of us has our own set of anxieties, fears and beliefs about keeping ourselves safe in life.

Yet, those who are close to death have said they wish they had risked more. What could they mean?

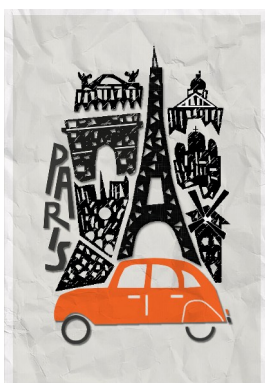
If risk and safety are all subjective concepts and differ greatly between us, perhaps we need to **explore our own definitions** of risk. Give them some air time!



Hiding them for weeks, months or years, then wondering why we didn't allow ourselves an opportunity to 'have a go', to try or to at least share our ideas with someone we love, leads us directly to Regret's door.

Can you afford to leave this part of you unexplored and unattended?

6. I WISH I HAD TRAVELLED MORE – SEEN MORE OF THE WORLD AND ENJOYED MORE FREE TIME



I'm curious about whether this regret links closely with Regret No.3, above. Taking time out to explore the world around us can sometimes feel like a luxury or too indulgent.

Too student-like!

Yet, with the right planning and preparation, our desires to travel – however near or far from our homes – can be enriching and bring so much personal growth. We gain confidence, realise that the world around us is vast and beautiful with so much to teach us.

Learning about ourselves, new cultures and the expansive nature of travel can bring us so many gifts, such as resilience, a sense of adventure. We can even begin to see that our problems seem smaller and less overwhelming when we view them from another part of the globe!

The desire to travel is not placed in the hearts of everyone though. Sometimes, travelling inwards can be equally valuable or important.

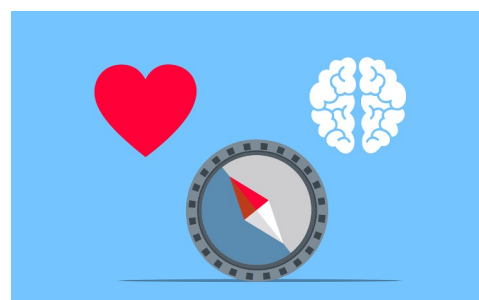
Where would you like to travel? If you were to travel, where might you choose to go? And what would you like the experience of travel to **give** you?

7. I WISH I HAD FOLLOWED MY HEART MORE AND LET MYSELF BE HAPPIER INSTEAD OF COMPARING MYSELF WITH OTHERS;

Ahhh, yes the old ‘following my heart’ chestnut! Easier said than done, of course, when we each have heads that step in to have their say as well!

There is greater evidence to suggest that our bodies (aka our feelings) and our intuition often make better decisions than all the detailed planning our logical minds alone could ever make. Why is this?

How many times have you said after an event or situation that hasn’t gone too well that you knew at the start you shouldn’t have made that choice, said that thing or chosen that path? Somehow, we find it easier to value and validate thinking while overriding our intuition; that inner wisdom or ‘knowing’.



Yet, what if there’s already a perfectly designed compass deep inside each of us, which guides us along our path?

What if we could **trust our hearts** each time they spark with passion about something we *really want to do with our lives*? Or at least give the heart some space to be heard and see where that takes us! This is truly living. Listening to ourselves, to our hearts and acting on this guidance; whether that’s just a conversation with someone we trust or taking new steps forward into the unknown – walking in faith.

What inner voice, feeling or vision do you quietly see and hear but try to push aside? What do you think might happen if you allowed that vision to be seen, heard and felt by your heart? Read more about my journey [here](#).

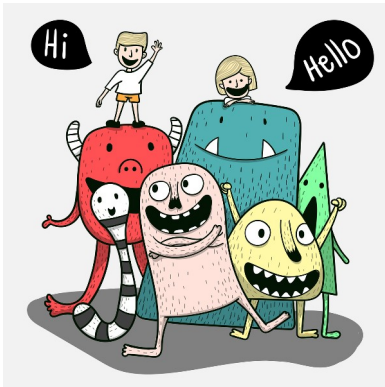
8. I WISH I HAD STAYED IN TOUCH WITH FRIENDS

It’s easy to tell ourselves that friends come and go in our lives, so staying in touch doesn’t really matter – or happen in practice. And of course, that’s completely true. But what about

those people **you wish you had kept in touch** with? The ones you'd *still* like to reach out to, but your thoughts tell you it's too late, they've probably moved on or they won't want to hear from you anyway?

What if those thoughts are just that – just thoughts?!

We tell ourselves 'stories' each and every day. We conjure up the if-s and the but-s that when told over and over again, we then believe as truth! But the **real truth** is that we can't possibly know what's true for the other person until we take action to engage them in the conversation!



Everything else is just mind reading... We often *believe* the beliefs we think about over and over without really making real enquiries as to whether they are the **true!** Think about that for a moment...

Who would you love to re-connect with but have been putting off reaching out to?

What might be the first small step you could take towards connecting today, thus avoiding this deathbed regret?

9. I WISH I DIDN'T WORRY SO MUCH

"As a rule, men worry more about what they can't see, than what they can." Julius Ceaser

In this frantic, busy world, bad news can appear to override the good and there is always something new we could choose to worry about.

Each of us carries our own personal worries too, of course, and there are bigger, world-worries which – if we allow them to – have the capacity to engulf us in our everyday lives.

Twenty-four hour news and ongoing social media 'feeds' (perhaps they're called feeds for a reason) can often overwhelm us. They can negatively impact our young people too and draw us closer to fear and worry and away from faith and trust in our futures.

As Martin Luther King Jr said "Faith is taking the first step, even when you don't see the whole staircase."

Sometimes, we must deactivate our worries for a moment and just take the next best step forward for ourselves. Talking about our worries with a trusted friend, partner or professional always helps. The old adage, 'a problem shared is a problem halved' is still as true today as it was all those years ago when it was first quoted!



Who might you talk to about your worries today? Sharing releases the worry from our minds, give the other person an opportunity to be of service and often brings new and insightful perspectives on the things we have been worrying about.

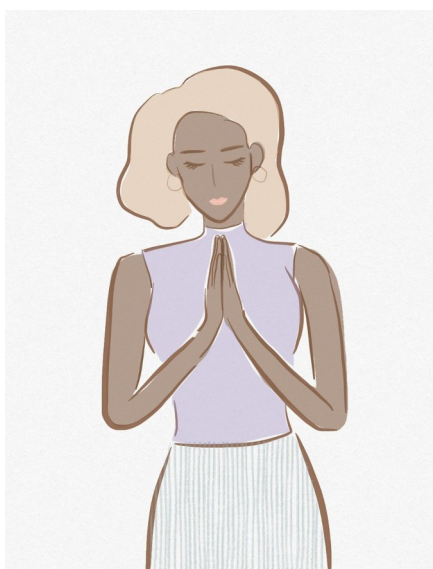
What could be a next best step **towards faith in your future**, today?

10. I WISH I HAD TAKEN BETTER CARE OF MYSELF

Taking care of ourselves is a holistic affair!

Brushing our teeth daily, sleeping well and basic hygiene are all straightforward self-care activities that we in the West now take for granted.

And focus on our mental health and wellbeing is thankfully getting more exposure now, too. Yet, what about our spiritual and emotional wellbeing?



How do we take care of ourselves in these areas?

Whether or not you hold religious or spiritual views, many of us keep going when we really need to stop and rest.

Prayer, meditation or just being with ourselves in quietness can be deeply healing. It can be easy to ignore the impact that emotional pain, sadness, anger or disappointments have on our daily lives. Instead, we hope that these feelings will go away or that things will just get better on their own.

And sometimes, they do of course. Yet, when things aren't getting better and we remind ourselves that we only have **one life**, what must we do then?

As someone famous once said (Google disputed who!) "Nothing changes if nothing changes". Maybe that's not strictly true, as things are always changing. Yet perhaps the sentiment is that we won't start to **see the change that we want to see** until we **make new and positive decisions and choices about our lives** going forwards.

When we stop doing what we've always done, we will start getting new and different results.

So, congratulate yourself for reading this far. You clearly *want* change!

What will you do next?

I'd love to connect with you if you'd like to explore your next best step or just find out more about Slow Coach Sarah.

Email for a free, initial consultation about whether one-to-one coaching or counselling could help you right now, or you are welcome to attend one of Slow Coach Sarah's face-to-face workshops in Kent, UK.