

Living Life Well

with **ZURAIDA JARDINE**

Media personality and functional medicine health and lifestyle coach Zuraida Jardine opens up about her career, change, and how she lives life well.

ON CHANGING GEARS

What made you switch from being a full-time media personality to pursuing a career in health and wellbeing?

It was an organic transition, as I'd always had a keen interest in wellbeing and behaviour. I woke up one morning and had this crazy idea – "What if I were to follow this path that's calling me so loudly? What if I were to apply to university to study psychology?" And so I did.

How has your media career equipped you for your current vocation?

My entire career in media included human connection. My vocation never bred isolation, only inclusion. I am forever grateful for my media career, and nothing that I've done or am doing in this field is a drastic departure from my health and wellbeing pursuits. It's all interlinked, with the common denominator being people and connection.

What made you choose the path of a functional medicine health and lifestyle coach?

After discovering functional medicine and the significance of gut health in particular, I signed up to study functional medicine health coaching with the International Institute of Functional Medicine in the US. This, in turn, led me to my studies in breathwork therapy.

What is functional medicine, and what do you see as its benefits?

Functional medicine looks at the human being as an individual, focusing on identifying and addressing the root cause of dysfunction or disease. It is, in essence, a tailor-made medicinal outlook on optimum health, which aims to take away the plaster and heal the wound.



Can you tell us a bit more about breathwork therapy?

Breathwork is an ancient healing practice that can be found in a number of different traditions. Hebraic tradition refers to ruach; Asian cultures have chi and ki, and the Hindu religion practises pranayama. Breathwork allows us to become aware of our states, including tension, blocks, resistance, and suppressions that are preventing us from enjoying healthy breath flow and circulation.

Why did you go on to pursue your MA in Critical Diversity studies?

As a South African, and a person of colour, I see it as imperative for us all to learn to understand one another as individuals. Critical Diversity Literacy interrogates the study of otherness, and recognises how our privilege and power impact our social behaviour, viewpoints and narrative. We can only begin to understand the uniqueness of individuality when we recognise that our multiple intersections with life make our experiences deeply subjective. An appreciation of this subjectivity can only aid me in being a stronger healthcare practitioner - and human being.

ON LIVING LIFE WELL

What does living life well mean to you?

Live: Whatever you do, commit to it fully. Life: It's fleeting, so make sure you live it intentionally. Well: This is a state of feeling. High or low, whichever state is practised best will thrive the most.

What is your primary motivation for staying healthy?

Longevity. The ability to live longer and healthier lives is within reach if we move regularly, eat consciously, connect to our spirituality, and play often.

You've referred to food as 'pleasure and medicine'. How does this reflect in your daily life?

Food is a pleasure that can conjure up positive memories of people and places. It is also a form of medicine, because so much of what we need to heal ourselves can be found in the nutrients rooted in nature. By gathering and sharing food in a way that creates positive connotations and memories, I am continuously cultivating and encouraging a positive relationship with it.

Is your exercise routine set, or do you like to keep it fresh?

I'm drawn to the word 'movement' rather than 'exercise', because it denotes less of a sense of pressure. For me, movement can mean anything from a strength training routine to yoga, pilates, or a high intensity session.

Why is mental wellbeing important to you?

Mental, physical and spiritual health are all intertwined. They all deserve the same attention, because if one is out of balance, the other areas are all impacted. Overall wellness involves optimum health of the full mind-body connection.

How do you build your mental and emotional resilience?

By owning my personal life stories. We must allow ourselves to be vulnerable enough to own and appreciate that our experiences and adversities have moulded us into the beings that are still standing today.

What are five Wellness Warehouse products that you love, and which Wellness store do you usually visit?

My favourite products are the Biomedcan supplement range, Metagenics UltraPotent C, Eat Real Lentil Chips, organic honey, and carob coated almonds. I usually shop at the Wellness Warehouse in Parktown North in Johannesburg.

ON THE FUTURE

Do you set goals and resolutions for yourself and your life?

I have journalled all my life, and a big part of this includes the visions and resolutions I have for myself and the future. There is power in writing down your thoughts.

What are your aspirations for the year?

I've just renovated and re-opened my practice for workshops and in-person client consultations. I'm also going to be applying to do my PhD.



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