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Pharmacy

APRIL, 2023

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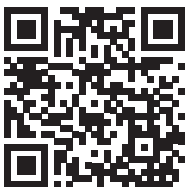


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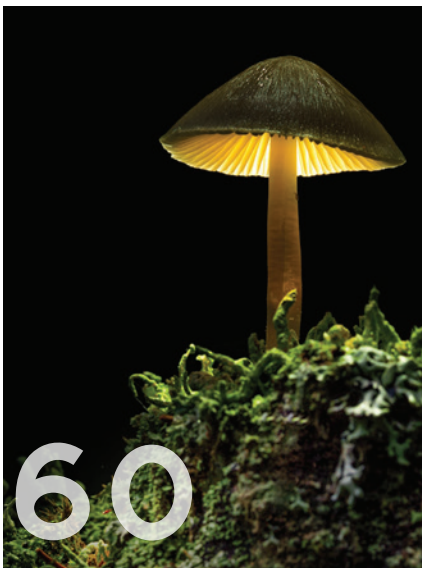
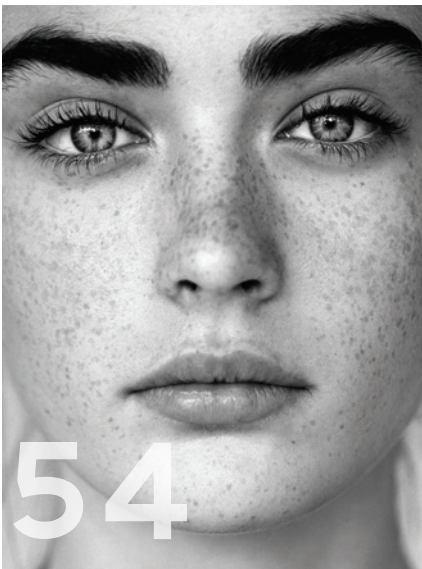
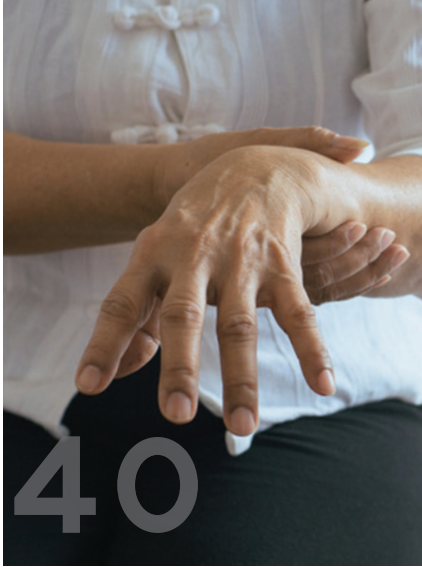


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IGNORANCE IS NOT BLISS, SO KEEP BEING CURIOUS!

By Dr Monique Beedles.

We're all born curious. Curiosity is the desire to learn, and it's as natural as the desire to eat. Just as a baby will cry until they're fed, so they will reach out to touch that colourful object or take a bite of that scrap they found on the floor. They just want to learn more about it.

Curiosity is essential to our survival, as it alerts us to dangers and potential threats. If we're not curious about a roar from the trees, it may be too late once the lion has pounced. The flipside of this essential curiosity is the anxiety that comes from being ever alert to threats. At its extreme it can lead to paranoia and a crippling fear of trying anything new.

Ignorance is not bliss. Instead, knowledge is power, and curiosity is an essential leadership capability. Rather than being afraid of the unknown, or defensive in the face of potential threats, a mindset of curiosity helps us to learn and to grow through ever-changing uncertainties.

Dr Todd Kashdan, a professor of psychology at Virginia's George Mason University in the US, has undertaken extensive research on curiosity. In his book *Curious?* he highlights five of the demonstrated 'big benefits' of curiosity.

Those with higher levels of curiosity show:

- Improved health, including longer lives.
- Higher overall intelligence.
- A greater sense of meaning and purpose in their lives.
- Healthier social relationships.
- Greater fulfilment and ultimate happiness.

We're all born curious, but our curiosity can decline if we don't nurture and encourage it. Since it's innate, we don't need to 'develop' our curiosity. Rather, we need to avoid stifling it.



“Ignorance is not bliss. Instead, knowledge is power, and curiosity is an essential leadership capability.”

When three-year-olds ask 'why?' they're following a natural instinct, one that's essential to their survival and growth. After repeatedly being told to 'be quiet' or 'stop bugging me', they give up asking.

The same thing can happen in the workplace if we don't have a safe space to ask questions. Sometimes we're afraid that asking a 'stupid question' will make us look incompetent. Instead, we should view questions as an indicator of a person's desire to learn – a desire that we should nurture and encourage.

We know that if we don't exercise, our muscles will atrophy. Likewise, nurturing your curiosity needs to become a habit. If you don't use it, you'll lose it. If we're socialised to accept the status quo and not ask 'too many questions', our curiosity can be stifled as we move through life.

Progressing in your career or in growing your business requires actively nurturing curiosity in yourself and in your team. Develop a habit of always asking more, always probing deeper. A good

question to ask yourself is, 'What else do I need to know?'

Not all problems are created equal. We also need to be curious about which problems are most important to our team, to our business, and to our careers. As much as we might like to, we can't solve all the problems at once. It's easy to get carried away by things that are interesting (to us), but not relevant (to others). That doesn't mean we should confine ourselves to the specific domain of our expertise. In fact, we can learn a lot by looking outside our own four walls to other businesses, to other countries and to other industries.

What are you curious about?



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