



The life coach's advice



Jeff Archer is a life coach and runs Upgrade My Life, a website that offers one-to-one and distance life-coaching solutions. For details and a free personal happiness profile, call 020 8748 5563, or visit www.upgrade-my-life.com.

Jeff says: 'Victoria hasn't been happy for a while, but was finding it hard to pinpoint why. She had no time for herself and felt everything was getting on top of her. As soon as she thought about what "everything" was, she could break down her concerns into individual problems and tackle them one at a time. I asked her to rate different areas of her life according to how happy she was with them, and then decide what she wanted to achieve in each area over time-frames of one month, six months and two years. This allowed her to identify where she was unhappy and set herself short- and long-term goals.'

'Victoria has already created some more time for herself by organising a baby-sitting rota, scheduling one evening a week where she is relieved of all family duties, and booking a weekend away with her sister. She's also arranged some outings so the whole family can do fun things together, rather than just experiencing the stresses of everyday life. These changes have helped her reduce her stress levels significantly. She's been keeping notes on her progress, which she can look at when she needs a confidence boost.'



The personal trainer's advice



Neal Chamberlain is a fitness instructor and director of The Tonic, an internet-based nationwide personal-training service that will search its national database to find a personal trainer close to you. For details, visit www.the-tonic.com.

Neal says: 'Victoria's been really active in the past, enjoying swimming, dance and aerobics, but her main barriers now are time, looking after the children and the fact that she can't always plan ahead. She wants to lose 1st to get back to her pre-baby size 10, so I've suggested daily activities (such as

taking a 20-minute walk with the kids), as well as giving her a separate resistance circuit to do twice a week, which will work all her muscle groups, and a stretching programme with six simple 30-second stretches to do most days to improve flexibility. I've also advised her to get a Swiss ball – it won't break the bank and is great for core strength work. Victoria's got an exercise bike, cross-trainer and lots of exercise videos at home, and I've suggested she try to do at least 15 minutes' cardio work three or four times a week, alternating between them.'

The hairstylist's advice



Adam Redman is a style director at Toni & Guy, Croydon. Victoria's cut cost £42 and her colour was £60. To book an appointment, call 020 8649 8485, or to find your nearest salon, visit www.toniandguy.co.uk.

Adam says: 'Victoria had a heavy, shoulder-length bob that was taking her quite a long time to dry in the morning, so I gave her a more low-maintenance style. I warmed up her natural light-brown colour with a chestnut gloss and put a few light-blond highlights through her parting – it makes her

hair look much brighter and really healthy, and she doesn't have to worry about regrowth. Then I took about 1½in off the length and cut in some long layers to take out the weight, creating a choppy, layered bob. I finished off with a sweeping fringe to soften the style. Victoria has great hair and this textured cut will be easy to look after as she won't have to spend any time styling it. For going out, she can easily glam it up with a bit of wax and a spritz of gloss spray to bring out the textured layers.'



TWO WEEKS LATER... VICTORIA'S VERDICT

'The whole process has really sorted me out, and I've lost 6lb already! I found the nutritional plan strict, but Susan advised me to try to stick to it 80% of the time, allowing me some flexibility. I've got more energy and am in a better frame of mind – even the children have noticed! It's been tough

to find time for Neal's fitness routine, but I'm trying to eat dinner earlier with the children a few times a week so that I exercise once they're asleep. The make-up and new haircut look great. And with Jeff's help, I've managed to create time for myself. I feel much more confident and able to cope.' □

Would you like to be considered for a Life Makeover? Send a photo of yourself and a letter giving us details of what you would like to change about your life to Life Makeover/Zest, National Magazine House, 72 Broadwick Street, London W1F 9EP.