

bella rae

VALUE + BEAUTY + PURPOSE



ART JOURNALING | REAL LIFE ROMANCE | DIY KOKEDAMA
BREAKFAST AROUND THE WORLD | GROWING UP AWKWARD | SLAM POETRY

after school quiz

Once school is out you're faced with some daunting but super exciting choices! There are endless possibilities (obviously too many for one quiz). You might feel certain of your next move, or overwhelmed by the options. Either way here are a few questions for reflection.

YOUR FEELINGS TOWARDS SCHOOL ARE:

A. School has been great! I actually really enjoy learning and using my mind. One of my favourite places is my desk (or reading in bed!). I can get a bit bored on holidays.

B. School's all right but I am digging my weekend job. I enjoy the independence of earning some money, love being part of a team and am learning a lot from watching management and seeing how the business runs.

C. Thank goodness it's over! My brain needs a break! I'm not sure what is next for me but I'll be fine as long as there are no desks, classes, uniforms or exams.

D. School was cool. At least I knew what to expect there. I've kind of stopped thinking about school because I feel freaked out about what I'm going to do next.

AFTER SCHOOL YOU WANT TO MOVE...

A. Not really! Home is fine. I'm in no hurry to move out, plus I can save a lot of money if I live at home. I get on with my parents and they respect my space. If I had to move for a purpose though, I could.

B. into a share house with some like-minded people. I'm keen to experience the independence of living out of home. I've already started saving money and buying a few things of my own.

C. Yes! I want to move! I want to break free, explore, get some space from my family, experience some adventures. Get me out of here!

D. Do I? I don't know. Home isn't always easy but I am scared to live somewhere new too. Should I stay or should I go now?

IF YOU COULD DO SOME WORK EXPERIENCE, YOU WOULD PICK:

A. Something I am curious about, to suss out whether I want to study in that field or not – nursing? teaching? law or accounting? science? art?

B. Something practical I'm passionate about and/or which serves people and/or the community, in a business or company with a good rep.

C. Something exciting or unusual... maybe something tied to a cause I care about... preferably involving travel.

D. Can't someone pick something for me? Maybe I'll ask people who know me well what they think... again. Actually I'm not sure I want to do work experience.

YOUR INTERNET SEARCH HISTORY LOOKS LIKE:

A. Different universities I could enrol in... the top courses in my favourite subjects... what books I would need to buy... pretty stationery I could use...

B. Current companies and businesses hiring... how to write a killer resume... leadership opportunities...

C. Overseas work and volunteer opportunities... short courses and workshops... inspirational adventure clips... personality tests...

D. Facebook... Instagram... YouTube, YouTube, YouTube... whatever will entertain and distract me. I definitely don't want to be left alone with my daydreams (and doubts!).

WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT YOUR FUTURE YOU ARE MOTIVATED BY:

A. Delving into research and learning. Working hard over time to achieve something worthwhile. Making a contribution to society by solving problems and using my brain.

B. Standing on my own two feet. Building a great life. Contributing to my community in a tangible way.

C. Personal growth, seeking truth. Adventure. Friendship. Experiencing the world and trying a bunch of different opportunities.

D. At this point, I just want to survive, hide, be OK, shake this pressure off. I'm not dreaming too big because I feel really unsure. Expectations are scary and fear of failure has me stuck.

If you got....



Mostly a's – back to the books, Hermione!

Sounds like your mind is an insatiable sponge! School was like your entrée and you're salivating just thinking about the main course! Studying straight after school is not for the faint of heart! But it doesn't have to be all about the end goal either. While it's wise to consider the student debt you may accrue, study can be an invigorating exploration across disciplines and subjects you didn't get to discover during school, as well as opportunities to study abroad and the chance to make new friends. Some slivers on study... it is a sacrifice, but it's meant to serve you, not make you its slave. Your professors are a rich resource, but they don't know everything. It can feel like a big time commitment, but if you get started and hang in there you'll be surprised how quickly you get through it.

A

Mostly b's – There's something 'bout that work, work, work, work, work, work

You're keen to earn some money, gain some independence, do something practical, join a team and experience 'the real world'. Ah now why don't you get a job? Or start a trade! Even if it isn't super glamorous (few jobs are), there is SO MUCH to be gained from working (in a team or on your own) in a demanding environment. The hardest part might be simply getting the job, but patience and perseverance are built through the application and interview process. Hopefully you find something you get a kick out of, but if not, try to look beyond the job itself. Focus on the skills you're learning, the different people you're serving and relating to, the work ethic and strength of character you're developing and the business/management/life insights you're gaining. Then you'll see the richness and purpose in your work tasks big and small.

B

Mostly d's – Stressed, depressed, not impressed

Already tired of thinking about what's next? Overwhelmed by options and unenthused about choosing? Sick of quizzes and personality tests and career expos and sentences starting with, "What about..." or "You should look into..." Perhaps you're feeling frustrated by pressure and expectations placed on you by family, friends, the world, yourself...? It's OK to feel this way. Guaranteed you're not alone, even if your friends all seem certain. Very few really know what they're doing. Most of us make it up as we go and somehow find our way. You will too. It's OK to take some time to journal, go for some long walks or camp out for a few days. Maybe don't binge watch all of Netflix, avoid showering for a week and postpone all life choices, indefinitely. Eventually you will have to choose to do something. But know you don't need to have it figured out all at once either.

D

Mostly c's – Mind the gap!

Itching to do something other than school, but not ready to knuckle down into study or a specific job? Want some space to explore and grow? Why not take a gap year? If you're willing to roll up your sleeves and get to work on having a seriously fun year, the opportunities are out there. Think working holidays, short courses, house-sitting, odd jobs, volunteering overseas or simply getting grounded at home, starting a vegetable patch, helping your family, serving at church, taking time to see a counsellor and work on yourself, your habits and your inner world. There is no right or wrong way to do a gap year. But it is wise to give yourself a focus and set some goals so you are proud of how you spend the time. Expect that it won't be all sunny beach times - as with life, there will be challenges, lessons and down days. But do dare to ask yourself, what would make your heart sing?

C



l'avventura milanese di leah

Our resident sustainable and ethical fashion writer, Leah Musch, shares with us the highs and lows of moving abroad alone, as she begins her semester studying in Italy's fashion capital, Milan.

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In the weeks before flying to Milan to study fashion for a semester, people kept asking me if I was excited. I would twist my face into a smile and nod. However the truth was that I was terrified. For someone as passionate as I am to have the opportunity to study abroad in one of the world's fashion capitals sounds like a dream come true. But having to face the fact that I would be doing it completely on my own was enough to make me feel like I had rocks in my stomach.

When I arrived in Italy, I was slightly delirious (nearly 48 hours of travel will do that to a girl)! My taxi driver sped through the countryside, weaving in and out of cars between text messages he was writing frantically with one hand!

I arrived at my new university – Nuova Accademia di Belle Arti (New Academy of Fine Arts) with my suitcases in tow.

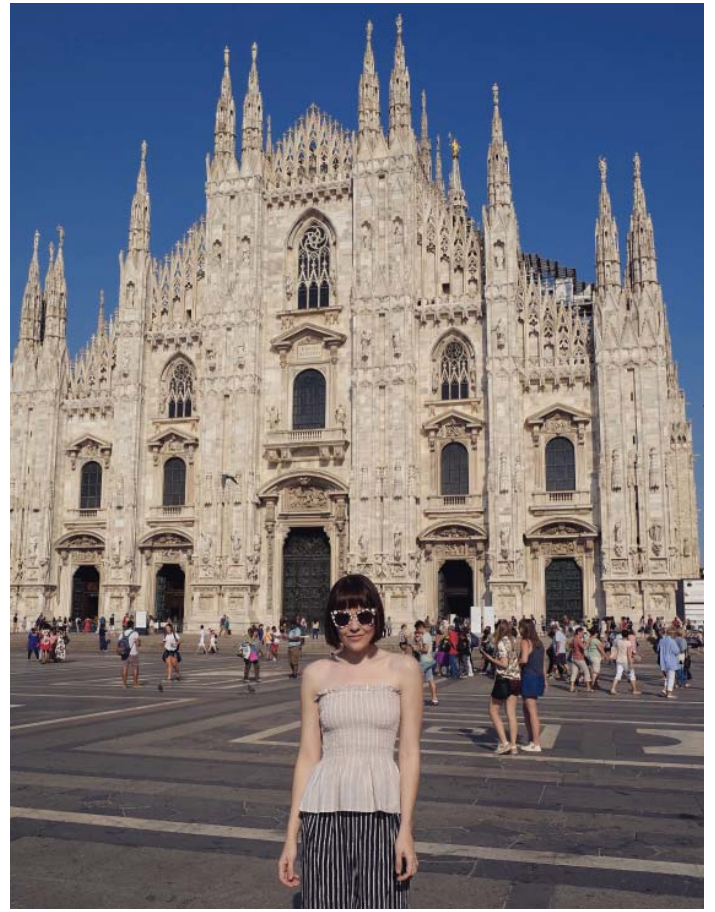
When I was informed that my other three house mates wouldn't be arriving for at least five more days, I felt a lump creep into my throat. How was I going to survive here on my own for that long, in a place where I barely spoke the language? The first night in the empty apartment was the hardest. I curled up, fully clothed, on top of my bed, too tired to even get under the covers. I used a small hand towel as a blanket (pathetic I know). It was 4pm.

The next day I was awake before the sun. Having anxiety is nothing new to me,

however on this morning I experienced it on a whole new level. My heart was racing, I felt sick, I was sweating. I was suddenly hyper-aware of time. The thought that I was going to be away from my family and fiancé for the next 140 days made the room spin.

I realised that in order to survive, I needed to connect with people.

I had to make friends, and since the other people I would be studying with hadn't arrived yet, I turned to the next best thing – Facebook. I discovered a Facebook group called 'Girls in Milan', and once I was accepted I typed a plea for help: *Aussie girl, freaking out, homesick after two days, needs pals.* I was overwhelmed



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with responses, but one stood out. An English girl named Michelle empathised with how I was feeling, and was happy to meet up with me in the afternoon to show me around the city.

We met outside my uni (safety first) and instantly I knew we'd be friends. She had a relaxed, warm energy that made me feel calm again for the first time in days. We started to walk and chat, and as we turned the corner I quickly discovered that my apartment is right next to two of Milan's most famous and beautiful canals, a fantastic vintage store and endless cafés and restaurants. We strolled along the cobblestone streets, stopping for coffee gelato and enjoying the blistering Italian sunshine.

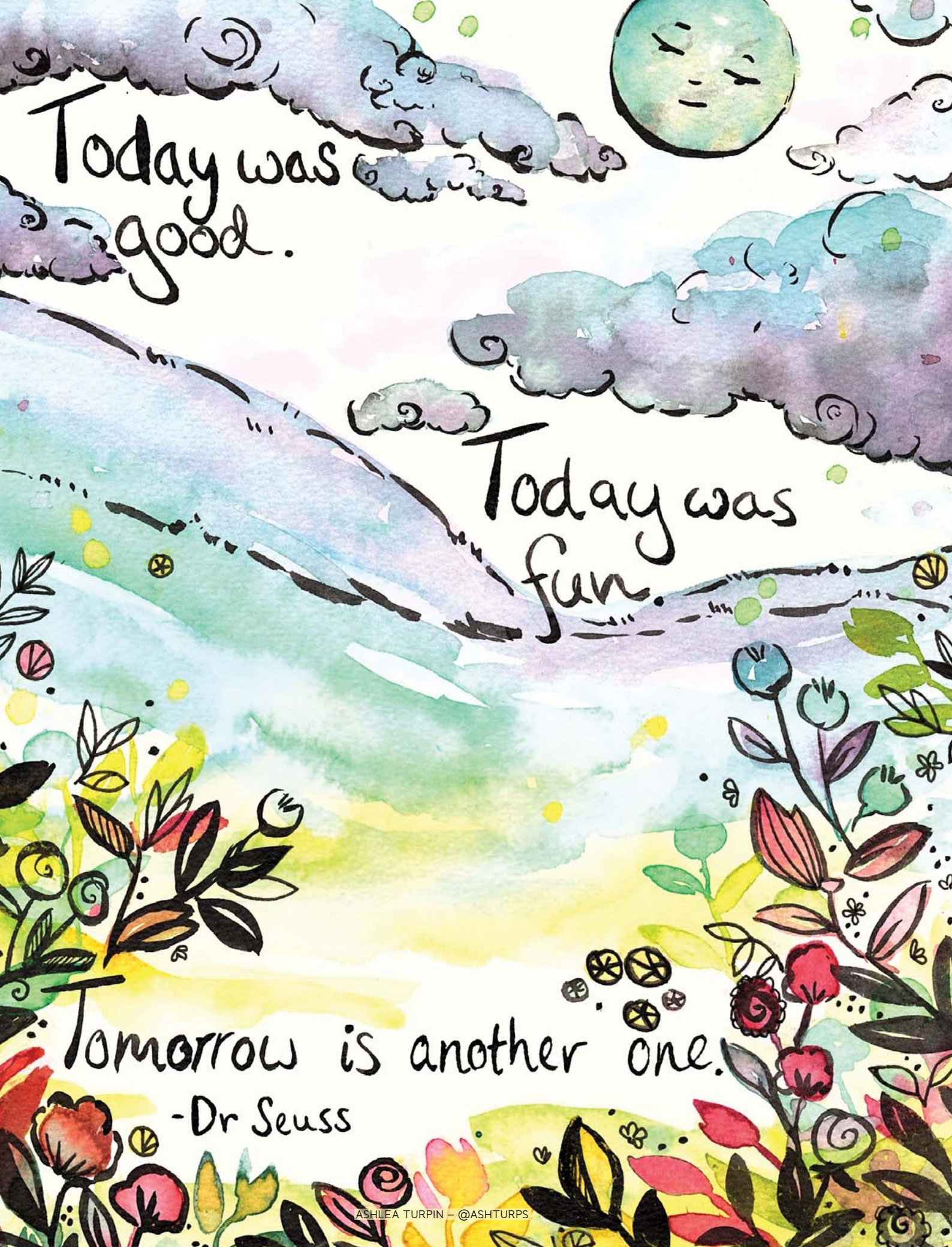
The street fashion didn't disappoint, as I admired tanned women in designer pleated skirts teamed with trendy sneakers and oversized handbags rush past me. There was something about their natural beauty that made me feel good about embracing less makeup.

I soon learned that Michelle had fallen in love with Italy at a young age and had been living her dream to live and teach in Milan for the last four years. Her passion for the country was so genuine that part of me started to open up to it a little more as well.

As we neared the city centre, she stopped me. "I remember the first moment I saw it," she said smiling. "Saw what?" I asked, but before I could finish, I felt myself

gasp. A church stretching high into the sky made from sparkling, slightly pink marble was glowing in the afternoon sun, and it took my breath away. The Duomo (cathedral) was more stunning and grand than I could have imagined, and there was something in seeing it that filled me with excitement and optimism.

I was here, I'd made it! And although I was scared, I knew I'd be OK, because on the other side of the things you are most afraid of are always the biggest and best adventures.



Today was
good.

Today was
fun.

Tomorrow is another one.

-Dr Seuss



keep those dreams clean

How's your sleep hygiene?

No, we aren't talking about whether you have clean sheets, or your ability to refrain from drooling on your pillow. Gotcha there! Sleep hygiene refers to the sleeping habits and practices that are conducive to a good 'n' healthy night's sleep.

Studies by the Sleep Health Foundation have indicated that 30-45% of Australians have poor sleeping patterns, and sleep deprivation could kill you quicker than food deprivation.

Sleep on that fact!

Alarmingly, we are the only mammals that willingly put off sleep, and this decision is impacting our health in dramatic ways.

You might already have a tried and tested road map to sleepy town or you might find yourself tossing about in bed wondering where you went wrong. Sleep seems like a fairly effortless thing to do, but we can make it hard for ourselves if we have haphazard habits.

As kiddlywinks we relied on our parents creating a comforting bedtime routine, complete with teeth brushing, bedtime story, saying goodnight and getting tucked in. As we grow we have to choose our own rituals. If you're dreaming of a better night's sleep, get intentional about how you go to bed. Here are some ideas (based on science and stuff):

60 minutes before bed: switching off starts by switching off

Start your sleep routine 60 minutes before your desired bed time by switching off all electronic devices. The blue light that emanates from your phone, TV, laptops

and other devices reduces your sleep-inducing hormone, melatonin, which means your sleep won't be refreshing and restorative. If you've been hyped up all day you might feel a bit of a come-down. If this switching off stage makes you feel bored and edgy, choose one or two easy activities that will get you ready for the next day, such as packing your lunch or laying your clothes out, to distract yourself without a screen.

45 minutes before bed: turn the heat up!

Have a hot shower or bath 45-60 minutes before bedtime. The gradual lowering of body temperature as you cool down afterwards helps signal to the brain that it's time to sleep.

Once upon a time when dusk hit and the temperature dropped, humans would be ready to begin their sleep. However, the light bulb has meant that we go to bed at a very different time than when the sun goes down. A hot bath or shower can help mimic this natural cycle, which will help sleep come more easily.

The ideal temperature for sleeping is about 22 degrees Celsius. So a cool room can help you drift off more easily.

30 minutes before bed: set the stage

The brain is influenced by its context. Make sure you wear clothes that are only for sleeping to help signal to the brain it's preparing for sleep, not for school, or sport, or a party. You might have heard of these things called pyjamas (rumour has it they lose their sleepy powers if you

wear them during the day, at least on a regular basis).

Use a lamp to dim the lighting and help stimulate melatonin production (a sleeping hormone) which will get you feeling drowsy.

15 minutes before bed: stretch/read/journal

A wind-down activity before bed can be useful for slowing your thoughts and helping you process anything that is worrying you. Many of us lie awake at night with brains buzzing about to-do lists, relationships and future decisions. Try gentle movement such as stretching, or reading a book (of the paper variety) or writing in your journal, which are all helpful activities to help centre your thoughts and reduce stress.

30 minutes post bed: don't suffer in silence

Ideally falling asleep at night should take 10-15 minutes. However if you are lying in bed awake after 30 minutes, it's simply that you aren't quite ready for sleep yet. Try not to panic or get cranky when this happens. Just hop out of bed and repeat some of these steps and try bed again in another 15 minutes. If you are wide awake, perhaps stay awake a little longer before trying to fall asleep again.

Giving yourself a sleep routine that works will do much more than keep you from feeling tired the next day. Sleep affects your mood, weight, skin, academic performance, athletic ability, and much more. Perhaps one of the best ways you can discover your best self is to become better acquainted with your bed!

love vs. lust

How do you tell the difference?

What is love, anyway? Romance is fun, and having that special someone in our lives is a desire for most of us. But how do we know we've truly found someone worthy? Are we in love, or simply 'in lust'?

Emotions that come with a relationship are powerful. They give us great happiness

and pleasure. Often it's impossible to hear what our brain is saying because our heart is speaking so loudly and it just feels so good!

It's smart to let your brain have a say as well (although it's nowhere near as fun). It's your brain that will stop you making

decisions you might regret later on, when the initial high has calmed down and you begin to notice things about each other you were blind to before.

So let's take a look at your heart through the eyes of your brain (there's an image for you!).

LOVE...

is patient. You are willing to wait and see how the relationship is going before making any strong commitments.

is kind. You treat each other gently and wait for the right moments to say tricky things.

does not envy. You trust each other and feel safe. You can spend time together and apart and with your friends and family.

is not boastful. You are proud to be each other's friend, but don't feel the need to flaunt it. You encourage each other and don't show off your strengths (or their weaknesses!).

is not self-seeking. The relationship is about the two of you respecting one another and putting one another first – without either of you taking advantage.

is not easily angered. If one of you breaks a date or things don't go according to plan, the inconvenienced person is able to remain calm and understanding.

does not keep score. The past is the past, and when someone makes a mistake, you choose to forgive and move on (whilst setting and keeping healthy expectations around how you treat one another).

LUST...

is impatient. You want to jump right in and don't think about or care what might happen if it doesn't work out.

is insensitive. You find yourselves saying things on impulse without thinking it through first.

is jealous. You have nagging doubts about what the other is doing when you are not together. You feel a need to control or keep tabs and want the other all to yourself.

is boastful. You are openly proud and don't care who knows it, and often compare with your friends' relationships, or compete amongst yourselves, trying to 'one up' the other.

is selfish. One of you gets upset or demanding when you feel the other isn't 'meeting your needs', but communicating about this is hard, and can get heated.

gets angry quickly. If things don't go the way one of you thinks they should be going, you easily get upset, and can be quick to blame the other.

keeps reminding and digging. You feel the need to bring up past hurts again and again, holding it against the other person and never fully letting it go.

Stand back and ask yourself, which column sounds like me? And which column does your bae camp out in? Are you in it together or is one of you loving while the other is lusting? What would your trusted wise people say? I challenge you to ask someone who loves you fiercely but can also take a look from the outside, without being swayed by the feelings you carry when you're in the thick of it.

If your head and heart agree it's love (for both of you) keep up the good work – and it is work, but worth it! Of course we can all stumble into selfishness at times, but love keeps on the lookout for lust creeping in and calls that nastiness out.

If you noticed one or both of you struggle with steering clear of the red (lusty selfishness) it might be time to consider whether you're building the kind of campfire which can burn steadily,

keeping you warm for years to come, or whether you need to hightail it out of there before this bonfire you've lit leaves someone seriously burnt.

Are you having trouble sorting out your head and heart? Need to talk to someone who is not your friends and family? Write to [bella rae's trained counsellor at counsellor.anne@bellaraemag.com](mailto:bella.rae@bellaraemag.com) for objective, confidential wisdom. Or call Kids Help Line on 1800 55 1800.



a tongan in auckland

Liz Schultz chats to Lavinia Hufangale'o Rosina 'Uhila, who is passionate about bringing her Tongan heritage to New Zealand, the land in which she grew up, through her singing, acting and dancing.

My dad said by age two I was already singing and being very dramatic! There was a little performer gene in me, cultivated by my dad who also sings and plays instruments. I'd tag along with him to performances, where I'd be on the sidelines, copying dance moves and singing along. I think my confidence and free spirit was nurtured from a young age.

When I was in primary school I'd put my hand up for the Kapa Haka group, who would perform the traditional Māori dance and song in Te Reo – the Māori language, even though I'm not Māori. I would be like: "Yay! Pick me! I want to be in the front and perform!"

In high school I started choosing subjects based on pursuing Performing Arts as a career and on graduation moved to the only school offering the disciplines I wanted, in Christchurch, more than 700 km away.

I spent almost every night of the first year crying about being away from home. There was some culture shock for me because in Auckland I had more

Pacific Island people around me, while in Christchurch we were the minority.

I started to copy the culture around me, which was totally not me. I felt if I didn't fit into their mould, then I was not in at all. I wasn't grounded, and kind of lost who I was.

I made mistakes but it was also a time of growth. My performing skills were sharpened. I learnt how to be on my own, to be disciplined, adaptable and stand my ground.

These days I incorporate collaboration, community and respect for diversity into my creative work. Two years ago I created my own company, *Majesty Productions*, which runs youth programs and professional productions in Auckland.

I choose to use my understanding of both cultures to relate to all sorts of different people. I don't want to be stuck in a way that distances me from people in either culture.

The younger me didn't see the value in my heritage, but I have found a sense of belonging comes from learning where you have come from. There's also beauty in seeing traits and talents flow down the family tree.

On my father's side I have many relatives with a gift for serving others well, which I never would have known about if I hadn't asked. There's a sense of deep connection and respect, a sense of grounding when you understand your roots. You begin carrying on a legacy. You know what you have and who you are can contribute in some way, just as those who went before you did.

I have also learnt not to limit myself to one creative art form. Drama isn't just about being on the stage. There's also film, advertising, coaching – so many different ways you can use drama! Upskilling doesn't just help with getting a job, it helps get the creative juices flowing and means you have more fun. I have also learnt not to aim for perfection, but to give my best and not worry about the rest.



breakfast around the world

We've been busy asking some of our international friends what they put in their mouths at 'the most important meal of the day'.

The Philippines thanks to Jena

Champorado is a traditional Filipino breakfast and I don't mind eating it for lunch and even dinner. Very easy to make, you can use a typical white rice but it's best if you use glutinous 'sticky rice', brown sugar, cocoa powder, coconut milk or evaporated milk, water, then boil it altogether and that's it! Really delicious and rich!

Japan thanks to Andrea and Kim

Rice, always. And any combination of miso soup, fish, pickles, seaweed, egg omelette. *Nattō* – really popular with adults but usually hated by kids – fermented soybeans with a sticky, stringy consistency that smells like week-old sweaty socks and, apparently, tastes like it too!

Don't forget to say *いただきます* itadakimasu (sounds like 'eat a duck and mouse... Eeew!') before eating and *ごちそうさまでした* gochisousamadeshita when you're finished. A little hard to translate directly to English. Itadakimasu generally means to receive, used mostly as a, "Let us eat!"

while gochi is kinda their, "Thank you for the meal".

The Netherlands thanks to Machteld

Although Dutch people might have less traditional breakfasts these days, we are still very much a breaky loving country! A typical Dutch breakfast would include a slice of bread with butter and cheese or ham, a slice of bread with butter and chocolate sprinkles, or jam and peanut butter, a glass of milk and a slice of spiced breakfast cake, called '*Ontbijtkoek*', with butter.

The Cook Islands thanks to Vaia

Some typical breakfast foods we eat are: paw paw with milk powder sprinkled over the top. *Ūtō Vaé*, which is the sweet and soft yellow flesh found in a certain type of hard coconut, mixed with water and sugar. *Harava* – our alternative to toast, which is a little bit like a pancake – only made in different flavours such as coconut, banana, potatoes or pumpkin – and served with butter or cream. Then there's fried fish, rice and *Miti Roro*, which is made from coconut cream, salt, warm or cold water and optional chilli (served

with sweet and crispy *Harava*). Coconut porridge made with the flesh from soft coconuts. And finally – my mum's favourite – sweet and juicy mangoes!

The United States thanks to Cameron

It all depends on where you go. When I'm in Pennsylvania, if I want something cheap and quick I'll head to a local diner and get eggs, fatty strips of bacon, sausage patties and toast with black drip coffee. (Some people go for pancakes instead of the toast, with maple syrup on top.) All for about \$10 and this includes free coffee refills. Diners are all across the United States and most are open 24 hours. The plates are big but the quality of the food isn't the best.

When I'm in New York City I'll head to a Hispanic corner store in the Bronx. You can get something called *salami con mangu* (salami with smashed bananas and cheese) and their coffee is really sweet – up to 4 sugars a cup! This will all cost about \$9. But when I'm in Manhattan or Brooklyn I'll head to a nice café and get something like eggs benedict with a large cappuccino and maybe some fruit on the side. This will most probably cost about \$25.



Brazil thanks to Sarah and Dinei

Breakfast can be quite different from the North to the South. In our Southern rural area, a typical breakfast (or *Café Da Manhã* as we call it) is entirely homemade and consists of a thick slice of bread served with butter, cream, cheese, salami, sandwich meats or jam (made from pumpkin, banana, orange, paw paw or any other fruit that is in season). Coffee or *maté* (green tea). *Cuca*, which is a cake-like bread with jam cooked in it. Or... just cake... Yep! Cake for breakfast! It's a good place to live.

Spain thanks to Laura

Spain has a really sweet tooth at breakfast! If we are not eating *churros* dunked in the thickest, sweetest cup of hot chocolate, we are eating pastries. We like all the pastries! From croissants to danishes to *magdalenas* (muffins). We love *café con tostadas* (coffee with toast). We also enjoy toast with butter and jam. If we do fancy something more savoury, we put olive oil on the toast and rub it with garlic and tomatoes. Growing up, I ate sugar-loaded cereals, including coco pops. We also have a Spanish version of

Milo - *Cola Cao*. We like orange juice with breakfast too.

Russia thanks to Valerie

Porridge – made from semolina, millet, buckwheat or barley, cooked with milk and sugar. Sweet foods, such as fruit and jam, are typically not eaten at breakfast and juice of any kind is never present at the breakfast table. 9 out of 10 Russian people drink black tea with their breakfast; some drink coffee, but tea is definitely the more common and traditional drink. An all-time favourite for most households on weekends and for special occasions, are Russian pancakes, called *blini*, which we eat with sour cream, honey, jam, nutella, cottage cheese or even meat! – If Mum puts the extra effort in!

Sweden thanks to Marianne

Coffee or tea with a sandwich with either ham, cheese or toast and marmalade. We drink milder black tea either like earl grey or a fruity flavoured black tea with honey. The Swedes have specific types of soft or crisp bread specifically by the brand *Wasa*, that we love. Complements are: boiled egg in an egg cup with salt and butter eaten

with a teaspoon. A glass of juice. Porridge made from oats with jam and milk. Fruit yogurt or *filmjök* which is a kind of yogurt I haven't so far found in any other country, eaten with cereal or muesli.

England, Ireland & Scotland thanks to Robyne

A typical English breakfast is a heart stopper! The full English includes toasted buttered white bread, usually two slices which are later dipped and fried in the leftover bacon fat, two Cumberland pork sausages, two to three rashers of crispy bacon, baked beans, sauté mushrooms and black pudding. Black pudding is made usually with pork fat, pork blood and oatmeal or barley and a special spice mix, then cooked and cured.

And, we can't forget the tea! In Ireland they drink Irish breakfast tea (slightly milder in flavour), whereas the English drink English breakfast tea.

The Irish use Irish soda bread, as opposed to sliced white bread for their breakfast, but everything else is pretty much the same. The Scottish add grilled tomatoes and potato scones. They also start off with porridge and sometimes the Scots batter and fry their black pudding!