




Galaxy® and  YOUNG WOMEN'S TRUST present

# Advice to my *Younger Self*



Unable to afford food, falling behind on rent or bills and struggling to make ends meet. The cost-of-living crisis is having a disproportionately negative financial impact on women.

At a time when they should be enjoying independence, feelings of purpose, happiness, fulfilment and a sense of agency - young women are too often left worrying about financial stability and stuck in jobs they don't enjoy.

Young women should be thriving, but instead they are struggling. And worryingly, there is a widening gulf between young women's and young men's financial stability.

As a feminist organisation working to achieve economic justice, the Young Women's Trust champions women aged 18-30 on low or no pay, striving to create a more equal world and raise women's incomes. As part of their commitment to help women Thrive, Galaxy are working with the Young Women's Trust to fund 1000's of hours of coaching to help young women find their passion, build self-belief and thrive in work.

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At its heart, Galaxy is about promoting pleasure - and there is no greater human pleasure than helping other people thrive. And when women thrive, the communities around them thrive too. Your pleasure has promise.

Every woman deserves the chance to succeed in life and have the freedom of choice to find the job they enjoy. In this booklet we've spoken to twenty incredible women across a spectrum of high-profile careers. These women wanted to share their own stories of adversity and challenges in the hope of inspiring and helping motivate a new generation of women in the workplace. We hope their life lessons will help offer support and encouragement to the thousands of young women to be their authentic selves and fight for roles they deserve.

**LUCIE CAVE**  
**Journalist and Editor**





# CLAIRE REINDORP

Chief Executive at Young Women's Trust

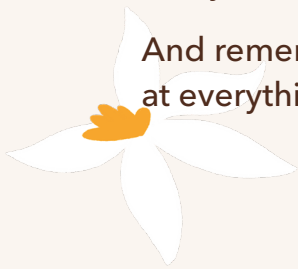
**“In life sometimes you're running, sometimes you're walking and sometimes you're standing still. All three are ok”**

“Being young today is tough, and being a young woman is even harder. Each year, thousands of young women approach Young Women's Trust for support. Many are struggling to get work, or they're stuck in low-paid jobs or facing widespread sexism at work. And unsurprisingly given the challenges they're facing, many young women tell us that they feel anxious or underconfident.

In my early 20s I didn't have a clue what I wanted to do and felt completely lost, comparing myself to others who seemed to be making a better start. I love leading The Young Women's Trust because we offer young women three of the things that I needed when I was starting out: a brilliant coach to help me identify my goals and understand my strengths; an experienced professional to review my CV and job applications; and peer support from a community that really gets it.

After a year of despair in the wrong job and feeling completely stuck, a wise friend once said to me that 'In life sometimes you're running, sometimes you're walking and sometimes you're standing still. All three are ok. It's true. Everyone is on their own path going at different speeds.

And remember you're ten times better at everything than you think!



## KELLY HOPPEN

### Being different is not just good, it's GREAT.

"I was once in a meeting with 20 people on Zoom and I was spoken to by someone who talked down to me in a demeaning way, making me feel totally invisible. I stopped the meeting and said I wanted to thank everyone who worked for him and apologised if we had been relentless in wanting to be heard in our product designs, but that I realised with a leader like they had I could see why. I then told this gentleman we were not going to be working together anymore.

I felt empowered and proud that I had stood up for myself, my company and for women.

I wish I had known that authenticity is the basis for everything you do in life. Do not be scared to be different. Different is good, in fact, it's GREAT.

If I had to give advice to my younger self? Be authentic, be fierce but vulnerable, be courageous, take risks and when they don't work out - move on. Don't waste energy on dead ends. Believe in what you do and surround yourself with positive people. Follow your intuition as it's real. Don't lose sleep, as you need sleep to achieve and follow your dreams and passions."



## ANNA WILLIAMSON

### Be unapologetically who YOU are!

"As a young woman, I never understood what mental health was all about. But I had a massive breakdown in my twenties - due to what is now defined as a coercive controlling relationship.

I was presenting kids TV at the time, a job that I loved, but instead of enjoying it I just felt suffocated, crippled with anxiety and depression and I reached rock bottom. I was struggling to eat, I didn't feel any joy, and I became obsessive about routines - which is a real symptom of my anxiety. I remember even thinking at one point that I didn't want to be on TV anymore. I felt that if I packed in my career all the horrible feelings would go away. I felt lacking in confidence and self-esteem and I had huge impostor syndrome.

I was in a really toxic relationship and I didn't realise it.

But now I look back and realise the value of having a great support network and being vulnerable enough to be able to ask for help was just so essential back then. In the end, I couldn't mask my feelings anymore and I had to tell my friend how I was feeling. I trusted her, help came and everything started to get better.

I wish I'd had more confidence in my uniqueness, as opposed to feeling like I had to fit in with the crowd. The advice I would give to my younger self would be to just be unapologetically who you are."





# ANGELA GRIFFIN

## The things I thought were negatives were actually strengths.

"Coming from a poor working-class background and going into an industry that was nothing like where I was from was a real eye-opener for me and a moment of challenge. I joined Coronation Street aged 16 and suddenly I was part of an industry where people didn't sound and look like me. I was in one of the biggest shows in the UK - watched by 15-20 million people - and I was a black working-class northern actor. I suffered massive impostor syndrome. Class has so much to answer for when it comes to how people think about themselves and where they should be in the world. It's only now that I see what people looked down on is also a massive strength. I appreciate life and I am grateful as I have seen the other side. I never got involved in the showbiz world. I was still hanging out with my mates from Leeds who I worked with at Burger King. And while at the time I felt like I didn't belong, I now frame that as 'I chose not to be there'.

Yes, I sounded common - but I was an individual. Yes, I was the only black woman in the room - but it got me noticed. I believe in spinning every situation into a positive. All those bad relationships made me realise what I didn't want... and led to my ace husband. As for advice? Live in the moment. Take the time to reflect and appreciate where you are right now."



# YOMI ADEGOKE

## I felt like I was playing a game and everyone else had the rule book apart from me.

"When I got a break in journalism I felt I was different. Everyone else I was working with had come from a journalism background and opportunities in the media weren't massively diverse. Not just in terms of race but also class - most people in the world I found myself working with had gone to private schools, or had family members. It felt like I was playing a game and everyone else had the rule book except me.

Looking back, I was resilient without knowing it. I was self-taught and not formally trained. But I was always transparent about my limitations and I wasn't pretending I could do what I couldn't - but simultaneously I was passionate and keen to learn and excited. So the lesson here is being open to opportunities and adaptable. And learning not to take things personally when they don't work out.

I think my younger self could actually give my older self advice! I was so confident and there was a naivety that I am now so grateful for. I saw myself as the exception to every rule. I suddenly realised, 'Oh wow, I'm the only black person' or 'Oh wow, I'm the only person who went to a state school' but I didn't shy from it. Rather than getting impostor syndrome, I felt even more deserving to be in that space because I had an opportunity that other people didn't. And I'm having to reframe and relearn that confidence now."

# EDITH BOWMAN

## **It's hard to not take things personally but try to remember - when one door closes another opens.**

"As a young woman, I was very confused. I was determined to find 'my thing' and would try so many different sports, clubs, and interests. I never really committed to anything fully as I got bored easily and always wanted to move on to the next. I worked in my family's little hotel (what with it being a family business, it was expected of us) and that instilled in me a work ethic that I am eternally grateful for. It also gave me a determination to succeed and to not take no for an answer when it came to setbacks in my future and career. The idea that I would be able to work in the media seemed so far away from my little fishing village in Scotland, but I had to give it a go. I used my last student loan to do a day-long presenter training course because at the end of it they gave you a show reel. I made 'a lot' of copies and sent them out to everyone and anyone. I got SO many knockbacks and negativity thrown my way, particularly because of my accent. Even now I still have to contend with setbacks and knockbacks (they never stop!). It's hard to not take things personally but find a thick skin and move on - when one door closes another opens.

## **"Be strong, stand up for yourself and again, don't take no for an answer in the right situation."**

One particular life challenge was when I lost a job at a radio station as the controller didn't like me. I knew I was doing good work, but you can't make everyone like you. From that, I decided to craft my own thing and I launched my podcast, 'Soundtracking with Edith Bowman', where I talk about film and music every week with the most amazing creatives from those worlds. Looking back, I think I'm actually grateful to him - I've been able to make something that is mine, attracts the biggest names in film and has been running for 7 years. I'm proud of it and I'm proud of me and the fact I found a positive out of that very hard negative.

I wish I could tell my younger self to write it all down. The life I've lived has been crazy and there is a lot of it I can't remember, it would make a great book. Also, I'd love to congratulate myself on what I have achieved. Work hard and it pays off.

My ultimate mantra: Be strong, stand up for yourself and again, don't take no for an answer in the right situation. Try to not compare yourself to others, and if something doesn't go your way, don't take it personally, it's not you, it's them. You are more than capable of doing the job, it's just not for you, right now."





# VICKY PATTISON

## You might not be the cleverest but you can always make sure you're the hardest working.

"Coming from a reality TV background, a show like MTV's Geordie Shore, a lot of people had preconceived notions of who I was and what I was capable of. Few people believed I had a future in the industry. I was told repeatedly to stay on the show, and that there was nothing else out there for me. I was told I should be grateful and know which side my bread was buttered. But it wasn't about being ungrateful for the opportunity I'd been given - it was about knowing I wanted to be something different.

So I made the decision to walk away from something that was no longer serving me. I left with very little money in the bank to show for a five-year career in television, no job offers and the reputation that being on the show had created. (Full accountability: my behaviour had not helped either!)

I accepted that I might not ever be the cleverest, the best looking or the first choice for a job - but I WOULD be the hardest working. I would learn everyone's names and treat everyone from the CEO to the runner with the respect and kindness they deserve. And I would not forget where I came from.

So my advice: work so hard, be so kind that you change your own narrative. Force people to take notice of you and see you how you want to be seen.

Dream big, stay positive, work hard and enjoy the journey.



Photo credit: @bartkuykens

# SADIE FROST

## When there are disappointments - make sure you learn how to react from that and take it as a learning.

"When I was younger, I had a lot of challenges from people taking advantage of me.

I remember being fresh and eager to work, having all this energy and trying to impress everyone - but along the way, I got hurt because I let people take advantage of me by always trying to please people. I've learnt now to hold some of that back because time is the most important thing. Some people will take advantage of your kindness and generosity - so make sure you maintain the essence of you. I tell my kids to always

be kind and open and the person you want to be, but be careful and protect yourself. You don't have to be negative and closed off - but it's possible to be compassionate and creative without giving it all away.

Things change constantly and doors open as quickly as they close. I was young and had a child and then got the role in Dracula. I was breastfeeding on the sofa at home one minute and then in Hollywood on a major film the next! Then a year later I was back where I started. There are so many twists and turns in life. Everyone has opportunities and challenges and some things work and some don't.

It's about growing and learning as a person. The key thing is when there are disappointments, how do you react to them and take it as a learning experience? Move on in a positive way."

# ANNA WHITEHOUSE

## Set other women up to sail, not to fail.

"My biggest turning point was when I quit my job to set up Flex Appeal. I'm not saying everyone needs to quit their job and campaign but it was a real belief that there was another way - flexible working is not only acceptable, it's essential. I remember breaking that cycle of fitting into those male shoes, and I was proud of myself. I was good enough. I look back on when I was outside parliament in my leopard print jumpsuit when everyone else was wearing suits and I'd love to say to myself in that moment - "Yes girl!"

My dad gave me some great advice. He said two things - one was never look up and never look down; and two was about friendship in the working world - because teamwork is so important. Don't isolate yourself from others - lean in. It's not a competition - collaboration is what will get you there faster.

I'd say to young girls in their twenties at work, if they see a working mum leaving early to pick up the kids - don't huff and puff and get frustrated, always think that you might be there one day. Try and get into the shoes of other women of other generations. Set other women up to sail not to fail. And if you're lucky enough to cover someone's maternity leave - don't go in with the assumption you are going to take her job - help to keep her seat warm because you might want someone to do the same for you one day."



# MELANIE BROWN

## Learn who to trust and follow your gut instinct. Don't be afraid of standing up for yourself.

"My experience of the world of work wasn't the average one because my focus was to become a performer. But the obstacles were quite similar to other workplaces. As a dancer you get so many rejections from a very young age you almost become more used to a "No" than a "Yes" but you keep going back and back until you get that yes. It's a good lesson to learn.

As Spice Girls we quickly realised that our power was in who we were as individuals. We had a management team who wanted us to dress the same and be a very typical girl band and luckily the fact there were five of us we had the confidence to say: 'No way' to that and to leave and go off on our own.

Advice to my younger self would be - watch out for people who just want to take advantage of you. Learn who to trust and follow your gut instinct.

I was in an abusive relationship for ten years. I wrote about it in my book 'Brutally Honest'. I wish as a young woman someone explained to me what a good relationship looked like. I became a Patron for Women's Aid and it's my mission to try and educate others. I want kids in schools to be taught these things - boys and girls. We are living through an epidemic of domestic abuse, financial abuse and violence against women. I'm proud that my voice is part of the conversation."



## ELLIE SIMMONDS

**Don't be afraid to take a break and try something new. Go out of your comfort zone. Take things in more.**

"For me, there was a real moment of adversity as an athlete heading to work in Rio in 2016. Looking back at it, mentally I wasn't in the right headspace. I was 21 years old and swimming was all I knew. But I'd missed growing up, all I knew was being a sportsperson and nothing else. Being a teenager is so crucial to learning about yourself - it's when you should be out with friends and making mistakes and figuring stuff out, but I missed all of that because I was in this sporting world and focused solely on winning.

The big moment first was Beijing and then London 2012 and after that, Rio. But Rio was when I really hit the crunch point. One individual on the team was really condescending and it got to me so badly that all I felt was burnt out and lacking in confidence. In the end, I decided to take a break from sport and go travelling. All I'd known was swimming - I needed to find myself. Time out changed me and made me realise there was more.

I'd tell my younger self "Don't be afraid to try something new. Go out of your comfort zone. Take things in more!". Maybe it's something about our society that makes us think we always have to look ahead, always pushing forward. I was never present in the moment - whenever a race had finished it was always 'Where next?' But I wish now I'd taken it all in. So appreciate the moment!"



## RACHEL STEVENS

**Your voice matters. It might not matter to everyone - but it matters to you.**

"As a young woman, my appearance was seen before I was heard. Sadly, there was a lot of bullying because of that, and because I was quietly confident, this was unfortunately misunderstood. Since I can remember, I always felt creative so when I was approached to be in S Club, I knew it would feed my soul and allow me to express myself in an outlet that meant the world. However, many decisions were made for me, and during my time in the band my voice did get quieter. I found it harder to express my visions and dreams and was getting lost in all the noise. S Club was amazing, but I was part of a whole team of people. It has taken me until adulthood to really find my own voice.

I'm not sure we can confidently say we know who we are 100% until we have really ventured into the world and experienced things, but I have realised every setback, challenge and celebration are all part of the process. We're forever changing and evolving.

I'd tell my younger self it's ok to be vulnerable and to talk more. I'd tell myself to trust others, open up, and keep believing, because it will all work out in the end. I'd tell myself your voice matters, hold it, be strong, and believe it. It might not matter to everyone, but it will matter to many.

Lastly, I'd tell myself 'you've got this and I'm proud of you!'"



## ZOE BLASKEY

### Self belief is the most important thing to work on. Your self worth is your ceiling.

"My podcast, Motherkind, was a few years old and was just starting to become known. Then came the pandemic and a baby - at exactly the same time. My eldest daughter was suddenly at home, I was juggling a newborn and my partner had to work all hours to steady his own business. I considered pausing or stopping the podcast, but I realised it was exactly at this time that my audience needed it most. So I quickly figured out how to record online, often recording with guests late at night or early morning. It was a really hard time - but I kept going and without a doubt, it helped to make the podcast what it is today. I learned the power of commitment and if you have vision and passion - almost anything is possible.

I wish I had known what was possible. I started my career in corporate jobs I didn't love, and whilst I learned loads, I stayed much longer than I should have because I didn't believe my dream of entrepreneurship was possible for me. I wish I'd known that it's our beliefs about ourselves that hold us back. The moment I challenged those beliefs holding me back - everything changed.

Self-belief is the most important thing to work on. Your self-worth is your ceiling, because you'll only go for the opportunities you think you deserve. Work every day on believing that you deserve success, happiness and abundance - however that looks to you."



## BECKY EXCELL

### I wish I knew how toxic constantly comparing yourself to others can be.

"When I was diagnosed with a BRCA2 gene mutation (meaning an 88% chance of getting breast cancer), I was advised to have a double mastectomy to reduce my risk. The thought of physically losing a part of myself/my femininity was terrifying. But instead of focusing on what I was losing, I focused on the positives: the fact I found out early before I ever had breast cancer and that I can now take steps to prevent passing it on to my future children. I learned to always look for the positives no matter how small.

I wish I knew how toxic comparing yourself to others can be. It's extremely draining to apply that to everything you do.

Comparison is the thief of joy and with the internet, there's always someone 'better than you'! I'd tell my younger self not to invest energy into using comparison just to make myself feel inadequate. Only compare yourself to your own previous performance - you're likely always constantly improving!

I did my social media job as a side hustle, but it started to grow which created a huge dilemma. Should I quit my stable job to work for myself? I was scared. However, I did it and it paid off.

My advice would be: trust the process, and go with your gut. Finding your own path isn't always tidy and if you don't feel a path is right for you, don't be afraid to change and don't worry about others judging you - it's your life."





## TAMZIN OUTHWAITE

### Now I am having a love affair with myself and that means I am a happier, healthier human.

"When I was young I remember feeling so responsible for how others felt. This led to me being a people pleaser and never wanting to upset anybody. But when I realised that the last person I was pleasing was myself, that's when everything changed.

After spending time getting to know myself and working on my own outlook and my journey in life, I realised that happiness starts with me. Peace and strength start with me.

To my younger self I would say, do not chase men or validation from a partner. Work on you. Create a life with purpose and passion. The other stuff will follow. Trust the process. Do not chase money... chase art, inspiration and trust your instinct. Money will follow. Magic happens when you are open. Stay open and soft in this hard world. And when things are tough, always remember and say to yourself: "This too shall pass."

Now I am proud to say that I am having a love affair with myself and that means I am a happier, healthier human. If I get down, I can always find the glimmers. Small moments of joy!

The moments and glimmers that I feel, I don't need others for. I now find so much more in my time alone. My time in calm not chaos and my time spent in and appreciating nature. We were never meant to spend so little time in nature. If I ever feel unsettled, nature is the best leveller. It never lets me down."



## KELSEY PARKER

### Feel and breathe and live each day because we are only here once.

"The biggest challenge I've been through was facing cancer head on with my husband Tom Parker. But also now being left bringing up two children and having to make decisions we would have made as a partnership - but every day there is the reminder that I'm making them just as me and I'm having to play two roles and be both mum and dad to my children. So how can I do that and do Tom justice? I literally wake up every morning and try to be the best version of me I can possibly be and leave yesterday in the past and live for today and live for each moment and enjoy each day. My advice to my younger self would be feel the fear and do it anyway because I'm living by that now. Nothing will ever be as bad as walking into a room and being told the news that your husband has a brain tumour and the prognosis is so poor that there is nothing that will cure him. So I now always say to myself - feel the fear and do it anyway! Life is incredibly tough but you can get through it.

I would say to everyone - put yourself out of your comfort zone, head into situations and scenarios where you really feel uncomfortable - just do it.

And most of all, make sure you feel and breathe and really truly live each day. Because we are only here once."



# KANYA KING

## Setbacks are not synonymous with failure but rather opportunities for growth and reinvention.

"One notable instance where I overcame adversity was when I faced expulsion from university due to academic struggles compounded by the responsibilities of parenthood and financial obligations. At that time, the weight of disappointment was crushing, and I felt overwhelmed by the seemingly insurmountable challenges before me. Despite the initial setback, I instead channelled my energy into finding a way forward.

Years later, being bestowed with an honorary doctorate for my accomplishments served as a poignant reminder of the transformative power of perseverance and self-belief. This taught me that setbacks are not synonymous with failure but rather opportunities for growth and reinvention.

Looking back, I am grateful for the adversity I faced, as it shaped me into a stronger individual. It reaffirmed the importance of believing in oneself and serves as a constant source of inspiration in my journey forward.

**I found trying to break into the creative sector very challenging. Networking relied on already knowing people in the industry. However, time and again I used to try and get in through the back door, over the fence, around the side, overcoming whatever barriers came my way. In the beginning, I sent loads of CVs out and mostly didn't get a reply, let alone an interview.**

Ironically, it was when I relinquished the relentless pursuit of traditional avenues that I found my breakthrough. I began to focus on creating platforms for others, whether through producing events or working on a chat show pilot. These endeavours not only provided a space for talent to shine but also allowed me to forge meaningful connections within the industry.

Reflecting on the challenges I've faced, I realise they've been my greatest teachers, shaping me into the person I am today. Looking back, I see each obstacle not as a roadblock, but as a stepping stone, propelling me forward towards growth.

For young women navigating their own journeys, I offer these key takeaways:

**Embrace Challenges:** Instead of fearing challenges, embrace them as opportunities for growth. Each hurdle you overcome strengthens your character.

**Persevere with Purpose:** In the face of adversity, stay committed to your goals and dreams. Let your passion drive you forward, even when the path seems uncertain.

**Learn from Setbacks:** Every setback is a lesson in disguise. Take the time to reflect on your experiences, learn from your mistakes, and emerge stronger and wiser.

**Cultivate Resilience:** Resilience isn't about avoiding failure, but rather bouncing back from it with renewed determination. Train yourself to adapt to life's challenges with grace and resilience.

**Support Network:** Surround yourself with a supportive network of friends, family, and mentors who uplift and inspire you. Lean on them for guidance and encouragement during difficult times.

**My mantra:** "Don't get bitter, get better" - serves as a powerful reminder to approach life's adversities with a growth mindset.

Remember that life's challenges are not meant to break you, but to mould you into the empowered individual you are destined to be. Embrace each obstacle as a chance to learn, grow, and thrive."





## ANGELICA BELL

**Work hard, be your best self but also have integrity – there is nothing worse than not being authentic to your true self.**

“Starting out as a woman in the world of work can be both exciting and scary. What I would say is understand your worth and don’t give anyone a reason to label you. Work hard, be your best self and have integrity - there is nothing worse than not being authentic to your true self. We will all experience adversity at some point which manifests in different ways... but it can strengthen your metal even though at the time it can feel all-consuming.

There have been moments when I have felt there is no way out, but there is always a solution. When I started, I seriously grafted - made teas, ran errands and when hurdles came my way, found a way to push through. Thankfully the people I worked for back in the day still give me work now.

As for advice? I would say choose your friends or tribe wisely. I’m all about having positivity around me. Everyone is different so you do you and I’m over here doing me. If you want to join in then that’s even better!”



## AMANDA LOVETT

**Confidence is one of the strongest attributes anyone can possess.**

“As a teenager, I never felt I fitted in anywhere. I came from a low-income single-parent family with a mother who was working in a local pub. University wasn’t an option - my road was paved out with an office job, marry young and become a mum. I would look at all the business ladies in their suits and nice cars but didn’t believe it could be my reality.

One day after my three children had gone to school, I saw a job fair advertised and went in. I told the interviewer “I love being a mam, but I want to find me, I want a career”.

I went on to manage various offices and staff and became director of my own company.

I worked hard every day, and small achievements and recognition resulted in awards. As my skills grew, I grew in confidence, self-belief and purpose. Confidence is one of the strongest attributes anyone can possess. Unfortunately, we are not born with it, like a heart or a brain.

Whatever life has dealt you it’s not your finished hand, you are just starting the game. It doesn’t matter if your clothes are different, or your family is different - no one defines YOU.



## TRACY ANN OBERMAN

**It is so much better to have lived and taken the risk than not to take the risk at all.**

A particular moment of adversity for me came very early on in my life when I was four years old. My grandma died in her sleep when she was only 51. Six months later, my beloved grandpa, her husband, also died in his sleep! A terrible shock for a young girl who should've been skipping around the world, thinking about unicorns and rainbows. I was acutely aware suddenly of how terrible the world could be when you lose people that you love. The world suddenly felt unsafe, unfair and scary. I learnt indirectly that as painful as it is to love people, you should always go for love rather than play it safe to shield yourself from any hurt.

It is so much better to have lived and taken the risk than not to take the risk at all.

I would tell my younger self to be your own best friend and treat yourself as you would treat the person that you love the best in the world. If you have the utmost respect and love and kindness for yourself, the world will reflect that back to you.



## ELIZABETH DAY

**Sometimes you need to befriend yourself first, before you can find your tribe.**

"Recently, I've had to come to terms with the fact that I won't have my own children. I've had 12 years of trying and failing to have babies.

Sometimes life doesn't work out the way you imagine it will and although this might cause pain and grief, there are so many amazing things that happen on the other side of that curve ball.

I've learned about my own resilience, I've met some amazing people and I've found that part of my purpose is to speak about these issues to help others. That gives my life meaning and I'm so grateful for it.

I'd tell my younger self that not fitting in at school would actually end up serving me well: it made me empathetic, curious and it helped me to listen.

I'd also say "Don't worry if it takes time to meet your tribe". It took me until I was 19 to find my best friend (sometimes you need to befriend yourself first).

I feel so much more myself now than I did as a young woman! I feel more powerful and more understood. I also trust myself more. In fact, I like myself more and I have a lot of compassion for my younger self. Women have been sold a lie that age diminishes them. I promise you it doesn't: at 45, I feel more empowered than ever."





# OLIVIA ATTWOOD

## Don't be scared of not having found your 'thing'. You're not in a race, it will come to you.

"If I could speak to my younger self I'd say 'Don't spend time and energy and tears on boys - instead focus on yourself. Be kind to yourself, eat properly, and get some sleep. It's easier to love something and like something that you care for - and by that something, I mean you. I never really understood how to look after myself and that made me feel quite low as a young woman. Ultimately, the more you care for something in life the more you appreciate it. And my advice to anyone reading this is - don't be scared about not having found your 'thing' that you love and are good at. This whole notion of 'what's your thing' really freaked me out. It was as if everyone else seemed to know what they wanted to do but I had no idea. But now I know - you're not in a race, it will come to you.

When I came out of Love Island - everything changed. Being thrust into the spotlight and learning how to navigate this whole new spotlight was life-changing overnight. I'd been catapulted into the court of human opinion and even though I just took it day by day, it didn't make it easier.

And now I just tell myself that you need to roll with life and everything that it has in store for you - be your true self, don't let people walk over you and don't give a shit about anyone apart from those you care about."





## About Young Women's Trust

Young Women's Trust champions young women aged 18-30 on low or no pay. We are here to create a more equal world of work and raise young women's incomes.

Through our work we tackle sexism and misogyny for anyone who has experienced this and we campaign for equality in the workplace.

We offer young women free coaching and feedback on job applications, bringing together a network of thousands of young women to support each other, build their self-confidence and have their voices heard.

**To find out more, visit [www.youngwomenstrust.org/](http://www.youngwomenstrust.org/)**



## About Galaxy Chocolate

At Galaxy, we're on a mission to create a world where chocolate does as good as it tastes. We believe even the smallest of acts can make a big difference. Every little thing we do matters, whether it's helping women get back into the workplace through training, or increasing access to savings and loans, we know that our words, and our actions, have a ripple effect.

In March 2023 Galaxy pledged to help 1 million people including women, their families and their communities thrive by 2030 - which includes empowering women in cocoa growing communities around the world, and raising awareness of the issues facing young women in the UK.

Galaxy is working with Young Women's Trust to fund 1000's of hours of coaching to help young women find their passion, build self-belief and thrive in work. Your pleasure has promise.

**Find out more at [www.galaxychocolate.co.uk/empowering-women](http://www.galaxychocolate.co.uk/empowering-women)**



Galaxy<sup>®</sup> and  YOUNG  
WOMEN'S  
TRUST

# Advice to my *Younger Self*

