



Online Therapy

Pipeline personal development

A self-development course that you can do from your sofa, The Life Class is therapy for those who don't do therapy. Its creator, Jacqueline Hurst, explains...

The Life Class was born out of frustration from seeing so many men and women unable to process their thoughts and feelings clearly. I understood the frustration because I had been the same. When I was at school, no one ever taught me how to deal with the emotional stuff. As I grew into an adult I needed to learn how to deal with life on life's terms. Being taught maths and geography was great but no one said, "Hey, this is what you do when you feel stressed out, angry or down." So I looked for other ways to handle my emotions that weren't exactly... ideal.

After ten years of self-destruction, I turned my life around and built my business by coaching others in how to deal with life and how to simply "feel good" no matter what. I have seen thousands of men who are embarrassed about how they feel – that being depressed or anxious or scared or lonely is the worst thing in the world for them; that they are the only ones in the world that feel this way; that they can't talk to their friends, wives or parents for fear of being seen as weak or not good enough. The more I heard this same story, the more I believed I needed to help on a much bigger scale, which is why I created an online self-development course at my virtual school, The Life Class.

I see everyone today investing in their physical health: eating organically, juicing and working out has become an important part of life.

+ Seriously. It's time to start wearing anti-blue light glasses



We've told you not to use your phone late at night, but of course you haven't. Just like you haven't stopped using your laptop, playing your games console or watching your HD TV. All that harmful high-energy blue light is still damaging your eyes, wrecking your circadian rhythm and inhibiting the body's production of melatonin, making it difficult for you to get a decent night's sleep. The solution could be Swannies blue-light blocking glasses (swanwickssleep.com). Simply pop them on a couple of hours before bed and reap the benefits of better sleep. From £49. At amazon.co.uk

Today, we have access to more insider information about how to keep fit and healthy than ever before. But we neglect what's running through our minds. Our emotional and mental health are rarely given a second thought. We are not living consciously or observing how we are making all-important decisions and this often means we don't get the results or the life we want. It's important to acknowledge that what is going on in our heads is critical to how all areas of our lives develop. And it's imperative to acknowledge that it is emotional intelligence that is the key to real success. I am a big believer that to live our best lives, we need to get the healthiest mind possible.

I created The Life Class to help people feel better, in their own time, in their own way, at their own pace. It was built and put together from all the experience I have had working with clients, in a worksheet and online video format. It is a comprehensive course that uses effective tools, techniques and concepts, allowing you to truly understand yourself better. It is a simple but effective way of helping those who want to feel and live better and more optimally by thinking, behaving and acting with a higher degree of emotional intelligence. The Life Class was simply developed to help people upgrade their life, have better relationships and to be less anxious and stressed by optimising their way of thinking.

As you go through the course, you start to take control of how you feel instead of letting your feelings control you. You learn how to release negative thought patterns, anxieties and worries, which naturally begin to lift. And the best part about The Life Class is that you can do all of this in the comfort of your own home, on the tube or waiting for a date. No one even has to know what you are doing, although I promise you they will notice that you've changed – and for the better. Think of it as hot yoga for your mind.

thelifeclass.com

70%
of adults who regularly use media devices have experienced symptoms of digital eyestrain

Illustrations by Francesco Porcili

Tried & Tested

The Life Class: does it work?

Journalist Alice Hart-Davis puts the Jacqueline Hurst method through its paces

Let's jump right in here. How well do you get on with your thoughts? Until I got stuck into this programme, I hadn't realised quite how vital it is – for a happier, saner, easier existence – to notice your thoughts and the things you say to yourself and, where necessary, to challenge and replace them with kinder, more helpful alternatives. Have I lost you already? I'll try to explain.

There are six modules in The Life Class (see left), each composed of bite-sized, manageable online sections, with videos and written notes to explain each bit and a bunch of worksheets to grapple with, so it gives you the full benefit of therapy for the price of a single session of face-to-face coaching (£300).

The idea is to help people help themselves and bring the idea of mental wellness to the fore, and creator Jacqueline Hurst has worked hard to simplify the complex underlying messages of life coaching. Her programme is easy to engage with, but this isn't just stuff you read and that's that: you need to get your head around it, ponder it, then the work – applying the lessons to your own life issues – really starts.

Take all sections on thoughts, feelings and beliefs, for instance. Did you know that your thoughts create your feelings? No one else can "make" you feel anything. What's making you feel anything are your own thoughts.

And beliefs. They're just thoughts you've thought again and again until they stuck, or arbitrary rules that your family or society has laid down in your mind. They're really powerful and frequently limiting but get this – they're not necessarily true.

Of course, you can think and believe anything you want, but if you are endlessly recycling pessimistic ideas about yourself or about, say, your ability to find a better job or a partner, or to achieve a goal, well, it doesn't help. And it really is within your power to change.

The lightbulb moment came when all this sank in. When I caught myself spiralling downwards in negative thoughts ("That will never work" or "I'm not worth it") that made me feel hopeless, what I needed to do was challenge those ideas and come up with alternatives. "Is that thought true?" I would ask myself sternly. "Who says it won't work?" Or, a new favourite thought-trick borrowed from lifestyle experimenter and podcaster Tim Ferriss, "What would this thing look like if it was easy?" I found that even just trying new thoughts on for size, as it were, could shift my mood for the better.

There's a lot more to the course, but this bit has proved a most useful trick to have up my sleeve and now it feels like a game. Every negative thought that I catch gets swapped for a better one. You have to believe the new thought, to make it stick. That's another bit of learning. But d'you know? It works, and if I can learn it, you could, too.

Photograph Kurt Iswarientko



Celebrity Life Coach

The GQ Pep Talk with... Chris Pratt

The star of this summer's all-conquering box office super-smash *Avengers: Infinity War* explains how to break through to greatness

In his words:

"I had to hustle hard and go hungry. I had to eat sardines and figure out how to get gas money. I never had a plan B. I never stopped believing. Ever. Don't give up. Apply pressure for as long as it takes. It will break before you do. Go get it."

In other words:

To achieve anything requires sacrifice, but by persevering you will prevail.

In his words:

"On a scale of one to ten, I kind of hit ten when I stopped having to serve people food. So I've been riding ten ever since."

In other words:

Don't forget where you started from. It's a positive because it will remind you of what you have achieved already.

In his words:

"If you don't believe in yourself, find a way to. Because even more than you want it, you must believe it. And learn about yourself. Who are you? What's your voice? What are you dying to contribute?"

In other words:

Know yourself. Be honest in your self-appraisal: work on your weaknesses, acknowledge your strengths and have a target.