Retail therapies

By LAURA MULLEY

■ Move over retinol, everyone's talking about retinal now, a more potent and faster-acting form of vitamin A.

Murad Retinal ReSculpt Body Treatment, £79, is the market's first retinal-based product for the body. Quickly selling out when it launched last month, it's now back in stock. Said to be a 'workout in a jar' it helps smooth and lift sagging skin and wrinkles in two weeks, and minimise the look of stretch marks in eight weeks.



■ Wellness coffee is a growing trend, and if the warmer weather has you spending a fortune on cafes' syrup-laden iced lattes, consider switching to Nespresso's new Vertuo Coffee+ Active blend, £7.50 for 10 pods.

In addition to subtle vanilla and almond flavours, it also contains vitamin B6, which can help reduce tiredness and fatigue in a more sustained way than constant caffeine hits. If you're in the market for a Vertuo machine, you'll often find them hugely discounted on Amazon.



■ If you've ever had one of foot guru Margaret Dabbs' famous medi-pedi treatments, you'll know the podiatrist-founded brand is about far more than a quick lick of polish – its products really do focus on the health of the feet and hands. Its new Bare Hands by Margaret Dabbs Conditioning Hand Cream, £6, helps heal dry, cracked mitts with a nourishing yet non-greasy formula and a refreshing scent.



■ Vitamin-rich, drinkable green powders are becoming a popular way to give your body a daily boost without capsules (celebrity-favoured AG1 is the most well-known of these). We like Verve's Transparent Greens V80 Powder as a cheaper alternative – starting from £60 for a monthly subscription – which contains 80 natural ingredients with over 200 health benefits.



Start banking happiness... and you'll never go bust

Professor Mark Fabian's brilliant new book, Beyond Happy, is a guide to cultivating wellbeing. Here he shares his tips for a fulfilling life



INSIGHT
Mark Fabian

We're all striving to be happy – but it can feel out of reach in our busy lives. But what if you could build your happiness pot up like a retirement portfolio – and cash it in later?

The way we're encouraged to plan for retirement is to work hard, save hard, and eventually sit back and enjoy the fruits of our labour.

But a common difficulty in retirement is figuring out what we do with ourselves.

Working long and hard lets you invest in money, but it doesn't leave much time to invest in hobbies, relationships, or other things that make life meaningful.

FRUITFUL

Investing in wellbeing over the course of your life is more fruitful. Like a pension, it pays dividends.

The more you invest in the people you love, the activities you enjoy, and the endeavours you value, the more they'll pay out.

How to discover the people, places and activities for you to invest in is the subject of my book, Beyond Happy.

Too much of our popular culture treats life as being about "getting through it" to some happy reward at the end. We should instead learn how to make life pleasant, fulfilling and valuable for each other every day.

The easiest place to see the benefit of "wellbeing stocks" is in old friendships. Your in-jokes have layers deeper than the rings on an ancient tree. When you need help, old friends will offer it in just the right way because they know you intuitively. The more you go to the well of old friendships, the better the water tastes.



The same is true of hobbies. It can be exhilarating to start something new, but also daunting and frustrating, because you might not be very good at it.

> **"You can see the benefit of wellbeing stocks in your old friendships**

Careers are now often ego-driven – they're competitive, greedy, and winner-take-all. Yet the winners also never seem to retire and move on and let in fresh thinking. This sort of toxic self-centredness puts the virtuous powers of altruism into reverse.

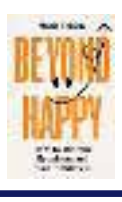
When you get ahead in a competitive hierarchy, you do so by stepping on others. When you find more time for personal endeavours by skipping out on community activities, you make things worse for everyone else.

Think of something as simple as using your bag to stop anyone sitting next to you on the train. Someone looking for a seat now feels stressed and awkward. If they stand for the journey, they'll arrive tired and irritated. They will feel like society is mean and doesn't care about them. And they'll pass that energy on.

Maybe they work as a dentist's receptionist. Someone arrives 10 minutes late because of a cancelled bus. They're sorry, they tried their best. But the receptionist is grumpy – nobody cares about them, why should they care? "You missed your appointment, you'll have to come back in a few weeks." Now another person's day is ruined.

Community and happiness starts with generous, community-minded individuals. They set an example by investing in others, which encourages people to do the same. Then wellbeing stocks really pay dividends.

BY **MARK FABIAN**



■ Beyond Happy: How to Rethink Happiness and Find Fulfilment, by Mark Fabian (Bedford Square, £20) is out

MY SIX TIPS FOR FINDING HAPPINESS

1 UNDERSTAND THE HEDONIST TREADMILL You are wired by evolution so that your moods, good and bad, return quickly to baseline. You're also going to be aware of ways life could be better. That's why perfect happiness is always out of reach. So get beyond happy as a destination and organise your life so your everyday is something you want to do. Generate pleasant, fulfilling, valuable experiences.

2 LIVE AN EXAMINED LIFE So often we just think about how to get money. Think instead about what you want money (and time) for, and then just do that. If you find something engrossing, inspiring and exhilarating, you'll keep at it and your competence will grow. You can make a mint at anything if you're expert at it. Your local hairdresser might not be rolling in dough but those who style for the Baftas are. And if you're already doing what you love, people can't exploit you just by offering money.

3 USE YOUR EMOTIONS AND MOTIVATIONS TO FIND YOUR AUTHENTICITY To persist with something you have to love it. Banking could pay me billions a year and I still couldn't do it. I'd have to drag myself to work everyday. Motivation and the emotions you feel at work, with peers, when trying new hobbies or visiting new neighbourhoods, all provide insight into what sort of life might suit you. The best advice you can get on how to live well comes from within, but you've got to learn to listen to it.



4 BE A VALUES-DRIVEN PERSON The most powerful pursuits aren't just activities, they're ethical. For example, when Netflix's The Chef's Table interviews the culinary maestros of the show, their food often reflects the change they want to see in the world, either as part of the temple they cook for, the love of animals they want to promote, or their desire to bring people together. It's their commitment to these values that fuels their dedication. The priority is to promote these values. You can do it too. This will imbue your life with meaning and purpose, and help you connect with people like you.

5 WELLBEING IS SOMETHING WE DO TOGETHER Practicing, celebrating, and deepening our values is best with other people. If you want to be rich in wellbeing, invest in people and places. Care for other people and the things you feel are sacred. Help each other when you can without expectation of reward.

6 VALUE EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE A shortcut for developing it, especially for the type of men who are cut off from their emotions, is whenever you come across someone whose feeling something big, ask them whether they want to be helped, heard, hugged. When someone is upset we want to fix their problem, but if they just want to vent or cry this makes us seem impatient. Learn how to ask incisive questions that help them talk out their feelings. And learn how to give a supportive hug.

