



*The*  
**CATALYST**  
*Magazine*

JAN/FEB 95 ISSUE 1 • RRP £2.50

**TOM  
HOPKINS**

*- shares over 100  
new selling ideas*

**ZIG ZIGLAR**

*- goals for '95*

**THE LOVE PLAN**

*- looking at the  
forgotten truth  
about SEX*

**BIJA BENNETT**

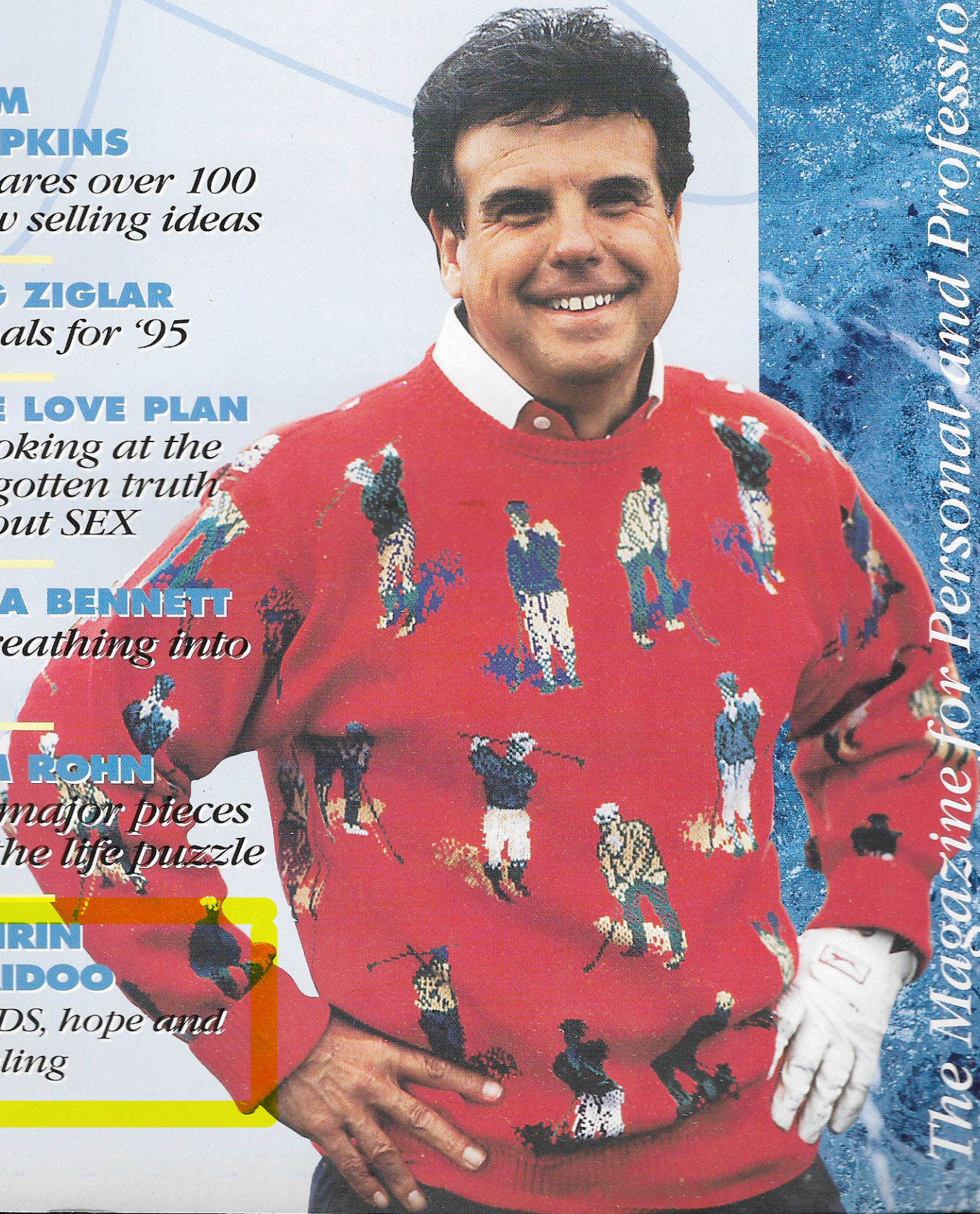
*- breathing into  
life*

**JIM ROHN**

*- 5 major pieces  
to the life puzzle*

**SHIRIN  
NAIDOO**

*- AIDS, hope and  
healing*



*The Magazine for Personal and Professional Growth*

# Magician of the Mind

by Michael Benjamin

Shirin Naidoo is a woman with a mission. She talks about her work with a consuming passion and is thoroughly committed to making a difference in the world. Last month saw the launch of her charity, "The Shirin Naidoo Trust" an organisation dedicated to making holistic treatment widely and freely available to people living with HIV, Aids and other immune-dysfunctional illnesses. Some of the people with full-blown Aids that Shirin worked with seven years ago at the Terrence Higgins Trust who had been given between three to six months to live are alive and well today, confounding their medical prognosis. The Terrence Higgins Trust presented Shirin with a Special Award commending her for her "exemplary contribution and outstanding service to the community in the field of HIV and Aids". It is these qualities, together with the exceptional results she achieves, that seem destined to make her one of the best-known as well as one of the most capable healers of our time.

"I believe that the techniques we offer are very powerful indeed," she says, "That is why we have now set up the charity. We wanted to make these methods available on a much wider basis. People with life-threatening illnesses such as Aids and cancer need to have far greater choice in their lives than may currently be available to them."

While Shirin does not deny the efficacy of orthodox medicine in certain cases, she believes her own approach allows people to access their own power in the midst of crisis, ultimately allowing them to transform the quality of their lives, as well as their health. "One problem with orthodox medicine," she says, "is that it tends to zero in on isolated areas of the



physical body, and heavily underplays or ignores the fact that there's a whole person there with a lifestyle and behaviours that could have a very great bearing on the course of the illness. It's also heavily biased towards the pathological and uses all kinds of potentially harmful chemicals to attack the illness. I know that many of the people with Aids who have come to see me have given up on orthodox medicine because they found they weren't getting well using all the drugs they'd been given. In some cases I had people coming to see me taking fifty to sixty tablets a day, and I had the feeling they weren't dying of Aids, but of excess medication."

"What I do is very different, you see," she says, warming to her topic. "When you come to see me I'm looking at the whole of your life, your patterns of behaviour, how you relate to the people around you. I am looking at the whole person - a real live human being with a physical body, but also with thoughts,

*“People with life-threatening illnesses such as Aids and cancer need to have far greater choice in their lives than may currently be available to them.”*

with feelings, with families and very painful issues to deal with - all of which can have a very considerable effect on the course of an illness.”

While Shirin sometimes uses aromatherapy massage and hands-on healing with her clients, it is upon the role of the mind in the self-healing process that Shirin places particular emphasis. “So much research has been done that has proven the ability of the mind to influence the physical body. The mind is the most powerful piece of equipment we have. It’s much more powerful and versatile than any computer you could ever design. And the mind can make a tremendous difference in the whole quality of our lives - and not just our health - as long as we know how to use it properly. And that is basically what’s on offer at our workshops: the techniques that we teach are not just about healing your physical body but about shifting and growing in all areas of your life. We offer people more choices as to how they can see, feel, think and act in the world. And that doesn’t just apply to people who are ill. We also do workshops for people who are fit and well but who want to transform the quality of their lives.”

All this is not to deny the role of viruses and bacteria and their effects on the physical body. “They may well be there. But the fact that we all have cancer cells in our body does not mean that we’re going to all get cancer. I believe it was Claude Bernard who said that the microbe is nothing, the terrain is everything. If you think in a certain way, hold certain beliefs, live in a certain way and follow the processes that we teach, there is no doubt in my mind that you can heal yourself of cancer, Aids or of any other

so called terminal illness. That may seem like a monumental statement to make, but then I believe in the monumental power of the human mind, body and spirit. And this has not just been borne out by the people I’ve worked with. Just look at the work being done in the States by Dr Siegel, Dr Simonton and Louise Hay.”

Shirin strongly believes in the efficacy of self-healing meditation and visualisation. “We do a lot of this in our workshops. I work a lot with people in altered state. I believe that true magic can happen in an altered, or meditative state of consciousness. We do exercises that work with people’s limiting beliefs as to how they can heal themselves and who they can become in the world. We do a lot of very gentle, yet powerful visualisations to release negative emotions - fear, anger, resentment, shame, guilt - that can weaken the immune system and engender disease. If someone is harbouring a lot of suppressed anger or resentment, for example, can there be any wonder that negative energy is caught up internally and is one day going to have some kind of effect on the physical body, manifesting as arthritis, for example. That’s why forgiveness is so important.”

Some of the people with Aids that Shirin sees are from the gay community and may feel a considerable sense of guilt and shame at some level of their being if they have grown up with parents, peers and their religion all seeming to condemn them for the way they were living their lives. “But for me nothing is wrong. People are not wrong or bad. We have all come to this planet to learn. For me, each and every human being, whoever they may be, whatever they

may do, is and remains a spark of God. Everybody is at their essence divine. And if I didn’t believe that, I couldn’t do this work, because I’d be coming from a place of judgement - and who are any of us to judge or condemn other human beings in that way?”

Shirin Naidoo spent her childhood in the South Africa of the 1950s and 60s. Her father, an associate of Nelson Mandela, was obviously a prime target for the authorities, and her childhood was thus a time of considerable turbulence and uncertainty. “I can remember the police coming to question me about the whereabouts of my father. I think that growing up in such circumstances - living on the edge if you like - led me to search for meaning in peoples lives at a far younger age than you might normally expect.”

She has very clear views about her father’s life. “I believe that what he was doing was fine to the extent that he was looking at the quality of people’s lives and how they could be enhanced. There was certainly a strong impulse to serve humanity there. But I am personally more drawn towards Mahatma Gandhi’s non-violent way, because it really encourages a complete shift in consciousness. If I look at my father’s background, I can see that he was always fighting for justice in his life, because as a child he had been brought up by his uncle and had never been given the same love and respect as his uncle had given to his own children. So he took this sense of injustice, along with a whole lot of anger and resentment, and sought to resolve it in a cause outside himself. But he was still looking to resolve things that way. If you can resolve something within yourself,

*"Everything in our lives happens for just one reason: so that we can learn and grow. Illness is no exception. It is a signal in our lives telling us that something needs to be done differently."*



reached the levels I am now reaching."

So does she believe that at some level people actually create their illnesses? "Look, everything in our lives happens for just one reason: so that we can learn and grow. Illness is no exception. It is a signal in our lives telling us that something needs to be done differently. It may be that we need to value and

then not only do you grow and evolve in terms of wisdom and your capacity to love, you also then - and, I believe, only then - win the right, as it were, to assist others in doing the same."

love ourselves more by making changes in our diet, our lifestyle or in how we relate to others. Some of the people I've seen with Aids have even said that Aids was the best thing that happened to them

Shirin lays great emphasis upon this issue of personal change, and the idea of working on yourself continuously, whether or not you have an illness. "Listen," she says, "I couldn't do what I do if I didn't continuously put this philosophy into my life. I am always working upon myself, and all the people who assist me have made the commitment to do the same. I never tell others to do what I have not



been able to do for myself. And it's a process that never stops. You see, I take full responsibility for what is happening in my life. On some level I created it, or chose it to learn and grow. And nobody's been through a tougher or more traumatic life than I have - illnesses, marriages, family problems, you name it, I've been there. I feel like I've had three lifetimes in one. But," she emphasises, "the so-called crises were often in retrospect the greatest of blessings. They were opportunities for me to make quantum shifts in my life, and without them I would never have

because it forced them to completely re-evaluate what they were doing with their lives."

The issue of death is clearly a fundamental one for anyone working with people with life-threatening illnesses. Shirin sees death as part of what she terms 'the bigger picture!' "For me, life is just a play of consciousness; none of it is real, however real it may seem. It's just about learning lessons and evolving to new levels within

ourselves - that's all. Death is not an ending as far as I'm concerned. It's part of the process of life we're all going to go through some day. I sometimes tell my clients who have Aids that, whereas in the West we mourn when someone dies and rejoice when someone is born, in India it's often the reverse: death is seen as a cause for celebration, because people believe that the soul is going to a far better place than this."

Shirin's work, however, is ultimately a vibrant and emphatic affirmation of life. It is about assisting people in transforming their lives in the here and now, whatever their present situation. "My workshops are about helping people to realise the tremendous powers that lie latent within each and every one of us and to which we can all ultimately become the magicians in our own lives."

**The Shirin Naidoo Trust is located at:  
"MahaShakti"**

**50 Greenbank Avenue  
Sudbury  
Wembley  
Middlesex  
HA0 2TF**

**Tel: 081 900 1998  
Fax: 081 900 1918**

