

THE INTERVIEW



BY JANE CONNOLLY

Out of the Grey Zone and back in the game

WITH more women turning to cosmetic procedures to boost their confidence, life coach Lindsey Agness urges people to look for the beauty within.

Surrounded by images of wrinkle-free celebrities, many ordinary women are feeling under pressure to delay the ageing process. But having tried Botox herself, Agness believes injections and surgery are not the answer.

"Not only with Botox, but with a lot of more invasive cosmetic surgery, there is a lot of expectation and it does not necessarily come to fruition," she said.

"When people have treatments, they are often disappointed because they expect to have a complete personal makeover. Some TV programmes encourage that, but what viewers don't see is that the people have several procedures. People expect to come out looking 30 years younger."

Agness, 50, from Sandwich, set up The Change Corporation in 2005 and is now one of the UK's top people-developers and motivational experts.

After starting her career in local government, she began working as a business consultant for professional services firm PricewaterhouseCoopers where she attended a course in neuro-linguistic programming, or NLP.

"I became interested in the people aspect of change projects and behavioural change," she said.

"I started to work not only with people inside organisations, but also to run personal development courses."

Since setting up her own company, Agness has written a book, called Change Your Life With NLP, and has begun to focus on what she calls the "mid-life female group" – women of a certain age who might need help to change their lives for the better. People approach her

with a wide range of problems which sometimes relate to body image.

"It can be a range of things. They are often people who are stuck somewhere in their lives," she said. "In my book, I called it the Grey Zone; it's the comfortable but uncomfortable stage. They could want to start a new career or new relationship, get fit or are just in a rut and want to make new friends. I don't restrict it to one type of challenge."

Agness feels her own experiences have helped to make her an effective life coach.

"I know I attract a lot of women because they see me as a role model," she said. "I've changed career, I've been divorced and I've been concerned about turning 50 like everyone else. I've used NLP to help myself and others."

Her new book, *What's Age Got To Do With It?*, is to be published early in 2010. Later this year, Agness will be running a course in Canterbury called *Age With Attitude*, which she hopes will bring about permanent long-term change for mid-life women.

"One of the things I talk about in my new book is helping mid-life women feel comfortable in their own skin," she said.

"Often issues about body image are driven by underlying issues and if you tackle those, people start to feel better from the inside out."

For more information about the course, go online at www.agewithattitude.co.uk.

BRAND NEW YOU: Life coach Lindsey Agness urges mid-life women not to seek fulfillment at the end of a Botox needle or on the edge of a surgeon's scalpel



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