

The nutrition coach, blogger and cook Madeleine Shaw chats to *healthy* about success, support networks, and why she doesn't compare herself to anyone

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**“FEELING GOOD IS WHAT DRIVES ME”**

Photograph: Instagram.com/madeleine\_shaw

Considering she first rose to fame through her eponymous wellness blog, Madeleine Shaw manages to spend an impressive amount of time away from her computer screen. ‘I’m quite strict with myself,’ she says. ‘I often give myself weekends off without any social media or putting up anything on my website – plus two weeks at Christmas and over the summer. I’ll shut everything down – it’s the only way I can relax.’

Surprising? Perhaps. But, as her digital detox policy might suggest, the 26-year-old wellbeing leader has always skipped to her own beat – and it’s a policy that has paid off. After a year spent working at an organic cafe in Sydney, Madeleine returned to London determined to bring the Australian healthy eating culture to London. Over the past three years, she’s carved out a niche for herself, with a series of pop-up supper clubs followed by two successful book launches – her debut cookbook *Get The Glow* and *Ready Steady Glow*, released in 2016 (both Orion, £20) – plus her wellbeing app *Glow Guides*. It hasn’t always been easy to push her agenda, either: ‘When I sent out my first book to publishers, I got responses like ‘I don’t think health is a big thing’ and ‘You’ve got to put calories on your recipes’ – but I really believed in what I was doing so I pushed through.’

It looks like Madeleine, who boasts 56.9K Twitter followers, was right to stick to her guns.

However, she’s far too nice to gloat. Catching up with her after an alfresco yoga session – led by the wellness warrior herself – it’s clear that her perpetual smile isn’t just for the cameras. Radiantly happy with a lithe, healthy figure, Madeleine is a brilliant ambassador for her ‘look good, feel good’ philosophy. ‘What drives me is feeling good within myself: strong and energised.’ For Madeleine, that comes down to the four basic pillars: ‘hydration, sleep, good food and daily movement’.

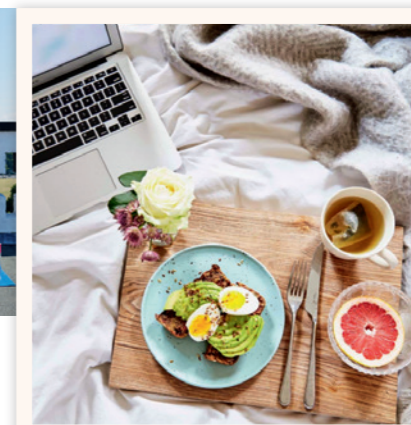
Madeleine’s positive mental attitude also helps her to avoid comparing herself to the numerous other wellness bloggers out there: ‘What’s the saying? “Comparison is the thief of joy.” I think it’s a natural trap to fall into, especially as a woman. But I’m much better at avoiding it now than when I was starting out. Everyone’s different. There will always be someone bigger and better than you. That’s just life.’

Despite impressions to the contrary, Madeleine swears she isn’t perfect. ‘For eight months last year, I did no exercise at all. You just get out of the swing of it and start thinking: “Ooh, an extra hour in bed would be really nice.” I felt terrible.’

Now she’s back on track, doing three HIIT classes a week, plus regular yoga sessions. Still,



Daily movement and good food are just two of Madeleine’s four must-follow rules



balancing exercise with her gruelling day job is never easy: ‘Being your own boss is hard: you don’t leave at 5pm on a Friday, and Sunday is the same as Monday. Basically, you work 24/7. The positives outweigh the negatives, though; my work gives my life a purpose, and that’s a great feeling.’

But there’s one topic that turns this motivated businesswoman into a blushing schoolgirl, and that’s her boyfriend, 29-year-old restaurateur Kieran Monteiro: ‘He’s gorgeous – half Indian, half Irish. From the first date, I thought: “This is it.”’ Not surprisingly, the power couple met while they were working, when Madeleine hosted one of her supper clubs at Kieran’s first restaurant, Boma.

‘We were unprofessional,’ says Madeleine, laughing. ‘We went from business to pleasure!’ But she’s earnest about the fact that she’s learnt a lot from Kieran, who shares her passion for hard work. ‘He’s good at giving me advice on managing staff and making career decisions – and he gives great pep talks when I’m stressed!’

The other person Madeleine gushes about is her mum, a physiotherapist: ‘She’s an amazing woman who’s achieved a great balance of running her own business, raising children and managing to be really sociable at the same time. She’s a great role model.’

This strong support network has helped Madeleine through the ups and downs of her career: ‘In the past, I’ve experienced work-related anxiety from feeling like I’m not posting enough recipes or working hard enough – we’re always hardest on ourselves.’ Nowadays, she’s more pragmatic: ‘I’ve learnt that it doesn’t matter how many followers I get, or how many books I’ve released, unless I’m doing it with the right mentality – because I love what I do. I feel like I’ve achieved a lot by 26. I’m enjoying every moment.’

*Madeleine Shaw is an ambassador for Brita, who are partnering with the Marine Conservation Society to discourage people in the UK from buying single-use plastic water bottles.*

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