

Life works

SMART IDEAS FOR AN EASIER LIFE

Turbo-charge your confidence

Ever wondered how some (ie other) people seem to sail through life attracting fabulous friendships, interesting hobbies and a satisfying career? Perhaps you're in need of a boost to your self-esteem. Nikki Owen, the UK's leading confidence and charisma expert (www.audiencewithcharisma.com), offers this advice:

★ Ask five friends to write down three qualities they most admire about you and put them in a box. Pick a 'quality card' each morning and start the day feeling good.

★ Look in the mirror and say, 'I am confident' 10 times while tapping your chest lightly. This integrates the words into your brain, increasing your confidence consciously and unconsciously.

★ Pay attention to your thoughts; if you think positively, you'll feel more assured.

★ Being yourself naturally raises your energy and self-esteem.



THREE OF THE BEST BACK TO SCHOOL



1 Lunchbox, £9.99, www.strawberryfool.co.uk

2 Mini highlighters set, £2.95, Muji (www.muji.co.uk)

3 Notebook and pen, £2.99, Sainsbury's (0800 636262; www.sainsburys.co.uk)



NEW-TERM NERVES

A change in school, new teachers and different classmates can all cause children anxiety; Parentline Plus has some ideas to ease the way:

★ Start getting back into school-time routines towards the end of the holidays so it's less of a shock. Give them a bit of leeway in the first week, too, as it can feel like a long day.

★ Avoid last-minute panic buying of shoes, uniforms and other essentials.

★ Take time to talk about how they feel about a new school or a different teacher, and offer extra reassurance if it's GCSE year, for example.

★ Re-address any issues from last term, such as bullying, and make sure you understand what they want to change.

For more advice, call Parentline Plus on 0808 800 2222 or visit www.parentlineplus.org.uk.

Ready, get set, read!

Roald Dahl Day on 13 September celebrates the life and works of the popular author. Get your children involved with the Roald Dahl Reading Relay – a challenge to read three Roald Dahl books between September and December. Download a Relay Diary from www.roalddahl.com (from 1 September) – when your bookworm finishes they will receive a Buckswashing Book Champion certificate. See 'But mum, reading is boring!' on page 32 for more ways to get kids into books ▷

