

Sally Brampton: Editing Elle magazine turned me to drink pills

As launch editor of Elle magazine in 1985, Sally Brampton led a gilded existence.

She was close friends with the likes of Paula Yates, Simon and Yasmin Le Bon, and designers Jasper Conran and John Galiano.

Most evenings, she was to be found at her private table in London's exclusive Groucho club, entertaining a host of models, writers and photographers.

Indeed, one journalist interviewing Sally about the success of Elle magazine at the time wrote that "confidence beams off Sally Brampton like light off a laser".

Sally's marriage to then BBC1 controller Jonathan Powell in 1990, and subsequent birth of her daughter Molly, now 16, seemed to seal her status as one of Britain's media elite.

By 1999, then a highly respected freelance writer and novelist, Sally lived in a large house in Maida Vale, received invitations to every party in town and had enough money to indulge her every whim.

Yet behind this enviable facade, Sally was already experiencing the beginnings of what was to be a bleak depression that was to see her hospitalised twice, attempt to take her own life on two separate occasions, develop alcoholism and spend two years able to do little but cry.

"Everyone saw me as this hugely successful, hugely independent, vivacious woman in total control of everything in her life," says Sally, now 52 and living in Queen's Park, London, with her daughter and third husband, Tom, who is 49 and runs an ethical marketing company.

"And in many ways, I was. I had all the boxes ticked - the career, the husband, money and a lovely daughter - and I was very happy with my life. But if I look back now, there were signs all along that something wasn't right.

"As long ago as when I was launching Elle, I would find myself crying for days on end. I put it down to the stress of producing a magazine and having to be constantly "on show", which is part of being an editor of a big title.

"Now, though, I think it was a warning sign of the depression that was to come.

"Then, in the late 1990s, despite the wonderful life I appeared to be living, I felt a constant sense of inarticulate grief and sadness. It was something I didn't want to admit to because I felt so guilty.

"How could I admit to feeling sad when my life was so "great"?"

"If you are successful and confident, and outwardly leading an enviable existence, it is almost impossible to admit that anything is wrong.

"What I didn't understand at the time was that admitting to feeling the way I did would not have been an admission of failure, or that anything was drastically wrong with my life.

"It would have been admitting - and realising - that there was something wrong with me. I wish

"I had understood depression; recognised that it is an illness with definite, clear symptoms, and had sought help sooner."

By the beginning of 2000, and aged 43, Sally - who had turned freelance following the birth of her daughter in 1992 - was editing women's magazine Red.

"It was a job that propelled her back into the centre of the media world, yet this time her heart wasn't in it.

"I found the obsession with celebrities and products vacuous, and I started to feel very disheartened by it all," she says.

At the same time, her ten-year marriage to Jonathan (she had previously been married briefly in her 20s) came to an end because, she says, they had grown apart. Even in retrospect, she doesn't feel her depression had anything to do with the break-up.

The couple agreed to share custody of their daughter, but it was decided that Sally would be the one to move out of the family home and into a flat nearby. Almost immediately, she found herself unable to sleep properly.

'Every day at exactly 3.20am, I'd wake up with what I call "washing machine head" - a load of thoughts going round and round in my mind,' says Sally. 'I also started losing weight, for no apparent reason.'

'I now know these are common symptoms of depression - but, as usual, I hid behind my veil of success and capability, and refused to admit that anything was wrong.'

'In fact, I actually received compliments on my weight loss. I worked in magazines, and in that world thin was good. I couldn't bring myself to admit to anyone that I couldn't eat because I felt as though I had a huge lump at the back of my throat, and that I was on the verge of crying all the time.'

In April that year, Sally went to her GP about her inability to sleep properly. He raised the possibility of depression, and prescribed her a mild dose of anti-depressants.

'I was furious with the diagnosis and the treatment,' recalls Sally. 'I said to my GP that I was not the sort of person depression happens to.'

'The pills had absolutely no effect either. I kept taking them, but the fact they didn't work only strengthened my view that I wasn't - and could not be - depressed.'

In fact, with each passing week, Sally's mood worsened. She says: 'I managed to keep it together at work, or when my daughter was staying with me. But whenever I was home alone, I'd cry for hours and hours, without reason.'

'I put it down to my divorce and moving house. I'd cry from the moment I got home until I went to bed; I'd wake up in the night crying. And I'd cry from the moment I got up, until I left for work.'

'In the summer of 2000, I took a week's holiday and spent it walking around London, crying behind my dark glasses. I was trying to walk away my tears and my sadness.'

'After that, I went to therapy. The irony was that I wasn't the sort of person who did therapy, or believed in

therapy, but I went in the hope that if I expressed my misery, it would go away. But it didn't.'

Sally's depression was compounded by a relationship with a newly single man, who was unable to commit to her properly because of a recent marital break-up and responsibilities to his young children.

While she struggled to make a go of their romance, that September the sudden death of her close friend and confidante Paula Yates came as another grievous blow.

'Paula was one of the few people I'd shared my misery with, because she was so unhappy, too,' says Sally. 'I'd spoken to her a few days earlier and had dinner booked in with her a few days later. I couldn't believe she'd died. I was devastated.'

The final straw for Sally came in October when, as a result of declining sales, she was sacked from Red magazine. Even though this series of events would be enough to leave even the strongest of women feeling low, Sally struggled to accept, or admit, that she might be depressed.

'I felt as though I still had a place to live, money from a redundancy payout, a child I adored, friends I love, and work if I wanted it,' she says. 'I knew I was unhappy and I was finding it hard to cope, but I didn't think I had a "right" to depression.'

But in January 2001, after telling her by now ex-husband how she felt, he arranged for her to be assessed by a psychiatrist. As a result, she was admitted to hospital with severe clinical depression and put on 24-hour suicide watch.

'I spent two weeks in hospital, and I thought they would make me better,' she says. 'If I'd known then that for the next two years I would feel only black

despair, I don't think I'd have made it through. I would have killed myself there and then.'

For the next year, Sally showed no signs of improvement, despite a second two-week stay in a psychiatric hospital. She was told by her psychiatrist that she was one of just 30 per cent of depression patients who are resistant to all forms of medication.

'Throughout that year, I felt totally separated from life,' says Sally. 'I remember standing at my window, watching people getting on with their lives, and feeling completely excluded from life. I couldn't even imagine what I would do if I was outside.'

'I was unable to work and had to rely on savings, and I thought about suicide constantly.'

'The woman I'd once recognised as myself - who had flown across world at a moment's notice, and had been described as "fierce" by colleagues for having the guts to stand up and argue with Rupert Murdoch when I worked in newspapers - had totally gone.'

'Now, the simplest of tasks, even getting up in the morning, felt impossible. I barely left the house, stopped washing, wearing make-up or cleaning my teeth, and ate virtually nothing. When, at some point that year, my hot water stopped working, it was simply beyond me to get it fixed.'

'The only time I even vaguely resembled my old self was when my daughter was with me. Molly moved between her father's house and mine every five days. When she was with me, I'd force myself to get up, get dressed and get her ready to go to school, and I tried not to cry in front of her.'

'None of the medication I was prescribed worked, so I started to drink heavily. I could easily get through two bottles of a good French burgundy (my drug of choice) a day. I reached a point where I liked to be mildly but consistently drunk all day, every day.'

'It was really hard on Molly, who was about ten at the time, and she saw some things that no child should have to see. But she has always seemed older than her years. She used to come and visit me in hospital, and she was very mature in her outlook. She seemed to understand that I was ill, and coped admirably.'

In November 2001, shortly after leaving hospital for the second time, Sally attempted to kill herself by taking an overdose of pills.

'It always frustrates me,' she says, 'that when someone dies after a long illness, such as cancer, people say things like: "He fought so hard."

'Yet when they commit suicide, they are said to be "selfish". This is quite wrong.'

'I'd fought so hard, and I couldn't go on pretending I had any semblance of a normal life left.'

'So one night, when my daughter was with her father, I simply gathered together all the pills that were close at hand and took them.'

'I didn't count them. I did not even look to see what they were. I just swallowed them. But, much to my annoyance, I woke up again.'

'In January 2002, by now drinking increasingly heavily and at her lowest ebb, Sally attempted suicide again.'

'This time, to be sure it worked, she used the internet to look up what would constitute a fatal dose of her medication - and trebled it.'

'As I took the pills, I thought to myself, "Thank God it's over". I had tried very hard for two years to stay alive, and I couldn't do it any more.'

'I smiled as I took the pills, thinking that at last I was going to be free.'

'When I woke up, all I felt was horror that my body had let me down by insisting on staying alive. I've since been told that I have the constitution of an ox.'

'Despite everything I've put my body through, my liver function, for instance, has never been compromised.'

This second suicide attempt, though, was to prove a turning point for Sally.

After failing to find peace in death, or respite in therapy, drugs or hospitalisation, she decided she had to do whatever she could to bring her illness to an end.

Sally started walking for half an hour a day, and took up yoga. She called on supportive friends to take her out for a cup of tea. Most important of all, she says, she accepted she had an illness and stopped feeling ashamed.

"I realised that you wouldn't say to someone with a broken leg: "Get up and walk." So why should that be the attitude towards depression?"

"I knew then I had to take time, and put effort and energy into getting better.

"My recovery was very slow, and not easy. It was almost impossible for me to find meaning in life again. I had to start with the smallest of things.

"For instance, there was meaning in doing the washing up, as it meant I had plates and cutlery to eat from. There was meaning to walking up the road, as it meant I could buy food for my child.

"I also took up gardening again, which had once been a passion of mine. Slowly, I stopped crying and I no longer wanted myself dead."

However, Sally's recovery stalled later that year when her elderly parents fell ill.

Once again, she turned to alcohol - but instead of wine, this time she drank neat vodka straight from the bottle.

"I quickly reached a point where I'd lie in bed in the afternoons drinking straight from the bottle, then spend the evenings alone on the sofa doing the same," she says.

In all, it would take three years and, in 2003, a 28-day spell in rehab for alcoholism, as well as attendance at AA meetings, for Sally to recover completely.

She has since discovered that depression runs in her family, and both her mother and her brothers have suffered from depressive episodes, though not as severe as Sally's.

Today, she once again appears a woman in total control of her life, although there is an unmistakable sadness to her eyes, a slight nervousness to her hands.

Nonetheless, she has completed a book about her depression, in which she lays bare the depths to which she has sunk in recent years.

In her personal life, she has recently married Tom - the divorce she had been seeing at the time her depression began.

The couple live in a large, airy house in Queen's Park, which they have recently renovated.

"Although my relationship with Tom didn't cause my depression, not being able to be together properly because of my illness and his family situation certainly broke my heart time and time again," says Sally.

"At my lowest point, I hit him.

"I'd wanted him to take away my pain, and I didn't know back then that nobody can take away another person's pain.

"It was three years before we saw each other again, even though during that time Tom was never far from my mind.

"By the time we finally met up again, I was well into my recovery and able to say that I had truly helped myself."

Sally says she would not consider herself completely clear of depression; but, as a result of yoga, vitamins, meditation, exercise, acupuncture and staying away from alcohol, she is able to control the illness and take measures to prevent recurrences before they become all-consuming.

She says: "If there is one thing I've realised, it's that depression does not strike one sort of person because of one particular reason.

"In hospital, I met everyone from high-flying businessmen to single mothers.

"Some had been through terrible abuse: others, like me, had no obvious reason.

"But the result was that we all, for whatever reason, felt utterly lost and bereft. And we all faced a momentous struggle to find ourselves again."

Shoot The Damn Dog: A Memoir Of Depression, by Sally Brampton, is published by Bloomsbury at 15.99. To order a copy at 14.40 (p p free), call 0845 606 4206.

Many with skin and meat are Feiyou, such as skin, the skin and fat pork, etc., remember to eat before the first remove these parts. In addition, like outer layer cake and the butter sandwich, but also scratch and take all the best, if failed to retain than half of all eating into the stomach much better.

2, the additional oil will not increase!

Tu Do not eat bread butter, peanut butter, jam use no fat; drink tea or coffee avoid Naiqing and sugar, to increase, they can switch to low-fat milk and sugar substitutes to replace. In addition. Steak salad dressing and heat of these sauces are high, it s best small increase is the best.

3, the provincial water to oil not!

Faced with sweet-and-sour, nectar, Gouqian such as a greasy dishes, suggest that you can be prepared next to a bowl of water or soup before eating to put food into, Lek swap excess water. If inconvenient, or used paper napkin to allocate part of oil-absorbing rice, it s a good idea.

You lose weight (jianfei6.net) health consultant Zhang Jian Mr. Kay said: In fact, they do not have as absolute as the above point to eat and scratch dissection. In many cases, the number of eating more important than what to eat. I think if there are half a sandwich to eat cake, not to eat a sandwich than the heat may be even less. So, the key is not the total

Graphic: 001.

4, omitting oil onions and Rumei!

Eat outside in the face, will be Bian-called roast pork and fried noodles with little more oil. When eating roast pork can not please the boss and sesame oil, green onions and Rumei oil, or not to finish all the soup, if customary point dishes, a vegetable election lo mei more than help you added fibre.

5, drink broth!

He Shang Tang If it is found that when the surface layer of oil slicks, can put out oil slicks fishing Zaikai. If we can choose, at a bowl of soup broth will be much better than, as is soup with butter and flour for 10% of the body is drinking too much a burden.

6, eliminate peanut seeds!

Chinese wedding or participate in the luncheon, the table would normally placed melon seeds, peanuts, cashew nuts, or will be in the dishes, Boluo, pine nuts, walnuts. These nuts contain high fat category of the best eat, eat lightly because the seeds can eat 100 calories a Progressive.

Zhang Jian Kai said: Very often, we inadvertently eating too many calories. For example, the peanut seeds, and each heat is not high. However, many of my friends while watching TV Bianchi, Xishuichangliu several large bag of seeds on the night of the claims. This adhere to it, can not count?

Graphic: 002.

7, but a single point of dishes!

If it is also want to lose weight and several friends go to small chafing dish, it can be a single point of the way, with a fresh-meat, and more vegetables, corn, bean curd, Dongfen; processing of the hot pot, such as egg dumplings, fish dumplings, pork balls, eat as much as possible, because such foods contain more fat.

8, a la carte Western know-how!

Western point of time, judging from the menu on whether high-fat food. For example, Fire and the next word representative to the butter and cheese in cooking, Baishi representative butter sauce, were mostly Supi, comparison, grilled and smoked food calories on the much lower. In addition, you may wish to recommend point seafood meal, generally speaking, expensive seafood prices, usually not too much weight.

9, bogey sweet drink!

Shaokai sweet and alcoholic beverages, the best time is thirsty to drink water or tea instead of points have added sugar, Naiqing, oil or milk to drink, such as Bingsha coffee, cappuccino, etc.. Although non-alcoholic fruit juice and fat, but high calorie, particularly the squandering is increasingly strong heat higher, in order to avoid obesity, or Shao He is the best!

Kai Zhang Jian said: Alcohol is high heat, and many fish balls, pork balls like soup rinse starch are expected to do, therefore, the time to eat hot pot, not because of material and free wine rinse your damaged build oh.

Graphic: 003.

Photo link Address: <http://www.jianfei6.net/jankebbs/thread-552-1-1.html>

About the Author

From www.dailymail.co.uk:

Hoodia Gordonii Hoodia Diet Pills, weight loss pill a natural appetite suppressant, Certified Hoodia is earning attention as a potentially.

Start planning for weight loss without wasting a minute and to initiate this process, make diet pills a part of your life. It'll definitely.

Diet Pills That Make You Feel Full Italian scientists are developing diets pills that can make you feel full for 5 hours. The pill expands.

In addition, we have a searchable database of weight loss products from numerous stores, so you can price comparison shop for the best deals on diet pills.

Provides weight loss solutions through education. Offers weight loss programs, diet plans, weight loss tips and articles as well as information.

Weight Loss Center is your free online guide to weight loss, diet pills, dieting and nutrition. Visit the Weight Loss Center Forum and join our community.

Helix Slim weight loss pill is part of the new generation of A.Vogel products. It is an adjuvant and efficient means to help control appetite.

Diet pills are very tempting things if you want to lose weight, especially if you have tried several conventional weight loss diets without.

Source: <http://www.productsherbal.com>