

Our next move

From writing a novel to living a simplified life, four famous faces share their plans

“A family tragedy totally changed everything for me”

TV presenter **JUNE SARPONG, 40**, lives in North London. She's releasing her first book, *Diversify*, this month.

I embrace new experiences and seek them out, but anything new is frightening. You can put me on a stage in front of 50,000 people and I wouldn't flinch. But writing a book felt incredibly daunting because it's new.

I thought I had no prejudices, but I did. My book came from an experience I had while filming in Las Vegas. A young man appeared on set with tattoos and I felt intimidated even though he was in no way menacing. As a woman of colour, I've been on the receiving end of that kind of judgment – this made me see the other side.

We all need to start having these conversations. Whether you're a woman, have a disability or are in any



JUNE HAIR: VERONICA WHITE. MAKE-UP: JESSIE BARKER. BLOUSE AND TROUSERS: BOTH MARC CAIN. CUFF: EDGE OF EMBER

AMANDA HAIR & MAKE-UP: IAN MCINTOSH AT CAROL HAYES MANAGEMENT. DRESS AND HEELS: BOTH LK BENNETT. EARRINGS AND BANGLE: BOTH ESHVI

way “different”, you know what it's like not to be considered the gold standard. I want to encourage people to spot their own hidden prejudices.

I struggle with confidence, I'm actually quite shy. I've named my insecure side Agnes – and she's bloody annoying! But in naming it, I'm able to notice when Agnes is in charge.

Friendships are very important to me. During tough times you see who your real friends are. My brother died [he committed suicide] two years ago, and it was the darkest time. I wouldn't have got through it without my friends.

My life now compared to then is like night and day. People said it would get better; I didn't believe it – but it did. The silver lining about dark times is that it makes you appreciate the little things. I am also much more compassionate and mindful of trying to be as kind as I can. My brother dying changed everything. .

I believe in God, the power of prayer, and meditation. We all need something outside of ourselves to get us through. For me, it's faith and prayer.

My biggest hobby is food and cooking. Food is at the centre of African culture. My parents' generation were a stern bunch – the way they showed love was through food. I love having people for dinner. My signature dish is jollof rice, a biryani crossed with tomato risotto!

I'm in a relationship but it's still very new. We're living together and I'm very happy – it's too early to say any more.

My shoe cupboard is ridiculous! I don't even want to think about how much I've spent on shoes over the years.

I used to have a five-year plan, but the last few years have shown me you cannot control everything. Now I'm much more inclined to go with the flow. I've recently started presenting an arts show on Sky Arts, something I would never have considered before.

June's book, Diversify, is out now (HQ).