



DAILY EXPRESS

CRUSADING FOR A FAIRER BRITAIN



Our Paper
Front and Back Pages, E-Edition and Back Issues...

Weather
21°C
London

Horoscope

MyEXPRESS
Your PROFILE
Your COMMENTS
Your SPACE
[SIGN IN / UP](#)

Monday 24th August 2009



Make us your HOME PAGE



What is RSS?

SEARCH:



This Site



Google

[SEARCH](#)

Quickly Find...

- Home | Front Page
- MyEXPRESS
- Have Your Say
- News / Showbiz
- Scottish
- Sport
- Pictures **NEW**
- Video **NEW**
- Features
 - Day & Night
 - Express Yourself
 - Health
 - Fashion & Beauty
 - Gardening
 - Food & Recipes

- Horoscope
- Our Comment
- The Crusader
- Entertainment
- TV Guide
- Money
- Motoring
- Travel
- Careers
- Fun / Competitions
- Cartoon
- Blogs
- Forgotten Verse
- Have a Story?
- Contact Us
- Polls
- Retirement
- Property
- Our Paper

- Dating
- Vouchers
- Express Mortgages
- Express Loans
- Bingo
- Lose Weight
- Franchising
- Shopping
- Book Shop
- Compare Broadband
- Wine Shop
- Legal Store
- FlatShare
- Cruises

Columnists

Jimmy Young
Read the latest column now

Vanessa Feltz
Read the latest column now

Alan Titchmarsh
Read the latest column now

Dr Rosemary Leonard
Read the latest column now

HOME > FEATURES > EXPRESS YOURSELF > In search of my very own happy ending

expressyourself

IN SEARCH OF MY VERY OWN HAPPY ENDING



Monday May 18, 2009

By **Anne Wollenburg**

[Have your say\(0\)](#)

PREMIERE SERVICE: Anne could relate to film characters

Have your say on this story. Create your own MyEXPRESS profile & get interactive today!

[SIGN IN / UP](#)

Slouched in an armchair, my right hand is numb and my left foot keeps twitching. I'm talking about the 1985 film *The Breakfast Club* to psychotherapist Bernie Wooder who has pioneered movie therapy in the UK.

"We have all watched films and felt sad or happy afterwards," says Wooder in his book *Movie Therapy: How It Changes Lives*. He explains that an on-screen image can provide a way to discuss strong emotions and memories.

As a cinema buff who regularly writes film reviews I liked the idea of looking at films in a new way but that wasn't the only attraction.

I have always admired people who visit therapists because I couldn't imagine opening my heart to a stranger. However when I heard about movie therapy I realised that instead of talking about myself I could talk about films.

Wooder explains that movie therapy is not a quick fix. It may involve bringing difficult feelings to the surface and as a result can be upsetting. He asks if there's a film that speaks to me in particular. I tell him I identify with Allison in *The Breakfast Club*, a film in which five teenagers from different cliques are stuck in detention together. Allison is the outsider.

"I was bullied at school," I explain. "I felt like a nobody. I'm scared of that happening again." He asks if I am feeling any physical sensations. I'm not and I worry that the question is a bit "new agey".

I recall a classroom incident. I was wearing a scarf and two boys grabbed the ends and pulled. I thought the teacher saw but he didn't do anything. "If somebody did that now I would be angry," I say, "but I wasn't at the time. I just felt helpless."

Wooder asks again about any physical sensations I may be feeling. As I explain how I compensate for having been a shy, awkward child by being a forthright, bolshy adult, I realise my right hand is pulsing with energy. Now this I wasn't expecting. I ask if it is normal to have a physical reaction and he says it is.

EXPRESS YOURSELF ARTICLE SEARCH SEARCH for: [SEARCH](#)

Wooder explains it's because emotional feelings affect your body not just your brain. "Your body manifests emotion denied by your mind. It feels emotion and lets you know," he says.

We talk about how *The Breakfast Club* unfolds on a Saturday. On Monday everything will go back to normal and I realise I'm afraid that will happen to me. I'm content with my relationship, friends and career but I'm scared of losing it all. Wooder points out that my left foot keeps twitching as I talk.

My ex-fiancé cheated on me after nearly seven years together. I was determined to get on with life and be happy but it hasn't always been easy. Wooder observes: "I have a sense you can't feel safe

Predict the Football Scores & Win £1,000,000
Every Week For Only £1

Football Match Centre
League tables • Statistics • Fixtures

EXPRESS VOUCHERS
Search over 40,000 vouchers! [SEARCH](#)

MORE EXPRESS YOURSELF

What happened to the little boy who survived Niagara Falls?

EXCLUSIVE: In 1960, Roger Woodward became The Boy Who Lived when he plunged over...

[Read More](#) [Have Your Say\(0\)](#)

Exam time survival strategy

If your children are sitting their GCSEs or A-levels this year it's likely you ...

[Read More](#) [Have Your Say\(0\)](#)

Discover your wild side

In ancient North American folklore they believed that people took on the attribu...

[Read More](#) [Have Your Say\(2\)](#)

- [Dating](#)
- [Heal Gel](#)
- [Wine Shop](#)
- [Bingo](#)
- [Mortgages](#)



[HOROSCOPES](#)

[MyEXPRESS](#)



in your life. You think that Monday is going to come again." It's the perfect description of how I feel.

I'm happier these days but I'm not at peace with events in the past. "I feel my life is a notebook and there are pages I want to rip out," I say. Wooder asks if I have seen the 1998 film Sliding Doors in which Gwyneth Paltrow stars as a woman whose life plays out differently in two parallel universes. I have seen it and tell him that I feel I want to "see behind the other door but can't". "Sometimes I go through a door without realising I have a choice until it's too late," I continue.

Wooder asks how my hand feels now and I realise it has gone numb. He asks me to think about The Breakfast Club again and I explain that I'm annoyed with Allison. He suggests: "You can see her stuck in a cycle and know she will regret it one day. She doesn't do anything to change her life."

I agree and add: "I feel I could have had a better time if I had tried." I explain that I wish I could wipe parts of my memory like in the film Eternal Sunshine Of The Spotless Mind, in which Kate Winslet and Jim Carrey have their memories erased, though it hits me later that they both regret it.

I tell Wooder I'm not sure why I can't simply enjoy my life. He says I feel I have to be on guard which prevents me relaxing. "Imagine you're walking along the street," he says. "You see a little girl. She's upset. You ask her what's wrong and she tells you she's frightened and lonely. What would you say to her?"

I have trouble answering but say I would walk along with her. "I don't like imagining old me and young me. It's not that I want to leave her to be miserable," I say "but I need to take her back home." Wooder thinks I don't know how to reassure her. In truth I want someone else to do it for me.

"Go back to a film," says Wooder. A strong image comes into my head from a recently released movie I watched just a few days ago. In the movie Is Anybody There, Michael Caine is an elderly magician put in a care home.

He befriends the young boy whose parents run it. Recalling their friendship I find it much easier to imagine old me and young me. We're on a beach getting an ice cream. "The little girl would like that," says Wooder.

Walking out into the sunshine after our session I feel light and floaty as if I've had a massage or too much champagne. I never expected movie therapy to be such a physical experience. I walk past a newsagent and breaking into a smile I go in and buy an ice lolly.

Movie therapy helped me voice feelings I hadn't been able to describe before. It won't be right for everyone and you may need a few sessions. As with all kinds of therapy it can involve feeling worse before you feel better and can be very hard emotionally but I can say for certain that it helped.

I A movie therapy session with Bernie Wooder is £55 an hour. Visit themovietherapist.com for details. His book Movie Therapy: How It Changes Lives is published by Rideau Lakes Publishing, £10.

"Have Your Say" Comment on this story now! [CLICK HERE TO HAVE YOUR SAY](#)

Share...



- Got A Story? Get in touch online
- Email the news desk directly here!

Next story...



Exam time survival strategy

If your children are sitting their GCSEs or A-levels this year it's likely your entire...

[NEXT STORY...](#)

New BlackBerry® Storm™
Get The New 3G BlackBerry Storm 9500.
Now Available In Stores

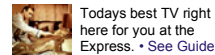
Stop Being So Negative
You Can Control Thoughts & Emotions with
Positive Psychology Tools.

Ads by Google

Print This Article Email To A Friend Contact Us About Article **RSS** Get RSS

Justin Toper
Britain's best astrologer
Choose One...

TV GUIDE



Today's best TV right here for you at the Express. • See Guide

TODAY'S CARTOON

Paul Thomas



The Political Cartoonist of the Year

Compare Pension

Annuities
We Find The Highest Rate For You, FSA Regulated, Contact Us Free!
www.Annuity-Advisor.co.uk

1 Tip of a flat belly :
Cut down 3 lbs of your belly every week by using this 1 weird tip.
Fatburningfurnace.com

McAfee
Total Protection 2009

£29.34

RRP £58.69
Save £29

50%

OFF



Buy Now