

Let go of REGRET

We all have things we wish we had – or *hadn't* – said or done, and these feelings can follow us for years. But how can we stop beating ourselves up and put the past to rest, asks Caroline Butterwick

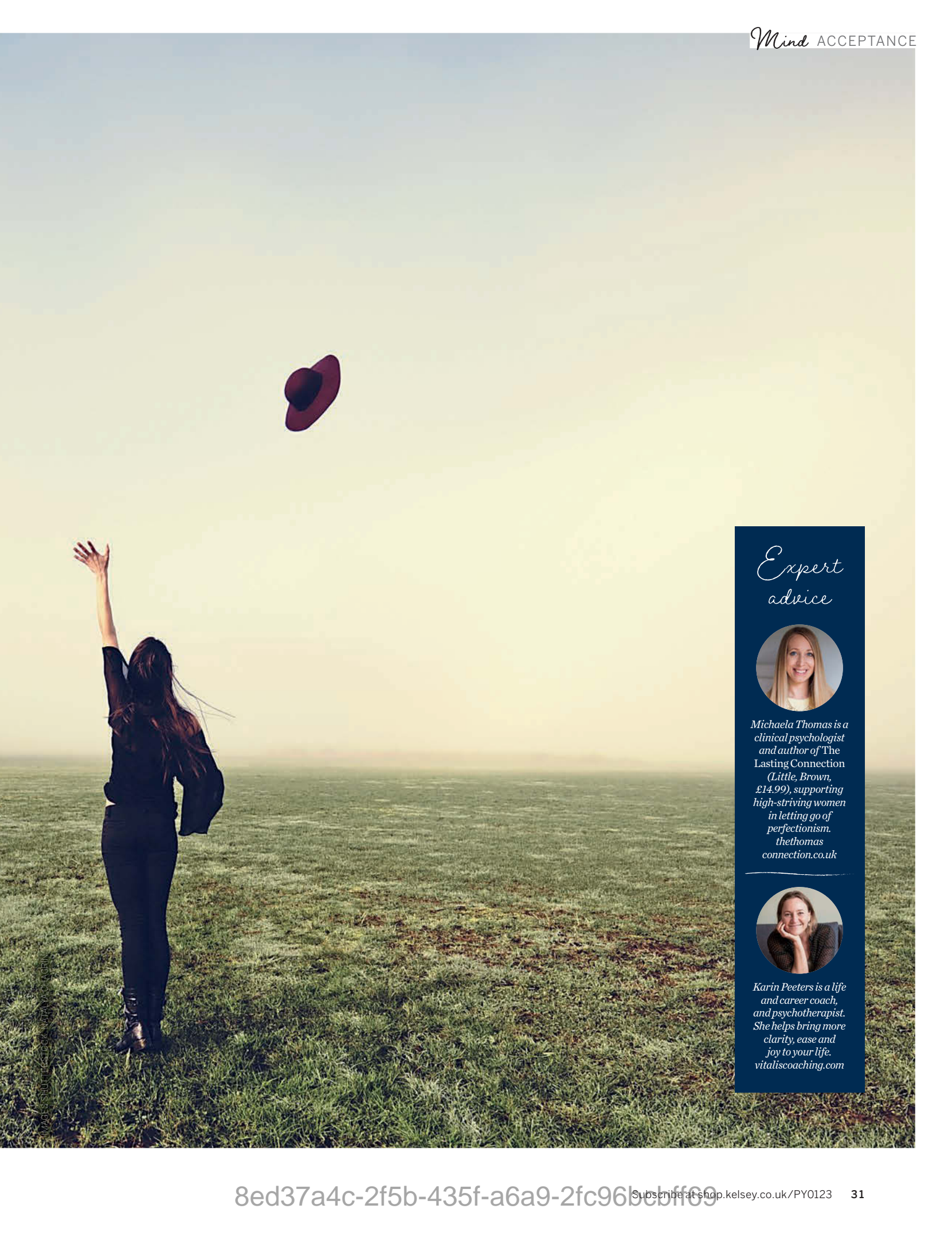
Most nights, I lie in bed, fretting over decisions I've made in the past, wishing I could go back and undo what happened. It's a common problem, but one I'd love to get over. After all, whether it's ruminating on big life decisions, such as if you should have moved house or been in a certain relationship, or just lots of little things, you wish you had done differently, feeling regretful can easily impact us negatively.

'Being stuck in constant rumination can be linked to low mood, and can signal that we may actually

be experiencing a depressive episode,' explains clinical psychologist Michaela Thomas. When we then turn our attention to looking forwards, our thinking can become much more negative and anxiety-fuelled, and worrying about the future can lead to us avoiding things. We become so convinced that things will go wrong that we begin to miss out on opportunities which, ironically, can lead to further regret.

Understanding your regret

As difficult as regret can be, there are ways to use these emotions to understand ourselves better. When ▶▶



Expert
advice



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