

AUTHOR and therapist Julia Hollenberg's new book, *The Healing Power of Pleasure: Seven Medicines for Rediscovering the Innate Joy of Being* (Findhorn Press, £14.55), is available now.

The 53-year-old was born in London to Susan and Martin Hollenberg.

Julia, who is mother to Ruby, read English literature and drama at London University, Goldsmiths College.

A former member of Habonim Dror and a London fieldworker for the Union of Jewish Students, she emigrated to Israel when she was in her early 20s.

Julia spent almost eight years in Tel Aviv, working for high-tech companies and learning and practising the Grinberg Method of Bodywork.

On her return to the UK, she worked as a therapist and for Jewish charities.

She also studied biodynamic craniosacral therapy and family constellations.

1. Nickname?

Joolz. My friends at school called me that.

2. Best and worst things about your job?

I love connecting with people, sharing touching moments and contributing to positive change for individuals and the world. However, I need to wear many hats, and am not great at all the admin!

3. Favourite musician or band?

Nina Simone. I grew up listening to my grandpa playing Chopin and my dad playing jazz on the piano. Nina Simone is so sensual, just gotta move listening to her.

4. Favourite film?

Contact, a sci-fi film with Jodie Foster about passion, searching, connecting, romance and integrity. Here, science and

MY LIFE IN 20-ish QUESTIONS

JULIA HOLLENBERG

spirituality meet.

The African Queen, with Humphrey Bogart and Katherine Hepburn, an old black and white film of romance, adventure and activism. And *Dirty Dancing* is good fun. So many wonderful films.

5. What would you call your autobiography?

The Anatomy of Abigail: Fragments of an Unknown Life. (Abigail is my Hebrew name)

6. Where do you see yourself in 10 years?

A well-respected wellness/spiritual teacher, offering popular articles, workshops and sessions, maybe another book published.

7. Biggest worry?

That, by carelessness, we will end up destroying the natural balance of animals, plants, climate, oceans and crops. Can we avoid disaster?

8. Last time you cried?

I cry often, sometimes for sadness but often touched by beauty or deep feeling.

9. Last book you read?

My Broken Vagina, by Fran Bushe, is funny and human. Recommended.

10. Last film you saw?

Cruella. Ruby suggested we watch it and it is an empowering story with fun music.

11. Favourite TV show?

Big Bang Theory. I'm a geek too, and I love the details of physics and biology.

12. Favourite holiday destination?

Sunshine, beach and places to explore. I

love forests, climbing hills, ancient ruins and meeting interesting people. This summer I'm teaching a masterclass week in Skiros, Greece.

13. What would be your specialist subject on *Mastermind*?

Joy. How to access the wisdom of your body – to enjoy being grounded in reality, many sensual pleasures in relationship and spontaneous instinct. Body is where your life is lived. Feeling at home in your own life.

14. Earliest memory?

Maybe I was a toddler, walking holding hands with my dad. We went to see the brass band outside a church. I was stirred by the big, bold music.

15. Of what are you most proud?

My book, which was a lifetime project. As a child, I knew I would one day write a book. I began writing the first part, decades ago, when I was living in Tel Aviv. I knew that the second part would be written, when I was healed and evolved. That's what happened. Despite life's ups and downs, I'm grateful the message from my heart, is going out to the world.

16. Most embarrassing moment?

Awkward clumsy teenage stuff... what I most remember is squashing myself small with embarrassment, wishing I could hide. I didn't know then that it was all just ordinary and okay human vulnerability and imperfection!

17. Heroine?

Marianne Williamson, best-selling author, spiritual leader and activist.

18. What do you do in your spare time?

Physical stuff. Love walking, dancing (5Rhythms and Ceroc) kickboxing, and when I can, sailing. Sometimes my daughter and I go horse-riding.

19. How would you like to be remembered?

Inspiring, fun and kind.

20. What's top of your bucket list?

Visiting South America. I want to visit the land of the Incas. As a teenager I remember stopping still in front of a poster about them. I was intrigued.

21. What is your most treasured possession?

My health and confidence. I've had to travel by way of big life challenges, several breakdowns and years of chronic fatigue. Grateful for my supplements, meditations and practices to keep me 'on the road'.

22. Something people might not be aware of about you.

We've two black cats. Mars and Pluto, and a chocolate Labrador, Olive.

23. Describe yourself in 280 characters (or fewer).

Life's not been easy, it has been a rewarding adventure. I'm delicate, deep, intuitive, powerful and earthy, passionate about sharing love. I notice small details: who someone is, how they feel, what they need. I love harmony, laughing, expressing



myself. A healer and visionary.

24. What does being Jewish mean to you?

It's where I come from, a culture of warmth, intelligence and complexity. There's much beauty in traditional Jewish stories, rituals, music, food. As a student, I loved spending time on a kibbutz milking cows, picking fruit, and directing the first Jewish Students Arts Festival. After university I worked for the Union of Jewish Students, then lived in Tel Aviv by the beach for seven years. I've also enjoyed exploring other spiritual traditions, countries and cultures. We don't eat pig or shellfish, my daughter goes to a Jewish school and on Fridays we light candles and make the blessings. I'm proud to belong to a lineage of spiritual seekers, visionary thinkers and productive creatives, and make my contribution.

25. Sum up your career in three words.

Integrity, insight, connection.

26. What is the best piece of advice you've ever been given?

My grandpa, Stanley, suggested scribbling on a clean white blank piece of paper to make it dirty, before starting to create. Art includes imperfections. It's freeing to have already got something wrong.

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