
MY LIFE IN HEALTH

‘I’VE ALWAYS SOUGHT HAPPINESS’

Actress, director, and health-retreat partner Sadie Frost, 58, talks to Joanna Ebsworth about her passion for yoga and meditation, and why she’ll never compromise on her dedication to wellness.

WHEN I MEET SADIE FROST FOR an afternoon of yoga and meditation to celebrate her new partnership with Amchara Health Retreat, she’s a radiant picture of health and happiness. By the time I’ve contorted my body through several asanas under Sadie’s watchful eye – she’s a qualified yogi – and drifted off to a higher plane while snuggled under a cosy blanket, my thoughts are clear and I’ve made my mind up: I need every one of her wellness secrets to staying strong, serene, and most importantly, sane.

Read on to discover how the mum-of-four balances motherhood with a hectic career by cherishing her “me time” at home, and by regularly going away to Amchara, her spiritual home in Malta, to reset and refresh her body and mind.

I loved performing from a very early age. When I got a scholarship to Italia Conti, it was great for many reasons, not least because my doctors told me it was very important that I lead a healthy lifestyle due to having a lung condition called bronchiectasis, which I got at the age of four. I was vegetarian as a child because I wouldn’t eat meat or fish, so my mum became vegetarian too. I was brought

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up eating organic; there was a big emphasis in my house to eat well and be healthy.

My stepfather was a healer and told me about meditation when I was 11 or 12 years old. And that’s when the seeds were planted that there was a more holistic way of living. We were seen as an odd family because, in those days, you were considered weird if you were doing anything alternative. That’s why I carved out my own beliefs from the beginning. I knew I had to be healthy, so dance became important to me. I started doing yoga in my teens after someone recommended it to help me understand the breath. Yoga involves doing the asanas, but it’s very much about breathing, meditation, positivity, and getting peace of mind.

I’ve gone back to yoga all my life. When I’ve struggled with anxiety or postnatal depression, yoga has really given me the tools to get better. Nobody has a 100 per cent easy-going life, and we all have challenges to deal with. But I believe those challenges help us to grow as a person and become bigger, better, stronger. I’ve always tried to work through negative moments and shift them



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towards being more positive. I’ve always been a survivor, and I’ve always loved a challenge.

My wellness journey is important to me because it’s kept me alive. It’s a thing that’s made me who I am today, and it’s one of my biggest strengths. I did a lot of meditation and yoga in my 20s and 30s, but it was only about 20 years ago that things became more spiritual. I started really meditating and praying and trying to make myself a better person by being more positive and less self-centred. I don’t think you can be happy when you live in a “me, me, me” world. You have to do things for other people.

Meditation gives me a purpose and a strength. It makes me able to have empathy and compassion for other people, and I like to think people come to me when they’re going

through a difficult time. That said, I don’t take anything for granted. It’s important to realise that enjoying good mental health, and feeling grounded, and having peace of mind, is not something you just get to have forever. You must work at it all the time. The more I go back to meditation, the more I think it’s just heaven. It’s like eating the best bar of chocolate and it makes me feel so good. I try to have it in my life every day.

Being spiritual and taking time to do things that are good for your mind doesn’t mean avoiding life. I still have to pay my taxes, go to the doctor, do my work and deal with my children’s situations. You have to be very present in this day and age. You have to sort your s**t out, do all the things you need to do, and still feel good. Meditating – whether it’s for five minutes,





20 minutes, an hour, or two hours a day – can help you feel like you can cope with it all.

I'm glad I've managed to have a career while prioritising my children and not missing out on years of their lives. I'm so lucky to have them around me, and they've all had a taste for wellness and health. My eldest son Fin had yoga lessons from me, and I was practising meditation and yoga with my youngest son Rudy the other day. I recently qualified as a Jivamukti yoga teacher, and I'm doing courses in Indian philosophy and Sanskrit to further my knowledge on the history of yoga. But I don't study and practise to create a new career. I just love passing the message on and healing people. I'm glad I can make films and act and do my wellness thing because the two blend wherever I'm working. I've achieved a lot, and I haven't sacrificed myself or my family for this crazy life.

My party-girl reputation was 25-30 years ago. I like a party – I'll go to someone's wedding or birthday – but ultimately, I've always been someone who likes going to bed early and getting up early. I have a relationship with alcohol where I know I should be sensible. There were times when I was younger where I'd think, "oh well, I drank a bit too much there". But then you learn your lesson and realise you don't want to have a hangover. Personally, I think I've always taken care of and respected myself. I've always sought happiness and wellness; that hasn't changed.



My food philosophy is simple and balanced. Obviously, I eat a lot of fruit and vegetables, but if I want to have a packet of crisps or some bread, I will. What I don't like about what's happening right now is that everybody's telling everybody what they should and shouldn't eat. As a vegetarian, I've never projected onto people "you shouldn't eat meat or fish", because I'd feel uncomfortable doing that.

But there's now this very aggressive attitude coming from lots of people about what you should and shouldn't eat, and a lot of them are doing it to create a brand or sell something. Sometimes I look at social media and I'm hyperventilating because they're spreading anger and fear in people that, in the end, will be far more damaging and stressful to your body than eating something that's actually not that bad for you.

Thankfully, I've gone through my life so I know what my values are, but this whole telling people what to do thing is crazy.



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I stay fit and healthy with walking, yoga, Pilates, and weight training. I've done weight training since I was in my 20s, but I don't think I realised the importance of it for bone density until the last five years. I'm not a strong person, so I have to lift lighter weights, but I think it's very good for you, and I find that it's really good for me mentally. Anything that makes me feel stronger is a positive.

My mini dachshund Cherry is my biggest protector. She's my biggest snuggler, my biggest yogi companion, and she loves keeping me company while I meditate. The great thing is that she can come with me everywhere, and that includes staying with me at the Amchara Health Retreat in Gozo, Malta (right), where I've been going since it opened in 2015.


I've recently partnered with Amchara to offer some of my own wellness retreats and lend my creative eye to refurbishing the suites, and Cherry was there helping me to decorate the rooms. She's absolutely my best friend, and I'm very lucky to have her.

It's important to practise your wellness routines and rituals at home. But I also think it's great to get away on a retreat. There are so many types, and once you find one that

suits you, you'll get the opportunity to learn something beneficial for your health that you might not get to do at home.

Personally, my work life can be chaotic, whether I'm travelling or on set, and when I'm doing a film, I might not get to eat healthily or practise yoga as much as I want. But going away on a retreat gives me the opportunity to press the reset button and really heal myself.





HAPPINESS
AHEAD

I love going to Gozo in Malta because it's like going back in time. Amchara is a beautiful place that specialises in functional medicine, and it's the opposite of pretentious. It has a loving, grounded community that helps me get to the heart and essence of who I am. The first few times I went, I took some quite ill people with me, including someone who had an autoimmune disease, and I saw their health really improve. I felt I could partner with the owners because I've studied nutrition, massage, and yoga, and I want to offer up some different programmes with different healing situations that will inspire people to take steps towards getting well by themselves. I just want to get the message out that you can take positive steps to heal yourself. And if it's going to give you longevity in life, that's the best gift you can give yourself.

● Visit amchara.com/malta-retreat for more information. Prices at Amchara Gozo start from £1800 for 7 nights in a one bedroom apartment. Flights to Malta start from £100 return, dependent on time of year.

