

'I felt **BULLIED** into WANTING A CHILD'

Lisa Riley reveals the pressures she faced trying to conceive and why she feels more 'complete' despite not having a baby

At the age of 41, she shocked fans when she revealed she was exploring IVF after finding love with her fiancé Al.

However just one month later, Lisa Riley's dreams of becoming a mum came crashing down, as doctors sadly confirmed the procedure would 'likely end in failure'. Nevertheless, Lisa remained positive, and later announced her engagement to Al, showing off her diamond dazzler on Instagram in May.

And when we sit down for a chat with the actress – who rose to fame on ITV's *Emmerdale* – she clearly has a spring in her step, gushing, 'Al's unbelievably supportive.' Here, as she releases her book *Lose Weight for Life*, Lisa opens up about the truth behind her pregnancy struggle and her amazing transformation, after losing an incredible 12st and having a stone of excess skin removed last year ...

'Lose Weight for Life is a book for women of all shapes and sizes, who just want to shed that little bit of weight. Any aspect of losing weight that people are worried about, I hope to give them the answer. There are so many more opportunities to make a change in this book.'

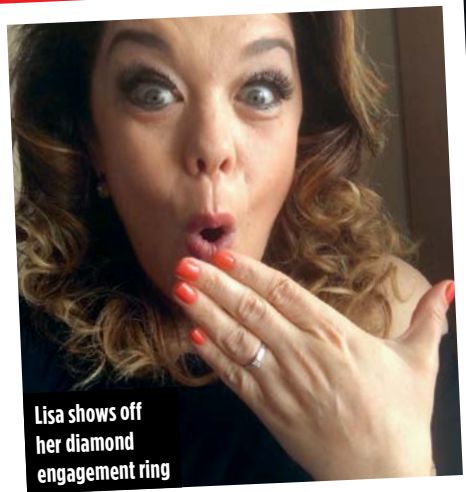
'I just want to be the person I deserve to be! IVF didn't work for me, but I don't

want plan B, C, D or E. I can't go around wishing I was a mum because that's not going to be me. I was put in a situation where I did feel bullied. It was like, 'Oh, you've got an amazing body, don't you want a baby?' And actually, I don't want a child!

'And this whole thing of feeling incomplete – why is that? I couldn't feel more complete if I tried. I'm the cliché of a naughty auntie and I have my nephews, who I have sleepovers with when I go back to Manchester. That brings music to my ears.'

'Am I 100% body-confident? Yes! I feel like I've got the correct figure. I'm a woman – I've got curves in the right places, and I'm who I want to be. The feeling I get now when I go shopping for clothes and beautiful underwear is one money can't buy!

'There isn't a day where I don't get wound up, but don't have insecurities as such. I have wound scars from my skin operations. I don't have a problem with them, but when I go to gym classes, I can see other people looking as the wound on my left arm is still quite deep. I just make a joke out of it



Lisa shows off her diamond engagement ring



Back in 2014, the actress was beginning her weight-loss journey



Lisa as Mandy in *Emmerdale* in 2000, with co-star Dominic Brunt, and demonstrating her fitness regime in her new book



saying things like, "I've spent the night with Edward Scissorhands."

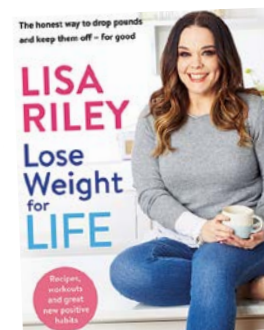
'Lots of things make me cry, like the second anyone mentions my mum [who passed away in 2012 from cancer]. I'll probably cry about it till the day I die, but crying is wonderful and we should embrace it.'

'Al is unbelievably supportive of my fitness journey! He's been there throughout everything – the person I was before, my operation, and then my life now. When you fall in love with someone, you don't go, "OK, you have to look like this to fall in love!" It's about what's inside.'

'The reason relationships don't work in this industry is because people put them in the public eye. My life with Al is *my* life and I like to keep it private. Just as pregnant women have a natural bloom, people always say to me, "God, you are glowing!" And that's because I am happy and I don't want that ruined.'

'Will we have a traditional wedding? This will probably be the longest engagement! Even when I wear my ring it sort of feels claustrophobic. If we do it, we will probably be in America one day, and one of us will say, "Do you want to get married today?"'

*** Lose Weight for Life by Lisa Riley (Michael Joseph, £16.99). Out 12 July**



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