



Ann Peacock

TALES OF A MODERN WOMAN

Superwomen sit and think

I AM always fascinated by surveys that measure the emotional wellbeing of women much like me, so I was interested in the findings of a survey recently commissioned by Yoplait Le Rice.

Yes, they obviously have an agenda — to find out more about the hearts and minds of the women who are their target market. But the results still show something of a particular moment in our present society.

And are we happy? Well, according to the survey, despite living in an age in which we are constantly made to feel that we must look thinner, be healthier, feel more fulfilled and achieve not only great careers, but harmonious family lives, the good news seems to be “yes”.

In fact, a surprising 93 per cent of the 7000 women surveyed claimed to be satisfied, or, even better, “very” satisfied, with their lives.

It's not all perfect, though. The survey also found that, if given the chance to change something about the way they live in today's society, many would alter the amount of time that they have to spend on relationships, friendships, exercise, diet and themselves — as they juggle the demands of busy work/home lives.

For the survey's consulting psychologist, Meredith Fuller, the most surprising result was the “whopping 93 per cent of women ‘satisfied or very satisfied’ with their lives”.

“We know that women tend to become more satisfied as they grow older (particularly from age 50-plus), but I was struck by the positive assessments of the younger women,” Meredith said.

“I was delighted that women are getting the message about appreciating individual difference — 85 per cent were happy with how they looked.

“While it isn't surprising that many young women are enjoying living in the present (and let's face it, would we want 25-year-olds living on Vegemite sandwiches and sitting at home each night while they're socking it away for their distant 90s?) I was concerned that a massive 29 per cent of

women surveyed didn't have a clue how to start caring for their financial future. I was taken aback at their lack of knowledge in terms of how to access information or source help with money when the time came — especially given their internet skills!”

I must admit, the financial aspects of the findings were a little worrying. The 29 per cent of the women who were surveyed that Meredith told me about — the ones who admitted to not knowing where to begin to secure a stable financial future — must have a great many sleepless nights.

“With almost two-thirds of women feeling that juggling the likes of motherhood, work and relationships is leaving them with zero time to themselves, we need to be asking whether perhaps we are asking too much of women in today's society,” Meredith said.

“Women need to realise that it is impossible to be superwoman

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“The biggest challenge today is trying to find a true and sustainable life balance: motherhood, work, maintaining a relationship, caring for ageing parents — the list goes on!

“Women need to learn the art of self-affirming sloth rather than being addicted to perfection and accomplishment,” she said.

“We need to become a more reflective society, and begin to prize time spent thinking, daydreaming, and sitting.”

I am all for that! Now, if only I could figure out a way to do it!



Time out: Psychologist Meredith Fuller issues a warning for superwomen. Picture: AARON FRANCIS