

Our EUREKA moments!

These three women listened to their intuition and just look what happened...

'I made a bucket list for my milestone birthday'

For as long as I can recall, I've always carried around a little black book. I used it to write down ideas of things I wanted to do, whether it was training for a triathlon or travelling to exotic places. The thing is, I wasn't getting round to doing it all.

Then, in September 2012, two months after my 29th birthday, I was flipping through my book with my fiancé Tom when, seeing all the things I hadn't accomplished, it dawned on me – what was I waiting for? 'I'm going to write a bucket

list,' I told Tom, suddenly. 'I'm going to do 30 of these things before I turn 30.'

I thought he might think it was a bit ambitious, but he was so supportive. And so, I got planning.

The first thing was simple enough – learning to make macaroons. Working long hours in my finance job Monday to Friday, I found a day course for the following weekend. As I whisked eggs and sugar, I felt so pleased with myself. The batch turned out pretty tasty, too.

It all spiralled from there – the following week, I rode a quad bike, built a gingerbread house and even went clay

'Life's too short for regrets'



Seeing in her 30th in Vegas with her now husband Tom

pigeon shooting.

But other things required a bit more planning – like having lunch in Paris with Tom and seeing the Northern Lights in Iceland. Using my savings and booking cheap flights in advance made it all possible.

Every time I ticked something off, I felt a sense of achievement.

In May 2013, after lots of training, I even completed a

half-marathon and climbed Mount Kilimanjaro! It was an exhausting month, but it was all worth it and that July, I celebrated my 30th in Las Vegas with Tom.

I'd had so much fun that I didn't want to stop. So I decided I'd write a new bucket list every year. I'm currently working through the 33 things I want to do before I'm 33. Like



Climbing Mount Kilimanjaro in May 2013

the saying goes, life is too short to have regrets!

Caroline Wellingham, 32, London
◆ raisethebarlifecoaching.com



Running a half-marathon was a huge achievement

As part of her bucket list, Caroline's travelled the world



At her biggest, Denise weighed 22st 7lb

'Body shaming gave me the push I needed'

I've always had a sweet tooth and by the time I got married in 1997, aged 39, I was 14st. It might not sound huge, but for my 5ft 5in frame, I felt enormous!

My eating habits only got worse. I'd eat the same sized portions as my husband Simon – and at work as a career psychologist, I'd snack on chocolate biscuits all day.

By the time I turned 45, I was 20st. I tried diet after diet, but with no willpower, I'd give up after just a few weeks and soon I was 22st 7lb.

By 2009, I'd thrown out my weighing scales and all but given up. But then, that June, Simon and I went on holiday to Cuba...

As we were waiting for the plane to take off, a man at the end of our row called a flight attendant over. I heard him say he'd like to move seat. 'We're too squashed in this row,' he told her. 'Because of that large lady at the end.' As I realised he was talking about me, I felt my face flush red.

I wanted to confront him, but

I was too humiliated. I couldn't even bear to talk to Simon about it. For the first time, I'd seen myself through someone else's eyes – and it wasn't pretty.

I knew if I kept going on like I was, I'd be fat forever. I couldn't let that happen.

Two weeks later, back from holiday, I signed up with a personal trainer. I had sessions twice a week and that, combined with cutting out processed and fatty foods, helped me lose 8-10lb a month.

'I've had the last laugh'

As my cheekbones started to appear again and my waist became more defined, I felt incredible. And by December 2011, I finally reached my goal of 12st. Slipping into a size 12, I'd never been more proud of myself.

I've managed to maintain my weight,

Denise lost an amazing 10st 7lb by working out with a personal trainer and changing her diet



going dancing with Simon at least three times a week.

As much as that moment on the plane mortified me and a part of me wishes it had never happened, it gave me the push I needed to do something. And as mean as that man was about me, at least I've had the last laugh!

Denise Taylor, 58, Gloucestershire
◆ amazingpeople.co.uk

Turning Point

'New boots changed my life'

In my twenties, I was a textbook career woman. Working in PR, I travelled the country to meet clients and, aged just 26, I was able to start my own company. But while I relished the challenge, juggling a business with looking after my son Sam, then three, wasn't easy.

My time only became more stretched when Betty arrived four years later and then Delilah in 2007. I lost count of the amount of school assemblies I missed and in 2009, pregnant with my fourth child, Beau, I knew something had to give.

After discussing it with my husband James, we decided to dissolve the company. We'd be able to survive on his salary as a retail manager and I'd get to be there for the kids whenever they needed me.

It seemed a great solution and I loved my new role as a stay-at-home mum. That's why, when it came time for Beau to start school in 2013, I was bereft.

I felt like I didn't have any purpose and I realised I missed having a career. But out of the workplace for so long, I was sure I'd never be able to go back.

By January 2016, I felt at my lowest. But that month, I was out shopping near our home in Cornwall when I spotted a pair of black ankle boots in Ted Baker. At £60, I questioned whether I really needed them – but as I turned them over, I noticed an inscription on the soles. 'Cinderella is proof a new pair of shoes can change your life,' it read. Those words stirred something inside me – if I wanted to be happy again, I needed to stop

making excuses and actually do something. So I bought the boots and back home, I began thinking about what I could do. I realised there must be plenty of mums who shared that same fear of not being good enough. Maybe at the same time as helping myself, I could help them, too. From that moment, The Housewife Revolution – a coaching service to inspire other women to realise their potential – was born. I spent the next few weeks thinking about how I'd do it. Using my business experience, I'd offer my services as a coach for women wanting to start their own businesses or grow their ideas. Then in March I started my own site offering one-to-one coaching, as well as creating a Facebook group full of free tips and advice. I've already helped 400 housewives and James says he can see my spark is back. Best of all, I can still be there for the kids. In just a few months, my life's changed so much – and I owe it all to a pair of boots!



The inscription on Vanessa's boots inspired her to make a change

Vanessa Matthews, 39, Cornwall
◆ thehousewife.com

Best foot forward: Vanessa's helping other housewives

