

Stay gold, Ponyboy...



My fave part of my own coming-of-age tale? My childhood friends are still among my BFFs now.

Last month, I heard some news that could have a very bad effect on my workout regime, simply because I anticipate that it's going to start eating up a fair amount of my time: One of my favourite books, *Prep* by Curtis Sittenfeld, is to be made into a TV show that's said to become as addictive as *Gossip Girl* or *The OC*. And if it has the kind of profound effect that the book had on me, then, well, I'm in trouble. Now, I have to admit that I've always been quite partial to a good coming-of-age story—in my youth, I eagerly lapped up everything from JD Salinger's *The Catcher In The Rye* to Louise Rennison's *Angus, Thongs and Full-Frontal Snogging*—I know I'm not alone in this. After all, there's a reason why John Green's novels are so popular, and so many coming-of-age stories become some of the most touching films (you know the kind—the ones that bring out the warm and fuzzies, while making you feel overwhelmed with emotion and nostalgia as you contemplate the vast meaning of life, all set to an epic soundtrack). So why is it that these stories

are so compelling at every age, despite the fact that they tend to centre around teenage life? Perhaps it's because they focus on the protagonist's moral, emotional and psychological growth during that tender period where they move from youth to adulthood. It's a pivotal part of life. The personal growth we all experience during that time is what lays the groundwork for our adult lives thereafter—it's when we first discover what it feels like to find our own identity. Whether that's finding confidence, learning how to see the world, or experiencing life-changing

trauma (such as in Khaled Hosseini's *The Kite Runner*), it's a language we can all understand. We can all relate to that awkward first kiss or crush, and how it felt when you tried, well, pretty much anything for the first time, be it travel, coming upon a new genre of music, or challenging someone's opinions or expectations of you. There is a certain level of egocentricity here too—it's a reminder that everyone out there is the same, really, and that we're all just trying to find our way through this journey of life. These stories remind us of a time when it was ok to know we don't have it all figured out yet, and we had the freedom to try and make sense of the world we live in each day. They help us take a step back from the daily grind of a busy adult life, and remember what it feels like to just look at yourself through that lens, finding answers to who we are and what we want—which is something we need to keep reassessing throughout our lives, not just when we're teenagers. This month, I turn 32 years old as I celebrate my birthday on the 16th. It's odd when I think about what, as a teenager, I thought 32 was meant to look like. It certainly wasn't what my life is now, I can tell you that. But who says that's a bad thing? Part of what makes life so exciting is that you never know what's just around the corner. Reflecting on the earlier chapters of our never-ending process of self-discovery can be a great reminder that the uncertainty of the future is as thrilling as it is frightening, and that it can make us feel more alive. As one of my wiser friends puts it, sometimes you have to look back to move forward. Who cares if you don't have it all figured out yet? As long as you're able to maintain a healthy body and mind, and retain a playful curiosity for discovering the world around you, then you're growing, and I'd say you're golden. I hope you have a great month, and we'll see you in June!

Yi-Hwa

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TIME FOR A CHANGE

IF YOU HAVE...

15 SECONDS

Chug down a gulp or two of water. Aside from all of the other health benefits of staying well-hydrated, skincare expert Deborah Mitchell says it could help keep your pores tighter too! "Cover Your Bases," p.21

10 MINUTES

Tack this mini yoga routine on to the end of your next workout: The stretch it'll allow you will take your body and exercise to the next level. "Namastay A While", p.37

15 MINUTES

This simple but effective routine won't just leave you looking ready for summer with all of its backless styles, but it'll also help with the rest of your workouts too. "Get Back At It!" p.49

30 MINUTES

Turn your workout gear inside out and then hang it up to air out a bit before chucking it in the wash: It'll help it stay more fresh (i.e. not reek) in the long run. "Discuss: Fitness," p.15

60 MINUTES

Think chicken is boring? Try one of these recipes and you'll eat your words—and some tasty bird as well. Bonus: Whip these up and you'll be set with meal prep too. "Spring Chicken," p.57

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