

Six Months to Get a Life

(Extract two)

Sunday 4th May

In my pursuit of my ongoing quest to get a life I browsed through the large selection of self-help books on the shelves of my local bookshop after dropping Sean off at his mum's. They all sounded a load of old bollocks to me. I reckon they should do an experiment. The next time two identical twins are born, make one read one self-help book a month for the whole of his life and don't let the other read any. Then, on their 60th birthday, ask them who has had the best life. I bet it would be the one who didn't spend half his life reading that self-righteous claptrap.

When I was in the bookshop I saw our marriage guidance counsellor browsing in the 'travel' section.

'Thinking of going somewhere?' I asked her.

'I am just looking really,' she replied, struggling to find me in her memory bank.

I introduced myself and a light went on in her eyes as she remembered me. She tried to scarper.

'Shouldn't you be in the 'health and fitness' section?' I hollered at her back as she hurried out of the shop. She is the largest woman I have ever met. I got some dirty looks from my fellow shoppers but that bit of cruelty at my counsellor's expense made me feel good.

As well as her being rather large, there are a couple of other things you should know about our marriage guidance counsellor. She has got a moustache that rivals Daley Thompson's and Merv Hughes's and, probably not unconnected, she has never been married. I found it hard to take advice on saving my marriage from a person who has no actual experience of the concept.

I am surprised she couldn't place me straight away today. The last time we met was pretty memorable.

In our first session we had covered things like how much time my then wife and I spent talking to each other (none), our relationships with our parents (fine), our relationships with each other's parents (hers with mine fine, mine with hers anything but fine), our hobbies (fine until she suggested my wife went with me) and our approach to parenthood (not bad). In the second – and as it turned out, last – session, we talked about our sex life.

'When was the last time you made love?'

'Last week,' I replied.

'I can't remember,' my wife said.

'Do you engage in foreplay before sex?'

'Yes,' from me.

'No,' from my ex. Are we talking about the same sex?'

'Do you reach climax in your love-making?'

A 'Yes' from me.

A 'No' from my ex.

'Is your sex loving and sensual or a routine you go through because you think you should?' our relationship 'expert' asked.

My wife went for 'routine'. I went for the therapist. 'What's the point of dissecting our sex life like this? Isn't it bloody obvious we hardly ever shag? We wouldn't have come to see you if we did it every night, would we? Do you get off on watching other people talk about their sex lives? I bet you've never even had sex, have you? Have you ever been touched? Have you ever had an orgasm? Go on, tell us. We've got a right to know who we're working with here.'

At which point I was asked to leave. To my ex's credit, she laughed and left with me. We actually had pretty good sex that night too, with foreplay and orgasms and everything.