



The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge join forces with Prince Harry to launch their Heads Together mental health campaign in 2016



Prince William joins Julia (above) for the 25th anniversary of Child Bereavement UK last June – she is one of Prince George's godmothers – and (below) Julia at Wimbledon with the Princess of Wales in 1984



DIANA'S CLOSE CONFIDANTE JULIA SAMUEL ON ROYAL ROLE MODELS AND COPING WITH CHANGE

She shared a passion for caring with her close friend Diana, Princess of Wales that has continued through her relationship with Diana's sons, the Dukes of Cambridge and Sussex.

Now psychotherapist Julia Samuel – a godmother to Prince George – has praised Princes William and Harry together with the Duchess of Cambridge for their staunch support for mental health issues and the NHS during the coronavirus crisis, telling HELLO! how they are such important role models.

"In times like these we all look to people we know – and those we don't – for hope. It's a way of making us feel safe," she says.

"Their Heads Together charity has been incredibly powerful and effective. It's moved the dial on the perception of mental health.

"On the anniversary of Diana's death, William and Harry talked about her loss, how it made them feel. This made them role models for many children and young people, and by encouraging men to talk like that, has made everyone recognise that our mental health is as important as our physical health, more so now than ever."

Julia, the founder patron of the charity Child Bereavement UK, has drawn on her more than 30 years of experience in the psychology of grief and change for her latest book, *This*

Too Small Pass, which she hopes will help navigate the seismic change brought into our lives by the Covid-19 pandemic, too.

"I wrote it because my clients had a problem adapting to change," she says. "Change we don't choose is a difficult, messy process and it's happening all over the globe now."

"When lockdown came, some of us reacted by getting busy, shutting down or going into a panic. We need to find ways of supporting ourselves in that crisis rather than resisting it."

"My main message is: don't resist change; you have to adapt to it. Those who adjust have more joy and more success in life."

TIPS TO GET THROUGH

As well as featuring case studies from her therapy room, *This Too Shall Pass* includes a chapter on Julia's Eight Pillars of Strength – tips on relationships, mental and physical health and ways to manage emotions, aimed at easing us through such uncharted territory.

She adds that it's important that people allow themselves to feel upset over having to postpone weddings, holidays and family celebrations.

"We need to practise self-compassion. Having your dreams dashed – as well as all the expense and effort – is an enormous loss. Your sadness is valid," she says.

"But we also need to have a flame



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'My main message is don't resist change; you have to adapt to it'

of hope, which is the opposite of despair. Pencil in plans and dreams for the future. And at the end of each day, write down three things you're grateful for.

"I think at the end of this we'll learn good and bad things about ourselves and discover what really matters to us," she adds. "Perhaps we'll find that we don't need as much as we thought we did, or want to be as frantically busy. Our relationships with our partners and children could become even closer because we've shared this time together getting through it."

A HOUSE FULL OF LOVE
Life in lockdown for Julia is with her husband Michael, one of their three daughters – they also have a grown-up son – and three of their seven grandchildren at the family's home in Somerset.

She and Michael celebrated their 40th anniversary before the virus imposed global isolation, with a renewal of their wedding vows.

"It felt like a wonderful blessing," she says. "We decided that as we get older, we need to double down on being kind to one another."

"At the end of the day, we do an online yoga session together, then have a bath and supper."

She is also delighted to be able to spend this time with some of the younger members of the family.

"We have lunch together every day and they enjoy running around in the garden," she says. "I miss my other children and grandchildren, though, and look forward to giving them all a hug. My seventh grandchild was born two weeks ago and I can't wait to hold him for the first time."

INTERVIEW:
SALLY MORGAN

This Too Shall Pass: Stories of Change, Crisis and Hopeful Beginnings is out now, published by Penguin, priced £14.99.

Julia Samuel
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