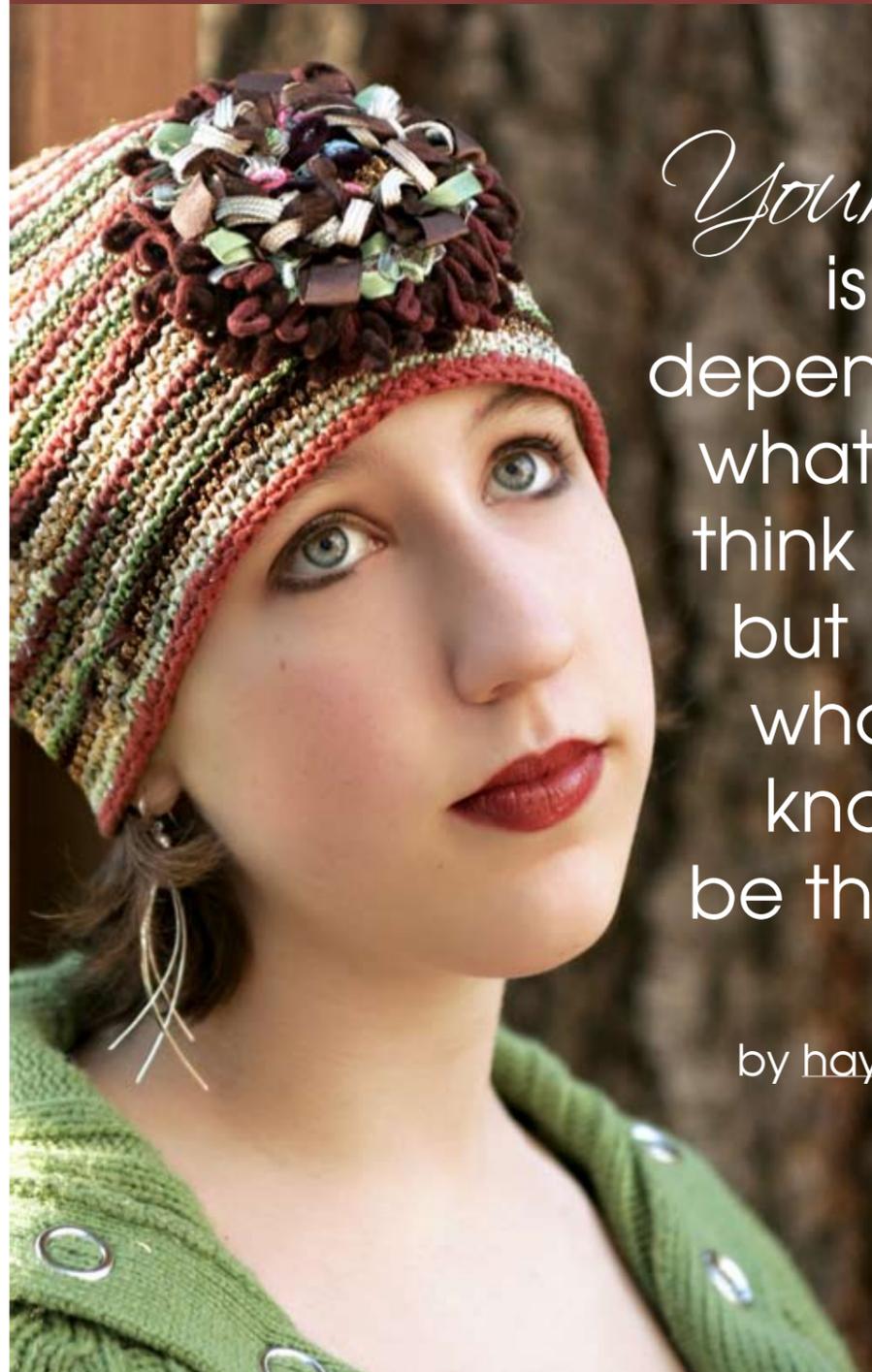


Power thought  
for your day ...

Your worth  
is not  
dependent on  
what others  
think of you,  
but rather  
what you  
know to  
be the truth.

by [hayley solich](#)



Confessions  
of a  
\$PENDAHOLIC



by [jill chivers](#)

“*Imagine...* You're standing at the bottom of a large mountain... the day is blustery and a little chill... you look up and see in front of you a large mass of earth and rocks and scrubby bushes... you can't remember getting here, but it's irrefutable – you're here... the mountain is real. You're at the bottom... and there's only one way forward.”

## The Problem

That was me in early December 2009. The mountain I found myself in front of was a shopping problem. Well, more accurately, an overshopping problem. It had dawned on me slowly – I was buying too much. I was wearing too little. I had racks and racks of stuff I didn't need, or even want. How did it get there? How did I get here?

Recognising you have a problem that needs fixing is a painful process for many people. It was for me. I wanted to pretend I didn't have a problem, and I succeeded in doing that for a long time. Months. Over a year. But the whispering – you have a problem with shopping! – grew louder, and louder. Until it became a shout and I couldn't ignore it any longer.

We've become so familiar with hearing about other people's compulsions and addictions, haven't we? Reality shows like *Celebrity Rehab* and *Intervention* have made entertainment out of real problems affecting real people.



Recognising you have a compulsion for something isn't easy. For me it was very painful. I minimised the problem – surely it's not that bad! It's just a few shoes for goodness sake! – through to justification – well, I have the money to cover it and we're not in credit card purgatory – how bad can it really be? And finally landed at acknowledgement – well, it's real, it's here, I can't ignore it anymore – my shopping is spiralling out of control. And blessedly, shortly after that came action – what can I do about it?

## The Action

The first important step is acknowledgement. You can't change something you don't recognise for what it is. In late December 2009, I looked my compulsion to overshop squarely in the eyes, and saw it for what it was: a problem that was causing me harm. Not life threatening harm, but life-depriving harm. I couldn't have moved anywhere without that first step of acknowledgement.

But like climbing a mountain, you need to take the next step. Then the

next. That's the difference between successful people and others – they know the importance of perseverance, and continuing on. Of taking the next step and not stopping until there are no more steps to take.

A key moment for me was being open to the insight that came, seemingly unbidden, into my awareness. The thought was fully formed when I became aware of it: you need to stop shopping for a year. I wasn't aware of consciously creating that thought – it simply appeared. And I had the



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openness and wisdom to see it, and to take it seriously. Wisdom is like that – so often we have the answers within us, if we would only stop, pause, and listen.

That thought – you need to take a year off from shopping – was with me for about an hour before I acted on it. I talked to my husband, who endorsed the plan immediately. I researched free blog platforms and started one that afternoon – I knew I would need some form of recording mechanism to allow me to express myself, and to receive feedback.

I sent out my first blog posting, querulously proposing this extreme

personal challenge, to a group of friends. All of them responded within hours – “do it”, they said. The best ones said “you can do it”.

And so I started. On December 15, 2009, I started my year without clothes shopping. Fear was my constant companion for many months. Fear of failure. Fear of other people's judgement, criticism and ridicule. Fear of something I couldn't even describe – of missing out on something, of finding a flaw so large in my character that I would never recover from it or be able

to address it.

I had many ups and downs that year. I had tears and frustration and recrimination. I had moments when I wondered why are you doing this stupid challenge? What are you trying to prove? At times, I was listless and directionless and dispirited.

And I also experienced great grace. Flashes of insight so clear and bold that they took my breath away. Feelings of utter presence and completeness that confirmed I was on the right path. Connections with others so profound and meaningful that I knew there was richness and purpose to my journey.

“It was truly a profound and life changing journey. I learned much about myself, my shopping, my relationships, my talents and my failings.”

## The Result

It was truly a profound and life changing journey. I learned much about myself, my shopping, my relationships, my talents and my failings.

And because of all that the journey revealed to me, a new idea started to form. What if I could help others equally afflicted with a compulsion to overshop? What if I could turn my time and talents into developing a program of equal length and richness? What if I could hold the light for others walking this same path behind me?

So I started to design a 12 month program. 12 themes quickly emerged. The need for faculty – for people whose subject matter expertise was greater than mine – became quickly apparent, and those connections grew and became firm. Within months, we had a program designed, a small but growing expert faculty, and an emerging list of women who wanted to join the program.

In October 2010, we opened the virtual doors to My Year Without

Clothes Shopping and by the end of that year, women from all over the world were enrolling. By this time, I had also appeared in over 20 media stories in Australia, New Zealand and the United States, talking about my own journey, and the My Year Without Clothes Shopping program.

Over a year on, and two years “clean” with my own overshopping problem, much has changed. I no longer feel a compulsion to shop and my life is so full and varied, I can’t imagine wanting to



spend a day at the mall.

My Year Without Clothes Shopping continues to attract members from around the globe, and those who have finished

the journey report its transformational impact on their lives, their wallets, their wardrobes and their self-esteem.

I am asked to share my story regularly with entrepreneurs and women’s networks. I am invited to work with others frequently, to write articles, create videos, deliver teleseminars and workshops.

And I have appeared in over 40 media stories in Australia, New Zealand, the United States and Europe. I now help others to gain media mastery.

And none of this would have been possible without that first step. That first step of acknowledgement. Of stepping into the fear, rather than away from it.

And then taking the next step.

Then the next.

May your journey be as rich and life changing as mine is. It will be different to mine – you must follow your own path. But know that the rewards are waiting for you, as sure as the sun will rise in the morning. ♥GPM



## How to Take Action Now if You Have a Problem:

**Name it.** Acknowledge you have the problem and take responsibility for it.

**Make peace with yourself.** Forgive yourself for your weakness.

**Research what help you can get** for that problem because there are bound to be others who have been where you are and gone through what you are going through and have some solutions for you

**Decide** that you are going to change

**Garner support** from friends and family

**Write your vision down** so it becomes visual

**Decide what your reward will be** for achieving your goal

**Adopt the attitude** that there is ‘No try. Just do or do not.’ and like the Nike attitude says, “Just do it.”

**Never give up.** If you fall off the wagon, just get up and dust yourself off and chalk it up to experience and keep going. Persistence will eventually turn your situation around.