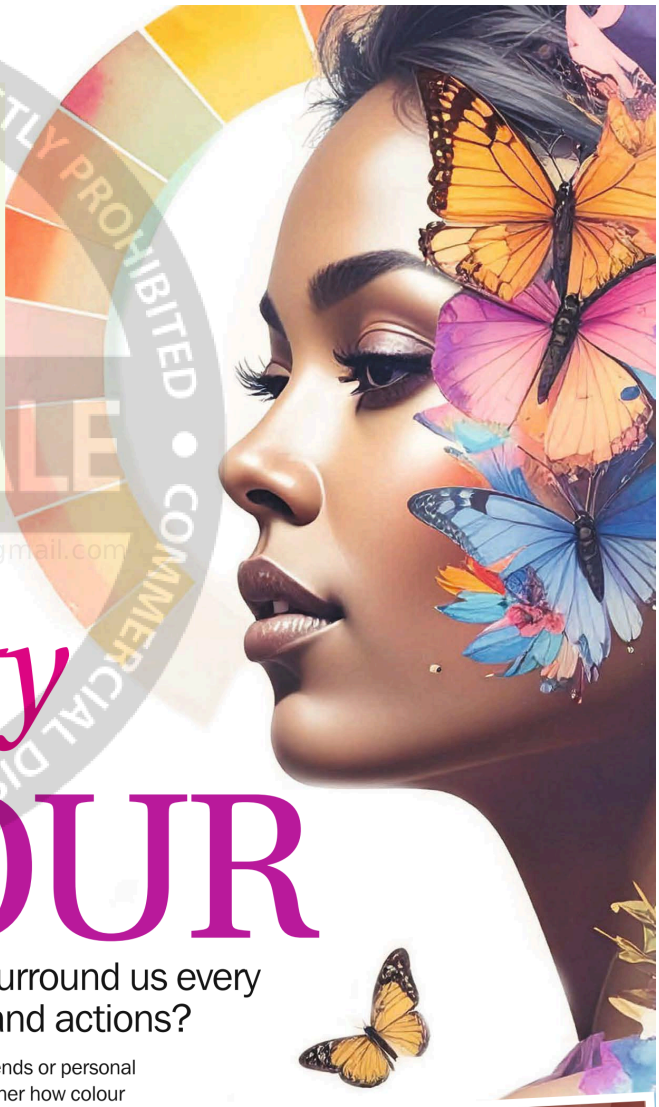
- Color—psychological aspects



Wear colours that support how you want to feel

Choose your clothing colours based on the emotional state you want to encourage. For example, if you want to feel more confident during a big presentation, wear a colour that gives you inner strength (rather than one that simply grabs attention).



The Psychology OF COLOUR

How do the colours that surround us every day affect our mood and actions?



Colour psychologist Karen Haller

Whether it's red as the colour of love, yellow the colour of optimism or black the colour of mourning, we tend to associate colours with certain meanings. But there is much more to what we associate with colour than we perhaps realise.

In fact, the psychology of colour is an entire field of study, which investigates how different colours affect our mood and behaviour.

"It's not about trends or personal preferences, but rather how colour influences us at a deeper emotional and psychological level," explains colour psychologist Karen Haller.

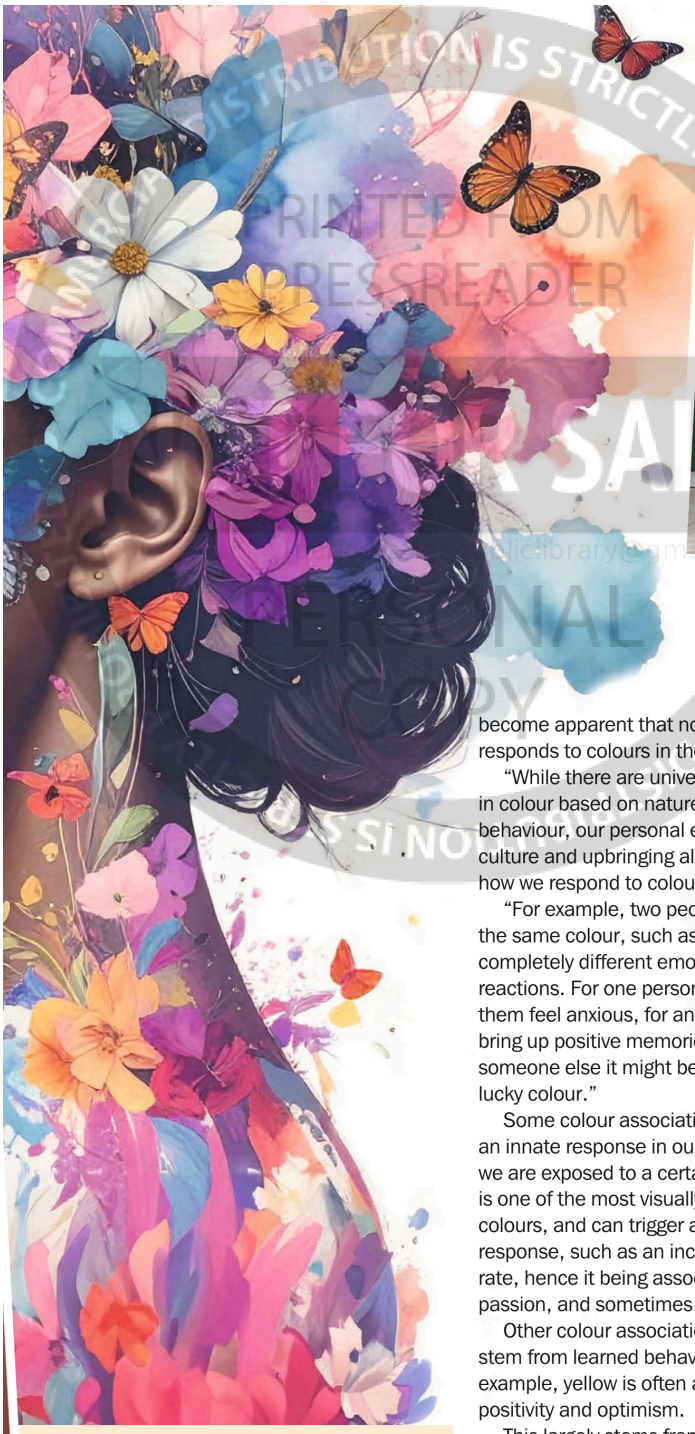
"We're surrounded by colour all the time, in our homes, wardrobes, workplaces and branding and it's quietly impacting us, whether we're aware of it or not."

Karen's work revolves around helping people to understand the connotations of different colours, and how they can utilise this to benefit their businesses, products, designs and personal styles.

"When used with intention, colour can support us emotionally, help us feel more at ease, boost our confidence or create a sense of energy and focus. And when it is used without awareness, it can have the opposite effect and cause stress, discomfort or disconnect," Karen says.

When Karen started her working life, there was no such thing as colour psychologists. But knowledge around the topic is now developing, and it has







Let your personality guide your colour choices

Whether it's a favourite cushion or a jumper you always feel 'yourself' in, notice the colours that feel most like you. When your home and wardrobe reflect your authentic self, you're more likely to feel comfortable, aligned and uplifted.

become apparent that not everyone responds to colours in the same way.

"While there are universal meanings in colour based on nature and human behaviour, our personal experiences, culture and upbringing all play a role in how we respond to colour," Karen says.

"For example, two people might see the same colour, such as red, and have completely different emotional reactions. For one person it might make them feel anxious, for another it could bring up positive memories, and for someone else it might be their culture's lucky colour."

Some colour associations stem from an innate response in our brains when we are exposed to a certain colour. Red is one of the most visually stimulating colours, and can trigger a physical response, such as an increase in heart rate, hence it being associated with love, passion, and sometimes anger.

Other colour associations however stem from learned behaviour. For example, yellow is often associated with positivity and optimism.

This largely stems from the fact that we have come to associate yellow with sunlight, and therefore warmth and energy.

So, how can we apply colour psychology to benefit our lives?

"One of the simplest ways to use colour in your daily life is to surround yourself with colours that support how you want to feel. If you need more calm, bring in soft colours. If you want to feel more motivated or energised as a pick-me-up, choose colours that are brighter and more stimulating," Karen says.

"It does not have to mean painting all your walls. This is not about colour drenching, and you don't need to overdo it. It could be a cushion, a notebook or the clothes you choose to wear that day. Small touches of the right colours can make a big difference."

Karen sees the very real impact of colour on people every day through her work."I often help clients create colour palettes for their homes, wardrobes or workspaces that align with their personality and how they want to live. The shift it brings is often immediate and genuinely life-enhancing," she says.

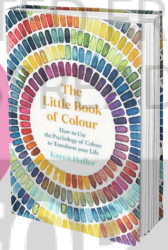
So, before picking out your outfit for the day or painting your living room, take some time to consider how the colours make you feel. This will impact you more than you know.

Create calming, restful spaces with colour at home

Use softer colours in rooms where you want to unwind, like the bedroom or bathroom. These colours can help create a sense of calm and psychological rest. It's not about following trends, but choosing colours that help you feel at ease and supported in that space.



The Little Book of Colour, Karen Haller (Penguin Life, £14.99)



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