

**TAKE
10**



SUBJECT

Wendyl Nissen

**JULIA BLOORE CHATS
WITH THIS PASSIONATE
DOMESTIC GODDESS ...**

1 Who does your business card say you are ... and who are you really?

WENDYL: My business card says that I'm a writer and a business owner. I run *Wendyl's Green Goddess*, and we make natural cleaners. But who am I really? I'm a grandmother, mother and wife.

2 What's your favourite childhood memory?

WENDYL: Fishing with my dad in his old 12-foot clinker dinghy. We'd take the little boat out into the Hauraki, off Birkenhead, on a Sunday morning. I loved the serenity of the ocean and the quietness. My dad's a quiet person, so we'd just sit there, listening to the lapping of the water on the bottom of the boat. That's still my happiest place – on the water.

3 Three most important things to you?

WENDYL: My primary concern is that my family is happy – and when they're all happy at the same time, it's a very good day! Secondly, my relationship with my husband. I regard that as being very special – and we put a lot of work into not letting it go stale and keeping it really healthy. The third thing is that my place on this earth doesn't leave too big a footprint. I'm really conscious of treading carefully in a world that's in danger of being overused.

4 You've recently changed the way you're approaching life – especially in terms of work and family. Can you explain that a little?

WENDYL: As a daughter of the feminist revolution, we were told that we could do anything – so we did *everything*. I don't for one minute think that this fabulous freedom shouldn't have been there; it was great growing up with the opportunity to do what I wanted to do. But, in my case, there was an over-enthusiasm ... and I became very exhausted, quite unfulfilled and a bit of a man! I found that I needed to get back to some more base values that I really enjoyed, like nurturing my family and spending time with them. I realised that being in the corporate office block earning a big salary is something that's not necessarily valuable to me anymore. My approach is not anti-feminist ... I was a working mum for 25 years. But it seemed like the women who were working felt guilty and the women who stayed at home felt guilty. I think it's about time we stood up and said, actually, I'm just going to do what I want to do.

5 What would you like to be remembered for?

WENDYL: Oh that's a deep one! I guess I'd like to be remembered as someone who lived my life well. I'd be devastated if I got to my deathbed and I hadn't achieved anything. It's very important to me that I make the most of every day and end each day feeling like I've done something worthwhile.

6 Highlight of your career?

WENDYL: Because I'm a journalist, my highlight has always been getting the stories that no-one else could get. And the peak of my career was

scoring the Aaron and Lorraine Cohen story. I'd worked on it for three years, and when they got released from jail I got the story ahead of everyone else!

7 The best birthday present you've ever received?

WENDYL: Last year was my 50th birthday, and my husband and I spent four weeks on a cruise ship. That was bliss for me! To this day if I'm stressed out or I can't sleep, I just have to go back there in my mind and look at those



Norwegian fjords and fantastic oceans. We're still paying for it! But that was my best birthday gift ever.

8 Book you find yourself recommending the most?

WENDYL: I'm a really big reader, so I'll have to name a few. If you're looking for fiction, *Gone Girl* by Gillian Flynn. For non-fiction, my favourite would be Michael Pollan's *Food Rules: An Eater's Manual*. If you really need a good laugh then David Sedaris will give it to you – his book *Let's Explore Diabetes with Owls* is hilarious.

9 What do you do to relax?

WENDYL: I haven't been good at relaxing in the past. But in the last few years I've started meditation. I don't do it every day, just when I need it. Exercise helps, so I head to the gym three times a week. I also swim as often as I can.

10 One thing you've learnt about life so far that you'd love to pass on.

WENDYL: We have five children. And one of the things that I've always told them, is to make sure they do what they want to do in life – not what others expect them to do. I see it so often when parents want their kids to be doctors or lawyers and all the kid wants to do is be an artist. If you have to work hard, and get up at 5am, it's so much better if you enjoy what you're getting up for. If you don't, it causes a lot of stress. I just love writing, so getting up and working hard is a joy. ❁