



THE IMAGE OF *your mother*

Are the beauty products and practices we favour less individual than we realise? We ask four women to recount the beauty lessons they've inherited from their mothers. How much do the beauty rituals we witnessed as children affect the resemblance between us and our mothers? While learned behaviour may be the reason you're quick-tempered or bake a fabulous Victoria sponge, it may also be the reason why you colour your hair a certain shade or find yourself drawn to specific scents. As well as physical attributes, personality traits and talents, do we also inherit a part of our beauty blueprint from our mothers? **By Bella Binns**



“We have a saying in ayurveda that you only put onto the body what you'd be willing to put inside”

SUNITA PASSI, 39, is the founder of Tri-Dosha Ayurvedic Skincare

Growing up in the Midlands in the 1970s, it was hard to reconcile my olive skin and dark, curly hair with my blonde, blue-eyed classmates, but my mother, Kamlesh, always encouraged me to focus on inner beauty. At an early age she taught me about Abhyanga, the ayurvedic practice of self-massage. She said it was *snehana* which, literally translated, means 'loving your own body'. Starting at my feet, she taught me to massage my skin in firm strokes towards my heart. We have a saying in ayurveda that you only put onto the body what you'd be willing to put inside. My mother favoured sesame oil because it's tri-doshic (suitable for everybody type) and its rejuvenating qualities are revered in India, where my parents lived before I was born. It's something that I still do daily to condition my skin and joints.

“My mum Beatrice had an ongoing preoccupation with me cleaning my teeth”

JESSICA THOMPSON, 25, is an author and journalist

The one thing that really stands out from my childhood is Beatrice, my mum's, ongoing preoccupation with me cleaning my teeth. It was always the most important part of the morning and bedtime routine. There's even a home movie where she follows me into the bathroom with the camera to check I'm using my yellow cartoon toothbrush correctly.

For the majority of my childhood, we lived in a maisonette in Kent. Here, for some reason, I ended up with a sink in my bedroom, which cemented Mum's campaign for oral hygiene and made me feel supremely grown-up. Unluckily, for someone who's fastidious about their teeth, I needed lots of dental work as a child to correct a painfully impacted tooth. Mum was always very supportive during this time. Now I have beautiful teeth, which I suppose I owe in part to her diligence, though the small gap between my teeth that I inherited from her has now disappeared almost entirely.

