

'My motto? Follow your dreams'

Sixties icon Twiggy on career highs, the joys of grannyhood and the secret to her happy marriage

Down-to-earth Twiggy has worked in showbiz for more than 50 years, but the former model, who started life as plain Lesley Hornby, isn't stopping.

The star, who lives in London's Kensington with actor husband Leigh Lawson, recently appeared alongside fellow Marks & Spencer ambassadors Rosie Huntington-Whiteley, David Gandy and Oliver

Cheshire, modelling a slogan T-shirt for Fashion Targets Breast Cancer. She's also added new designs to her Specsavers collection and is recording a new album, too.

It's your 30th wedding anniversary in September. What's the secret to a long marriage?

God only knows – we must have done something right as here we are. I think timing's important. Leigh and I were very lucky to meet – at a friend's dinner party. I was in my mid-30s, he was in his early 40s and we'd each been through a failed marriage. We instantly hit it off, but took it very gently at the start – he

had a son [Jason] and I had a daughter [Carly]. It's all very well falling in love, but you've got to make sure the children are OK as well. We don't know how we'll celebrate yet.

How does it feel to be a grandmother-of-three?

It's the best. We've been blessed. My stepson has a little boy and girl, and my daughter had Joni three years ago. She's hysterical, as all three-year-olds are; she comes out with some classics. I babysit whenever I can. We've always been a close-knit family – Carly's 20 minutes down the road, but Joni has brought us even closer together and we see each other a few times a week. Joni calls me Mimi, not grandma. I love it. I certainly don't feel like a grandma – it sounds so pompous.

You're now 68. How do you feel about ageing?

I don't understand people getting depressed about it. It's a fact of life. I made the decision to celebrate every birthday. I suppose I am pretty lucky with my genes, but I also believe that you are what you eat. I love to cook and buy organic when I can. I think healthy eating, lots of sleep and having fun is a good formula for looking and feeling great.



The model celebrates 30 years of marriage this year

'I wanted to design dresses'

If she'd not been scouted as a model, Twiggy would have loved to become a dress designer. Her mum, Nell, used to make her clothes and taught her to sew at a young age.

'I was a mod, very much into fashion,' she says. 'Then fate intervened! I still sew and knit things like cardigans – all the usual baby stuff – for my grandchildren. I'm also asked to do alterations.'



Mum Nell taught her how to sew

'My daughter loves vintage clothes and recently bought a lovely 50s dress. I was on good mother duty and spent the day replacing the zip and making adjustments. I find the whole process incredibly relaxing.'

Our Twiggy is clearly a woman of many talents!

You juggle so many balls. How do you do it?

I'm not sure. Like my mum, I've always been a worrier, but I tend to be glass half-full and always look on the bright side of life. My favourite motto is 'follow your dreams'. I've met many middle-aged people who regret not trying something they wanted to do when they were younger. Just go for it.

What are you proud of?

I never thought in a million years that I'd go on Broadway and sing and dance in front of 2,000 people every night for two years. But, in 1983, I was cast in the hit musical *My One And Only*. It was a dream of mine but also a fear, and it ended up being a smash-hit. I was nominated for a [US theatre] Tony Award. It was magical. I proved to myself that I could do something I thought I couldn't.

What has been your career highlight so far?

I've been very lucky to have done so many different things, but you can't get much better than flying, aged 17, to New York to work with Richard Avedon, one of the greatest fashion photographers of his era, for *US Vogue*. I was a

skinny little kid with a very different look who did all her own make-up. Someone saw me, photographed me and it kind of snowballed. I went from schoolgirl to working with him in a year.

Sir David Attenborough is a national treasure, like you. Did you see *Blue Planet*?

Yes, he's the most extraordinary man, so loved and respected. It's brilliant that he makes us all aware of how bad plastics are – now people are doing something about it. Coffee cups, for instance – my husband said the other day he couldn't remember people walking down the street in the old days with a cup of tea or coffee – it's become a fad.

Are you thinking of retiring?

No! But the nice thing is that I don't live a 9 to 5 existence, and adore the work I do. I get offered lots of things and feel lucky to be able to pick and choose. I'm currently putting together another album – I've done six. This one has period songs and folksy ballads. I love singing, everyone should do it.

Twiggy for Aurora eyewear collection, exclusive to Specsavers

'I'm lucky with my genes, but healthy eating, lots of sleep and having fun is a formula for feeling great'



Leigh and Twiggy hit it off 'instantly'



With first hubby Michael Witney and week-old Carly