



Marie's spirituality has helped her come to terms with difficult times. "I believe my mum is looking after me," she says. "After so many problems, there are a lot of good things happening to me."

TOP AND SKIRT: JASPER CONRAN. EARRINGS: STEPHEN WEBSTER

'I would do anything to avoid Botox. I have nothing against plastic surgery, but if I can prevent it, I will'

go to the gym, addicted to that endorphin high. I even made a fitness video, but when I look back at it, I'm shocked – my muscles look like a wrestler's."

Do you think ageism exists for women your age who are in the public eye?

"Of course. The brains behind products, ideas, films and music belong to people in their twenties and thirties. To them, women in their forties and fifties are their grannies or mothers."

The anniversary of your mother's death is looming. How are you coping?

"It's a terrible thing to admit, but I am dealing with it by not dealing with it. Having said that, I am going to consult a bereavement counsellor. Losing your mum is a big one. I recognise there are different stages of grieving and I'd rather go through that with a qualified stranger than a friend. The first death I had to deal with was my sister Suzon's."

What happened?

"She died 30 years ago, at the age of 23. She fell off a cliff on an island near Jamaica. She was riding her bicycle and just slipped. Her death changed my outlook on life forever. I never used to confront people, such as my ex-husband Bailey – I felt I couldn't speak out. But after Suzon died, I realised how short life can be and became a stronger person."

Losing both your sister and your mum must have been devastating...

"Yes, but in one way it's a comfort to me that Mum and Su are in the same place together."

Are you a spiritual person?

"Oh yes. I truly do believe in the spirit and that life continues. I believe in reincarnation and the basic principles of Buddhism. I believe my mum's looking after me."

Are you close to your father?

"Yes. In fact, he rang up a few nights ago to tell me he was going on a date! He's in his eighties and I was so shocked but also pleased. He's lonely, and if he misses female company, why shouldn't he have a date? Mum wouldn't mind, I'm sure."

Are you friends with David Bailey?

"I have a great relationship with him and his wife Catherine. It hasn't always been that way – we used to have such an up and

down relationship when we were married. Having said that, I was in love with him and we had wonderful times together."

Do you have a man in your life now?

"No. I was seeing someone but it's over now. I'm definitely not interested in getting married again and I've never wanted children. I don't want to be with a man who has them, either. I live a very hedonistic lifestyle compared to most women my age, because I can."

What kind of man attracts you?

"Physically large and with an alpha-male personality. When they tower over me, it makes me feel more feminine. Because I'm such a strong person, they need to be strong too. My ex-boyfriend, Marco Pierre White, is a prime example of the kind of man I like. We're still great friends."

Do younger men ask you out?

"All the time, but I've never been asked out by a man my own age. They're either married or in a relationship, and if they're not, they want a woman in her 20s. I don't date men younger than me by more than seven years. Ten would terrify me – beyond that would be insane!"

Are you in touch with Jerry Hall?

"Not as much as we used to be. When she split up with Mick, she had four children. I don't know anything about nappies or how to hold children. She needed to find and seek out women in the same position."

"Jerry has a sweet nature and used to say that her perfect dream was for us to have our babies together. But that wasn't for me – I'm not maternal and don't feel comfortable around children. I accidentally got pregnant when I was 17 but had an abortion. Not one of my three siblings had children. My parents were always telling us to explore and travel and leave having children till as late as possible." **H**

INTERVIEW: SALLY MORGAN
PHOTOS: MIKE OWEN

HAIR & MAKE-UP: LAURENCE CLOSE AT MODELS 1
USING PAUL MITCHELL AND CHRISTIAN DIOR
HAIR COLOURIST: KATHI AT RICHARD WARD

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With ex-husband David Bailey (below left) and with her late mother Linda (below); shocking London shoppers last week as part of a window display in Selfridges (right)

