**Tapescript**

**Part 1:**

INTERVIEWER: My next guest is Brigid McConville, a journalist who decided to get herself a life coach. Brigid, what made you do it and what is a life coach?

BRIGID: Well, all was not entirely well with my life. Nothing drastic, I just felt 'stuck' and in need of change, both on the work front - too much to do, too little time - and at home ditto. I **wasn't miserable enough for therapy or counselling. I simply wanted to get a little more from life**. Until recently, the options for someone in my situation would have been extremely limited. Now, however, legions of life coaches are out there, ready and waiting to come to the aid of the frustrated and down-at-heart. For about £40 a session, your personal coach will telephone you once a week, and spend half an hour talking to you in an effort to help you sort your life

out.

INTERVIEWER: But isn't this just another self-improvement fad? Like all the self-help books and tapes?

BRIGID: Well, I was a bit dubious myself, but I decided to try it. I booked a course with Fiona Harrold, a leading British coach. She identified my anxieties almost immediately. Within half an hour of our first conversation, I found myself agreeing that the first thing I had to tackle was my deeply ambivalent relationship with money. Yes, of course it was rooted in childhood - but what could we actually do about it? Fiona is a passionate advocate of self-belief and with her characteristic verve, she told me I had to carve out a whole new way of thinking about myself**. I must see myself as 'a magnet for money', she said. And she told me: 'Consider yourself someone to whom cash flows effortlessly**. Why shouldn't you have an easy life, an abundance of pleasure, leisure and luxury - and all without feeling any guilt?'

INTERVIEWER: How did you react to that?

BRIGID: Well, it seemed such a preposterous idea that I laughed out loud down the telephone. But, undeterred by my scepticism, Fiona told me to suspend my disbelief, and gave me a clutch of positive affirmations with which to brainwash myself into readiness for riches. She told me to repeat the following words whenever possible: 'I, Brigid, am now ready to have the ideal life that I deserve.' **Doing this, I found, cheered me up no end.**

INTERVIEWER: What else did she tell you?

BRIGID: Well, subsequent sessions were more practical. First came the mandatory de-cluttering - she told me to throw out as much unnecessary jumble and rubbish as possible, clearing space for all the goodies to come - once the money started to roll in. Then we began trying to cure my personal finance phobia; I dutifully did my sums, and started saving something, however small, every month. My work also came under close scrutiny, too, as I made up my mind to concentrate on jobs that really interested me. Exactly which issues you tackle during coaching is up to you. **According to Fiona, most people want to get organized at home and at work, make the most of their abilities and sort out money problems.** She reckons that building up confidence is vital. She really does believe that people are capable of doing anything they want to do, **and that all that stands in their way is childhood** **conditioning.**

INTERVIEWER: So what did you get out of it all? And would you recommend it?

BRIGID: Well, coaching makes you get on and do all those things you've put off for so long, because there is the deadline of the next session. If you don't act in time, your coach probably won't want to speak to you. So coaching is hardly a soft option. But for me, it has provided a great boost. There have been no instant miracles, but things are looking up at work and financially, money and I are definitely on better terms**. I still have my doubts about the 'me first' approach but, then again, it is a healthy counterbalance to the 'me last' way of thinking I'm used to.**

INTERVIEWER: Thanks, Brigid. Now, if you want to find out more about life coaches you can contact this address ...

**Part 2:**

Our world is getting more and more densely populated. By 2050, there'll be nearly 10 billion people on our planet. And agricultural demand is predicted to rise by 70%. What's more, countries all over the world are struggling with the consequences of climate change. Drought and high salt levels in soils caused by poor irrigation practices are wreaking havoc on crop yields. This situation is getting worse. **Elevated salt concentrations are projected to affect more than 50% of all our arable lands in the next 30 years**. Long term food insecurity is on everyone's minds, so how will we ensure that every human alive gets the food they need? **One solution might be Hardy crops that flourished despite rough conditions. These crops may offer the world populations a crucial answer to impending food shortages. Plants use light, water and CO2 to provide us with the food via photosynthesis, which is conducted by machinery inside chloroplasts within their cells.** But **photosynthesis is disrupted on plants when plants encounter drought or salt-affected soil.** As a result, the chloroplasts make toxins and the plant dies. Scientists at the University of Oxford are investigating a new gene called SP1 that can help make plants less stressed in adverse conditions. **The SP1 chain temporarily regulates the photosynthetic mechanism in plants and thus stops so many toxins being produced**. The scientists have tested the system in a common model plant, but plan to engineer resilient versions of staple crops. Super strong varieties of wheat, rice, tomatoes and brassica could withstand harsh environmental effects, staying green when stressed and providing reliable, nutritious harvest for future generations.

**Part 3:**

Once described as “no different to the vomit of a drunkard”, sushi has been on quite a journey. The story of sushi goes back to prehistoric Southeast Asia. **There, fish was preserved by packing it with salt and cooked rice, resulting in a vinegary, fermented fish and a gloopy rice**. The rice part was truly disgusting and usually discarded.

In Japan, where the technique remained in use as it died out elsewhere. It was called nare sushi. Nare, meaning aged.

This was the definition of sushi for several centuries, but by the 15th century, **especially in coastal areas where fish was more plentiful all year round,** people were leaving it for less time and daring to eat rice, which is an early, was pleasantly tangy. 200 years later, with Japanese demand for the taste of sushi booming and even quicker version was invented, **which involved simply adding vinegar to the right to flavour it.**

Finally, in the 1820s and what is now Tokyo, raw fish as fresh as possible was added to the rice, now no longer aged at all, and modern sushi was born. The Japanese called it haya sushi. Haya meaning fast. Japan was a very closed country until 1854, so it wasn't until the late Victorian period that Westerners, particularly Americans, started to spending time in Japan and encountered sushi. It required an incredible level of skill. Getting it wrong wasn't just annoying, but potentially risky**. One rare delicacy, puffer fish, which today is tightly regulated, is highly poisonous if badly prepared.**

It wasn't until in 1970s that sushi, both as a luxury treat and as a cheap street food, started to be seen outside Japan. They first emerged in California, which had a large Japanese population, and followed the Japanese across the world. **Californians initially aghast at the idea of eating raw fish, grew to love it, but to encourage them.** Japanese sushi chefs came up with the Californian roll, which originally contained cooked crab. **Other Westernized recipes followed, including the decidedly 1980s Philadelphia roll with smoked salmon and cream cheese**. **Most Western countries don't allow freshwater fish to be used because of the danger from parasite, fish must be frozen, which killed the parasites before use.** As sushi spread, the deeply ingrained western fear of raw fish meant that more and more versions came into use, which relied on ingredients such as cooked prawns, smoked fish or eggs, and where the often complex side sauces were replaced with simple soy sauce, ginger and wasabi. **The ultimate westernisation is probably the Asian Latin fusion.** Which is the sushi burrito invented in 2011. The first sushi restaurant in the UK opened in London 1994 in the city, the heart of business land.

Today sushi is booming, marketed as being healthy, convenient and still just a little bit exotic. **The conveyor belt concept used in many restaurants adds a certain level of novelty**, as do the chopsticks, although according to many Japanese, sushi is best eaten with the fingers. Today, there are many types of sushi. At its best, it is often still very expensive and very beautiful**, and its devotees can be positively fanatical for a Japanese apprenticeship lasts at least five years for a sushi chef**, and both Japan and the UK have sushi restaurants which have been awarded 3 Michelin stars. Not bad for a food which started as a way to stop fish from rotting.

**Part 4:**

A cross party group of US senators has reached agreement on strengthening gun control measures. 10 Republicans backed the plans, which means they have some chance of success. Measures include tougher background checks for gun buyers under the age of 21 and expanded mental health checks. Here's our North America correspondent David Word. This is a significant move, and assuming these proposals pass into law, they would represent the first gun control measures this country has seen in decades**. The proposals themselves are fairly modest**. They include tighter background checks for gun sales involving customers under the age of 21 and **the introduction or expansion of so called red flag laws,** **which would potentially lead to the confiscation of weapons in the hands that people deemed a risk to themselves or others**, and greater federal funding for school security systems and mental health checks. **What these proposals do not include is an outright ban on assault style weapons** that the kind that we use in the Eovaldi and Buffalo, NY shooting. So there's something that President Biden and senior Democrats had called for. Nonetheless, President Biden welcomed this move. He said it was, I quote, an important step in the right direction. The last meaningful gun control regulations in this country were introduced in the mid 1990s, the Brady Bill, which created the national background check system. But since then there's been very little movement, **largely due to the opposition of Republicans in the Senate who oppose anything that transgresses upon the Simple Second Amendment**, **the right to bear arms in this country**. The majority of Americans, polls show, continue to support tighter gun control measures in this country. And ironically, the news of these latest proposals came on the 6th anniversary of a shooting at a gay nightclub in Florida in which 49 people lost their lives.