

REGRETS Reading

Read the article. Complete it with the missing sentences.

- A When American journalist Kathryn Schulz was 29, she decided to get a tattoo
- B Since then, Ms Schulz has found two ways of dealing with her regret
- C Apart from these four components, Ms Schulz also felt pain
- D Despite not having the effect that she had intended, Ms Schulz's tattoo has served to remind her of something else
- E Ms Schulz experienced all four components of regret that night
- F Ms Schulz's tattoo is a compass

Read the whole text again and mark the sentences **T** (true) or **F** (false).

- 1 Kathryn Schulz had had no regrets until she got a tattoo. T
- 2 The first emotion Ms Schulz felt that night was a kind of confusion. ___
- 3 By the time she got home, her wrist had stopped hurting. ___
- 4 Ms Schulz isn't the only American who regrets having a tattoo. ___
- 5 In Ms Schulz's opinion, regret usually disappears over time. ___
- 6 When Ms Schulz shows people her tattoo, they are usually horrified. ___
- 7 Ms Schulz wanted a tattoo that reminded her of the places she travelled to. ___
- 8 She thinks regrets teach us to accept our mistakes. ___

Look at the **highlighted** words and phrases in the text and try to work out their meaning. Then match them to definitions 1–10.

- 1 happening many times _____
- 2 a refusal to accept that something unpleasant has happened _____
- 3 with a mistake which means that it is not perfect _____
- 4 happening at exactly the same time as something else _____
- 5 purposes or aims _____
- 6 thinking too much about one particular thing _____
- 7 the importance of something _____
- 8 accept something unpleasant or difficult _____
- 9 confusion and surprise _____
- 10 a basic general idea _____



¹ **A**. Unfortunately, she regretted getting it as soon as she left the tattoo shop. Until then, she had been proud of leading a life without regrets. She had gone through life working on the principle that you should always look forward and never look back. But that night, she remembers feeling regret for the very first time.

² _____. The first one was denial and she spent the first few hours saying to herself, 'Make it go away!' The second was a feeling of bewilderment in which she kept on asking herself, 'How could I have done that?' The third was a desire to punish herself, something along the lines of 'I could kick myself'. The fourth is something that psychologists call perseveration. This is the habit of focussing obsessively and repeatedly on the exact same thing. A person who is feeling regret has the first three components going around in their head again and again.

³ ____; not only the physical pain of her tattooed wrist, but the emotional pain of knowing that she had done something incredibly stupid.

⁴ _____. The first is to take comfort in the fact that she is not alone. Figures show that around 17% of Americans regret getting tattoos at some point in their lives. The second is to learn to laugh at herself. Humour and black humour play a fundamental role in helping us come to terms with our regret. Apart from that, Ms Schulz recognizes the value of sitting back and waiting for the pain of regret to go away. *Time heals all wounds* as the saying goes, and in the case of regret this is most certainly true.

⁵ _____. Most people who see it are disappointed, because they don't think it is that bad; the problem is that she doesn't like it. She got the tattoo when she was off travelling and she was worried that she would forget some of the lessons that she had learnt during that time. It is a lesson that she wants to share with other people. For her, the compass represented the two ideas in one image.

⁶ _____. It reminds her how important it is to keep on exploring, and simultaneously how important it is to know where you're heading in life. Ms Schulz believes that if we have goals and dreams and if we love people, we should feel pain when things go wrong. In her view, we need to learn to love the flawed things that we create and to be able to forgive ourselves for creating them. Ms Schulz says that her experience has taught her that regret doesn't exist to remind us that we did badly; instead it is there to remind us that we know that we can do better.

ADJECTIVES listening

iChecker Listen to a couple, Max and Ella, discussing the characteristics of different members of their families. Write **M** (Max's mum) or **D** (Max's dad). There are two adjectives which you don't need to use.

Who is...?

- ☐ unwell
- ☐ helpful

- ☐ stubborn
- ☐ selfish

- ☐ critical
- ☐ insincere

