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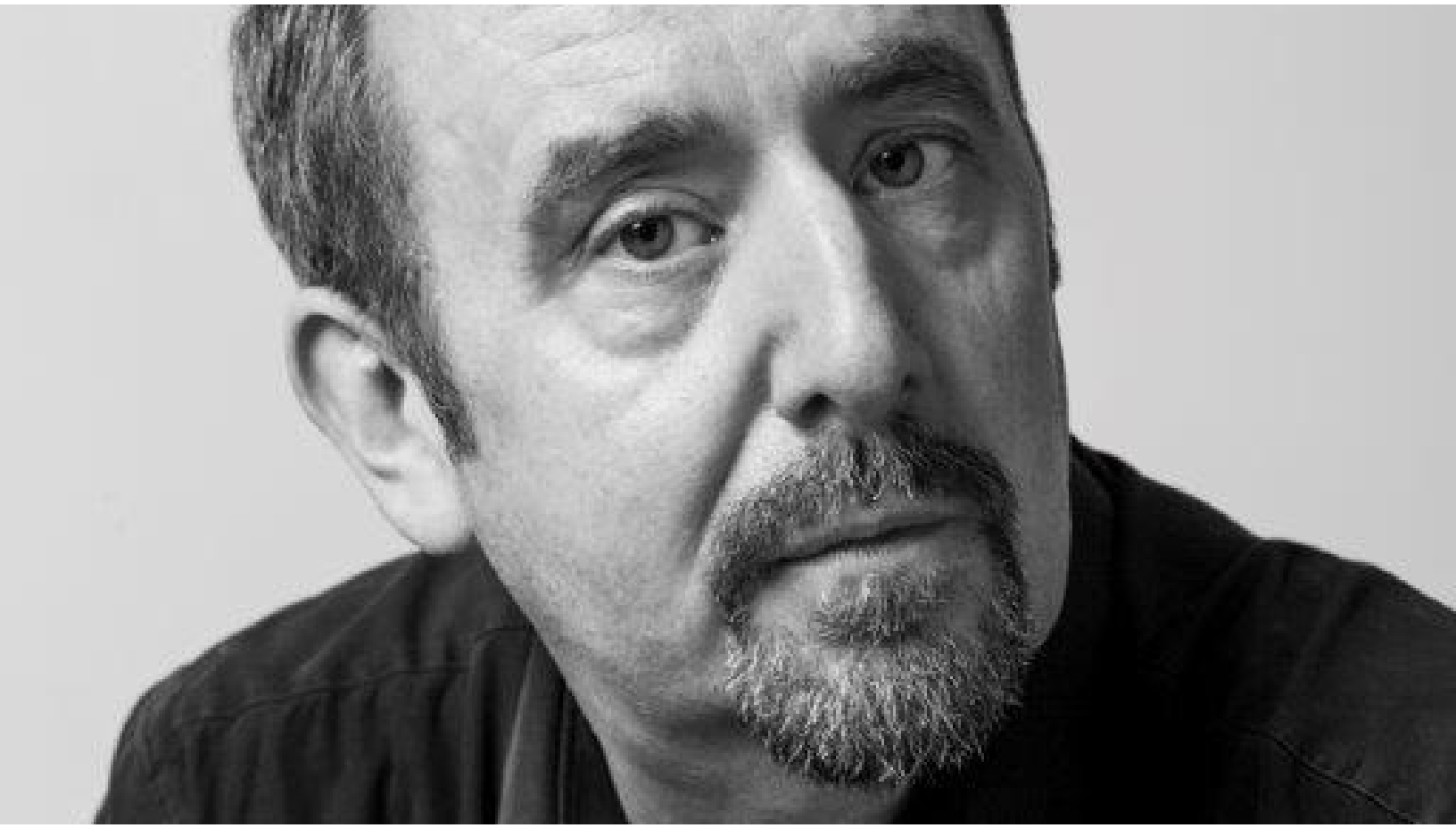

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Psychologist launches guide book for humans

A senior lecturer and health psychologist at Northumbria University, Newcastle, has published a new book that explores what makes us who we are and why we are so resistant to change.

Dr Vincent Deary has written the first book in the *How To Live* Trilogy, called *How We Are*.

Published on 4 September, *Volume 1: How We Are* examines the power of habit and the difficulty of change.

Drawing on his vast experience as a health psychologist and Cognitive Behavioural Therapist as well as a deep interest in literature, film, philosophy and science, Dr Deary examines how we negotiate change in our daily lives using transformative personal stories as examples.

"*How We Are* is divided into two acts," Dr Deary said. "The first looks at habit while the second examines how we adjust to change. Change is difficult because the majority of our day to day lives are carried out on auto-pilot. We set things up so we don't need to think about what we are doing or where we are going. It becomes routine.

"When something happens in our world to disrupt our routines - such as a new relationship, the loss of an old relationship, bereavement, changing jobs or moving to a new city - we then have to adjust, and this is difficult.

"Change is physiologically tiring, emotionally arousing and mentally pre-occupying, and it will continue to be so until we reach a new normal and re-establish equilibrium. Change takes us out of auto-pilot and the comfortable roles we are used to, and we usually want to get back to them as quickly as possible. Change is uncomfortable"

How We Are, published by Allen Lane, has already received positive reviews which have noted its eclectic cultural references and its accessible style which should appeal to a wide audience.

Blackwell's Book Shop on Percy Street, Newcastle, will mark the publication with a private launch party on Friday (5 Sept).

To support the book's launch, Dr Deary will give public lectures at the Cheltenham Literary Festival, the Royal Society of Arts, the School of Life and the Southbank Literary Festival. He will also speak at the Freethinking Festival at the Sage Gateshead on 1 November. The discussion will be broadcast on BBC Radio 3's Free Thinking programme following the festival.

How We Are is Dr Deary's first book and represents years of experience, study and reflection.

He added: "After I turned 40 I effectively became a hermit for two years to write and reflect, mapping out all three books. I suppose I had a 'thoughtful'

mid-life crisis."

Volume 1: How We Are in the *How To Live* trilogy will be followed by *Volume 2: How We Break*, and *Volume 3: How We Mend*.

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