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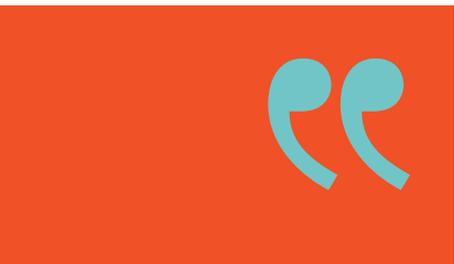


**Australian and  
New Zealand  
Women**



# I Said *YES!*

HOW TO CREATE BOUNDARIES,  
STAND IN THE SPOTLIGHT AND  
BE AUTHENTICALLY YOU



AN ANTHOLOGY OF FIFTEEN AUSTRALIAN  
AND NEW ZEALAND WOMEN

# I Said *YES!*

HOW TO CREATE BOUNDARIES, STAND IN THE  
SPOTLIGHT AND BE AUTHENTICALLY YOU

SAMANTHA JANSEN PUBLISHING  
2017

# CONTENTS

I Said YES!  
How to Create Boundaries, Stand In the Spotlight and Be Authentically You  
1st ed.

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- Acknowledgements . . . . .v**
- In Pursuit of The Woman Within . . . . .3**  
*Amanda Ferrucci*
- Fear Less And Say Yes More Often – Searching  
For Life’s Meaning . . . . .17**  
*Andrea Moody*
- Number 63! Buffed And Tanned . . . . .27**  
*Tina Horwood*
- Wishing Well – Planning Simpler. . . . .35**  
*Nia Mccartin*
- Seeds Of Greatness. . . . .45**  
*Ronece Dobrowolski*
- From Broken To Believing. . . . .57**  
*Sarah Griffiths*
- The Ripple Effect . . . . .67**  
*Harmeen Kaur*
- Say ‘Yes’ And Make A Difference . . . . .77**  
*Sue Mathieson*

<b>There Is Always A Reality Beyond</b>	
<b>The One You Know Now</b> .....	<b>89</b>
<i>Jayne Albiston</i>	
<b>I Said No</b> .....	<b>103</b>
<i>Kerry Nelson</i>	
<b>Yes – A Land Of Magic And Miracles</b> .....	<b>113</b>
<i>Julie Nabaala</i>	
<b>The Power Of Embracing Uncertainty</b> .....	<b>125</b>
<i>Veronika Whyte</i>	
<b>The Zipline</b> .....	<b>137</b>
<i>Judith Lane</i>	
<b>Awaken Thriving Aliveness - Make Fear Your Friend</b> . . . .	<b>147</b>
<i>Jenni Mears</i>	
<b>Yes! I Became Unstoppable</b> .....	<b>157</b>
<i>Samantha Jansen</i>	

## **Acknowledgements with Gratitude**

The mission of this book is to share our years of wisdom, tips, suggestions and strategies of how saying YES created opportunities and outcomes.

The book is designed to encourage and inspire you to pursue your life’s passion with courage, determination and love.

Every author featured in the book has committed to serving you. Together we share a common path. A path to living up to our life’s highest values, honouring our self-worth and pursuing our life’s purpose.

I would like to personally acknowledge every author in the book. Your commitment and contribution to this book filled my heart with gratitude for having found each one of you. Each of you has opened your heart and soul to share insights giving every reader a real sense of you. Thank You!

In closing, I would like to acknowledge my family - for your love and support in every project which sometimes takes me around the world. My community, the readers and last but not least, my team - for your ongoing dedication and commitment to serving our readers, followers and clients.

**Love and Gratitude,**

**Samantha**

# AMANDA FERRUCCI



*There is no relationship that can't be repaired and no conversation that can't be had.*

A CLINICAL FAMILY THERAPIST, Amanda balances her work in private practice with her role as a child and family counsellor in a community organisation. Amanda's motto is '*There is no relationship that can't be repaired and no conversation that can't be had.*' She feels passionate about her work's purpose and holds the strong belief that it is the ultimate privilege to be entrusted to work with people at their most vulnerable.

With a Diploma in Counselling and a Master's Degree in Social Science and Family Therapy, Amanda enjoys working with a wide range of clients including individuals, couples, children

and families. She has ten years' experience of working with high conflict, separated families and has a special interest in the areas of attachment and trauma.

Amanda has a diverse background, having moved countries twice and being bilingual in English and Italian. She appreciates the variegated mix of cultures in her life, humorously describing herself as British by blood and birth, Italian by heart and soul, and Australian by love and choice.

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## IN PURSUIT OF THE WOMAN WITHIN

**16000kms in the shoes of the  
incidental counsellor**

*By Amanda Ferrucci*

.....

IMAGINE THIS. YOU'RE AN ordinary fifteen-year-old British school girl when your parents suddenly ask you how you'd feel about a family move from boring grey England to sunny and beautiful Tuscany. What would you think? How would you feel? Maybe you'd feel a bit excited but also apprehensive about leaving behind the life you're so familiar with to embark on the unknown? That was more or less how I felt when the exact same thing happened to me. The added incentive at the time was not having to finish the school year (what were my parents thinking?!) or sit exams and to instead experience more fun, adventure and freedom than I'd ever had in the UK. The Italian way of life was certainly more entertaining and social and as my parents became more absorbed in their new business venture, I rode motorbikes, stayed out late in the evenings and seemed to find an abundance of *Chianti Classico*.

Despite having fun, fifteen is still a hard age to encounter such big change. I missed my school friends and my education took a hit as my attention was diverted from normal schooling to learning a new language. Whilst my social life was booming, my direction in life was waning. In hindsight, I was probably a bit

lost in those first few years in Italy. Gone was the careers centre at school and the direction that I'd had previously. I found myself geographically isolated (living rurally, about ten kilometres out of town, and then an hour's bus journey on winding roads to Siena or Florence) and with fewer opportunities than I'd have liked. I didn't end up with the qualifications I'd expected to get in the UK but I did get an Italian school leaving certificate, a new language, and some street smarts. By the time I was seventeen, I'd sobered up (literally!), had found my man and was engaged to be married. Like most youngsters, I thought I knew everything and this was what I wanted. I was willing to swap dating for commitment, partying for child rearing and teenage music hits for nursery rhymes and Disney classics!

I was just shy of eighteen when I got married and was already pregnant with my first child. This was not an unplanned pregnancy and my husband and I were eager to settle down and start a family in the small village in which my husband was born and raised. The village, technically a hamlet, is at the end of a long dirt road surrounded by bushland, vines and olive groves. It has no shops or stores of any kind, it has no through road and is home to approximately 50 people, the majority of whom are related to my husband.

So as I settled into married life, I was under the scrutiny of watchful eyes. It wasn't easy to gain the approval of the locals, especially the older ones. I had the odds stacked against me from the start. I was English (therefore foreign and weird), young (oh so young!) and the daughter of what the locals considered 'a well to do English family' which made them even more sceptical about my ability to live simply, work hard and care for a family.



*The road into the village. Photo taken from outside our house.*

“Does she feed him?” one of the old ladies asked. Another wanted to know why I hung my washing the way I did. “Doesn't she know how to hang washing?” But as time went on, it was observed that I cooked and my husband wasn't malnourished, I worked hard (and learnt how to hang my washing properly!), I spoke good Italian, was respectful to the locals and joined them in the piazza on those long summer nights, gossiping about all sorts whilst trying to keep cool.

The clincher to my acceptance, however, was one, then two and finally three little boys. Cherubic, golden-haired little babies that tottered around the 'piazza', allowing the old ladies to cluck and fuss over them and stroke their blonde heads with their wrinkled and withered hands. Little village boys who grew into fair-haired, brown skinned little rascals, bombing around

the village on their bicycles, half-naked, building mud huts with their cousins, getting dirty and climbing trees. Walking in their father's footsteps in the same village that he grew up in. Still, in the Italian era of the adored and spoiled male child, my boys had an 'Anglo twist' which made them a little more grateful and polite than the average Italian boy, endearing them to everyone around them. Bilingual and well behaved, they balanced the freedom that rural village life gave them with the respect, manners and boundaries that they learnt at home. And with that, the same old ladies who questioned me early on, said, "*Ma che brava mamma!*" and accepted me into their lives.



*Hanging out in the 'piazza' (village square) Circa 1997*

My domestic life was no mistake; coming from a broken home, career-obsessed parents and a somewhat unstable upbringing, all I'd ever dreamed of was having my own family, being a full-time mum and creating a safe and stable home. My days were spent cleaning, cooking and parenting and that was how I wanted it. I was happy, living amongst family, vineyards and olive groves. We

grew nearly all our own produce; the food we ate was fresh and in season and the air we breathed was clean. And such beauty! You've seen the postcards. Fields of wild poppies and fireflies in spring and long hot summers of afternoon siestas and evening festivals with music and dancing. Autumn brought chestnut hunting, vine and olive pickings and beautiful colours reflecting across the hills and valleys, and even winter had its own charm with open log fires, polenta and stews, traditional Christmases and at times, lush snow falls.

I don't know exactly when things started to change for me, but they slowly did. I started to feel restless, I wanted more but I didn't know what. The village which had always represented simplicity and freedom began to feel like a cage. I became bored and stifled by the same people and lack of novelty and opportunities; I didn't care about Ottavina's bunions or who parked their car in front of Fabrizio's garage! As my youngest started school, it was as if I lifted my gaze for the first time in approximately ten years of motherhood and like looking in a mirror, I was confronted by my own reflection. Who was this woman?! My adolescence had rolled into adulthood and as my children morphed into their own little personalities, I felt like I had nothing to show for myself. I was wise and mature beyond my years in so many ways and yet I was naive, sheltered and inexperienced in others.

Restless and on a mission to find new experiences, I began to explore the idea of moving out of the village. Firstly to different parts of Italy, then to the UK and then after hearing what a great lifestyle Australian's have, to Australia. I bought a book called 'Migrating to Australia' and enthusiastically poured over the map, reading up on information about the different States and

Territories. My poor husband was dragged along by my own enthusiasm, which at times, even I had to fake given sudden and occasional bouts of fear and apprehension. People got sick and tired of me talking about it and stopped taking me seriously. My mother-in-law didn't understand. "*What are you looking for Amanda?*" she'd ask. "*What do you need? I've got a cigarette in my hand and food on the table, I don't need anything else.*" And I'd feel ashamed for wanting more. Was I just being stupid?

\*

THE REALITY OF ACTUALLY migrating seemed unreal and I didn't believe we'd ever really do it but finally after almost 16 years living in Italy, our family of five boarded a plane to Melbourne on a three-month tourist visa. The idea was to 'trial it' for a few months and extend if we liked it. Most people called us crazy, some called us courageous. I just thought it would be a good experience for a few months and then we'd return home.

The children started school in Melbourne and their broken English slowly began to improve as they navigated the strange, new school system. People were surprised when I'd tell them that I had no qualifications and didn't work. "*I'm just a mum*" I'd say but I knew there was more in store for me and this was the land of promise and opportunities after all. Each new experience was exciting and whilst I frequently felt displaced, scared and homesick, I relished this novel life. Three months passed and I had no intention of going back to live in the village.

During those first few years in Melbourne, the highs were mixed with the lows. My husband and I separated and he returned to Italy. I had huge issues with my visa and for some time wasn't

allowed to work or study and we took multiple trips back to Italy in an attempt to maintain a sense of family despite living on different sides of the world. I still felt driven to 'find myself' but appeared to be getting more swallowed up in feelings of confusion, doubt, shame and fear. I was struggling financially and felt like I had one foot in Australia and the other still in Italy. Stuck and unsure what to do, I was like a rabbit caught in headlights, unable to recapture my 'old life' but unable to move forward either.

I was almost in my mid-thirties by this time and worried that I was getting too old to start anything new. With a family history in the tourism industry and the only real work experience I'd ever had, I looked to enrol in tourism studies, yet an advertisement for a counselling course kept catching my eye. Many times I'd get drawn back to that same ad, reading it over and over and fantasising about the idea of enrolling and becoming a counsellor.

At that time, I didn't really understand the difference between counsellors, psychologists or other disciplines but I loved the idea of helping people and the nurturing aspect of the job was very appealing to me. Without knowing or understanding much about the role, I already had a vision of myself as a counsellor - I could literally see myself in action. I went to a course information session but then backed out before registration. I was going through my own separation, felt emotional and basically not ready to learn about helping other people whilst I was still trying to get myself back on track after experiencing such sadness and loss.

Over time, and as my own emotional wounds began to heal and I felt ready to embark on something new, my fears and limiting beliefs overwhelmed me instead. Maybe I wasn't capable? I wasn't a 'clever' person, I was a mum! I didn't have qualifica-

tions and I hadn't been to university, I hadn't even spoken much English in the last fifteen or so years and felt like I still had the vocabulary and grammar of a teenager. Despite such doubts and fears, sometimes there's just a 'knowing' that guides you in the direction you need to go in, and so after rejecting the idea too many times to count over a couple of years, I finally took the plunge and with huge trepidation, 'I said yes!' and I enrolled in a diploma of counselling.

Off I'd trot to the city each week and would follow up at home, working on my coursework and completing all my readings like the dutiful student. I enjoyed the learnings and I sailed through the assessments though still with little direction about what I would do afterwards. I'd had my eye on the Family Therapy module for some time and as we commenced the unit, I almost couldn't contain myself. "*I've been really excited about this module,*" I told my lecturer, "*I'm so inspired to work with families.*" To my utter disappointment, the lecturer made a disapproving face and replied, "*Why would anyone want to work with families? It's much too hard! Stick with individual counselling.*" And with that I felt my dreams come crashing down around me. I wasn't even sure what type of work I could do with families, but something about it filled me with motivation - and now someone had told me not to do it.

Within eighteen months I'd completed my diploma in counselling and began various other training courses and a telephone counselling volunteer role. I felt a natural ability to connect with people but I still struggled with a crippling lack of self-confidence. I couldn't help comparing myself to others and everyone seemed to have more qualifications and greater experience.

After multiple job interviews and rejections, obtaining paid work appeared virtually impossible as I got caught in the catch-

22 of 'not enough experience = no work. No work = not enough experience'. As I learnt more about the profession, I learnt that I was under-qualified and that my study pathways were muddled and that I would have been better off completing a better foundation course prior to the counselling. I was deflated and to be honest, a bit embarrassed. I wanted to feel more skilled and yet I just felt stupid and incapable.

Given my lack of confidence and low self-esteem, I shunned opportunities to network and disregarded many jobs believing that I couldn't do them and that if I did, I'd fail anyway. Throughout my many Google searches, I was often drawn to a local agency that worked with families. I still fantasised about doing family work but then I'd remember what my lecturer had said and I'd resign myself to the fact that if she thought it was too hard, then I certainly couldn't do it.

I don't remember now whether it was out of desperation, exasperation or maybe just a thread of hope, but one day, and totally out of character for me, I took a deep breath and cold-called the agency, introducing myself and asking if they employed counsellors. Shortly afterwards I had an interview and began my work with families.

Whilst my first job wasn't strictly a counselling role, I loved the work I was doing and it was a good introduction for me into agency work. Every single thing was a learning experience. What everyone else already seemed to know, for me was new. I had to learn from scratch about common work practices, processes, procedures, roles and rules. I loved working with families and it was whilst at work one day that it occurred to me that my lecturer was 'just a person' and that her word was not gospel. She had her opinions and preferences and I had my own. At that point I set

myself free and enrolled in postgraduate studies in Social Science and Family Therapy.

Despite my limitations, I was accepted into the course only to find myself in a room with many highly qualified and very experienced other professionals. Again I was the underdog, apologising for my lack of everything! “*Clearly I can’t do this,*” I thought, “*I’ll just stay until the census date and then I’ll withdraw.*” But I didn’t withdraw. I couldn’t. And I couldn’t because I was passionate about what I was doing and I was meant to be there. Everything in my life had been leading me to this point and I approached each lecture with extreme curiosity, interest and enthusiasm. The learnings resonated with me and I felt an innate ability and understanding. I saw others at times struggling with concepts that to me came easily and naturally. I worked hard to keep up and to hold my own; if the others read a book, I read two. If they discussed a theory, I went home and explored in more depth. I wanted to learn everything I could and I absorbed information like a sponge! One year turned into two and then into three as I went on to complete a Master’s Degree. Along with the other students, I was exposed and challenged as I counselled real families behind a two-way mirror, observed by lecturers and other students. Our therapeutic work was then critiqued and we were provided with feedback to improve our practice.

At work, one opportunity flowed into another and then another and I started a counselling role with high conflict, separated families. This didn’t come easily to me as I continued to battle with my confidence. Saying ‘yes’ to opportunities was incredibly hard when my mind was telling me that I would fail and should say no.

Now, some six years since I graduated with a Master’s Degree in Social Science and Family Therapy, ample work experience, significantly more confidence and my own practice, I look back on where I came from, to where I am now, and I feel grateful to have had such wonderful and diverse life experiences. I am happy to have followed my heart and proud of what I have achieved. There were many times when I felt like giving up, when the obstacles of life covered my path and I lost sight of my goals, and there were times when somebody, or something, led me to feel unworthy and incapable.

Upon reflection, and perhaps like many therapists before me, I realise that as a child growing up in my family, I was already walking in the shoes of the incidental counsellor, aware of everyone’s feelings and always trying to maintain the peace, and then years later, relinquishing an even bigger part of myself when I had children and became a mother. When you are that type of person, it can be very hard to learn to focus on yourself and to prioritise your own needs but there are no medals for martyrs in this world and at times we all need to be self-focused and walk our own path. My path was rocky in places and with lots of twists and turns. Sometimes I stumbled, sometimes I fell and sometimes I ran with the wind in my hair.

As I look back and reflect on my journey, it is with great pride, rather than shame, that I embrace my inner villager, housewife, mother and all the other roles that I have ever had. Each one is important in its own right and each has contributed to the person, and to the therapist, that I am today.

\*

## ANDREA MOODY



*Open yourself to  
new opportunities,  
fear less and  
create momentum  
in your life.*

ANDREA WAS BORN IN Buenos Aires, Argentina in 1967 and migrated to Australia with her family in the early eighties. She now lives in Melbourne with her husband and two sons.

After graduating from Monash University with a Bachelor of Business she went on to become a qualified Certified Practicing Accountant (CPA). Andrea is also a qualified business trainer, coach and mentor Australia wide.

She commenced her career as an auditor for the Australian Government followed by various management roles in the hospitality, beauty and fitness industries. In 1995 she went on to become a successful business owner in the automotive parts sector. Her role as financial controller contributed to the growth and sustainability of the business which was sold to a major automotive company in 2013.

After spending the last few years managing a team of 54 people across three states, Andrea decided to go out on her own so she could focus on her passion for teaching. Through her business coaching and training seminars, Andrea has been able to apply her extensive business knowledge to assist business owners to get unstuck. She is passionate about helping businesses succeed and she is all about actionable initiatives and sustainable results.

In her spare time Andrea loves to read books, go for long walks and cycle with her husband.

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 Andrea Moody Pathways to Success

# FEAR LESS AND SAY YES MORE OFTEN — SEARCHING FOR LIFE'S MEANING

*By Andrea Moody*

.....

ALL MY LIFE I have been on a quest to find what life is all about and my part in this world. Searching for greatness has been my purpose from a very young age. I have never been content with just being. I know there is something greater than my perception is capable of grasping. I feel it within my core but at times the limitations put on it by the world I live in to stop me from moving forward.

I have always wondered why we are at times so afraid to take the plunge, to expand our comfort zone, to experience the unfamiliar and to gain a new perspective. Would saying yes more often propels us to the next level of existence? Would saying yes more often bring us closer to the extraordinary life we are all capable of? Would saying yes more often speed our journey to our true purpose in this world?

As I approach my fiftieth birthday and reflect on my life so far, I discover that despite the constraints placed on my life by my beliefs and those of my environment I have been able to accumulate a tremendous amount of knowledge, experience and wisdom. I consider my life so far successful but incomplete, I am still waiting for the last piece of the jigsaw puzzle and I wonder if I am the keeper of that last piece? Am I the one holding me back?

Have I missed that life-changing opportunity because I was afraid to say yes? I know that at times fear has confined me to play it safe, to keeping it real, to staying within the realm of the familiar. Why is it that we allow fear to rule us?

Fear is an inevitable part of who we are. We are hard-wired to experience it because once it helped us survive and stay safe. Our fears are always the same: fear of rejection (not being loved), fear of failure (not being good enough), and fear of judgment (not belonging). As a result most of our decisions are still very much based on this premise. These constant fears are what keep us playing it safe and saying *No* to the many invitations that we are presented with every day. We are programmed to say *No* more often than *Yes* because it keeps us safe and confined within our comfort zone.

For most of us stepping out of the familiar into the unfamiliar is uncomfortable. We fear the 'what ifs,' the lack of control, the uncertainty, the judgment of others and the stigma of making the wrong decisions. I recently joined Toast Masters, a public speaking group, as I want to learn to control my anxiety when speaking to groups. Last week I had the opportunity to present my first speech and I have to say I was petrified, however, afterwards everyone in the room commented on my passionate delivery and inspiring story. No-one mentioned my nerves, my awkwardness or my accent. It was all in my head! I know the next speech will be as nerve wracking as the first one but I feel a little bit more confident in my ability to succeed.

So what if I told you there is a way to break through this framework of fear and doubt?

As I grow older I no longer worry about making the wrong decisions. Life has taught me so far that there are no wrong

decisions only lessons. Lessons that sharpen my ability to make better future decisions with confidence and less trepidation. This revelation has allowed me to fear less and say yes more often. Every time a new opportunity comes my way I now ask myself four questions:

What is the worst that can happen?

Can I handle it?

What is the best that can happen?

What is most likely to happen?

Knowing that we have the power within us to handle most things in life (except death) removes the fear of the unknown and opens us to a whole new world of possibilities. So if we can handle the worst case scenario what is there to fear? And what if the most likely outcome propels us to a much higher level of existence and success? Isn't that worth pursuing?

Once I decide that I can handle a particular outcome I then ask myself if what I am about to undertake is moving me towards my goals or away from my goals. Not long ago I said yes to working for a particular accounting firm because I wanted to experience what it was like to work in such an environment. I was curious enough to give it a go although deep down I knew it wasn't the right fit for me but I chose to ignore the knowing. My co-workers and bosses were nice enough, the work was challenging and the clients were varied and interesting. However, I dreaded each day and for the life of me, I couldn't pinpoint what the issue was until it occurred to me that I was way off course. My goals and values were somehow compromised and I struggle to see how I could align my purpose with theirs. I only stayed for a short time and moved on to pursue my dreams. However, this experience taught me a very valuable lesson.

When we are aligned with our purpose and goals our intuition will guide us to make the right decisions.

More often than not we choose to ignore our gut instinct and that's where fear creeps in. We allow our head to make the choices for us instead of listening to the inner voice of wisdom, our heart and gut. So once I know that I can handle the worst case scenario and the opportunity presented is aligned with my goals I then ask how.

How am I going to fit it in?

How am I going to tackle it?

How am I going to implement it?

How am I going to measure it?

And I don't ever ask myself "Do I have what it takes to make it happen?"

We are more resourceful than what we give ourselves credit for, and waiting to be ready to start is futile as the timing will never be right. I live my life by Richard Branson's quote "*If somebody offers you an amazing opportunity but you are not sure you can do it, say yes – then learn how to do it later!*" The how is the easy part, saying yes in the first place is what determines what happens next.

I recall a time when I was offered the position of General Manager and although I had little management experience at the time, deep down I knew I wanted to give it a go. The allure of the position was that I got to inspire, motivate and work with different people each day. By doing so I discovered that I had a natural talent for leadership. Those few years were challenging but very rewarding and I learned a lot about myself, in particular how resourceful I can be when necessary.

I believe deep down we all know that extraordinary is one Yes away but instead we choose to say No because we don't know all the steps to How. What if we choose to focus on what is possible and what excites us and then work on how? And if we fail, so what? By saying YES, we invite possibility into our lives and the ability to learn what we are capable of and just how far we can go. Why not take the opportunity as a compliment and harness the confidence other people have in us. If others can see our potential then it must be within us to nurture and bring forth to the challenge. When we say No to new experiences and opportunities, we reject many of life's magnificent chances and leave us open to regret.

Recently I was given the opportunity to write and deliver a training program to a group of small business owners. I had facilitated before but never created programs of this magnitude. The opportunity was too great to pass so I said yes and then I spent a good three months working out how to go about it. I doubted myself many times but with the help of mentors and Google, I managed to create a program that I am proud of. I got to deliver the program a few weeks back with fantastic feedback and as a result, I am off to Queensland and Auckland in the next few months to do it again!

The next step is to stay focused to see the new opportunity through. Focus helps us maintain attention and effort in the midst of distractions and setbacks. To stay focused is to do what it takes to reach our goal despite the level of difficulty or distress it might cause us. To stay focused also means that we have to make a choice between what needs to happen right now and what can wait. Careful planning, rigorous time management and enthusiasm are key ingredients to ensure we stay on course. We all have

the same 24 hours, it is how those hours are used that determines the level of success we experience.

Staying motivated and on track can be difficult at times especially when results are not happening at the rate we want. So how do we sustain focus when enthusiasm starts to wane? For me, it is all about small rewards along the way. That's what keeps me going. Having a clear vision of what success looks like and then breaking it down into small attainable components ensures the task is doable and not as daunting as it appeared in the beginning. So, celebrate success along the way no matter how small it might be all the motivation you need to get the job done!

As I reflect on my life I realised that my eagerness to finding my place in this world has pushed me to say Yes more often than No although at times terrifying. Being open-minded and curious about what it might be like if I give it a go has allowed me to experience a much richer existence. Being open-minded to the unknown without judgement has broadened my knowledge base about what is possible.

Being open-minded to acknowledging that I don't know what I don't know has propelled me to search for what might be probable if I just try. I know now that through saying Yes to life's opportunities I have the power to:

- seek meaningful relationships and connections
- pursue my passions
- share my knowledge with others
- learn from others
- be my own leader
- live by my own compass and my own rules
- be a life-long learner and continue to seek what I don't know

- be the best version of myself
- inspire others to engage with the world and in doing so fulfilling their own destiny
- building a legacy for others to follow
- seek my purpose

As I continue on my life journey I pledge to keep saying YES to opportunities that come my way because I now know that I am only a YES away from finding greatness.

My wish for you is that through these pages I have ignited your curiosity to seek, experience and participate in your own destiny.

Waiting for that break, that job, that relationship to come to you is futile because the desire to be extraordinary comes from within. You have the power within you to shape your life but you must be absolutely certain that you want it because it is only when you are committed that you will move mountains to get it. So why not say YES and see what happens. Open yourself to new opportunities, fear less and create momentum in your life. I assure you the rewards are worth the effort and before you know it life might just give you what you are searching for.

*Say yes in a world of no's and watch  
your life change – do it!*

*Unknown*

\*

## TINA HORWOOD



*I realised that my ultimate purpose in life was to empower women with a choice.*

FOUNDER OF BODY FIT Melbourne, a facilitator of change and personal trainer, Tina Horwood is on a mission to help busy women create a healthy lifestyle. As a self-confessed lover of weight training, Tina helps women to shift their focus from being a number on the scale to being strong in body and mind, which ultimately empowers them to live their life purpose.

As a qualified personal trainer, she believes that a healthy lifestyle and a positive relationship with food is the key to success in life and business. *“Food is fuel and when used to nourish our bodies, our bodies respond. We have better concentration, we are more productive in our day and our drive for life and in business is improved.”*

Her personal purpose and passion is helping women to understand and embrace choice. To empower them to believe in themselves and to help them reach that ultimate life dream that

many dream, but never achieve. When women feel good in their skin they are empowered to live their ultimate life purpose.

Tina believes that with the right support, guidance and training, anyone can achieve their weight loss goals and maintain it for life.

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## NUMBER 63! BUFFED AND TANNED

*By Tina Horwood*

### The journey began...

IT'S FUNNY HOW LIFE has a way of getting you to sit up and pay attention, and when it does, you can either sit up and take notice or keep your head down and do nothing. I chose to keep my head up...

For as long as I can remember I have strived for the perfect body. Skinny waist, flat belly, legs that didn't chafe in the summer and didn't wear out the seams of my pants. A butt that didn't wobble as I ran or walked, toned arms and a back that has no creases and doesn't bulge over my bra. That wasn't too much to ask, was it? After all, that is what was in the media wasn't it? That is what I needed to achieve to be confident and successful, wasn't it? All I had to do was get skinny and life would be great, I would be happy and I would find my confidence. So the journey to getting skinny began. What was supposed to be a beautiful thing took me on a journey to a very unhealthy low and taught me about who I am and what my ultimate life purpose was?

Fat, skinny, fat, skinny... my teenage life revolved around diets. Losing weight, feeling and looking amazing, then slowly putting it all back on again, plus some... I was frustrated, constantly hating on myself. I dreaded going out to any event where I had to wear something more than comfy pants and a baggy jumper or top. I

just wanted to be skinny, maybe I just needed to eat less and run more?

I didn't have a positive role model around food when growing up. My mother was a huge emotional eater and so I learned these habits. When I felt sick, my mum would make me feel better with food. When I was sad, I was offered biscuits or cake and it was never just one, but many. Every week, when mum went shopping she'd bring us a lolly treat. From a young age, I learned that food was the way to deal with my emotions and it was a reward.

As a child and into my early adult years, I lived with my parents, two sisters and brother on a farm in rural South Australia. Isolation was a big thing. Our property was a thirty-minute drive from the nearest town and our closest neighbours were three kilometres away. I didn't have any close friends and was a very shy and quiet child. I grew up in a very religious household and the early years were like any other kid on a farm. We got to ride motorbikes, learnt to drive as soon as we could reach the accelerator and our days were filled with baby animals, and freedom. My parents were strict and monitored what we read, what we watched on TV and who our friends were but I loved them dearly. My father was my idol, I did everything I was told, followed him around all the time and wanted to be his right-hand man when I grew up. He couldn't do any wrong in my young eyes. He always had the final say on everything, but that was okay. I felt safe, and comfortable knowing someone had my back and helped me to make the important decisions in life. As far as I knew, life was good, and that was just the way it was.

At the age of twelve, life as I knew it changed forever. My world of childhood frivolity became one of fear, confusion and even greater isolation. It was a Friday afternoon, mum had gone into

town and I was in my bedroom reading. My father came into my room Bible in hand and sat beside me. He showed me a passage of scripture that I came to understand over the following ten years justified his actions. My childish innocence was stolen at the hand of the person I most admired. I was told that it was okay, for every question that I had, he had a response ready. I wasn't to tell anybody especially not my mum, because they, or she, wouldn't understand. He'd had a revelation from God that he was supposed to teach me how to be a good wife to my future husband. It was gentle but at the same time scary as hell. How was it that this thing, this violation of my personal space, this intrusion into my physical being was okay? I remember after the first violation, turning over and curling up into a ball, covering my naked body with the bed sheets, sobbing... How could I say I was a virgin when my father had just taken that from me?

As it went on I became more withdrawn, the things I used to love doing on the farm became opportunities for another violation. If I was ever alone with him, something always happened. I stopped helping willingly on the farm and turned to food for comfort. I had no friends, the little confidence that I had in myself was shattered, I didn't like what was happening but was trapped by location and fear of what would happen if I said anything. Life continued in this negative way for ten years before I said Yes to the change that started my journey to discovering who I was and what I was capable of.

### **The Goal**

Number 63! Buffed, tanned to within an inch of my life and quivering with nervous excitement... and starving! All the women around me looked amazing, my bikini was tiny, I had never

worn anything like that in my life. I had worked my butt off for eighteen months dieting strictly, passing up family events, work events and nights out with the girls. I trained six days a week to get my body ready to enter a natural body-building competition. Here I was at my goal, eighteen kilograms lighter, and muscles showing that I had only ever dreamed about and ready to step on stage to be judged for my physical appearance. Bright lights and over 500 pairs of eyes staring up at me. I was proud of what I had achieved and I knew that I had achieved what I set out to do. But as I stood in line, I questioned, what if I wasn't good enough? I compared myself to the women in front, behind and next to me. They were skinnier than me, their arms looked better than mine, their abs were more defined than mine, they were beautiful. Was I? Did I look as good as they looked? My legs were in the best shape ever, yet still, I wasn't happy. Even though I was proud of what I had achieved and I was mostly happy with how I looked, a small part of me still wanted to hide and cover my self-diagnosed imperfections.

I'd done it! Skinny me had finally arrived! I was skinnier than I had ever remembered being. I had gone from my heaviest weight of 87kg down to 64kg, my 'ideal' body weight and it was great... for a day. I remember that very afternoon after the competition had finished and all the beautiful skinny women headed home, I headed to the supermarket and loaded up on carbs. Rice cakes, chips, lollies, I couldn't get enough. I went home and ate a huge roast dinner, I didn't care if I felt fat or that I ate way too much. I'd just lost 22kg and competed in a natural bodybuilding competition, I deserved to treat myself, didn't I? The days following the competition were hard. Food had a massive hold over me, everything I had avoided and deprived myself of for the past eighteen

months suddenly became fair game again. I binged and binged hard. Within a month, I had stacked back on eight kilograms and I was not happy. My body didn't look anything like it had just a few short months ago. What was wrong with me? I judged myself, and I am sure others were judging me too. I had to stop!

During my journey to the stage of the bodybuilding competition, I had two fabulous personal trainers in my corner. They both taught me the mechanics of the body and listened when I struggled with the strict diet and supported me when it was all just too hard. Above all, they both ignited a fire within me to help others with their own diet and weight loss journey.

This was my defining moment. I remember it like it was yesterday! It was the moment that I realised that getting the body of your dreams wasn't about being skinny, it wasn't about restricting everything you ate, it wasn't about feeling like the odd one out at events and family functions, but it was about balance. A healthy relationship with food, where food fuelled my body, not comforted it, where I made choices about what I ate without guilt and where I understood that exercise was about being healthy and strong, not just something to do to lose weight. I no longer wanted to stay in the same oppressed, controlled and negative place. It was time to take control of my own life, my future, and say YES to what lay ahead. That path away from where I currently was, was unknown. I had no idea where it would take me or how I'd get there, but the dream of something better, something more was what I wanted. I had to start somewhere, I said YES!

It took me another three years to figure out what I'd said yes too. I realised that for many women, the frustration of weight loss and achieving the body of their dreams was out of their reach. They'd start, only to fail within a few weeks. It was an ongoing

cycle that set many up to fail before they started. The knowledge that I had gained during my own transformation was what others needed to know. I realised that my ultimate purpose in life was to empower women with a choice. Help them to believe in themselves and to show them that they are more than just a number on the scales. I showed them how to get off the negative dieting cycle and how to create a positive and healthy relationship with food.

The women that came to me were confused, disheartened and ready to settle in a body they hated but didn't know how to change. Simply showing them what food did for their bodies and how they could be in control of the results empowered these women to success. For some it was about getting strong, feeling that their bodies could physically face any challenge. For others, it was about a dress size, fitting back into their favourite jeans, or black cocktail dress, and for the elite, it was about believing that they could achieve anything they set their minds too. It was about freedom from the negative effects of dieting, freedom to achieve a life-long dream.

That moment of enlightenment sends tingles across my skin every time. Watching these women realise that to achieve the body of their dreams doesn't have to mean restriction or deprivation, but that they can enjoy their favourite foods, is freeing. Within moments, these women release years of negativity, years of burden and year of unrealistic expectations on themselves. That freedom from dieting and constantly thinking about food can be achieved, by anyone. If you have spent years dieting and are frustrated by the lack of lasting results, it might be time to say YES, to change.

\*

## NIA MCMARTIN



*First, you need a wish,  
and you want to be  
so passionate about  
that wish that failing  
isn't an option!*

### **“The Wish Strategist”.**

NIA'S VISION IS TO help 500 small businesses remove *planning paralysis* from their business model and encourage the development of simple, straight-lined strategies that actually deliver results however big or small they may seem.

Decades of corporate and public sector strategy and planning has cured her of the need for complicated mind maps, spreadsheets and graphs. A simple linear planning method makes delivering your plan clear and focused – you will always see where you're at, and what you need to do next!

A creative soul, Nia is an award-winning singer-songwriter, musician, needleworker and knitter and finds great joy in the pursuit of creativity.

Nia's life has been fueled by saying YES in all manner of situations – even her contribution to this book was a big fat YES!

#### CONNECT WITH NIA



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## WISHING WELL – PLANNING SIMPLER

By Nia McMartin

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*Without action, forward motion, propulsion,  
exertion – “a wish is just a dream your  
heart makes” (Cinderella, 1950)*

### **You know that feeling...**

ON THE OUTSIDE, YOU'RE showing as calm, serene, and beautiful but on the inside, your heart is racing, you are feeling anxious, nervous, frightened, there may even be nausea.

Your head is full of paralysing questions...

Do I look okay? Will I make sense? Am I good enough? Am I believable? Is this going to work? Did I give the kids their lunches? Did I leave the iron on? Did I lock the front door?

The truth is, underneath that beautifully calm, serene exterior, that graceful swan is flapping her feet like mad to keep herself afloat!

Just keep swimming...

People often ask me, “*How do you fit it all in, family, work, music, business?*” and honestly I can't really say – I just keep those little feet paddling as hard as I can underwater where no one can see!

And, I have a plan. The single thing that keeps me grounded in these situations where nerves, uncertainty, or fear, threaten to

bring me undone, is my plan. I know where I am going and I have a plan to get me there!

I have several plans of varying complexity, all written down in formal, solid document form. I refer to them on a monthly basis at least (sometimes more often.) My plans change – I revise them constantly depending on what is working and what is not. I’m human – I change my mind. I’m also quite efficient, which results in trying to find a better, simpler, or easier way! Necessity (laziness) is the mother of invention apparently.

I’m becoming good at letting stuff go that isn’t providing value in whichever area it relates to.

I plan my year, my week, my day and every single event. I plan my work, I plan my music, and I even plan my ‘spontaneous’ time! If I don’t make these plans – these things, my achievements, may never come to fruition.

A map for the easily distracted:

Not having a plan is like getting in your car to go somewhere and just driving around until you figure out where that somewhere actually is. My hubby likes nothing better than to just get in the car and drive and while he may have a destination in mind – often he doesn’t care to share that with me. It’s just “let’s go for a drive”. This is NOT my thing, I don’t want to wander around the countryside aimlessly and guess at which way to turn next.

I need to know:

- What is the purpose of our trip?
- Where is the destination?
- What are we going to do when we get there?
- Where can we eat?
- Is anyone else coming?
- What time will we be home?

If only he would tell me the destination and a few details, I’d be much happier. He is very content deciding which way to turn once he gets to the corner of our street.

When I’m going somewhere, I have already entered the address into the navigator before I put on my seatbelt, called some friends to meet us there, worked out where we’re going to eat and quite possibly booked a table at the local pub!

What does a good plan look like?

Plans are important. Write them down, keep them close, refer to them often, and revise each time something changes for you. Only when your goal is there, right in front of you can you then work towards it.

First, you need a wish, and you want to be so passionate about that wish that failing isn’t an option!

Then by adding some intent and action, your wish becomes a goal – it is defined, written down, you are committed to it!

The plan is what brings your goals to life – it gives you the itinerary – the map – for your journey.

Until you write it down, it is only a wish, a hope, a dream.

A good plan has to be useful – to you! It must show you what needs to be done, when you need to do things, and how the actions link together to maximize your possibility of reaching your goal.

It must be clear, workable, and simple to read. You have to like to look at it. It must not fill you with fear or dread! When you have that plan finally written down and displayed prominently in your workspace, it motivates you, drives you, and keeps you accountable. You want to finish those actions, complete those tasks and tick off that to do list so you can physically SEE how far you’ve come! The plan turns those wishes into goals - ideas into realities.

The plan becomes your biggest cheerleader, your BBF - your best business friend.

It's never too late to start your plan. Start today.

Mind maps – word salad – and other problematic pictograms:

You've seen them, lots of lines, and little clouds, stars and boxes, all too messy for my slightly OCD brain to cope with. I could make no sense of them AFTER I had put a couple of hours into drawing, colouring, scrunching paper and re-starting many times and I was certainly no closer to understanding what I had to do, or what I had to do FIRST! Granted, I now knew I had to commit to something to make it happen, and that commitment somehow would manifest itself once I wrote that something down, but it was all still too messy for me to make any sense of it.

Even though I am a creative soul at heart – THIS does not work for me.

I have discovered I need a far more linear approach that will guide me from whoa to go, in small, manageable steps. It has to be SIMPLE.

**In an increasingly complex world, simplicity  
is becoming one of the four key values  
Edward De Bono – Simplicity**

I finally developed a method that made it much simpler for me to define and step out my goals – there is no need for it to be so complex!

**YES makes dreams come true**

I have said YES more times than I care to recall. YES to things a 'normal' person would balk at or run away from as fast as their feet could carry them!

I am not saying each time has been a roaring success, but I do know that each yes has delivered an amazing opportunity, an incredible learning or significant personal growth.

At 15, I had dreams of being a rock superstar – like Pat Benatar, Deborah Harry or Stevie Nicks. Many hours crafting my stage technique (mostly in front of my bedroom mirror), singing along to the radio or cassettes in my room and practicing my rock and roll hairstyles and makeup. I sang to myself, to my family, to anyone who would listen. I was already a star in my mind, I just needed a vehicle to propel me to the heights I thought I desired.

I have always been a singer. I fronted up wherever anyone would let me, at home, family gatherings, school. But I had no clue whatsoever how I was going to make my dreams of rock superstardom come true.

By 16, I was an apprentice hairdresser, still looking for fame and fortune. I loved hairdressing, I was moderately successful I think, but it wasn't my passion. It seemed that everyone I knew in my final year of school wanted to be a teacher or a hairdresser. University was out of the equation at that point so hairdressing it was. I had an interview in the front bar of the Shamrock Hotel and started the following Monday. I said yes to my first job!

Sometime during that first year, I spotted a newspaper ad (no Internet back then) for a band that needed a lead singer. I cut it out and carried that tiny three-lined advertisement around with me for a week or more before I showed it to the other hairdressers and the receptionist at work. I didn't actually call the number for another week or two. Finally, the receptionist pulled me aside, dialled the number and handed me the phone. How was I going to live my dream if I didn't take action?

That first step, making the call was key in delivering the outcome I wanted. This dream was going to remain just that until some effort was expended to make it happen.

I will forever thank that receptionist for the push!

I said YES to my first band.

This was my first real learning that if I wanted my dreams to come true – I had to take some physical action. Thinking about it was never going to make it happen!

### **YES is a great career move!**

My corporate career has been pretty much filled with experiences such as this. I said yes to opportunities for which realistically, I was a little (or a lot!) over-confident, didn't have the right experience or had the wrong or no qualifications. As they say in New South Wales, I had 'more front than Grace Brothers.'

I didn't know how to say no!

The key words here are energy and activity. Wishes and making them come true involves a little physics - there must be a forward motion to make wishes come true.

Physics and wishing

My disclaimer here is I am NO physicist but I think we can apply Newton's First Law of Motion to wishes and goals.

The definition of a wish is a longed-for desire or hope for something that may, or may not, be attained. A goal is much more specific - the aim or object towards which your energy is directed (the wish), the end of an activity.

A wish: I wish I had more time.

A goal: By the end of 2020, I will help 500 small business people attain financial sustainability through the educational programs and resources I provide.

Take *time* for example. Many of us wish for *more time* but the likelihood of any of us actually making that happen is absolutely none whatsoever! One day will always be 24 hours, 1,440 minutes and 86,400 seconds.

### **Wishing for more time is a waste of time.**

This wish definition does not imply any action towards achieving this longed-for desire or hope; which had me asking myself, "*can wishes actually come true?*" If you take the definition as correct - then I would say, "*No*". A wish in itself is something improbable, unlikely, even impossible; a *something* that will most likely not happen.

Isaac Newton was a very smart guy. He tells us in his first law of motion that every object remains still or otherwise in uniform motion in a straight line unless an external force is applied to change its current state. Wishes are the same. Until you apply some external force or take some action, a wish (the object at rest) stays at rest and an object in motion stays in motion with the same speed and in the same direction unless acted upon by an unbalanced force.

If this is true, then:

- A wish will remain a wish unless acted upon by an unbalanced force - the wisher takes action or moves forward.
- A goal (an object in motion) will remain in motion unless acted upon by an unbalanced force - the actions cease or the endpoint is reached

It's science people! All it takes is a wish plus action – effort – exertion!

## Figuring out my WHY!

For many of us our life's purpose is evident quite early. Olympic athletes start quite young on their journey's to Olympic greatness, for example – for the rest of us it takes a little longer.

If I was truly honest with myself, I would have to say that my WHY realisation has only appeared to me in the past two or three years. I've been slowly working my way to this place though with no real understanding of WHY for much longer than that. Once I absolutely understood my WHY, things started to become so much clearer.

All of the positions I've held in my corporate life have been of great value – I've learnt much from every single manager, colleague, and staff member, even the not so pleasant ones. I have great gifts bestowed on me from my family, friends, and people I have connected with through my music, and other areas.

Every single interaction has been a step forward into my WHY.

By the end of 2020, I will assist 500 small business owners to plan for their own sustainable success using the tools and resources I have developed.

Why am I here? Because I believe planning should not be hard, it shouldn't make you fearful or confused or make you feel inadequate or uneducated. My success comes from helping YOU achieve your wishes, by helping you to formulate simple and achievable plans that drive you to meet your goals.

Keep wishing, but don't forget to take action!

\*

## RONECE DOBROWOLSKI



*Change your life - don't settle for debt, unhappiness, an average job or anything else that make you feel less than.*

### Through tough circumstances, seeds of greatness grow

RONECE HAS BEEN TRAINING women for over 27 years. She has empowered many on long-term unemployed return to work and small business programs. Ronece is a Marketing Services Specialist, a top performing sales person, bringing in well over \$10 million.

She is also a skin care ambassador running more than 200 workshops and training more than 2,000 women on how to look and feel their best.

As an independent consultant with a global online beauty and wellness social marketing business, she is always looking for people to train and loves building

up teams to reach for the stars.

Her purpose is to help people achieve financial and time freedom. She believes everyone can be set free from poverty and become victorious by growing an additional income stream.

Ronece is committed to the fight against poverty and is involved in fundraising both locally and internationally. Her deep gratitude towards life and her passion to help others keeps her highly motivated. She shares her ability to overcome all obstacles to create a life designed for greatness.

### CONNECT WITH RONECE



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# SEEDS OF GREATNESS

By Ronece Dobrowolski

*“Nothing is impossible, the word itself says ‘I’m possible!’ Audrey Hepburn*

THE PURPOSE OF THIS chapter is to encourage you to stand strong and fight the good fight. You’re wonderfully made, worth more than rubies and you have seeds of greatness within.

From the depth of my heart I encourage you to be the best version of yourself. More importantly, find deep joy and peace within through your vision, goals and dreams. Think positively and change will happen, you have a seed of greatness waiting to grow. I will ask you questions along the way, please take a moment to search your heart, to discover more of who you are. My story is like many who have experienced trials in life. My life has taught me to be an overcomer, to love more, to live with passion and to be the light into darkness.

**Have you ever wondered who you are and what your purpose in life is all about?** We are all in this together, humanity at its very best and worst, love always overcomes fear. Loving one another is the key to a full-filled life, to serve and encourage others. Be the light into darkness

My sister and I were sitting outside in the gutter, when I asked her the question, “*Where are you going to go live?*” Our parents’ announcement of separating made me feel numb. Young and

vulnerable, she said to me, “*I am going to Mr and Mrs IK.*” I was thinking the same. My reply was simple, “*Oh, that is a good idea.*” I knew she would be safe.

Prior to my parent’s separation my sister and I had encounters with an uncle that took something so precious from us. Our innocent lives, now replaced with shame, guilt, and the fear that if anyone found out we would be considered bad girls, and that telling the world would destroy the family.

Children take on a false sense of responsibility. Tragically the events that took place in my early teenage years filled me with fear, shame, and a rebellious nature. I felt responsible for everyone else’s happiness but my own. Experiencing rejection, struggle, doubt and a deep lack of self-worth were normal. My education was cut short and I really felt cast aside. I felt inadequate.

### **I gave it my all**

Growing up a dancer gave me pleasure and a sense of purpose. Hours of classes, private lessons, and practice motivated me to be the best I could be.

I had good childhood memories and as a kid, I loved achieving my personal excellence - for which I am forever grateful today. As a ballerina I was asked to audition for the Australian Ballet company, my fear was so great that I said, “No”. Deep down I didn’t feel good enough, I compared myself to the other girl that was asked. I learnt early on about comparison and underneath I never felt enough.

Comparison robs your joy more quickly than you can blink. **Who do you compare yourself to?** The wisest thing you can do is to get into your own activity in life, focus on your dreams and

don’t look back unless you are drawing from your gifts to propel your life forward.

***I gave it all,*** daily. My dancing routine was a normal part of my life, it never felt like work. Dancers learn many characteristics that translate into everyday life, my top three favourites:

1. Grit – strength of character, determination, never quitting, dedicated, loyal
2. Courage – stepping out of your comfort zone, feeling the fear and doing it anyway
3. Passion – a deep love, a compelling thought that never leaves you, fun

Backstage, I remember feeling the adrenalin, that moment behind the curtain before stepping onto the stage was scary and exciting all at once. As I stepped on the stage all my shyness disappeared and my confidence shone through. My fear conquered, digging deep this was something natural for me. Little did I know, that fear was going to be my number one enemy.

### **Trapped in a world filled with pain**

My thoughts paralysed me for years and it showed through my behaviour. The next decade of my life was out of control, I was irresponsible and a real danger to myself. I had an eating disorder (and still to this day struggle with a healthier attitude towards food). I was filled with such anger yet still eager to take on the world and all it had to offer.

I used alcohol to numb fear, anger and grief, and so much more. Numbing the pain is never a good choice, it creates more devastation than you set out to fix. I was reckless and insecure. I had no boundaries and seemed to leave a trail of destruction where ever I went. I made decisions that were rarely in my best

interest or anyone else's for that matter. Was there a way out of my poor me attitude? **YES!**

*A small voice on the inside of me that said: "MAKE A CHANGE NOW!"*

Needing to get away from where my life was I made the decision to move from Adelaide to Melbourne. I was a copycat, with no ability to think for myself, I knew I had to change but with no self-confidence, I was carrying very unsupportive beliefs and thoughts.

I felt unlovable, unworthy, like I couldn't have a proper relationship to save myself. I mismanaged money and felt like no one was there for me. I self-medicated with alcohol four or five nights a week, and my philosophy was I will reject you before you can reject me.

Every relationship was steeped in wrong thinking. I was searching for healing of my soul and I wanted answers. Suddenly, I stopped drinking and the terror and fear rose to the surface. I would sit in my room each night writing letters to God expressing how scared I was. This went on for two years, finding solace writing in my journal and walking in the gardens.

### **Yearning for more**

Fast forward quite a few years later, I was involved in lots of personal development and change when I met my husband. He was able to tame me and finally, thoughts of family were flooding my brain. I loved being pregnant, being a mum, and learnt much about holistic living. I discovered aromatherapy. My boys were healthy and their immune system strong, they still love essential oils today.

I spent years developing myself, attending courses and reading books. I became a qualified Clinical Aromatherapist when my boys were about eight. I received my first diploma, even though I had been teaching for six years by now. My confidence grew and a truly nurturing side of my-self emerged. My passion for skin care is an integral part of my life. I feel such JOY when I'm able to give back to others.

Sadly, prior to my marriage breaking down, my sister, aged 35, took her own life. My sister's life was full of torment, just as mine had been. A sense of relief knowing her pain was over, helped but I also felt like my history had resurfaced. The one person who knew everything about me was gone, the sister I loved so much.

Two years later my mum died from pneumonia and heart complications, and much like before I felt a sense of relief but with a broken heart. I didn't want these fractures to beat me, and slowly I began to find forgiveness, compassion and understanding within myself. My journey with God got me through many struggles.

Raising boys and working full-time as a sole parent was challenging, but we got through many rough times. We delivered local papers, Avon and Home Care catalogues just to make ends meet. Begrudgingly, at six am we would put the papers through the letterboxes. An angry dog on the other side, barking and growling, would snatch the paper and eat it, scary but funny. I did things other people didn't want to do to pay bills. I continued to study, learn and grow as I was determined to be the best version of myself and a role model for the boys.

I had a deep yearning to have my own place where I was no longer at the mercy of landlords and real estate agents. The past experiences of homelessness drove me to never be in that situa-

tion again. I had lost all faith that my dream would come true but a friend shared her story with me and from that moment on my faith was strong that I would own my place one day.

John Howard released the first home buyer's grant, a whopping \$17,000. With a good income, and my deposit I went and purchased a unit. From a sole parent with nothing to a homeowner! After spending seven years as a trainer at TAFE and three years as a skin care Ambassador, the mix of training and sales skills prepared me for the next seven years as a top performing, business developer. In my new job in training and sales, I shared the message of education with others who lacked confidence. It was inspiring, I loved watching people grow and develop. **What do you yearn for deeply?**

Sadly, government funding stopped, leading to a lot of redundancy. Working for other companies just didn't have the same value. Wanting more life choices and not being dependent on whatever came along, I dug deep. I knew the goals I had written down came to pass and I was happy with the qualifications and achievements so far. I started to believe I could make a transition in my life from corporate to a business owner.

### **Hope-filled life**

I prayed as I wrote down my goal:

***“Aroma business. Is a heart desire to touch people with wellness products”.***

Time to go back to what I loved. I wasn't sure how but I trusted it would come. Months passed after writing my goal, and at the same time I needed, a good botanical skincare range. It was then a work colleague came bouncing into the office. Whatever she had I wanted. Handing me a sample she said, “Try this it is botani-

cal based, pure, safe and beneficial product”. I was so excited, a new skin care range. I was very interested and asked her, “*Could I make money from this?*” A resounding “YES” was ringing in my ears. When she said I could, my spirit was leaping for Joy. In that moment I knew my dream had emerged, that I could be anywhere running a business with only my smartphone, some lippy and a savvy attitude. I jumped in with both feet. The company ticked all the boxes including being an online shopping global business. The journey needed persistence, a coachable heart, and passion. A deeper gratitude towards life, a change of mindset and an unwavering belief has changed me and given me Hope. In fact, I had forgotten about my goal but God hadn't.

Looking ten years younger, doing what I love. What more could a girl want?

This business is setting me and my boys up for time freedom, financial freedom, the superannuation I need and the lifestyle I desire.

*You cannot change your destination overnight, but you can change your direction overnight. -Jim Rohn.*

It's a blessing to be able to give others a vehicle that can empower them and their families to a lifetime of dreams coming true. **Are you desiring time freedom, financial freedom, time to travel, reaching your full potential, leading others, be your own boss, be with your children more? What is your DREAM?**

**Saying YES to Your Seeds of Greatness**

*If you want to reach your goals and fulfil your potential, become intentional about your personal growth. It will change your life. -John Maxwell.*

Take your negative thoughts and habits captive and replace it with positivity. Reading and listening to audio will help to form new habits.

Dr Caroline Leaf says the brain is plastic and can be changed moment by moment by how we direct our thinking. – Our brains are being constantly being reprogrammed by the choices we make, and it is very exciting to notice how my thoughts have changed for the better. Good thinking = good choices = healthy thoughts. Toxic thinking = toxic choices = toxic thoughts.

Choosing morning routines tears down toxic thoughts and rebuilds healthy ones, it is called neurogenesis. This is a sample of my morning:

- 20 minutes each morning of reading on personal development
- Visualisation and morning prayer and looking over my goals
- 30 minute exercise, listening to my favourite speakers or preachers
- Most important: Breakfast with my shake, fibre, greens and supplements
- Listening to audios of great leaders while driving

There were days where I would think “Is this working?” Perseverance is winning. Creating a new standard takes commitment and routine. Read as much as you can and **Dream BIG**. As the saying goes “If it doesn’t make you cry then your vision isn’t big enough.” To build a dream you need to get serious - something

I had to learn. **Keep your vision before your eyes** – written word and vision boards keep you focused. It helps to stretch your vision by using your imagination. Without vision people perish.

**Goals** – “Goals are just dreams with deadlines” Napoleon Hill.

Change your life - don’t settle for debt, unhappiness, an average job or anything else that make you feel less than. Be the extraordinary. Writing down your goals daily and be certain, don’t be double minded. Successful people write down their goal, review and rewrite.

**Plan and Execute** – I plan each step daily. I’ve developed systems and follow proven methods. I’m proud to be a copy-cat by following leaders that have walked the path of success before me. This helps me focus on my activity and I learn to become more consistent daily.

Be accountable to someone. There are many online and offline mentors in my life that have been my inspiration. From books, audio and face to face seminars, webinars and study. I couldn’t have grown without this help. My favourite book says, “Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the **renewing of your mind**”. Change starts with you, you get to decide.

**Hello Future** has been developed from Ronece’s experience and desire to help others. Plant the seed, water it daily, let some sunshine in and watch YOUR seed grow. The online program includes: Creating a Vision Board, Goal Setting, Planning, Executing and Dreaming BIG.

### Seeds of Greatness – One-on-one mentoring:

- Transition from one role to another- stay at home mum to work, worker to business, business to an additional income stream
- Develop your vision, habits, mindset, goals and grow your seeds of greatness
- Creating additional residual based income streams through direct sales. Let's chat over coffee

### Why don't you say YES to your Possibilities?

## SARAH GRIFFITHS



*Listen to what is within you and make choices aligned with who you really are*

“BELIEVE IN YOURSELF AND become who you need to be to succeed.”

Mother and Entrepreneur

As the 52- year old mother of 20-year-old twins, I am proud to call myself an entrepreneur. I have successfully set up and operated two businesses and am in the process of developing a third. I hope to share my extensive life and business skills and experiences to help other people achieve their goals and create their own successes.

My first two businesses are restaurants and my first taste of the hospitality industry was with the franchise, The Coffee Club. I chose the relative safety of franchising as they have the blueprint for success, they have the support, knowledge and structure that I

needed to feel secure in taking that first step. I am a very successful and awarded franchisee and just this year was nominated as franchise council WA businesswoman of the year.

Taking everything I had learnt I then opened a second restaurant, nearly four years ago, which was not a franchise but an independent fine dining evening restaurant. When I bought it, it was in decline but by then I had the confidence to think that I could turn it around.

### CONNECT WITH SARAH

 [www.sallyg.com](http://www.sallyg.com)

 [www.facebook.com/sallyglifecoach](https://www.facebook.com/sallyglifecoach)

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## FROM BROKEN TO BELIEVING

*“That quiet inner voice is the whisper  
of the soul, your true self”*

*By Sarah Griffiths*

.....

EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO achieve, whatever you set your mind to, is already within you. The only thing standing between you and your goals, whatever they are, is actually you. Everything you say you want in life but do not achieve will be down to you.

I know it is quite a statement but with two successful businesses behind me and having recently set up my third I totally understand the truth and wisdom of these words. If you can take them on board, they will serve you well.

If you read my bio you will already understand that my journey as a female entrepreneur was not an easy one. I tell you this to make the point that I am no-one special. I did not go to university or have money or connections, no one gave me a head start or an advantage. So, stop focusing on what you think you don't have, you have everything you need.

From a very young age, somewhere deep inside me, I knew I did not want to work for other people. While my peers were busily applying to universities, banks, insurance companies and other corporate entities, I had no idea what I wanted to do. I did know though that the thought of being confined to an office and a routine almost gave me panic attacks. I only had to think

about it to feel the cold sweat of fear and entrapment. I did not understand it myself. I was confused and felt that I must just be really lazy.

My father had always been self-employed, I guess he was my example and I take after him. Throughout my teenage years I worked on his home-improvement company's promotions stand. Here I quickly learnt that I was a people-person. I liked talking to new people and my outgoing and vivacious personality meant that people were drawn to me and I had a natural flair for sales. Being young and pretty and female also helped.

It is interesting looking back thirty years later and seeing how there were moments when my true passion was revealing itself but, due to circumstances, things people said, or a lack of encouragement I ignored what my whole being, my true self, was telling me. At the age of nineteen there was a brief period where after college I thought about going to university. I had always written and read a lot, I loved English literature and writing so I toyed with the idea of either studying journalism or teaching. In a chance conversation with my mother, trying to get some direction I mentioned this dilemma to her to which she replied: *"There is no point going to university unless you know what you want to be."* I totally took this at face value and shelved all thoughts of the university. How easily we are swayed by the words and opinions of others and what a great impact that can have on our lives.

Shortly afterwards I moved to London where I was fortunate to land a very good sales role within commercial interiors. This was an ideal role for me as it incorporated my enjoyment of people and selling, with elements of design and creativity as my clients

were architects and designers. More importantly, still it gave me the sense of freedom that I needed. I had a big area to look after with several hundred clients so I planned my time and calls and was only in the office one day a week. I enjoyed that one day in the office, being part of the team and giving my week some structure. I didn't acknowledge it at the time but, I was young and immature and the job had just the right balance of autonomy, which required self-discipline but there was also a plan and an expectation which was good for me to follow.

I actually did that job for four years and, on the whole I really enjoyed it. Then came a turning point, a restlessness and a sense that something very important was missing. I felt confined and as if there was nothing left for me to do - no growth to be had and not enough flexibility. No meaningful way to express myself. It was that whisper again, that tap on my shoulder, my inner self, trying to get my attention and get me back on track. I found an advert for a writing course. There we are, journalism again. I was excited and showed it to my dad. I told him what I was thinking and he immediately asked me why I would do that when I had a really good job? What would be the point? I expect this scenario sounds very familiar to some of you.

People who dissuade us from stepping out of the ordinary are not generally being mean, they just want to keep us safe and do not understand our desire for the exceptional. I guess his self-employed life had been very hard. Working hard but never really having or achieving much, so of course, he discouraged me, pointing out all the disadvantages as opposed to the benefits of my current life. At that time, I could see his point. I had an above average salary with a company car and all the perks, I was living

in West London with a fairly well off boyfriend, with a lively social life and on the surface it must have looked as if I had it all. Why would I even consider throwing it all away? What was wrong with me, I had no idea why I was unhappy. I just felt that I must be really ungrateful and hard to please. I guess others must have seen it that way too, including the boyfriend!

I put away all thoughts of writing but, by then I had become very unsettled. I felt like I needed a break from everyone and everything. What I really needed was to take control of my own destiny, listen to that small inner voice and take action on what it was telling me. Then, just like now, there was such a high expectation to just conform, settle down and somehow be happy. I had no sense then like I do now of how making decisions and taking control is my responsibility. Back then I just felt like a complete failure and that my inability to just settle down and be happy made me ungrateful, inadequate and somehow very strange. I really did not like myself. I seemingly had it all but was so unhappy. I had no idea what was going on or how to “fix” myself.

Moving on a few years and in April 1995, aged 29, I got married and in October 1996 I had twins. Now, I am not a person to not work - I am hugely driven by a need to achieve so it was devastating when a car accident when I was 6 weeks pregnant, left me with significant lower back injuries that meant I could not return to work. The next five years were very bleak indeed, a lot of pain coupled with serious postnatal depression, exacerbated, no doubt, by the loss of earnings, social isolation and a general sense of losing myself that being unable to work caused. I did not

actually start to recover from that until my boys went to school, they were more independent so the pain started to lessen and I could think about things other than being a stay-at-home mum who hated and loathed that role!

Things have to change!

I was so unhappy that in 2006 we decided to migrate to Australia, a massive move for any family but, I was so excited because finally, here was my chance. We could move to a new country and have a whole new life. For many years previously I had been wanting to combine my love of people with a business venture so the obvious outcome from the move was to use our money (I had made money developing several houses in the previous few years) to invest in a tourism, accommodation business. The one thing we were certain of was that this was a new start, new opportunities, and we absolutely were not going to work for anyone else. I should have seen the red flags as my husband had always enjoyed the security of working for a company, whereas I had always shunned it and wished that he did not! I was deliriously happy. I was escaping all the pain of the past few years and my new life ahead looked wonderful.

Within a few weeks of arriving in Australia, the dream was shattered. I was left reeling, wondering what had happened. I was living in a house and an area that I hated and my husband had a job with a Government body. It would have been hard to imagine how it could go so wrong so quickly and be so far removed from all that we had planned. I was miserable and lonely and Marc just carried on as if everything was fine, again making me wonder what was wrong with myself. After eight months I gave in, got a job in

commercial interior sales again and tried to make the best of it. By 2011 after nearly five years of depression and disappointment, I knew I had to do something, I was literally feeling suicidal with the life that we had created.

It was not exactly what I wanted but loosely aligned to the tourism idea, I thought about opening a café or restaurant. Now, I had no idea how to do this but the desire to work for myself was by then overwhelming. With all the setbacks my sunny personality had taken quite a knock and my self-confidence was very low, so I opted for a franchise, specifically because they had the blueprint, the methods and history of success which was just what I needed.

In March 2011 I took on a brand new franchise with The Coffee Club. For three years I worked incredibly hard in that business. I set incredibly high standards and expectations and I was there to make sure they were met. By 2014 I felt confident in myself and all I had learnt and I took on a second restaurant. Not a franchise this time but, a restaurant that was in decline and needed to be given a second lease of life. I was finally the entrepreneur I wanted to be!

Saying YES to Myself!

An unexpected shift came at the end of 2016 as I realised that through my businesses, I had grown tremendously as a person. People were coming to me for business and life advice. I was being recommended as someone respected to talk to for guidance and direction and I was loving being able to help people in this way. I did not realise it at the time but those were my first tentative steps towards becoming a business and life coach. I started on an intense personal development journey and stepped back from the restaurants so that I could study and invest in being mentored.

My inner self literally came alive as I recognised the joining of my desire to teach and to write and how I was going to use those skills to help other people on their own journey. To encourage them to listen to who they really are and to help make their journey smoother, shorter and far less painful than my own.

Listen to what is within you and make choices aligned with who you really are. Just like the franchise, get someone to help you realise your dreams. Someone who has been there and done it and knows the way. Who can guide you and teach you all you need to know for a shorter and less painful journey to your own success and happiness.

\*

# HARMEEN KAUR



*Saying yes ... can guarantee you, set of reactions, touching lives and changing situations, carrying you to a door you never in your wildest dreams thought would open.*

HAILING FROM A ZAMBIAN Sikh family, Harmeen Kaur attained her qualifications in the fields of Business, Marketing, Management and Commerce in Sydney. She proceeded to work in the Education industry as a part-time Student Support Officer.

Her vigour and determination led her to the ranks of Compliance Manager, Group Marketing and Operations Manager for a group of companies delivering vocational and higher education on multiple campuses across Australia. She left her full-time position to find her calling and to pay her bills she started her consulting business with Australian higher education providers.

During this period, a few gaps and potentials were realised within her life and the education

industry. With a passion to make a difference, backed with nine years of experience in the education and training industry, Harmeen said YES to an opportunity and she now is the co-founder and Chief Operations Officer of Aston College. Aston College delivers Australian vocational education across multiple locations in the world, with the purpose of transforming lives of individuals and strengthening communities, through employment linked education and training.

She is also the author of *Cracking the RPL code, My life, my decisions, my career, and How Pathway programs helped me succeed*. And now debuting as a co-author of *I said yes*.

In her downtime, Harmeen runs a blog called Kourageous.com on random thoughts on various issues. Raising awareness of mental illness and depression are causes close to her heart.

Her personal purpose is to be of service by raising awareness through education, reigniting and passing the torch of humanity and service along the way. She believes if the human race got together as one, we could generate powerful amounts of energy tapping into something phenomenal and out of this world.

### CONNECT WITH HARMEEN



<https://www.instagram.com/humanisedher/>  
<https://www.instagram.com/astoncollege/>



<https://www.facebook.com/KourageousH>  
<https://www.facebook.com/AstonCollege>



<http://www.kourageous.com/>  
<http://aston.edu.au/>

# THE RIPPLE EFFECT

By Harmeen Kaur

.....  
I SAID YES! How many times have you said that phrase? Or here's another question, how many times have you been presented with an opportunity where your heart wants to say yes, but your brain goes into shut-down mode and you think you will utter the word yes, but immediately without even a second thought, you hear your own voice, saying No? I, like most people, have had so many of those relatable moments too. Life took a different turn when I discovered the art of saying yes.

To give you bits of context, let's take a mental summarised flashback to the African continent I called home while growing up.

In the early 2000's, yes not the 1800's, I was a high school student in a small town in Zambia. Life was pretty simple and I had it all figured out as a teenager. I wanted to work for the United Nations as a doctor who travelled from one region to another helping individuals in need of medical assistance. Attending a few seminars held by institutes at education fairs reaffirmed my dreams of staying and studying in Zambia and pursuing my life goal of helping people. I did not want to abandon my country and make a life elsewhere.

Year 12 hit me with a realisation that I needed to act soon and commence my pathway to the medical field. You probably already know from my bio that life hit me with Australia. I thought of it as a roadblock at the time, and I did not become a doctor.

Long story short, family pressure from the elders of my parents decided that Australia was for me! Business studies were apparently my thing and with a heavy heart, my parents apologised for not being able to provide me with a life that I dreamt of. I landed in Sydney with one small old-fashioned bag alone and my Uncle and Aunt were waiting for me with open arms.

To others it seemed I lived a life full of excitement and new beginnings. To have your dreams crushed at 18 was not easy, to say the least. I put on a brave front. 'Mentsu' the Japanese concept of saving face. It was a facade so that I did not have to talk about what I lost. I had a mask on all the time and it only came off when I cried myself to sleep. To the outside world, including my parents, family, colleagues and friends, I was happy and posted how awesome life was on social media. I had days where I thought I was doing just fine and then days where I felt like the walls were caving in and I was being swallowed by depression. So smiling a little bit more with such radiance was my way out, yet no one saw the deep dark hole I filled out with doing things for the sake of it.

I could feel my greatness, I could feel what I had to offer the world, and I could feel the differences I could make. I could feel the potential, I could feel it all. It seemed like I built the walls and now they had a mind of their own. I woke with feelings of dread and fear on most days, but I still got on the bus went to college and work and did what I had to do.

To say that one moment defined and changed my life would be me telling a white lie. For the life of me, I cannot remember what changed or how the process began! All I remember is, I came to the country in 2008 as a student. I worked from being a receptionist up to a managerial position. I kept doing things for the sake of it all.

I said yes to roles I knew I had no experience in. One year I was in the one department and the next time in another. I jumped from Management to Marketing to HR to Accounts to Operations to everything in between. I spent around seven years working for the same group of companies in different capacities. My reason? I had none. I did it and kept going.

In the meantime, my parents and siblings left Zambia and moved to Canada due to some compelling circumstances. They left the life they knew to start one they never dreamt of. I applied for a visa after visa to visit them, to hug them and let them know of my struggles and got rejected on every front. This carried on for the seven years where I kept doing different roles and learning. I eventually got the honour of becoming an Australian citizen.

Unknown to me, I was laying a foundation. I did not see it at the time and after seven years of not knowing if I will be ever whole or if I will ever be happy with myself I left the group and ventured out on my own. It was the scariest thing I had ever done. I had no job, no vision for the future, no goal to pursue and according to me, I had no direction or one particular skill I could rely on. I envied people that knew they were marketing specialists or they were accountants. I admired that they had one field they were really good at. I thought I really had it very hard. I became the 'victim.'

At this point I was living on my own, waves of depression swept back and forth. I started my own consulting firm going into a business and helping out with marketing and compliance. Again to the outside world, here I was a confident woman pursuing her dreams. To me, inside I was still the eighteen-year-old who was a victim. All I wanted to do was run to my parents and brothers and just hug them tight. I couldn't do that till much later but I always

asked myself “Why me?” I started feeling sorry for myself and just had one inner battle after another.

Damn! That was a lengthy summary of a seven-year flashback? Well, we will hang out in the past for a few more paragraphs. Laying the context isn’t easy you know!

So back to it. My ex-colleague and co-founder of Aston College, one day sat down with me and asked me if I wanted to start a business with him. Who me? Being in business? You have got to be kidding me.

\*

I SAID NO WITHOUT even thinking about it. He persisted and encouraged me to be in business. I told him I did not have enough money, plus I was not an expert in any field so clearly he had the wrong person for the job.

He continued nagging me like an annoying person wanting to make a point that I had no intention of listening to. Not sure what possessed me, or how I said it, but I said YES!

Great! So we started the business. My very first business venture that actually had other people working in it. We were soon four business partners delivering education overseas. With no clue on how to do things I went with the flow and gave whatever input I could. Lo and behold, we had to shut down as things went down the gutter all in a blink of an eye. We lost everything - \$300 000 collectively, and all our savings.

Nice one! The one time I actually consciously said yes to something and it did not work out. We had yet another coffee and debrief on what to do moving forward. How do we save ourselves from this disaster?

Surely, I should have gone back to consulting or doing a nine-to-five-office job. The funny part is, we decided to do it again.

Tired of the education industry allowing certain people to exploit international students, we decided to make a difference. We decided to say YES and show the world that we can deliver education and not cut corners.

Aston was born to deliver Australian Education.

1. To give access to students who cannot afford to come to Australia but want a quality Australian education.
2. Creating a pathway program for students who will come to Australia for further studies. This pathway is to ensure that students come to Australia with a sense of purpose, interpersonal skills, better language skills, and with a sense of community to enrich and give back to those communities which are either their home country or Australia if they choose to make it home.
3. Have genuine, conscious students studying in Australia.

This year we launched programs in India, Pakistan and the Philippines. We teamed up with other colleges so they too can have a chance to deliver programs they are experts in. Our goal is to eventually teach trade skills to the less privileged to enhance their lives in their home countries. Our main purpose is to transform lives and strengthen communities.

If you had asked me several years ago where I saw myself today, my answer would have been a purposeless life.

I did make it to see my parents after eight years. I cannot explain the feelings and emotions we all went through that day at the airport in Canada. Tears of all sorts, struggles we all endured

to finally hold each other and say we made it. All I know is when I consciously started to say yes, things began to unfold.

Earlier this year, I also visited the Philippines after my trip to Canada. The eighteen-year-old girl now 28 stood in front of hundreds of students delivering her story. In that moment, I choked up again with so many emotions. I could barely breathe. Here I was, not a doctor but travelling to different parts of the world delivering education and awareness on issues that could potentially help students, parents, Australia, and most of all help me be whole again.



So my YES changed my life slowly without me realising what was happening. What moment changed it? I have no idea. I learned that subconsciously I had kept saying yes, but it was when I consciously started saying YES at the right time, that it was the leap of faith I had to take to venture into a new chapter.

Saying yes does not mean we are prepared, it does not mean we know what lies ahead nor does it mean we will succeed straight away. It will, I can guarantee you, set of reactions, touching lives and changing situations, carrying you to a door you never in your wildest dreams thought would open. A ripple effect of sorts, starting from the core like just a drop in still waters continuing and spreading results from that very event and action carrying you to a world beyond your wildest dreams.

\*

## SUE MATHIESON



*My encouragement to you is to be open to growth, to being stretched, to live an amazing life and to chase your dreams!*

THE MOST GRATIFYING THING was when my old boss said to me

“Depression, so what, that doesn’t change your ability”.

It was the first time I had someone affirm me for who I was and not define me by my illness.

I had been in an emotionally abusive marriage, ended up with severe depression and lost my career. Once on medication, decision making came more readily. I went back to do some study, trained in a clinical role and during this time reconnected with my previous boss. Siva gave me the opportunity to step into a business management role and once again utilise my skills.

*“She is super knowledgeable and fantastic to work with”* – Kerstyn Walsh, Event MC and actress

“How awesome she is as a person. Getting to know her experience and background and her plans for the future, I know she will be successful in whatever she does” – Jay Palese, Entrepreneur

The journey has been filled with highs, lows and many bumps in the road. This rich tapestry of experiences has helped me to keep believing in and learning all that I can about myself. As a speaker, I seek to be an inspiration to others that change is possible and together we can make a difference. As an entrepreneur, I am excited by the opportunities that I have been able to create in business and property investment.

If there was one word that would describe me, I think it would be ‘resilient’.

I hope that I can inspire others to chase their dreams and if there has been adversity, it can be overcome. It takes hard work and perseverance but I am proof that it can be done.

### CONNECT WITH SUE

- 🖱 [www.suemathieson.com.au](http://www.suemathieson.com.au)
- 🖱 [www.employpartners.com.au](http://www.employpartners.com.au)

# SAY ‘YES’ AND MAKE A DIFFERENCE

*Become the master of your destiny!*

By Sue Mathieson

**23<sup>rd</sup> August 2016**

IT FELT STRANGE THAT day, sitting on the train heading into the city. I didn’t normally take days off work to go and do something for myself.

I had conflicting feelings... there was a sense of ‘*I should be at work*’ given that I had a job, but in the depths of my inner being there was a sense of freedom... that I was choosing to do something for me... something that I really wanted to do.

I was so excited that I was taking action, doing something that really mattered. I was done with being in an environment that was negative, unsupportive and not feeling valued. Today, there would be no presentation of a report and Connie (not her real name) regurgitating everything I was presenting as though she was the expert. Leaving me to question why on earth I bothered. There would be no hiding in my office, avoiding the insincere and superficial conversations with her or meetings with a consultant and having to pretend that I was okay when I wasn’t.

My heart was beating a little faster than normal. I wanted to shout out to the people around me, to say how excited I was, but

they were either sleeping or had their heads buried in a phone or laptop. I was unable to focus on reading a book or even look at my phone and so smiled meekly at the lady opposite me.

There was a sense of anticipation going to an event that I really didn't know what to expect. A sense of control that I wasn't doing what I 'should' be doing and being a bit of a rebel.

As the train rattled along past houses and through level crossings, stopping at the required stations, my mind drifted back to when I was fourteen and in year nine.

I was about to speak at the assembly, in front of approximately a hundred people. My palms were sweaty and I was feeling nervous. What would people think of what I was going to say? What would they think of ME? Would they question who I thought I was, getting up and speaking?

I had worked hard in my preparation. I wanted to present an objective opinion on the topic. One that wasn't judgmental, but one that would hopefully encourage my peers to at least think about the topic that I was presenting on.

There was a sense of relief when it was over and in some ways, I didn't really care what my friends thought. I did know, however, that I wanted to be a person of influence, someone that could share knowledge and experience.

Here I was, sitting on the train, almost forty years later, FINALLY stepping toward my dream. I wasn't sure how it was all going to pan out but I was consciously taking action to create my own destiny.

I had no idea who JT Foxx was. All I knew was that when an invitation to a free Mega Speaker event came up on my Facebook feed, I had to be there. I would deal with any fallout at work afterwards.

By the end of the day, I was exhausted. It was close to 6 pm and my brain was buzzing with all the new knowledge that I had received. The day had been filled with energy, meeting new people, talking and sharing. There was an opportunity to go to Orlando, Florida in the coming November. I had no idea what I was signing up for. I just knew I had to be there! I said YES.



*Me with JT Foxx*

### **9<sup>th</sup> November 2016**

I was buckled into my seat, waiting for the plane to push back. I loved flying and being on the A380, thinking about it so effortlessly climbing into the sky was giving me a buzz. A part of me felt a little crazy, heading all the way to Florida for a four-day event and then turning around to come back home. In that craziness was an element of defiance, I wanted to prove to myself that I

could do it. After all, this was in part the kind of life I wanted to embark on. Travelling, having a global business.

A part of me also felt guilty. Would the kids be okay? Would they get on or would they fight? I had to let go of that and remind myself that it was MY TIME now. They were 21 and eighteen, able to drive and get where they needed to be. I had provided above and beyond for them, it was time to invest in myself and in that be a role model. To show to my kids that I had something to offer the world that was unique and special.

### 10<sup>th</sup> November 2016

People were milling about, chatting, and introducing themselves. Some who obviously knew each other were greeting with either a handshake or a squeal of delight, a hug and kiss on the cheek. There was an energy in the air, a sense of anticipation.

Finally, the doors opened to the main auditorium and people quickly filed in. The room was enormous! Rows of tables filled the entire space.

I was glad that I had Bron to share the experience with. We had met back in August at the Melbourne event and decided to share accommodation. Having one person that I knew made navigating the unknown a little easier.

There were 1500 people from over 61 countries around the globe. To say that the mood was electrifying was an understatement!

The following four days were like nothing I had experienced before. Everybody was there for the same reason – to learn, share and grow together. Whether you were a multi-multi-millionaire or just starting out, it didn't matter. It really was family! People with extensive experience and insight presented on stage as well

as JT Foxx and his wonderful coaches. There were also the most amazing celebrity speakers including Calvin Klein, 50 Cent and Fredrik Eklund, just to name a few. Having grown up with movies like *Grease* and *Saturday Night Fever* it was an absolute delight on the Saturday night to be standing on my chair with hundreds of others singing *You're the One that I want* with John Travolta... I had to keep pinching myself!

I felt alive and at home in this environment. People were so positive and willing to share. Even after a long day, there was an opportunity to mingle at the bar, have a drink and something to eat.

### 18<sup>th</sup> April 2017

Again, I was sitting on an A380 but this time, bound for New York. It was going to be a long haul, across to Los Angeles and then on to the east coast of the US. Having managed the trip in November 2016, I was ready to take this in my stride. This would be a smaller group of people, learning about how to successfully brand ourselves and our business.

I was excited but also a bit tired. I had become increasingly aware that staying in my current work situation was not sustainable. It was impacting my health. I was experiencing increasing blood pressure issues. My medication had been increased twice within a short period of time and my GP was becoming more and more concerned about my ongoing health. Having convinced her some months earlier that I could manage without going on sick leave, I realised that my health was more important and had now resigned from my job. I could go away knowing that on my return there would only be a short time before I finished up.

**21<sup>st</sup> April 2017**

What an amazing three days! I was able to meet Fredrik Eklund from Million Dollar Listings. He is the number one real estate broker in New York City, a man that has achieved so much and is so inspirational. To be able to see the sales gallery for the Steiner, East Village development, was a real privilege.



*Here am I, a girl from Melbourne, mixing with the elite.*

I was also able to receive teaching from Hugh Hilton for a day. He offered incredible insight into business, underpinning principles with the most interesting and engaging stories. Mr Hilton has been involved in 28 corporate restructuring, turnaround and performance engagements.

Hearing from Jason Flom, CEO of Lava Records and Lava Music Publishing was inspirational. Amongst many well-known artists, he discovered Katy Perry and Lorde. Whilst his stories from the music industry were entertaining and insightful, it was his stories about helping the wrongfully convicted that were the most enlightening. Jason has spent many years helping everyday people, changing their lives by freeing them from prison.

My love of and interest in property was piqued as I listened to Anthony Lolli. An author, entrepreneur, philanthropist and real estate mogul, Anthony grew up in Brooklyn, New York. Even though he grew up poor, he was a millionaire by the age of 23. He built the very successful Rapid Realty franchise.

Not only did I get to engage with very inspirational and influential business people but I also got to network with others from Singapore, Canada, UK and USA. I was loving the intellectual challenge, the opportunities to meet so many amazing people and was noticing how much I was growing as an individual.

It would have been remiss to travel that distance and not do some sightseeing. The next five days were filled with exploring galleries, iconic sights such as the Statue of Liberty and a sobering visit to the 9/11 Memorial. There was energy, life, great restaurants and wonderful architecture. I loved New York.

**22<sup>nd</sup> May 2017**

Today there is no office to drive to, only the study in my home. It is strange in some ways and will probably take some time to get used to. I have a clear structure that I want to follow and a number of goals to achieve. I am now the master of my own destiny and it is up to me to make this work.

**29<sup>th</sup> June 2017**

Wow! Wow! Wow! I was speechless as the realisation hit me. I could see how my decision making through my entire life had been impacted. It was so freeing to understand the drivers and for it all to make sense. I was slowly tearing down the limiting beliefs and the mindsets that had been holding me back.

I had been working with a coach and this was my second session. We were able to identify that an event that had happened

when I was 21 months old (too young to consciously remember) had created a system of beliefs in my brain that had gone unchallenged for all these years. I needed to be able to give myself every chance of success in my new endeavours and this was a very significant breakthrough.

I believe there is real power in saying YES to opportunity.

At times it might be scary because you're not sure what the outcome is going to be. There is often a financial cost involved. That can be hard too, as you're not always sure how you are going to finance the opportunity. However, you know you need to take it.

When I was asked if I would consider being a co-author to an anthology called "I said YES", I was jumping out of my skin because that has really been my journey over the past twelve months.

I hope that as you have read some of my recent experiences that you would be inspired to say 'YES' to opportunities that come your way. My encouragement to you is to be open to growth, to being stretched, to live an amazing life and to chase your dreams!

At the time of writing, I have become a Director of a new Human Resources company – Employ Partners and continue to promote my business consultancy, I have a technology business and I have joined Toastmasters to improve my public speaking. Once this book is published, I will also be an author.

I look forward to hearing your journey and the success that you achieve!

\*

## JAYNE ALBISTON



*I honestly believe continuing to choose to step beyond your comfort zone results in a life where you are constantly moving towards fulfilling your true potential.*

### **Choose to become inspiring.**

CO-FOUNDER OF PLUSONE DYNAMICS, an Australasian Professional Business Network, international trainer and speaker, certified iMA Practitioner, author and co-creator of workshops and professional development resources, and a lifelong lover of international travel, wine and chocolate.

Jayne is on a mission to inspire solutions through international business development, to help others network and connect effectively, and to ensure not-for-profits and corporates build strong, resilient teams which achieve their goals.

Half Australian and half Kiwi, Jayne spent her formative years in New Zealand before embarking on

a life that has seen her travel to over 25 countries including living in Austria, Canada and Poland. Jayne graduated from Auckland University with a BA in Sociology and English Literature and a Post Graduate Diploma in Sociology. She spent years in the international education, work and travel industry starting out teaching ESOL and then moving through the ranks to business development and international business senior management. The markets she has worked with include, but is not limited to: Europe, Russia, the UK, the USA, Canada, South Africa, The Middle East, India, China, Japan and Korea.

PlusOne Dynamics was established in 2012 to inspire, create and deliver effective solutions to people, teams and businesses that build connectivity, communication and engagement and produce tangible results. The vision is to have a global impact on people and their businesses.

Through their passion, expertise and drive, Jayne and the PlusOne Dynamics team aim to become a partner of choice for those looking to connect more effectively, communicate with more clarity and to strategically build engaging networks and teams. They assist SMEs, corporates and not for profits with expanding their online and offline networks by delivering workshops and effective networking strategies combined with team building focused on the differences in people's preferred communication styles using the iMA framework.

Personally, Jayne is driven by her own core values of authenticity, professionalism, results, passion and consistency. She is committed to making sure her choice to be inspiring, to maintain an optimistic frame of mind, to be engaging, compelling and consistent across all platforms, translates into true professionalism and the best results for those she partners with. Jayne

lives between Australia and New Zealand and is the mother of 5 amazing young adults.

*My purpose is to express my passion, energy and drive to inspire, connect and build engaging networks with people and businesses.*

#### CONNECT WITH JAYNE ALBISTON

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# THERE IS ALWAYS A REALITY BEYOND THE ONE YOU KNOW NOW

*By Jayne Albiston*

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IT WAS JULY 1989. Europe was calling and I said YES.

At the time, I just wanted an eye opener, something to broaden the narrow view of the world that I had grown up with, something different; something *on the other side of my comfort zone*.

There is a common saying; 'If you do what you've always done, you'll get what you've always got'.

A one-way ticket to Frankfurt was about to change all of that and little did I realise at the time that I would be walking straight into the path of one of the most significant times of historical change since World War II.

## **What We Know And Believe Is Based On Our Life Experience To Date**

I had grown up with the Cold War being a part of life. The banter between the then Soviet Union and the USA was everyday news and the idea that someone was going to blow the world to pieces someday simply because they wanted to prove their strength, power and ultimately their domination was just a given that we all lived with. Growing up in New Zealand, the one consolation was that we were so far away and we were so insignificant that of any country, we had one of the best chances of surviving a nuclear holocaust or even escaping it all together.

The 'Iron Curtain' had sat in my mind ever since I could remember, literally as a massive, physical curtain made of iron that stretched for miles along the borders of the Soviet Union. It trapped all those who were on the wrong side of it and preventing the rest of us from seeing or knowing if the stories of greatness and grandeur that frequently hit our newspapers had any ounce of truth to them. I often wondered if perhaps the reality was something completely different; something that none of us could imagine. The fact that until 29 July 1981 (the wedding of Lady Diana and Prince Charles) my family did not have a TV, only served to feed my vivid imagination as to what might lie beyond 'The Iron Curtain'.

One of the weekly highlights of my early primary school years was Friday film time when a projector would be set up and our entire country school (forty to sixty students in total) would gather in an unused classroom to watch whatever the NZ Ministry of Education had happened to send us to watch that week. I vividly recall the 'official' films about China and Chinese life, which showed them all dressed in identical clothing, all riding bicycles, sharing plots of land and farm machinery. I thought it was crazy how they all had pretty much identical hairstyles, one style for men and one for women. This, the films informed me was the Communist system; a system, a system where every citizen was regarded as equal and treated fairly.

I think it is understandable that my child brain then mapped this onto an internal picture of all Communist countries and contributed to how I pictured life behind 'The Iron Curtain', the biggest collective of Communist countries in the world.

### **Bursting The Bubble**

Three things stand out in my memory as being responsible for bursting this peaceful bubble I had created of what life in a socialist society looked like.

The first was the photocopied newsletters from the underground movement of people fighting for democracy from behind the Iron Curtain that my father somehow acquired on a semi-regular basis and used to leave on my bed for me to find and read.

The second was the level of extreme control and discipline we all saw on the faces of Russian, Romanian and other Soviet Union country participants in the Olympic Games, particularly in sports such as gymnastics and the stories that followed of those who managed to 'defect' to the West as we referred to it at that time.

The third was the graphic stories of how East Germans attempted border crossings from East to West Berlin that my German language teacher told our class at the beginning of 1982. She had spent a year in West Berlin and her account of those she had met combined with the photos in books of dramatic escapes, both successful and unsuccessful, made a lasting impact on me.

### **There Is More To Life Than Our Current Experience**

The toxic combination of inconsistencies about life in Communist countries and the reality of what really lay beyond the Iron Curtain fuelled a fascination in me that would not leave. It was clear that there was more to life outside rural New Zealand, University, Australia and any other place where I had been. It was like I had a duty to myself and what the rest of my life could become, to discover that and at the very least open my eyes to *the possibilities that lay outside my comfort zone*.

Even though I think deep down, most of us in what was then known as the Western world, thought that the extreme level of discipline required to keep the Iron Curtain in place could not last forever, I do think it is fair to say that no one predicted it would literally come crumbling down the way it did. No one predicted it would all happen in the last half of 1989 and that I would be in the middle of it. Mikhail Gorbachev taking over the leadership of Russia and the Soviet Union was the start and I flew straight into the wave of change that his policies of ‘glasnost’ (openness) and ‘perestroika’ (restructuring) had ignited.

### **A Great Place To Start. Doing Something That Was In My Comfort Zone In A Place And Location That Was Outside My Comfort Zone**

I had grown up in a family that volunteered for all manner of charitable organisations and so in a way it was quite inside my comfort zone to join a volunteer organisation and help others for the first six months of my time in Europe.

What was not in my comfort zone but which has gone on to impact and shape almost everything I have done since then, was volunteering to help those in United Nations Refugee Camps in mainly rural areas outside Vienna, Austria. I experienced first-hand meeting those who had just escaped from Eastern European countries such as Romania, Hungary, Poland, Estonia, Georgia, and the then Czechoslovakia and others such as Syria, Persia, Albania and Turkey. Their stories were usually much more dramatic than the ones my German Language Teacher had told us.

It was not unusual for only part of a family to arrive at one of the *Gasthauser*, the others having been shot as they swam, crawled in the dark, or tummy crawled across the snow dressed in white,

in attempts to cross borders to the West. All who were genuine were escaping one life, looking for another. All were *leaving their comfort zone*, looking for a better future with more opportunity and possibility.

Meeting and connecting with these people whose lives had been so outside my realm of understanding of what life could be like, opened my eyes to a completely different world. I listened to their accounts of the conditions they had lived under and somehow survived and then watched their determination continue as they tolerated sometimes horrifically challenging conditions, bunked up in close quarters with others who often had completely different religions, acceptable levels of hygiene, cultural practices and other habits. Sometimes the waiting for a visa to a new country such as the USA was one year, sometimes two and sometimes three years. I frequently met people who had been waiting for three years, the whole time living in these extremely trying conditions.

### **The Unexpected Often Lies Just Outside Our Comfort Zone**

Little did I know that within a month of arriving in Europe I would find myself in Warsaw Poland on the eve of the first democratic election that was to successfully overthrow nearly fifty years of communism, enforced on the Poles by the Western Allies’ pact with Stalin, following the end of World War II.

Neither did I know that within four months, the Berlin Wall would come down and that by Christmas, Nicolai Ceausescu would be executed following a dramatic uprising. He was one of the harshest dictators Romania had ever had, known for the inhuman conditions he imposed on Romanian citizens in an extreme effort to rid the country of its national debt.

I never dreamed that I would be driving into the Romanian revolution in a van with a Red Cross on the front (believing that we would be safe because of the Red Cross), within days of Ceausescu's execution. The expressions on the faces of those I met on that aid trip during the Romanian Revolution will remain with me for the rest of my life. I can not even begin to describe the look on the face of an adult who is seeing a fellow human from outside their country for the first time in their entire life. I will always remember the look of pride on the face of the High School Teacher showing off their technology department and then the tears that welled up in all of our eyes as he asked how it compared to the technology our High School students in the West had. When we said nothing and the teacher pleaded with us to be honest, I to this day have so much respect for my colleague who bravely said, 'These devices are about forty years behind American schools. We would only see these in a museum.'

### **Taking The First Step Paves The Way For The Second**

The years I spent teaching English as a Second Language (1990-91) in the newly post-Communist Poland have been among the greatest gifts I have ever received. I learned to speak Polish and grew to love a culture steeped in tradition and history that was dramatically different from my native one. Above all, I learned what it truly means to connect with fellow humans at a heart level.

The time in Austria and Romania was a great foundation for the years in Poland. It paved the way for me to step even further outside my comfort zone in Poland and as my confidence grew, for me to actively connect with, and contribute to, the lives of those I encountered along the way. The years that followed are

material for many more chapters than just this one. What I want to share here are the lessons I learned and to hopefully impart some inspiration to you as the reader or for you to take and share with others.

### **There Is Always A Reality Beyond The One You Know Now**

Getting on a plane and flying to the other side of the world was a very clear way of getting outside my comfort zone. It was a sink or swim move, feel the fear and do it anyway, don't look back and just go. It was the type of decision that left me with no choice but to modify and adapt in order to survive the dramatically different and challenging situations I found myself in.

For me, it was like pinching myself, like feeling real and feeling reality for the first time. One morning I heard a machine gun fire into a car outside my Red Cross Hotel window on the corner of the square in Timisoara where the Romanian revolution began. I distinctly remember thinking that for the first time in my life this was REAL. It was not TV or just the news with pictures from the comfort of my lounge. It ignited an excitement for life and for making the most of each day that has stayed with me pretty much ever since.

In Poland, the motivation to force myself to feel the fear and do it anyway was survival but the experience planted a seed of new confidence in me that I treasure and have grabbed onto and grown in the years that have followed.

I remember being absolutely petrified to go up to strangers at a tram stop and ask them in Polish what the time was. There are many ways to ask the time and I literally spent about two days asking each batch of people getting off trams in as many ways as I could, to tell me the time. I kept telling myself that chances

were I would never ever see this person again so therefore in the big picture it really did not matter if I completely messed up my accent or my words. Many years later I would go on to also use this technique to get me past the awkwardness of introducing myself to complete strangers at the after-functions at the many international business conferences that I was to attend around the world.

### **There Is A Framework And Set Of Strategies That Work**

In 2011 I said YES to learning a new framework for communicating and connecting with others that not only allowed me to enlarge my own comfort zone of who I can comfortably connect with but has opened doors for me to teach and train others how to do the same.

This framework is called iMA and is a simple set of strategies that enable us to understand our own natural comfort zone when it comes to our outward communication and connectivity and that of the person we are connecting with. My teacher was the Founder of iMA, James Knight. I was fortunate enough to become the first Accredited iMA Practitioner in the whole of Australia and New Zealand and I have since gone on to write and create workshops, training and presentations to help hundreds of people across Australia, New Zealand and internationally.

My own stepping outside my comfort zone in 1989 was full of trial and error and I had to learn along the way what worked and what didn't and how to handle the experiences, without the strategies and tools I am equipped with now.

### **Identify, Modify And Adapt**

The mission of the iMA framework is to bring people closer by helping us to:

1. Identify our own natural comfort zone and that of the person we are connecting with
2. Modify our message so it is more effectively received
3. Adapt to and appreciate the differences in others.

The appreciate part will be my lifelong challenge.

When we know where our natural comfort zone lies and where the comfort zones of others lie, and when we have tools and strategies to modify and adapt, then we can make a conscious decision to move out of our comfort zone and towards the other person in order to connect with them for a particular reason. We can also decide to step outside our comfort zone for the pure reason of wanting to push our natural boundaries and to either achieve more, be more spontaneous, and have more excitement in our lives, have more stability or more meaningful relationships or to be more structured and to improve efficiency and progress with greater accuracy.

### **Identify**

The iMA framework teaches us that we all have a natural comfort zone that is patterned and predictable. It is characterised by two simple signs of observable behaviour; our natural level of openness and our natural drive to move forward (the pace we prefer to go at.) These two signs of observable behaviour produce four different comfort zones. Although we can all communicate and connect in all four zones, there will be one zone or iMA dialect that will ultimately be the least stressful for us.

Another way of looking at it is when we think that we all have people who we naturally click with, who even when we first meet them are naturally on our wavelength and who we are really comfortable with. Apart from these people, everyone else we meet

is on varying degrees of difference from us, from just slightly not on our wavelength or in our comfort zone, right around to those who we know are polar opposites of us and with whom it will always be a challenge to connect. With them, we will forever have to modify and adapt the most. They are the most stressful and challenging people for us to be around.

### **Modify And Adapt**

Contrary to what I was first taught many years ago, it is not really in our interests to draw people into us in a conversation or a relationship: or to think that by drawing them into the zone that is most comfortable to us, they will then start to feel comfortable too. It is more in our interests to identify our own natural comfort zone and that of the person we are with and then to make a conscious decision to move out of our comfort zone and towards theirs. This keeps them comfortable, we are the ones making the effort and ultimately by not taking them out of where they are most naturally comfortable, we will achieve the best outcome for both them and us.

In Poland, I discovered that making the massive effort to move towards others and connect by giving it all I had to speak Polish in a way that I could be understood. It had a huge influence on those around me. For the first time in my life I learned that by simply having the courage to step out and make the effort to move towards them, others wanted to connect with me. My deepest friendships and most meaningful relationships were forged when I stepped out of my comfort zone and spoke Polish rather than when I made others step out of their comfort zones and speak English to me.

### **Enlarging Your Comfort Zone Is Possible And Achievable**

I believe we all have our 1989 moments. The one time when we took that leap and it led to opportunities and possibilities we perhaps never dreamed were possible for us. Since 1989, I have said YES to many opportunities that have taken me outside my comfort zone. Some have stretched me beyond belief, many have been amazingly positive, some have been gut-wrenchingly negative but all have enlarged my comfort zone and I have used them to make me stronger. I encourage you to do the same.

One of the sayings I created along the way that has saved me many times is: ‘The more you do, the more you can do’. It is a simple way of explaining that once we have stretched ourselves beyond our normal, then going there again and even further suddenly enters our realm of what is possible. This is amazing and something that tangibly opens up our lives, our careers, our business, our potential to new heights. And who doesn’t want that?

### **Consciously Saying Yes**

These days I am consciously saying YES to accepting the natural comfort zone I was born with and I am consciously saying YES to the challenge to spend the rest of my life enlarging that comfort zone. For me, having a patterned and predictable way to do that using iMA strategies is of huge value as it gives me a logical place to start and a simple, effective way to plan and to move forward.

Those are my motivators and they are similar to about 25% of the world’s population. You will either naturally be most comfortable in the same zone as me or you will be among the 75% of others who have a different comfort zone. Whatever your natural

comfort zone, iMA strategies and framework can be of immense value to you.

### **Are You Ready To Say Yes?**

The choice to say yes to identifying your own natural comfort zone so you can take steps to go beyond it and to consciously enlarge it, is yours. I honestly believe continuing to choose to step beyond your comfort zone results in a life where you are constantly moving towards fulfilling your true potential. Are you willing to join me?

*As a thank you for reading this chapter, I have a gift for you. I have created this link for you to go to and find out your own iMA style and receive a clear beginning explanation of the framework and your own natural comfort zone. You may even find an additional surprise gift waiting there for you.*

*[www.isaidyes.plusonedynamics.com](http://www.isaidyes.plusonedynamics.com)*

\*

## **KERRY NELSON**



*I said YES to throwing off the shackles of guilt to shine in my own strengths.*

ON 28 MAY 2014, Kerry Anne Nelson arrived home from working in her family business to find her husband had passed away unexpectedly in their home. The very next day Kerry Anne realised that everything boiled down to one question: “Do I let my passion die with him, or do I follow it with everything I have?”

Since then Kerry Anne has invested everything into her mission. She ended up restructuring and then selling that family business to make space for her newfound purpose. These days, Kerry Anne is a business process genius who uses speaking, writing and events to communicate her defining commitment.

Kerry Anne Nelson helps people to find and follow their passion. Her years of experience in business management,

education, events and team leadership have set Kerry Anne up for wins that seem almost instant in developing business growth systems.

**CONNECT WITH KERRY:**

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# I SAID NO

*By Kerry-Anne Nelson*

.....  
GUILT IS A RELENTLESS accusatory voice that annihilates your confidence.

My earliest experiences with guilt were childhood ones. My mum was only eighteen when I was born on July 2, 1975, but by the time she was twenty-five she'd delivered four more bundles of joy. As the oldest of five born to young, working-class parents, expectations were high. It was me who put my baby sister in her car seat for family outings, and me who went to the milk bar to buy my dad's smokes and newspaper after school. I supervised children washing dinner dishes, raking backyard leaves, and cleaning bedrooms to an acceptable standard. I counselled my younger siblings, mediated their squabbles, and consoled them when they were hurt. I was expected to keep the peace, but things were rarely peaceful, and I was often blamed. It's horrible to feel responsible for outcomes you cannot control.

Guilt is a terrorist who holds you hostage.

My family was highly regimented. When my mum fell pregnant with me, my dad immediately joined the army. He was the Baby Boomer man of the house who had a responsibility to his new family. School mornings saw us filing in for breakfast then being issued our daily rations: One fruit. Two sandwiches. Three biscuits. After school was strictly homework and chores before play. Dinner was silently served at 1800 hours so dad could watch the news from the dining table. Then the kitchen was cleaned,

Sale of the Century was watched, baths were had, and we were promptly marched to teeth, toilet, bed. My dad met any deviation from this routine with anger, which could develop into an aggressive rage at the drop of the hat. This happened most days. I couldn't work out how to stop those volcanic eruptions.

Guilt is a poisonous knot in the pit of your stomach.

Our insular family was very much removed from the outside world. Between regular house moves and being embarrassed of my dysfunctional family, I rarely invited friends to my house. My siblings were my first playmates and confidantes. Dad took the car to work, so we walked most places with mum: shops, parks, swimming pools, delivering pamphlets for extra household cash. Clothes were mostly second-hand and passed down from one sibling to the next. I have no childhood memories of going to a restaurant where the menu wasn't shouting at us from a neon board over a counter. I loved my friends and for the most part I had plenty, but I always felt different from my peers. I felt ashamed of my home life and kept it concealed as if it was all my fault. My family was a taboo subject hidden in silence.

Guilt is a ghostly isolation which hides and conceals.

I started school when I was four, so I completed high school by the time I was seventeen. I moved out the very next week. At first to my Youth Pastor's home with his wife and new baby, then into a flat with my best friend. I didn't know what I wanted exactly, but I knew what I didn't want: another day of guilt. My first year out of home was terrifying. The footsteps of every passer-by outside my bedroom window scared me, and the fear of not being able to support myself tormented me daily. I barely heard from my

family that year. My eighteenth birthday was a non-event, and Christmas saw me enduring a few hours of a bitter, uncomfortable family visit before I returned to the loneliness of my adult life. I thought moving out would liberate me, but I was still bound by ties of fear, blame and obligation. I hated this family rejection and wondered how I could make it better.

Guilt is a hopeless case that wistfully gazes at imaginary alternatives.

Things did not get better... indeed, they became remarkably worse when the bombshell was dropped. In May 1994, at eighteen years of age, with a casual job at Coles, and a diet of pizza, yoghurt and two-minute noodles, my doctor made the sobering announcement that I was pregnant. After meeting Adam at a church youth camp a couple of years prior, I'd been with him for about six months and we'd recently become engaged. I didn't know how we would manage it all, or how I would tell my parents or church leaders. It was a nightmare for months. My dad was dismissive. My mum was silent. I was removed from my church roles and we were both made to apologise in front of the five hundred strong congregation. There was certainly no-one celebrating or giving congratulatory hugs. We were outcast and alone. I couldn't believe things had become this bad.

Guilt warps our vision and makes beautiful things into a hideous monstrosity.

Adam and I were married, and I strived to comply with everyone's expectations. But this new life growing inside brought me to a defining crossroads and I decided to turn a corner. For the first time ever, I chose to say NO to feeling guilty. I was deter-

mined to make it all change. Despite my youth, I'd seen first-hand that things never stayed the same, and I'd seen myself muster the courage to confront my fears and hurts. Throughout this pregnancy, I started to deconstruct the mindsets of guilt that had imprisoned me for as long as I could remember. I refused to welcome my beautiful baby to a world that silenced love with the destructive language of shame.

*"We are defined by what we say  
no to" - Paul Graham.*

Practicing new thought patterns is not something that comes quickly or easily. For months my mind was lost in cycles of guilt, remorse, regret and self-loathing. I leaned into my doctor who counselled me with the pragmatic care I needed to set things straight. This baby would be a blessing, and it would bring the best out in me. By the time my beautiful boy Zachery Jacob Koster was born on February 9, 1995, I was ready to love him with everything. The labour was fast and furious and I lost so much blood that I nearly died, but I had true love to live for now. I cried thinking that I may never love another human being as much as I loved this perfect little person. I could scarcely believe how overwhelming this love was. It saw me through the sleepless nights and endless days of new motherhood. It ushered in the birth of my second love, Isabelle Grace Koster on November 1, 1997. To this day, my children are the delight of my life.

*Love does not dishonour others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. 1 Corinthians 13:5*

Learning how to replace thoughts of guilt with the language of love opened new freedom. For the next two decades I survived seasons that would have crushed me otherwise. My developing skills of self-love nurtured me through divorcing Adam at twenty-four years of age and leaving Zac and Isabelle with him for a full year while I battled my demons towards wholeness. As I became better at saying no to guilt and condemnation, it became easier to love others and believe in myself. I wanted more! I wasn't ashamed of the messiness of finding what this elusive 'more' was, so I started learning how to get it. I returned to my kids after that year, and I continued to grow from strength to strength. Nothing could stop me because I'd figured out the keys to exponential growth.

We expand our capacity by loving ourselves first.

I met my second husband Alec at a Sales Awards night in Albury NSW. He was my boss in my new job selling vacuums door to door. It didn't take long for me to fall in love with his intelligence, charm, and big ambitions. We were married in Wagga Wagga NSW in April 2002, deeply in love and excited about the future. For years we traversed the daily terrain of our young family, our church, our businesses, and our country town community. Over time, we progressed from direct sales through to owning a Godfrey's franchise, then we opened an appliance repair centre. I went to university to become a teacher and supported Alec as he kept driving our family business forward. We moved from the repair centre to selling vacuum spares online. Alec was devoted to raising my children as his own, so we never felt the need to have children together. Life wasn't always easy but we were connected in love and our dedication to continuous growth.

We closed the repair centre after three years, ignoring our accountant's advice to go bankrupt, opting instead to pay our

debtors back. Rolling supplier debt chased us for about a decade. Although we continued to grow our revenue by building better websites and bigger sales, we couldn't get back in the black. In 2013 we made a big move to Melbourne to gain cheaper postage rates for our online orders and maximise opportunities for importing. But the debt was crushing, and the stress was too much for Alec.

On May 28, 2014, I returned from our warehouse to find Alec lying face down on our kitchen floor, dead.

His heart attack left me alone with a business choking on old bills and no time to grieve. I returned to work the very next day requesting grace from our suppliers while I worked it all out. The loss continued when my English warehouse assistant had to leave because his visa had expired. Then again another loss when my warehouse manager left because Alec's passing was too much for him to bear. He needed to find his own way forward. I was alone at first, so the business restructuring that ensued was built very firmly on my ability to say NO to guilt, again, and again, and again.

I said No to the guilt that widows face when they experience happiness after they lose their beloved. I was thirty-seven years old and I had a lifetime of living and loving left to do.

I said No to the guilt that came from transforming the business I'd been left with. This had previously been Alec's baby, but now I was in the driver's seat and couldn't waste one moment being sentimental about the task at hand.

I said No to the guilt that came from working until after midnight most nights which left Isabelle at home and grieving alone at sixteen. I had to permit myself to invest in this job fully and see it through.

I said No to the guilt that I faced every time I asked my suppliers to release stock despite having overdue invoices. If I didn't request special treatment I was sure to go under, so I chose the lesser of two evils.

I said No to the guilt of prioritising my needs above others. I was at the end of myself with my back against the wall. It had to be me and mine first if I was going to make it.

I said No to the guilt that came when I asked people to work a little longer or help a little more. I needed support in this mission, so I embraced my strengths as a businesswoman in my own right, and inspired people to champion my cause.

I said No to the guilt of seeing opportunity in the depths of loss. I cannot begin to describe how gutting the grief was, and I still found new tears to cry, but even amidst the loss, there was a chance for me to shine in my strengths... and shine I did.

By December 20, 2014, I had reinvented my business. I reworked our warehouse floor and conducted our first ever stocktake. I implemented a complete locations system to streamline our processes of receiving stock and picking orders. I had my website developer install new software to manage our stock replenishment and inventory levels. He integrated our new systems with the Australia Post software to refine our order fulfilment processes. I managed casual and volunteer staff while I trained two new permanent team members to push forward into a new work flow. I documented the core procedures of my entire business in comprehensive manuals which allowed my team to work with autonomy. I then outsourced my warehouse operations to a third party order fulfilment company. And finally, as a result of all this restructure, I managed to clear that

decade's worth of rolling debt to finally bring my previously ailing business into the black. All this was done in only seven months, which kept me surging forward. On December 1, 2015, I sold that business for a profit equal to the ten years' worth of debt I'd inherited.

All of this came about because from the outset, I'd seen a vision bigger than survival. The last part of my story here takes us right back to the day after Alec died. I was reading through the reflections I'd been keeping on my phone over the previous few years. I'd started these notes to remind me that life was good despite the business pressures, and the trials were all worth it. As I read over those notes, my clarity of vision cut through the haze of loss. I realised I was reading the draft of my first book, and I would use my story of freedom to inspire others to rise to their highest potential.

Now, I'm a speaker, author and business process genius. I live to help others follow their passion and I do that by helping business owners and professionals refine their work processes the way I did. I said YES to throwing off the shackles of guilt to shine in my own strengths. I say YES every day to helping others shine in theirs.

\*

## JULIE NABAALA



*I hope from this almost fairy-tale ending, that you too will follow the dreams that live within you.*

JULIE RUNS AN INTERNATIONAL “Dream Customer-Attraction” Coaching and Mindset Training Business for start-ups, extraordinary business leaders, entrepreneurs, coaches, national and international organisations and corporations. With 20 years’ experience, she recognises that those who win in the business game have developed success mindsets that work for them. Conquer the mind and the game of business is easy to play and win. She is passionate about training the mind first.

Julie is a successful Customer-ologist first and a business builder second. She supports and guides extraordinary business leaders to step into their next level of success. She has developed a special mind and business customer attraction method called *Customerology*. She trains business

owners to become Customerologists, who create customer centred businesses where profit follows service. She deftly builds and strengthens the mind of entrepreneurs to play the game of business and win. Her motto is ‘*think like a dream customer to attract a dream customer.*’ Julie equips business leaders with the business tools that achieve meaningful success in mindset, personal development, sales, and productivity coaching, all while living a life that inspires you!

*If you would like to visit the land of Magic and Miracles – there’s a free little gift waiting for you at [www.marketingmadeeasygnet.co.nz](http://www.marketingmadeeasygnet.co.nz). To inspire you on your own Yes Journey. If you have a business, discover what you believe subconsciously about “customers”. Do you love them or hate them? Take the FREE Customer Profiler and uncover your subconscious beliefs about customers.*

### CONNECT WITH JULIE

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# YES – A LAND OF MAGIC AND MIRACLES

*Yes, I will go! - A journey to new beginnings halfway across the world*

*By Julie Nabaala*

## Part I

*“HAVE YOU STARTED VISUALISING what you want yet? Do you have pictures and a vision board up of what you want?”*

When my coach asked me this simple yet life pivoting question I dutifully answered YES, to both and told her I was visualising and dreaming and imagining every day for .....! Two months later I was on a plane to Kenya, Africa for a family holiday with my brother, his wife and three children.

September 2008 - *“But they kill people over there!”*

I’m thinking back to my comment *“But they kill people over there! Can’t we go somewhere else?”* And my brother’s unconcerned reply *“Well, we’re going, are you coming or not?”* This began a new adventure that changed the course of my life forever. As I said YES, I did not know the far-reaching consequences that would unravel over the next few years, and how my life would be forever changed!

And that was it. I was booked to go on a family safari to Africa with my brother and his family. Once I discovered that we are

going to Africa, I immediately recalled the article I'd recently read stating that Johannesburg was then classified as the most violent and unsafe city in the world.

My brother was not concerned as he always did his research well and was taking us on a safe family holiday. And we were not going to Johannesburg. We were going to Kenya. I didn't know much about Kenya, except that they had fast, if not the fastest runners in the world.

A little thought came into my head, that decided my path. The thought was, that I would never make the effort to go to Africa, and as my brother had arranged all the airfares, accommodation, safari and trip details, I might as well go now or I would never visit Africa in my entire lifetime. I definitely would not go if I had to organise the trip. So I said YES, I'll go!

### **November 2008 - Two Weeks till departure**

Two weeks before the trip and suddenly all the pressure is on. The trip is paid for and my business gets super busy, to the point that I decide it is impossible for me to leave the country. I rang the travel agent in despair at 5 pm on a Friday evening and told them to cancel the trip. There is no way that I could go. My staff weren't ready for me to leave, I wasn't ready to leave, plus another million reasons why I simply couldn't go.

Over the long weekend I was a little uneasily and wondered if I have made a mistake and should really have gone but I pushed the thought aside. On the Monday morning I receive a call from the travel agent telling me that I will lose more than two-thirds of all the money if I cancelled now. Breathing an almost audible sigh of relief I agreed to go. Secretly I felt I was meant to go.

Two weeks later, and with some small excitement, I flew off to Kenya with my brother and his family for a three week safari holiday. We would be staying in tents in national parks, living a very simple fun life with 21 other happy family holidaymakers. This was my first introduction to Kenya which started a chain of events to unravel over the next four to five years.

Three days after arriving, I fell in love with the energy, the freedom, and the amazing people of Kenya. The rhythm of Africa sneaked into my blood and I was hooked. This was truly a land of opportunities! A little thought crept into my mind *"I love this place and I'm coming back here to live!"* No sense or logic – just a silent knowing, a feeling from the soul, and then I carried on with my holiday (another story in itself).

I was determined to return to Kenya, but could never have imagined what this would mean to my life and the lives of others. During the next two years, I travel back and forth between Kenya and New Zealand, staying from four to six months at a time.

## **Part II**

### **2011 - Don't wait any longer!**

It was a lovely Sunday morning, sun shining, the seats were not full, and as always, I pondered sadly why there were no queues of people outside waiting to get in. Today the minister was in good form and gave a teaching that resounded down the ages of time, from ancient of days to the ends of eternity. His words seemed to have an almost magical and holy resonance that reached to the depths of one's soul.

His words touched my soul and others that sunny Sunday morning in Auckland, New Zealand. The words of the sermon are gone from my memory today, but the message is forever with me.

Don't wait any longer or put off following your dreams. If you have a dream [to serve God – ministers words] then get up and make it happen today. Don't keep putting it off and thinking about it, or waiting for the circumstances to be right. The time to pursue your dream is now! The time to say yes to what is inside of you is today! Take action and start making your dream happen today. It was about how others would miss out if we did not step up and follow the dreams inside of us.

My heart was set on fire. What was the dream I had been believing in for two years? I had longed to return to Kenya and teach a FREE business school for one month to help the small local businesses do better. I had only dreamed of it, never started planning it, getting it out from inside my mind, onto paper, and into a place where it could become real. Kept Inside me, my dream was helping no one!

That very day I made a choice to GO and make it real - to return to Kenya where I had not been for two and a half years. I said YES to letting my dream become real to teach a FREE business school to any business people in Kenya who cared to listen. I teamed up with the local church I had been supporting for the last two and a half years.

And so I left for Kenya in December 2011 to start teaching in January 2012. My YES journey was beginning to become a reality! I was off again...

### Part III

#### January 2012 - Do you remember me?

*"May I have a word?"* The words rang out into the silence of the gentle warm evening air. At *Ngau* café it was busy, with tourists and locals, coming and going day and night. *Ngau* is one of the

busiest cafés. I happily waited for my order of chicken and chips when a melodic voice said: *"May I have a word?"*

I turned around and there was the most handsome, thin, gorgeous and heart-throbbing Maasai I had ever seen. I looked at him stunned into silence and said nothing. Not like me at all, who usually has more words than even I care to acknowledge. A flood of a million emotions engulfed me all at the same time. In the silence that ensued and seemed to go on forever, he spoke again in his rhythmic and suave voice. *"Do you remember me?"*

"Of course," I said. How could I not remember him? This was the man I was engaged to when I left Kenya two and a half years ago. After eight months back in New Zealand it seemed that he must be a conman and sadly the relationship ended. Here he was again, right in front of me, softly spoken, well dressed and graceful. *"Yes I remember you,"* I said, and then spat out *"I have nothing to say to you."*

He asked in his softly spoken way with politeness and grace, *"May I have just one minute to explain what happened two and a half years ago?"* As all the old feelings of peace, serenity, gentleness and sheer *liking* entered into my soul, I sat there quietly and said calmly, *"just one minute!"* He sat down next to me and as he began to speak in his kind unhurried melodic voice, all I could think was *"no wonder I loved you then – you are good looking, well-spoken, and..."*

I realised one minute would not be long enough to explain what happened two and a half years ago, and suggested we meet the next day for him to explain more fully. But the chain of events had already been set in place.

Three weeks later we were married. It was a simple and gorgeous wedding ceremony with its own miracles, turning it into

the most romantic and beautiful day of our lives which we will remember and treasure forever. We walked home hand in hand, barefooted through the silky sand, happily holding our 1 solitary wedding gift and left over wedding cake in the early hours of the morning to begin the rest of our life together!

Today, six years on, we are still happily married and I do not regret for one minute my chance to say YES to teach a free business school in the small local town of Mtwapa, (half an hour out of Mombasa), Kenya.



## Part IV

### Business School Success. The First YES was a Success!

The FREE month-long business school was finally over. All the help and support came as and when it was needed and business owners now knew how to attract their dream customers, and each

one, had the confidence to grow their business. Was it an effort to create and teach something I had never done before? Yes, it truly was. It was hard work. It taxed me to my max, and at times I was at breaking point, but something about giving and serving and making a dream come true, kept me going on, pushing through barriers, seeking help when I ran out of resources. Obstacles were overcome as I hung on, and carried on! I kept pushing through.

Thirty businesses attended the month-long business school, changing their lives, learning how to budget, learning simple customer attraction strategies and mindsets, putting customer attraction offers into their business and watching customers start coming to them. One business owner said, *“I thought I didn’t have enough money, but once you taught us how to budget, I found I had enough money left to give to the church each week.”*

Another beautiful business attendee, a hairdresser, said: *“I only had five customers a week but now I have grown to twenty customers by using just one simple offer, and I am continuing to grow.”*

Mostly the beautiful business owners learned confidence, business skills and how to go about attracting their ideal customers to their business in very simple, low-cost ways.

I started out saying YES to a dream to help others and teach a free business school, and out of it I ended up saying another big YES – to the man of my dreams. I had been visioning my dream husband for three months before meeting him in Kenya, and I had been praying for a husband for over thirty years. I honestly had reluctantly accepted I would never be married and would remain single for the rest of my life.

So this chapter is really about two “I said YES” moments in my life and there have been many more.

I hope from this almost fairy-tale ending, that you too will follow the dreams that live within you. Whether big or small, whether you've had them for five minutes or for more than thirty years, pick up your courage to say YES to realising them and making them happen. Because when you say YES, it is not just you, but others too, that benefit.

And if you think you don't know how - neither did I know how to write a business school, and neither did the first man on the moon know how to walk on the moon until he had done it. Neither do we truly know how to, in many instances, but the one thing we all do know is that for our YES to become real, it starts with the first footstep of what we can do. No matter how big or how small. Then keep on taking footsteps until you realise your dream. Until the dream becomes REAL!

May I encourage you, if you have a dream, an opportunity, or an unfilled longing in your heart, to say YES, pick up your foot, just one, and take your first step. Do not let fear, procrastination, or the dreaded terror barrier hold you back, or stop you or slow you down. Square your chin and your heart and step into your dreams. YES is really the only way forward. Yes truly is A Land of Magic and Miracles!

You can turn your YES into a joyous and growing moment for yourself and others, taking it out of your heart and turning it into your reality. I reached out for help along the way and it came – help will come for you when it is needed. Believe it will come at the right time, then take the second step.

After the first two steps – DO NOT LOOK BACK! Keep on walking until you cross over the finish line! Your next YES

opportunity is awaiting you. If you dare to take the journey into the land of *I said YES*.

And now I'm off on my next YES adventure of opportunities and possibilities. I wonder where it will lead me next, and how my dream will help many more people.

Godspeed to you on your YES journey – your opportunities are awaiting you to step into them, embrace them fully, enjoy the journey and make them yours. *The world is waiting for you to say YES.*

\*

# VERONIKA WHYTE



*Your journey is about unbecoming everything that isn't really you, so you can be who you were meant to be in the first place.*

FOUNDER OF HAPPY BEYOND Limits, Global Training Facilitator and author. She is a former teacher and a psychologist who has helped many individuals to find their path in life.

Veronika helps people who are stuck at the fork in the road, whether it is their career, their relationships or life itself. As a result of being stuck at the fork in the road, people lose their sense of direction, mission, their sense of purpose, and are therefore lacking clarity, not knowing which way to turn.

For the first time, Veronika shares her personal story of embracing the unknown to show that when you say YES to yourself, the dormant forces within awake and surface to help you achieve all you desire.

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# THE POWER OF EMBRACING UNCERTAINTY

*Courage to Be You*

*By Veronika Whyte*

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## **We become aware of the void as we fill it** **Antonio Porchia**

DOES YOUR LIFE SEEM great on the outside? Do you have a steady job and wonderful relationships with the people you love? Do you travel and have done lots of great things, however, somewhere deep inside you feel emptiness, a sense of a quiet despair, which might be described as a hole in your soul?

You are grateful and aware that you created the comfortable life you've always wanted, however you have no-one to share the feeling that something really important is missing in your life, for fear of being ridiculed. You hear the voices telling you that you don't have any problems, hence you are selfish to even express your concerns. You don't feel like going into long explanations about the many challenges in your life that you have overcome, and that you deserve the life you have. Instead, you do your daily routine with a smile on your face convincing yourself they might be right and you need to turn that voice inside down, that your life is good enough.

**Every artist dips his brush in his own soul and  
paints his own nature into his pictures  
Henry Ward Beecher**

However, when you are on your own and the external noise is cancelled, you close your eyes and listen to your heart, which whispers that there is so much in you that can be shared, that needs to go out there. You dream about it, you get the warm glow in your heart, the sense of fulfilment runs through your veins, the indescribable feeling of excitement and happiness covers your like a blissful cocoon. In those moments you feel alive, you feel connected with your ultimate self.

Imagine what your life would look like if you listened to the voice inside of you? Feel what is possible for you when you truly open up your heart, conquer your deepest fears and said yes to yourself. What legacy will you leave behind then? How much energy will you generate? What ripple effect will it have?

**Authenticity is the daily practice of letting go  
of who we think we are supposed to be  
and embracing who we are.**

My own story has had lots of challenging turns on its way. Several times my big dreams crushed in an instant and once in a heartbeat. Losses helped me to develop strength, discipline, determination, and compassion to people's pain, understanding the depth of the soul, the fears, and the secret ambitions.

I discovered, that in order to feel fulfilled, it is not the things we must gain, it's the things WE NEED TO LET GO OF. When we let go of our fears and expectations, then the magic happens

– we open our soul, we let the love flow, we let our true self, the authentic self to surface. It brings the feeling of fulfilment you can't mistake for anything. Until then, subliminal energy starts rushing and creating the ripple effect in your life and the life of others. Your journey isn't about becoming anything or anybody. Your journey is about unbecoming everything that isn't really you, so you can be who you were meant to be in the first place.

The moment it felt like the greater challenges were over and I was blissfully happy in my relationships, travelling the world and having a steady job. On the outside my life was close to perfect, on the inside, I felt empty. The feeling of stagnation, apathy and loss of motivation was at times overwhelming. The quiet despair was numbing to my very being. In those moments, I was asking myself a question, what if there is something more to this life, but living the daily routine of it? What if I could be more, give more and share more? Who am I really? What is the purpose? So, I decided that a degree in psychology might give me the answers. Although I successfully completed it and gained in-depth knowledge of the types of therapy, it did not fill my inner void. However, in one of the studies of the famous psychologist Csikszentmihalyi, I came across the saying that joy and fulfilment is the byproduct of commitment to something that is larger than the self.

**You are not feeling empty because you don't  
have more stuff. You are feeling empty  
because you have not yet encountered  
your real self, you have not come to your  
authentic individuality –Rajneesh**

And then, there was a lightbulb moment that all this time it was not about me, in fact, it was never about me. All this time it was about others, about serving others to help achieve their goals, like once I did myself. The decision was made right there and then. You know how we make the decision, it happens in a moment, we might be preparing ourselves for the decision for ages, however, the decision is instantaneous. You are always one decision away from a totally different life.

Once the decision was made, the dark phantom entered the scene, the Fear. The fear was having a conversation with me by telling me, *“Who do you think you are? What if this is the wrong decision? What if it’s not going to work and you lose the career you worked for?”* Of all the life hazards, fear is the worst. It was up to me to decide whose voice to listen to. My fear or my soul? The ego or the higher self?

**Two roads diverged in a wood, and I, I took  
the one less travelled by. And that has  
made all the difference -Robert Frost**

I started reminiscing on my previous achievements and I could not remember one when I accomplished something meaningful from the place of the total comfort. Not once. I was certain that it was the right decision.

If you allow me to share a very personal story with you of meeting my future husband in a beautiful country foreign to me back then. It was an extremely uncertain life changing decision for me. I made the choice for Love, because, in all honesty, the opposite of Fear is always Love. I left behind a well-established life and family, moved my home and rebuilt my life again with

complete uncertainty on my hands, however, I was absolutely certain about our love and that I value it the most. Was it worth the effort? Hundred percent. Our relationship is one of the most amazing things that ever happened to me. Could it go south? Totally.

One of my passions is travelling. To me, when I travel to a new country, meet unique people, learn their culture and their perspectives in life, it is magical. I feel grateful that I can share their world with me. It builds the character of behavioural flexibility. Once, I was preparing to the long trekking journey in the mountains of Nepal, I read a piece, written by W.H. Murray in the Scottish Himalayan Expedition: *“Until one is committed, there is hesitancy, the chance to draw back, always ineffectiveness. Concerning all acts of initiative (and creation), there is one elementary truth, the ignorance of which kills countless ideas and splendid plans, that the moment one definitely commits oneself, the Providence moves, too. All sorts of things occur to help on that would never otherwise occurred, a whole stream of events issues from the decision, raising in one’s favour all manner of unforeseen incidents and meetings and material assistance no individual could have dreamt would come his way”*.

**Happiness is the meaning and the  
purpose of life, the whole aim and  
end of human existence -Aristotle**

Feeling unsure and lost is part of the journey of transformation. Instead of avoiding it, embrace it. See what those feelings are showing you and use it. Take a breath. You'll be okay. Even if you don't feel okay all the time. Be fearless in the pursuit of what sets your soul on fire. This can be uncomfortable and scary for many people. Saying YES to life is powerful. It moves you from trying or hoping to *I am, I can, I will*, and, eventually, *I know*. Saying YES allows you to take advantage of opportunities, harness the energy available in the present moment and act instead of putting your dreams in the archive box. When you say YES to life you see circumstances, and your life, in a new light. You attract opportunities and move forward in the direction of your dreams. YES creates a life that is versatile and vibrant and flows with grace and beauty.

Fear is a thought that triggers uncomfortable emotions, which impact behaviour. You can change your state and eliminate unnecessary fear by changing how you experience it. That's exactly what I do to help the people I work with through my programs. Changing the way they think and feel about fear, releasing the suppressed emotions so they can say YES to life and all the wonderful opportunities it brings.

**Embrace the uncertainty. Some of the most beautiful chapters in our lives won't have a title until much later -Bob Goff**

Often new opportunities knock on our doors in the shape of massive work, first of all internal. Reengineering the internal dialogues, embracing the fears, uncovering hidden resources,

saying yes to the challenges and figuring out how to solve it. You see, people often ask the question on how to be fulfilled, how to be happy? When, in fact, the main question you need to ask yourself is not what to do but who do you need to be in order to create happiness, to have the ability to notice the possibilities. Who do you need to be? What qualities do you need to uncover? What beliefs do you need to shift? What is your big why in life? What do you stand for?

**Pain has its own noble joy, when it starts a strong consciousness of life, from a stagnant one -John Sterling**

When I answered these questions for myself, there was no doubt or second-guessing that helping people to pursue their dreams was my quest. The fears were still there, however, the pain of staying the same was stronger than the pain of moving forward. The lightbulb moment I had before made perfect sense then, it was not about me. The fulfilment comes from serving others and belonging to something greater than yourself. The realisation of this truth gave me the certainty of quitting my safe job and starting my own consulting agency. I started working with amazing and talented people, who felt stuck in life but had so much inside them to share with the world. The inspiration from moving people from being stuck in a stagnant swamp to flowing freely in fresh waters of a mountain river. Yes, the river has its barriers and sometimes waterfalls, but what a feeling canoeing and observing beautiful scenery around and feeling truly alive, away from stagnant waters, sailing towards your dreams.



The transformational shift happens the very moment you make the decision of saying YES to yourself and floating on the waves of fulfilment. There is something in the world you were put here to do, that only you can do. Step into your brilliance and enjoy the journey.

*beauty  
begins the  
moment  
you decide  
to be  
yourself*  
-coco chanel

I personally help people who are stuck at the fork in the road. Whether it will be their career, their relationships or life itself. And as a result of being stuck at the fork in the road, they lose their sense of direction, mission, their sense of purpose, and therefore, now lack clarity, not knowing which way to turn. It

shows up symptomatically via procrastination, self-sabotage, lack of motivation or apathy. And this has a negative impact on self-esteem, self-belief and self-confidence and ultimately self-love. If you know anyone who has these kinds of issues, this is what I am an expert in - helping people to say yes to themselves.

**The purpose of life is a life of  
purpose -Robert Byrne**

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## JUDITH LANE



*What I am most excited about is helping people in need and also creating financial freedom.*

JUDITH HAS BEEN AN exceptional Registered Nurse and Midwife for over 30 years. She has always felt very honoured to be involved with families at the most incredible time of their lives, the birth of their newborn. Judith is now incorporating the skills learned from her years in the medical profession to help change lives in the community.

Judith has a desire to educate and empower women to take control of their own and their families health and wellbeing with natural solutions.

Judith has been married to a very supportive husband for 26 years and has four children. Her path to wellness and financial

security arose from a need to influence her family to lead balanced and fulfilled lives.

She is also on her own personal journey of self-development and the past 18 months has been full of new discoveries, friendships and a fresh sense of purpose. Judith is very passionate about creating a life full of joy, compassion and integrity for herself and people she meets.

### CONNECT WITH JUDITH



/Judith Lane

/Judith Lane Essential Freedom

## THE ZIPLINE

### “Before the YES”

*By Judith Lane*

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#### Before the YES

I HAVE THESE FEELINGS of darkness and dread. There’s a heaviness on my chest, a lack of joy, a sense of being trapped, voiceless and powerless.

Another shift at the maternity unit and I am anticipating a long day, evening or night. I need to support and educate sleep deprived and overwhelmed new parents on how to cope with their wailing unsettled newborns. I need to care for a woman in labour and assist her with the birth of her baby. I always feel blessed and privileged to be included in something as miraculous as the birth of a child. I’m grateful to have followed this career path, but midwifery nursing has had to adjust to changes. Intervention has increased, and caesarean rates are rising, women are less empowered and I no longer feel the passion.

Looking back, I often felt frustrated and powerless because I couldn’t really help my patients in the way I wanted to; I had to just go along with the decisions that had been made for them. I found myself saying “*this is not what I signed up for*” so often but then felt guilty about feeling that way. I had stopped loving my job like I used to. Looking after the women and their families,

and spending time with the many friends I had at work, was still enjoyable but it was no longer enough.

I can't really explain where the joy in my nursing had gone. The feelings of dread before each shift were getting harder to bare. Could it simply be that after almost thirty years of full-time nursing that the shift work was finally taking its toll? No routine, lack of sleep, eating poorly at weird hours and quick changeovers. My body was battling with weight issues, yo-yo dieting, lack of exercise and my soul was very low on self-care; my self-love was non-existent. There were feelings of total disconnection from my husband Ian and from my four children, being so tired most days and having nothing left to give.

Or was there something more to this lack of joy in what was once my life's purpose? Was there a sense that I could no longer help in the way I wanted to? Was there a feeling of being bound by regulation and secrecy?

In 1999, Ian and I gave birth to a gorgeous but sadly stillborn baby girl. We called her Georgia. The anguish and despair initially were so overwhelming. I remember only feeling numb, alone, and a sense of guilt that maybe I was to blame. I was grateful for my two young sons and just wanted to be around them all the time, feeling their energy and warmth. I began to realize how precious life really is and wanted to cherish every single moment. Following this tragedy my husband and I promised we would spend more time together and, be more caring and attentive with each other. But as so often happens, the best of intentions got thwarted and eighteen years later we still hadn't fulfilled that promise. I was starting to feel remorse, regret and guilt that we had been too busy for each other and was also fearful of the future with Ian. What would we talk about in our retirement if

we weren't really talking now?! Something big had to change. I had to start listening to me so in turn, I could start listening to others.

### **The YES moment**

In early 2016 I attended a Real Food Revolution expo. I needed to make some serious changes in my life, in particular my diet, as I was suffering from weight issues. I blamed my lack of self-esteem and my heavy heart at work on poor food choices because of the shift work, but in all honesty, I think it was an overall lack of self-love and not being true to myself. At the Expo I was introduced to the most amazing essential oils by a very inspiring and dynamic presenter, Kisane Appleby. These essential oils literally cracked my heart open, I had never smelt essential oils as pure and as potent as these, I knew I needed them in my life. The aromas invoked feelings of joy and calmness, and a sense of Wellbeing. Kisane was very passionate about how the oils had changed her life, her story was impressive and remarkable. Kisane's energy inspired me and I felt a rush of excitement, this is what I am looking for, this is my purpose.

Kisane spoke about the business opportunity and the many ways in which doTERRA wellness advocates can empower and educate families to improve their lives. I couldn't help but enrol on the spot, I felt so energized and alive, the decision was easy. Kisane must have seen some sort of spark in me because a week later she invited me to an Essential Oils Boot Camp. Oh my god! Someone believes in me! This hadn't happened in quite a long time and it felt amazing and exhilarating. The feeling was like a child on Christmas morning receiving everything that had been wished for on Santa's' list.

Having been in small business before I was open to looking into the ‘oils business’ as a way of increasing my income and ensuring the health of my family. The bonus was that I could do so whilst helping people become more proactive with their health care and reduce the toxic load in their environment. I was impressed by the many testimonials of how the oils were supporting people with their health concerns and I saw firsthand the amazing results achieved by one of my friends who suffers from an autoimmune disease. The more I used the oils myself, the more I knew that I wanted to share the benefits with anyone that was willing to listen. I had found a new joy.

Reducing my hours at the hospital was not possible and I would often feel resentful that I had to go to work when I knew I would much prefer to be spending time sharing the essential oils. Whenever I would talk to people about the oils I would light up inside; I actually felt I was making a difference in their lives and I knew this is what I needed to be doing. Financially, we were not in a position for me to fully quit nursing, so I had to compromise. But I knew my time would come. Later that year one of the midwives in her sixties was saying she was looking at working at least the next five years at almost full-time due to financial need. I was horrified as I realised that could be me in ten years’ time. That conversation was the catalyst. I needed to follow my dreams and do the things that brought me joy, delight and happiness. I finally said YES to me.

In February 2017 I started long service leave. It wasn’t the *doing* that was difficult it was the *deciding* that was. Saying yes to myself? Well, that was hard. I agonised over the choice I was making and worried about what others thought, even though I knew it was the right choice for me. There was still the unknown,

the concern for the future, and still the hesitation. But when I finally put the application in for my extended leave the apprehension eased, and the excitement began. Once I realised I was worthy and deserving of having what I wanted, doors started to open for me and I was surprised by the number of opportunities came my way.

### Since the YES

Since I said YES to me, I have been amazed at how doTERRA has changed my life. I am now able to make a difference, add value to peoples’ lives and be of service. In February 2017, doTERRA took me to Fiji on an incentive trip. I suppose you could say it was the trip of a lifetime. It was on that trip that I really felt I belonged, was loved and appreciated. My heart was filled to the brim when we visited a Fijian village and donated school supplies and financial aid to the children. Giving back and being of service, what more could I ask for?

Interestingly, I did get more than I bargained for on that trip, but I’m sure it happened for a reason. I had the misfortune of crashing while zip lining, severely injuring my lower left leg and suffering concussion. Louise Hay, author of *Heal your Body*, would say the lower left leg represents fear of the future; perhaps this accident was no accident.. The damage to my leg was extensive and surgeons were keen to operate and perform a skin graft saying it would take at least five months to heal. I asked if I could wait because I trusted that a more natural way would serve my body better. Using the oils for support, within ten weeks my injury was completely healed, to the surprise and curiosity of the doctors. I had proven them wrong and solidified my belief in the oils. I was my own best-case study! An unforeseen bonus was that I was now

able to take sick leave, which allowed me even more time to focus on my new business.

In November 2016 my husband, who has been a Police officer for almost forty years with the past three years in the family violence unit, began suffering from depression. This was accompanied by migraines due to work-related stress. With the support of counselling, supplements and the oils, Ian could avoid prescribed medication. He has since retired from the Police force and is supporting our doTERRA business. While I haven't been able to get him involved in sharing oils he is very good with my back office and administration. Being off work now Ian has become a house-husband, which frees me up to concentrate fully on our business.

In June 2017, eighteen years since our promise to each other that we would spend more time together, we went away - just the two of us with no kids. It was only a weekend, but it was precious. I no longer worry about our relationship and the future. Saying YES to me has opened the space to allow Ian back into my life.

### **Beyond the Yes**

I am not the same person I was in February 2016 on that day when Kisane shared the essential oils with me, and I never want to be that person again. I was searching for something but didn't really know what.

I am now allowing myself to grow in confidence and most days I do love me. I allow myself to be vulnerable and visible. The heaviness in my chest is no longer there, and in fact I feel so much lighter. My head is clear and I have a genuine sense of purpose. I know I can serve more people and change more lives through doTERRA than I ever would have in the hospital.

I am excited about the future but I know there is a lot of hard work ahead of me. The thing is, I am looking forward to the hard work. My days are very full but that doesn't seem to bother me at all. I am doing what I really want to do and love.

I am now around for my husband and children and do not have to miss special events because of shift work. Working from home means I can work around their busy schedules and always be there for them. Family holidays are back on the agenda with New Zealand already planned. There'll be white water rafting, a giant swing, and a whole lot of adventures - just no zip lining for me!

What I am most excited about is helping people in need whilst creating financial freedom. I will be able to make a difference not only to my family but to other families too. In the future I see great opportunity to support new mothers and their partners in their homes, to encourage them emotionally, assist with feeding and help them cope with their new babies. My old world and new world combined in perfect harmony.

I am doing something that I really love, I have clear goals, my future is bright and all I had to do was say YES.

*I move forward with confidence and joy, knowing  
that all is well in my future -Louise Hay*

\*

# JENNI MEARS



*Truly experiencing  
your feelings  
makes you more  
responsive, more  
attractive to yourself,  
opportunities, and  
relationships.*

CLINICAL HYPNOTHERAPIST,  
SOMATIC SEX educator, and  
relationship and intimacy coach.  
Jenni writes for, speaks to, and  
teaches women how to say yes to  
live and love a turned-on life. She  
is the founder of the transforma-  
tional internationally approved  
Embodied Inner Alchemy™  
Practitioner and Women's Facili-  
tator training.

Jenni Mears is an expert  
transformation growth catalyst  
assisting women to discover their  
daring self and mindfully recon-  
nect to their unique attraction  
factor. Jenni passionately believes  
that it is every person's birthright  
to have the ability to learn how to  
live wholeheartedly. She provides  
tools to support them, release  
habitual patterns, self-sabotaging

beliefs, and blocks that stop them from feeling a thriving aliveness fuelling their every breath.

She has dedicated the last twenty years training in clinical hypnotherapy, somatic sexology and the healing arts. Not only has this had a profound effect on her own life, she has shared her work with thousands of clients both nationally and internationally to help them to become their own know-thyself specialists.

Jenni Mears is a beacon of light for women who are seeking to improve their lives on so many levels. Her innate wisdom and many years of personal experience and continued study are helping women discover the infinite pleasure and joy of reconnecting with their own psycho-sexual intelligence through mind-body connection.

She is a safe powerful support for each and every woman she works alongside, supporting them as they release emotional blocks or traumas, find their voice and experience what it feels like to be an authentic, sensual and passionate woman with healthy boundaries.

### CONNECT WITH JENNIE

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# AWAKEN THRIVING ALIVENESS - MAKE FEAR YOUR FRIEND

*Say YES! To live and love a turned on life*

*By Jenni Mears*

.....

TO GET WHAT YOUR heart desires you first have to listen to your heart. To get what you feel you deserve you first have to feel your feelings. To really feel your feelings you first have to feel the fear. Once you make fear your friend you really can have anything your heart desires.

Most women have been in headlock for a long time wondering why they can't attract the health, the relationships, the business or the love into their lives they desire. It's a loop that goes around and around, in their head. They think about how they might change but they never actually get their body in alignment. They never actually take a step forward. I was like that too.

Fear had stopped me really exploring my true desire to help these women. My life was stagnant. I wasn't reaching, wasn't able to help. I didn't have the money and I didn't have resources.

Fear had stopped me when I should have been helping my son build his confidence. We were on a high-ropes course. He was watching me - eight metres up in a tree, the height of a two-storey house - when I had frozen instead of jumping to the next platform. I was safely harnessed, double carabiner clips and ropes, and I

could feel my insides shaking. I needed a push, a loving caring push. I screamed. Only when it was over, feeling the rush of relief, did I realise I could have almost stepped to the other side. There was no way I hadn't been physically safe. It wasn't scary to be there. It was scary to take that first step.

### **Get over yourself. Actually, do something about it.**

My motivation had come from a place of anger. I was furious that I had frozen, that I would be letting down my son. It was my anger at myself, my lack of self-worth that really made me move, physically and emotionally. I had to say to myself "*Get over yourself. Actually, do something about it.*"

For the first time, I had given myself permission to acknowledge the feeling of anger. 'Nice girls' aren't supposed to feel anger. For the first time, I had listened to the wisdom of the feelings in my body. Your mind isn't always your best friend.

Your feelings, your inner feelings in your body are a much better compass for where you are and where you want to be. Maybe right now you feel someone has their loving caring hand on your back. Maybe you feel like you don't have a choice.

I was relieved to feel that part of me that was saying "*I'm sick and tired of hearing your excuses. You spend all your time studying and learning, then you don't implement it.*" She's your friend. Fear is not.

### **Growth comes from feeling clunky and uncomfortable.**

Fear had been holding me back, keeping everything safe so that I didn't have to feel uncomfortable. I had finally found that part

of me that knows that growth comes from feeling clunky and uncomfortable. I finally listened to that part of me.

It isn't until you've taken that first step, taken action, that you can overcome feeling uncomfortable. I found I needed to take that action to learn, to change. And having taken action, I found it's more than just learning, it in my head. It's transferring the thought processes into a desire, a feeling in my body that moves it into an action. That makes it a pleasurable experience that gives me the impetus to keep moving forward.

**I've changed a lot of other women's lives because the more I've embodied it the more I've become it**, the more I don't have to push, teach or preach.

You are no longer just thinking about it. This is embodying your pleasure, embodying your confidence, embodying your self-worth. It's walking it daily so that it gets into your muscle memory. You don't think about it. It's saying yes to somatic work, to somatic embodied work.

A lot of learning is centred on the mind - you go learn stuff. Not very often are you invited to activate. In somatic learning we use the teaching model: engage, learn, and activate. That's something you can do straight away.

I've learnt with somatic work you also create limbic resonance, an innermost energetic knowing where you learn by just being present. You teach by being, being who you are, practising what you do.

In private sessions, clients come and bring whatever their goals are, whatever it is they want to change in their lives. We look at what's affecting them as a whole - physically, emotionally and energetically. Then I give them a set of tools, practices they

can take away so they can embody more and more of the lasting change they desire.

**First, you have to become more intimate with yourself.**

If you want to become more magnetic in health, in business, in relationships, or attract an extraordinary love into your life, first you have to become more intimate with yourself. Learn to connect more with the sensations you're feeling in your body and your emotions. Understand you have an energetic presence, not just a physical presence, in the room. You can affect the room wherever you are. This really comes back to body awareness, so acknowledge that sometimes we feel like shrinking and sometimes we feel like being more expanded, sometimes we feel more confident, sometimes less. It's about how to turn it on when you want to turn it on.

My work is about helping you get more connected with your inner world, be more grounded, so you can have the awareness to change your body language to change what's happening in your outer world, your attraction factor.

I had to learn the difference between feelings and emotions to discover what was inhibiting me from having all that I desired in my life. In emotions, I'm reacting. In feelings, I'm responding. That was a big awakening, realising I'd spent a lot of my life in reaction. That does not attract anything.

Truly experiencing your feelings makes you more responsive, more attractive to yourself, opportunities, and relationships.

I realised I had been living a contracted life. I needed to stretch my comfort zone, expand my experiences energetically, emotionally, and physically to find a more powerful me, a more confident

me. And I found a more expressive me who can ask for my needs to be met in all areas of my life.

I had come to a place of self-love and self-care. Before I had missed the opportunities to feel joy, and the pleasure of what it is to fully receive because we are a society of givers. We don't often receive at a deeper level where there's a lot of pleasure to be derived.

Now, if I see an opportunity it's not a warning bell or an alarm bell, it's a bell of excitement that goes off in my head. It's a signal that this is something I should be looking at because it does look scary!

And the other signal is when I see something and immediately judge it, react to it, and I go "*Oh no, I don't need that.*" Now, after that initial reaction, I stop and breathe, place my hands on my heart and my belly, get myself grounded and then I go "*Okay, what's really going on here and what do I need to look at?*"

The more I have developed this somatic embodied way of living, the more I have developed my emotional intelligence. For example, if you want people to come to an exercise class, a yoga or meditation class, you don't really need to give them a lot of information. They just need to know by looking at you, how you've embodied it. You'll be looking vibrant, you'll have an aliveness about you and, as a woman, you'll have a radiance about you. A charisma. A presence. That's what I'm talking about when I say the attraction factor.

**Women say to me 'I want what you're having!'**

Women say to me - and I know they're having fun - the reason I came to you, came to one of your workshops or programs, is "*I want what you're having!*"

My biggest challenge when I'm supporting these women is that my work is somatic, it's embodied. You don't just learn, you actually activate it. You need to bring physical practices into your life to help you to cultivate the chemistry in your body, the new neural circuitry in your mind, to support that behaviour to continue in your life. The practice becomes a habit that in turn reinforces the neural circuitry and the physical pleasure.

I'm not just talking about sex. When our senses are heightened we can enjoy pleasure in every area: taking a shower, going for a walk, being in nature or eating. We've cultivated a society of numb people. Headlock, when you are only living in your head, keeps you numb.

The whole thing about this work is you got to leap off, dive deep. What I realised that day with my son was I had to take that first step and dive in, as scary as that is and It was only afterwards I realised that it wasn't as scary as I thought.

I realised I have lived a good portion of my life in headlock and that's really where I have made assumptions about things that are actually not true. I hadn't experienced them and I didn't when I dived in. My headlock had really disconnected me from a great relationship with myself.

Rediscovering how to have this relationship with myself, and another thing I said YES to, was learning more of who I am as a psycho-sexual being.

One of my daily practices is mindful self-pleasure, to put my body in an expanded state to set up my day. You are more likely to attract greater opportunities when you're in an expansive positive thriving state than when you are in a more contracted state. The contracted state is when in you're in headlock and you

miss opportunities. When you're more expanded you're more aware and open to receive.

If you want more pleasure you have to be activating more pleasure in your body every day.

### **How much pleasure are you willing to allow yourself to feel?**

Pleasure is the new healer and pleasure shows up in all areas: how we eat, how we sleep, how we treat ourselves, how we treat others. It shows up in my latest body of work. I'm asking the question "*how much pleasure are you willing to allow yourself to feel?*" because pleasure has no cap. Pleasure in your life gets a cap put on it because of fear or lack of self-worth.

If you explore your sexual intelligence then it gives you the opportunity to find out there is more pleasure available in your body, more pleasure available in your life.

People are afraid to explore their sexuality because society tells us it's not okay. There are so many taboos, so many beliefs around sexuality, but it's the relationship with your inner self. It's where your charisma comes from.

Those with the greatest charisma have an element they emanate, their energetic light, their charisma exists because they are really comfortable with who they are as a sexual being. They don't play small. They're used to being in an expanded pleasurable state and what it means to play big. You can just tell. They're comfortable. They're embodied. They're in their body. They're the sort of person who, when you ask how they are, they tell you "*I'm feeling awesome, my body's on fire, every part of my body, cells, everything, is a thriving aliveness.*"

My profound hope is that this inspires you to connect to your body, your inborn erotic intelligence, to enjoy cultivating a life fueled with joy, pleasure, and self-exploration.

If you are seeking expanded pleasure, extraordinary love, more meaningful connections and better self-worth, then I invite you to dive in, to also seek the vital practices to activate the alive version of the woman you are, living and loving a turned-on life. Just say YES.

\*

## SAMANTHA JANSEN



*The only thing we can do is be ourselves and keep living our life aligned to our highest values despite the challenges.*

AUTHOR, SPEAKER AND INFLUENCER. The founder of Platform 4 Success and Samantha Jansen Publishing, An international speaker, author and self-confessed social media Lover.

Samantha Jansen is on a mission to help small business owners build an influential profile and highly profitable businesses. As a self-confessed lover of social media, she helps business owners understand the power of social media in today's marketing world along with harnessing the power of self-publishing – Write Your Own Book.

She has co-authored 7 anthologies which include *Reboot Your Life* alongside Dr John Demartini. She has also written her own books *No Qualifications, No Excuses - How to build a business even when the odds are against you* and *The Influential Author*

“Self-publishing and social media marketing is one of the most powerful ways to fast-track your business and build an influential profile,” says Samantha

When she isn’t consulting clients and running workshops, she is out networking with local business owners and is a mum to Sierra and Savinesh.

### CONNECT WITH SAMANTHA JANSEN



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## YES! I BECAME UNSTOPPABLE

*Give yourself permission to ignite your soul's desire,  
pursue your passion and become unstoppable*

*By Samantha Jansen*

.....

AS I WALKED THROUGH the corridor towards the reception at Essendon Fields Airport in Melbourne, the excitement started to build. The kids were excited and we were finally here for an experience they had been counting down for nearly four weeks.

We were about to go on a thirty-minute helicopter ride over Melbourne. Even though I had lived in Melbourne for over thirteen years, travelled a fair amount and the kids have travelled internationally and interstate before none of us had seen Melbourne from this angle. This was a private helicopter ride.

Upon arriving at reception, we were taken through to a waiting area for a safety briefing as we prepared for our flight and ahead of the walk across the tarmac to the helicopter.

Once on board, the feeling of excitement started to settle as we lifted off into the air and the pilot talked to us through the headphone. The kids were beyond excited and I was too. The pilot pointed out major iconic buildings as we flew over Albert Park, St Kilda, over the city and beyond. The view was breathtaking as we flew over and I loved seeing how tiny everything seemed from 3000 feet above the ground.

This was one of the many experiences which taught me an incredible lesson. As our adventure continued on my five-year-old son made an interesting comment “*Mummy we are now in the sky and big and the cars on the road are so small.*”

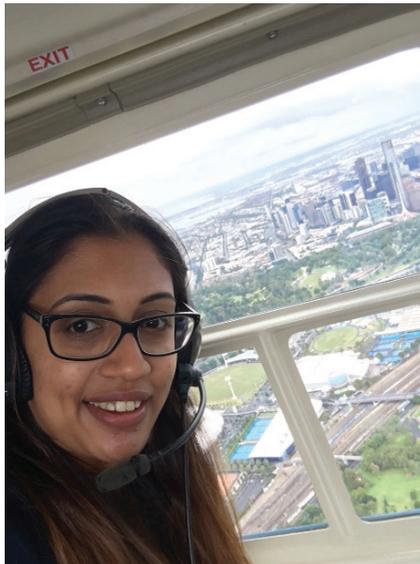
I had to explain to him it was all perception. We were having fun, experiencing something different, so our perception was different to the people that were driving their cars. Once we landed we were back to driving our car home and someone else might experience the helicopter ride later that day.

It’s all perception depending on where you might be in life right now.

No position is perfect

No outcome is guaranteed!

I doubt my five-year-old understood the entire concept, however, my daughter Sierra understood the concept and talks about it often, especially when we try something new and a little challenging.



### **The lesson of perception**

In my early twenties I was in a relationship with an incredible guy “Mr D” he was truly the best and treated me really well. Our dates together were always fun, easy going, filled with adventure. However a year into our relationship we both knew we would never marry each other... his family didn’t like me and thought I was after their son’s money. This perception wasn’t uncommon, I heard of this throughout my teenage years growing up in Sri Lanka.

I wasn’t after their money but that was their perception and I couldn’t change their mind. Fast forward almost twelve years and we remain friends over a distance. He is happily married to someone incredible and she was the ideal women for their son in their perception.

Sometimes we can influence someone’s perception, sometimes we can’t. The only thing we can do is be ourselves and keep living our life aligned to our highest values despite the challenges.

As a result of feeling like I wasn't worthy of being with him, I promised myself to become a woman on a mission and never allow someone else to determine my self-worth.

My next relationship was different, my self-worth wasn't the issue. There were ongoing challenges and I was struggling year after year. It was time to face the challenges and find a way to move forward.

### **The Challenge to Succeed**

We all experience challenges at one time or another, it might be around our career, our family members, our loved ones, a business decision, health and wellbeing issues, maybe even a financial issue and the list goes on.

I have invested time and money to learn more about WHY things happen to us, what makes us tick, what drives our passion, why we react to situations in different ways. The findings were fascinating and the journey helped me reach new heights.

We are bound to experience challenges, no matter our positive attitude to life, we can't control it all. Yet we do have control over how we respond to every challenge.

I'm not perfect in any way. I have reacted to situations and sometimes questioned it all, however after a few hours of crying and thinking further, I usually see the picture with clarity. The lesson is clear and the challenge is either a stepping stone or an opportunity to challenge myself to grow.

From personal experience, nearly every challenged has been an opportunity for me to step up, embrace change and grow. These have challenged me emotionally yet the lessons were greater and the outcomes were successful.

I grew to embrace change!

I grew to learn a new skill!

I grew to a better version of myself.

Where is your life headed now? I don't know your story yet and maybe our paths will cross one day soon, but for now I encourage you to embrace those challenging times that don't seem to have a silver lining just yet. Be open to the possibility of success at the end of your challenge, be willing to embrace the challenge and I encourage you to look deep within your heart and soul for the hidden lesson.

### **Nurture Yourself!**

How many times have you heard the common phrase "*Think about others and don't be so selfish?*"

I have lost count, it goes in the one ear and out the other ear.

We live in a congested society with time poor people wanting it all done FAST! And sometimes I know I can be guilty of this too. However, when I catch myself getting too caught up, it's time to slow down and say NO! Instead of YES!

We are all busy, dealing with life's happy times and challenging times. How often do we stop to nurture ourselves?

When I worked a 9 – 5 corporate job, I enjoyed holidays every year even if it was only a week or two. Life was good, bills were paid and I was cruising along living life. But was I really living my life to its full potential?

Five years ago after a life-changing moment which left me raising two kids as a single mum, on a mission to find herself after the love of my life walked out. The quest began through emotional pain, uncertainty and the realisation that I had to step up. There was no time to play small and look to blame someone. I had two kids counting on me.

Five years on and the *one thing that kept me sane was nurturing myself, ignoring all the comments from family and friends which didn't serve me.* They had my best interest at heart, but only I knew what I needed most because I had taken the time to find myself after months and months of heartache.

I invested in me!

I invested in finding myself!

I invested in time for me!

I heard the tiny whispers of “*She can be so selfish at times, having time out to relax and recharge.*” At the start when I heard these quiet whispers I wondered if I was selfish and a bad mum asking my mum to mind the kids, but then I soon discovered, I had invested in me.

Investing in me meant, having freedom with choices.

I needed time to recharge.

I needed time to relax.

I need time out to do nothing and that's okay!

It would have been so easy to listen to what people had to say and believe them, because they loved me and wanted to help me. True? But I made a choice, a choice to honour my highest and live a life with fulfilment.

“ I \_\_\_\_\_ am committed to learning new skills and turning my dreams into a reality and taking daily action.

I will not waste time in this one AMAZING life I have on earth. I am committed to living a life fulfilled.”

## Rewind Time

Embarking on a journey to self-discovery was met with resistance, countless challenges and moments of being overwhelmed. Some days were harder than others, I wanted to give up, but thanks to the support of my incredible coaches and mentor I pushed through. I focused on my life's purpose instead of the pain. I focused on the impact I can make long-term and what that image looked like when I visualised it.

The quiet moments of stillness was magical, through the tears I found the strength to keep going to achieve greatness and live a life fulfilled.

The fog cleared and by following my coaches and mentors guidance, I started witnessing the profound impact the power of one's mind had in creating better outcomes, better results and a better life.

After almost eighteen months of consistent work and reading countless books on mindset, wealth creation and building a successful business. The pattern of actionable tasks were clear and I started taking action one step at a time.

## Fast Forward Time

My headspace is different, my beliefs are different, and I choose my environment carefully.

Two successful businesses serving clients in the US, New Zealand and across Australia. The dream is alive and impacting individuals and business owners through LIVE events and online programs.

There is no magic formula or wishing wand in my hand. Everything I have achieved is as a direct result of taking action every day.

“Change begins from within when one makes a decision.”

YES! I want \_\_\_\_\_

Make the decision and follow through against all obstacles.

Through my years of personal development I have learnt a lot,  
if I was to share something for you to think about it would be

**“Your Thoughts become Your Reality.”**

Feel the Fear! Embrace the Challenge!

Be You, Be Vulnerable and Be Unstoppable!

I believe good things come to those who know what  
they want and willing to ask for it.

I don't wait for someday, I take action now!

I am fearless and unstoppable.

I am committed to myself.

The way you approach your day is entirely up to you.

Do you choose productivity with momentum or allow  
obstacles to restrict your potential?

\*

# I Said *YES!*

Fifteen Australian and New Zealand women share their stories of courage and wisdom, and provide practical insight on how saying **YES** changed their life, relationships, career and business.

*I Said Yes* will inspire and encourage you to step forward, embrace change and say **YES**.

Anything is possible if you believe.

”

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