

LIVE YOUR PASSION

*How to live your dreams using
the stories of others*



*People &
Performance*

INSPIRING STORIES OF
PASSIONATE COACHES

JANE & MICHAEL PELUSEY

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*People &
Performance*

MICHAEL AND JANE PELUSEY



Live Your Passion: People and Performance

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THE PASSION

For years Michael and Jane Pelusey have been fascinated by people who seem to be living their passion. Our first real experience and recognition of people with a passion began 20 years ago when we met Katie Syme (who will be in our passion books about art and the environment). Katie was and is passionate about fungi. Yes fungi. Although we do find fungi fascinating it is more the fact that somebody could be so outrageously excited by that subject that really grabbed our imagination. Her face lit up, her knowledge was extraordinary and she showed a great hunger for learning. Fast forward 20 years and we interviewed Katie for one of our books and she is just as passionate about fungi. In fact Katie is a world authority on the subject.

When you spend time with people who are passionate, it is infectious. You become more enthusiastic about your own life when you are around them.

We would like to thank each person we interviewed. These people are very busy and they gave us their time and let us into their lives by answering our questions.

We would also like to thank those people who gave us access to some of the people in this book. In some cases we liaised with personal assistants and public relations people until we actually met the person we wanted to interview. These contact people were very helpful and without them we may not have captured such an eminent group of inspiring people.

Each interview is, as much as possible, in the person's own voice. We tried to keep a sense of different accents and ways of speaking and edited only for ease of reading. Each chapter also has an image that represents something or somewhere that means something to the person we have interviewed. Glenn Capelli explained how Esperance was his spiritual home so we chose a photograph of the clear Esperance ocean. Kerrie Phipps is a country girl and when we visited her in Dubbo we took the opportunity to capture the rural essence of the area.



Introduction to the Authors

Our passion for people and performance came to the forefront of our minds when we began the journey to find out what our passions were and how to live them. Our questions were:

How do some people find their passions easily?

Is there a correlation between energy, happiness and passion?

What is the difference between passionate people and less passionate people?

Our work on children's educational books took us all around the country and world, researching our material. We had to learn what we were writing about. We did a series of books about living in the outback so we travelled around to meet the people in question. People live in the outback because they love the lifestyle. They love the freedom and the work they do. The enthusiasm is contagious. One evening we were told that a herd of cattle were being loaded onto a truck. The station workers would muster the cattle together and drive them to the loading point. Pre-dawn we were all up and at it. The station workers were mostly late teens and early twenties. There was not a grumpy one amongst them. They were all riding horses or motorbikes and, as they say, if you love what you are doing it isn't work.

Even though we may not share the same passion as others, it is an amazing feeling to hang out and interview passionate people. One of the chefs we talked to, Emmanuel Mollois, said that if you are not passionate about something, just hang out with people who are and the passion will rub off on you.

Referring back to Katie Syme and her fungi passion, by the end of the weekend the whole group was walking through the forest searching for fungi. We all knew they had to be in a good physical state and are in different stages of development. We didn't really share the passion for fungi but we were very willing to share the feeling of passion.



The journey to find your passion can be a complex one of discovery or something you have always known. We believe that we all know what our passion is as a child, when we are unencumbered by negative programming or sensibilities. The older we get, the more the pressures of peer groups and culture can alter our direction and some of us can lose track of our passion.

We work together on a joint purpose, and our passions, although different, complement each other. So here we let each of us speak separately.

Jane

At school, I really enjoyed doing school projects. Daggy I know and not something you run around the playground declaring. I did love the excitement of the clean blotting paper of a sketchbook, the pile of travel brochures my mother would wangle out of the local travel agent and my large set of *World Book Encyclopaedia*. And in my dagginess I was actually quite good at them. Two projects made it to the shelves of the school library. Thirty years later I contacted the school to see if they could search their catalogue for my name. They now have 45 books of mine. I have turned my passion for school projects into writing books. Writing a book is just like a grown-up school project except I have replaced my sketch book with the computer, the encyclopaedia with Google and for the images I married a photographer.

In between school projects and writing books, I became a nurse. It was something I had wanted to do since I was ten-ish and my enthusiasm would never be swayed. Nursing is a profession that you start off young. Along the way, your values change but the job doesn't so I got what we call "burnout". That is when I started on the path to find my passion and what makes passionate people tick.

The travel bug was something kindled in me at an early age. A South Pacific cruise



at the age of ten cultivated my fascination for exotic people and places. Nursing didn't hinder the travel bug; in fact, with lots of annual leave each year it played right into my hands.

Writing books and articles for magazines means that you have to talk to and interview many people and most of them are passionate about what they are doing. That is why they are worthy of an article or a book. Travel writing is also a natural progression when you are passionate about travel.

Michael

In 1963 we were enjoying a family holiday at Rottnest Island off the Perth coast in Western Australia. A quokka, that curious little marsupial resident of Rottnest Island, squatted amongst the grass. Mum passed me her Kodak box brownie camera. I held the metal box to my chest, looked down through the view finder and pushed the shutter button. Click. I was only eight years old. The seed was planted back then and my passion for photography grew.

In 1966 we headed north in Western Australia in the old Kombi on a family holiday. I now owned a little Kodak Starflex camera and a travel diary. We dawdled along stopping at places such as Denham, Carnarvon, Exmouth, Onslow, Wittenoom and Port Hedland soaking up the awesome colourful scenery in between. To a little kid full of unabashed curiosity for everything, this trip was pure joy. I took photos and wrote words in my diary. My passion for writing and photography grew and matured into a rewarding career.

I am now living my passion as a photographer and writer. I love meeting and speaking with other people who are living their passion. Their energy and zest for life is inspiring and this is no more apparent than when it comes to food.



Many people do not understand our lifestyle because it is different to the norm. Thinking back, we both had so-called “normal jobs” and now we live something that is light years away from that. When you work for yourself and do the kind of work we do, other people have a perception that you hardly ever work. Maybe that is because we can control the time we start and finish work. We can take a Friday off to go away for the weekend. And that is what people notice. They don’t notice the working late to meet a deadline or working for weeks straight to get a book finished. But even working late or long hours is not the same when you are living your passion.

We are not hanging out for the weekend. Sometimes I see people say TGIF (Thank God it’s Friday) and it just reminds us that it is Friday. We actually can forget about upcoming public holidays. We try to avoid going away at those times because we don’t really want to have to visit somewhere in the crush of the Easter crowd.

There is a very fine line between work, play and leisure activities. Some of the experiences we get to have because of our work are just amazing. Whether it is going to an event to take photographs or travelling six months in Asia for a book series, the enjoyment outweighs the work aspect.

Spending time with the people we have interviewed for this series of books is technically work but having a conversation with inspiring people gives you energy. We got to meet the likes of Matt Moran at ARIA Restaurant in Sydney and then did another interview there over lunch. We got to go to the offices of *delicious.magazine* and see the workings of a fabulous publication while interviewing Valli Little. In Broome we got to interview their amazing Indian chef and then enjoy his food. In fact, all the people we interviewed generously gave their time, knowledge and philosophy to us. And there is another bonus. When listening to such amazing stories from these people, undoubtedly some of their passion and drive rubs off onto us.

Holidays are also an interesting concept for us. We travel at least six months of the year, writing articles, books and taking photographs. When you love what you



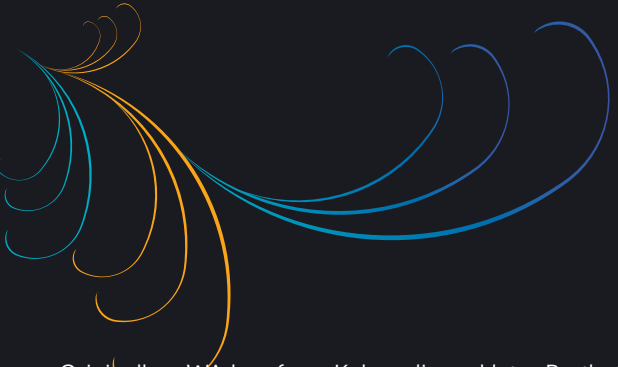
do it is hard to turn that off. True, when you love taking photographs as a hobby, sometimes becoming a professional photographer makes it more grind than pleasure. Fortunately, we have managed to balance that so that Mike is always taking photos for pleasure and profit, even on holidays. We always have a camera on us, even a small compact camera.

When you are a writer, it is impossible to stop ideas coming, and why would you want to? The sights and sounds of any location are always good fodder for writing and there is usually a story in most places and most people. We often find that we go to one place for a story and, on the last day when you have got what you want, people then come up with, “You should go and talk to George, he is such a character” or “You should go and see the rock formations on the east of town. They are magnificent at sunset”. We do find that a good healthy curiosity goes a long way. Listening to people and really “hearing” their story is always an inspiration to us.

We love travel and we have been to a lot of places. We do like to have a purpose while we are in a place. Our travel passions are markets, UNESCO World Heritage Sites and trails. So when we visit a country we usually find a World Heritage Site to explore, track down a local market and hike a walking trail.

Diaries are a great way of documenting life’s experiences. Their purpose is twofold. Firstly, it is a record of what you have done and where you have been. A few years down the track it is sometimes hard to remember the details of that man you met in – which town was it? Secondly, writing a diary also gets the creative juices going. Writing down the sensory experience is far easier an hour or two afterward as opposed to six months down the track.

Living your passion can be scary and also exciting. When we get to the scary bits we work through them together. We regularly use a saying by Susan Jeffers, “Feel the fear and do it anyway”. Sometimes it is easier to live the routine life but we find that living your passion is a far more rewarding life.



Originally a WA boy from Kalgoorlie and later Perth, Glenn Capelli is now a Melbourne resident. We sit at a cafe table on a cool sunny afternoon overlooking South Bank where the languid Yarra River mooches past. Dressed in his customary black, Glenn Capelli greets us. Now I (Mike) share something in common with Glenn – we both went to Doubleview Primary School in Perth way back in the 1960s. Being two years younger than me, Glenn shared classrooms with my sister, Anne-Marie. For a few minutes we reminisce about days long past.


Both Jane and I have had the immense privilege of seeing Glenn speak, both as a keynote and in a workshop situation. His unique style and content is something to behold.

Ever since those school days, Glenn's burning desire was to be a teacher, but not necessarily in the traditional sense. Glenn still sees himself as a teacher, even though he is one of the most sought after professional speakers both nationally and internationally. Teaching is Glenn's great passion; whether it is inspiring teenagers or corporate go-getters, it's all teaching to him.

Glenn's philosophy about teaching is neatly encapsulated in this statement: Before we look at what is wrong with a student I find out what is right with them. So before they tell me what they can't do, I find out what they can do. We have a belief that everybody has a talent inside. If you can get esteem for one thing, that self-esteem can grow in other areas.

As we find out in the interview, Glenn Capelli's story is quite inspirational. To paraphrase Frank Sinatra, Glenn has certainly done it his way.


"It's about being open to new experiences and willing to learn from them"



Glenn Capelli

PASSION Teaching

WEBSITE www.glencapelli.com





Passion for me is the sustained love of something. In some people, passion is something that comes and goes. But I look at it this way – instead of going in and out of something, how do you find something you love doing and keep it going no matter what?

Passion can be about where you come from. I am 53 years of age now and the red dirt and blue sky still brings up something within me. Kalgoorlie is rich inside of me. I travelled the world as a backpacker for seven years and as soon as I was in Israel, East Africa, Arizona or New Mexico, where there is red dirt and blue sky, I felt I was home.

Grandad and grandma eventually moved to Esperance, a town on the south coast in Western Australia. As kids, we used to visit Esperance on our holidays. Esperance is my spiritual home. The beaches of Esperance are the most spiritual place on the planet. Kalgoorlie is the red dirt inside of me.

To be a teacher you have to fall in love with learning. So that is where I think my passion is, learning and teaching. I was very fortunate that I had great teachers at Kalgoorlie Central, Doubleview Primary and Churchlands Senior High School. Interestingly, we had a segment on Melbourne radio about “super teachers” where we got people to phone in about their great teachers. Most media focuses on the negative stuff of teaching and sure enough, a lot of people rang in with the negatives. So fortunate was I to have teachers that left me with really great impressions.

I was down in Esperance presenting at the high school and getting kids out of the audience to do different things. A kid of Indian background came out and was just superb. He was funny and really responded to what I was saying. Years later I got an email telling me his story. He could have easily gone into medicine or become an architect, but his passion was dancing. He loved theatre and now travels the world as a dancer on Broadway. He comes back to Esperance and performs a little show about following your passion.

I like trying different things and radio seems like a good way to spread the message.



I worked with the ABC in Perth doing a radio segment. The content varied at first and then became Thinking Caps.

My Thinking Caps radio segments continue today after moving to Melbourne. I do a segment on commercial radio every fortnight with Denis Walter; yes the one with the deep voice. It's a half-hour segment and it is fantastic.

In our Thinking Caps radio program we do it differently. We call the talkback “reverse talkback”. In normal radio talkback you have a subject and people ring in because they have an opinion on a topic. What we do is that people ring in and I give them the topic. A listener would ring in and we spin the Walter Wheel – after all, Denis is the radio presenter. We see what subject randomly comes up and then tell the listener. The letter W might come up and there is a song called Wild Thing so “what is the wildest thing you have ever done?” The show is spontaneous but I have still designed it.

Thinking Caps is now a book. When the Thinking Caps book came out, how it was received gave me confidence. I know I could get a message across by speaking, but by writing, that is not a song. It was great.

I had a conversation with an Australian rules football coach the other day. He said you might be passionate about being a coach, you might be passionate about speaking in public, but you have to learn about all the stuff around it. I am talking about the necessary things that need doing that perhaps you are not passionate about. People say to me, you must be sick of flying. The fact is, I am not allowed to get sick of flying. If that was the case I wouldn't be doing what I do.

Once I did 34 presentations over 35 days in 12 different countries. I planned it that way and even though I knew it was bizarre, I treated it like a marathon test for myself. It did work out, but at the end I was knackered. We now make sure that we have free time in the diary. Lindy, my wife, and I like the gym and yoga. I read and do cryptic crosswords. We have friends who are not in the speaking world and are totally unimpressed at what I do which is nice. Eclectic is my middle name in both work and leisure.



I knew from the young age of around five or six years that I was going to be a teacher. My first day at was in Kalgoorlie. I was that child who spent the first half day at school crying. On day two I was moved to another classroom. Miss Sawyer made me feel great to be in the classroom. I realised on day one that school could hurt you and use you as an example of embarrassment. Day two's teacher provided a whole different world and I decided to be a teacher.

I read a lot and was a thinking youngster, but nobody would have known that. The thing that gave me some confidence was football. When I was a kid in Kalgoorlie, Dad took me to the footy. In one game, the football was kicked into the crowd. I picked up the ball and kicked it to the fullback. The player said to me, "Great kick". It was one little comment that left a big mark. Later I moved schools and I didn't know anyone. At playtime, footballs were flying everywhere. I kicked a football a long way and was invited to play with the other kids. I joined the Doubleview Football Club outside the school and the game became my passion. It was the thing that gave me the belief in myself and sociability.

Gaining confidence playing football led to learning dancing at 17. That gave me enough social skills to becoming a better teacher or communicator. It's about being open to new experiences and willing to learn from them.

I went straight into teacher training and was the first Capelli to ever graduate from university. I didn't attend a lot of my lessons during my Diploma of Education because I was writing my own stuff. I travelled every uni break. I used to hitch around Australia and in those days I read Jack Kerouac's On the Road and I listened to Bob Dylan. They were my inspiration.

I got an interview at Wanneroo Senior High School and got the job. They offered me incredible freedom in my first year. I taught English, history and economics. I soon realised I had hit a ceiling level of what I was allowed to do. So I had to find some way to teach and at the same time write my own curriculum. When people say to me, "What are you now?", I say I am a teacher who gets to write his own curriculum.



After two years of teaching came the big decision. Do I stay at Wanneroo which I love or leave and go travelling with no safety nets? On and off for the next seven years I travelled with bits and pieces of teaching in between.

I spent all of 1981 living on a kibbutz in Israel where I met an American who suggested I try out a summer camp in the USA. Because I spoke Hebrew, I got employed on a Jewish summer camp in South Carolina for four years. Working there, you are in the cauldron. You discover things about yourself.

In 1985, I came back to the kibbutz and met up with my previous roommate and he said, "You are nearly 30 and you have nothing, except a beard and a backpack. My friends want to know, what is your insurance for the future?" I said I don't know, but I know deep down it will turn out right for me.

I did a fourth year on summer camp in 1987 when my brother Garry Capelli rang and invited me to come home to be best man at his wedding. Garry also approached me about his idea of running a youth course in Australia.

Garry started off this mastermind program and invited me along. It was great material, but they were essentially lectures. If you really made them interactive it could really work so we agreed to run a weekend together. I set up a youth program in association with it. We had 13 kids in the first course and from there, it started growing.

I was fortunate in 1989 to get a Churchill Fellowship and went back over to America looking at self-esteem development in teenagers through accelerative learning methodology. The Churchill scholarship opened up doors.

As part of my study I had to do a presentation and somebody there said, "Can you come to our conference in Chicago next year?" I did two TV series in America which we also wrote.

The speaking industry grew as I grew and when I got back to Australia my courses took off. All this work came from word of mouth.



*“Laughter
seemed the
methodology
that dissolved
tension and
you could slip
the learning
in sideways”*

Glen Capelli

Esperance beach



I am sometimes asked how I became a confident public speaker. I was always a confident teacher and I think that helped. Because I teach in a certain way I was asked by the principal at Wanneroo to talk to other staff. There was nothing more nerve-racking than talking to your peers. My hand was shaking like anything and so everybody was looking at that. I said I don't drink very much and I got a laugh. Laughter dissolved tension. I remember at summer camp realising Jewish people love stories that make a point. So I would start by weaving some story and then bang, in would come some point. You have to actually design a lesson for full engagement.

I now design my keynote talk with the freedom to adapt depending on the audience. I might have five different choices of a particular chunk I want to get across and the audience will give hints as to how it will be presented. I always encourage professional speakers to have a breadth and depth of knowledge and a breadth and depth of methodology. Some learners may need a different approach such as having an activity wrapped around it. I might start with a story, weave in a joke then add an activity. I want people to be excited when they walk out of my presentation and say, "gee, I learnt something".

Since I love music, I think in rhythm. The song, When I Die by 60s rock group Blood, Sweat and Tears taught me how to design a presentation in a rhythmic format that engages people. When writing a musical piece you have to work out what are the highs and lows, where the fast and slow is and where the pauses are. It is the same in presentations.

I work with a great range of industries, doing conferences or ongoing leadership workshops. That variety, plus my radio and writing, gives me freedom.

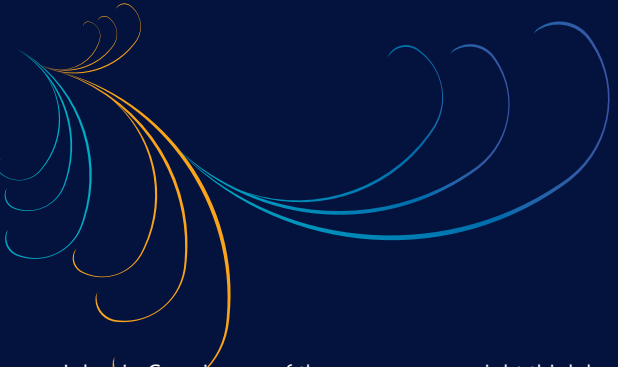
I am sometimes asked what kind of learner I am – audio, visual, etc. I always come out blended. I am visual, audio, kinaesthetic, print orientated, interactive, creative and



analytical – I've got them all. It's an eclectic blend, although I have a visual side that comes out strongly in my drawings. I have always doodled and when I wrote poetry privately as a kid I would decorate it with symbolism, and I think that is what my notes still are. When the executives of BHP were talking at a mine site, I took notes using keywords and pictures of key elements. When people saw it afterwards they wanted it scanned for some of the miners who are visual in their learning. Even today doing a radio show I have a visual map of two pages of possibility drawn out. We don't know what the people are going to talk about when they ring in but that just helps me bounce about and keep it spontaneous. There's no set sequence, I don't have to go from step one to step two. To some people it looks like a mess on a page, but for me it works.

My dad's a musician playing eight different instruments, but doesn't read a note of music. I grew up with that love of music and rhythm. I realised early on that, through rhythm and rhyme, learning stuff seemed to stick. For example, "1492 Columbus sailed the ocean blue", has a certain rhythm that aids learning. When we started the youth program in 1987, I wanted every message put into rhythm. It sounded like early rap. I met up with some local musicians, including Keith McDonald, about turning my youth program into an album of songs. I gave him lyrics to my Attitude Song and he said it was fantastic. Keith asked if I had any more and I gave him hundreds. Pretty well every presentation I do has the Attitude Song in it.

A lot of people now want to be speakers and it has a mini rock star connotation to a certain extent. I look for the talent inside the person. What is it that really excites them, what is it they are good at? I ask them why they want to become a professional speaker – what is it that burns inside them? They have to have something inside of them that can bring out the creativity in people, bring out something. If they haven't got that, don't do professional speaking.



Johnnie Cass is one of those guys you might think looks familiar. That is because Johnnie was in the very first series of Big Brother Australia. But it wasn't Big Brother where we first saw Johnnie in action. We were at a free weekend seminar hosted by a personal development organisation run by Christopher Howard. Johnnie presented the first morning session and engaged the 400-strong audience with his charm, wit, storytelling and sheer undiluted energy. We have seen him on stage as a presenter a few times now and wondered what makes a man like him tick. Presenting in front of an audience thirsting for knowledge that will propel them into the life they truly desire is a tough gig. It was after one such gig at Observation City on Scarborough Beach in Western Australia that we found out. Under a cloudless blue sky with a simmering Indian Ocean backdrop, Johnnie starts talking about his life as we sit around an alfresco cafe table.

*“It is about the attitude you bring
to the table”*



Johnnie Cass

PASSION Getting the best out of people





My passion is to experience all that the world has to offer in the moment. For a time there acting was my passion. Now, media is my passion and so is personal training. For whatever I have decided to do in that moment, I do it one hundred per cent and just love it. Life is my passion and getting people to reignite with what is important to them as well.

I love and always want to travel and that is the path that I chose to follow and it has got me to where I am today. I love being on planes where I use self-hypnosis to put myself under, and I do sleep. I travel a lot and don't get jetlagged as I have my own time zones.

I am also a fitness fanatic. There is nothing better than travelling around the world running through Paris or running through Amsterdam at six in the morning when there is no one around. You get a totally different feel to the city because during the day all the tourists are around and retail is happening. In the early morning it is a brand new day and you just get the city for whatever it is and you have done something for yourself.

Weights and running are my two big things and obviously watching my weight. I think food is important. I was just reading an article in the Financial Review that you have a three per cent chance of obesity if you have a lower socioeconomic background. I like to eat well. It is what gives me energy. It gives me fuel. It keeps me going. I also like a balance between rest and work, because I work hard. I try and work as efficiently as I can and I am by no means a workaholic.

I don't really look at what I do as work anyway. I see it as play. I am just on stage, talking to a lot of people having a good time and sharing knowledge. I judge a weekend course by whether the people who came took something away with them, some tremendous value. Whether they implement it I can't be responsible for that but I give them something to think about. I think we offer some great information and a great service.



I am a lead trainer and master coach for the Academy of Wealth and Achievement which was started by Christopher Howard. I jokingly say that my job interview for Chris was the longest ever. It was like a two-year job interview. It was a combination of things. The timing was right within the organisation but also the attitude that I showed up with. I had some coaching experience. I was willing to show up at event after event on my own time and let it be known that I wanted to coach and let that presence be felt. Chris gave me that role. He also knew I wanted to present and speak. I was open with my communication with Chris and the team.

It is about good connection with people but then you have to back that up with skill. I know plenty of people who are great talkers and great networkers with no skill or competency there. There is an ongoing commitment. I draw from a wide variety of resources and skills; it is not just the material I have learnt from Chris. He encourages us to bring in everything we can. To run a three-day program you have to have a lot of background.

My role as a teacher and a leader is to get new trainers up to speed and teach new content pieces. I am very much about empowering others. I don't feel so insecure that I have to keep everything to myself. The more that I give to them the more they keep me working harder. I just have to run faster and I like it like that.

I wanted to play a much bigger game instead of one-on-one coaching. I enjoy the one-on-one coaching but always wanted to have a global lifestyle.

I have an apartment in Sydney and when I am in town I hang out there. I have some friends living in it and there is a spare room always available for me. I like to catch up with my mum and dad and family.



THE JOURNEY

I have always had an idea of what my passion is. When everyone was going off on work experience doing journalism and all these great things, I did teaching. I didn't know I wanted to be a teacher but here I was, teaching. I've always had an idea that I wanted to be on the stage, be in front of groups of people, but I was never sure in what capacity. I've kinda wanted to be famous, be attracted to large audiences. That has always been clear.

I was sporty as a kid but not very good at it. I was OK at some sports. I was the captain of the squash team and I played basketball, I was a sprinter, I played football and soccer but I never excelled at any of them except squash. Does anyone play squash anymore? Now I like to push weights and I like to run.

I was a personal trainer. I did that for about 10 years. Everything I have done I have always just fallen into it to some degree. In personal training, I was looking to boost my levels of confidence at the time. There have been times in my life when I have had challenges so I got into health and fitness. I was getting some results and people were asking me about the results so I started my own personal training business. Before that, I worked as a retail manager for quite a period of time. So working in retail, working with other managers and other team members, leading a team is always something I have done. Even when I was at McDonald's, I was a crew member and a crew leader, always leading and teaching other kids, teaching people to be better than who they were.

I did acting and did some film work. I did some short films and commercials but most of my career was in personal training and retail.

After Big Brother you sort of get thrust into the media spotlight, you get a lot of media attention. There is a lot of expectation that you are going to accomplish a lot of things from a lot of people. When those things don't happen you start to question



yourself. For me, I wouldn't say I fell into a depression but I was really questioning my capabilities. Was I any good at anything considering the media said that I had all these opportunities that didn't eventuate? It started me thinking, why is it that some people are able to go out and create opportunities for themselves but somebody like me can't? What's the difference?

That started me on a bit of a process of self-discovery. I have always had an interest in psychology. I have always had an interest in people and performance so it was a double-edged sword. I was learning about myself and I was learning about how to help other people to learn about themselves and create opportunities for themselves. I went and studied some psychotherapy as I was thinking about a career change, so why not go and study psychotherapy. I studied that and realised it wasn't quite the thing that I wanted. It was a little bit heavy going. I don't really need to go that deep.

Somebody said, have you thought about getting a career coach, so I ended up working with one. I did some continuous work with him. He said he was running a course, so why don't I come and sit in on the course. I was personal training at the time so I started doing some coaching with my clients which was different to the personal training. My coach asked me if I wanted to do some presenting at his course. I said "sure" and so I presented at his course. I ended up presenting all of his courses. I was doing well with lots of coaching clients and I was looking to accelerate myself and my clients. Someone mentioned NLP (neuro linguistic programming) and I was given a ticket to a Chris Howard course. At first I didn't really like Chris. He was just some loud American guy. I did the initial course twice and the second time realised there was something to this so I did all the courses. Chris asked me to be one of their coaches.



*“If you don’t
know what
your purpose
is then
make it your
purpose to
find out what
your purpose
is”*

Johnnie Cass

Noosa Surf



I have accomplished all the things I wanted to do. What I am doing at the moment is my dream. I get to travel the world and inspire people and live a global lifestyle. My goal is to continue to do that. My real passion lies in talking. I want to have a talk show, whether that is on TV or on YouTube. That is one of the things I want to start building towards in the next couple of years. I would probably do that in the UK because I am not your quintessential Aussie. If you look at Australian TV it is quintessentially Australian. It is not a good thing or a bad thing, it is just not very global. You get your global franchises like Big Brother and Idol but otherwise it is pretty Australian. The UK tends to be a bit more open and I like the UK at the moment. I see my program being chatty or maybe even a panel type of discussion. You might get a variety of people on there. I like the Ellen DeGeneres style of doing things. She is a bit more funky, a bit more fresh. She is inspirational but she isn't shoving inspiration down your throat. I like the inspiration to be a bit sleight of hand.

There's a bigger picture and there is inspiration there as well. I am very happy doing this work at the moment and love living my life so I am not fully into writing my book yet. I am not one hundred per cent clear on the book just yet. It is an evolution. Whatever I write I want it to be a true representation of who I am. Not a mimic or a copy of something else.

In my spare time I like to spend time with my partner and I am very social. I have friends globally and lots of global connections. I like to catch up with them, have a nice meal and chat. That is probably my Italian background and Italians like to connect over a meal, big pasta lunches. I like to catch up with groups of friends maybe on a Sunday and hang out. I also like to read or go and see a movie, even though I have seen most of them on the plane. I have seen them all and *Shrek Forever* for the third time doesn't really cut it.



There have been many times in my life when I haven't known what I want to do. Even when you find the path, you are always adjusting and changing anyway. I think it was Mark Twain who said "Know thyself", and that means making the time to find out what is important to you. If you don't know what your purpose is then make it your purpose to find out what your purpose is. I had a period of about 18 months where I didn't know what my purpose was. The funny thing is, I did know but I wasn't connected to it. So for 18 months I went on a journey of self-discovery. At the same time you still have to worry about your cash flow but you should not despair. You just have to keep searching for what juices you up and have that persistence to make it happen. It is about the attitude you bring to the table. Even if you don't have your purpose, have the faith that you will play full-out in the process of finding it. I read books and I keep a journal so if there is confusion or lack of clarity I can refer back. I ask questions. What do I want to be? What do I want to do? What do I want to have? What is my ideal day? I know that I have to paint my focus.

Some people, like Britney Spears, know from a young age exactly what they are going to do. Oprah knew from the age of three what she was going to do and so was up in the pulpit speaking. When I think of myself and then other people, I have had some idea but it hasn't always been that clear. But I have always moved one step forward in the direction that I wanted to go and then let things fall into place. There are times when I go totally off my path.

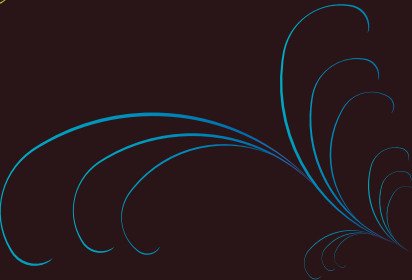
There are times when you just have to do something and you know it is not the right thing for you. Even so, on some level you know even then there is something for you even if you don't know what it is. Even if you don't know where you are meant to be, just be open to finding out what that is. OK, I have an interest in people. I have an interest in performance. You try one angle and it may not be quite the thing. Try another thing and it may not be quite right. Just keep moving one step forward.



Ric Charlesworth is generally regarded as one of Australia's most successful sportsmen and coaches. His record is beyond reproach. In cricket, he played for Western Australia, being part of three Sheffield Shield winning teams. In hockey, Ric was a representative in five Olympic hockey teams, getting a silver medal in 1976. In 1988 he retired as a player, and from 1993 to 2000 he was head coach for the Australian women's hockey team (Hockeyroos), culminating in the gold medal at the Atlanta Olympics and gold at the Sydney Olympics. In 2009 he took up the Australian men's hockey team which won numerous national titles including the 2010 World Cup. Add his medical doctor career and a 10-year stint in Federal Parliament representing Perth and you have one high achiever.

That much we knew as we entered the Western Australian Hockey Stadium. Now it was time to meet the legendary man in person. Introductions complete, our interview begins and it soon becomes apparent that Ric's coaching philosophy with sport is applicable to life in general. Rick speaks in calm measured tones, almost understated considering his considerable talents as a sportsman and coach.

"My job was not about being their best friend. It was and is about helping them to be better"



Ric Charlesworth

PASSION Sporting Performance





I am very lucky to be doing what I do. I really enjoy coaching. I coached the national women's hockey team for eight years, a long time to do it. Now I am the coach of the national men's hockey team. From January 2010 to October 2010 we would have played 70 matches in that time. By December we would have played even more. It is a demanding job.

My best moments involve winning the major tournaments as a player and coach. I won a silver medal as a player in the 1976 Olympics at Montreal. In the 1980s I was in the World Cup winning team. I was the coach when the women's hockey team won the World Cup twice and the Olympic gold twice. And, as a coach with the guy's team, we have just won the World Cup. They were special occasions. Being part of the WA cricket team who won the Sheffield Shield was nice. Even winning the grand final in your club is special.

On a wider level, about 70 players went through the women's hockey program so you as a coach have a big impact on those people. Many of those players are now good friends of mine.

I have always loved playing sport from since I was a boy. I did that and went to school. After school, I went to university. University was a good environment to do different kinds of sport. I loved playing Australian rules football (AFL) and hockey until I was 14 but couldn't do both, so had to make a decision. In the 1970s you could even do two sports at an elite level, but not at the same time.

I am passionate about hockey, I just love the game. And as I can't play anymore, my passion for the game is kept going through coaching.



The hockey stadium at Belmont in Perth was opened in 1979. It was the first AstroTurf stadium in Australia. The first time we played an international tournament on AstroTurf was at the Olympic Games in Montreal in 1976. Montreal forced us to go into synthetic turf as the Olympic people said grass was not an option. For the skills to be on show at their best, perfectly flat surfaces of synthetic pitches are what you want. In India there are only a few AstroTurf pitches, in Holland there's over 2,000 of them. Soccer, of course, is the main game in Holland, but hockey does very well. It is a rich person's sport over there.

I also spent time in India as adviser for Indian hockey in 2008. They have a huge pool of talent. Ex Australian cricket captain Greg Chappell said to me if India got their act totally together they would have the top five cricket teams in the world.

What you see in the highest level of sports sometimes is nonsense. The teams with the most money win, it's boring. It's also about theatre and celebrity. In our sport, teams seriously prepare for four years to compete in the Olympics, so we do it much better than they do in the much bigger professional sports.

I find life interesting and exciting and there are not enough hours in the day to do everything I want to do. When I am doing this coaching job it is totally absorbing because you spend the entire day trying to make the team better and make a difference.



THE JOURNEY

As a kid I did athletics. I tried the long jump, I tried the shot put, I tried running the 100 metres and longer distances. I tried all the different strokes in the swimming carnivals. That was how it was back then. We had a teacher in our school that was interested in hockey. So we played hockey at primary school. In the 1960s in Perth, hockey wasn't an established sport at most schools.

I played both hockey and football (AFL) in winter and cricket in the summer. At school we played sport on Friday afternoon. Saturday morning I played football for the local under 14s. Saturday afternoon we had hockey. It all fitted in very nicely. It was very different back then. There was lots of bush around and there were dugites (a poisonous snake) going down the road. I walked to school in bare feet.

Even at the elite level back then you could play hockey in winter and cricket in summer. At state level you would finish hockey in October and start cricket a week later. Ken Macaulay played state level football in winter and cricket in summer as a number of sportspeople did in those days. Ross Edwards played hockey with me and test cricket for Australia.

The hockey club I first played for was, would you believe, called Cricketers. The club started back in the 1930s. It was a hockey club in winter and a cricket club in summer.

Some of my cricket mates played in the English county competition, but I never went as my university study was a serious business.

In hockey and cricket I got pretty good and was selected into state teams. But cricket was something I did in summer in between hockey seasons.

When I went to university, I naturally played both games for that team. I made a few centuries and was selected to play for Western Australia in the Sheffield Shield cricket competition.

I played cricket until I was 26, but had to let it go as I was preparing to play hockey for Australia in the Moscow Olympics. In the middle of the cricket season I was captain



of the state team and had to go to a hockey tournament in Pakistan in 1979/80. It didn't work and I even had a young family back then.

After graduating in medicine I worked in general practice for a while in a hospital, but then I realised it wasn't really my thing. So I thought I would specialise, then an opportunity in politics came up. I was interested in politics and you don't get many chances like that coming along so I took it. I think there is a chapter in my book titled, "Interesting Job, Terrible Lifestyle". So that was 10 years of my life. After that I thought I would get involved in practising medicine again.

I was then approached by the girls (Australian Women's hockey team) and asked, "What do you think about coaching us?" I had never thought about doing such a thing, even though I had done a lot of coaching. Even at 17 I had coached teams within my hockey club. I had coached a club hockey team, junior teams, and my daughter's under 14s, the State junior team and the state under 21s team.

When I was in the senior team the coach went away and I took over for a while. I certainly had some experience in coaching hockey, but I never thought I would have coached an international team. So they took a bit of a punt on me I suppose. People said I should never coach women, "you won't be able to do it". Women are different but, as I found out, you make a mistake if you differentiate too much. From my experience, they are just as aggressive, just as hard workers and just as competitive as the boys.

So I fell into coaching women's hockey accidentally. I really like it instead of going into work every day in a suit and tie. I mean, I'm in a t-shirt, tracksuit and a pair of shorts. And I work with young people who are really good, who are very motivated, work hard and want to be outstanding. That is a really good environment in which to work as you are amongst very motivated people. Essentially, my reward is lifting the bar for them. My job as coach is not about being their best friend. It was and is about helping them to be better.



*“If you want
to win at the
Olympics,
don’t aim for
the bronze
medal
because that
is what you
will get”*

Rick Charlesworth

*Cormorants on the
Swan River*



My advice for anybody who wants to play any sport for Australia is to play and have fun and if you are good enough, it will happen. I sort of dreamed of playing cricket or hockey for Australia but you never actually knew if that would happen. I just played it because I loved it.

There is an adrenaline rush that goes with elite sport. But there are great disappointments as well, as you don't always win, of course.

A lot of people in business grow the business and make a profit and they are doing fine. It is not so imperative to do your best. In the sporting environment, unless you win the premiership, grand final or gold medal you are not considered successful. There is a "being your best" imperative which actually pushes and drives people. In the best programs it drives them more. In national hockey teams there is an international paradigm you are operating in.

The national hockey teams are both based in Perth, but as individuals they don't all have to move here. It depends on their particular circumstances. Some are full-time students. One of the issues with our group men's elite players is that a lot of them play professionally in Europe. So you only have them together part of the time, whereas with the girls, one of the nice things is that they have to come over here. We therefore have a better chance to develop attitudes, approaches and the way of going about things as opposed to the boys. The state based competition hasn't the money or been going long enough to attract the players from Europe. In 2010, the team will get together for the *Commonwealth Games and when that is over they go back for a winter break of a few months over December, January and February and then go back to Europe in March, April and May. I won't see those players until June. The season in Australia goes from April to September. They play all year round which makes them more vulnerable to chronic injuries. The overseas clubs are not particularly interested if their players play for Australia or not. To them they are more commodities. It's harder to build a national team and identity with that team and consolidate all you want to consolidate.




*Both the men's and women's hockey team won gold. It is interesting that a lot of elite athletes don't have a high level of self-belief. Actually the best athletes are quite humble because they are the ones searching to get better. You have to have high ambition if you want to do well. I have always had this view that if you want to win at the Olympics don't aim for the bronze medal because that is what you will get. It's about knowing where to go and having a view of how you are going to get there. As a coach I have to convince the athletes that they can do it. Although most of it is in the mind, nobody will succeed at the highest level unless they are a quality athlete. On top of that, what differentiates great teams and individuals from the rest is their ability to focus, and deliver on the day, under pressure and when it counts. How you develop that is in the training where you put them under pressure situations, getting them to develop reproducible skills under pressure. You need a resilient group of people to build a great team. All the important decisions are made by the players on the field during the game, not by me. You want to develop players that can make good decisions on the field. I think it is a measurable process over time, week after week after week.

Australia's main competition is Germany. Holland is up there and Spain is good. Korea, Argentina, Japan, China, India, Pakistan are amongst a raft of countries that are very good and competitive. In the women's game, the United States is very good.

I have been the men's hockey coach about two years now. We have had 19 players that have debuted in that time. They have to blend in with the senior ones and build a strong team. You make a mistake if you go with the impression that this is how we have to play. In the end, it has to suit the players you have. It is a process of finessing and polishing so you can get the best out of them. In my hockey team, if we are lacking a certain type of player, I am not Alex Ferguson of Manchester United and spend up big buying one; I have to make the best goalkeepers in Australia, better.

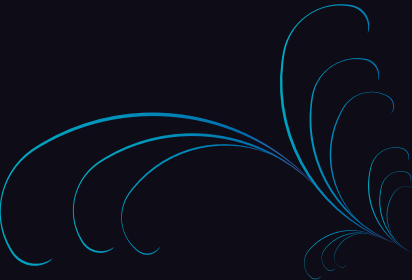
It's also challenging when my players come back from their overseas teams with habits and ideas they get from their clubs and coaches which are different to ours. You have to be constantly changing and redefining.



We originally heard Cathy Denehy's story when she told it from a stage at a personal development course. She explained how she had turned her life around. When we knew we were going to Albany for Children's Book Week, I Facebooked Cathy about the possibility of doing an interview. We meet at Vancouver Café (from Live Your Passion: Food) and as we get our coffees and I start the tape recorder, Cathy comments, "It's amazing, if you just let people ramble you get the core of who they are and what their essence is".

Cathy's essence is her passion for connecting people. And at the end of the interview she connects me to a few other Albany people that live their passion. I interview both of them the next day.


"You always connect with people on different levels because you are so many things and you are so many layers"



Cathy Denehy

PASSION Supporting and connecting women

WEBSITE www.businessdivasaustralia.com





I love connecting people running events. I love that whole pleasure that comes from seeing people create something together.

I am also passionate about regional and rural women. There is an amazing array of networking groups, support groups and events in the big cities. That stuff doesn't get to regional areas. Australia is so much more than the metro areas. Through my links at Remote Rural and Regional Network for women (RRR Network) there are many examples of phenomenal women doing amazing things. More and more women are going into business based at home because it is an easy thing to do. They can be the mum at home and watch the kids while running the business. It can bring in that much-needed extra money because many are doing it tough out in the regional areas. I want to connect all these women. What I see is like a web of interconnectedness where a woman in Kalgoorlie can connect to a woman in Albany and say, "I am coming down, do you guys have an event? Great, let's meet". Even online, they might say, "Look what you've got and look what I've got."

The Business Diva events are structured so that it doesn't matter whether you are in Timbuktu, Albany or Kununurra. At a Diva event, you know it will run the same way. I am also passionate about the networking. I am really big on letting everyone in the room have their say. They get up and say "This is who I am and this is what I do". Or they can say what they are passionate about. You may not connect with someone over business because you might already have an accountant for example. But you might connect over being passionate about helping children in third world countries, riding horses or taking photos. Never judge someone on "you do that and I have no interest in that".

At one of the recent meetings, a mobile travel agent did a presentation so we got everyone to tell a 30-second travel story – everyone has a travel story. People



walked away saying "I felt so connected to everyone". I restrict it to 50 women per event. It is very important to me that the events never become so large that people aren't connecting. I am also trying to teach people that you don't get new business by coming in and shaking someone's hand and handing over your business card. The connection comes from the heart. That is very important to me. I pull a room of people together and they learn that they have all these amazing connections that they never thought they would.

I love that I have managed to turn my passion for helping rural women and my passion for supporting, networking and connecting, into a business. In the city I was hearing that many trainings and events weren't filling up. Was that because there were too many on offer or they were not feeling that heartfelt message when they got there.

There are woman who have joined who were not advocates of me in the past, who said that it won't work, that are now coming on board as members. When that happens I know that I am giving them what they want. I am meeting a need. It is all about meeting your clients' or customers' or members' needs.

Mindset is the big issue. Most of us come from that middle-class-struggle city environment that is imprinted on our brains. Other people grow up in the same environment but their parents tell them to go after what they want. Ninety five per cent of us end up broke when we are old because we struggle with that mindset every day. It is the five per cent that are saying "OK, what can I learn? Who do I need to connect with? What is the most important thing I need to do today that will keep me on track towards my dreams?"



THE JOURNEY

It's funny, when you talk about when I was younger, I think back and realise I grew up with a really weird family. We came out on the 10-pound pom scheme from England and then became quite separated. We disassociated from the family. I had a close-knit family in England of aunties and uncles, grandparents and cousins, and moving out to Melbourne disassociated us from them. That led to us being a minority group basically. Then my parents separated and again we were disassociated. In my early teens I came over to Western Australia with my mum and stepdad. As a child I felt I just never fitted in anywhere. I think that is where it has come out – always wanting to support the underdog and support people who didn't feel like they fitted.

I sort of drifted through life trying lots of different things. I tried so many things that I gained a wide range of experience and I realised that I usually ended up in leadership roles. If I wasn't in a leadership role I ended up being told I don't fit in here because of my big picture thinking. I would always be looking at how to create things bigger and better for everyone. Like, if we did this it would be better for all people concerned. I used to manage a band for six years. I just loved arranging the events and organising things. I loved that I could sit on the phone and get the band into a pub gig.

Then a few years ago I looked at my life and realised there was stuff that I didn't know. I have lived in Albany my whole life. I have travelled around Australia a couple of times. It isn't my lack of passion and it isn't my lack of understanding or my lack of drive or conviction. It is my lack of knowledge and strategy. The one thing that I got out of doing the personal development courses was that I don't know what I don't know so I had better go out and know it. I went on a journey of finding out as much as possible about me and what I do and how I can relate better to people to get the best out of them.



During that process I went through a couple of women's networks, women's events down here and realised that many women were disassociated. They were caught up raising kids, running businesses and more, but weren't connecting in a heartfelt way with other women, except who they grew up with. When I went to these women's events they were saying, "wouldn't it be great to have more of these events. Look at how many people in this small town of Albany that I don't know".

That is where the idea for Business Divas came about and I started running it as a networking group. It started with six people in a café. Everyone loved it and went away feeling good, feeling inspired, and we decided to do it again so I started running it monthly. I love creating names. People come up to me and ask if I can think of a name for their business or training. For my own I came up with Dynamic Divas and that changed to Business Divas. I toyed with Business Divas WA but ended with Business Divas Australia because I want to connect women from Moora to Mildura and have them all interacting because they understand each other, they are not in the metro. I am not saying that I will not go metro but I want those women out in the regions to feel connected and supported.

After a year of doing that I realised that I had jagged it. I loved seeing people coming together. I loved bringing interesting people in to talk and I also realised that if I didn't do something about it I was going to go broke. I was funding it all so I decided to turn it into a business so that is where Business Divas evolved from. I now have a membership to our tribe. I called them tribes and I am the Chief Diva. I have just hooked with some relatives who are Quinault Indians from America and they love the fact that I am the Chief Diva of a tribe. I have a tribe here in Albany and the next town Denmark and they are spreading through rural and regional towns. Because I can't be everywhere I am finding people to be tribe leaders in each town. It is about finding that person who is passionate about connecting people.



*"It is all
about this
huge family
of women who
love, support
and nurture
each other"*

Cathy Denehy

Middleton Beach, Albany



Where it is going to next is a membership interactive website with professional and personal development. Many people say they are doing professional development but not into that personal development thing. I think of it like a carpet. You can't have one weave without the other. You pull out one weave and the carpet doesn't exist. You are left with just a pile of string. Personal and professional development are the two weaves of the carpet. I am interested in where the two cross over and interweave.

I choose the professional development guest speakers each month that are experts in their field. Participants walk away with knowledge they can implement in their businesses. I am bringing in people who can teach about social media. People need this stuff and just can't get access to it. They are still getting their head around Facebook and the net.

When I first started this idea I had so many people telling me it couldn't be done. Australia does have the tall poppy syndrome. I say in my events that I am a big believer in taking action. With the amount of times I have fallen over, I have the best calloused knees out there. But nothing keeps me down and I get up and then work out my next strategy.

When you keep taking action you are going to stumble across the big thing that makes the big difference. By sitting there pondering the things you have done wrong or shouldn't be doing, you are not taking action on the things that create the things you want.

One thing we don't do as women is congratulate ourselves when we do something well. I have been known to do my happy dance. I don't care where it is or when it is, even in public. Do your happy dance – if people look at you weirdly, so what? At least when they look at you, you will stay in their mind, not bad for business. Congratulate yourself, support yourself, be there for yourself.



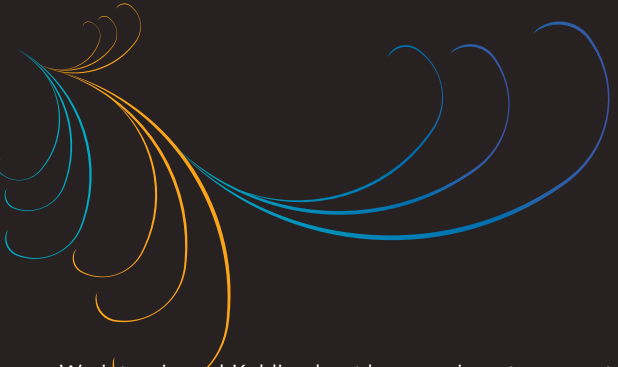
When I started Business Divas I had someone say, "Oh, your latest venture". I am a strong believer in giving everything a go. There was a great book called Repotting, 10 Steps to Redesigning Your Life by Diana Holman and Ginger Pape. Some people stay in the one thing all their lives and that is great if you love it and it is meeting your needs. But if it isn't, have the guts to repot. There are days when I get up and it is hard, the bills are piling up, the kids are screaming and the new tenant is a nightmare so you want to go and live on an island and forget all about this. It is times like that where you are your own worst or best coach, your own worst or best advocate.

That is what drives me; there are women out there like me five years ago. Like I was, they don't know who to turn to or where to get the knowledge to become who they need to be. I was sick of working for other people. I wanted my own business and be that place where woman can come and surround themselves with dynamic women.

It is all about this huge family I am creating, women who love, support and nurture each other. I really want us to connect with each other. I am a big thinker, a creator and I know my paperwork is untidy. I am not a systems person so I need to connect with someone who can help me with that.

Many people go into business thinking it is nine to five. It isn't. What can I do today or tonight? It is like that Malcolm Gladwell book Tipping Point. If you can put in your 10 thousand hours early on, the tipping point will come earlier. That is why many new businesses fail in the first one, two or three years. If you work 70 hours a week, to reach 10 thousand hours it is three and a half years. Then you are doing it, making it happen.


Business Divas is in its infancy; however, in that time, male CEOs of big businesses have joined us. Their female staff can come along to the events and they see the benefit in it. Government agencies come on board because they can see the benefit in it. That is what inspires me to keep it going, build it and make more connections.



We interviewed Kahlia about her passion at an event she was helping out on. At a young age she had already worked in the travel industry, and then moved on to set up her own coaching and training business. She thought that was her passion. Twelve months later we caught up with her because we heard on the grapevine that she had changed direction. Most of the people we have interviewed had already been through the to-ing and fro-ing of finding their passion. We had actually caught Kahlia in the throes of change. So we interviewed her twice.

From our point of view it was interesting to see how initially we interviewed someone who thought they knew what they were passionate about but, in hindsight, it was just the start of the journey. Kahlia loved coaching and training but, as it turns out, it is in the form of event management.

“If you can make a career out of your passion you have it made. It also makes all the hard work so much easier”



Kahlia Ericson

PASSION Event management

WEBSITE www.thekeys.com.au





I have a few passions. The first one is travel and I worked in the travel industry for five years. I love the adventure; I love experiencing new things. My purpose in life is to experience and inspire. Travel is the experience part of that – the cultures, the food, the activities. I like doing things that are so different to home. I am also passionate about my coaching and training, which is what I do now. This is where the inspire part of my passion comes in. I want to make a difference. I have had such massive shifts from having been coached and trained myself, that it is very important to me to be able to share that with others.

Twelve months on I still have my three or four coaching clients and I love it. But I was beginning to question that, yes I have started my business and yes it was doing OK but it hasn't done really well. I have learnt that if you are on the right path it should happen fairly quickly and quite naturally. So it started me thinking. I was at a big event and in an environment where there was a huge team for an events management company and it was a very supportive environment.

Tobi (a mentor of mine) sat me down and I was feeling a bit down. I knew that something wasn't right. He asked me, "What do you want?" Immediately it came into my head that I wanted to be an event manager. But it also came into my head that you can't do that because that is what everyone else wants to do. There was also a lot of fear there because that is something that I truly wanted to do so it was kinda like I was avoiding it. I sat there all flustered, hot and freaking out when he asked me so I knew that I had to say something. Finally I got it out and said I wanted to be an event manager and he said, "OK cool". He then asked me if I wanted my own company or did I want to work for someone else. I thought I wanted both because I wanted to do my own stuff but I also knew that I had a lot to learn and how to do that. I know I have the tools and that I could go out and do it straightaway and I am also one that values learning from other people that do things awesomely. Tobi is one of them for me because he is one of the best event managers. I didn't realise at the time but he



pretty much told me that I could have a job at Universal Events. I was in such a funny headspace I didn't realise what he said.

The next day I went up to Brisbane and I rang him to ask about how to approach Universal Events about getting a job. He said, "You already have the job, I am the person who employs people". I was so excited because it had happened so easily. All I had to do was ask for it.

Now I can ask Tobi anything I need to know. I also have a coach, Doug, and he took me through a session where I worked out that it was definitely something I wanted to focus on. He told me I was too scattered. I was starting the event managing and I was still coaching and training and working part-time for another coaching organisation. He told me that coming up to the New Year, I had to focus on just one thing. We went through and worked out what I am good at and what all my profiles were, like disc profiles and Wealth Dynamics profiling. Wealth Dynamics was designed by Roger Hamilton. You do a heap of questions and it analyses the easiest way to wealth in your life. We came to the conclusion that the events thing brings all the other things I love, like coaching and training, into one basket. When you are running an event you have to teach your team, so I am getting in my training. You are the go-to person when something goes wrong. If someone needs coaching you're the person that has to coach them, so I am getting that fulfilled.

Doug also asked me, "What is the one thing that you can't go without in life?" So the one thing that I need to do is go along to events. I thought originally that was in the form of teaching or training from the stage. I realise now that I don't need that aspect. I can add my little bits and pieces that make differences in people's lives but I don't need to be in the spotlight all the time. Since then, things have just skyrocketed. I have been blown away at how quickly things have happened. Now I definitely know that I am on the right path.



THE JOURNEY

When I was a kid I was very good at listening. People would seem to come to me – because I was the humble one in the group – with their problems and get their solution. I didn't think anything of it. I thought that was how everyone was. I liked to be around adults.

As a teenager I had no real idea of what I wanted or about goal setting. I tell this story when I am teaching goal setting. When I was at high school, we had a task to fill out a questionnaire. At the time I didn't think anything of it. It was all about values, beliefs and structures of your family. Then we had to set goals, five-year goals and ten-year goals. We had to set them for every area of our life like health, family and career. At the time, I didn't think anything of it. When you are 16, you don't even know what you want to do on the weekend, let alone in five or ten years' time. So I was playing around and put a heap of goals down. Five years later after I had done quite a bit of travel and was in my "dream job" as a travel planner, I got a letter in the mail. I open up this letter and it was all the goals I had written down as a 16-year-old. I started reading through these goals. Many of them were very general, like to be fit and healthy and have lots of friends and family. There was a couple there that brought a tear to my eye. One goal was to live in Canada for 12 months, which I had done two years before that. Another one was to be working as a travel planner, which I was doing as well. I didn't remember even putting them on the questionnaire. I met my husband at school, so my five-year plan was to still be with him and my 10-year plan was to be married to him, which I was.



I did the Chris Howard Fast Track (Academy of Wealth and Achievement) and at the beginning there was no way I was getting up on that stage. I was happy being a travel planner. I was happy being a behind-the-scenes person. I couldn't even get up on the stage to dance in the breaks. I had very much labelled myself the shy kid. I was quiet, kept to myself, and wouldn't put my hand up to ask a question in class. I was not confident at all. At the platform and presentation skills training (my fourth), there was a little spark there that I thought maybe I could be up there. It was at Design your Destiny (Rich Heart, Wealthy Mind) that I decided to become a coach because I was quite good at it. I was still confused about what that was.

I worked as a travel planner for a while and then quit. I resigned because I got a massive pay cut because of the economic downturn. By then I valued myself too much to stay in the job. The next week I did Billionaire Bootcamp and installed all the good wealth and money mindset. It paved the way for me to start my own business.

I tried lots of different things like coaching people who had been sexually abused, coaching and mentoring school kids, business training. I tried lots of different areas of coaching in order to find what my niche was. So this year I realised that travel and adventure was my second highest value in life, so it was very important for me to bring that back in because I had blocked it out for 12 months. I didn't know where it fitted.



*"I surround
myself with a
great team of
coaches and
mentors for
support"*

Kahlia Ericson

Little Beach, near Albany



Becoming a coach was a journey for me. I didn't just decide. It took me a good year to become qualified and get my confidence. So it may look like I jumped straight in but I was working up to it.

I believe that some people aren't even looking for their passion. They are stuck in that box, limited by the boundaries that keep them in. So, firstly, it is finding that spark and then going out and doing something with it. Then they need to take action and see. I spent that 12 months testing different things. It was being able to say, well, that didn't fit or that did fit and playing around with it.

I surround myself with a great team of coaches and mentors for support. I also have a great group of supportive friends. I also use all the tools I have learnt with my coaching training on myself. I know what my values are and any decision I make I pass through my values set.

The last few weeks have been so refreshing and a huge weight has been lifted off my shoulders. I realise it does happen naturally. I have been speaking with a lot of business people and they said now you have found your thing, work out how you are going to market that. What speakers do you want to work with? Are you going to work with anyone or work with specific people? It feels so good having people come to me and approach me instead of having to go out there and hassle people all the time. Everything I do now is a reassurance that I have made the right decision.

I am now running, organising and managing the events of speakers. I do everything and they just rock up and speak. Something I realise is that I want to be working with people who I believe in their message 100 per cent. I need to be passionate about



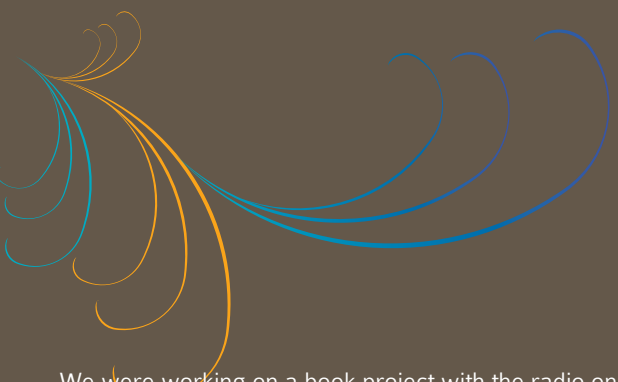
what they are speaking about. The events person at the back of the room is in charge of sales and in charge of people taking the next step, so for me I have to believe in them.

People can get confused because they are handed so many choices. Because I got rid of all my fears of public speaking I thought that was what I had to do. Just because I can speak now it doesn't mean that I have to be a speaker. Even though I got rid of all my stuff around speaking I still have to work hard at it, whereas the event managing comes naturally. Speakers love that because they usually hate that stuff. I have learnt that my skills do have value as an event organiser. I also didn't recognise my passion for things like putting PowerPoints and documents together.

I am at a stage where I have my speakers and I can run events. Now I want to start working on promotion, building my database. That is where the niche stuff comes in. If I am targeting just a certain type of person with certain speakers it will be much easier than promoting everyone to everyone.

I am constantly amazed at the people I have around me, supporting me in my journey. I credit that for my time at Jetset. The boss would always hang out with the CEO at the travel conferences and our branch did win a lot of awards. I would ask how is he doing that. I learnt following his example.

This year I went on a trekking trip to Mount Everest base camp. I want to organise a trip like that every year. It brings together my love of travel and event management. It is in line with my value of experiencing new things.



We were working on a book project with the radio on in the background. Geoff Hutchinson, the morning presenter on ABC radio in Perth, introduced his next guest, an expert in achieving happiness. It is a subject close to our hearts, and most other people for that matter, so we stopped tapping on the laptop and listened intently to what he had to say. Enthralled, we came up with the brilliant idea of including Russ Harris in this book. A subsequent phone call revealed that he was actually living in Perth in the coastal suburb of Cottesloe and was soon to return to his hometown Melbourne in a couple months. Fortunately, he was open to an interview before heading east.


Passing through a high wooden gate we enter a typically expansive Cottesloe garden with a tall concrete Buddha serenely looking on. It sort of set the scene for the next hour as we sit on the veranda in what can be best described as a relaxing interview with Russ Harris.

Russ introduces us to the practice of ACT or Acceptance and Commitment Therapy. ACT was founded by Steven Hayes in the USA.

We talk about mindfulness, which is a mental state of awareness, openness and focus, an integral part of ACT. Russ explains how he uses these techniques to help people reduce their stress, rise above fear, handle painful thoughts, change bad habits, get the most out of work, improve relationships and create a rich and meaningful life. Russ Harris is the author of two books about ACT, *The Happiness Trap* and *The Confidence Gap*.

Since the interview, Russ Harris had a role in a documentary shown on ABC TV called *Making Australia Happy*.

*“The hardest thing about
mindfulness is remembering to do
it”*



Russ Harris

PASSION Mindfulness

WEBSITES www.actmindfully.com.au
www.thehappinesstrap.com

BOOKS *The Happiness Trap*
The Confidence Gap





I became fascinated with the psychology of health in my patients when I was a GP. It started me on a journey to discover what helps humans live richer lives. What helps people deal with that little voice in the head saying you are not good enough, you can't do it.

From there, my passion for helping people led to discovering Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT). One of the reasons why many psychologists are attracted to ACT is that it offers a really solid framework for dealing with the human condition. More than anything, the core of ACT is learning something called Psychological Flexibility. This is about your capacity of being in the present moment and engaging fully in what you are doing, and taking action guided by your values or what really is important rather than being caught up in your feelings and thoughts.

I want people to understand that the story out there is that you have to think positive before being the person you want to be, but it should be the opposite, by starting to be the person you want to be right now. It's action first. You have far more control over your actions than your thoughts and feelings. My point is that people are told not to feel anxious and don't have any anxious thoughts or feelings, so what are they going to do? People will feel anxious. So let's focus on taking control of your actions – do the things that matter and make your life meaningful.

I certainly believe that society is awash with the belief that positive thinking is the answer to all our problems. It certainly is useful but it doesn't live up to the hype. You can try to get rid of this negative voice in your head and replace it with a positive one, but good luck to you.

It's a bit like listening to two radio programs at the same time. The positive thinking approach is, here is radio negative broadcasting and now we are going to bring in radio positive and try to drown out radio negative. It is hard to focus on what you are doing while listening to two radios.



I believe you are better off being positive with the aim of a rich and meaningful life.

A study published last year that made world headlines showed that people with low self-esteem who practised positive affirmations got worse. People who already had high self-esteem who did the same felt a little happier. What happened was that people with low self-esteem would repeat something like "I am a confident person" and then the mind would jump in and say "No, you're not" and then they get worse.

I am also fascinated by the concept of fragile self-esteem. It's very common in high achievers. As long as I am achieving my goals and being successful I can hold on to "I am wonderful, I am a champion. I am a great guy". But as soon as the performance drops off, they come crumbling or crashing down. It is then replaced by "I am not worthy, I am hopeless". We teach a lot of people like that to let go of that self-defeating concept.

If you start taking action by living by your values, living in the present moment and observing your thoughts then you start having genuine confidence and higher self-esteem. Of course, there are times when you may be deeply involved in reading a book and or lying on a beach where I may just want to daydream. But, if I am with my kids or doing an activity, most of the time daydreaming would be inappropriate.

We teach people mindfulness skills so they don't have to like that pain, but drop the struggle with it. They don't have to centre their life on avoiding pain and that can be very liberating. It's the same with confidence. By attempting to avoid pain, you increase your feelings of anxiety, therefore lack of confidence. The fact is, by avoiding or ignoring painful stuff you will never take the actions necessary to gain that self-confidence.



THE JOURNEY

I was born in Liverpool in England and was very anxious and insecure at school. I was also quite a bright student at school, near the top of the class. At university, things suddenly changed and I became massively insecure. I felt dumb, stupid and felt I couldn't do this. Every time I looked at the text books I was overwhelmed with anxiety. What did I do? I stayed away from the text books and failed the exams. After two years of failing exams I thought I'd better do something about it. The anxiety and insecurity part was dealt with by lots of drinking. On one occasion I got admitted to hospital with alcohol poisoning.

Somehow, I got through university and became a GP and migrated to Australia in 1991. Here I am, a GP, high status, high income at a young age, but despite all that I wasn't fulfilled. I started looking at how I could help my own anxieties of self-doubt and insecurities.

It all basically led to me exploring a bunch of different therapies all of which had some good things, but nothing completely satisfactory to me. Then I discovered ACT and it had everything I wanted.

At the moment, ACT is only seen as something for people with depression or addictions, etc. But I think it is really applicable to every human being on the planet.

I am starting to take it into the corporate world to increase performance, reduce stress and build better relationships. What determines a successful salesperson is persistence. In sales you will get a series of knockbacks and rejections. When you get those setbacks, it doesn't matter how tough you are, you are going to have some unpleasant thoughts and feelings. Your mind is telling you it is the "too hard story". That is when you bring in your values. Why am I doing this job? Is it to support my kids and put bread on the table? If that is the case, am I going to let this anxiety stop me making the next phone call and miss out on a potential sale? This is an example of the mindfulness-based approach.



TI am running workshops to teach people how to do ACT. Therapists, coaches, psychologists, occupational therapists, dieticians – basically, anybody who is interested in helping human beings needs to learn this stuff. My future will most certainly mean doing more books and running more workshops.

There are good studies showing that if people suffering depression clarify what is important to them, set some goals and take action towards them, they will have similar results as taking antidepressants. Taking action alters the chemicals in the brain and the wiring. So the question arises, am I going to give people a drug that has lots of side effects and is not much better than a placebo that costs a fortune? Or do I offer some kind of behaviour therapy which is longer lasting?

Chronic pain syndrome that doesn't get better with treatment can cause secondary depression anxiety. There was a study published in the top pain management journal in the world, which is called Pain. It was a really tight study using ACT and more standard treatments in pain control in kids. The ACT group only had 10 hours with the patients that had no medication whatsoever. In contrast, the control group had treatments at the top pain clinic in Sweden with all its technology. ACT started off by clarifying the kids' values and using these values to set goals. Then the researchers moved from values and goal setting to maintenance skills to handle their thoughts and feelings. They were taught the mindfulness approach to their pain and let it be there without fighting it. The data was astonishing. The ACT group – even though there was not one attempt to reduce or distract from pain – had less pain, higher functioning and less fear of pain than the control group.

Before mindfulness was taught to these kids, they were totally focused on the pain and they saw it as a barrier to not being able to live a life.



*“Values are
your heart’s
deepest
desires of how
you want to
behave on an
ongoing basis”*

Russ Harris

Whale Rock, Tidal River,
Wilson’s Promontory



With my clients, I may start by going over their values, if I feel they are ready for it. To some people, the concept of values is totally new. Still, in most cases, it's a good place to start. Ask, what aspect of life is most important to you? What sort of relationships do you want to build? How do you want to be in your relationship? On your deathbed, what do you want to look back on in your life and what you stood for? If our aim is to live richer fuller lives we need to know what is important and meaningful. Sorting out your values is probably the simplest way of doing that. Values are your heart's deepest desires of how you want to behave on an ongoing basis.

Goals are things that can be ticked off a list and achieved. Values are how I want to behave right now and every step of the way towards achieving a particular goal. Even if I don't achieve the goal, values are about how I want to keep behaving. If my goal is to win a match, the values are how I want to play regardless of the result. You see these high goal setting achievers – as long as they keep achieving, they are happy. But, in reality, nobody can keep up that track record forever.

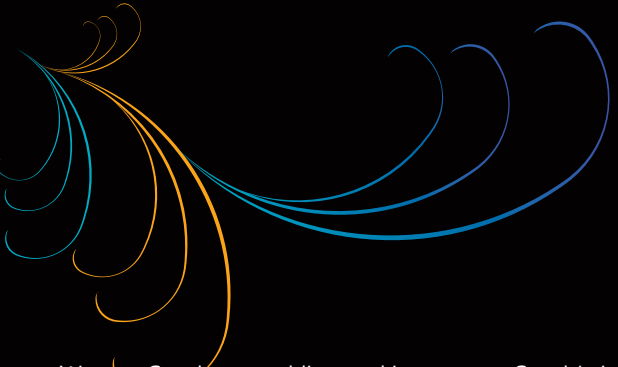
So what we do in mindfulness is to teach people to step out of that. Say, well OK, my mind is telling me that I am a loser; my mind is telling me that I am a winner. They would then say what I want to be right now and what I want to do right now. Do I want to spend my time trying to get a positive story in my head or spend it engaging with my kids or taking photos, writing books?

Many people say they will achieve something when they lose the fear. Unfortunately, they will be waiting forever. The most successful people in life didn't get successful by waiting until all their fears disappeared. They got their success by taking action despite that fear.

One thing we get people to do is to name that thought just like in a story. It could be here's the "old rejection story" or the "I can't do it story". You observe the thoughts and feelings linked to the story that keeps showing up. People will tell you there's positive emotion and negative emotion and that is a problematic term. If your aim is to achieve a rich and meaningful life, a positive emotion should be any emotion that enables us to do that such as fear. Fear prepares us for challenging and difficult situations. Sadness is very important in coming to terms with loss. Guilt helps you stay on track and energises you to get back on track with your ethics and morals and to take action. But these are not referred to as positive emotions. The idea is then that positive emotions are just those that feel good and emotions that feel bad are negative. And that just sets people up for a struggle with human nature. The thing is, if you are going live a full life, you will experience the full range of emotions.

Things that make life rich and meaningful can bring plenty of pain with them. A good example is the pain involved in keeping your body in shape. It's all about your capacity to accept it without being overwhelmed by it. What is this pain teaching me? There is lots of research revealing that the more you avoid these uncomfortable experiences, the greater the risk of depression, drug addiction, relationship difficulties and many other social problems.

The hardest thing about mindfulness is remembering to do it. Moments of mindfulness happen spontaneously to everyone. You are at a restaurant and a waiter puts in front of you a fancy plate of food. For that moment you are completely caught up noticing the look, smell and the first mouthful of delicious taste sensations. Then after a while, conversation and other distractions take over while you wolf down the food. Mindfulness takes conscious concentration.



We met Sarah at a public speaking course. Sarah's infectious vitality and her successful life coaching business make her an obvious inclusion in this book along with other high achievers. We arrange the interview at her apartment overlooking the Brisbane River in Brisbane, Queensland. We sit on the balcony sipping herbal "enlightenment tea" and admire the view overlooking the wide brown river. At dusk, flying foxes noisily make their way across a pink sky. Our conversation becomes engrossing as darkness falls, like it rapidly does in the tropics. Animated, enthusiastic, driven, knowledgeable, caring, compassionate are all descriptions that sum up Sarah by the end of our conversation.

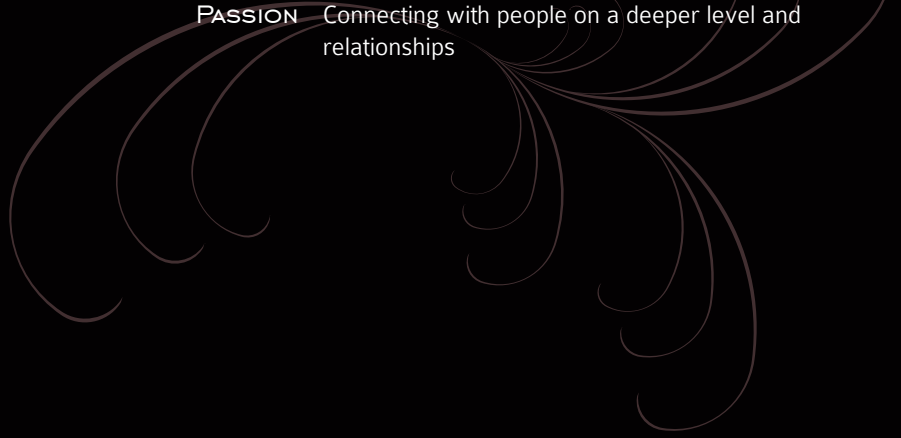
Less than a year later, the apartment first floor was flooded as the Brisbane River broke its banks and caused massive destruction during January 2011.

*"When the goal is big, all this
other cool stuff happens"*



Sarah Maxwell

PASSION Connecting with people on a deeper level and
relationships





My passion is connecting with people, being in relationship with people on a deeper level. I am really passionate about that moment where you feel that it is real. I get really excited about that.

I am passionate about relationships because I have experienced the pain of what happens when they are not realized. My parents divorced when I was 2 years old and I lived with my Mom who could not feed us kids and had to get a job which caused her to leave us kids in daycare full time. The separation we experienced as well as loneliness was seeded deep within me and I must have plugged into my psyche that I wanted to figure out what made great relationships tick. I became the consummate observer of all things relational and noticed what worked and didn't work. I then tried that out in my own life and felt the pain of heartache as well as the frustration of wanting so much without actually knowing the ingredients.

I was a professional athlete for 14 years playing on the court of life. I learnt the intricacies of winning and losing and the importance of having a clear intention and goal. In Canada, people play varsity sport and the degree comes with it. I studied a Bachelor of Science majoring in biopsychology. By the time I was playing beach volleyball, I had completed my degree. Just talking about the degree seems so far away now. It seems like something I did and that I don't use it that much. I wouldn't call what I currently do psychology. It is human behaviour, and maybe it set the scene, but it concentrated on the chemicals of the brain and the pathology of disease. I am now working with people in excellence.

When I was at university I always felt there was something lacking, something missing, and I couldn't quite connect to what that was. I think it was about being in rapport with people. What I do now is a bit more modern and it feels like it makes a difference.



What I do now is about results, whereas psychology was about finding boxes for people. We categorised people in their disorder, it was all boxes. It is easy to do that. I did it myself to others and on myself. It made me feel better. In order to coach well, I feel I have to take away a box and sit outside the box because so I am not constrained by it.

When I think of high points, the most obvious was winning a beach volleyball event in Italy. Another one was at a tournament in my home country of Canada. My playing partner and I had been doing a lot of stuff on energy. We were ranked number one in Canada, but the second team were better known because they had gone to the Olympics. They got all the attention and media and got on centre court. There were all these opportunities to feel it was unfair. All this stuff was brewing up so we decided to use it as fuel. We used everything we had learnt and applied the techniques to the situation.

It happened like this. Like tennis, you buy beach volleyball tickets for a session. For some reason in this tournament, the sessions were off in time. People who were watching the centre court game had to leave before it was over. All these people were pouring out of centre court looking for other games. There we were on an outside court. We had gone to a third set and I just had a feeling that everyone was there watching. We won that game and got the best result for an open event. For me, it was that moment when I just trusted and it all happened. From there we got our first huge sponsor and all these really good things happened. It was really special.

I go back to that time and remember what it was like. It is one of those times when you take something that people say really works, trust in it and things actually happen. It is such a cool moment. I can also see that we had to choose it, because I can see in the past when I would have gone the opposite way. I couldn't have predicted the way it happened.



THE JOURNEY

As a child, I feel like I was being groomed to do what I do now, because when I was a kid I would sit in with all the adults. I loved to listen to how everyone was talking about their problems; it was usually in a group with my mum and her five sisters. It was the family joke that we were solving the world's problems. Instead of going outside and playing, I would come inside and soak it all in. I don't know if I was making connections.

I also grew up on Oprah. Mum and I would watch her every day. Maybe I was inadvertently modelling Oprah. That is my way of looking at the world. I would be sitting in the room with adults just observing what they were doing. I always thought that adults had all the answers and were really wise. I always looked up to adults and thought, when I get to their age I will be wise as well. I remember when I realised they weren't, it was terrible for me. It was devastating. I was about 10 years old and thought, if they don't know who does? That was a really weird period.

As a child I was really deep, pretty full on, I always wanted to get to the heart of everything. I hated talking about the weather. I wanted to talk about real things, deep things. I wanted the connection and I didn't want to have the crap superficial things. I didn't know what the word "energy" meant then. I was always asking the deeper question. I wondered about my purpose or destiny. I questioned what I am here for and what I am meant to be doing. It was under the guise of Christianity so it came with lots of guilt as well. In hindsight, I am thankful because it gave me parameters as a kid to think like that. I would try and work out how God could be with me now but also in my future. I thought that was pretty trippy.

I was always in teams. I was always the captain and loved being the group leader. Mom would tell me I win the bossy award. I played lots of team sports like soccer, but volleyball took over my life from 14 years old. I got all my fulfilment from the actual team, that relationship was so important to me.

After university, beach volleyball became an Olympic sport. Beach volleyball is a team of two. A duo can be very much like an individual sport because you can be



targeted, so you seem to be playing the whole game yourself. You have to score the points. The challenges that I met were so much bigger than those in a team, yet I could still get fed through the relationship.

When I retired in 2008, I didn't see myself fitting into a traditional role, like lawyer, doctor, psychologist for that matter. I knew that I had a skill set because I was already doing it in volleyball and I loved the mental side of things. I was always intrigued by the mind and how it worked. While playing volleyball, I did lots of courses but my intention with them was how to play better. I did think I would do something independent after sport, but I didn't know about coaching.

I worked with another beach volleyball player and she worked with my team. She really inspired me because her life change was so dramatic. I did some courses that she had become a trainer for. It was good timing. To be honest, I was really dead inside when I retired. I didn't think I was good at anything. It happened so slowly, it was really insidious and I didn't recognise it. I did some work on my values and beliefs around business. I couldn't see how I could charge people for what I was doing. I learnt how to value myself and my skills.

Plato was quoted as saying "You can learn more about a person in an hour of play than a lifetime of conversation" and this has been my life experience as a pro athlete. Games are an extraordinary medium as they provide experiential learning. My neuroscience degree may come out now in that science has now proven that we only uptake 25 per cent of our environment through the cognitive realm (our brains) and that there is a phenomenal 75 per cent being filtered through our bodies. Because of this evidence, it only made sense for me to create experiences that run through the body and the learnings are hence ingrained at three times the rate. It just made sense. I also went with the premise that "no one likes to be told what to do" and so what if the learning came as a self-experience that was undeniable. This seemed to be the greatest encourager for change and proven to be ultimately effective.



*"I have
a firm
belief that
anything is
possible"*

Sarah Maxwell

Lake Louise, Rocky
Mountains, Canada



Looking back at being the top team in Canada was amazing. I didn't celebrate enough at the time because we were going for goals that were so much bigger. When the goal is big, all this other cool stuff happens.

After our tournament win in Italy, my playing partner and I went down to the beach and just lay under the stars and soaked the achievement in, knowing that is what it is like when everything lines up. The celebration is very important because during the event you are almost out of it. It just happens.

My playing partner and I have the record for the longest time together. We played together for nine years, which I am very proud of. People break up in beach volleyball all the time. We were at this tournament and we were fighting which is not what we did. My partner was getting heat stroke and we were losing to a team we shouldn't lose to. There was a breakdown and I basically said, OK I give up, I will just support her to get through the heat stroke. She felt so supported, she started playing really well and we won.

It is important to me that people are fulfilled in their lives. Sport is quite good because you can test yourself. I coach the Canadian curling team and their goal is to go to the 2014 Winter Olympics. I was there for them at the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver. We talk about so many other things other than sport but bring it back to what is actually happening on the ice. I don't know much about curling. I am not there to coach the skills. I am there to take them outside the box. Because you have always done something one way, you might be stuck in that way. There may be a better way of doing it.

If someone shows up early it can be really annoying. That is what I would do in sport and life because I thought it was better. I was then taught about reading and anticipating the action. My coach called it being in time with the ball. The idea is that your body moves in relation to what information your eyes are getting. That was a really big distinction. It is one thing to have the insight and notice, but to be actually moving in relation to that insight is a result. It involves letting go. Every time you try too hard it doesn't work.




I have a firm belief that anything is possible. So I just say this is what I want to do and I just trust the finance part of it. Some people think I have some stuff about money because I don't pay it a lot of attention but it is always there for me.

When I started playing beach volleyball, the only female professional athletes were ice hockey players. My playing partner and I created the first template because nothing else existed. No amateur athlete had sponsorship. No one would say they were professional.

I do what I want first. I say this is what I am meant to do. I have to step up and accept that I am giving value. I always wanted to be special. When I was in school I didn't stand out. I did stand out in sports so that is where I went. I have that competitive thing going because I want to be the best. I wanted to be the best beach volleyball player, now I want to be the best coach. I found playing in sport for 14 years gave me great lessons for everyday life and relationships, far more than psychology did.

Because of my passion for great relationships that are fulfilling and nurturing, I now run Workshops that use game-play to teach the foundations/ingredients of a great relationship. I tend to speak to those couples who already have a great thing going but recognise honour and respect the fragile balance that is a great partnership and hence are proactive in feeding that. Growing and expanding your couple is rewarding beyond measure and yet I am comfortable with the fact that this is a revolution within relationships: that they actually are tended to while nothing dramatically wrong is happening. We are working from the front and moving things forward rather than band-aiding and picking up the pieces once things have come un-done. I love working with super couples because we get to create the content together and continue expanding the possibilities for partnerships into the future.

I also run TEAM BUILDING Workshops for businesses because I believe that every business can be extraordinary through inspired, effective and responsible team work that increases productivity and allows for an enjoyable experience of work life. Having been a professional athlete of 14 years, I bring my PhD in TEAM to the forefront and run in-office games that bridge the gap between individual intent and collaborative effort. There is nothing more exciting than a team operating on all cylinders!



We first met Julie Meek at a National Speakers chapter meeting in Perth not long into joining the organisation. In a measured way she articulated to us her vision of healthier Australians through what we eat. Step forward six months or so and we meet at a cafe in the Perth suburb of Doubleview. With a glass cabinet full of cakes and other food types, it seemed an appropriate place to talk about Julie's passion – nutrition and peak performance. Over coffees, or more precisely skinny lattes, we chat and find out her vision. Clearly Julie Meek has a burning passion to help as many people as possible find good health through healthy eating. Through her career as an accredited practicing dietician, Julie spreads her words of wisdom by private consulting, talking on radio and speaking engagements. In 2009, Julie produced a top-selling book titled *Truth, Lies and Chocolate*. Her next project is interviewing top performers about their tips.

*“I link sport and nutrition together
and that is how I get my message
across”*



Julie Meek

PASSION Food and health for peak performance

WEBSITE www.juliemeek.com.au

Books





THE PASSION

My passion is both food and health related. Mum was always a really good cook when I was a kid. My nan as well was also a great cook. I think back then there wasn't a lot of healthy stuff about. Mum was a really good cake baker, a sort of product of the era. The thing back then was that we were running around 24/7 so it didn't matter so much.

My interest in food turned into a passion at an early age at school. I was 14 and I had no idea why, but I was passionate about what makes up the food we eat. I did home economics at school, but I knew I didn't want to do that. But I liked the part where you learnt all about food, vitamins and things like that. I was really interested in what makes up food. I said, right, that is what I want to do. The guidance officer said you don't need to know until Year 9, you have a few more years before you have to decide. But I need to know now, it's part of my personality.

These days kids are living sedentary lifestyles around computers and TV, plus poor diet, and they are paying the big price with increasing health problems.

Mostly my career these days is speaking and writing and I really love that. When I decided to sell my dietician practice it actually took a year to really make my mind up. I felt my practice was actually me; I was selling part of me because it took so long and was so hard to build it up. Then I realised the business is not me, it's ridiculous to think that way. It took years to get to that point of realisation. I really liked seeing athletes on a one-on-one basis, but I couldn't do it with three kids.

Glenn Cardwell is a mentor of mine. Glenn does a lot of keynote speaking and is a dietician with around 30 years working in various areas. They include the National



Heart Foundation, Children's Hospital of Sydney, School Canteen Association, nutrition consultancy and nutritionist for several high profile teams. Glenn is a published author of three books and an award winning professional speaker. I would like to do that but because I have three young kids, I am not in a position to do the travelling required right now.

I speak to kids about nutrition. I work with six private schools every year. They are all really into sport and recognise if they want to play sport well good nutrition is vital. I link sport and nutrition together and that is how I get my message across. Year nines are a very good level to speak to before they become what teenagers tend to become. And when they are in Year 11 and 12 and doing their exams, they really need to watch their nutrition for optimal performance. This also applies in other areas such as business CEOs. My specialty is nutrition, but I also refer my customers to a specialist in exercise, because they do go hand in hand. I have six CEOs who I see on an individual basis and they finish up at the end of the year. Before the program, most of these clients didn't know they had a problem. How they find out about me is mainly word of mouth. It goes something like a loved one or colleague whispers in his ear, "You have a problem and I know somebody that can help". Another factor is the boom in cycling, the new golf, that is becoming very apparent on our roads. There's a lot pedalling around who could do with some good nutritional advice.

It will be interesting to see how it will go as some of the CEOs were not in great shape when the program started 12 months ago. So we are writing up a story following their progress that will hopefully be published in some business magazines.



THE JOURNEY

At school, I wondered if there was such a thing as teaching people what to eat. So I went to the career counsellors. They said, yep there is, it's called a dietitian.

I was told exactly what subjects were required. So in my mind I was never in doubt that is what I wanted to do. I wanted to become a dietitian.

I got straight into university and there was never a doubt. But after graduating, I went like most dietitians into the hospital system and my practical experience was in Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital in Perth. I hated it with an absolute passion. I would rather cut my arms off. It had a lot to do with the department there. They took two-hour lunch breaks. It was all about treating sick people, which is fair enough in a hospital, but I wanted to invent, not treat. But I had to get a job in that because there was no other work around at the time. And there was no work in Western Australia at all.

My entire class of 15 moved to New South Wales. We all applied for jobs and got them. I went to Cootamundra based at a community health centre. I was responsible for the entire region with the closest big centre being Wagga. So we travelled quite a bit. I was there a year and a half and then did a similar thing at Nowra on the south coast to get the experience. I knew I had to do it, but it wasn't living my passion. I was in a hospital where a patient would come in with a heart attack and I would give them what they had to eat while in there. Then I would tell them what they needed to do when they got home. Then you never saw them again, which is the frustrating part of it. I didn't know what happened to them or if they slipped back into bad habits.

The community health centres were a bit better because patients would come back and see me and in groups. And you can have a long-term relationship with them. In the hospital it was not for me.



When I was in Cootamundra I became very interested in the sport side of nutrition. I had always loved sport, especially competing in triathlons. So I started with the local rugby union team in town. I mean, you get to know a lot of people through sport in a small town, there's no doubt about that. So I asked them if they would be interested in me speaking to them.

They had never heard of anything like it. So we ended up speaking in the pub while they were drinking beer. It was great fun and enforced in me that this is what I wanted to do.

I was very naive at the time, but maybe in some cases this may not be a bad thing. This naivety led to a big turning point in my journey to discovering my true passion.

On a frequent trip from Cootamundra to Sydney, I passed through Canberra, home of the Institute of Sport. Professor Louise Burke is the guru when it comes to sports nutrition in Australia if not the world and is based in the Institute of Sport. I was really interested in how Professor Louise Burke combined sport with nutrition. I wanted to know how I could get started. So I rang the professor and asked what I needed to do.

She directed me to stuff to read and this was the beginning of my sports nutrition career. I was away four years and came back to Perth to set up my own practice. It took me a year to get it going. I have since sold that original business. I built it up to a point where I covered weight loss, cholesterol or sports stuff. I became well known enough to just concentrate on sports nutrition. I worked with the Dockers AFL team for six years and the Perth Wildcats basketball team. My practice was athletes coming in on a one-on-one basis. I also advised sports teams, and not necessarily professional teams, like the state cycling team. I now only see clients one-on-one on a special occasion. If I am working with companies all work is with their teams.



*“In my mind
I was never
in doubt that
is what I
wanted to do”*

Julie Meek

North Beach, Perth



When I go and speak somewhere, I am often asked, “This is something I would like to do as well. How do I go about it?” I like that because it’s somebody trying to find their way and perhaps I can help. In Perth when I went through 10 years ago, Curtin University was the only place that did nutrition and now there are more options because of shortages in the profession. It is a little different for me when compared with newer graduates looking for work today. My competition is not other dieticians any more, it’s other speakers.

Even though it is my background, I don’t want to necessarily do the scientific side of things but more for the people. I do a segment of Perth radio station 6PR and that has taught me that people don’t want to know jargon. They just want to know something that applies to them. The radio segment is going very well and is great exposure for me. I sell quite a few books that way.

People ask if I let my kids eat bad things, the answer is, not very often as they don’t have the option at home. Going to friends’ parties, they eat what’s there. My seven-year-old daughter Indiana is extremely into eating good food. In the school lunch box, it is good stuff and some people notice. The other day one of the mums said to me, “Oh, my daughter came home the other day and told me I had to have this, this and this in my lunch box Mum. This is what Indiana has and her mum is a dietician”. Luckily, that mum knows me well and was not put out.

My book is titled Truth, Lies and Chocolate and contains 99 facts and fairytales about food. There is a lot of misinformation out there and this book helps dispel these myths about food.

When the book became public, the state library became aware of it as it was being considered for the Premier Awards. Although it didn’t win, it was huge.



Last year, I saw Lou Heckler, a great motivational speaker and speech coach. I spent a whole day in his workshop and he said, “If you are not scared it is not big enough for you”. I always remember that.

Doing a book has always been in the back of my mind, but I never considered I could actually do it. I didn’t think I was good enough to do that. My mentor, David Price of National Speakers, said to me, “When are you going to write this book that is in the back of your head? You just have to sit down right now and get started and stop thinking”.

So I did, every Monday afternoon for four hours. I got a babysitter for the three kids. That freed me up to go and write my book in the Karrinyup Library. I found a quiet spot down the back near a power point and set up. It was four hours once a week and the book took me six months, which isn’t too bad. It was made easier because I had collected all my research material first and worked out all my questions as well. I typed out all the questions and then did the ones I felt like doing on that particular day. I just typed it not bothering about any editing or changes along the way. I believe that you are not objective enough when editing while writing. Perhaps later you can come back with a fresher outlook and try editing.

This book was self-published and when it first came out I approached bookshops. It was hard going as some didn’t stock self-published books and came up with excuses such as distribution problems. Now I have an Australian-wide distributor. Every time I speak I sell books and that works very well. The book is selling well and has just gone into its second edition of 3000. My book is now in bookshops.

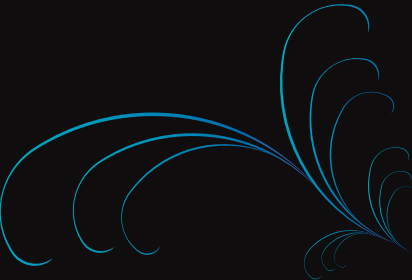
I do have another book idea, but at this early stage it is just in my head. I am passionate about writing.



When Jane made Kerrie Phipps a friend on Facebook, we would not have dreamed that we would be talking face to face at Aria Restaurant with the Opera House and the Sydney Harbour Bridge providing an iconic backdrop. Between delectable mouthfuls, the girl from Dubbo, New South Wales tells her inspiring story. We first met up in Perth at her Conversations with Entrepreneurs function organised by Kerrie at Borders bookshop. It was a small group of likeminded people with a lot of ambition and heart. Due to a combination of good fortune or synchronicity, call it what you will, we have connected again with Conversations with Entrepreneurs in Melbourne and Dubbo in New South Wales, Kerrie's home town and head office.

Once Kerrie got in the rhythm there was no stopping her. Her story is one of rising from adversity and helping others achieve the life they deserve. She speaks with emotion that brings laughter, tears and more often a smile. It is this smile and laughter that spontaneously pop up in conversation that tells us we are talking to somebody who confidently knows her purpose in life; but, as we find out, it was not always the case.

*“Coaching is about the client
and pulling out their ideas
and getting the gold out of
them”*



Kerrie Phipps

PASSION Connecting with people

WEBSITE www.createthelifeclub.com





THE PASSION

I am really passionate about connecting with people and being inclusive. I can't stand people being excluded from things because they don't quite fit the mould, although I know that sometimes people exclude themselves because they assume they won't be accepted – that makes me sad. I think I am passionate about inclusiveness because of being bullied at school and being on the outer. I like making people feel welcome because I know they are great people behind their hesitancy to connect. I think that passion also comes from my dad as he is such a people person.

I think that times of isolation, rejection and abuse in my younger years have made me more caring, compassionate and understanding of people.

I'm passionate about people growing in confidence. When I was younger I was incredibly intimidated by other people. Talking to two people at once was overwhelming and I felt that I had nothing to say. Today, my love for people is bigger than my fear. It's interesting – people just presume that I am confident, but it's developed as I've pushed myself out of my comfort zone.

I'm passionate about learning, growing, being our absolute best selves, and supporting others on this kind of journey.

I love thinking about thinking and creativity. It's too easy to live on autopilot, but not too difficult at all to live purposefully when you're switched on. Life is far more amazing than most people settle for.



When I was younger I didn't know what I was passionate about as it takes a while to discover it. That is worth pursuing, it is a journey. I want people to know their worth is far beyond what they could imagine. To know that we are created with a purpose, with incredible gifts and talents and we are loved by our Creator. If you live purposefully and mindfully you will discover your bigger purpose. Be mindful of doing every day well and honour yourself and others.

I also want to value and acknowledge regional Australia. I've spent a lot of time in our capital cities for training and business events and have been surprised by people being shocked that I had international clients when I'm from Dubbo. We have phone, internet and a fabulous airport.

The other issue I've noticed in promoting regional Australia is the self-esteem in many smaller communities. Like we think we have to get a guest speaker from Sydney because they know stuff. But the thing is, these speakers don't always relate to people in the country, and they take business out of town. It's a shame, when we have amazing people in the community with a wealth of knowledge. Getting somebody in from Sydney all the time just says we are not good enough, and that we don't know what our own resources are. The reason why I featured young entrepreneurs in my book is because there are some amazing stories in our regions and we want to say to young people that you don't have to go to the big city for opportunities. Young people in country towns who create great products and services find that their communities support them and cheer them on.



THE JOURNEY

I grew up on a farm near Gilgandra, not far from Dubbo. We were pretty adventurous, doing things like abseiling and parasailing. Dad took us to every circus that came to town and had trapezes and flying foxes rigged up on the farm. My dad was previously a PT instructor in the army. Sometimes as kids we had to do chin-ups, sit-ups and push-ups before dinner. It's a shame I didn't make that a lifelong habit!

In primary school I saw myself as a bit of a writer. I wrote a journal. I also wrote a fictional story about girls at school. It was a way of processing what was happening to me because I was being seriously bullied. Girls at school were often "not allowed" to be my friend, but a couple of younger ones didn't respond to peer pressure and I'll never forget their kindness.

In Year 8 I was sexually abused by a "family friend". I didn't tell anyone for about six months until one day I told a school friend who promised to keep it a secret. Unfortunately, by the end of the day all the students were talking about it; the girls whispered and the boys made derogatory comments. Mum and Dad didn't want me to go back to school after that year, so I was homeschooled for Year 10. In December of that year, a week after my 16th birthday, I took a farm vehicle in the middle of the night and ran away from home to Dubbo looking for work. I stayed with various friends then boarded with an old lady in a wheelchair. She was very happy to have someone to help so I felt really responsible and grown-up there; however, I was starving myself and lost a lot of weight.

Recognising that my inner turmoil was within me, and my family weren't the problem, I returned home after two months and attended TAFE in Gilgandra where I did an office administration certificate. I did quite well until I started skipping classes with a couple of girls to go off drinking. The teacher said to me that I'd be the last one in the class to get a job, which fuelled my determination to be the first. I took my résumé to various offices in Dubbo and met a dentist who knew my parents and my grandparents. I was employed immediately.



I worked in a dentist surgery for five years and I learnt a lot. When I married Lyndon I worked part-time at the surgery and other days for a local motel as a tour hostess taking senior citizens around Dubbo.

Then, I needed a job with more hours so we could buy a house. I was at a bank counter while my balance was being added up and even though I was looking at the print-out upside down, I worked it out quicker than the teller did with her calculator. My "I'm dumb at maths" belief fell away in an instant.

I applied for a job at the bank and they gave me an application form, which asked for tertiary qualifications. I didn't look good on paper, so I asked if I could just talk to one of the managers and explain my experience working with people. I started the following Monday.

At the bank my life direction changed. The bank closed at 4pm and teenagers would come in after school. They could be in tears about a crisis at home or school and felt the need to talk to me. While in the bank I would look out and think, there are people out there... and I am not really making a difference here.

I was involved in a local church and that is how these kids knew me. I thought it would be really cool to work in the church as a youth worker, but there was no such role. Shortly after, I was offered a position to help youth and visit schools. It was a quarter of what I was being paid at the bank but that didn't matter.

I worked all the time without days off. I also worked as an interpreter for deaf students using sign language. We'd befriended deaf kids who would come around to our house and visit. So I learnt just by being with them. I was an interpreter for teachers with deaf children for a year, and was also asked to support the teachers with emotionally disturbed/behavioural problem kids until funding ran out after six months.



I continued working with young people for eight years and was totally committed. After taking eight teenagers to Thailand for three weeks, I picked up a virus that really knocked me around and I struggled throughout 2003.

I always believed that brighter days were ahead and I just needed to persevere, but I didn't realise that I needed to make changes. Focusing on being there for others and ignoring my health, I pushed on until one day I suddenly had no decision-making capability. It really scared me when I realised it was taking every bit of my focus to drive home. When I got home I just went blank and could hardly move. I looked for help and was told by doctors in 2004 that I may not be able to work for ten years. That really put a fire in my belly, a determination to overcome. I knew I was on the planet for a purpose and it wasn't to spend the next ten years in the lounge! It was a dark period and I felt very alone. Lyndon was working full-time in real estate and trying to manage the household and I tried to recover and look after our three-year-old son Ethan. He just played quietly while I basically slept a lot.

I had resigned from the church job and related voluntary roles and just worked on getting well. Then I started working part-time in a furniture store. I was on a three-month trial and I didn't realise I was selling far and beyond what they expected because I just liked connecting with people. I would sit on a lounge chair with them and just have a chat. It wasn't a strategy, I just enjoyed my work day.

The owner was thrilled with my sales, calling me "Lounge Queen"; however, I was suddenly told I was not "suitable for the team" and my employment ceased immediately. It was such a kick in the guts. I wasn't aware of some behind-the-scenes politics.

When we came home I was still pondering "where to from here". I needed to know how to help people more effectively, not burning out and being on call 24/7.



I looked up life coaching on Google and it looked like words from my personal journal. I saw that I was just missing the structure to help people create positive, lasting change. So I flew down to Sydney for an information session. I started working with a coach in October and began the training a month later. I did practice sessions on my family and friends and loved it, and everyone said how it was a great fit for me. Lyndon had seen my own transformation and told me to go for it, offering to do my office work and look after Ethan who was about four and growing up fast. Lyndon made it a goal to leave real estate and be a house-dad within a year, which he did.

My first visit to the accountant regarding my coaching business was only six months into it, and I was still recovering my health and working part-time. He asked me what my Plan B was, to which I responded "There's no Plan B. I was born to coach". I decided as I left that I would put a smile on his face when I went in to see him the following year – and I did.

In addition to coaching people and my continuing education, I became quite involved with Results Coaching Systems, in a number of ways. When I was offered the National Sales Manager role, I was intimidated by the title, so when they repackaged it as Coach Training Consultant I said yes. Sales came naturally as I was so passionate about their training and coaching, and their enrolment numbers increased dramatically. The CEO then asked me to go to Singapore for an event with him, which resulted in me becoming the Asia Pacific Coach Training Consultant.

I committed to that for a year and was glad I had only promised that timeframe. I spent most of my time on the database and dealing with emails and phone calls with little time for coaching clients, which I was far more passionate about. I was speaking every day about my passion, but not living it. The great thing about that role was that it opened up amazing doors for me. I gained so much valuable experience, public speaking, hosting teleconferences and working with so many high achievers.



*“I want people
to know their
worth is far
beyond what
they could
imagine”*

Kerrie Phipps

*Pasture, near Gilgandra
and Dubbo*



I've worked with a number of great coaches over the past seven years and I'm always clarifying and refining my business plans and my message. I noticed in the early days that people often confused coaching with counselling, so I communicated the achievement aspect of coaching, and that I'm "coaching achievers to excel".

I continued to define my niche even further. I started looking at highlighting regional Australia, and the more I talked about it, the more important it became, and the idea for the book *Lifting the Lid on Quiet Achievers* became an obvious next step.

It is easy to get caught up with your work at the expense of a balanced life. An unexpected death in my extended family, and my brother's near fatal accident, plus my own experience with chronic illness, has really clarified to me what's important. I can drop things to go and be with family – or get rest if I need to – before I really need to. When I was available 24/7 for the teenagers I was unintentionally ignoring my marriage, I was ignoring my family, and not taking care of myself. Mum would come over and help out around the house. We would do stuff together but I was rarely present. I would wake up at three o'clock in the morning thinking of ways of doing things, and unable to switch off from work. That doesn't happen anymore and I love that I sleep well and wake up happy.

I am not really a detail person. I'm more of a big picture person and if I collaborate with others it will happen. A coaching program I am doing at the moment which is partially online and partially group telephone coaching was started because someone offered to help me do the admin involved, and my speaking events are done in collaboration with others.

Most of my clients were from Dubbo to start with, people I knew who were intrigued by the idea of coaching. My business has just grown from conversations. I would go to business and community events and just share the joy of new insights and ideas, and the breakthroughs that my clients have. What motivated person wouldn't want to know more?

I just love coaching and asking people questions that make them think and come up



with inspired ideas. I love being coached too. It's incredible how when your thinking is clarified you can step forward boldly and efficiently. As I've developed as a speaker, I've realised that if I stay true to my coaching style, being intuitive and in the moment with the audience, rather than focus on a polished presentation, both the audience and I love it so much more.

I have really learnt how to forgive and let go which is so important. Now I am thankful for what happened to me in the past as it has given me that resourcefulness and understanding to help people who want to overcome their challenges. It's a choice, to dwell in the drama or overcome.

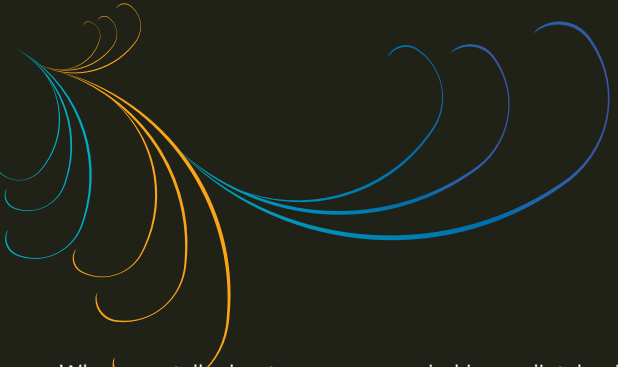
I love writing, it keeps me real. I write most days at home, and I love writing when I travel. I was writing recently and thinking about how depleted my self-esteem was back then and how different it is now.

If a young person asked for advice about their future I would recommend writing a journal until you get clear. Dump your thoughts on paper. It takes time to get clarity about what is important to you. What energises you? What motivates you? What frustrates you to the point that you'll do something positive about it?

Talk out your ideas too, with people who believe in you. Talk and write – spend time alone with your thoughts, watch the direction they take you – and turn it around when they're negative. You're in charge of your brain and you can become more positive – and create more positive outcomes. Take responsibility for your thoughts and actions.

When I was a kid, Mum thought I'd become a teacher, but I didn't complete school. But now I am teaching people and I have really only seen that over the past year, when I have been doing more speaking. Coaching is so much about the client and pulling out their ideas and revealing the gold that's in them. Now people are asking me to mentor them and share experiences. I realise now how much I have to teach; yet I still have much to learn, and I often review and refine my purpose and passions. Just keep going until you find your calling.

What are you on the planet for? It's more significant than you can see right now.



When you talk about energy, my mind immediately pictures Katie. I remember seeing her from a distance and thinking, what is that girl on? It turns out Katie is high on life. If you could bottle her energy, you would make a fortune. While we have known Katie she has navigated through high school as head girl, while running her own business, participating in all her amazing hobbies and sharing her knowledge and energy.

Katie's achievements are amazing for someone so young. During her final year at school she was school captain, school dux, started her business and bought and renovated her first property.

She also breaks all the stereotypes of teenagers and young adults that we are shown by the media today.




“I want to support young people to be the best that they can be”



Katie Pitsis

PASSION Inspiring young people to be the best they can be

WEBSITES www.visionaryyouthleadership.com
www.freespiritgirl.com





My passion is to support teenage girls and pre-teen girls to learn to love themselves and to learn to respect themselves. I give them the skills and tools to stand up for what they believe in and stand up to peer pressure. I want to support young people to be the best that they can be.

I have just finished year 12 at Woolgoolga High School where I was school captain. I am seen as a leader. It is amazing since I have stepped up and said that I don't want to drink and do drugs. It has been really interesting to see others, more of my peers, say they aren't going to do that either, that is not what they want to do. It is about leading by example and giving permission to other people to make their own decisions. People respect me for doing that as well. When I go to a party and people offer me a drink and I say, "no thanks, I don't drink to have fun", they say "that is so cool and I respect you for doing that". Now everyone just knows that and they are cool with that. If people don't know me they may think that I am drunk when I am going crazy, but people that do know me say, no that's just her.

I love dancing. I have danced since I was four. Love it, I have just always done it. It is a great way for me to express myself. It helps me to keep really fit, I love it and it is part of me. It allows me to express my emotions and find connections and connection with myself. If I did want to take my dance further I might apply for the Sydney Dance Academy because I really agree with their values and like the stuff that they do. I am really happy with where I am at the moment and with what I am doing.

I love photography. I got my first proper camera when I was 15. My grandfather gave me this box of photography stuff. My other camera is an SLR. I love that we can capture



a moment in time so we can see it forever. I love art and I just do it, love it. My grandmum's an artist and so is my mum. That kind of stuff just runs in the family.

I have had to learn how to fit everything in, particularly in the early years of high school. I have always wanted to experience everything and all the amazing things life has to offer. Now I am an expert at time management.

I did Heywire which is run by the ABC. You go onto an ABC website and apply by writing stories and posting videos about your views as a young person. It is for teenagers and young adults from 16 to 22 years. From there they pick 30 winners and they all go down to Canberra and so I was one of those winners. In Canberra they put you into groups and you start making up pitches. At the end of the week you pitch in front of government officials and high-up people and millionaires, people that can make your goals and ideas a reality. The next day we went to question time in parliament. One of the politicians actually talked about something we had pitched.

It was so cool to be able to meet other awesome young people, who really have an opinion and are adamant about getting it heard. It inspired me to play a bigger game, and reach more people. I was in the group for mental health and youth personal development. We talked about getting into schools as a mandatory part of PE. In PE you do physical education but there is no mental health or how to support yourself or how to feel good and how to set goals. So many of our beliefs are formed at school and a lot of the time it is negative. If you can turn it around at a young age you have a really solid foundation to step out into your future.



There are four of us, three brothers and me. I live on the north east coast of New South Wales in the beautiful community of Mullaway.

Mum heard about the Junior Journey, which is part of The Journey, a program created by cancer survivor and author Brandon Bays. It's about empowering people to reach their full potential. Mum mentioned it to Brody (younger brother) and he said that sounds awesome and he came back so amazing and shiny and bright, so empowered and confident. So I decided I wanted some of what he had.

I went with mum to Liberating Kids Shining Potential which is a workshop run through The Journey. I was about 12 or 13ish. The lady who runs it, Laurie, felt she wanted to support me, so she offered me other courses for free. So I went and did a whole heap of them.

There was one workshop called the Abundance Retreat and, because it is about money, I should find my own way to go there. I ran a raffle to get there and I made enough money in about three weeks. I was just getting out, taking action, just doing it. On the last night they have a big celebration and auction different things. The money goes towards their charity called Journey Outreach. I felt called to do a dance because that is what I love doing and all the money I raised was supposed to go to Journey Outreach. The woman who runs the whole thing, Brandon, stood up and said that all the money raised by me would go towards me attending all the practitioner courses to get certified and accredited.



I was so grateful and I started crying and didn't know what to do. It's such an amazing journey, it is just crazy. The woman who won the raffle was in charge of taking people over to America for the Tony Robbins Global Leadership Camp. She said I should try out for this thing. I tried out and I got in and I have done that camp for the last three years as part of the team. I have done my whole Journey practitioners program.

Mum then did neuro linguistic programming (NLP) and I thought that is just amazing, so I did NLP. I decided that the skills and tools that I have learnt had caused me to become this confident person who fought for what I believed in and didn't get influenced by peer group pressure. I decided it would be doing the young people in my community a disservice to not do it. I decided to step up and give it a go. I started my own business holding workshops for teenage and pre-teen girls. It's crazy and really exciting and I just love it.

I worked four jobs to fund myself getting all my accreditations and qualifications. I have applied for grants and sponsorship. I am constantly learning and hearing of new ways of doing things and learning how to do them. I live in a town that has just a corner store, national park bush and the beach.

I am going to be moving away next year and I am really going to miss my family, especially my mum and dad and brothers. We are all really close and my brothers are my best friends. We hang out together and we rarely fight. It is a really supportive environment.



*“If you can
turn it
around at
a young age
you have a
really solid
foundation to
step out into
your future”*

Katie Pitsis

Northern Rivers Beach



I have always been a pretty out-there kid. I was always pretty hard on myself and really competitive with all my sports and school. That has been the thing that has really challenged me to move forward, to develop myself as a person. I have the tools to set goals and learn to be kind to myself. I don't have a fear of failure or a fear of rejection, whereas that used to be a huge driving force. That was the main bad thing or challenge I had when I was younger. Even so, I was always a pretty confident kid. You need to be if you are going to be school captain in primary school and on the School Representative Council (SRC). I was friendly and always able to create rapport without really knowing what it was. The things that I have learnt have supported me through my teenage years. I know I wouldn't be the person I am today without all this stuff I have learnt.

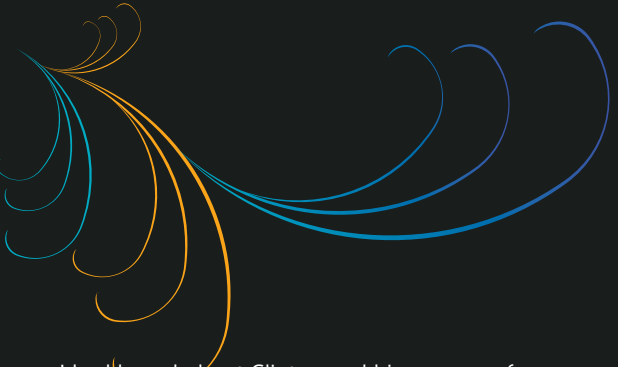
In my workshops we do a lot of stuff to do with the media and advertising. We do lots of processing around negative body image. We do a lot of metaphor games and even just sharing. I get great feedback and the majority of the girls come back again to do another workshop. We have an assist team which is girls that have been through the program. I choose them and then I train them and they come back as mentors to support the other young girls. It has been really positive.



I am about to launch Visionary Youth Leadership, which will expand the business to include guys and train young people in study skills, organisation and stress management. They are some of the issues identified by our group at the Heywire Forum. It's a simple idea that meets a desperate need amongst young people. There were so many people in my last year of high school who were stressed. This stress was so unnecessary and it really did affect their memories during year 11 and 12, therefore their results. That's why I've created it, to be able to support other people to achieve what they want to achieve and have positive beliefs about themselves.

A lot of kids form really negative beliefs about themselves, thinking that they're dumb, or they're slow, but they are just not being taught in the right way that supports them. So it's supporting young people to understand that and go, "OK, how can I take responsibility for myself and step up and learn in that way that is going to support me better?" Because when you're in control and you take responsibility, then you can create whatever you want in your life.

My goal is to expand my business all over Australia and I am going to get into school systems for young people in general, not just girls. I want to teach senior students about goal setting and learning strategies like speed reading. Eventually I am going to have workshops running in every main country in the world to have this support network for young people that is everywhere.

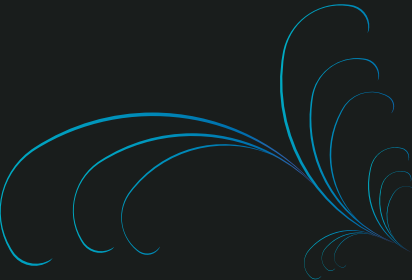


I had heard about Clinton and his games a few years before we actually met him and experienced those games for ourselves. Clinton Swaine runs Frontier Trainings that specialises in experiential business training. His point of difference is that all the learning comes from playing games. To facilitate the games, Clinton assumes different characters. In fact, there are 110 characters including 28 women. One of those women characters, Bobby Sue Numbawan, is training as a gymnast to compete in the London Olympics. Yes, I am being serious here.

The games Clinton organises and plays can seem superficial on the surface and you can play superficially. However, if you play them full out, your own personal issues will emerge and if you look deeply at those issues you can change the way you do business. It can also change other areas of your life.

When we interview Clinton he is sitting on a coach, talking to people one on one, but stretching at the same time to remain flexible for Bobby Sue's gymnastic exploits.

*“Understand that if you decide
your passion there are going to be
hurdles along the way, challenges
along the way”*



Clinton Swaine

PASSION Experiential business training

WEBSITE www.frontiertrainings.com





The greatest source of my passion would be about personal growth – expanding to be myself and being the best I can be and inspiring others to be the best they can be. It was an evolutionary process. I had a long background of links that all came together into one time and place and I realised that everything I had ever done had brought me to where I am now. Everything from my real estate experience, to my business consulting experience, to my coaching experience, all the game creation I had done, all that came together into one company called Frontier Training. That became the vehicle for me to go out and push myself in ways I never thought I could reach and to use that as inspiration for other people, to help people grow their businesses and themselves into the best that they can be.

Frontier Training started out as teaching my friends how to achieve things through games. From there I started creating more games about different areas of our business and before long into the personal development side. Then it became a full training company. It went from doing games on weekends, while I was doing my real estate, to it becoming all consuming. My total focus and all I do now is train people in lots of countries around the world. It's about training business strategies and personal growth in games. The games are incredible, powerful, fun and the people playing learn and it sticks.

At one point I was doing a game about investing called the Carnival, where each little carnival represented a different style of investing. I said to my wife, can you go and get a carnival ring master's hat and jacket. She went off and bought this big yellow sequined jacket and top hat and I wore that and the students loved it and said, Clinton we want more of that. When the students ask for more of something, you deliver that. So we started having more characters and costumes.

Then we turned everything into games in the company and before long it became what it is today – purely games based, number one at what we do, no one even



remotely close to what we do, and it all works. Now we have a global company and are expanding and it is doing great.

Experiential games reflect real life situations. They give you the opportunity to gain great personal insight into how you act and react. I found that experiential learning through games is far more effective than lecture style workshops or reading books, which only engage you intellectually – you will immediately feel the difference.

Learning from games gives meaning and learning from direct experience. Aristotle once said, "For the things we have to learn before we can do them, we learn by doing them".

My wife has been a full-time mum with my son for the last three years but now my son is safe enough to be in the training room, she is coming back into the business. We have been together for 10 years and she has been with me in the training room previously and crewing but when the boy came along she focused on him. Now he is old enough she can't wait to get back and run a Frontier kids program. She loves it. She came over to England just recently and walked into a big pool of love. She hadn't been a part of the community in England and here in Australia. The students were very excited to meet her.

I have created 110 characters. Twenty eight, yes twenty eight I think are women. Bobby Sue has been around for about two years and so for those last two years I have been working with her every day training, doing all the gymnastics. Some of them only need very small slivers of material and don't come around very often. Others are in my life all the time because they are on stage all the time teaching – Marcus my marketing executive, some of my military generals, Preston in my racing car efficiency type games – they are in Play to Win™ so they are around me all the time, in all the games we do.



THE JOURNEY

I was always one that was driven to succeed; without a doubt, if you met me as a child I was driven to succeed. In competitions, sports, I was pushing hard, working to be the best, aiming for excellence in everything I did. But as far as the creativity of what I do now, I had no idea back then. We never really used costumes growing up. I was in a youth theatre workshop for a little while but it was in minor roles with no real goal to be the lead actor or the big star.

I did play Dungeons and Dragons and those sorts of games growing up so I had all that creativity with me. The idea of manifesting games' creativity into business as a teaching training tool never occurred to me.

After a business failure, I was pretty down and ready to evolve to another level but instead I started teaching my friends about how not to do business, with games. I had been playing games since I was 13 years old but I was taking them to an all-new level, playing at a bigger scale, getting more people involved. It was a natural evolution of what I was already doing. It became bigger and bigger, bolder and bolder and commercial. As it evolved, it was just a natural path for where I was going.

I am learning in all different areas all the time. I don't focus on just one at a time, I am focusing on 10 to 15 different areas right now. I am just about to start taking guitar



lessons, singing lessons, so that my rock star, Ricky, can get up on stage and can fully sing and play guitar on stage. I am constantly learning and being the best that I can be in so many different fields. Some faculty members, which is what I call them, have more exposure in my life at any one time but I learn from all of them. I am surprised sometime by what I teach.

The faculty members are not me. There is a huge differentiation between who I am and who they are. If you meet them, they may share the same body but their personality is totally different. So Bobby Sue is totally different, has totally different emotions, different physiology, outlook on life, so just sitting into that energy is incredible. I speak about them in third person because it is not me. When I look at my ability on stage, I look at me as Clinton on stage, I think that is amazing. When I look at what all my faculty do, all 110 of them, it is hard to comprehend. When I am being another faculty member, Clinton disappears, there is no Clinton. Inside my head is an expansive experience.

I also find that if I have a challenge in life, there will be a faculty member who has skills and no fear in the area. If I become that faculty member I can get past that obstacle to continue and grow.



*“Games
allow us to
test and work
through the
challenges
and thus
actually
learn”*

Clinton Swaine

Tongue Point,
Wilson's Promontory



What did I love doing? I loved to play. I loved to play games and now I have turned it into a global business about training adults about business but using games. Go back to childhood; find the things that you used to love to do. Take that and expand that to be life's passion and you could work out a way to make money out of it; what would that be? Go back to between the age of five and 12, the things that absorbed your time. If you could spend a whole day doing that, getting lost in that, for most people that is their passion. But we leave that age and we get caught up in school and then get a job. They lose touch with that passion they were consumed by.

It takes time. Most people who want to go and be successful find it is not an overnight process. They have done a lot of studies, and a book by Geoff Colvin called Talent is Overrated: What Really Separates World-Class Performers from Everybody Else talks about the 10 years of working at your passion until you are successful. I have been five years in my business but if I factor in all my consulting and coaching and all the other things I have done it is a 20-year-plus journey to get to where I am now. If I keep doing what I am doing my destiny is set for the rest of my life, financially, spiritually, with my family, everything is on the right track and I am so blessed every day.

I love that by using experiential learning games we are growing as a person from the inside, whereas conventional teaching and training is the transfer of knowledge to a person from the outside. People take much more ownership of the learning if it comes from within. The main reason the games are so powerful is that people learn by

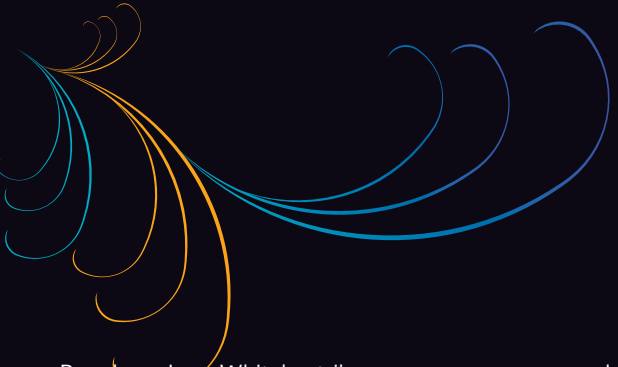


doing. When we are simply taught something we have not yet had the learnings that come from experience. Games allow us to test and work through the challenges and thus actually learn. That, combined with deliberate time to reflect and extract lessons, makes them so powerful.

Understand that if you decide your passion there are going to be hurdles along the way, challenges along the way. Would you be willing to work for five to 10 years but knowing that if it is your passion you will eventually get there?

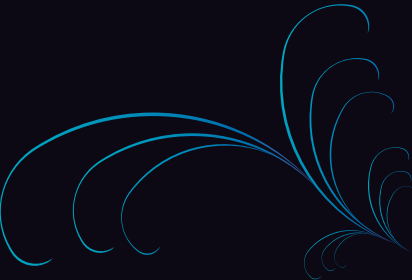
I travel the world a lot so training (as Bobby Sue) becomes difficult. While I am on the road I do a lot of stretching to keep my back open. Bobby Sue is training five times a week with a coach and then training seven times a week as well. So I have a lot of training to do. I am doing a lot of dance stuff now so it is an exciting period. To follow Bobby Sue's journey she has her own TV station, Bobby Sue TV, she has her own Facebook page with all her posts and magazine covers, and her own website.

Our goal is to take all the faculty members and age reverse them back to when they were in primary school and have them teach empowerment lesson to kids but through animated cartoons and books. That is a goal; I will start that next year sometime, an animated series of the entire faculty. They would be in school and they would go off and have adventures and experiences with bullies and things like that. They will use their smarts and their wit to get through it all.



Penelope Jane Whitely strikes you as someone you know from TV. That's probably because she was. She is dynamic, well spoken, has lovely elocution and is always beautifully groomed. Penelope runs around with lots of energy, breaking the stereotype of someone over 50, of a certain age. We first came across Penelope at a self-development course that we were crewing together for in Sydney. In a break between a very busy schedule during the course, Jane, armed with her trusty digital recorder, listened to Penelope's amazingly varied life and her burning desire to empower women of a certain age. I later catch up with Penelope at a Rotary Club lunch in Sydney. I got to see her in action talking to about 18 men of a certain age and two women. Since her subject was about empowering women, it was potentially a dodgy prospect. But, alas, nothing to fear. Penelope's relaxed, humorous and warm presentation had them smiling and asking pertinent questions. Later, between showers, I managed to take some images of this eloquent woman against an autumn backdrop in the RSL club car park.

“It's about staying young and vivacious and of course it comes from inside as well as from the outside”




Penelope Jane Whitely

PASSION Supporting women of a certain age

BOOK *Hot Stuff – The Ultimate Guide to Style for Women of a Certain Age*

WEBSITES www.agingdisgracefullynow.com
www.hotstuffthebook.com





I help women 40 plus to age disgracefully. What does that mean? When our mothers were 50 they were old. They were old women. Aging disgracefully is about embracing culture as it is today. It is knowing how to put together an outfit with a pair of jeans so that you don't look like "grannydom". It's about not moving into grannydom. It's about staying young and vivacious and of course it comes from inside as well as from the outside. So what I really do is that I help people reinvent themselves on the inside and outside.

When I turned 50, basically, apart from sweating, nothing happened. A friend asked me that since I'd turn 50 had I disappeared. I just said NO. After that question I started looking at what was going on in my life and I had this revelation that I had disappeared. I would be queuing for a cup of coffee and 10 people would come in behind me and they would be served first because I was a person who didn't exist anymore. This really got up my nose as you can imagine. This is got to be wrong and nobody could give me a reason as to why it happens.

I think it is because we can no longer procreate, because we can no longer continue the species, our value is gone. Our value is now staying home and looking after the grandchildren. Society has disregarded them which means the person somehow is diminished. And that is where I feel older women's problems come from. I can't find myself. I've lost myself. Where am I? I've disappeared since I turned 50. What will I do now? And I look in the mirror and I want to slash my wrists.



It is interesting because it may be the biggest challenge that any woman will face and for many women it is a loss of femininity and that in itself is scary. Add to that the physical changes that happen and knowing what to do about the physical changes, to learn the subtle art of camouflage. There are a lot of anatomical and not just physiological changes in the brain from these incredible hormones and it starts when you're in your forties. Things start to change slowly and then they start to pick up pace. And you become peri-menopausal. Then you officially become menopausal and then officially post-menopause. People look at their lives and say, "When it is going to be my turn?" because even their passion is vested in their husband or their children or their dog or whatever it is.

The other societal change is that there are so many women now in their late thirties and early forties who chose a career. We set that up. Women's lib set that up. Women of the sixties and the Mary Quant and Twiggy era changed things with women's lib, not enough I don't think. Many women chose to have careers and then realised they didn't have children, they don't have a husband, they don't have a family, they don't have a secure environment. Then you get women whose marriages have broken down. One of the biggest growing problems today that people don't realise is the number of homeless women over 35, usually from a marriage breakdown, and they are left with nothing and nowhere to go. Because their identity was linked to their husband, they don't know what to do.



THE JOURNEY

I was born in North London in Hampstead and we moved to Chelsea and my father bought a guesthouse in Kent. My father was a musician and started out as a concert pianist; he taught himself to play. The war came along and he got shot and invalided out. He went and worked for the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC). He would entertain the troops and broadcast on the radio. It was always feast or famine in our house. He would get an offer to do a film score and would say, "Let's do that then" and it would be a while before the money would come in so we would "tighten our belts" a little bit. It was great fun, it really was. I grew up with lots of musicians around and it was very exciting.

I started performing at about age two. There used to be an old-people's house near where we lived, and I went there every Saturday afternoon. I would trot up there and arrive for afternoon tea. There was a piano and one of the old folks would play and I would perform singing and dancing. My mother would come and collect me. And I remember my mother being the most beautiful woman in the world. We all thought that of our mothers but she was absolutely stunning. She had a knack for looking great; she could put herself in a green garbage bag and look sensational. She was so stylish and so elegant. Like us all, she had problems in her life and she unfortunately ended up with Alzheimer's disease. I used to dress her then because I couldn't bear the thought of her having a lucid moment where she knew what was going on and looking in the mirror and thinking, "Oh my god, what is that?"

So when she died, I started thinking, could all this start happening to me? I talked to other women and I got the idea about writing a book about menopause. BORING. I asked, what are things that women would want to know? What they wanted to know



was what to do with this body so that they look stunning still. What should I do about hair and makeup and everything else? Also, what do I do with myself, where do I find myself? What I am going to do with myself when I am completely lost.

I realised that the reason I was doing all of this was because I couldn't help my mother. I transferred that energy to the rest of the female population. Over 50 is the time that they start to live their life. They need to get themselves dressed in the morning and look in the mirror and say, I may not be perfect but parts of me are a knockout. They can walk out the door and say, it is all about me.

I was a working actress for many years. I have been coming to Australia off and on from when I was 12. When my father died we came out here semi-permanently. My father had a very large music publication business and my mother didn't want to sell it or bring in a manager so she brought me in instead. In that role I travelled a lot, so I bought a house in Sydney. Eventually my mother was too ill to travel.

My best friend is Kate Manning, who was a Doctor Who girl. She was Jo Grant with John Pertwee. When I was 26, I had an accident and damaged my ears resulting in deafness in one ear and 60% in the other. Kate was responsible for getting me back into acting.

I was a singer but had a problem in my throat and had surgery so my voice isn't what it used to be. People ask if I have had elocution lessons but I haven't. I just sound like everyone around me when I was growing up. You go through life sounding the way you originally sounded.



*"My father
always said
to me, "You
will always
come up with
a bunch of
roses" and he
was right"*

Penelope Jane Whitely

Bromeliad



I have been doing workshops for a while but I was missing something. Then, over the last few months it has all fallen into place. I had a five and a half hour brainstorming session that brought out my true passion and I know it is my passion because I am bringing so much in now. I love work. I don't call this work because I love it so much. I can't ever see myself retiring. I'm not the retirement type.

I have been very fortunate in my life. I have had all the trials and tribulations that people have. My father always said to me, "You will always come up with a bunch of roses" and he was right. Even at the darkest times, and you can see it at the time, it always comes out for the best. I am a lucky person because I have always found a way to love what I was doing. Even if I didn't really love it I would find a way around it to make sure I did love it. I just feel that it is so important and I have always taken responsibility for myself.

I usually spend half of my time in London and half my time in Australia, but I am in Australia more these days because the book is moving faster here. I have interviews with the Today Show and Sunrise coming up. I have several speaking engagements lined up for next year already. I am also running my Aging Disgracefully experiences and they are five-star, three-day weekends and seven-day retreats. It's a luxury experience where I help women, no more than 10 of them, reinvent the inside and the outside. I have blocks of content because it isn't the same as a workshop. I cover everything on how to dress, even down to the right handbag. I love red and black, myself.

I don't do colour swatches for women because you give them a confined range of colours and they won't move and try anything else.

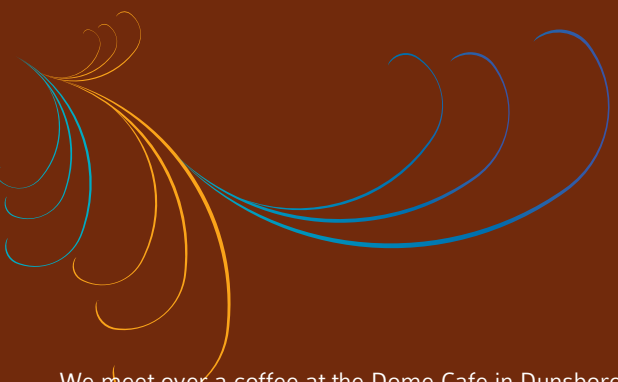


I have a tip which is in a section of my book: do not go shopping with a friend – everyone has their own agendas and it isn't yours. It is all part of the picture – grooming, nails and hair. I hold them in places where there is a spa so there are massages and treatments.

If they come with me, they save money, they connect with other women and they have a great experience. They also join the club, because it is also about keeping the community together. The women share with one another because it is also bonding. I get all their application forms and I match them up. I follow up and keep in touch when we get back with a newsletter. It is great fun and I just love it. It is everything I love doing. I get to speak, I get to help women gain confidence and achieve their goals. I travel and live in five-star luxury.

I am looking at putting together documentaries, a television show, and developing a franchise. I would like to join together with other like-minded women to spread my message. I would also like to establish a shopping service but will have to do some research and get some contacts and great deals. It is all about being healthy and eating right and doing all those sorts of things.

I am trying to put together a complete package for everybody. My legacy from all this is to establish a series of places for homeless women over 35. Not just a hostel but a place where they have their own room and bathroom and we reinvent them inside and out. If they don't have a skill, we would give them a skill and send them out into the world. It is called Beginnings.



We meet over a coffee at the Dome Cafe in Dunsborough, a thriving resort town located south of Busselton in Western Australia. Andrew is literally living the so called “sea change” lifestyle. But as we find out, it’s not all smooth sailing. Besides hearing his wise words over the radio, we first came across Andrew at a golf fundraising day. He was hosting an evening auction and in order to raise the bidding he was simultaneously calling the auction and making his own bids. It was hilarious to watch and we knew right there and then that this guy had that extra something.

During the two-hour conversation, Andrew reveals his philosophy passionately. I know pretty quickly that Andrew has a particular take on how our society is heading. Making his points by thumping the table, he says we really need people to stand up and influence others in a positive manner every single day. “We are put on this earth to help people and not just make a shit load of money, live on a hill with a big house and drive around in a Merc and then say, look at me. My argument is that you have to go and experience life and learn about the things important to you.”

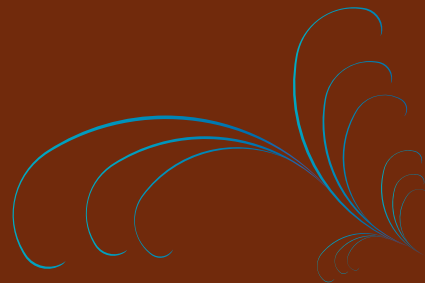
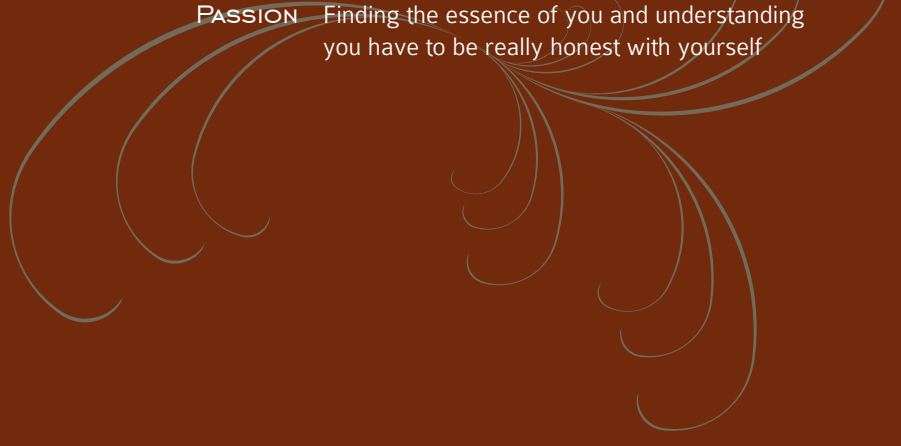
It is clear from this tiny segment of our conversation that Andrew Wynn has strong beliefs. What is more, he backs them up with action.

“I like living in myself now”



Andrew Wynn

PASSION Finding the essence of you and understanding
you have to be really honest with yourself





The source of my passion is an integral belief that there is a greater force at work at all times. Once you go out of the harmony of that source, which is largely formed by your own consciousness, you will never tap into your passion.

I was brought up as a strict Catholic. I never felt the church understood that the most important thing a person should have is not the relationship with the institution; instead, it's the relationship of themselves with a higher source. The Catholic Church is only the bus to get to the destination. It is not the destination. The real vehicle for me is finding the essence of you and understanding you have to be really honest with yourself; that consciousness, spirit and passion are all aligned. When you don't follow those things you can become sick, violent and depressed.

And now my whole motivation is based on helping other people develop their abilities. If I can tap into helping them, then I guess I can get fulfilment out of my life.

I think there are plenty of token gestures, but I want people to start living the talk and believe in a passionate, caring and engaging way to inspire others. So, become as Gandhi used to say, "be the change in the world you want it to be".

I think the education system needs people with life skills to come into schools. An idea I thought of 15 years ago was people from diverse backgrounds going around to schools. I went to my son's school and said I reckon you should get people from different walks of life to come in and talk to kids about life. And they said, it wouldn't meet the curriculum. The trouble is, most kids grow into adulthood not knowing what is really going on until they get into their 40s and 50s. People are being herded like cattle into roles that when they get to 28 or so they suddenly realise, I actually hate this. This is an epidemic. I believe that while society pursues this never-ending commodity-driven philosophy, people will never be truly happy. Now it's about time we had a bloody good think.



I felt I had a calling to do a lot more than what I am doing. So I am passionate about making sure people fulfil their own expectations in relation to their belief system.

I believe men need to develop more attributes that women have, particularly in terms of understanding. Quality in male role models is diminishing at a rapid rate. Young men of Australia need people to support them and say "hey, you are not that bad". You turn on the news and everything is about trying to find a story about somebody being bashed on their head with a brick.

I have always made money in my business undertakings. If you are doing something because it is important or if it is your passion, the result is a quality product; it's a quality product so people will buy it and the end result is it makes money.

It is very confronting to make huge changes in your life without a very understanding partner. My wife is a very supportive person and she is married to someone who is probably a little unusual. My wife loves her work as a flight attendant, which means frequently flying long exhausting journeys.

I think men don't ask what their partners want first. I said to Helen when I met her, what is the one thing you really want to do in life. She said I want to be a flight attendant. So let's work towards the goal. It took three years to get the interview; she went through the recruitment process: 50,000 applicants on the east coast and 500 picked. She waited 12 months and got the job which changed her life. It changed her perception of life. We always saw it in her, but sometimes you need others to draw it out of them so they realise what they are capable of.



THE JOURNEY

I come from the bush originally, from the town of Wangaratta in Victoria. So I always had a fondness for the bush. I said to my wife, one day we are going to have a plot of land down here near Margaret River. Five years ago we got the plot of land and started working towards how we can create the type of life we want to live.

I was a really good student at City Beach High School and my father was the headmaster of, thankfully, another school. I was a straight A student. At 15 I decided to leave and work in television. I worked in TV for six months and got a production assistant role, inspired by my brother's success. The recession hit in 1981 or thereabouts and then I was laid off.

I got a job at Wembley Golf Course around 1981 picking up stray golf balls. I went from a straight A student to a tractor driver. My father thought "shock horror, what are you doing?" I said, "I always liked golf, maybe I will become a golf professional".

I did a three-year apprenticeship as a golf professional which covers everything from business management and selling to mending golf clubs. In those days you had to get your golf handicap down to around two or something like that. You then got a PGA (Professional Golfers Association) qualification so you can teach golf in Australia, and that is what I did. I was never good enough to actually play the game professionally.

Then my passion became business and through that I started to realise how you could actually make a real difference. I got the confidence in myself to go into business in retail and wholesale areas.

After being self-employed for many years and working the golf business for 30 years of that it was time for a bit of a change. My values systems have undergone a fairly radical change. My new values sort of evolved because when I came down to Dunsborough I took up real estate. Even though I was really good at it, I wasn't enjoying it. In fact, that was an understatement as I found out. I went down to Coles one day to do a bit of shopping and I felt I was having a heart attack. I had to go to hospital. An interesting thing happened. I did all the tests, nothing wrong. I went to the doctor down here in Dunsborough and he said, "What is really wrong?" Well, I'm not



doing what I want to do. I went straight into the real estate office and resigned.

I had a physical warning signal indicating that I wasn't living a life true to myself. I should have recognised the signs months ago, because I used to feel sick in the office, but conditioning kicks in and that little voice in the head says you are a quitter.

Making big changes in your life's direction is not easy, it is confronting. When I left real estate I was probably as low as I could be as a person. I had to confront things that have been building up for quite a long time. I just had to go away and sort things out in my head. Was I worried about the future, the uncertainty? Yes, of course I was. I had some shocking days, but it was worth it.

I have gone through the process of something I have never done in my life – applying for some jobs. I want to do something different and apply for some corporate work. Boy, what an eye opener that was. If you did not have the resilience of your inner strength you would get absolutely demoralised with the process you have to go through. What I do now is just ring the recruitment people up and just say to them, this is what I am doing, this is what I believe in, does the company have that philosophy? If not, I am not applying for any position. They come back with, "we don't get anybody asking those sort of questions".

We are living in a shed at the moment on our three acres. I couldn't care less if I am living in a shed or not. I like living in myself now. The block is basically a cow paddock on top of a hill. It has a great view of the valley and we have planted 500 trees which have matured now. We may build a house on it, but I am in no great hurry.

What we have found moving to the bush is that you have time. We have a cat called Sheba who I spend a lot of quality time with. I may be away a few days and my neighbour Mike feeds the cat. He may do something else that needs attention and I don't ask him. Then I will spend half an hour mowing his verge. It's giving yourself unconditionally which made this country great. In Perth I gave my neighbours two bottles of wine. The next day they had left the house empty – was the wine that bad (laughing)?



*“We are put
on this earth
to help people
and not just
make a load
of money”*

Andrew Wynne



If I was asked the question from somebody seeking advice looking for their passion I would say this: just by asking that question they have already started the process.

When I speak to somebody about helping them recognise their calling, I just ask them questions. The important starting point question is, are you happy? This is the one thing that everybody is searching for out there. They will never find it out there.

You can't tell people what to do. It's about free will. However, you are obliged to wear your belief system on your sleeve. I'm now following my "inner guidance system". By doing that, opportunities will come. When I reflect on the best times of my life, it's when I follow my belief system.

My mate Gaven said this to me the other day: "You are not waiting for the next opportunity; you are living the next opportunity now".

The other key thing for men is that they have been conditioned that what they do is who they are. Once I got out of my retail business, nobody rang me, I didn't have a title. When I got the wholesale business going, everybody started ringing again. The male ego is largely based on what your title is at a given time. What I realised in the last six months is that people who valued me as a bloke and the ones who valued me as a title are totally different.

If you base your self-worth on the commodity-driven perception, you are doomed. However, the real true leaders, the real shifters and changers, are the ones that can transcend the commodity label and contribute much more than a title suggests.

When I take on something new I think firstly if it is in the best interests of everybody, if this is really going to make a positive difference.

My values have evolved over the last 10 years. We spent a lot of time working with my son who has depression and that was a pretty big turning point in my values system to what is important. Empathy is the thing. That is the big thing in the future. If people have empathy, understanding and can tap into that person's belief, values and passion system then anything is possible.



You go through different stages in life. When I was young I was driven. I had a driven father, I was a driven career person and driven looking up to my brother who was very successful. I got to about the early 30s and I went from being driven to being called. When you are being driven you are working from the outside in. Being called is from the inside out.

The saddest thing is when talking to people who have learnt to stifle this calling within because they are scared. I have got myself into a pretty reasonable position to allow me to step back and work out the rest of my life, and I am excited about that. I tried explaining to my father who is 85 years of age. "You know son, what are you doing"? "Well, Dad, I am having a bit of a think about what I am going to do next, and what that is, I don't know."

It's very interesting; the profile of me has changed because people's perception of me is doing stuff on the radio. Perceptions are what are largely driving the world. But, if you are smart, you can use these perceptions to your advantage. When I get an opportunity to talk on the radio with the Perth ABC morning host Geoff Hutchinson, I certainly use it to make my points.

Let's engage others and encourage them to live by their values and belief systems.

So now I am exploring other opportunities. I am doing a lot more MC work, auctioneering work, sales work training and marketing. I would like to get into a more hands-on marketing role in inspiring younger people and getting them to understand what it's all about. I also intend doing more radio and public speaking and talking to groups of kids about how good they are, not how bad they are. Kids need to be reinforced, not in a false way.

Now when I talk to people they say, are you all right, have you had some sort of religious experience? I say I have had a religious experience with myself and have woken up. And mate, I've never been better.



THE PASSION

The idea behind this book of interviews is to look at people who obviously live their passion. Our intention was to analyse their values and attitudes and apply them to our own lives, but what struck us after interviewing them was that they share so many similar characteristics.

The Passion

The participants in this book about living your passion are all linked by the common theme of people being the best they can be. However, during our interviews it became apparent that passion for people and their performance is an individual thing. The passion of Olympic hockey coach Ric Charlesworth is to create elite athletes and the team performance. International beach volleyball player, Sarah Maxwell's passion is relationships and connecting. Cathy Denehy and Kerrie Phipps are all about connecting but with a rural focus.

Values

Values are the assumptions we use to decide on our actions. All the people in this book know what their value system is and they pass their ideas and actions through their value systems before they make a decision. If an opportunity goes against their values they may re-evaluate the opportunity.

They also understand that values change constantly through our lives. That is why we choose what we are going to do when we are young. Later on in life, as our values change so do our goals, aspirations and what we want to do.

Andrew Wynne said his values changed over the last 10 years. As things happen, we work out what our priorities are.

Julie Meek trained as a dietician because that was closest to what she wanted to do career-wise. Working in hospitals was where dieticians mostly went straight out of training. Julie soon realised that working in a hospital did not meet her value of peak performance, so she moved into another specialty niche.



The Summary

Utilisation of previous skills

Everyone has skills that can be used in different ways. Sarah Maxwell uses her skills as an elite athlete as a metaphor for her coaching and relationship work. Sometimes it is easier to see the true lesson when presented in a metaphorical story.

When Clinton Swaine is teaching his experiential games, he draws on past experiences in business to create the atmosphere that helps others learn and be the best they can be. Clinton creates characters to teach people. Not many of us have had the experience of being a female gymnast. Clinton is not afraid to experience anything.

Johnnie Cass has combined his previous skills into teaching others how to be the best they can be. When he was a personal trainer and was learning NLP and coaching skills he started integrating them into fitness and wellness regimes. Both physical and mental fitness work well together. They blended until the coaching was stronger than the fitness side. Johnnie's love of performing and his television profile came together for him as he now presents in front of often thousands of people.

Often what we do early on can be the precursor or just a stage in our journey to our passion. Don't throw your previous skills away – use them.

Mentors and support network

People living their passion often have mentors –someone they look up to and admire but also someone they can ask for advice or pass ideas through – particularly the younger members of this group. Without people supporting them, many of their achievements may not have occurred. Katie Pitsis has a highly supportive family network. Her parents encourage her to follow her dreams. She in turn is a mentor for her own peer group.

Sometimes mentors know you better than you know yourself. It may appear like they can read your mind. Julie Meek's mentor David Price asked her when she was going to write that book she was thinking about. She had never actually mentioned it to him.



Work hard and never stop learning

When I think of hard work I think of Cathie Denehy. She says that if you are living your passion you don't mind what time of day or night it is. She has been known to be up till the wee hours working on an idea.

Andrew Wynne is a highly intelligent bloke with an enormous drive. At a crossroads in his life he was prepared to stop everything to learn what he needed to learn. We have a tendency to just stay with what we know because it is too scary to face the reality of how unhappy or unsatisfied we are. The status quo is usually the easy option but is rarely the best option. We make up excuses as to why it is best to stay still. We blame others like the kids, the mortgage, our boss, our parents, anyone but ourselves

Drive

Although the interviewees as we know them today are dynamic, inspirational people, it has not always been that way. Many of our passionate people were quiet young people with their fair share of troubles. Kerrie Phipps was an introverted bullied teen who could have been devastated by her past. She, however, did not get bogged down in the misery of it or feel sorry for herself. She decided she could help others to overcome similar issues. It is interesting to see how what would send one person to wallow in depression, inspires someone else to want to connect with people.

Russ Harris found the pressure of medical school hard to deal with. He pushed through and found his own special niche that helped himself but even better helped his patients. As a general practitioner, Russ could have continued the constant cycle of a medical practice but decided it was better for him to take a cut in pay to make a difference.

Glenn Capelli was born to be a teacher, and in his first year was asked to talk to the whole school staff where he worked. And although his passion is teaching, the standard methods in schools did not fit his concepts so he felt he had to write his own curriculum. So that is what he did. Now he travels the world with his own curriculum or lessons.



Age

Age has no correlation with the ability to live your passion. Katie Pitsis knew what she wanted to do from a tender age of 16. She probably knew a lot earlier than that. Society has the ability to want to discourage children from pursuing their passion because they should grow up first. Unfortunately, many of us take the growing up path and forget what it was in those childhood years that excited and inspired us.

Living your passion is not something just for the young, it's also for the young at heart. Penelope Jane Whitely, in contrast to Katie, works with women of a "certain age". In some way they are very similar because the young and the more mature can both be ignored and disenfranchised.

Problem solving

Without exception, each person in this book saw there was a problem that needed to be solved and did something about that. Sometimes that problem was something that was accentuated by their life experience. Cathie Denehy felt like she was disassociated growing up and found her passion in connecting people. Penelope Jane Whitely found she became invisible when she turned 50, so she went out to help older women stand out in a crowd. Katie Pitsis saw that her generation of pre-teens and teenagers were being influenced by their peer group to their detriment. Russ Harris felt that there was something missing in the treatment of his medical patients and he was also looking for something else for himself.

Other interviewees could see the problem and knew that their experience could solve it. Sarah Maxwell knew that all her years of experience as an Olympic standard athlete could help people in relationships. After all, there is nothing like a two-person beach volleyball team to bring out relationship issues. Ric Charlesworth, as another Olympic sports person, doctor and politician, has the background that is useful in training other teams to become the best they possibly can be. Julie Meek's dietician experience would be useful for high performance sports people and this could also be applied to the corporate high flyers.



Embracing change

Andrew Wynne says that making big changes in your life's direction is not easy, it is confronting. He would know, he has made lots of them. This is not an uncommon practice amongst the people living their passions. What stands out is that the people in this book are constantly evaluating where they are at and asking the question:

How can I make this even better?

How can I be a better person?

How can I help others to be the best they can be?

Cathie Denehy wakes up early in the morning with ideas of how she can help the rural women network better. Without asking questions, it is hard to change things. Some people Cathie comes into contact with call it her "latest venture". People who are defining their passion are willing to have a go and change things until they get it right.

When we interviewed Kahlia Ericson she thought she knew what her passion was, but it turned out her passion needed tweaking. She commented that when the real passion emerged she got all hot and bothered. It was as if she knew it was the right thing but it was a bit scary.

Focus

Ric Charlesworth comments that his job in creating Olympic champions is about making them believe they can do it. He says their job is to focus. What we have noticed is the degree of focus that the people living their passion have in their life.

Firstly, they focus on what they want. If they find themselves in a place that they think is not on the right path, they have the ability to recognise those feelings and change direction.

Julie Meek realised that although being a dietician was her passion, it wasn't being a dietician in a hospital that excited her. Julie had a choice to stay in an area that wasn't quite right, or do something about it. She changed her focus to create her own practice and find her niche.



All personal development tells us that what we focus on expands, so focusing on what you want will take you in that direction. Focusing on the negative or what you don't want will bring more of just that.

Opportunity

People living their passion are great at taking opportunities when they arise. They may be scared but, if they know they are on the right path, they trust that the opportunity will take them somewhere.

Glenn Capelli will say he never had the vision of being a world-travelling keynote speaker. It just happened by stealth. One thing led to another and to another. When you are living your passion it is amazing how the bits and pieces just fall into place.

Kahlia Ericson said that when she started coaching and training it was hard work. All her personal development work had said that when you are living your passion it will fall into place. When she made the shift to what was her real passion, event management, all the planets aligned and she had clients coming to her.

Even if the opportunity does not take them in the right direction, they learn from the experience and refocus their journey.

Energy

When we talk to the people living their passion we are constantly impressed by their energy levels. Clinton Swaine can train as a gymnast for many hours a day and run a training business. Glenn Capelli travels the world constantly as an international keynote speaker and gives dynamic energetic presentations. Kerrie Phipps struggles with chronic fatigue but the passion for connecting people gets her out of bed every day.

When you don't like what you do it is hard to find the energy to get out of bed and go to work. The attitude of loving what you do provides that, no matter how many hours sleep you have had.

FIND, LIVE AND PUBLISH YOUR PASSION

Why find and live your passion

A life without passion inherently has something missing. We believe everyone has a passion or two but they often forget and don't recognise them. Even when people know what their passion is they think it is too hard to live it. Living your passion doesn't mean giving up your career, it means finding time to do something that you love so you are living a happier life.

People who find and live their passion often think about writing their own book.

Potential authors don't write that book inside them for many reasons:

Self-doubt about their own abilities.

Being overwhelmed by the size of the project and their lack of experience in the area.

Beliefs about themselves and the book publishing industry.

Why us?

Experience and Expertise: We have been in the publishing industry for over ten years and have written and published over 80 books, some with multinational publishers and some by our own publishing company.

Qualifications: We have coaching and performance consultant qualifications.

Current: We are not just coaches, we are always writing our own books, so we know what changes and challenges are coming.



What we do for you

Vision and Planning: Help to create a vision for your book and a detailed plan to follow.

Writing: Provide tips for writing and overcoming writer's block.

After the Writing: Help you to outsource proofreading, editing, design and printing.

Marketing and Distribution: Once you have the book, it is time to sell.

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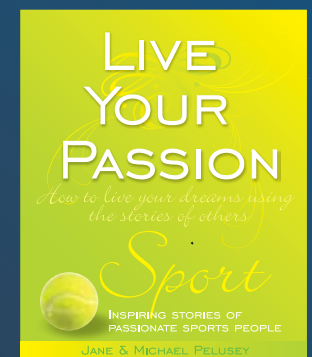
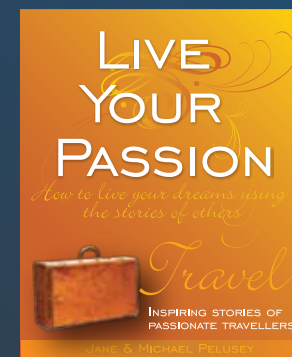
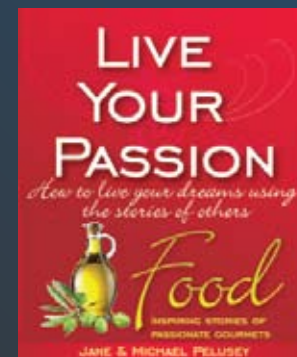
Imagine living your life doing something you love. This isn't just for the select few. Living your passion can be for everyone. By reading the stories of people who are passionate about food and life, you can use their values and attitudes to put that passion into your own life. This book is about people living their passion for food, but their messages can be applied to anyone with a passion for anything.

The people in this book are passionate about improving the performance of others in many different areas:

- Rural and regional people
- Women: young, business and over 50
- Elite sport
- Corporate business
- Men
- Relationships
- Education and teaching

In every case they are passionate about helping people be the best they can be.

Michael and Jane Pelusey interview 13 coaches and performance professionals to find the essence of what makes them tick. Michael and Jane's own journey to find and live their own passions has led them to produce over 80 books, write hundreds of magazine and newspaper articles and take hundreds of thousands of photographs.



Other titles in the 'Live Your Passion' series

