



DEEPWELL

How creative women reset, refresh and carry on

HOW CREATIVE WOMEN RESET REFRESH & CARRY ON

Before I started my business, I spent several years thinking about it.

I sat on the sidelines and watched women who were running their own businesses and wondered how they found the courage.

But then, instead of making unhelpful comparisons, I started to get curious.

What is it about these women and their work that I admire and want for myself? How can I make that happen? Those questions helped me begin.

I reached out to other women with creative businesses for support. They didn't see me as a competitor. Instead, they believed in me, and held out a hand to pull me up.

Some people who gave me encouragement are old friends. Others I met online this year. These women showed me what's possible, even during a pandemic.

This book started as a way of saying thank you, but it grew into something bigger. It became a co-created collection of ideas designed to help you reset, refresh and carry on.

The name 'Deepwell' reflects the idea that the people around us offer a wellspring of ideas. It's also the translation of my surname.

Tiefenbrun is an ancient Germanic name given to families who lived near a deep well.

The quotes in this book offer prompts to quench your thirst. To help you feel less alone. See what resonates and where it takes you.

There's wisdom all around. Don't be afraid to ask.

This book is designed to be shared. Pass it on.

And if you enjoy it, say hello on Instagram [@sara_tiefenbrun](https://www.instagram.com/sara_tiefenbrun) - I'd love to hear from you.

With love,

Sara

saratiefenbrun.com

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VISION



FIND YOUR IKIGAI

Beck is an incredible coach and facilitator of Brené Brown's work. I did a job for Beck in early 2020 and then she invited me to a workshop during the first lockdown and introduced me to a bunch of amazing women.

Find your ikigai. Your reason for being, your life purpose, your why. This isn't your job title or what your business does. It's the words that express the positive impact you bring to this world. Yours could start with... I bring... I create... I serve... I teach... I connect... I build... I provide... I stand for... I move... Your life purpose has no completion date and it isn't for anyone except you. After that, everything else falls into place.

Beck Hopkins

Live Brave Workshops Melbourne

livebraveworkshops.com

How creative women reset, refresh and carry on

Starting our own business has meant thinking about the voices we choose to amplify - to acknowledge the power and agency we have in our work.

This is a real privilege and a responsibility. Asking ourselves how we want to use this agency has become integral to who we are as a business. Not only asking what contribution does this client's work make and what value does it add, but also what contribution do we want to make and how we shape our business accordingly?

Finding similar minded and hearted colleagues is fundamental to making it work. For us, the business began organically over time but it also required a big leap, mutual trust and lots of good open conversations.

Dina Kluska, Anna Lensky, Terri King
Pitch Projects, Melbourne

pitchprojects.com

ACKNOWLEDGE YOUR POWER

These three women run a communications agency for interesting and worthwhile projects. They've been an inspiration to me over the last few years and I had the opportunity to work with them this year during the pandemic.

WHAT DO YOU WANT?

Ginger empowers artists to master the craft of polymer clay through her inspiring classes and content.

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If there were no limitations. If you had all the talent and time and money and love and sleep and coffee that was necessary, what would you want?

Do that. Find a way.

No, you won't get everything you want. But you'll be a whole heck of a lot closer than if you had never headed in that direction.

Ginger Davis Allman

Artist, Teacher and Creator of the Blue Bottle Tree, Missouri

thebluebottletree.com

1. Don't wait to be confident; if you wait for that you'll never do it! Substitute courage for confidence and you'll get it done 100% of the time.
2. Start with vision, not tactics. Dare to imagine from a place of ideals first.
3. Create a strategy THEN get to tactics!
This foundation will save you time and energy.
4. Get to know your ideal client and ideal collaborators sooner rather than later.
5. Celebrate your successes and your failures.
6. Don't hold yourself to standards beyond where YOU actually are with your initiative. This is your own path and you choose your moves.
7. Be visible: it requires vulnerability, but you can't be an invisible game-changer, storyteller, entrepreneur, or leader.
8. Know that we want you to succeed!

Julia May & Sarah Anderson

Visibility Co, Barwon Heads

visibilityco.com

BE VISIBLE

I met Julia when I was launching modern philosophy classes called The School of Life. I've watched her evolve from journalist to visionary coach and leader. She paired with Sarah Anderson to create Visibility Co. Together they do amazing things, including traveling to Antarctica as part of Homeward Bound, a mission for women in STEM.

THE WORLD NEEDS YOU

Emma is one of my oldest friends. Her career is amazing. She started in TV, took a detour to become a childbirth educator and then returned to TV a decade later. She has now re-established herself as an executive producer of children's television and has brought two major new series to life, one during the pandemic.

The world has changed dramatically and although it's often scary, you can use this space and time to find a new way to approach old ideas.

More than ever, the world needs a fresh approach and we, as creatives, are those best equipped to respond in clever and innovative ways.

If you have the nerve and the determination, you can succeed. Do it! Fill the gaps created by the coronavirus to launch your business, sell your brand and reinvent yourself! The world needs you more than ever!

Emma Hyman

Creative Director, Tiny House Productions, London

tinyhouseproductions.co.uk

When you're starting out in business, especially if you're working solo, it can be easy to look to others and measure every step of your journey against theirs.

The problem here, is that just because someone looks successful, doesn't mean they are.

So, while the grass might appear greener, their house might be falling apart.

It's better to look inwards and take notice of your strengths, weaknesses, and take time to develop your own voice and your own way of helping others. This'll help you develop the confidence to do things your way and find comfort in your version of success.

Ali Strachan

Arts Advocate, Brisbane

alistrachan.com

DEVELOP YOUR OWN VOICE

Ali's built the kind of business I'm striving for.
She helps artists articulate what they do better
to sell more and make a bigger impact.

PASSION SPEAKS VOLUMES

Sarah and I had our first babies at the same time. She's built her granola business while having four young children. I love her irreverent sense of humour; she has passion by the bucketload.

Don't start a business unless you're truly passionate about the product or service you intend to sell. Passion speaks volumes and when you believe in your product, it is easy for others to do the same. When the going gets tough (which it will), you'll need to draw on that passion over and over again to keep the cogs turning.

Sarah Hosking

Founder Ted and Mem's Granola, Geelong

tedandmems.com.au

How creative women reset, refresh and carry on

Always remember the reason why you started your business. This helps you course-correct when things get hard or when new opportunities come your way. This central motivating force of the reason you chose this life will help you say ‘yes’ when you need to and ‘no’ when projects are not the right fit. Understanding this deep-seated need inside of you will not save you from making mistakes, but it will make it easier to understand what went wrong when you do. On the other hand, wins become so much sweeter because you can see how you are moving closer to your vision!

Megan Davis

Lead Storyteller, Spendlove and Lamb, Melbourne

spendloveandlamb.com

REMEMBER WHY YOU STARTED

In 2012 Megan helped me establish The School of Life, a philosophy school pop up. She's since built a storytelling business with a focus on design thinking.

BE CREATIVE. BE BOLD

Lauretta has more than thirty years of experience working in museums and a deep supply of wisdom.

How creative women reset, refresh and carry on

Seize opportunity when it comes your way. Jump into the deep end to really put your skills and talents to the test. Mistakes will be made and the learning a challenge: if nothing is ventured, nothing will ever be gained.

Clarity of vision. Keep your goals in sight, particularly when the hurdles loom, as they inevitably will. Trust your instincts, believe in yourself.

Think outside the box. Be creative, be bold.

Heed the lessons of history. There is wisdom in knowing and understanding what has gone before, particularly when seeking enlightened approaches to pave the way for the future.

Maintain a sense of humour. There's nothing like a good belly laugh at the end of the day to reset your heart, mind and soul for tomorrow.

Lauretta Zilles

Museum Curator and Consultant, Regional Victoria

budacastlemaine.org

When starting a new venture, make sure you've done your homework. Clarify your core values. They're your unique guidelines that will help you along the path to your vision.

Even without knowing, you've already used them to decide to launch your business in the first place. They're a part of you, the not-always-conscious you, rather than a to-do list or a roadmap that's laid out by someone else.

Values point your compass to your next steps. They define what you'll defend and what you'll promote. They identify what brings you joy, and will give you resilience in difficult times. They're your personal framework in life and business.

Your values carry you through every decision, every busy day. They save you time and reduce your stress.

During stormy times, your values provide a steady hand on the rudder. They'll always be there.

Susan Ordway

Personal and Leadership Coach, San Francisco

Susanordway.com

CLARIFY YOUR CORE VALUES

Susan helps women lead personal and professional lives that align with their values.

MINDSET



SPEAK BOLDLY

Laura's a woman who doesn't underplay her talents. Her energy is refreshing. By liberating herself she helps other people to communicate more clearly.

Own your talent. I am a Pitching Goddess. Loglines are my superpower. These things are true, but it is also true that it is uncomfortable to say something so uncompromising, so direct.

We have been taught that speaking boldly is arrogance. We believe that when we do outstanding work over and over and over again, eventually someone will notice it and reward us without our having to point it out. And so we remain hopeful and quiet and small.

Screw that.

Having the courage to shine the spotlight on your talent and accomplishments allows those who are scrambling in the dark, who are desperate for your light, to actually find you. What are you the Goddess of? What is your superpower? Own your strengths. Speak boldly. Change the world.

Laura Brennan

Pitching Consultant, Los Angeles

PitchingPerfectly.com

For every decision you make, for every action you do or don't take, ask yourself: Is this coming from a place of love, or from a place of fear? If you notice that it's fear either stopping you or keeping you going, take some time to reset. What would be the love-based way forward?

Gloria Eid

Life and Leadership Coach, Vancouver

gloriaeid.com

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TAKE SOME TIME TO RESET

Gloria dropped out of working in higher education to pursue a love of life! Since then she's become a coach and writer.

BE PREPARED TO WEATHER A FEW STORMS

Kate and I are connected through The Clever Copywriting Community. She's funny, open and always willing to share honest advice.

Having the freedom to be your own boss is mighty addictive. It takes time to build the right mindset and confidence, but it's oh-so-worth it. I've been patient and accepted that growth will be slow, which worked perfectly while I had my three munchkins underfoot. Now they're older, I've embraced my niche, established processes and built up a network of clients. Of course, coronavirus was a setback but in business you need to be prepared to weather a few storms. My focus for 2020 is visibility, so I've invested in marketing on social media. I've even mustered the courage to film videos (I hate watching them back, but I post them anyway). It's all about showing up to make a name for myself as an expert in small business blogging. I still love what I do, which helps!

Kate Merryweather

Copywriter, Dot Com Words, Melbourne

dotcomwords.com.au

‘If you’re good at what you do, the work will always come.’
This piece of advice was given to me many years ago, and it is something I still cherish. It’s helpful for moments of self-doubt, and perfect for other moments when you are building your business, and things are a little quiet. Never forget that running a creative business is hard, but you’re doing a brilliant job!

Annie Reid

Founder, Atrium Media, Melbourne

atrium.media

THE WORK WILL
ALWAYS COME

Annie Reid is a delightfully thoughtful journalist, copywriter and published author with a passion for design. We were introduced through The Clever Copywriter Community. She was also the kind proof reader of this book.

ADAPT AND CHANGE

Krysia and I were flatmates long ago in London. She has produced documentaries in London and Canberra, launched a rooftop cinema in Manila and run a dance school in Kuwait. Her ability to adapt is truly impressive.

How creative women reset, refresh and carry on

For 11 years, I have followed my diplomat partner from Europe to Australia, to South East Asia and the Middle East.

Forging my career in each new country hasn't been smooth running. But it has uncovered new opportunities and broadened my horizons.

I've become resilient, adaptive and determined. My early years in traditional print media have stood me in great stead.

Now, living through a global pandemic, I'm having to change again, but I'm ready. Digging deep and relying on my skills helps me to keep going and growing.

Don't be afraid to adapt and change. This life is long and you can follow many paths. You'll need to harness your inner hustler, but that can be fun as well as daunting. Go for it!

Krysia Derecki

Producer, Creative Content and Podcaster, Kuwait

[linkedin.com/in/krysia-d-create](https://www.linkedin.com/in/krysia-d-create)

Having worked in large corporates and teams for most of my career, it's been challenging and a little lonely at times to be in my own creative company of one.

I've had to stop and lovingly remind myself of all the things I'm great at. Not in a big-headed kinda way, but to re-centre myself and know deep in my bones that I have a number of qualities that I wish to share with the world and to play to those strengths.

At times, I've wondered whether I am enough. Should I be compensating for gaps, how do I stack up and compare to others? Now when I hear a 'should', I stop, take a deep breath and remember all that I have to offer and believe that my unique, quirky, glorious self is exactly what the right clients are looking for. Advice that is working out just fine.

Fiona Wright

Strategic Thinker & Human Centred Designer, Melbourne

hellofionawright.com

PLAY TO YOUR STRENGTHS

Fiona's a former BBC TV producer turned human centred designer. She's the most delightful human, whip smart and intuitive.

YOU ARE MORE THAN YOUR WORK

Vicky and I became close at university when we studied broadcasting in the 90s! She's had a stellar career in factual television, rising quickly through the ranks and always having great commercial instincts.

It's easy to feel your identity is wrapped up in your work. And then, if work goes quiet, to feel a loss of self.

For 23 years I've been the major breadwinner. Now I find myself, for the first time ever, unemployed.

Regardless of this being pandemic-related, it can still chip away at my confidence. I've realised that there's no female version of the word emasculated (go figure). But if there was, that's how I feel.

And yet. It hasn't brought me to my knees. Far from it. Because outside of work, I'm a wife, mother, daughter, sister, friend and synagogue chairperson. I contribute to society and am valued by the people in my life.

If things don't go to plan, remember that work is one aspect of you and there's so much more to you.

Vicky Hamburger

TV Executive, London

[linkedin.com/in/vickyhamburger](https://www.linkedin.com/in/vickyhamburger)

I'm a casting director. And I love that my business means I get to use my creative and technical skills to my full potential.

My passion pushes me to keep going during hard times or when deadlines seem impossible.

After 11 years of running my business, I still have a huge hunger for it. I hope to pass on my work ethic to my daughters.

A few tips I live by:

1. Keep your eyes on the prize. The end result will be worth the blood, sweat and tears.
2. Fake it until you make it. And when you make it, keep on faking it! You'll never feel you're 'there'.
3. Impossible is possible. Just delete the IM.
4. Believe in yourself, your team and what you do.
5. Network and get involved in industry events.
6. Have a (good) life outside of your work.

Good luck!

Daniella Friedman

Casting Director and Owner of Chameleon Casting, Melbourne

chameleon.net.au

IT'S WORTH IT

Daniella and I met through our young daughters and keep each other inspired by ideas and culture, whenever life allows!

LISTEN TO THE VOICE THAT SAYS YOU CAN

How creative women reset, refresh and carry on

Stop focussing on that self-sabotaging voice that says you can't do it and start listening to the voice that says you can.

It takes a positive mindset to start a business but mostly you'll learn by doing.

Each time you do something new you'll grow in self-belief.

Your customers will steer you in the right direction.

Learn what you need to do to serve them better.

Push yourself over metaphorical cliffs. Celebrate small wins.

Do what it takes to get a little braver each day.

Your voice can make a difference.

Sara Tiefenbrun

Writer, Storyteller and Content Strategist, Melbourne

saratiefenbrun.com



CREATIVE PRACTICE

FALL IN LOVE WITH THE PROCESS

Savi and I connected through the Akimbo Creatives Workshop. She's built an engaged community around her work. I admire her calmness and ability to keep everything in perspective.

Fall in love with the process of creation.

The results are not always desirable or in your control, but the process can be joyful.

That joy is what makes it worthwhile and inspires a willingness to try again and again.

Savitha Enner

Yoga Teacher, Cook and Community Builder, Baltimore, Maryland.

savithaenner.com

How creative women reset, refresh and carry on

I hope and pray that today you will choose freedom – to surrender and tear down who you think you are, to rediscover who you really are... who you were always meant to be!

Nicole Colter

Creative Evangelist, Connecticut

nicolecolter.com

CHOOSE FREEDOM

Nicole is a creative facilitator and a driving force behind the Create Your Own School Movement. She helps people recognise, articulate and achieve their ambitions, by freeing them from self-imposed constraints.

TAKE CHANCES

Dottie's a devoted landscape artist and teacher and all round wonderful human. Her work centres around the marshes of Savannah Georgia.

How creative women reset, refresh and carry on

Just say yes. Take chances. Every possibility offers a way to grow and quite possibly move you in a different direction. Do all the things that you don't feel you are ready for. Don't play it safe. Leap, especially when there is no net.

Dottie Leatherwood

Artist and Teacher, Savannah, Georgia

dottieleatherwood.com

See the waves roll in. Feel the rhythm.
Get ready to jump in.

Trust your in-built intelligence. Watch as the
momentum builds.

Some will go far, some you choose to let pass.

Catch your wave. You'll grow from each surge.

If you get caught in the undercurrent,
know you will rise.

Catch your breath. Take a leap and ride
your next wave.

Lisa Degen

Marketing Director & Consultant Melbourne

[linkedin.com/in/lisa-degen/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/lisa-degen/)

CATCH YOUR NEXT WAVE

Lisa is the Marketing Director at an agency
and growing her own consultancy. We share
conversations about our latest inspiration.
Lisa's been a big supporter of this e-book project.

LET IT GO

Dalit is a brilliant ideas person. Once a lawyer, now a writer, storytelling coach and podcast producer for changemakers. She's also an Impact Investor with Just World Investments.

As a creative, I have lots of ideas.

I have ideas in the shower, when I'm cleaning porridge off the floor, when I'm responding to emails, when I'm working on another idea...

There is no shortage of ideas. And they all seem good at the time.

But here's the problem: I can only work on one idea at a time. The rest have to be left on the proverbial shelf. I've always found it kind of painful, until someone gave me the following advice:

"Have many small funerals."

Yes, give that idea a funeral. Write the new idea down. Honour it. Grieve it. And then let it go.

If it's a really, really good idea, it will haunt me until eventually I resurrect it and put it into action.

And it will be brilliant.

Dalit Kaplan

Founder of Storywell and Impact Investor, Melbourne

[Storywell.com.au](https://storywell.com.au)

Get a notebook that feels good to write and draw in.
One that's a good size, that will fit your lifestyle.

Take it wherever you go. Live with it. Sleep with it.
Feed it daily with your ideas. Nurture the relationship you
have. Whatever you need to do to become best friends.

So, on the days when you feel confused or stuck you can
go back and look through it. Sometimes your notebook
is the only one that understands what's going on.

Jennifer Smith
Artist, Cleveland

jennifersmith.art

NURTURE THE RELATIONSHIP

Jennifer experiments with plants to create non-toxic dyes. Her art is an exploration of homemade plant based dyes and how they interact with paper. Recently she's started writing poems to accompany her organic and textured art.

B.I.C.

Karen is a published author of fiction and graphic designer. Her next book 'Miss Hall's Last Costume' examines themes of morality and longevity with warmth and dark wit. It'll be released in 2021.

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B.I.C. stands for Butt In Chair, the formula for forward momentum in your creative practice.

Okay, maybe you stand, dance, or walk around with a camera or a toolbox, but whatever it is you have to put in the time. Your creative work is your job – your real job, your dream job — so show up, even if its B.I.C. for just half an hour. Even if it feels like nothing is happening.

Start with two days per week. You will soon want three, then aim for four. Patiently remove obstacles and add more time. Find a rhythm. Once you're B.I.C. six days per week, relax. As one of my teachers once reminded me, in the Judeo-Christian tradition even God rested on the Sabbath.

Karen Engelmann

Author and Graphic Designer, New York.

karenengelmann.com

PROCESSES



ASK QUESTIONS

Jan's a content marketer and supporter of women sharing their stories. She runs a PR business and has recently launched a media research business.

First, ask questions. If something doesn't make sense to you, chances are — it doesn't make sense.

Trust your gut. Second, get started on your business. If you have a 'real job,' start a side gig. You don't have to have it all figured out. Figure out a way to take the first step.

Then, keep at it. Chances are things won't come together automatically or easily. For me, the middle is the hardest part. After a couple of obstacles, quitting is easy. Keep at it.

Most successful people I know just kept doing it.

Jan Risher

Risher Media, Louisiana

rishermedia.com

If I'd have known the hours worked, paths mistaken and challenges of the journey, I would never have started. Have an eye to the future, but just set off. Don't spend too long planning the trip.

Lockdown taught me patience. The madness of lockdown domestic family chaos and its impact on my working hours has helped me manage expectations of mine and my team's workload. We are all going slow. If the email goes tomorrow rather than today, it's OK.

Without the time to do so, I'm not breathing down my team's necks and not micro-managing. Patience has made me a better boss. It has given them more time to grow and make mistakes and given me more time to research, think and create the work.

Josephine Burton

Chief Executive & Artistic Director, Dash Arts, London

dasharts.org.uk

DON'T SPEND TOO LONG PLANNING

I've known Josephine for 20 something years. An arts producer and deep thinker, the organisation she leads bridges cultural divides through theatre and events.

FOLLOW THROUGH

Danielle Certo is the multi-talented founder of Second Nature Creative and the brains behind Creative Fare a resource for overworked creatives (going live in 2021). Look out for it, it's going to be great.

How creative women reset, refresh and carry on

Bring your best self into the business – from healthy boundaries, to thoughtful and unexpected client check-ins. Be the kind of person you'd want to work with.

Instil your values in client communication early on. Are you always available? Do you let your customers determine your schedule? One day you'll look back and realise the small actions you've taken overtime have a massive impact on your working relationships and wellbeing.

Accept that you can't control how your client or customer behaves, but you can be fully responsible for yourself and your next move.

And most important of all, follow through on what you say you'll do.

Danielle Certo

Founder, Second Nature Creative & Creative Fare, Orlando, Florida

creative-fare.com

Start small! Even if you have a big idea, the only way to stay sane is to break the concept down into small parts that you can execute consistently.

Also, prioritise what matters most to you - you can't be or do all things - and focus your best mental hours on those tasks.

Lastly, if you find yourself not enjoying most of what you are doing, reconsider if this idea or business is worth pursuing as is.

You don't have to love every aspect of running a business, but if you borderline hate what you are doing every day and aren't excited to tackle some part of your work, it may be time to reassess what needs to change.

Victoria Hefty

Career Mixologist, Philadelphia

careermixology.com

BREAK THE CONCEPT DOWN

Victoria and I connected through the Akimbo Story Skills Workshop. She has a natural and powerful ability to tell stories and connect with emotion as well as strategic nous.

SORT THE WHEAT FROM THE CHAFF

Katie's an awesomely funny individual thinker with a long marketing career. Katie took over her family business, along with her husband, when her father died. In the process she gained a huge amount of experience. Since selling that business she's begun her own consultancy.

Never give in to the temptation to take on every client who crosses your path - make sure that you give your time and energy to individuals and businesses who 'get it'. Developing a brief together is often the best way to sort the wheat from the chaff in the beginning, but you then develop instincts for the process and can make choices much more quickly as time goes on. In this and other areas of a woman's life, "no" is always an available option!

Katie Russo

Marketing Consultant, Melbourne

katierusso.com.au

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When I ventured into the world of self-employment sixteen years ago, I didn't know exactly what I wanted my business to become. I was somewhat aware of my strengths. And I had a rough idea of the kind of work I enjoyed. But I didn't want this lack of clarity to hold me back. So I just focused on getting myself 'out there' – saying yes to whatever opportunities came my way. It wasn't until many years later that I was able to refine my service offerings and business model. And it was all thanks to the countless right and wrong turns I made along the way.

So my advice? Don't pressure yourself to define your vision from the get-go. It could slow you down or even immobilise you. Just get out there and see what happens.

Discover what drives you. Learn the lessons. Make the mistakes. And above all, keep going.

Vikki Maver

Copywriter & Content Strategist & Director Refresh Marketing, Melbourne

refreshmarketing.com.au

JUST GET
OUT THERE

Vikki established her own business sixteen years ago and delivers writing skills training as well as copywriting. She's hugely successful and inspiring. She also happens to be my sister-in-law.

MAKE SOMETHING. THEN START SELLING IT

Tanya's an SEO copywriter and a kindred spirit.
We share a love of powerful storytelling.

Start by taking action. Make something to sell, then start selling it. You can test and refine later. It's easy to get caught up in the planning and preparation stages. If you wait until the time is right, the perfect thing is built and whatever life circumstances fall into line to be ready, you'll never make the move.

Tanya Abdul Jalil

Melbourne Education Writer, Melbourne

melbourneducationwriter.com

You don't have to work it out, fit it in or compromise on something else because you're not sure where your next job will come from.

If you're not sure, say it out loud. Feel the 'no' and you'll know if it's right. Better to leave some space for something that will make you want to shout 'yes' without hesitation.

Katrina Kelly

Marketing Consultant, Melbourne

www.eofe.com.au

**SAY NO AS OFTEN
AS YOU SAY YES**

Katrina and I met during the pandemic. She's a brilliant strategic marketer with a great sense of humour.

IT'S A LONG GAME

Susannah's an incredibly smart and principled documentary maker and old friend. She's worked all over the world and produced many award-winning films.

How creative women reset, refresh and carry on

As a producer, I can become overwhelmed with ideas. When I do, I stop and write every project, concept or seed of an idea on one piece of paper. I sum up each idea in one word. And then I look at them all and compare them. I ask, 'Is the world clamouring out for this? Does the world really need this?'. This helps me interrogate which are strong and which are weak. Then I scrap a third of them. It clears the mind.

I set up my own business with a friend just three weeks before the coronavirus hit. Timing! When I'm feeling dispirited, I remind myself of all the people I admire who only became successful later in life. And that it's a long game. I know when I look back I'll regret not enjoying the process more.

Susannah Price

Executive Producer and Owner, Sand Paper Films, London

sandpaperfilms.com

A close-up photograph of a person's legs and hands. The person is sitting or lying down on a patterned rug. Their legs are crossed at the ankles, and their hands are resting on their knees. A digital wristwatch with a metal link band is visible on the left wrist. The background is a blurred interior space with a window letting in natural light.

SELF CARE

TRUST YOURSELF

Naomi is a purpose-driven female founder on a mission to reduce waste. We work together on her business, RePlated, which brings Australian-made recycled reusable containers to takeaway food.

How creative women reset, refresh and carry on

Trust yourself. Be authentic. The hardest thing to do at the beginning is to keep going. There are always setbacks and lows and we tend to focus on those rather than celebrating the wins. I've been focussing on kind self-talk and support, alongside all that (necessary) critical thinking.

Also, getting comfortable selling is critical. When I learnt how to 'sell' what I do in a way that felt authentic and sat with my values - it changed everything.

Naomi Tarszisz

Founder, RePlated, Sydney

replated.co

The most important thing to do when starting your own business or creative endeavour is to back yourself 100%.

Don't downplay what you are doing to yourself or to others. Something that took me a while to realise was that hours clocked doesn't equal the quality of outcome. Sometimes doing less is more. Don't burn yourself out because that's what you think you need to do in order to succeed.

Jess Sanders

Author & Social Worker, Melbourne

re-shape.info

DON'T BURN
YOURSELF OUT

Jess is a social impact entrepreneur. She has published three books and is an advocate for body acceptance, gender equality and supporting young people's mental health.

FEELING BLUE? SEEK GREEN

Rebecca's a marketer and a former broadcaster like me.
And she also hosts an ABC Victoria Radio show as the
permaculture correspondent, Mrs Broccoli.

Feeling blue? Seek green.

Nature has all the answers and she's only one step away.

Rebecca Norman

Marketing Consultant and Permaculture Advocate, Mrs Broccoli.

Instagram @mrsbroccoli.com.au

How creative women reset, refresh and carry on

Despite what many say, there are no shortcuts to creating a business. As a creative, how I feel about my business matters most. Following traditional business advice only led me to build a business that depleted all my creativity and energy. I've now learned to trust myself and design my business to honour my intuition, creativity and sensitive needs. I believe your business will awaken you to the things you are ready to know or change about yourself. Let it lead you on a wayward path to becoming your best self. The rest will magically sort itself out when you feel good and love your work and business. Find people who honour and support your choices and needs. Don't be steered in a different direction that doesn't feel good for you. The world needs more people like you to do business differently.

Kim Banks

Micro Business Coach for Women, Vancouver

kimbanks.com

DO BUSINESS DIFFERENTLY

Kim and I met on the Akimbo Creatives Workshop and found our world views aligned. Kim helps women define success on their own terms.

JUST BEGIN

Sarah's a former news executive at CNN, She has extensive experience in conflict zones and a bunch of awards under her belt. She recently moved into fiction. Her first novel, *The Source*, will be published by Orenda Books in April 2021 and is in development as a television drama.

As a writer, champagne is always in the fridge door.

You never know when to get it out and celebrate. There's always more to do.

Finished your first draft? Now edit it. Done that? Now edit it again. Finished? Now submit it. What next? Start another idea. Stuck? Kill your darlings and start again.

Learn to mark moments of achievement. They will spur you on.

And believe in the power of failure.

You'll only succeed when you accept you can fail.

So don't prepare. Just begin.

Sarah Sultoon

Journalist and Writer, London

www.rcwlitagency.com/authors/sarah-sultoon

Remember, discipline brings freedom. You can do anything, not everything.

Rituals create rhythm. Give yourself space to breathe and reconnect with your soul when it's overwhelming. It will be.

Enjoy the adventure.

Neha Swaminathan

Creator of Little Zen Rebels, London

[Instagram @littlezenrebels](#)

RITUALS CREATE RHYTHM

Neha is a mindful mum who creates products to help children rebalance and calm themselves.

BELIEVE IN YOURSELF

Hollie and I met at an event, when I began my own business and she was launching a podcast and new direction as a productivity coach. We've offered each other support since we met.

How creative women reset, refresh and carry on

Business is not linear, especially that of a creative business. You will encounter many 'failures' as a creative business owner, but they aren't failures. They're lessons. You'll sit down and analyse what and how something can be improved, and you will try again. And again. And so on and so forth until you find that perfect formula. Give yourself time, grace, compassion and understanding. Treat yourself with the same kindness and enthusiasm you would a baby developing new skills, like walking. Remember, a baby crawls before it can walk. Be open to new relationships and collaborations, but do exercise caution. Make sure it is beneficial for all involved. Build friendships with these people, for they will likely be some of your biggest supporters. Finally, believe in yourself. You are doing great things.

Hollie Barac

Productivity Coach, Mayday VA, Melbourne

maydayva.com.au



COMMUNITY

IT'LL BE LONELY AT TIMES

Elise is a mindful leader. She's not only written a book, she's also built a global movement. Mindful in May is an annual meditation challenge that also fundraises for charity to bring clean water to developing countries. Elise is unstoppable!

How creative women reset, refresh and carry on

You'll feel like giving up. Don't. It's part of the journey.

Turning your ideas into reality is hard work. Making that reality financially viable is even harder.

You'll be confused. It'll be lonely at times. You'll feel like there's an elusive magic golden key that could solve all your dilemmas if only you could find it.

You'll doubt what you're doing and feel like you should quit. This isn't personal, it's part of the entrepreneurial landscape.

Make friends with these big feelings. Find a community of like-minded business friends to support you through the challenges. Get a mentor or coach. And keep taking steps forward.

There's nothing as invigorating as carving out your own meaningful path.

Elise Bialylew

Author of The Happiness Plan & Creator of Mindful in May, Melbourne

mindfulinmay.org

Start before waiting to figure things out. There is no such thing as perfection and you will learn as you go.

Surround yourself with encouragers, a support group that has your back, reminds you of boundaries, and the importance of me-time.

Mostly, during difficult days, remember why you started in the first place. Add your purpose to your vision board, for you to keep going, no matter what.

I have learned the most about my business, people and life when things didn't come easy, and growth is what we should all aspire to even when it is not so comfortable stepping out of our comfort zone. You are as strong as you are vulnerable. And you always do the best you can.

Marie Nadal Sharma

Founder, Them You & Me Digital, Melbourne

theyouandme.com

LEARN AS YOU GO

Marie oozes positive energy. She runs an international creative agency that demystifies digital marketing. She started the business in Singapore and moved to Melbourne last year.

STAY CONNECTED

Elise is a brilliant playwright, intuitive observer
and close friend.

I am not a planner. When I write, create, I go in blind, and am guided by instinct. When I reflect on the last twenty-odd years of my life as a creative, it reads back to me like my writing process, never knowing how one job will lead to the next, but somehow, sure enough, it does.

And while writing can be solitary, it is so important to stay connected, and find your support systems, whether that be family, a writing group, a cohort of actors, directors and dramaturges or a really good friend. Because if you're like me, at one point or another, you will need a plan, or at least the idea of one (which you can always throw out the window!).

Elise Esther Hearst

Playwright, Writer and Storyteller

elisehearst.me

When I started as a copywriter, I was five months pregnant and I had no clue about running a business. Although I'd written copy in an agency, it was different.

And suddenly I had to write copy but also find the clients, manage bookkeeping, advertise, market, create processes and deal with dozens of tricky situations.

So, I found 15 willing copywriters on Twitter and asked them to join my little Google group.

And they saved me.

I learned about deposits and debt collection. About boundaries, and budgets. About skills and stress management.

I also got a lot of support, love, education, reassurance and laughs. (This community grew into The Clever Copywriting School).

My advice? Find a gang of creatives to hang with.

Yes, they're your competitors, but they also 100% get what you do.

And there's always plenty of work to go around.

Other creative humans will refresh, reenergise and save you in your darkest times.

Kate Toon

Founder, Stay Tooned, Sydney

katetoon.com

FIND A GANG OF CREATIVES

Kate is the charismatic and quirky brain behind The Clever Copywriting School, Digital Masterchefs, the Recipe for SEO Success and more. Her courses, products and groups are invaluable and also bring many people together. On top of it all, she's hugely entertaining.

PLAY

Erin launched her business, Totem Candles during the pandemic, when she lost her job. It's now her beloved side project to her day job where she runs a global team for a major brand. Totem is not only a candle business, it's also a content business, making statements that draw women together.

Play. Knock it down. And play some more.

You don't have to figure out everything in the beginning. In fact, you may find that by doing and seeing what sticks, your strategy and your why will become more clear to you.

Have supporters. I think we all need a CSO (Chief Spiritual Officer). Because there will be times you may want to give up or you may lose motivation and this is when your CSO or your trusted friend will step in to keep you moving forward.

Erin Chonko

Co-founder, Totem Candles Seattle

[@totemcandles](#)

How creative women reset, refresh and carry on

DEEPWELL

How creative women reset, refresh and carry on

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