

PROSPERITY | FREEDOM | PURPOSE

# LEAD

*Why Am I  
So Driven?*

MIKE HANDCOCK

*A Legacy of Art,  
Innovation,  
and Heritage*

**SIMPLICIO  
MICHAEL LUIS**



WHEN MAKING A DIFFERENCE IS AS IMPORTANT AS MAKING A PROFIT

*Bold Leadership*

DOMITILLE KIGER

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Grow Global*

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**W**elcome to the 8th Edition of our global LEAD Magazine where we dive into the transformative power of self-leadership. In our current geopolitical environment it's become the norm to direct our focus outwards, rather taking the journey within.

In this edition, we aim to inspire you with real life stories and rockstar mindsets from entrepreneurs and creatives who refuse to bow to challenging circumstances, and rather bend the environment to their will.

Our cover feature, "M" stands out, as the cool dude we met in Malaysia a couple of years ago. Read how his personal philosophies on life, and his unique essence led him to disrupt the fashion industry and rub shoulders with hip hop moguls like The Black Eyed Peas, and a many other A-listers.

Get bold and brave with our world-champion skydiver, Domitille Kiger, who illustrates how our daily fears can be canalised into the the most amazing adventures.

In this issue, we've included many positive and inspirational real-life stories about ordinary people who uses what already exist within themselves to create extraordinary impact in this world.

If we don't take the lead in our own lives, are we equipped to judge others?

Leadership is an inside job. It's the fire within that constantly stokes. It's the privilege to go inside and reveal to the world the treasures that you find. It's the knowledge that top reviews are not from clients, but from those who live the closest to you, and are witness to the daily decisions that you make.

Take the time to read about conscious leaders who live for prosperity, freedom and purpose. May this issue inspire you to also play a bigger game.

**Landi Jac**  
*Editor In Chief*



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## FROM THE PRESIDENTS CORNER



# UPGRADING *GSF*



2025/26 is an exciting time for the Global Speakers Federation (GSF), the governing body of 17 associations covering speaking in more than 35 countries. At our first 3-day strategic summit in 10 years in Scottsdale Arizona, we decided that the focus will be on 3 core initiatives for the speaking and thought leadership worlds globally.

**Governance:** This means stronger professionalism in all of our associations, best practice and a new ethics policy that is relevant for a changing world. Our AI focus on training, our leaders library and helping associations grow and recruit, train and develop speaking professionals is paramount to our future. This includes a focus on accreditations and acknowledgements for leaders in our industry.

## 2030 & BEYOND

**Partnership:** New relationships with strategic alliances such as Universities, Tech Companies, Speaking Relevant partners in AI, Publishing, New Media and Marketing are key to us being seen as more professional, more relevant and more global.

**Advancement:** We will have a strong focus on advancing our industry reputation, our associations, onboarding new associations in new countries and regions and promoting members of associations through new recognition and opportunities in their own careers.

## GOVERN: PARTNER: ADVANCE

Our plan covers 21 new initiatives that bring the federation well into the 2nd quarter of the 21st century and positions us for immense growth, new events, more respectability and greater positioning as one of the leading industries and most relevant in the sustainability of planet earth.



**Mike Handcock**

**CSP | Global Speaking Fellow**

President: Global Speakers Federation 2025/26

# What Leader Are You?

## REACTIVE VS PROACTIVE LEADERSHIP™

**NARROW VIEW** – vs – **WIDE VIEW**  
(Vertical Mindset) (Horizontal Mindset)

**TRANSACTIONAL** – vs – **RELATIONAL**  
(Do Mindset) (Who Mindset)

**TRIGGER FISH** – vs – **CALM OBSERVER**  
(Automated Mindset) (Strategic Mindset)

**CALL CENTRE** – vs – **DISCERNER**  
(24/7 Mindset) (Boundaries Mindset)

**I WANT IT NOW** – vs – **GOOD THINGS COME**  
(Instant Reward Mindset) (Perseverance Mindset)

**BUSY BEE** – vs – **SMART PLANNER**  
(Fill Space Mindset) (Create Space Mindset)

**LIFE AROUND BUSINESS** – vs – **BUSINESS AROUND LIFE**  
(Scarcity Mindset) (Prosperity Mindset)

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## Transactional or Relational ...

Proactive leadership embraces a wide, relational, and strategic mindset, prioritizing long-term vision, discernment, and perseverance. Leaders create space for smart planning, align business with life, and foster prosperity. In contrast, reactive leadership adopts a narrow, transactional, and automated approach, driven by short-term urgency, constant availability, and instant rewards. Such leaders fill space with "busyness", operate from scarcity, and let life revolve around business. Proactive leaders thrive by anticipating challenges and building meaningful connections, while reactive leaders respond impulsively, often missing opportunities for sustainable growth. What sort of leader are you?



PROSPERITY

PROSPERITY



PROSPERITY

*When everything you touch turns  
into gold, uplifting the lives of those  
around you*

Written by Koketso Sylvia Milosevic

# PROPERTY PROSPERITY

KOKETSO SYLVIA MILOSEVIC'S BOLD  
BLUEPRINT FOR WEALTH

PROSPERITY



CEO | Entrepreneur | Investor | Property Developer | Property Mentor | TV Presenter | Author

**K**oketso Sylvia Milosevic is a dynamic financial transformation speaker, entrepreneur, and property expert, known for her inspiring seminars and as a former co-host of the popular TV show *All About Property*. As the Founder and CEO of *Riches and Beyond*, a leading property investment company in South Africa, she has played a pivotal role in empowering countless individuals to achieve financial freedom through property investment.

With over 22 years of experience in property investment, Sylvia is a seasoned residential property developer, investor, author, and mentor. Her mission is to help aspiring property entrepreneurs navigate their journey toward financial independence. Her extensive background includes studies in communication and economics, project management, and entrepreneurship, coupled with practical expertise in sourcing property deals, negotiating, and managing projects.

Sylvia's passion for property investment drives her commitment to sharing her knowledge. Through her work, she teaches others how to fund property deals, raise equity, and build sustainable, scalable property businesses that can become generational legacies.

### EARLY LIFE AND OVERCOMING ADVERSITY

Success is often born out of adversity, and Sylvia's life story is a testament to that. Growing up in the township of Ga-Rankuwa, Pretoria, Sylvia faced financial hardships when her father, the sole breadwinner of the family, lost his job at BMW. This event marked a turning point, highlighting the importance of financial independence and the limitations of relying solely on a job for income.

Inspired by her mother, who independently built their family home, Sylvia developed a deep interest in property. She realized that owning property could be the key to financial freedom. After witnessing her family's struggles, Sylvia decided to take control of her financial future by learning from the best property experts both in South Africa and the UK.

Throughout her journey, Sylvia encountered many obstacles, but she never saw them as setbacks. Instead, she viewed them as opportunities to learn and grow. "I learned that adversity is not a roadblock but a stepping stone. Each setback was an opportunity to become more resourceful and resilient," Sylvia reflects. Her upbringing instilled in her the mindset that failure is not the opposite of success but an essential part of the path to success.

### THE JOURNEY TO ENTREPRENEURSHIP

At a pivotal moment in her life, Sylvia decided to confront her fears and step out of her comfort zone. For too long, she had waited for external validation before pursuing her dreams, but she realized that true greatness comes from within. Sylvia made a conscious decision to stop seeking permission to be great and instead took ownership of her potential. This mindset shift propelled her toward

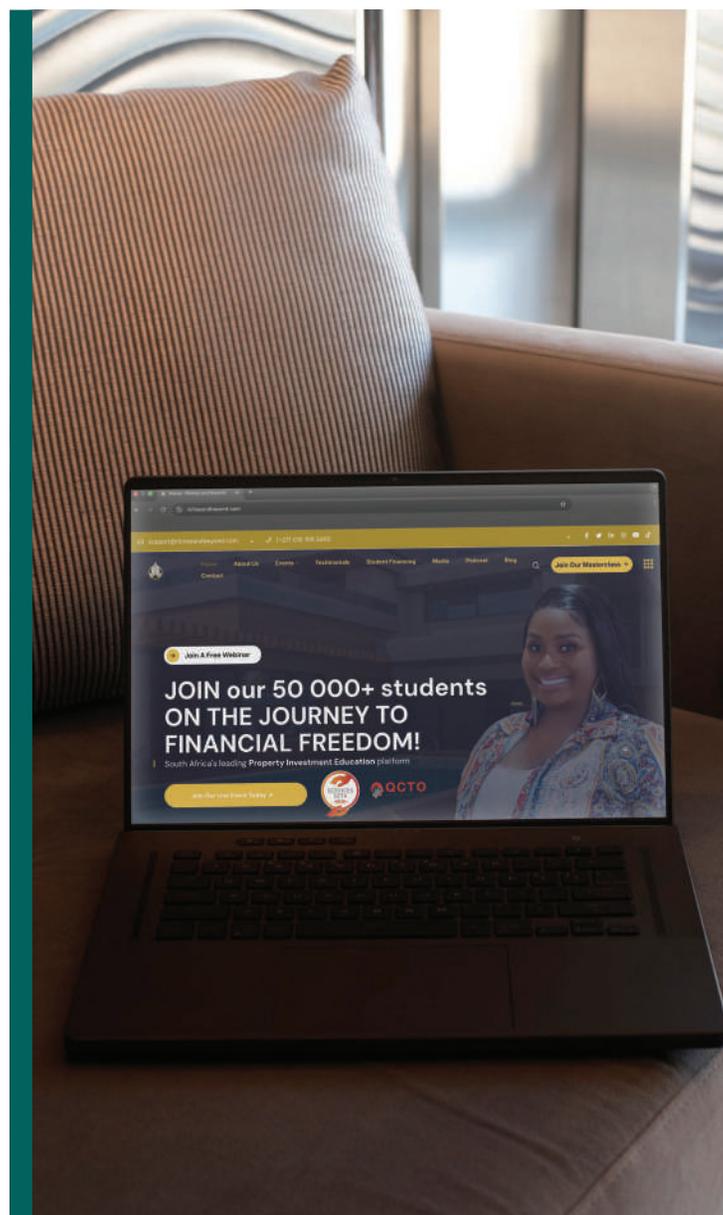
entrepreneurial success.

Her entrepreneurial journey reached a defining moment when Sylvia founded Riches and Beyond. Recognizing a gap in the market for financial education and personal development, she launched the company to help individuals gain the knowledge and tools to build sustainable wealth. Sylvia's vision was to empower others to take charge of their financial futures through practical property investment strategies.

Building Riches and Beyond was not an easy feat. Sylvia faced numerous challenges, including financial constraints, skepticism from others, and the uphill task of establishing a new brand in a competitive industry. However, her unwavering determination, coupled with her corporate experience and lessons learned from overcoming adversity, kept her focused on her goals.

### THE BIRTH OF RICHES AND BEYOND

Riches and Beyond was created with a clear mission: to bridge the gap between financial education and empowerment. Sylvia recognized that many people lacked the essential knowledge of financial principles required to build lasting wealth. She wanted to provide accessible and actionable advice for individuals at all stages of their financial journeys, from beginners to seasoned investors.



Despite the initial challenges, Sylvia's focus remained on delivering real value to her clients. She combined her expertise in property investment with her desire to teach others, creating a platform that not only focused on financial growth but also promoted personal development. The goal was clear: to help individuals build wealth through property, while also fostering personal empowerment and growth.

### OVERCOMING CHALLENGES IN BUSINESS

Like any entrepreneurial journey, Sylvia's path was filled with challenges. One of the most significant obstacles she faced was securing the necessary funding to get her business off the ground. Many investors were skeptical, uncertain about whether she could succeed in such a competitive market. Establishing credibility and trust was also an uphill battle.

Balancing the demands of growing a business while being a mother of twins added another layer of complexity. As a woman in leadership, Sylvia had to navigate the societal pressures and expectations placed on female entrepreneurs. However, rather than allowing these pressures to hold her back, Sylvia used them as fuel for her determination. She became a beacon of inspiration for other women, proving that success is possible, regardless of gender.

Another challenge was scaling Riches and Beyond as demand for financial education services grew. Sylvia had to adapt and evolve her business strategies to stay relevant in a rapidly changing landscape. From organizing live training events to pivoting to online platforms during the COVID-19 pandemic, she continually adjusted her approach to meet the needs of her clients. Sylvia also embraced the role of technology in the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR), ensuring that her business kept pace with emerging trends and innovations.

### ACHIEVEMENTS AND IMPACT

Today, Sylvia Milosevic's achievements extend far beyond her initial vision. As the CEO of Riches and Beyond, she has touched the lives of over 50,000 individuals through her mentorship programs, seminars, and training events. Her success as a property developer and investor continues to serve as an inspiration for others looking to break free from financial constraints and achieve lasting wealth.

Sylvia's impact reaches beyond business success. Through her role as a TV presenter and financial transformation speaker, she has raised awareness about the importance of financial literacy and the transformative power of property investment. She released a bestseller *Winning the Property Game*—a detailed guide that provides readers with the tools, strategies, and mindset needed to succeed in property investment. It is designed to help both beginners and more experienced investors navigate the complexities of the property market with confidence.

Her work in property mentorship has empowered aspiring

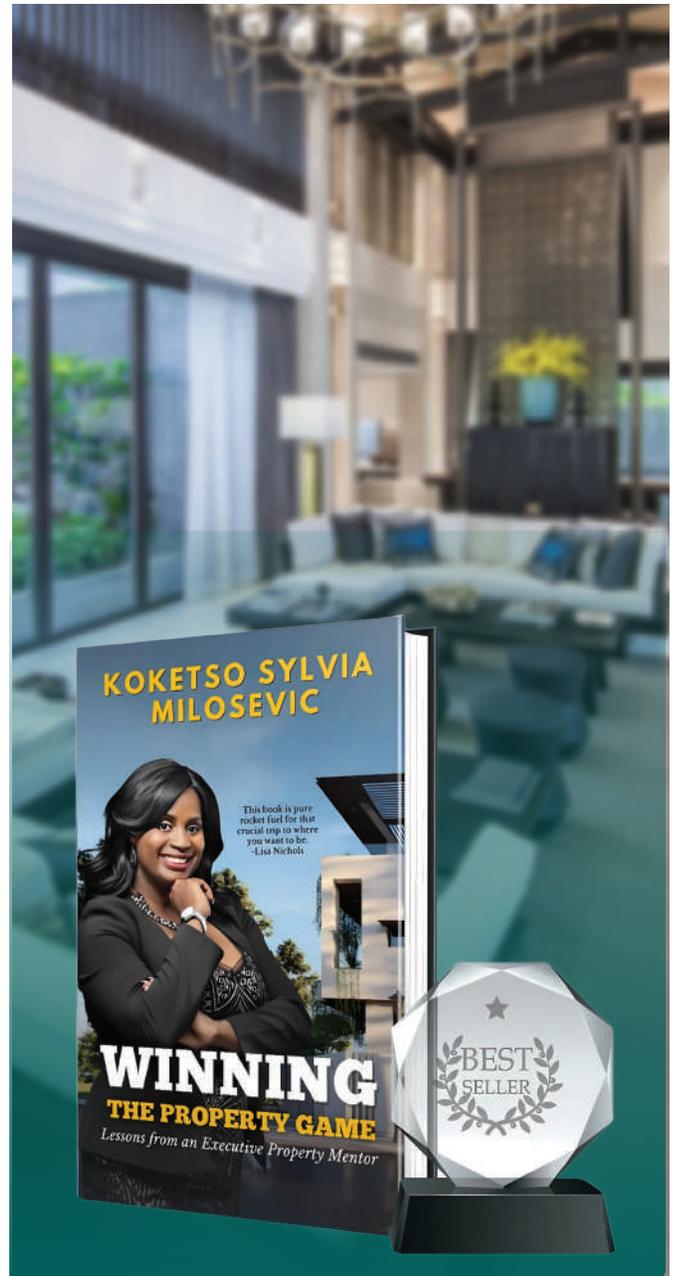
entrepreneurs to take the first steps toward financial independence, and her books and seminars provide invaluable guidance on how to create a sustainable property business.

### A LEGACY OF EMPOWERMENT AND EDUCATION

Sylvia's journey from a young girl in Ga-Rankuwa to a successful CEO and entrepreneur exemplifies the power of resilience, determination, and a growth mindset. Through her company Riches and Beyond, she continues to help people realize their potential and achieve financial freedom through property investment.

Her story is a powerful reminder that success is not reserved for a select few; it is available to anyone willing to take control of their destiny and commit to continuous learning and growth. Sylvia's legacy will undoubtedly inspire generations to come, proving that with the right mindset, mentorship, and perseverance, anything is possible.

[richesandbeyond.com](https://richesandbeyond.com)





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PROSPERITY

Written By Neeraj Shah

# HOW TOP 1% OF ENTREPRENEURS ARE USING AI

TO EXPLODE PROFITS, SLASH TIME, AND STAY RELEVANT

**W**e are witnessing the most significant technological shift in decades. Artificial Intelligence (AI) is not only transforming how we work, but it is rapidly redefining what it means to stay competitive as a business owner.

Yet while AI adoption is accelerating, many entrepreneurs remain on the sidelines—unsure of how to begin or skeptical of whether it applies to them. This hesitation is understandable, but it is also costly.

The question is no longer whether AI will affect your business. The real question is: Will you leverage it before your competitors do?

### AI IS NOT JUST FOR TECH COMPANIES

For years, entrepreneurs believed that AI was a tool reserved for Silicon Valley or Fortune 500 companies. Today, that myth is broken.

AI is now accessible, intuitive, and highly practical. Whether it's drafting sales messages, managing customer inquiries, generating LinkedIn posts, or documenting SOPs, AI can now support 60–80% of core business functions—saving time, reducing costs, and driving scale.

But tools alone don't create transformation. What separates entrepreneurs who thrive with AI from those who struggle is not intelligence.

It's not experience. It comes down to three elements: **Mindset, Skillset, and Execution.**

#### 1. The Mindset Shift: From Control to Curiosity

For most business owners, the first barrier to AI is psychological. Traditional thinking says, "I've done it this way for years." Adaptive thinking asks, "What if there's a faster or smarter way?"

The top 1% of entrepreneurs approach AI with curiosity, not fear. They don't need to understand every technical detail. They simply stay open to experimenting—testing what works and what doesn't. This small shift opens the door to exponential growth.

#### 2. The Skillset Shift: From Clicking to Prompting

You don't need to become a software developer. But you do need to know how to "talk" to AI. Prompting is now a core business skill. It means giving AI the right context, tone, and objective to get the output you want.

Simple example:

Instead of saying, "Write a blog post," you say, "Write a 500-word blog post in my voice for B2B coaches, highlighting three trends in personal branding on LinkedIn." The clearer your instructions, the better your results.

Today's entrepreneurs must learn to prompt, combine



tools, and build AI workflows that reflect their business voice and goals.

#### 3. The Execution Shift: From Planning to Action

The greatest myth in AI is that you need a perfect system to begin. In reality, progress comes from small, consistent wins. I recommend a simple 3-phase roadmap that I use with my clients in Titan AI:

### THE 180-DAY ROADMAP TO INTEGRATE AI INTO YOUR BUSINESS

#### Phase 1: Awareness (Days 1–30)

Start by identifying one task that drains your time or energy. Choose a simple AI tool—such as ChatGPT—and block one hour each week to test use cases.

#### Phase 2: Application (Days 31–90)

Build one repeatable AI workflow. Examples include:

- Weekly social media content
- Email follow-ups to inbound leads
- FAQ-style customer support messages

Refine the system, teach the AI your voice, and measure ROI in time saved or leads generated.

#### Phase 3: Automation (Days 91–180)

By this stage, you'll be ready to expand. Roll out 2–3 AI systems across sales, support, or marketing. Assign a team member to manage your "AI stack" and review results monthly. This way, AI is no longer an experiment—it becomes a functioning layer of your business infrastructure.



### WHERE AI DELIVERS THE FASTEST WINS

In my experience working with 650+ founders, these four areas deliver the highest impact from AI adoption:

#### 1. Marketing and Content Creation

AI tools can write LinkedIn posts, blogs, email campaigns, and repurpose video content— all in your tone.

#### 2. Lead Generation

Automate your outreach messages, follow-ups, and segmentation. One founder I work with closed \$80K in deals by speeding up response time using AI.

#### 3. Customer Support

Deploy chat assistants to answer common queries instantly. Your clients get faster replies. Your team stays focused.

#### 4. Operations and Documentation

Turn meeting notes into action items, voice memos into SOPs, and recurring workflows into automated tasks.

### FINAL THOUGHT: RELEVANCE IS THE REAL ROI

The world is changing fast. Those who delay risk falling behind—not because they're less talented, but because they're unwilling to adapt.

AI is no longer about getting ahead. It's about staying in the game. You don't need to be the first. But you do need to be

bold enough to start. Shift your mindset. Learn the skillset. Take small, consistent action. Because the entrepreneurs who move now aren't just saving time. They're building businesses that scale faster, lead smarter, and stay forever relevant.



Neeraj Shah is the creator of Titan AI and Unlock LinkedIn with AI — two global programs helping entrepreneurs scale using AI while saving 20+ hours a week. He has worked with over 650 founders and was a keynote speaker at a global Generative AI conference.  
[neerajshah.me](https://neerajshah.me)



10

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Written by Mitchell Pham

# FROM REFUGEE TO REMARKABLE LEADER

## | *Mitchell Pham's Journey to Prosperity*

**2025 is an auspicious year for Mitchell Khoa Dang Pham, a Vietnamese-Kiwi who has been leading for over three decades in both New Zealand and Vietnam, as he celebrates his 40th anniversary of arriving in NZ, 'fresh-off-the-boat', from Pulau Galang refugee camp in Indonesia.**

Today, Mitchell is recognised as one of the country's top technology innovators, business entrepreneurs, government advisers and industry leaders - a unique leader who can build business, develop industry, influence government and impact policy, and a prolific relationship builder between NZ and Asia.

To understand how he got here, and why, we follow Mitchell on his recent trip to revisit the former refugee camp, where he reconnected deeply with his personal

history and reflected on how that shaped his leadership journey and vision for the future.

### PERSONAL JOURNEY

Arriving at the former camp site that now serves as a museum, Mitchell remembered his early years. His parents, he and two younger siblings attempted but failed to escape Vietnam when he was 8 and 10 years old. Both times, the family was arrested and imprisoned in makeshift/ concentration-style camps for long durations.

The third time, at age 12, Mitchell successfully escaped but without his parents and siblings. He survived several near-death ordeals on the South China Sea on a small wooden boat, was eventually rescued, and then endured two gruelling years in four refugee camps in Indonesia.

Through such experiences of trial-by-fire, Mitchell learned very early many leadership lessons that empowered him and those he later coached as leaders for life, including:

1. Life is not only precious, but it can also be brief, so... live every day to our fullest potential.
2. Leaders don't always have perfect information to make decisions, so... have strong core values that guide us and enable us to live with ourselves afterwards, no matter the outcomes.
3. Leaders don't have the luxury of giving up when facing adversity or crises outside of our control – it is all about weathering the storm and keeping everyone together while on our watch.
4. We are impacted by our environment, but we can also impact it in return, so... change our environment for the better.
5. No matter our demographics, we can all impact other people's chances in life, so... do something about it.

Arriving in NZ in 1985, Mitchell continued his schooling then university in Auckland (and later in the US). Like other migrants, he struggled with language, culture, identity, family unification and belonging in the new country.



1985 First Arrived In New Zealand

It took him over 10 years before feeling at home and as a New Zealander, and that it's normal to be both Vietnamese and Kiwi. Later, this became a unique advantage that enabled him - through passion, hard work and authentic leadership - to impact NZ's future with/in Asia, while also impacting Vietnam.

### BUSINESS IMPACT

From early advances in information technology, Mitchell saw that software, data and the internet will transform business and shape the future of commerce, industry, government and society. However, most organisations did not have their own capabilities to build and implement such systems. So, in 1993, he cofounded the first company in the now CodeHQ group to do just this and have since impacted hundreds of business customers in over a dozen of key industries, also government and civil society, while creating opportunities for IT professionals.

In 2004, as more businesses struggled with accessing local tech talent within Australasia as well as working with offshore teams in other parts of the world, Mitchell cofounded CodeHQ's own development centre in Ho Chi Minh City with their unique NZ-Vietnam "local expertise + offshore scalability" model, to shield businesses from the complexity and risks of working directly with offshore companies - leveraging his ability to fluidly operate between Western and Asian cultures and creating opportunities for a new generation of talented professionals in Vietnam.

While Asia has large customer bases, talent pools and investment capital, it is not easy for Western businesses to succeed in the region. So, in 2016, Mitchell cofounded the Kiwi Connection Tech Hub as a launchpad, operating facility and mini ecosystem, to help Western companies establish presence in Vietnam and build a base for doing business in the region.

In recent years, Mitchell broadened his impact by taking up key roles in other businesses, such as Director of Easy Crypto Global, Chief Digital Officer of TradeWindow Group, Strategic Advisor at Forsyth Barr and at Prime Construction, and Entrepreneur-in-Residence at the University of Auckland Business School.

### INDUSTRY IMPACT

In doing business, Mitchell learned about ecosystems where participants are interconnected and can work together to shape their shared destiny and collective impact. For over 20 years, he has been directly involved in advancing NZ's technology industry, bringing businesses together into a well-connected community with synergy, purpose, alignment and united voice, working with government, informing policy, growing the industry and enabling Tech to advance other sectors.

As Chairman of the overarching industry body NZTech, Mitchell guided its growth from a single association to a Tech Alliance of 20 associations with nearly two thousand members. As his innovative approach to establishing and leading FinTechNZ was replicated for AgriTech, EdTech, AI, IoT, ClimateTech and other domains, Mitchell coached many business executives into industry leaders along the way - bringing forth his earlier vision of information technology shaping how we live, work and play, globally, while growing the industry to become the country's third-largest exporter.



2021 NZ Hi Tech Award

New Zealand's location also ties its future to the Asia-Pacific region, where two-third of its top 15 trading partners are Asian economies, including Vietnam. Mitchell applied his passion for building and strengthening connections through involvement with ASEAN-NZ Business Council, bringing together NZ Business Chambers across ASEAN region, chairing the NZ Asia Institute, and advising government.

**GOVERNMENT IMPACT**

Mitchell understands government's role and scale of impact, so he has been influencing both policy development and execution by advising the Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment, Immigration NZ, Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Trade, NZ Trade & Enterprise, and Reserve Bank NZ, leading the Digital Council to shape the current Digital Strategy for NZ, and serving on the Board of the Asia NZ Foundation and the Global Council of their US counterpart - the Asia Society.

**COMMUNITY IMPACT**

Family is the centre of Mitchell's universe. In the early days, as a full-time student working two part-time jobs, he was not able to fund his family to reunite in NZ. Not wanting this to happen to others, he later cofounded the Auckland Refugee Family Trust to assist refugees to reunite with their families. He also served as a Director of Refugee Services Aotearoa NZ (until they merged with NZ Red Cross) and of HOST Aotearoa NZ.

As a migrant, Mitchell understands what it takes to build a successful and meaningful life in a foreign country, far from home and family. He identifies with NZ's need to connect and support its million-plus diaspora living in 187 countries and so made his impact by assisting and later chairing KEA - the official organisation behind this cause.

**FUTURE IMPACT**

For his achievements, Mitchell received prestigious awards from the World Economic Forum, Asia Society, CPA Australia, KEA NZ, University of Auckland, technology industry in both NZ and Vietnam, and the royal appointment as Officer of the NZ Order of Merit (ONZM) from King Charles III. Leaving Pulau Galang for Ho Chi Minh City, almost tracing his original journey in reverse, he felt a sense of excitement for the future as his leadership journey continues.



2024 UoA Distinguished Alumni

Even though COVID-19 changed the world in ways that are still unfolding whilst evolving geopolitics reshape geoeconomics across the planet, Asia continues to remain integral to the global economy. Regional alliances, trade agreements and rules-based order continue to help against uncertainty and volatility, whilst East-West links at business-to-business level become even more important than ever.

With depth and breadth of experience in business and leadership, East-West expertise and ability to operate effectively at different levels, Mitchell is determined to continue applying himself to make a positive impact, whether at an individual company or industry-wide level. He believes that there is still more to learn and do, impact to make and leaders to work with.



2023 ONZM Family & Friends



2023 ONZM Royal Appointment



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**WORLDWIDE**

PROSPERITY



# THE RELATIONSHIP ROI

## How Human Connection Accelerates Success

Written by Larry Long Jr.

**W**e live in a world where AI is writing emails, scheduling our meetings, and spitting out strategy slides. But let me tell you this - when it comes to REAL success ... the kind that creates lasting impact and opens doors of opportunity, the ultimate ROI is built on human relationships.

That's right: Return On Intention. Return On Integrity. Return On Interaction. Or as I call it, 'The Relationship ROI'.

As a keynote speaker, sales coach and entrepreneur, I've seen firsthand how genuine relationships can spark game-changing growth. It's not just about who you know ... it's about both, who knows you and how you show up for those who know you.

Let's dive into how you can turn casual contacts into meaningful connections - with Purpose, Presence and People-first principles.

### 3 TYPES OF RELATIONSHIPS EVERY LEADER NEEDS

Every leader, especially in today's hyper-connected, 'noisy' digital world, needs three core types of relationships to thrive:

#### 1. Mentors and Coaches – The Uplifters

These are your sounding boards, your challengers, your wise guides. My own coach once told me, "Larry, you're not just meant to speak ... you're meant to spark."

That encouragement ignited my path. Who is in YOUR corner lighting your fire and giving you a spark?

#### 2. Peers and Collaborators – The Sharpeners

These are your colleagues and fellow runners in the race. They remind you that you are not alone. When done right, you lift each other higher. Whether it's your speaker's association (\*for me, it's NSA-National Speakers Association & my NSA Carolinas Chapter as iron sharpens iron, and collaboration leads to compounded growth.

#### 3. Clients and Community – The Impact Zones

When you focus on relationships, not transactions, your clients become your ambassadors. They refer, rebook, and rave about you ... not because you sold something, but because you genuinely made them feel seen, heard, and valued.

### HOW TO MAXIMIZE THE RELATIONSHIP ROI

If you want to grow your influence and impact, you've got to build with intention, not just attention.

Here are a few actionable ways to elevate your connection game:

#### Practice Intentional Curiosity

Skip the small talk and ask better questions: "What's lighting you up right now?" "What challenge are you working through?" Being interested makes you interesting.

#Interested>Interesting

### Be Proactive in Your Follow-Up

Most people drop the ball here. Don't just connect ... continue. Follow up, and follow through with a personalized video, a helpful resource and/or a genuine note of gratitude. Relationships aren't built in the first moment - they're built in the moments after.

### Celebrate Others Loudly and Often

Shine your light on others. Share their wins. Cheer them on! I call this being their 'Hype Squad' ... and trust me, your positive energy will come back 20x.

### Use LinkedIn as a Love Language

It's more than just a resume. It's a relationship builder - when used with sincere heart. Post with purpose, engage and support others' content, and send messages with the intent to serve, and not sell.

## MY JOURNEY OF RELATIONSHIP-FUELED BREAKTHROUGHS

### From Laid Off to Lifted Up

When I got laid off in 2021, I didn't spiral ... thankfully, I soared.

Why?

Because my network had my back. Friends referred me, supported me, and said, 'You got this Larry.' From those seeds of connection, a full-time speaking business blossomed.

### From LinkedIn to the Big Stage

One of my biggest speaking engagements came from someone I'd never met in person ... just connected with on LinkedIn. They followed my content, felt my energy,

and reached out. I had built trust before we ever talked. That's the Relationship ROI in motion and action.

### From Thank You to Ongoing Opportunity

I once sent a simple handwritten card after a speaking event. That act led to another event, then a series of referrals. It wasn't magic. It was intentional appreciation, which paid off in real relationship dividends. #LittleThingsAreReallyTheBigThings

### Build the Kind of Wealth That AI Can't Touch

AI is here to stay ... as a tool, it's smart, fast, and powerful. But it CAN'T build trust. It CAN'T offer a heartfelt hug, share a laugh or look someone in the eye and say, 'I see you'. That's YOUR gift. And, that's the currency that really moves the needle.

### Please ask yourself:

Are you treating people like numbers ... or neighbors?  
Are you building a network ... or nurturing your net worth of relationships?  
Are you chasing algorithms ... or choosing authenticity?

Let's all stop collecting contacts and start cultivating connections. Invest in people and not just processes. Truly, lead with heart!

Because when we do - when we choose to believe in the power of human connection ... we're able to experience the true magic of this life and this business.

That's when the Relationship ROI pays off big.

### I'm strongly encouraging you to:

**Keep building • believing • showing up.**

Let's turn more contacts into cont'R'acts ... TOGETHER!



# FDCCONNECT

# Your greatest business asset isn't your logo.

# It's **you.**

Relying solely on your company's brand to drive business growth is an outdated strategy. Today's clients want to connect with real people who effectively demonstrate expertise and trust.

We've helped over 500 leaders in finance, healthcare, law, SaaS, professional services, and more transform their LinkedIn presence from a digital resume into a powerful lead generation magnet.

## The results speak for themselves

**80%**

### increase in engagement

Clients see a surge in profile views, post interactions, and inbound inquiries.

**\$5M+**

### in new business secured

Clients have closed significant deals through FDC Connect's LinkedIn strategies.

**20+hrs**

### saved weekly per executive

We automate and streamline LinkedIn engagement, freeing up time for strategic priorities.

**2x**

### faster sales cycles

Decision-makers move through the funnel more quickly with our relationship-driven selling approach.

**Renier Lombard**  
Managing Director of FDC  
"One relationship can change your business & life"

## Our dedicated team provides

- ▶ Personal brand strategy
- ▶ Ongoing content creation
- ▶ LinkedIn profile makeovers
- ▶ Social selling

Leverage the untapped potential of your personal brand and LinkedIn to generate qualified leads and create powerful assets and channels for your business.

Connect with us

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Get in touch

PROSPERITY



# IGNITE YOUR DRIVE

## The Reward-Effort Formula for Conscious Leadership

Written by Mike Handcock

**Every morning, as the sun rises over Cape Town, South Africa, I wake up with a fire in my belly. It's not just the beauty of Table Mountain or the promise of a strong flat white—it's the deep, intrinsic drive to inspire, connect, and create impact. As the co-founder of the Circle of Excellence Group and other initiatives like the Entrepreneur X Factor, I've spent decades exploring what fuels human motivation. In fact travelling to over one hundred countries is a study in human psychology itself.**

My guiding formula is simple yet powerful:  
**Motivation = Reward ÷ Effort.**

This equation, balancing what we gain against what we invest, has shaped my journey and can illuminate yours. In this article for LEAD Magazine, I'll share my personal drivers, explore the motivations of two remarkable individuals—Maya Shahani and Matthias Gelber—and offer a practical framework to break down big goals into motivating, achievable steps.

### MY MOTIVATION: A LIFE OF IMPACT

What gets me out of bed each day? It's the desire to empower entrepreneurs to live with prosperity, freedom, and purpose. This drive didn't emerge overnight. Growing up, I faced financial struggles after being orphaned at fifteen, self-doubt, and the pressure to follow a conventional path. The amount of times I was told to 'Get a Real Job' was frightful. Those challenges forged my resilience, becoming the bedrock of my motivation. In my twenties, I launched my music career, a heavy rock band, Charley Browne, driven by a passion for creativity

and expression (and obviously some built up angst). Our debut album, Power Palace, was a labor of love—raw, authentic, and unpolished. Today it's gained a cult following in countries like Cyprus, Brazil, and even parts of Germany. Fans still message me about tracks like "Exit Stage Right," and "Dictatorship" and that unexpected legacy feels like a reward far outweighing the effort of late-night studio sessions and begging and borrowing from friends to make it. It's true what they say, that at the grass roots of music there are a lot of parasites ready to launch. We had our fair share. That experience taught me that motivation thrives when passion fuels purpose.

Today, as the founder of the Circle of Excellence, my focus is helping others unlock their potential. Whether mentoring entrepreneurs through global events or producing LEAD Magazine's pages of "genius from people just like us," my reward is transformation—businesses scaling, lives improving. The effort? Long hours, global travel, and navigating leadership's complexities. But the formula holds: the reward of impact dwarfs the effort.

A pivotal moment came with the Entrepreneur X Factor, a global competition connecting aspiring entrepreneurs with mentors and investors. I'll never forget watching the brilliance of people like Ben Kruger (South African Actor turned Entrepreneur) or Dickson Lai (the excitable Malaysian founder of a unique profiling test). It's also the space where I met my wife and business partner Landi Jac.

Not only did she shine up the stage, she made a lasting impression on me that only grows more and more each day. My core motivation is achievement—not just personal, but collective. It's about creating systems, like our Program

for speakers or the Bali Business School, where people grow, connect, and thrive.

### CASE STUDIES: THE POWER OF CORE MOTIVATION

Let's explore two individuals whose extraordinary achievements highlight how motivation drives success.

#### Maya Shahani: Empowering Through Education

Maya Shahani, a global education advocate, is now well into her seventies, yet she has transformed lives through her work with the Sage Foundation continually. Her motivation stems from a deep belief in education as a tool for empowerment of those who have less opportunity than most. Based in Mumbai, Maya has driven initiatives to provide vocational training and mentorship to underserved communities. Her reward? Seeing young people gain skills and confidence to build better futures.

The effort—coordinating global programs, securing funding, and navigating cultural barriers—is immense. Yet, Maya's passion for creating opportunity keeps her motivated. Her story shows how aligning work with a higher purpose creates a high reward-to-effort ratio, sustaining drive through challenges.

#### Matthias Gelber: Championing Sustainability

Known as the "Green Man," Matthias Gelber is a sustainability pioneer who inspires action on climate change. From the Philippines, Matthias has spoken at global forums and founded initiatives like Eco Warrior to promote sustainable living. His core motivation is legacy—leaving a healthier planet for future generations. The effort, from grassroots campaigns to influencing policy, is daunting, but the reward of inspiring change keeps him going. Matthias once shared that seeing a single community adopt zero-waste practices feels like a monumental win. His journey reflects how a vision for global impact can outweigh even the toughest challenges.

### WHY MOST PEOPLE STRUGGLE WITH MOTIVATION

Too often, people falter because their goals feel overwhelming—like scaling Table Mountain in a single leap. As neuroscience research suggests, the "middle problem" can drain motivation when progress feels stalled.

The solution? Break big goals into smaller, achievable chunks and celebrate each step. This aligns with the motivation formula: smaller efforts yield quicker rewards, keeping the ratio high and the drive alive.

Most people don't lack ambition; they lack a system to sustain it. Without chunking goals, the effort feels disproportionate to the reward, leading to procrastination or burnout. Positive psychology backs this: celebrating small wins boosts engagement and persistence. For example, instead of aiming to "build a \$10 million business," focus on "securing five high-end clients this quarter." Each client signed is a reward, reinforcing motivation.

### CHUNKING GOALS: A FORMULA FOR SUSTAINED MOTIVATION

To make the motivation formula work, you need a structured approach to chunking goals and celebrating progress. Here's how it ties to **Motivation = Reward ÷ Effort**:

- 1. Define the Big Goal Clearly:** Start with a specific, meaningful objective. It could be growing your company into a \$10 million business within two years. Clarity makes the reward tangible.
- 2. Break It Down into Milestones:** Divide the goal into smaller, time-bound steps. For my business, this might mean launching a new mastermind session or increasing LinkedIn outreach by 20%. Milestones reduce effort, making rewards feel closer.
- 3. Assign Micro-Tasks:** Break milestones into daily or weekly tasks. To attract clients, I might schedule three targeted LinkedIn posts per week. Small tasks lower the effort barrier, boosting motivation.
- 4. Celebrate Every Win:** Rewards don't need to be extravagant. A BBQ with friends, a team shoutout, or reflecting on progress can reinforce the reward side. Celebrating keeps the motivation ratio high.
- 5. Track and Adjust:** Use tools like a journal or CRM to monitor progress. Reflecting on what's working adjusts the effort needed, keeping the formula balanced.

### APPLYING THE MOTIVATION FORMULA: A HOW-TO GUIDE

Here's a practical guide to applying **Motivation = Reward ÷ Effort**, inspired by my journey and the stories of Maya and Matthias:

- **Identify Your Core Reward:** What drives you? Is it achievement, like my goal to empower entrepreneurs? Empowerment, like Maya's passion for education? Or legacy, like Matthias's vision for sustainability? Pinpoint what makes the effort worthwhile.
- **Minimise Perceived Effort:** Simplify tasks to reduce strain. Use tools like Thinkific for course delivery or block social media during work hours. Lower effort increases the motivation ratio.
- **Amplify the Reward:** Make rewards immediate and meaningful. After a task, treat yourself to a small joy—a walk along Camps Bay, a favourite playlist, or public recognition. This tilts the formula in your favour.
- **Leverage Intrinsic Motivation:** Align tasks with passions. My love for events drives my work with the Circle of Excellence. Maya's joy in education and Matthias's commitment to the planet fuel their efforts. Find what lights you up.
- **Build a Feedback Loop:** Seek feedback to gauge progress, as job design research suggests. Client testimonials or team reviews reinforce the reward and keep effort aligned.
- **Stay Flexible:** If a task feels too effort-intensive, reassess. Adjust deadlines, delegate, or simplify. My cash-flow-funded growth for Circle of Excellence relies on affordable systems, keeping effort manageable.

## POWERING YOUR MOTIVATION

Motivation isn't magic—it's a formula. By embracing  $\text{Motivation} = \text{Reward} \div \text{Effort}$ , you can engineer goals to keep your fire burning. My journey—from Charley Browne cult following to building the Entrepreneur X Factor—shows that passion and purpose create unstoppable drive. Maya Shahani and Matthias Gelber demonstrate how aligning effort with meaningful rewards turns dreams into reality. By chunking goals, celebrating wins, and applying the steps above, you can sustain motivation no matter the challenge.

As I often say, "If you end up with a boring, miserable life, it's because you planned it that way." Choose motivation, and design a life of impact.

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Mike Handcock, 2025/26 President of the Global Speakers Federation, is a globally recognized conscious leader and visionary speaker, distinguished as one of only 40 worldwide to hold both Certified Speaking Professional

(CSP) and Global Speaking Fellow designations.

A four-time New Zealand Speaker of the Year and multi-awardwinning author of 14 books—including 8 international bestsellers - Mike's impactful career spans founding five thriving businesses, producing the film *Dreamcatchers* (2010), and serving on three charitable trust boards, earning praise from former U.S. President Bill Clinton for his philanthropy, including model villages in India and orphanages in Cambodia.

With a former corporate role managing a \$250 million budget and business experience in over 50 countries, plus insights from 110+ country travels and studies in ancient wisdom, Mike empowers entrepreneurs and speakers globally as Chairman of Circle of Excellence. Based between Cape Town, South Africa, and Greece with his wife Landi Jac, he continues to inspire with his dynamic storytelling and commitment to ethical leadership.

[www.circleofexcellence.biz](http://www.circleofexcellence.biz)





FREEDOM

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A person wearing a vibrant red suit is shown from the side, standing in front of a large window. The window looks out onto a cityscape with a body of water and a bridge. The scene is softly blurred, creating a contemplative atmosphere. A thin white line is drawn around the person's suit, and a vertical gold bar is on the right side of the image.

*The choice to do what you want, when  
you want, and with whom you want*

FREEDOM



FREEDOM

## SIMPLICIO MICHAEL LUIS

# “A Legacy of Art, Innovation, and Heritage”

Written by Huey Teng Tay

### Heritage and The Birth of “M”

Born in Manila, Philippines, Simplicio Michael Luis Asis Herrera — better known as “M”— hails from an esteemed lineage. He is a descendant of the distinguished Roxas family, whose influence has shaped Philippine history for generations. His great-granduncle, Manuel Acuña Roxas, served as the Fifth President of the Philippines, a statesman whose legacy continues to echo in the country's political and economic landscape. The Roxas family's contributions extend beyond governance, with their name still closely tied to key regions and industries in the Philippines.

With a Chinese father and a Spanish-Filipina mother, M's multicultural heritage was further enriched when his family emigrated to Los Angeles, United States, when he was just five years old. But as a young immigrant navigating a new culture, he quickly learned that fitting in came with challenges — starting with his name.

In a world where “Simplicio” wasn't considered “cool” or “American” enough, he simplified it to “Mike,” hoping to blend in. For years, he carried that name, adapting to his surroundings, excelling in the arts, and carving out his own space in a foreign land. However, as he grew older and reconnected with his heritage, he shed the need to conform. Embracing his roots, he reclaimed his full name: Simplicio Michael Luis Asis Herrera — wearing it as a badge of pride rather than an obstacle.

This became a defining lesson of his youth: That one should never shy away from heritage, but instead, be proud of it and harness it as a source of strength and identity.

As his vision sharpened and his work transcended borders, he refined his identity once more. The letter “M” became his signature — more than just an initial, it was a philosophy. The 13th letter of the alphabet, “M” symbolised transformation. Its symmetry reflected balance, its structure mirrored two figures holding hands, and when inverted, it became a “W” — a representation of duality and equality.

It embodied everything he stood for: unity, connection, and the power of culture to shape the world.

Thus, “M” was born — not just a name, but a movement.

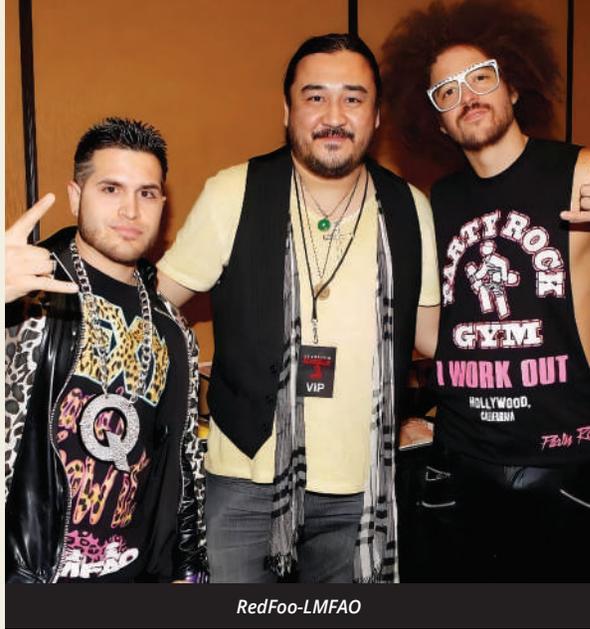
### A Young Creative Mind in Motion

From an early age, “M” demonstrated a natural affinity for the arts. Whether sketching his siblings, drawing from nature — particularly his fascination with spiders — or illustrating comics, he was constantly refining his artistic skills. His first taste of artistic recognition came when his mother encouraged him to enter a drawing contest, drawing the mascot of the bank where his mother worked. Winning first place was a pivotal moment, instilling in him the confidence to pursue creative endeavours.

His artistic talents extended beyond visual art. “M” starred as the lead in school plays, penned award-winning essays, and even exhibited an entrepreneurial spirit. One memorable venture saw him transforming brown paper lunch bags into handmade puppets, setting up a puppet theatre in his front yard, and charging neighbourhood kids USD\$1 for admission. He even enlisted his five-year-old sister to sell lemonade for 25 cents a cup — an early testament to his innovative and business-minded approach to creativity.



Sketches, circa 1988



RedFoo-LMFAO

## The Cultural Tapestry of the '90s: Shaping an Artist

The vibrant and eclectic cultural scene of the 1990s left a lasting impression on "M". Growing up in Los Angeles at a time when music, fashion, and art were at their peak, he immersed himself in various subcultures — from grunge and goth to rock and hip-hop. The underground dance scene became a second home, where he and his peers engaged in "dance-offs" reminiscent of modern competitions like America's Best Dance Crew.

Among the talents who emerged from this era were Fergie, Apl.de.ap, and Will.i.am of the Black Eyed Peas, as well as actor Darius McCrary (Family Matters).

"M" himself was part of a dance crew, embracing the ambition that defined their generation. "We all had a mission," he recalls. "I told myself, 'I will meet you at the top.'"

When it came time to decide on a future career, there was no doubt in "M"'s mind that the arts would be his calling. He applied to several universities, but when The Fashion Institute of Design and Merchandising (FIDM) responded first, he took it as a sign — and the beginning of his journey into the world of fashion.

## Breaking into the Fashion Industry

At FIDM, "M"'s creative vision took shape. Ever the innovator, he entered a school contest that required students to pitch a business idea. His concept — a fashion brand for the "new world thinker" — was presented not as a standard business proposal but as a visually compelling 100-page comic book. Though he didn't win, his work captured the attention of executives at FIDM, leading to his first role as an educator, teaching fashion and graphics.

"M" quickly became known for his ability to hack traditional industry processes. While fashion students at the time relied on expensive, industry-specific software priced at USD\$35,000, he leveraged CorelDRAW to create CAD designs at a fraction of the cost. His philosophy of "sharing information for better living" extended beyond design — he wanted to democratise access to knowledge, a principle that would define his career.

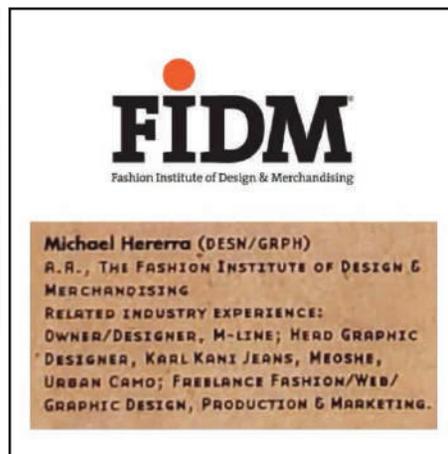
This ingenuity earned him his first major role in the fashion world: a Design Assistant at Karl Kani Jeans, the first African-American-owned fashion house and a pioneering brand in hip-hop streetwear. The company, valued at USD\$450 million and featured in Forbes 500, operated with a lean team of eight, and "M" quickly ascended from Assistant Designer to Head of Graphics and Licensee Manager. By age 19, he was managing international deals, including partnerships with Mitsubishi in Japan.

This was where "M" made a pivotal realisation: Building a multimillion-dollar empire doesn't require a legion of employees or limitless capital. The real leverage? Efficiency and vision — because scale isn't about size, it's about strategy.

His time at Karl Kani also connected him to the biggest names in hip-hop. Rubbing shoulders with music icons, he solidified relationships that would later influence his career in celebrity fashion design.



Hong Kong, circa 1998



Los Angeles, circa 2001



New York, circa 2006

## A Global Creative Force

After three years as an instructor and a growing reputation as a designer, "M" yearned for more. He set out on a journey that would make him one of the first true "digital nomads," living in over 25 countries while designing for some of the world's biggest brands.

His portfolio expanded to include projects for Red Bull, Mercedes-Benz, BMW, Formula One, World Cup, Ferrari, and FHM. He developed collections remotely, traveling to factories to oversee prototypes and conduct quality control.

As a Creative Director for a German design agency, "M" led a diverse team of 20, curating product lines that ranged from apparel to accessories for international clients. This global exposure sharpened his ability to navigate different cultural nuances in business, making him not just a designer but a strategic visionary.

His work with celebrities flourished, creating custom pieces for the likes of Britney Spears, The Black Eyed Peas, Wayne Brady, Kid Rock, Al Pacino, Snoop Dogg, Dr. Dre, New Edition, 98 Degrees, and Manny Pacquiao-for whom "M" created the now iconic Filipino Flag boxing robe. Whether designing for red carpets or music videos, "M" seamlessly blended personal style with artistic expression.

Here, he discovered another invaluable insight: Success isn't just the product of individual brilliance, but about surrounding oneself with the right people. The right team can turn ideas into reality.



Snoop Dogg Collection



MTheMovement Kings



Taboo (Black Eyed Peas)



Manny Pacquiao



Al Pacino

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**Full Circle:  
Giving Back Through Design and Education**

The culmination of his experiences led to MTHEMOVEMENT — his brand and philosophy that encapsulates everything he stands for. “M” realised that the moment he clearly defined his beliefs, his career expanded beyond expectations. His brand was no longer just a label; it became a statement, a movement, a legacy.

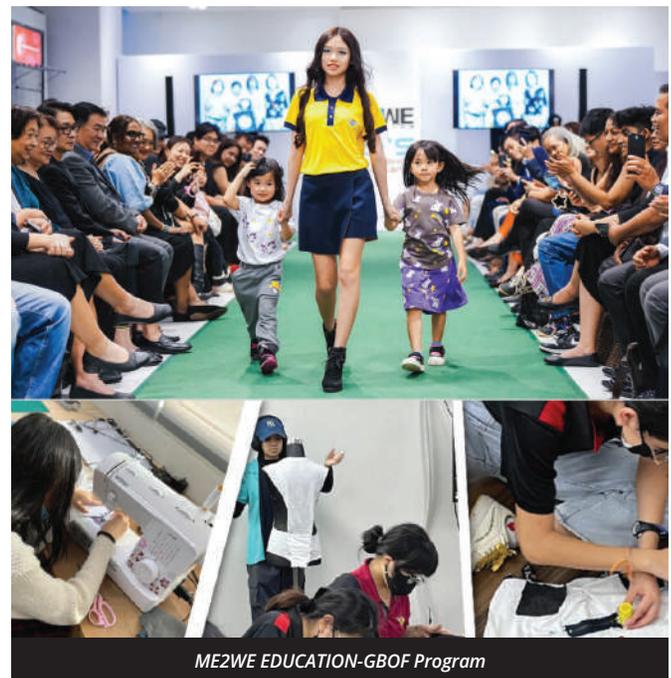
Returning to Southeast Asia, “M” has reached a full-circle moment, sharing his philosophy and expertise with the next generation. Today, “M” is not just designing for celebrities or shaping campaigns for global brands - he’s shaping something far more meaningful: futures. In partnership with fellow visionary Stuart Patton, he co-founded ME2WE Education, an initiative that redefines learning through the lens of global opportunity, creative enterprise, and real-world mentorship.

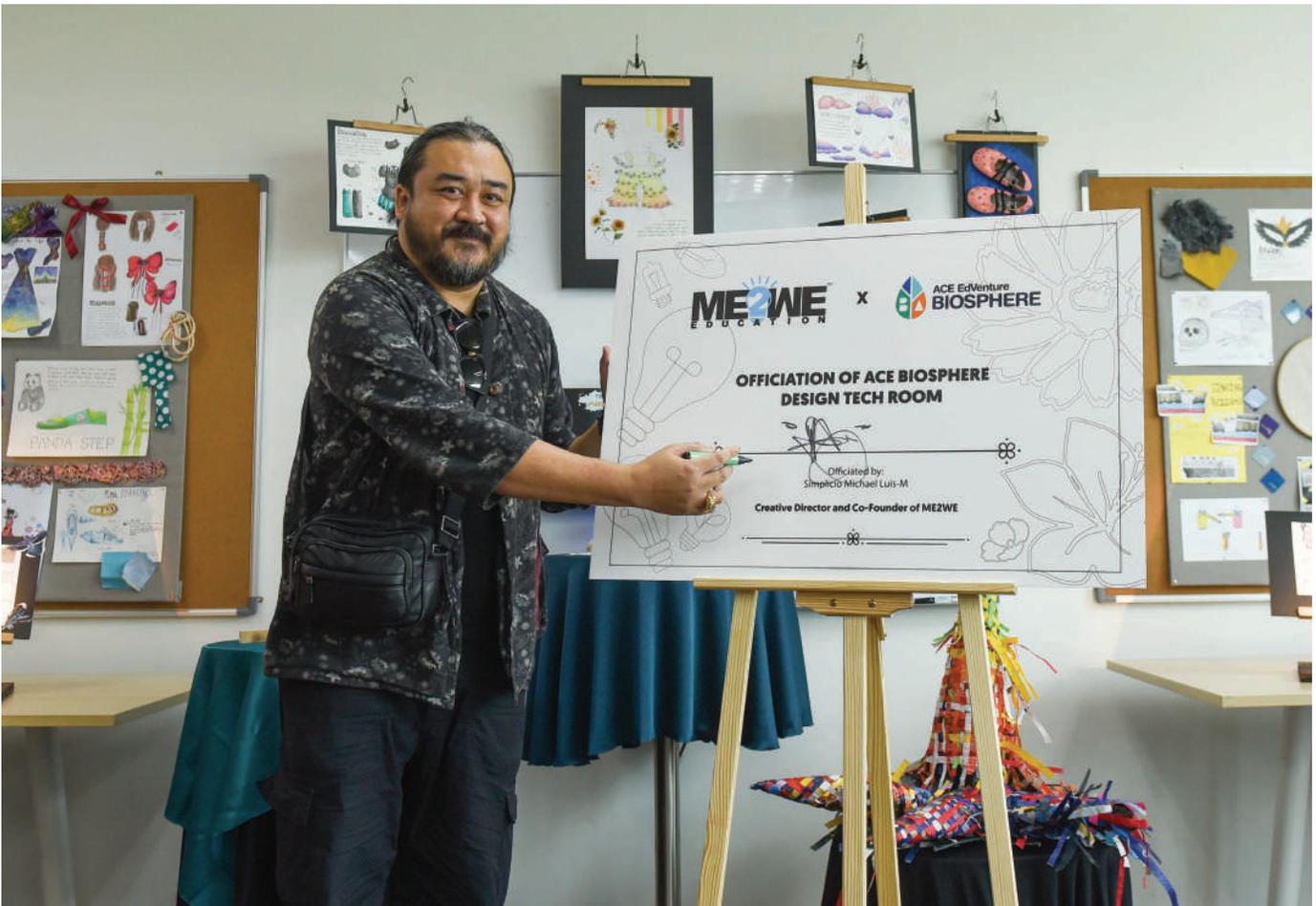
It’s no surprise that this forward-thinking movement found its roots at Dwi Emas International School, Malaysia’s First Entrepreneurial International School. A place that champions vision over convention, Dwi Emas mirrors “M”’s own story — where global citizens and bold thinkers thrive, and creativity is never confined to a classroom.

Through ME2WE Education, “M” has brought the world into the classroom — not as a concept, but as a lived experience. The programme has opened its doors to an extraordinary roster of mentors: from Jamie Jones (All-4-One) to Natascha Wright (former member of LaBouche), from Princess Monalisa Okojie (CEO of Nehita Jewelry) to Lesley Cheam (Miss Universe Malaysia 2022), and more. These are not mere guest speakers — they are collaborators, co-creators, and catalysts, guiding students in building real-world projects, launching ideas, and transforming their passions into purpose.

Under “M”’s mentorship, students don’t just learn about entrepreneurship — they live it. Whether it’s pitching to global experts, developing prototypes, or creating socially impactful ventures, the ME2WE Education experience is equal parts masterclass and movement. And true to “M”’s ethos, it’s not about selling dreams of fame, but instilling the skills, mindset, and global awareness — to prepare students not just to succeed, but to build nations and create jobs of the future.

From a young dreamer in Los Angeles to a globally recognised creative powerhouse, “M”’s journey is a testament to vision, resilience, and the transformative power of art. As he continues to shape the future of fashion and education, his legacy — both inherited and self-made — stands as a bridge between tradition and innovation.





"M" officially signing a partnership with Dwi Emas, ushering in a new era for ME2WE Education's elite global collaboration.



With Jamie Jones (All-4-One) & Adai Lamar (Celebrity Radio Host-KDay) at Dwi Emas, where industry mentorship meets the next generation of trailblazers.

FREEDOM



Written by Domtille Kiger

# BOLD LEADERSHIP

## FROM FEAR TO EXTRAORDINARY HEIGHTS

**T**he moment my feet left the plane for the first time, at fifteen, I felt my fear transform into pure exhilaration. I discovered, flying in the immense expanse of the sky, that what I thought would be a void had, in fact, a texture—a density. That what we call “empty space” was full of possibilities. That leap marked the beginning of a lifelong relationship with risk—not as reckless thrill-seeking, but as an intentional choice to live fully and authentically.

At twenty-three, I faced a crucial crossroads. On one path: the respected halls of Sorbonne University, a promising future as a historian, and the comforting predictability of my life in Paris, aligned with the expectations of my family. The other path shimmered with uncertainty, excitement, and the terrifying freedom of possibility—skydiving.

With my savings, I bought a plane ticket and flew to Eloy, Arizona, the Mecca of skydiving. I decided to go all in, and threw myself into a sport that most people considered borderline madness.

It was a decision that changed everything. Embracing that risk led me on a spectacular journey. Over the next 15 years, I became a national, European, and ultimately a world champion skydiver. I set and organized ten world records, traveled to over 80 countries, and found myself living a life richer, more adventurous, and more joyful than I ever imagined.

Yet, despite these accomplishments, I have learned a critical lesson: while a life without risks is a life half-lived, not all risks are worth taking. Understanding this distinction has

My relationship with risk took another powerful form when I decided to step onto a different stage—literally. In 2023, I took another leap, this time into the unknown world of professional speaking. Using my experiences from skydiving and record organizing, I began to translate lessons from the skies into insights for leaders and organizations worldwide. It was a gamble: could my story resonate beyond my own community? Could the sky truly offer universal wisdom?

The answer was a resounding yes. Today, my speaking engagements bring me face-to-face with conscious, visionary leaders around the globe—and their teams. My talks center around the notion of bold leadership—intimately tied to my experiences in skydiving. Leading a corporate team, much like organizing world records, requires a meticulous structure, a culture of trust, and a vision compelling enough to unite a diverse group around a shared goal.

My message about courage echoes through every audience: “Courage isn’t the absence of fear; it is the ability to act despite fear.” And, equally important: “Thinking doesn’t overcome fear; action does.”

In every keynote I deliver, whether to multinational corporations or intimate teams, my goal is to ignite reflection on each person’s relationship to risk. I challenge audiences to discern the risks that promise meaningful reward from those that merely tempt fate. My experiences prove that boldness does not exclude caution. Instead, true courage involves preparation, respect for safety, and accepting accountability for outcomes. It means fostering mutual trust and anchoring your risks in convictions greater than yourself.

My path has also led me to extraordinary collaborations, such as working with haute couture designer Iris van Herpen. In 2021, I took a leap of a different kind, becoming the first skydiver to jump wearing a couture dress—one of her exquisite creations. That leap was not just a performance but an artistic testament to the harmony between calculated risk and innovative expression. It reinforced my belief that the most impactful risks are those balanced carefully between meticulous planning and creative boldness.

*“Courage isn’t the absence of fear; it is the ability to act despite fear.”  
And, equally important: “Thinking doesn’t overcome fear; action does.”*

been vital. Risk is not about blind boldness; it is about knowing when to leap and when to pause—when the potential cost outweighs the reward.

In 2016, I faced the most brutal reminder of this truth. Dave, my soulmate, died tragically in a BASE jumping accident. Until then, I had shared in the thrill and beauty of BASE jumping, enamored by its breathtaking landscapes and the visceral sense of flight. Yet losing Dave made me reconsider everything. I stepped back, reflected, and consciously chose never to BASE jump again. The scales had shifted: no thrill could ever justify the possibility of leaving behind those I love to bear the same unbearable pain. And in BASE jumping, the chances of dying are truly high—unlike in skydiving. That kind of thrill wasn’t worth dying for. Sometimes, the boldest move is deciding not to jump.



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Reflecting deeply on my journey, I am now channeling my experiences and lessons into a forthcoming book—a deeply personal exploration of risk, joy, loss, and courage. The book, much like this article, asks you to reconsider your relationship with risk: to embrace it thoughtfully, to discern its worth, and to appreciate its transformative power.

Looking back, each risk I've embraced has carried within it seeds of extraordinary transformation. From leaping into a skydiving career to stepping onto international stages as a speaker, I've learned that a fulfilling life inevitably involves confronting fear. But I've also learned to respect that fear, recognizing when it guides me toward caution rather than action.

Today, as I await the birth of my first child, my perspective on risk deepens yet again. Becoming a mother introduces a new kind of fear—different from any I've known. Yet, I remain committed to living boldly, guided by the conviction that life's richest experiences lie just beyond the edges of our comfort zones.

To those reading this, I ask: what risks might you take if you allowed yourself to act despite your fears? What possibilities await you on the other side of courage?

Remember, a life without taking any risks isn't worth living—but choose wisely, for not all risks are created equal.



Domitille Kiger is a professional skydiver, business owner, and international keynote speaker.

Her skydiving career spans over 25 years, where she has amassed more than 10,000 jumps across the globe. She holds two World Championship titles and 10 “largest freefall formation” world records, 7 of which she has co-organized. Through her extensive experience in freeflying, Domitille has become a sought-after international coach, guiding skydivers of all levels to push beyond their comfort zones.

In addition to her athletic achievements, Domitille is a successful business owner. She is a partner in zerOGravity—a premier indoor skydiving facility in France—where beginners and elite flyers alike can learn or refine the art of flying in a controlled environment. She also leads Audeo, her speaking company through which she has, for the past four years, delivered high-energy keynotes to corporate and association audiences worldwide. Drawing from her experience in extreme sports, Domitille's talks illuminate the power of calculated risk-taking, fostering resilience, and achieving remarkable goals under pressure.

Beyond her entrepreneurial pursuits, Domitille is dedicated to advancing her sport. She serves on the board of the French Skydiving Federation and is the French delegate and Chair of the “Skydiving for the Disabled” committee at the International Skydiving Commission (ISC), championing inclusive programs for athletes of all abilities. Domitille's unwavering commitment to excellence, inclusivity, and bold vision continues to elevate skydiving—and those she inspires—to extraordinary heights.

# FREEDOM TO BUILD WHAT MATTERS

## *How Monica Chen Is Redefining Property Management Through Clarity, Courage, and Conscious Leadership*

**In the often transactional world of property management, Monica Chen brings a different energy—one rooted in clarity, integrity, and a belief that business should serve people, not the other way around.**

As the founder and Managing Director of Uno Property Management, Monica has spent the last decade building a company that challenges the status quo. At UNO, success isn't measured by buzzwords or bloated portfolios—it's about doing meaningful work, building strong relationships, and staying grounded in values that matter.

Her approach is practical, but deeply personal. "We get things done and we communicate," isn't just UNO's tagline—it's a reflection of the way Monica leads and lives.

### **FROM FRUSTRATION TO FOCUS**

Monica's journey started on the other side of the table—as a property investor. Frustrated by poor service, vague communication, and a lack of accountability, she decided to build what she couldn't find: a management company that was streamlined, transparent, and genuinely client-focused. UNO was founded not to be the biggest, but to be the most effective. Today, it's recognized as one of Auckland's most trusted residential property management firms—especially among long-term investors and build-to-rent developers

who value consistency and clear results.

### **A VALUES-DRIVEN BUSINESS THAT WORKS**

Monica leads with three values that underpin everything she does: **Commitment, Playfulness, and Boldness.**

- **Commitment** shows up in how her team shows up for clients—on time, every time, with clear processes and full visibility.
- **Playfulness** shapes the company culture—there's room for creativity, personality, and joy, even in a highly procedural industry.
- **Boldness** drives innovation—whether adopting AI to streamline workflows or encouraging her team to challenge outdated norms.

This values-first model isn't just good leadership—it's good business. The team at UNO is known for being proactive, fast to resolve problems, and meticulous in both compliance and communication. Clients stick around, and many arrive through word of mouth.

### **BEYOND THE BASICS: REDEFINING INDUSTRY STANDARDS**

While many property managers operate reactively, Monica has positioned UNO as a strategic partner—especially in the growing build-to-rent space. Developers and investors

turn to UNO not just to manage properties, but to guide them through the entire lifecycle: from design input and tenant profiling to market positioning and long-term retention strategy. With a strong understanding of both the investor mindset and tenant needs, Monica and her team help clients make smart decisions that improve outcomes and reduce risk—without unnecessary complexity. UNO also leverages smart tech solutions to speed up leasing, enhance reporting, and improve landlord-tenant interactions. But tech is never the focus—people always come first.

### A COMPANY CULTURE THAT BUILDS PEOPLE

At UNO, success is driven by a team-first, values-led culture—one that prioritizes growth, autonomy, and excellence without relying on top-down pressure. Monica has built a workplace where people are encouraged to think independently, make confident decisions, and take ownership of their roles.

Every team member is supported through ongoing training, real-time feedback, and clarity around expectations. Inspired by the principle of Kaizen—making tomorrow better than today—UNO fosters a mindset of continuous improvement at every level. Team members aren't just following procedures; they're helping shape and improve them.

Rather than chasing perfection, the focus is on progress and potential. The culture at UNO is not high-pressure, but high-expectation—with individuals driven by a personal desire to reach high standards and fulfill their own potential. It's an environment that attracts those who care deeply about their work and want to grow alongside a company that's growing too.

This people-first approach results in longer employee tenures, stronger client relationships, and consistently high service quality.

UNO also sees property management as a team sport, where every player's contribution matters. From senior property managers to support staff, everyone is trained not just in compliance and process—but in the tools and technologies that enhance the experience for landlords and tenants alike. These include UNO's custom apps, virtual inspection platforms, and smart maintenance systems that help the team manage efficiently without sacrificing personal attention.

By aligning purpose with performance, Monica has created more than a company—she's created a culture that builds people.

### THE HUMAN SIDE OF PROPERTY

For Monica, the business is ultimately about people. She recalls a time when UNO was referred to an elderly couple whose previous manager had neglected their portfolio for years. Rent had never been reviewed, maintenance was ignored, and compliance issues had stacked up.

Monica's team stepped in, cleaned up the backlog, restored



legality, raised standards, and most importantly—restored the owners' peace of mind.

"These stories remind us why we do what we do," she says. "It's not just about the properties. It's about people feeling safe, supported, and seen."

### CREATIVITY AS A BUSINESS ASSET

Outside of property, Monica expresses herself through writing. Her children's book series Kai and Mia—inspired by her own children—is about adventure, honesty, and growing into your unique self. It's not just a hobby—it's another way Monica integrates her values into her work and life.

She's also becoming known for her candid content on platforms like Xiaohongshu and Instagram, where she shares both the behind-the-scenes of business and cheeky commentary on industry norms. Her voice is smart, grounded, and often unexpected—and that's what makes it resonate.

### LEADERSHIP WITH HEART AND EDGE

Whether she's building business systems, mentoring her team, or writing a chapter for a bedtime story, Monica brings the same energy to everything she does: focused, intentional, and refreshingly real. She believes you can be high-performing without being rigid. You can lead without losing yourself. And you can succeed without selling out your values.

UNO Property Management is a reflection of that philosophy—a business built to last, not just scale. One that grows through service, not hype. And one that reminds the industry: you don't need to do things the way they've always been done.

Because when you lead with freedom, results follow naturally.

Monica Chen is the founder and Managing Director of Uno Property Management, one of Auckland's top-performing residential property management companies. A seasoned property investor and entrepreneur, Monica brings nearly two decades of experience to the industry—building a business known for operational discipline, transparency, and measurable results.

Since founding UNO in 2016, Monica has led the company to become a go-to name in Auckland's build-to-rent sector, widely respected for its values-led culture and client loyalty. Her leadership is rooted in clarity, accountability, and bold action, and her team operates

with a no-nonsense ethos: "We get things done and we communicate." Guided by her personal values of Commitment, Playfulness, and Boldness, Monica fosters a culture where people are empowered to grow, clients feel supported, and systems serve people—not the other way around. She is also the author of the Kai and Mia children's book series and a candid content creator, using storytelling and humor to challenge industry norms and connect with her community. Whether she's supporting landlords, mentoring her team, or building new ventures, Monica is committed to leading consciously—and building businesses that are sustainable, human, and unapologetically real.

## THE HEXAGON MESSAGE

How Symbols Can Shape  
Strategy and Financial Power



For months, a curious pattern kept showing up in my life — the hexagon. At first, it felt like a coincidence. But the repetition became too consistent to ignore. It wasn't until a leadership retreat in Bali with the Circle of Excellence network that the meaning behind it truly landed.

### **A Shape. A Signal. A System.**

The hexagon wasn't just a shape. It became a metaphor. A message. A system.

**Its message: Get ready** — not in a vague, motivational sense, but in a grounded, strategic one.

You're meant to play a bigger game — but only if the foundations beneath are solid. The hexagon revealed a truth: six strong, interlocked sides. Seen in beehives, snowflakes, Saturn's pole — a design nature trusts. A blueprint for strength, efficiency, and growth.

And within it, two clear instructions emerged.

### **1. Build on Rock, Not Rubble.**

To grow, get your house in order. My business was profitable, but behind the scenes, things were messy — cash flow unpredictable, finances blurred, systems inefficient. The structure held, but it wasn't scalable.

To truly level up, I needed clarity and strength.

### **That meant:**

- Separating business and personal finances
- Streamlining expenses
- Creating cash flow visibility
- Tackling debt and tax inefficiencies

The hexagon's first lesson:

**Don't scale chaos. Build strength first.**

### **2. Milk the Honey.**

Once your foundation is solid — **milk the honey**. Like bees storing fuel for growth, your business should generate strategic profit — reinvested to multiply momentum. **Ask:**

- Are we hitting optimal profit (30%)?
  - Are profits being reinvested smartly?
  - Is every rand working for today and tomorrow?
- Profit isn't just an outcome — it's a driver of growth. Done right, honey makes more honey.

### **What the Hexagon Taught Me**

Sometimes the universe speaks in patterns. For me, the hexagon was a whisper, then a push.

Its message:

**Play big — but be ready.**

**Build strong. Use wisely. Multiply with intention.**

That's how to create a business — and life — that is powerful, profitable, and built to last.



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ON 1-1 TO GROUP COACHING

PLACE

BECOME A COMMUNITY LEADER

GET CERTIFIED

WEEKLY

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# APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP



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## Questions for the Applicant :

1. Do you have a criminal record in any country, or any pending legal issues in any country that could impact your professional reputation? Yes No
2. Have you ever been reprimanded or removed from a professional organization or networking group due to unethical behaviour? Yes No
3. Are you currently involved in any business practices that could be considered dishonest or harmful to clients, colleagues, or peers? Yes No
4. Do you authorize your credit card to be charged the \$480 USD non-refundable amount for 1 year membership to Circle of Excellence Private Members Club? Yes No

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FREEDOM



# It's Never Too Late to BLOOM

Written by Renske Lammerding

Entrepreneur | Decorator | Speaker | TV Personality | Mother | Woman of Reinvention

FREEDOM

**R**enske Lammerding is a dynamic South African woman known for her unwavering resilience, passion for transformation, and her appearance on *The Real Housewives of Pretoria*. A former pharmacist turned entrepreneur, Renske has spent her life creating beauty—whether through business, home décor, women's empowerment, or personal growth. As the founder of Mrs. Globe South Africa, she helped uplift and educate women across the country, and today she continues to inspire through her story of reinvention, spiritual awakening, and newfound love. At 58, she proves that growth has no expiration date and that it's never too late to bloom.

## THE COURAGE TO START AGAIN

I'm Renske, and I believe with all my heart that life starts whenever you decide it does. Not when society expects it to. Not when the calendar turns a certain number. But the moment you say, "Now. I begin again."

"Every season of life has the power to transform us—if we let it."

At 58, I've embraced many new beginnings. Some may recognize me from *The Real Housewives of Pretoria*, but behind the screen, I am so much more—a mother, businesswoman, creative, and woman of faith.

## FROM POTCHEFSTROOM TO PURPOSE

I grew up in Potchefstroom as Renske de Bruyn, eldest of three children. Despite being top of my class and invited to a prestigious school for gifted children, I battled intense shyness and low self-image. I studied pharmacy at my father's suggestion and worked in the industry for 19 years, even owning a pharmacy for two years. But when the industry changed, I had to pivot. It was tough, but every failure became a teacher.

"I didn't choose pharmacy with passion—I chose it to please. But life has a way of leading you back to yourself."

## TRADING PILLS FOR PASSION

When my daughter Amike was born, I found the courage to start again. I studied interior decorating, finally aligning with my love for beauty and transformation. I opened a boutique from home and built a creative life around my children—selling decor, clothes, and hosting empowering women's mornings.

It wasn't always easy. People took advantage of my trusting nature. But those lessons taught me strength, boundaries, and the importance of protecting your own light.



### FINDING MY VOICE THROUGH MRS. GLOBE

Years later, I launched Mrs. Globe South Africa to inspire and uplift women. The platform helped me rediscover my voice—but behind the scenes, politics and misuse broke my spirit. After Housewives of Pretoria, I sold the pageant and stepped into a deeper personal transformation.

Through the WIN Foundation course, I began to understand emotional abuse and narcissism—things I'd lived through but never had the language for. It gave me the strength to walk away from a 27-year marriage, with grace and clarity.

"Awareness is power. I stopped carrying others' pain as my own."

### LETTING GO, LETTING GOD

Letting go brought me healing. I leaned into faith, therapy, and coaching. I stopped controlling outcomes and let God move in my life.

And then—love came back.

Today, I've reconnected with Pierre, the love of my life from 35 years ago. Life brought us back together after we each

walked similar paths of growth and heartbreak. Now, with fuller hearts and deeper wisdom, we have a second chance.

"Our timing wasn't wrong—it was just unfinished. Now, love feels whole."

### THE HEART OF WHO I AM

Motherhood will always be my most cherished title. My daughter Amike is my best friend, and Bernard, my son, is soaring toward his dream of becoming a pilot. My greatest joy is seeing them thrive.

I've worn many hats—pharmacist, entrepreneur, TV personality, speaker—but my essence is constant: a woman who believes in becoming, again and again.

### IT'S NEVER TOO LATE TO BLOOM

My story is one of rising, loving, learning, and beginning again. Life doesn't start at 20, 30, or 50. It starts the moment you choose it.

"To every woman: start now. Dream now. Bloom now. There is always time."



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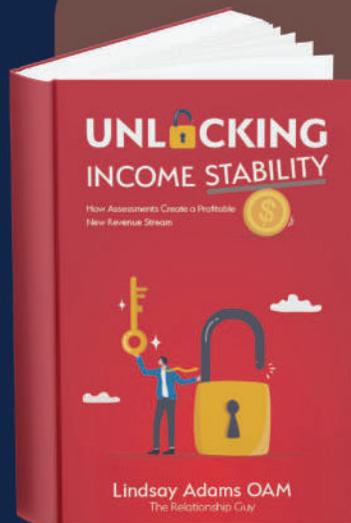
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## ABOUT US

24x7 Assessments is Australia's leading assessment platform that was built specifically for professionals like you, to make a more serious impact and become more valuable.

## CORPORATE RETENTION

LOYALTY *OVER* PAY*The Ultimate Advantage*

Written by Andre Norman

**T**he first time I ever spoke in a corporate setting, I was terrified. I had traveled from America to London Business School. I'd been invited to do a training for an international bank, and I'd never stepped foot in a place like that before. I wasn't a banker. I didn't speak that language. And I wasn't sure what I could say that would actually land with a room full of executives in suits.

So, before I began my talk, I asked one question of the men in attendance: *"What can I do to make this the best talk ever?"*

The CEO stood and said, *"Andre, don't talk to us in banking terms. Tell us your story. Trust that we're smart enough to draw the lines."*

That changed everything.

I gave the most dynamic talk of my life — and it ended with a standing ovation.

At lunch, I sat with a few members of the C-suite. One of them told me about a VP on their team who had been negotiating a major contract. Halfway through the deal, the guy left to join a competitor. Same industry. Same contract. But now, he was working for the other side. Just like that, they knew the deal was as good as lost.

I looked around the table and asked, *"How did he walk out of your company and start working against you like that?"*

One of them shrugged. *"It happens all the time,"* he said. *"They get offered more money, and they leave."*

I sat with that for a minute. Because where I come from, it doesn't work like that.

I was once sentenced to over 100 years in maximum security. I was the top gang leader in the state prison system, running contraband operations from the inside. Eventually, I landed in solitary confinement, where I started rebuilding my life. After 14 years behind bars, I earned my freedom. But my time as a prison boss taught me everything I know about leadership.

I told the group, *"I ran a gang for many years, and never did a member quit on us and go join an opposing gang and shoot back at us. Some left and joined the church, some moved away to start over. But they didn't flip sides like that. To me, that was inconceivable. We taught loyalty. We taught our people what it meant to be part of something bigger than themselves."*

I saw people take bullets and still come back to the same corner the next day.  
I saw people give up their lives, their freedom, everything. Not for money — but for loyalty.

The banker looked at me and asked, *"Can you teach our people that kind of loyalty?"*

**We sat down after lunch and built something real:**  
A corporate retention strategy based on the same loyalty principles I'd learned in the streets.  
Built on community.  
Built on purpose.  
Built on something stronger than money.

## THE 4 FOUNDATIONAL PRINCIPLES TO BUILDING A LOYAL TEAM

### 1. Build a Shared Identity

People don't stay because of contracts. They stay because they see themselves as part of something bigger. When I first arrived in prison, scared and unsure, my gang leader Dominic took me under his wing. He showed me the ropes. He made me feel like I belonged. That is what a shared identity does — it turns fear into commitment. In your company, don't just fill roles. Build a culture where people belong, where they feel part of something they're proud to represent.

### 2. Foster Purpose Beyond Profit

Money motivates, but purpose inspires. Our mission wasn't about a paycheck — it was about survival, legacy, and community. I saw people risk their lives, not for cash, but because they believed in what we stood for. Your business needs the same depth of purpose. When people understand how their work impacts lives and creates lasting change, they stay loyal through the ups and downs.

### 3. Build Unbreakable Trust

In my world, trust wasn't optional. You either trusted your crew with your life, or you didn't roll with them at all. Dominic showed me what unbreakable trust looks like.



Even after I left prison, I raised money, got him a lawyer, and overturned his sentence. That's trust that runs deep. In business, trust is built through consistency, transparency, and having your people's backs — every single day.

#### 4. Lead with Ride-or-Die Commitment

Loyalty starts at the top.

If you want your people to go the distance, you have to show them you're committed to them. Invest in their growth. Stand by them in hard times. Celebrate their wins and lift them up when they fall.

When your team knows you're with them, no matter what, they'll move mountains for you.

#### Here's the truth:

You can't buy loyalty. You build it.

One relationship at a time.

One conversation at a time.

One shared mission at a time.

When you do, your people won't just stick around for the paycheck. They'll stay because they believe in what you've built — and they'll fight to protect it.

Ready to build that kind of loyalty in your organization? Reach out, and let's start building together.

FREEDOM

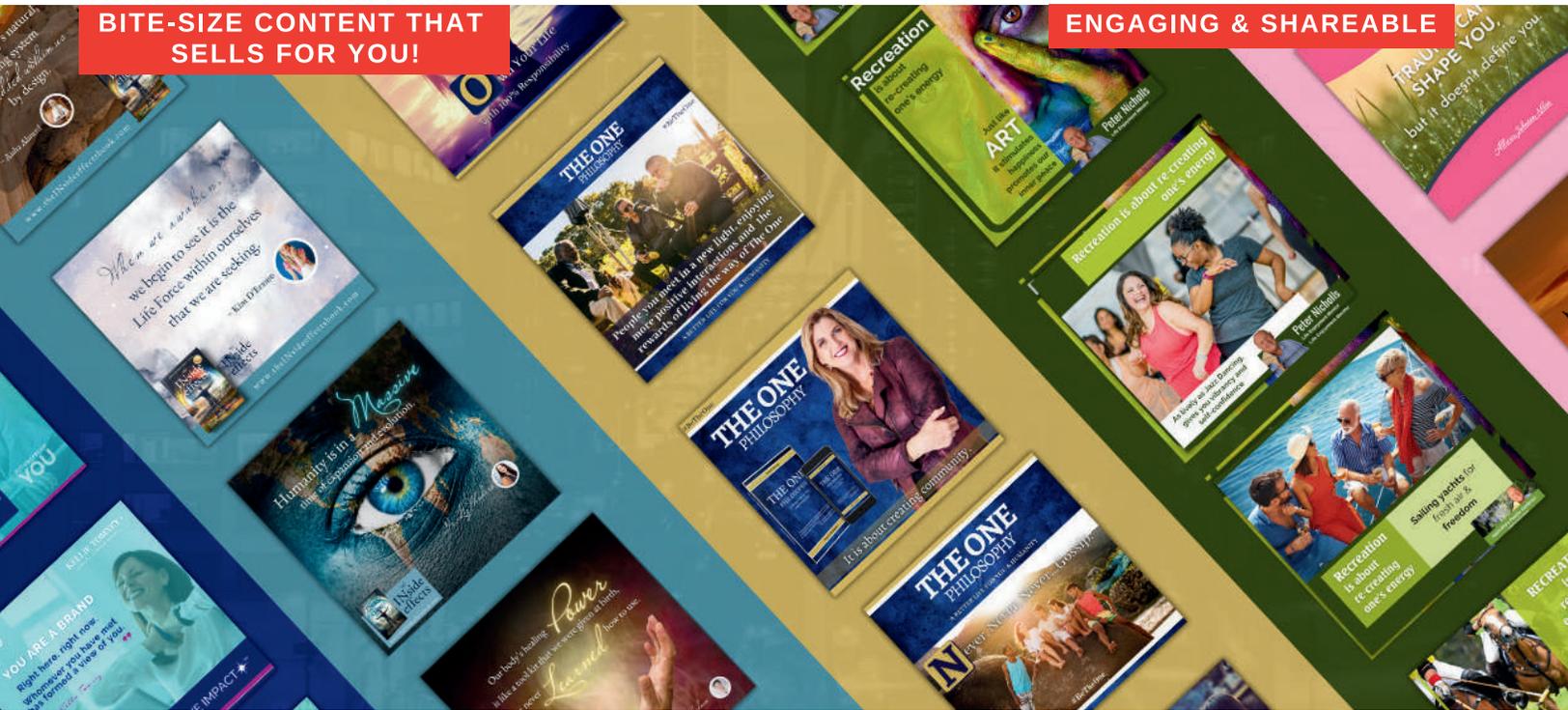




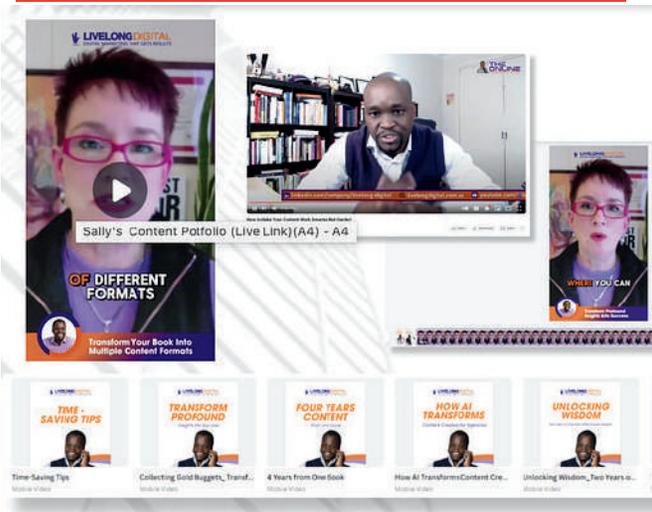
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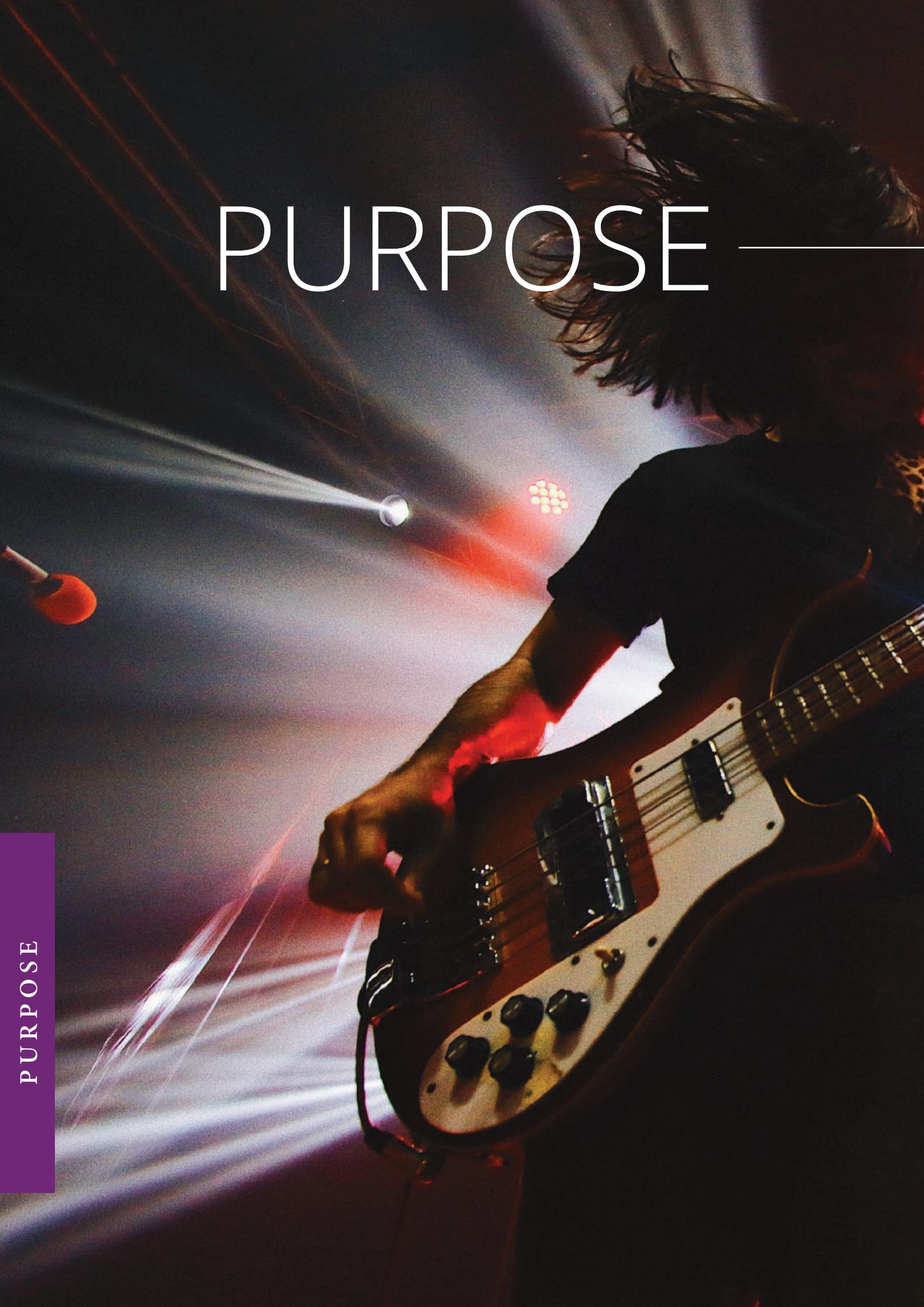


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**MONETIZE YOUR CONTENT**

# PURPOSE

A photograph of a musician playing an electric guitar on stage. The musician is seen from the side, wearing a black t-shirt. The guitar is a dark-colored electric guitar with a white pickguard. The stage is lit with dramatic, low-key lighting, featuring beams of white light and a prominent red light source. A microphone with a red pop filter is visible on the left side of the frame. The overall mood is energetic and artistic.

PURPOSE



*When making a difference is as important as making a profit*

PURPOSE

# LIVE LIFE EXTRAORDINARILY!



Written by Landi Jac

PURPOSE

**W**hen people approach us, it's usually because they want to play a bigger game in business and life.

They want to be prosperous and make a difference.

They love freedom—to do what they want, when they want, with whom they want.

They seek purpose: that one thing that gets you out of bed each morning.

We guide them through world-class business solutions. They attend our annual Business School at an exquisite resort in Bali. We discuss ways to productise your business, achieve premium pricing through global positioning, and master deep sales psychology, the latest marketing trends,

and maximum impact as a leader. All fascinating topics, but they're usually not the number one thing people want to know.

### **Time and time again, I'm asked: "Who am I?" "Why am I here?" "What am I meant to do?"**

We always start with the most obvious clues, like, "What did you enjoy doing as a child?" But this rarely satisfies. The questions grow more urgent, deeper. People seek meaning—more than just a reconciliation of their lives, a strengths-finder test, or casual feedback from peers.

I've noticed an insatiable dissatisfaction in people's lives. It's deeper than boredom and hungrier than personal development. In conversations, people are desperately seeking themselves. They're starving for answers, trying to remember who they were before "life happened," as they call it.

#### **PEOPLE ARE SEEKING THEIR ESSENCE**

Ultimately, most of our "business sessions" turn into dream analysis, natal charts, ancient Chinese astrology, interpreting signs and synchronicities, delving into life after death, spiritual questions, and whatever else is needed to lead a person back to their Self.

Together, we embark on a quest for clarity—a place where the road opens up as the fog begins to clear. This is the single thing that makes people ecstatically happy. Not international travel, not landing massive deals (though they often achieve these anyway), and not a more streamlined sales funnel—just a better understanding of who they are, how they got here, and the best way forward.

#### **THIS IS WHERE THE MAGIC HAPPENS**

Every time we open the door to a person's true voice, wonderful things start to happen. It amazes me how many people were raised by parents who never truly knew them. Then, later in life, a lightning bolt strikes, and they suddenly wake up, thinking, "Hey! This is not what I signed up for!" Or worse, "Where am I in all of this?"

If you're already on the path of self-discovery, you're in a good place. Rabbit holes may be scary to jump into, but what you find on the other side can be incredibly rewarding. Beyond the unknown lies a treasure beyond your wildest imagination—YOU. The true version that is suffocating and begging to show its face.

There's a clear difference between the leaders in our community who develop products and services for a well-defined target market but leave themselves out of it. It's the people who are brave enough to weave their personal preferences and passions into their business solutions who have the most fun.

#### **YOU ARE NOT MEANT TO LIVE A BORING LIFE**

When you say YES! to yourself, it's as if the different parts



of you turn into magnets. Your consulting career, obsession with coffee, and love for poetry become one, irresistibly colliding into a single message to the world. You're no longer split into a personal and professional brand, and your story becomes one powerful testimony of a human being who dares to express everything they are. You don't have to operate in silos.

Some of the most successful people on this planet are those who have given up—not on life, but on the impossible task of being something different for everyone they meet. It's exhausting to maintain a stiff upper lip during the week, hide your inner poet, and only get excited about your passions on weekends. Why can't all of you fit within one cohesive brand personality? Why look for differentiators outside yourself when everything you need is already within?

### **ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS BE HONEST AND SHOW YOURSELF**

You may find so much joy in your inner landscape that external distractions no longer thrill you or throw you off balance. Spend a day on social media and see for yourself. People who create their own reality use social media to observe, encourage, and educate. It's the preachers, trolls, and doomsayers who are uninterested in themselves. If you live your life blaming others, you lose the opportunity to share your unique gifts with the world.

What gives you joy is the key to an impeccable life. It's my definition of sovereignty because the moment you see yourself, you align your business and life with the real you—not the imprinted person carrying old patterns and borrowed ideas of reality. A person who knows themselves can love all parts of their being, knowing they are forever unfolding like an onion. They can love more deeply, discern which clients they want to serve, and show the world what their version of boundaries looks like.

The seeker of Self is the one who enters a room, and their presence is felt because self reflection takes courage. Facing the music builds authority. It fosters confidence and trust in the decisions you make. When the lines blur between your true self and your professional brand, you can no longer solve problems without aligning with your passions. Your business deals become values-driven, and the way you treat loved ones naturally becomes part of your legacy.

### **YOU LEARN WHAT GIVES YOU ENERGY AND WHAT BRINGS YOU DOWN**

People get stuck in worlds of their own creation. That's not what I want for you. Don't wait for life to pull the rug out from under you before you surrender to the truth. Knowing yourself is your heritage. It's the key that opens doors to your next chapter, your next level, and the smile on your face that you so richly deserve. Stop looking at the world around you and face yourself. I want to see the real you—the one who came here to live an extraordinary life.

Landi Jac's extensive travel and work in over 50 countries have earned her the reputation of a Global Citizen. As CEO of the Circle of Excellence Group, Landi is known for her high energy, global community, and jet-setter lifestyle.

As a sought-after international speaker, she shares insights, learnings, and trends from around the world on Global Brand Mastery, Building a Business that Fuels an Extraordinary Lifestyle, and Holistic High Performance for Entrepreneurs.

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 +27 83-678-6450





FF

Consciousness is not about  
being perfect or the impact  
you make; it's the capacity to  
love, and be loved

Landi Jac

● Play A Bigger Game

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*“The greatest influence we have isn’t in our titles or fame - it’s in how we show up for the people who matter most.”*



# PLAYING A BIGGER GAME

## LESSONS FROM AN OLYMPIAN

President, South African Olympians Association  
Olympian | Tech Entrepreneur | Cancer Survivor | Keynote Speaker

Written by Steve Evans OLY

**F**rom the moment I picked up a hockey stick as a young boy, I dreamt of wearing green and gold on the world’s biggest stage. Like most worthwhile dreams, the path to becoming an Olympian was anything but smooth. I faced setbacks, injuries, and seasons of doubt. There were moments when walking away would have been easier. But each of those struggles became a brick in the foundation of something far more valuable than talent - resilience.

Much of that resilience was first modelled to me by my parents. Mum and Dad were both accomplished players; however, what stood out wasn’t just their love for the game, but the effort they put in - their work ethic, commitment to their team, and the lifelong friendships through the sport. They’ve been my ultimate role models - then and now. That resilience was tested years later, off the field, when

I was diagnosed with cancer. It’s the kind of moment that forces you to pause and ask: *What really matters now?* Looking back, I see those defining chapters as preparation for something bigger: shaping the next generation of conscious leaders.

Let’s be clear - playing a bigger game doesn’t mean chasing applause. It means aligning with your purpose. It means evolving when it would be easier to stagnate. It’s about turning your wins, wounds, setbacks, and comebacks into a roadmap for others.

### FROM THE PITCH TO PURPOSE

I’ve lived many lives: Olympian, entrepreneur, cancer survivor, keynote speaker, father, and now President of the South African Olympians Association. If there’s one truth that unites them, it’s this: **growth begins when we choose**

to show up fully - with courage, clarity, and purpose.

My Olympic journey was anything but linear. Selected into the national squad at 18, I missed out on every major international tournament between 1994 and 2002 - including two World Cups, a Commonwealth Games, and both the Atlanta and Sydney Olympics. The most devastating blow came in 2000, when our team was withdrawn from Sydney on political grounds, despite qualifying through Africa.

After a few seasons in the UK, I finally found my stride - competing at the Commonwealth Games in 2002, captaining South Africa at the inaugural Indoor Hockey World Cup in 2003, and being named SA Player of the Year.

Yet the road to Athens 2004 brought more heartbreak. We lost to Egypt in extra time at the African qualifier. One last shot remained - the FIH Olympic qualifier in Madrid. Despite being the lowest-ranked team, we stunned Belgium in sudden-death shootouts to claim the final Olympic spot!

These defining chapters taught me that setbacks aren't the end of the story. They're the beginning of purpose. Because the truth is: **our most powerful leadership moments are rarely our most public. They're how we choose to respond when no one's watching.**

#### THE HERO FORMULA: A MODEL FOR CONSCIOUS GROWTH

Ironically, the framework that would shape my leadership philosophy only came to me after I had retired from international sport, during a leadership seminar in London in 2005.

It's called the H'ERO Formula: **Event + Response = Outcome**

We can't control the events life throws at us, but our response shapes the outcome - in sport, leadership, and life. What has mattered most in my journey is how I showed up. The energy I brought. The intention behind every action.

This is the essence of conscious leadership. It's not about having all the answers. It's about pausing, reflecting, and choosing your next move - with clarity, awareness, and purpose.

*“True leadership is about the decisions you make under pressure in those moments of emotional uncertainty.”*

The HERO Formula isn't a theory. It's about living in high-stakes moments, making quiet decisions, and recovering with grace and courage.

One of the most important roles I've ever had, one with the highest stakes and that grounds me daily, is being present as a father. In a world that's always on, fuelled by hustle and distraction, **presence is a superpower.**

My children don't care how many businesses I'm involved in - they care whether I'm listening, whether I'm available, and

whether I show up with love, energy, and integrity. This presence also shapes how I lead - with empathy, emotional intelligence, and conscious action.

*“The greatest influence we have isn't in our titles or fame - it's in how we show up for the people who matter most.”*



Marcelle Matthews OLY, SA Olympian #322,  
Figure Skating, Squaw Valley 1960

#### OLYMPISM AND LEGACY

In 2024, I was honoured to be elected President of the South African Olympians Association - not as a title, but as a mission.

South Africa has produced extraordinary athletes. But too often, our Olympians are celebrated once and then forgotten. Their wisdom and lived experience go untapped. My vision is to build a **culture of lifelong Olympism**, where athletes become mentors, educators, and leaders long after their final whistle.

*“An Olympian's greatest contribution often comes after the Games are over.”*

We're launching school programmes, mentorship networks, and community initiatives to reconnect Olympians with the next generation - not as celebrities, but as role models of resilience, discipline, and human potential.

The greatest threat facing our children today may not be economic instability, or global warming - it's disconnection.

From nature. From purpose. From one another.  
We're raising a generation trapped in an infinite scroll of curated lives and dopamine-driven distraction. The result? Overstimulated, underdeveloped kids - emotionally, socially, and spiritually.

### Sport is one of the most powerful antidotes we have.

It teaches how to win and lose. How to fail and recover. How to play by the rules, collaborate, regulate emotion, and manage energy. It is the ultimate training ground for life. That's why my vision as President includes embedding Olympism in schools - not as history, but as a living value system. Imagine every child with access to Olympians as mentors - not just showing them how to win, but how to live.

### TECH FOR GOOD: INNOVATION WITH INTENTION

I'm a structural engineer by training - a strategic hedge that supported my hockey career while sharpening my problem-solving skills, but I've always been drawn to entrepreneurship. I thrive in that space between creativity and strategy where ideas are turned into impact. After cancer forced me to re-evaluate everything in 2010, I pivoted into tech, building fintech and messaging solutions for a big venture capital fund. That's where I saw technology's potential - not as an industry, but as a tool to scale good ideas successfully.

Today, through Stampede Enterprises, I guide startups and medium-sized businesses worldwide, with a focus on emerging technologies such as WhatsApp automation, AI chatbots, and the future of sports and media platforms. What sets our work apart is the mindset behind the build: we lead with clarity, design with empathy, and build solutions that are human-centred and purpose-aligned.

*“Technology should never replace our humanity - it should reinforce it.”*

Ultimately, technology is just a tool. It doesn't create purpose. We do.

### PLAYING A BIGGER GAME

Legacy is shaped by how we show up when no one's watching - the quiet choices, the acts of integrity, the decision to lead with purpose when it would be easier not to. That's what playing a bigger game means to me. It's about leading consciously in our businesses, families, and communities - with clarity, courage, and compassion.

“Conscious leadership isn't theory. It's how culture changes - one decision, one moment, one person at a time.”

So, if you're wondering whether it's time to lead with more intention, more heart, and more impact, it is.

This is the moment. Let's play a bigger game - together, and on purpose.

Steve Evans OLY is a South African hockey Olympian, tech entrepreneur, and peak performance specialist. He helps businesses embrace technology through product strategy, solution design, and outsourced CTO services - with a focus on human-centred innovation and purpose-driven growth.

Steve is also the newly elected President of the South African Olympians Association and on a mission to create a culture of Olympism in South Africa and the next generation of conscious leaders. Over his international career, he earned 96 caps for South Africa and competed at the 2004 Athens Olympic Games. He also captained the national indoor team at the inaugural Indoor Hockey World Cup in Leipzig in 2003 - a proud chapter in his family's legacy of South African hockey excellence.

When he's not leading from the front in sport or tech, Steve is most at home with his wife and three children, who continue to inspire his mission to build a more conscious, connected world - one decision, one moment, one game at a time.



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— Laura Baxter

”

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1930's Market 100cm x 130cm (2024)

# LORD

# ROBERT WALKER'S

## VIBRANT ODYSSEY IN ART & CONSCIOUSNESS

Written by Lord Robert Walker

**R**obert Walker was born in Bradford, West Yorkshire, England in 1960. As long as he can remember he was devoted to creating art, and became interested initially in ceramics.

At the age of 15 some of his ceramic pieces were exhibited at Goosewell Gallery nearby. He later discovered that one of his pieces had been purchased by David Hockney's mother; a prescient event, as this was his first point of contact with an artist who was to shape his creative direction and become a close friend.

Robert went on to study at Bradford Art College and later at Bristol Polytechnic. He specialised in ceramics, and in 1981 was one of only three students to graduate that year with First Class Honours.

Robert's work in both ceramics and painting has been widely exhibited and is now in many leading collections around the world. One of his leading patrons, Her Grace the Duchess of Devonshire wrote the following; *"Robert is one of my favourite artists. I admire his bold use of colour, and I am delighted to own his work in my private collection."*

The early '90's was a pivotal period for Robert. A time when he found painting beginning to become important to him. He describes this time as a 'Damascene conversion'. For him the move from ceramics to painting came as a dawning realisation that unlike ceramics, with paint, the artist is in complete control of the whole process until the final brushstrokes are applied and the work is completed.

At this time Robert worked with a muted palette, reflecting the low light and damp atmosphere of his native Yorkshire. This was soon to change. In 1991 he was introduced to David Hockney, who had also grown up in Bradford, and was an old boy of Bradford Grammar School where Robert was Head of Art at the time.

David subsequently invited Robert to come to his home in Los Angeles to paint and work with him in his studio. This was a pivotal event for Robert. He found himself working alongside his friend of now 40 years, in David's California

studio. Hockney's flamboyant use of colour transformed Robert's artwork. An influence that cannot be overstated and has resonated in his paintings from that time. Robert's paintings are now emblazoned by a stunning, bold colour palette. Hockney's influence is very visible. It is wonderful to see how a creative collaboration can influence both parties. Robert declares: *"My discovery of colour with David came as a revelation. My work became more joyous."*

Robert's approach to his art has always been stimulated and shaped by new experiences and environments. Subsequent to his time with Hockney, Robert threw in his lot in England to travel around South East Asia, searching for new experiences and inspiration.

He explored the trade routes of Malacca, visiting the long houses of the Dayak tribes in Borneo, and the villages of Myanmar. He travelled along the coastal areas of East Malaysia and Indonesia, eventually settling in Bali.

Here he has created a beautiful home where he paints in his open studio in a lush tropical garden of his own making. Stepping into Robert's world reveals an oasis of beauty, tranquillity and joy. Lush tropical greenery interlaced with abundant orchids in bloom; trickling water flowing into a huge koi pond; and birdsong mixing with the strains of classical music and perhaps a sprinkling of Gershwin tunes.





*Sunrise Temple 140cm x 140cm (2024)*



*Gathering Balinese 100cm x 120cm (2025)*

His sprawling house is a calming retreat, shared with various rescued and pampered local dogs. In his travels Robert has amassed a large collection of beautiful antique oriental china and ceramics, and many artifacts, dating back to before the time of Ghengis Khan. Robert has truly created a Balinese 'Briigadoon' or 'Shangri-La'.

Here is an idyll where he spends his days depicting on canvas his interpretations of life in Bali. Colours blaze in scenes of the Bali landscape. Markets, jungle and volcano vistas; fishermen and rice farmers; wonderful faces; and temple scenes. His work clearly translating the visceral bond of the local people, whose Hindu spirituality and devotions forges them in mind, body and soul to this stunning archipelago.

It is easy to see why a Yorkshire gentleman decided to forgo his tweeds and brogues, and the chilly daily existence of the English seasons to embrace this tropical environment which would enable him to grow as an artist and environmentalist.

Robert's passion for local birds has led him to visit a nearby market, where he purchases caged baby birds. Many are little owls, who he nurtures and protects until they can fly about the house, and leave when they choose. To date he has fostered and released back to the wild 76 birds.

Robert has been living in South East Asia for the past fifteen years. Ten of which have been in Bali, his spiritual home and inspiration.

**THE FOLLOWING IS A CRITIQUE OF ROBERT'S WORK BY ANASTASIA BEZGUBOVA. MEMBER OF THE ASSOCIATION OF INTERNATIONAL ART CRITICS (AICA) MOSCOW**

In the paintings of Robert Walker there is a boundary between reality and the artist's imagination, which is able to set some on the wave of real life, and others - to bring the creator's thoughts to the pulsating nerve.

If we set the task to characterise the style of Robert Walker



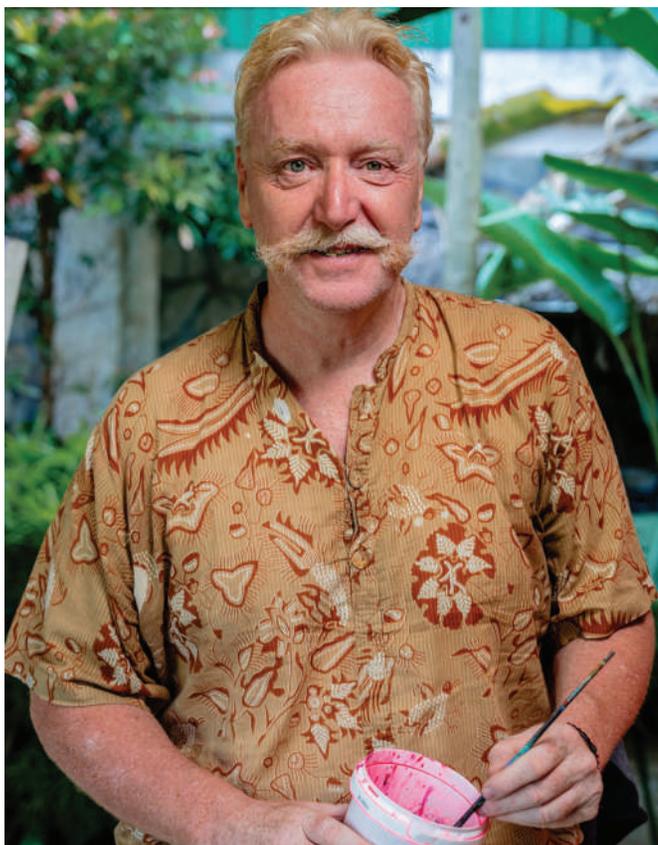
*Rice Field Tabanan 45cm x 150cm (2020)*

in one phrase, then perhaps it would be most appropriate to call it "The style of only Robert Walker". It will be quite difficult to find parallels 'neo pop art, neo abstraction or trans avant-garde'. Perhaps in this wording "the style of Robert Walker ", will be the uniqueness of his world view, the special optics of his perception.

An exceptionally important quality of Walker's work seems to be the large format of his work, and in small works - the potential of them to go to large format. In a world where we often scrupulously and carefully look for the same flaws; when the details seem to be just a manifestation of imperfection, the brilliance and luminosity of pure colour spots reveal a primordial nature of our feelings and sensations, making them meaningful to us again. The landscapes of Robert Walker seem to be portals to another heavenly reality, on which, according to the poet, we are stepping for the first time. These are portals into which you enter naked in soul or body, with the timidity of the uninitiated, perhaps initiated into the secrets of the universe.

Despite the airiness and luminosity of Walker's canvases, each centimetre of them has the density of the venous grid of being. The sky is often absent in the composition of the landscape, and like children's drawings, they sometimes show an absolute unwillingness to discover the possible emptiness of the world. But every stroke, every spot in Walker's painting speaks of a fierce and indomitable thirst to live, to search, to explain the phenomena, signs and meanings that arise in the world.

Robert Walker's ability to comprehend the world, bypassing a clear figurative reality, to transform the motifs of nature (palm trees, lianas, reeds, shoots and bamboo) playing it's indefatigable diversity into large colour spots and their contrast creates Walker's recognisable style in which the capacity and integrity of the artist's vision remove the boundaries between the European world and the exotic world of East Asia.



*Balinese Girl 130cm x 100cm*



*Ducks Herder 60cm x 80cm (2022)*

Robert's work can be collected through his agent Ketut Sumberjaya and he can be contacted on his instagram account @walkerrobertian, or email to Lordrobertianwalker@hotmail.com or WhatsApp on +62 822-3764-8782



# DAN PATLANSKY

## A MODERN BLUES MAESTRO

Written by Rachelle Crous

**W**ith a career spanning over a decade and eleven studio albums, Dan Patlansky has cemented his reputation as one of the most formidable blues-rock guitarists of his generation. His exceptional storytelling, masterful guitar prowess, and relentless dedication to the genre have garnered him international acclaim. Recognized by Blues Rock Review USA as having two worldwide #1 and two worldwide #2 best Blues Rock albums, Patlansky stands alongside legendary names like Joe Bonamassa as a defining voice in modern blues.

### A JOURNEY THROUGH MUSIC

Born in South Africa, Patlansky's journey into blues music was deeply personal. From an early age, he was captivated by the soul-stirring power of the genre and sought to carve his own niche within it. Over the years, his music has evolved, blending traditional blues with a contemporary edge, earning him a devoted following worldwide.

His 2014 album 'Dear Silence Thieves', produced by Theo Crous, was a breakthrough moment. Voted the #1 Blues Rock Album of the Year by Blues Rock Review USA, it catapulted Patlansky into the international spotlight. The album's success led to extensive touring across the UK, Poland, the Netherlands, and Germany, earning him rave reviews in the European press.

Following the success of 'Dear Silence Thieves', he released 'Introvertigo' in 2016, another critically acclaimed record that cemented his place in the blues-rock world. The album was once again voted the Best Blues Rock Album of the Year by Blues Rock Review USA, making Patlansky the first artist to top the list twice.

### SHARING THE STAGE WITH LEGENDS

Patlansky's talent has not gone unnoticed by the greats of the industry. In February 2014, he was handpicked by Bruce Springsteen to open for him at the FNB Stadium in Johannesburg, South Africa, playing to a crowd of 64,000 - his largest audience to date. In 2015, legendary guitarist Joe Satriani invited Patlansky as a special guest on his UK Shockwave tour, spanning 25 shows across ten countries. His collaborations continued in 2016 when he joined award-winning blues rock band King King for their UK tour, performing in Germany, the Netherlands, and the UK. His reputation as a phenomenal live performer has seen him return to Europe time and again, sharing stages with the likes of Joanne Shaw Taylor and Walter Trout. His relentless touring schedule and electrifying performances have solidified his standing as a top-tier blues artist. In November 2025, he will be performing as special guest on Bywater Call's UK tour for nine shows across the country.

### THE EVOLUTION OF A SOUND

Patlansky's 2018 release, 'Perfection Kills', showcased his continuous evolution as an artist. The album, recorded in his hometown of Pretoria, was a raw and unapologetic take on Blues Rock, capturing the essence of his live performances. It was voted the #2 Best Blues Rock Album of 2018 by Blues Rock Review USA, while Total Guitar and MusicRadar ranked him the 9th Best Blues Guitarist in the world that same year.

After winning the South African Music Award (SAMA) for Best Rock Album in 2019, Patlansky shifted focus to writing and online teaching during the pandemic. This period of reflection led to the creation of his 2022 album, 'Shelter of Bones'. A deeply personal record, it was recorded over three years and reflected the highs and lows of his journey. The album was met with widespread acclaim, earning the #2 spot on Blues Rock Review's Best Blues Rock Albums of 2022 and a spot among Classic Rock Magazine's Top 5 Albums of the Year.

### MOVIN' ON: A DEFINING RECORD

In 2024, Patlansky released 'Movin' On', an album he describes as an unfiltered and relentless representation of his artistry. Stripping back excessive production, he aimed to capture the raw energy of a live performance and crafted an album that is raw, honest, and unapologetically true to his identity as an artist.

The journey to 'Movin' On' began in January 2023, when Patlansky embarked on a new creative process alongside collaborators Andy Maritz and Greg Van Kerkhof. Unlike his



previous projects, where he leaned heavily on his solo songwriting, this time he sought a fresh perspective. "Andy and Greg are exceptional songwriters," Patlansky explains. "They brought something new and exciting to the table, helping shape the album in a way that felt both familiar and entirely new."

The album was recorded at Drumheadz, Andy Maritz's studio in Johannesburg, with Maritz also taking on the role of co-producer. For Patlansky, this partnership was crucial in realizing his vision. "Andy understood exactly what I was going for. I didn't want overproduced, polished tracks - I wanted the album to feel as raw and immediate as a live performance," he says.

The result? A no-nonsense, unfiltered blues-rock record that captures Patlansky's signature grit and passion. "Movin' On' is all about going back to my roots - playing and writing the music I love the most," he shares. "This is, without a doubt, my most honest and raw offering to date. The older I get, the more important it is for me to stay true to what I believe in musically."

The album's title track, 'Movin' On', serves as the thematic heartbeat of the record. Not only does it encapsulate Patlansky's personal and artistic evolution, but it also struck a chord with audiences throughout 2023. "Every time we performed it live, I could feel the connection. It resonated in a way that made it clear - this was the perfect title for the album," he reflects.

More than just an album, 'Movin' On' is a statement. It's a testament to Patlansky's unwavering dedication to his craft and his refusal to compromise for commercial appeal. "This record is who I am. It's about rediscovering what makes me tick musically and leaving the past behind," he says. "I wanted to create something I love without worrying about anything else."

Upon release, he embarked on an extensive South African album launch tour, followed by an international tour across the UK and Hungary. Later in the year, he took his Unplugged & Unfiltered acoustic show on the road before touring the Netherlands, Germany, and Belgium. By December 2024, 'Movin' On' was voted the #3 Blues Rock Album of the Year by Blues Rock Review USA, further solidifying his place among the blues elite.

#### AWARDS AND ACCOLADES

Patlansky's contributions to Blues Rock have been recognized with numerous awards and nominations. From multiple Blues Rock Review #1 and #2 album rankings to a SAMA Award for Best Rock Album, his impact on the genre is undeniable. Notably, 'Dear Silence Thieves' and 'Introvertigo' both topped Blues Rock Review's album charts, while 'Perfection Kills' and 'Shelter of Bones' continued his streak of top-tier releases.

His prowess as a guitarist has been acknowledged by Total Guitar Magazine, which ranked him among the top 10 rock guitarists in the world. Additionally, he has received

nominations from Planet Rock Radio and British Blues Awards, further underscoring his influence in the Blues Rock community.

#### A LEGACY IN THE MAKING

With each album, Dan Patlansky continues to push the boundaries of blues rock while staying true to the essence of the genre. His ability to seamlessly blend powerful guitar riffs with emotive storytelling has earned him a place among the greats. Whether through his electrifying live performances, masterful recordings, or dedication to nurturing the next generation of musicians, Patlansky's influence on the blues rock landscape is undeniable.

As he moves forward, one thing remains certain - Dan Patlansky is not just playing the blues; he is redefining it.

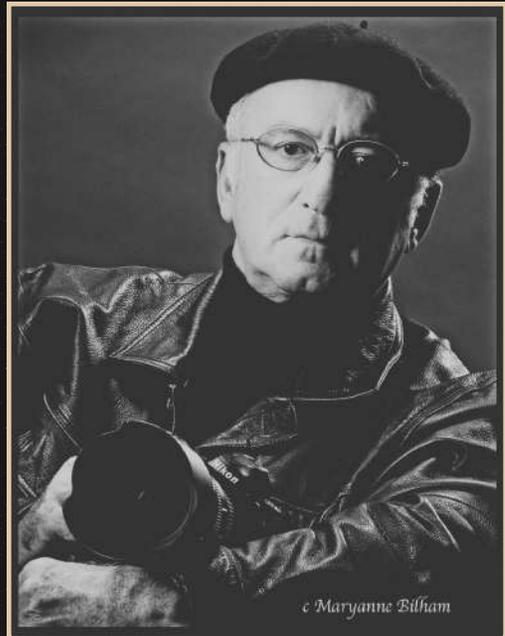


✦ THE UNHERALDED SAGES OF OLD ✦

# ROCK STARS

## THE ICON: ROBERT M. KNIGHT

Robert M. Knight is 'the' premier rock photographer of all time. If you owned a Hendrix t-shirt or Led Zeppelin, then chances are he took the photo. Visit: <https://knightbilham.co.nz> and check out some of his incredible work.

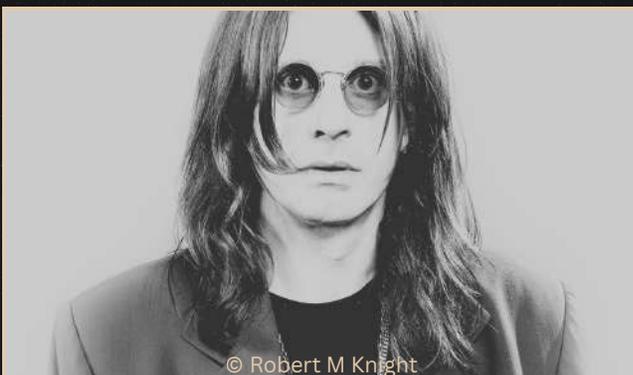


# R.I.P. OZZY & ACE

Ozzy Osbourne may have been 'the prince of darkness' but his humour lit up households worldwide.

The brash rockstars that your mother warned you about have aged into Sages. Ozzy opened up his home and made our dysfunction normal and Ace Frehley from Kiss inspired a generation to pick up a guitar.

Ace Frehley was loose but when he turned down \$15M in 1982, because it breached his values, he set a new stage for us.



WE MUST BECOME THE MASTERS WE HELD UP IN OUR YOUTH



# AI

## HOW ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IS IMPACTING THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

Written by Imam Aghay

### INTRODUCTION: THE AI REVOLUTION IN THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

When generative AI became widely popular with the boom of ChatGPT in the last quarter of 2023, it caused a wave of confusion and uncertainty.

Some people feared losing their jobs. Others worried about authenticity and integrity. Some organizations banned AI entirely, while others went all in, integrating it into every aspect of their business and personal lives.

Today, we see two main groups: early adopters, who are leveraging AI to their advantage, and those who are late to the party, now scrambling to catch up.

Like any technology, AI can be used for good or misused for harmful purposes—whether it's misinformation campaigns, deepfakes, or unethical data manipulation. While security experts, policymakers, and legal professionals focus on addressing the risks and regulating AI, my focus is on how you, as a thought leader, can use AI to create a greater positive impact in the world.

By adopting the right tools and strategies, we are

witnessing one of the most remarkable technological revolutions in history—one that has the power to amplify leadership, accelerate innovation, and create more opportunities than ever before.

### LIFTING THE LIMITS OF EACH INDIVIDUAL

One of the biggest challenges for entrepreneurs has always been dealing with their personal limitations.

For example, English is my second language, and writing complex concepts has always been challenging for me—especially when it comes to grammar. Even though I'm highly skilled at writing sales copy and promotional material, every piece of content I wrote had to go through an editor or a native English-speaking team member before publication. This process meant that even simple tasks took one to two business days to complete.

Another challenge I faced was video recording. I'm not comfortable reading a script while recording, so whenever I needed to create a Video Sales Letter (VSL), I had to spend hours rehearsing and recording just to ensure I sounded natural.

Now, think about that for a moment—it would take me hours to produce a five-minute video because reading a script on camera didn't feel authentic to me.

But today, thanks to AI, these limitations no longer hold me back.

- For writing, I can draft my thoughts, input them into AI tools like ChatGPT, Claude, or DeepSeek, and get them polished for grammar and clarity within minutes instead of days.
- For video content, I can now clone my voice and video, using AI-powered tools to create high-quality VSLs and short-form content.

Now, I know the idea of cloning your voice or video can be scary. Many people immediately think about deepfakes and the unethical use of AI-generated content. But as a thought leader, you're not creating a deepfake—you're using AI to enhance your ability to communicate and connect with your audience without being constrained by technology or production barriers.

And here's the best part—AI-generated versions of me actually sound and look more natural than when I record scripted content myself!

If you want to explore this technology, Synthesia and HeyGen allow you to create video clones, while ElevenLabs enables ultra-realistic voice cloning.

The bottom line? AI removes limitations, allowing you to reach new heights, create content more efficiently, and stand out in ways you never could before.

### AI-POWERED CONTENT CREATION: THE THOUGHT LEADER'S APPROACH

One of the biggest fears surrounding AI is that it will lead

to generic, low-quality content—and this is true if you use AI incorrectly.

AI generates content based on existing data. It lacks original thought, real-world experiences, and nuanced insights. For example, when I asked AI for ideas on this very article, it suggested I write about how leaders can use AI for “rapid content creation.” While this is true, it's also basic and uninspired—lacking the depth, perspective, and originality that define true thought leadership.

This is where the human factor comes in.

- If you simply instruct AI to “write an article about [topic]”, you'll end up with generic content that lacks depth.
- If you use AI strategically—to refine, expand, or support your unique ideas—it becomes a powerful tool that enhances your thought leadership.

AI can accelerate content creation, but it's your insight, experience, and perspective that makes it valuable.

### OUTDATED OUTPUT FROM OUTDATED SOURCES

One of the biggest misconceptions about AI is that its responses are always accurate and up to date. In reality, AI often provides outdated or incorrect information.

#### Here's a real example:

A few months ago, a potential joint venture (JV) partner ran a search on me using an AI tool before our meeting. He used AI to research my background, projects, and conversation starters.

The problem? AI pulled outdated information from old sources. It got about 15% of my details correct but completely missed what I was actually working on.

As a result, he wasted 25 minutes out of our 30-minute call trying to verify information instead of having a meaningful discussion.

This is a prime example of AI failing where human connection is still superior.



When meeting someone, instead of relying solely on AI research, simply ask: *“What project are you most excited about right now that could use some JV support?”*

In just three minutes, you'll get accurate, real-time insights—something AI simply can't provide.

AI is great, but when it comes to human connection, nothing replaces human interaction.

**BEING RIGHT VS. BEING CORRECT: AI'S BIAS PROBLEM**

Another challenge with AI is that it doesn't prioritize truth—it prioritizes producing convincing answers.

As someone who has trained thousands of people on mindset and leadership, I've observed a universal truth: *Most people care more about being right than about being correct.*

When we believe in an idea—especially one that aligns with our research, experiences, and biases—it's incredibly hard to change our minds.

This is why we see divisiveness in politics, science, religion, and culture—because people prioritize proving themselves right over seeking the truth.

Now, here's where AI fits in.

AI is trained on vast amounts of conflicting research.

**For example:**

- There are studies proving a vegan diet is the healthiest choice, and studies proving a carnivore diet is optimal.
- If you ask AI to write an article supporting veganism, it will find the research to back that stance.
- If you ask it to write an article supporting carnivorousism, it will do the same.



**SO, WHICH IS CORRECT?**

AI doesn't care. It simply follows your prompt. That's why critical thinking is more important than ever in the AI era.

**As a thought leader, you have two choices:**

1. Use AI to amplify polarizing arguments and fuel division.
2. Use AI as a tool for deeper insight, balanced perspectives, and meaningful discussions.

AI doesn't think—it mimics. True thought leadership requires human discernment.

**CONCLUSION: EMBRACING AI TO ELEVATE THOUGHT LEADERSHIP**

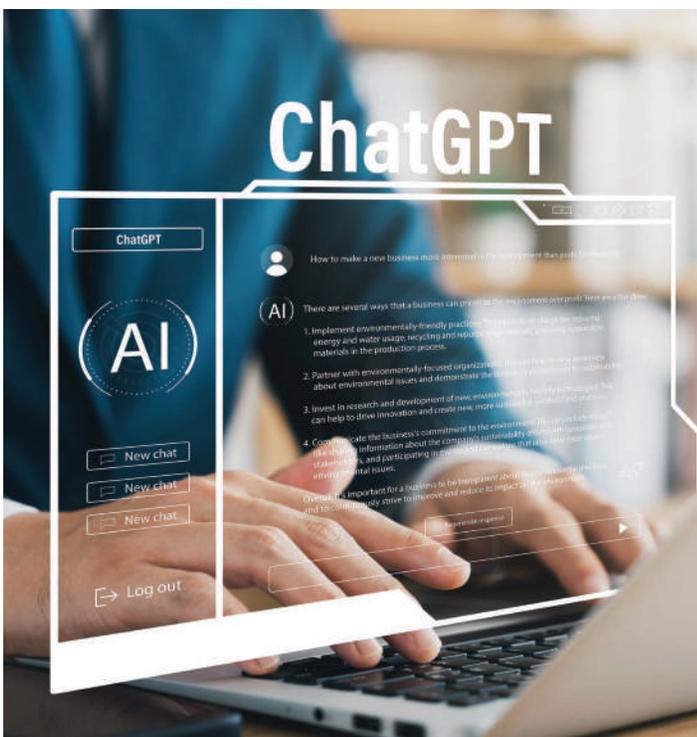
At its core, AI is just a tool—a powerful one that allows leaders to create content faster, communicate more effectively, and scale their impact.

But it's essential to use AI responsibly.

- Don't blindly trust AI-generated content.
- Don't replace human connection with automation.
- Don't sacrifice authenticity for efficiency.

Instead, use AI to elevate your leadership—while keeping your unique voice, insights, and integrity at the forefront. The world needs real thought leaders now more than ever. And with AI, you have more tools than ever before to make an even greater impact.

So, step up. Lead with wisdom. And leverage AI to transform the future of leadership.



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# SEX, POWER & TRANSFORMATION

Written by Marcia Martin

In an engaging conversation with Mike Handcock, chairman of the Circle of Excellence Group of Companies, Marcia Martin, a pivotal figure in the human potential movement, shares insights from her remarkable life and her new book, *Sex, Power, and Transformation*. With a friendship spanning nearly 18 years, Mike and Marcia dive into her experiences from the vibrant 1970's to her influential role in personal development, offering a glimpse into the light and shadow of transformation.

## THE FLOWER CHILD ERA

Marcia's story begins in 1967, when she arrived in San Francisco's Haight-Ashbury, the epicenter of the counterculture movement. "I was searching for my spiritual self, like so many others," she recalls. "We were hippies, flower children, wearing flowers in our hair, professing peace, and protesting the Vietnam War." It was a time of communal living, love, and enlightenment, set against a backdrop of significant historical events, including the assassinations of Martin Luther King Jr. and Bobby Kennedy. The era's ethos of peace and love laid the groundwork for Marcia's lifelong mission.

## THE DAWN OF PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

By 1970, the seeds of the human potential movement were sprouting. Marcia was drawn to early pioneers like Jose Silva, who conducted small seminars, and George Leonard and Michael Murphy, founders of the Esalen Institute. "We sat naked in hot tubs, talking about love, peace, and human potential," she says. In 1971, she attended a seminar led by Werner Erhard, then a trainer for Mind Dynamics, which later evolved into Erhard Seminars Training (EST) and eventually Landmark Worldwide. "There were just 31 of us in that first training," Marcia notes, marking her entry into what would become a global industry, with her at the forefront of every nuance.

Her attraction to this nascent field stemmed from a unique influence: her Aunt Gladys, a clairvoyant healer and esoteric astrologist. "She taught me about connecting with inner power and the mysteries of metaphysics," Marcia explains. At a guest seminar led by Erhard, she saw an opportunity to bring these teachings to the masses. "I wanted to be part of helping people discover their personal power and create their own futures," She saw the potential straight away and there started a friendship and business relationship that

was at sometimes profound, sometimes crazy and sometimes immensely manipulative.

### A TRAILBLAZER IN TRANSFORMATION

Marcia's role in the personal development industry was nothing short of monumental. As Vice President of EST and head of its Communication Registration Division, she was instrumental in enrolling participants. By the time she left in 1979, EST had reached more than 700,000 graduates. "I didn't enroll each one personally, but I led the campaigns, trained seminar leaders, and shared the vision," she says. Her charisma was magnetic; people were drawn to her light, with stories of chance encounters in restrooms or on buses leading to enrolments.

Beyond EST, Martin's influence extended to supporting figures like a young Tony Robbins, co-creating Jack Canfield's Transformational Leadership Council, and even organised the film shoot of *The Secret by Rhonda Byrne and Paul Harrington*, whose first year DVD sales were over \$60 Million in the USA alone. "I was often the woman behind these movements," she acknowledges, reflecting on a career that touched millions.

### THE GENESIS OF SEX, POWER, AND TRANSFORMATION

Marcia's book, *Sex, Power, and Transformation*, was born from a desire to set the record straight. Prompted by a conversation with a former Landmark leader, she realised that the origins and purpose of the human potential movement were being misunderstood. "People didn't know

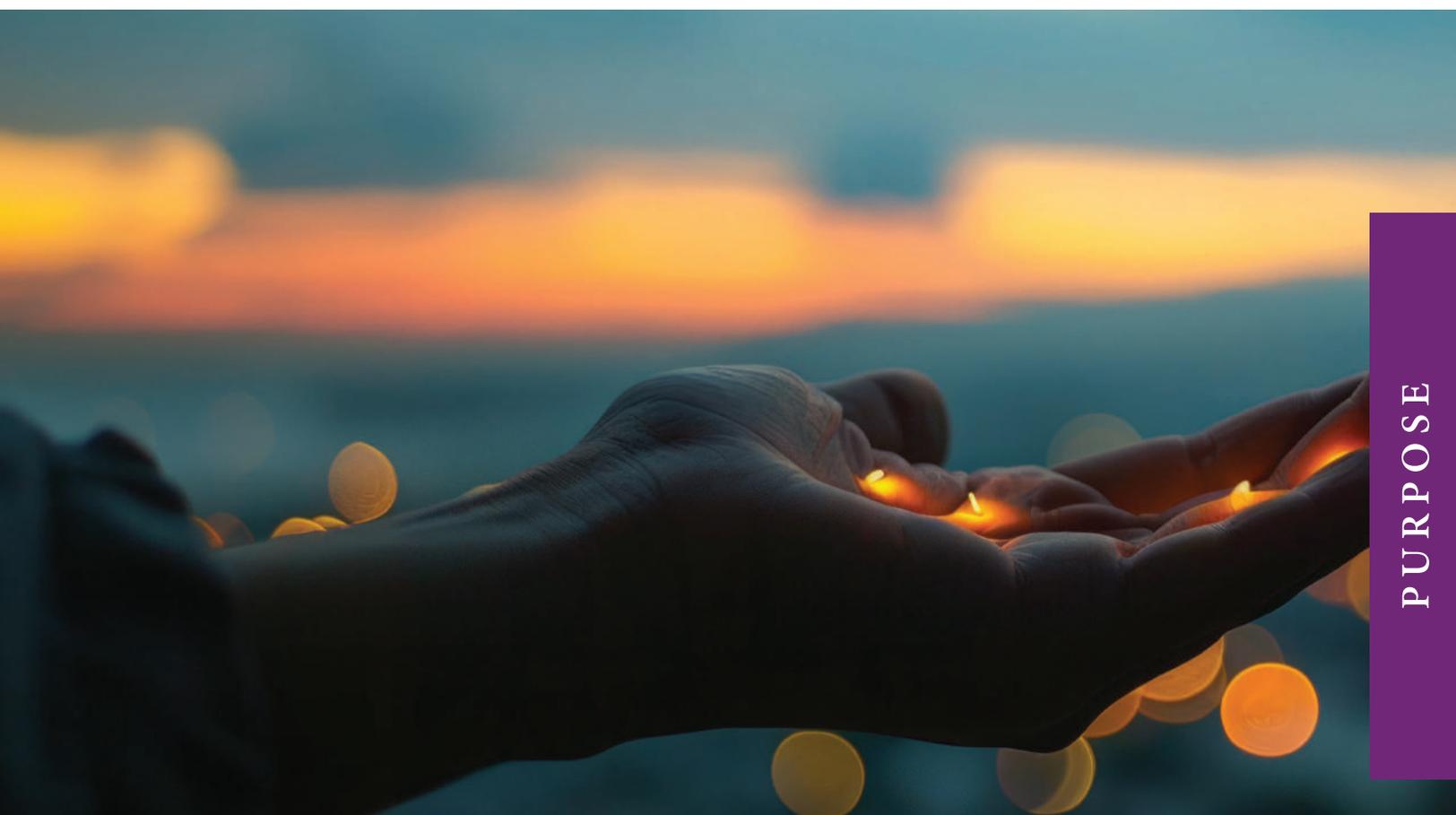
their history," she says. "I wanted to share the truth - the light and the dark."

The book is not just a memoir but a reflection on the personal development industry's evolution. "It's about my journey as a young girl becoming a woman in a man's world, facing power, betrayal, and reinvention," The title, initially inspired by "sex, drugs, and rock and roll," evolved to focus on power dynamics and sexual politics. "It's not just about sex - it's about manipulation, power's potential to corrupt or elevate, and the shadow side of transformation," she clarifies.

### THE LIGHT AND THE DARK

Marcia emphasises the duality of transformation. The light lies in recognising one's infinite potential. "We're like droplets from an ocean, individual expressions of a greater consciousness," she says. "Transformation happens when you realise you're bigger than your body, mind, or emotions, and you can create a life that works for you." Her book aims to empower readers to find their own path, rather than following a guru's dogma.

The dark side, however, is where the industry sometimes falters. "Charismatic leaders can become arrogant, insisting their way is the only way," Marcia warns. She candidly shares her own missteps and those of others, believing that confronting the shadow is essential for growth. "If you don't reflect on the dark side, there's no room for evolution," she asserts.



One challenging story she included involves real people and real mistakes, that had disastrous effects on the people involved. "I wanted to be respectful but honest," she says. "Transformation requires looking at our shadows, acknowledging where we've gone wrong, and learning from it."

**A MESSAGE OF RESILIENCE**

Marcia hopes readers take away a profound message: "Life is a gift, and the human spirit is big enough to handle anything." Despite personal hardships - an abusive childhood, divorce, the loss of a stepchild to suicide, and financial ruin - she views every experience as a step toward growth. "All of it contributes to becoming a better human and serving mankind," she says.

She encourages readers to embrace both their light and dark sides, using seminars and leaders as tools to discover their own wisdom, not to follow blindly. "Take the information, process it, and make choices based on your values," she advises.

**MARCIA MARTIN TODAY**

At this stage in her life, Marcia calls herself an 'elder', dedicated to sharing her wisdom. She works with corporations on leadership, culture, and team alignment, offers individual coaching, and plans new public seminars. "I never intend to retire," she declares. Single and surrounded by beloved animals, she's open to new connections and continues to live her purpose with passion.

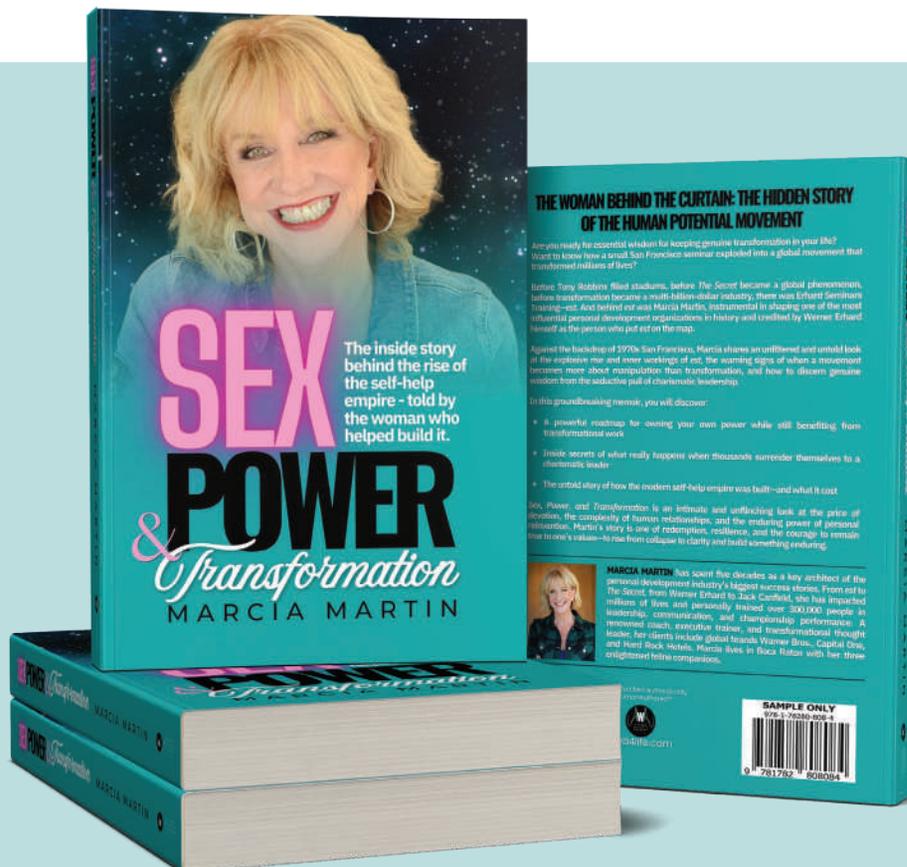


**A MUST-READ JOURNEY**

*Sex, Power, and Transformation* is a gripping read. "It's nonfiction with the intrigue of a novel." They read it in two days, - it's hard to put down, apparently." Grab a copy, or two, to share with those who love stories of real-life transformation, mixed with intrigue and a bit of spice.

Marcia closes with a heartfelt message: "Whatever you're facing, your human spirit is big enough to handle it. God bless and thank you for hearing my story."

*Sex, Power, and Transformation* is available on Amazon, a testament to Martin's enduring impact on the human potential movement and her call to embrace both the light and dark of our journeys.



# INSPIRING

READS ...



**THE CIRCLE OF EXCELLENCE: DISCOVER HOW CONSCIOUS LEADERS ARE PLAYING A BIGGER GAME |**  
By Mike Handcock and Landi Jac

[in](#) LinkedIn Review by Antoni Lacinai

*"Mike Handcock genuinely cares about you succeeding. With a combination of high clarity and high empathy, he and his partner Landi Jac have guided me (and so many other entrepreneurs) to grow mentally and business-wise, and I appreciate their advice immensely."*

AVAILABLE ON AMAZON KINDLE

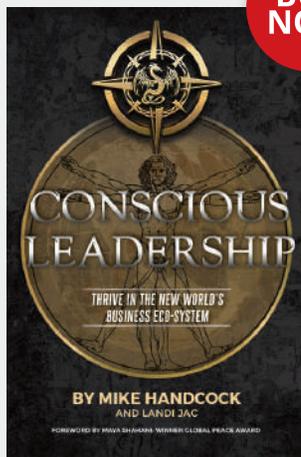
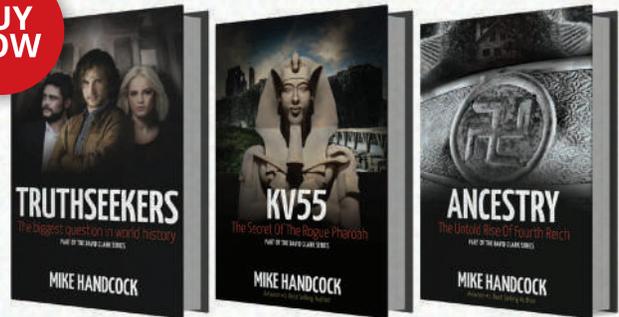


**THE DAVID CLARK SERIES: TRUTHSEEKERS, KV55 & ANCESTRY | By Mike Handcock**

★★★★★ 5-Star Amazon Review by Chris Baumgartner

*"I bought Truthseekers because it was recommended by Amazon Prime. I wasn't sure what to expect... but what a fantastic story!!!! I finished the book in three evenings and immediately bought the second and third in the series. Dan Brown influences, bits of history, lots of action and adventure... what a fantastic series of books!"*

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**CONSCIOUS LEADERSHIP: THRIVE IN THE NEW WORLD'S BUSINESS ECO-SYSTEM | By Mike Handcock and Landi Jac**

LinkedIn Review by Dr Philip Merry

*"What is especially unique about Mike is that he approaches business from a holistic perspective, and with his deep understanding of ancient traditions, he can help you understand issues from a spiritual perspective."*

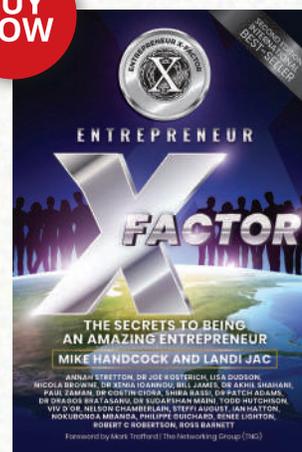
**AVAILABLE ON AMAZON KINDLE**

**ENTREPRENEUR X-FACTOR II: THE SECRETS TO BEING AN AMAZING ENTREPRENEUR | By Mike Handcock and Landi Jac**

★★★★★ 5-Star Amazon Review by Shazar Robinson

*"Very valuable info for all entrepreneurs in this day and age."*

**AVAILABLE ON AMAZON KINDLE**

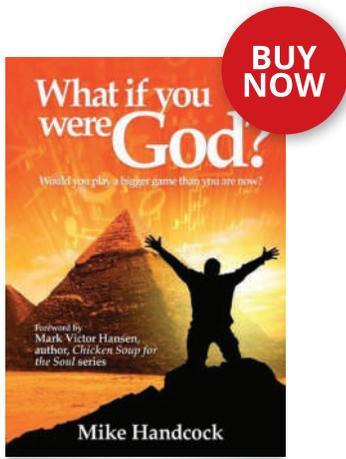


**THE BOOK OF SACRED PRESCRIPTIONS: THE TIMELESS ART OF FEELING LIGHT | By Landi Jac**

★★★★★ 5-Star Amazon Review by Keridak Silk

*"A marvellous gift! The Book of Sacred Prescriptions takes on a journey of insights and practices that go deep into the soul. If you are unhappy with your life, I highly recommend the many prescriptions. These show a path to joy and contentment. It is a book to take in slowly and to allow your being to open up to the possibilities. Follow the directions to your own miracle."*

**AVAILABLE ON AMAZON KINDLE**



**WHAT IF YOU WERE GOD? WOULD YOU PLAY A BIGGER GAME THAN YOU ARE NOW? | By Mike Hancock**

★★★★★ 5-Star Amazon Review by A. Mic

*"This outstanding book covers the essence of who we are and why we are here on the planet today... 2011. It's cleverly written and covers material from the I-Ching, Pyramid Texts and numerous other sources. You will learn a lot about your self and about our world, it's history and it's heroes. It's challenging and the exercise on finding your soul note is unique and fun."*

**AVAILABLE ON AMAZON KINDLE**

**SEX, POWER & TRANSFORMATION: THE INSIDE STORY BEHIND THE RISE OF THE SELF-HELP EMPIRE - TOLD BY THE WOMAN WHO HELPED BUILD IT | By Marcia Martin**

★★★★★ 5-Star Amazon Review by Melissa Hocking Hughes

*"Marcia Martin has penned an entertaining, enthralling, and, at times, suspenseful tome from the birthplace of personal development to this era; a rapidly shifting world that can only tolerate authenticity. Personal, at times brutally heartbreaking and ultimately divinely inspirational, Marcia's brilliant book with have you enthralled! Loved it!"*

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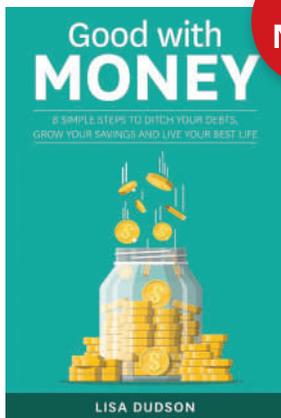
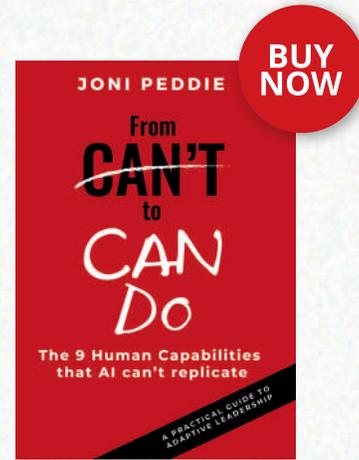


**FROM CAN'T TO CAN DO: THE 9 HUMAN CAPABILITIES THAT AI CAN'T REPLICATE. A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO ADAPTIVE LEADERSHIP | By Joni Peddie**

 *Book Launch Review by Anonymous*

*"CAN DO is a masterclass in modern leadership. It's the toolkit every leader needs to inspire and thrive in today's fast-paced world."*

**AVAILABLE ON AMAZON KINDLE**



**GOOD WITH MONEY: 8 SIMPLE STEPS TO DITCH YOUR DEBTS, GROW YOUR SAVINGS, AND LIVE YOUR BEST LIFE | By Lisa Dudson**

 *LinkedIn Review by John Shackleton*

*Lisa is an amazing lady whose knowledge and experience have helped 1000's of people move towards their financial goals both in their business and in their personal life. She is a person of extremely high integrity and I have no hesitation in recommending her.*

**AVAILABLE ON ACUMEN.CO.NZ**

**RISKING IRRELEVANCE: WHY BUSINESSES CAN'T AFFORD TO IGNORE WEB3 (AND WHAT THE HECK IS WEB3 ANYWAY?) | By Alex Pryor**

 *LinkedIn Review by Heather Cresswell*

*Alex inspires forward-thinking leaders to embrace the challenges of technology, lead with purpose, and drive meaningful change. Her brilliant mind allows her to distill difficult technological concepts into sustainable solutions, which is balanced by her heart for leadership.*

**AVAILABLE ON AMAZON KINDLE**





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