

AUSTRALIAN Natural Health

5 WAYS
TO MOVE
YOUR MIND

**MAT
CLASS**
FIND YOUR
YOGA STYLE

#RAW
SUMMER
SOIREE
10-PAGE VEGAN
RECIPE SPECIAL

LOL
THERAPY
THE SCIENCE
OF LAUGHTER

bumper
BEAUTY

SIMPLE SKIN FIXES
HAIR HYDRATION
NAIL REPAIR KIT
PROBIOTIC FACE MASKS
FAUX GLOW PERFECTION
PALEO HEALTH HACKS
BEAUTY DETOX

LISA
MESSENGER
ON MONEY, MINDFULNESS AND
MAKING HER OWN RULES

Dec 2015-Jan 2016
AUS. \$8.50 Inc GST
NZ. \$10.20 Inc GST



VOLUME 15 No. 6
BLITZ PUBLICATIONS
9 77 1324 743065
06
www.naturalhealthmag.com.au



the BOLD & the brilliant

LISA MESSENGER DOESN'T BELIEVE IN FOLLOWING THE RULES. IN FACT, THE AUTHOR, ENTREPRENEUR AND #GIRLBOSS SAYS BREAKING THEM IS WHAT HAS HELPED HER BUILD HER GAME-CHANGING GLOBAL BRAND.

TIANNA NADALIN WRITES.

"Define your vision and your why and your purpose, and what you stand for in the world."

Quite frankly, Lisa Messenger says, the commercial side of business can be a real pain in the arse.

"If you want to do something extraordinary in the world – it costs a lot of money," she says. "So it's not OK to just sit in an abundant circle and pray, and think 'it's all going to be fine'. These days, there are so many currencies in business other than cash; collaboration is key for the future."

Founder and CEO of The Messenger Group, editor in chief of *Renegade Collective* and entrepreneurial wild child, Messenger isn't afraid to tell it like it is. She doesn't obey the rules. She doesn't take the path well travelled. And she certainly doesn't conform to expectation.

It's this openness, honesty and unapologetically ambitious attitude – coupled with brazen determination to succeed – that has seen Messenger become one of the country's most influential and inspiring success stories. And with 12 businesses to her name and 14 books under her belt, she is fearlessly blazing a new trail, inspiring women from all corners of the globe to take charge of their lives and live their dreams.

"I don't play by the rules," she says. "Ever. "When you back yourself, you're prepared to go against the trend, to challenge the status quo; that's when extraordinary things happen."

Messenger is the first to admit that her ethos is a little unorthodox, but says it was by throwing the conventional business rulebook out the window that she found her 'why' and started living her life's purpose.

FROM HUMBLE BEGINNINGS

Although she may seem like a textbook case study of success, Messenger's story is far from glitz and glam. It has taken years of sweat, sacrifice and more than a few tears to build her influential global brand. Messenger's business life began on October 22, 2001, when she started a sponsorship agency for the arts and entertainment industry, brokering deals for international acts such as The Wiggles and Cirque du Soleil. She soon expanded into PR, publishing and print brokering, and although she was producing creative and courageous work for big-time businesses such as Lorna Jane, Contiki and Commbank, she still felt like something was missing.

"I was at a point where I had a really profitable business," she says. "But it wasn't exciting me at all."

This was the catalyst that inspired her to make a change. And so was born *The Collective*, a lifestyle magazine that celebrates

game-changers, rule-breakers, thought-leaders and style-makers from across the globe, bringing together a community of like-minded trailblazers with the shared vision of making the world a better place.

But launching a new magazine in 2013 was no easy task, with the print industry in Australia starting to experience massive decline.

With some 5500 other titles already on the Aussie market, Messenger had her fair share of naysayers and cynics, quick to point out the *The Collective's* endless limitations. But, despite the obstacles and challenges, she forged ahead with unwavering self-belief; feeling the fear and doing it anyway.

Fast forward two years and *The Collective* has defied the odds to become one of the most exciting and innovative publications on the market.

"When you back yourself, you're prepared to go against the trend, to challenge the status quo; that's when extraordinary things happen."

It is sold in 37 different countries, and growing, has 18 different revenue streams, 23 full-time staff in Sydney and 80 freelance writers around the world; a pretty incredible feat for a now not-so-little magazine that could.

"[*The Collective*] is about empowering people to be the very best version of themselves that they can be," Messenger says, her voice full of pride and emotion.

"A lot of people believe that doing good in the world or doing something you're passionate about is mutually exclusive to having money. But the reality is, there has to be that fine line and blend between living your purpose and knowing your why, and making it commercially tenable."

UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL

Messenger knew from the moment she dreamed up *The Collective* that it had the potential to be a huge source of inspiration for people.

What she hadn't accounted for, though, was how much people would connect with her, personally, as the voice behind it.

"That side of it was completely accidental," she laughs. "It was never about me at all. When I started writing my editor's letters, I had no idea what I was doing but I wasn't afraid of writing about that. The whole time I have just been really honest and authentic and vulnerable about the journey, wearing my heart on my sleeve and telling it how it is."

Messenger says that often we look at people in the media who have achieved a level of success and it seems so unattainable. They're so unrelatable and seem so far removed from our own lives that we often think, 'well I don't understand that person'.

"I think that's kind of it – I am just an ordinary girl from the middle of nowhere having a crack," Messenger says. "People see me schlepping around and I am just normal and daggy. I am nothing special, so I think people go, 'if she can do it, we can do it, too'."

Messenger was brought up on a farm in the central west district of NSW, and credits her rural upbringing with instilling in her both a sense of imagination and realism. The nearest town, which had a population of only 800 people, was about half an hour away, and her school had barely 300 students from kindergarten through to year 12. She grew up before the Internet, so her connection to the outside world was limited to reading the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* and annual shopping trips to the big smoke with her mum and younger sister.

"It's funny, a lot of people ask me: 'Were you one of those lemonade-selling kids on the side of the street?'" she says. "The reality is I grew up on a 4500-acre property in Coolah and our nearest neighbours were miles and miles away. I didn't have anyone to sell lemonade – or anything else – to."

LIGHTING THE FIRE

Though she doesn't know what ignited her entrepreneurial spirit, Messenger says she was always a square peg. She was a bit of a young rebel, incessantly asking 'why' and questioning everything anyone said.

It drove people so mad, she recalls, that one day her maths teacher actually picked her up – chair and all – carried her out of the classroom and just closed the door.

It wasn't until years later that she began to appreciate the beauty of her curious and inquisitive mind.

"That is what sets me apart from so many other people," she says. "I keep pushing boundaries and I keep questioning things, and I keep wanting to know the answers and to do things in a different way. I think I was always a determined little game-changer, I just hadn't yet found my way."

FACING HER FEAR

Though she has written an entire book on facing her fear, Messenger says she wasn't born with daredevil DNA; being brave and bold is something she has had to practise.

"Sure, there were elements of me that were brave and courageous and rebellious and out there, but there was also this side of me that never fit in and still felt like just a scared little child."

Once she began to question her fears, she started to realise that so much of what she was afraid of was unfounded.

"There is a really big difference between a perceived fear and what is actual danger," she says. "I use the example that, if you're standing at the edge of a cliff or you're about to jump off – that's a real danger. But most of the fears we have are associated with things that haven't yet occurred."

The trick to overcoming fear, she says, is to understand what our triggers are. That way we can reverse engineer scenarios in our head and remove the element of unknown that creates doubt and fear.

"We could be crippled perpetually and live curled up on the floor if we let fear override us," she says. "But if you don't think you've got to be perfect in the world and you're passionate and you know what your 'why' is, then it's imperative that you don't let fear overcome you."

It was this perpetual quest to learn more about herself and her desire to challenge conventional wisdom that has seen Messenger dive head first into her many business ventures. What others would see as insurmountable obstacles, she saw as opportunities for growth and development.

"When I first started out, I didn't know anything about business at all and it was kind of terrifying," she says. "But I've been in business for 14 years this month, so there's little that hasn't come at me. Just the other week my CFO said to me: 'We're \$82,000 short this month, what are going to do about it?' In that moment I realised I was OK with it because I have so many things in place to deal with situations like that now."

"But 14 years ago, if someone had've told me we were short \$82 dollars, I would have completely freaked out. I think there's a really important lesson in that."

BECOMING LISA

Messenger says one of the biggest lessons she has learnt in business is to back herself and trust her instincts. It has also been one of the toughest lessons she has learnt in life.

"Throughout my 20s, I practically drank myself to death," she admits. "My life was like a train wreck. I alienated my family for three years and had no semblance of who I was; I don't think I ever did, to be honest."

So she started searching for ways to bring meaning back into her life,

and nothing was off limits. To date, she has spent more than a decade on personal development and years studying psychology and philosophy. She's spent time at a raw vegan food commune in the middle of Costa Rica, inspired inmates in women's prisons, and trekked the Western Ghats in India raising money for charity. She's been married and divorced and suffered heart-breaking moments from which she thought she might never recover. But even in her darkest hours, she has always been able to look at the situation, learn, and find ways to grow, evolve and be stronger.

"Throughout my 20s, I practically drank myself to death... My life was like a train wreck. I had no semblance of who I was."

"It takes a lot of work and courage to really look at yourself, understand who you are and get that pure sense of unwavering self-belief and inner peace," she says.

"I am still very much on my journey. But I am so grateful for everything that has happened in my life. Without all of that I wouldn't be who I am today."

"I wouldn't have this extraordinary life because I wouldn't have had the courage and resilience and self-belief that you need when you dig as deep as I have with *The Collective*."

"I have had a lot of shit thrown at me but somehow I have managed to be an eternal optimist through all of it. When you put together that underlying optimism with a lot of personal development – it's a fabulous recipe for being able to create something extraordinary and live the life you want."

FINDING BALANCE

With such a fast-paced and full lifestyle, Messenger has had to learn how to tune out and start listening to her body. And in her search for self, what she found was mindfulness. She has completed a course in transcendental meditation, which she now practises twice a day, and also has daily rituals that are absolutely non-negotiable.

"My TM teacher told me there are 72 20-minute blocks in every single day," says Messenger, who now lives in the beachside inner-Sydney suburb of Tamarama with her pup, Benny. "If I can't find two 20-minute blocks to sit quietly out of 72, that's crazy."

She says figuring out what is important to you in terms of rituals, and doing it every day – without fail – is also essential.

"I have a personal trainer three times a week. Some days my diary is like the wild wild west but my PAs know they cannot – under any circumstances – move my training sessions. Without my fitness and my health, I am nothing – so that's imperative."

With so much on her plate, what is her one *Devil Wears Prada* habit, we ask?

"Every single morning I have a green smoothie sitting on my desk waiting for me," she laughs. "So even if I slip up and eat hot chips at lunch – which barely ever happens – at least I know I have started the day well."

SURREAL SUCCESS

Meditation and morning smoothies aside, Messenger says success is not about awards or accolades, cash or contacts. It's about finding something you believe in and owning it.

"Define your vision and your why and your purpose, and what you stand for in the world," she says. "It took me a long time to figure that out and now I could not be any more resolute about what I am here on this planet to do – and that's to be an entrepreneur for entrepreneurs. That's a pretty powerful thing that I own."

"I think once you own something and you get clear on your purpose and your passion, then every single day, all you have to do is ask yourself, 'Why am I doing this?' and it helps keep you on track."

"Because some days – well, every day – it is so freaking hard. We have so many different channels and platforms and things going on. It's a bloody expensive exercise and there is stuff that gets thrown at me every day that is beyond anything I ever imagined conceivable."

So whether she is strolling down red carpets, meeting with *Vogue* editor Anna Wintour in New York or at an entrepreneurs convention with Richard Branson on his private island, Necker ("you know – all that kind of stuff," she laughs), she is able to step back, remember her why, and appreciate just how incredible her journey is and how lucky she is to be on it.

"There are so many people out there who connect with *The Collective* in so many different ways and that's what keeps me going," she says. "For me it's about living my life out loud, authentically, every single day and demonstrating that anything is possible."

"And that is my purpose and my why until the day I die." NH

Lisa Messenger is speaking at the Utopia Women's Wellness events in Sydney and Brisbane in November. For more info visit: utopiawomenswellness.com

Essentials with Lisa Messenger**THREE THINGS IN YOUR HANDBAG?**

The latest issue of *The Collective*, my iPad (it goes everywhere with me) and a manila folder filled with everything I have to do over the next six days (I have speaking gigs all over the country).

LEVERAGE IN A NUTSHELL?

Hire your weaknesses: utilise people to do the things you're bad at; and collaborate: connect with like-minded businesses with non-competing profiles and help each other.

LAST BOOK YOU READ?

Elon Musk's biography by Ashlee Vance.

BIGGEST INSPIRATIONS?

Richard Branson, Oprah, Jamie Oliver and Martha Stewart.

MOST MEMORABLE MOMENT?

When I connect face to face with our community, that's what touches me more than anything.

ADVICE YOU LIVE BY?

Fail fast; anything is possible; and it's not the big that eat the small, it's the fast that eat the slow.

CHOCOLATE OR VANILLA?

Chocolate.

MUST-HAVE FASHION ACCESSORY?

Nike high tops.

MOST POWERFUL ASSET?

I am able to look at something that doesn't even exist and sell it.

WHY DO SO MANY BUSINESSES FAIL?

People start a business and they think they need to do everything themselves because they don't have the money to hire someone. The reality is you end up spending 80 to 90 per cent of your time doing stuff you're really, really bad at. For me, I am terrible at detail. I am probably the crappiest person on the planet when it comes to detail and follow-through, but I am an amazing visionary and can think about all these really big things like putting deals together and big strategies. But when I am spending 10 per cent of my time working on that and 90 per cent trying to implement it, it's a waste. When I started I was going round and round in circles, bugging things up – then I realised I am much better outsourcing that or bringing in someone who can make it happen. I am absolutely the biggest advocate of hiring your weaknesses. Sure, I am the face and architect of the brand – but it is my incredible team that really makes it all happen.



SCAN PAGE FOR MORE LISA MESSENGER WISDOM