

MAGAZINE

Dream big to SHIFT BIG

MAKING
CHANGE
FOR GOOD
Emily O'Brien

SPOT THE
SUCCESS
Professor Maja

THE POWER
OF THE ASK
Dani S. Kagan

BUILDING A
VILLAGE FOR
RADIANT GIRLS
Gina Faubert

LEADING
WITH FIRE
Leigh Fowler



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dream big to SHIFT BIG

AGENDA

8:30 am - 10:00 am
Registration & Building
Connections

10:00 am - 10:30 am
Welcome

10:30 am - 11:00 am
Panel Presentation

11:00 am - 11:30 am
Professor Maja

11:30 am - 1:00 pm
High Tea Service

1:00 pm - 1:30 pm
Annette Hamm

1:30 pm - 2:00 pm
Dani S. Kagan

2:00 pm - 2:30 pm
Break Sponsored by
Andrea Florian

2:30 pm - 3:00 pm
Emily O'Brien

3:00 pm - 4:00 pm
Gina Faubert &
Grand Finale

Access to full interviews
and more content
updates from the High
Tea by scanning the
QR code.



DreamBigShiftBig.com/magazine

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meet your Hostess



Leigh

FOWLER

**President, FemCity Hamilton
Book Launch & Content Marketer**

Leigh Fowler specializes in empowering women business owners with strategic content marketing that connects and converts. With over 25 years of experience, she helps clients amplify their vision, monetize their marketing, and make a lasting impact through

innovative content strategies and book launches. Her services include content strategy development, book launching, and community engagement, all designed to elevate her clients' authority and reach.

LEADING WITH FIRE: The Mindset Shift That Changed Everything

What has made me feel more alive in the first quarter of 2025 than ever has been verbalizing my dreams, sharing them and then activating them - without hesitation!

It's no surprise that the inaugural FemCity High Tea Full Day Conference I hosted in April 2025 was aptly named Dream Big to Shift Big. Next-level reinvention for your next level self!

Having worked in publishing and marketing for 25 years, I know that words matter. I also know that the most growth comes from curated spaces that foster learning, growth and transformation.

The FemCity High Tea was the spark that came out of a burning desire to not only inspire other women to become their best selves, but to connect them with like-minded business owners together for a full day of transformation and celebration!

This keepsake magazine project that you are holding in your hands came to life out of the desire to stretch the wisdom

of the community into both print and digital mediums with articles and interviews featuring female-focused interactive podcast interviews, stories, invitations, advertisements and a whole new way for local women in business to get more visible, share their stories and connect more deeply with each other!

With a little encouragement from the lovely and brilliant Amy Bell of White Lightning Communications, and teammate Marianne D'Alessandro for logistics support, I decided to launch this pilot magazine with hyper speed! I share some of our behind-the-scenes in this magazine and full interviews can be found at dreambigshiftbig.com/magazine/!

We've packed this magazine with the expansion codes from our featured FemCity High Tea speakers. Their wisdom is yours to absorb and learn from their insights on the road to becoming your next-level self!

Becoming the president of a local FemCity chapter was not

on my Bingo card for 2025 as 2024 was wrapping up. However, when I interviewed for the role, I leaned into it because this global and empowering 16-year-old organization shared many of my own values to contribute, collaborate, create and connect as well as lead in the biggest way!

I knew I was in good hands! I realized that FemCity had the leadership in place to support me in helping more people and making a bigger impact. Founder Violette de Ayala has built a community that not only cares, but has the resources, structure and morals designed to create a safe space for women to grow, expand and boost their businesses! Together, with her COO Lynn Pelzer, they've continued to help women connect more deeply with each other, build stronger communities and also lead themselves with more conviction and passion than ever!

Within a short 90-days the FemCity Hamilton chapter hosted three facilitated and fun mastermind meets networking sessions, two lunch n' learns and a full-day conference for women in business to Dream Big to Shift Big! Our membership has grown quickly and fiercely with passionate wom-

en-owned businesses that are excited about building this community.

With this new role came a new mindset, almost overnight. I have been stepping into my next-level self!

I started to make decisions more quickly, listening to my gut more than my brain.

I started to bet more on myself. I began to eat fear for breakfast.

I broke through limiting habits and old mindsets to allow what I wanted to create come to life!

I do want to say that it was a choice to focus on the how and not the what ifs!

I kept visualizing the dreams coming to life.

Surrounding yourself with the right people, the right mindset and the willingness to mentor and be mentored is one of the fastest ways to expand and get to your next-level self.

Welcome to the world of FemCity!



This dream has become a reality in less than nine weeks!

It's our season to dream big and shift big!

SHOPS
↓

Access to full interviews and more content updates from the High Tea by scanning the QR code.
DreamBigShiftBig.com/magazine





Linda Grubic - Wholistic
Community Events Co-Chair



Leigh Fowler
Chapter President



Rachel Simms
Community Content Chair



Lisa Hardie
Digital Community Chair



Judy Rickey - Philanthropic &
Community Outreach Chair



Nikki Milligan - Wholistic
Community Events Co-Chair



MEET FEMCITY HAMILTON!

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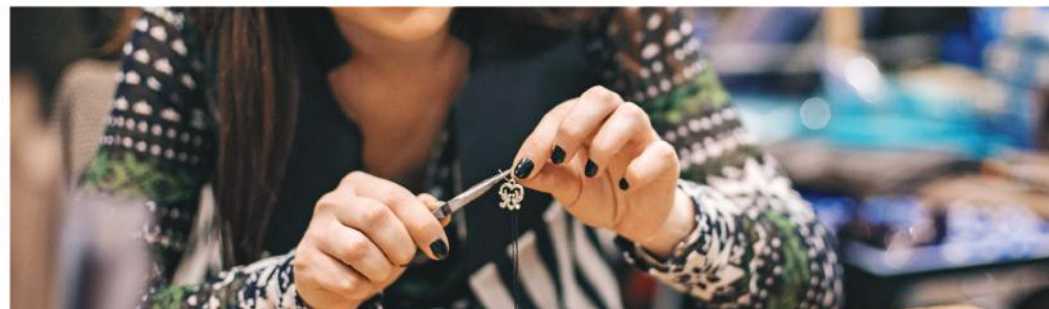


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STEPPING INTO YOUR NEXT LEVEL with Amy Bell & Leigh Fowler!

Behind the scenes of the magazine pilot and cover strategy



AMY: I loved how this project began—originally, you were planning a typical event program. But after our brainstorming session, we committed to creating this pilot magazine in under five weeks. I've been producing magazines for entrepreneurs for a while now, and I thought, Why stick to a standard program? Why not go big? The entire theme is Dream Big to Shift Big, so let's make something bold, beautiful, and impactful. And that's exactly what we did!

LEIGH: You want me to put my face on the cover of the keepsake magazine! [Shocked!]

AMY: A lot of women, like you, have this deep desire to help others. They're driven to be of service and often focus on amplifying their clients or community. And that's powerful. But to truly do that—to lead and inspire—you have to be willing to be seen yourself.

When you first suggested using a group shot of the women from the last event for the cover, I understood the intention. But I also knew that putting multiple faces on the cover could dilute the message. It's important to be clear and bold in our storytelling, and one strong image—your image—sets the tone.

I get that it's nerve-wracking. There's a vulnerable, almost spiritual element to stepping forward like that. It's not just about a photo—it's about stepping into your "I Am-ness,"

fully owning your voice, your vision, and your work.

Being on the cover says, "This is who I am. I'm ready to lead." And that's a form of uplevelling.

For a lot of women, getting a TED Talk or landing a media feature feels like a huge leap. But something like this—a cover feature—is a bold, beautiful mid-step. It builds your confidence, helps you be seen, and opens the door to what's next.

LEIGH: You know you remind me of when I wrote the book. I really had to own my words. I had to own my message, and it was a game changer for me.

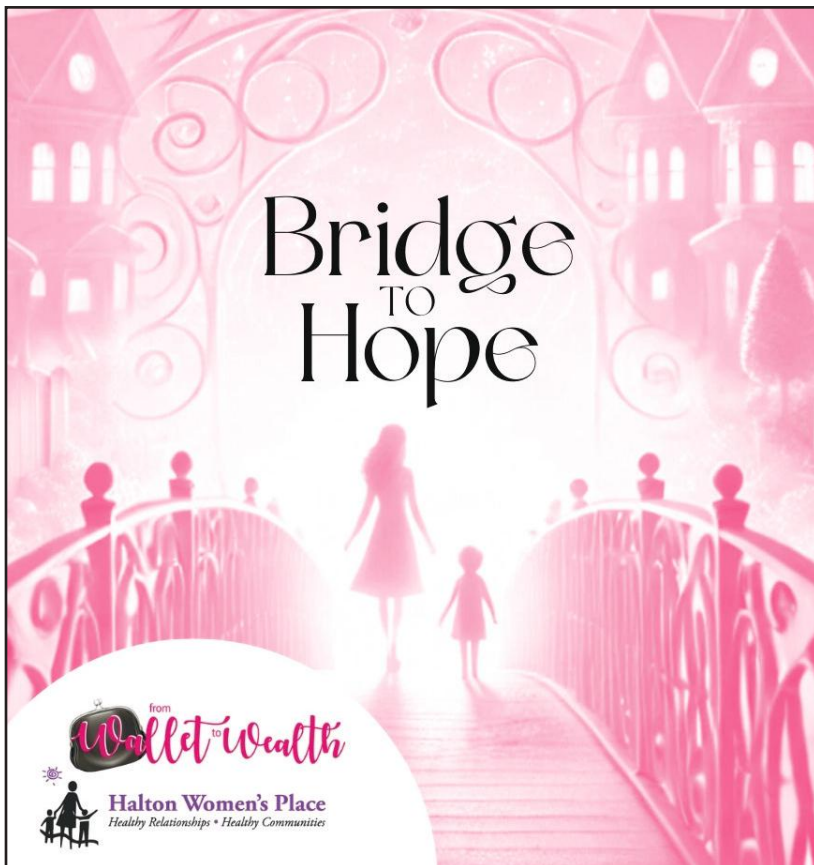
AMY: I absolutely love what you're creating, and it's truly an honour to be part of it. Thank you for inviting me in and being open to exploring the magazine side of things—it's been such an exciting collaboration.

LEIGH: You're gonna hold me to that cover, aren't you?

AMY: You know I am!!

Watch the full interview online by
scanning the QR code.
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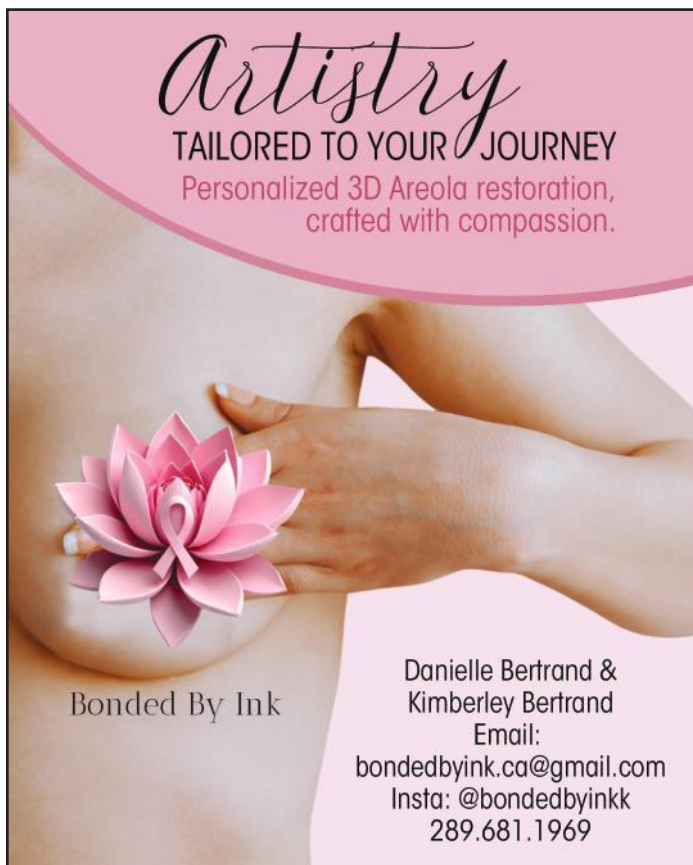
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LEIGH FOWLER,
CONTENT STRATEGIST



meet our panellists



Kirsty MacMillan, BA, RRT, CCAA, MPM - Panellist

www.macmillanelitemindset.com

Kirsty MacMillan, BA, RRT, CCAA, MPM, is a Mental Performance Coach, elite standup paddle board racer with Team Canada, and advanced certified coach with Paddle Canada. She holds a Mental Performance Mastery certification and works with over 10,000 members at Paddle Monster. Kirsty provides practical strategies to enhance mindset, focus, confidence, and routines. A seasoned athlete, she's training for the 2025 ICF World Championships and has competed internationally in events like the Carolina Cup and ICF World SUP Championships. Sponsored by Starboard and Oofos, she also works as an Anesthesia Assistant at Oakville Hospital.



Cathy Thompson - Panellist

Business Advisor & Author of *The Dandelion: Secrets to Growing Your Successful Business from the Ground Up*

www.cathythompson.biz

Cathy Thompson accidentally started her entrepreneurial journey at the age of 4, selling dandelions door to door. She has been a TV host and producer, mental health and addictions consultant, a tutor, a franchisor, a licensor, computer salesperson, server, talent manager, tax preparer, podcast host, and retreat organizer. At the cornerstone of all her adventures, she identifies as a lifelong learner. With just shy of 30 years of business experience under her belt, she is passionate about educating others on how to grow a successful business from the ground up.



Stephanie van Dam - Panellist

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www.clydesdale.sandler.com

Stephanie van Dam is a seasoned sales leader and Sandler franchise owner in Hamilton, with a proven track record of driving revenue growth and building high-performing teams. With over 20 years of experience, Stephanie specializes in supply chain and channel sales strategies, and cultivating strong customer relationships. She is also the sole female Sandler franchise owner in Canada—a distinction that reflects her leadership and pioneering spirit. Stephanie is driven by a passion for helping others master sales, elevate customer service, and excel as leaders.



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Foreword written by ANDER HAD,
Co-Host of 'The Feed' and 'The AI Effect'

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with feel-good content marketing strategies.

LEIGH FOWLER



mingle & marvel

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FEMCITY® HAMILTON, CANADA CHAPTER • 13



OVERCOME *writers* BLOCK

and create a game-changing,
powerful marketing tool quickly!

7 strategies to get your book written FAST!

By Leigh Fowler

Writer's block is a real thing and it can really mess with your production timelines, milestones and overall success of your book. My experience is that writer's block comes from one or many fears that haven't been addressed and are rattling around in your head, preventing the creativity from taking place.

However, once you have a strategic outline for your book, the tactical implementation of writing your book can be quite logical and practical if you've prepared yourself mentally for the outcome of actually finishing the book!!!

I applied several of these tactical strategies to get my book done in time to meet my crazy deadlines and expectations. I believe once you eliminate or deal with your fears, the flow will come!

#1 BEAT OVERWHELM WITH MINOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

In order to get past the overwhelm, it's important to break down the book into smaller sections; perhaps even smaller than chapters! For example, the table of contents, back of the book info, dedication, or even your author bio.

Start making your book a reality, one section at a time. Start seeing it become a tangible, physical thing! Once I completed these minor tidbits and started with some non-emotional pieces of my book, I found the writing flow came and I was in the zone.



#2 PRODUCTIVITY

Prepare your plan. Before going into this 5-day creation period have a solid draft and a detailed mind map ready for your book along with a clear vision statement for its readers, your chapter outline, and any key themes or messages you want to include.

Pick the writing times in advance. Become mindful of your most productive, undistracted times of the day, and pick those as writing times. The five days don't start today – they start the calendar day you select to commit and get it done. No excuses. Make sure your clients, your family, your social calendar and you know, this is your goal and it's what you'll be doing.

#3 SET A HARD DEADLINE

I'm not talking about self-regulated deadlines, I'm talking S*** will hit the fan if you don't get stuff done deadlines. A hard deadline must have consequences. For example, with my goodie bag deadline, I had to get my first edition/draft galley copy in event bags by a certain date or I couldn't participate the way I had planned. It would have been a costly deadline to miss and also a huge ego-bruise if I didn't complete the task.

#4 CONNECT WITH SERVICE PROVIDERS

Knowing who will help self-publish your book and support your production goals is a big step. Bringing that into your goals and deadlines is a huge way to keep you on track, knowing others are waiting to work with and for you. Start putting down deposits on future services required to self-publish your book and reserve your space in the production line!

#5 RECONNECT WITH YOUR WHY

My why factor gave me the extra edge to complete my book and stay committed. For me, it helped to know that it would inspire my friends and family, and I would have a tangible keepsake of my efforts as an entrepreneur and proof of what I do. A big part of why I wrote my book was my son; it was about setting an example, dreaming big, and thinking bigger.

Writing and publishing a book became more about living and leaving behind a legacy for him – to inspire him and show him that anything is possible. When you're aligned with your why, there is no fear you can't overcome. Dig deep and make your book about more than just writing – what's the real reason you are here to inspire and make an impact?

#6 MAKE IT REAL – SPREAD THE NEWS

There's nothing like having a fire lit under your butt than your community of friends, family and colleagues rooting for you and holding you accountable. Your goals HAVE to happen and for some of us, this added pressure can be a real advantage.

#7 INVOLVE YOUR ONLINE COMMUNITY

People LOVE to help and support others in need – and boy, authors need support! This is a great way to keep feeling the fear and do it anyways.

By writing a book, you're releasing a very big part of yourself into a product that most people only dream about! It's a roller-coaster of decision fatigue, imposter syndrome and triumph! And in the middle of all that, there is the non-stop game-changing evolution of owning your thought leadership...Stepping into it and claiming it as your own!

Are you ready to write and publish your book and have questions about self-publishing? Let's chat! Head over to leighfowler.com/bookchat to book some time to talk about making your dream a reality!

meet our speaker



PROFESSOR *maja*

**Renowned Sociologist, TEDx Speaker,
Author and Confidence Builder**

Dr. Maja is a sociologist, author, and TEDx speaker with a passion for building confidence and eliminating unnecessary apologies. She holds a Ph.D. in Sociology, focusing on women's health, and became inspired to explore the impact of apologies on women's careers after attending an academic conference in 2014. This led to her

first book, 'Hey Ladies, Stop Apologizing', and her TEDx talk, How Apologies Kill Our Confidence. As a speaker, she now focuses on confidence, communication, and mindset, and is conducting a global study on women's confidence and communication. Dr. Maja's work aims to empower women to embrace their success unapologetically.

SPOT THE SUCCESS!

Confidence-building with Professor Maja

I had the recent pleasure and joy of interviewing Professor Maja, Sociologist, TEDx Speaker, Author and Confidence Builder at a local podcast studio about her findings supporting her 6-year study on women's confidence. She was joined by her daughter Rio, who was preparing for a speaking contest only weeks away and taking notes!

Her findings are so relevant for women in business pursuing their big dreams and goals.

Professor Maja commenced a study on confidence six years ago, interviewing women from all over the world about what influences their confidence, how they use their apologies and what external and internal factors influence their mindsets.

After interviewing over 420 women, across 26 countries and with over 2000 hours of data – she can tell you that without a doubt – confidence is a muscle that you strengthen with use!

She firmly believes that confidence is not something you're born with!

We got to speak about her journey to the TEDx stage, her personal approach to failure, choosing our environments, raising confident girls, perfectionism, imposter syndrome, societal conditioning, building (and rebuilding) confidence and even how to reframe our failures and experiences.

Watch the full interview online by scanning the QR code.
DreamBigShiftBig.com/professormaja



Highlights from our interview!

LEIGH: What was it like to prepare for and get onto the TEDx Stage?

MAJA: I've climbed a mountain of noes to get to my yes. And that really is the journey I believe of every woman entrepreneur. You will hear 15, 20 nos before somebody says, yeah, actually that's a great idea. And a lot of times those no's come from within the family in the home, within your mind, within people that you thought would be supportive.

At every step of the way, I had to say to myself, why not me? Why not me? Why shouldn't I be on that stage? Why shouldn't I keep trying?

I got rejected from Ted, I think three times before they accepted me. I was prepared to apply times, apply 20 times, and I will keep applying. I want a second one and I want a third one. And I keep thinking, why not me? My message, why shouldn't I tell my story?

And every single woman needs to be thinking of that too. Another no is just one step closer to your Yes.

LEIGH: We were chatting this morning that you see failure differently than many do – you see failure as simply information.

MAJA: Yeah. That's all it is. But oftentimes we make a mistake and then we think we are the mistake, we fail, and then we say, well, see, I suck. I shouldn't have done that.

LEIGH: Yes! Sometimes we lose our confidence, or it gets rocked. Based on your research and learned everyday experience, what advice do you have for our readers when they are experiencing a setback or perceived failure?

MAJA: I would task every one of us with the idea of looking at what you did that day that you were a part of that was successful, no matter how minor or inconsequential you think it is. You want to spot that success!

You're looking for evidence of what you did well, not how well you did it, not if you completed the job, just evidence of your success. We're not judging it, we're not evaluating it. We're simply looking at what you did that worked. I love this. And then itemizing that.

LEIGH: Are there any last words you want to share with our audience about the journey of rebuilding that confidence muscle and aspiring for new things and big dreams?

MAJA: Along the way, we will get knocked down and we will have our confidence shaken. And a counter-balance to that is adding in the joy

Stress is women's number one health concern. And we know that doing the things that we love helps build resilience to that stress. We have to add in the joy as often as we can because it helps us withstand the stress, and it helps us withstand every single no and failure that comes our way.

For more information visit www.professormaja.com.



meet our speaker



Annette
HAMM

Co-Host CHCH Morning Live
6-10 AM Weekdays

As co-host of Morning Live on CHCH, Annette Hamm has almost finished her work day by the time most people are waking up. She loves to share what's happening in and around the Golden Horseshoe,

and meeting people from all walks of life on the show. Annette is an avid reader, and volunteers with Theatre Aquarius, Women 4 Change, and the YWCA Hamilton Turning Point Giving Circle.

AMPLIFYING YOUR BUSINESS STORY!

notes

I'VE SPENT 25 YEARS MAKING RICH MEN RICHER

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meet our speaker



Dani

S. KAGAN

**Co-Founder & CEO, Mave & Chez,
Podcast Host, Speaker &
Featured on Dragons' Den**

Dani S Kagan is a serial entrepreneur, community leader, podcast host, and mom of two. Since 2015, she has scaled three 6-figure businesses and raised over \$300k for Canadian charities. As the Co-Founder & CEO of Mave & Chez, a 7-figure ecommerce brand, Dani created the first luxury ergonomic slippers for women after experiencing

pregnancy-related foot and back pain. Featured on Dragons' Den, Vogue, and Globe & Mail, her company aims to provide women with supportive yet stylish footwear. Dani is passionate about empowering women to pursue their dreams, build confidence, and make a global impact through entrepreneurship.

notes

THE POWER OF THE ASK:

The Mindset Behind Making Uncomfortable Asks

with Dani S. Kagan, Mave & Chez's Co-Founder, by Leigh Fowler

For more information visit www.danikagan.com

TOP INSIGHTS FROM DANI

Focus on your personal growth and development. If you're not in an energetic state of coming from a place of positivity, believing in yourself, having that delusional belief in yourself, which I think is super important, and understanding why you're doing things, honing in and tapping into your why behind everything you do...is how you get to the place of being able to make those uncomfortable asks."

Don't take "no" for an answer. "I'm also just savage about raising capital. Because you have to be, otherwise you won't get the money. I'm just going to go in and make the ask again, expect the nos."

Going back for additional asks is never a bad thing!

"I think we're always scared to go back. We're scared, I think as women, to ask for things a second time, ask for more money, ask for bigger things, and at the end of the day, you don't really have much to lose, because if it's going to be a no, it's going to be a no."

“ You can have it all, but you have to ask for the help! And I'll say it again. You can have it all, but you need to ask for the help! ”

Making a No, a Not Yet! "With raising money you're making asks all the time, and for every 100 asks you're making, you're going to get about 99 no's. I think one thing that I do really well is going getting those no's. Sometimes I remind myself that it's a not yet, and that there are more fish in the sea."

Flex the Muscle! "I think it's a muscle that you have to flex, so making uncomfortable asks gets easier with time. The more you do it, the more you flex the muscle, the easier the uncomfortable asks become."

You have to expect that the noes are coming. "Once you expect that, the pressure becomes a little bit less."

Make the hard asks! "If you go in with a bigger ask, and it's a yes, or if you go in with a bigger ask, let's say I'm asking someone for a \$50,000 check, and they said, Well, I'm not going to do that much, but I'll do a little bit less. That's still a yes to me, right?"

Get on the phone! "I think is a bit [of a] lost [art]. I think the best asks come when you are able to get on the phone with someone or get in person."

Watch the full interview online by scanning the QR code.
DreamBigShiftBig.com/daniskagan





tea time chats

There's nothing quite like a good conversation over a cup of tea. The ladies in this directory are all about connection and collaboration, and they're ready to share stories, ideas, and inspiration with you. Whether you're looking for advice, a fresh perspective, or just some friendly company, booking a "Tea Time" chat is a great way to build new relationships and spark meaningful conversations. Don't hesitate—pick up the phone, book a time, and let the tea (and the ideas) flow!



Imast Bayzar Bulgan
Owner, Your Boutique

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The MAWB Network is a heart-centered community for Mississauga (and area) women in business, offering authentic networking, social media training, and support to grow through connection, collaboration, and learning.



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meet our speaker



Emily
O'BRIEN

**CEO Comeback Snacks
COO Comeback Catalyst**

Emily O'Brien is the founder of Comeback Snacks, a specialty popcorn company with a bold mission to fight the stigma around criminal records. After serving a four-year prison sentence, she transformed her experience into a movement for second chances, empowering others through training and reintegration support. Her popcorn is

now available in over 700 locations across North America. Emily is a sought-after speaker and media contributor and has received numerous awards, including the YWCA Women of Distinction Award, the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Award, and the 2025 Sobeys Diversity Award. She was also named a Top 50 Global Woman in Sustainability.

notes

Watch the full interview online by
scanning the QR code.
DreamBigShiftBig.com/emilyobrien



MAKING CHANGE FOR GOOD: Focused and Present Leadership

with Emily O'Brien, by Leigh Fowler

When you sit down and chat with Emily you realize it is her desire to make lives better combined with her proactive leadership that is the secret sauce behind her success.

LEIGH: How are you adapting to all the success you've experienced?

EMILY: I mean, I've never been someone that's focused on massive, crazy startup growth. For me, it's more about fulfillment of seeing other people grow. I like to learn and know what's going on in the business and not be like, oh, everything's happening at once. Then you lose control. So it's like, don't try to rush things, enjoy the process. And even in the shitty times, there's still so much to learn.

LEIGH: Absolutely.

EMILY: Don't try to just rush to the next milestone. It's literally [about] be[ing] present in what you're building.

LEIGH: We wear many hats as entrepreneurs, how do you manage the growth and delegation of all the things?

EMILY: Well, I have a business partner so often he del-

egates to me what I have to do to action things, which is great, I'm very type B. I'm very creative, and I'm not the big planning kind of person. All these complex structures, I'm very good at executing and creating and being spontaneous, which is my secret weapon. It's like I'll go anywhere and jump in.

LEIGH: Have you learned some things along the way or insights on working with people too?

EMILY: Yes. You need to! Learning and adapting processes [is key] because you have to be able to adapt when you're growing a business. You can't just be like, oh, I don't want to do that or I don't want to learn that! You have to figure out a way to learn it.

For me, I couldn't run a business on my own. I just couldn't. And I realized that. I work better and I can build more robust businesses with the right partners, and the right programs, with the right partners.

For more information visit www.comebacksnacks.com or www.combackcatalyst.ca.





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5 Steps to Million Dollar Networking: The Playbook for Building Powerful, Profitable Connections

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- 4. The Fortune is in the Follow-Up**
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- 5. Make Networking a Lifestyle, Not a Sprint**
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8 Steps to Crafting Unshakable Core Values for Your Business

- 1. Reflect on personal values:** Your business is an extension of you. Values that guide your personal life should translate into your business philosophy.
- 2. Identify what sets your business apart:** Your approach, the impact you want to create, and how clients experience your brand.
- 3. Examine who is at the center of your business model:** Map out your ideal client; and the 3 things they want.
- 4. List key themes that matter most:** Jot down recurring themes that define your vision. Create 3-5 strong, meaningful values rather than an overwhelming list.
- 5. Define each value clearly:** Write a sentence or two explaining what each value means to you and why it is important for your company.
- 6. Align business practices with your values:** Values aren't just words, they are reflected in how you operate and share your business with others.
- 7. Communicate values clearly:** Share on your website, in client conversations, and with your team. When people resonate with your values, they'll be more drawn to work with you.
- 8. Revisit & evolve:** As your business grows, values may evolve. Review annually to remain aligned with your mission and the impact you want to create.

Cathy Thompson, Business Advisor
Author of *The Dandelion: Secrets to Growing Your Successful Business from the Ground Up*
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meet our speaker



gina
FAUBERT

**Founder of Radiant Girls
Leadership Foundation**

Gina Faubert is the founder of Radiant Girls Inc., a program designed to empower girls through health, self-care, and confidence-building. With over 20 years of experience in fitness, wellness, and life coaching, Gina has worked with Olympic athletes and Fortune 500 companies. She is a certified Personal Trainer, Pilates and Yoga teacher,

Life Coach, and NLP Trainer. After founding Serenity Valley, a wellness retreat, she expanded her mission to include girls' camps, retreats, and coaching. Gina is a bestselling author of *The Best Life* and regularly speaks on the mental/emotional connection to fitness and developing exceptional health.

notes

Watch the full interview online by
scanning the QR code.
DreamBigShiftBig.com/ginafaubert



BUILDING A VILLAGE FOR RADIANT GIRLS...

With Founder Gina Faubert, By Leigh Fowler

*Excerpts from an interview with
Leigh Fowler, President FemCity Hamilton*

It's not everyday that you get to sit down with someone who has run a non-profit for over 15 years, trained and worked with a world-class mindset coach in Tony Robbins and who embodies her values, beliefs and vision with a tireless passion.

Gina was recently inspired by The Success Institute's research on what makes a great human. One of the 40 things that they suggested was that a kid should be part of an extended community.

GINA: Back in the day, we used to talk to our neighbors. We used to go to church, we used to know our Grandma, hang out with our Aunt, community centers, playgrounds. I thought, wow, there's a lot of silo parenting going on now, how could we expand on this [old concept]?

I love all these amazing women that we have in our community, and I thought it would be so great to have these girls get to know some of these women. And so I asked, I put a post on Facebook asking, is anyone out there wanting to be a part of our summer camp?

The response was staggering - she had almost 100 women immediately!

GINA: We created the Radiant Girls Village! I got to know each of them individually, got to know what their strengths were, what they could bring to girls. They've really moved Radiant Girls forward in a lot of ways. I take their feedback, they share ideas, and we are on Fast Forward!

Gina's business aptitude is evident in that she has been

running this non-profit for 15 years.

GINA: I've seen a few of these types of things that I'm doing where they're empowering young girls. They have great intentions, great programs. They come and go, primarily because they're relying on grants. And when the grants aren't flowing, the programs are not running.


We [Radiant Girls Leadership Foundation] work differently. People will pay to attend, and then we'll donate spots based on our registration to kids in need. So we invite kids from the Rock, from the Lighthouse, from Halton Women's Place, and then all the guidance counselors in Burlington and Hamilton know that if they have a kid that's in need that they can reach out.

I've taken a really great business approach to running a nonprofit and pulling the community in. And it's not just about the grants, it is about making it work financially and being creative.

I've been very strategic about those business decisions. This needs to be sustainable. If I'm going to be putting myself out there and being a resource for these kids, I have a responsibility to make sure that I'm here next year and the year after.

Learn more about Gina's strategic approach to building a sustainable non-profit as the Founder of the Radiant Girls Leadership Foundation, how she rallies the women around her vision inside the Radiant Girls Village, an ambassador program for adult women to be part of the foundation's camps, workshops and experiences, the evolution of her podcast, Raising Radiant Girls and how she stays healthy and energized! You can learn more about Gina's foundation at RadiantGirls.ca.







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