

WOMEN LIKE ME MAGAZINE

MARCH 2024

Featured Author
GUELDA REDMAN



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- ★ WISE WORDS FROM WISE WOMEN
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*Diversity in
Womanhood
Across the Globe*

To every incredible woman across the globe who has received this edition of "Women Like Me" – Welcome!

International Women's Day Edition

In the spirit of International Women's Day, "Women Like Me" magazine is proud to present a special edition that shines a light on the resilience, strength, and triumph of women from all walks of life.

This issue is dedicated to the brave souls who have boldly shared their adversities and victories, providing readers with a tapestry of experiences that are both deeply personal and universally resonant. Through their stories, we celebrate the indomitable spirit of women who have faced challenges with courage, navigated their paths with grace, and emerged stronger, serving as beacons of hope and inspiration for others.

Join us in honoring these remarkable women, whose journeys not only reflect their individual prowess but also underscore the collective power of women everywhere on International Women's Day.



FROM THE Founder



A Note from Julie Fairhurst: Empowerment, Unity, and Celebration: The Essence of International Women's Day!

As the calendar turns to March, a special day dawns upon us, radiating women's strength, resilience, and beauty worldwide. March 8th marks International Women's Day (IWD) - a day dedicated to acknowledging and celebrating the monumental achievements of women.

International Women's Day is not just a day; it's a reflection of our journey, a testament to our struggles, and a celebration of our victories. It's a day that bridges past and present, reminding us of the relentless determination of those who came before us and inspiring future generations to continue the fight for equality. It's a day where the world looks at women not just for their roles in families or societies but as pillars of strength, innovation, and change.

Here's to the women like me, like you, and like us all – may we continue to rise, unite, and lead with grace and strength.

Happy International Women's Day!

Julie

A BROKEN MIND OUR JOURNEY WITH SEVERE MENTAL ILLNESS

"I have learned now that while those who speak about one's miseries usually hurt, those who keep silence hurt more."

C.S. Lewis

"A Broken Mind: Our Journey with Severe Mental Illness," by Autor Gueda Redman, is a deeply moving and insightful exploration into the complex world of severe mental illness.



This story is not just about the pain and the battles but also about the strength, resilience, and hope that emerges from the darkest times. Through "A Broken Mind," we are invited to see beyond the stigma and misconceptions, to embrace empathy, and to recognize the courage it takes to confront and live with severe mental illness.

At 3 am, the nurse comes by and tells us we should go home and get some rest. They have him and will take good care of him. We look at her, at each other, and back at her. "No way, I can't leave him. I won't leave him," I say. We find a place to try to rest, and we wait for morning and hopefully a bed in the Psych ward. I've never been in a Psych ward before, and we have no idea what to expect. How did we get here?

High school was tough. Like really tough! My son, who had always been a happy, shy, and quiet little boy, liked by all his teachers, was now regularly combative and defiant. His hygiene was nonexistent, and he was using drugs. Drugs were not exactly shocking since he was in high school, but our biggest concern was that he was not doing it because of peer pressure but rather that he sought it out and was doing it by himself. He would skip classes and sit in the school field, smoking weed and not hiding it. This was such a detour from who he had always been. We were shocked.

We talked to school counselors and clinical counselors, and everyone had the same answer for us. Each one told us that he was acting like a normal teenage boy. Our biggest frustration was because we knew that because 1. he wasn't telling them the truth about what he was thinking and what was going on, and 2. because I knew my son, and this was so very far out of his character. How could we expect someone to see what was going on when they only spent an hour or so with him and didn't see the struggle? When my son was younger, he was always so sweet and smiling. He had always been very quiet and had learning difficulties that led him to withdraw even more when in a crowd. He was always the boy on the outskirts of a game waiting to be invited.

We later found out that, in fact, what he was going through was called the prodromal stage of Schizophrenia. Prior to getting really ill, it was definitely a sign of what was to come. During this time, he withdrew, experimented with drugs, and developed false beliefs. The most damaging one was that he thought everyone could hear his thoughts. He blamed me for not letting him know when he was younger so that he could learn to deal with it. It caused him so much stress and anxiety and made it very difficult for him to be around people. While arguing, I sometimes asked him what he was thinking, and he would say, "You know." I would tell him that I had no idea, but he would get angry, and things would escalate. I knew I was losing him but didn't know what to do.

I'm not sure what it is about mothers knowing things. I guess they call it intuition, but for some reason, I always worried about this child, that something was going to go wrong. Since an episode when he was five when he told me he could hear people talking that weren't there, I had a strange sense and periodically asked him if he still heard voices.

The day came when he was living and working in a different town, an hour's drive from our home, that we found him in our basement in his old room, his eyes looking haunted, and our nightmare began. What he was saying didn't make sense.

Within a few days, he finally started talking about what was happening and how he heard voices. He heard voices telling him how awful he was, how no one wanted him around, and how he would go to hell. They told him he was the worst person in the world and everyone hated him. They were voices of people as though they were sitting close by and talking to each other about him and how they wished he wasn't there.

He came home because no one wanted him. He couldn't take it any longer. He would tell me that he hated me for not telling him people could hear his thoughts. He felt I didn't want him around either, but I had to look after him because I was his mother. He believed his only option was to move to the city alone and be homeless. Our time was spent trying to reassure him and trying to figure out what we could do to help him.

When we found a program for him that helped with early psychosis intervention, we had hopes that things would soon change. He wanted help, and we hoped he would get therapy and we would find medication so he would get better. As we learned more about this disease, we also learned that those suffering often don't believe they are sick. While my son wanted help, he truly believed everything his mind was telling him. He thought we were lying again, and he was not trusting that medication would help.

We were very lucky that he was always willing to have us in his appointments with his psychiatrist and case worker. This allowed us to give our feedback even though he often didn't believe or necessarily like what we said. It also let me be an advocate in times when he didn't know how to ask for another alternative to some of the medications because of how they were affecting him. Anti-psychotic meds have some terrible side effects, such as feeling tired all the time, foggy brain, drooling, excessive weight gain, and uncontrolled movement. Our attending appointments, I believe, made all the difference because we heard what was being said and could fill in important gaps.

We also participated in an education series that helped us understand more of what he was going through. On the outside, someone with Schizophrenia can seem as though they are being difficult and not doing what they need to do to get well. We learned a lot about what was happening and were able to look back and realize that his noncompliance with our household rules was, in fact, a large part of his illness.

When you get a diagnosis, first, you blame yourself. You remember every time you yelled, didn't have time, they fell and hurt themselves. You feel that you didn't do enough to make sure they felt loved and that their stress level was not overwhelming, and you find fault in everything you have ever done. You vow to do all you can to help them and get them well because you believe it was your fault.

Once you learn about the illness, you learn that no one really knows why it happens. We know some things, but we don't know the causes. We know that typically, a few experiences that could have contributed may have happened. Everyone is born with a level of vulnerability. Everyone. Then traumas, birth order/date, genetics, drug use, and environment can increase the likelihood of developing it.

What you learn is that anyone can develop Schizophrenia or other serious mental illnesses, and it is not due to bad parenting. I learned that it wasn't my fault. That doesn't mean I still don't feel somewhat responsible, but it means I don't beat myself up daily because of his diagnosis. It lets us move forward.



I share this story with you for a few reasons.

- Trust your gut parental instincts. If you know something is wrong, don't accept answers from someone who has only spoken to your child for an hour.
- Mental illness is still a mystery to the medical world. There is so much that we don't know. So much to learn, and before we can truly help and eradicate mental illness, we must understand how it is caused—advocate for better training in medical school and more research.

- Mental illness is often thought of as just dealing with the mind and having to get that straightened out. The fact is that mental illness is a physical illness. The brain is not working properly, and it is causing issues with how your brain interprets things.
- Don't compare your journey with someone else. Everyone's journey is different, and each body needs something unique.
- Finding what works for you takes a LONGGGG time to find the right treatments. NEVER give up.
- There is always hope. Recovery can be expected, but you must understand that recovery looks different for everyone.

You are not a bad parent, sister, brother, or grandparent. You didn't cause it. There is a cocktail of environmental, traumatic situations, substances, and pre-disposed issues that can lead to a psychotic break. It can happen to anyone.

Meet Guelda Redman



While navigating a Schizophrenia diagnosis for her son, Guelda also developed severe depression herself. Learning more about mental illness and how it can affect you has been a roller coaster experience, to say the least.

After discovering the British Columbia Schizophrenia Society (BCSS), Guelda and her family have been fundraising for them yearly in either the BMO Vancouver Marathon or Scotiabank half-marathon runs as Team Heimburger.

Guelda sits on the Board of Directors for the British Columbia Schizophrenia Society Foundation.

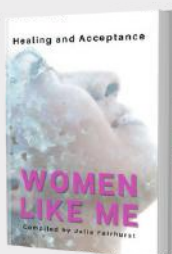
Praying for the best but preparing for the worst, Guelda keeps a watchful eye on her son and realizes how fragile the human mind can be. Things are good now, but there are never any guarantees. More research is desperately needed.

Schizophrenia Mom Warrior

Click here to go to Guelda's website. You'll find invaluable information that can help you or your loved one.



"Click the book to access purchasing option."



**"A Broken Mind: Our Journey with Severe Mental Illness,"
by Autor Guelda Redma**

If you want to read her entire story, you can find Guelda's story in the Women Like Me Book.
"Healing and Acceptance"

Wise Words From Wise Women



★ "I can promise you that women working together—linked, informed, and educated—can bring peace and prosperity to this forsaken planet." — Isabel Allende

★ "What's the greatest lesson a woman should learn? That since day one, she's already had everything she needs within herself. It's the world that convinced her she did not." —
Rupi Kaur

★ "Do not live someone else's life and someone else's idea of what womanhood is. Womanhood is you."
— Viola Davis

★ "I am woman phenomenally. Phenomenal woman, that's me." — Maya Angelou

★ "There is no limit to what we, as women, can accomplish." — Michelle Obama

★ "A girl should be two things: who and what she wants." — Coco Chanel

★ "Here's to strong women. May we know them. May we be them. May we raise them." — Unknown

★ "A strong woman looks a challenge in the eye and gives it a wink." — Gina Carey

★ "Extremists have shown what frightens them most. A girl with a book." — Malala Yousafzai

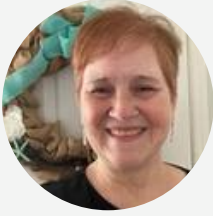
★ "There is nothing stronger than a broken woman who has rebuilt herself." — Hannah Gadsby

★ "Above all, be the heroine of your life, not the victim." — Nora Ephron

★ "Every woman's success should be an inspiration to another. We're strongest when we cheer each other on." — Serena Williams



Women's Stories of Empowerment



SUSAN DABORN

When I look back at the past 13 years of my life, this journey I've been on recovering from a car accident and dealing with the trauma and aftermath of that has given me an unknown strength that I didn't think I had.

This inner strength, the "warrior" in me, has surfaced and given me the strength and courage to keep on, which sometimes didn't seem possible.

I can't explain what keeps pushing me to deal with my daily struggles, which can be big or small. Maybe this warrior in me has always been there I just never knew I had it in me.

Every day presents different challenges, but I feel I can now handle what's thrown at me. My inner warrior comes out fiercely when I'm advocating for my senior clients, as they can't always look out for themselves, and this makes me very passionate about being a caregiver for our most vulnerable.

On days when I can't be my own warrior I know I can for them and that really inspires me to keep going on and to keep doing what I do.



Nancy Beaulieu

I've grown up hearing bad things about labels and how we should avoid them. Somehow, I've never felt that labels were a problem. I'm happy to identify everything as it is. I feel it brings clarity and support when you can identify things. So many people in my life have gone through life without "their labels," which has only hindered them. In today's world, it seems as though everyone is looking for a diagnosis, or at least that's what my doctor told me.

I remember a situation from when I was a child under the age of seven that has stuck with me all my 39 years of life. I was the baby of my siblings, and my sister, who was a year and ten months older than me, was asked to pick up the phone, call the number on a piece of paper, and order pizza. Everything was written down, and this seemed like a simple task to me. I remember my sister feeling very distraught and overwhelmed. She didn't know what to say and couldn't bring herself to do it. I picked up the phone, dialed the number, and ordered the pizza. I was proud of myself for doing this but confused as to why my sister could not.

Many years went by with my sister having big emotions, being impulsive, being disorganized, resisting change, rebelling, being everything but normal, cussing, and being hard to get along with. We fought a lot growing up and always thought she was odd. She went through some serious Tom Boy phases, a trench coat phase, a goth phase, and in her teen years, she got pretty heavy into drugs.

We went through a divorce in our family life, and we mostly lived with our mom until I decided to move to my dad's. With three-plus hours driving between my sister and me, the absence did us some good. When she moved in with my dad and I we grew a lot closer. My sister was my tag-along until she made her own friends.

Over the years of young adulthood, my sister had multiple different living situations and made lots of reckless choices. I had my share of not-so-great choices, too, but I was too busy chasing my dreams to stumble in life like she had. My sister bounced around living in many different spaces, and after living out of a basement suite of our brother's home and then my basement suite, she moved a bunch more times until she had nothing much left and was living out of a shelter.

She chose "camping from the shelter," as she would call it. I often drove down the streets looking for her and her shopping cart with her belongings, wondering if she was okay. She had pawned many things off, and some were stolen. She was living a very hard life, and it broke my heart. I worried about her constantly. You could not tell my sister what to do; she wouldn't listen, but she clearly needed help.

My sister met an amazing case worker one day who had a big heart and was motivated to help her. She got off the streets and into an apartment, and we thought things were looking up. She was starting to get some diagnosis, and it was far too long overdue.

You see, Audrey was ADHD, had anxiety, had personality disorder, narcolepsy, depression, and that may not have been every label. She went her whole life without labels. Without labels, she lacked the support she really needed. In April of 2022, my sister took her life. She left us at age 38. I used to think that however we die, suicide included, that was how we were meant to die. As I constantly get educated about life and death, mediumship, mental health, and much more, I have learned that suicide is never part of our life plan. It's an escape from suffering, not how we are meant to exit our human experience.

In the last few years of my life, I've come to realize my partner, my kids, and my mom all have ADHD. It's become a passion of mine to study mental health and to raise awareness around it. I'm here to tell you that if you think something is off, look into it, get your diagnosis, get your label. With that label comes support, empathy, compassion, and understanding.

Life can be so hard, especially if you're neurodivergent. Seek help, and feel no shame. Please, everyone, learn to recognize when people are struggling and let's lift each other up. Forget judging others and lead with your heart.

Women's Stories of Empowerment



TRACEY GRAVES

Our Love Story, In Memory of Chris Mason

Friday May 17th, 2002, (known as the May “24” weekend) is the day I saw a man on a dancing machine at a hockey arena in Pierrefonds, QC. By Sunday, May 19th, 2002, he had already captured my heart.

I had vowed to myself that after a very abusive relationship with my son’s father, I was not going to become involved with anyone ever again. My defense wall was very high, and I was determined never to let anyone in again; it was too dangerous.

May 17th, 2002, was the May 24 weekend, so to speak. I was the Assistant Coordinator for a AAA Hockey Tournament for Division 1 and Division 2 schools in the USA, working with Scouts to seek out exceptional talent for their elite schools.

We had teams from all over Ontario, Nova Scotia, and Quebec. It was busy, and I didn’t have much time on my hands...until he spoke to me.

Ever get the feeling that someone is watching you? I could sense it constantly but didn’t pay any attention to it; this was about hockey. I watched as he danced with his daughter and teammates from the Kingston Beasts Hockey Team and thought to myself how lucky these girls were to have such a fun dad hang out with them.

At the end of the first night, as everyone returned to the hotel, I found myself in the bar, just wanting a cigarette (I had been trying to quit, and yes, you were allowed to smoke in the bars then) and a cold beer. I stood at the bar, sipping away and chatting with some of the parents, and another drink appeared. I thanked the bartender, and he said thank the gentleman over at that table, and there he was all alone. He had A big smile and a Cigarillo in his hand; he raised his glass (his signature Rusty Nail), and I walked over to thank him. The love story begins.

We struck up a conversation so quickly that it was like we had known each other for years. I revealed that I was a single parent robbing Peter to pay Paul, and he revealed that he was a Financial Planner.

At the end of the night, when the bar was closing (3 am) with an early wake-up call for myself to be back at the arena, he walked me to my room and said goodnight.

Day two at the rink, another busy day, arranging for pictures and signings from various Female Team Canada Members; no rest for the wicked, they say, and there he was. Standing proudly with the other moms and dads of their team, waiting to meet these amazing players with their daughters and sons, I desperately tried not to make it obvious that I was staring out of the corner of my eye; how was this happening to me? I promised myself never again. I also had to be cognizant that my son was at the rink with his team.

Another night at the hotel bar, he immediately invited me to sit with him for a bite to eat. It was late, and I wasn't hungry, but he insisted I try some of his appetizers, so for the first time in my life, I tried asparagus – true story!

We had another amazing evening chatting it up, and he let me know that he wasn't trying to pick me up but wanted to know who the woman with the long red hair was, as she was striking and had the nicest legs he'd ever seen, yes, I blushed.

He came to find that his wife had asked for a separation after 26 years and three children. He found out she had been with someone else, and he really wasn't devastated by it due to how their marriage came to be; he only felt for his daughters.

That broke my heart, but I listened to him as he told me about some of his life. A stranger talking to me about his life felt unreal, but he said he felt like he could trust me.

This time, when the bar closed, he walked me to my room and came in so we could continue talking, and we did until very early in the morning. He had to sneak out of my room so our kids didn't see it happen – what on earth were we thinking...especially when he thanked me and... then kissed me goodnight?

When the door closed behind him, my mind raced...my heart pounded, and I realized I had fallen deep for this man I saw on a dancing machine.

Sunday rolls around, and a Scout is very interested in meeting his daughter, and another wants to meet my son. I rounded up my son, brought him to meet the hockey coach from Stanstead, and spoke with Chris about his daughter. I introduce them both to the Hockey Coach from New Hampshire and go back to running the tournament.

The arena was a whirlwind of excitement as parents were escorted to meet with prestigious schools. Sadly, the Kingston Beast team was eliminated that day from the tournament. The weekend was coming to an end, and I didn't know if I would ever see him again. I wished them all well and a safe trip home. I was left with a business card and a heart that sank as I had to say goodbye. How did this happen...

As I write this, I am reminded that within each of us lies a brave and courageous warrior waiting to rise up and conquer life's challenges.

By embracing our warrior within, we unlock the full potential of our being, allowing us to seize opportunities, overcome obstacles, and experience the richness and beauty of life in its fullest expression.

Only when we let our brave inner warrior rise up can we truly embrace the journey, savor the moments, and cherish the invaluable gifts that life has to offer us.

*“Grief is nothing but a painful waiting, a horrible patience.
Grief cannot be torn down or scaled or overcome or outsmarted.
It can only be outlasted.
Survival is surrender to the brick wall.”*

Glennon Doyle Melton



Women's Stories of Empowerment



Marissa Magcawas

On January 11, 1964, a precious child was born to proud parents Osias and Ernita Magcawas, and that was me, a happy, playful, beautiful girl named Marissa Magcawas. I am the sixth child of eight siblings. I was born in San Diego, San Pablo City, Philippines. I'm so thankful for my childhood and family.

Although we grew up poor, our parents instilled the importance of education into our minds. They made sure that all of us finished our chosen careers. I graduated from Philippine Women's University with a BA degree in Communication Arts. I was grateful that I had the privilege of going to any university of my choice to take any course I wanted to. I had a full scholarship for one year of my education, as I had graduated valedictorian at San Pablo Colleges.

Going to university was my first chance to live independently, as it was the first time I had moved away from my parents and family. It was tough to manage things independently and adjust to city life in Manila, but it was worth it. It was exciting as I began to figure out who I was and who and what I wanted to be. I gained wonderful friends. I became a staff writer in our school newspaper.

Unfortunately, I did not maintain my academic scholarship. However, I got accepted into another form of scholarship, wherein I got to work at the registrar's office. University was the time when I realized my independence and learned important lessons.

In January 1991, I landed in beautiful British Columbia, Canada, which I now call home. I came here as a live-in caregiver or nanny. After coming here from the Philippines and working as an executive assistant in the advertising department of a prestigious company, and then suddenly being confined to just the four corners of the house, doing household chores and taking care of kids – call me crazy, but it was not an easy transition.

It was a shock at first; I just had to accept my present reality, something that I have almost perfected over the years. Things became easier once I accepted my reality and was not in denial any more. I'm thankful for working as a nanny because the experience helped me hone my patience, maturity, understanding, sound judgment, nurturing spirit, and genuine love for children. A college hired me as an Accounting Administrator because I am a nanny. The principal was so impressed with the kind of flexibility and well-rounded personality that I possess. So, kudos to all the live-in nannies and caregivers; continue your great job!

March 28, 2023, marked the 9-year anniversary of my breast cancer diagnosis. This breast cancer journey is one of the most painful moments in my life, especially with the side effects of chemotherapy, the mastectomy procedure and the healing process. Nonetheless, I consider this was the best time because I felt so close to God. I fully surrendered myself to Him; I received Jesus Christ as my personal savior.

I was at the calmest point in my life, at the most peaceful place within myself and with all the people around me. I healed very well while continuing my work with the Lord. This journey had been difficult, but the prayers and loving support, combined with each word of kindness, had seen me through and made this battle worth all the treasure in the world. Breast cancer changed me in so many ways: It got me closer to God who created me; I learned the value of meaningful relationships, and truly appreciated life in significantly simple ways.

My breast cancer journey has also, in a strange way, done some amazing things for me. It has allowed me to be more me; I'm much more in touch with who I am – my beingness, true self, and higher purpose in life. I took some steps backward and got a closer and better view of my life. I started to slow down and relax, saying “No” when I deemed it necessary, and it felt good. Most importantly, I realized how strong I am as a person with God's continued guidance and unconditional love.

Yes, some things have changed, and this battle has changed my life. But the change can be beautiful, and lovely things can happen in trying times, too.

I was having a great ride in my life, right after my breast cancer, when a mishap occurred; I had a car accident in 2015. Thank God I was alive! However, I was diagnosed with depression and post-traumatic stress disorder. I decided then to seek professional help and to take every step necessary to cure myself. I realized that if there is a physical sickness, there is mental illness; my brain is a part of my body that needs care and treatment. My simple analogy made things easier for me. I can attest that my depression and anxiety are real, and only someone who has been through it, or a psychologist and psychiatrist, would comprehend. Let it be known that mental health disorders have severe consequences and need to be taken seriously.

This challenge has been difficult and has affected my son in crucial ways, often negatively, especially because he's a growing teenager. I felt bad, sad, and guilty because of how I sometimes treated him. On the bright side, this ongoing journey perfects my patience, enhances my resilience, and makes me closer to God.

I became fully aware that there's no quick fix to life's discomfort, specifically my battle with PTSD and depression. I concluded it is okay not to be okay sometimes. It's okay to seek support and help and share inner struggles with someone willing to listen; it does get better every day. As I go through life, with all of its adversities and challenges, I continue to practice changing the way I look at the world and always see the good side of things and people. My intentions are genuine and positive. Then my life is transformed, putting me into a better position.

Over the years, I have learned to be spontaneous, bold, and courageous, to practice being in the now, to live one day at a time, to simplify life, and to seize and enjoy the moment. As Rick Pitino says, “Learning to live in the present tense – one that's free from the failures of the past and the anxieties of the future – is a wonderful gift and one you always should be striving for.”

Moreover, it is with my great pride and honor that I continuously involve myself in various non-profit organizations, community projects and events that inspire future generations and are committed to help support those who are in need. I know that I am making a difference in my own little ways, and that there is no greater pleasure than making a contribution to community projects with meaning, purpose and passion.

I'm grateful for all of my experiences, good or bad; for all of the struggles I've been through and overcome; for the beautiful memories; for the amazing people I have met; for the beautiful places I've been to; for my wonderful friends and my loving family. Because without them, I would not be the kind of person I have become. I may not have all the riches in the world, but with God in my life and all the marvelous people and the great support system I have, I am indeed blessed. Thank you, Lord! I'm so proud to say, "It's great to be me!"

I stumble, I break, I fail, I rise, I heal – I overcome. I fall, I get up, I cry, I laugh at myself and I keep moving forward. I'm a courageous single mom. I am a survivor, and I am an author.



Rosa Livingstone

In my life's narrative, the battles I've faced extended far beyond the ordinary struggles I expected of life; the roots go deeply into the aching places of emotional and physical abuse, the domestic violence I witnessed, but more profoundly, childhood sexual abuse. I still carry the scars from those early wounds, but my journey as a warrior woman is not defined by victimhood. I've refused that label all my life. Instead, it is formed by a remarkable strength and resilience I never knew I had, which led me to thrive despite the darkness that once threatened to blind me.

I came to recognize that childhood sexual abuse cast a long and dark shadow over most of my life, attempting to bury me in shame and "The Code of Silence". I did not recognize honest, kind, and caring love. Yet, there came a point where I had to refuse to let the actions of another dictate the course of my life.

With countless hours of gut-wrenchingly painful Hypnotherapy and what proved to be an unwavering commitment to my own healing, I began to confront the pain head-on. And Sisters, it wasn't easy. But I found that the pain I carried had become greater than my shame, fear, and instinct to hide and run for the hills.

Emotional abuse by my mother's sharp, insidious tongue fractured my sense of self-worth and eroded the foundation of my identity. I thought this was 'normal' parenting. However, as a warrior woman, I eventually 'woke up'. I did not know this was a choice. Building emotional intelligence became my armor against manipulation and control, which had been the prototype for relationships I thought I deserved.

Instead of continuing the cycle of abuse with self-punishment, I transformed those experiences into compassion for myself and others. This became a powerful force, leading me to my current profession as a Clinical Hypnotherapist with a passion for helping women harness their own healing.

Looking back, I see that learning to heal childhood trauma required buckets of courage, but with each therapy session, I untangled the grip that abuse held over me. It was the beginning of my reclaiming my inner child, guiding her to see life from the lens of self-love versus self-loathing. In doing my inner work, I freed myself from the chains of silence and rediscovered my voice and right to speak my truth! As a warrior woman, my journey to a thriving place is the essence of my warrior spirit.

My inner battlefield transformed from mere survival to a space where I used my past experiences to fuel my resilience. In having overcome much of my past, I've become a living testament to the transformative power of finding self-worth and value through introspection and the power of forgiveness. The scars of shame that once ached within me are now only reminders that I am more than what I was exposed to and that, despite the odds, I am a woman who turned pain into a narrative of personal power with an unwavering belief that she is the only author of her story.

Through my painful self-examinations through the lens of my memory, I now embody the essence of what I believe a warrior woman to be — one who confronts her past, knows her strength, fights for truth, and stands as a beacon of hope and inspiration for others - for my sons to know what a strong woman looks like as well as to other women navigating their own journeys of healing to triumph over adversity.

We are meant to thrive, Sisters! And thriving amidst the aftermath of soul-crushing experiences is something we can all do. I made it my mission to use education, therapy, and my career aspirations to defy the limitations my upbringing imposed on me. The warrior within me turned away from my mother's venomous voice and striking hands and did not succumb to the darkness brought on by the abuser of my precious little body. Instead, I healed the anger, confusion, and pain and used my new truth to fuel my dreams.

My thriving is not an absence of pain but a deliberate choice to rise above it. I see it in the relationships I've cultivated: my supportive husband who believes in me fully; my two amazing sons who are not only a testament to my capacity to love and rear with an open heart but also the source of all I've done right; my sister, who valiantly tried to shield me from harm; my beautiful niece who blossomed into a strong, independent, and powerful woman; the women I call "Family" who have taught me non-competitive support; my courageous female clients who faced their fears and re-lit their warrior light. All these serve as daily gratitude for the healthy love I give and receive.

Instead of holding me back, the scars on my soul have become a guiding light towards a life that radiates with authenticity, strength, and the unwavering belief that I own my story and can determine my destiny, no matter what!

And it is a testament to the amazing opportunities that arise when a warrior woman confronts her past, rewrites her narrative and reclaims her voice.

Looking into the window of the soul.
See the door within, use your imagination and turn the picture the four different directions.
What do see, message from spirit.

Julia Hik



What Is Stillness Of Mind?



The stillness of one's mind is often defined as tranquility or possessing inner peace. It includes any act that involves taking a moment to reflect on your physical and mental state. As such, you can practice stillness on a walk, at night in bed, or in your car on your way to work with the radio off.

The goal of stillness is to stop the flow of anxious thoughts so you can give your mind a rest. The benefits of stillness are numerous, not limited to increased clarity and focus, creativity, reduced stress levels, and better physical health.

Here, we will answer the most commonly asked questions about stillness of mind, including if there are any differences between this and mindfulness and how you can begin incorporating it into your daily routine.

Is There a Difference Between Mindfulness and Stillness of Mind?

Is there a difference between the stillness of mind and the practice of mindfulness? The answer is that they are more extensions of one another.

Through the stillness of mind, the goal is to quiet your mind from raging, anxious thoughts and instead separate yourself from them. It's like unfurling a ball of yarn. If your anxious thoughts are the strings of yarn, you're not slowly unknotting them. Instead, you are just putting the ball of yarn on the kitchen counter to be dealt with later.

Mindfulness, on the other hand, is acknowledging that the ball of yarn exists and identifying how the tangled mess is making you feel in this moment without thinking about how you will fix it or how it became so tangled to start with.

With stillness of mind, you see the ball of yarn, but with mindfulness, you acknowledge how it makes you feel.

That's kind of how these two concepts work with one another. Stillness of mind doesn't trick you into believing that the ball of yarn doesn't exist, but rather, it pushes it aside so you can focus on something else for a little while. After this pause, you're better equipped to know how to start untangling it.

How to Practice Stillness of Mind?

The yarn analogy is good because it highlights the importance of this practice. As with anything, though, achieving stillness of mind takes work. If you're ready to get started, here are some tips for how to practice stillness of mind:

Make Time for It

We will be more likely to follow through if we're held to a commitment. So, if you want to achieve stillness of mind, put it on your calendar. You can schedule this for any time, but try to set up the same time slot every day, as it will become a part of your routine over time.

There's a scientific benefit to this, too, as experts from WebMD claim that "if you have a plan, you'll feel more in control." Having control in this context can lead to reduced stress levels ordinarily caused by having decision fatigue first thing in the morning.

Find a Spot You Want to Practice In That's Free From Distractions

Trying to practice stillness of mind while at your desk at work or while driving your little ones to daycare may not be the most practical of choices.

Don't Give Up

When you're trying to quiet your thoughts, you'll likely discover that they pop back up the moment you think you've finally gotten rid of them. This is normal and should be an expected part of practicing stillness of mind. After all, you're in the early stages of trying to re-train your brain, which is now trying to unlearn everything it's done from Day 1.

When this happens, learn to redirect your thoughts. Try imagining a shelf or table where you can physically pick up your anxious thoughts and place them down. Imagine what that would look like. Believe it or not, a simple act like this can help!

In the same vein, don't get too hard on yourself if you forget to practice for a day or two here and there. This is a new practice, and like with any hobby, it's not necessarily going to come easy...but it will be worth it.

Just to remind you, stillness of mind is achievable. You need to set the stage for it to be successful. Limit distractions, find a cozy place to practice, and remember that you're human - it's okay to miss a day and make a mistake. You don't have to be perfect, but the practice of stillness of mind makes perfect over time.

7 Key Benefits Of **PRACTICING STILLNESS**

1. You'll Become More Focused On The Present

It's a lot like meditation, however, the big difference is that stillness isn't necessarily as focused on breathing techniques. Rather, it's about bringing attention to your emotions so you can manage them more effectively.

2. You'll Become More Creative

As you practice the technique of stillness, you'll find yourself experiencing more moments of pause. It's in these paused moments that the right side of your brain - the creative side - begins to flourish.

3. You'll Develop A Stronger Intuition

Through stillness, you get to connect with yourself. One benefit of doing this includes developing a stronger intuition. Intuition is an internal meter that helps inform our decisions including everything from avoiding taking a particular road to work, not stopping to engage in conversation with someone that gives us a funky feeling, or even scheduling a doctor's appointment. In other words, it's our gut instinct.

4. You'll Get A Better Night's Sleep

Though many people use these noisy items as a distraction to lessen either feelings of fear or loneliness, this kind of noise pollution disrupts our natural sleep cycle. Though it may be difficult at first, try removing all lights and distractions next time you go to bed. If your thoughts keep you up at night, the practice of stillness can eventually reduce this. In the process of practicing stillness as it relates to your racing thoughts, you'll find that you feel more refreshed in the morning because you'll actually be rested.

5. You'll Reduce Your Stress Levels

From a biological standpoint, the more still and relaxed your body is, the more active your sympathetic system is. This is the part of the body that is responsible for relaxation in comparison to your parasympathetic system, which is responsible for your fight or flight response most often experienced during times of stress.

6. You'll Have Less Muscle Tension

During our moments of stillness, we draw attention to our bodies, both physically and emotionally. As you do a scan of your body, you will call attention to this tightness and release it. It literally feels like a weight coming off your shoulders - and it kind of is. Holding tension in our muscles can trick other parts of our body into reacting to stress. The more you can offload it, the less your body will react to the stimuli.

7. You'll Have More Clarity

Like becoming more creative in terms of artistic pursuits and problem-solving, stillness helps you develop more clarity. Sometimes when we're too close to a situation, it can be hard to look at it logically. However, when you shut out the rest of the world for a few moments and relax, you figure out what is right for you.



Spring
by Nicole Carpentier



The wind rustles through the branches,
the birds chirp quietly,
on this cold winters day I sit,
I listen and I wait for spring to come.

The spring that feels like blooming,
glowing, radiant possibilities.
The spring that brings deep warmth,

The ice hasn't melted yet from my long winter,
It's cold and still slippery inside,
One must be careful, treading lightly,
For one misstep could end in more pain.

So I sit, and I wait,
Learning what it is to sit with this feeling,
A feeling I can barely describe,
It isn't fear, it isn't loneliness, it isn't sadness or despair.

It is calm, quiet, not happy, yet not quite sad,
I observe it like I would a beautiful pebble found on the beach,
Not a precious stone,
yet not something to discard either.

This winter of my soul has had many faces already,
Many winter storms, many frigid nights,
light falling snow, and warm winter sunshine,
So I wonder what this phase is, with it's calm half beauty.

On the doorstep of spring,
but not quite there yet,
I observe, and I make sure to treat it with care as I turn it over in my hands,
This deserves a different type of honoring.

So I will sit with it,
with myself, in my gratitude, in my pain, in my fury, and in my joy,
For I know now that I can be all of these at once,
I just didn't know until now that I could also be at peace.

Meet Nicole Carpentier



My name is Nicole, I am 36 years old and I will be officially divorced in a few months time.

I have spent most of my life fighting loneliness as an only child, with a troubled family. I learned how to keep my emotions, my desires, my words and my feelings hidden so that I could appear strong for everyone else. This carried over into my relationships and friendships over the years, heartache after heartache.

Then I married a man and started to believe I was safe, that I was seen and I was loved even in my brokenness. I was very wrong. As I began to open up and show my vulnerability, he beat me down for it. I was told I was stupid, childish, and too emotional for my feelings. And when I stood up for myself, I was threatened with physical force. He became an extremist with harsh, dogmatic religious views and tried to force the same views on me.

With the pain this all caused, I became codependent on him, his love, and his praise. I knew he was wrong about me and my emotions, but I let myself get smaller until there was almost nothing left. That's when he had an affair.

I walked away, and nearly a year later I am still on my healing journey, and that's what it is, a journey. It may never end, as the damage he has caused may come up in unexpected ways years down the road, but I will never stop fighting for myself. If his brokenness that he pushed onto me taught me anything, it's that I am enough in all of my parts, my emotions and how deeply I feel are beautiful and they are a blessing!

So, while I go through my healing journey, as I know so many others out there are, I want to send a reminder that healing is not linear. There will be ups and downs. Some days you will feel as though you are soaring and doing better than ever, other days you will struggle to pick yourself up off the ground.

Both are normal, both are healthy, both are necessary! Just as long as you feel it, learn to feel through it, learn to find your release, whatever that may be, and learn to trust yourself! That you have got yourself through all of this.

Whether you're an aspiring entrepreneur, a curious mind, or simply seeking motivation and inspiration, this podcast is a treasure trove of wisdom and guidance.



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SYDNEY MICKEY JULIE FAIRHURST

Episode. 17

Conversations with Women Like Me

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Sydney Mickey tells her story with love and forgiveness.

A MOMENT IN TIME - LIFE WILL NEVER BE THE SAME

"When I looked at my rear-view mirror, I felt immediate panic. I couldn't find my voice to say what I saw, and my hands gripped the wheel so intensely that they throbbed. I looked over my shoulder to let them pass, but what happened next changed our lives forever."

A drunk driver causes a serious life-altering accident that has changed the course of Sydney's life and her family.

Are You Not Liked Online? JULIE FAIRHURST

Episode. 39

Conversations with Women Like Me In Business

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Do you set out to attract people who like and appreciate you? If you don't, then that's a problem. Likability is paramount to succeeding in the online world. You want to work with those with whom you have common ground.

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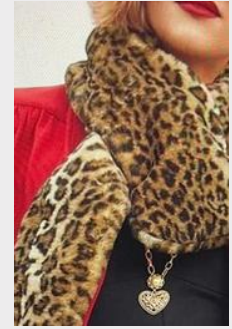
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According to researchers, the heart has an electromagnetic field larger than the brain: a magnetometer can measure the energy field of the heart that radiates from 2.4 meters to 3 meters around the human body.

While this is certainly significant, perhaps more impressive than the electromagnetic field projected by the heart of a horse is five times larger than that of a human being (imagine an electromagnetic sphere around the horse) and it can influence straight into our own heart rate.

Horses are also likely to have what science has identified as a "coherent" heart rate (heart rate pattern) that explains why we can feel better when we're close to them. Studies have found a coherent heart pattern or HRV to be a solid measure of well-being and consistent with emotional states of calm and joy-that is, we exhibit such patterns when we feel positive emotions.



Julie Fairhurst

A prolific author, visionary publisher, and empowering writing coach dedicated to helping women excel in both their business and personal journeys.



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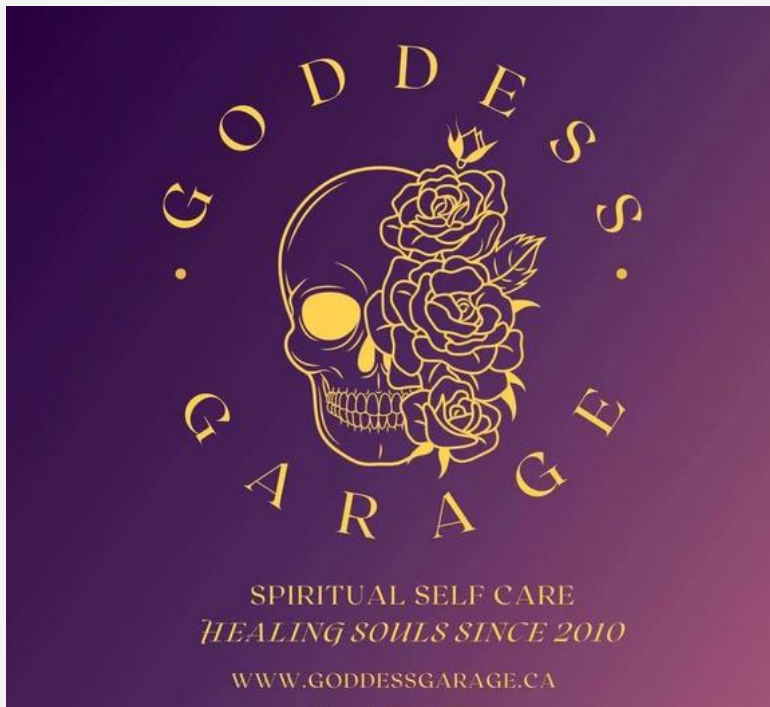


- **Community & Support:** The BCWBN provides a supportive community where women can connect, share experiences, and offer guidance. Being surrounded by like-minded individuals can significantly enhance your business journey.
- **Networking Opportunities:** Regular events, workshops, and meetings allow members to establish essential business connections, find potential clients, or even meet future business partners.
- **Mentorship:** Benefit from mentorship opportunities, where seasoned professionals offer guidance, share their experiences, and provide actionable advice to help grow your business.
- **Collaborative Environment:** The BCWBN fosters a collaborative, rather than competitive, environment. This ethos can lead to joint ventures and collaborative projects between members.

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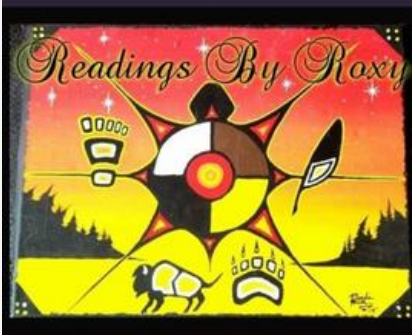
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“Everything becomes a story. The conversations that I have, and the moments that I spend with people around me. The moments of silences that I have in my day to day life. The sudden wanderings that I have in my weekends. The dreams that I dream. The thoughts that I think. Everything becomes a poem or a story in my life.”

Avijeet Das

Readings By Roxy

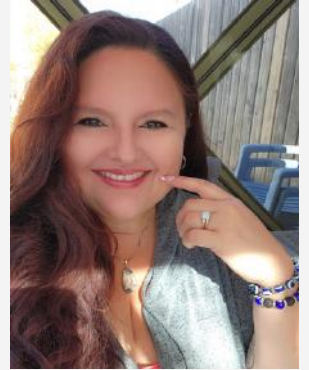
Owned and operated by Roxanne Naistus from Onion Lake First Nation, Saskatchewan. Roxy has been doing her Intuitive Angel Card Readings for almost 23 years and has run her home-based business since 2009 in Lloydminster, Saskatchewan. She is a certified Reiki Energy Practitioner and a certified Massage Therapist. Roxy does both in-person and video (distant) Readings. She has been blessed to make so many amazing connections through her clientele from all over Canada, USA, and her newest client from London, England!



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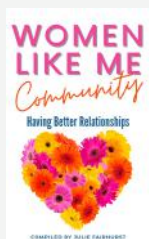
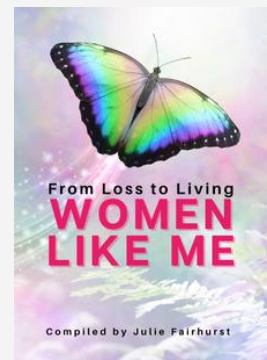
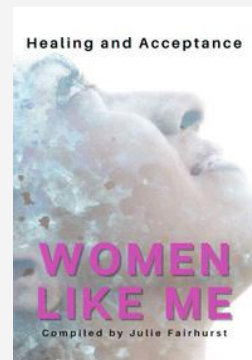
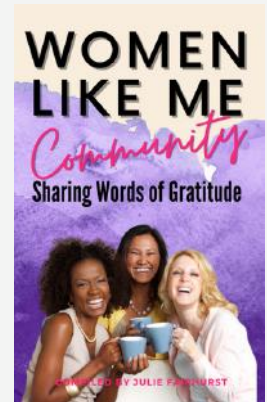
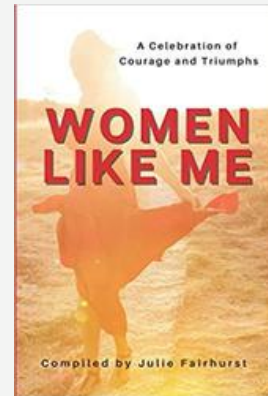
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My Approach, Process and Promise.



I am Trish Scoular, a Registered Professional Counselor who specializes in Anxiety & Depression, since 2014. I develop a treatment plan that includes appropriate interventions and techniques that specifically address depression and for each of the anxiety disorders. It's important to understand the root of anxiety and depression so we can treat it accordingly with proper medical necessity and appropriate treatment.

My goal when working with clients is to help them find a clear path to reducing symptoms and function better on a day-to-day basis. We work together to address the many conditions that coexist with anxiety and depression, while developing a plan of action that meets the goals we establish together.

My other training is in abuse, domestic violence, youth, family, community based counselling, addictions & recovery and couples (I am currently learning the Gottman method). I also work with clients who need transitional Life Coaching, which is focussed on helping you achieve your goals and dreams.



[Go to my website here](#)

I am a Registered Professional Counsellor with the Canadian Professional Counsellor's Association in good standing, #3517. We are competency-based and a member of FACTBC. I received my Diploma in Applied Psychology and Counselling from Kelowna College of Professional Counselling in 2011. I completed a two-year internship with a Worldtree Community in Nanaimo. I finished my career in 2022 as a Continuing Care Assistant after 26 years working primarily with seniors.

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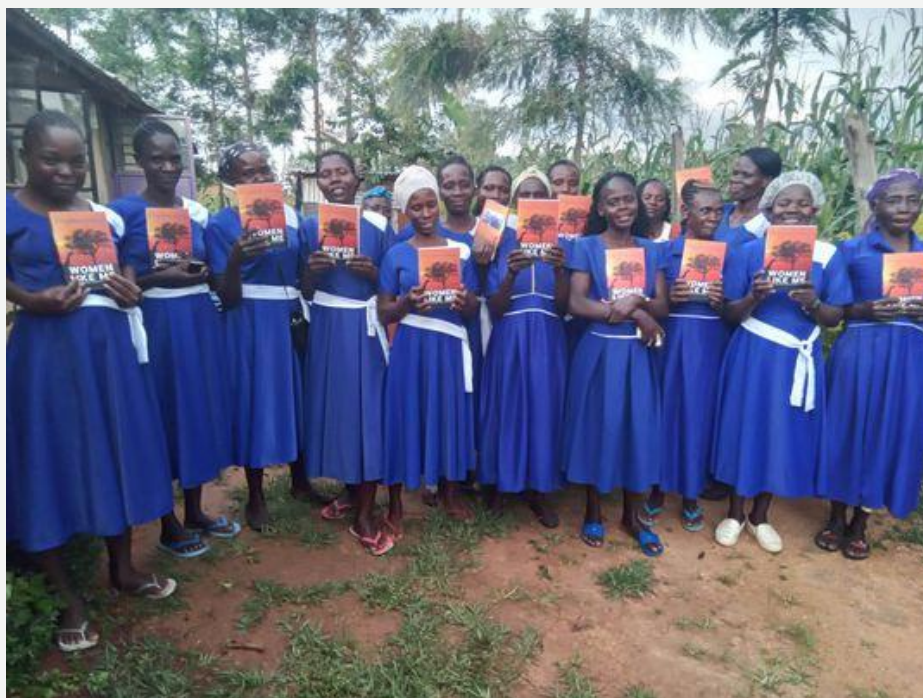
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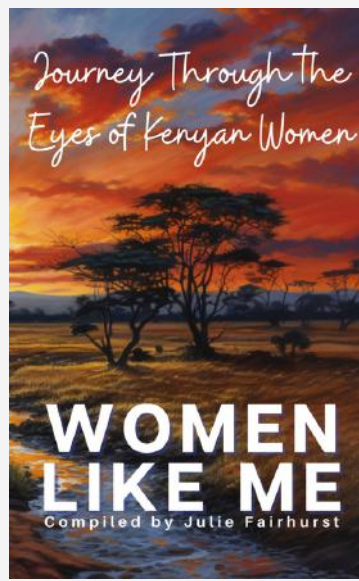
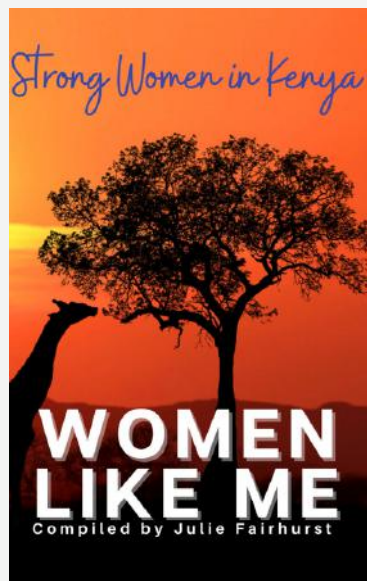


They have no computers. All stories are handwritten and sent in the mail, to be published.

Women Like Me covers all costs of the book production!



☀️ Please Empower These Women With A Book Purchase, It will mean more to them then you could every know.☀️



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Halloween Hullabaloo!

I had so much fun writing this children's book; it was definitely a departure from the norm, as I do a lot of dark writing.

I wanted to try publishing a book on Amazon and thought I needed a small book to get me started.

Living on the farm gave me the idea to write a children's book about a farm animal. I chose a donkey and, of course, gave her my name, my middle name, Dixey!

Then I pondered the subject of this story, and anyone who knows me well knows that I was the Queen of Halloween, so how fitting this would be.

It is a wonderful, heartwarming tale of discovery and friendship, starring Dixey the Donkey. With no idea what Halloween is about, the other farm animals teach Dixey all about the wonders and fun of Halloween. You can purchase this adorable book on Amazon with the link above.

Brenda Cooper

Bank On Yourself Professional



KELLY KETCHEN

I empower women to take charge of their financial destiny by providing guidance in creating a retirement plan with potential tax advantages.

Beyond retirement, these funds can be utilized for various financial objectives, including funding their children's education, acquiring a vacation property, undertaking home renovations, or establishing a reliable emergency fund.

Moreover, these resources can be harnessed in the realm of business to support ventures, expand operations, invest in cutting-edge office technology, undertake business upgrades, or even facilitate the purchase of new office spaces.

The possibilities are limited only by your imagination.

Notably, this approach doesn't involve traditional banking institutions or government regulations akin to RRSPs; instead, it employs a tried-and-true financial strategy that has been available in Canada since 1920.

kelly@macdevfinancial.com

604-318-9515



Meet Kelly Ketchen

I am a single mother to three amazing adult children. With more than two decades of experience as an educator, I transitioned into the realm of life insurance.

While my career path has evolved, I still consider myself a teacher, albeit one who imparts financial wisdom to eager learners without the disruption of spitballs or backtalk!

My true passion lies in helping individuals realize a life they never thought possible.

I've had the privilege of residing in various places, including Dublin, Ireland, Toronto, Summerland, and Vancouver. I'm an avid traveler and eagerly anticipate a journey to France and Venice next year to reunite with my youngest daughter.

♥ CALL FOR ARTICLES & ADVERTISEMENTS ♥

☀ Be a Part of Women Like Me Magazine's

April 2024 Issue - Entrepreneurial Spirit: Featuring female entrepreneurs who are redefining success, starting their businesses, and making an impact in their industries.☀

Are you a passionate writer or business owner looking to share your articles or advertisements with a vibrant community of women? Women Like Me Magazine invites you to contribute to our upcoming April 2024 issue, where the theme is "Entrepreneurial Spirit: Featuring female entrepreneurs who are redefining success, starting their businesses, and making an impact in their industries.."

✉ Why You Should Join Us:

♥ FREE Submissions: Yes, you heard it right! We are offering an exclusive opportunity for women to showcase their talents and products at absolutely NO COST.

👧 Empower Women: Celebrate the power of women by becoming a part of a community that supports and uplifts each other.

🎨 Express Yourself: Share your creativity and passion with our diverse readership. Whether you're a writer, artist, or entrepreneur, this is your platform!



📅 Important Details:

📅 Submission Deadline: March 27, 2024

Topics of Interest:

Whatever you'd like to share, here are a few ideas below

Breaking Barriers:

Stories of women who have overcome significant obstacles to achieve remarkable success.

Mental Health Warriors:

Addressing how women worldwide are changing the conversation around mental health and wellness.

Entrepreneurship and Empowerment:

Stories of female entrepreneurs who are creating opportunities and inspiring others.

Health and Body Positivity:

Covering the movements led by women that promote health, fitness, and body positivity across cultures.

Unheard Voices:

Giving women from marginalized communities a platform to share their stories and perspectives.

Fashion with a Cause:

Exploring how women in the fashion industry are using their platforms for advocacy and ethical practices.

Advertising Opportunities

Do you have a business OR product that caters to women? We would like to advertise with us in our Women Like Me magazine and get noticed by our engaged readership.

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Your contribution can inspire, uplift, and connect with women around the world. Build your business and help others!

Women Like Me Magazine offers a platform for various services that cater to women's interests, needs, and empowerment.

Women Like Me Magazine offers a platform for various services that cater to women's interests, needs, and empowerment.

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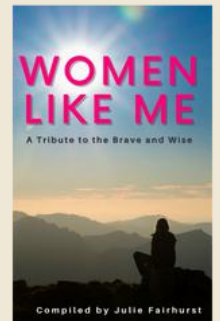
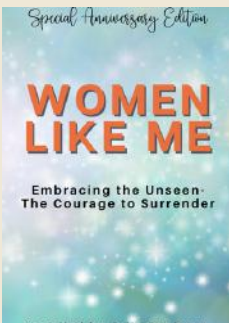
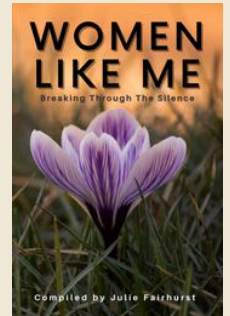
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Your Story is Your Superpower

Help others with your wisdom

Join the over 160 women who have
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Talk to Julie!

Julie Fairhurst

Women Like Me Stories & Business

Julie Fairhurst boasts three decades at the helm of a thriving business in promotions, sales, and marketing, holding a certification as a master persuader. With an impressive portfolio of 26 books under her name, she has collaborated with more than 160 authors to help shape their personal narratives



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