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MAGAZINE



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WHAT'S INSIDE

EXAMPLE CONTENT

WELCOME TO SALONPRENEUR
INDUSTRY NEWS
LEAVE THE LADDER DOWN
MEET THE COLLABORATIVE
COLUMNISTS
A SELECTION OF COLLABORATIVE
COLUMNIST ARTICLES
SPOTLIGHT - SALON OWNER
MADAM ZSA ZSA - RESIDENT AGONY AUNT
BOOK NOOK RECOMMENDATION
COFFEE TIME



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Launch Edition Front Cover by Kirsty Meakin

Over the past few years, our industry has shifted dramatically. Today, the majority of professionals are working solo or self-employed - highly skilled, deeply creative, and committed to their clients, yet often expected to run fully-fledged businesses without ever being shown how. Most have learned by doing, piecing things together with the tools of their trade, instinct, and determination, until the moment comes when building something sustainable requires more than just passion and perseverance.

Along the way, many experience the quieter side of business ownership: uncertainty, pressure, isolation, sleepless nights, and the unspoken feeling that everyone else has somehow figured it out. If that sounds familiar, you're not alone, and you're exactly where you need to be. Salonpreneur Magazine exists to normalise those experiences and replace guesswork with clarity.



hello and

WELCOME TO Salonpreneur MAGAZINE

Our contributors don't speak at you; they stand with you. They've lived the highs and lows, navigated the setbacks, and learned the lessons the hard way, and now share them so you don't have to.

This publication is built as a steady, trusted companion for salon, beauty, and wellness business owners. Each edition brings together experienced voices from across the sector and beyond to explore the areas where business can feel most complex - from planning and marketing to confidence, boundaries, visibility, and growth. We actively invite input from the wider industry, creating a platform shaped not just by experts, but by the real experiences of professionals working on the ground.

Balance sits at the heart of everything we do. Running a business isn't just about systems and strategy, it's about the person behind it. Within these pages, you'll find space to pause, reflect, and check in with yourself, alongside practical guidance you can act on immediately. Moments of calm sit comfortably next to moments of insight, because sustainable success requires both.

For our readers, Salonpreneur Magazine is a resource you return to - not a quick fix, but a growing library of support. For our partners and advertisers, it's a trusted environment where your message is seen, read, and valued by engaged professionals who are actively investing in their development and businesses.

Welcome to Salonpreneur Magazine - a publication created with care, integrity, and intention. To those who supported my previous publication, Salon Education Journal, you'll recognise the collaborative spirit, the #LeaveTheLadderDown ethos, and a commitment to amplifying voices across our industry, alongside new perspectives, new contributors, and a renewed focus on helping business owners move forward with confidence.

Now, let the creative team do what they do best — and fill these pages with insight that supports where you are, and where you're ready to go next.



#LeaveTheLadderDown

A Two-Way Street of Raising Each Other

Leaving The Ladder Down means...

You offer support and allow others to support you

You teach what you know and stay open to learning from others

You lift someone else up and accept when others lift you

It's about collaboration over competition

Recognising that everyone rises higher when we rise together

Business with integrity and building a community that thrives together

INDUSTRY NEWS

MARIA RYLLOTT-BYRD BECOMES NEW CHAIR OF INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR APPLIED CORNEOTHERAPY

UK-based Maria Rylott-Byrd was recently announced as the Global Chair of The International Association for Applied Corneotherapy (I.A.C.). Maria's election to this esteemed global position recognises her outstanding contribution to corneotherapy and her commitment to advancing skin science education and supporting professionals in the industry. Maria Rylott-Byrd BA Hons, CIDESCO, CIBTAC, is herself an accomplished UK-based corneotherapist, skin science educator, and business mentor with an impressive 37 years' experience in the health & beauty industry. Maria's election comes at a pivotal time as the I.A.C. continues to strengthen its global presence and promote corneotherapy as a vital, science-driven approach to skin health. Her leadership will undoubtedly contribute to advancing the organisation's mission and supporting professionals worldwide in delivering exceptional 'skin health first' care. Visit the I.A.C. website at corneotherapy.org or thecorneotherapyconsultant.co.uk to discover more.



MARTA ZACZKOWSKA APPOINTED PRESIDENT OF INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COSMETOLOGISTS (ASCO UK)

Renowned international waxing expert and educator Marta Zaczkowska has been appointed President of ASCO UK – International Association of Cosmetologists. The launch of ASCO UK was formally celebrated on 10th May 2025 during a prestigious Gala Night in Bucharest. Marta, widely recognised in the waxing and education sectors, has been working closely with ASCO Romania since 2024 and was honoured to take on this leadership role.



Founded by Monica Lupu, ASCO Romania is a respected professional association known for its dedication to education, ethics, and excellence in the beauty industry. It supports practitioners through mentoring, congresses, and community-building initiatives that raise standards and promote innovation. ASCO UK continues this mission, with a strong focus on supporting UK beauty professionals through top-tier education, professional collaboration, and a shared commitment to industry best practices. Under Marta's leadership, the association has exciting plans ahead - including the first official UK event, Cheers to Beauty, set to take place in Autumn 2025. Dates and details will be announced soon.

PRODUCT LAUNCH



On 16 May Saviour™ Nail was launched. Delivering a powerful solution for dry, damaged, and compromised nails and skin, Saviour™ was founded by renowned industry educator and advisor Theresa Foddering, known professionally as The Naildresser. It represents over two decades of professional insight combined with nature-led innovation. Saviour™ offers two transformational heroes - The Nail & Skin Restoring Balm and The Nail & Skin Restoring Oil.

The brand's ethos:

"Inspired by nature. Formulated with knowledge. Created with experience."

Saviour™ is available to purchase at www.saviournails.co.uk

MEET THE COLLABORATIVE COLUMNISTS



Carl Hinder

Carl Hinder is a straight-talking salon business coach and disruptor, delivering strategy, structure, and results-driven support to help salon owners succeed, with no fluff, just real-world impact.



Debbie Lewis

Debbie Lewis is a salon founder turned business coach, empowering solopreneurs and micro-businesses with expert guidance to grow, scale, or exit, while championing apprenticeships, women in business, and purposeful entrepreneurship.



Debbie Allen

Debbie Allen empowers salon professionals through education and helps them show up online with confidence, using personality, passion & authenticity as the ultimate tools to connect, attract, and grow.



Sam Blake

Sam Blake, founder of The Safer Salon Geek, empowers salons and clinics to build legally sound, people-first businesses through her Your Safer Space Standards™ and 30+ years of sector expertise.



Kim Ford

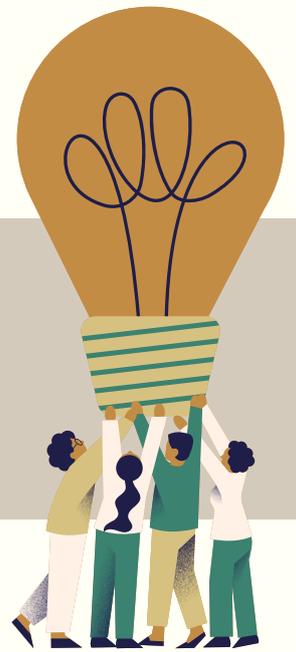
Kim Ford is a global industry consultant, HABIA ambassador, and expert witness, bringing extensive education and business insight across 50 countries with roles in governance, quality assurance, and community advocacy.



Phil Jackson

Phil Jackson is a salon coach, speaker, and author blending bold, practical strategies with 20+ years of industry insight - empowering creative salon owners through Build Your Salon and AI DIY.

MEET THE COLLABORATIVE COLUMNISTS



Philippa Holding

Philippa Holding - The Mind Atelier is an award-winning mindset and business growth coach, helping entrepreneurs build legacy-driven, 7-figure businesses, while championing gender equality through her work with UN Women and inclusive leadership.



Kerry Beavis

Kerry Beavis is an award-winning holistic therapist specialising in Pilates, Yin Yoga, and mindfulness, helping salon professionals and high-achieving women prevent burnout and create lasting balance in mind, body, and soul.



Donna Clayton

Donna Clayton empowers solo salon owners and educators to build profitable training academies, using her 27 years of industry expertise, extensive Further Education and academy background to simplify success through education.



Theresa Foddering

Theresa Foddering is a pioneering nail expert, educator, and founder of Saviour Nails, driving industry innovation, education, and excellence while empowering professionals to raise standards and shape the future of their business.



Kathryn Buckley

Kathryn Buckley, skin professional and environmental scientist, helps practitioners integrate evidence-informed nutrition into skincare. Author of The Skin We Live In, she translates complex science into practical strategies for healthier skin from within.



Emma Stobbs

Emma Stobbs, clinic owner and co-founder of Simple Salon Marketing, helps salon professionals simplify social media and strategy with real, proven marketing systems built from her own industry experience, growth journey and results.



Rebecca Day

Rebecca Day is an independent HR consultant with global beauty brand experience, helping salon owners drive success through expert people strategies, talent development, and transformational HR tailored to the industry.

MEET THE COLLABORATIVE COLUMNISTS



Claire Black & Claire Runton

Founders of Balance & Bliss, Claire B & Claire R provide clear, jargon-free financial guidance for beauty pros, helping salons & therapists simplify money management and make confident profitable business decisions.



Wendy Garcarz

Wendy Garcarz, Founder & CEO, Retirement CIC: Supporting Women to Move From Success to Significance. Wendy is also a business futurist & strategist, as well as a successful author.



Sue Davies

Sue Davies is The Salon Inspector™, helps salon professionals raise standards, build trust, and boost visibility through expert audits, mentoring, and advocacy - championing professionalism, compliance, and client confidence across the industry.



Helen Equagoo Cockle

Helen Equagoo Cockle, founder of the A-Beauty Movement and former BBC journalist, is a wellness innovator and inclusive advocate, championing DEI and melanin-rich skincare to inspire a more representative beauty industry.

The best collaborations create something
bigger
than the sum of what each person can
create on their own



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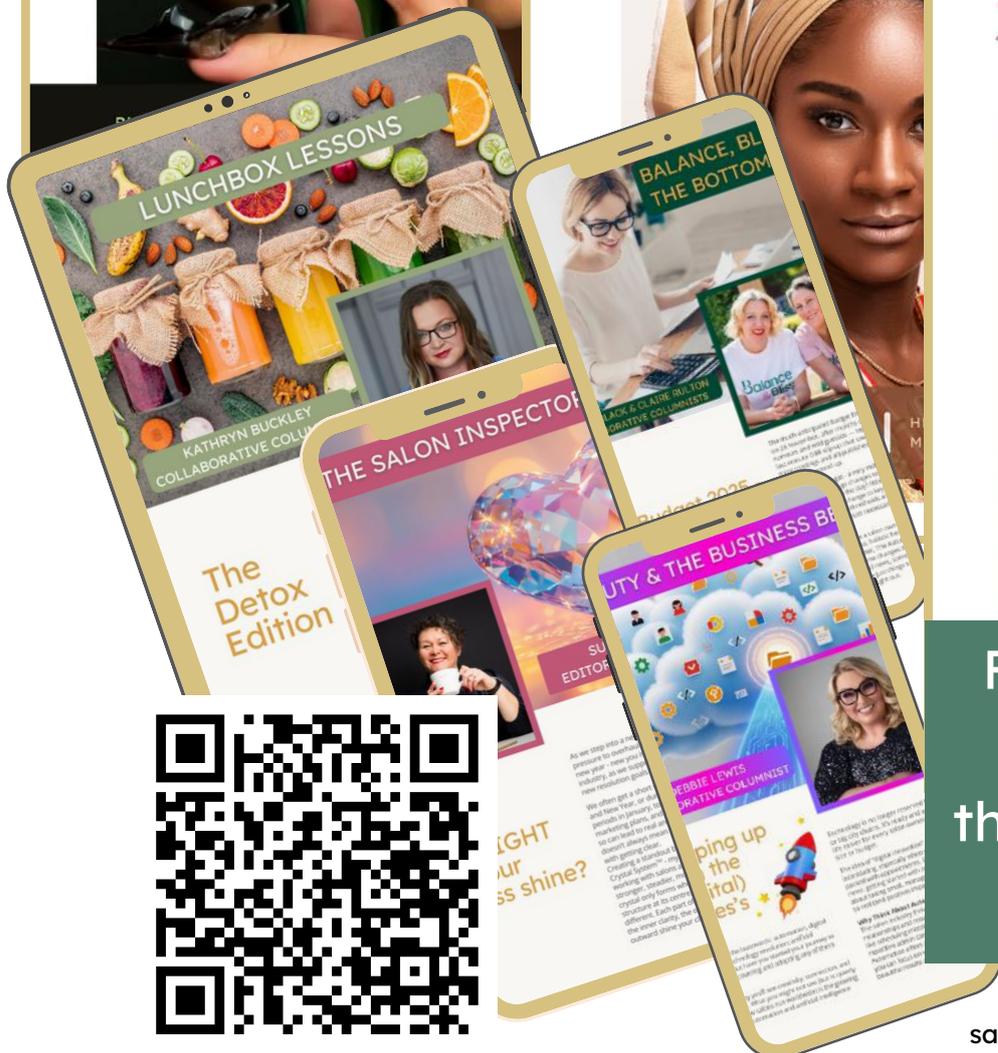
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BEAUTY & THE BUSINESS BEAST

DEBBIE LEWIS
COLLABORATIVE COLUMNIST



Business Diversification: Shiny Object or Strategic Pivot?



How to know when to do it, defer it, or dump that new idea that's bubbling

Gurus talk about multiple income streams, the power of a portfolio, and frankly, everyone these days wants to be a coach, educator or community leader after a few years of salon ownership. For some, it's a natural next step that pays dividends, for others it's a dilution of attention, a dangerous thinning of cashflow and another whopping 'to do' list without significant return on time and energy invested.

But what if your salon walls held a less obvious, but more lucrative, opportunity? Whether your salon is a high-street monster or a converted garden space, from new service trends to skin problem solutions, wellness add-ons, e-commerce, and even podcasts or creating your own-brand product lines, modern business demands a little something extra to keep maximum profits realised.

In this article, we're diving into the power of the pivot, the beauty of diversification done right, and how to stay focused in a world that loves to distract.

First Things First: What Does It Mean to Pivot?

A "pivot" in business means shifting direction, often in response to change; whether that's the market you serve, your customers' needs, or your own goals.

It could be a small shift, like adding a new service, or a big leap, like creating your own product line or launching an online business alongside the salon.

Twenty years ago, I created an academy within my salon, a recruitment agency for hair and beauty professionals, and a social media education platform. All based on my experience, qualifications, future aspirations, and strong business models that drive profitability. They also created extra opportunities for my long-standing team members, whom I was afraid of losing unless I offered them a progression plan and exciting new possibilities. A well-timed pivot can breathe new life into your salon. It can help you stand out, future-proof your income, and reignite your passion. But here's the thing: not every new idea is a smart pivot.

Sometimes, what feels like a pivot is just a distraction in disguise.



Pivot

Solves a real problem or fills a clear need

Aligns with your long-term goals

You've done research and have a plan

You've considered all the risks

You're ready to invest time, money & energy

Adds value for existing clients community

Shiny Object

Just sounds exciting or trendy

No clear place in your overall vision

It's a gut decision, or based on FOMO

You've only focused on the possible rewards

You're hoping for fast cash or instant success

Distracts from your core services

Pivot vs. Shiny Object: What's the Difference?

The line between a smart business move and a shiny object can be very fine. It often comes down to the reason you're doing it, timing, and alignment with your vision and goals.

Real Talk: Why Diversify at All?

Here's why smart diversification matters:

Financial resilience – Relying solely on in-salon services can leave you vulnerable to slow seasons or unforeseen closures/understaffing (we've all learned that the hard way).

Attracting new clients – Offering something new can bring fresh faces through the door (or bring existing ones back for more).

Keeping your team engaged – New services, learning opportunities, and creative projects can keep staff motivated and inspired.

Personal growth – You didn't start your salon to get bored. Exploring new territory can reignite your entrepreneurial fire.

But it has to make sense for you! It's only a flex if it brings you joy.

Ask yourself: Is this something I'd still be interested in six months from now, even if it's hard work with no profit realised? If the answer is no, you might be in shiny-object territory.

Salon Success Stories: Salonpreneurs who Pivoted with Purpose

Case Study 1: Bridal Beautician to Skincare Specialist Sarah, a salon owner in Manchester, saw a drop in bridal bookings following the pandemic. Instead of stressing, she leaned into what her clients were asking for: skin confidence. She trained in advanced facials, introduced skincare retail, and created monthly skin memberships. Now, facial services account for 40% of her income, and she loves doing them. Win-Win.

Case Study 2: Barber Basics to Recurring Revenue Retail Tom started offering beard oils that he hand-mixed at home. They flew off the shelves. He now runs a TikTok shop and has added e-commerce to his website, which brings in extra revenue without affecting his day-to-day bookings. Bonus: His barbers love sharing the products and earning extra commission, and clients love taking home a little piece of the brand and the benefits they bring.

Case Study 3: Hair & Beauty Basics to Sensational Serenity Spa Jade added meditation sessions and a quiet zone in her salon. It was a passion project at first, but it attracted a new clientele; people looking for more than just a haircut or treatment. Now, her business includes workshops, aromatherapy upgrades and even retreats. It works because it's rooted in her values and optimises the existing space.



linktr.ee/mrsdlewis

How to Know If It's Time to Pivot

Here's a simple decision-making tool to help you sort inspiration from impulse:

The **D.I.V.A.** Check

Before you dive into something new, run it through this checker.. (box around the word DIVA)

D Demand: Are clients requesting it? Is there a clear need or gap in your market?

I Interest: Are you genuinely interested in this? Will you stay excited when the novelty wears off?

V Viability: Can you realistically make money from it? Do you have the time, skills, and resources?

A Alignment: Does it fit with your brand, values, and long-term vision?

If the answer is a "yes" to all four, you've likely found a pivot worth exploring.

If not, pop it on a (mental) shelf, take another look later, and journal about it. It's likely not a great move.

Top Tips (to diversify without derailing)

Here are a few quick tips to help you grow more sustainably:

🚀 Start small and test first – Don't dump the old faithfuls without testing the waters (or remove hair masques from the menu) just because you want to launch hair vitamins. Pilot ideas and test assumptions.

🚀 Ask your clients – Use Instagram polls, client listening and testing groups, or email surveys to gauge interest before you commit.

🚀 Don't overwhelm your team – Bring your staff along for the ride. Make sure they're consulted, trained, excited, and supported in any new offering.

🚀 Time it right – Avoid launching during your busiest months. Choose a window where you can really focus, and is optimum for the release.

🚀 Create a "not now" list – Have a dedicated place (a notebook, phone note, or digital board) where you store all the brilliant ideas you're not acting on yet. This is your 'ideas locker'; mine is bulging!

🚀 Review quarterly – Take stock of what's working, what's draining you, and where to lean in. Always start with visioning and goal setting - is this taking you to your dream life destination?

Pivoting isn't just for Silicon Valley tech bros. It's for smart, soulful business owners like you who want to grow purposefully and with profit at the forefront (unapologetically!). You don't have to do it all -but you can do something bold, beautiful, and right for your business to take it to a whole new level.

Remember: the best pivots feel like taking an escalator to the next level, not running away from your current one.

Mrs D Lewis



Debbie Lewis is a salon founder turned business coach, empowering solopreneurs and micro-businesses with expert guidance to grow, scale, or exit, while championing apprenticeships, women in business, and purposeful entrepreneurship.

Lunchbox Lessons | The Barrier Leak

by Kathryn Buckley



Picture this. It's 6am and my kitchen looks like a scene from a horror movie. Even with teenagers in the house, I still end up on lunch duty. And we're not talking about a quick chicken wrap, Oh no! Apparently I've raised three kids who expect full-on meal prep status. Quinoa, rice, pasta, protein, veggies, fruit, nuts ... I'm on autopilot with a coffee in one hand, stuffing it all into boxes like a conveyor belt chef, praying it balances out and that no one moans.

And this morning, I actually smiled to myself. Because isn't this exactly how we run our businesses sometimes? We just keep stuffing things in. New treatments, another client, a 'quick' social post, that training course we don't really have time for. Stuff, stuff, stuff without stopping to ask,

"Is any of this actually nourishing me?"

That's really the point of this column. Lunchboxes. Whether for our kids, ourselves, or our salons, aren't just about food. They're about fuel. And the kind of fuel you choose changes everything.

Skin Barriers & Business Barriers

Anyone who knows me will know that I am a bit obsessed with barriers. The skin barrier, the gut barrier, and the invisible ones we build around our businesses. They all work the same way.

- Your skin barrier only thrives if you feed it the right nutrients.
- Your business barrier only thrives if you feed it the right systems, boundaries, and support.

Ignore either one and you'll see leaks. On skin, it shows up as redness, acne, irritation, premature ageing. In business, it's more exhaustion, overbooking, resentment, or undercharging.

These barriers are meant to protect you. But only if you put the right things in the box.

A Quick Story From My Own Barrier Leak

When my dad got poorly, and later when we lost him, I just kept working. Head down. Push on. Fill the box. That's what we do, right?

But grief has a way of poking holes in even the strongest barrier. My skin flared, my energy flatlined, my head felt like mush. I thought I was coping, but really, I was running on empty. My "business lunchbox" was packed but nothing inside was nourishing me.

What stitched me back together wasn't anything dramatic, it was getting back to basics. A proper breakfast with fat and protein instead of just coffee. A water bottle I loved, filled with lemon and fresh ginger. Tiny changes that gave me back some resilience. And with that came the strength to face the real stuff that mattered; family, grief, growth.

The Science Snack

Here's your geeky bite for the day (I promise it's a small one).

Your skin barrier is built from fats. Not just any fats, but a delicate balance of omegas 3, 6, 7, and 9. When that balance tips i.e. too much omega-6, not enough omega-3, the "mortar" holding your skin cells together weakens.

Your business barrier isn't so different. Fill your week with omega-6-style tasks, think firefighting, people-pleasing, over-serving and the structure buckles. You end up inflamed, frazzled, and burned out.

The solution? Balance. It's always balance.

Lunchbox Recipe | The Glow Jar Salad



I can't write about lunchboxes without sharing one. So, this is my go-to on days when I know I'll be chasing my tail. And best of all, my kids actually eat it.

The Glow Jar Salad - Serves 1



- 1 small fillet of cooked salmon (or another healthy protein)
- ½ avocado, a boiled egg cut into quarters or some feta cheese
- A handful of roughly chopped walnuts or a handful of pomegranate seeds
- A handful of mixed leaves (think variety here)
- Your choice of grains or pasta or just leave that out
- Healthy veg (cucumber, cherry tomatoes, peppers, sweetcorn, grated carrot etc)
- A handful of tenderstem broccoli, lightly fried (optional but try it!)
- Squeeze of lemon juice and a drizzle of extra virgin olive oil, maybe a teaspoon of mayo

Layer in a jar. Put the dressing in first. Then add the rest, leaves last. Pop the lid on. Done. When you're ready to eat, tip it into a dish and dig in!

Self-Care Signal

Try this tomorrow before you open the salon. Grab a bit of paper and draw a box. Label it "My Lunchbox." Now write down what you've been putting in there lately - food, habits, clients, tasks, even people. Then ask yourself, "Is this fuelling me, or leaking me dry?" If it fuels you, it stays. If it drains you, it needs rebalancing. Because just like your skin, your business barrier depends on the fuel you choose.

Kathryn Buckley, founder of Skin Professionals UK®, is a Skin Professional, Environmental Scientist, and Nutritional Therapist specialising in skin barrier health. She mentors practitioners to integrate nutrition with treatments, and her forthcoming book *The Skin We Live In* explores the deeper connections between food, lifestyle, and skin health. Scan the code to be first to hear more about Kathryn's new book.





THE SALON INSPECTOR™

IS YOUR SALON BUSINESS HIDING IN PLAIN SIGHT?

Let The Salon Inspector shine a spotlight on your client experience pathway



Empower your reputation in partnership with The Salon Inspector

Our professional audit of your online world followed by a friendly mentoring service gives salon owners peace of mind, credibility, and confidence to grow with integrity.

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SPOTLIGHT

SOLO PRO & ACADEMY OWNER



Featuring

ELEASHA YARDE



**OM MAKEUP
ARTISTRY & BEAUTY**

Hi everyone! I'm the founder of OM Makeup Artistry & Beauty in Sheffield, Yorkshire - a passionate bridal makeup artist, educator, and lifelong beauty enthusiast. Born and raised in Sheffield, this city has always been home.

My beauty journey began in 1999 at Sheffield College, where I completed Level 2 and Level 3 in Beauty Therapy. After working in salons and spas, I continued my studies at the University of Derby, earning a degree in International Spa Management, and later took on business manager roles with renowned makeup brands.

My passion for helping others discover their confidence through beauty led me naturally to education. In 2015, I



BTS - Front Cover Shoot

earned my Master's in the Professional Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) - a significant achievement I deeply cherish. I have now been in the education business for over 10 years, teaching in further education colleges, running community programmes, and supporting learners from every walk of life. The leap from artist to educator was inspired by my commitment to boosting confidence and creativity in aspiring beauty professionals. I wanted to fill a gap in inclusive training, teaching techniques that celebrate every skin tone and individuality. Helping others discover their creative power quickly became the most rewarding part of my career.



Navigating rapid changes in beauty trends, sourcing quality course materials, and adapting to ever-diverse student needs were major challenges. Building a curriculum that prioritises inclusion and real-world success took tenacity and constant learning. Striking the balance between artistry and running a business meant developing strong business acumen, marketing, pricing, and client management, all whilst teaching and inspiring future talent.

Over the years, I learned the value of empathy, adaptability, and relentless skill development. I discovered that the most effective educators foster a sense of belonging, prioritise practical skills, and celebrate student individuality. Continuous self-education and reinvention have been key to my success as both an educator and artist.



“Two of my greatest achievements are completing my Master’s in PGCE and being appointed as the Head Makeup Artist for the MOBO Awards.”

At OM Makeup Artistry & Beauty Education, I offer ABT-accredited and HABIA-endorsed courses in makeup artistry, bridal technique, waxing, massage, and broader beauty therapy. My courses focus on hands-on training, inclusivity, and career-ready skills to ensure students feel truly prepared - whether they're headed for a busy salon, launching their freelance business, or starting their own ventures.

Two of my greatest achievements are completing my Master’s in PGCE and being appointed as the Head Makeup Artist for the MOBO Awards, not only in 2024 but again in 2025 - and I've been called back for 2026 as well. Leading backstage teams and creating looks for top UK and international celebrities at one of the country's biggest events has been an incredible honour that reminds me how far artistry and inclusion can reach.



@ommakeupandbeautyeducation

My favourite part of teaching is witnessing transformation - when students realise their skills and confidence, whether it's nailing a bridal look or securing their first freelance booking. Every day at OM Makeup Artistry & Beauty is about creating real, lasting impact and celebrating each step of my students' journeys. The joy of watching someone discover what they're capable of never fades.

At OM Makeup Artistry & Beauty, everything I do is about empowerment - helping people feel confident and ready to embrace their own beauty stories. From bridal artistry to accredited courses, new product launches to industry panels, my journey is driven by the belief that education and creativity change lives.

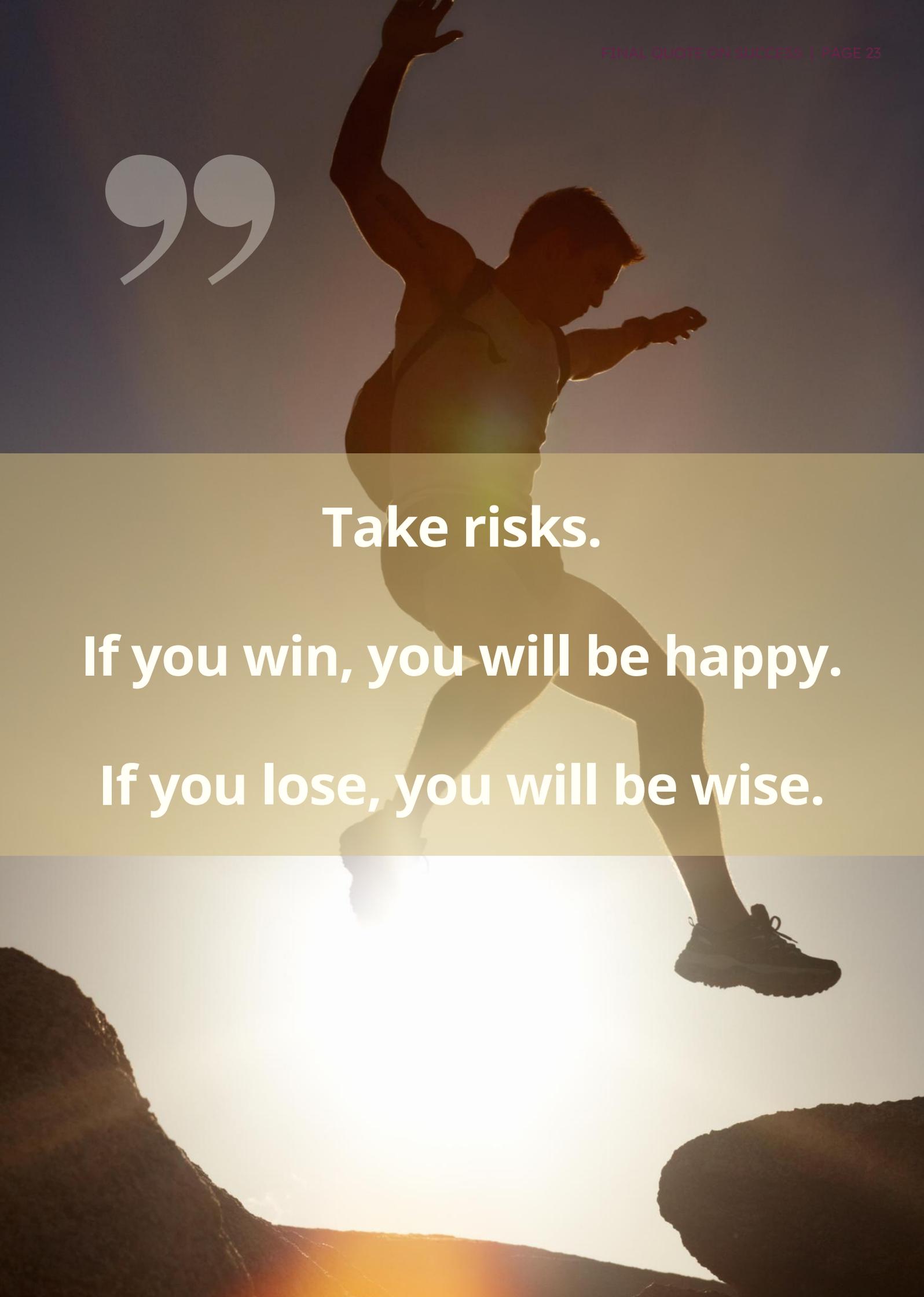
Thank you for following my journey so far. I am excited for what's next - there's always more magic to come!

”

Take risks.

If you win, you will be happy.

If you lose, you will be wise.



THE BUSINESS OF EDUCATION

DONNA CLAYTON
COLLABORATIVE COLUMNIST



Navigating Teaching Qualifications



linktr.ee/donnaclayton

So, you've mastered your craft – now you want to teach it.

Stepping into education isn't just about showing others how to wax body hair or cut a neat bob. It's about understanding how people learn, process, and then implement what they have learned. It's about structuring knowledge and segmenting it in a way that doesn't overwhelm.

Whether you're running your own salon or preparing to deliver short courses, the right teaching qualifications can elevate your abilities and open new doors for you now and in the future.

This quick guide breaks down the teaching qualifications, highlights common issues, particularly around misinformation with Award in Education and Training (AET) courses, and will encourage you to develop from a transactional teaching style into a transformational teacher and educator.

Understanding the Teaching Qualifications

The education pathway in the hair and beauty sector can feel overwhelming. Let's look at the main qualifications:

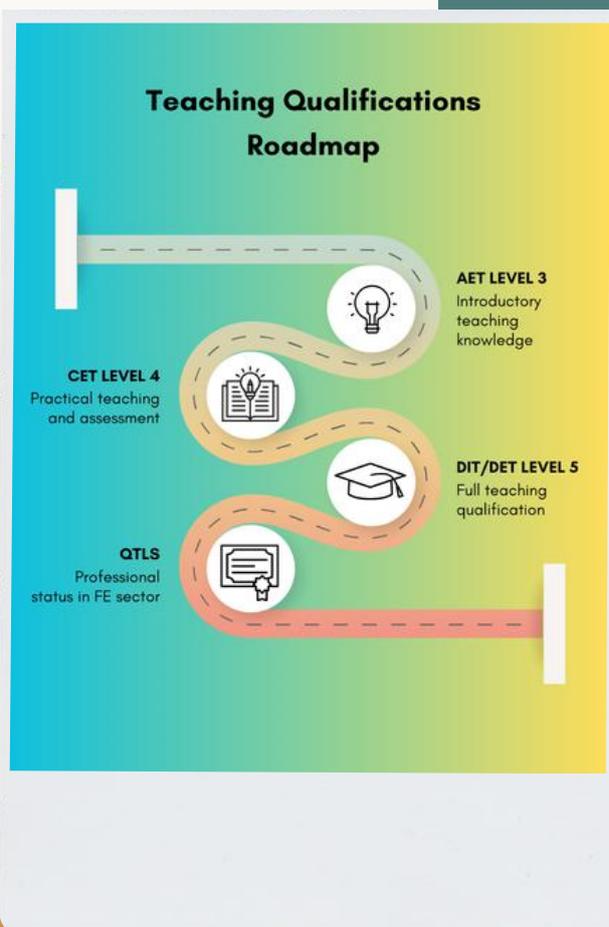
AET – Award in Education and Training (Level 3 RQF)

This is the entry point for teachers and educators and is considered a threshold qualification. It's a regulated qualification on the RQF (Regulated Qualifications Framework) and provides a basic understanding of teaching roles, responsibilities, and assessment methods. Its practical element is a microteach, which consists of a 20-minute short lesson observed or videoed.

Who's this best for?

Those who are delivering short, accredited courses, and independent educators offering Continued Professional Development (CPD) workshops.

AET is an introduction qualification, not a full teaching qualification. It doesn't qualify you to teach regulated qualifications, and you'd be hard-pushed to find an awarding organisation that will allow you to become a centre. Within most of the Further Education (FE) settings, there will be an expectation to go to the next level quite quickly.



“Stepping into education isn't just about showing others how to wax body hair or cut a neat bob. It's about understanding how people learn, process, and then implement what they have learned. It's about structuring knowledge and segmenting it in a way that doesn't overwhelm.”

CET – Certificate in Education and Training (Level 4 RQF)

This is the next step and can be the starting point for some. If you have access to learners to observe, you do not need to use the AET first. The CET builds on the AET and includes practical teaching experience, developing resources in a specialist area, and planning to meet the needs of learners. It's ideal for those teaching accredited and regulated qualifications, working in colleges, training providers, independent academies, and for educators.

DIT – Diploma in Teaching (Level 5 RQF)

Known until recently as the DET – Diploma in Education and Training. This is the gold standard for educators. It prepares you for all teaching roles and builds upon the CET, teaching methodologies, curriculum design, diverse learner needs, inclusion, behaviour management, and digital methods.

It's often required for teaching in FE colleges, becoming a centre for full qualification delivery, such as the Level 3 Beauty Therapy Diploma, and applying for QTLS (Qualified Teacher Learning and Skills) status.

If you are serious about teaching, aim for CET or DIT – not just the AET.



PODCAST

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Sue Davies on



PODCAST

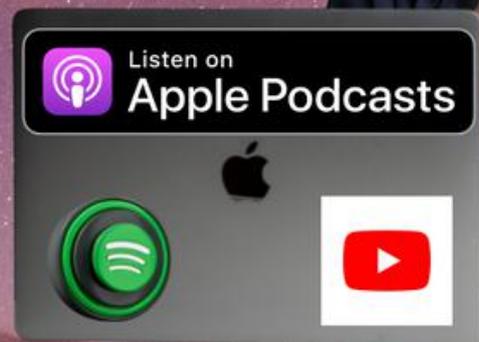
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Spotting Misinformation with AET courses

Unfortunately, many hair and beauty professionals are sold CPD courses disguised as teaching qualifications. These are simply not recognised courses and often are only supported by a few accredited CPD companies.

What to look for

- Courses advertised as "Level 3 AET" but not linked to the RQF
- No mention of an awarding body/organisation (AO) (e.g, TQUK, Pearson, VTCT, Focus Awards)
- Terms like "certified" or "accredited" usually link to no AO
- Missing OFQUAL logo on the certificate
- Mentions "equivalent to" in the description
- Cheap price or special offer (£99)

A good course will have

- Explicit reference to the RQF and/or qualification number
- Named awarding body/organisation (AO)
- Certificate with OFQUAL logo
- A reasonable price tag (£250-500)

If it's a CPD course, it won't qualify you to teach regulated qualifications, you may get turned down from brand education roles, and you will struggle to find accredited companies to accredit your short courses. Always ask for the awarding organisation; they will be able to confirm centre status and legitimacy for you to cross-check.

CPD for teaching - not just for treatment techniques

In our industry, CPD often refers to learning a new treatment or service in its entirety, or a new technique. But if you're teaching and educating, your CPD should also include **educational development**.

Valuable CPD for educators includes training on inclusion and diverse learner needs, learning barriers and adaptations, SEND awareness, and safeguarding.

This type of CPD helps you develop from a subject specialist to a skilled educator who can support a broader range of learners and deliver effective, differentiated learning experiences to help your learners achieve their outcomes and career goals.

From Transactional to Transformational Teaching
Many educators slide into the transactional teaching method once trained; it tends to be mapped out from our own experience of learning. The "here's how to do X" approach tries to condense 20-plus years of their own knowledge into a very short space of time. Whilst they need to learn how to do X, it's the context that can often be lacking or overwhelming.

What is transactional teaching?

- Just teaching the skill
- Step-by-step instructions
- Very teacher-driven, little input from learners
- Focused on completion, not competence
- Very time-focused and checking off a to-do list

This approach can seem efficient, but it risks creating passive learners who merely copy and replicate techniques they observe without truly understanding them.

Top tips for transformational teaching

- Explain the why behind the techniques
- Connect skills and knowledge to real-world examples

- Encourage problem-solving and adaptability
- Give learners autonomy
- Encourage self-reflection

This is the difference between someone performing a perfect facial routine and understanding skin physiology, client wellbeing, and how to tailor treatments for different outcomes.

Final thoughts

Teaching is more than just passing on skills - it's about shaping futures, creating business owners, and fulfilling career paths. Build your portfolio of regulated qualifications and meaningful CPD. This will position you as an intuitive and inclusive educator who is dedicated and adaptive to learners' needs to achieve successful outcomes, and not just someone who trains them.

Selecting the right qualifications and providers, investing in your own development, and teaching with purpose will not only advance your own career and business, but also positively impact the lives of those you teach.



Donna Clayton empowers solo salon owners and educators to build profitable training academies, using her 27 years of industry expertise, extensive Further Education and academy background to simplify success through education.



ask MaDaM zSa zSa

Salonpreneur's irreverent resident agony aunt joins us in honour of **PRIDE**
Brought to you by the Queen of Salons, Phil Jackson



Help! My friend's become boring!

My friend has become really boring since they started seeing someone new. They've stopped going out and when we do go out they're forever messaging each other. We've been friends for a long time, but they're no fun any more and don't want to spend time away from their partner. What can I do?

Madam Zsa Zsa Speaks:

Ohhh my love, what a sad tale! A friend drawn to the honey trap of new romance, like a little moth hurling itself at a Himalayan salt lamp. And you left lonely, creepy, and rather pointless.

What you're dealing with is a textbook case of Amicus Dullardium, or 'boring buddy syndrome'. It's a chronic condition in which one's capacity for fun shrivels up like a pensioner's testes the moment a fresh bit of meat enters the chat.

It's relatively rare amongst the working classes since everyday people are rarely interesting enough to trigger such a strong yearning. Luckily, the three stage solution is simple:

- *Guilt. Remind your friend of all the good times you had together before they became a human keyring. I expect you have tales of Butlins holidays, shoplifting in Iceland, and eating chips at bus stops you could reminisce about.*
- *Sabotage. Maybe plant a seed of doubt about how often the partner is texting someone else or consider having intercourse with your friend's new partner.*
- *Diversion therapy. Introduce them to someone distractingly hot, or at least confusingly foreign. Sometimes a dalliance with a sexually ambiguous Spaniard can bring one to one's senses.*

If none of this works, my love, then it's time to accept the tragic truth: it may be time to move on. I'm sending you my leaflet "Friends: Who needs them?" which I think you'll find especially useful.

Madam ZsaZsa



Is it OK to sing while you're working?

I've been singing since I could talk and am desperate to be a pop star. I love singing, so sometimes when I'm working in the salon I break into song when I'm doing a treatment as my mind wanders and all of a sudden I'm singing show tunes! The clients don't mind, but my boss thinks I should stop. Are they just holding me back?

Madam Zsa Zsa speaks:

For clarity, since the upper classes are prevented from watching reality TV or engaging in popular culture, I have consulted the tarot. My spirit guide has shared the Wheel of Fortune, which, rather than training for Britain's Got The Voice Factor (or whatever the latest round of tripe is called), you might be better suited to than some kind of chance-based game show.

Now, my little Temu Whitney, let me break it to you gently: just because something escapes your mouth doesn't mean the world is better for having heard it. The clients "don't mind"? Darling, clients are trapped. They'll tolerate a lot when you've got hot wax near their unmentionables. Silence isn't applause.

Your boss, meanwhile, sounds like the only sane person in the room and you should perhaps consider taking a pay cut until this strange episode of delusion and instability has passed.

Madam Zsa Zsa



If you have a problem for Madam Zsa Zsa please inbox us



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2025

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COLLABORATIVE COLUMNIST



The Extraordinary Journey of Norma Ellis: From Mountain Child to Beauty Pioneer



The A Beauty Platform

When I first met Norma, I was struck by her upright stature and sparkling eyes. Her makeup was perfectly applied, and she was wearing a gorgeous, colourful summer dress suitable for the heat of what had been an incredible summer. As we chatted, my journalistic instincts told me that this woman had such a wealth of stories and experience—the quiet confidence she exuded was a testament to years of rich experience.

We met at Tones of Beauty - the first concept curated expo aimed at showcasing the best of multicultural beauty in the industry. I was on my way out when I saw her engaged in conversation with a woman dressed impeccably in white, who turned out to be a noteworthy woman in her own right. What follows are just a few parts of the remarkable story of Norma Ellis to date.

Mountain Paradise: The Early Years

Born in March 1955 in Mount Prospect, Jamaica, Norma's life began in what can only be described as a rural paradise, nestled high up in the majestic Jamaican mountains. She lived with her mother and beloved grandparents in a world that seemed touched by magic.

Her father, a man of unwavering faith, had departed to fulfil his calling of building a church, leaving Norma's mother to run the farm where they cultivated the provisions that sustained their family. Norma describes these formative days as wonderful and free, feasting on fresh callaloo and ackee, lovingly tending to her cherished pet chicken Percy, whom she was tasked with protecting from the hawks that perpetually circled overhead in the mountain sky. Life on Mount Prospect was beautifully simple, governed by the rhythms of nature and the unbreakable bonds of family.

Yet even in this idyllic setting, life presented profound challenges that would test a young child's understanding of the world. Norma shares particularly poignant memories of her confusion when her grandparents passed away - she simply couldn't comprehend what had happened to these pillars of her world or why they were being laid to rest in the earth. These early encounters with life's deepest mysteries, along with countless other childhood adventures filled with magic, wonder, and occasional mayhem, are all beautifully chronicled in her captivating memoir, "Coming Down from My Mountain" - a collection of stories so vivid and engaging they transport readers directly into her extraordinary childhood world.



The Fight for Life: Against All Odds

For Norma, the real mayhem began in earnest when she was around five years old. Left at home while the family attended church, she suddenly began to violently vomit blood - a terrifying experience that marked the beginning of what would become the defining chapter of her life for many years.

At just five years old, Norma embarked on what would become a gruelling journey of endless hospital visits and extended stays. An American surgeon travelled to Jamaica and diagnosed Norma with a leaking heart valve - a serious and potentially fatal congenital defect. Norma was not expected to live past the age of ten years old. She came to England and joined the first heart valve replacement programme for children at Great Ormond Street. Her surgery was performed in Leeds, and against all the odds, unlike all of her fellow childhood hospital bedmates with the same problem, Norma not only survived but emerged triumphant. After a pioneering massive heart operation, she received the revolutionary plastic valve that enabled Norma to surpass any boundaries that life may have originally presented before her. Norma eloquently describes her heart as "the hard drive of her body," and from that pivotal moment forward, she didn't merely survive - she chose to thrive, transforming her second chance at life into something truly magnificent.

Breaking Barriers: A Pioneer in Beauty

Norma's extraordinary journey continued through the revolutionary decades of the 1960s and 1970s, where she became a true trailblazer, breaking significant ground for Black women in the retail industry. Her breakthrough came when she secured a position at a large Boots superstore in Birmingham. With her keen eye for opportunity and a love for cosmetics, she spotted that the makeup counters were often empty during staff lunch breaks. Norma approached her managers with a proposal that would change the trajectory of her career.

The managers agreed to allow her to step in and cover the makeup counters when the regular representatives were away. This might have seemed like entering through the back door - particularly given how exceptionally rare it was at that time to see a Black woman serving at a makeup counter - but it provided Norma with the perfect platform to master her craft and demonstrate her exceptional skills in makeup artistry and customer relations.

Her natural creative talent and sharp eye for what worked quickly earned her a reputation as a truly gifted makeup artist and creative visionary. The vibrant subculture of the 1980s opened even more doors, leading to a prestigious invitation to work as a platform artist at a leading hair and beauty event at Earls Court. This exposure led directly to her involvement in planning and working on the groundbreaking first Afro-Hair and Beauty exhibition - a historic event that would reshape the industry. It was here that Norma earned her

first magazine coverfeature on Black Hair and Beauty, cementing her status as a rising star in the beauty world.

Television Pioneer and Educator

Over the following decades, Norma became a familiar and respected presence on television and beauty stages across the country, dedicating herself tirelessly to educating Black women about proper skincare and cosmetics. Her impact extended far beyond entertainment - she proactively contacted the BBC to help arrange appropriate makeup and hair care for one of the few female Black television news presenters of that era, demonstrating her unwavering commitment to representation and professional excellence in the media.

In the 1980s, Norma took the significant step of training professionally in beauty therapy, subsequently opening successful skincare clinics in both the glamorous setting of Miami and the cosmopolitan hub of London. Her comprehensive knowledge and extensive experience working with skin of all tones became virtually unmatched in the industry, establishing her as a true authority and pioneer in multicultural beauty practices.

Continuing Legacy and Modern Impact

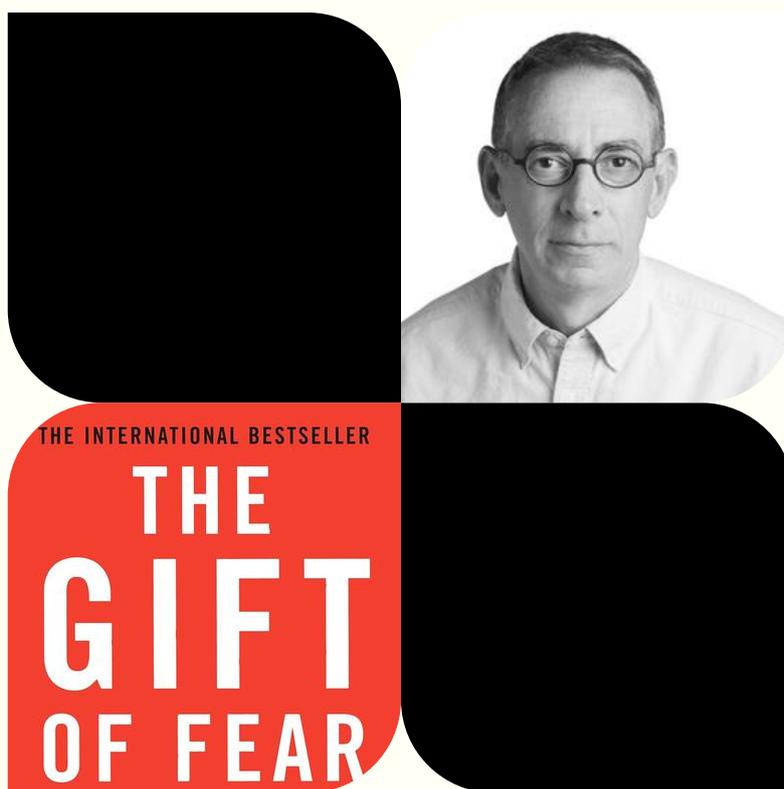
To date, Norma continues to run her own thriving beauty clinic in London while serving as a highly respected and renowned beauty assessor. She generously shares her vast wealth of knowledge and experience through her popular weekly podcast, "Moments with Norma," which has become a true guiding light for listeners seeking wisdom and inspiration. Through this platform, Norma spreads her years of accumulated wisdom with gratitude at the root of all her awareness, offering

spiritual guidance that extends far beyond beauty advice. Her deeply spiritual nature infuses every aspect of her work, creating a unique space where practical beauty knowledge meets profound life wisdom.

Additionally, she has authored and published a deeply personal memoir about her remarkable life journey, "Coming Down from My Mountain," which is readily available on Amazon for anyone inspired to learn more about her incredible story of triumph over adversity. Norma Ellis's story stands as one of extraordinary resilience, groundbreaking achievement, and unwavering determination to not just survive life's greatest challenges but to thrive spectacularly and lift others along the way. From a mountain child in Jamaica to a pioneering force in the international beauty industry, her life serves as a powerful testament to the indomitable strength of the human spirit and the transformative power of turning life's greatest challenges into opportunities for success and positive impact.



Helen Cockle, founder of the A-Beauty Movement and former BBC journalist, is a wellness innovator and inclusive advocate, championing DEI and melanin-rich skincare to inspire a more representative beauty industry



BOOK NOOK #1

The Gift of Fear by Gavin de Becker



Gift of Fear - Gavin de Becker

I was first introduced to this book whilst in a Clubhouse room during one of the lockdowns. A big name, international entrepreneur recommended it and I was inspired in that moment to buy it. The book then sat on my book pile until 2023 as I kept reading the blurb and was unsure why he'd recommended it as it didn't seem to be about being a business owner. Then, one day, it spoke to me and so I picked it up and Chapter 1 changed my world. I mentioned to my sister that I'd found this amazing book which gave the biggest insights into personal safety I'd ever read. She laughed and told me she'd read it nearly 20 years before and that chapter 1 still stuck in her mind too.

Beyond the fact that it is one of the most deeply impactful things I've ever read, I won't go into detail, it also resonated with me as someone who has been in personal and work situations where I've felt unsafe. Gavin de Becker has a life long experience of recognising threat and, through

his client stories, he shares how to not only recognise fear, but also when you really need to act on gut instinct. As salon professionals, and particularly female pros, we too often find ourselves in situations where we feel uncomfortable about a call, a text, a booking. This book will help you understand why your gut says, "NO!" and why you should probably pay more attention to it.

In this empowering book, Gavin de Becker shows you how to spot even subtle signs of danger and offers specific ways to protect yourself and those you love, including: how to act when approached by a stranger; when you should fear someone close to you; how to uncover the source of anonymous threats or phone calls; the biggest mistake you can make with a threatening person; and more. You can learn to spot the danger signals others miss.

#VibeForDecember

Abundance

*A situation in which there
is more than enough of
something.*

THE SALON INSPECTOR™

SUE DAVIES
EDITORIAL DIRECTOR



Visibility isn't Vanity - Finding the Confidence to Show Up Your Way

When I talk to salon owners and solo pros, one of the biggest challenges I hear is, "I know I should be showing up more, but I just don't know how." If that sounds familiar, you're not alone. You started your business because you love what you do, want to make people feel good, and are passionate about your craft – not because you wanted to spend all day figuring out Instagram Reels or Facebook algorithms.

Here's the thing: visibility doesn't have to feel like a vanity project or a performance. It can be simple, human, and aligned with you. We all know how much social media is shifting, especially as AI-created content makes us second-guess what's real. Your gift is that you are human. Your humanity will resonate and connect you to your clients – current, potential, and future.

If you find yourself staring at the screen, unsure what to post or worried you'll annoy people, you're not alone. Everyone feels that way sometimes.

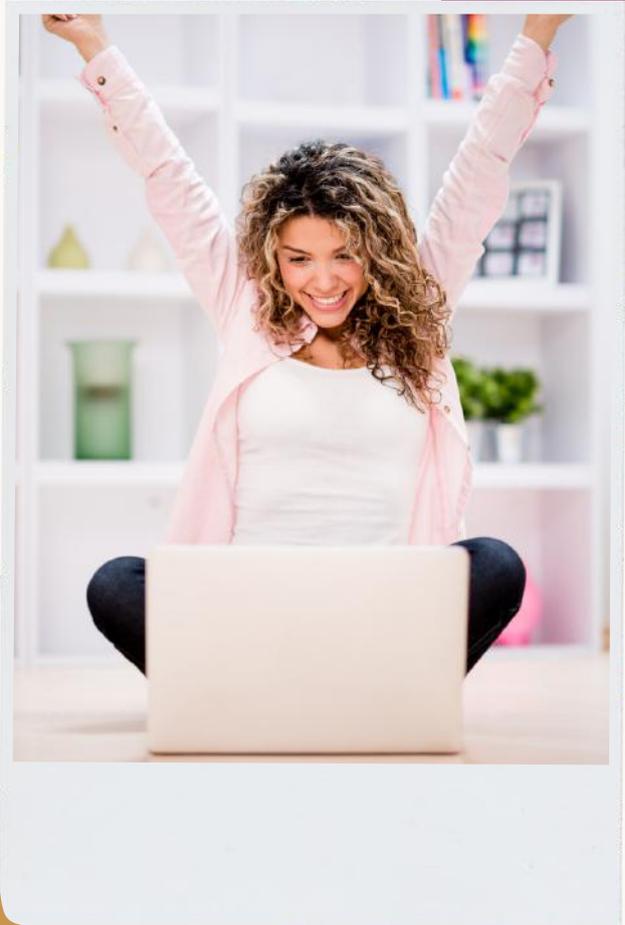
The truth is, organic algorithms mean the same people won't see every post, so you won't be a nuisance. Even top marketers post often just to be seen occasionally — and the biggest reach usually comes from paid posts, not organic ones.

The Importance of Visibility

Visibility is a necessity in business. Being meek and mild won't win you clients. It's not about "Look at me!" – it's about "Look at how I can help you!" Remember, while you are behind your business, your audience evaluates how your services make a difference in their lives.

In the past, visibility was far less personal. We'd place an advert in the Yellow Pages or local paper, maybe do a flyer drop, and that was that. It was like fishing: we cast the line, sometimes caught something, sometimes not.

Now, we have to show up as part of that line cast. We often become the bait, which can feel uncomfortable. Why? Because it feels like we're showing off or chasing attention – not a comfortable place for many of us.



“But here’s the truth: visibility is not about vanity. It’s about being findable and trustworthy.”

It can feel like a double-edged sword: show up and squirm, or stay hidden and remain invisible.

But here's the truth: visibility is not about vanity. It's about being findable and trustworthy.

The Pitfalls That Keep You Hidden

There are many reasons we stay hidden, and most come down to the stories we tell ourselves.

- “If I do good work, clients will come.” Word of mouth helps, but without enough people talking, it dries up fast.
- Trying to be everywhere. You don't need to post on every platform. Focus on where your clients actually are. Being visible everywhere is exhausting; be visible where it counts.
- Comparisonitis. Other businesses may look more polished, but you're seeing their highlight reel. Behind the scenes, they may feel the same doubts as you.
- Inconsistency. This often stems from burnout, lack of confidence, fear of rejection, or lack of planning. Identifying the cause helps you fix it.



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A More Human Approach

Visibility looks different for everyone. For some, it's their daily live online videos; for others, a weekly email, maybe sharing client testimonials. The key is consistency and letting your audience know what to expect and with what regularity.

Your business is a creation – a way to connect and serve clients. It is part of you, but it is not you. That distinction makes visibility easier. If you're shy, daily videos might not be the answer. The word 'live' stops many people in their tracks with fears of forgetting words, getting a bad comment, or making a mistake. But videos don't have to be live. Pre-record, edit, and show your business in its best light. And remember, mistakes often make you more relatable.

You could also film a short walk-through of your salon or workspace – a simple way to show accessibility, welcome new clients, and add a human touch. If being on camera feels daunting, this is a softer start.

Reframing the Mindset

Visibility makes it easier for the right clients to find you and benefit from your expertise. When negative thoughts creep in – *"What will people think of me?"* – flip them into *"How can I help people today?"*

I recently worked with a client who knew they had untapped potential in their personal social media audience. Many of their friend connections were also potential clients, yet the thought of showing up there felt terrifying, as this new

method would also put them in front of their personal friends and family.

They worried about judgement, the dreaded *"what will they think of me?"* and compared themselves to other business owners who seemed to share deeply personal stories on camera, and that level of exposure in their personal world just wasn't comfortable for them. Together, we unpacked what was really happening. It wasn't about ability or lack of ideas – it was about the stories their subconscious was telling them. We identified their specific visibility barriers and reframed those inner objections into a mindset that worked *for* them, not against them.

The result? Instead of forcing themselves to copy what others were doing, they began showing up online in a way that felt authentic, professional, and aligned with their values. They reconnected with their audience in *their* voice, not a borrowed one.

This is exactly the type of shift we work on inside my Confidently Visible programme: moving from fear and comparison into confidence and clarity, so your visibility becomes a natural extension of who you are. Because here's the truth – those intrusive thoughts that whisper "you can't" or "you'll look silly" aren't facts. They're just your subconscious mind literally making sh*t up. They aren't real, they aren't happening now, and most importantly, they can be changed.

Using the Right Tools

When you're stuck in a visibility rut, it feels like no one will ever find you. But with the right mindset and tools, things shift quickly. There's no overnight magic, but building confidence online and using tools like Google Business Profile, an optimised website, online directories, and a consistent (not obsessive) social presence gives you a stronger business and a more secure future for you and your family.

There's a lot of opportunity out there for everyone, and sometimes a little help and support in the process can help. Check out my Confidently Visible Programme and my Business Visibility Boosters to start building your visibility and set your business on the right pathway.



Sue Davies, The Salon Inspector™, helps salon professionals raise standards, build trust, and boost visibility through expert audits, mentoring, and advocacy - championing professionalism, compliance, and client confidence across the industry.

Why Salons Are Switching to Their Own Skincare Range And Why You Should Too



by Llewellyn Thomas
Own Label Skincare



In today's competitive salon industry, standing out is no longer optional - it's essential. For salons, that means rethinking the products you use and recommend. If you're still stocking high street skincare brands that your clients can find anywhere (and often cheaper online), it's time to ask: who's really benefiting?

At Own Label Skincare, we believe you should be.

We help salons take control of their brand by offering award-winning, vegan, cruelty-free skincare that you can sell under your own name. No more promoting faceless brands that undercut you online or launch in every retail chain without a second thought for the hard-working professionals who built their reputation.

Our white-label range is designed with salons in mind - results-driven, salon-tested, and beautifully packaged to reflect your business. Whether you want just a few units to start or full-scale production, our low minimum orders and free label design support make the process simple and affordable.

Salons who switch to their own branded range report:

Higher Profit Margins - You control the price, not the high street.

Stronger Client Loyalty - Clients come back for your brand, not just the service.

Elevated Brand Identity - Show your expertise with products that carry your name.

Gone are the days of giving free promotion to companies who never promote you back. With Own Label Skincare, you're not just another stockist - you're a brand owner.

We've supported hundreds of salon owners across the UK in launching bespoke skincare lines that reflect their values and vision. From facial oils to cleansers, serums, body scrubs and more, we provide the quality, compliance, and support to help your brand thrive.



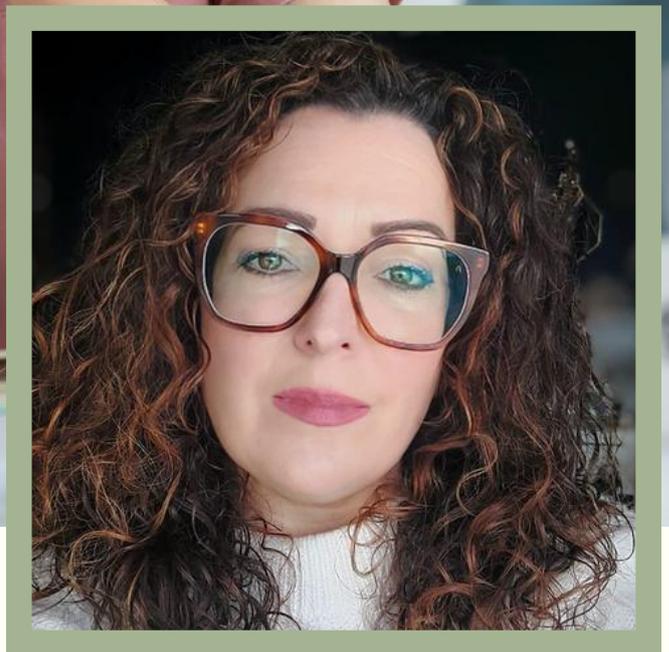
So if you're ready to move away from mass-market products and take your business to the next level, join the growing number of salons saying goodbye to big-brand domination and hello to their own skincare empire.



THE SAFER SALON GEEK YOUR SAFE SPACE CREATOR



SAM BLAKE
COLLABORATIVE COLUMNIST



The Weight of Being the Boss, Even When It's Just You

Working 'Solo' doesn't always look the same, but at times it can feel the same

Welcome to your safe space column. Here, I'll talk about curating your 'safe space business' and that includes YOU, not just your gorgeous (and occasionally not-so-gorgeous) clients or team! I've been flying solo for over a decade, but I've also been part of a team, led a team, and supported students, whether it's been small, large, independent, or corporate. I've felt all the feels; and when you've got responsibilities, wherever and however they land, it can sometimes feel lonely, even isolating.

Let's Talk About You...

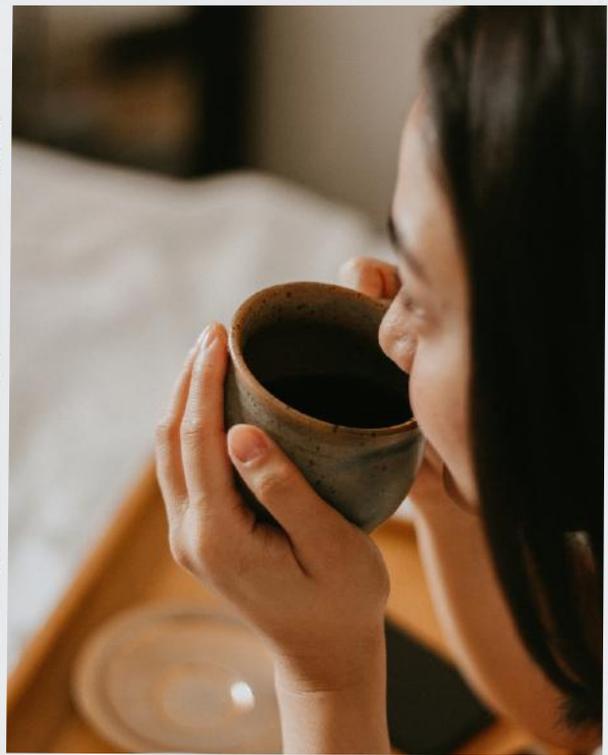
Once upon a time:

- You dreamed of building a brilliant team.
- You wanted to work for yourself, whether alone or with others.

Whether you're managing your dream team or living your solo dream, business is hard. Add the flying solo feeling, and it's even heavier - more pressure, more stress. Either way, people are relying on you, and both business models share one critical goal: to build something sustainable and successful. More than just paying the bills, otherwise, what's the point?

Flying Solo, with 'Martine' on Board

On the surface, solo work might mean being mobile or home-based, lone-working. But being 'solo' isn't just about location. Yes, self-employment has perks, but let's talk about what often stays



"When you're solo, it's all internal. The feelings. The struggles. Sprinkle in some impostor syndrome, procrastination, and the unhelpful self-talk... who tells you to cut it out?"

unsaid. You can be surrounded by people all day, renting space or managing others, and still feel alone. Lone and solo, missing the staffroom banter, the quick "have you read this article?", and the venting about "that client."

In leadership, there's rarely a break, especially without a strong team or manager. You hold space for everyone else. Keep everyone else in nice crisp and clean positive pants, you don't EVER want to overstep from leader to boss friend, so who is laundering yours?

When you're solo, it's all internal. The feelings. The struggles. Sprinkle in some impostor syndrome, procrastination, and the unhelpful self-talk... who tells you to cut it out?



Local Growth Hub Contacts
businessboardnetwork.co.uk/local-growth-hub-contacts
Government Funded support
gov.uk/business-support-service | gov.uk/business-finance-support
King's Trust for aged those 18-30
kingstrust.org.uk
Access to Work if you have a disability or health condition
gov.uk/access-to-work
For mental health support
hubofhope.co.uk

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My very vocal internal monologue. She's the critic, the complainer, the saboteur. And I tell her to pipe down daily! You've got a 'Martine' too. That voice that chips away at your confidence. Maybe daily, maybe occasionally. Do you tell yours to pipe down? Or do they win on the rougher days?

What helps me is the community I've built: peers, industry friends collected over the years, people I'm lucky to know. But not everyone has that, or has the chance to build it. So, where do you go?

Social Media – The Not-So-Safe Support Space

We all need support. A release valve. While friends and family care, their instinct is to protect. That can mean fear-based advice, which is not always helpful. They might not understand the layers of self-employment or be able to offer solutions. Often, they're the first to say: "Just give it up."

Turning to social media groups for peer advice, especially when you're solo, is the common go-to. But putting your hand up online can be terrifying: rejection, judgement, the "frienemy" who leaves you burned. Socials seem like the easiest place, yet...

They come with flaws. You post seeking help, and the commenters play Judge in the Court of Facebook Opinion. They mock, belittle, even dish out passive-aggressive "advice," oblivious to the human on the other side, someone they might push to give up entirely.

But there are good spaces out there. Full of virtual huggers, the ladder-holders, the signposters. It can be a mission to find that group with those people. That's what "leaving the ladder down" means to me: offering someone a step up, or a moment of pause, which is why I take the time to comment if I see an SOS post, and why I have set up a Safe Space Salon Staffroom™.

Add a Sprinkle of Everything Else We Carry

Running a business, caring for clients, setting boundaries, managing a to-do list, and practising self-care, it's already a lot. But what if you're also navigating neurodivergence (diagnosed or not), trauma, physical or mental health challenges?

Then there's life. Grief. Parenting. Caregiving. The basics, like doing the food shop. And let's not forget showing up as the partner and friend we want to be. All of this? It adds to the heaviness; it's all energy.

And sure, we hear "delegate" or "outsource the housework"... but that's not everyone's reality. Not everyone can afford coaches, strategists, and social media managers. So it becomes multitasking, the juggle and the cycle. And it can be exhausting, and we can hold back because we don't want to burden others. All that multitasking causes more mental weight gain. Put that burden cake DOWN, Martine. No one wants a slice!

Pushing through without support heightens the risk of burnout and health issues. So, seek out meaningful connections: a safe space community is the lifeline.

Look locally, there's FREE business support out there: Adult Education courses, networking, even banks offering free mentoring. External perspectives can be a breath of fresh air.

Above all else, prioritise you: your health, your boundaries, your peace.

Look After Yourself, and Your Business.

JOINING A FREE FACEBOOK SUPPORT GROUP

Is it a safe, informed space?



Before Joining:

- ✓ **Check the Admin/Team:** What's their background? Do they have relevant experience and credibility?
- ✓ **Review the Group Rules:** Are there clear expectations around respect, posting, promotions, and helpful conduct?

After Joining:

- ✓ **Use the Search Function**
Is the group helpful and informed on those topics?
- ✓ **Assess the Tone and Culture**
Is the group: Friendly and respectful? Opinion-led or evidence-based? Supportive of signposting to reliable resources? Overwhelmed by promotion or sales?
- ✓ **Look for Toxicity**
Are there regular belittling, negativity, or aggressive replies? Unmoderated arguments or dismissive attitudes?
- ✓ **Check Admin Engagement**
Is the admin or moderator team active, present, and encouraging productive discussion? Are there sanctions for those who are disrespectful?

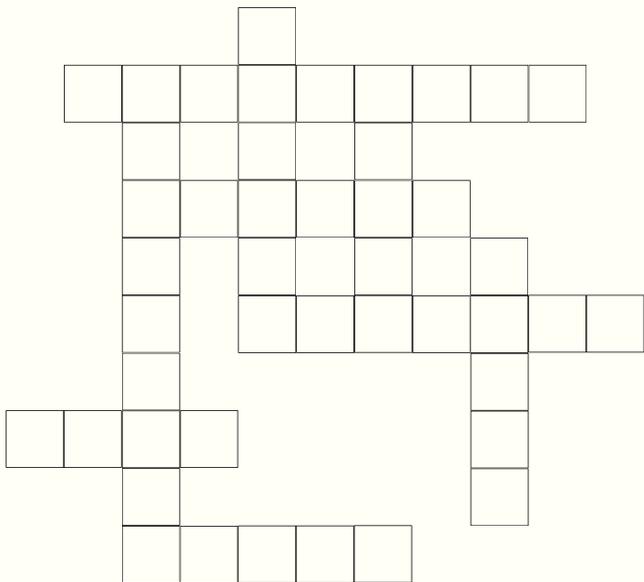


Sam Blake, founder of The Safer Salon Geek, empowers salons and clinics to build legally sound, people-first businesses through her Your Safer Space Standards™ and 30+ years of sector expertise.



COFFEE TIME

Wordfit



CLEAN
CLIENT

FACIAL
HAIR

LOYALTY
NAILS

RECEPTION
TREATMENT



Colour Me In

MINDFUL

Moment . . .



Grab some paper and a pencil, colouring pens or paint and spend some time painting or drawing something that you love in as much detail as you can

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