

# CONFIDENCE

With Elif Köse

C E C

## KICK SELF-DOUBT TO THE CURB

*It's easier than you've  
been led to believe.  
Let's get real.*

## FASHION: YOUR SHIELD OR YOUR MASK?

*Style is fun,  
but true confidence?  
That's an insane job.*

## BREATHWORK: HYPE OR GAME- CHANGER

*Here's what you really  
need to know.*

## VALIDATION 101

*The fine line between  
healthy vibes and un-  
healthy dependence  
know the difference.*

## MANIFESTING MAGIC

*The secret to getting  
what you want isn't as  
mystical as it sounds  
here's the lowdown.*

## ON THE COVER: ELIF KÖSE

*Bringing the sass, smarts, and  
secrets to owning your power at  
International Women's Day.*

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*Why a transformational retreat beats a drawn-out  
mastermind for real, lasting success*

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## CONFIDENCE TV

Where Transformation Begins

A show designed to inspire, empower, and ignite change.

Welcome to Confidence TV, a space where real stories meet real transformation. This is more than just a show—it's a movement for those ready to break barriers, step into their power, and create a life of confidence, clarity, and success.

Are you a leader, changemaker, or someone with a powerful story to share?  
Do you want to inspire others with your journey, expertise, or mission?  
Are you ready to be seen, heard, and celebrated?



BE PART OF A SHOW THAT CHANGES LIVES—ONE CONVERSATION AT A TIME.



## CONFIDENCE IS YOUR SUPERPOWER: THE BIRTH OF A MOVEMENT

**C**onfidence is not just a feeling—it's a superpower. A force that allows us to rise beyond self-doubt, step boldly into our truth, and transform not just our own lives but the world around us.

I know this because I've lived it. For years, I sought confidence in external achievements, in the way I looked, in the validation of others. But true confidence—the kind that is unshakable, the kind that carries you through life's storms—comes from within. It is built, moment by moment, through courage, resilience, and the decision to stand in your power despite fear.

This magazine, Confidence, is born today, on March 8th—International Women's Day, not just as a publication but as a gift. A gift to every woman who is on her journey of transformation. A gift to the dreamers, the doers, the ones who have been told they are not enough but are choosing to rise anyway.

It is a compass, guiding you back to yourself. It is a collection of stories, insights, and wisdom from women who have walked this path, just like you. It is a reminder that you are not alone, that your voice matters, and that your transformation is not just possible—it is inevitable when you step into your power.

This magazine is not about surface-level confidence—it is about the deep, unshakable kind. The confidence to speak, to lead, to rebuild, to love yourself fully, and to take up space in a world that needs your brilliance.

To every woman reading this—this is for you.

May it inspire, empower, and remind you that you are already everything you need to be.

“Confidence is not about having all the answers—it’s about trusting yourself enough to take the next step, even when the path is uncertain.”

— Elif Köse

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**“ Fashion had been a shield, not a solution. ”**



**“ Confidence isn't about dressing the part. It's about owning who you already are. ”**

# ***Fashion Is a Shield—Until You Discover the True Source of Confidence***

By Elif Köse

I want to share a story with you.

It's a story about transformation, about peeling back the layers of who we think we need to be, and about **discovering what confidence truly means.**

For as long as I can remember, I've loved fashion.

I loved the way a beautifully tailored outfit could transform a woman's posture, how the perfect pair of heels could make her feel **unstoppable**. For years, I dedicated my life to helping women step into confidence through what they wore.

And it worked—at least for a while.

I would see women light up, their eyes shining with newfound self-assurance as they walked out of my boutique, shoulders back, heads high. It was magical to witness.

But something started to **nag at me**.

Because sometimes, that transformation didn't last.

Days later, I would see the same women, and the sparkle was gone. They would confide in me, sharing how they had felt incredible in their new outfits—but the moment they were alone, away from the admiring eyes, the old doubts crept back in.

I began to realise something profound:

**Fashion had been a shield, not a solution.**

It was a powerful tool, yes—but it was only ever a temporary fix. Underneath the stylish clothes, the deeper insecurities remained.

**When the Outside World Disappears, the Truth Emerges**

Then the pandemic hit.

We were stripped of our routines, our distractions, and—perhaps most significantly—the external comforts we had relied on.

For many of us, fashion had been one of those comforts. A kind of armour, making us feel powerful, confident, and ready to take on the world.

But suddenly, there was nowhere to go. No social events, no business meetings, no special occasions to get dressed up for. The clothes we had once used to shape our identity hung untouched in our wardrobes.

I remember those early days vividly. The silence, the uncertainty. The sudden **absence of the world's gaze.**

Without the routine of getting dressed up, I found myself facing something far more confronting than an empty calendar—my own reflection.

For the first time in a long time, I had to sit with **myself**—without the layers of fashion, without the polished image, without the validation of others.

And it was a revelation.

I started to see how much we, as women, have been conditioned to seek confidence from the outside. How we learn from a young age that **if we look good, we'll feel good**. That **if we present ourselves well, we'll be accepted, admired, and valued**.

But what happens when **no one is looking**?

What happens when the carefully curated outfits, the designer labels, the perfectly styled hair—**what happens when all of it is stripped away?**

That's when the real work begins.

**The Journey to Real Confidence**

Sitting with this truth, I began a journey of self-discovery—one that was both painful and liberating.

I asked myself: **Who am I, without the labels? Without the roles I play? Without the external approval?**

And perhaps even more importantly—**why had I needed those things in the first place?**

It wasn't easy.

Like so many women, I had spent years unconsciously seeking **validation**—from society, from peers, from the world around me. **I had measured my worth by how I was perceived, rather than by how I felt inside.**

Realising this was like seeing myself clearly for the first time.

And in that clarity, something powerful happened.

### I let go.

I let go of the pressure to **prove myself**. I let go of the fear of **not being enough**. I let go of the belief that my confidence was something I had to earn, rather than something I already **possessed**.

I stopped dressing for **approval** and started dressing for **myself**.

Not to impress. Not to fit in. Not to meet an invisible standard.

But because **it felt good**.

And **that** was the moment confidence became real.

### Redefining What It Means to Be Seen

This transformation didn't just change me—it changed the way I work with women.

I began to see that confidence is not about **creating a perfect image**, but about **embracing your truest self**.

It's about standing in front of the mirror, stripped of the layers, and saying:

*"This is me. And I am enough."*



## ELIF KÖSE

Elif Köse is a transformational confidence coach, speaker, strategic business advisor, and visionary leader dedicated to empowering individuals and organizations. With over 20 years of experience, she creates transformative events, coaching programs, and retreats that inspire action, build confidence, and foster lasting change. Elif is on a mission to create a movement of empowerment and connection, with compassion at its core.

Because when confidence comes from within, fashion is no longer a shield—it becomes an **extension of your authenticity**.

It becomes a **celebration**, not a mask.

### Confidence That Lasts

The truth is, you don't need to **hide** behind clothes, titles, or expectations.

You don't need to **be more** or **do more** to be worthy.

Confidence isn't about dressing the part.

It's about owning who you **already are**.

It's about letting go of **who you think you need to be**—so you can finally step into the power of **who you truly are**.

And that? That's a confidence that lasts.

### No More Costumes. No More Shields. Just You.

So, what if you allowed yourself to be **seen**—truly seen?

Not just in a beautiful dress, or a tailored suit, or a polished look.

But as **you**.

What if you stopped waiting for confidence to come from the outside—and started claiming it from within?

Because when you do, something remarkable happens:

You stop looking for permission to **take up space**.

You stop chasing validation and start **owning your worth**.

You stop playing a role and start **living as yourself**—fully, unapologetically, and powerfully.

And isn't that the most beautiful thing a woman can wear?



# The Joy of Knowing Yourself is Freedom!

By Rebecca Hunt



**I**t all comes down to confidence. I don't really know where to start so I'm going to just begin and see where it goes. I think about how confident I am now, how well I am getting to know myself and live the life I want to live, everyday it just gets better and better.

And then, I look back to the 18-year-old Beccy who left school with no idea of who she was, what she liked, what she was good at let alone what she wanted to do with her life. It's quite amazing to see how far I've come.

My first experience of living life on my own terms was when I worked at a ski resort after leaving school. I couldn't believe how much fun it was. I met incredible people and realized, for the first time, this is what life should feel like. Full of joy and excitement.

It was such an eye-opener for me. It marked the beginning of my mission to create a fabulous, joy-filled life. But for a long time, I couldn't figure out why I could live this amazing life abroad, only to feel like it disappeared the moment I came back home to England.

In my early 30s, I had a life-changing weekend at the Priory in London that shook my world. I was only there for an hour when it hit me: how much I had been conditioned by society, how my survival instincts had shaped my world, and how many of my decisions were unconscious, based on outdated beliefs buried in my subconscious mind. It was earth shattering. I had to completely re-evaluate everything I knew; nothing was what I thought it was!

That weekend was the beginning of something new—my first tentative steps toward creating the life I wanted and becoming the person who had been hidden deep inside me all along.

The next pivotal moment came in my late 30s when I decided I wanted to change careers. I love my job as a greetings card designer and the heart of my home is the kitchen, so what I really wanted to do was become a homeware designer and design kitchen textiles. But no matter how hard I tried, I couldn't land the role I wanted. So, I decided that if no one was going to give me the job, I would create it myself. And that's exactly what I did.

That decision became the catalyst for my personal development and growing confidence. I started small designing a few fabrics and making all the products myself: tea towels, aprons, and napkins. There was so much to learn, but I loved it. From learning how to run a business to constantly asking, What's the next small step I can take? —I found the process exhilarating. And realised with each step I took out of my comfort zone, my confidence grew. It then gave me the confidence to try the new thing. The more I did this, the more I got to know myself. Discovered I loved making recipe videos for my YouTube channel, I loved doing live baking demonstrations that were fun and sometimes things went a bit wrong, and people loved it because they got to see how to rescue something. That's it's OK not to be perfect and you can still succeed. This is one of the biggest lies we are told; success only comes with perfection. Then it begs the question, "what is success?"

I called my business Chez Beccy, because I didn't want to limit myself, I knew my business had the potential to be so much bigger than just a few tea towels and aprons. I wanted it to reflect my world, my kitchen—even though I didn't fully understand what that meant at the time.

**"This is one of the biggest lies we are told; success only comes with perfection. Then it begs the question, "what is success?"**

Today, that vision has blossomed into something extraordinary, and I know there is so much more to come. A lot of coaches say you must have a vision to know where you are going. Personally, I find that too scary and it stops me in my tracks. I like to feel my way, go where my intuition takes me and I outsource my vision to my inspiring coach and mentor Elif Köse. And I can do this because she SEES me.

Everything we do at Chez Beccy is centred around the joy of connecting around the kitchen table. The joy of connecting with our loved ones and just as importantly ourselves.

As Brené Brown says "Connection is why we are here. It gives purpose and meaning to our lives."

They say we all turn into our mother's! My Mum is an amazing cook, and I learnt so much from her. But she was not a baker, she doesn't like sweet things, so had no interest in baking, unlike me!

My customers now have the opportunity to join me in my kitchen for baking demonstrations, followed by a delicious full Afternoon Tea experience. And this year, I'm thrilled to be a baking demonstrator at the Cheltenham Food Festival!

I am published author of A Guide to Hosting Afternoon Tea with Beccy's Favourite Recipes, which is available on Amazon and [chezbeccy.com](http://chezbeccy.com). You can even find my recipes on the Chez Beccy YouTube channel.

**"Connection is why we are here. It gives purpose and meaning to our lives."**  
**-Brené Brown**

I am passionate about designing beautiful useful items for the kitchen. I've curated a fabulous collection of luxury kitchen textiles, which are now exclusively made for Chez Beccy right here in the UK. My designs include a wide variety of styles from bright colourful spray of hearts to soft muted ditsy florals, hand painted cake illustrations and of course my Christmas Collection is always a firm favourite. You can explore the collection at [chezbeccy.com](http://chezbeccy.com) I'm also passionate about supporting other small British brands. Every year, I showcase their incredible work in my 12 Days of Christmas Joy interview series, which you can find on the Chez Beccy YouTube channel.

I remember someone once asking me, "Who do you want to be?" I thought it was such an odd question with such an obvious answer: "I want to be me, of course." But that simple question has shaped my life's mission since I was 18 years old. It's been a journey to truly come home to myself, to become me.



## REBECCA HUNT

Beccy is the founder of Chez Beccy kitchen and home style brand, a brand that celebrates connection, creativity, and joy through baking and design. As a passionate entrepreneur, author, and baking demonstrator, she helps people rediscover confidence and self-expression through the simple pleasures of food, storytelling, and beautifully crafted homeware.

"...And do you know what? I think I'm finally there—or at least close. Of course, it's not a destination. . ."

And do you know what? I think I'm finally there—or at least close. Of course, it's not a destination. I'm continually growing, discovering new things I love, and building my confidence. As I become better at listening to my intuition and staying true to myself, life just keeps getting better and better.

It's hard work. It's scary, especially at the beginning. It takes courage that you have to dig deep to find. But now I have self-belief, I can look back and see, I can do hard things, so I can do this.

And oh wow—it's worth it.

# The Key to *Manifesting* Your Desires Is Simpler Than You Think

By Elif Köse

**"You stop chasing. You start attracting. You stop seeking. You start being."**

We spend so much of our lives chasing—chasing success, love, happiness, financial security, recognition. We believe that once we reach a certain goal or acquire the things we dream of, we'll finally feel the joy and fulfilment we've been longing for.

But there's a truth many people overlook: We don't actually desire the **thing** itself—we desire the **feeling** we believe it will give us. Understanding this shifts everything.

The car, the relationship, the dream home, the financial abundance—all of these are external symbols of an **inner state** we're seeking. When we realise this, we unlock something profound: **the power to manifest doesn't come from endlessly chasing, but from cultivating the emotions we believe those desires will bring.**

## The True Nature of Desire

At the core of every goal, every dream, and every longing is an emotional blueprint.

Why do we want wealth? Because we believe it will bring security, freedom, and peace of mind.

Why do we long for a loving partner? Because we associate it with joy, connection, and a sense of being cherished.

Why do we seek career success? Because we believe it will give us confidence, purpose, and fulfilment.

But here's where so many get stuck: **we keep waiting for the external world to create these emotions for us.**

We tell ourselves, “I’ll feel successful when I achieve this milestone.”

Or, “I’ll finally be happy when I have this relationship.”

Or, “Once I reach my financial goal, I’ll be free.”

We place our emotional states in the hands of future circumstances, never realising that we can choose to embody those emotions right now—and in doing so, we actually become a magnet for the very things we desire.

### Emotions Are the Foundation of Manifestation

This isn’t just a theory—it’s backed by both **ancient wisdom** and **modern science**.

“...Positive psychology tells us that our emotional states directly influence our reality. ...”

Positive psychology tells us that our emotional states directly influence our reality. Studies show that individuals who cultivate joy, gratitude, and confidence are more likely to achieve their goals because they operate from a place of clarity, possibility, and alignment.

And then there’s the Law of Attraction, which states that like attracts like. The energy we radiate—whether it’s love or lack, abundance or scarcity, joy or fear—is what we draw into our lives.

This means that if we constantly feel unfulfilled, waiting for something external to complete us, we are actually reinforcing a **state of lack**. But when we learn to **embody the emotions of the life we desire now**, we naturally align ourselves with the reality we seek.

“ The power to manifest doesn’t come from endlessly chasing, but from cultivating the emotions we believe those desires will bring. ”

### Mastering Your Emotions: The True Power Move

If emotions are the primary manifestation, then learning to navigate and master them is the key to creating a life of alignment and fulfilment.

Read that again.

This doesn’t mean forcing yourself to be happy all the time or suppressing negative emotions. That’s not emotional mastery—that’s avoidance.

True emotional mastery is about:

- **Becoming aware of your emotions** without judgment.
- **Understanding their root causes** and shifting them consciously.
- **Developing resilience**, so that external circumstances no longer dictate your internal state.

When you take control of your emotional landscape, **you take control of your reality**.

### How to Shift Your Emotional State

So, how do you cultivate the emotions you desire **before the external world gives you a reason to feel them**?

Here are some of the most powerful tools that have helped not just me, but countless people I’ve worked with:

#### 1. Emotional Awareness: The Art of Listening to Yourself

Most people go through life on autopilot, reacting to emotions rather than consciously observing them. **The first step to mastery is awareness**.

Pause. Check in with yourself. *What am I feeling right now? Where is this coming from?*

“...Mindfulness and journaling are two of the most effective ways to strengthen this awareness. . . .”

**Mindfulness and journaling** are two of the most effective ways to strengthen this awareness. Writing down your emotions—without judgment—helps you track patterns and triggers, allowing you to navigate them with greater clarity.

## 2. The Power of Gratitude: Training Your Brain for Abundance

Gratitude is more than a feel-good practice—it literally **rewires your brain**.

The mind is naturally wired to **focus on problems and what's missing** (a survival mechanism from ancient times). But by consciously shifting your focus to **what's already good in your life**, you train your brain to exist in a **state of abundance**.

A simple but life-changing habit: **write down three things you're grateful for each day**. Do this for a month, and you'll notice a profound shift in your emotions—and what you begin to attract.

## 3. Visualisation: Creating the Emotion Before the Outcome

Your subconscious mind doesn't distinguish between imagination and reality.

This means that when you vividly **visualise yourself experiencing the emotions of your dream life**, your mind **registers it as real**—and begins aligning your actions, decisions, and energy accordingly.

A powerful way to start: Think of a past moment when you felt pure joy, excitement, or deep gratitude. Close your eyes and **relive** it—see the colours, hear the sounds, feel the sensations. This primes your brain to **generate these emotions on demand**.

## 4. Breathwork: Regulating Your Energy Instantly

One of the quickest ways to **shift your emotional state** is through **breathwork**.

Your breath is directly linked to your nervous system, meaning that by consciously controlling it, you can **calm anxiety, shift stress, and generate emotions like peace and empowerment**.

Try this:

- Inhale deeply for **four seconds**, hold for **four seconds**, and exhale slowly for **eight seconds**.
- Repeat for two minutes and notice the shift.

This simple technique helps reset your energy and brings you back to **inner balance**.



## The Ripple Effect of Emotional Mastery

Once you master your emotions, you gain control over **how you experience life**—and this shift creates a ripple effect across every area of your existence.

**Relationships flourish.** When you radiate confidence and inner peace, you naturally attract people who reflect those same qualities.

**Success follows with ease.** When you operate from a place of emotional alignment, you take bolder risks, see more opportunities, and create impact effortlessly.

**Physical well-being improves.** Positive emotional states strengthen the immune system, reduce stress, and enhance longevity.

Most importantly—**you stop waiting for life to make you happy. You become the source of your own fulfilment.**

## The Ultimate Realisation: You Are the Creator

Your emotions are not **responses** to life. They are the **blueprint** for the life you create.

So instead of waiting for external circumstances to bring you joy, abundance, or love—ask yourself:

*How can I embody these emotions right now?*

Because the moment you do, something incredible happens:

You stop chasing. You start attracting.

You stop seeking. You start **being**.

And that's when manifestation becomes **effortless**.

## ELIF KÖSE

It's not the success, the money, or the relationship you want—it's the feeling you believe they'll give you. But here's the truth: you don't have to wait for external circumstances to create that feeling. Manifestation starts within.

Are you ready to step into alignment and attract what you truly desire? Lets have a chat and see how we can work to master emotional alignment and manifestation at [www.elifikose.com](http://www.elifikose.com).

*This topic has been a cornerstone of my journey and teachings. I first explored it in depth on my blog, where I continue to share insights on emotional mastery, confidence, and manifestation. If this resonated with you, you can find more at [www.elifikose.com](http://www.elifikose.com).*

# Understanding Healthy Validation vs. Unhealthy Dependence!

By Elif Köse

**I**'ve often reflected on the concept of validation and its profound impact on our lives. It's a topic close to my heart and it comes up within my inner circle, and I believe it's a journey many of us share. Let me take you through a story that might resonate with you, one that involves navigating the delicate balance between healthy validation and unhealthy dependence on external approval.

Imagine waking up every day with a sense of unease, that gnawing feeling in the pit of your stomach, a constant need to prove yourself. One thing I can assure you is that you're not alone in this; many of us have been there, it's a daily conversation I have with my clients. We live in a society that thrives on validation—likes on social media, praise at work, admiration from friends and family. It's easy to become entangled in this web, believing our worth is measured by external affirmations.

Remember yourself as a child? A child seeking approval from your parents, teachers, and friends. Each time you received a compliment or a word of praise, it felt like a warm hug, reassuring you that you were on the right track. As you grew older, this need for validation didn't disappear; it just took on different forms.

In my own life, I remember how much I craved validation during my early years. Whether it was excelling in school, achieving milestones in my businesses, maintaining certain relationships, even getting divorced from my ex husband and how we managed to leave in good terms! I constantly looked for external approval to feel good about myself. I believed that if others saw my worth, it would somehow make me feel worthy.



But here's the catch: this kind of validation is fleeting. It feels good in the moment but doesn't have the lasting impact that true self-confidence does. When the praise stops, the sense of worthiness often fades away, leaving us searching for the next hit of approval.

I remember a time when I was caught in this cycle. I was constantly seeking approval, a pat on the back, a kind word that would reassure me I was on the right path. But the more I sought it, the more it eluded me. It was like chasing a dream; no matter how fast I ran, it kept slipping away. The validation I received felt hollow, temporary, and left me feeling even more insecure.

This is the pain point for many of us. We crave validation because, deep down, we're uncertain of our own worth. We question our abilities, our decisions, our very selves. This dependence on external validation becomes a barrier to true self-confidence, trapping us in a cycle of doubt and anxiety.

It's not just about wanting to be liked or appreciated, it's about needing it to feel good about ourselves. And that need can be consuming. It dictates our actions, shapes our relationships, and influences our choices. We end up living not for ourselves but for the approval of others.

**"It's not just about wanting to be liked or appreciated, it's about needing it to feel good about ourselves. And that need can be consuming."**

But here's where the story takes a turn. One day, I realised that the validation I was seeking externally could only be truly fulfilled internally. This epiphany didn't come easily; it was the result of introspection, self-compassion, and a desire to break free from the chains of dependence.

I began to practice self-validation, recognising and affirming my own worth. I started to celebrate my achievements, however small, and acknowledge my strengths without needing external applause. It wasn't an overnight transformation, but gradually, I felt a shift. The constant need for approval diminished, replaced by a growing sense of self-assurance.

This journey isn't unique to me. It's one that many of us can tackle. The first step is acknowledging the pain points, realising how much we rely on external validation and how it affects our lives. The next step is embracing self-validation, finding ways to affirm our worth from within.

### **Understanding Healthy Validation vs. Unhealthy Dependence**

When you dig deeper into the distinction between healthy validation and unhealthy dependence on external validation, it will help you understand this further to shed light on your path to genuine self-confidence.

**Healthy Validation:** Healthy validation comes from a place of self-assurance. It's the recognition that while it's nice to receive compliments and encouragement from others, your sense of self-worth isn't tied to it. You appreciate the positive feedback, but you don't rely on it to define your value. Healthy validation boosts your confidence because it aligns with your own internal beliefs about your worth. You do whatever it is for you, not for others to see it. Because you have clarity on your journey, your desires, your values, your dreams and you are doing it FOR YOU.

**Unhealthy Dependence on External Validation:** On the other hand, unhealthy dependence on external validation happens when you rely on others' opinions to feel good about yourself. Your self-esteem is on a rollercoaster, rising and falling based on the feedback you receive. This dependence can lead to people-pleasing behaviours, fear of criticism, and a constant need for approval. It's exhausting and ultimately unsustainable.

### **Recognising the Signs**

So, how do you know if you're seeking healthy validation or if you've slipped into unhealthy dependence, I hear you ask?

Here are some signs to watch for:

- 1. People-Pleasing:** You go out of your way to make others happy, even if it means compromising your own needs and values.
- 2. Fear of Criticism:** You're overly sensitive to criticism and take it as a reflection of your worth rather than constructive feedback.
- 3. Constant Comparison:** You frequently compare yourself to others and feel inadequate if you don't measure up.
- 4. Need for Approval:** You seek constant reassurance from others to feel good about yourself.

### **My Own Journey to Self-Confidence**

In my personal journey, I realised that my dependence on external validation was holding me back from true self-confidence. I began to explore techniques to shift my focus inward and build a stronger sense of self-worth. This included mindfulness practices, self-reflection, and connecting with my inner values.

**“Healthy validation boosts your confidence because it aligns with your own internal beliefs about your worth. You do whatever it is for you, not for others to see it.”**

One of the most transformative tools I discovered was Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP). NLP helped me understand the relationship between my neurological processes, language, and behavioural patterns. By using techniques like anchoring and reframing, I learned to change negative thought patterns and emotional responses, cultivating positive emotions and behaviours that supported my goals.

Another powerful practice was **Breathwork**. As a Breathwork facilitator, I've seen firsthand the impact that conscious breathing can have on our mental and emotional well-being. It's a way to reconnect with ourselves, to ground our feelings, and to affirm our own worth from within.

Remember, the journey to self-confidence is ongoing. It's filled with moments of doubt and self-discovery, but each step forward brings us closer to a more authentic, empowered version of ourselves. So, if you find yourself caught in the cycle of seeking validation, know that you're not alone and that it's possible to break free.

Start by acknowledging your worth, independent of others' opinions. Celebrate your unique strengths and achievements. Surround yourself with supportive people who uplift and affirm you. And most importantly, practice self-compassion. Be kind to yourself, recognising that your worth is inherent, not contingent on external approval.

This journey is yours to take, and it begins with a single step towards self-awareness and self-love. Embrace it, and watch as genuine self-confidence blossoms from within.



**"One day, I realised that the validation I was seeking externally could only be truly fulfilled internally."**

## ELIF KÖSE

How long will you let external approval define your worth?

What if the validation you're seeking isn't the key to confidence, but the very thing holding you back?

Imagine trusting yourself fully—without the need for likes, praise, or reassurance from others.

Break free from the cycle of self-doubt and reclaim your power.



# Mumbop: Where Movement Becomes Freedom

By Tessa Wilson

**T**here's a moment when music takes over—when your body starts to move before your mind can catch up, when the weight of the day dissolves into rhythm, and when, just for a little while, everything else fades away.

That's the magic of dance.

And yet, somewhere along the way, so many of us stop dancing.

Maybe we learned that movement was something to be judged. Maybe we started to believe that exercise had to be serious, structured, or goal-driven. Maybe we became so caught up in the expectations of daily life that we forgot what it feels like to move **just because it feels good**.

Mumbop is here to bring that feeling back.

Founded by **Tess**, a dancer and fitness instructor who believes in the power of joyful movement, Mumbop isn't just about exercise. It's about **self-expression, community, and reclaiming the simple joy of moving freely**—without fear, without judgment, and without worrying if you're getting it “right.”

Because here's the truth: **your body already knows how to move**. It's just waiting for permission to do it.

### The Rhythm of Confidence

When was the last time you truly let go?

Not in a planned way. Not in a structured class where you were trying to perfect a routine or keep up with a tempo. But in a way that felt **wild and freeing**, where the music became part of you, and for those few minutes, nothing else mattered.

That's what **Mumbop** is all about.

At its core, Mumbop is a celebration of movement—an opportunity to step into a space where you can **drop the self-consciousness, shake off the expectations, and just be in the moment**. The music leads, your body follows, and suddenly, you're not thinking about your to-do list or the worries that followed you through the day. You're just feeling.

**“... And in that feeling, something shifts...”**

And in that feeling, something shifts.

Because confidence isn't just about how we look—it's about how we feel inside our own skin. It's about trusting ourselves enough to take up space, to move without fear, to allow joy to flood our cells and remind us that we are alive.

That's the magic of movement. That's the power of dance.

And it's exactly why Mumbop exists.

### A Personal Connection to the Power of Dance

I first met **Tess** through my Zumba instructor, and from the very first moment, I knew she had a special energy—one that made movement feel effortless, joyful, and completely **liberating**.

When I was preparing for my International Women's Day event at The Grand Hotel, I wanted the entrance to be something truly empowering, something that captured the essence of confidence and self-expression. Tess helped me step into that moment—teaching me her moves, showing me how to own the space, and, more importantly, reminding me that dance is about presence, not perfection.

That experience wasn't just about learning a routine. It was about **feeling the power of my own body, stepping into confidence in a way that words alone could never achieve**.

It was a reminder of why movement matters. **Why dance is more than just exercise—it's a form of expression, healing, and transformation**.

## A Space to Move, A Space to Belong

The name 'Mumbop' is a nod to **mothers**, an acknowledgment of the need for a space where women—especially those who might have lost themselves in the daily routine of caring for others—**can reclaim a little bit of themselves through movement.**

But Mumbop isn't just for mums.

It's for **anyone** who has ever felt out of place in traditional fitness settings. Anyone who has ever walked into a gym and felt like they didn't belong. Anyone who has ever believed that dance was something reserved for "real" dancers.

Here, there's **room for everyone—whether you're a seasoned dancer perfecting a routine or someone stepping onto the dance floor for the very first time.** Some love nailing every move, others just let the music guide them. **Both are celebrated.**

Because movement should never be something that makes you feel small. It should be something that makes you **come alive.**

### Music That Moves You

At Mumbop, every session is its own unique experience. The music isn't just background noise—it's the **heartbeat of the class**, setting the rhythm and energy of every movement.

One moment, you might be bouncing to '**90s pop anthems**', feeling the nostalgia of songs that once played at school discos. The next, you're swept up in house beats, moving instinctively to the pulse of deep bass. Then comes **drum and bass**, a high-energy surge that electrifies your body, or a smooth dancehall rhythm that lets you sway, step, and flow.

Every song is carefully chosen to do one thing: **bring you into your body, out of your head, and into the joy of movement.**

Because music has power. It holds memories, shifts energy, and transports us to moments of pure presence. And when you move to it—really move—you connect to something far greater than just a workout.

You connect to **yourself.**

## Moving for the Soul, Not the Scale

Mumbop isn't about **losing weight, burning calories, or working toward some external goal.** It's about something deeper.

It's about **rewriting the way we think about movement**—not as something we "should" do, but something we *get* to do.

It's about stepping into a space where **you don't have to be anyone other than yourself.** Where you don't have to know the moves in advance or worry about whether you're "doing it right." Where you can walk in feeling tired, stressed, or unsure—and walk out feeling **lighter, freer, and more connected to yourself.**

Because **dance isn't just about movement—it's about remembering who you are.**

It's about **feeling without overthinking, expressing without explaining, and stepping fully into your body with confidence.**

So if you've ever longed for a space where fitness feels **like fun**, where movement feels **like self-care**, and where community feels **like home**—this is your invitation.

To move. To dance. To feel.

To remember that your body is yours. And that movement—in all its forms—is one of the most powerful ways to set yourself free.

Learn more and book a class at [www.mumbop.com](http://www.mumbop.com).

## TESSA WILSON

Tessa Wilson is a dance and fitness instructor and founder of Mumbop, a movement dedicated to helping women reconnect with their bodies. Through dance, music, and empowerment, she creates a safe space for self-expression, confidence, and joy, inspiring people to move freely without fear or judgment.



# How Photography Can Boost Your Brand and Help You Feel Confident in Front of the Camera

By Charlotte Rebecca Photography

Photography isn't just about taking pretty pictures – it's about telling your brand's story and making a lasting impression. Whether you're a small business owner, a freelancer, or building your personal brand, great photography can really take you to the next level.

## The Power of First Impressions

In today's online world, your photos are often the first thing potential clients see. A professional, authentic image can instantly communicate trust, personality, and professionalism. Whether it's your website, social media, or marketing materials, high-quality visuals create consistency and credibility, helping your audience connect with you and your work.

## Feeling Confident in Front of the Camera

I get it – being in front of the camera can feel a bit awkward, but here's the secret: confidence comes from being yourself. A great photographer will help you feel relaxed, guide you with poses, and bring out your natural energy. If you're feeling unsure, focusing on body neutrality can be a game-changer. Instead of fixating on how you look, shift your mindset to appreciate what your body does for you – it allows you to create, connect, and bring your vision to life.

**“Instead of fixating on how you look, shift your mindset to appreciate what your body does for you – it allows you to create, connect, and bring your vision to life.”**



## Tips to Boost Your Confidence

- Practice Your Poses: Spend a few minutes in front of the mirror to discover angles and expressions that feel natural to you.
- Wear What Makes You Feel Amazing: Comfort is key, so choose outfits that reflect your brand and make you feel like your best self.
- Embrace Your Uniqueness: Think about your brand's message – are you fun and quirky? Sleek and professional? Let your personality shine through in your images.

- Trust the Process: A skilled photographer will guide you every step of the way, helping you relax and capture authentic moments that truly represent who you are.

## Photography Is More Than Just a Headshot

Photography is about showcasing what makes your brand unique. Whether it's your passion, your products, or your process, high-quality visuals can elevate your brand and help you stand out from the crowd. By focusing on what you bring to the table rather than how you look, you'll naturally exude confidence and authenticity.

## Ready to Elevate Your Brand?

Whether you're launching a new venture or refreshing your brand, investing in professional photography is one of the best decisions you can make. Get in front of the camera and show the world what makes you, YOU!

*Get in touch with me at  
[hello@charlottterebeccaphoto.com](mailto:hello@charlottterebeccaphoto.com)  
to learn more or visit  
<https://charlottterebeccaphoto.com/business-photography/> to see more of my packages.*

**“By focusing on what you bring to the table rather than how you look, you'll naturally exude confidence and authenticity.”**



## CHARLOTTE REBECCA

Charlotte Rebecca is a brand photographer who is passionate about helping entrepreneurs show up with confidence. Through her photography, she captures authenticity and empowers individuals to build personal brands that resonate, creating a powerful visual identity for business growth and impact.



# The Missing Link to Female Empowerment: Your Body, Your Power

By Emma Fullwood

**“No one enters your temple without wiping their feet and bowing to the goddess within. “**



**F**or years, I lived in a body that felt disconnected.

As a fitness instructor, I spent my life moving, teaching, and helping women feel strong—yet I had never been taught about my own pelvic floor. That is, until I started leaking during my own classes. I remember laughing it off, assuming it was just part of being a woman. No one had ever mentioned that this was something I could heal.

Determined to find answers, I trained as a pelvic floor coach. But even then, something still felt... missing. While I was teaching women how to prevent leaking and strengthen their core, I was completely shut off from my sensuality, my sexuality, and my own body. Years of past trauma, medical procedures that had left me feeling “touched out,” and birth complications had created an invisible barrier between me and my pleasure.

I realised I had been having sex the way I had seen it in movies—performative, disconnected, something to **give** rather than experience for myself. No wonder I was struggling. No wonder it felt like just another thing on the to-do list.

When my relationship ended, I knew I had to face the part of me I had spent years avoiding: my sensual, sexual self. Sure, I had a business, I was a mother, I was busy—there was no time for sensuality, right? But deep down, I knew if I didn’t reconnect with that part of me, I would repeat the same pattern in my next relationship. Passionate at first, then fizzling out, leaving me making excuses, feeling numb, avoiding intimacy.

That’s when I discovered Tantra—**real** Tantra for women. And when I went deeper into the emotional memory stored in the pelvic floor, everything changed.

**“The pelvic floor isn’t just a group of muscles—it’s the keeper of our deepest emotions.”**



## The Pelvic Floor: Where We Store Our Pain, Power & Pleasure

The pelvic floor isn't just a group of muscles—it's the keeper of our deepest emotions. It holds the stories we've buried, the outdated beliefs passed down through generations, the pain of loss, shame, fear, and trauma (medical, sexual & emotional)

I often ask my clients:

Who taught you pleasure?  
Who showed you how to have sex for a woman's body?  
Did you ever go to "Female Orgasm School" or were you just expected to figure it out?

Most of us were raised with sex education that revolved around either making babies or avoiding pregnancy. We were taught to "keep our legs closed" to stay safe, to dress in ways that wouldn't attract the wrong kind of attention, to be careful about our reputations. And if you grew up in the 80s or 90s? The message was clear: sex was dangerous. AIDS, teen pregnancies, caution, fear. No wonder we struggle to fully embrace the parts of us designed for pleasure.

If you want to take away a woman's power, make her fear the parts that make her **a woman**.

Her bleed.  
Her vagina.  
Her breasts.  
Her womb.  
Her menopause.

And that's exactly what has happened.

## Pelvic Floor Dysfunction: The Hidden Epidemic No One Talks About

Many of my clients have undergone medical procedures that were deemed "routine." A coil fitting in a lunch break leaving them to pop a few painkillers & return to the boardroom unable to say what they have just endured. Putting on a brave face & continuing.

Then there's the women who leak. Who cross their legs when they sneeze, laugh, or jump. Who assume this is just what happens after childbirth or with age.

Some try Kegels (or as I like to call them, "pussy-ups") religiously, only to see no results and believe their body is weak.

But let's pause for a moment.

The pelvic floor is the body part that holds **everything** up.  
The body part that can birth a **melon** and return to its normal size.  
The body part that bleeds and yet does not die.  
The body part that can grant a woman **countless** orgasms.

**Weak? No.**  
**Lacking education? Yes.**

When a woman feels unsafe in her own body, it impacts everything. If she can't trust her body to hold when she sneezes or coughs, how can she feel safe to fully surrender into pleasure?

Sure, we talk about grounding—walking barefoot in the grass, cold water swimming, meditating on our third eye. But if you are disconnected from your **pelvic floor**, you are disconnected from your safety, your sexuality, and your power.

It's like a rollercoaster with a loose harness—you're never quite sure if you're secure.

So you stay in your head.

### **Living in the Mind, keeps you Disconnected from the Body**

Many women live their lives in their minds because it feels safer than living in their bodies.

I liken this to owning a 10-bedroom mansion, yet feeling safest locked away in the attic.

You might dabble in healing practices, try different self-care rituals, do all the things that **should** help. But if you're not addressing the seat of your power—your pelvic floor—you will always feel like something is missing.

You will always feel like a guest in your own body.

### **Reclaiming Your Feminine Power**

With my work, I help women move back into their full, embodied selves.

Imagine unlocking that attic door and walking through every room in your body—fully inhabiting it, feeling at home. At your very core, there is a space designed for **you**.

A sanctuary.

A luxurious, delicious, blissful space.

A room with the softest bedding, a breathtaking view, a feeling of peace and sensuality so deep it **grounds** you.

I help women **claim** this space.

Own it.

Live in it.

Because when you do, everything changes.

Your confidence.

Your relationships.

Your sensuality.

Your ability to manifest.

No one enters your temple without wiping their feet and **bowing** to the goddess within.

### **The Missing Link in Female Empowerment**

Before working with me, women struggle with pelvic floor issues, low libido, body confidence challenges, outdated beliefs about sex, and difficulty reaching orgasm.

And yet, we are told to push through. To be strong. To be empowered.

But how can we be truly empowered when we are disconnected from the very thing that makes us **women**?

It's like working on a puzzle—assembling every piece of confidence, success, and self-love—only to realize there are a few missing pieces.

And without those pieces?

The picture will never feel **whole**.

The pelvic floor **is** the missing link.

And once you unlock it, you don't just heal—you **transform**.

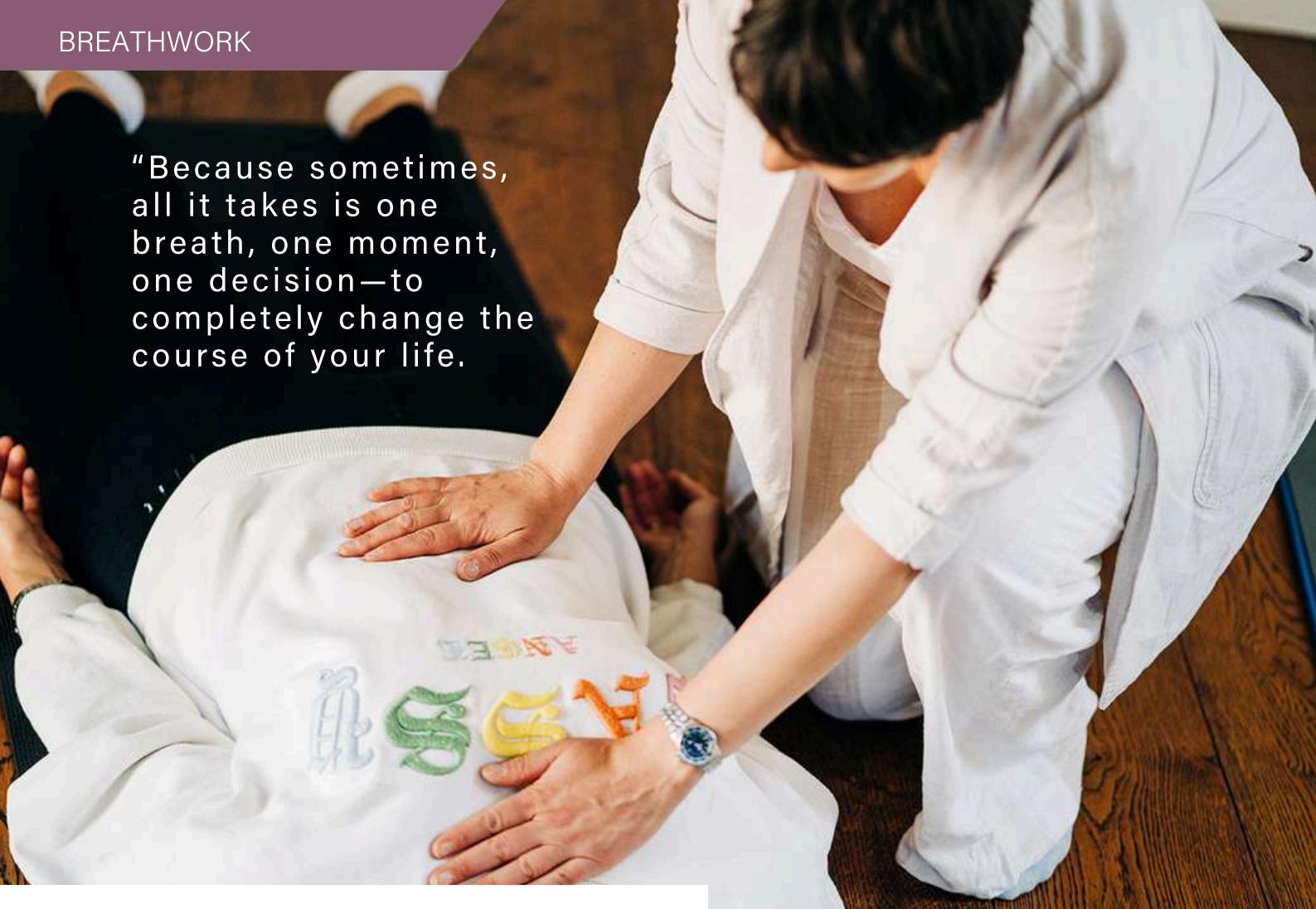
**“But how can we be truly empowered when we are disconnected from the very thing that makes us women? ”**

## **EMMA FULLWOOD**

Emma Fullwood is a pelvic floor and female orgasm coach and speaker dedicated to helping women reconnect with their bodies, heal trauma, and reclaim their pleasure. Through coaching, embodiment practices, and Tantra workshops, she supports women in stepping into their power, confidence, and full self-expression.



"Because sometimes, all it takes is one breath, one moment, one decision—to completely change the course of your life."



# What's the Deal with Breathwork?

By Elif Köse

There are moments in life when we feel stuck—like something deep inside is waiting to be released, yet we don't quite know how to access it.

And then there's **breathwork**.

A practice that isn't new, yet feels revolutionary. A technique that isn't just about breathing, but about **rewiring, releasing, and rediscovering yourself—one breath at a time**.

Breathwork is one of the core modalities I use to help my clients break free from limiting beliefs and patterns. Alongside Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP), belief clearing, energy healing, and somatic movement, breathwork serves as a bridge between the conscious and subconscious mind, allowing deep transformation to unfold.

Because here's the truth: **our subconscious mind holds the key to everything we manifest**. And breathwork is one of the fastest ways to access it.

## The Subconscious Mind: The Operating System Running Your Life

Think of your **subconscious mind like a computer**—one that has been programmed since childhood. Every experience, every belief, every lesson you've absorbed from the world around you has been stored there, shaping the way you think, feel, and react to life.

“... Your conscious mind—the part of you that makes decisions, rationalises, and analyses—is just the surface layer of your mind. ...”

Your conscious mind—the part of you that makes decisions, rationalises, and analyses—is just the surface layer of your mind. But the subconscious mind? That’s where the real programming runs.

It’s responsible for 95% of your daily thoughts, behaviours, and emotions. That’s why simply “deciding” to change something in your life often doesn’t work—because the deeper programming hasn’t been rewritten yet.

This is where **breathwork comes in.**

Unlike talk therapy, where you’re working primarily at a conscious level, **breathwork allows you to bypass the overthinking mind** and access the subconscious directly. It’s like going straight into the source code and **updating the outdated beliefs that no longer serve you.**

### So, What Exactly Is Breathwork?

Breathwork is more than just deep breathing—it’s a **powerful, transformational tool** that helps us **unlock trapped emotions, shift stagnant energy, and reprogram the subconscious mind.**

It’s a practice that has been used for centuries—by **ancient yogis, shamans, and spiritual seekers**—and today, it’s recognised as a **bridge between science and spirituality**, helping people access deep states of awareness and healing.

One of the most well-known forms is **holotropic breathwork**—a method that combines **intense breathing patterns with music, body awareness, and subconscious exploration.** And trust me, this isn’t something you can just pick up from a YouTube tutorial.

**“This is the power of breathwork—it **meets you where you are** and **takes you where you need to go.**”**

Holotropic breathwork is facilitated by trained practitioners—those who have clocked in hundreds of hours of training to guide people through this inner journey safely. Because once you enter the breathwork state, you’re not just breathing—you’re accessing a deeper, more profound part of yourself.

### What Happens in a Breathwork Session?

Imagine this:

A quiet room, a group of people lying down on mats, **eyes closed, covered with blankets for warmth.** A facilitator at the front, guiding the session with **breath cues and music**, holding space for each person’s journey.

And then—the breath begins.

**A connected, rhythmic breathing pattern**—not forced, but deep and continuous.

Music swells in the background, guiding the pace—**tribal drumming to awaken something within, followed by melodic heart-opening sounds, finally settling into meditative stillness.**

A trained facilitator holds space, guiding the experience while allowing **your own breath to take the lead.**

And somewhere along the way, something **shifts.**

You might feel **a wave of emotion rise and release.**

You might enter **a dream-like state, seeing memories or visions unfold.**

You might feel **sensations in your body—tingling, warmth, lightness.**

“Or, maybe, for the first time in a long time, you feel completely, deeply present. . .”

Or, maybe, for the first time in a long time, you feel completely, deeply present.

This is the power of breathwork—it meets you where you are and takes you where you need to go.

### What Does It Feel Like?

Breathing rapidly might sound intimidating at first. That's exactly what I thought too.

But here's the thing—you're always in control.

Many describe it as entering a **lucid dream**, where thoughts and emotions move freely. Others feel a **sense of clarity and peace they haven't felt in years**.

There's no right or wrong way to experience it—only **your way**.

### Why Is Breathwork So Powerful for Rewiring the Mind?

Because it takes you into the **theta brainwave state**—the same state your mind enters during deep meditation, hypnosis, or right before you fall asleep.

In this state, your subconscious becomes highly receptive. Old belief patterns can be brought to the surface and rewritten. This is why breathwork is one of the most effective tools for belief clearing.

Once you enter **theta**, you're able to **release outdated beliefs, heal old wounds, and plant new, empowering thoughts into your subconscious mind**.

This is why I use breathwork **alongside NLP, energy healing, and somatic movement**—because together, they create **profound shifts in how we think, feel, and experience life**.

### The Path to Transformation: Where Do You Begin?

If something inside you is **craving change**, if you feel like you've been carrying old stories, fears, and patterns that no longer serve you—this is your invitation to explore what's possible.

For years, I have guided people through **deep transformation** using breathwork, belief clearing, and subconscious rewiring at my **immersive retreats in the UK, Turkey, and across Europe**. These retreats aren't just about relaxation—they are about **real breakthroughs, emotional release, and stepping into the most empowered version of yourself**.

Hundreds of people have come through these retreats feeling **lighter, clearer, and more connected** to themselves than ever before. If you feel called to step into this experience, to reset and realign at a profound level, you can find more details on my upcoming retreats at [retreats.elifikose.com](http://retreats.elifikose.com)

Because sometimes, **all it takes is one breath, one moment, one decision—to completely change the course of your life**.

## ELIF KÖSE

What if the key to unlocking your subconscious was as simple as your breath? You've been carrying old stories, limiting beliefs, and stuck emotions for years. But what if you could release them—not through endless thinking, but through your breath? Breathwork is more than a technique; it's a pathway to profound transformation. Ready to experience deep healing and rewire your subconscious? Join my breathwork sessions or retreats.

# Overcoming Self-Doubt Is Not As Hard As You Think

By Elif Köse

Self-doubt. That quiet, persistent whisper that makes us second-guess our choices, abilities, and worth.

For so many women, self-doubt isn't just an occasional thought—it's a constant shadow, shaping how they show up in their careers, relationships, and personal growth. It keeps them stuck in cycles of overthinking, hesitation, and self-comparison, making them feel lost in their own lives.

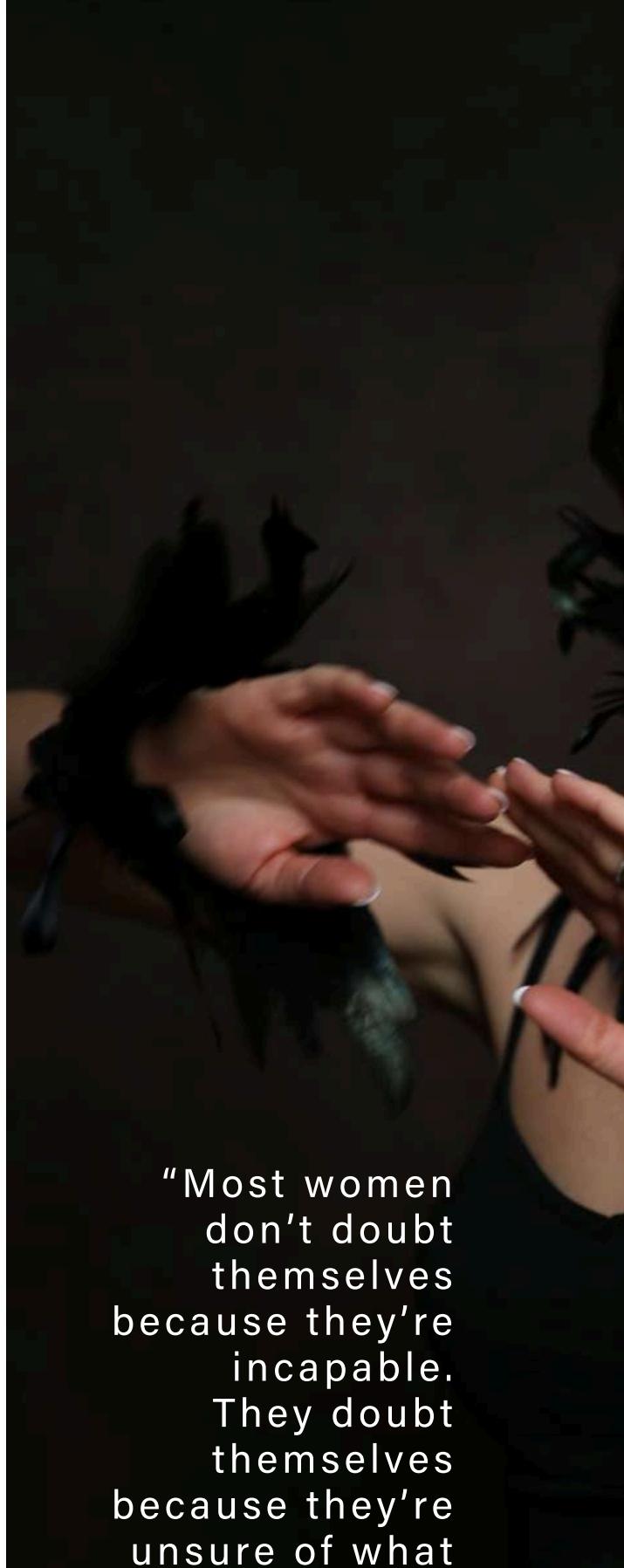
But here's something I've come to realise after years of working with incredible women:

**A lot of self-doubt isn't really about ability. It's about clarity.**

Most women don't doubt themselves because they're incapable. They doubt themselves because they're unsure of what they truly want.

And how could they know?

From the moment we're born, we're absorbing expectations—what society tells us we should be, what family expects us to do, what success is supposed to look like. We spend years unknowingly **living a patchwork life stitched together from other people's ideas** of who we should be.



"Most women don't doubt themselves because they're incapable. They doubt themselves because they're unsure of what they truly want."



And then, one day, we wake up wondering:  
*Is this even my life?*

When you don't have clarity, doubt fills the space. You question every decision. You fear getting it wrong. You hold yourself back from taking action because... what if this isn't the right path?

But what if the real question isn't *What if I get it wrong?*

What if the real question is: *What if I never let myself find out?*

### **Breaking Free from the Shadows of Self-Doubt**

Doubt thrives in uncertainty. When you're unclear on what you truly want, every decision feels overwhelming. The mind races with "what ifs" and worst-case scenarios, making you feel paralysed.

The solution?

**Clarity.** When you get clear on what YOU want—not what others expect—self-doubt starts to fade.

**Trust.** Learning to trust yourself more than external validation changes everything.

**Mindfulness.** Practicing presence helps you quiet the noise and listen to what truly feels right for you.

### **How Do You Know What You Want?**

For many, this is the biggest struggle. We spend so much time living for others that when we stop to ask, What do I actually want?—the answer feels like an empty silence.

But the truth is, deep down, you already know.

Beneath the noise, beneath the self-doubt, beneath all the ways you've been shaped by other people's expectations—there is a voice inside you.

You've just spent so long **dismissing it, ignoring it, pushing it aside** that it feels faint.

This is where doing the inner work comes in.

Because the truth is: the life you want is already within you. It's just waiting for permission.

### **Confidence Is Not a Personality Trait—It's a Practice**

People assume confidence is something you're either born with or without. But confidence isn't a personality trait—it's a practice.

It's built through the small choices you make every single day:

**Embracing Failure as a Stepping Stone.** Confidence isn't the absence of failure; it's the willingness to keep going despite it.

**Rewiring the Inner Dialogue.** Your thoughts shape your reality. When self-doubt creeps in, challenge it. Replace it with something stronger.

**Surrounding Yourself with the Right Support.** Confidence doesn't grow in isolation. It grows in spaces where you feel seen, heard, and supported—where someone reminds you of your power when you forget it.

### **This Is Why I Do This Work**

I've had the honour of working with so many women who felt lost in their own lives—who doubted their next steps, who weren't sure if they were making the right decisions, who felt like they were running in circles.

And what I want you to know is this: you are not alone in this.

You don't have to figure it all out by yourself. You don't have to hold all your doubts and fears alone. You don't have to keep pretending you've got it together when deep down, you feel stuck.



“... I am here for you—not just as a coach, but as someone who genuinely sees you, believes in you, and will never judge you. ...”

I am here for you—not just as a coach, but as someone who genuinely sees you, believes in you, and will never judge you.

I know what it's like to feel unsure.  
I know what it's like to question yourself.  
I know what it's like to feel like you're meant for more, but not know how to get there.

And I also know what it's like to break free from that.

In my **Courageously Confident Podcast**, I share the exact mindset shifts and strategies that helped me overcome self-doubt, rewire my beliefs, and build a life I love.

Because confidence isn't something that some people “just have.”

**It's something you build.  
It's something you choose.  
And it's something I can help you find within yourself.**

So if you're ready to start trusting yourself again—if you're ready to stop second-guessing and start creating a life that feels like YOURS—I'm here.

“... Self-doubt is not a life sentence. ...”

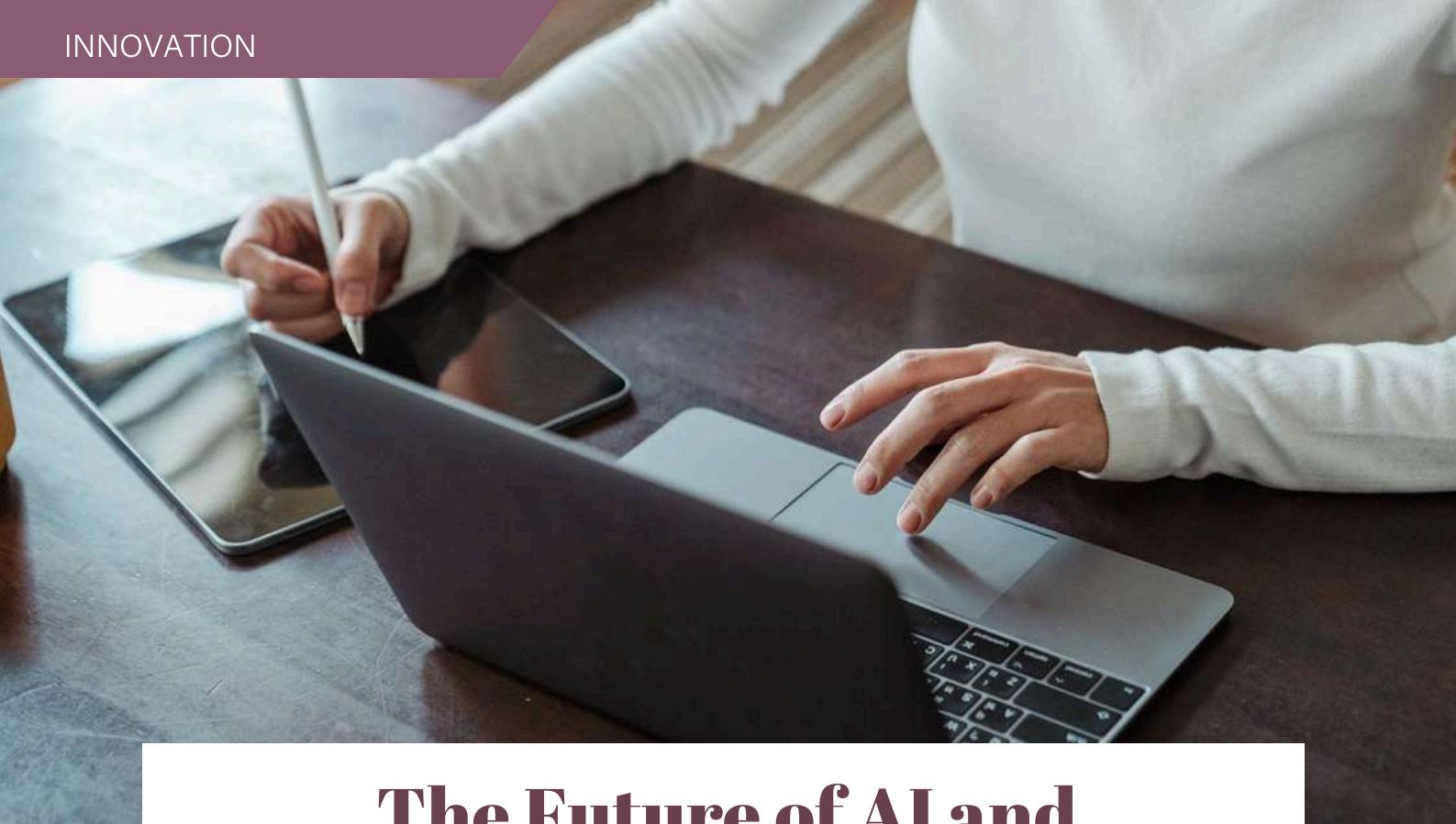
Self-doubt is not a life sentence. It's a moment—a challenge to move through, not a reason to stand still. The journey to clarity and confidence doesn't have to be walked alone. Sometimes, all it takes is a conversation, a new perspective, or someone to remind you of the strength that's already within you.

If you ever find yourself needing that space—to reflect, to explore, to be heard—you can always reach me here:[leader.elifikose.com](http://leader.elifikose.com).

“Confidence isn't something that some people “just have.””

## ELIF KÖSE

What if self-doubt isn't about ability but about clarity? How often have you questioned your worth, waiting for external validation? Confidence isn't gained—it's uncovered. It's already within you, buried under doubt. The only thing in your way is hesitation. How much longer will you wait?



# The Future of AI and Automations: Empowering Us to Build Scalable, Sustainable Businesses

By Funmi Olatoye

**I**magine reclaiming hours of your day, focusing on what truly matters, and watching your business thrive without constant hustle. For many of us, this may feel like a dream — or even too good to be true. The buzz around AI (Artificial Intelligence) and automation often brings excitement, but it's also surrounded by hesitation and misconceptions. Is it too complicated? Too expensive? Will it replace the personal touch we've worked so hard to cultivate in our businesses?

**“ The truth is, AI and automation are not just tools for tech giants or large corporations. ...”**

The truth is, AI and automation are not just tools for tech giants or large corporations.

**“ AI and automation are not just tools for tech giants or large corporations. They are powerful enablers of balance, scalability, and freedom”**

They are powerful enablers of balance, scalability, and freedom, especially for women like us who are building businesses while managing all the other demands life throws our way. By embracing these innovations, we can create businesses that align with our ambitions and values while freeing up time to live life the way we love.

In this article, we'll explore how AI and automation can transform your business, debunk common myths, and provide actionable strategies to get started. The future is here, and it's designed to work for us.

## The Transformative Power of AI in Business

AI and automation are revolutionising the way we operate our businesses. From chatbots that handle customer queries 24/7 to tools that automate repetitive tasks like invoicing and scheduling, these technologies are reshaping how we work by offering:

- **Time Savings:** AI takes over mundane, time-consuming tasks, allowing us to focus on strategy, creativity, and growth.
- **Scalability:** Automations enable us to handle more clients and operations without increasing workload.
- **Enhanced Customer Experience:** AI-driven personalisation ensures our customers feel seen, heard, and valued.

Take, for example, an AI-powered chatbot. Instead of spending hours responding to FAQs or managing inquiries, you can deploy a chatbot to handle these tasks seamlessly, leaving you with more time to focus on scaling your business. These tools don't just save time; they help you provide a consistent and professional experience to every customer, ensuring no one slips through the cracks.

Beyond chatbots, think about automating your invoicing process. Imagine never having to chase overdue payments or manually send reminders. With AI tools, you can automate these tasks and set up customised templates that reflect your brand's voice and professionalism.

## Debunking Common Misconceptions About AI and Automations

While the benefits are clear, many of us hesitate to adopt AI due to fears and misunderstandings. Let's bust some common myths:

- **Myth 1: AI is too complicated for small businesses.** *Reality:* Many AI tools, like Zapier and Go High Level, are user-friendly and designed for non-technical users. If you can use a smartphone, you can leverage these tools.

- **Myth 2: Automation replaces the human touch.** *Reality:* Automation enhances human connection by freeing you to focus on meaningful interactions. For instance, automating follow-ups ensures your clients feel valued without you manually tracking every detail.
- **Myth 3: AI is expensive.** *Reality:* There are scalable options for every budget, and the return on investment often outweighs the cost. Tools like email marketing automations can cost as little as a coffee a day while boosting your revenue significantly.
- **Myth 4: AI will take away jobs.** *Reality:* AI doesn't replace people; it amplifies their efforts. It allows us and our teams to focus on strategic, creative, and high-value tasks rather than getting bogged down in administrative work.

“... Another fear is that AI requires a steep learning curve. ...”

Another fear is that AI requires a steep learning curve. The truth is, many tools come with robust support systems, tutorials, and communities that make the adoption process straightforward. You don't need to become a tech wizard; you just need to take that first step.

## Why We Should Embrace AI

Many of us juggle multiple roles — managing our businesses, caring for families, and trying to carve out time for ourselves.

**"AI doesn't replace people; it amplifies their efforts"**



**"... This balancing act can lead to overwhelm and burnout. ..."**

This balancing act can lead to overwhelm and burnout. AI and automation offer a way to lighten the load, enabling us to:

- **Save Time:** Automating tasks like scheduling, invoicing, and email follow-ups frees up valuable hours in our day.
- **Level the Playing Field:** AI allows smaller businesses to compete with larger companies by streamlining processes and enhancing customer experiences.
- **Achieve Balance:** By taking over repetitive tasks, automation creates room for creativity, innovation, and personal time.

Consider the story of a mother of two who used automation to streamline her customer onboarding process. By automating emails, contract signing, and initial consultations, she not only saved hours each week but also provided a smoother experience for her clients. Now, imagine applying that same logic to your marketing efforts. AI tools can help you identify your audience, craft personalised messages, and even determine the best times to post on social media, ensuring your efforts have maximum impact.

## Practical Ways to Start Leveraging AI and Automation

Ready to embrace AI? Here are some practical steps to get started:

1. **Streamline Operations:** Automate repetitive tasks like scheduling appointments, sending reminders, and tracking invoices. Tools like Calendly and QuickBooks make this easy.
  - Pro Tip: Combine automation tools to create end-to-end workflows. For example, integrate Calendly with Zoom to automatically generate meeting links.
2. **Boost Marketing Efforts:** Use AI tools like Meta Ads Manager or HubSpot to analyse customer behaviour, optimise campaigns, and target the right audience.
  - AI-powered platforms can even recommend keywords or visuals that are likely to perform well, taking the guesswork out of your marketing strategy.
3. **Enhance Customer Experience:** Implement chatbots to provide instant responses to customer enquiries and personalise communication with automation tools like ActiveCampaign.
  - Think of your chatbot as an extension of your team, one that never sleeps or takes a break but ensures your customers feel supported.

“The tools are here, and the possibilities are endless — are you ready to embrace them? ”



## FUNMI OLATOYE

Funmi Olatoye is a business strategist, AI consultant, speaker and automation expert dedicated to helping entrepreneurs streamline operations and scale their businesses. Through cutting-edge technology and smart automation, she empowers business owners to work efficiently, increase impact, and create long-term sustainability without burnout.

4. **Make Smarter Decisions:** Leverage analytics platforms to track performance, identify growth opportunities, and refine your strategy. AI-driven insights can guide you towards smarter, data-backed decisions.

- Pro Tip: Use predictive analytics tools to anticipate trends and stay ahead of your competitors.

5. **Start Small and Build:** Begin by automating one or two simple tasks. Once you're comfortable, expand into more complex workflows. Small wins build confidence and pave the way for bigger transformations.

## Overcoming Barriers to Adoption

If the idea of adopting AI feels overwhelming, start small. Focus on a single pain point in your business and find an automation tool to address it. Seek professional guidance or join communities of like-minded entrepreneurs who are leveraging AI. Remember, the goal isn't to overhaul everything overnight but to take consistent steps towards a more streamlined and scalable business.

Another approach is to think about the tasks you dislike or find the most time-consuming. Chances are, there's an automation tool that can help. For example, if you dread managing your email list, AI-powered email marketing tools can handle segmentation, scheduling, and even content suggestions for you.

The future of business isn't about working harder — it's about working smarter. AI and automation are no longer optional; they are essential tools for building sustainable, scalable businesses that align with our lifestyles and values. By embracing these technologies, we can unlock freedom, balance, and growth, creating businesses that work for us, not the other way around.

It's time to step into the future and build a business that supports the life you love. The tools are here, and the possibilities are endless — are you ready to embrace them?



"Becoming untamed isn't about becoming more. It's about becoming fully, radically, completely yourself."

"If you don't know where you've come from, you don't know where you're going."  
-Maya Angelou

# Untamed Confidence: The Art of Living on Your Terms

By Bethanie Lunn

**W**hat does it mean to be truly free? Not just independent, but free in a way that shakes you to your core—where every decision, every moment, feels undeniably yours? It means becoming untamed. It means rejecting the pressure to conform and choosing instead to carve out your own path—to live, work, and be your way.

Maya Angelou said, “If you don’t know where you’ve come from, you don’t know where you’re going.” And so, before we go forward, let’s first look back...

## The Journey to Becoming Untamed

I wasn’t always this confident. I wasn’t always untamed. I had to unlearn, strip back, and rediscover who I really was. And so, I want to share four defining moments in my life—moments that shaped me, moments that taught me what it really means to be untamed.

## The Bronx: Strength in Adversity

Once upon a time, in a land not so far away (Central England, to be exact), I was a little girl growing up in a council estate, affectionately known as The Bronx because of the crime and chaos that surrounded us. Knife crime wasn’t a statistic—it was our neighbour’s last argument. A trip to the shops wasn’t just for groceries; it was a lesson in survival.

We were poor—so poor that I remember my mum crying because she couldn’t afford to feed my sister and me. And yet, she always found a way. Our little cul-de-sac was filled with single mothers, all supporting each other, proving that women are stronger together.

We never let our circumstances define us. Instead, they fueled us. My disadvantages gave me backbone. They gave me grit. They gave me fire.

And that fire? That’s what I want for you too.

## The Girl with No Voice: Overcoming Fear

For all my confidence, I was once painfully shy—a secret I hid well. Sometimes, when people spoke to me, my throat would close up. No voice would come out. I would go red, my eyes would well up, and I’d stand there—a quivering wreck.

One of the last times this happened, age 11, I was standing in front of a boy I had a crush on. I physically couldn’t speak. His look of horror as I stood there, frozen, was the moment I decided: never again. I never want to feel like that again.

I created my own affirmation: “I don’t get embarrassed. It’s impossible.” And so, in time, I didn’t.

That’s when I learned the power of mindset, of self-belief, of choosing your own narrative.

## The Power of Radical Simplification

In *The 5AM Club*, Robin Sharma talks about early rising as a way to create space for self-mastery. The message is clear: mastering yourself leads to freedom. But becoming untamed isn’t about adding more to your life—it’s about stripping back what no longer serves you.

You don’t need to do it all—you need to do what matters.

When I was nine years old, I was given a bag of sample-sized foundations—the kind you get for free. I decided to sell them door-to-door for 10p each. A woman challenged me: “Why should I pay for a free sample?”

**“You don’t need to do it all—you need to do what matters.”**

“Being  
untamed  
means taking  
control. This  
is your life.  
Your terms.  
Your time.”



I looked her in the eye and said, “I’ll give you the free one, but you’ll be so impressed, you’ll wish you had bought more at this bargain price. And if you don’t buy now, you’ll have nothing. This is a one-time opportunity.”

She bought 20.

That’s when I knew—I had something. And that something wasn’t about following the rules. It was about creating my own.

### A Life on Your Terms

Being untamed means taking control. This is your life. Your terms. Your time. It means:

- Saying no without guilt.
- Prioritising yourself without apology.
- Trusting your instincts without hesitation.
- Walking away from anything that doesn’t align with your values.
- Committing to a few high-value projects at a time—not too many.

At 23, I started my own PR company. I ran it from my back bedroom before moving into offices in Covent Garden. I left a stable job to do it. People asked, “Are you sure? Are you ready? Can you do this? What if you fail?”

I didn’t have all the answers, but I gave it my best shot. And I made it work.

So roll the dice and see what happens.

### The Confidence to Own Who You Are

Too often, women are taught to dim their light, to shrink themselves into smaller versions of who they truly are. But here’s the truth:

- You are not too much.
- You are not too emotional.
- You are not too ambitious.

You are exactly who you are meant to be.

For years, I tried to be everything for everyone, but it was draining, exhausting, and ultimately destructive. Only when I stopped people-pleasing did I realise how much of myself I had been sacrificing.

## BETHANIE LUNN

Bethanie Lunn is a seasoned strategist and business development leader with over 20 years of experience working with global brands like Shiseido and No7 Cosmetics. At 23, she founded Huge Promotions Ltd, delivering transformative campaigns and market launches. Today, through her consultancy, Untamed, Bethanie helps businesses achieve sustainable growth with bold, strategic insights and a human-centered approach. A published author and speaker, she has inspired audiences at venues like SKY and Google HQ.

Then, well into my forties, I was diagnosed with ADHD, and that knowledge changed everything. Suddenly, my entire life made sense—the times I felt like a misfit, the moments I struggled to be understood, the exhaustion from masking who I really was. ADHD had shaped my experiences in ways I never realised. Looking back, I rewrote my own story, not because I wanted to, but because I had to.

Understanding my ADHD has given me power—because knowledge is power. And the more I learn about it, the more I understand myself.

That’s what being untamed is about—self-awareness, breaking free from the noise and expectations that hold you back, and finally living for you.

### Welcome to Untamed Academy

This is the philosophy behind Untamed Academy—a space that equips executive women at the stage in their life where they’re ready to become untamed - equipping you with the clarity and confidence to take charge of your lives through curated introduction events (move over, networking!), an online community, training, and mentoring. Here, we don’t just talk about change. We make it happen.

We strip away the noise. We commit to what matters. We own our voices.

So, what will you start today? What will you strip away? What will you embrace?

Confidence doesn’t come from waiting for permission. It comes from taking it.

Becoming untamed isn’t about becoming more. It’s about becoming fully, radically, completely yourself.

Let’s do this.





"You can make  
money from  
your magical  
gifts, and you  
should."

# IT'S TIME TO MAKE MORE MONEY DOING WORK YOU LOVE... WITH CLIENTS THAT LIGHT YOU UP

By Kate Wolf

You can't make money from that'.

You've probably heard that hundreds of times, right? You're a coach? A coach is just an expensive cheerleader. You're a healer? How can you charge for such gifts? Oh, you're a therapist? You listen to people's problems for money; isn't that what friends do for free?"

When the messaging all around you is that your gifts can't make money, it's easy to start to believe it's true.

But it's not. You can make money from your magical gifts, and you should.

You know you've got something special. You know that you can help people grow and heal. You know that you see the world differently, and always have.

Maybe you are that person that strangers just tell their life stories to. Maybe your friends tell you that when they need to feel calm they think of you, or when they need a pick-me-up they pick up the phone and call you. Maybe strangers on the internet thank you when you share your thoughts, and tell you that you've managed to put into words something they were feeling, but couldn't express.

There are people in this world with all kinds of different talents and outlooks and we need all of them. But if you are someone who sees things differently, and people come to you naturally for support, then chances are you came here to be a coach/healer/guide - whatever you want to call this amazing job of guiding people to grow themselves and change their lives.

You've most likely been doing it for free for a long time... maybe your whole life. You've received thank you notes and cards and wouldn't it be great if you could pay your bills with gratitude?! Sadly we can't though. Is it time to start making good money in return for all you give?

When you're a coach, healer, therapist or entrepreneur doing the world-shaping work you came here to do, people often think they have two choices:

Option one: Do the work you love, but end up burnt out and struggling because you never quite make the money you need.

Option two: Build a successful business that makes money but which leaves you feeling totally unfulfilled and like a 2D version of yourself (and having to work hard to keep up pretences of perfection which ultimately also leads to exhaustion!)

But that's a false choice, and there is another way, and when you stop thinking you have to make that call, and understand that you can do the work that lights you up, help the people you're meant to help *and* make blooming good money for it too, that's when the universe gets behind you and it starts to happen.

**"The only way to build a business that feels fulfilling AND fills your bank account, is to build it as yourself."**

"... So. Are you up for making really good money with your magic? Yes? Then you need to do these five things. ..."

So. Are you up for making really good money with your magic? Yes? Then you need to do these five things.

One: Define your magic

Two: Discern who needs it

Three: Get disciplined about talking for them, and only for them.

Four: Design a message that calls them in and offers that keep them coming back.

Five: Decide you're in it for the long game

## ONE

### DEFINE YOUR MAGIC

The first step is to get really clear on what your magic is.

Often when we look for our gifts and talents we are looking to pieces of paper with qualifications or a series of letters on them. And while these may represent merit, our magic is so much deeper than that. Our magic is hiding in our responses and reactions to things, in our desires and our jealousies, in things we did when we were a child or do when no-one is watching.

When you're a magical entrepreneur, so often you're multi-talented and multi-passionate, but most traditional business coaches will tell you that you have to choose one or the other, or else you'll confuse your audience. But think about it this way - turning up at your friend's door with either eggs, sugar or flour, is far less impressive than showing up with a cake. The same thing applies to your gifts. Stop compartmentalising and start combining your gifts and what you offer to the world will be so much more impressive, delicious, and valuable.

What do you have expertise in? What do you have experience in? What have you always done, naturally?

*For more prompts to uncover your magic, download my guide: signposts to your purpose and magic, here: [katewolf.global/signposts](http://katewolf.global/signposts)*

## TWO

### DISCERN WHO NEEDS IT

**Once you have** clarity on your gifts to give, it's time to look at who wants and needs them. It's time to choose your audience. Where can you place your gifts that they can do the most good, in the direction of your vision and purpose? Where can they have the greatest impact? Who does it just make sense for you to work with, based on past experience and expertise?

This is where we start putting your magic and your value through the filter of your just-right client, and asking: why should they care? What's in it for them?

There are two things we need to know:

1. What do they want?
2. What do they no longer want? / want to stop?

A true journey of gathering your gifts is a deep dive into the world of you, but now we need to come up for air, take a look around, and stay surface level for a while. Because no-one spends money on things that aren't important to them. So - why should anyone care about your magic?

Honestly? They shouldn't. They should only care about how it makes their life better.

So we'd better get really good at communicating that.



### THREE

#### **GET DISCIPLINED ABOUT TALKING FOR YOUR JUST-RIGHT CLIENTS, AND ONLY FOR THEM.**

Nearly 10 years ago now, I made a video talking about how there must be another way - another way to grow your business that doesn't depend on manipulation, pushing, striving or hustling, or following a 3-step plan or formula that happened to work for someone else, someone completely different with different circumstances, connections and collateral.

A stranger on the internet commented on the video telling me I came across as weird. The thing about being weird though, is that it's a permission slip to freedom. And on the journey of stubbornly doing it my way, I found that in truth, that's the only way.

**The only way to build a business that feels fulfilling AND fills your bank account, is to build it as yourself.**

It feels fulfilling because when you get 'there' you get to turn around and go, wow, look what I did - without compromising my integrity, without having to pretend to be anything other than who I am, and ultimately getting to sleep really well at night! (before having a newborn )

And it fills your bank account for one very simple and cool reason - being yourself out loud (that part is key!) is what beckons ideal clients to your online door. The lady who told me I came across as weird was not an ideal client. She may have been drawn to someone more serious, less playful, less expressive, less colourful - not me.

One of the joys of being self-employed is you get to choose exactly who you work with, and who you don't work with. No annoying colleagues you have to put up with every day. No bosses making dumb decisions that you can see play out and know it isn't going to end well. No overly demanding clients or ones that want things from you that you don't truly want to give.

“... When you dare to show up as yourself, really truly no holds barred, you attract only the clients who see your magic, get it, want it, respect and value it and are happy to pay you for it. ...”

When you dare to show up as yourself, really truly no holds barred, you attract only the clients who see your magic, get it, want it, respect and value it and are happy to pay you for it.

And *that* makes all the difference.

When it comes to sharing content, stop asking ‘what will people think’ and start asking: does this serve my just-right client?

## FOUR

### DESIGN A MESSAGE THAT CALLS THEM IN AND OFFERS THAT KEEP THEM COMING BACK.

It doesn’t matter how good you are at what you do, if you want to grow your business you need to be attracting a steady flow of interest in your work.

Of course, that’s what marketing is for.

But, marketing only works when you get your message right, and when you’re someone with intangible gifts, getting your messaging right can feel like an impossible task. If you’ve spent hours trying to squish everything that you are into an elevator pitch, only to end up with a message that not only sounds like everyone else’s but fails to fully communicate the deep value of what you do - YOU ARE NOT ALONE.

So many coaches, healers and entrepreneurs survive through word of mouth referrals only, not because they’re not good enough to scale, but because their message is too wishy-washy, generic, vague, and barely scratches the surface of what it really means to work with them.

This is a problem that tied me up in knots for years, until one day it clicked.

The message is just the front door.

Imagine someone with a headache walking down a street where the shops were called ‘medicine’, ‘medicine’ and then - suddenly, clouds parting - ‘cure your headache’.

You know which shop they’d enter, and which shopkeeper would get their money.

“... But most entrepreneurs are sign writing ‘medicine’ on their shopfront instead of ‘cure your headache’ - and losing clients and money as a result. ...”

But most entrepreneurs are sign writing ‘medicine’ on their shopfront instead of ‘cure your headache’ - and losing clients and money as a result.

Now, the tricky part comes when you know you do so much more than cure headaches - or heartache or leaky gut or money blocks or whatever it is you do.

But here’s the good news - once they’re in, they’re in. And you might have headache medicine in the front, but in the back, you can have an Aladdin’s cave.

**"The clarity has them walk through the door. The variety keeps them exploring. . ."**

The clarity has them walk through the door.  
The variety keeps them exploring.

Just don't try to put the variety - everything you offer - in the shop-front window.  
Because they will walk on by and into the shop of the person proclaiming to sell exactly what they know they want and need.

## **FIVE**

### **DECIDE YOU'RE IN BUSINESS!**

It's time to uncover your hidden magic and share it with the world.

That bit feels exciting, right?

But we also want you to be bringing in the money.

When you're a caring, sensitive, intuitive person, the whole money conversation can feel like a necessary evil.

We've all seen that meme - the one that says the planet doesn't need more successful people, instead it needs more peacemakers, healers, restorers, storytellers and lovers.

This gets shared a lot and it's easy to agree with- it seems sweet, nice, good. But what it actually is, is an unnecessary and damaging false choice and if you're believing it then this false choice is hurting you.

Can we not have both? Can we not BE both?  
Do we not NEED people who are both?

I believe we absolutely do. We need more than anything, **SUCCESSFUL** peacemakers, healers, restorers, storytellers, lovers, artists, creators, poets, crafters.

People who are in touch with their magic, claim it proudly and deeply and share it with the world- and are well cared for in return.

No more starving artists and no more frustrated healers, thinking there's a choice to be made between doing your healing work in the world and experiencing the life-affirming energising joy of being a financial success with it.

You're not a charity. You're in business. It's time to open those doors and get the cash flow flowing.

It's time to make money with your magic! Remember - you were made for this. Now, it's time to get paid for it.

*"When you dare to show up as yourself, really truly no holds barred, you attract only the clients who see your magic, get it, want it, respect and value it and are happy to pay you for it."*



## **KATE WOLF**

Kate Wolf is a speaker trainer and business consultant for magical entrepreneurs. As the creator of the "Money for Your Magic" method, she helps visionary leaders turn their gifts into thriving businesses by aligning strategy with soul, making entrepreneurship fulfilling and financially abundant.



# Breaking the Rules of Networking: How I Built a Community Based on Storytelling

By Simona Barbieri

I know what it feels like to walk into a networking event and feel completely out of place. You scan the room, see incredible speakers on stage, people who look the part, sound the part, and seem to exude success. And then there's that sinking feeling, the one that whispers, *Do I belong here? Do I have anything valuable to offer?*

This feeling of not being enough was what sparked the idea for HubDot. In 2012, I started something different, something that flipped traditional networking on its head, because I was tired of spaces that made people feel like they had to prove their worth through titles, job roles, or achievements.

## A New Way to Network

I grew up in Napoli, south of Italy, a place where human connection is everything. The streets are filled with people talking, sharing ideas, and inspiring each other, not based on status but on story. I wanted to bring that feeling into the world of networking.

I found myself at a crossroads in my career, seeking new possibilities. Traditional networking events left me feeling disconnected and disempowered, dominated by hierarchy and superficial labels. Frustrated by this lack of genuine connection, I set up HubDot with a vision to redefine networking and bring people together in the style of an Italian Piazza.

So, I sent an email to every woman I knew, friends from music, the corporate world, my mother's friends at school. I invited them to my kitchen table in London and introduced a new way to connect. I didn't want networking to be about job titles or seniority. I wanted it to be about what truly matters, who we are, what drives us, and where we want to go.

On 24 June 2012, HubDot was born. And with it, a movement that has since connected thousands of people across the world through the simple power of storytelling.

### We Are Tired of the Traditional Way of Networking

For so long, networking has been about impressing others rather than truly connecting with them. You're expected to enter a room, shake hands, give a rehearsed pitch, and hope you leave with a useful contact. But this often leaves us feeling like we need to prove our worth, like we have to fit into a mold rather than show up as our authentic selves.

The truth? The most powerful connections happen when we drop the facade and share our real stories.

That's why at HubDot, we've created a networking model that isn't based on job titles, LinkedIn profiles, or professional hierarchies. Instead, we use something revolutionary: Five Dots.

What sets HubDot apart is its unwavering commitment to embracing vulnerability and facilitating genuine connections. By removing barriers and encouraging people to share their stories, HubDot creates a leveled environment where everyone can feel seen, heard, and valued.

**"I didn't want networking to be about job titles or seniority. I wanted it to be about what truly matters, who we are, what drives us, and where we want to go."**

### The Five Dots: A Networking Revolution

Our Five Dot system is a simple but powerful way to help us navigate networking in a way that feels natural and empowering. Instead of asking, *What am I getting out of this for myself?* why don't we start with, *How can I help you?* Generosity is addictive—trust me.

At any HubDot event, you choose a Dot that reflects where you are in your journey:

- **Red:** I have knowledge to share
- **Yellow:** I have an idea, I need help
- **Green:** I'm here to be inspired
- **Blue:** I am here to make connections
- **Purple:** I want to tell you about my story

By choosing a Dot, you immediately signal your mindset, not your status. It levels the playing field and opens up real, human conversations where connections are made based on values, dreams, and experiences, rather than résumés. Our networking is about talking about the endless possibilities ahead of us as we let go of the labels that do not serve us anymore.

And it works. I've seen people launch businesses, find investors, discover new passions, and forge lifelong friendships, all because they felt seen and heard in a way that traditional networking never allowed.

### My Top Tips to Network in a Way That's Empowering

#### 1. Start With Your Story

Forget the pressure to have the perfect "elevator pitch." Instead, think about what truly excites you right now. What are you working on? What challenges are you facing? What's inspiring you?

When you start from a place of honesty, conversations become richer, deeper, and more meaningful. And you'll be amazed at how many people resonate with what you're going through.

## 2. Be Open About What You Need

So many of us feel like we need to present ourselves as already successful in networking spaces. But the real magic happens when you share what you're looking for. We call this the ask and the offer, the bartering at our Piazza-style events.

Need advice? Say it.

Looking for a collaborator? Ask.

Unsure about your next step? Let people know.

When you're open about your needs, people will naturally want to help you, because we all know what it feels like to need support.

## 3. Stop Worrying About “Looking the Part”

The biggest barrier to confident networking is the fear of not being good enough. We worry about whether we sound smart, look polished, or seem interesting enough to others.

But the truth is, the most magnetic people in any room are the ones who show up as themselves. Authenticity is what makes people remember you. It's what draws them in and makes them want to connect.

## 4. Listen More Than You Speak

Some of the most powerful connections come not from talking, but from truly listening.

When you give someone your full attention, when you lean in, ask questions, and genuinely care about their story, you create a space where real trust and relationships can form.

And here's the secret: people will remember you not for what you said, but for how you made them feel.



## SIMONA BARBIERI

Simona Barbieri is the founder of HubDot, a global movement transforming networking through storytelling. Inspired by Italian piazzas, she creates spaces where human connection transcends job titles, allowing people to share their ideas, passions, and journeys in an authentic and meaningful way.

## 5. Find Networking Spaces That Feel Right

Not all networking spaces are created equal. If traditional networking events leave you drained or uninspired, find communities that align with your values.

At HubDot, for example, we host monthly events that are open to everyone. There's no membership fee, no pressure to sell yourself, just a space where you can connect with like-minded people in a meaningful way.

## The Future of Networking Is Human

I believe that the future of networking isn't about status or job titles, it's about human connection. It's about creating spaces where every person, no matter where they are in their journey, feels valued, empowered, and heard.

HubDot is proof that when we come together to share our stories, magic happens. Ideas take flight. Dreams turn into reality. And most importantly, we remind each other that we are enough, just as we are.

So next time you walk into a networking space, take a deep breath. Forget about the need to impress. Instead, ask yourself:

- What do I really want to share today?
- How can I be open to others?
- What feels most true to me in this moment?

And then, simply start.

Your story matters. And the right people will hear it.

Join us at HubDot. Our events happen every month, and they're open to all. There's no membership, just a community of incredible people waiting to meet you.

Because one connection can change your life.

Through the power of human connection, HubDot is championing cultural integration, one story at a time.



# Embracing Your Story: The Key to Confident Leadership

By Abi Osho



There is an undeniable power in storytelling. Our personal narratives shape who we are, the way we move through the world, and how we lead. Yet, for so many women—especially women in leadership positions—there is a hesitation, even fear, about embracing their personal stories. We worry about judgment, vulnerability, and whether our experiences truly matter. But the truth is, our stories are our power. They are the bridge that connects us to others, creating space for transformation, belonging, and deep, meaningful leadership.

“ Our stories are our power. They are the bridge that connects us to others, creating space for transformation, belonging, and deep, meaningful leadership. ”

## A Story of Identity and Belonging

My own journey has been one of profound self-discovery. I was raised in East Sussex, privately fostered by a white family as a Black child of Nigerian heritage. Growing up in an environment where I often felt different, I struggled with questions of cultural identity and belonging. Where did I fit? Who was I meant to be? How could I honour both the girl I was raised as and the heritage that was deeply rooted in my DNA?

These questions didn't have easy answers. As a young woman, I battled self-doubt, feeling like I needed to silence parts of myself to be accepted. It took years of inner work to shift from self-doubt to self-belief, to understand that I didn't have to choose one identity over another—I could embrace all of who I was and use that to empower others.

Today, as a **Personal Storytelling and Leadership Coach, BAFTA award-winning retreat curator, speaker, and author**, I help women—especially leaders—embrace their own narratives. I've worked with CEOs, entrepreneurs, healers, and therapists who are incredibly gifted but hold back because they don't believe their story is valuable. **But it is. Every single time.**

### **The Power of Owning Your Narrative**

When women step into their full stories, something shifts. They become **more confident, more authentic, and more impactful** in their businesses and leadership roles. They stop playing small and start owning their space with grace and power. This is why I do what I do—because I know firsthand what it's like to question your worth, and I also know what it feels like to **rise beyond those doubts**.

So how do you start? If you're a woman leader struggling with confidence, unsure about embracing your personal story, here are **three key tips to help you step into your full power:**

#### **1. Rewrite the Narrative You Tell Yourself**

We all have inner stories that shape our beliefs about ourselves. Maybe you tell yourself, "I'm not experienced enough to share my story," or "People won't take me seriously." But these are just **old narratives**—stories that were formed based on past experiences, fears, or societal conditioning.

Rewriting your narrative means choosing new, empowering beliefs. Instead of "I'm not experienced enough," try "My unique journey makes me the perfect person to share this message." Instead of "People won't take me seriously," try "My authenticity attracts the right audience." When you shift your self-perception, the world around you shifts too.

#### **2. Find Strength in Vulnerability**

Vulnerability is often seen as a weakness in leadership, but in reality, **it's a superpower**. When you share your personal journey—including the struggles, doubts, and challenges—you give others permission to do the same.

Think about the leaders who inspire you most. Chances are, they are the ones who **share their experiences with courage and honesty**. This doesn't mean revealing every intimate detail of your life, but rather, allowing yourself to be seen as human, relatable, and real.

*"... When I first started talking openly about my experience growing up in private foster care, I worried about how people would perceive me. ..."*

When I first started talking openly about my experience growing up in private foster care, I worried about how people would perceive me. Would they see me as "less than" because I didn't have a traditional upbringing? But the opposite happened. The more I shared, the more I connected with people who had also felt like outsiders at some point in their lives. Vulnerability builds bridges, and bridges create community.

### 3. Align Your Leadership with Your Truth

Leadership is not about fitting into a mold—it's about owning who you are and leading from a place of truth. When you align your leadership style with your authentic self, you lead with more confidence, creativity, and impact.

This means asking yourself: **What are my core values? What message do I want to share with the world? How do I want people to feel in my presence?** When your business and leadership are built on authenticity, they naturally attract the right clients, opportunities, and partnerships.

#### Embracing the Light Within

I often say, **“Celebrating the light that shines within you.”** Because I believe that every woman has a unique brilliance—a light that, when fully embraced, becomes a guiding force for others. Your story, your journey, your experiences—they are not just for you. They are meant to **uplift, inspire, and create change.**

So if you've been waiting for the “perfect” time to step into your power, to share your story, to take up space in your business or career—**the time is now.**

The world needs your voice. The world needs your leadership. And most importantly, **you need to honour yourself by stepping into the fullness of who you are.**



Your story is your strength. Your authenticity is your superpower. And your leadership is most impactful when it is deeply aligned with who you truly are. Whether you are an entrepreneur, a CEO, a healer, or a woman on the brink of stepping into something greater—know that your voice matters.

I have walked the path of uncertainty, questioning my own worth. I have had to **overcome self-doubt and replace it with self-belief.** And I continue to do so because personal growth is a lifelong journey. But one thing I know for sure is this: **the moment you embrace who you are, everything changes.**

So, my message to you today is simple: Your story is powerful. Own it. **Share it. Let it guide you. And watch as the world opens up in ways you never imagined.**

Celebrating the light that shines within you.

Love & blessings Abi



### ABI OSHO

Abi Osho is a Personal Storytelling and Leadership Coach, BAFTA award-winning retreat curator, and speaker. She specialises in helping leaders harness the power of their personal stories to create impact, confidence, and transformation. Abi's work empowers individuals to step into their authenticity and lead with purpose.

"Public speaking isn't just for the naturally confident —it's for anyone willing to step up, embrace their voice, and share their message with the world. "



"Sometimes, we have to feel the fear and do it anyway!"

# Public Speaking is for Everyone: Introverts & Extroverts Alike

Whether you consider yourself an introvert or an extrovert – Public Speaking is for everyone!

By Kate Gilbert

Most people will sit somewhere on the scale from extrovert to introvert and there are definitely cross-overs. Some introverts will be wonderful public speakers, while some extroverts will prefer to shy away from the spotlight.

Public speaking is something that a large number of people struggle with. For someone who is an introvert, it's likely to be a very intense fear and something that you can't imagine yourself doing. So it's encouraging to know that 25% to 40% of the workforce are reported as being introverts. Introvert is a word that we've shied away from for years. After all, being the extrovert always sounds so much better when you compare it to the old terms used for an introvert such as wallflower, shy, quiet, dreamers and underconfident.

Whether you're an introvert or an extrovert, we all have times when the idea of delivering a talk or presentation at work can feel daunting. While it's said that extroverts find being in the spotlight easier than their introverted colleagues, I know for a fact that even extroverts will still get nervous or anxious in the run up to a presentation. So wherever you find yourself on the scale, I think you'll find these ten tips useful to help you get in the right frame of mind for a presentation and able to deliver at your best.

## **10 TIPS TO HELP COMBAT NERVES FOR INTROVERTS AND EXTROVERTS TO IMPROVE PUBLIC SPEAKING:**

**FOCUS ON YOUR STRENGTHS** – While our brains often love to focus on the negative as it's more powerful than positive thinking, we must remind ourselves of what we're good at. Ask yourself, what you've done in your career to date? How have you got to where you are? Why are you the person to do this job? Remembering our strengths will build our confidence in ourselves. This in turn will support us when we start speaking.

**CHARGE YOUR BATTERY** – Everyone needs down time or alone time in order to recharge. Make sure your tank isn't running on empty. Down time for you might be spending some time reading a book, cooking, having a bath, going for a walk in the park, taking an afternoon nap or hanging out with your best friend. Be sure to make space for downtime within your week.

**JOURNALLING** - This is a wonderful exercise and allows the overactive mind to pour out onto the page. Sometimes putting all of your thoughts down on paper gives the mind a lot of relief. Try it for yourself, it's a wonderful way to process your ideas and thoughts and you may even find you resolve some of your challenges by writing about them. I promise you'll feel freer and lighter once that load is lifted.



**BE KIND TO YOURSELF** – Positive self-talk also helps to boost your own confidence. Start to become aware of the way that you speak to yourself and try not to criticise yourself too much. Instead accept your feelings and focus on your positive attributes and strengthen them.

**VISUALISE** – Most of us have a wonderful imagination, so use it! Visualise your success. See yourself speaking confidently, clearly and calmly on stage or in a board meeting. Often what we're imagining is how badly it could go and how uncomfortable you might feel. This is almost a self-fulfilling prophecy and won't help you to do confident planning. So imagine it going really well. See it in detail, feel it, and hear the positive words and applause afterwards.

**REHEARSE** – I can't stress this enough. Practicing your talk or presentation out loud not only helps your memory but allows you to feel more relaxed and comfortable on the day. Always, memorise the first few sentences and say them out loud privately before the talk (even if it's a whisper in the bathroom at the event).

**EMBRACE SILENCE** – The worst thing people tend to do is try to fill the silences with something. That something often becomes a ramble or doesn't make sense. We lose our composure and start losing the thread of what we were saying and we stop making sense. Instead embrace the silence, be okay with it. It gives the audience time to process your words and gives you time to find the right words and be more impactful with your speech.

**PUT YOUR HAND UP TO SPEAK** – It's easy to sit back and allow others to lead and dominate, particularly if they are very good at it. It's important to remember that your voice, thoughts, strengths and ideas are equally important and it is unfair on others to withhold them. Sometimes, we have to feel the fear and do it anyway! People will be grateful that you did.

**PAUSE BEFORE YOU START SPEAKING** – This is a great technique to get everyone's attention before you start speaking and will give you a moment to just breathe and settle.

**STRETCH BEFORE PRESENTING** – Our bodies often fill with adrenalin before a presentation and we can react by tensing up. It's a great idea to have a good stretch before we present. Find somewhere private and do a few start jumps, run on the spot or shake your hands and arms out. Another good tip is to tense your whole body and then relax to get rid of the tension.

Public speaking isn't just for the naturally confident—it's for anyone willing to step up, embrace their voice, and share their message with the world. Whether you're an introvert or an extrovert, your words have the power to inspire, influence, and create change. Nerves are simply a sign that you care, and with the right mindset, they can fuel your success rather than hold you back. Trust in your strengths, visualise your success, and step forward with courage. The world needs your voice—so take a deep breath, believe in yourself, and speak with confidence.

Good Luck!

## KATE GILBERT

Kate Gilbert is a public speaking coach, trainer, and mentor dedicated to helping individuals find their voice and speak with confidence. She empowers both introverts and extroverts to step into their power, master communication, and deliver impactful presentations with clarity, authenticity, and presence.



"The truth about your own life is not always obvious, but it is always there, waiting to be discovered."  
- David Whyte



Elen is a multidisciplinary artist whose creative portfolio spans photography, styling, interior and garden design, costume design for dance theatre, writing, composing, and film-making. She lives in Brighton, UK, with her husband and two children, and her company, Elensworld, serves as a platform for all her creative projects.

# IT IS NEVER TOO LATE

## How The Snow Queen And Writing A Children's Book Helped Me Reconnect With My True Purpose

By Elen Agasiants

Do you remember Hans Christian Andersen's tale of The Snow Queen? Gerda, on her quest to rescue Kai, stumbles upon a cottage where summer flowers bloom, despite the icy world outside. That image has always stayed with me—a warm oasis of beauty and life in the middle of a cold storm.

Growing up in Moscow, snowstorms weren't just stories—they were my reality, metaphorically and literally. Every winter, I walked to school in the dark, the icy wind biting my face as snow swirled around me. The bleak, concrete cityscape in sub-zero temperatures often felt isolating. But what I remember most is the joy in creating warmth and magic—whether it was decorating for school productions, crafting costumes, or bringing whimsy to the everyday.

I also remember that life wasn't always kind to creativity. Even in the most supportive and creative of families, I somehow internalized the idea that being an artist required not only immense talent (possibly shaped through subtle, in-passing comparisons to high artistic standards) but also came with significant risks. It seemed that pursuing creativity came with the price of hardship and struggle—a life of potential destitution.

Worse, I sensed that being yourself wasn't safe; you had to carefully choose where and when to reveal your true self.

Complicated school friendships, my mum secretly copy-typing banned novels by Pasternak and Bulgakov to share with friends, and stories of persecution faced by outspoken film directors or musicians—all of these shaped my understanding that being authentic was a risk, and that risk was best avoided.

So I chose business, accounting, and IT systems engineering for my studies. And my creativity went into hiding, working underground, in disguise. While it was scaled down, hidden in quiet corners, it was always present. I moved to England straight after graduating, following an attractive job offer. During 15 years of working for law firms, managing mergers and coordinating projects, I still found ways to infuse beauty and creativity into the most unlikely places. I transformed boring legal offices into inviting spaces and wrote playful, heartfelt songs as farewell gifts for colleagues. But those little pockets of creativity weren't enough—I was slowly dying inside, doing work that did nothing for my soul, surrounded by people I had little in common with, in an environment where I couldn't be a full version of myself.

This realization led me to retrain as an interior designer, diving into the world of design, styling, and atmosphere creation. Each project became a canvas for crafting meaningful, heartfelt spaces. I began to reconnect with the essence of who I had always been—someone who creates beautiful atmospheres that touch people's hearts.

## PERSONAL JOURNEYS

"... In my late 30s, I had children, and they gave me permission to amplify all the things I had loved so dearly as a child ..."

In my late 30s, I had children, and they gave me permission to amplify all the things I had loved so dearly as a child. I noticed the beauty in small details again—taking photos to capture fleeting moments, telling stories through imagery, dancing, making costumes, dressing up, and singing. Blogging about the day-to-day of motherhood, infusing it with beauty, helped me appreciate how much joy I could bring into the world when I allowed myself to focus on it.

The next few years were about exploration and growth, but I grew less satisfied with contractual work. Working to someone else's brief no longer felt creatively fulfilling. Just before lockdown, I designed my dream garden and home for our family and realized how much I thrived when I trusted my own vision. That experience reaffirmed that my distinctive style and staying true to my creative instincts were essential for feeling anchored and proud of my work. I also saw how compromise—working to other people's briefs—diluted the overall impact and meaning of what I created.

Then came lockdown—a time of forced pause but also deep reflection. After that, I attended Ali Mapleton's creative retreat, a transformative experience that helped me see what I had never allowed myself to imagine: I am an artist. Not just a writer, a designer, a stylist, or a photographer, but someone whose gift is to create oases of magic and meaning wherever I go.

So, I returned to the essence of the children's book story I wrote nearly 12 years ago. *Flufflin and the Shooting Star* is about something I feel truly passionate about: the idea that every one of us is born with a set of special, unique gifts that are apparent from very early on. It's not just one or two gifts in isolation; it's the crossover of those passions and interests that makes us truly unique. Following those passions and allowing yourself to master them can lead to a meaningful, satisfying life—one surrounded by people who truly understand and value you, doing something you love. Isn't that a beautiful thing?

Today, I embrace that identity fully. I have plans for an entire *Flufflin* series, a theatre production, workshops for schools and nurseries, and a podcast exploring childhood dreams and interests with my guests. My purpose is clear: to bring warmth, beauty, and joy to the hearts and lives of others. Through my books, photography, theatre, workshops, or events, I want kids to grow up knowing it's okay to follow every interest and passion they have. Paraphrasing Elizabeth Gilbert: "The definition of living a meaningful life is living a life led by curiosity," and I intend to let it take me to the most incredible places—bringing my audience along with me!

“... Every one of us is born with a set of special, unique gifts that are apparent from very early on. But it is not just one or two of these gifts in isolation...”



## "I have not done this alone..."

I haven't done this alone. I've surrounded myself with people who feel like my tribe - girlfriends, mentors, and coaches. I moved away from anything that no longer served me.

I worked with Elif Kose, using somatic breathing techniques to unpick the societal and family conditioning that kept me small. I have worked with Ali Mapletoft on mindset and visibility.

I've worked with other coaches, learning about mindset and money, and this work is ongoing.

Understanding yourself is one of the most transformational and empowering gifts you can give yourself.

I felt I needed permission to be my full self, but no one needs to wait until their 50s to understand that their true essence has been there all along.

Just look closely at yourself between the ages of three and nine:

What absorbed you completely?  
What came easily and naturally?  
What could you do for hours on end?

## " Looking back I see how every part of my journey mattered."

Looking back, I see how every part of my journey mattered—the dark winter walks to school, the corporate years, motherhood, and even the quiet moments of doubt. Each step brought me closer to who I am today: someone who creates magical worlds where others can feel inspired, uplifted, and seen.

## "Being seen is one of our deepest and most significant needs. ..."

Being seen is one of our deepest and most significant needs. It's a gift we can give to ourselves, our children, and the people around us—a gift with the power to bring purpose, meaning, and exquisite beauty to everyday life.

Because no matter what storms rage outside, there is always the possibility of creating an oasis of beauty within.



"Understanding yourself is one of the most important, transformational, and empowering gifts you can give yourself."

Credits: Photography: Michelle Hayward, Eclectic Photography. Styling & Costumes: Elensworld.

You can find me on Instagram @elen.agasaints.elensworld or visit my website at [www.elensworld.com](http://www.elensworld.com).  
Flufflin and the Shooting Star is available worldwide on Amazon for kids aged 3-10, with a beautiful message for adults too.



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