

**THE**  
*LADY*  
*BOSS*  
**BOOK**

**A COLLECTION OF INSPIRING STORIES  
FROM FEMALE ENTREPRENEURS**

**HILARY YOUNG**

# Table of Contents

A Note From Hilary

## **Fitness & Health**

Amanda Alappat 2  
Serena Scanzillo 5  
Heather Gunn-Rivera 8  
Hilary Stiebel 11

## **Beauty & Fashion**

Samantha Klein 14  
Jessica Myhr 18  
Marcia Williams 22  
Terina Nicole Hill 25

## **Photographers & Media**

Bethany Rees 29  
Lorraine Daley 33  
Cheldin Barlatt 37

## **Children's Services**

Courtney Tillem-Gessin 40  
Fallyn Buckley 44  
Julie Salvano 47  
Closing Thoughts 50

# Hi! It's so good to have you here!

I've connected with so many amazing and inspiring women over the years. Women who are driven by big ideas and an unyielding passion to pursue their dreams. I'm amazed by their shared drive, success, and resilience.

But it was a journey for all of them to achieve those things.

I've connected with so many amazing and inspiring women over the years. Women who are driven by big ideas and an unyielding passion to pursue their dreams. I'm amazed by their shared drive, success, and resilience.

There's always a reason to put off starting or building a business -- motherhood, finances, the death of a loved one -- but definitely confidence shouldn't be one of them. Women are extremely capable business owners, even though they only make up roughly 40 percent of small business owners in America. Studies have shown that investing in women across the globe has a multiplier effect, since women are more likely to reinvest that money back into their families and communities.

So why are economists more willing to bet on women than women are willing to bet on themselves?

Confidence. Women experience a major crisis of confidence, often feeling like unless they are able to do everything perfectly they aren't capable of doing it. I'm here to call BS. Women are every inch as capable as men (probably moreso!) when it comes to launching and running businesses. I'm hoping that this collection of stories from amazing women entrepreneurs will not only highlight that, but also inspire you to stop doubting and start doing. Because you are amazing.



xo,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alyssa'.

## Amanda Alappat

Pre- and Postpartum Coach and  
Birth Doula

### Amanda Alappat Wellness



<https://amandaalappat.com/>



[https://www.instagram.com/amanda\\_alappat/](https://www.instagram.com/amanda_alappat/)



I first met Amanda when I was 24 years old and my father had gifted me a few sessions with a trainer at my gym. When I was asked which trainer I wanted to workout with, I didn't even hesitate before saying "the tiny girl who is always boxing!"

Amanda and I became fast friends and our relationship soon evolved far beyond a trainer-client dynamic. When Amanda told me she wanted to leave the gym and build her own book of business I supported her 100%. I was amazed by her determination, energy, passion and desire to learn how to build a successful business. I watched in awe as she figured out exactly what she needed to do in order to achieve her dream.

It wasn't always easy, and I was there to listen (and learn!) about the mistakes she had made along the way. But she has become a powerhouse fitness presence in New York City, and now that she is a new mama I am so looking forward to watching her figure out how to expand her business to fit into her new life. If there's one thing I know about Amanda, it's that she is the ultimate fighter and she always comes out on top.

### **What is the name of your company and what do you do?**

My business name is my name: Amanda Alappat Wellness. I am a yoga teacher, personal trainer, kids mindfulness teacher, pre/post natal instructor, blogger, health coach, doula and mama.

### **How long have you been in business?**

I started my own business in 2009 but have been in the health and wellness industry for almost 20 years!

### **How did you decide to launch your own business?**

I was working for a corporate gym and had a steady book of clients. However, I was growing tired of the corporate policies, the high turnover of managers, the emphasis on sales over client success stories and just a general lack of integrity within the company. Every time I walked into the gym, I felt an internal battle because I loved what I was doing but I didn't love the environment that I was doing it in.

So, I decided to individually speak to each one of my clients explaining my desire to go out on my own and every single one of them agreed to follow me. It was a very validating experience to quit my job and the next day continue to do what I love but on my own terms.

### **What challenges did you face in the process of launching your business?**

I launched a business before the boom of social media so I mainly relied on word of mouth and referrals. I had no platform to build off of, nor did I have any idea how to market my business, how much to save for taxes, if I should file as a legal entity-- and all the other aspects that are required to be successful.

I had worked in a corporate gym for over ten years so I never had to consider medical or liability insurance, how to obtain new clients and how to manage expenses. But I trusted that I would be able to figure it all out and was open to learning along the way.

### **Did you feel as though there were resources available to you, specifically as a woman business owner?**

There were resources available but I had to seek them out. Luckily I had a very business savvy friend who took the time to help me get clear on my cash flow and become organized on how much money I was making versus spending. I also researched a lot of the courses offered through the city (NYC) and ended up taking a free month-long course for entrepreneurs that taught us the essentials of starting a business.

I also found Marie Forelo's B-school, and while it doesn't just cater only to women, it did align with my values. And lastly, I read a ton of books on business and finance which helped a lot.

### **Any books you'd recommend?**

#### **These are my favorites:**

Courage: The Art of Living Dangerously by Osho

I Will Teach You to be Rich by Ramit Sethi

Creating Money, Attracting Abundance by Sanaya Roman + Duane Packer

Sacred Success by Barbara Stanny

### **Do you have a mentor?**

I had a yoga mentor for many years that taught me how to teach yoga and also provided me with a solid philosophy on life, but I never had a business mentor. I have relied on the advice of some smart business savvy people but never anyone who took me under their wing.

### **What do you love most about running your own business?**

Living life on my own terms! I get to make the rules, charge what I am worth, create my own hours, adapt my business as I evolve, take off when I want, spend time with my daughter, say no to things that do not align, create abundance by living in alignment with my purpose, being of service to others while making the world a better place all while having the freedom to live my life!

### **What is your least favorite aspect of running your own business?**

No paid maternity leave, no paid time off, no medical insurance covered by an employer. (Author's note: Amen. This is a BIG problem for women business owners, myself included!)

### **What is your best piece of advice for other women who are thinking about launching a business?**

Just do it! You will never be totally ready or prepared. You will never know everything. Sometimes it's just a matter of taking the first step. Trust yourself that you will always be able to figure it out. Trust yourself that you will thrive! Have the confidence that if your business aligns with your values, dreams, gifts and vision, abundance, success, joy and fulfillment are yours for the taking!

# Serena Scanzillo

Personal Fitness Trainer

## SerenaFit

 <https://serenafit.com/>

 <https://www.instagram.com/serenafitstudios/>



Serena and I chat all the time but have actually never met IRL. She's a virtual fitness powerhouse and a co-leader for a group called **The Solopreneur Network**, which is where Serena and I met. I am amazed by Serena's talent, drive, and desire to help other solopreneurs succeed. She is a natural-born leader and I can't wait to see what she does next!

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### What is the name of your company and what do you do?

I'm the founder of SerenaFit and The SerenaFit Virtual Training Studio. My team of coaches and I lead live + interactive workouts in a small group setting via video conference every weekday!

### How long have you been in business?

I've owned SerenaFit for ten years.

### How did you decide to launch your own business?

I decided to detour from my college career track of becoming a news anchor to the wellness industry after I quickly realized how much I loved working with people on improving their lives through fitness. I started in corporate fitness for about a year, then launched SerenaFit in 2007 with a handful of amazing clients who had a ton of success. I was eager to see how far I could take things.

### **What challenges did you face in the process of launching your business?**

Well they say don't quit your day job, so I had 4 other part-time positions during my first three start up years. I worked at J. Crew, as a dog walker (which actually yielded clients!), as a teen center counselor, and also as a high school lacrosse coach during the Spring. Money of course was tight because you're simply not pulling in enough to fund your day-to-day living expenses in the beginning. It takes time to grow so I was pulled in a handful of directions which got tough. You have to really, really want things to work in order to get through those first few years.

### **Did you feel as though there were resources available to you, specifically as a woman business owner?**

Yes and no. I had to seek out help, but things were just showing up at my doorstep. I used SCORE, a free business coaching program that is presented by American Express. I actually still use them from time to time and attend their webinars. I completed a ton of certifications in my earlier years as well. They had resources and communities that helped me get ahead. I also took a few business classes at a local community center to learn the basics and network.

### **Do you have a mentor?**

I have a mastermind group of 3 other women I've been friends with since I first started. They were instrumental in my growth. We all own our companies and chat monthly about challenges and supply recommendations, support + advice. We all followed a business coach years back who served as a mentor in so many ways. I think that so as long as you are connected to somebody in your industry that's further along than you, it'll be enough. I'm a supporter of learning from other vs. viewing them as competition.

### **Are there any good business books you would recommend?**

I'm currently reading "Contagious: Why Things Go Viral". It's very insightful. Next on my list is "The Art of Not Giving a F\*ck"



### **What do you love most about running your own business?**

I like working from home most of the time. But honestly I love knowing that something I personally created is helping change a person's life for the better. If I sit and think about that concept, it motivates me to keep going and reach even more people. It's also a huge testament to the dedication I have to my company and my clients; I'll never not be thinking about them and their wellbeing.

### **What is your least favorite aspect of running your own business?**

There is so much to manage. Because I'm a solopreneur, I don't have a huge full-time team working with me on things everyday. I have a handful of part-time contractors that do work for me on a monthly basis. I have to manage those projects, and plan ahead. That's on top of my day-to-day client sessions, my personal life + partnership obligations. If I'm not careful I can corner myself and feel really stressed out.

### **What is your best piece of advice for other women who are thinking about launching a business?**

Ask yourself how badly you want this. Don't assume anything will be easy and be sure you have funds to cover your daily/monthly expenses for a while. I learned as I went along and did it all during a time where things weren't quite as connected. Launching a business now is much easier than it was ten years ago. You have websites, apps, and coaches by the thousands ready and willing to help you get organized! Keep your head up, stay focused, stay authentic + invest in video marketing.

# Heather Gunn-Rivera

Personal Fitness Trainer

## Grassroots Fitness Project

 <https://www.grassrootsfitnessproject.com/>

 [https://www.instagram.com/heather\\_gunn\\_rivera/](https://www.instagram.com/heather_gunn_rivera/)



I was introduced to Heather through Amanda Alappat, and I love what her business is all about: taking the intimidation factor out of working out and making the gym a more supportive, community experience. Despite her background as a physical trainer, Heather is truly an entrepreneur at heart. In addition to the Grassroots Fitness Project, she has founded 5 other organizations!

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### What is the name of your company and what do you do?

Grassroots Fitness Project. I am the co-founder, current owner and personal trainer. Our approach to fitness is about building a foundation of movements that can be easily accessible to our members, regardless of their fitness level. By focusing on these movements, we can modify and progress our workouts to meet the needs of our members, whether they are looking to improve their general fitness or working on a specific fitness goal. Grassroots Fitness Project exists to be the conduit for your ideal lifestyle and for any fitness project you are working on.

### How long have you been in business?

Over 16 years!

### **How did you decide to launch your own business?**

My husband and I worked as trainers at NY Sports Club back in the day. I started in 2001 and he had started working there many years before that. He was the one who hired me as a trainer--I was just 20-years-old.

He told me that I had to get a certification and build a clientele in 90 days. I ended up building the largest clientele base at that location. In 2003, he was done trying to “make the numbers” every month as a manager, and said he wanted to be a trainer again, but wanted to work himself, and I said, “let’s do it!” I was young and didn’t see failure as something that was scary, because I saw all of the potential in being able to offer our clients a more intimate community environment. Our vision was to provide clients with one-on-one and small group training with an emphasis on building a community.

### **What challenges did you face in the process of launching your business?**

The biggest challenge was having to pay 5 years in back sales tax, 5 years into business. At the time we went into business, sales tax was not collected for personal training, the rules clearly changed, but were not enforced. Our accountant even had no idea! The government unfortunately made us an example. Finances always put a strain on relationships. And working with my husband adds a whole other element of stress--being married and business partners can confuse the “work/love” relationship. I have learned--and am still learning--that it's super important to take time for yourself. To do something that is separate from the business and separate from the family dynamic. It's imperative to work on your own individual identity so that you don't get resentful and or lost in the life you are living. It's also important to take time to just be a couple. No talk about business, or kids. We have a standing date night where we choose something to do that takes us out of the everyday and into the realm of adventure and connection, the place where we met and fell in love in the first place. I could actually write a whole piece on just this topic!

The rest of our challenges were hindsight. We didn’t enter into our business as “business people,” so we didn’t think of scaling. We didn’t think of coming up with a proper business plan. We didn’t think about retirement. We finally have all of that squared away, but I say to this day that had we entered into being entrepreneurs thinking like business people, we probably wouldn’t have done what we did. What we started didn’t make sense on paper. It was coming purely from being passionate about what we did.

**Did you feel as though there were resources available to you, specifically as a woman business owner?**

Not at all. And I know it's not the same, but I'm currently launching an arm of our business strictly for women and I'm super excited! I think it's so important to give women a space to build their own communities.

**Do you have a mentor?**

Mentors were few and far between when we were getting started. Our friends started their business, The Everyday Athlete, in Brooklyn a few months before us, so we saw what was possible through them. I am just now gathering my mentors. I'm opening myself to be taught and learn from strong, smart women.

**Are there any good business books you would recommend?**

I'm not really a business book kind of gal. I don't have much time. But, I'm always open to hearing recommendations. I do follow inspirational leaders that are in the field of health and wellness, however, like Brene Brown, and Dr. Christiane Northrup.

**What do you love most about running your own business?**

That I work for myself, and have the power to create!

**What is your least favorite aspect of running your own business?**

100% it's having to manage employees.

**What is your best piece of advice for other women who are thinking about launching a business?**

There's so much I could say, but my main piece of advice would be to not worry about all the how's, and instead focus on the why's and the what's. The how's will come if your vision is focused, from the heart, and ultimately for the greater good.

My favorite quote is, "jump and your network will appear."

## Hilary Stiebel

Elderberry Syrup Apothecary

### Hilary's Homemade

 <https://www.hilaryshomemade.com/>

 [https://www.instagram.com/hilarys\\_homemade/](https://www.instagram.com/hilarys_homemade/)



Growing up my name wasn't very popular. In fact, as a kid, I would beg my mom to change my name to Heather or Beth, which were much more common names in the 80's and 90's. So, when I meet other Hilary's I always get excited.

I met Hilary Stiebel at a mutual friend's house party nearly a decade ago, and I loved her immediately. Hilary has a very chill vibe, making her easy to talk to and good to have around during a global pandemic. In addition to her day job as a Programs Manager at Philabundance, a wonderful Philly-area nonprofit that aims to combat hunger, Hilary runs her own company, Hilary's Homemade. Through that business, Hilary sells homemade elderberry syrup, which has been shown to be a natural immune booster. With a global pandemic happening right now, and lots of people focused on protecting their immune system, there's no better Lady Boss to introduce you to right now.

### **What is the name of your company and what do you do?**

Hilary's Homemade. I make artisanal organic elderberry syrup

### **How long have you been in business?**

About 1.5 years.

### **How did you decide to launch your own business?**

I had been making my own syrup for a few years before I saw the opportunity and gap in the market. I tested the waters by asking my local FB mom's group if there was interest so I started playing around with it and now it's what I want to do full time.

### **What challenges did you face in the process of launching your business?**

SO many, and still being challenged daily. I get in my own way a lot, but am learning done is better than perfect! Creating a website was a big hurdle for me. I was tempted to hire out, but knew if I spent a little time I could figure out the basics and eventually I will grow the biz to a point I can hire all the help I need. I'm still working on keeping supplies in stock, creating content, and getting into retail stores. Also, this won't come to life on its own so I have to put in the time to build it and ask for help. Yet, there's only 24 hours in a day, I work full-time, have a long commute, and still want to be a present mom/wife/human during the hours that I'm at home, and get in some self-care time. Finding enough time in my day to do it all is a real challenge.

Also, don't get hung up on the trolls. Just keep going and use any negativity that comes your way as motivation to keep working harder.

### **Did you feel as though there were resources available to you, specifically as a woman business owner?**

I do, but I sometimes feel limited by my own capacity and responsibilities. Being clear on what I want, need, and can take on helps me choose which resources to use or take advantage of at any given time.

### **Do you have a mentor?**

I'm working on formalizing a new mentorship relationship, it's one of my top goals for this year. I have a decent network and support, but it's too piecemeal. Some of my favorite online coaches, all whom have written books and/or podcasts, include: Tony Robbins, Rachel Hollis, Tim Ferris, Jenna Kutcher, Jim Fortin, Marie Forleo, Chris Guillebeau, Brene Brown and David Bach. Highly recommend any of them!

### **Books you recommend?**

I read--or, rather, I mostly listened while commuting--a ton in 2019. A few of my fave's: The 4-hour Workweek, The Big Leap, The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People, Girl Stop Apologizing/Girl Wash Your Face, The Power of Habit, Peaceful Parent Happy Kids, Dare to Lead, The Subtle Art of Not Giving a F\*ck, The Snowball, You Are a Badass and The Life-Changing Magic of Tidying Up. More than a few, but these were particularly influential and memorable!

### **What do you love most about running your own business?**

I love being my own boss, watching the business grow, and bringing my dreams to life. I love seeing the potential and then making it happen. And I really love making, sharing and educating people on the benefits of elderberry syrup!

### **What is your least favorite aspect of running your own business?**

The pressure I put on myself to do all the things. Wanting to and knowing that if I focused on it full time I could achieve more of my goals more quickly.

### **What is your best piece of advice for other women who are thinking about launching a business?**

Trust your gut and just do it already! The worst that can happen is you fail and walk away with lessons learned, maybe end up in a bit of debt. I think most of us get in our own way, or fear the financial risk (hi, that's me!).

Ask for help, outsource, and be clear on your goals, vision, mission and values. As a mentor in my 9-5 world, I've been working with my group of mentees to create SMART(IE) goals and you can bet your a\$\$ I'm doubling-down on this in my biz. Strategic, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, Time-bound, Inclusive, and Equitable. Write down your goals then go back and ask if they are SMART. Keep tweaking until you get there.

## Samantha Klein

Professional Makeup Artist

### Samantha Klein Makeup

 <https://www.samanthaklein.com/>

 <https://www.instagram.com/facestylist/>



I first met Samantha when I was planning my wedding in 2013 and needed a makeup artist. She was recommended to me through a mutual friend and I remember when she showed up at my apartment for the trial session, it was like we had always been friends. She was easy to be around and very talented--qualities I always look for in new friends!

In the years since, I've gotten to know Sam very well. She is kind, generous, funny, and one of the most hard working women I know. Every day she's hustlin'. She built a very successful wedding and event makeup business here in Philadelphia, also working on commercials for Comcast (and some of my clients!). But Sam dreamt of having more. In 2016, she decided to move out to LA and reboot her business to focus on more commercial endeavors. And she's done it! It's been so incredible to watch Sam set goals and work towards them and then crush them. She's so talented and I can't wait to see what comes next for this ambitious lady boss.

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### **What is the name of your company and what do you do?**

Samantha Klein Makeup. I work in all areas of the beauty, fashion and entertainment industries as a professional makeup artist and hair stylist. Most of my work is in TV, commercials, and print, but I did weddings and events for years when I was trying to build the commercial side of the business.

### **How long have you been in business?**

Over 15 years! Believe it or not, I have been working within the beauty industry since I was 18 years old.

### **How did you decide to launch your own business?**

Being a creative individual, I had my own vision of the type of jobs I wanted to work on, so I plowed towards that. I buckled down and spent countless hours studying, researching and experimenting through trial and error. I took specialized makeup and hair courses and constantly networked with like-minded creatives.

In the beginning, I started out "testing" (trade for images, which is unpaid) with other professionals in order to build my portfolio and establish trust-worthy relationships. This created an opportunity to prove myself as a professional artist which later led to paid jobs. I was so busy chasing my passion for makeup artistry, one opportunity would create a lead for another and after a while my business started to develop on its own. As it unfolded, it gave me the confidence to keep pursuing makeup artistry as a full-time career.

### **What challenges did you face in the process of launching your business?**

Honestly, I had no idea how to run a business and what it entailed when I was first starting out. The first vendor agreement, contract, negotiation, etc., all of that was a self-taught learning process. It forced me to use my brain, dig deep and find answers. If I wanted to succeed, I had no choice but to figure it out.

There's also no guarantee for work when you're on your own. That being said, there is a ton of pressure as it's all on ME to be a strong business owner--to continually build momentum and grow new business. Running a business in makeup artistry is more than just performing makeup applications which many people don't realize. It includes juggling multiple tasks such as inventory control, negotiation, contracts, accounting, invoicing, collecting payments, email correspondence, marketing, sales, networking, traveling, meetings, education and keeping up to date on the latest advancements within the industry, etc. I didn't fully grasp what it meant to run a business at first. As my business grew I had to figure out how to keep up with curve balls I'd encounter. I'm much better at it now, but it keeps me on my toes for sure!

### **Did you feel as though there were resources available to you, specifically as a woman business owner?**

When I started out, I wasn't aware of specific resources available for women in business. To me a business is a business and can be run by anyone, regardless of gender. Of course it was super overwhelming when I first started landing gigs and "business" started to happen, but it never came down to I can't do this because I'm a woman.

### **Do you have a mentor?**

Yes, I had a few key people that made a major impact on my career. One is photographer, Joe Edelman, who helped me to develop my portfolio and to believe in my artistry and self at times when I didn't. I'm super hard on myself.

Also, an exceptional makeup artist, Karen Lewis, who I refer to as my "Makeup Mom" really took me under her wing and taught me the ropes of being a strong business woman. Joe and Karen helped me grow immensely, both personally and professionally. I'm eternally grateful for their support.

### **Are there any good business books you would recommend?**

I've been reading the book "You are a Badass" and " You are a Badass at Making Money" by Jen Sincero. These motivational books can apply to anyone focusing to maximize their full potential and self-worth. If you don't believe in yourself or your business, why would others?

### **What do you love most about running your own business?**

I love that I'm constantly learning and growing. Also, it pushes me out of my comfort zone in the best way possible. They don't call it risky business for nothing!

### **What is your least favorite aspect of running your own business?**

Work/Life balance. My business means being on-call 24/7. It's EAT, SLEEP, MAKEUP. Even when I may have a day "off" there's always something else to do and it's hard to turn my business-mind off. I'm constantly working or networking in order to drum up future business because at times there are lulls. The business definitely ebbs and flows and that can be taxing.

### **What is your best piece of advice for other women who are thinking about launching a business?**

Go for it and don't second guess yourself! Be 100% committed. No one can predict the roadblocks you may hit along the way, but you will be able to figure it out with persistence, resilience, and determination. You must learn from your failures in order to grow. Also, try not to take things personally when dealing with business relationships and, most important, ALWAYS BELIEVE IN YOURSELF!!

If you're thinking about a career in makeup know this: Learning business is similar to learning a new language. Every artist should be extremely well-rounded and have a deep knowledge for skin care, skin types, product knowledge, color theory, set-etiquette, professionalism and more. Over the years, I continually evolve in my craft and apply new skill sets to work as efficiently as possible. I strive to stay up to date and learn about new products, technology, and innovations in my industry. Business is all about being a sponge, being on top of your game and being able to apply the knowledge you gain as you go. Be patient, the more familiar you are with business terms and practices, the more confidence you will gain and the easier it becomes.

## Jessica Myhr

Personal Stylist and Image Consultant

### Inherent Style

 <http://www.inherentstyle.com/>

 <https://www.instagram.com/inherentstyle/>



I met Jessica Myhr right after a big snow storm here in Philly when I was pregnant with my youngest child, which means it was either December 2017, or January 2018. Jess had recently moved to the Philadelphia area from New York City and we were put in touch by a mutual friend (and fellow Lady Boss!), Kelsey Fox Bennett Boyd. As someone who has successfully made the move from NYC to Philly myself, friends often see me as being the welcoming committee for their friends making the move--and I am happy to play that role. It's a great way to meet new people and reminisce about my time in New York, while also talking up all the things I love about the place I now call home.

But I was a little nervous to meet Jess, because she was an actress and a style maven and I really wanted to impress her with my outfit. So of course, that morning when I looked in my closet full of clothes I felt like I had nothing to wear! The problem was that although my life and body (two kids!) had changed since my years in NYC, I still felt edgy and cool on the inside even if how I was presenting myself on the outside was more about comfort and efficiency. I showed up to our brunch together feeling more than a little self-conscious, but Jess immediately made me feel comfortable. She made me feel understood and seen, because as she explained her business, Inherent Style, to me I felt like I was her ideal client. And I also came to realize that afternoon that she understood her clients so intimately because she's experienced all those complicated feelings about life and transitions herself.

Needless to say, in addition to striking up a wonderful friendship that afternoon, Jess and I also have created a beautiful business partnership. I've been helping her to navigate a rebrand and figure out how to expand her offerings, and she has helped me clean out my closet, which in turn, has left me feeling inspired and more connected to myself, something I really hadn't felt since having kids. Jess has so much more to offer people than just making them look pretty; she really has a talent for helping you figure out where you lost your way and get you back on track to becoming your best self.

### **What is the name of your company (or companies) and what do you do?**

Inherent Style is my company name. I wanted to create a name that celebrated authentic style from within each person, which is why my tagline is: "A New You From the Inside Out." I am an image consultant, wardrobe stylist and actress.

### **How long have you been in business?**

I started doing image consulting for friends, family and close colleagues -- personal shopping, color analysis, and style work-- right after I left graduate school at Rutgers University just to make some extra money on the side and have fun while doing it. "Inherent Style" officially formed in 2010. I developed a name, logo, business website, business cards, etc. and having all of that in place made my business feel very real - not a side hustle.

### **How did you decide to launch your own business?**

I never thought I would have my own business. I had worked for other small companies before, and didn't really want the hassle. But I got laid off from a creative branding manager job that I loved, and needed to make income quickly - so I thought I would give it a go, doing my image consulting work as much as possible. I did well enough, but it would take me another 3-4 years to actually commit to doing Inherent Style full time, with no other part time jobs, probably because I was scared to make the leap to being fully self-employed.

### **What challenges did you face in the process of launching your business?**

I was pretty lucky. My business doesn't have a lot of overhead costs - I don't need a space to work out of, as I meet people at their wardrobes, in retail or online. Registering my trademark was a bit stressful because there was someone in LA that had a similar name. Mostly, it was facing my self-doubt that I could do this full-time and make enough money to earn a living.

## Did you feel as though there were resources available to you, specifically as a woman business owner?

I felt like I had to go back to school. I was good at my business, but not good at business in general. I didn't have a 5-year plan, I didn't know how to use demographics or target specific clients. I had learned a lot already from different companies I had worked for...but to do it on my own felt overwhelming. Especially as a woman. No one really understood my business or why I even wanted to do it.

My elevator pitch was often explaining to people what an image consultant even does. I started doing research on popular business books at the time and how freelancers make a living. There were two resources that really helped with my business's clarity and infrastructure:

- My elevator pitch was often explaining to people what an image consultant even does. I started doing research on popular business books at the time and how freelancers make a living. There were two resources that really helped with my business's clarity and infrastructure:  
Marie Forleo's B School - I went through this course with a couple of friends that were entrepreneurial minded. I found it so helpful in identifying specifically who my client was, and what I wanted to put out into the world, what services I wanted to offer and my general company aesthetic.
- I was working at Columbia University at the time, in between jobs - and I found out about their Small Business Development Center. I qualified to be part of their small business program and I attended meetings learning about the various aspects of how to develop and run a business. They were instrumental in connecting me with lawyers that would get my trademark officially registered and my LLC paperwork finished all pro bono. I was so grateful to have this legal support.

## Do you have a mentor?

I wouldn't say I had one specific mentor, but learned from all the women around me. I had strong female allies that were also entrepreneurs. One of my dear friends, Erin Williams, launched her own make-up and skincare company Erin's Faces around the same time as me. We have always supported each other's businesses, and have been good sounding boards for each other. Also, good role models - many of my bosses, managers and employers at the companies I worked for were women. In fact, I wouldn't be here today without all the badass women in my life.

### **Books you recommend?**

I don't have one book that I would recommend above all others. Different books are valuable at different times. If you are just beginning in business, I recommend Simon Sinek's "Start with Why." I am a big fan of Seth Godin and Brené Brown. I think the more you read, the better. I always have a stack of business books I'm trying to tackle. On my desk now is "Dare to Lead" by Brené Brown, "Grit" by Angela Duckworth, and "The Talent Code" by Daniel Coyle.

### **What do you love most about running your own business?**

The flexibility of making my own hours. Changing people's lives one person at a time. I love working with my clients. The knowledge that I created my business and unique methodology around a need I saw in the community - for individuals to reveal who they authentically are from the inside out.

### **What is your least favorite aspect of running your own business?**

Ha! Scheduling and accounting. Being a creative person it's hard sticking to a routine and schedule, time management is often my struggle. Anything involving numbers, especially doing taxes, is something I do not enjoy!

### **What is your best piece of advice for other women who are thinking about launching a business?**

Surround yourself with like-minded individuals who believe in what you are doing and will be supportive and honest. Do as much research as you can on your industry, and celebrate how you are different. Honor what makes you stand out from the crowd. And finally, know that you will never be truly ready. I waited years to go full-time with my business until I felt it was "safe" to do so. I would have probably been a lot happier and not juggling so much for so many years if I had just jumped into the unknown. Having your own business means having the ability to take risks!

## Marcia Williams

Professional Makeup Artist

### Embellish Beauty

 <https://embellishbeauty.store/>

 <https://www.instagram.com/makeupbyembellish/>



I met Marcia Williams at a networking event for women last winter. Some of the women who had product-based businesses had set up tables to showcase their inventory and I couldn't help but notice that women were crowded around Marcia's table more than any other in the room. I went over to check out what everyone was looking at and immediately understood why there was a crowd; Marcia makes beautiful makeup in vibrant colors that are flattering for every skin type.

As a sucker for a bright lip, I was immediately drawn to her Relentless Liquid Lipstick, which I not only bought on the spot, but also wore for the rest of the day. To this day, every time I put on Marcia's lipstick I get a ton of positive feedback on the color. It is the perfect blend of red and orange, which compliments my skin tone perfectly. I've become a serious fangirl of Marcia's, and can't sing her praises enough. If you need a little pick me up, check out Marcia's website, Embellish Beauty, to take her quiz and find your perfect lip color. You won't regret it!



### **What is the name of your company (or companies) and what do you do?**

The name of my company is Embellish Beauty Concepts, LLC. I launched this company to provide on location luxury experience of hair and makeup to affluent women, brides, etc.

Since the pandemic, I'm focused more on reinventing myself and my business by zooming in on creating new products and adding new colors. My mission is to create a superb formula for all women. We are also launching a Beauty App that will have monthly memberships that offer how to's and live shows introducing women entrepreneurs with their own products featured in our App boutique, education, etc.

### **How long have you been in business?**

I have been in business for myself since 2010. At the time of launch, I was newly married with kids. I had my 9 year-old son (from a previous relationship) and my infant daughter at the time. I knew the moment I had my daughter Karly that I could not go back to salon life, which consists working hours on end and missing out on significant life moments. Before meeting my husband, I was a single mom to my now 22 year-old son, and I had spent countless hours in the salon building a strong book of clients. I did it to help give my son the best possible life, but in doing so, I missed out on many years of family functions due to salon hours.

### **How did you decide to launch your own business?**

I have always been someone that hated the restrictions put on you when working for someone else. I understood early on that it is very freeing to create something that belongs to you.

### **What challenges did you face in the process of launching your business?**

The challenges I faced was raising money and multiplying my money. It is extremely difficult raising capital in the beauty space.

### **Did you feel as though there were resources available to you, specifically as a woman business owner?**

I did not feel as though there was many resources when I started years ago. However, I believe there has been a shift in e-commerce in which many more opportunities will arise for women in business now.

### **Do you have a mentor?**

I have 2 mentors and I strongly recommend having one to help push you and hold you accountable.

### **Books you recommend?**

The books I recommend are Profit First by Mike Michalowicz, Contagious; Why things Catch On by Jonah Berger, The Power of Vulnerability by Brene Brown, and The 10 X Rule by Grant Cardone.

### **What do you love most about running your own business?**

I love running my own business because it gives me flexibility to spend time with my family. It allows me to spend some intimate time doing self-improvement and development on my own terms.

### **What is your least favorite aspect of running your own business?**

My absolute least favorite part of the business is understanding financial statements. Thank God for my husband who has a degree in accounting! He manages cash flow and produces financial projections. However, I still had to learn accounting terms like "working capital" and "accumulated depreciation." Needless to say, it's very important as a woman owned business that we know how to fiscally operate.

### **What is your best piece of advice for other women who are thinking about launching a business?**

The greatest tragedy in life is to die and go to heaven with your dream inside of you. The world is your oyster. Go for it! When you get in the thick of it, never give up. It's hard to push through sometimes. It's easy to fold, meaning give up and fall apart at the seams. Let your experiences teach you how to level up!

## Terina Nicole Hill

Fashion and Accessories Designer

### Tereina Nicole Design Studio

 <https://www.terinanicole.com/>

 <https://www.instagram.com/theterinanicole/>



When I was about 6-months pregnant with my second child, I was contacted by Terina and her co-founder of DIY MakersCon, Nneka, to become a participant in a panel they were putting together about branding and PR. Over the course of our exchanges, we realized that we had a lot in common, namely that in addition to running a business, she had just had her second child and I was not far behind her.

When we finally met at DIY MakersCon in September 2018, I was so happy to talk to her about how hard it was to balance keeping a business afloat with a newborn. It was also nice to know that I wasn't the only one who brought a breast pump to the conference. I'm so impressed by what she's been able to build and what she continues to build. She's a true entrepreneur---a constant stream of great ideas that she's able to execute.

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### **What is the name of your company (or companies) and what do you do?**

I own Jypsea Leathergoods, a line of handcrafted eco-friendly handbags, home decor and jewelry. I am also the owner of the Fashion Design Center of South Jersey, a brand new makerspace for fashion enthusiasts.

### **How long have you been in business?**

Jypsea initially launched in 2002 when I was still in college. It received some press and wholesale orders but then was shelved because my life couldn't sustain it after graduation. I had gotten married and was expecting my first child, so the business stayed on the back burner for a while.

### **How did you decide to launch your own business?**

I'm a serial entrepreneur. I'll launch a new biz in a minute! When I launched Jypsea Leathergoods, I was already running my own little vintage boutique and attending the Fashion Institute of Technology where I was studying Accessory Design. While the store was slow I would practice what I was learning in school, designing leather handbags. And customers were as interested in my designs as they were in the vintage I was selling, so I decided to begin selling my bags in my store. Not long after, I got a wholesale order from a boutique and my new business officially began! But running a store, going to college full-time and then sewing all night to fulfill wholesale orders was too much for me. I shut it down after 6 months vowing to re-open after I graduated college.

### **What challenges did you face in the process of launching your business?**

I didn't re-open directly following graduation because I gave birth to my 1st born 2 weeks after I graduated. It was 2004 and I was a mother and a wife and a new home owner, and because I am a serial entrepreneur, I launched another business that was easier to manage than trying to sew with a baby on my hip! I created a line of all-natural body spa treatments. It was easier for me to mix herbs, butters and oils with the baby. I got it into a dozen stores and sold it from my website. I was also on Etsy, when it was brand new. I ran this business for 3 years before selling it. I missed designing handbags and really had no deep passion for the spa industry.

### **Did you feel as though there were resources available to you, specifically as a woman business owner?**

Back then I felt very alone. Being a solopreneur or mompreneur weren't concepts that people were familiar with yet. My friends thought I was a weirdo. My husband at the time wanted me to "get a real job." And having no other examples of successful one-woman businesses didn't help, so I eventually gave in, despite the business being successful, and went back to designing handbags and footwear in NYC's corporate fashion industry which is the work I did while pursuing my degree.

### **Do you have a mentor?**

No. I've never had a mentor but as time went by more and more women were choosing to be self-employed and I now have peers that I bounce ideas off of, collaborate with or just get inspiration from.

### **Books you recommend?**

The E-Myth by Micheal E. Gerber, Crushing it by Gary V., The 50th Law by Robert Green.

### **What do you love most about running your own business?**

Now I have my 2nd child. He's 18-months-old and my daughter is now 15. Being able to be active in her busy life, at her school, as her Girls Scouts Troop Leader, and to be able to homeschool my baby boy while balancing my businesses feels great! My children are my priority and working full-time for others has never worked for me because corporate jobs have never respected my priorities as a mother.

### **What is your least favorite aspect of running your own business?**

The hardest part is getting in front of new audiences. I was vending a bit and that sucks. Lots of wear and tear on my car, the labor of setting up a booth and breaking down, and you never know when a rainstorm will shut you down flushing the money you spent to be there down the drain BUT when it works, it's a great way to meet new people and for them to discover something they love. The feedback is invaluable and the sales can be really good too. You have to take the good with the bad in business.

### **What is your best piece of advice for other women who are thinking about launching a business?**

Do it part-time for a while. Don't just jump into it because you hate your job. Figure out if you really like doing ALL jobs, not just the fun stuff, to run your business, because you will wear all hats for a little while until you can afford to outsource. From social media, to shipping, to pitching to the press and retailers, to sourcing new zippers and leather, to updating the website--you name it, I do it!

What I will say though, is Fiverr will be your best friend. Small research jobs or cute marketing videos can be designed by an expert for just a few dollars so don't get too bogged down with things you aren't good at. Just have a good awareness of how all parts of your business work. Also, know when it's time to end it and move on. Stay open to new opportunities as well. I always wanted to open a fashion design school to give back to the community and when a community development program started renovating old, abandoned commercial spaces in Camden I got the opportunity to lease a beautiful new space because I was ready and open to it. Stay ready so you don't have to get ready!

For more insights from Terina, follow her on Instagram @theterinanicole or visit her website [www.terinanicole.com](http://www.terinanicole.com).

# Bethany Rees

Photographer-Weddings and Live Music Events

## DOLA Photography

 <https://www.dolaphoto.com/>

 <https://www.instagram.com/dolaphoto/>



When I first met Bethany I was impressed with how she never really allowed herself to be put in any particular box. She was a scientist at a prominent company in Delaware and loved going to music and art festivals, like Burning Man, Outside Lands and Firefly. I watched her slowly explore her more creative side until eventually she settled on photography. She was not only passionate about pursuing a photography career, she was also quite talented.

Fast--forward to 2017 and Bethany's full-time career as a live music and wedding photographer. She launched DOLA Photography in 2012 and never looked back. While she's no longer working as a scientist, she approaches each new project with the same thoughtful curiosity and precision that she brought to her work in the lab. It's been amazing to watch her transition into her new role as a creative entrepreneur, and is a great inspiration to anyone who is looking to make a radical career change.

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### **What is the name of your company and what do you do?**

DOLA Photography - I am a live music, wedding and lifestyle photographer

### **How long have you been in business?**

I officially formed my LLC in March 2012, so going on 6 years!

### **How did you decide to launch your own business?**

My degree is in biochemistry and I was working in a lab doing research when I started my photography business on the side. I know that it seems like such an unlikely leap to go from being a scientist to being a photographer, but for me there are actually a lot of similarities. First, in order to be a good scientist you have to be creative, I think scientists just use their creativity in a different way than people traditionally think. Einstein even said it himself, "creativity is intelligence having fun." Second, I think all scientists get into the field because they want to have a positive impact on the other people. Every single person in the world is touched by science and that's one of the reasons I love it so much. Photography is very similar to me because I can have a positive impact on someone else, except that impact is direct and immediate, felt as soon as I deliver photos to a client that they love. With science you might not see the impact of the work that you are doing for 10+ years! There is nothing better than photographing someone's wedding, delivering their photos and seeing the joy it brings them when they are able to re-live such a happy day over and over. The same goes for shooting a music festival, which is another amazingly joyous occasion, and when people see your photos after it helps them re-live a fun moment. This is why I truly love my work, so there was no turning back once I got a taste of that.

### **What challenges did you face in the process of launching your business?**

Having enough time to get everything done. I was doing photography on the side for years while I still had a full-time job, which was smart because it gave me the ability to slowly build up my business without having to worry about how much income I was making, but it was also very difficult because you can only take on so much when you're doing that. It's also not sustainable to work that much in the long term—eventually something's got to give—so I'm happy to just be focused on photography right now. I actually get to enjoy having free time!



### **Did you feel as though there were resources available to you, specifically as a woman business owner?**

Not any that I know of but I wish there was!

### **Do you have a mentor?**

I'm so grateful for the opportunities I've had to learn from a few incredible photographers. I took a fantastic class at the International Center of Photography in NYC this summer with John Dolan and Holger Thoss. I also attended a workshop with Jose Villa in Mexico last year. They are some of the best photographers in the country, and what I learned from each was very different, but both have helped shape my photography style. (Note: Both John Dolan and Jose Villa have made Harper's Bazaar's Best Wedding Photographers List)

### **Books you recommend?**

I love the Origin of Inspiration by Samuel Adoquei. I go back and read parts of it over and over whenever I'm feeling stuck. The author is the stepfather of Julian Casablancas who is the lead singer of The Strokes. I photographed their concert at Governors Ball Music Festival a few years ago in NYC and was very struck by his performance so I did some googling afterwards and came across the book.

### **What do you love most about running your own business?**

Being able to work with so many other awesome creatives! There are so many talented people in the Philly/ NYC area and it's fun working on events and projects together. I also love having creative control and the ability to develop my own artistic vision. If I want my website to look a certain way, or if I want to shoot something in a certain way, I can. It's really refreshing to be able to make your own decisions and stay true to your style.

### **What is your least favorite aspect of running your own business?**

A lot of my shoots take place on the weekend, which is great because it means that I can grocery shop at 10am on a Tuesday when no one else is around, but it can also be very isolating when most of your friends work a more traditional 9-5 schedule during the week. It's hard when you have to miss seeing family or going to a party because you're just not on the same schedule as others!

**What is your best piece of advice for other women who are thinking about launching a business?**

Become friends with others who have already done it and ask them lots of questions. It's important to set yourself up for success by learning from what they have done, which to me mostly means learning from their mistakes so you don't make the same ones. It's not easy launching a business by yourself and because of that I also think it's important to outsource things that you're not good at. You only have so many hours in a day so spend your time wisely.

## Lorraine Daley

Photographer-Portraits

### Lorraine Daley Photography

 <https://www.lorrainedaley.com/>

 <https://www.instagram.com/lorrainedaley/>



Lorraine and I first met at a friend's wedding. She was not attending as a guest, however; she, along with her husband Greg, was the wedding photographer. Since my husband and I were planning a wedding at the time, I was paying close attention to how they approached their work and I also just thought they looked pretty damn cool. We ended up hiring Lorraine (and Greg) to be our wedding photographers and were so pleasantly surprised to become friendly with them both in the process. They are both so warm and friendly, which really comes through in their work.

In 2014 Lorraine had a baby girl, Adriana, and took a break from professional photography. But her talent cannot be denied, and she couldn't stay away from photography for too long. In 2018, Lorraine decided to rebrand her photography business, moving away from weddings and into portrait services. She brings the same warmth and intimacy to her portraits as she did her wedding photos and I can't wait to be in front of her camera again soon!

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### **What is the name of your company and what do you do?**

I am a Lorraine Daley and I own a portrait and fashion photography business based in downtown Philadelphia.

### **How long have you been in business?**

I've been in business for 15 years. I did weddings for 8 years, took a couple years off to raise my daughter and recently have made the transition to portraits full-time this past September when my daughter, Adriana, went to pre-school.

We really loved shooting weddings, but we were easily working 60+ hours a week, since my husband also runs a business. When we got pregnant, I knew this was not possible to maintain. We decided to close the studio when I was 7 1/2 months pregnant. I had wanted to be with my child full time for a couple years, so we were fortunate enough to be able to do that.

When Adriana was 2, I shot some weddings for other studios and few for myself, but it very physically/psychologically demanding. I also knew that putting energy into growing a wedding business would take energy and I really was excited about the potential of the portrait business. I wanted to give it my all. And so I rebranded and relaunched the business.

I always knew I would get back to photography, after having Adriana. It is my passion, my art and fulfills my need to create. It is still very challenging to make it work with being a mom, but both are so rewarding, that you just find a way. Thankfully, I have a great partner that supports my dreams.

### **How did you decide to launch your own business?**

After college I worked in finance which was not a good fit for my personality. I then worked in IT, which I really liked, but the tech bust happened and I was left at a crossroad. During this time, someone gave me a camera and I knew immediately I wanted to become a pro. Thanks to my husband, he got me my first client and we just ran with it.

### **What challenges did you face in the process of launching your business?**

Initial challenges of launching my business were getting clients on a limited budget. You don't really have much of a marketing budget, so you have to be creative about gaining the trust of potential clients.

### **Did you feel as though there were resources available to you, specifically as a woman business owner?**

There are tons of resources for a women owned business, but I have only recently taken advantage of them. Women's groups have proven invaluable to me personally and professionally, such as Ellevate, The Walnut Club, and NAWBO.

### **Do you have a mentor?**

I do have a mentor. She is also a photographer and she has an online course on how to run a portrait business. She teaches everything from lighting to posing to marketing, sales, design etc. I am eternally grateful for having found her, as I think making the transition from one genre of photography to another has had its challenges and without her guidance, I would've felt completely lost.

### **Are there any good business books you would recommend?**

How to Win Friends and Influence People by Dale Carnegie, The Four Hour Workweek by Tim Ferris, Think and Grow Rich by Napoleon Hill, and The War of Art: Break Through the Blocks and Win Your Inner Creative Battles by Steven Pressfield.

### **What do you love most about running your own business?**

I love making my own schedule. I love being fully responsible for the success or failures of my business. I love the marriage of art and commerce and learning how to make it work. And I love how the challenges force you to grow personally. There is nothing like being your own boss!

### **What is your least favorite aspect of running your own business?**

I find it difficult to wear so many hats. Because I am rebranding, it is a bit like starting from scratch: new portfolio, new marketing materials, new clients. Some days I just don't feel like dealing with all the aspects of making it work, but if I don't do it, no one else will.

I have also found it extremely challenging to be a mom and run my own business. The work day is so short, as I leave to pick up my daughter from school at 2:20. I used to work until 6 or 7 every night before having her, so I really need to stay extremely focused now.

**What is your best piece of advice for other women who are thinking about launching a business?**

It is critical that you have a good accountant. I had poor advice from one, and it really hurt my bottom line.

Learn from your mistakes--they are not really mistakes, they are lessons. And know that there will be a lot of them. If you drop the ball, own it. Drop the blame game and take full responsibility for everything. It is up to you!

Keep connected with other business owners. Join women's groups. You need peers and mentors you can go to for advice and emotional support. It can be a lonely climb, but it is so worth it to be the captain of your own ship!

Lastly, infuse what you do with love. Be the positive force in your business and know you are there to serve your customers, so check your ego and always do your best.

## Cheldin Barlatt

Media and Branding Entrepreneur

### This Is It TV

 <https://thisisittv.com/>

 <https://www.instagram.com/thisisittv/>



I first connected with Cheldin Barlatt Rumer in a women's group on Facebook, and she invited me to be a guest on her online talk show, "This Is It TV." I wasn't sure what to expect, or how to prepare and I was admittedly frazzled when, on the day of the interview, there was lots of rain. Despite showing up with frizzy hair, Cheldin was warm, inviting, reassuring, and lovely. She also happens to be incredibly smart, driven, and passionate about helping people grow their businesses. I had a wonderful conversation with Cheldin about content on her show, and wanted to return the favor by featuring her as one of the Lady Boss' that I love!

Part of what I think is so incredible about Cheldin's story is that she was already running a successful business when she decided to pursue a new passion, which is a testament to the fact that you don't ever have to let yourself be defined in just one way.

### **What is the name of your company (or companies) and what do you do?**

I am the Executive Producer & Host of This is it TV, a daily digital talk show that celebrates the entrepreneurial sprint, while giving our audience a daily dose of lifestyle news. I give entrepreneurs and small business owners a platform to no longer whisper their wishes, but SCREAM their dream.

### **How long have you been in business?**

This is it TV was created in 2015.

### **How did you decide to launch your own business?**

I originally started a grass-roots PR & marketing agency called i-g creative, which I am still the CEO of the company. I would often prep my clients for interviews by recording them and interviewing them before going live. I realized that this was my true passion and in 2015 started This is it TV.

### **What challenges did you face in the process of launching your business?**

I was late to the game in creating a digital series because by 2015 everyone was already established and on YouTube. It took me a few years to find my niche in the space and eventually found the mission of This Is It TV, which is Scream Your Dream. I want to help as many entrepreneurs and small business owners share their story and give them the confidence to scream their dream.

### **Did you feel as though there were resources available to you, specifically as a woman business owner?**

I already had an extensive network of connections in the Philadelphia area through my previous business. However, there are such amazing women's groups that support other like-minded female entrepreneurs like myself. There is a large sense of community in this area and I have met a variety of women who have helped guide me and my business in the right direction.

### **Do you have a mentor?**

My mother Ada!

### **Books you recommend?**

Becoming by Michelle Obama.



### **What do you love most about running your own business?**

I love creating things from the ground up and giving a platform to people who didn't always have one available to them. I found a need for entrepreneurs to have a community and voice and created this outlet for them. Interviewing interesting people everyday is probably my favorite part.

### **What is your least favorite aspect of running your own business?**

My least favorite part is the administrative business tasks. Running a business is difficult and I am naturally creative. The administration side of things did not come easy to me, but with trial and error I have become proficient.

### **What is your best piece of advice for other women who are thinking about launching a business?**

I always say I know what I know, but also know what I don't know. What I mean by this statement is that I understand when I need to ask for help when I am not good at something. Seek out advisors and find your tribe of people who have the knowledge in areas/disciplines that you lack knowledge in.

## Courtney Tillem-Gessin

Speech Therapist

### Communication Clubhouse

 <http://www.commclubnyc.com/>



Courtney is one of my oldest and dearest friends. We grew up together, which means we've gone from having sleepovers and talking about boys, to launching businesses and having daughters of our own (who have become friends!). Courtney has a pretty incredible professional story that started back when we were in high school. Courtney was recommended by the principal of our school to work with a young woman who had experienced a stroke and lost much of her speech function. Their work together sparked something for Courtney, and she pursued a degree in speech therapy in college.

I've watched her chase this dream since we were 18, and it's been so incredible to not only watch her achieve her goals, but surpass them. She's built a warm, wonderful speech center in Manhattan called Communication Clubhouse. She works with children of all ages, specializing in helping kids develop confident communication and social skills.

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### **What is the name of your company and what do you do?**

I am the proud owner of Communication Clubhouse, a boutique speech, language, and learning center in Manhattan. I am trained as a speech-language pathologist, specializing in the development of effective communication skills, including articulation of sounds, conversation skills, verbal expression, comprehension, social skills, and academic readiness. I work with children, parents, and teachers to provide strategies and direct instruction to establish and enhance confidence and skills.

### **How long have you been in business?**

Communication Clubhouse, LLC opened its doors in Manhattan in 2012. Before the founding of this space, I was a traveling clinician. Through my work in the NYC Early Intervention program, consulting and providing therapy to children within preschools and elementary schools around the city, working with children and families in their NYC homes, and helping to launch a special needs middle school, I met so many wonderful people who ended up supporting me when I chose to take my career to the next level.

### **How did you decide to launch your own business?**

Launching my own business was a bit of an organic decision. I was starting to burn out traveling between clients, making all those home visits and the dream of having my own space was the springboard that launched Communication Clubhouse into reality. The fact that my therapeutic toys and books were overtaking my apartment, probably factored in there too! I would often find myself daydreaming of what my “office” would look like: dozens of books, a cozy tent, tons of arts and crafts supplies, games and toys organized just so, and a huge dry-erase white board. Plus, with all the time I could save by having kids come to me instead of jetting all over the city meant that I would actually be able to help more children in the long run.

### **What challenges did you face in the process of launching your business?**

I wear all the hats for the business, which is a challenge I gladly accept. My primary role as educator and therapist sits atop my other roles as secretary, schedule coordinator, invoice specialist, and clean up crew! I have been the most resistant to the role of billing, however, which involves creating, sending, and following up on invoices. Because I find so much enjoyment in the hands-on, clinical component of my job, I sort of push this less desirable aspect to the wayside. A wise teacher once preached, “Don’t fight it, just accept it.” Though his advice was related to trigonometry, it rings true in many circumstances. I’m working on accepting the parts of business ownership that are less joyful for me.

### **Did you feel as though there were resources available to you, specifically as a woman business owner?**

I've been lucky to have both of my mothers-in-law serve as resources for me throughout the process, as they both achieved independent success in business. Rona (my husband's mother) is a jewelry designer and manufacturer and Marilyn (my husband's stepmother) is a property manager, and they both understand the experience of starting, and running, your own business. Just recently, Marilyn was recounting how her own mother, upon hearing about her daughter's new job, asked: "So, how are they treating you? How are they paying you?" And the response, of course, was, "There is no 'they!' It's me!"

I have to admit that my husband, Chad, has been an invaluable resource for me, supporting me in all the aspects of the job that are outside my areas of expertise. There would be no Communication Clubhouse without his loving support and business acumen. Additionally, the mentorship of all the dedicated educational professionals who guided me throughout the years has served as a deep resource of confidence.

### **Do you have a mentor?**

I find daily mentorship in the huge online community of Speech-Language Pathologists, teachers, and therapists. By sharing creative therapy ideas, motivational quotes, resources and success stories, I feel continuously connected and inspired.

### **Books you recommend?**

I constantly return to *How to Talk so Kids Will Listen and Listen so Kids Will Talk*, by Adele Fabre and Elaine Mazlish. I think their message is as profound now as it was when the book was published 30+ years ago. It all comes down to connection and empathy. Get down on the same level as your child, look them in the eye, and listen! Keep your expectations in check. As a parent of an almost 4-year-old girl, I have found so many excellent strategies in the follow up book, *How to Talk so Little Kids Will Listen...* written by Adele Faber's daughter and her childhood friend, Joanna Fabre and Julie King. These lessons will not only improve your communication skills with your children, but will help you take a closer look at your interpersonal communication skills in general.

### **What do you love most about running your own business?**

I love being able to make my own schedule! I am so grateful for the special mornings I get to share with my daughter as well as the time I carve out for fitness (I love Pilates, strength training, yoga, and I've recently

taken up running). I've also tremendously enjoyed creating the physical space that is Communication Clubhouse, curating all the toys, books, and furniture in my own style.

**What is your least favorite aspect of running your own business?**

Due to the fact that my business is just me, it's hard having to turn potential clients away because I have no time left in my schedule.

**What is your best piece of advice for other women who are thinking about launching a business?**

I feel like I'm talking to myself right now, as I'm getting ready to take Communication Clubhouse to the next level (stay tuned!). For me, the word "launch" connotes a powerful action. In fact, one of the definitions for this verb is: to burst out boldly into action. Wow, right!? To all you women out there thinking about LAUNCHING a business, I say, spread your wings and fly! If not you, then who?!

## Fallyn Buckley

Parent and Child Coach

### Mindful Kids Coaching

 <https://www.mindfulkidscoaching.com/>

 <https://www.instagram.com/mindfulkidscoaching/>



Fallyn was my roommate in college and general partner-in-crime. When we graduated, Fallyn debated going to law school, but instead followed her heart and moved out to San Francisco, where she found a job as a nanny to a young boy on the autism spectrum. It was through her work with him that Fallyn discovered her love of working with children. She went back to graduate school to get a Master's in Social Work and has now been working with children in a professional capacity for over 10 years.

Although Fallyn serves as a social worker for an elementary school district in the San Francisco area, she is a serial entrepreneur at heart. So it's no surprise that in addition to her full-time job, Fallyn also runs a successful coaching business for children and parents. Mindful Kids Coaching focuses on social emotional learning, providing people with the tools they need for greater self-control, building stronger relationships, and establishing a mind-body connection. Fallyn has helped me on my own parenting journey over the years, and I have been grateful for the wisdom, insight and guidance she has provided my family.

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### **What is the name of your company and what do you do?**

Mindful Kids Coaching. I am a family and children's coach. I specialize in the development of social-emotional skills for children and families as well as parent education.

### **How long have you been in business?**

I originally started my business, Social Success in 2010 where I led individual and group social skills classes for children in NYC. It's since evolved into Mindful Kids Coaching which officially launched in 2018. I have a bigger focus on teaching both parents and children how to identify, label and manage emotions as well as how to communicate to feel more connected. I now serve children, parents and families all over the world.

### **How did you decide to launch your own business?**

I have always had the entrepreneurial spirit and am lucky enough to have my friends and family support my endeavors and my big ideas.

### **What challenges did you face in the process of launching your business?**

Self-doubt is probably the biggest consistent challenge. Then, getting clear on what I wanted my business and brand to be.

### **Did you feel as though there were resources available to you, specifically as a woman business owner?**

Yes. I have been lucky enough to go through multiple entrepreneurial workshops, seminars and classes in NYC (FastTrak) and SF (Renaissance Center). I also am part of great supportive networks of women. It's really inspiring and I'm so grateful for these networks.

### **Do you have a mentor?**

I don't have a specific mentor. I would like to get a business coach in the next year to help me focus and grow my business.

### **Books you recommend?**

The Success Principles by Jack Canfield. You Are a Badass at Making Money: Master the Mindset of Wealth by Jen Sincero

**What do you love most about running your own business?**

I love seeing my clients improve and feel more connected to their families. I love utilizing my skills and being an expert in my field while knowing that I am able to have multiple streams of income.

**What is your least favorite aspect of running your own business?**

Figuring out how to scale and where to allocate funds.

**What is your best piece of advice for other women who are thinking about launching a business?**

Go for it! I support starting your business as a side hustle so you can learn how to run a business while having income. Running a business is such a great opportunity to learn about yourself and what works and doesn't work for you. It helps you appreciate all the business owners out there hustling their hearts out while bringing something awesome to the world.




## Julie Salvano

Children's Music Entrepreneur

### Rhythm Babies

 <https://www.rhythmbabies.com/>

 <https://www.instagram.com/rhythmbabiesllc/>



It turns out that I was a big fan of Julie Salvano long before I met her. Just like Serena Scanzillo, Julie and I met in a Facebook group for Solopreneurs, but I was already familiar with her business because I have taken my kids to her classes! Rhythm Babies is a wonderful early education music program here in Philadelphia, with regular classes spread out at kid-friendly establishments throughout the city. If you have kids under the age of five in the city, I highly recommend it. Regardless of whether or not you have young kids or even live in Philadelphia, I think you'll enjoy Julie's story about how she built a successful business as a 20-something.

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### **What is the name of your company and what do you do?**

My company is called Rhythm Babies. I run an early childhood music program for children 4 months through 5 years in the Philadelphia area. We provide a traveling music and movement program for daycares, preschools, birthdays, special events and baby stores.

### **How long have you been in business?**

Seven and a half years! It's hard to believe. I tell people I was too young to understand what I was getting myself into, but old enough to know I was capable of doing it. I highly recommend starting a business in your 20's! You have plenty of time to learn from your mistakes.

### **How did you decide to launch your own business?**

I was working part time at a kid's gym teaching early childhood development classes, singing in children's theatre productions on the side, and teaching singing lessons to make ends meet. When I starting working with families and children something clicked inside me and I knew I could make a difference in this specific way. Singing is such a powerful and educational tool to calm parents and children alike.

### **What challenges did you face in the process of launching your business?**

I had several! I was stiffed by a few places early on because it's really hard switching hats between being the sweet music teacher and the tough money collector. Eventually I put policies in place to ensure I was getting paid on time. A general point I should make is new business owners have no time and no money, so the biggest obstacle is keeping your hopes up and your eye on the prize (or your five year plan). After you get enough business and few people working with you, you gain at least one or both of those.

### **Did you feel as though there were resources available to you, specifically as a woman business owner?**

I did go to a few random networking events but they were too impersonal for me. I prefer going to events within my industry. More recently, I found free courses for small business owners at the Community College of Philadelphia that had some great advice.

### **Do you have a mentor?**

I go to a mini-mastermind group called "The Pow Wow." It's run by real estate agent Liz Lutz. I attribute most of my sanity and later success from being able to come to that group, vent, and bounce ideas off of other business women. It was truly my sanctuary to clear my head.

### **Are there any good business books you would recommend?**

I'm a big fan of "The Miracle Morning." I'll be the first to admit I don't follow all of Hal Elrod's rules, but I do love the idea of having a morning ritual. Because entrepreneurs don't have a nine to five, you have to create a ritual for yourself and your day otherwise you can get side tracked by useless things.

### **What do you love most about running your own business?**

Freedom and purpose! My schedule is my own. I never have to ask to go on vacation, or go to the doctor's office, or take a sick day. I'm also bringing happiness and joy into the world everyday which feels pretty good. Who doesn't want to make kids happy? Even my teachers tell me how happy they are simply teaching the classes.

### **What is your least favorite aspect of running your own business?**

Uncertainty. You never know when the next emergency is coming, so you have to prepare for it. It could be someone quitting, or a huge client is unhappy and you have to make it better. I took up a yoga and meditation practice to deal with these moments of stress. I'm much better for it.

### **What is your best piece of advice for other women who are thinking about launching a business?**

I have so much advice! Make small measurable goals for yourself and slowly cross each one off. Write everything down. There have been studies that show you are more successful if you write goals down and frequently check up on them. I also strongly suggest finding a group of other business owners to meet with regularly to help you manage stress and problems that arise. You won't regret taking the time out to take care of yourself.



## Take The Leap, Follow Your Dreams, Build A Better Life

Now that you've read all these wonderful stories of success, struggle, determination, and resilience are you feeling more inspired? That was my hope for you when putting this book together.

I felt so alone during my journey to starting a business, and it wasn't until I started building this fierce lady boss community that I realized I wasn't. There is so much strength to be found in community, and so much power in being a woman—so just imagine how unstoppable you can be if you join a community of empowered, ambitious women?

I'd like to invite you to join the HYC community, no matter where you are on your journey to start a business, because having someone in your corner can make all the difference.

 Sign up for the HYC Newsletter: <https://www.hilaryyoungcreative.com/email-sign-up>

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