

DARE to

STEP UP *bravely*

STAND OUT *boldly*

SPEAK UP *brilliantly*

ROCK YOUR STRIPES

JILINDA LEE

ENDORSEMENTS

‘I’ve had the great pleasure of working with Jilinda in various capacities over the past few years, and *Rock Your Stripes* is without a doubt the summary of how she lives her life, how she leads and how she influences others. In a world that is becoming increasingly beige, it’s such a relief to read a book from someone encouraging high-level integrity while maintaining individuality. I have enormous respect for Jilinda. I know that those who read *Rock Your Stripes*, or get to experience a workshop or event of some sort where Jilinda is presenting, will quickly see all of the good that she brings to the table, with a wonderful combination of down-to-earth wisdom and high-level knowledge. So sit back, grab a big cup of coffee and go on the journey that *Rock Your Stripes* is bound to take you on.’

Andrew Griffiths

International Bestselling Author and Global Speaker

‘For me, this book is a journey through a process of realisation in both personal and career. It made me laugh many times, at myself and at the author’s experiences, as I related so many instances to my own life; being female, adopted, qualifying as a mature student, being a similar age and hitting the glass ceiling on many occasions. How many “if only I had done ...” moments.

‘It is inspirational, challenges you and makes you reflect. I have never regarded myself as the “F word” but certainly want equality, consistency and fairness. This is not a “let’s hate men” book, it is a book that reasons with why women have not succeeded; some through entrenched views and others through stereotypes, but many through inequality.

‘One sentence sums it up for me: “If this book helps just one woman to step up, stand out, speak up and lead positive change ... then sharing my stories and experiences here will be worth it.”

Jackie Paterson BA (Hons) MCIPD CMgr FCMI

Educational Practitioner & Consultant

‘As the head of one of the oldest and most respected leadership institutes in the world, I consider myself extremely fortunate that I am frequently asked to read and review books about management and leadership. Few that I have read are as practical and as “different” as *Rock Your Stripes*. And I say “different” in a very positive way! Jilinda’s perspective on – and approach to – leadership is unique. As is *Rock Your Stripes*. It’s a fast-moving, sweeping journey across the modern leadership landscape told from the perspective of a leader who has certainly “earned her stripes” in the world of management. What hits you right between the eyes about Jilinda is that she doesn’t mince her words or beat around the bush! *Rock Your Stripes* is crammed full of practical tips to help you lead better and, more importantly, be better.

‘There’s no gentle lead in! The first chapter implores us to Disrupt the Status Quo ... and the rest of the book continues in the same bold vein. And rightly so. As Jilinda states, “I believe the most important single thing .. is daring to dare”.

‘*Rock Your Stripes* is a bold, brave and long overdue book about putting your fear aside and jumping in; in to life and in to leadership. Jilinda is an out and proud zebra, and after reading *Rock Your Stripes* I reckon there’s a bit of zebra in all of us, waiting to be put proudly on display.’

David Pich MA (Cantab) FIML
Chief Executive

‘Straight forward and straight from the heart, this is a very accessible read. It just might make you reflect, re-frame and re-envision your opportunities for making a difference.

‘Jilinda encourages women to lead with authenticity, find better ways of solving problems and build positive change in workplace culture.’

Vivienne Tippet PhD OAM
Professor

'*Rock Your Stripes* is everything I expected from the dynamic individual that is Jilinda. Her desire to stand out as an accomplished professional and individual thinker is well charted in her first foray into the world of publishing.

'Focused, gutsy and relentless are all virtues that she expresses well in writing, and a very logical and convincing argument accompanies every motivating chapter of her book.

'While she professes to be a feminist, she has, throughout her life and in this book, maintained her respect for women and men, a respect that is clearly evident as she charts the steps of her self-help program.'

Errol R J Morrison

Media Creative

'What a privilege to be asked to review *Rock Your Stripes*. I have been waiting in anticipation for this book to be written and printed. From the first chapter it's *kapow*, *wow*, then so many *ah-ha moments* woven throughout the book.

'Jilinda shares her life experiences, her rawness, honesty and vulnerability, through every chapter – there's no fluffing of words. What has always struck me about Jilinda is how incredibly passionate she is about leadership, speaking out, questioning, disrupting the status quo. She encourages you to do the same.

'This is a book that you can read, absorb the message, take action, then re-read it. A manual to pour through, to inspire you to BE more, DO more, or pick you up during the challenges of life.

'Jilinda not only encourages you to rock your stripes your way – she boldly leads by walking her talk and rocking her stripes!'

Leonie Lomax

Intuitive Leadership Mentor

ABOUT JILINDA

Known for her vibrant, passionate personality, and straight-shooting commentary, Jilinda Lee is not afraid to challenge the status quo. She doesn't try to blend in with the ordinary and is not inspired by the average, nor does she believe in playing small to suit others. Instead, she purposefully rocks individuality, espouses authenticity, and dares to disrupt irrelevant social norms for greater-good outcomes.



After three decades of richly diverse leadership experiences in both the private and public sectors, Jilinda made the courageous jump to establish a consulting and coaching practice, its core mission to develop dynamic leaders, diverse and engaged teams, and vibrant cultures.

An internationally accredited leadership expert, 'Change Champion' facilitator and go-to leadership coach for government agencies, industry groups and communities across Australia, Jilinda is driven to help others be authentic, genuine, emotionally intelligent, inclusive and engaging leaders. Leaders many wish they had. Leaders the world needs more than ever.

She regularly connects with a growing community through her on-point posts, articles, panel commentary and videos, featured across a range of media platforms, and her energetic keynote presentations are packed with real and raw stories that provoke thought and inspire change.

Jilinda values knowledge and embraces life-long learning, both formal and informal through varied experiences. She holds a Master's degree in management (people and leadership majors), the globally recognised Chartered Managers designation, as well as accreditations in behavioural science analysis, coaching, and facilitation. To quench her 'need to know' thirst, she constantly researches and reads.

As a proud feminist and passionate advocate for greater equality and diversity, Jilinda established the ElevateHER Leadership Community in

2014, facilitated Lean In coaching circles (part of the global foundation LeanIn.org), and in 2020 founded the not-for-profit enterprise ElevateHER Australia, to support circle networks and their leaders nationally, provide education, and partner with other gender equality agencies in advocacy initiatives. She is a member and supporter of numerous women's groups, agencies and forums, including the Australian Gender Equality Council – AGEQ, Australian Local Government Women's Association – ALGWA, UN Women Australia – UNWA, Women and Leadership Australia – WLA, and Women for Election – WFE, and active in advocacy initiatives such as #100daysforchange, #honourawoman, #ItsTime, #EqualPayDay, #IWD, and #UNWomen. In 2021, Jilinda was elected to the national Australian Gender Equality Council as a Board Director.

There is no doubt that Jilinda's high-energy sweet spot is fuelled and fired up when combining her two great passions: leadership and gender equality.

Shortly after Jilinda first published *Rock Your Stripes* (mid-2019), the world experienced a widespread global pandemic that particularly impacted women, initially with reduced choices and chances to focus on their own career goals, and subsequent heightened awareness of gendered role imbalances in homes, companies and communities. Being acutely conscious of these impacts, Jilinda embraced this crisis as a potential catalyst for accelerating changes to entrenched systemic gendered barriers.

Jilinda's ongoing research, writing and commentary is focused on addressing women's critical needs in areas of flexible career opportunities, creating life by design – not default – affordable housing and financial security, and abolishing ageism bias that compounds with other gender biases women are impacted by at every age, stage and phase of their lives.

When not travelling to deliver projects and presentations, Jilinda re-energises by rising early to watch the sun rise over the ocean, soaking up warm tropical sunshine, breathing in sea breezes, taking beach walks with her dog, and swimming laps, from her home base at Cairns Northern Beaches, Australia. She is an avid believer in daily meditation and journalling, flexible work practices and healthy lifestyle choices.

Jilinda's personal mission is to help women create life on their own terms, rock their stripes, raise their voice, rock the world, and change the game.

DEDICATION

To Chloe and Beau, my independent children – deep pride and gratitude

You are undoubtedly the protégés of a strong, feminist mother. May you keep rocking your individual stripes.

To Saffron and George, my grand-children – deep bond

Your arrival sparked an urgency in me to write this book and deepened my resolve to keep advocating for a more equal world. May your lives be full of exciting choices, chances and changes.

To Gary, my Change Champion partner and side-line supporter – deep love

You got me from the start. Our Yin & Yang traits balance and complement each other, while navigating the swings and shifts that is life and love. May we continue to rock our zigzag journey together.

To ALL the awesome women, who hold up half the world

You are the reason for this book. May more of you step into lead roles, sit at the decision-making tables, rock your unique feminine stripes and change the world.

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INTRODUCTION

Let's start with the glaringly obvious. One of the strongest messages we receive is from what we see. It can have a huge impact on us. We form a view from a visual message in a nanosecond. Contrary to the adage '*you can't judge a book by its cover*', most people do. At least initially. One thing I know from decades of personal experience in service-orientated industries: first impressions *really do count*. So, might as well stand out.

Yes ... my book cover is deliberately bold, bright and brave. The stark contrasts of black-and-white zebra stripes mixed with my signature colour – bold orange – and the splashes of strong, vibrant colours; it all fits well with my personality, my purpose, and the personal stories I share within these pages. Perhaps that's what led you to pick this book up at a bookstore or online. I hope it grabbed your attention among the millions of marketing messages that get thrown at you each day. Uniqueness rocks!

Whatever the reason you are now reading this, it is my genuine intention to inspire and encourage you to make positive changes and bold decisions about your life. To make your unique mark. Let me explain why ...

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‘SO WHAT’S WITH THE ZEBRA THEME?’

I’m a *name-the-elephant-in-the-room* kind of person. From many years of honing my communication skills from initial quiet questioning to a frustrated WTF judgement tone, to now one of genuine curiosity that feeds my need to know *why it is so*, I’ve learned the value in addressing the obvious questions up front. It distracts focus and flow when big questions are left unanswered.

So, as it makes no sense to tiptoe around this; here goes ...

Elephant #1 ... ironically, turns out – it’s a ZEBRA! Yes, you ask, ‘What’s with the zebra theme?’

Here’s the thing; I love zebras. For a very long time, I have been drawn to anything with strikingly bold zebra print or the stark contrast of black-and-white striping – clothing, bags, shoes, rugs, feature walls, and most recently – an awesome zebra-print couch for my reading nook. And, when I say ‘*very long time*’, I mean V E R Y long time. I designed my 21st-birthday party outfit: a black pantsuit with white inverted panels in the sleeves and pant legs, big white buttons and wide, white collar features. You get the picture; so ‘80s but oh so individual.

Decades later, it’s become my signature style – no, not the ‘80s pantsuit ... zebra print. It’s part of my personal brand. In fact, my absolute favourite presentation outfits are either zebra print (#1 fave – sequin-embellished zebra-print kaftan) or variations of black-and-white striping with a splash of unexpected bright colour added (I’ll explain the colourful splashes later).

A few years ago, I met a wonderful, intuitive coaching colleague (now one of my ‘besties’) who introduced me to the world of African animal spiritual meanings, initially sending me a short paragraph about the zebra. It was one of those OMG moments. If ever I was going to be likened to an animal or take on a symbolic animal, it would have to be the zebra.

Here’s why:



*The zebra is a powerful animal,
a symbol of individuality and balance*

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When you study the zebra, of course the first thing that stands out is its bold, high-contrast striping; each animal with its own unique design. Just like human fingerprints. No two zebras are alike. They have an extraordinary ability to survive and flourish in a harsh land. They enjoy and thrive on a challenge, like they know it's a chance for growth and strength. They don't give up, they step up – rising to confront obstacles. They are extremely resilient, resourceful and adaptable.

African animal researchers have observed that it's the zebra who is most situationally aware. They are always scanning the horizon, on high alert and the first to notice slight changes and potential threats. It is said that when the zebra stops, raises its head and starts twitching, all the surrounding animals watch the zebra; when it starts to move, the others follow. Therefore, it's often the zebra that influences and drives change.

Interesting? Most people think of the lion as being king of the prairie, but in fact it's the zebra who is often leader of the masses ... the game-changing influencer.

Those who know me would recognise that the zebra symbolism sits well with me. My friends often say: '*That's SO YOU, Jilinda.*' Yes, it is – but it is not *exclusively* mine ...

My hope, as you read through this book, is that you will not just recognise the quirky synergies between my shared personal stories and learnings and that of the zebra's characteristics – you will also embrace the self-confidence and powerful courage that comes from fully embracing your unique self. *Your* unique stripes. Your stark black-and-white contrasts, and your bright splashes of brilliant colour.

So get ready to ROCK YOUR STRIPES.

You'll find the zebra theme peppered throughout the pages following, to illustrate my overall intentional purpose and passionate drive to help women:

- **STEP UP** ... to be brave
- **STAND OUT** ... to be bold
- **SPEAK UP** ... to brilliantly influence, drive and lead change.

IT'S TIME FOR FUNDAMENTAL CHANGE

Why do I think women need to do that? Aahh, it's time to reveal the second rather large elephant in the room:

Elephant #2 ... the F word. No, not that one. I've made sure it doesn't pop up in print, although the same surety is not given at my presentations (I like to splash a little colour across all areas of my life). I'm talking about the other F word: yes, I'm a proud FEMINIST. Always have been, always will be.

Born in the '60s, my generation fought hard to ensure the 1940s–50s submissive housewife model was shown for what it was: unequal, unfair, uninspiring, undermining, and just plain unacceptable. Frankly, a set of man-made rules, conceived by men for the benefit of men.

'Oh, please no; not 1960s feminism again.'

I hear your screams.

'I don't want to be like one of them.'

I know. Surely we've progressed enough for there to be no need to rehash the outdated feminist movement, right? After all, as the Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau so famously responded to questions regarding the number of females he appointed to his first cabinet: *'It's 2015'* – delivered with a good dose of unapologetic WTF tone of: *'How is that even a relevant question in today's world?'* Good on him for being a gender-equality role model; he's right. But sadly, years later – where are all the other notable global examples?

I hear it in the ladies' circles I mentor, the numerous international women's movements I belong to, and the many thousands of women all over the world who have recently rallied to send a clear message about unacceptable misogynistic, unequal views espoused by some of our elected 'leaders'.

Who could possibly ignore that?

In recent years, the global *#metoo* uprising has flushed out sexual abuse and gender discrimination that those in power (particularly in

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male-led industries) have been dishing out for centuries to women who felt they had no choice but to tolerate it. How great it is to now see women all over the world standing side by side, stating clearly: NO, NOT ACCEPTABLE!

Wrong is always wrong, even if some think they have the power to get away with it.

Yes, it's time for fundamental change. Women are sick of waiting for the game to change; for real equality of choices. It's time we stop hoping that 'one day, someone will do something'. It is my long-held, passionate hope that each of our lives be filled with more choices, chances and game-changing opportunities than those who walked the path before us.

May we be forever grateful to those brave, bold women of past eras who cleared and widened the path, reducing the obstacles to equal rights and choices in such things as voting, education, birth control, divorce settlements, child support, financial independence and career options. May we continue to draw strength from those radically disruptive women who dare to proudly wear the 'feminist' badge; still today. May we continue to strive for equality in our own circles and in our own lives.

However, despite all that – hope, gratitude, and acknowledgement of our sister placard-bearers – these are not personal action strategies. If you are feeling stuck, or belittled, or held back, and are ready to raise the bar, you will need to action your own game-changing plan.

Whether you are comfortable personally using the F-word (feminism) or not really doesn't matter. Whatever meaning you take from past eras and events, the true meaning of feminism is simply gender equality – that's *it*. Equal choices. Equal opportunities. Regardless of what different jiggly bits we possess below the neck. It's simply about fairness.

Frankly, from my observations, I believe in the last few decades we have dropped the ball on this issue, especially in my homeland,

Australia. Research stats confirm this. To be up there at the top of global comparisons for the number of Australian women per capita who hold university-level degrees, and in the same report be ranked as low as 50th in the world for the number of women participating in the workforce, is astonishingly concerning.

Surely, most of us – men and women alike – would see these results as totally unacceptable, even shameful. While it's easy to point the finger at far-right conservative political parties, or blame that all-male corporate leadership team, or our own personal circumstances, I believe each one of us needs to act to ensure gender equality remains high on the agenda. Your agenda, my agenda, women's worldwide agenda, the agenda of our daughters, and most importantly, the agenda of our male partners and our sons.

But let's not just make it an agenda item or an aspirational quota goal; I believe it's time for more women to **step up, stand out and speak up**; to demand and drive much-needed change. It's also time for our men to help drive this change and support women to do that. We ALL need to pick up that ball, run with it and collectively slam-dunk it. The right time is NOW.

Okay ... so you're probably thinking that's all very inspirational, but your life is a little more complicated than most. Perhaps you are already juggling enough balls and are not sure you want to be a game-changing leader or sitting in a C-suite chair – even if it was offered to you on a platter. Besides, what would I know about your life or what you've already tried? Who am I to suggest it's now time for you to step up, right?

Yes, I get that stepping up into a leadership role in your chosen career might not be your thing, but there may be other areas in your life where you could drive some much-needed changes. Perhaps your role in addressing the equality challenge is to influence and support other women to step up, stand out, and speak up, or your daughters, granddaughters, and sons.

I certainly don't profess to have all the answers, and I'm not saying ALL women need to be sitting at the decision-making tables, but what I do know is that many hold themselves back from all sorts of

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opportunities and chances. I observe this continuously, and it concerns me greatly.

After years of coaching and mentoring others, I know the core reason for holding back is generally found in their crippling fears. The three most universally common fears of all are:

- **fear of failure (mistakes and losses)**
- **fear of rejection (not belonging)**
- **fear of not being good enough (expectations and judgements).**

... and then there's the main fear that halts progress on gender equality matters:

- **fear of the unknown (uncertainty and change)**

... and another one that's a massive fear for many women, and relates to the fear of rejection:

- **fear of what others will think (how others will talk about and treat them).**

I experienced all those fears very early on in life, and spent much of my first three decades striving to overcome them. Smashing through those fears. Unlearning old programming and relearning new ways to think and feel. I gradually grew and changed into the person I was meant to be. The real me – Ms Change Champion ... with a voice and mission that mattered.

OOOOOPS

In fact, I started life a little differently to most, embracing change from day one. So ... here comes the third elephant in the room:

Elephant #3 ... I was an accidental baby, given up for adoption by my teenage mother at birth.

Some may choose stronger emotive words like ‘unwanted’, ‘abandoned’ or ‘discarded’, but I don’t see the point in dramatising what was the commonly accepted solution to ‘the shame’ of unplanned teenage pregnancies in the 1960s. The circumstances are not important; it is what it is.

I have no judgement and hold no malice for my birth mother, who has no doubt had to live with what would have been a very difficult decision at a time when there were far fewer choices, and to this day, still chooses to keep it a secret from her family. I respect her wishes.

That said, I spent the early formative years of my life trying to feel ‘good enough’, and to find some sense of belonging with my adopted family and their chosen circles, the hordes of relatives (big families), and their narrow-minded religious sect.

From an epiphany moment at age seven, I started my own journey of letting go of the need to fit in. Discovering that it was way more exciting to creatively explore and embrace my own individuality, I began to design my own reality. (You’ll have to flip forward to read more about that moment, one of my earliest memories of awakening the ‘real’ me.)

Throughout my life, rather than ever thinking ‘woe is me’, I gradually built immense personal power and a positive attitude of: ‘WOW, is me’. I learned from very early on the self-confident power that uniqueness and individuality gives; of being deliberately different, of standing out from the ordinary, of not trying to Compare, Compete, Copy or Conform. Individuality absolutely rocks!

EMBRACE THE ZIGZAGS

One more ‘C’ word I should mention at this point: I love CHANGE. Some would say I embraced it from birth. Zigzags are so much more fun than straight lines. I have a ‘what’s next’ thirst, and enjoy the excitement and new opportunities that change brings. It makes no sense to keep doing stuff that’s not working or is no longer relevant. For me, there is far more fear in being stuck with limited choices than in making changes. I think of change as simply turning the page to start

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another new chapter, and it's fair to say my personal book is thick from creating a life of interesting chapters.

As I wrote the chapters in this book, I'd lived in 11 regional locations, experienced two very different marriages, raised two individual, independent-thinking children, welcomed two adult step-sons and their families, had three very different career paths (more to come), and stepped up into various leadership roles (private business, partnerships, public sector, corporate and community) – driving change in all of them. No wonder I'm known as a Change Champion in my professional circles. Change is so exciting 😊.

Writing this book is another change for me; a challenging one. Fully embracing my vulnerability. Putting my thoughts, personal stories and learnings out into the world with no guarantee it will be accepted or even appreciated; well, that's kind of scary, and somewhat risky. I spent hours (read: years of procrastinating) mulling over what to include, how much to tell, and the real biggy: how to share my stories while respecting others who have been directly involved in my journey. Real stories are not always pretty or comfortable for others.

In 2012, I built greater courage while making a life-changing career decision, and around the same time I read Brené Brown's book *Daring Greatly* about how the courage to be vulnerable transforms us. Like taking off a mask or standing naked on a stage, I learned that vulnerability – in all its uncomfortableness – is a strength. It takes courage to put it out there.

Three things I know for sure:

- 1.** We have no control over how others will think or respond, nor do we own their shit ... so worrying about that is a waste of time and energy.
- 2.** We learn more from doing the uncomfortable, uncertain, scary things that challenge us ... to become wiser, stronger, more resilient, and to grow and evolve.
- 3.** I'm okay with not being perfect ... no-one is. There's no such thing.

My life has certainly not been perfect or particularly remarkable, and I would never have achieved all I have done, or experienced all that I have, without making mistakes along the way. Having a go, stuffing up, and learning from that is how we grow stronger and achieve more. I'm planning a few more zigzags; some will work, some will be another lesson, and I will be wiser for all of it.

So, with all that said, I courageously present to you my warts-and-all version. My who, why, what and how. My learnings, my opinion rants, my personal stories, snippets from those I admire, my passionate messages of encouragement, and proven tips to help you create your own stripes and boldly *rock* them.

My hope is, as you work your way through this book, you will be inspired to raise your own bar and design a life full of the opportunities you deserve to experience. May you add some excitement to your life and embrace the challenging zigzag pathways.

May you be one of those awesome women willing to step up, stand out, speak up, and be the change our world is so desperately needing.

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HOW TO GET THE MOST OUT OF THIS BOOK ...

Firstly, the intended outcome of this book is to inspire more women to step up, stand out and speak up, and to encourage more women to sit at the decision-making tables. I have deliberately repeated this theme throughout the parts and chapters, as it is the fundamental purpose for my writing this book, and is an extension of the women's support circles, programs, retreats and coaching services I offer.

The book is divided into two parts.

Part I is my inspirational call-out challenge to you.

By sharing my personal stories with you, I dare you to play a bigger game of life ... your full-arse, colourful, zebra version 😊.

I DARE you to:

DISRUPT the status quo ...

ASPIRE to be your greatest version ...

REACH for your goals ...

Evolve and keep growing ...

Inspiration is one thing, but it's your changes of behaviour and observable actions that will make the biggest difference. That's why I've included Part II.

Part II is about making those changes: doing it. From my own learnings and experience as a leadership mentor, I have developed a formula of five core igniters and strengtheners of personal power. I now boldly refer to this as the FAVE 5 Formula: five 'I's for HOW to be a brave, bold, and brilliant game-changing woman:

<i>Fuchsia</i>	Be an INDIVIDUAL
<i>Red</i>	Be INDEPENDENT
<i>Yellow</i>	Be an INITIATOR
<i>Orange</i>	Be an INFLUENCER
<i>Teal</i>	Be INVOLVED

Although I colour-code these five sections in presentations and programs, the colour printing costs would potentially have made the book less accessible to all. So, instead: grab some colouring pencils or highlighters and add your own splashes of colour. I've given you suggestions of the colours I associate with each chapter, but I encourage you to be creative. Personalise it. Make this book your own unique copy. Rock your own colours.

Colouring the chapter title pages in Part II will make it easier to find and go to any section of interest, whenever you feel the need to build more muscle around that behaviour. While these sections are not an ordered process, the first two are foundational as they build your personal power that fuels the confidence needed to propel your progress. They are the strong central core of the FAVE 5 Formula.

It is my aim for this book to be a useful reflection tool and a go-to reference source. For that reason, I have included some key points and checklists as simple reminders, and a few reflective exercises and questions for you to ponder. Oh, and when you flip to the very back, you'll find a thought-bubble section for you to easily record your ideas and take-away actions in one easy location.

One more thing: I'm a bit of a quote queen. I personally find inspirational quotes to be a wonderful way to motivate positive actions. Peppered throughout the book, please take a moment to pause and reflect on the meaning you take from these quotes.

Embrace the journey ... it's time to change the game ... shake it up a bit ... be bolder, braver and brighter ... and make a bigger difference.

WHAT A WONDERFUL TIME TO BE A WOMAN

Are you ready to elevate your goals? ...

To fuel your inner power and boost your confidence? ...

To change how you play your game of life? ...

To stride out in your unique, colourful stripes? ...

To be a game-changing woman? ...

To make a bigger difference?

I DARE you to turn the pages, embrace the learnings, and then bravely step up, boldly stand out and brilliantly speak up. The world is waiting for you to ROCK YOUR STRIPES.

THE STARFISH STORY

Original story by Loren Eisley.

One day a man was walking along the beach, when he noticed a boy hurriedly picking up and gently throwing things into the ocean.

Approaching the boy, he asked, 'Young man, what are you doing?'

The boy replied, 'Throwing starfish back into the ocean. The surf is up and the tide is going out. If I don't throw them back, they'll die.'

The man laughed to himself and said, 'Don't you realise there are miles and miles of beach and hundreds of starfish? You can't make any difference!'

After listening politely, the boy bent down, picked up another starfish, and threw it into the surf. Then, smiling at the man, he said,

'I made a difference to that one.'



This story, originally written by Loren Eisley as part of an essay in 1969, has been retold and used by many motivational speakers to illustrate the point that ONE motivated individual CAN make a difference – even if the effort is just one touch point, or one chunk of work at a time. It all counts.

Likewise, if this book helps just one woman to step up, stand out, speak up and lead positive change ... then sharing my stories and experiences here will be worth it. Like waves leaving a mark on the sand, I believe the ripple effect that starts from just one person leading change can be powerful beyond measure.

I believe that the
most important
single thing,
beyond discipline
and creativity,
is daring to
DARE.

Maya Angelou

PART I

D.A.R.E.

DISRUPT ... the status quo

ASPIRE ... to be your
greatest version

REACH ... for your goals

EVOLVE ... keep learning
and growing

Rock Your Stripes

What a wonderful time to be a woman.

Now, more than any time in the past six decades I have lived through, there is immense opportunity for you to reach your greatest potential ... ready right now for you to grasp hold of.

WARNING: I passionately write this section like an obsessed woman on an urgent mission to influence change at the deepest level – to challenge core beliefs, entrenched habits, and our perceived role in society as women. To open our eyes to choices and chances.

This is a call to action for my own daughter, my beautiful granddaughter, my niece and grand-niece, the young women in my partner's family, the women in circles I've facilitated, and all those I've met at networking events and in client organisations, and those I'm yet to meet; especially to those who have been holding back, blending in or keeping quiet.

I urge you ... now is the time to step up, stand out and speak up.

I DARE you to be all you can be ... to play your game of life at 100%.

Become your full-arse version ... don't settle for half-arse.

NOW IS THE TIME TO ...

■ DISRUPT the status quo ...

It's madness to keep doing the same things and hope for a better result. Hope is not a strategy ... it's a fantasy.

■ **ASPIRE** to be your greatest version ...

Why would you want to be or do less than you are capable of? Playing small is not a predetermined destiny ... it's a choice.

■ **REACH** for your goals ...

Success happens to those who make it happen, rather than those who wait for it to be offered. Reach wider and higher than you think will be possible.

■ **EVOLVE** and keep evolving ...

Life is a journey of continual learning and growth. Like filling up your wisdom bucket; you are never 'there yet'.

I hope this section will inspire you to DARE to dream, DARE to explore, DARE to plan and – most of all – DARE to take that first step ... and the second ... and keep climbing that staircase towards your biggest goals.

FIRST UP ...

There are two words I want you to delete from your thinking and your responses – verbal and written. They are '*SHOULD*' and '*WISH*'.

Write them in big letters, put them up on your wall, and draw a thick red line through them.



'*SHOULD*' is a judgemental expectation based on comparing your life with others, and is driven by one of the most universally common and most debilitating FEARS:

The fear of not being good enough.

Rock Your Stripes

Smash that! Leave perfectionism where it belongs – perfection is an illusion. Focus on your current skills and your ability to learn new things and new ways of doing the things you are passionate about. You have everything you need inside you to take hold of this journey called *life*.

Your journey – your life.

You have the right to make your own decisions and do whatever you want, without going on a ‘shoulding’ guilt trip. So, stop *shoulding* on yourself, stop listening to the *should-ers*, and simply be the person you want to be – your unique version.



A ‘WISH’, like hope, is not a strategy. It belongs only in fairy tales and birthday cards. The problem with wishing stuff for ourselves is it’s often just a whimsical thought that our over-protective, risk-averse, internal BS voice immediately blows away with, ‘*But, I can’t*’, or, ‘*But, that won’t happen because ...*’, or some other slap-down response. Turn your wishes into real actions. You CAN (or you can’t), you WILL (or you won’t), you ARE already starting to act with this first step: you’ve picked up this book for a reason. Well done.

***You ARE enough ... you ARE capable ...
you CAN change ... you CAN do this.***

Keep reading ... go ahead. Highlight sections and add your scribbled thoughts and ideas. This is your book to play with. Go nuts with colour and sticky notes ... or not – it’s your journey.

Now ... let’s be DARING, and begin with a little DISRUPTION 😊.