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Karen McDermott is a powerhouse and publishing house like no other. The mother of six and successful business woman was recently crowned AusMumpreneur of the Year.

Karen has published over 300 books since she started her publishing businesses, Serenity Press, Making Magic Happen Press and KMD Books. She has personally written and published 3 full length novels, 5 novelettes, 4 non fiction books, 12 children's books and 7 journals.

Karen is humble and she happily discusses how she has overcome challenges.

Karen states: "I have overcome many challenges but my approach to challenges is different. I see challenges as an opportunity to pause, learn and level up into the person I need to be to achieve my goals and as I set myself high achieving goals and therefore challenges are quite regular in my life.

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Karen's advice for balancing or juggling motherhood and work or a business:

"Do what you can when you can. My kids are my world, it is because I wanted to be present as a mum that I really delved into publishing. Even on my busiest day I am there to drop off and pick up my kids from school. They are growing up so fast and I don't want to miss out on milestones or treasured moments. I have grown enough that I have an amazing team to lean on."

The business turned over AU\$1.1 million this past financial year. The business goal for five years is to increase that tenfold.

Karen's advice for business owners: "Know that your mindset also needs to grow alongside your business. Be strategic with where you invest in your growth. Know what that is for you and then find professional credible support to help you to make that happen. Keep releasing what no longer serves you as you grow and know when to declutter so that you have room for more aligned opportunities."

Ironically Karen says she did not excel in English at school.

"I am slightly dyslexic and couldn't connect with words like other people did. I did find it easier when I went back to university as an adult and achieved a diploma in Humanities. I fell in love with the English Literature component. When I moved to Australia 12 years ago I explored and experimented with children's books. Alphabet Job Buddies was the first thing I ever wrote back in 2008."

"I was absolutely called to write my first novel. One day in 2010 I was watching The View, Whoopi Goldberg had some guests on who were a reality TV couple and they had been through a miscarriage, the woman was pretty emotional and Whoopi turned her back to the camera and told the woman 'I am going to tell you something that I tell all of my friends when this happens to them, this is a visitor that has come to visit you to let you know that you are on the wrong path and when you shift on to the right path for you your gift will come.' Well I had goosebumps all over my body, I felt compelled to share the answer I had just been gifted."

Two and a half years prior to this, Karen had lost twins at 11 weeks. She wanted them so much and had previously been through a year of PTSD because of an incident in her home. She remembers it being a long drawn out miscarriage and she never understood why it happened as she already had two healthy boys. The words resonated with Karen after watching The View that day and she remembers crying buckets of tears for the lost pregnancy, the numbness and the loss woke her up again.

"I could feel again, I shifted back onto the right track, I got pregnant straight away and everything in life started to flow wonderfully again. So, after this epiphany and compelling desire to share more than a blog with the world I came aware that National novel writing month was in 2 days time so with a seedling of an idea I mapped out some chapters, told my husband he didn't have a wife for a month and for 30 days whilst breast feeding my 4 week old I typed 1667 words a day one handed and on the 30th day I had over 50000 words, a full heart and a novel."

Karen's self publishing journey was a negative experience which led to her business idea.

Karen says: "I had my published heart centred book in my hands it didn't feel worth it somehow, but that journey was like a training course for me as I learned a lot of the facets of publishing and so with some additional research I discovered that the print and distribution centre my self publishing company from the US used to print and distribute my books happened to open an office in Melbourne that every month I applied to become a publisher with the intention of joining authors on their journey to help them through challenges and never have them feel abandoned like I did.

Authorship is a long term journey and I am in it for the long haul with each of my authors."

Karen works with many well known people. She says that she is blessed to be able to connect with the wonderful people she knows. She believes that she shows up the same with everyone and cannot be anyone else but herself so every person receives the authentic real version of Karen.

Karen concludes: "The well known people in my circle are some of the kindest people I know and it is an absolute joy to work with them. Sarah, The Duchess of York is one of the kindest and creative people I know and we work together with her team to bring beautiful books out into the world. Each book has the essence of Kindness at its core. I have met Elizabeth Gilbert on 3 occasions since 2015, recently in March when she came to Perth, she also agreed to contribute to my book *The Power of Knowing* which releases on Sept 22nd and I am also in talks with her agent to have Elizabeth attend one of our castle writers retreats in Ireland when the world gets back to some level of normality. Joanne Fedler is a truly special friend, we have known each other since 2016 when I hired a castle for writers retreat and had no clue how to fill it. Joanne kindly shared some insights and we have been friends since and now have founded Lusaris, which we are really proud and excited about. Kate Forsyth is a truly magnificent woman, she is enchanting and her words are captivating, I adore Kate and the beautiful books she produces for Serenity Press with photographic artist Lorena Carrington. I am very blessed to know many amazing authors all of whom are so lovely."

Karen's Tips for those who don't feel that they know how to write or who have writer's block:

"When you set an intention to write a book, especially if it is your first one, there will be moments of self doubt, give yourself permission to get the first draft out, it's called a messy draft for a reason, it is because it is everything that needs to come out and then from that point your manuscript can be moulded into something magnificent and focused on what your readers need to read. So in short, stop over thinking!"

-ENDS-

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