

IT IS SO WORTH IT ...



It was September 2004 and I was on a holiday on the Gold Coast with my mum & dad and partner, at that time. At this point my mum had been battling her breast and liver cancer for 15 years and during those years she had absolutely inspired me with her vision, her courage, her determination and her incredible will and attitude independent of some pretty trying circumstances. I made a decision during that week away that I was going to write a book about my mum and share her story to inspire the world ...

We had a great week as a family and I particularly wanted to spend some special time with mum to talk to her about her life and journey with the disease. So, on one of the days I told her that I was planning to write a book about her life to highlight some valuable lessons that could benefit others. Her response was 'why would anyone be interested in my story?' She had such a humbleness and quiet determination about her which I struggle to find the words to describe. For hours we talked, we laughed, we cried, I listened and I wrote and at the end I was even more proud of and inspired by mum and totally determined that this book would be written.

Well, we all have great intentions and then along comes life to bite us in the butt! It was only a couple of months after this trip to QLD that, due to an extreme course of radiotherapy, my mum's condition rapidly deteriorated. She went from being this active, mobile and vibrant woman to being so incapacitated that even just sitting up in bed was a huge challenge.

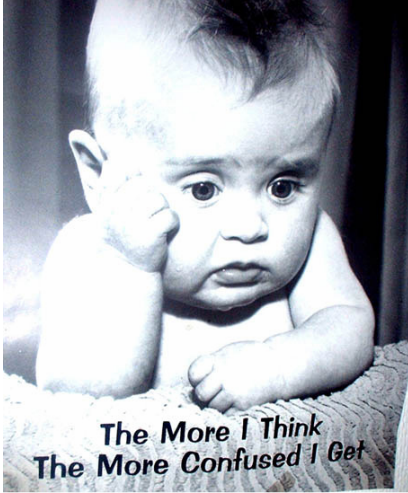


The one thing, however, that didn't change was her 'never give in' attitude and the beautiful smile with freshly applied lipstick that was always on her face! That is the memory I have of my mum as she slipped into her final peaceful state on December 3, 2004.

Devastated!

I had 15 years to deal with the fact that my mum had cancer and that there was a chance that she may die before her time – but did I? Not for one second! My head was buried far too deeply in the sand just hoping it would all go away, so when it happened I was devastated. The next 12 months was an absolute write off! The only thing that happened within that period of time to distract my grief for my mum was the break down of my long term relationship. When it rains!!

Book, what book?!



Over the next couple of years it was really all about trying to make some sense of the things that had happened and why. It was a confusing time and so any thought of a book was at the farthest reach of my mind. But, as they say, 'time heals all', as does perspective and a desire to find the good in all situations. I started to write spasmodically over the next couple of years and got about half way into the manuscript. The decision finally came in May 2008, whilst I was on my honeymoon with my beautiful wife, that it was time to finish what I had started. And I got back to work, this time with a determined focus to finish the manuscript.

Once it was finished I thought it be a simple job to get it to my publisher and then let them do the rest. What I wasn't expecting was that they didn't want it!! What do I do now? After the initial shock I started making calls and sending manuscripts to about 20 publishers and then I waited. One by one they all rejected the manuscript! I started to doubt myself and wondered whether this was ever going to happen – then I thought about my mum! Next approach ...! I started to contact literary agents the same way I did publishers and got a pretty similar result ... until one day I got a call! One literary agent, whom I will be eternally grateful to, said she would take my manuscript and find me a publisher and she did. So in July 2009 **Exisle Publishing** accepted my manuscript - nearly 5 years after I began!

Now the work begins ...

I thought it would be easy from here. The editor read the manuscript thoroughly and sent me an email. She started the email with; *'I've put some very rough ideas down for how I think the manuscript and general approach needs to be reworked'*, and she finished the same email with; *'Hopefully I haven't shocked you into depression!'* I wasn't depressed - I was, however, overwhelmed! But I got to work to rewrite and improve a vast majority of the book. After much to and fro'ing and some very confronting changes in thinking and approach to the manuscript it was finally finished. On October 29, 2010 I got an email from the editor saying; *'Just to let you know that your book is now at the printer'!!!* On Monday this week (January 10, 2011), some six and half years after starting, I received my first finished hard cover copy of **Dance Until it Rains!**

It is so worth it!

I am not telling this story to say 'Look at me, aren't I fabulous'. I am not telling this story for you to say 'well done'. I am sharing this story to say that the prize is so worth the price. The feeling I have when I hold this book is indescribable and the challenges I had to go through and the time it took seem almost insignificant as I look at and feel the finished product.

Stay the race! Finish what you start! Do whatever it takes, irrespective of circumstances, to enjoy the rewards. It is so worth it!!



January 15, 2011