

Speaker 1: 0:00

Welcome to Beyond the Mirror with your hosts, Adri Varga and Jodie Fjeldin. In this podcast, Adri and Jodie take you on an intriguing journey beyond the surface, deep diving into the world of business in the hair, skin, beauty and wellness industries. From business success tips and marketing hacks to industry insights and trends it's all here. They leave no stone unturned. Sites and trends it's all here. They leave no stone unturned. So get ready to unlock your full potential. Evaluate your business, leave behind the limitations and embrace the endless possibilities that lie beyond the mirror.

Jodie Fielden: 0:51

Hello and welcome everyone. It's great to be back. I'm Jodie Fielden, and I'm joined by my work wife, Bestie, and business partner, Adri Varga. During these podcasts, we share how you can leverage your passion into profit. Whether you're a budding entrepreneur, a seasoned business owner or someone who's just thinking about starting up, you're in the right place because we've just about done it all and we're here to share with you that you can too, because it's time to believe your business can be everything you ever wanted.

Adri Varga: 1:18

Yes, absolutely. Hello everyone and welcome back, and it's so great to be back for part two of our candid conversations.

Jodie Fielden: 1:30

Hey, so we're going to be talking a little bit now about my past, aren't we? And Audrey was just asking me a few questions just before.

Adri Varga: 1:38

Yeah, so are you ready.

Jodie Fielden: 1:41

I was actually I'm running a little bit late this morning and I was in the shower going over my head, because Adri and I went to record this podcast the other day and it just we had all sorts of technical issues and everything was all over the place. So I was in the shower preparing myself this time, because last time I'm like, oh, like a deer in the headlights. So the best thinking is done of a morning in the shower yeah, so how did you go with that?

Jodie Fielden: 2:11

I still don't have a plan man, we, just, we just start.

Adri Varga: 2:16

Let's, let's start, and let's start with your childhood, childhood memories. You know like, how was life when you grow up?

Jodie Fielden: 2:24

look, life was. I have some really good childhood memories and I have some really traumatic ones, which most people do. Um, growing up, my dad came from New Zealand and he was a little bit of a um scallywag, we'll say and um, him and my mum got married and they ended up separating when I was about six. So before that, we lived on the central coast here in Copia, where you and I live now. We started off here and then we moved to the country and there's you know stories of, you know know dad doing the sheep, you know slaughtering the sheep and things like that. And so I went vegetarian as a child for a while. Oh, my goodness, yeah, I stopped eating meat for a while. Um, but yeah, no, look, he was a great dad, terrible husband, let's just say that. And then, yeah, mum and dad got separated.

Adri Varga: 3:37

And along came the wicked stepfather. Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. So last time we've got really emotional about when you were telling your story. So, you know, just go as deep as you want to, because we all have our baggage. Really, you know, like I said, my childhood, which was not so much different from yours, apart from that, our stepfather is a wonderful man, so he's really lovely.

Jodie Fielden: 4:00

Yeah, your stepfather is beautiful.

Adri Varga: 4:02

Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, we are very lucky, but you know like our father's beautiful yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, we are very lucky. But you know like our father was. You know like an alcoholic and it was a lot of challenges and you know like it was terrible on my side, so I can understand. You know like you get emotional, but in the same time, you know like your relationship with your father now is absolutely amazing.

Jodie Fielden: 4:24

Oh, he's beautiful.

Adri Varga: 4:25

Yeah, yeah.

Jodie Fielden: 4:28

So back when I was a child, he was a very. He was an alcoholic as well. He was also very violent, and that's why they separated. Never towards me. I don't ever remember my dad even smacking me you know, but towards my mom.

Jodie Fielden: 4:45

My dad might be listening to this and there's two different sides to the story, but I don't remember it. But my stepfather, mum, had a terrible taste in men. He was an ex-junkie. Mum

fell in love with him when she was 16 and then she left him to go to New Zealand. But she reconnected with him once he was out of rehab and that, and they ended up getting together and he wasn't physically abusive, he was emotionally abusive, he was really bad.

Jodie Fielden: 5:30

But I was programmed to my own programming being a little bit protective is that I used to get in between, you know, the two of them fighting and I'd have to get my little brother and go and call the police to get to safety and it was pretty traumatic, you know. I remember having to stand there one night between them holding onto a knife, thinking, oh, if you take one more step closer, you know so just lots of things like that. So, but then mum passed away when I was 14 and nine months, I think it was, and yeah, so that was yeah, that was obviously, you know, like very emotional.

Adri Varga: 6:19

But you know like I always look back to my life because my one was very similar to you. You know like we were very threatened and afraid of our father when he was drunk and I remember, me and my sister, we were standing at the window at night before we go to bed and we wanted to see if he comes home, because if he was walking straight or like this, yeah, yeah, we knew how bad is going to be?

Adri Varga: 6:48

and that was absolutely threatening and frightening for us. So I can absolutely understand, but what I wanted to ask from you? You know like we all learn from this, so what was your learning? You know from this situation that you had to live in when you were a child.

Jodie Fielden: 7:08

I knew that I would never make those same mistakes. I would never put my children in a vulnerable position. I will always put their safety and well-being first. So I think that's one of the big things I learned. Um, I also, you know, a little bit later, sort of after mum uh passed away. You know different things in my life and we'll get to those in a minute. Um, but because of all the trauma and and like you said, you know, like you can pick it as a kid, and I used to think to my mum why aren't you like can't you see what's coming? Like stop, shut up, don't say anything, you know, and it seems like they missed it. And us kids are there, sitting there, like you said, watching. And the second I could just tell the way Paul was standing whether we're in for it or not, you know or just the way he would drop his bottom lip and I'd be like running to the hills, you know.

Adri Varga: 8:12

So what it does really, you know like yeah, what it does I just wanted to step in here to us is that we learn to read read people which later on in life we can use it.

Adri Varga: 8:28

So it's like a skill, what we build out of this situation, because you and me, like, we are so aware of people and we talk to people 10 minutes. We know everything about them, about

body language, the words they are using and everything else. And I'm not quite sure how you feel about it, but I always put it back to I learned because I was watching my environment, because obviously, you know, like I wanted to prepare for what is coming, and it's very sad, isn't it? Because we were so, were so young, you know, like I was like five, six, seven, eight, nine, you know, and and I I kept, you know, doing the same things and developing this skill which I didn't know. You know, like I was developing this skill, but you and me, I know we have this really strong feeling about people and I think it is because we have to learn to read people.

Jodie Fielden: 9:29

Yeah, look we do, you become hyper vigilant. Um, so later on I can be just sitting in any room, anywhere and I can feel what the tension that are with people, you know in a pub, you know like growing up in nightclubs, and that I'd just be able to feel, and that ended up being a skill because of one of my jobs I ended up having. But, yeah, so it really did. And you know, at school I was bullied a lot as well. It really did, and you know, at school I was bullied a lot as well.

Jodie Fielden: 10:06

So I never had a safe place until, except for my nannas, and my nan and pa are beautiful, beautiful people and they raised my. I had a little brother as well, craig, and he was eight years younger than me and he was my stepfather and mum's son, and so when mum died, craig was only seven and, yeah, I was like 15, 14. And so Craig ended up living with Nana and I ended up in between my godparents and my nan and pa's and I wanted to leave school and the rule was in our household I couldn't leave school unless I had an apprenticeship. I couldn't just have a job, it had to be an apprenticeship or otherwise I had to stay in school, so I went into hairdressing and now my mum was a hairdresser and and had a salon back in the country and, um, you know, I used to tear around there and people would say to me you know, oh, will you be a hairdresser like your mum? No, nope, I'm not doing, I'm not doing this, I'm not doing this job. It doesn't make enough money. It was a little country salon.

Jodie Fielden: 11:33

Yeah, like this is back in the 80s and it was just we never had money and it wasn't that the salon wasn't making money, it was my stepfather had come in and take the money out of the till and go to the pub. So I think it was my stepfather had come in and take the money out of the till and go to the pub. So yeah, I think it was more about I'm not going to have this life?

Adri Varga: 12:05

I think, yes, but um, yeah. So you, you just mentioned, you know, like you, like, that was the rules in the family that if you want to stop uh, oh yeah to uh going to school, you have to be come on apprentice. But before we get in there, you know, I really wanted to know. You know, like, what did you really want it to be when you grow up? What was the idea? You know, I really wanted to know. You know, like, what did you really want it to be when you grow up? What was the idea?

Jodie Fielden: 12:27

you know I always thought I was going to be either a vet when I was a kid, growing up a vet, um and then in high school I decided I wanted to be a marine biologist, because I was actually quite good at science and stuff. So I was like that's what I'll do. So, yeah, yeah, nothing, to nowhere near the path that I ended up on yeah, yeah it just completely changed.

Jodie Fielden: 12:54

So, um, yeah, so, uh, I picked hairdressing because I knew it. I already knew my way around a salon and I wanted to get out and so, um, I picked hairdressing and then, literally two weeks after I started my apprenticeship, mum passed away. So, yeah, and I was made to go to work the day after she died. I turned up at work and, um, and they, let me have the day off for a funeral and back to work the day after a funeral.

Adri Varga: 13:29

It was very, very different times, isn't it From what we have Very different times, yep, yep.

Jodie Fielden: 13:36

Wouldn't be nothing like that nowadays.

Adri Varga: 13:39

No. So what do you think? What was the biggest lesson you were, you know, like you were about to take from your childhood?

Jodie Fielden: 13:53

I didn't really learn the biggest lesson until I was in my teens, but once I learned, that was not to allow fear to govern me, to know that I can stand on my own two feet and protect myself and protect others, and definitely not to let any man ever treat me the way that I saw them treat my mom ever treat me the way that I saw them treat my mom, yeah, which is an amazing learning, because you see, like when we are growing up in this kind of situation, you know, like we have sort of two choices, really, or just two ways people normally go.

Adri Varga: 14:36

One is that then people are or women especially copying what their mother did, so they go down the same path, or it ends up being.

Jodie Fielden: 14:49

It ends up being generational trauma. Like it. It actually is passed on in your dna and everything that you learn you know like and it takes years it takes uh as many generations that does the damage to undo the damage and maybe more. And it has to be conscious. You have to be consciously aware that you need to undo this trauma that's been passed to you yeah, it's a conscious decision and, and it is true, scientifically it can go back to 14 generations.

Adri Varga: 15:21

So you know, like the the pattern, what you are copying, you are absolutely unaware of and you attracting the same man, attracting the same life situations, or you and me, we actually changed everything, so I was exactly the same. You know, like I said, this is what I learned, this is what I don't want and I don't want this kind of man I don't want. So, when it comes to your relationship with Graham, you have a beautiful husband. So do you want to tell a little bit more about your marriage and your kids?

Jodie Fielden: 15:58

Yeah, look, there's, how do there's like so many things? I wanted to say all at once, um that yes, it like you said about we change it, but for it to remain change. This is really important because people, a lot of people, miss this step is that you can't just change yourself. You, if you have children, then you need to make sure your children are consciously aware of breaking the pattern and teaching them to be strong and powerful. So that's what I instill with Harper. You know like she goes to kickboxing, she goes to karate, you know, for her to empower herself because she's very anxious and she's also both my kids are on the autism spectrum and I'll probably come back to that once I've done a bit of the timeline, because I think it really shows, like, the changes that you go through to get to a place, because I don't just go straight from that trauma to being happily married. Um, there was a massive, there's a massive development there in the middle. Um, but I did want to say, like with my daughter, um, empowerment and making sure that she's never fearful of a man or woman but she has her own power, that no one she's not controlled. Um, she goes to a christian school and in the school. They say you know you must obey, and that triggered me, remember when I, like, I got that email and I said to them straight away my daughter's not going to blindly obey anybody, I don't care who you are, she's not obeying you. You know she will follow you and she will follow instructions, but she's not obeying anyone. That word is out of our like. That's a big no-no to me. So, yeah, it's so. Those kind of things I'm very passionate about, especially with girls. So I'll bring the timeline back a little bit.

Jodie Fielden: 18:04

So after mum passed away, I did my apprenticeship. I had, but in the background actually, the person that came to the door is one of the people that influenced my life. They were friends of my mum and Glenn started teaching me karate when I was in high school, getting bullied, and that I think he just did it to sort of help me and make me feel better. And then, years later, I ended up getting into mixed martial arts and different things like that and I was told by the guy that I was training with that the best training I can get, because I wanted to do tournament fighting, was to work as a bouncer in some nightclubs. So I ended up becoming a hairdressing bouncer. I worked in some very rough establishments, you know there were some nights I've had a gun pulled on me, I've had someone with a knife, I've had someone try and run me over, I've had footballers try and fight me or have fought with me, you know.

Jodie Fielden: 19:16

So, very physical hands-on, it's not just like the door wench that sits there taking the ticket. I was actually hands-on physically manhandling. Um, men in nightclubs. I hated doing the women because they scratch, yeah, and and girls. You know those volatile situations a

woman actually has. We have some really great techniques that we can defuse men quite easily. Um, yeah, but uh, there's certain men though that and we were saying this in the last podcast that you know, weak men prey on vulnerable women and that's what my stepfather did. He was a very weak man, had no backbone with other men, um, but yeah, he preyed on my mum. Um, so, yeah, I was. I learned not to be fearful of men through empowering myself.

Jodie Fielden: 20:20

And then, one day after mum passed away, a couple of years later, um, my little brother, uh, my stepfather had never turned up to pick up my little brother for his visits and all these kind of things. He just let the poor kid down and he's traumatized. He's only seven, he's lost his mum. And then, two years later, after we lost mum I think it was we lost my grandfather. So then it was just Nan and us, um, and I went to live with some family friends.

Jodie Fielden: 20:53

Um, during this time, and and I came back and I was, uh, paul had not picked Craig up again. And then he came and saw me at work to try and have a conversation with me about something, and I must have been I think I might have been like 19 or something and I finally stood up to him and I stood over him because he started doing, you know, the finger pointing, that's a yeah, I hate, don't put your hand in my face and um, and he started doing that to me and I stood up to him and took a step towards him and the next thing he he did was like cowered away and like his voice changed, his demeanor changed, everything about him just changed. And then it was then that I learned that powerful lesson of um weak men don't like strong women, because we're not afraid of them, you know.

Adri Varga: 21:49

Yes.

Jodie Fielden: 21:52

And so that was probably when we were talking about the thing in my life that influenced my childhood the most was learning that I don't have to be afraid of anyone, and so yeah, we've. Where are we up to?

Adri Varga: 22:09

I got sidetracked yeah, you just wanted to go back to the timeline, because I jumped the timeline I felt, you know, like, uh, probably it was time to go to how you changed everything for yourself, because your husband, the person you choose, is completely different from the experiences you had yeah but in the same time you were talking about uh, you know, uh, you were. It takes that you need to see some of these things.

Jodie Fielden: 22:37

So, yeah, that becoming a bouncer and things like that, this is what empowered me. And then I was um, and because we talk about business, some of my career progressions through there was that I ended up leaving hairdressing because I was pretty wild in my 20s and I was at the pub with my girlfriend playing pool and these guys made a bet that I couldn't

do roofing because I was telling them a story about my dad who was a roofer. And I'm like, yes, I can, I can do roofing. I'm a girl who can do anything boys can do. So I ended up roofing. So I left hairdressing. So I became a roofing bouncer and working two jobs, because by this stage I had my brother come live with me when he was 15 and I think I was 23.

Jodie Fielden: 23:34

So I was raising at 23, I was raising a teenage boy who was very trauma like, who had a lot of behavioural stuff going on back then too. He's grown up into a fine young man now. Stuff going on back then too. He's grown up into a fine young man now, but, um, yeah, so a confused 20s. I look at 20 year olds now and I think, oh, my god, what was I thinking, raising a 15 year old. So, um, I had to work two jobs and then I ended up falling in a roof and going, okay, this, we'll finish this, and went back to hairdressing and started managing salons. Because I was managing salons since I was 19 years old when I just finished my apprenticeship. So, and in that time, you know, um, when people say it takes a village, it was only my nan and my auntie, but my auntie, uh, wasn't that close with us when, uh, I was in my 20s, because I wasn't a very nice person and, um, and we used to clash. I we're fabulous now, but we used to clash. And so then, having Craig living with me, and then I, because I didn't, I'm good at hairdressing, but I just am not a good employee. I don't like being told what to do, yeah, then I decided I wanted to change careers again because I never wanted to be a hairdresser anyway. So what people don't realize is that your skills, that you learn hairdressing, is actually very transferable to go outside the industry and I went into asset management. So I started working there and so, if you can slowly see where I've kind of gone, from some really rough and wild people surrounding me to.

Jodie Fielden: 25:31

All of a sudden I kind of changed. I made a conscious choice again no, I don't want this lifestyle, so I want something more for myself. So that's why I went into asset management and I didn't finish year 10. Like, they gave me a pd certificate, mum was dying that year so I only attended maybe for two terms out of the hole, um, but I scraped through. So I ended up going in um as client services, like bottom of the bottom, and but my skills with hairdressing and being able to speak with people and you know um having those people skills, uh, I was able to get a role in their uh client services. And then, through the banking, in that I did, I educated myself, doing their courses and you know, I kept progressing. And I progressed all the way through until I was was distributions manager of one of the big world asset management companies and DWS, and in that time I met my husband, graham. So I was surrounding myself in my work environment with completely different people. I hadn't completely changed my personal group of friends so much.

Jodie Fielden: 26:51

And vitamins up there, yeah, yeah. But then I met Graham and I thought, oh, that's a funny story, poor Graham.

Adri Varga: 27:06

Yeah, I just want to stop here for a moment because it's very important what you did really you, you changed the environment and this is extremely important if we want to get or see

changes in our life. You need to change your environment because in the environment where you were frustrated and you're with words, you know you are saying you weren't really a nice person because all the frustrations, agitations and you know like you were in an environment where that was sort of a norm. You know like, obviously, working in a pub, you know like fighting, you know bad language and everything else. So you shifted to a working environment and that shift is actually started to shift everything else in your life, just like you said. You know like you met a baby girl there.

Adri Varga: 28:01

So this is a funny story, feel free to tell us funny story.

Jodie Fielden: 28:12

It does. Feel free to tell us. Um, so, when we met. So this is when RSVP dating first started, because all the guys that, um, we were around were all rat bags and and you know they weren't. They were the people I knew that I would never be with um and I had no intention of being with someone like them. And so my girlfriend and I had had a couple of venos and we decided oh, you know, we'll try this RSVP, which used to be an online dating thing I don't know if it's there anymore and nowadays it's actually quite acceptable to say online dating but back in 2006, when RSVP first started, it was.

Jodie Fielden: 28:46

You know, you were pretty lame if you had to say online dating, but back in 2006, when RSVP first started, it was. You know, you were pretty lame if you had to go online to get a date. Now, you can only get a date if you go online. So, um, we, uh, we met there and um, great, you'll have to double check with Graham, who contacted who first, I think. I think we had the free account, so I may have put a like on his picture because we weren't spending money on it.

Jodie Fielden: 29:14

So he ended up sending me a message, so he had to pay to speak to me yeah and I put, I put paul graham through the ringer when we met, you know, like the first day on our first date, I made him come to my brother's football game, um, that he was playing and I was standing in amongst all the team at the end of the game and and his mates and my friends and that and um, graham had to walk across the football oval in front of everyone in his. He was in a really nice, like Graham's, from a very lovely family, very, let's say, upper crust, and I was really low crust. We were, you know, as I grew up, you know we were looking at moving into a housing commission that's how broke my mum was and the housing commission looked like it was a step up from you know. Yeah, so, so, seeing Graham walking across the field in his you know Armani's and all the rest of it across this football field in downtown Umina, um, it was hilarious and the the confidence he had to be able to do that, to walk over.

Jodie Fielden: 30:29

So I'm like all right, okay, because most guys probably would have said there's no way, I'm not, or taken one, look at and just gone, no, so, yeah, we went on our first date, yeah, and it was actually my, my first alpha, my first date with Graham. So I was 26. Was I when I met Graham, I can't remember, or 28, I think I might've been 28. I was 28. I had to just quickly do the math and I'd never had a date because I had never met anyone that like I'd been out and gone out but never a proper date. So Graham was my first proper real boyfriend and first real date. Yeah.

Adri Varga: 31:19

So that's amazing, that's really really good. And then obviously you know like you ended up married and having two beautiful children, and then new challenges started to come to your life.

Jodie Fielden: 31:33

So obviously yes so we did that. I actually fell pregnant just before my wedding and at this point Graham and I had been together for two years and I was really unhappy in my work. And Graham said, well, let's go and buy a salon. So that's when we purchased the salon and we had the salon for two years and then we ready to get married. Right, this is how, yeah, I, I went out, I, I, yeah, back then I even went and had liposuction to get ready for this wedding. Right, I bought, um, a beautiful dress. That was a lot of money, it was over \$10,000 I spent on this wedding dress. It was ridiculous. Right, all thank you to being able to have a business that works. I'll just throw that in there. But so, two days before the wedding, this is how like mayhem is in my life. So one, I had the liposuction to get ready and then I fell pregnant six weeks after I had the liposuction and then I was. That was like four weeks, so I was four months pregnant by the time we got to the wedding. And then, two days before the wedding, the salon nearly burnt down and I was living above the salon at the time, so I'm running around um trying to, you know the the salon was completely sorted out. So we're trying to um have clients in there because they our clients were very particular and they it didn't matter if the salon was sorted out you can get the air vents in there and still blow dry my hair for my Saturday, for my Friday and Saturday weekend.

Jodie Fielden: 33:36

And then came along Harper, which is my first daughter, my only daughter, my first child. And then, when Harper was four months old, I fell pregnant with Bryn. So then I had Bryn and we'll talk about later about everything that went on on the business side of things while all this is happening. And then, probably when Bryn was 18 months old, um, and Harper was, uh, two years, probably nearly two and a half, maybe three when I got her diagnosis it was in there somewhere, um, that Harper was diagnosed with autism and sensory processing disorder and speech delays, which was okay. There's other family members on Graham's side of the family that have autism, and his sister, who's a university professor, and things like that. So my experience of autism was okay. Well, they're quirky, they've got their own interests, they're very, you know, all these things that people, the perception people get from, and I hate, um, this stigma, but you know, like the good, is it the good doctor? I don't know the one where he's a doctor and he's autistic, and and then, um, you know, like maybe sheldon cooper on big bang theory you know, those were my experiences

of it, plus graham's um sister who is the uni professor, right, and then so that's, I'm like okay, well, um, that's, that's okay, we can deal with that.

Jodie Fielden: 35:29

And then, uh, along came Bryn, and and he was we always knew there was something a little bit different with Harper, because even as a baby she wouldn't look at people if they were overstimulating, like if they were too animated. And getting in her face and going and garring Harper's face goes blank and her eyes just shoot away and it's just the lights are off, nobody's home, you can't get her attention back. So I used to like get people to sort of back off and but I'd also be making apologies, like, oh, she's not rude, she's not rude, she's just, you know, like making apologies for a baby anyway. Um, that's how society makes you feel about things. Is that you need to apologise?

Jodie Fielden: 36:10

Anyway, along came Bryn, and Bryn was what we call neurotypical, so normal for those people out there that aren't aware of these terms and he was meeting all his milestones, doing all the typical things that two-year-olds are supposed to do, and had been saying you know his single words and stuff. And then one day my cousin, who's his godmother, said to me I haven't heard Bryn say anything for a while, have you? And I thought, no, actually, no, I haven't, I'm sure I have. Anyway. So we started watching him for the next couple of days like a hawk and all his words. There were no words. There was no mom, dad, truck, dog. There was, you know nothing. And so we ended up going to a pediatrician and, um, he gave, uh, he did these tests and that, and we got the diagnosis of level 3 ASD, which is autistic.

Jodie Fielden: 37:17

Level 3 is the lowest form of autism. People call it low functioning. It's not low functioning, it's so complicated. But for the ease of people to understand, you've got one end that, uh, you know the, the good doctor and that that you see on tv. And then you've got the other end where they're banging their heads um, you know all that, um, banging their heads, big meltdowns on the floor, kicking, screaming holes in walls. So that's level three. And nonverbal and OCD, adhd, odd, so all these acronyms right that go in which are like all these behavior things and it was so hard to hear that and the journey you have to look, I'll get teary again. I thought I wouldn't the second time talking about it. The grieving process that you need to go to takes years for you to not grieve that I have a disabled child. It's grieving my expectations of my child's future. Yes, okay, you can come in and talk for a minute now.

Adri Varga: 38:45

All right, I'm just going to give a little bit of a space, a little bit of a moment for you. But yeah, I remember I was already in your life when you had Harper and Bryn and I remember with Bryn I was holding him and he was completely a normal baby for quite a while, a normal baby for quite a while. And then I was very, very surprised when you shared with me that you got the diagnosis. And also when you got the diagnosis and everything, you still had your salon and we're going to talk about that a little bit later. But you really tried very hard to balance everything and you did a really really good job to balancing everything. Most people they didn't even know what you were going through and obviously after a while you had to

give up the salon and again, we're going to get into that a little bit later because you choose to focus on your children and this is yeah sorry.

Jodie Fielden: 40:00

Yeah, look, it did. I had to. I only my kids always first. I didn't have any. So by this stage Graham's parents when we had the kids, they weren't living near us and they were helping his younger sister with her young kids and then their own grandchildren, kayla, our niece she'd had her first as well. So Graham's parents were helping that side of the family. I had no one on my side of the family. I had my auntie, sharon, but she worked full time and so she would be there when she could. Graham had been made redundant. When was it? I think it was just before Bryn was born and then started a new job. Was that Harper? I can't remember, it was one or the other. Graham had started a new job that's right just before Harper. So I had no one to help me.

Jodie Fielden: 41:05

You know I would have to take Harper as a newborn baby in my sling because I lived above the salon. These are just kind of some examples of when Adriana said that I was trying to do everything. You know I would have Harper in my sling as a three-day-old baby blow-drying someone's hair, you know, or taking. I had to start expressing so I couldn't keep breastfeeding because I had to work. So I would grab Harper in the bottle and run it up to her godfather, who was the florist two doors up, which Adriana knows Joe. So I'd hand Harper over to Jojo and her bottle and a nappy, and I'll be back in an hour when I finish this client. So I never got to have that special one-on-one time with Harper.

Jodie Fielden: 41:47

And then when Bryn came, um, I had uh, you there and I think that's when I convinced you to start managing for me because I was really heavily pregnant with Bryn. Um, so I could have, but then I had the two of them and Graham had to work because his job required that he had to. He got it like two weeks off but I had no one. So we ended up moving and this is why we moved away from the salon, because I had no one to support me. And this is just before the diagnosis that I was already overwhelmed with the business and two, you know, babies you know only what, 14 months apart. So I moved out to West Pennant Hills where I had more family friends.

Jodie Fielden: 42:42

So the people that took me in when I was a teenager, chris and Glenn, these were the family friends I was mentioning before that so I could do my apprenticeship, I used to stay at their place and they treated me like one of their kids and they're actually the people that taught me that husbands and wives do not hurt each other. You know like a man is not supposed to hurt a woman, either with his words or with his fists. You know, and because I remember we'll talk when we were talking about the trauma they might, they were having a disagreement about something and I sat there frozen in terror, thinking, oh my god, when do I go out? And God, when do I go out and intervene, like, when do I go out and protect Chris? You know like what's going to happen, and I was sitting there listening for the thud.

Jodie Fielden: 43:39

You know that telltale thud that sends you running. Yeah, so no, thud came and no, like screaming, no, having to call the police, and I thought what's going on there? And then the next morning they were fine and just the relationship between them and the caring and the loving and the supporting, and the backwards and forwards, and you know, like everything they did together and they always taught me that, um, as a husband and wife, you need to put yourselves first as a relationship, because the kids will one day grow up and leave and then you know you're going to be with this person, but in by doing that and having a great relationship between yourselves teaches your kids to have a great relationship and that passes on to your kids, like if you're happy, your kids are happy you know, and it flows down the same way as poop.

Jodie Fielden: 44:41

I won't swear on the podcast because I don't think we've got explicit language warning, but poop rolls downhill, right. So if kids are seeing parents behaving in a way, that's what they learn to expect, right? So it was Chris and Glenn that taught me those big things as well. Um and uh, why I ended up with someone as amazing as Graham. And, just a little hint, we don't fight. We might have a disagreement, but I think maybe we've only ever had one what you would call fight, but nothing ever like what I grew up with, anyway. So I moved closer to them so that, Chris, I would have some help. And then that's when we got the diagnosis.

Jodie Fielden: 45:31

And, as I was saying, you know like that, grieving the future, like even now I see 13 year old boys out playing football, out skating down the street, running down to go for a surf. You know like, here in Copacabana they start. You know we, the kids know, learn how to surf and and everything, and Bryn can swim like a fish. Um, but you know from like, maybe age 10, 11, they grab a surfboard and they go out surfing in six foot surf by themselves. You know like if my dad can't be there with them. They'll run down and have an early morning surf and come back yeah so Bryn will never be able to do that.

Jodie Fielden: 46:17

Um, the realization that Bryn won't, um, probably he won't have a family. Um, he's not. I think maybe he will learn to drive a car, but someone's going to have to be really brave to get in there with him. You know like, and back then I thought, oh, he's going to live with me forever. I'm going to be changing his nappy as an adult. You know, like all these different things, that you have to grieve and let it go, so that you can focus on the future he can have instead of the future he won't have.

Adri Varga: 47:06

Yes, sorry, no, it's all good. It's all good. Yeah, it is extremely challenging to see and not to see the future for your child like a bright future, but in the same time, I know how much this picture has changed for you guys, because you're doing absolutely everything to give the absolute best life for your children, and Bryn went through a lot of therapy and he's still going

through lots of therapy and he's very, very different from now from what you were thinking it's ever going to be.

Adri Varga: 47:47

So can you just share with us? Uh, you know, like where he's at right now and, uh, you know like that's actually a little bit uh, uh, more happier story than where we. You know where, where you started. You just were.

Jodie Fielden: 48:01

Yeah, so Bryn is bright, like he has language now, like we were told he'd never speak. Uh, and this is where I think it was temple grandin, um was our first introduction to this end of the spectrum and she said don't ever place limitations, the only limits, um, your autistic child will have the limits that you put on them. They don't know that they have limits and don't assume they can't do something. Always assume they can. And then, if they are having trouble or that they're unable to do it, you find a way to enable them to do it so that they can do the things that they want. And then you know there's a whole end of a community. That brings in a whole other thing that other people call you an ableist because you're empowered, but for me it's not. It's about empowering Bryn to make his own choices so that he can advocate for himself. So Bryn now can tell me if he is sick or if he's hurt within reason, like I can't get a clear picture, but you know, this morning he's like sore throat, which is actually him just trying to get out of school. Today he even convinced this morning, he convinced the teacher a little back note to understand this Bryn was sick, probably earlier this year, on a Thursday and the first time he's actually been sick as sick as he was. And I said, okay, we'll stay home in bed. You need to rest in bed if you're sick. And you stay home. Well, the next Thursday, lo and behold, he's sick again and he tucked himself back into bed and he's like oh no, bryn's sick, sore throat. See, I'm like, nah, mate, I've checked his temperature, he's on the forehead, you're not sick, get up, get to school. So for a couple of months every Thursday he bunged on the sick trick. Anyway. Today, um, this morning he comes down, he goes, oh, sore throat. And I'm like, oh no. And then I went it's Thursday, sure enough it's a Thursday. I'm like, no, mate, you're not sick. So he sent him to school. I gave him a throat lozenger. There's no temperature, no snuffle, no, nothing like that. He gets to school and he tells his teacher oh, bryn's sick, sore throat. Up into the doctor's office, wait for mum. So that's the sequencing in the way that Bryn speaks. And so she's like oh no, you're all right. And he's like Bryn's sick, bryn's sick, call mum. So she called me and she goes look, bryn's telling me he's got a sore throat and he needs to call mum, and she goes. I don't know that he's got a sore throat and he needs to call mum, and she goes. I don't know that he's sick. And I said he's not sick, it's Thursday, and so she goes, are you sure? And I'm like, yeah, and Bryn, she goes. Bryn, do you want to talk to mum? So she put Bryn on the phone. I'm like, mate, you're not sick, go and get a. Jess will take you to the canteen and get you a throat lozenger and you can have a throat. And he's like, oh, no, sick, come home. I'm like, no, you're not sick. And he just starts laughing. And then Jess is like he's laughing. I'm like, yeah, he's not sick.

Jodie Fielden: 51:27

You know, and I shared the other day with like the family and you, you know he's been watching this thing on YouTube at school and so Bryn's in high school now. Um, he, he's, uh, where he's gone from it? I'll come back to this story. So he went from a special school for

autism where they said that you know, they can't do anything to help him. His behaviours are terrible. He used to abscond, break into the principal's office, beat up teachers, all sorts of things. To now he's in a mainstream high school in a support unit. Now Bryn's in year seven.

Jodie Fielden: 52:07

He is big. I'm 5'9". He's the same height as me now with size 11 no size, uh, 14 men's shoe okay, so he's a big kid. Um, he's gone and picked up the grate for the drain and grabbed one of the other kids and tried to put them into the, into the drain and to enact a um, a scene from youtube. And so the teacher sent me a message going um, we're going to be getting the um, uh, the handyman to screw down all the drains, but is there anything you can do to get him to stop trying to put kids in the drains? They're getting upset and I'm just like. So I had a conversation with him and he stopped. But yeah, he just does like. People think that he can't understand them, but he can understand every word that they say. It might take him a little while to process, but he's very and he's just got a wicked sense of humor.

Adri Varga: 53:09

He's so funny yes, I absolutely agree about you know, like his sense of humor and and all those things. But what I really appreciate about your parenting, and I always say you know, like your kids are so happy to have two such a beautiful parents for them, like they were born in the perfect family because they are so loved, so supported, and you don't treat them like they have any issues or anything. They have boundaries, they have to do things. They cannot get away from anything because you say, oh, you know like they are, you know they are autistic, so I cannot, you know, ask them to do things, like they have routines, cannot ask them to do things. They have routines and they have to do things and most of the time they can't get away with anything.

Adri Varga: 53:58

You just treat them like normal children and I think this is a great advantage for them because, as you mentioned, you do not put limitations. As you mentioned, you know, like you do not put limitations, you actually opened up a door and a gate for them to experience life. You guide them, you help them and this is how Bryn ended up being in a position where he is right now, when you are actually thinking about my. One day he will be able to, you know, live independently with a support worker, so you don't need to be there all the time. So, yeah, when it comes to you know, to you juggling family, kids and business, next time we're going to get into that part. But before we leave, we left my interview with me telling the story how we met. So can you tell your side of the story, how we met before we finish this podcast?

Jodie Fielden: 55:00

Yeah, yeah, we can.

Jodie Fielden: 55:04

So Graham had, when we had taken over the salon, we had two renter chair people and I had a big salon. I had 13 staff and quite a few chairs in there, and it worked out really well

because when we couldn't find staff, if you think back then, there was the skill shortage, which is having a bit of the skill shortage, which is similar. It started with having a bit of that skill shortage again now, but back in 2008, 9, 10. Hang on, harper was born in 10, wasn't she? Yeah, I came in 10. Yeah, so 2010,.

Jodie Fielden: 55:47

We used to have to use the backpacker visas and that for stylists, and usually they were from Ireland, so I had a lot of Irish stylists in the salon. One of the renter chairs left and Graham said, oh, we should get another one, because it worked out really well that, like, when we were too busy, um, I could, uh, I would get them to do my clients and we'd do a commission, we'd do a split, you know, um, and that worked really well, uh. And so Graham said, oh, we'll get someone in, and he said put an ad in. I said I don't have time to put an ad in. You put an ad in. You do it, I'm doing everything else. So Graham did, and Audrey, I think, audrey, graham must have seen your. You'll need to remind me of these bits. Graham must have seen your is. Yes, you'll need to remind me these bits. Yeah, okay.

Jodie Fielden: 56:48

So and Graham reached out to Audrey and um, and organized for her to come in. And, uh, I'd said to Graham all right, well, I'll be at home, because the salon, our unit, was above the salon and the kitchen was just behind the salon, so you could come through the salon into my kitchen. And so in comes this tall I think you were a brunette at the time, weren't you? Yes, yes, yeah, this tall, very stylish thing we may have even had on, like those leather pants. I used to wear those leather pants and very stylish woman into the kitchen and she said hello, I'm Adriana. I'm like sorry, what's your name? I couldn't, I was so thrown by the accent. It took me years to like and, plus, you hadn't been like, you hadn't been. How many years had you been in Australia at that time?

Adri Varga: 57:40

Nine years, yeah, nine years.

Jodie Fielden: 57:42

Nine years okay, I came with my language, so the accent was yeah so the accent was stronger than it is today and we just got on so well and you were just so kind and like the first thing you did was like Harper didn't look away from you, like Harper actually engaged with you. Um, and I was feeding Harper and she was sitting up on a bumbo on the kitchen table with a little round bobble head. My daughter has a very spherical head, like her father. She inherited the ball and um, so she had this little round head and Audrey was just so lovely and the moment that you came in how we were talking about we can sense people I just relaxed straight away. I didn't have.

Jodie Fielden: 58:33

Usually when I meet strangers I'm very standoffish and you know I'm not quick to warm to people unless I'm working, and then you know it's a persona, it's not who I am.

Jodie Fielden: 58:47

So, meeting Adria and it was just instant I like this chick, you know, like she's so cool, and we just clicked from there, I think it was. And then it was, think two weeks after you started, when I'd found, like in between, where Adria said, yes, she'd come, she'd like the seat, and we said, yes, you know, we filled out all the agreement and everything. Within the two weeks of Adria starting, I found out that I was pregnant with Bryn, and then that's it. And this is how comfortable I felt with Adriana, because her first day in there I said, oh, I want to talk to you about something. Um, how do you feel about managing the salon when I'm, uh, have the baby and Adriana's just like what. So that's how comfortable I was with you from like just that first interaction and the way we sort of negotiated around the um. Everything was that uh, the um that I instantly trusted you yes, yes, it's.

Adri Varga: 59:59

Uh, it was very interesting because, obviously, personally, I went through a couple of things in the same time. You know, the salon just shut down where I was working. They didn't give us too much of the notice. So I was like I'm trying to find a place to to work or to take my clients, which was amazingly, you know like, you provided a place for me and you know like, my ex left to go to China to build a factory and I was suddenly by myself and you know there was so many things in my level too and then you came and you said, oh, by the way, you know like, would you like to manage the salon for me?

Adri Varga: 1:00:40

And I was just like, oh, my God, I can't even think right now. I just wanted to start to look after my clients. But yeah, exactly what it was, you know like, this is how our relationship started and what we are going to do in our next podcast. We're going to go through how our relationship has formed and how we sort of went to different path for a little while, and then we again joined together after six years or five years, after five years, I think.

Jodie Fielden: 1:01:20

It was five years. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Adri Varga: 1:01:22

Yeah, five years, not even speaking too much. Uh, you know, like sometimes uh talking to each other but not really, and then we have we ended up having our company now uh focused. So but we thought it's very important for us to share with you guys that no one's journey is simple and easy, and might people look like that they have a perfect life? Actually, everything is learning and in life and what we learn from situation.

Jodie Fielden: 1:01:58

This is who we become yeah, exactly, and you know you need to. It's when you go through adversity, like you see it in all the um quotes and all the rest of it. But those quotes are there for a reason because it's true when you go through adversity and challenges, you actually learn resilience, um, and you can either learn the lesson that the universe is giving you or you can ignore it and it will find another way to teach you.

Jodie Fielden: 1:02:27

I think that's the one thing I always if you get backed into a corner, you need to do the things that you've been avoiding, but, yeah, having the strength but also surrounding yourself with the people that can lift you up instead of hold you back. And I think that's another big one that I learned on my journey that you know I surround myself with people like you and Kristen, Glenn and Graham, and you know all my other girlfriends and that that I have now they're all people. When you look around, when you other girlfriends, and that that I have now they're all people. When you look around, when you look at the people that you surround yourself with, you get a fairly good indication of who you are as a person. So I think you know it's.

Adri Varga: 1:03:17

And your story is especially for a very, very, very motivational for me because you know like we did have a similar, you know, start, but a big difference is that I still have my mother, who is an absolutely strong woman, and she was always there for us and for you really to grow up in an environment, be in an environment, which were really, as you said you know, like lower class, and then you make a decision and you change everything for yourself and now you are in a completely different environment. It just comes back to if any of our listeners is struggling with their environment, it is actually a way out. So if you don't like that, it's slowly, slowly you can move out from it.

Jodie Fielden: 1:04:15

Yeah, you can. And look, it takes time and it takes having the right people around you to be able to. It doesn't happen overnight, you know it can take, you know, years. So but it does happen if you're just consciously, every day, making those decisions that you're going to do it differently. Yes, absolutely.

Adri Varga: 1:04:38

Rufus is in the background back there.

Jodie Fielden: 1:04:39

I don't know if you can hear him through there.

Adri Varga: 1:04:42

That's all right, all good. I think that's it for today. We can finish for today. If you want to follow us, you can follow us on Instagram, Facebook and TikTok. Our handle is FocusedGDT and we are going to see you at our next podcast. Bye for now, all right, see you later, guys.

Jodie Fielden: 1:05:06

Bye.

Speaker 1: 1:05:08

Well, that was Beyond the Mirror. Thank you for being a part of this exhilarating adventure. Join Adri and Jodi next week as they continue to help you unlock the true potential of your

business so you can leave your limitations behind and embrace the endless possibilities that lie beyond the mirror. And if you have a burning question that you'd like to feature as a guest on this podcast, just leave us a message at the podcast page at focusgdt.com. So until next time, keep pushing boundaries, keep thriving and always remember that your success is right here, right, right now, beyond the mirror.