

5 MINUTES WITH



MARINA PASSALARIS OF BEAUTIFUL MINDS

What was your first job? I worked at a theatre restaurant as a singer/performer and waitress. It was fun and as I was at theatre school at the time, it was my perfect first job.

Who was the biggest influence on your career? And why? My life has been the biggest influence. I have had an incredible journey so far. The experiences and the people along the way have made me who I am and in turn guided my direction.

What led you to the industry you are in today? I was always incredibly arty at school. I came third in the South African Dalro performance and drama championships. At just 16, I sang in London and Vienna at the International Chamber Choir competition. My solo and group work won me first place in the international titles. From there my focus was performance and drama.

I was fortunate to attend the exclusive Waterfront Theatre School in Cape Town, South Africa. I completed a diploma, at Trinity of London, in dance, theatre, singing and stage make up. On my free days, I worked at a talent and modelling agency to gain industry experience. I then studied styling and fashion design. To me, the design side all really linked in with my theatre and drama past. I was

making creative pieces and being a part of fashion shows. I also did a make up course at nights, which I really loved.

What inspired you to start your own business, Beautiful Minds? After working in the modelling industry, which is known for negatively affecting girls' confidence, I realised that there was a real need to educate girls more about their emotions. Beautiful Minds has been a vision of mine for many years. I want to show young girls that they are beautiful inside and out.

How did you come up with the beautiful minds program and what made you move out of the modelling/talent industry?

I wanted to take all my years of experience and cover the grooming and department lessons but add in all the vital life skills. I wrote a program that I wish I had done as a young girl.

How do you manage the stress of operating your own business? I have excellent time management skills and I make sure I make the time I need for myself to unwind.

What's the best thing about running your own business? The best part is having control over what direction the business is taking.

What's the most challenging thing about running your own school? The most challenging part is educating the public that we are not just another grooming and department course.

If you weren't running Beautiful Minds, what would you love to be doing? I am doing everything I want to be doing. I am having a ball!

What's the best piece of business advice you have been given? My dad always used to tell me that my reputation (business or personal) was vital; once you damage that... you have a problem.

In your spare time what do you enjoy? I love walking on the beach, spending time in nature and time with family and friends.

Where do you want to be in five years time? I would like to see my program in every school in Australia. I have also written my first book, which is due to be published later this year so in five years I would like another two published books.

Do you have a philosophy for life?
"When in doubt...don't" *bm*



Business is mostly about winning – and sometimes about being lost.

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Mike Walker
0424 471 151

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