

# Blaise Graham

*Find Your North*  
Coaching and Counselling



*“WiRE” program has set me free. I was so bound by all the rules and expectations of my place in the world, starting a business and creating success for myself seemed impossible. The skills, knowledge, and connections I have gained from WiRE have given me a solid base to step out of that shadow and embrace my potential.*

## YOU AND YOUR VENTURE

### **What words would describe you as a person?**

Empathetic, Independent, Strong, Forthright and Nurturing.

### **Describe how you would pitch your venture**

*Find Your North* is a coaching and counselling service that encourages you to embrace your fears and limitations, utilising them to create the life you want.

With a variety of strategies, we empower you to reflect, connect and embrace your self confidence with a no-nonsense but sensitive approach.

### **At what stage is your venture?**

Growth

### **What is your service or product?**

One-on-one counselling services, workshops, online programs and content writing.

### **What is the structure of your venture?**

Solo

### **What type of venture do you have?**

Small business entrepreneurship.

### **Does your venture reach local/national/international markets/audiences?**

Local and national.

## IDENTITY

### **In one word, characterise your life as an entrepreneur (why this particular word)?**

Chaotic. I am often found multitasking or busily working away at unusual times of the day or night when my children are asleep. Having said that, the chaos allows me to be both mum and business owner.

### **What does success mean to you?**

Having the ability to do what I love, to benefit others while creating opportunities for myself and my family. Being self-sufficient (career and financial wise) is a big part of that.

### **What is your favourite aspect of being an entrepreneur?**

The sense of accomplishment that comes with making decisions, taking risks, accepting opportunities you never thought possible, is incredibly invigorating.

## **MOTIVATION / MINDSET**

### **What mindset(s) helps make you successful?**

My clients know I approach every issue with curiosity and gratefulness. That basic urge of fear and self protection can be all consuming, but every time I notice that fear, I choose to approach it with curiosity and embrace the opportunity.

### **What ignited the spark in you to start a new business venture or to make significant changes in an existing business?**

Four years ago, I came out of an abusive relationship as a single mother with little support. I had a great counsellor and mentor who helped me find my feet in that time and instilled in me the curiosity to consider creating a venture for myself. All my success and progress are because of her faith and encouragement.

Ultimately, I didn't want to embrace self-pity and be solely reliant on welfare, and to choose to use my experience as a base to rebuild myself bigger and more successful than I had been before.

### **How do you conquer those moments of doubt that so often stifle or trip or stop so many entrepreneurs with great ideas...what pushes you through?**

My first reaction is always to hide when things get too overwhelming and the self-doubt hits. So, I allow myself that measured time for the need to self-nurture and really feel my fears and doubts before reframing and embracing the experience. It is certainly inelegant, but it does work for me.

### **What is your favourite quote?**

A thing named is a thing tamed.

## **VISION**

### **What is your vision for your venture?**

Business for me was really created from necessity and although it has changed and evolved as I've grown, at the heart it has always been my desire to empower single parents to put their dreams and abilities ahead of their current situations. Long term, I would like to create a unique support service for separated and single parents.

A woman wearing a wide-brimmed hat is seen from the side, looking out over a blurred landscape of trees and sky. The background is a soft-focus natural setting with green foliage and a bright sky. The woman's hair is brown and pulled back. The overall mood is contemplative and serene.

## SELF-EFFICACY AND SKILLS

### **To what do you attribute your success in progressing your entrepreneurial journey?**

WiRE has been such an asset to me this year. It truly dragged me kicking and screaming out of my safe little comfort zone. The program really challenged my preconceived ideas around who businesswomen are.

### **What would you say are the top three skills needed to be a successful entrepreneur?**

- Dedication. If you are not in love and passionate about your business, the sheer effort needed to birth this creation would be such a drain.
- Focus. Even when I have a quick 15 minutes to squeeze in some work, I fully commit to that moment and I make it count.
- Curiosity. The desire to constantly watch and learn the things you need to know.

### **What was your biggest mistake in an entrepreneurial context?**

Staying too small. I really hid for a long time, afraid to be too visible, too confident or assume I had more value than I had. This really restricted *Find Your North* and it's only been this year that I have challenged that self-limiting constraint.

### **What sacrifices have you had to make to be a successful entrepreneur?**

Time and money. I hate to consider the monetary value that would be given to the years and investment I have already put towards my business, sometimes at the cost of providing basics for myself.

### **In your view what factors help individuals make the transition to self-employment?**

A real desire or necessity. My business mentors all started when in a tight spot or were down on their luck. I am a big fan of resilience and overcoming adversity, and it truly is the struggles that create the opportunities in our lives.

Finding a business community or support base. The progress I have made this year alone with extra support, has been phenomenal.

## STRATEGY

### **What would you say are the top three key elements for starting your business?**

- Self confidence
- Knowing my value
- Choosing to prioritise my business as an important and valuable part of my life.



### **What has been your most successful form(s) of marketing?**

So far, word of mouth! I live in a rural area and find from meeting and talking to new people, they get to know me and build a sense of connection. Sometimes months later, I will have someone pop up that has heard about my services from someone or I have met once before.

### **What are your thoughts on the value of partnerships?**

Partnerships are amazing! It is such an honour to have someone see value in collaborating with your business. I really enjoy the process. Working predominantly on my own, means having the opportunity to bounce ideas and problem solve is so valuable.

### **Where did your venture funding/capital come from?**

Thin air! My approach to funding and capital is certainly frugal!

### **What creative strategies did you use to execute on minimal cash flow?**

Honestly, the first few years I really scrimped and saved to prioritise my business. My car maintenance was neglected, I gratefully received second hand clothes, worked part time, anything to save a few dollars to put towards my business. Now as my growth is eclipsing my profit, I am exploring other avenues, taking advantage of any support or free courses on offer and utilising networks.

### **What habits helped make you successful?**

“Study while others are sleeping, work while others are loafing, prepare while others are playing, and dream while others are wishing.” William A. Ward is my inspiration.

I work early in the morning, at night and whenever the baby is sleeping so I still get that valuable time with my family and time to recharge. My goal is to constantly accrue new knowledge and skills. Whenever I hit a wall of ‘I have no idea how to do this’, I challenge myself to learn or ask someone to teach me. The constant variation to my schedule and work really keeps it interesting.

### **Do you want to grow your business? How will you do this?**

Yes. Over the years the grand plan has changed and adapted but ultimately the growth needs to be consistently happening, slow and steady as funds and opportunities come my way.

### **How do you stay motivated when things get busy with family and other things?**

Mostly, I don't. When family and life get in the way I give myself permission to check out and take that time. Then I am able to bounce back rejuvenated.



## NETWORKS

### **To what extent do you agree with the following statement and why?**

*“The connections and networks that exist between people and enabled cooperation is one of the most important things in entrepreneurship”*

Connection and networks have been essential in my growth as a businesswoman, and without that cooperation and collaboration I would not have made nearly as much progress.

### **What kinds of networks do you access to help your entrepreneurial journey?**

My Pod from WiRE continue to connect and a few I am in contact with regularly, to bounce ideas off. I also have a local mumpreneurs group that are a wealth of knowledge and experience.

### **Do you have a mentor? If so, how have they helped you? If not, was that a conscious choice?**

My mentor Elspeth is the reason I am here doing what I am doing both personally and professionally. She highlighted my ability and potential to become a counsellor and encouraged me to actively study and begin *Find Your North*. I will always be so deeply grateful for her presence in my life.

## IMPACT OF THE WiRE PROGRAM

### **Why did you decide to participate in the WiRE Program?**

WiRE had popped up from time to time over the years but I finally felt I had the time and energy to dedicate to it this year while on maternity leave, and without my second income stream.

### **In what aspects of the WiRE Program have you participated in so far?**

Workshops and the Hub program.

### **What knowledge/skills have you acquired?**

Oh so much! Basics of business and strategy, the benefit of collaboration and networking and one gem in particular, when it comes to lack of knowledge or skill, “not yet” which has proven invaluable time and time again.

### **How useful were these skills in developing your venture and/or your future career?**

Fundamental. There really was not any structure or consistency when it came to my business and this reflected in my success. I feel WiRE changed my very approach to business and therefore it will be the root cause of any future achievements.

**What has been the impact of the WiRE Program?  
(both personally and in your venture)**

There really has been so much come from WiRE but most importantly I feel I have really embraced the business woman persona and my confidence has just improved dramatically, I feel more clarity, motivation and dedication to my long term goals for *Find Your North*.

**What benefits have you derived by participating in the program?**

Connection and collaboration. The process has created a valuable collaboration with another WiRE participant, that is incredibly exciting and outside my primary focus.

**If you had a business/venture when you started engaging in the WiRE Program, have you grown your venture or scaled it up as a result of the WiRE Program? If yes, please explain your answer (both in terms of the dollar value of the total enterprise as well as the scale-up value, or/and increase in sales or growth in customer numbers) (whichever applies)**

*Find Your North* has expanded exponentially since WiRE, not only have I taken on more one-on-one clients (an increase of 50%), my confidence in my value as a service has encouraged me to charge a more accurate price, again increased by 50%. The future projects created by completing the WiRE program will not only provide an increase in profit and growth but a sustained increase with many other opportunities to pursue.

**If you did have a business/venture when you started engaging in the WiRE Program, what has been the impact of the WiRE Program on the sustainability of business/venture?**

The sustainability has gone from questionable at best to something I can see continuing for decades to come. The clarity that came from narrowing my focus and specialising, has created some very exciting pathways and opportunities.

**How appropriate is the skills to you which are delivered by the WiRE Program?**

Very appropriate, it really covered my blind spots and even the areas I was more familiar with, providing a new perspective and opportunity to reflect.

**To what extent have you applied the skills/knowledge learnt through the WiRE Program?**

I use skills from WiRE each day. Motivation and mindset continue to be daily skills and the understanding of business drawn on for all aspects of my daily work.

**To what extent has the WiRE Program helped you to develop strong ties between yourself and other women entrepreneurs? Why?**

WiRE created a unique and exciting collaboration that I was not expecting, and opened my eyes to the option of expanding and creating new opportunities. The ongoing interaction of my Pod has become a valuable part of my process, and a great sounding board for new ideas and problem solving.

A woman wearing a wide-brimmed hat is shown in profile on the left side of the page, looking towards the right. The background is a soft-focus landscape with trees and a bright sky, suggesting an outdoor setting. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

**To what extent has the WiRE Program helped with the facilitation of emotional support for your entrepreneurial journey? Why?**

My confidence as a business owner has grown. I feel it has brought me many years ahead of where I was at the beginning of the year. More confident, assertive, and strong in my convictions. I feel prepared to embrace the world of business.

**To what extent has the WiRE Program helped you to get to know and network with women from different backgrounds, for example different socioeconomic status, age, generation etc?**

There really was little to no networking happening previously, in embracing networking, the opportunity to see a problem from many different perspectives has been created.

**To what extent has the WiRE Program enhanced your ability to link with other entrepreneurs and agencies outside the WiRE community that could benefit your entrepreneurial journey?**

The knowledge base of the women I have met is incredibly valuable, through the WiRE network. I can easily source other entrepreneurs, services, and opportunities that I was previously unaware of.

**If your venture has not been online previously, has your venture gone online as a result of the WiRE Program?**

*Find Your North* was on Facebook but the program has really motivated me to create an online 'home' for the business, and setting up a website has become a major focus.

**If relevant, have you influenced someone else through your WiRE experience to start or grow a venture i.e. passing it on?**

The skills and knowledge have been able to be utilised by my partner in his live music business. He has seen my progress, which has encouraged him to re-evaluate his approach and grow his business.

**Name the biggest overall lesson you have learnt in your entrepreneurial journey so far that could be passed on to other women**

Give yourself permission to shine! We really carry the weight of societal and family values around entrepreneurship and financial independence, choosing to give yourself permission lifts the weight off your shoulders and creates space for you to embrace your potential.

**Where to find you online**

<https://www.facebook.com/findyournorthcoaching>

*Blaise Graham  
Quinalow (Darling Downs)*

