



Inner Beauty

Every business owner, at one time or another, has experienced his or her share of struggles and triumphs. If you've ever had a day, a week or even a year when you felt absolutely everything was going wrong, you're not alone. But take heart! Now an inspirational new book, *Wake Up and Live the Life You Love...In Beauty* (Little Seed Publishing), the latest installment in the series created by inspirational speaker Steven E. Schmitt, with



Bryan Durocher, draws on the experiences of 50 top beauty artists to share how overcoming their challenges enabled them to live the lives they love. On the following pages, four of these experts—beauty entrepreneur Lauren Gartland, platform artist extraordinaire Robert Cromeans, salon owner and consultant Shawn L. Brown and day spa pioneer Tamara Aruj—contribute intimate accounts of their own personal triumphs over physical, emotional or economic adversity and shed light on the true meaning of feeling beautiful—from the inside out.

Photography: STEPHEN SULLIVAN

FROM LEFT: Lauren Gartland, Robert Cromeans, Tamara Aruj, Shawn L. Brown. ABOVE: Bryan Durocher, Steven E. Schmitt



**LAUREN
GARTLAND**

FINISHING STRONG

The one thing you can count on in life is that adversity will happen. The question that haunts us is, what will we do when that time comes? In 1995 I founded Inspiring Champions, a service to teach, inspire and serve salon professionals through business education and coaching. In 2001, my CFO told me, "I have good news and bad news. The good news, is you have exceeded your goals this year as far as revenue generated." Then came the bomb. "The bad news is, because you didn't charge enough to cover expenses of the workshops, you are in grave danger of going out of business." She then proceeded to tell me that if we didn't halt our workshops immediately, the debt would only grow larger. At that time, our primary source of revenue for the company was the workshops, so if we could no longer lead these, then it was obvious we were out of business. It didn't seem possible and it certainly didn't seem fair. How could we work this hard for six years and see it end like this? In that moment, I never felt such fear, hopelessness or desperation. I wished the earth would open up and swallow me whole.

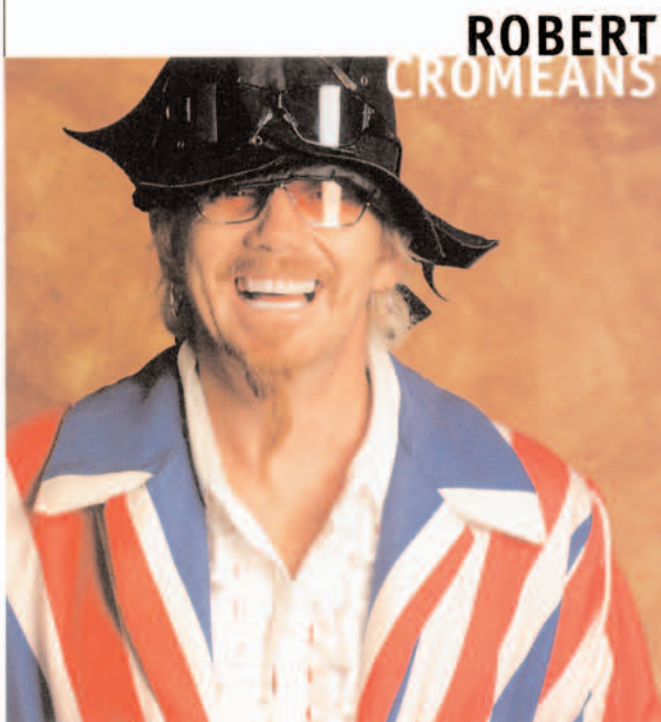
But ultimately I learned valuable lessons from this painful experience: Grieve, but have the wisdom to know when to press on. Develop a spirit of humility; to move on, I needed to kill my pride and ego. Listen to your inner voice; it will tell you exactly what you need to know and do. And finally, ask for help when you need it. These lessons saved me and helped me to let go. I hope they will inspire you through your own storms of life.

STOP AND SMELL THE ROSES

At the nightclub where I used to work in Glasgow, Scotland, a large group of "posers" would come in—cool-dressed people with style. They were hairdressers. Up to that point in my life, I had been restricted from expressing my individuality. So, hairdressing seemed to be a natural path for me. Today, I speak to about 500,000 hairdressers a year about art, fashion, trends, career paths and business. For me, it's an incredible feeling to be helping others meet their individual goals.

Despite all the wonderful experiences my career has given me, the greatest experience of my life was the birth of my two children. Although they are both adopted, my wife and I were present at their deliveries. My hairdressing experience came in handy when cutting the cord. Being a parent is truly the best experience; it taught me the meaning of life. My son, Reed Heron, is now 3, and my daughter, Monaghan Rose, is 2.

Many things during the course of life serve to teach us. A few years ago, a friend of mine passed away in her sleep from a heart attack; she was only 37. She was an Olympic gold medalist, but her real accomplishments were her two beautiful children and loving husband. Though the death of a loved one is tragic, there is still a lesson to be had. Life is short, so we must live it on a shorter time span. Too often we build our dreams or goals based on retiring at 65. My advice is to accelerate the experience of life, to be more focused to obtain the things you dream of in retirement, and to make them happen today. Time is the only thing that can never be returned.



**ROBERT
CROMEANS**



**SHAWN L.
BROWN**

RESPONDING TO THE CALL

It was October 14, 1998. I lay bedridden in my beautiful four-bedroom home crying out to God and asking him why he would allow a storm of this magnitude to come into my life. I was bedridden and seven months pregnant with my first child, our home was in foreclosure, both of our vehicles had been repossessed, and the wedding ring I so deeply cherished was missing. What seemed most tragic at that time was the complete deterioration of my pride. So I prayed to God that he would just let me die. I believed that I was nothing without my material wealth.

The next evening I was being transferred by a critical care team to a hospital an hour away. I had two surgeries, a seizure, a blood transfusion, minor heart failure and delivered a two-pound preemie. Over and over again I cried out "why?" The answer was simple: God had a purpose for my life and it wasn't being fulfilled. He needed me to be humble and seeking before I would be responsive to his calling for my life. There were lives that he wanted me to touch.

So after my illness I decided to pursue a career in the beauty industry. In November 2003, my mother and I opened a salon, and I accepted a position as the director of education for a consulting and coaching firm specializing in helping people build successful salons and spas. Today, my husband and I have two gorgeous children, Quinton, 5, and Lena, 3, and we understand what is valuable in life. I am now living the life I love, filled with purpose, joy and peace. God loved me enough to allow me to become a living, breathing testimony of his grace and mercy.

THE BRAND NEW YOU

Growing up, I was always told I had an "old soul." This thrilled me. Like all children, nothing seemed better to me than being a grown-up. Being called an old soul made me feel wonderfully wise, and I willingly lived up to the persona.

But as an adult, the concept of being an old soul lost its lovely patina. I regretted having had an old-soulhood rather than a childhood. It would have been far better to have adventured from infancy to teens, growing up without any thought to age or wisdom. To be spontaneous. To be childlike. Not to mention that, as an adult, I came to appreciate that while age is inevitable, wisdom is not an inevitable by-product of age.

My daughter helped me to transform these regrets into an inspiring, healthy way to live. When she was born, I marveled at her newness and naturalness. And I saw that she too was an old soul, but not as I had understood it as a child. She was an old soul because she had the wisdom to grow and change naturally, and appropriately. She learned to crawl, and then to balance on her two feet, and then to walk. She handled every new stage with exquisitely happy-go-lucky grace. And she was always ready to be new again.

By loving her, I grew to love myself more, enough to see that I could be new again, as long as I was ready to. Being new again means knowing it is safe and worthwhile to make changes. And the rewards are manifold. When we are ready to be new again, the world reveals itself to us as an enormous opportunity for learning. The childlike adult I have become understands far more than the old-soul child I grew up as ever did.



**TAMARA
ARUJ**