

EWIF

ENCOURAGING WOMEN
INTO FRANCHISING



WHEN LIFE IS TURNED UPSIDE-DOWN, YOU DON'T HAVE TO STAY THERE!

KATE MARKHAM

Babyballet

When it feels like everything in life is against you, the tide will turn, and you'll find yourself in a better place, Just like Kate Markham has, after a series of life-changing challenges turned her world upside-down.

Have you ever felt like everything in life is just going wrong around you? Where it feels like you're in the darkest tunnel, and the light is so far away you don't think you'll make it through. Sometimes, we experience a moment in time when we know how fragile life is, and how important it is to seize the day. This was certainly true for Kate Markham.

In 2011, Kate experienced her own Annus Horribulus and life was never the same again. "My husband died suddenly, leaving me with our two children: His death tore our worlds apart. Soon after, I was made redundant. But, because I didn't have the strength to look for another job I was unable to keep up my mortgage repayments; so the inevitable happened and we lost our home. Then things went from bad worse, because it was around the same time, when I was also diagnosed with skin cancer (Melanoma)."

As you can imagine, Kate's confidence was at an all-time low, and she wasn't sure what the future held. However, one of her friend's was about to step in to help Kate. "One of my friends was looking to set-up a dance school, and because I had a business background, she asked me for help. It was purely a voluntary role; but the business took off quickly. By the end of our first year we had almost 200 students. However, I soon found myself swamped in paperwork, struggling to support my children, and struggling with my mental health. I desperately needed to find paid employment." Kate found work through a software system she'd sourced for the dance school, which was to be a stepping stone to Kate's future. "Working with the software company was a lifeline for me at the time. They provided me with a purpose, a million miles away from all the trauma. It was through them I found, and fell in love with, the franchise, babyballet; and in 2017, my friend and I bought the babyballet Newcastle franchise. We are doing so well, teaching over 600 children after our first four years."

With her determination to build a better life for her and her children, and loving dance so much where she sees the benefit of teaching children skills which helps them with balance and coordination, Kate has taken her business a step further. "I'm a multi-brand franchise owner! As well as babyballet, I also own another franchise - Lil Beatz – teaching street-dance to pre-schoolers. It's been a challenging journey over the last ten years, but I know I'm giving my children the best life I can, after they lost their dad. I'm sure he's as proud as I am of what we're achieving. And...I was given the all-clear from cancer, after six years of treatment. Things do get better."