



*ambitious girls,
entrepreneurial women*



THE WHY: *TURN YOUR PASSION INTO A BUSINESS*

COACHINGSESSION WITH BOUCHRA AL
MEHRAJ | 02 APRIL 2020 | WEBINAR



COACH + SESSION

Bouchra Al Mehraj is a entrepreneurial single mom of 3 and founder of *The Urban Woman*. She's a woman with many passions. But it didn't come easy.

On the one hand, Bouchra is passionate about reshaping traditional organizations into organizations with a people-business driven purpose. On the other hand helping women to transform their lives and use their talents to make an impact. In order to do so, Bouchra uses her own experiences of knowing hard times to help women achieve the same - taking their life in their own hands, focussing on their talent and creating a safe and inspiring environment to do so.

When asked how Bouchra would describe herself, she uses 'courageous': *I have known fear and doubts in my life, however I kept believing that I am capable of living a different life. Through the fear I continued to put my passions into action and despite difficulties I continued to develop my activities not always knowing what I was doing... That's how I learnt a lot of life lessons. And I have no regret.*



Why was Bouchra Al Mehraj the coach during The why: turning your passion into a business

Bouchra spent years finding herself and her why. She always knew she was destined for greater things, to make an impact. Her own experiences are the foundation of the coaching. By sharing her own experiences, the good and the bad, she is able to help those. Because she reached her goal: making her passion into a business.



**#She
DID IT**

#SheDIDIT frequently organizes coachingsessions in which an intimate group of (future) female entrepreneurs come together. During the sessions, women share their story and their experiences, gain inspiration, build their network or get the first push to start. The coach differs per session to help these women on their way. In these learnings you get to know the coach and what the women have learned during the session.

#SheDID IT

QUESTIONS

WHAT DOES FEMALE ENTREPRENEURSHIP MEAN TO YOU?

Female entrepreneurship is necessary for economic growth and stability within a country. Female entrepreneurship reduces poverty as women are able to gain incomes, advocate for their own independence, and take on a more full societal role in their culture. By supporting programs that help women learn about the world of entrepreneurship, connect them with successful female entrepreneurs, and helping them find access to high-quality credit sources, women can build strong businesses, solidify their position in the global economy and local business world, and gradually build a stronger, better marketplace.

WHEN DID YOU TAKE THE STEP TO BECOME AN ENTREPRENEUR?

I used to work for big companies as HR Manager, but at a certain moment I wasn't happy anymore. I didn't enjoy waking up and knowing I had to work. I thought if I changed companies or work I would feel happy again, but that wasn't the case. It was actually my own fear that was holding me back (to become an entrepreneur). I am a single mom with bills, so becoming an entrepreneur wasn't that easy. It took me 1 year before I launched my independent activities. Once I did, it went well and gave me self-confidence to continue.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP ISN'T A ONE SIZE FITS ALL. HOW DID YOU DEAL WITH UNCERTAINTY, LACK OF KNOWLEDGE, COMPETITION,... ?

I learnt that even when I don't know, I need to do or try something so I can learn. When deciding to become an entrepreneur, you have a vision and you have a plan. However, be aware that you'll always have to change and adapt constantly throughout the process.





DID YOU MISS SOMETHING DURING YOUR JOURNEY?

I missed having women like me (from a different cultural background who did not have any support) like having a sparring partner. I also financed everything myself and funding for women is also a topic that most women struggle with to launch their businesses.

WHY DID YOU CREATE THE URBAN WOMAN?

I wanted to create a place for every woman to feel good and focus on her personal and professional development. Our focus is not only female entrepreneurs who have already their business going on. We will also focus on women who are living a difficult situation and don't have the financial resources to see a coach to help them.

WOMEN OFTEN LOOK FOR OTHER WOMEN TO SHARE EXPERIENCES, USE AS A ROLE MODEL AND INSPIRATION. DO/DID YOU HAVE A ROLE MODEL WHO YOU LOOK UP TO?

I do not have 1 particular role model... get inspired by every individual who had courage to pursue their dreams. I often refer to women in history like Maya Angelou, Fatima El Mernissi, Rosa Parks, Fatima El-Fihri, Katherine Johnson and many others.

DO YOU HAVE ONE GOLDEN RULE YOU'D LIKE TO SHARE WITH OTHER FEMALE ENTREPRENEURS?

Believe in yourself even when others think or say you can't do it... often it is their fears they are mirroring on you do not over think and just do. What is the worst that can happen? If you don't succeed, you can always go back but at least you tried.

LEARNINGS



- 01** **Learn how to fish instead** of simply accepting the fish. you learn by doing, so try it.
- 02** **If something keeps coming back**, realize that this is your why. It's waiting for you to do something with it.
- 03** **Your why is that thing that opens your heart**, that gives you happens. I gives you energy.
- 04** Write down YOUR visions on paper and link them with actions: what do I need to do to make something happen. I made my vision into concrete steps that I followed.
- 05** **The only thing that is holding you back is someone else's fear.** You know what you want and need to do. Don't waste your time listening to people who are not helping you nor supporting you.
- 06** **Remember that competition is not really competition.** Your intention of being an entrepreneur is not the same as someone else's, you are unique just as your passion is. The outcome will always be different.
- 07** **Don't worry about money.** When you do something from the heart with your passion, the money will come. Because you give back to society.
- 08** **Go through the phases of insecurities and fears, it's normal.** Embrace it, but don't give up, because you have the skills, the vision and the motivation to go for it.

