

Lisa Forrest

Former Olympian, Broadcaster, Coach & Keynote Speaker

Lisa Forrest is a former Olympian swimmer, an actor, author, broadcaster and mother. She is also a keynote speaker and mindfulness coach who has helped school students, community organisations, high performance individuals and teams across Australia to improve levels of resilience and manoeuvre through stressful situations.

Drawing on her extensive life experience as well as evidence-based science and academic research, Lisa's presentations provide her audiences with an understanding of what happens to our brains in times of stressful situations. She helps people to become mindful of their feelings, responses and actions in the moment, and provides practical tools and techniques that enable them to find ways to maintain a supple mind, a compassionate heart... and to work better as a team.



More about Lisa Forrest:

Back in 1978, when Lisa Forrest swam her way onto her first Australian team and won a silver medal in the 200m Backstroke at her first international event - the 1978 Commonwealth Games in Edmonton, Canada - she became the darling of Australian sport and her carefree, northern beaches life was changed forever. She was just fourteen.

Two years later, she captained the Australian swim team to the controversial Moscow Olympic Games and ticked off her first major lifegoal. But that defining moment was steeped in paradox. While Olympian is a standard admired by most Australians, the Moscow Olympians were rebels - defying the Fraser Government and the condemnation of 50% of the Australian public to get to the Games. And then carrying her own mighty expectations (as well as her country's) into the pool, Lisa slipped at the start of the final of her pet event, the 200m Backstroke. Her greatest achievement in the pool was shackled to a moment of devastating personal failure.

Still, determined to leave the disappointment of Moscow in the past, she went on to win gold medals in front of a home crowd at the 1982 Brisbane Commonwealth Games. As these were still the amateur (unpaid) days of sport, Lisa retired soon after and in the years that followed, became a trailblazer for high-profile women athletes to transition from sport into the media. In 1986, at the age of 22, she became the first woman to be made a full-time anchor of a national sports program, *Saturday Afternoon Football* on ABCTV.

But for Lisa, Olympian was a standard rather than identity, and she has since hosted a range of TV and radio programs, returning to sport for Commonwealth and Olympic duties. In her mid-20's she moved to New York to study acting and has worked as an actor on TV and stage. In 2000, her first novel, *Making the Most of It*, a coming-of-age story for young adults was published by Hachette. She has now published several more books including, *Boycott - Australia's controversial road to the 1980 Olympics*, a non-fiction account of the politics surrounding the attempted boycott of the Moscow Games.

In 2014, Lisa took a sabbatical, determined to find a way to manage a driving, unforgiving inner-voice that she'd first become aware of during the Moscow Games and, in the decades since, had fuelled an exhausting cycle of risk and excitement followed by illness and burnout.

Lisa's sabbatical produced a few stunning realisations. First, that a driving, unforgiving inner-voice is common to most of us. Second, that a driving, unforgiving inner-voice is often the product of the harden-up and get-tough sports regimes that many of us are habituated to in our teenage years. And, most stunning of all, the harden-up, get-tough habit of mind is at the root of many of the mental health and fitness problems we face as a community.

Fortunately, there is another way, a form of can-do kindness that Lisa was introduced to on her first day at the Dee Why Ladies Swimming Club when she was just eight years old. A way that encouraged a shy girl to set her sights on a world stage. A way that promotes joy over anxiety. A way that informs the way she coaches her clients through her business, Evermind and her presentations.

Lisa Forrest is an accomplished speaker whose presentations are unique because they are personal stories of extraordinary experiences and observations in high-pressure situations, backed up by the most up-to-date, evidence-based neuroscience. Her stories are as relevant to adults as they are to teenagers. Whether she is talking with students through a high-school well-being program, speaking at a Women's International Day breakfast or RUOK Day morning-tea, or leading a mindfulness-based high-performance workshop in a corporate environment, Lisa inspires audiences of all ages to let go of the inner-critic, have faith in their own wise instincts and live their best life.

Client testimonials

“ Many of the boys who heard Lisa speak have commented very favourably on the 'life skills' aspect of her presentation, as have mothers, telling me about their sons' reactions. Sometimes we forget that the boys need to be able to talk about their emotional lives and hear from an outsider that it is OK to have feelings. I especially thank her for that.

- *Newington College*

“ ABN AMRO employees have been fortunate enough to listen to some very high calibre speakers over the last couple of years, but there is no doubt that Lisa was the most inspiring

of them all. Her story, her delightful manner, her humour...what a wonderful combination. I have long been a fan, but am even more so now!

- ABN AMRO

“ Her engagement with the audience was brilliant: she was insightful, funny, inspiring. She had the audience absolutely silent, occasionally in tears one minute, and rolling around with laughter the next.

- The Children's Book Council of Australia

“ Very well, from the feedback we received they were quite moved by her stories.

- Matrix Planning Solutions Ltd

“ Our high-performance team faces immense pressure constantly and Lisa provided practical tools and techniques on how to achieve improved levels of resilience through the creation of space in the moment. It has not only helped us to reflect individually but also provided us the chance to find ways to work better as a team. Understanding what happens to our brains in times of stressful situations has been helpful to ensure we are mindful of how we respond. I strongly recommend Lisa's session to high performance teams or to individuals who strive to improve performance.

- Westpac Group

“ Lisa is a tremendously knowledgeable and motivational presenter that brings a wealth of life experience to her discipline. Her presentation on mindfulness was delivered with passion and rigor that was solidly underpinned by evidence-based science and academic research. I would highly recommend Lisa to talk at your next corporate team building session and look forward to crossing paths with her again.

- BT Financial

“ ...your talk prompted reflection and discussion ... In considering speakers for these events we look for those who are not only achieving in their chosen career path but can relate well to such a wide audience and provide both business and social guidance. I must also compliment you on your ability to include the audience in your discussion as well as achieving our goals of fostering a networking environment for Canberra women generally.

- Women With Ambition Networking Breakfasts

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