



MAY 2021

Q MAGAZINE

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featuring:  
ALESSIO VEGA  
his porn industry story

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Please take part in the Community Marketing & Insights (CMI) 15th Annual LGBTQ Community Survey!

For over a decade, this survey has provided free data to help non-profits, universities, and organizations better understand and serve the LGBTQ community. The report will be published on the CMI.info website for free download on approximately August 15. Previous surveys have had over 45,000 participants from 150 countries!

Also, participation in this survey gives important feedback to our LGBTQ community media and organizations, and provides data to companies interested in serving our community, sponsoring our charities, and supporting their LGBTQ employees.

The survey should take about 12 to 15 minutes to complete.

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**Publisher & Editor**  
Brett Hayhoe  
+61 (0) 422 632 690  
brett.hayhoe@qmagazine.com.au

**Editorial / Sales & Marketing**  
editor@qmagazine.com.au  
sales@qmagazine.com.au

**Design**  
Uncle Brett Designs & Graphics

**Contributing Writers**  
Brett Hayhoe, Gabriel Tabasco, Hylton Brewer-Johnson, Alan Manly, Renee Giarrusso

**Cover picture**  
Porn Star Alessio Vega

**Photographic Contributions**  
Steven Grace (q musical)

qscene@qmagazine.com.au

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Q MAGAZINE  
PO Box 7479, St. Kilda Road,  
Melbourne Victoria 3004  
www.qmagazine.com.au

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Brett Hayhoe t/a Q Magazine  
ABN 21 631 209 230

# q feature: ALESSIO VEGA

by Gabriel Tabasco

## Tell us a little bit about yourself?

I'm originally from Mexico City, moved to NYC a little over 10 years ago, and I have a degree in Musical theatre. I'm happily married, 5'8 inches tall, a Leo with Aquarius rising, big foodie and a hidden passion for interior design.

## How did you get into porn? When did you know you wanted to do porn? And why?

The short story: I guess what pushed me over the edge to make the decision was when my mom got diagnosed with breast cancer. I knew I had to do something, anything to help her and my family. I had a big following on Instagram at that time, Alessio Vega wasn't even 'born yet' so I figured that with my following back then I could be able to make some extra income if I opened an Only Fans account (hence why my handle name in OF is jockofficial84 and not AlessioVega).

I talked to my husband about doing also some mainstream porn to bring in more fans and he was completely supportive. I always wanted to do porn but like anyone else, I was scared and unsure but on the flip side I also love having sex. I'm a pig at heart.

## How would you describe the porn you make?

If I could put it in some words I would say: real, raw, authentic, to the point, great quality, clear, huge cocks, cream pies, multiple loads, thongs and lots and lots of Spanish!

## Who are your porn idols any why?

Sophie Anderson and Rebecca More aka The Cock Destroyers. They're my idols because they're incredibly genuine and smart. Not only they're successful at what they do but they're loving and compassionate, basically everything I strive to be every single day. I don't think I know anyone in this industry that's so comfortable in their own skin like these ladies.

## What do you say to people who think porn is demeaning?

I would say to them to dig deep inside to figure out what's the trigger behind that thought. At the end of the day we are all human and sex work is real work. It's also one of the oldest forms of work.

I also believe that in order to work in this industry and be successful you have to have an incredibly stable, strong and healthy mind. It requires a lot of discipline as well as a thick skin. It's not easy work. We're 100% in complete control of our bodies so it's not demeaning in any shape or form. We are only doing what everyone in the world is doing, sex is a natural thing, only difference is we're filming it for your pleasure.

## What's been your most memorable experience making porn?

Until this date there hasn't been a hotter experience than when I filmed with porn star Seán Duran. The amount of chemistry that we had on set was unreal and the action continued even after shooting our scene.

## What's been the worst experience you had making porn?

As a bottom in porn I've never had the added pressure to cum at the end of a scene. For most studios it's not a requirement for



the bottom to cum, there's enough pressure on us already to be 100% clean, not eat the day before and take above average size cocks inside us for long periods of time.

That being said, here's a little story where in one particular shoot I had a very bad experience. The night before the shoot I got bit by something in the hotel right in my money maker, (my ass), and I had a pretty big bug bite. I went to the ER at 4am to get a shot to hopefully help with the swelling but it didn't work. I came in to work the next morning, tired as hell, with a horrible bug bite that had to be covered with make up so I was extremely self-conscious. This was one of my longest shoots yet and towards the end of the day/scene, I was completely out of it. When the top finally came, I let out a sigh of relief and thought that was the end of the day but nope... the director stopped me right there and told me that what did I think I was doing, that I had to cum. With the pressure now in my head to finish, a whole studio waiting on me to cum and deliver so we could wrap up the long day, no matter what I did, what I thought about, it wasn't happening. The director kept getting visibly annoyed and frustrated and that only made matters worse for me. I tried everything I could that day. I felt defeated and I felt like a failure and of course they never called me back to work for them again. All the elements combined from the night before leading to that shoot were just not in my favour.

### **What's the most embarrassing thing that happened to you in porn?**

There's a running theme here hahaha! The night before my debut in porn I got attacked by mosquitoes, my body was completely covered in mosquito bites. That was embarrassing.

### **What's it like behind the scenes? Do you get friends of the cameramen or staff to come watch?**

Every single person and studio I've had the honour to work with has been extremely professional on set. It's always just the camera men, the director and perhaps someone that helps with lights and that's it. No one else is allowed in. There's so much pressure on them to get everything right, the angles, the lighting, the shot, so I've been lucky enough to work with very professional and respectful people.

### **What's the biggest misconception people have of porn stars?**

Well... everyone in this industry is different and I have met so many different types of personalities that I can only speak for myself. I'll answer based on some things that my own friends have asked me about doing porn.

Probably one of the biggest ones is that most people think we're drinking or doing drugs on set. Well that is 100% false. You're expected to be completely sober and conscious when you film. Everyone involved is a professional.

Another falsehood is that sometimes people think we're sex machines. Just because I'm a porn star it doesn't mean that I automatically want to have sex with every single person I meet. We can totally just chat and watch drag race if you'd like.

There's people from all walks of life in this industry and some porn stars have totally fit my own misconceptions but also some porn stars have completely opened my mind.

### **What advice do you have for anyone starting out in the business?**

Please don't listen to anyone. I made that mistake and I ended up in a lot of unnecessary drama, missed projects and opportunities. There's a lot of egos in this industry and you need a good support system at home or with friends. If it feels right, go for it, always be clear with your words, your intentions, film with whomever you want, regardless



of other people's opinions, again, if it feels right and you're not harming yourself or others go for it. Always credit the people you film with. Take care of your mental health just as much as you do your body. Be respectful, be kind to yourself, be clear of your branding, exploit your strongest assets and most importantly have fun. Sex is fun.

### **What are your fans like and what do they expect to see from you?**

I love my fans, they're always very respectful and clear on what they enjoy and like to see. They particularly love when I'm getting ploughed by extremely huge cocks. They love all my 'isms' in Spanish so they expect to see always a lot of moaning and a lot of Spanish. They also particularly love when I get bred by my camera men before I shoot with someone, I always try to deliver... haha.

### **That video on twitter of you getting your ass bleached was absolutely fantastic. Link below. What prompted you to do that? How was the experience? (and your hole looked great too!)**

I've always been obsessed with smooth pink holes so I contacted my good friend Enrique the owner of Face to Face NYC day spa so we could work on getting my hole even pinker and more camera ready. I didn't need much so after four sessions I achieved a much uniform and pinker colour. It's so fast and easy, I love it, and it doesn't hurt at all, everyone should try it.

### **What is your beauty regimen? How do you stay in shape? And any skin routine?**

I've recently started working with a nutritionist to help me gain more muscle weight. I've always had a very fast metabolism so gaining muscle weight or any weight at all has been very difficult for me. I go to the gym five days a week, no cardio for me, all weight training, one hour max.

When it comes to my skin I use the age defender line from Kiehl's serum and moisturizer and also not going to lie; Botox treatments every six months for wrinkle prevention and keep things smooth.

### **What do your friends and family say about you doing porn?**

They all have been incredibly supportive and I couldn't do this without their support.

### **What do you want to do further in your porn career? (future plans, people to work with)**

Ugh! So many tops, so little time. It's my dream to work with/for TIM Tales and Fuckermate one day. Eventually I would love to do some directing and camera work.

### **What's the sexual fantasy you want to achieve?**

A DP gang bang. One main top in the bottom and a bunch of tops lined up taking their turn to double fuck me, ideally 10 tops. If I'm able to achieve that, I'll retire happy but it has to be all double penetration.

### **Did you ever fall for a co-star?**

I have my crushes: Sean Duran and Tyler Roberts are probably the ones that have made me feel the most wanted. That is always a huge turn on for me which has lead up to amazing scenes but I'm a married man and I started in this industry as a married man so my boundaries have always been very clear with everyone. So it's all just been fantasies inside my head. I'm lucky to get to come back home to the man that supports me and loves me and I'll never change that for anything.

### **For all the size queens out there: how big was the biggest cock you gobbled on? Who was he? Was it fun?**

The longest one was 13 inches from XGCHASE. I loved



every single inch and I took 10 loads before he fucked me. It was one of my best experiences. The thickest one was Cutler X. That man knows what he's doing. No other top has been able to make me feel what it really is to go through your second hole and love every second of it. If I could put these two men in a room I'd definitely let both of them double fuck me.

### And reverse? What's the smallest cock? Was it in porn? What did you say or do?

Oddly enough the smallest one was from a random hook up that completely destroyed me and not in a good way. I think he was trying to overcompensate the fact that he was small by pounding extremely hard and moving weirdly. After that incident I've learned how to say no. As a bottom that was hard for me to do in the past and now even if I'm in a bathhouse face down ass up and taking loads I will stop a guy if he's hurting me.

### What are your fetishes?

Anything anonymous and I love being watched too.

### You're a confident guy, but what embarrasses you in porn?

We all have our insecurities in this industry, mine has always been my receding hairline but.... I finally did my FUE hair transplant surgery that I've wanted for years and I'm extremely happy I did it. It's going to be a long 11 months for the final results but it's finally done.

### You're from Mexico. Tell us about your favourite place in Mexico and why?

Guanajuato City will forever be one of my favourite places. It's colourful, artsy, rich in culture, amazing architecture, food. I encourage you to google Guanajuato City and you'll see what I'm talking about. Remember the Disney movie 'Coco'? That's basically what Guanajuato City is. I love it simply because it's beautiful, clean, touristy but without huge crowds and you get to have a better experience of what Mexican culture is. Guanajuato in 'Día de Muertos' is beautiful, we even have our own mummy museum there.

### For our Australian readers, have you been to Australia and if yes which is your favourite place?

Yes I have! I was working on a cruise ship as a singer in 2019 before the pandemic and I visited Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide, Esperance, and Perth. My favourite place by far was Sydney. I celebrated the New Year 2020 in Sydney so I got to see the amazing fireworks and spent the rest of the night taking men's loads in Bodyline Sauna so you can imagine the good time I had. I didn't leave until the morning and got to experience some amazing Aussie cock and men too. The only negative thing was that because of the wildfires happening that year, we weren't able to do all of the things we were planning to do in Australia. I would love to go back.

### Quick Facts:

• Favourite position: Missionary, love eye contact • Top or bottom: both, in porn just bottom • Cock size: 7 inches • Favourite food: Mexican • Favourite holiday location: anywhere with beach • Best body part: Legs • Least favourite body part: My jawline

### Check out Alessio's social media on:

• Twitter: @alessiovegaxxx • Linktr: <https://linktr.ee/AlessioNYC> • Just For Fans: @AlessioVegaXXX • Onlyfans: @jockofficial84

Alessio's ass bleaching video: <https://twitter.com/AlessioVegaXXX/status/1153009371967832064>

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# q musical theatre: **SIMPLY THE BEST!**

Promising to be a night of musical theatre bliss that audiences won't soon forget, Spears Entertainment proudly presents **THE MUSIC OF THE NIGHT - The Songs of Andrew Lloyd Webber** with special guest star – Debra Byrne, at Chapel off Chapel for 6 shows only from 12th May 2021.



An amazingly talented group of 10 performers, accompanied by a live band, will perform songs from beloved Andrew Lloyd Webber's worldwide hits including Phantom of the Opera, Jesus Christ Superstar, Cats, Starlight Express, Joseph & the Technicolour Dreamcoat, Song & Dance, Love Never Dies, Sunset Boulevard and even a few rarities.

Featuring a starry cast of performers including Bianca Bruce, Andy Conaghan, Madison Green, Genevieve Kingsford, Cherine Peck, Christopher Scalzo, Caitlin Spears, Tod Strike and Raphael Wong. Leading the dynamic creative team are director Theresa Borg and music director Stephen Gray.



Producer/performer Caitlin Spears remarked, "My love of theatre first began when I saw my first musical *The Phantom of the Opera*, it was an experience unlike any other, and music forever became apart of my soul. It has been a dream working with Theresa and Stephen, and together we have assembled an amazing cast led by the incomparable Debra Byrne. As we head back to the theatre after such a turbulent 2020, we are all finding new ways to acclimate, but once that music begins it's as if we never said goodbye."

**THE MUSIC OF THE NIGHT – THE SONGS OF ANDREW LLOYD WEBBER**  
Chapel Off Chapel, 12 Little Chapel St, Prahran,

Wednesday 12th May - 6:30pm (Preview)  
Thursday 13th May - 7:30pm (Opening night)  
Friday 14th May - 7:30pm  
Saturday 15th May - 7:30pm  
Sunday 16th May - 2:30pm & 6:00pm

Tickets: [www.chapeloffchapel.com.au](http://www.chapeloffchapel.com.au) or (03) 8290 7000  
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# q cuisine: with HOME COOK HYLTON

Now that I'm back at work, personal time has become quite scarce. The only time off work, with leave, is for a small number of reasons: you're going on holiday, you're sick, someone has kicked the bucket or is getting hitched, which doesn't exactly leave you with the availability or mindset to cook a healthy meal. Despite the cost it incurs, it's quite often easier to get takeaway if you're in any need of sustenance.

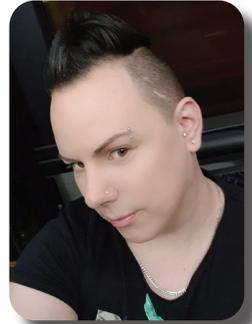
Something I've found to be a saviour is a simple salad that keeps well, and can be expanded to suit anyone's tastes.

## Quinoa Salad:

- 2 Lebanese cucumbers, quartered lengthways and roughly chopped
- 1 whole cob of corn, boiled, kernels removed and cob discarded or composted
- 1 red and one yellow capsicum, deseeded, sliced and roughly chopped
- 1 punnet of parsley, chopped
- 1 punnet of coriander, chopped
- 2 punnets of cherry tomatoes, quartered
- 1 red onion, diced
- 4-5 spring onions, thinly sliced
- A small handful, or more if desired, of bean sprouts
- 1 can of black beans, drained and rinsed
- A pinch or so, to taste, of both cumin and smoked paprika
- 1-2 fresh cayenne chilli, quartered lengthways and finely chopped, if desired
- ½-1 cup of tricolour quinoa, cooked in double the amount of either water, vegetable or chicken stock
- 1-2 slices of firm feta cheese, chopped and crumbled
- a mixture of 1:1 olive oil and lime juice, as a dressing

Combine the above ingredients in a large, sealable container. As with most of my recipes, adjustments can be made to suit your personal tastes. To make it wholly vegetarian, use water or vegetable stock to cook your quinoa. To make it vegan, omit the feta.

This salad makes a great side to anything you may be eating: chicken, fish, even beef. For a whole meal in one, combine a small amount, 150-200g, of salad with some shredded chicken or a small can of tuna. Time poorness solved, money saved, and tummy full. This recipe is perfect to satisfy your desired protein, fibre and vegetable consumption, and great for those wanting to lessen their calorie intake.



**“My reason to live is  
Sundays with my girlfriend”  
- Ashley**

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# q magic: **ADULTS ONLY**

'ADULTS ONLY MAGIC SHOW'  
July 6 - 10 | Melbourne Magic Festival 2021  
Houdini Theatre @ Arrow on Swanston

TICKETS NOW ON SALE

Following the roaring success of their 2020 and 2021 seasons, which saw an unprecedented run of COMPLETELY SELL OUT performances; Showmen Productions are once again returning to their hometown of Melbourne with their hilarious R-RATED 18+ magic show aptly named – ADULTS ONLY MAGIC SHOW at Houdini Theatre from July 6 to 10

Prepare to be WOWED out of your comfy red seats in this 70-minute JAM-PACKED SPECTACULAR featuring hilarious, raucous comedy, mind-bending illusions, stunningly dangerous stunts seen on stages all across the globe and just a cheeky hint of nudity!



After winning numerous awards at Fringes across the country with their 2 family magic shows – The Greatest Magic Show and CIRCUS – the creative minds Sam and Justin are now getting set to completely flip the script on what you would expect from your typical magic show – replacing the bunnies and top hats with raw comedy and sex appeal! Oh and did we mention FREE DRINKS for all the volunteers? Yes you read that right – join the magicians on stage and the next drink is on them!

As part of their first season at Adelaide Fringe in 2019, they were compared to their idols, and Vegas' most iconic magicians by GLAM Adelaide who hailed them as "Quite possibly the Penn & Teller of Australia!" \*\*\*\*\*

"The Showmen are wildly HILARIOUS, wonderfully confident, and WICKEDLY inappropriate! The perfection in the illusions, sleight of hand tricks and mental games prove just how good this duo is!" Theatre Travels, \*\*\*\*\*

"We have painstakingly put together completely original routines, bringing together a range of disciplines to deliver a show that is sure to leave an impression. We guarantee the people of Melbourne have never seen anything like this before!" says Showman, Sam Hume.

This show is restricted to ages 18+

The Houdini Theatre, Arrow on Swanston  
488 Swanston St, Carlton VIC 3053  
6 – 10 July 2021 at 2100  
Adults \$33; Concession \$27 Group 10+ \$25

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# q musical: MOULIN ROUGE!

Global Creatures today revealed the Australian cast of its Tony-nominated production, *Moulin Rouge! The Musical*, playing at Melbourne's Regent Theatre from 13 August 2021.

Alinta Chidzey (Chicago, West Side Story) will star as the sparkling diamond, Satine, opposite newcomer Des Flanagan as bohemian dreamer Christian. Simon Burke AO will play legendary club impresario Harold Zidler and Andrew Cook will play The Duke. Montmartre's resident artistes will be played by Tim Omaji as Toulouse-Lautrec and Ryan Gonzalez as Santiago. The club's famed entertainers known as the 'Lady Ms' will be played by Samantha Dodemaide as Nini, Elenoa Rokobaro as Arabia, Ruva Ngwenya as La Chocolat, and Christopher J Scalzo as Babydoll.

Also joining the company is Fabian Andrés, Amy Berrisford, Devon Braithwaite, James Bryers, Anica Calida, Kahlia Davis, Rodney Dobson, Joseph Donovan, Jarrod Draper, Bayley John Edmonds, Brittany Ford, Chaska Halliday, Scout Hook, Graeme Isaako, Keian Langdon, Bree Langridge, David Ouch, Sam Parkes, Clay Roberts, Emma Russell, Maxwell Simon, Kara Sims, David Srianni and Patrice Tipoki.



Earlier this year *Moulin Rouge! The Musical* held open call auditions to find its spectacular spectacular cast, receiving over 2000 submissions and auditioning 479 performers to fill 34 roles.

Global Creatures CEO and Producer of *Moulin Rouge! The Musical* Carmen Pavlovic said, *"In January and February of this year we sought to cast the show in a COVID-safe way while also opening up the process to artists who may not have had an agent or been in a show before. I'm so proud of every single person who auditioned for us, all of whom exhibited the utmost professionalism under unusual circumstances."*

*"After a rigorous and often exhilarating few months, we are privileged to bring you this group of immensely talented performers who we believe embody the bohemian values of this production: Truth, Beauty, Freedom, and Love."*

The Australian production of *Moulin Rouge! The Musical* will not only be the first international production of the musical, but due to the ongoing Broadway shutdown, Melbourne will be the only place in the world the show can be seen when performances begin in August.

*Moulin Rouge! The Musical* Director Alex Timbers said, *"We were lucky enough to meet several hundred fiercely talented actors in the audition process over the past few months, across Sydney, Melbourne, and through video submissions. The calibre of these performers was truly staggering, and it was clear to everyone on the artistic team what an incredible creative epicentre Australia is for musical theatre. I'm thrilled with the brilliant cast of 34 we've assembled and simply can't wait to get into the rehearsal room with them and for audiences in Melbourne to be as dazzled as we are by their power, skill, humour, and heart."*

Remarkably, Melbourne local Ms Chidzey completed the audition process while pregnant and welcomed her first child last month. Of stepping into the role of Satine, *"It's an absolute thrill to take on this iconic role that's so deeply rooted in Australia's creative history. To ignite this exquisite story of love for the first time on stage in Australia with an exceptional cast and creative team is going to be nothing short of magnificent!"*

Originally hailing from Beechworth, Victoria, Mr Flanagan said of playing Christian, *"I was lucky enough to see the show on Broadway and was struck by how immersive the entire experience was; it was like nothing I'd seen before. It's been a dream of mine to play this character, and to be able to do so in my home state is extremely special."*

Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events Martin Pakula said of the announcement; *"Melbourne will be the only place in the world to see Moulin Rouge! The Musical when it opens in August, which is great news for Australian audiences and local performers. With the cast now assembled, excitement is building for this spectacular production to spread its energy and passion throughout the city."*

Visit Victoria CEO Brendan McClements added; *"Visit Victoria is proud to support Moulin Rouge! The Musical and we look forward to welcoming visitors from across the country to the cultural capital of Australia for this exclusive show."*



*Tickets are now available for performances up to 26 December 2021 exclusively through Ticketmaster.*

# q advice: COVID LESSONS

## 5 lessons COVID can teach entrepreneurs about resilience

**Building a business is not for the faint-hearted. The obstacles are significant, the naysayers are many and the risks are plentiful. Not to mention COVID has provided many lessons in how resilience works in practice.**

Resilience is defined as “an ability to recover from or adjust easily to misfortune or change”. And the pandemic is the biggest global misfortune since World War II. Here are five of the main lessons about resilience arising from COVID.

### 1. Reconnect with customers

As the founding father of modern management studies Peter Drucker explains, the purpose of a business is “to create a customer”. Yet COVID-19 and the resulting lockdowns and national border closures have denied many businesses this most fundamental activity. All the other items required for business were still in place: staff were still on the books, properties were still leased, capital equipment was in place. The one thing missing was customers. Hence the first act of the resilient entrepreneur will be to reconnect with customers. Let them know you are still open for business. Outline any new or changed service provisions. Demonstrate your COVID-safe processes. But most of all, listen – how are they? Have their needs changed? What can you do to help them? It will take resilience and tenacity to win back old customers and identify new ones.

### 2. There are always winners and losers

In all market downturns, there are winners and losers. COVID is no exception. Harvey Norman, for instance, reported more sales than ever before, with profit soaring 185%. Our major supermarket chains and postage services similarly saw booming demand, to the extent they needed to put on extra staff to cope with the demand. Others, of course, have not been so lucky. Who would have thought just 18 months ago that Australians would be restricted from overseas and even interstate travel? The only certainty is uncertainty, and resilient entrepreneurs are prepared for either outcome.

### 3. Strong leadership

Good leadership isn't just about driving business growth and success in good times. It takes a skilled leader to motivate teams and maintain staff morale under trying circumstances. And that leadership must have one purpose: maintaining support for the customer. Staff wellness, public image, social action. None ever replace a customer-focused business. This lesson is going to be hard to accept for many entrepreneurs and employees alike. The background is a seemingly endless success built on a boom that lasted years (Australia avoided recession for almost 30 years). Teams – especially younger ones – will be looking to their leaders and managers for guidance on how to continue supporting customers now that the game has changed.

### 4. Adapt or die

In the early days of COVID, we heard many stories of how businesses pivoted their operations – cafes became meal delivery outlets; distilleries began producing sanitiser; theatre set builders turned to manufacturing home office furniture. It was no accident. Resilience in business is about finding and keeping customers. That may involve identifying new ways to deliver products and services to customers or pivoting operations entirely: whatever it takes to keep paying customers coming through the door.

### 5. State of mind

The fallout from any crisis or market shock is never the same. It differs between businesses and between industries. COVID has made this painfully clear. Some industries and markets have enjoyed a rapid bounce back from the initial shock of harsh lockdowns. Others hardest hit by the pandemic could take five years or more to get back to pre-COVID levels, management consultancy McKinsey suggests. Some may never recover at all. There is no fixed timeframe on how long resilience is needed. Rather it must be an ongoing part of every business and those operating within it.



# q pride: COS & BLACK RAINBOW

**COS supports Black Rainbow, a national Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander non-profit organisation that focuses on the positive health and wellbeing of the LGBTQIASB community.**

From Tuesday 20 April through Sunday 23 May, COS stores across Australia are open to collect donations for Black Rainbow. In addition, a Pride special edition repurposed cotton tote bag will be given with each donation of AUD 30 and above, while stocks last.

*"Black Rainbow prides itself on the partnerships that we engage with. Like COS, we are value-driven, with inclusion and diversity being paramount. COS' zero-tolerance policy towards discrimination helped endear us to pursue this relationship. We are looking forward to lending our brand to the pursuits of COS as it sets to achieve a global reflection of a multicultural world." — Dameyon Bonson (he/him), Founder of Black Rainbow.*

## THE STORY BEHIND THE TOTE

The Pride limited edition tote is now available at COS Australia. A way to give new life to leftover fabric, the tote is made from excess cotton unused by other designs. It's durable, designed to last and 100% recyclable. The limited edition tote will be given with each donation of AUD 30 and above to Black Rainbow, available at all COS Australia stores starting 20th April, while stocks last.

## ABOUT BLACK RAINBOW

Black Rainbow is a national Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual, Sistergirl and Brotherboy (LGBTQIASB) organisation in the pursuit of positive health and well-being for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander LGBTQIASB community. Originally focusing on suicide prevention, the diversity of their leadership group has allowed them to expand their horizons. Donations raised from the COS x Black Rainbow campaign will assist Black Rainbow in continuing to support the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander LGBTQIASB community through numerous grassroots initiatives and assist in setting up a new office space where the team will provide direct service to the LGBTQIASB community.

Find out more via [www.blackrainbow.org.au](http://www.blackrainbow.org.au)

## ABOUT COS

Modern style, designed to last. Offering innovative design, wardrobe essentials and sustainable collections, COS is a fashion brand for all. From the beginning, our design ethos has always put lasting style and quality first. Today 76% of the materials in our collection are more sustainably sourced. Our mission is to get to 100% in everything we do.

Buy better, keep forever - [www.cosstores.com](http://www.cosstores.com)



# q cheers: BROOKIE'S PREMIUM G&T

**G&T LOVERS REJOICE! BROOKIE'S GIN LAUNCH THEIR PREMIUM, PRE-BOTTLED GIN & TONIC**  
Cape Byron Distillery is set amongst the lush rainforests of the Byron Bay hinterland. Home of the highly awarded Brookie's Gin, the Distillery is bringing an unforeseen level of quality to the pre-bottled category with a super refreshing premium Gin & Tonic with Native Finger Lime, in a ready-to-enjoy bottle.

This season, Brookie's Gin is lifting spirits across Australia with their first pre-bottled drink, which is lower in sugar, delicate and 100% natural. Packed with all of the goodness of Brookie's much-loved Byron Dry Gin, it's a true showcase of native ingredients and botanicals hailing from the local surrounds.

Eddie Brook, Co-Founder of Brookie's Gin says, *"If you've made the hike to our distillery in Byron Bay, there's a very good chance that you've been treated to our signature G&T garnished with Native Finger Lime. We love it, you love it, so we thought, 'Hey – why not bottle the flavours of the rainforest to be enjoyed conveniently anywhere around Australia'. And bottle it we did! If you haven't had the pleasure yet, let me just say that you're in for a real treat."*

He continues, *"We know that the modern drinker is searching for quality, convenience and better alternatives. And we've heard the call for a premium Australian craft G&T, loud and clear! So, for a space renowned for loads of sugar and fake flavours, we wanted to change the game and bring an unrivalled level of quality and taste. We like to think we've created the Goldilocks of G&Ts - not too sweet, not too dry... but a little sipper that's 'just right'. We're stoked that our signature rainforest G&T is now in a convenient bottle, so Brookie's frothers can enjoy a 'dry on the fly' outside of our distillery, anywhere, and at any time."*

There's a couple of tricks to nailing this mix and Brookie's Gin is more than happy to share their secrets .....

Firstly, the crew opted for a custom dry style tonic. They use 50% less sugar than leading gin premix brands with only 2.6gm per 100ml. This takes out the unnecessary sweetness which often overrides the delicate flavour profile of the gin. Less sugar means less calories too. They've got your summer bods in mind.

Secondly, it's all about the quality of the spirit. The team use their signature Brookie's Byron Dry Gin, distilled with 17 native ingredients including macadamias, Byron Sunrise finger limes and native raspberries. If you want the best product you have to use the best ingredients. Simple! This pre-bottled G&T sits at 5.6% ABV, approx 1.3 standard drinks per serve.

Thirdly, staying in line with the Brookie's rulebook, they've omitted any nasty additives and fake sugars. This on-the-go G&T is made from 100% natural ingredients!

Finally, it's all in the twist! Finger Lime is native to the subtropical rainforest of the Northern NSW region, where Brookie's resides. This unique little citrus fruit with caviar-like pearls that bursts with a subtle sweetness and citrus-lead acidity, is the perfect complement to their rainforest gin.

Thirsty yet? Brookie's Byron Dry Gin & Tonic is now available to purchase from [www.capebyrondistillery.com](http://www.capebyrondistillery.com) and leading retailers. RRP \$27.99 - 4 pack. And be on the lookout for their next pre-bottled delight, with Brookie's Slow Gin Spritz, made with their signature Davidson Plum gin hitting bottle shops soon.



For more information or to view stockists, head over to [www.capebyrondistillery.com](http://www.capebyrondistillery.com)

# q book: THE (un)LUCKY SPERM

'THE (un)LUCKY SPERM' AUTOBIOGRAPHY SHARES BIZARRE MEMORIES AND  
OUTBACK AUSSIE LIFE IN THE SIXTIES & SEVENTIES!

This extraordinary tale gives an insight into the reality of growing up as the "odd one out"  
in an outback mining town.

A narrative by best-selling author Brett Preiss, set in the background of Broken Hill, New South Wales shares his humorous collection of anecdotes growing up in this unforgiving outback mining town. It's a great tale of innocence lost, self-value and perseverance.

The (un)Lucky Sperm is one such book that will be memorable for its elements of harrowing, extraordinary and absurd accounts; all of it told with humour and exquisite attention to detail. The book contains elements of his childhood that offer surprise, laughter and tears as he recounts his personal life journey, complete with misadventure, and challenges that demonstrate the true strength of the human spirit. The (un)Lucky Sperm shares themes of survival and exploration of your own destiny.

Mr Preiss decided to approach actor Myles Pollard (famous for the insanely popular Australian series, McLeod's Daughters, Home & Away, and Thirst - a movie coincidentally filmed in Broken Hill) to narrate the audiobook version and was thrilled when he agreed.

Of Mr Preiss' book, Mr Pollard said: *"Brett Preiss is an absolute gentleman and a fantastic writer. The novel is super funny, engaging and incredibly heart felt in so many moments. His writing is courageously honest and beautifully irreverent. Brett has a magical wit and a wonderful sensitivity. Having also lived in really remote Australian rural centres as a child, the physical and cultural landscape really resonated with me. He nailed it!"*

A high-profile Australian actor, Mr Pollard has included audio performing in his extensive range of performance skills. He believes that this is an important direction in any actor's career and shouldn't be overlooked as just a simple narration that anyone can do.

*"There is something very intimate about performing audiobooks that I love. You need to be incredibly immersed in the story at every moment in order to completely honour each subtle story and character change. You can't lean on physical demonstrative techniques for obvious reasons so instead you rely on connecting absolutely to the intellectual and emotional nuances of your voices,"* he said.

In conversation with Mr Preiss about the variety of stories in his book; *"It's hard to choose a favourite story. However, there are two that I hold dear to me. One, 'My Own Designer Label' where at the age of eight I design and sew my own clothes in spite of the macho, hyper-masculine world around me. It taught me to always be true to myself. The second is, 'The Final Countdown', where a generous mining manager in my hometown heard my story and gave me the money to head to university. That was my ticket to freedom."*

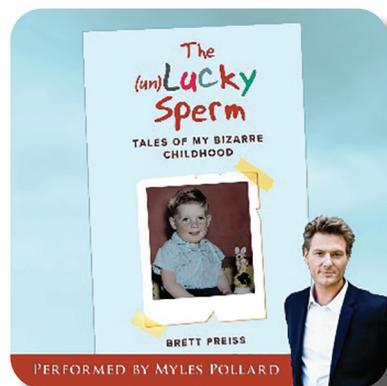
On his audiobook, *"I wanted to create a version of the book that everyone could enjoy, including those with vision impairments, or when you are simply out driving, and keen for some entertainment during the trip"* he said.

Nowadays, Mr Preiss lives in The Netherlands with his Dutch husband Jos who he met when working in Germany for 10 years. He travelled regularly to Amsterdam to see films that weren't dubbed. He met Jos and decided it was time to swap his lederhosen and sauerkraut for cheese and clogs. Whether he will move back to Broken Hill, *"For me, home is where the heart is. I am a lucky sperm to be able to live in Europe and visit Australia whenever I can. Who knows what the future will bring?"* Mr Preiss feels there are a lot more stories where The (un)Lucky Sperm came from, but in the meantime is content to enjoy his favourite aspects of life: a bath, his husband's chili con carne, and fresh sheets.

Purchase The (un)Lucky Sperm now from Amazon: <https://www.amazon.com.au/dp/B08TMSLN7K>

Or the audio version: <https://amzn.to/31Lb2j4>

Or from the author's website: [www.brettpreiss.com](http://www.brettpreiss.com)



# q mental health: **GIFT MINDSET**

## Why adopting a 'gift' mindset turns challenges into opportunities

**Life throws us curveballs. Some are made of glass and are hard to catch, some bounce off us and others seem to fall straight into our hands. But why not think of these experiences as 'gifts'? How we catch and embrace (or drop) these gifts depends on our mindset, perspective, beliefs, experiences and values.**

By adopting a 'gift' mindset, we can approach situations in our lives with deeper self-awareness, viewing challenges as an opportunity to learn and progress. Lessons may fall into any of the key 12 gifts: resilience, connection, forgiveness, growth, change, optimism, contribution, empathy, curiosity, courage, re-energising or gratitude.

The 2020 global pandemic presented gifts that challenged us and provided opportunities to look at life differently. We live in a hyper-connected world, but at the same time, we are infinitely disconnected. A National Survey of Mental Health and Wellbeing indicated that 2.1 million Australians aged 16–85 had serious thoughts about taking their own life at some point in their lives (Slade et al. 2009). Causes include stressful life events (imagine if we could share these openly), mental illness and substance abuse. The gift mindset helps us to share more of ourselves, as a way of helping others.

### **Where do Gifts come from?**

Sometimes hidden or buried in the past, our gifts, challenging and positive situations and people, are the key drivers to unwrapping our lessons or 'gifts'.

In the British game 'pass the parcel', a neatly wrapped newspaper parcel makes its way around a circle of excited kids. Each child takes their time passing on the parcel, hoping the music stops so they can remove the next layer to expose a small gift. The biggest gift always saved for the end. Not getting a gift was resilience-building and having to unwrap each layer brought you closer to the main prize - the real gift.

In life, challenging situations are like playing pass the parcel, the gift in the situation is never usually planned, clear or accepted in the moment.

Anna's daughter was diagnosed with cancer two years ago. She resigned from a job she loved to care for her child. Not long after this, she started a consultancy — resulting in greater work–life balance doing what she loves. Just like pass the parcel, the initial gift is not pleasant, not chosen and the biggest gift is saved for the end. So, how can you adopt a Gift mindset?

### **Self-awareness**

Whether facing a challenge or a success, the first step in adopting the Gift Mindset is to have deeper awareness of the event. A crisis or success can send us into a tornado of confusion, denial and defeat. By going through the 'unwrapping' process, we can peel back the layers and see the gift in a way that serves others and us. In the practice of dealing with any pain or challenge, we can gradually build our strength to handle more.

### **Acceptance**

Acceptance is choosing to embrace or tolerate something, rather than resist it. It is sometimes seen as a last resort in a world which is focused on self-improvement and being better than before.

Taking the path to acceptance allows us to come to a place of wisdom, perspective and ultimately change. It is about developing a relationship with an experience that is characterised by allowing it to be what it is; registering the presence of difficult feelings and succumbing to whatever will happen next.

Think about how sharing your story and lesson benefits others.

### **Action**

Sharing our lessons — the gifts — is not always comfortable; yet growth means moving beyond what we know, so we need to break through this barrier. We can't move forward until we learn the lesson and believe what it means to us personally. Use risk-taking, making mistakes, or experiencing success, as a learning experience. Accept and share — don't bury it under a rug.

Sharing lessons can enrich the lives of others; help replicate success and is potentially a survival guide for someone else.

A few questions to ponder:

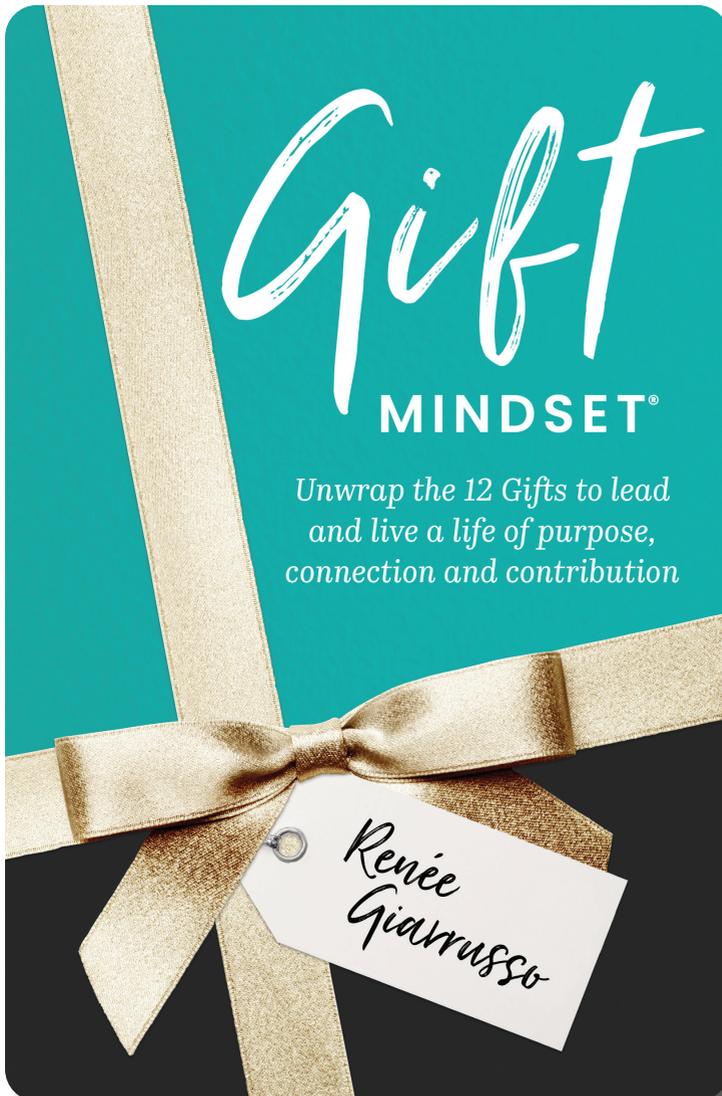
- What lessons have you gleaned and how will you apply these?
- Who could benefit from your gifts?
- What is one thing you could do today to share a gift?

By adopting the gift mindset, we get to live our legacy right now by living a life of purpose, connection and contribution.

What will it cost you not to unwrap your gifts?

*Renée Giarrusso, author of Gift Mindset, is a communication and leadership expert. She is a speaker, trainer, mentor and a professional coach (PCC) and works with leaders, teams and organisations to energise mindset and accelerate leadership and communication to lift performance and create collaborative and connected cultures.*

Find out more at [www.reneegiarrusso.com](http://www.reneegiarrusso.com)



# Gaylord Blade

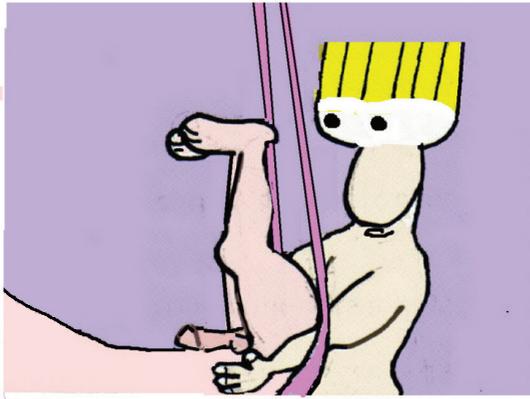
Jesus? Long time no see, mate!



I hope I'm your "mate" after I ask you stop doing what you're doing.



Say what? I thought God was cool with lovingly pummeling buttocks!?



Of course HE is. After all, it was DAD who married the anus to pleasure centers in the brain



Then what am I doing wrong? Too many men? Too rough? What is it?



The petrol-based lube you buy hurts the environment. Use spit, like I do!





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mob: 0422 632 690



Email: [brett.hayhoe@qmagazine.com.au](mailto:brett.hayhoe@qmagazine.com.au)

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