

Providing Options

AN INTERVIEW WITH KATIE UNDERWOOD

Born and raised in Adelaide South Australia, Plympton to be exact, Katie Underwood saw out the earlier years of her life there, settled throughout primary and high school. From an early age she had ambitions of helping people out in some way, and contemplated becoming a nurse as I suppose numerous young girls do too, around that age.

Although by the age of 9, Katie had changed that opinion slightly and set her mind on becoming a physiotherapist, after a conversation with her Mum. “Mum was a beauty therapist and taught me some basic massage techniques, I enjoyed massaging and asked how I could make this into a career”.

Physiotherapy being an option, and after some detailed explanation from her Mum, 9 year old Katie was determined to become a physiotherapist. “I remember at that age I would tell adults, who were amazed I knew the word, let alone what a physio actually did”. The ambition to pursue this career sort of hit a snag once she found out the marks she needed. “I was a good student, but didn’t have grades good enough,” even so Katie went on to study Maths & Science at Adelaide University.

Many of you may know Katie as a singer / songwriter from her solo career working with groups such as Disco Montego, T-Funk, and Terra Ferma. Or her time as part of the successful girl group Bardot, who formed in 1999. Though today Katie has gone full circle and is now the owner of Underwood Healing Center, where she concentrates on massage and Holistic healing, sharing and helping others. Through massage, meditation, and sound meditation, bringing together both her loves and passions, to create positive change for people.

Wanting to know more about what makes her tick, I started off with foods and cooking wanting to know, is she passionate about food? “Not sure if I am passionate about food, I love food and can cook, nothing too fancy though.” She adores her fruits and a variety of cuisines including Vietnamese, Italian, and Thai, “fish in particular shellfish, if it has a shell and is from the sea, I love it!” She prefers hot and spicy, the savory side of food, much more than the sweet side, though does occasionally treat herself to some dark chocolate.

Katie ensures her two girls, Zoe & Charlotte have the best opportunity in life, providing them with not only good nutrition but an education, and understanding of food. “I give the girls food options at dinner time, which are healthy, they have a choice if they prefer more of one

item today instead of another, well it is their choice and it seems to work, not all of the time though most.” Katie allows her girls to make their own decisions when it comes to food, if they want more of one item and less of another, they have the choice from what is on offer, and she ensures all the options are healthy. “Of course there are times when we have a chip or two, though these are treats, and the girls realise this, and seem to respect it.”

Katie feels, that if you provide a choice of poor nutritional food options for children such as Frankfurts or Pies, then either way whatever is chosen, if on a regular basis, will not be as beneficial to the health as a selection of healthy options such as vegetables. Katie feels that perhaps there is not the requisite understanding, by parents of the detrimental effects of poor dietary choices, and that the children can only be guided by what their parents provide for them, until a certain age. “Today we had a play date at our house and I made the children a cheesy pasta, plus they had three salad item options to choose from, and they did, they loved it.” Children will choose to eat from whatever you put on the table, they don’t have to like everything all of the time, that is why there is an option.

Katie stresses that she is in no way the perfect parent, “Who am I to give advice, I have made mistakes too”, she told me I could quote her on that one. Though there is one tip, passed onto her, at some stage, she cannot exactly recall by whom, which she uses with the girls on a daily basis and would like to share it:

TIP: Allow the children to serve themselves!

“I start the girls off with a small portion of food on their plates, then, on the table, there is a selection of, usually 3 foods for them to choose from.” She feels that if you give children the authority to serve for themselves they not only get to eat what they prefer, but in the amounts or quantities that are suitable for them. Her girls love the independence, of making their own decisions. “Zoe, may prefer less or no carrots during a meal, though will choose to replace it with corn or beans, or whatever else is on offer.” Katie feels that forcing children to eat one or two vegi items piled on their plates by parents, which the kids don’t like is not the way she prefers to raise her girls. “I have tried that, and it definitely did not work, it only frustrated me and upset the girls.”

At this stage of the interview Charlotte, one of Katie’s girls, decided to come in and say hello, so I got to ask her about her favorite foods. Which I can tell you include pears, red apples, zucchini and a selection of other vegetables, the

list went on, and on. This little one certainly takes after her mum, who was born for the stage.

Moving on, I asked Katie, about some of the things she cannot live without, excluding bodily part of course, and her answers were:

1. My Children, Charlotte & Zoe
2. My Phone, "like the rest of the world"
3. Mum, "She is my rock"
4. Coffee, "We have a love hate relationship, though at the moment I love it!"
5. Music, "Of course, for me!"

To relax and unwind Katie enjoys her meditation, and taking her long walks, "I really enjoy taking long walks, it is so relaxing for me." Catching up with friends for dinner, or a coffee is also something dear to her heart which she also finds relaxing. Last but certainly not least is another relaxation tool Katie enjoys, a long bath with epsom salts, as the magnesium helps to relax the muscles together with the warm water, something I learned there from Katie, which I had to add in.

Going forward into 2016 and beyond, Katie wants to concentrate on her Healing Center, looking for expansion opportunities, which enables her to help more people, such as in the corporate world, for example. Providing the opportunity of incorporating both the meditation and the sound meditation techniques into her healing programs. There is a clear focus on helping and healing others, and giving to the community, it is certainly humbling to meet individuals with such passion and drive.

Further into the future, from a five to ten year viewpoint, Katie's goals include writing an inspirational book of her life and experiences, so far. "I would also like to hit the motivational speaking circuit, to share these experiences." Being an important aspect of her life, Katie would also like to explore the option of recording her sound meditation programs, which to

date is obviously yet to happen.

We can only look forward to the coming chapters in the book of life of this amazing woman, who has achieved and experienced so much, already in life. With such self determination and drive it will certainly be exciting to see what Katie achieves going forward, we are looking forward to it, "there is so much I want to do."

