

# Time to Renew

## Jackie Keogh meets work performance and well-being coach Therese Ryan

IT'S not rocket science but it can take a surprisingly long time to unlearn all the stuff we do that doesn't work.

Here's a woman who can help: Therese Ryan set up Renewal Consultants in 2005 because she perceived there was a need for a coaching service that had particular emphasis on work performance and wellbeing.

'When I came back to Ireland from Australia, where I had been doing that kind of work,' Therese said, 'friends of mine questioned what I was doing and if Ireland was the place for such a service.'

'I had thought of setting up in London, where coaching was much more prevalent, but I wanted to work in Ireland and provide this service in Ireland. In short, I wanted to make it work here.'

When Therese came back she had just turned thirty, which she believes is a significant time in anyone's life, a time when you make decisions that can shape the rest of your life.

'For me, it was the small things that I missed about home. There is always something that people like to do in their family environment: for me, it was an easy 30 minutes and a cup of tea with my mum and dad and any one of my six siblings. I didn't miss the big things.'

'I came home "detached",' said Therese, who is now happily married with an adorable nine-month old daughter, Isabel. She said it was good to be back even though it was starting to become obvious that the recession was about to kick in.

'It is always a challenge to set up a new business. You are taking a risk. You are going with your belief that it is going to work. Then your job is to make it work,' said Therese, who had previously worked as the national health marketing manager for Stockvital in Ireland.

### As a nurse

Therese began her working life as a nurse at Limerick Regional, but she has always been highly motivated and interested in people, which has ultimately shaped what she is now doing.

'Even when I was working as a nurse I found myself curious about the patient's story. I always believed that helping people understand where they are now helps them to make the changes about where they want to go, and what they want to do.'

'Making changes to one's life can seem complex, but it is my job to help them understand where these changes can be made. It can be a bit like unravelling a puzzle.'

'It is very easy to make a generalisation and say, "every cup of coffee is the same", but that is not the case with people. No two people and no two situations are truly the same.'

'Everyone is different. That is where I come in: I can help



Therese Ryan maintains that no two people and no two situations are truly the same.

people improve how they perform. Essentially, it is like an audit in so far as I can help them to identify where they are, and then identify simple ways that they can improve.

'Sometimes people feel their particular situation is too complicated to even try, but "Creating Positive Change", which is the slogan of Therese's business, is within their grasp.'

## I wanted to work in Ireland and provide this service in Ireland

'We can all talk about making positive changes, but it is the doing of it that impacts your life and opens up possibilities for the future,' said Therese.

It is only since she relocated her business to Cork that people in West Cork have come to know Therese. Her talks, like her one-day time management workshop at the Inchydoney Hotel last April, are usually well attended.

That particular workshop was just for women, but Therese said her business is pretty much fifty-fifty because it is not just women who are struggling with issues like work-life balance, work performance, time management and stress management.

What her clients find most compelling about the service she offers is that she is both professional and personable. They like the fact that she goes the extra mile to help them find the solution they are looking for – a solution that not only enriches their lives but gives them a greater sense of clarity and purpose.

There is the misconception that Therese's business is re-

served for the corporate sector, but that simply is not the case. She works with a lot of private clients: everything from senior managers to the mother of three kids who has chosen to stay at home full-time.

### Working day

'Just because you are not in the office does not mean you don't have a working day,' said Therese. 'I help people get the most out of the time they have – not the time they wish they had.'

'Sometimes that just means showing them how to improve their energy levels, or delegate better, or improve their own management skills, and be less stressed when it comes to juggling life's demands.'

On a personal note, Therese said: 'I juggle just like everyone else. You have to. I have days when it all goes very smoothly and everything goes according to plan, but then I have days when the unexpected happens.'

'Being a parent you can expect the unexpected. Things don't always go the way you planned, however, it is how you deal with the sudden change to your day that counts.'

'I personally use a daily "to do" list because when I get up in the morning I need to know what I have to do and how much time I have in which to do it. For me, when I became a mother I took all the business skills I had acquired and transferred them into the home.'

'Time management did become my secret unspoken weapon when it came to managing my days. I didn't have the whole day to myself anymore: I had to work with the time given to me, not the time I wished I had.'

Smiling, Therese said: 'I also learned to work with my daughter.' In other words, Therese did not have the unrealistic expectation that her little one would slot into her routine, her timetable. 'I had to figure hers out fast and then work with it.'

The name of Therese's company is Renewal Consultants. It is fitting then that Therese can see, very clearly, how that now applies to her. 'With each change comes the chance to renew,' she said. 'It is life affirming.'

Previously, as a nurse, Therese was trained to take charge. Later, as a senior manager, she knew how to deal with the demands of business. Now, as the owner of her own company, she is in her element.

## I had to work with the time given to me, not the time I wished I had.

For the most part of her life she was an expert in her field and always knew what to do and had a sense of ability and confidence that comes with that. But when she became a parent she admitted: 'Suddenly you question yourself and that can be a vulnerable experience.'

'Being okay with that vulnerability isn't easy, especially if you are what is considered "able". Parenting makes you stop if you are lucky. It makes you realise that it is okay to be vulnerable, and it is okay to not always get it right.'

'If you are smart you realise that quickly and you ask for help.' Isn't that the very basis on which her company was formed?