



*“Maureen was able to clarify what her strengths were and what she needed to learn”*

### Focus on your own personal growth to make changes in your life

Maureen never dreamt that a discussion at a Pakistan cricket match would be the catalyst to change her life so dramatically. Chatting to the Pakistan Team Coach at the match she realised she'd found something she needed – Xplore!

Having received no further training in her (then) current role, Maureen felt as though she wanted develop some new skills at this point in her career. She was successful with what she was doing but needed to grow more as a person and invest in herself.

So Maureen negotiated the Xplore Career Resiliency program (as recommended by her cricket acquaintance) as part of her next pay rise package. “But...” her boss laughed, “this is all about you!”. “Of course it is!” she replied. It wasn't as if Maureen needed further training to do her job, she'd done every sales course in the book. What she needed was a program that would focus on her own personal growth.

Maureen had always worked for major blue chip organisations in corporate roles. She had been headhunted from the UK by Driza-Bone to run their licensing program for the Sydney 2000 Olympics. So in May 1999 she moved to Australia permanently. Her involvement in the Olympic program was such a success (she had 7,500 garments in the opening ceremony alone) that she was asked to stay on with Driza-Bone and set up their corporate clothing business.

At the time of attending the Xplore program Maureen was happy with her job but she often felt isolated. The head office was based in Brisbane and she was based in Sydney working from home, so her networks were important. This had been an important factor in her choice of the Xplore program.

Rather than just being a short course for a couple of days, the Xplore Career Resiliency program extended over 4 months. Not only did this length of time allow Maureen to become immersed in the program but she believes it was the reason she was able to make the changes she needed in her life. She says it was like “the start of the change of the rest of my life”.

As Maureen started to “peel away layers” of herself, she revealed “a side of me I didn't know existed”. She was able to clarify what her strengths were and what she needed to learn. She realised that where she was currently heading with her career was not necessarily where she wanted to be anymore.



## Xplore Case Study Maureen Collins

*"I can get out of bed and  
save people's lives!"*

Today Maureen is working as a development manager for the Australian arm of The UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) – a far cry from her sales career back in the UK, although not dissimilar in terms of skill set in her fundraising role. The difference she feels is the fact that "I can get out of bed and save people's lives!"

What Maureen finds amazing is the path that led to her position at UNHCR. She had spent about 3 years looking for something new and didn't realise that she had in fact found it, and was subconsciously orchestrating a way to get it!

Maureen recalls an exercise that she carried out during her Xplore program. "We had to match a series of questions with stickers that best reflected our answers". The questions related to how she felt about the present and the future. The outcome still amazes Maureen to the point that she keeps the stickers with her at work to remind her of how profound this experience was to her life.

Maureen had picked stickers with images of doves, the globe, volumes of people in a setting much like that of which she works with today. These stickers, she says, describe the job that she was led to do. "It was like the subconscious and the heart aligned". At that time however it wasn't necessarily obvious that these images represented Maureen's life calling, it took a little more time to put the pieces together.

Another surprising sign was during a one-on-one session with Margie Hartley, whom Maureen considered a valuable mentor supporting her through this period of change. They were brainstorming brands that Maureen would like to work for and the UN was one that she identified – 6 months later she was working for UNHCR!

Maureen learned that with courage you can make a difference. She feels that she has been given a second chance to be creative in her career as well as doing a job she loves. She has lived on 4 continents, visited over 50 countries and has a passion to go to places some people would not dare to go! She's fascinated by culture and history in a deep and credible way, wanting to sit with people in their homes and learn about them.

One of Maureen's other passions is photography and she is grateful that she has been given an opportunity to share other people's stories with her photos. In fact, Diana Ryall was one of the first people to ask Maureen if she could buy one of her photos that she had taken in India. At that time Maureen had not considered that her passion could translate into raising funds for her organisation, now she feels it has a purpose.



## Xplore Case Study Maureen Collins

*“we all have an innate sense of what is right and you just need to trust that judgement”*

*- Maureen Collins*

Maureen met with Soccerroo Mark Schwarzer recently and a comment that he made about one young former refugee struck a chord with her. Aminata Conteh, from Sierra Leone is working for David Lawrence (the Australian retailer) and Maureen is her mentor. Mark pointed out that from her appearance you would never know what a terrible experience this young woman had endured in her past. Proof that what you see on the surface is not always what it seems. Getting to know someone and their back-story is essential to enable you to help and support them.

Maureen believes that she herself has found a higher purpose in life and sometimes can't understand why it took her so long to get to this stage, where she feels so fulfilled. At a recent Xplore breakfast event where Maureen was a guest speaker, Di commented on how much she thought that Maureen had changed and grown as a person. “Sometimes you are too close to yourself to realise how much you've changed, it was a great to get a compliment like that from someone that I respect”.

“Trust in your gut feel” is a motto that Maureen has carried throughout her career and would advise others to follow. She believes that we all have an innate sense of what is right and you just need to trust that judgement. Maureen knows that if she trusts her gut then she can change the world!

### About Xplore For Success

Xplore offers a range of programs, workshops, professional coaching and consulting services. These services offer a unique opportunity for professionals to develop strategies to build their own skills through individual and/or group sessions led by our experienced and insightful facilitators. Participation in any Xplore program automatically connects you to the Xplore alumni, which currently includes over 3000 people in over 250 organisations. Xplore is committed to offering a positive, open, supportive and non-threatening group or individual environment