



#BossLady Dionne Collett on raising a business and a strong son

Thirteen years ago, I started my company, Take Note Reputation Management. It all came about after the birth of my son and the realisation that I wanted to spend as much time as possible with him and my growing family and I just knew I needed to make a drastic lifestyle change.

At that time, I was heading up the marketing department of one of South Africa's largest hotel groups and the demanding travel schedule meant that my daughter, now 16, had endured 48 flights by her second birthday.

My Take Note journey began filled with sleepless nights, much the same as having a new-born baby and as I look back now, with both Take Note and my son having just celebrated their 13th birthdays, it is remarkable the similarities in raising these two!

From birth to age eight, often labelled the formative years, a time of rapid growth and skills development, my son grew into a child who could take care of his own body and interact independently. Not dissimilar to my fledgling enterprise that was nurtured into a young business. The focus was centred on creating and defining our brand; establishing bonds, rapport and trust with clients and media; and devising effective work-processes.

The next stage is middle childhood between the ages of eight and 12, a time of slow and steady growth, value instilling and social development. Having Take Note's office close to home means that I have and continue to be an integral part of my children's everyday life and I am grateful for every moment I spend with them.

Similarly in my business, I am hands-on and place emphasis on personal service, forming long and meaningful relationships with our clients, allowing us to integrate our agency into their organisations, giving us a better understanding of their operations and consequently allowing us to offer informed solutions for exceptional reputation management.

Now as a young adolescent my son is busy forming and establishing his identity, as is Take Note cementing an identity and reputation as a leader in integrated reputation management, as shown by our outstanding performance as a finalist in the 2020 Prism Awards. Just as a child continuously explores new boundaries, so has Take Note, going from a Tourism centric agency into one that boasts a diverse portfolio including clients in the worlds of fashion, medicine, engineering and tourism.

In this transitional stage between child and adult, there is tremendous growth taking place and not just in height, but in stature too, a time of insatiable hunger for opportunities, challenges, dares and boundaries. One can either be out building on your legacy or hiding in the shadows feeling awkward and out of place – I can safely say that both my children and Take Note are creating legacies, in the bright limelight.

Great pride wells up in me and my cup overflows!

