

“It’s never too late for new beginnings”

Yvonne Dillon, co-founder of Nutrilicious Food Co, spoke to ThinkBusiness ahead of her guest appearance at next week’s Friday Breakfast Club in Waterford. Here’s a snippet of some of the things she will discuss.

Starting

[Nutrilicious Food Co](#) was set up by myself and my husband Brian in 2017. My interest in nutrition began when I became a mother to two crazy, energetic, fun loving hurling-mad sons. This interest encouraged me to complete a diploma in nutrition and health just for my own personal and family benefit.

However during this time I came up with the idea of starting a food business producing food for the busy household with wholesome ingredients which nourish from the inside out. Both in our 40s with lots of experience in business, we were searching to start a new business together which will keep us busy right up into our retirement.

The word Nutrilicious was scribbled on the centre of a large whiteboard and placed on my kitchen wall going back as far as 2013. Over time this whiteboard grew into an overcrowded space of ideas, words, names, to do lists, courses, suppliers, customers, marketing, designs, logos, etc.

Food experience

Both Brian and I went and trained at the Ballymaloe Cookery School which gave us the necessary skills and confidence to bring Nutrilicious Food Co to life in 2017. Our goal is to organically grow Nutrilicious Food Co into a recognisable, successful and trustworthy Irish food brand adding to our delicious treat range but also empower people back into the kitchen through our fun informative classes and online videos and content.

Networking

Currently I’m a member of the Dungarvan Chamber of Commerce and The Waterford Way, and my goal for the 12 months ahead is ensure that I incorporate time into my schedule to attend more events. Unfortunately time has been an issue for me in the past but I understand networking is such an integral part of growing, learning, meeting new people and potential customers.

Support

From the start of my journey, the Local Enterprise Office have been an integral part of our growth.

We were eligible for the feasibility grant which gave us a much needed cash injection. I signed on for and completed the Food Academy Programme which gave us an overview of exactly what is required to develop a product from my kitchen to the shop shelf. I also attended the LEO Entrepreneurs Weekend Retreat with other like minded business owners. I found this experience invaluable because sometimes, especially for start-ups, you can feel extremely lonely and isolated bringing your vision and ideas to life.

Inspirations

My role models in life would definitely be my own family members, from siblings to cousins, there is a drive in each one of us which for me comes from the fact our parents come from hard-working families. If I ever need guidance or advice I'm lucky to have such an amazing family to turn to.

Throughout our childhood my mam and dad worked non-stop to ensure that their six children were brought up in a loving, caring, encouraging household. My mam was so strict on the importance of education, while my dad on the other hand was so strict about us making time for fun, family, laughter and friends.

Lessons learned

Success to me is piece of mind and waking up content after a great nights sleep. During our nine month journey in our café, my health suffered tremendously, my confidence disappeared, and I felt at an all time low. I even developed crippling anxiety and panic attacks. I'd wake up with pins and needles in my arms and legs brought on by massive stress. This was the most challenging time I faced I wouldn't call it a mistake but a lesson learned.

I pinch myself now as I can honestly say I'm so proud of what we have achieved so far. It hasn't been a straightforward journey but we are so content with the way the business is moving forward.

Future

I'm now working on ways to enhance our offering. we have lots of plans for the years ahead, both in our kitchen and online. Every business needs to look forward, come up with new plans, thinking up new ideas and fortunately for us, this is where I thrive!

Advice

Note to my younger self would be eat well, exercise more, reach for the stars, don't be scared. To believe in yourself, have confidence and surround yourself with positive inspiring people. It's never too late for new beginnings.

[To attend the Friday Breakfast Club on September 6th in the Bank of Ireland Workbench](#)

[in Waterford, click here to register.](#)

Friday Breakfast Clubs are events held every first Friday in Bank of Ireland's Workbenches across the country. The first 30 minutes involves business networking over a light breakfast. This is followed by a fireside chat with a local business owner with a financial focus on the story of their journey to date, in a relaxed conversational setting, closing with Q&A with the audience.

[Is your start-up business in need of financial support? Click here to see what options are available to you.](#)

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Published: 29 August, 2019