

Lola's



Q&A...on Carole Pyke

In this issue Lola Aroun, from *Innovative Black Woman*, talks live and direct to Carole Pyke, the manager of Comedienne and TV star Felicity Ethnic and Managing Director of Carole Pyke Associates. Successful in her own right, Carole has been involved in organising events for the Write Thing, Vivienne Westwood's London & Paris Shows and Nelson Mandela's visit to London to mention but a few. Lola met her on a hot sweltering Summer afternoon at the Z-Bar in Brixton.

What kind of business is Carole Pyke Associates and how long has it been established?

Good question, Carole Pyke Associates is a PR and event management company established now for just under a year.

Had you always planned to be involved in the PR industry?

Ever since I can remember I have always been interested in people, the media and events. I was always scribbling at school about these things. I always had paper and a pencil in my hand. I previously

worked for the Sports Council & the London Youth Games where I was a press spokesperson and also wrote for their magazine.

What is it that interests you in PR specifically?

The sheer rush of it all! I love adrenalin and the buzz you get by being involved in projects from their inception right through to when they finish. I learn valuable



lessons and gain deep experiences from this type of work.

I know you were at the New York Essence Awards. What was it like being part of it?

Manic! People seem to have preconceived ideas about American events. I see an event as an event, the practicalities are the same except that they tend to be on a larger scale. I enjoyed being in

New York but feel that we need to recognise the fact that Britain is doing very well on the event management front. We do need to recognise, acknowledge and appreciate ourselves more. The USA is different compared to Britain - not better or worse - just different.

What advice and tips would you give to aspiring business women?

Have clear ideas of where you are going. This can change, but from the outset it should be clear that there is something that you are working towards. You need to be focused on the bigger picture and the smaller things that you do should be helping you to achieve that bigger picture. We already have the tools to do what we want. We must avoid thinking too long about the next steps before taking them. Either eliminate fear or better still, channel it in a way that propels you forward. If we are serious about ourselves and business we should have supportive, constructive and honest people around us. There are no guarantees in life but life is too short and what have we got to lose?

As long as I have known you, you have always been warm-spirited



and you always have an inspirational word for others. Who do you draw your inspirations from?

My mother. People say that I always have an answer to everything. My mother has been dead for three and a half years and it has been hard. It is only now that I appreciate the wise words of wisdom that she gave me then. As a child I remember her saying to me 'It's good for me to be proud of you but more for you to be proud of yourself'. I also get my inspiration from figures such as Susan L. Taylor, Iyanla Vanzant and of course our own Jackee Holder. From time to time, as we all do, I feel like giving up on my goals and seek an easier life. But I soon realise that the 'art is not in never falling, but in rising every time you fall'. I accept all my feelings and that they can change.

Would you say that a spiritual base is essential for succeeding in business?

Yes, God, Creator, Mother Being, Earth, whatever we call that which gives us strength and hope. It's essential to have an anchor to keep you strong. There are lots of debates about spirituality and the soul. We all have inner voices and we have the choice to listen or not. I am training myself right now to listen to the 1st inner voice, which has worked for me so far. Being true to self and working on ourselves is important, we tend to put others before ourselves and I think that in order to be a productive mother, wife, daughter, friend or lover, we need to start with ourselves. We need to spend more time on

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ourselves.

On reflection, what have been the most challenging times for you as a business owner?

Having bills to pay and no money to pay them can be a challenge! It's a situation that can make you want to give up. But I take solace from the fact that many successful business owners have gone through more tribulations than I will ever see. Some have even been declared bankrupt yet continued to believe in themselves, changed strategies and move on. Words are powerful in thought and speech. It is ourselves that raise or keep ourselves small.

What do you do in your spare time?

Spare time, what does that mean? I'm adventurous and like trying new things like going to the opera, I'm thinking (just thinking) about bungee jumping but right now I'm having a love affair with myself and going through self appreciation. Saturday can come along and I can be happy and content with some videos and wine rekindling the friendship with self. By doing this I feel comfortable with myself. As women we tend to, rather than be on our own, settle for less in our men. I think it is important that both parties in the relationship benefit from being together.

How did you become the manager of Felicity Ethnic and what is she

currently doing?

She is a friend of mine and at the time I just offered to give her a hand and today this is where we are. Right now Felicity is sunning herself in Antigua. She is multi talented and is currently working on a number of projects that highlight this.

Where would you recommend the busy working woman go to get away from it all for a week or two?

I think it depends on how well travelled she is and where she likes to go. If you are looking for rest & retreat then a beach holiday in Europe, Spain or Italy can be good. The Lake District, Wales or Ireland depending on the weather can be glorious. If you are looking for a real cultural experience, Africa is the place to go. In Gambia, Ghana or South Africa you can explore or go on some real eye-opening adventures. To get in touch or connect with brothers and sisters then it's the US. Thailand, Singapore and Malaysia are different and adventurous. A break is important to re-focus and re-energise.

What is your idea of success?

We are all successful in something. It can be measured in terms of how far we have come. Everything has an outcome and I think that as long we try something, even if the outcome is not the result which we hoped for, we are successful if we can learn from it. Success is also peace of mind.

