

## **The SOSE Spotlight podcast**

### **Series 2, Episode 6 transcription**

#### **Presenter – Lesley Forsyth**

Hello and welcome to the SOSE Spotlight podcast.

Wherever you are, in Dumfries and Galloway, the Scottish Borders or beyond, if you're a business, entrepreneur, community enterprise or aspiring to be one, this is for you. We are South of Scotland Enterprise and we're all about helping people in the South of Scotland to thrive, grow and fulfil your best potential.

This series is focused on Pathways, the Scottish Government funded pilot that has been delivered by South of Scotland Enterprise, which aims to help aspiring entrepreneurs across the region to find the confidence and strength to begin their business journey. In these six episodes, we will be speaking to SOSE staff, our dedicated Pathways coaches and the clients to find out all about Pathways and their experience.

We will be finding out: What is it? Why is it critical for aspiring entrepreneurs? Why now? What opportunities are there for you and how can South of Scotland Enterprise help?

I'm Lesley Forsyth and with me today is Ruth O'Malley, one of the Pathways clients. Ruth, originally from Edinburgh, has lived in various locations across the UK, from Shetland to Cornwall, and moved to the Scottish Borders during COVID having always loved the area. Ruth, a part-time nurse at the Borders General Hospital, describes herself with a passion to help others and now, through the help of Pathways, Ruth is fulfilling her business dreams, setting up her own massage therapy business in Hawick.

Hello and welcome to the SOSE Spotlight Ruth.

#### **Guest – Ruth O'Malley, Pathways client**

Hello. Thanks for having me.

#### **Lesley**

Ruth, tell us a little bit about yourself and how you first heard about Pathways.

#### **Ruth**

So I joined the women's business leadership programme, which was run by South of Scotland Enterprise which started at the start of last year, which really helped me get the business going and the course leader Sharday got in contact with me to say that I would qualify for the Pathways programme.

#### **Lesley**

Brilliant. And when you heard about the Pathways programme, were you excited to think there was a road for you to take to get this business off the ground?

#### **Ruth**

Yeah, definitely. I'm so grateful for all the help that's been out there that I've been able to access through the programme.

**Lesley**

So starting a business can be scary and daunting, and these are some of the barriers that stop people in their tracks. Has the Pathways programme helped you overcome some of these barriers that might have stopped you from starting your own business?

**Ruth**

Yeah, definitely. So, my business had just begun when I met Anne, who was my coach. A huge barrier for me was actually just doing anything on social media. It was a really sort of scary place for me and really helped me to see how that can help the business, how I can reach new people, how it can help the business grow. And I wouldn't have really been able to have the confidence to do that without her guidance on that.

**Lesley**

So, we've talked about some barriers there and for you it was the social media that you found a little bit scary, but can you tell us the advantages of having a coach to help you guide through these first steps of your business?

**Ruth**

I've only ever worked in a job where you're part of a team. So, the thought of being self-employed and kind of being on your own was quite a big deal for me. Working with Anne really helped because she was able to be just somebody to kind of bounce ideas off, but she was able to kind of help me recognise, you know, she said to me, "Look how much you've achieved today, this week, last week, this whole month". And I wouldn't have been able to look at it that way if I hadn't had somebody guiding me to do that.

**Lesley**

So, Anne's helped you break it down into stages. Do you think you would be where you are now, both professionally and personally, if you hadn't had the support from Pathways and Anne your coach?

**Ruth**

No, I've definitely gained more confidence just by working with somebody and doing just what we spoke about, you know, breaking it down and seeing what your achievements have been. It's hard to kind of congratulate yourself for how far you've come. So, actually having somebody to help you do that, it's really, really helped. Professionally, we've kind of talked a little bit about things like a business plan, which is just has never ever been on my radar at all. So, thinking about how I might be able to grow in that area of business has been really helpful as well.

**Lesley**

You must feel really proud when you look back at what you have achieved and how you've grown as a person, as a business person?

**Ruth**

Yeah. I mean it's been loads of work. You know, the last few years there's been a lot. But yeah, I'm so pleased with how the business is going now. And I feel like week to week things are progressing and I really love what I'm doing and I feel like I'm really helping people and the feedback's all been great. So, yeah, yeah, lots to be pleased about.

**Lesley**

And can you feel a difference in yourself where you are now to where you are at the start of this journey?

**Ruth**

Yeah, definitely confidence just being sure that I'm making the right decisions really. I had the skills to do this. But I didn't know how to make a business out of it. So yeah, it's been a great sort of year and a half for me.

**Lesley**

So, you knew what you wanted to do and you knew you were able to do it, but it was just getting that help and that nudge to get the business off the ground?

**Ruth**

Yeah. Yeah. To get the steps to make it happen.

**Lesley**

You must feel really empowered, having started your own business, getting through the scary bits, but looking to the future. What do you think the next 12 months looks like for you? Any business plans or any personal development that you're looking at?

**Ruth**

Getting feedback from my clients has been great because it's helping me to see what other treatments might be best suited to them. And how my personal development might suit the client needs and whom my kind of ideal client is.

**Lesley**

So the next 12 months looking at towards your client specifics, you know you've started that business and now you're looking at taking that time to get feedback from clients and see that you are providing the service that they're looking for or if there's anything else.

**Ruth**

Yeah, and I'm still working part-time as a nurse. I feel that as the business grows that the nursing hours might reduce further because the business is going so well and now that I can see that I'd be able to make a career out of this.

### **Lesley**

Well done, it must be still quite a juggle to be running a business, business planning for the next 12 months. It's been really great having you here today, Ruth, to share your journey. And I'm sure there are some listeners today inspired by your journey. For any listeners who have a business or social enterprise idea, but just don't know where to start, what advice would you give them?

### **Ruth**

I would say look and see how much help there is out there. I had no idea until I started tapping into things like Business Gateway and South of Scotland Enterprise just how much support there is for people starting out a new business, whether it's in things like social media or how to manage your finances. I can't believe how much help I've had through what's been available and actually for free and very, very locally.

### **Lesley**

Thank you, Ruth, for coming along today and sharing the successes and experiences you have enjoyed as a Pathways client. South of Scotland Enterprise is proud to be supporting new entrepreneurs.

To find out more about Pathways and the success stories along the way, visit our website: [southofscotlandenterprise.com/pathways](https://southofscotlandenterprise.com/pathways) or send us an email. Our email address is [clienthub@sose.scot](mailto:clienthub@sose.scot) or give us a call on 0300 304 8888 that's 0300 304 8888.

We'd love your feedback and please subscribe so you don't miss our next episode. I'm Lesley Forsyth. Thanks for listening to the SOSE Spotlight. Do join us again next week for more inspiring Pathways stories from around the South of Scotland.