

Story:
Gabrielle Chariton

a winning mindset

Committed, fierce, and wise: a decade after retiring from professional sport, surfing superstar Layne Beachley AO continues to inspire us to follow our dreams.



From carving up 50-foot waves to opening up the world of surfing to women and girls across Australia, it seems there's nothing Layne Beachley can't do, once she sets her mind to it.

Growing up on Sydney's Northern Beaches with a natural affinity for the water, Layne's ambition to become a champion surfer set in early, and set in hard. '[By my early teens] I had established a goal as audacious as becoming the best of the best,' she says.

'My self-identity was wrapped up in achieving my goals ... nothing was ever going to stop me.'

This steely determination saw Layne rise to the pinnacle of her sport, collecting a total of seven surfing world titles and countless awards to achieve legendary status as the world's greatest-ever female surfer, before retiring from competition in 2008.

Today, Layne channels her unstoppable drive and energy into enhancing the lives of others. She gives her time to a range of charities and philanthropic causes, and as part of her ongoing – and transformative – contribution to Australian surfing, continues to nurture the next generation of Australian athletes. When interviewed by *Housing*, she was heading home from a training camp for promising junior surfers in northern NSW, where she spent three days 'coaching them and surfing with them and inspiring them and motivating them'.

Life on the pro surfing circuit taught Layne a lot about the power of self-belief and overcoming adversity in the quest for success. And in her current career as one of Australia's most engaging and inspiring public speakers, she shares these hard-won lessons with audiences all around the world.

At the HIA National Conference in Singapore earlier this year, she talked about how we can all achieve our goals with a clearly-articulated vision, by surrounding ourselves with the right 'dream team' and by overcoming the fear that holds us back – a concept she illustrated by describing how she conquered the terror of riding a 50-foot wave by tuning into her 'internal dialogue'. Here, she

reveals more of what she's learnt about getting the most out of life, and her daily strategies for wellness and success.



LAYNE SPEAKING AT THE 2018 HIA NATIONAL CONFERENCE

'GOALS HAVE TO MEAN SOMETHING TO YOU, THEY'VE GOT TO BE A LITTLE BIT OF A STRETCH, AND THEY'VE GOT TO EXCITE YOU'



top 5

Layne's top five tips for mind and body

Do what you love

Layne believes that in business and in our personal lives, the key to unlocking our potential lies in identifying – and then pursuing – our passion, which gives us a sense of purpose, self-worth, and brings joy into our daily lives.

'My number one passion still is surfing,' she says. 'But I do also love sharing my stories and knowledge with people through public speaking.'

Find your morning routine

'My schedule is quite frantic and it's easy to get overwhelmed with all the demands that are placed on me,' Layne says. She keeps herself centred with a morning ritual that includes meditation.

'This brings continuity and routine to my life and makes sure that I kickstart my day feeling good, irrespective of where I am.'

Stay focused

Anyone can set a goal – but how many of us stick with them?

'Goals have to mean something to you, they've got to be a little bit of a stretch, and they've got to excite you,' Layne advises.

'When you set a really big goal, make sure you also set a whole bunch of little ones, so as you go along you can celebrate the little wins. It's the celebration of the little wins that helps you maintain that motivation and momentum and excitement.'

Commit to overcoming injury

As a pro surfer, Layne's remarkable resilience and never-say-die attitude saw her win her third world title just thirty minutes after a rogue 20-foot wave had smashed the lumbar bones in her spine.

'My desire to succeed and my fear of failure far outweighed the pain,' she says of this extraordinary feat.

This was by no means an isolated event, and the list of injuries Layne sustained during her surfing career is almost as impressive as her list of wins. In this respect there are parallels between professional sport and building, which has one of the highest injury rates of any occupation.

'I was so fierce and driven and feisty. I just had to get the job done. But it also cost me my quality of health and wellbeing. When I look back on my career there's definitely a more sustainable way to go about it.'

After dedicating years to the healing process, Layne urges others to be kinder to themselves.

'My advice to builders is listen to your body, there's no shame in not being able to lift something,' she says.

'But you've got to want to heal more than being injured. And that requires a lot of discipline and a lot of commitment – sometimes over a long period of time.'

Honour yourself

When it comes to maintaining wellness, Layne takes a pragmatic approach. '[Being healthy] is about doing things that you enjoy, not pushing yourself too hard, learning to listen to your body and honouring it. When it needs a rest give it a rest, when it wants food, eat well; if you've had a big night out, hydrate.'

'And I think another good lesson for everybody is to accept that on the days when you don't feel good, that's okay, that's normal. It's called being human.'

www.laynebeachley.com 

- **Find the joy** – my work/life balance comes from making sure that I do something I love every day – and that's surfing or yoga: surfing comes first, yoga comes second
- **Start your day** with a big glass of water
- **Meditation** helps
- **Build discipline** – start your day with success by making your bed every morning
- **Challenge yourself** every day by doing something as simple as brushing your teeth with the opposite hand – this creates connections between left brain and right brain, opens up your neurotransmitters and results in more creative and critical thinking patterns.

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