

DETERMINED PANDA PRINTS

NAT BIRD

1:- Who are you and what's your business?

I'm Nat, and I live in Eastbourne, East Sussex. It's a little patch of heaven in the world. I'm mum to Amber and wife to Steve and mum to my fur baby Diesel Dog, who is from Portugal.

I own and run Determined Panda Prints, creating a variety of journals for different hobbies, wellness and mindfulness, notebooks and printables, to support people in their day to day lives.

2:- Why did you start your business and when?

I started DPP when my previous business with The Body Shop At Home disappeared overnight, through no fault of my own and I wanted to do something that could not be taken away by anyone else.

I have always been a stationery addict and a bookworm (more of a book dragon these days). I've had many reading journals over the years, and my complaint is always the same - there are just too many pages that I absolutely would never use, and I hate waste. So I created my own, and decided to make it available for others to buy. This all started at the end of January 2024, and since then, I have created a wide range of products and love hearing from customers how some of them are helping them (for instance the migraine journal).

3:- What are your strengths and weaknesses in life or business?

My strengths are that I give anything I do 100% and I am very passionate about it. I like to be able to help people and make a difference, even if it is only small. I am very positive and work hard. My weaknesses are that due to health conditions, I can get very frustrated when I can't get everything done that I'd like to, and sometimes I take on too much, forgetting that my body isn't as accommodating in doing as much as it once could.

4:- What makes you unique in this world?

I have a wicked sense of humour, I am told, and as such can really turn a frown upside down. People generally feel very calm around me.

5:- What is your greatest achievement? Personal or Professional?

My greatest achievement is definitely turning the life of my daughter around. She is autistic with mental health struggles, and when she finished year 6, we decided to pull her out of school and home educate her, as she was in a really bad place. We did this despite many people telling us it was a bad idea. But we knew her and what she needed, and now she is in year 10, and is taking her maths GCSE a year early,

and is in a much better place emotionally. I'm very proud that I listened to my instincts and didn't give in to pressure to keep her in mainstream education.

6:- What is your motivation in life?

My motivation in life these days is to show my daughter that no matter what life throws at you, you can still do and achieve great things. If you want something, you can do it, you may just have to look at it and come from a different direction. But you WILL get there.

7:- What is your end goal?

My end goal is to have financial independence, but also a range where the profits go to a charity called Children On The Edge. I want my business to do something good for children who are marginalised.

8:- What's been your greatest challenge and how did you overcome it?

My greatest challenge was being homeless at 17. I overcame it by seeking help from a tutor at college, who is now a very good friend, years later, working incredibly hard and absolutely not giving up. I had my first mortgage at 19.

9:- What is your learning style?

Visual, Practical? On the Job? Written?

My learning style incorporates a bit of everything, visual, practical, on the job and written. Like I said, I'm a bookworm, so if I can read about it, make notes, and practice whilst reading, that is great. If I can find a video to help with bits too, that is also a super help. I will always ask people too. Learning from others is so important.

10:- If you could do anything or go anywhere in life what/where would it be?

If I could go anywhere it would probably be Baku to watch the Formula One Grand Prix. I'm a massive fan.