

In 2008, armed with a master's degree and what appeared to be a set career path, Lura Lunkenheimer was working as a school psychologist and loving her job. Owning and operating a business was not a thought that had ever crossed her mind. After several years of supporting students as a school psychologist, Lura became interested in the concept of peer mediation and began to think about how schools and students could benefit consistently utilizing this type of structured support.

A year-long hiatus from the school setting for professional development was all Lura had planned for. Fifteen years later, she's never returned to her intended career, but instead followed her dream of helping students by working to create supports for schools that engage students to learn social skills and those needed for facing adversity, responsible decision making and peaceful, productive problem solving. "Being able to work on a larger scale is what drives and motivates me," says Lura.

Being in an industry facing budget cuts at both the federal and state levels, Lura found it necessary to constantly think on her toes and really consider her business model. Realizing that the traditional funding model for education programming was changing,

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Lura initially found it hard to adjust, but she eventually realized that moving forward and accepting and embracing those changes helped strengthen her business and services it offered.

Peaceful Schools recently celebrated its 10th year in business, but Lura notes that there were many ups and many downs in that timeframe. Just a year ago, she wasn't sure whether she would have to close her doors for good or if she was going to reenergize the business. "As an entrepreneur, there comes a time where you start to doubt yourself," says Lura. "Meeting with a business counselor at the WISE Women's Business Center helped me gain an outside perspective on the business and map out a strategic plan."

Later this year, Lura and her team will be rolling out a new online subscription model, with a goal to sign up 10,000 subscribers within three years. Although each of the new products and services are exciting opportunities, Lura shares that she is still learning what the implication of growth would be and strategizing how to be prepared for a variety of issues that may arise, but overall she is excited for the challenges (and opportunities) ahead.



*wise words
of wisdom...*

"Seek counsel on things that are not your expertise."

– Lura Lunkenheimer

WISE HAPPENINGS:

The Building Blocks for Starting a Business

WHEN: November 5, 12:00-1:00PM
November 20, 5:30-7:00PM

Women in Food & Farming Businesses Roundtable

WHEN: November 7, 12:00-1:00PM
November 21, 12:00-1:00PM

Free Online Tools for Business Growth

WHEN: November 12, 12:00-1:00PM

Women in Creative Businesses Roundtable

WHEN: November 14, 12:00-1:00PM

Accounting Insights for Start-up Entrepreneurs

WHEN: November 19, 1:00-2:30PM

A women's business center... run for women, by women.

All events, unless otherwise indicated, are held at the **WISE Women's Business Center @ The Tech Garden** // 235 Harrison Street // Syracuse, NY 13202

(315) 443-8634 // wisecenter@syr.edu // www.wisecenter.org // **FIND US ON:**  