

“To read this book is to further appreciate the persistence Melanie has displayed in everything she’s done. To know her is to understand the meaning of grace under pressure.”

—PAUL AND MARY DANIEL, TOASTMASTERS

“Melanie’s ability to help people realize their capabilities and live their full potential is truly inspiring. Not only does she advocate for others, she leads by example every day representing what’s achievable. Melanie is a beacon of hope and courage for anyone who doubts what is possible. Her demonstrated resilience, determination, persistence, and confidence are infectious, and she’ll have you believing in your abilities too.”

—KRISTA ROWAN

“When I heard Melanie’s story, I was awestruck at this amazing woman who had not only overcome her own physical challenge after suffering a stroke but was very instrumental in helping others overcome theirs as well. Melanie throws all excuses out the window as she constantly focusses on her own growth, stretching her comfort zone, and pushing herself to becoming an even better speaker, writer, and active supporter of charitable events. She is my inspiration.”

—GLYNIS D’SOUZA

“In Melanie’s charitable work, one can see her interest in helping grow others’ skills and opening them up to their full potential. Very important but not the full depth of what she does to support and inspire so many. Leading by example is an understatement. Walking the talk doesn’t quite capture it. It’s the day-to-day work she does on herself that is most admirable. It is that quiet way in which she encourages people to follow along, to empower themselves to fulfil their own dreams.”

—KELLY MAC DONALD, BROADCASTER

“I went from being a very active person, both socially and professionally, to being stuff on the couch. Watching life go by, sitting on the sidelines, because I could no longer keep up the pace. My ability to maintain employment, relationships, and other aspects of my life had diminished. This is where Melanie and Connect 4 Life truly had the largest impact on my life, providing that safe space to make mistakes and try again. When you have a trusted voice that helps you toward your goals, it is invaluable. It was a unique situation to be able to work with Melanie, someone who is actually interested in your progress and believes in empowering you to achieve your dreams. Melanie is living the path of acquiring a disability later in life, and still living greatly.”

—SEAN PICKARD

“Melanie has always been the optimist. Even if she didn’t believe it, she made you think she did. She’s been the motivator. Forever positive. And a beautiful person inside-out. I love you to the moon and back!”

—VICKI MCGRATH

“Melanie made me realize that we are only limited by how we limit ourselves. I was amazed by her that she had a charity and ran a school. At first, I was not sure if I would be able to do certain things, and Melanie helped me understand myself better. I know that she really appreciated where I was coming from and always encouraged me to be the best that I could be. When you find a person of great value in your life, hold on tight and do not let go. We are truly connected for life.”

—NATHALEA MILLER

“Melanie has touched my life in more ways than one. How many of us really stop to walk alongside with someone else with the sole intention of making their path a little easier? That’s Melanie for you. An angel. A fighter who won’t stop helping those in need, no matter how hard it gets. I am grateful to call Melanie my friend and my inspiration.”

—TANIA HALDAR, PHOTOJOURNALIST

“Working with Melanie as an intern, as her station manager no less, was the biggest learning experience of my life. I got to do everything from on-air hosting to editing, and even a little bit of teaching. What Melanie did for me is something I will always be grateful for and I will remember my humble beginnings forever. Melanie has inspired not only me but many other people to follow their dreams. She is always your biggest fan and your best cheerleader, and I will be eternally grateful for where I am today.”

—BROCK RICHARDSON

“Melanie changed my life forever. I always felt that I didn’t belong until I met her. I was bullied in school, and I always had a difficult time making friends. She showed me what a true friendship was and is. Melanie showed me that life could be anything and everything I ever wanted. She always had a positive attitude which helped me see things more optimistically. Melanie taught me through hard work and perseverance that your dreams really can come true. I’ve never met somebody so determined, so full of strength. My life changed for the better the day we met. She never gave up on me. She never gave up on life even when she had her personal difficulties. She has a true heart, a kind soul, and the capacity to love in the hardest of times.”

—KATY SAUNDERS

“Melanie has taught me to celebrate my disability, own it, and allow myself to be comfortable in my new reality. Since becoming friends with Melanie in 2015, she has made a mark in my life by supporting and encouraging me to step out of my comfort zone and try new things. Melanie has motivated me to challenge myself. It’s my privilege to work alongside her and learn the things that I have.”

—MARK ANTHONY BROWN