

# STARTUP SPOTLIGHT

## JUSPY



Prior to creating Juspy and graduating from the University of Limerick with a PhD in Branding, Leonie Lynch graduated with a BA in Fine Art in her late teens. She painted, exhibited, and sold original art during this time, while being a DJ in local clubs and working on radio. When she was 29 she became a Pilates instructor and ran her own Pilates business since 2011. 3 years into her doctorate she had her first baby, Beau, which led her to becoming a pre and postnatal exercise specialist. Needless to say, she is a busy lady.

This has all led to the creation of Juspy. Juspy is a lifestyle brand which is just about to launch their first product Juspy Momme, a readymade drink with the postnatal mother in mind. It was specially formulated for the new mother who is tired, stressed and trying to re-establish a good relationship with her body. Understanding new mothers are often too busy to think about their own nutrition, this product is a mix of ingredients with gives women a healthy boost throughout their day.

With a particular focus on muscle recovery it is high in protein. Considering gut health Juspy Momme is high in fibre. Readymade, it is ideal for women who are looking for convenient solutions to improve their nutritional intake on the go. Juspy creator, Leonie Lynch, says that the idea for her product came from an infant baby formula she gave her daughter once she had stopped breastfeeding. She explained that on the packaging it said that everything a baby needs to stay healthy was in the formula, and realised that mothers need formulas like this as much as their babies do.

“Over the years I have taught mothers in postnatal exercise and recovery, the common diet staple that comes up in conversation is coffee, cereal and toast with chocolate on the side. In today’s fast paced world where new mothers have to take on multiple roles and responsibilities, their own health usually takes a back seat”, she said.

“Women are put under a lot of pressure having to take care of a new-born, managing their household, taking care of their families and in most case managing a job”, she continued. As all postnatal women suffer some form of tissue trauma, such as pelvic floor damage, C-section scars, prolapse and/or diastasis recti mothers need to recover, which takes time. However, mothers are too busy to concern themselves with their own nutritional needs, Leonie explains, and clinical malnutrition is a common ailment in the postnatal period.

“A lot of women crash diet at a time when they should be filling their bodies with nutritious food; replenishing and hydrating their bodies particularly if they are breastfeeding”, she said. “All women have hormone changes during pregnancy. These can play havoc with women’s health in the postnatal period. Foods can help or hinder the rebalancing of the body. Lack of knowledge about what to eat is a problem for most women”, she continued. Leonie’s Juspy Momme seeks to help new mothers meet their nutritional needs.

Leonie says that after she had the idea she flew to London in the early stages to get advice off a seasoned/success entrepreneur who had been there and done that and was willing to offer guidance and advice. As she was still doing her PhD, she explains that the start was slow. “I just kept going, teasing out the idea through the LEAP Programme, a business accelerator programme in Limerick.

Once I graduated, I really threw myself into business development. In September 2016, 6 months pregnant, I got a place on the Enterprise Ireland Entrepreneur Development Programme - New Frontiers”, she said. “Over the following 6 months, the idea was tested, the product development began and things started moving forward”, she continued. In April 2017 Leonie pitched successfully for the Competitive Start Fund investment from Enterprise Ireland. She called this a “god send for the next stage - to get the product ready for market”. She then brought the product development down to Teagasc, Moorepark to complete the recipe development of the first product. The recipe has since been signed off and trialed, at the moment Juspy is designing their packaging and website. “Then we are ready to rock”, Leonie said. “We recently competed against a large number of companies to be one of the 8 lucky businesses on this year’s Food Works Ireland”.

Leonie is hesitant to call herself an entrepreneur, saying she sees herself as more of a “doer”. “As far as entrepreneurship goes I am not that comfortable with the word to be honest because I do not see myself as one yet. You can call me an entrepreneur when I make my first million”, she explained. On what success looks like for her, Leonie already considers herself successful and she has her husband and two little girls. However, from a business perspective, success means Juspy going global. “In 5 years I want Juspy to be a global brand”, she said.

So far Leonie says that the feedback to the product has been amazing. “The product was developed using continual feedback from new mothers. I have conducted two significant pieces of market research, one with Joe public and the other with my target market – mothers”, she explained. Juspy’s first public outing was at the Moorepark Open Day in July where she was able to do taste tests with 535 people.

More recently, they were at the Pregnancy and Baby Fair in the RDS, where Juspy spent the weekend with new mothers and mothers-to-be talking about the brand, product and plans for the future. 97% of the feedback from over 1000 tastings was positive and left with hundreds of emails from mothers wanting to know when the product would be released.

Leonie says that she can’t always go to start-up events but found support among her peers and business advisors. “The New Frontiers Programme was brilliant because I became really good friends with two other foodies within the group who were also successful in getting on the Food Works Programme”, she said. “They help me so much because they have been there and done that and are much further along the sales journey than me”, she continued. She also said that her business advisors from the programme have been constant guides and helped her figure out the best course of action.

Her ambition is for Juspy to change the world in its own little way – helping women to be a little healthier and stronger in challenging life stages.

Leonie Lynch will be a guest at 'Founder Friday' at MotherMacs Pub from 6-8pm Friday November 3rd.

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