

Getting to Know - Our Founder

We sat down to have a chat and interview with Sarah Dean, Founder of the National Road Trauma Centre.

Sarah, you founded the Trust 15 years ago. What a wonderful milestone. What is your story, is there anything you have not shared?

Thank you so much. Looking back all these years, it certainly has given me a lot of time for reflection. I am so grateful for the wonderful opportunities, the people. For me the highlight is the opportunity to meet people from all walks of life. I am so grateful that a lot of people have entrusted me. Founding a Charitable Trust as I started to realise is no easy feat.

What many people do not know is that I grew up in the charitable sector. My father, worked in fundraising for charitable trusts. As a young child, I was always engaged in charitable work. Photo shoots, door knock appeals, bucket holding - you name it. As I grew older it was art auctions, fun runs and fashion shows. To me this was normal.

When the time came to establish the Trust, I thought it was very common, but as I grew into the role. I started to realise - how uncommon it is.

What differences have you noticed over the past 15 years?

So much, has changed in 15 years. Mainstream media has made a remarkable difference. 15 years ago, it was very rare to read stories of survivors or those whose lives have been impacted by road crashes in the newspaper.

Now, we now have a choice and variety of media platforms and content. It really has helped to connect and engage people.

Any thoughts on Governance?

I never intended to grow into Governance. It just happened. Like everyone who starts out, you learn to grow into the role. It is always, important to reflect, learn from each experience.

Education is so vitally important. I am so very grateful for so many wonderful mentors who have provided me with so much wisdom and guidance. It is so vital you learn to adapt and grow as a person.

Lastly, the most important value I hold, is to ensure you provide opportunities for others.

What has been the most enjoyable feature of your role (over the past 15 years).

It is always the people. I am so very grateful for each and every person I meet. When someone shares their personal story, I feel so very honored. It really is something, to have met someone who has had similar personal experience to you. I am also so very respectful of what others share.

Do you find it difficult working in the sector, given your historic crashes?

Although my crashes, happened some time ago. There will always be moments, when you reflect on your personal experiences. How it shaped you. Where your life is today. It is very normal to be triggered at times. It is so important to look after yourself too.

Is there any advice you would like to give to someone who is currently affected by a road crash?

It is so very important to focus on your recovery to allow your body to heal. Ensure you have the right people supporting you e.g. GP, Physiotherapist.

Make sure you surround yourself with good, positive people. Your life may be changed in some way but it does not stop here.