

Tribe of Lambs

Canadian jewelry makers
that changes lives.

CANADIAN



THERE ARE MANY THINGS TO LOVE ABOUT BEING A WRITER, BUT ONE OF THE BEST PARTS OF THIS GIG IS THAT IT GIVES YOU THE CHANCE TO CONNECT WITH AMAZING PEOPLE.

When the editors of StandOut asked me to connect with Alberta entrepreneurs Bobbi Paidel and Phillip Haley I had no idea how much they would fall into that category. But it became quickly evident in the interview that Paidel and Haley are out to create change, affect lives and spread positive vibes.

Sit-in on my interview with Tribe of Lambs Founder, Paidel, and its Marketing Director, Haley, to see why this is a Canadian venture you want to become part of.

Q: TRIBE OF LAMBS IS AN ETHICAL JEWELRY BRAND. WHAT MADE YOU DECIDE TO TAKE THAT PATH AS A BUSINESS?

A (Paidel): After working in the fashion industry in Toronto I became pretty jaded with the superficial nature of the business. I really started to question big brand ethics as well as the impact I was making in the world. I ended up in India for 7 months and had the space to create something more meaningful, with the skillset I had. The social need is so apparent in India and I became inspired to find a way to give back while also creating a successful business model for myself.

Q: WHERE DOES THE NAME TRIBE OF LAMBS COME FROM? WHAT DOES IT SIGNIFY?

A (Paidel): I love our name! I wanted the name to encompass our ethos of compassion but still be professional and accessible. The lamb is representative of the children we support. A lamb, just like a child, on its own is vulnerable...but there is strength in numbers - hence the Tribe. The Tribe is the community we've built - and are growing - of conscious consumers looking to make a stand for a better world through how they choose to spend their money.



Q: YOU HAVE A CAMPAIGN SUPPORTING HIV+ CHILDREN IN INDIA THROUGH YOUR PRODUCTS. WHY INDIA AND WHY THIS CAMPAIGN?

A (Paidel): India was the inspiration for the whole project itself as I was living and volunteering in Northern India when Tribe of Lambs was born. The whole basis of Tribe was to develop a circular model that gives back to those at risk children while empowering artisans through employment opportunities. When we first started out, we were working with a variety of at risk youth. So the projects and partners were varied. It was only last January when we met our partners at Rays Aasha Ki Ek Kiran and were opened up to the issues HIV+ children face in India. The denial of basic human rights these children face was something we couldn't turn our back to.

Q: HOW LONG HAS TRIBE OF LAMBS BEEN ACTIVE?

A (Paidel): Exactly 3 years ago we launched in a trial crowdfunding campaign that ended up being very successful. The following January we registered our name and it's been rolling every since.

Q: THIS ISSUE OF STANDOUT FOCUSES ON SUCCESS STORIES - WHAT DOES SUCCESS MEAN TO YOU AS AN ENTREPRENEUR, AS A DESIGNER, AND AS A PERSON?

A (Paidel): When I first started thinking about success, it really meant something in terms of status and money. And this is the cultural norm. Now that we're in the "business" of helping people and compassionate consumerism, I know true success can't be measured that way. Success is taking risks, moving beyond your fear, lifting others up and making a stand for what is fair, just and equal in this world. I wake up every morning joyful and fulfilled because I live my life, in all aspects, with compassion as my mantra.

Q: WHAT DO YOU THINK IS TRIBE OF LAMB'S SUCCESS STORY?

A (Paidel): I knew Tribe of Lambs was a success from that very first crowdfunding campaign when we delivered 80 winter jackets (among other items) to children living in the Himalayas. To use my blessings, opportunities and skills to empower children who can't help themselves, now that is truly amazing. Every time we're in India fulfilling on one of our projects, I am totally blown away by the impact that can be made with little effort.

Q: THERE IS A LOT OF WORK THAT HAPPENS BEHIND THE SCENES IN RUNNING A SUCCESSFUL BUSINESS. DO YOU HAVE TIPS TO OFFER FROM A BUSINESS PERSPECTIVE?

A (Haley): I would say be prepared to become so much more than what you expect - you need to become an accountant, tax expert, web designer, social media expert, marketer, customer service, salesman, and project manager. Accept help when it's offered and ask for help when you need it. It's hard to do this alone! Every now and again, step away - obviously it takes passion and drive to run a successful business, but sometimes you need to take a step back and reflect. It's easy to get overloaded with the day - to - day and lose track of the bigger picture.

A (Paidel): Be scared and keep going. Make mistakes and keep going. Get stuck and be amazed at your creative problem solving skills. Never let your ego get in the way of an opportunity. Listen to where your heart wants to take you and use the power of your mind to take you there. Be gentle on yourself and celebrate every little victory. Who you surround yourself with will shape what you do, so put yourself in the best company possible. If it doesn't serve you, love it and leave it.



Inspired? Fired up? Making a difference can be simple by becoming part of the community of compassionate consumerism.

India has approximately 2.1 million people living with HIV and about 170,000 of those are children under the age of 15. Once HIV+, children face immense discrimination, social segregation and is often times abandoned by their families and the State and education system.

Tribe of Lambs supports projects with on-the-ground NGOs in India by dedicating 100% of all its profits off product sales towards tuition, school supplies, uniforms, transport, creating safe places for learning, providing access to facilities and resources required to build bright futures and awareness initiatives in Canada, UK and India.

And you can be part of that Tribe!

Products are available online at tribeoflambs.com or Outside the Shape and The Clothing Bar in Calgary as well as The Makers Keep in Edmonton. — *Yvette Putter*

