

# *My new chapter* ‘I know I’m capable of doing anything’

When Jacqui Taylor, 60, discovered the pain-relieving powers of cannabidiol after suffering an injury that made it difficult to stand, she turned her back on a career in teaching to launch natural pain relief brand Taylor’s CBD.

I travelled all over the UK and the world as a national account manager for a very large hotel company, but once I had my first child in 1995 and my second in 1998, that life had to come to an end. Also, I was going through a divorce, so I really needed a job that would fit in with the children. I realised a job in teaching would be the best fit for my family due to the term-time hours, so I went on to gain a PGCE (postgraduate certificate in education). Once my kids started secondary school and were a bit more independent, I began teaching GCSE and A-level business studies as well as A-level psychology.

Teaching is a very rewarding job, but it’s also very stressful. Children don’t leave their anxieties and problems at the door like we do at work, and some of them can have very chaotic lives or special needs. But you can change lives, and I’m really happy to have had a part in that. However, after 12 years of teaching, four things happened at the same time that caused me to rethink my future.



Firstly, my children were older and going off to university. Secondly, I’d turned 55 and I was really feeling like I needed to do something different with my life. Thirdly, my long-term relationship had come to an end, so

that was another catalyst. And lastly, I had hurt my back quite badly on a piece of gym equipment I didn’t really know how to use.

I found it difficult to stand at work but taking ibuprofen and other

*‘I started looking into natural pain relief alternatives, and that’s when I discovered CBD’*

WORDS: JOANNA EBSWORTH. IMAGES: JACQUI TAYLOR.

painkillers really mucked around with my stomach. Ultimately, I started looking into natural pain relief alternatives, and that's when I discovered CBD (cannabidiol, a component of medical marijuana). I'm not great at taking tablets, so I bought some topical CBD products, and while they were okay, I felt they could work even better if the dose of CBD was higher. The idea of setting up a business to sell high-strength CBD products that relieved aches and pains simply spiralled from there.

**STARTING FROM SCRATCH**

I joined the Business and IP (intellectual property) Centre at The British Library to read reports about CBD while I tried to work out whether it was a passing trend or here to stay. I had an idea for products, but I still didn't know where to start with building my own business, so I went to the Spring Fair in Birmingham,

Britain's largest retail show. That led me to somebody who imported hemp and had a lab and chemist with whom I could share my vision for my brand.

I also went on a formulation course so I could understand what was going into products and how they were made, and I did a lot of research into the competition and costs while trying to come up with a niche or angle that would make my business different to everyone else's. It was most important to me that the products were easily absorbed into the skin and that they contained a high amount of CBD, unlike some on the market, so that people could get effective relief from pain and get on with their daily lives – because that's all I wanted, too.

Once I was happy with my first three products – the Relaxing Body Oil, Muscle & Joint Balm, and Deep Relief Muscle & Joint Cooling Cream – I gave away practically all of my first stock to people I didn't know to make



*'It's humbling to meet the people buying our products and hear how they're helping them'*

Jacqui set up her business from home.

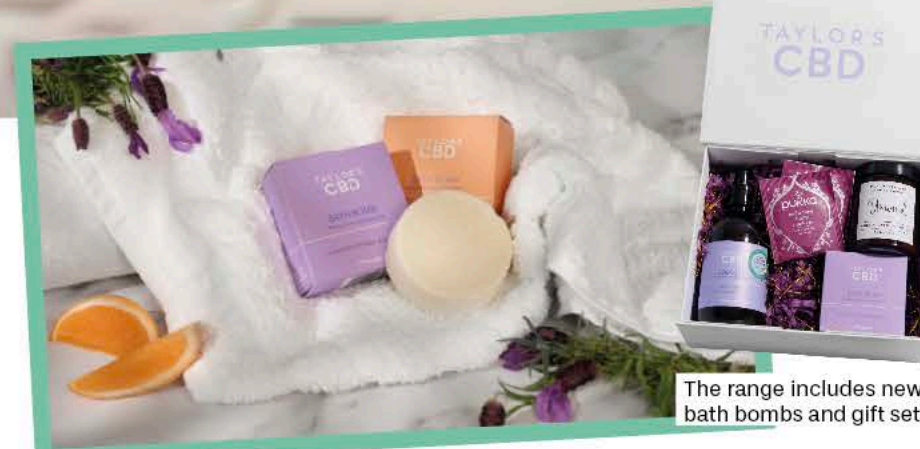
sure it worked, including PTs at gyms so they could try it with their clients. Once the very positive feedback was in, it was time to start building a brand and finding people to support me because I'm no web designer or product photographer. In all honesty, I've had a few ups and downs along the way, but I've now found my people and even though I'm not employing them on a full-time basis, I consider them part of the team.

**MAKING THE SWITCH**

It took about a year to get everything ready to launch Taylor's CBD while I worked as a teacher, but I was finally able to start working on the business full-time once the website went live in October 2023. Although it would be nice to be in an office surrounded by a team, working from home gives me the flexibility to do events and meet customers in person. I meet a lot of



Jacqui left a career in teaching to set up her new business.



The range includes new bath bombs and gift sets.

people with arthritis, and we also have a pop-up at the MS Therapy Centre in Harrow, which I go to once a month. We've just raised money for them because they're our official charity, so it's nice to give back in that way. But it's also very humbling to meet the people who are buying our products and hear how they're helping them to live with less pain.

More recently, we launched a bath bomb that comes in two scents, and we now do lots of lovely gift sets too, but I don't want to grow too fast

because I think you can lose sight of yourself and your vision. I think small is good because you can then be more focused on what you are trying to achieve. In fact, one of my top tips for starting a business is to define your market and really slim it down in terms of who you are selling to and who you can really help. More recently, I entered the Relaxing Body Oil into a magazine's beauty awards and I was so thrilled when it won Best Body Oil because it was up against the big brands. It just goes to show that if

you've got a good product, and there's a demand for it, there's no reason why you can't put yourself out there.

I meet a lot of women who want to do something different with their career and lives, and I think it all comes down to finding that one product or service you are passionate about and happy to put the time and effort into. Because starting a business isn't a quick fix, and you're not going to make squillions. You also have to step out of your comfort zone, which can be hard. But now I've done it, I feel very fulfilled, and it's given me the confidence to know I'm capable of doing anything I put my mind to.

● For more information about Taylor's CBD and to view the full range of products, visit [taylorscbd.co.uk](http://taylorscbd.co.uk).