



in the studio with grace koh

In 2014, Grace's dream of becoming a television presenter became a reality.

ABC3 (now ABC ME) was running a national competition to find new presenters, so Grace sent in her audition tape and got a call back.

In a Melbourne studio teeming with lights and cameras, she auditioned for the role. In a matter of weeks, she had landed her dream job.

“It was crazy good timing. You had to be 18+ to audition and the cut-off date was only two days after my 18th birthday,”

Grace says.

From interviewing Zac Efron and Zendaya for The Greatest Showman, swinging on a trapeze in a full clown

costume and meeting Elmo – Grace's job has been full of surprises.

“It was crazy being on a TV set. But not as crazy as some people might expect. There were days where we would be filming the most random content ever and sometimes you would have an out-of-body experience like, ‘Wow, I’m a 22-year-old woman doing a rap about turtles whilst dressed as a shark. How did this become my life?’ But then there were other days where we had a lot of downtime.”

On office days, she would arrive at 9 a.m. and start researching for the show – looking up viral videos, new music releases or the latest online trends. Then she would write a script and run social media for the channel.

Studio days were exhausting, but always fun. *“I’d come in at 7:30 a.m. for hair and makeup and then head to the studio to record the show. Sometimes we would have music guests and other fun people to interview, so there was always a lot of preparation for that.”*

A highlight in Grace's career was working as a host on Junior Eurovision in 2017 and 2018, where she travelled overseas to Georgia and Belarus respectively.

She also joined ABC's main channel for their live New Year's Eve broadcast. *“I was live in front of millions of Australians. It was daunting, but I loved it!”*

Being in front of a camera wasn't always easy, especially when Grace first started.



"I was only 18 and I was new to the industry – new to the idea of people watching me on television every day and people having an opinion about me. The first time someone commented on a photo of me saying I looked fat, I just deleted it and laughed about it. But, it stayed with me. Every single time I saw myself on screen, I saw that comment. And they kept coming – comments on how thick my legs were, how round my face was, and comparing me to my co-host. It was rough. But in the end, I've come to realise my worth is not in what others think of me, or what I look like. As long as I'm healthy and feel good about myself, that's all I need!"

Grace says her job has taught her a lot – from basics like how to be confident and what camera to look at, to more nuanced

lessons like how to build relationships off camera.

"On screen, chemistry is important, but if you're not a good person to work with off screen, things won't work out."

After almost five years of being on people's screens, Grace decided to wrap up her career in television last year. "Leaving my job was one of the saddest and hardest things I've ever done. It was also one of the bravest."

But she isn't hiding from the camera. She just started her own YouTube channel, where she films and vlogs from home.

"So far, it's been a creative outlet so I don't forget how it feels to talk to a camera. I've really been enjoying learning how

to edit my own content and also having full ownership over what I present to the public. It might not be as polished like my content on TV, but I'm proud of it because it's mine. It's very therapeutic to be able to create something from nothing."

When she's not filming, she's eating her mum's Hainanese chicken rice, training for a half marathon and listening to audiobooks before bed. Grace doesn't have any set plans for the future, instead she's open to any projects that come her way.

"I have the time to say yes to things I wasn't able to say yes to before. It's freeing. I can also reflect on life and see all I've done. That really motivates me. I have it in my mind I can do anything I put my mind and passion into and I'd really like to prove myself right."