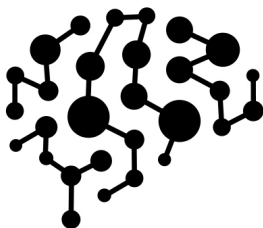


ONE GOLDEN NUGGET



**HOW TO
SURVIVE
AND
THRIVE
VOLUME III**

**JOE FOSTER, FOUNDER OF REEBOK,
RETURNS WITH POWERFUL NEW STORIES OF
RESILIENCE AND INNOVATION, CHANGING THE
WORLD ONE PAGE AT A TIME.**

Joe Foster



ROMAA RAJADHYAKSHA

Founder of SWS Global Coaching Services
(StudyWell Solutionss)

When my brother Jeff and I founded Reebok in 1958, the world was a different place — no internet, no social media, no instant access to information. But one thing that hasn't changed is the importance of knowing your purpose, finding the white space, and having the courage to be yourself. Romaa, a modern-day changemaker who is equipping young people with the skills that truly matter today, has that courage and is passionate about helping shape a generation that leads with kindness and clarity in a noisy, fast-moving world, which is exactly what we need more of today.

Romaa was born in Mumbai, a city she describes as “electric, colourful, and resilient.” From an early age, she was raised to believe that education was never just about grades; it was about values, curiosity, and having a voice. That belief came from her parents, Nikhil and Anita, to whom she pays deep tribute. Her father, she says, is the “blueprint” for her intellectual resilience. Her mother’s influence was more about integrity and purpose — a presence whose “quiet strength,” Romaa says, “teaches more than most people’s words ever could.” It’s this combination of conviction and compassion that continues to guide her.

It’s clear that Romaa is the product of her parents, who taught her to “think for myself, and never be afraid to speak my mind.” But those lessons didn’t make her any less of an observer. From a young age, she was a voracious reader, always questioning and watching, whether in the classroom, at home, or out in the wider world. That curiosity, sharpened by reflection, became one of her greatest strengths.



When Romaa was four years old, her family moved from Mumbai to Auckland, New Zealand — a shift that opened her up to two contrasting worlds. From the structure and familiarity of an esteemed Catholic convent school in India to the unfamiliar rhythm of a New Zealand public school, she felt suddenly out of place. Removed from the warmth of her maternal grandparents and aunty, Romaa experienced her first quiet grief — the kind that lingers before you know how to name it. For a time, she became withdrawn. The classroom offered little comfort: her teacher felt distant, the culture unfamiliar, and her voice — once curious — began to retreat inwards.

At the age of ten, Romaa and her family relocated to Melbourne, where she went on to complete high school. As the only child of hardworking immigrant parents, who put in long hours to give her the best possible start, Romaa's childhood was sometimes marked by loneliness and a sense of isolation. She felt that her circumstances made her grow up fast, and, being the only Indian student at her school at the time, she often noticed how differently she was treated by her peers. In response to not feeling welcomed and included, she developed a fierce sense of self-reliance and quickly learned to stand up for herself — an inner strength that has stayed with her ever since.

The challenges Romaa faced at school left a lasting impression and have deeply influenced her path in life. She shares, “Treating people with respect, regardless of who they are, is incredibly important to me, as is showing compassion and empathy.” These values have become the foundation of her personal and professional philosophy.



**“If your presence needs a title
to matter, you’re not leading,
you’re managing perception.”**



Romaa went on to earn a double major in psychology and criminology at university. Throughout her studies, she commuted daily and worked multiple jobs, first in a supermarket and later in a contact centre, to gain workforce experience and become financially independent. Her strong work ethic, shaped by the example set by her hardworking parents, became a defining trait during these formative years. Following her undergraduate studies, Romaa pursued multiple certifications in finance and insurance and is currently completing her MBA part-time. She also earned a prestigious Certificate of Specialisation in Strategy from Harvard Business School — a credential that helped open doors to leadership roles within the corporate sector. While progressing in her professional career, she simultaneously founded her soft skills coaching venture, guided by a deep commitment to human-centred development and having a meaningful, lasting impact.

Today, her professional life spans three distinct areas. First, she holds a full-time corporate role within the insurance industry. Second, she runs a soft skills coaching business, StudyWell Solutions, focused on helping individuals develop essential interpersonal and professional competencies. Third, she leads Strategic Growth Solutions, a consulting firm that partners with startups, non-profits, and established businesses by providing strategic guidance across diverse areas — all with the aim of unlocking growth, sharpening direction, and building resilient, future-ready organisations.

With StudyWell Solutionss, Romaa empowers students by focusing on soft skills development, promoting compassion, empathy, and kindness as essential values, both personally and professionally. She helps students build core competencies such as time and stress management, problem-solving, critical thinking, public speaking, and interview excellence — skills often overlooked in traditional education. She firmly believes that technical skills alone are no longer enough. In today's business environment, the ability to lead with integrity, grace, and empathy is vital to long-term success. At its core, StudyWell is about preparing students to succeed not just in exams or interviews, but in life, by helping them develop the confidence, clarity, and emotional strength to thrive in any environment.

As an empowerment coach, Romaa believes that cultivating a flexible mindset is one of the most challenging yet essential qualities she's had to develop. She explains, "It's about training yourself to adapt, to meet the needs of different people, different personalities, and individuals navigating vastly different circumstances. That kind of mindset doesn't come easily, but it makes all the difference."

Romaa has continually invested in her own growth to build the mindset required to guide others effectively. "I've done the training and worked with my mentors to identify and close any gaps," she explains. Her journey reflects just how powerful mentorship and coaching can be in elevating one's skill set. During her time at American Express, a mentor introduced her to the concept of servant leadership, a style that puts the needs of others first and focuses on helping people grow, thrive, and succeed. Popularised in the 1970s, this approach is becoming increasingly relevant in today's workplace. Rather than leading through top-down authority, servant leaders empower from the ground up, demonstrating empathy, active listening, humility, and a profound commitment to the personal and professional development of their teams.



**"Legacy isn't what you leave behind.
It's who you lift while you're still here."**

As the founder of StudyWell Solutions, Romaa's mission is to help shape a generation of purpose-driven individuals: future world leaders, policymakers, and changemakers who lead with compassion, empathy, and kindness. She believes that leadership isn't about being the loudest voice in the room but about understanding the power of putting others first and learning to regulate one's own emotions, a trait she likely inherited from her mother.

By helping young people hone emotional intelligence and self-management tools, Romaa hopes to address the growing mental health challenges caused by a lack of education around stress and emotional regulation. Her current programmes focus on students aged fifteen and above, but her long-term vision is to expand her reach and develop tailored initiatives for younger children, embedding healthy habits and values from an earlier age. Ultimately, Romaa aspires to build a generation that is not only capable of leading, but also of being better human beings.

While she's engaged with numerous NGOs and corporate partners, Romaa's mission goes far beyond business or financial gain. For her, it's about creating real, lasting impact, especially for children who might otherwise never have access to this kind of education. Whether speaking with NGOs, businesses, or parents, she's found that many people simply don't realise how transformative it can be to learn tools for



emotional regulation, effective communication, and self-management. These skills can be life-changing, not just professionally or academically, but personally. She recalls a conversation with a mother whose children had completed the programme. The woman confided that had she learned how to express herself and regulate her emotions earlier in life, her marriage might have survived. That kind of feedback reinforces Romaa's belief that if more people had access to these tools at the right time, their lives and relationships could look very different.

Having seen the profound impact her coaching can have on individuals, Romaa is passionate about expanding her reach. With several podcast appearances in the pipeline, she is eager to share her message with a broader audience and extend her public speaking engagements to inspire and empower even more people. Attending a United Nations convention in Geneva provided her with a valuable opportunity to share her insights and engage in meaningful discussions about the crucial role of soft skills in traditional education, particularly in a rapidly evolving world shaped by the emergence of AI. As a committee member for the Commission on the Status of Women Australia (UN Women), she continues to contribute to global conversations on education, equality, and empowerment.





“Kindness and compassion aren’t weaknesses. They’re evidence of precision: the ability to see clearly, act wisely, and still choose grace when power would be easier.”



Having worked with over a hundred students, Romaa understands the unique challenges and opportunities that come with transitioning from academic environments to the professional world. Her mission is to equip students with the soft skills necessary not only for academic success but to thrive in their future careers. Her coaching programme is entirely research-based and covers fifteen essential skills, each delivered in sessions lasting seventy-five minutes. Specially designed workbooks are used throughout, containing tools and techniques supported by extensive academic research.

One of the most common barriers to success Romaa encounters is fear, particularly the fear of failure. People often hold back because they don't want to be perceived as someone who has failed. At the root of this, she explains, is a fear of being judged. But once that fear is removed from the equation, everything begins to shift. When individuals are presented with something that offers clarity and depth, it creates a sense of confidence and possibility that can be truly transformative.

Romaa admits the idea of success can be hard to define, but two recent moments that stood out were winning the Emerging Entrepreneur of the Year 2025 award at the Women Changing the World Global Awards and being named in the Global MSN Microsoft Top 10 Inspiring Women Entrepreneurs 2025 list. "When someone reached out to tell me, I couldn't believe it," she says. "It was a real moment of validation, a reminder to keep believing in the work I'm doing." Yet for Romaa, success isn't

just about recognition; it's in the small, powerful transformations she sees through her coaching. When a student who's been bullied finds their confidence again, or when someone on the brink of dropping out of school chooses to stay and goes on to university. "That's success for me," she explains, "That's what makes me thrive."

Romaa envisions a world where power doesn't shout, it listens, a world where essential skills like empathy, emotional intelligence, and self-awareness are no longer treated as optional extras but are recognised as foundational. "I want to leave behind classrooms that teach compassion alongside geometry and calculus," she says, "and boardrooms that value emotional intelligence as deeply as they value data." For her, the ultimate legacy is not just in what she teaches, but who she teaches. She hopes to shape a future where leadership is grounded in clarity, care, and compassion, where strength is not measured by how loud a voice is, but by how wisely and humanely it speaks. "Kindness," she reminds us, "is never a weakness."



**"If you have to trade your
values to win, it's not a win.
It's a loss in disguise."**



“Build what outlives you. If your venture doesn’t shift something in the human condition, it’s just noise dressed up as success.”



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