How Jessica Abo Is Helping People Be Happy In Real Life — Not Just on Social Media



The author, speaker and entrepreneur talks about the healthy pursuit of happiness and success.

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Jessica Abo is the type of person you wouldn't mind sitting next to on a six-hour flight. In fact, you might hope the plane has to circle around a bit before landing just so you can have the opportunity to chat more.

Luckily you don't have to be stuck on a plane to hear Jessica's empowering brand of conversation. This Thursday, February 28th from 6:30-7:30 pm EST, she'll be

hosting a live Fireside Chat for *Entrepreneur* readers — for free! Sign up here and do it fast. Attendance is limited so secure your spot soon.

A social media and relationship expert by trade, Jessica is energetic, exudes genuine empathy and is effortlessly authentic. In fact, you may have spotted her, cast as herself, in several shows and movies including *House of Cards*, *Gossip Girl*, *Nurse Jackie* and *The Amazing Spider-Man 2*. That's right, she's so authentic, she plays herself on TV and in movies.

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Jessica Abo believes that life is about more than getting "likes." And that no matter where we are in our careers, relationships or level of activism, we are all a work in progress. Her book, *Unfiltered: How to Be as Happy as You Look on Social Media* was released in August and sold out on its first day. Fortunately, it's back in stock and was recently featured in this year's Grammy Gift bag.

Her speaking tour has taken her around the country including appearances at Facebook, Microsoft, Delta Airlines, TEDx, the United Nations, as well as to hundreds of conferences, nonprofits, universities and schools. Jessica's empowerment videos and articles appear weekly on here Entrepreneur.com. In my chat with her, she explained the long road to writing her impactful book, and what its success has meant to her readers — and to her.

Why write this book now?

"Over the course of 10 years, I wanted to write a book that I thought was going to be called *How to be a Changemaker*, but then realized that I wanted to reach people in a not such a 'rah-rah' way. So then the book was supposed to be called

Chief Empowerment Officer: How to be the CEO of Your Life, and my goal was to really dive into all the different ways that you can make a difference and turn your passion into action. But everywhere I went, I was talking to people who were saying things like, 'I can't go onto Instagram anymore because every time I log on, I just feel really bad about where I am in life.' I was sad that people weren't as happy as they appear to be on their social media feeds so I thought I just want to write a book about *that.* I wanted to really uncover the reasons why people may feel they're stuck in a rut and then provide action plans to help people get out of that icky feeling. That's how *Unfiltered: How to Be as Happy as You Look on Social Media* came to be."

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Getting the message out

"Right now I'm traveling the country speaking at different companies and nonprofits. At some places, I'm focusing on diversity and inclusion, in other places I'm talking about how women can be collaborative and not competitive with one another in the workplace. Other institutions are asking me to speak about how their team members can have a healthy relationship with social media and be happier overall. The goal is to boost the company's bottom line and also their own personal well-being."

Impact of her book on others

"A woman who read the book reached out to me to say that she has really been trying to connect with her teenage son, and she went through the book so that she could have a more relatable conversation with her child. He is struggling to find out what he wants to do in life and is at that point where he'll be applying to college soon, and she told me the

book gave her a great perspective of the world he will be working in and the world that he's currently living in. She said it helped her realize what people are facing in the workplace and what the next generation of leaders what they will have to go through to even get a job."

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Impact of her book on herself

"My daughter was due the day the book was due and I was on a race against time to get it completed. I am now a wife and a mother and live in Los Angeles – all of these things were not in my orbit just two years ago. My entire life changed. I used to be someone who would wake up at around 3 a.m. to go to work and then was done around noon, and then went to my other jobs, which included consulting, event planning and media training. I wore a lot of different hats. So I used to pack like 20 hours worth of work and meetings into a day. And then all of that slowed down as I became more and more pregnant and couldn't move as fast – let alone at all! Once I had my daughter, I realized that I'm living a completely different life and adjusting to what my new world requires. I am trying to figure out exactly what this new person needs in order to keep work going and to keep feeling like I'm a very active participant in my daughter's life and in my marriage. So I think what you learn in life, especially as an entrepreneur, is that the hustle is always there but it just may look a little different for a period of time before things settle down and you can catch your breath again."

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