



Salud! Change is not easy, but a fact of life, often leading to unknown opportunities. Follow Jodie's advice: Move the marbles!

Just like the seasons changing from summer to fall, life changes too. Each season delivers its own excitement. Jodie Davis is creating her own journey: From quilting super star to entrepreneur of The American Cuckoo Clock Company. Jodie reveals intimate perspectives on success in our quilting world, grieving for the past in 10 minute segments, forcing oneself to move forward and coming to terms with a new life as an adventure, complete with bumps and unadulterated joy.

Pick up the marbles and discover Jodie's new passion, or perhaps passions is more accurate. Enjoy this special issue as Jodie reveals what makes her tick, professionally, and personally. Sew SCHMETZ & Grabbit® Too!

Rhonda Pierce

Rhonda Pierce Spokesperson, SCHMETZneedles.com

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There's an App for That!









Jodie Davis The Journey from Quilts to Cuckoo Clocks



Jodie Davis

Jodie Davis has one of the most impressive resumes in the quilting industry. She has written over thirty books on crafts and quilting. She has produced, hosted or co-hosted the most popular TV quilting series on the internet, QNNtv.com. Jodie was president of QNNtv.com, referring to herself as the "Chief Quilting Enabler."

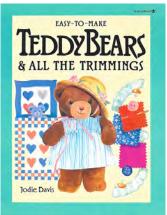
So, how does a girl, raised in Rhode Island, head off to college to become an electrical engineer, eventually rise to the top of the quilt world? Then, after achieving great success in her chosen field, find herself unemployed, living off her savings on a secluded Georgia farm, worried about how she was going to buy hay for her horses next month? And, WHAT DOES THAT HAVE TO DO WITH Cuckoo Clocks?

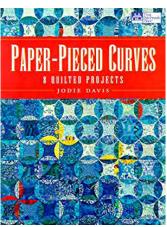
Jodie firmly believes you never know what kind of an impact you might have on another. For example, the quilting muse struck when Jodie was 16. Her mom's best friend, Ann Hanscom, made a quilt. She also gave Jodie her first kitty, Fanny. She was so entranced by the quilt (which had a kitty on the back), she went to the library and taught herself how to quilt from books and *Quilter's Newsletter*.

When she was still in college, she wrote her first book because her mom collected teddy bears. Jodie wanted to make her own, so back to the library. She checked out every book on teddy bear making, and thought, "My goodness, I can do better









Jodie's other crazy passion is rubber duckies. She designed a Quilting Rubber Duckie, had it manufactured, and imported them. She still has some available!

than that!" So back to the library. She learned how to write a book proposal and researched publishers. Despite the dire predictions of how new authors could paper their walls with rejection letters, the first company she pitched wanted her book.

The adage, "follow your passion," has greatly influenced Jodie's life. After quitting engineering school at 20, she became a natural history interpreter at Walden Pond State Reservation. She made a period dress from a historical pattern. Eventually, she made a civil war dress, complete with underpinnings, corset, cage, and all. Then she decided she wanted to fight, so she donned the soldier's wool uniform, with cartridge box, belt, canteen, and a Springfield rifle.

Jodie has a tendency to immerse herself in whatever her current endeavor may be. After writing over 35 books about quilting and crafting, Jodie had built an excellent reputation in the quilt industry.

Jodie became an avid collector of two things, rubber duckies and German cuckoo clocks. Her obsession with rubber ducks led to being interviewed for the A&E show, *The Incurable Collector*. The interview, shot in her bathroom, went viral on the internet. Jodie decided rubber duckies would be a good topic for a pop culture book. **Rubber Duckie** was published by Running Press and sold over 230,000 copies.





Her charismatic personality made Jodie a natural for television. Although she doesn't see herself that way, other people were always telling her she was very organized. She says,

"I planned every detail of the series for QNNtv. I hosted tapings at quilt market, etc. I planned every episode, from travel to where we were filming, guests, projects, hotels, flights, crew, etc. We taped three shows in two or three days, usually more than three locations. Honestly, I started out not knowing what I was doing but just did it. I suppose that's true of everything I've done. That's really the main skill. An insatiable curiosity and desire to create something from nothing to delight people."

The goal of QNNtv.com was to offer brands an opportunity to show how their product works. The whole concept was about using video to teach ... to tell a story. If a picture is worth a thousand words, how many is video worth? QNNtv was the precursor to YouTube and streaming video on cellphones! They were pioneers, riding high on this new, magical technology, and Jodie Davis was the President.

But then, QNNtv.com was eaten by a bigger fish. Jodie realized she wouldn't be able to support herself. It was heartbreaking, but that's life. Awful as it was, it was time for a change, to create whatever was going to be Jodie's next Big Thing.





My animals taught me about being present, they helped me get off the gerbil wheel.

Jodie had good reason to be freaked out and afraid. But she couldn't let it consume her. So, she'd set her timer and allow herself 10 minutes to cry and grieve. What she called "roll in the manure pile." When the alarm went off, she'd make herself get up and do something. Get engrossed. Learn a new thing, maybe affiliate marketing or SEO. It was her way of pushing the reset button.

At a hobby level, we all know that sewing, creating something with your hands, can be healing. Jodie believes the same thing happens if you have animals in your life. During her darkest days, her salvation was being with her animals. Having her cat, Mr. Possum, curled up in her lap, or tossing the ball

for her golden retriever, Comet. Just being with her Tennessee Walking Horse, Harley.

Jodie credits her positivity to skills learned through horsemanship. A horse is a flight animal. To be safe, the goal is to help the horse develop the ability to connect through bringing the focus back to his or her human. Animals ground Jodie and provide an emotional control valve. She calms them, and they calm her.



Positivity isn't a constant.

It's a set of scales. Sometimes there's more of you, think of them as marbles, in the negative side. That's okay. Be there for a bit. Then take one marble from the negative side and push it over to the positive. Hold it there and make that feeling part of your being. You may not be able to keep it there, but when you can, add another. Don't be frustrated when life hands you something that smashes the scale to the negative side. Bring yourself back ... one marble at a time.

Jodie was living on savings, and had no idea what her next "big thing" would be. Nike's tag line, "Just Do It," had always worked for her. With a giant leap of faith, the American Cuckoo Clock Company was born.

To back up a bit, in 2006, Jodie took a crew to the Bernina factory in Switzerland to shoot several episodes for a TV series. As an avid collector of cuckoo clocks, she decided to take advantage of this trip and tape an episode at the Schneider Cuckoo Clock factory in Germany.

Jodie pitched the idea of designing a quilt-inspired cuckoo clock. She was pleasantly surprised when her idea was met with some enthusiasm. Brainstorming the possibilities, they

found a clock in the German salesroom that could be used as a starting point and created the clock on the fly while taping the show.

To have one for herself, Jodie had to import 100 Quilt Shop Cuckoo Clocks.

Luckily, she sold 99 of those first clocks via an ad in a quilt magazine. Although she didn't know it at the time, she was planting the seeds for her next Big Thing.

Ten years later, after QNNtv had been swallowed by a bigger fish, Jodie looked at her beloved Quilt Shop Cuckoo Clock on her wall, and saw an opportunity. Although she was a big





The Quilt Shop Cuckoo Clock. The quilter rotary cuts and the kitty hops when the cuckoo calls.

fan of German cuckoo clocks, she realized they had failed to respond to a changing market. No one wants a dark wood cuckoo clock with a hag brandishing a rolling pin.

While reinventing herself, why not reinvent cuckoo clocks? She could design clocks that would fit into our homes, to reflect our passions and interests. Her new mission was to make this iconic, heirloom item relevant to today's consumers.

Jodie's original plan was to design the clocks, and have them manufactured in the premier factory in Germany. She launched a Kickstarter campaign to test her concept, Seventyseven people bought clocks. Her business was born! Time for some more designs! It soon became clear that the German factory simply was not set up to bring multiple designs through R&D quickly. In 2017, she faced the music: If she wanted to reinvent cuckoo clocks, she would have to make them herself.

It turns out that tools and materials aside, design is design. Jodie tooled-up and put a team together.

The cuckoo clock designer became the American Cuckoo Clock Company, manufacturing cuckoo clocks by hand on her farm in Hickory Flat, Georgia, exactly as they do in the Black Forest in addition to importing some designs from Germany.





At the factory in the Black Forest where a new batch of Quilt Shop Cuckoo Clocks were in production.

When asked how it's going so far, Jodie responded:

"I'm a way better cuckoo clock designer than I ever was a quilt designer.

Right now we make small batches of cuckoo clocks here on the farm. I have a CNC (computer numerical control) guy, a laser guy, also a guy who does 3D printing.

We assemble the clocks using imported German clockworks. Our clocks are made exactly as they are in the Black Forest. They are the real thing, made to last for generations.

Soon, we'll be ready for our first factory location. Which will probably be in a rehabbed historic building in Canton, Georgia.





At the Schneider factory in Schonach Germany with clockmaker, Tobias, who is working on her Backyard Birds Cuckoo Clock design.

From the outset I have known this is a direct to consumer product. It's a long sales cycle since they are expensive. My business is online, which gives me a direct relationship with my customers.

I have every intention of growing this business to gain a huge share of the American market, and then the international market. This is not a small business. We will sell a good chunk of the 70,000 cuckoo clocks sold annually in America. At an average of \$650 at clock retail, that's a nice business! As it turns out, cuckoo clocks are like quilts. Traveling for business over the years when an airplane seat mate would ask what I do the response would be, 'Oh I love quilts, my grandmother made them. I remember....' And off they'd go into happy memories. I was surprised to find that I get the exact same reaction about cuckoo clocks! What an honor to have a business that creates those kinds of feelings."

www.theamericancuckooclockcompany.com





Jodie and fiance, Mark Rowell, with the van they are refitting into a mobile gallery to spread smiles locally.

Single. But not for long. The unthinkable happened! I gave up on finding anyone. I told my friends that if anyone is out there, he'll have to come down the driveway.

Er, it's 1/4-mile-long through the woods and isolated. Then the developers started sniffing around. To fight a crazy rezoning on the large adjacent property, my neighbors and I banded together. One day Mark, a neighbor I didn't know existed, drove down my driveway to a meeting with the commissioners. It was sometime after that we had the opportunity to get to know each other. That's when cupid struck. Like a yellow jacket! Impossible! This fall we're getting married in my barn where it happened.

No kids, but thanks to Mark I now have amazing grandkids who adore me. Me, who has no kid experience! My 35th book will be, My Granddaddy Lives in a Cuckoo Clock Factory.







Needles don't last forever.

Change the needle!

Stitch quality improves & the sewing machine performs better with a new needle!



