

# SOREN MOLINEUX

## FOR MATTERS SPEAKING

Smile is a clothing label with a focus on humanity. For every item of clothing sold, Smile will donate a School Uniform or T Shirt to a child in need. Their concept is give first, wear second. So far Smile has donated 7,500 school uniforms and t-shirts to orphanages and schools across Indonesia, Cambodia, Remote Australia, India, Kenya and Sri Lanka. Their socially conscious business model of giving is growing. Matters Speaking love what Smile stands for and what it is creating and changing, not only for the smiles and clothes they are providing to children in need, but awareness that selfless giving can change lives for both the receiver and giver, and that we all have the opportunity to aid those in need and together collectively make a difference. Let us introduce you to Soren Molineux from Smile who is actively changing this world, one shirt and one smile at a time.



### Can you tell us how the journey of Smile began

Smile started 5 years ago when I set out to create a One For One Clothing Business. I pitched the idea to a couple of friends and started work on it basically straight away. I guess for all of us here at Smile, our desire to try and help people in remote parts of the World that often do not have access to what we would deem necessities, started even before that, as all of us were fairly well travelled after leaving high school. We all have a common thread that wanted to assist our communities and children that were so nice to us whilst we were travelling, just our way of giving something back. Smile only really started trading 3 years ago. We started Smile as a hobby, and for us it still is, I'm just lucky enough that it has become a full time hobby.

**Smile has been described as a collective of people who believe in something. Which people have taught, influenced and inspired you to turn Smile into actual smiles**

Firstly I would say the people we have met on the Open Road. We so often go to places in far away lands where local people offer you everything they have, whether it be food, shelter, coffee, whatever. These people sometimes do not have a lot to give, but the warmth and smiles they offered us through those formative years I guess had a fairly profound effect on all of us. Also the kids we meet on all of our Clothing Programs inspire us to keep doing the work we do, every single time. And from an initial inspiration, TOMS shoes in the United States made us see that One for One giving on a sustainable level was possible.

**Smile believes that it feels good to give at the same time as to receive. Can you tell us about the smiles you receive when you give on your clothing drops**

This is by far the biggest reason for us to continue our work. Every Clothing Program the kids energy levels and smiles simply radiate. Of course, like any unfamiliar situation, it takes them a while to warm to us, but then when they do there is nothing better. A lot of the time they are not only excited about receiving Uniforms or T-Shirts, but also just to spend time with some people from a different place, whether it be eating together, playing cricket (especially India and Sri Lanka) or just sitting around playing games.

**Whilst the concept of Smile is simple we know that starting a business is not. Particularly in a market where others are just simply trading and your business is about giving back to the communities that made you smile to begin with. What advice would you give to people and businesses that want to be a part of the bigger picture**

I guess just to play a part where you can. Not every person can do full time volunteer work, and not every business can be a social enterprise. But look to the spaces in which you can help, whether it be by supporting organisations that you connect with, and not letting yourself think that your small difference does not count, because it does. We here at Smile know that with our One For One Clothing model, it is not going to alleviate the World's problems in one swoop, but we are just trying to do the best we can in the space we have found ourselves. Of course these days, especially compared to when we started Smile, there are a lot more For-Purpose companies starting up and I think that is a great thing.

**Smile has just started being stocked in Dues Ex Machina that is the temple of enthusiasm, what else is on the horizon**

We are excited at the moment looking towards the next 6 months. We have some great Clothing Programs we are currently working on, and some nice new ranges in store for this Spring and Summer. Of course constantly on our horizon is spreading our One for One message, and seeing in which ways we can fine tune that as we move forward. We are very much learning as we go. Early stages yet, but we are also looking to potentially incorporate some mosquito netting for communities into our One For One community Programs as well.

**We love your simple and affordable clothing but also how Smile's photography and short films literally take us to a place we want to stay and where your focus is. What places have captivated you and where is calling you next**

Thanks very much. It is important to us if we are doing our job well, for our photography and short films to really show what we are doing, where we are going, and the giving process throughout. We believe we need to act as a conduit to the people that support our brand, who may not have time to travel to these far off places, but are still supporting children in need. Without such an amazing customer base and group of advocates, we would not have been able to do what we have done. As far as places that have captured me, I would have to say Indonesia and Sri Lanka are particular stand outs, but I also just love travelling, so any location I find myself I usually find bits and pieces there that resonate. Some places of focus going forward will be some outer islands in Indonesia, and we have just started talking with some friends in China about potential Clothing Programs next year, which we are excited about.

**What is it that make's Soren smile**

The Ocean, Travelling, and doing what we do.

**Whilst you're currently spending a lot of time in Indonesia we also know that you were born and raised in Australia. So is your beloved Parramatta Eels going to win the premiership this year**

We have lost 4 from our last 4, so I should be realistic and say not a chance. However, I will go with my gut and say 100%.

**Anything more you want to add**

Nope. Thanks very much.



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