



© Shona Grant-Mackintosh

Be Your Best Self

“I would encourage anybody considering signing up for the course to go for it! There is so much to learn both about yourself and the wider world.”

The time off the farm gave me the chance to meet a hugely diverse group of women, all doing different jobs, with different backgrounds, in different locations and challenges. What I discovered about their roles provided me with much food for thought, reflection and inspiration.

There was a lot of laughter and a few more serious moments. The farming life can be isolating, particularly so as a woman, so anything which helps to foster good mental health has to be worthwhile.

Since the course we have formed a strong support network, mostly through social media, both as individuals and as a group. This network was a great support to me in the midst of the relentless spring season.

We have utilised Zoom by inviting experts to share their knowledge, experiences and stories of how they have grown their businesses from an idea to reality. When the current situation improves I am sure there will be many face to face gatherings.

The course encourages everyone to consider whether they could step forward and take the lead: be it on a board or committee; or just value themselves and break down some of the sexist barriers.

It is apparent that the female contribution in the world of agriculture has clearly been underestimated in the past. It's great to feel that the Scottish Government is taking steps to redress this. The taskforce led by Fergus Ewing and Joyce Campbell deserve huge thanks for their hard work, insight, and belief in bringing these issues to light.

I would encourage anybody considering signing up for the course to go for it! There is so much to learn both about yourself and the wider world; a great chance to meet like-minded people; the opportunity to access support and education. You won't be disappointed!

Crofter Shona Grant-Mackintosh took part in the Be Your Best Self pilot course, March 2020.