

Lenuta Hellen Nadolu

AUTHOR OF 'GIVE ME COURAGE'



A loving mother, a successful entrepreneur, a survivor – Lenuta Hellen Nadolu, or just ‘Hellen’ as she is known to many – is the epitome of a self-made woman. Born and raised in 1950’s communist Eastern Europe, she struggled to find her place in an unhappy family and in an oppressive patriarchal society where a woman’s life had little value. Growing up in Romania, Hellen knew great hardships but always remained hopeful of gaining an education and finding her place in the world. Hellen married a successful doctor, suffering further prejudice and scorn for marrying outside her race and culture. She moved with him to Ghana. But Hellen’s hopes for a happier life were crushed when she realized that her husband’s world was equally oppressive and dangerous. Now trapped in Africa with three small children, Hellen knew she would need to take drastic steps to protect herself and her family from emotional and psychological abuse from her husband and his domineering family. The first European woman to ever be granted a petition of divorce in Ghana, Hellen took her children and fled back to Romania. She then summoned all her faith and resilience and immigrated to Australia in 1984; finally achieving a happy life for her children and herself. Today Hellen lives in Sydney, where she runs a successful cosmetology business, surrounded by her beloved children Elsie, William and Nancy and grandchildren Amira and Leila. Hellen’s memoir, *Give Me Courage*, chronicles her life journey; her refusal to give up on herself and her dreams; her refusal to be a victim of cultural terror; her refusal to be treated as a lesser human being in a male-dominated society. She hopes to inspire women, and all those who are subjected to racial, cultural and religious discrimination, to persevere and to nurture their spirit so that they can live their lives with grace and gratitude. In addition to her writing, Hellen frequently speaks to groups about her experiences and the lessons she has learned. Most recently, she was a guest speaker at United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees charitable event in support of women and girls in the Democratic Republic of Congo.