

# I spent forty years playing small. And I didn't know I was.

SMI

Not shy. Not unconfident. I ran national sales teams and built a mental health programme for ten thousand people. I was still folding myself down to fit whatever room I was standing in, and I couldn't see it.

WHY SHE KNOWS WHAT SHE KNOWS

My brother was murdered. My sister and my father died of illness. I had a stroke. I've been divorced. I'm raising two neurodivergent children. And I work a frontline job where people turn up on the worst day of their life, which doesn't care what sort of week I'm having.

None of that is the interesting part. This is: a life like that turns you into an instrument. You learn to read a room before you're in it. To hear what somebody means underneath what they're actually saying. To catch the exact second a person decides not to say the thing.

That skill is why I could do frontline work. It's why I could build a mental health programme for ten thousand people across a global company. And it's why I can see the thing that costs people the most and shows up nowhere — capable people quietly holding back the very thing that makes them worth having around.

At fifty I worked out I'd been doing it my whole life, and there was nobody left to blame. That's not a nice thing to find out. It's a very useful thing to be able to talk about.

"My work is closing the gap between the scope of who someone actually is, and the scope they've shrunk themselves down to."

AMANDA ANDERSON

32

SPEAKING  
ENGAGEMENTS  
INTERNATIONALLY

19

YEARS IN NLP,  
RESILIENCE &  
APPLIED MENTAL  
HEALTH

10k

STAFF IN THE  
GLOBAL  
PROGRAMME SHE  
BUILT

"Her session left a lasting impression" — rated 9/10, and the audience asked for more.

JIAMIN WONG · INTELLECT, SINGAPORE

"If you ever have the chance to hear Amanda speak, take it."

MITCH QUEK · PANEL DELEGATE

THE TRACK RECORD

- Created the Global Mental Health programme at L'Occitane en Provence — a three-year roadmap for 10,000 staff
- NSW State Manager, frontline domestic violence and homelessness outreach — 4Voices
- Master NLP Practitioner · Mental Health First Aid · Beyond Blue speaker
- Founder and editor, TOTALLY MENTAL™ magazine — 200+ editions
- Named in Microsoft's Top 10 Speakers to Follow, 2025

STAGES, MEDIA & PARTNERS

L'Occitane en Provence · KPMG Asia · Workplace Health & Safety Show · Wellbeing at Work · Women in Health & Safety Summit · Intellect · HR Daily · MindPeers · FemFounder · Pro Bono Australia · Life Coach Code · TraumaWise · Stop DV · She Is Me Global · Stories That Stir · The Impactful Voice Project · Tradie Wives

"Playing small doesn't protect you from danger. It invites it."

## WHAT SHE'LL TALK ABOUT

**I spent forty years playing small.**

What it actually is, why it isn't shyness or low confidence, and how you can be successful and still be doing it.

**Grief, trauma, and the skill it accidentally builds.**

A harder and more useful answer than "what doesn't kill you".

**Raising children who don't fold themselves down.**

What parents accidentally reward, and what it costs the child twenty years later.

**Playing small in love.**

The partner who is married to your management system rather than to you — and the friends trained not to ask twice.

**Built to agree.**

How school, family, faith and friendship groups train it into us before we're old enough to spot it happening.

**Becoming the person people ring.**

What frontline crisis work does to you, and what it gives back.

**The moment at fifty.**

Working out you've done it your whole life and there is nobody left to blame.

**Getting it back.**

Not a mindset shift. A repossession — and why it's slower and less tidy than anyone sells it.

## QUESTIONS THAT GET A REAL ANSWER

- ? *If playing small isn't shyness or low confidence, what is it?*
- ? *You say people can be confident, successful, and still playing small. How does that work?*
- ? *At fifty you worked out you'd done it your whole life. What was the moment?*
- ? *What does it cost the people at home — a partner, a child, a friend?*
- ? *What did losing so many people actually teach you that you'd want someone to know?*
- ? *Where are you still doing it now?*

## FORMATS

- Keynotes, 20–60 minutes — conferences and summits
- Panels and fireside chats, as guest or host
- Half-day and full-day workshops
- Podcast, radio and broadcast interviews
- Written features, columns and comment

## BASED

Sydney. Interviews are recorded remotely as standard — broadcast-quality microphone, camera and a dedicated quiet room. Riverside, Zoom, Squadcast, StreamYard or your own platform. In studio in Sydney with a little notice.

## TIMING

Sydney time. Comfortable across every Australian time zone, including the Perth offset and early starts for breakfast radio.

## TRAVEL

Interstate for conferences, summits and keynotes. Also works internationally — 32 engagements to date across Australia, Asia, the UK and the US.

## ON REQUEST

Headshots, showreel, edited clips, approved topic list, and a free resource to offer your audience — the 30-Day Ladder, the Capability Gap Calculator and the white paper are all at [amanda-anderson.com.au](https://amanda-anderson.com.au)

## BIO — 45 WORDS, FOR READING OUT

Amanda Anderson is a speaker, broadcaster and writer on why capable people hold back the very thing they were hired for. She created the global mental health programme at L'Occitane en Provence, and now runs frontline domestic violence and homelessness outreach across New South Wales.

## BIO — 120 WORDS, FOR PROGRAMMES

Amanda Anderson spent forty years playing small and didn't know that's what she was doing. She has spent her career studying what makes people do what they do — in boardrooms and in crisis.

She created the Global Mental Health programme at L'Occitane en Provence, a three-year roadmap for 10,000 staff, and today runs frontline domestic violence and homelessness outreach across New South Wales for 4Voices. She is a Master NLP Practitioner, a Beyond Blue speaker, founder of TOTALLY MENTAL™ magazine, and was named in Microsoft's Top 10 Speakers to Follow in 2025. Her first book, *I Made It Look Easy*, is in development.

She works on one thing: the gap between the scope of who someone actually is, and the scope they've shrunk themselves down to.