



Naomi Milgrom is the Executive Chair and CEO of the specialty retailer, the Sussan Group, controlling the retail chains *Sussan*, *Suzanne Grae* and *Sportsgirl* with more than 500 retail stores in Australia and New Zealand. Naomi is a noted philanthropist and a member of Chief Executive Women.

NAOMI MILGROM

CEO SUSSAN GROUP & BUSINESS VISIONARY

Q: *What is your ideal Australia?*

A: An Australia that realises that its true wealth lies in the talents of its people and not simply in the natural resources in the ground. My ideal would be if all its inhabitants would have the opportunity to realize their potential through quality education and access to a good livelihood.

Q: *How would describe Australia at present?*

A: Australia is in transition and business in particular is undergoing a major re-evaluation because we realise that we have to join with the community and government as partners in social change in order to tackle the social, environmental and humanitarian issues that ultimately threaten us all.

Q: *Which Australian do you most admire?*

A: One Australian I admire is Professor Fred Mendelsohn. Under his leadership, and in only 7 years, the Howard Florey Institute has been transformed into one of the foremost neuroscience research institutes in the world, making groundbreaking advances in the treatment of crippling brain and mind disorders that affect one in every 7 Australians - illnesses such as Parkinson's, memory loss, multiple sclerosis, brain injury, stroke, epilepsy.

Q: *What do you consider your greatest achievement?*

A: My children.

Q: *What is your greatest regret or life learning to date?*

A: The famous French singer Edith Piaf had a song called "No, I regret nothing." Even if I do have some regrets there is no point dwelling on them.

Q: *Where do you find your inspiration?*

A: The wide range of talented Australians I am constantly involved with is a wonderful source of inspiration: the young contemporary artists at Australian Centre for Contemporary Art; the scientists at the Howard Florey Institute; the creative people in the fashion and retail industries.

Q: *Who are your heroes?*

A: I'm not sure I would call her a heroine, but I very much admire Katherine Graham who had the courage to step into the leadership of *The Washington Post* when it was in crisis and lead it to its position as one of the great newspapers in the world.

Q: *How would you describe yourself?*

A: A difficult one – driven, creative, caring, passionate, intuitive, positive, focused and team-oriented.

Q: *If you could change one thing about yourself, what would it be?*

A: I can't change anything and I accept the fact that the mistakes I've made and the different steps I have taken in life haven't led me in a straight line, but in directions that have been far more interesting than anything I could have planned.

Q: *What is your worst fear?*

A: Mediocrity.

Q: *What qualities do you most admire in people?*

A: Honesty, integrity and originality. So I try to create a culture of trust in my business and to foster creativity and innovation.

Q: *Who are your favourite writers?*

A: I very much like the genre of autobiographies and biographies because I am intrigued by people and the different lives they lead.

Q: *When are you happiest?*

A: Being with my children, my partner John and when the sales figures are good!!

Q: *What did you want to be when you grew up?*

A: I wanted to save the world.

Q: *What one thing would you tell your children about how to live/be in the world?*

A: It would be to hand down the gift I received from my parents – the general belief in life's limitless possibilities, along with my hope that they live their lives according to their wishes and not according to anyone's expectations.

Q: *What is your life motto?*

A: Humility and humanity.