

## Preface

# Story Time

Every night my eight-year old son and I read a story before he goes to bed. Sometimes it gets us talking about his day. Or my day. Or what happened at school. Or something he is worried about. It starts a conversation. He asks questions, many that I can't answer. We talk more. And then he sleeps on it.

Stories do that. They get us talking. They help us pay attention to things that matter. They help us remember lessons. They help us relate to one another. They bring us together.

Stories are the foundation of *How to Be a Financial Grownup* because I believe that nothing grabs a reader's attention, and makes a lasting mark, like a compelling story.

When I started the process of asking successful people whom I admired about their experiences with money, I had no idea what to expect. What if they all said the same thing? That would make a terrible book. The project could easily crash and burn before it even got off the ground. Even worse, what if they didn't even want to participate?

As you will see when you start to turn the pages, the very opposite happened. Each and every one of the extraordinary Role Models shared unique experiences. Who knew that a personal finance book would have stories that included a sex scandal, repeated battles with cancer, and tales of living out of a car? You will read the incredible stories of Role Models that experienced these things and many more that will surprise you. Money is messy. Success is not a straight line to the top. Even the Role Models, some of the most successful people out there, have had their unexpected setbacks.

It was also important to be honest and transparent about the reality that we don't all begin at the same starting line. I believe that we can learn just as much from the born-rich Role Models, such as Ivanka Trump and Sir Martin Sorrell, as we can from the extraordinary rags-to-riches tale of a Role Model such as Tony Robbins, who at one point in his childhood didn't even have food to eat. Many a scion has blown their fortune or, even worse, lived an irrelevant life. The accomplishments of those who get a head start can be just as instructive and inspiring as those who start with nothing.