



# Our Story

## It started with a flower ...

The seed for Fellow Flowers was planted in 2011, when writer and runner Mel Charbonneau signed up for a half marathon with 13 other women. The runners quickly became friends as they discussed training and, more so, their reasons for running. On race day, the women all tucked an orange flower into their hair to signal to each other, and to the world, that they were a united force.

The flower. The connections. The stories. The support. These elements stuck with Mel long beyond the finish line, and she recognized the need to create ways for women to step into their own stories, and spaces in which women can cheer each other on.

Fellow Flowers started with seven flowers signifying different reasons for running. And since then it has blossomed into so much more.

It's become a movement — some 30,000 women strong — of honoring, celebrating and sharing women's stories. The reasons why they run, strive for a goal or break through to truth, freedom and joy.

It's expanded to feature 13 flowers with distinct meanings — courage, bravery, strength, grace, gratitude, truth, resilience, joy, freedom, hope, clarity, tribe and self — that allow women to express something fundamental to themselves and forge an instant bond with others doing the same.

Those flowers have inspired virtual runs that see women across the country setting and chasing goals, and sparked apparel and products with equally empowering messages and meanings.

From the flowers, communities have sprouted. The FFCrew, a virtual sisterhood of runners and active women. Participants in Declare It Day, an annual day of goal-setting, and in events such as the #FFHolidayChallenge, which encourages women to keep moving — and making themselves a priority — from Thanksgiving to New Year's Day.



Programs have taken root too. As Mel began coaching women, she recognized the need to guide women in breaking through to become their most authentic selves, own their stories and step into the lives they are meant to lead. She launched her signature Breakthrough & Begin course and annual retreat in 2015.

And in 2019, Mel took what could have been a passing compliment at the gym and turned it into Tell Her, a line of cards and products and a movement that empowers women to tell a woman when they see her being brave, standing strong, showing up or enduring a storm.

Throughout this season of growth, Mel has consistently nurtured Fellow Flowers, weaving her personal journey into that of the brand. She remains passionate about providing women with the inspiration and tools to uncover, own and begin to live their unique stories, and to create a sisterhood of support.

## **About Mel**

Fellow Flowers founder Mel Charbonneau is an entrepreneur, writer, coach, runner and creator of spaces for women to identify, own and step into their stories. She lives in Wisconsin with her husband and three daughters.

## **Connect**

Find Fellow Flowers on Instagram, Facebook and Twitter at @fellowflowers.

## **For More**

For additional information or to request an interview with Mel Charbonneau, please contact communications director Katie Vaughn at [katie@fellowflowers.com](mailto:katie@fellowflowers.com)

