

5 DECISIONS THAT *Shaped my life*

As she publishes her first novel, Sharon Osbourne talks about the choices she's made

Sharon started
her career as
Ozzy's manager

Sharon, 57, lives with her husband Ozzy Osbourne in LA and is best known as a judge on *The X Factor* and *America's Got Talent*. Her book, *Extreme*, is the most successful female autobiography ever, and her debut novel, *Revenge*, is out now.

FAMILY The best decisions I ever made were marrying my husband and having my children. There's nothing I would change or rewrite about my life because it has made me who I am. Maybe I should learn to keep my mouth shut, though, because it keeps getting me in trouble! I had a tough upbringing and a difficult relationship with my father [music producer Don Arden], but from that I took a good work ethic, a musical education and the ability to stand on my own feet.

FAME Fate decided this one for me, but it's a good thing I didn't become famous until I was in my late forties. There's no way I could have coped with it before. If I had been in the spotlight in my twenties, like Lily Allen, for example, I would have been such a brat and a nightmare to work with.

SHAPE I've been on both sides of the street weight-wise. I've been the woman who is so fat that nobody wants to sit next to her on the plane, and the woman who weighs 107lbs and for whom guys hold doors open. I know which I prefer. When I had gastric band surgery at the end of the 90s, I lost 125lbs in a year and my body totally changed. I then had to have plastic surgery to get rid of the excess skin, but I did it for me and not because of the industry I'm in.

HEALTH There are lots of ways to reinvent yourself, not just physically, but on the inside too. I was always cynical about people until I had cancer. I've spent so much of my life dealing with business people who are all about cutting to the chase and moving on. But when I was diagnosed with colon cancer in 2002, it made me realise that the rest of the world isn't like that. The public support was overwhelming.

AGE There's so much pressure to look a certain way, but what I really want is to find that quiet part in me where I can grow old gracefully. I know I'm not alone; most women of my generation struggle with this. Our youth may be behind us, but at 50, we're not the has-beens our mothers were. I see life differently now – you can't control everything. Things go wrong... that's life. The trick is to keep going and make the decision to live in the present. **w&h**

Sharon Osbourne's novel, *Revenge*, is out now (£12.99, Sphere).



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