My last entrepreneur interview came from a friend of a friend in my current home town of North Easton,MA,USA, although I've never met her before. Joan Hartel Cabral is President and CEO of Vantel Pearls here, and Joan started this jewelry business in 1990. Her mission was and still is “to inspire women to run their own business and to enjoy authentic and abundant life.” She had no government, philanthropic, intermediate nor anchor institution contributions and started her business by offering her family and friends a 25% return on their investment if they contributed to her start up, and she got started with $30,000 investments and her own $1000. Joan's challenges were that in the beginning, she went without her own income for a handful of years, and found she could not afford to do fun things such as go out to dinner unless she scrutinized the cost of what was on the menu. After a handful of years living this way, Joan's Vantel Pearl business became profitable. Another challenge Joan found starting her own pearl jewelry business in 1990 was that many founders of companies and CEO's were men so it was not common for women to start their own business. After a handful of years , Joan found that her Vantel Pearl business was experiencing exponential growth, mostly by word of mouth. Joan hired “pearl jewelry demonstrators” whom would go to people's houses to throw parties, where the person would invite friends to see Joan's pearl jewelry, and the demonstrator would receive part of the profits of the party where they were a demonstrator. Joan said she had no background nor an education in the pearl jewelry business and figured it out as she went what it would take to be successful in this business.

The support that helped Joan succeed was her belief in herself, a conviction that she would do well eventually no matter what hardships she faced in the beginning. Joan said she latched onto anything in her life that helped her believe in herself to be successful.

Joan's measure of success is certainly a financial measure, where over the years she has experienced a consistent profit every year, and that is her business success. Joan's personal life measure of her success is her serenity and work/life balance, since she has observed that many people in the President and CEO position of a company do not have this work/life balance that Joan does.

The beneficiaries of Joan's success are the demonstrators of the Vantel Pearls, and some of her demonstrators have been with her for over 15 years. Joan and her demonstrators believe in “intrinsic personal development”, which Joan describes as an “understatement”, and they attend womens' leadership conferences and businesses to speak about their success and share their “treasure gems” which are listed on the Vantel Pearl web site (8 of those). A few of those for Joan are: “trusting your intuitions”, “your richest rewards come from helping others”, and for Joan, she is not shy to say that she believes “a power greater than herself provides her best guidance”. Joan and her demonstrators share their “treasure gems” at the women leadership conferences and businesses where they are invited to speak about their pearl jewelry business success, to inspire other women, sharing the panel with other successful women from all different types of backgrounds that are different to theirs.