

Connie Paglianiti



TEDx speaker

International Amazon bestselling author

Event professional

Warning signs. Second chances. The courage to start again.

Connie Paglianiti is a TEDx speaker, international Amazon bestselling author and ISA Certified Speaker with more than 40 years in events. She speaks about overlooked warning signs, accountability and second chances, and retaining, reskilling and valuing experienced people at work. Drawing on her professional experience, gambling recovery and rebuilding her life after prison, she brings honesty, humour and practical questions to corporate, professional and community audiences.

61

Went to prison

66

Diploma of Event
Management

67

International bestselling
author

68

TEDxKew speaker

40+ years in events · ISA Certified Speaker

Amazon bestseller in five countries · Diploma of Event Management, Swinburne

TEDxKew speaker, June 2026

Speaking, interviews and media enquiries

connie@conniepaglianiti.com

+61 417 362 785 | www.conniepaglianiti.com

The person behind the story.

Ready-to-use biographies and an introduction for event hosts.

SHORT BIOGRAPHY

Connie Paglianiti is a TEDx speaker, international Amazon bestselling author and ISA Certified Speaker with more than 40 years in events. She speaks about overlooked warning signs, accountability and second chances, and retaining, reskilling and valuing experienced people at work. Drawing on her professional experience, gambling recovery and rebuilding her life after prison, she brings honesty, humour and practical questions to corporate, professional and community audiences.

FULL BIOGRAPHY

Connie Paglianiti spent more than 40 years working in events, bringing people together and managing the pressures that happen behind the scenes. Her career has included major festivals and high-profile events, including galas with Sophia Loren and Susan Sarandon.

In her mid-fifties, after being conned in her business, Connie developed a gambling addiction. She went to prison at 61 and takes responsibility for the actions that put her there. She speaks openly about the shame, silence and warning signs that accompanied that period of her life.

After her release, she rebuilt her life. She completed a Diploma of Event Management at Swinburne at 66 and became an international Amazon bestselling author at 67, with bestseller status in five countries. In June 2026, at 68, she took her story to the TEDxKew stage with "Prison Without Bars: What Verdict Are You Still Carrying?"

Today, Connie brings her professional experience and lived experience together in her speaking. Her signature topic, Red Flags in Plain Sight™, asks why we explain away what we can see, and what we can do before a situation becomes a crisis. Her second keynote, Sitting on a Goldmine, looks at the experienced people organisations already have, and what it costs to overlook them.

She also speaks about recovery, accountability and the opportunity to start again. With more than 40 years in events, Connie understands run sheets, timing, audience expectations and what organisers need from a speaker. Her approach is direct, practical and human.

HOST INTRODUCTION

Our next speaker is Connie Paglianiti, a TEDx speaker, international Amazon bestselling author and event professional with more than 40 years of experience. Connie has rebuilt her life after gambling addiction and prison, and she speaks openly about warning signs, accountability and second chances. Her work asks us to look again at what we dismiss, the labels we carry and the opportunities we may overlook. Please welcome Connie Paglianiti.

Pronunciation: Connie pag-lee-ah-NEE-tee

A story that opens a conversation.

Topics can be tailored to the audience and event brief.

01 Red Flags in Plain Sight™

The warning signs are usually there. People notice them, explain them away and say nothing. Connie built a career spanning more than 40 years in events. In her mid-fifties, after being conned in her business, she developed a gambling addiction that eventually led to prison. She takes responsibility for her actions and understands how a capable, trusted professional can be struggling behind the scenes. Using her S.I.G.N.S.™ framework, she shows teams how to notice earlier and start the conversation sooner.

YOUR AUDIENCE LEAVES WITH

- The common reasons we talk ourselves out of what we have noticed
- A practical way to raise a concern without accusing anyone
- A clear picture of what silence costs in people, money and reputation

Best for: Leaders, HR, risk and compliance teams, professional associations, gambling harm audiences.

02 Stigma, accountability and second chances

Connie went to prison at 61 and takes full responsibility for what put her there. Her question is about what comes next. Once someone has been held to account and done the work, when are they allowed to move forward? For workplaces, this is a practical question about hiring, return to work and how people are treated after a serious mistake.

YOUR AUDIENCE LEAVES WITH

- How shame and fear of judgement stop people asking for help early
- The difference between holding someone accountable and writing them off
- Questions to test how your own organisation handles second chances

Best for: HR and people leaders, health and community services, justice sector, employers considering fair-chance hiring.

What your audience takes away.

Each session combines Connie's story with practical questions for your people.

03 Sitting on a Goldmine: age diversity and reinvention

Connie completed her diploma at 66, became an international bestselling author at 67 and gave her TEDx talk at 68. She talks to employers about the experienced people already on their payroll: the ones overlooked for training, promotion and new roles, and what it costs to lose them. It speaks to the organisation losing its knowledge, and to the person who has stopped believing they have more to offer.

YOUR AUDIENCE LEAVES WITH

- The assumptions about age that quietly push experienced staff out
- Practical ways to retain and reskill people instead of replacing them
- Ideas for getting different generations learning from each other
- A reason for individuals to stop counting themselves out

Best for: Employers, HR and learning teams, educators, women's networks, career development audiences.

04 Prison Without Bars

Based on Connie's TEDx talk. She served her sentence, but the judgement followed her out the gate. This session asks what verdict you are still carrying: a label from a failure, a redundancy, a mistake, or something someone said about you years ago. It suits teams coming through change, setbacks or restructure, as well as general audiences.

YOUR AUDIENCE LEAVES WITH

- A way to recognise the outdated labels they have accepted as fact
- An understanding of how those labels limit people and teams
- One clear step towards putting an old verdict down

Best for: Conferences, leadership programmes, personal development events, community groups.

Formats: keynotes, facilitated conversations, panels and interviews. For a booking enquiry, include your event date, location, audience and purpose.

Honest stories. Useful questions.

Available for podcasts, radio, television, print and digital interviews.

INTERVIEW ANGLES

The warning signs we explain away

Why gambling harm can remain hidden behind a capable, successful public life.

Life after the label

Accountability, shame, recovery and rebuilding after prison.

Starting again later in life

Returning to study and building a new career and public voice in her sixties.

The experience employers overlook

What organisations lose when they stop investing in their older, experienced people.

TEDxKEW · JUNE 2026

Prison Without Bars: What Verdict Are You Still Carrying?

[Watch Connie's TEDx talk on YouTube](#)

youtube.com/watch?v=t82oIP6qTNo · or scan the code



SELECTED MEDIA APPEARANCES

Marie Claire Australia · December 2024

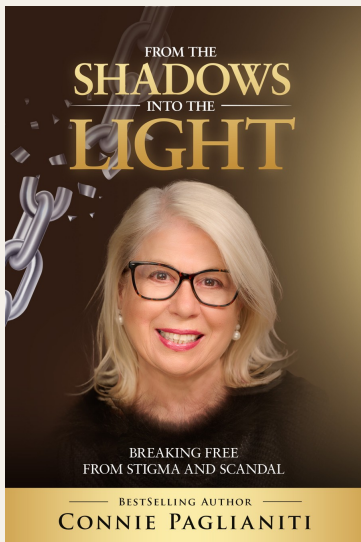
FORCE Magazine, US · July 2026

Take 5 · Issue 29, July 2026

Channel 31 · Conversations with Faye Waterman, 2025

Books and current work.

High-resolution headshots and book cover artwork available on request.

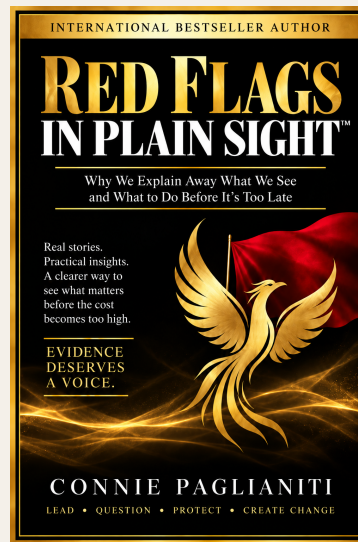


MEMOIR

From the
Shadows into
the Light

**Breaking Free from
Stigma and
Scandal**

Connie's memoir of
gambling addiction,
prison, recovery and
rebuilding.



CURRENT BOOK PROJECT

Red Flags in
Plain Sight™

**Why We Explain
Away What We See
and What to Do
Before It's Too
Late**

Connie's current
book project and
signature speaking
topic.



ON STAGE

Connie speaking at the
Holstep Health Annual General
Meeting.

Connie speaks at corporate, professional
and community events as a keynote
speaker, panellist and interview guest.

For images to use in your event programme
or publication, email
connie@conniepaglianiti.com.

What others say.

Feedback from speaking and peer-support work.

“Connie’s speaking style is engaging, thoughtful and her story leaves you on the edge of your seat from start to finish. Her ability to confront her own truth shows a strength and resilience that is both remarkable and touching.”

Stuart Moysey

Acting Participation and Events Officer, Maribyrnong City Council
Following Connie’s Daughters of the West presentation.

“Connie has a powerful and meaningful story to share. Her ability to connect with others, inspire hope and speak from the heart makes her a valuable contributor to the program.”

Gabriella Magyar

Peer Programs Coordinator, Holstep Health
On Connie’s volunteer work with the Peer Connections Program.

LET’S TALK ABOUT YOUR AUDIENCE.

For speaking: send your organisation, date, location, audience size and topic.

For media: send your publication or programme, deadline and interview focus.

connie@conniepaglianiti.com

+61 417 362 785

www.conniepaglianiti.com

LinkedIn: [linkedin.com/in/conniepaglianiti](https://www.linkedin.com/in/conniepaglianiti)

Instagram: [@conniepaglianiti](https://www.instagram.com/conniepaglianiti)

High-resolution headshots and book cover artwork available on request.

Based in Melbourne, Australia.