

Me!

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(and you thought you knew it all)

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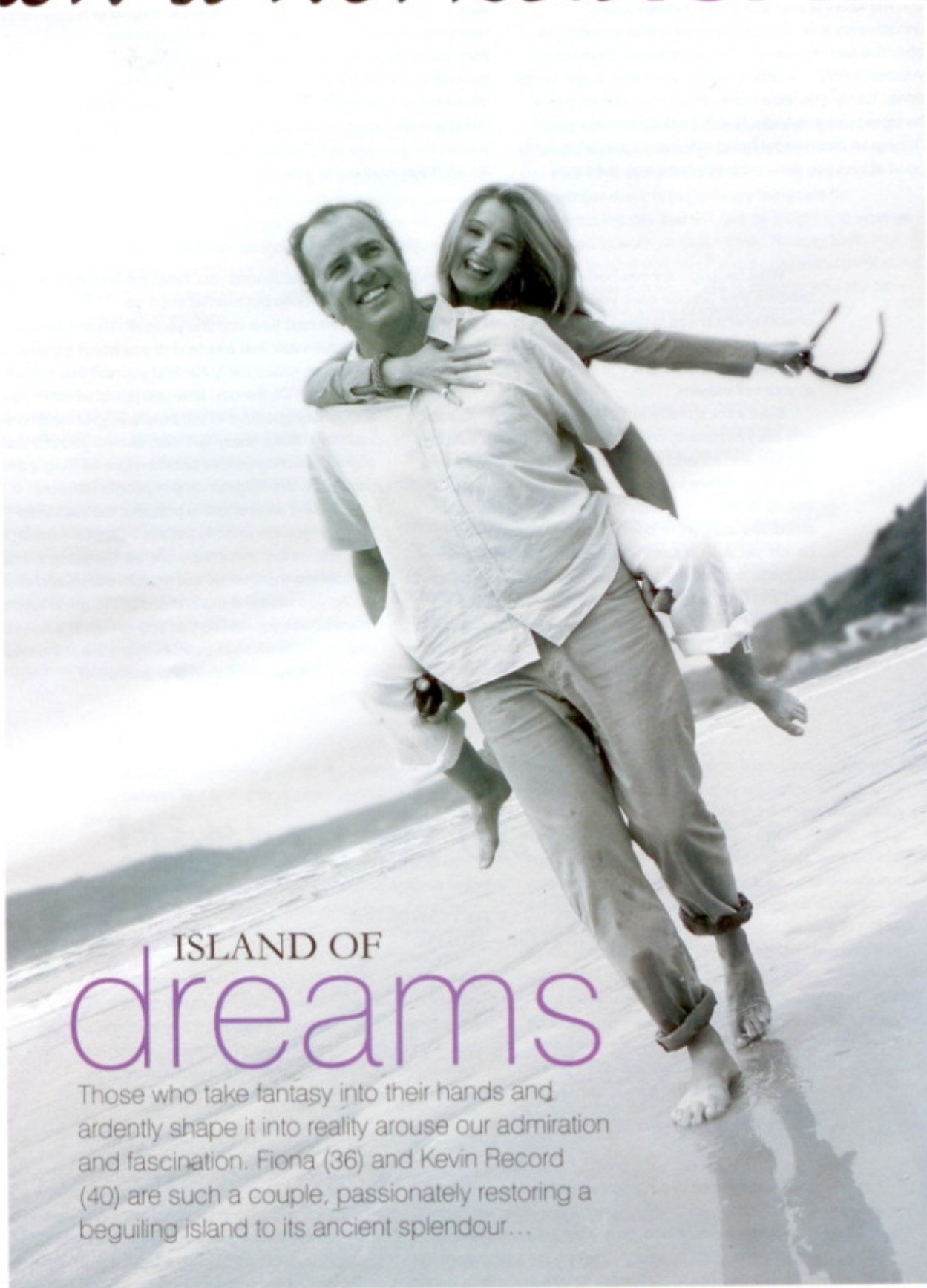
courteney COX
breaking out of the box

say **hello**
to the **future**



ISSN 1085-2440
Other countries \$17.99 (incl. tax)
APRIL-MAY 2007

how it worked **for me**



ISLAND OF **dreams**

Those who take fantasy into their hands and ardently shape it into reality arouse our admiration and fascination. Fiona (36) and Kevin Record (40) are such a couple, passionately restoring a beguiling island to its ancient splendour...

Intrepid explorers, this pair has done the impossible and discovered the unbelievable. They're a living definition of synergy. They met in the 80's and journeyed across Europe together, but persistently ached for their magical home continent. Driven by curiosity and thirsty for adventure, they zigzagged across Africa for over a year. "From encountering army convoys in the Sahara to mud holes that swallowed our truck whole in the Congo... we really did experience it all," they recount. In 1993 they reached the bustling Mozambican village of Pemba via bullet-ridden towns and 'roads' recently cleared of landmines. Boarding a dhow (a traditional wooden sailing vessel), they glided between islands, soaking up the pristine and staggering beauty of the Quirimbas Archipelago, finally sighting Ibo...

A VISION OF PERFECTION

"Under dhow sail at night with phosphorus flash bouncing off the warm water we slipped silently into the ancient harbour. The age-old trade buildings reflected off the sea. In the moonlight, Ibo Island appeared to us like a lost city." Part of Ibo Island's charm was that she *had* fallen into decline, and still guarded her secrets. As far back as the 1500's, she was a prosperous trading post; pirates, ivory, intrigue and the infamous slave-trade comprise her history. Beyond her soft, white beaches are magnificent coral reefs and turquoise waters that burgeon with marine wildlife. Sadly though, despite being encompassed by vivid loveliness, the island's friendly occupants were desperately poor. Captivated, Kevin and Fiona

returned for several months to learn the local traditions and understand Ibo's people. As every corner of this paradise was etched into their souls, a dream emerged... 'Ibo Island Lodge'.

THE PATH TO A DREAM

Fiona undertook the creative process, sitting for hours with local craftsmen drawing ideas in the sand. She trained the Ibo team in hospitality and housekeeping, overseeing every detail of design, as well as marketing the lodge internationally. \

Kevin engineered, built and restored the three mansions, each over a century old. He managed over a hundred labourers, mixing his fair share of concrete. Simultaneously he developed the historic visitors' routes and island excursions. The resourceful pair are careful to conserve the island's natural riches and uplift her people. English Language and environmental studies are undertaken at their conservation centre as a start to equipping islanders with viable income opportunities. Further projects are to follow, such as providing a workshop for selected local silversmiths who handcraft exquisite jewellery using venerable Arab techniques.

During this endeavour, the couple weathered long periods of isolation. At times, the logistical frustrations of having to transport or create every required item – right down to the last nail – were maddening! Yet these vexations were quickly usurped by delight as the rehabilitation was completed in time to welcome guests for Christmas, 2006.

Fiona and Kevin are soaring ahead – side by side and heart to heart. ✨

change
your mindset,
change
your life

WHAT CAN COUPLES WHO WORK TOGETHER LEARN FROM KEVIN & FIONA'S EXAMPLE?

- ✨ Develop a strong foundation for your relationship before embarking on a joint career. You need to know and understand your partner, especially how he or she reacts under pressure.
- ✨ Recognise each other's unique strengths and build on those.
- ✨ Encourage each other.
- ✨ When you experience conflict within the marriage or business, work hard to find a mutually satisfying solution. Talk issues through honestly. Try to hear the other's point of view.
- ✨ Keep work apart from the more personal aspects of your relationship.
- ✨ Define each partner's specific work duties and keep them separate. Be responsible for different aspects of the same project, yet don't be afraid to ask for help or advice from each other – that's the beauty of doing the venture together.
- ✨ No matter how ambitious the current project might be, take time for the simple and important things in life, like walking your dogs on the beach or sharing a bottle of wine with friends or family.
- ✨ Look after each other and above all else, have fun!

Explore Ibo virtually at www.iboisland.com

By Valerie Shayne; Photo by Frikkie Neethling