

# CHOICES

AUTUMN 2016

## THE ATTITUDE ISSUE!

HOW CHANGING  
YOUR ATTITUDE CAN  
CHANGE YOUR LIFE!

AN INTERVIEW WITH  
**STEPHANIE THOMPSON**  
SINGER/SONGWRITER AND ACTRESS



### ATTITUDE: POLITICS, RELIGION & REALITY

YOUR POINT OF VIEW MAY BE  
HAVING A DIRECT IMPACT ON  
YOUR ATTITUDE



### THE FREEWAY TO SUCCESS

MAINTAINING A POSITIVE  
ATTITUDE CAN HELP IMPROVE  
YOUR LEVEL OF SUCCESS



### SMILE WHEN YOU YELL AT ME!

HOW ATTITUDE AFFECTS OUR  
BODIES AND CHANGES WE  
CAN MAKE TO IMPROVE IT

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# FROM THE EDITOR

Autumn is here. It's my favorite season. The hot, hot summers of the Nevada desert always leave me excited for a new cooler, more colorful time of year. Autumn always seems to me like it is the beginning of something new. Maybe that's because in years gone by, the end of summer meant that a new year of school would be starting. I was always excited to see what each new year would bring...learning new things, having new teachers, making new friends, and in my case, it was usually starting at a new school, so it was a totally new adventure.

I still think of autumn that way... a new adventure. And I'm always full of wonder as to what that adventure has in store for me.

This is also the time of year when I go back through my achievement journal, look at my goals for this year and see how far I have come, because I only have these autumn months to get it all complete before the end of the year. However, I must admit that usually by this time of year, my goals for the year are either complete or almost complete. I find that by using my achievement journal, I stay on track. Which reminds me...how are you doing with yours?

This year I have embarked on something new...podcasting. And I love it! How fun it is to talk to people all over the world about anything and everything I want to talk about. My new

podcast is called "Choices," of course. And I talk with people from around the globe about choices they have made and what has happened as a result of those choices. I am often fascinated with some of the choices people make and the reasons they have for making them. You can find the shows archived on [www.choicesonlinemedia.com](http://www.choicesonlinemedia.com), if you care to listen.

And this new season finds me venturing into the world of television. I am now the host of World of Book Reviews. This show is live in Las Vegas on WBCOM-TV and then is archived on [www.akexpertstv.com](http://www.akexpertstv.com) so it can be seen at any time. I am reviewing books. You might know. As much as I love to read, this is the perfect gig for me. I hope you'll check it out from time to time.

And of course, it is almost time for the holidays. When I lived in South Africa, I often heard it called the "silly season."

They took their holidays much more serious than we do. What I mean by that is that in South Africa, a holiday is a holiday. It is not work up until the last minute, then knock yourself out trying to prepare for the big holiday meals, decorating, and then the shopping for presents. Their holidays were enjoyable! I've decided that this year, my holidays are going to be just that. I am going to have a "silly season." I hope you will, too. Take time for yourself and really, really enjoy that time. Life is shorter than you think. No one ever got to the end of their life and thought, I wish I had worked more. So think about what's important to you and make time for that now. You deserve to enjoy your life.

You Are More than Enough,

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# ATTITUDE IS A CHOICE

BY JUDI MOREO

**T**hemba was a beautiful African girl, the daughter of a dignitary, well educated, tall and proud...with a bit of a chip on her shoulder. She was attending one of our six-week training programs at the office in Johannesburg where she worked. We had spoken of the effects of attitude on our lives many times and she felt justified in having a defiant one. Perhaps she was. The question we had often asked her was, "Is your attitude getting you the results you want in your life?" And she had admitted it was not.

Even though she worked in the city, she lived in a township and rode in a taxi to work every morning. Taxis in South Africa are minivans with twice the number of people jamming into them than the van actually was designed to transport.

One morning, Themba was late to our training class and when she came in, she was visibly shaken. I was so concerned by what I saw that I stopped the class and asked her what was wrong.

She replied by saying, "This morning I was waiting at the taxi stand. When the taxi pulled up, I proceeded to get in. The taxi driver said to me, 'Not you. You don't get in my taxi. I don't like your face.' You know me. Normally, I would have fought with him--- but your words came to me and I stepped back and

waited for the next taxi. Another lady took that seat.

That taxi pulled away from the curb and I got in the next taxi. About 2 miles down the freeway, we watched as that other taxi which was now in front of us had a blowout on the front tire and





rolled over. The lady who took the seat where I would have been sitting was killed instantly along with the taxi driver. We heard on the radio news as we were pulling up to front of this building that everyone in that taxi was killed.”

Then she added, “I don’t mean to buy your face (translation: I’m not trying to impress you), but this morning I heard your words again and I heeded them and they saved my life.

I asked, “What words were those, Themba?”

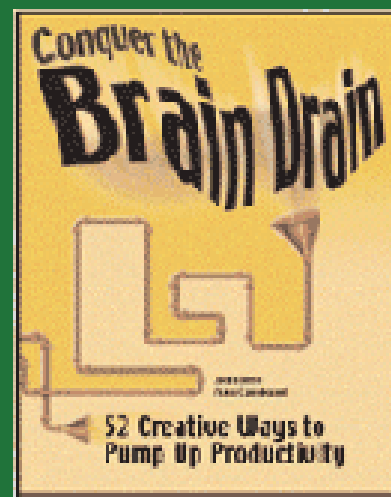
“You said that sometimes it pays to lose a battle in order to win the war and choosing the right attitude determines a better outcome. If I hadn’t kept my attitude in check this morning... If I had insisted on getting in that taxi as I normally would have, I would be dead. Your words saved my life. Thank you.”

Perhaps this appears to be a dramatic example. Never-the-less, this story demonstrates so clearly to all of us that the attitude we choose every day is one



### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Judi Moreo is the author of the award-winning book, “You Are More Than Enough: Every Woman’s Guide to Purpose, Passion, and Power” as well as its companion, Achievement Journal. She is a Certified Speaking Professional who has spoken in 28 countries around the world. Less than 10 percent of the speakers in the world hold this highly respected earned designation. To contact Judi or book her for a speaking engagement, contact Turning Point International, (702) 896-2228 or [judi@judimoreo.com](mailto:judi@judimoreo.com).



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that causes either positive or negative experiences to manifest in our lives.

Time and again, we hear that having a positive attitude is the key to all success in life. And it is!

The exciting thing, if only we would realize it, is that our attitude is one of the few things in life over which we have complete control. We can close our minds to failures, negative people, and circumstances of the past. We can discipline our minds to take possession of our thoughts. Otherwise, we can be influenced by anything and everything in life and let chance and circumstance happen to us. I know it's not always


easy to replace negative thoughts with positive thoughts.

I remember reading many years ago a quote by American psychologist, Professor William James that said, "As you think, so shall you be." These words have resonated in my mind ever since and I work daily to discipline my mind to maintain a positive focus. When we allow our minds to be filled with fear and doubt, or anger and hatred, these are the times when we scare away any chance of the success that we want to achieve.

Attitude is the outward expression of our inner feelings. Our thoughts create

our feelings. Our feelings determine our behaviors. When we improve our thoughts, we improve our feelings. That will improve our behavior and will bring us improved results.

When things happen to us, we can choose to believe it happened for a reason. Even in the most difficult of experiences, if we look for them, we will find opportunities. It is what we think about the experience that determines how we respond to it. If we think, "This is a disaster," it certainly will be. If on the other hand, we think, "There's an opportunity in here somewhere," and look for it, we will most certainly find it.



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# ATTITUDE DETERMINES ALTITUTDE

BY JOAN S. PECK

**I**t wasn't too long ago, I was in a predicament where I was unhappy with circumstances and found myself in a gloomy mood. As I sat there, I had to chuckle when I swear I could hear my mother clearly say, "You are not going to get what you want unless you change your attitude, young lady!" Although she passed many years earlier, it is amazing to me how she and mothers all over the world have the power to impart words of wisdom that stick with us throughout our lifetimes and later come to us in many ways as reminders.

As I thought about what she said, I tried to remember when I first learned what it meant to "change my attitude." Obviously, it had to do with my behavior – not acting in a more grateful manner for what was about to take place or had taken place. Not really having to do with perception, necessarily, but more like speaking out in the proper manner. Then, this came to mind, "It's not what you say but how you say it!" And that is attitude, my friend! Attitude means approach and how you approach life in all aspects determines your altitude and height of good living.

I found this in my research and share it with you because I believe this anonymous piece says it better than I can:

## What Am I?

I am seldom considered, though I do more to influence everything about you than virtually any one thing in your life. I often control the time you get up in the morning, the time you go to sleep, what you eat and drink and the very thought that runs through your head. I can make you either happy or sad, loving or hateful, cheerful or remorseful,



congenial or spiteful and in doing so, control the very capacity that you have for success.

No, you don't often think of me; instead, you BLAME the problem I create on the shortcoming of others, or the state of the economy, or your family or a million other reasons. Often at times unable to

find anyone else to BLAME, you look for shortcomings within yourself on which to lay the BLAME.

When my impact on your life is considered fully in your every thought and action, when you are mindful of my awesome power, when you nurture and groom me for positive use in your life, I

can become more contagious than the most prolific disease ever witnessed by man. My influence will spread to every person you come in contact with.

Groomed and nurtured in a positive manner, there will be no person or obstacle that can stand in the way of my success or fail to be impacted for the better.

***“Two things define you: your patience when you have nothing and your attitude when you have everything”***

**Anonymous**

**I am your Attitude!**



### **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

Joan S. Peck is an editor and author of short stories, spiritual books and a contributing author in two of the books in the Life Choices book series. She also writes for Recovery Today magazine.

Her latest book is ***Prime Threat – Shattering the Power of Addiction***, a book written with her son from the other side about what addiction is and how to live without it. It is an uplifting book with him sharing some of his own lifetimes of addiction and what he is doing now to clear them.

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# AN ATTITUDE OF ACCEPTANCE

BY DEBRA WHITTAM



**I** hold inside me the fury and rage of my father, and his father, and all of the father's before him. I am them. But I don't want to be. I want to live in a place of forgiveness. I want to maintain an attitude of acceptance rather than one of denial. But how?

Acceptance is by far the best feeling I have ever known. Yet as I've always sought to control the people and things around me, it is a pleasure I rarely experience. There is no acceptance when you seek to control, and in fact, there is no such thing as control. There is only a perceived notion. We attempt to gain control, until eventually it kills us. If acceptance is so important, why does it feel so unattainable?

Like many, I have been wronged by friends and family, shamed, and betrayed. I protect myself with a false feeling of strength that comes from dwelling in these painful memories and

feeding off the negative emotions. I see an unfamiliar path before me. A road paved with vulnerability and humility, and the "weakness" of releasing a grudge.

An attitude is a way of thinking, appearing, and behaving that impacts those around us. I now choose an attitude of vulnerability and possibility. I choose to release past wrongs that I blamed on others, and held onto for far too long. Forgiving others is the most difficult thing that I've ever done. We are all fragile human beings who make mistakes (and my own mistakes make me cringe.) As I forgive those around me, can I forgive myself?

I accept where I came from, and I am reminded that it wasn't all bad. I remember an easy Sunday afternoon homebound by winter's delight: mountains of thick snow and slippery ice kept even the hearty Adirondack seeker homebound; an old desk with a roll top open to reveal a vinyl record,

ready for playing. My mind is filled with an unbidden memory when listening to Andy Williams and Perry Como. The strings of Mantovani open an already formed travel trip back to a time of long ago when I longed for safety. Audrey Hepburn and Fred Astaire came alive in my living room on those lonely Sunday afternoons. The life I have lived, is precisely what I needed to accept others... and myself.

I strive to live in a place free of fear, hate, and blame. I welcome the nostalgia and the sounds and smells that race back to me... beautiful memories. Those loved ones are no longer here, only what I carry in my heart. I hope that before my loved ones passed, they forgave me and adopted an attitude of acceptance. Each day I forgive what has happened, accept what has been, and love those who have come before me.



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Debra Whittam is a licensed therapist in Pittsburgh, PA who is also in Recovery. She specializes in untreated mental illness, untreated addiction and unacknowledged grief. Running groups as well as doing individual work with her clients, Debra encourages others with her humor as well as her vulnerabilities. While Debra lives in Pittsburgh, she also has a cottage in the Adirondacks and spends time in Paris.



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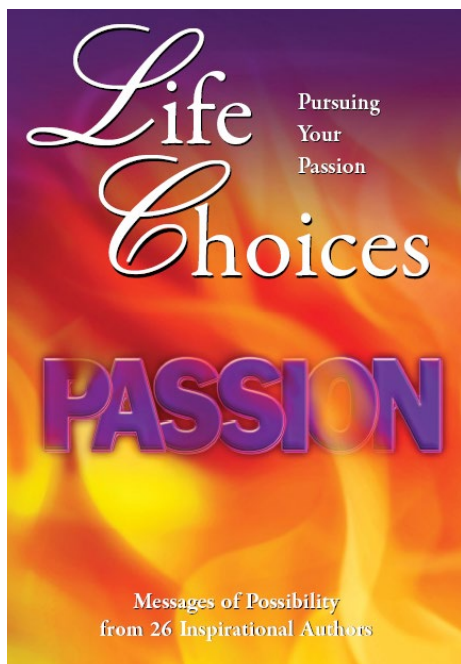
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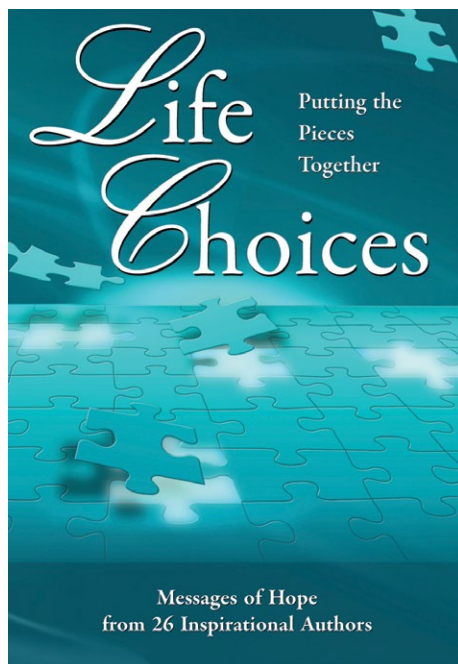
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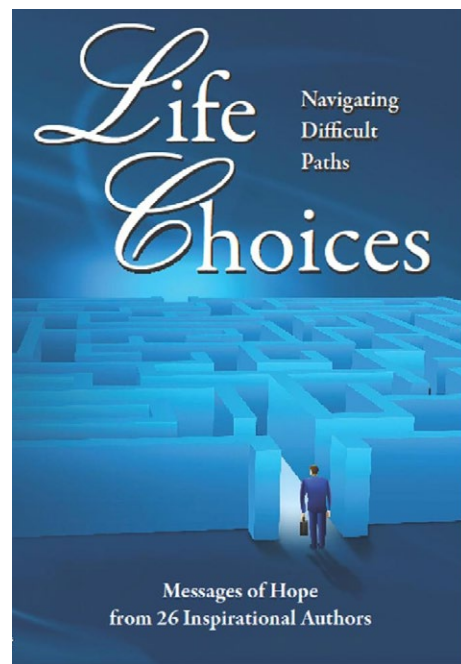
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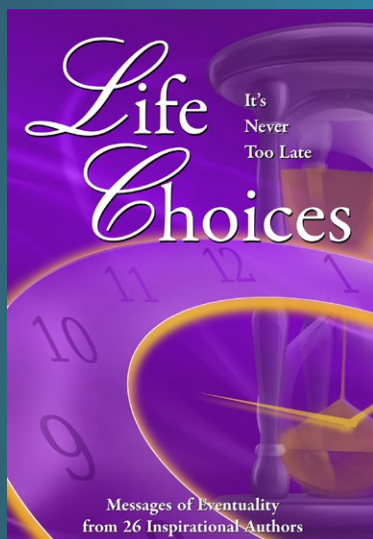
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Should you find yourself in circumstances that require the making of difficult choices, the stories in this book can offer you courage and inspiration. Each author has addressed hurdles they have faced in order to reach their current level of success. It is a collection of powerful true stories written by real people who have overcome the obstacles in their paths.



This empowering collection of stories reminds us that we all have choices and the choices we make are what determine the course of our lives. The authors of these stories are real people who have reached into the depths of their souls to share their inspiring journeys when navigating the difficult paths of their lives.



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## STEP ONE



## STEP TWO



## STEP THREE

# 3 STRATEGIES TO MAXIMIZE TIME BETWEEN APPOINTMENTS

BY AMBER DE LA GARZA

# W

hat is it about time? Everyone has the same 24 hours in a day but some people manage to get an

incredible amount of work done with theirs while for others, time seems to disappear into thin air. Hours fly by. Minutes feel more like seconds. Time you could otherwise invest in your family, business, hobby, community, or other activity is often misplaced but it's not really lost. You can find time to do what matters most by reclaiming a great deal of time often hiding between appointments. Here's how:

### Time Maximization Strategies for Downtime Between Appointments

#### 1. Recognize & Repurpose Downtime

Although downtime is all around you, you may not realize it. Downtime is any inactive time between periods of actual work. Any time you have a few minutes between the end of one task and the beginning of another, you have downtime in which you can be productive. Start pinpointing your periods of downtime so you can choose to invest that time differently. Often, the biggest challenge to being productive is

failing to recognize the opportunity to repurpose time. This happens because you may be too busy wasting time on unproductive habits such as skimming social media, cherry picking through emails, chit-chatting with co-workers, surfing the net, even daydreaming. Identify your periods of downtime so you can proactively put that time to better use.

#### 2. Be A Master Scheduler

Planning ahead can help you maximize loads of time, especially when it comes to scheduling appointments. Schedule meetings strategically so you can minimize time between them. Book appointments closely together to avoid long, unproductive breaks. Leave some buffer time in between just in case appointments run late, but an hour of buffer time is unnecessary. Respect your time and others' time by aiming to keep meetings on schedule.

One great secret of master schedulers is to book meetings back-to-back as a "power meeting day" in a coffee shop or office. Scheduling back-to-back meetings at the same location minimizes travel time, removes the cost of traveling to another destination, and enables you to accomplish tasks between appointments because you're stationary instead of driving or walking.

Scheduling a "power meeting day" once a month with everyone you want to meet with or catch up with is a great efficiency strategy. It has two benefits. First, you tend to not run over on meetings because when you knowingly have another meeting to get to, you will purposefully utilize your time for each meeting more efficiently. Second, back-to-back meetings don't provide idle time for long, unproductive breaks.

Another great strategy is to break your out-of-office meetings up into regions. Many entrepreneurs swear by this scheduling method. They inform their assistants which days they will be in certain areas of town. Their assistants then schedule their meetings accordingly, filling up their calendar with back-to-back meetings by region and date. This strategy works particularly well for professionals that meet at their clients' homes or offices.

### 3. Keep a List

Downtime is inevitable. No matter how great a scheduler you are, you will face periods of unscheduled inactivity and therefore opportunities to repurpose and maximize time. Create a list of tasks you can complete between meetings and during any downtime. Keep the list with you, ideally on your synced digital task manager, so you can get right to work when you have downtime. Your list could include tasks like:

- Calls – Make return calls or progress calls to check in with clients and see



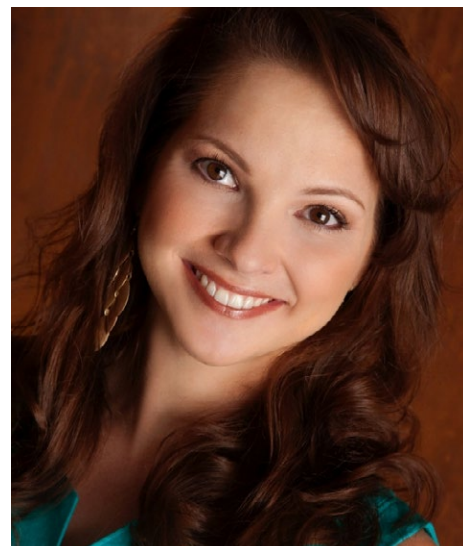
how they are doing

- Reading – Peruse trade journals or industry articles for great ideas
- Online Research – Figure out how to best go about an upcoming project/let someone go/upgrade your technology
- Review – Compile and assess meeting notes
- Schedule – Capture actions items on your task list
- Emails – Process emails. Hint: Process your emails only if you have enough time to take action on them. You would have to spend time re-reading them again otherwise.

Time does seem to get lost sometimes but it can often be found in the seconds

and minutes that add up between the meetings, appointments, and scheduled tasks that make up your daily life. Use downtime to your advantage. Recognize and repurpose it, schedule wisely, and keep a list to maximize time and be productive so you can spend more time on what matters most.

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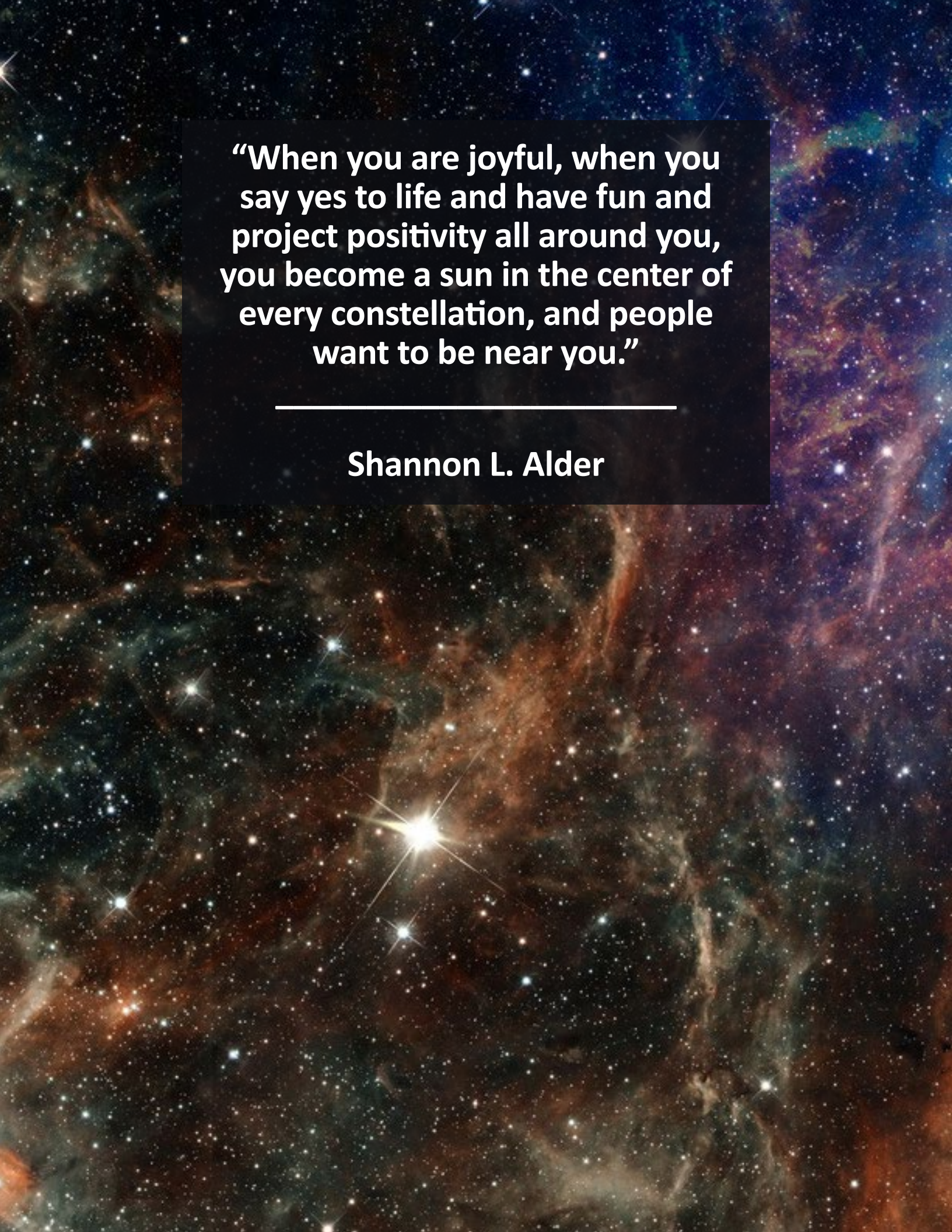


#### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Amber De La Garza works with business owners who are eager to maximize their personal productivity to be more effective in life and business, meet their maximum potential, and accomplish their goals. For more information or to reach Amber: 702-527-2307 or [Amber@TheProductivitySpecialist.com](mailto:Amber@TheProductivitySpecialist.com)

**“Take care of the minutes, for the hours will take care of themselves.”**

**Lord Chesterfield**



**“When you are joyful, when you say yes to life and have fun and project positivity all around you, you become a sun in the center of every constellation, and people want to be near you.”**

---

**Shannon L. Alder**



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# THE COOK

BY JAANA HATTON

**T**he buttery aroma of Lal's freshly baked cinnamon buns was irresistible – a scent of home. We were fortunate to have a cook in India who could produce such western pastries even Martha Stewart would have admired. Lal got up at three o'clock in the morning in order to work the dough to have the chubby treats ready for breakfast.

It's customary to have domestic help in India. We had a staff of five: a cook, a maid, a laundry man, a gardener and a yard sweeper. The cook is the undisputed head of the household staff. The need for so many domestics doesn't depend on the size of the household. Instead, it's the Indian caste system that dictates the division of jobs. Thus, each person does specific duties befitting his rank in society. The laundry man has no business stepping into the kitchen and the dirty clothes are not for the cook to handle – he rules from the kitchen. It was complicated for us westerners to understand, but we tried to respect the rules of the Indian society as best we could.

Lal came to us highly recommended from another diplomatic household. From the very first meeting, we were impressed by his self-confidence. Since he needed to be in charge of the

housekeeping staff, it was a desirable quality. He lacked the usual humility of a domestic worker, but still remained respectful as we interviewed him.

For an Indian man, Lal had an unusually tall and sturdy build, much like his mental state. He had the air of a stubborn bull. With some thirty years of experience in diplomatic households, he knew his worth.

If I wanted a cup of coffee, I couldn't go into the kitchen to fetch it. Lal brought it to me on a tray along with little sugar and creamer containers.

Considering my European middle-class upbringing, I found it both flattering and uncomfortable. However, the arrangement left very little room for argument. We were in India.

We had lovely dinners, so very American: spaghetti, meatloaf, tacos. All this was to please my husband. I appreciated the Indian nights, however, and always made sure to tell Lal so. His ongoing and only complaint was that "Memsahib eat very little." I made sure to praise every delicious meal and apologize that I couldn't eat more than one heaping plateful.



As the months went by, Lal became more comfortable in his position and began to ask for extra perks and more pay. He wanted a partitioning wall for his servant's quarters to separate his clock workshop from his living area. His hobby and passion was building antique clocks. His skill in clock building didn't equal his abilities as a cook, but it hardly mattered.

He wanted to invite dinner guests to our house, even if we weren't particularly good friends with these people. His confidence was turning into arrogance.

Lal's cooking continued to be as impeccable as always, but his demands became bolder and more frequent. Lal thought that since we liked him so much, we would do anything to keep him. Initially, we thought so, too.

Then came the night when he again wanted some excessive amount of money to improve his quarters. After



### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jaana Hatton was born in Finland in 1960. When she was twenty-three, she met her American husband, Ronald, and they spent the next twenty-five years traveling around the world due to his employment with the US government. They now live in Wenatchee, Washington. They have two grown sons.

Jaana may be contacted at:  
jaana\_hatton@hotmail.com

Lal finished for the evening, had closed down the kitchen, and had retired into his own quarters, my husband and I sat down to list the pros and cons of having our cook in the household. Yes, he was an excellent cook and yes, he could keep the rest of the staff organized and things running smoothly. But, maybe they were running too smoothly and we didn't know all the things we should. It was time to thank Lal for his good service and conquer back the house in which we were living.

It was uncomfortable to tell the head servant he was dismissed. Surprisingly, he took it well and was gone the next day. Only a few days later, he was working for one of those families we had refused to have over for dinner. No doubt he had been expecting to see the end of his employment with us and had already prepared for this next step. Lal was a smart man, after all.

Lal never talked about himself much. This much we came to know, and it was one of the most amazing things about him: Lal was born into the lowest caste, the untouchables. In India, it's almost impossible to cross those class boundaries in one lifetime. One has to be reborn, hopefully into a better lot next time. Somehow, by his determination, most likely, Lal crossed many caste boundaries and ended up being a cook in the diplomatic community in New Delhi. A king of sorts.

Our co-existence lasted less than a year and we didn't part in cordial terms, but I will always respect Lal the Cook for his accomplishments. Undoubtedly he has continued to advance in his life. I should check who is in the Indian government these days.



**“Ability is what you’re capable of doing. Motivation determines what you do. Attitude determines how well you do it.”**

**Lou Holtz**

**“There are two primary choices in life; to accept conditions as they exist, or accept the responsibility for changing them.”**

---

**Denis Waitley**



**A** *m I Going to be Okay?* is an American story with a universal message. Ms. Whittam traces her history in the form of stories about her all too human, and sometimes unhinged family; she throws a rope to the little girl living there, and in adulthood, is able to pull her out safely, bit by bit.

Her history is peopled with folks from a different time, a time before therapy was acceptable, 12 steps unimaginable and harsh words, backhands and even harsher silences can be spun to appear almost normal. She writes of a mother who would not or could not initiate love nor give it without condition, and a father, damn near heroic at times, abusive at others, a survivor with his head down and his sleeves rolled up.

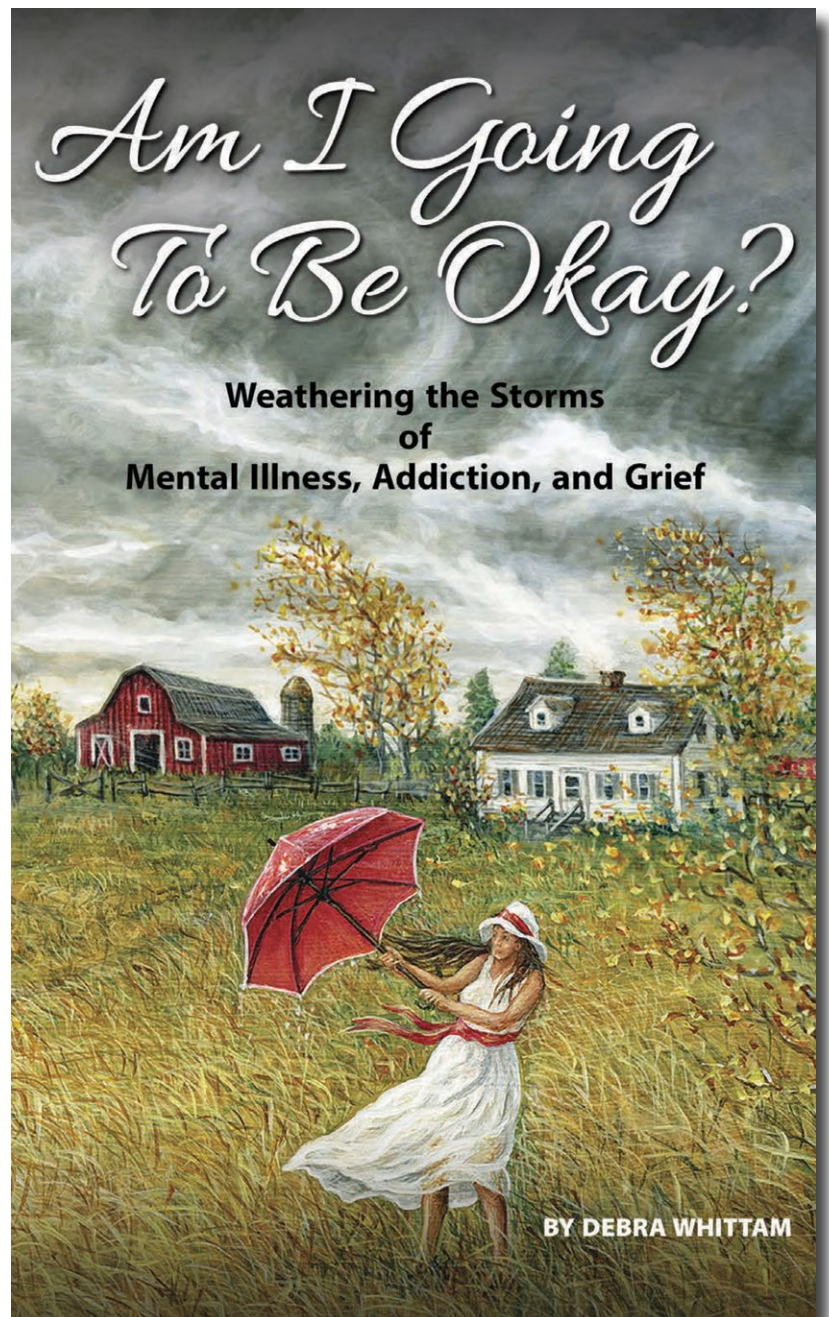
Ms. Whittam approaches her past with the clear-eyed, tough but sensitive objectivity necessary to untangle the shame from the source. She speaks of the people that affected her life so deeply with an understanding of their time and place in American culture; a family not far removed from immigrant roots when men carried their own water, emoted misplaced anger, and with fresh socks and food found on the trail, were confident, unflinching and at that same time tragically failing to the little ones they ignored.

Like many of us, details notwithstanding, Whittam responded by numbing, running and gunning. Alcohol gave her hope, soothed a crushed soul for a time and wrecked her on a train, until finally she had the courage to accept it wasn't working for her anymore. It was time to stop drinking and take inventory and accountability. It was time to accept, forgive and move forward. She healed where she was broken.

It is in the telling of this story that Whittam teaches us the difference between just surviving and surviving well; the importance of shared introspection and a careful eye on the wake we leave behind us in our actions. Her story is a guide to surviving abuse and addiction. It is also about witnessing and dealing with the shrinking faculties of aging parents in the unavoidable circle of life. Finally, she offers a realistic sense of hope, forgiveness and a life we can shake hands with.

# AM I GOING TO BE OKAY?

REVIEW BY ERIC OESTREICH - ARTIST, AUTHOR, AND TEACHER



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- Deborah Clark

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- Mack Jackson Jr.



**STEPHANIE'S**

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REVIEWS**

**With Stephanie Thompson and the Experts**

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**ON THE SHOW, STEPHANIE INTERVIEWS EXPERTS SUCH AS DIRECTORS,  
PRODUCERS, ACTORS, ACTRESSES AND SPECIAL GUESTS WHO  
SHARE INSIGHTS AND HAVE DISCUSSIONS ABOUT FEATURED MOVIES.**

**STEPHANIE THOMPSON, IS A MEMBER OF THE SCREEN ACTOR'S GUILD AND AFTRA. PRODUCED AND DIRECTED BY  
AIMMEE KODACHIAN. FOUNDER OF THE "AIMMEE KODACHIAN AND THE EXPERTS" SHOW AND ONLINE ACADEMY**





# STEPHANIE THOMPSON

## AN INTERVIEW

BY JUDI MOREO

**S**tephanie Thompson is a singer/songwriter, voiceover artist, actress, and host of “Stephanie’s Movie Reviews” on WCOBM TV. Stephanie started singing when she was three years old under the guidance of her father with whom she did multiple musicals and duets in churches and other venues. She majored in music in college getting a degree in Vocal Performance and graduating with Honors. Stephanie became a member of the West Coast Ensemble acting in plays. She also appeared at the LA Connection in their improv shows.

As a classically trained pop singer, she has sung on movie soundtracks, toured in China and had a guest appearance at the Las Vegas Black Music Awards. In addition, she has done over 150 one woman shows in Los Angeles and the surrounding cities. Stephanie teaches music for many different studios and gives lessons to children and adults.

In 2012, she met author and speaker, Aimmee Kodachian, and wrote a song entitled “Rise Above” which is based on a book written by Aimmee, “Tears of Hope.” Stephanie was also the reader for the “Tears of Hope” audio book.

In 2014, Stephanie wrote and recorded several inspirational pop songs including a Christmas song, “The Blessing of Christmas,” which is available in CD. “The Blessing of Christmas” was made into a music video and in a period of only two weeks on YouTube, it had tremendous success. Additionally, Stephanie directed and produced two operas as well as playing the leads.

Recently, Stephanie became the Host for “Stephanie’s Movie Reviews” directed and produced by Aimmee Kodachian on the WCOBM TV network. Today, she continues writing inspirational songs and jingles for businesses. She is a member of the Screen Actor’s Guild/AFTRA and Actor’s Equity. Stephanie is “An Artist Who Sings From the Heart to Touch the Soul!”

I had the opportunity to work with Stephanie when she was co-hosting the Aimmee Kodachian and the Experts show and I was a guest. We had such great fun, I thought you would enjoy getting to know her as well.

**You are an extremely creative person... singer, songwriter. Tell me a bit about that and how you got involved?**

I’ve been singing since I was three years old. I grew up surrounded by very talented musicians. My Mom played the clarinet, piano and sang in choirs when she was younger. My Dad also played the clarinet and is a trained singer. Church was a very big part of my life growing up and there were incredible musicians directing the church choir and singing in it. I have wonderful memories of my dad’s mom, my grandmother, Lily, singing with me as a child and my other grandmother, my mom’s mom, playing piano and singing for children. There was always music in the house whether it was my mom playing the piano or playing music on the stereo. The beauty



of it was that Mom introduced me to all kinds of music... everything from Perry Como to Simon and Garfunkel to Beethoven and we would watch every kind of musical and operetta that would come on TV. It's rare for someone my age to know who Nelson Eddy and Jeanette McDonald are.

Songwriting came later. Dad taught me singing up until I was in high school and then I started studying with a voice teacher. I went to Chapman University and trained in opera and classical music. I received a Bachelor's Degree in Mu-

sic: Vocal Performance Cum Laude with Honors. I sang opera for a number of years as well as singing music I had been exposed to in my childhood. Long story, short, I ended up in Las Vegas in February of 2005. But, it wasn't until 2012, after I met Aimme Kodachian that my songwriting abilities appeared. Aimme wrote her life story in a book called "Tears of Hope" and one day she called me and asked me to help her write a song based on her story. She wanted it to talk about having peace in the world and she was convinced I needed to carry the message with my voice. I was taken

aback because up until that point, I had not considered myself a songwriter, but she seemed very sure so we started writing together and the words just started flowing in a very fluid way. The next morning the melody of the song was in my head. After we completed the "Rise Above" song for Aimme's book, it was like something was unleashed inside of me and I started writing songs. Now, I have a CD of me singing songs I have written.

#### **Where did you grow up?**

I'm originally from Illinois, but we moved when I was three to Southern California and I grew up in Orange County (before it was called the O.C.) in the town of Palencia, right down the road from where the Nixon Library is located.

#### **What entices a person like yourself to become a movie reviewer?**

Besides singing and music, I am in love with movies. Ever since I can remember, on Friday nights my parents took my brother and me to the movies where we could lose ourselves in the wonderment and stories of cinema. As an actor myself, I am very conscious of the kind of work it takes to transform yourself into a character in a way that convinces an audience that you are truly that person. It is fascinating to watch and be a part of that process and as an audience member, I have always enjoyed watching a movie with my family and then discussing it afterwards. It's fun to see how the movie affected each of us differently.

#### **How would you describe your relationship with movies?**

My relationship to movies is love/love. I love movies that transport me to a different place. I enjoy delving into the



Aimmee Kodachian and Stephanie Thompson

deep emotions of the characters and being moved. I know no matter how I'm feeling when I walk into a theater, my emotions and my perception will be transformed by the end of the movie. It's always interesting talking to other

people about a movie that I've seen. When I talk to them, I look forward to seeing their reactions and the emotions they felt.

**What type of movies are your favorite?**

Honestly, I love all movies. Each movie gives me something different, but action movies are the ones that are just pure entertainment for me.

**What is your all-time favorite movie and why?**

My all-time favorite movie hands down is "The Sound of Music." It has everything--- drama, danger, romance, comedy. It is the epitome of movies. And, the singing and beautiful cinematography just make it breathtaking. I love it because of the music, of course, but also the relationships and how they develop between Maria and her affection for the Captain. His change from a stodgy, military man to a man who loves to sing with his children is just magical.

**Who is your favorite actor/actress? Why?**

My favorite actor is Harrison Ford. He does action and dramas so well. There



Stephanie Thompson in the television recording studio



**What type of guests do you have on your show?**

I have directors, actors, actresses, producers and, sometimes, special guests with whom I want to discuss a certain movie.

**Do you review only American made movies or foreign films as well?**

For now, I only review American made movies.

**When and where is your show aired?**

It is aired live on WCOBM in Las Vegas. You can watch all of the episodes 24 hours a day from anywhere in the world on [AKExpertstv.com](http://AKExpertstv.com).

**Who have you not interviewed that you would love to have as guests on your show and why?**

I would want to interview the cast of "The Expendables" movies because they were all my favorites in movies growing up, actors like Sylvester Stallone, Arnold Schwarzenegger, Harrison Ford, Bruce Willis, Wesley Snipes, Mel Gibson and new ones as well. I really like Jason Statham. He would be interesting to interview, don't you think?

**Yes, Stephanie, I certainly do. Thank you. I have enjoyed interviewing you and getting to know you a bit better.**

To learn more about Stephanie or to book her for a singing engagement, visit: [www.AKExpertstv.com](http://www.AKExpertstv.com)

is this one part in "The Fugitive" when the police are drilling him about the murder of his wife and in that scene, I see him totally immersed in the character and it is powerful to watch.

My favorite actress is Helen Mirren. She is phenomenal to watch in dramas as "The Queen," and yet, she is just as beautiful to watch as a killer in the action movies, "Red" and "Red 2." She has a comedic flair, as well.

**How long have you been in the Screen Actor's Guild and what's the benefit from it?**

I've been in what is now SAG/AFTRA since 2001. There are so many benefits. They are too numerous to list but it is very difficult to get into it and very prestigious when you do. One of the many benefits is that when it is time to vote for actors and actresses in SAG films, I receive the films while they are still in the theater so I can vote.





# Do you wish you were more **CREATIVE?**

- Are you feeling stuck, trapped, or overwhelmed?
- Do you have a desire to be more creative?
- Do you want to overcome your doubts and fears about your creative abilities?
- Do you want to write a book, paint pictures, or begin a new creative project of some kind?
- Do you want to start a new business venture? Or, take your current business to a new level?

## If so, you will want to work with a **Creativity Coach!**

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- Creativity Coaches guide, direct, and help you stay focused on your creative work.
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- Creativity Coaches help you build your confidence in your creative abilities.
- Creativity Coaches assist you in reaching higher levels of success.

Whatever your reason for seeking out a coach, Judi Moreo will help you acquire the skills you need to achieve your desired results. Your personally designed program will provide you with tried and true methods of getting from where you are to where you want to be in a positive and supportive atmosphere.

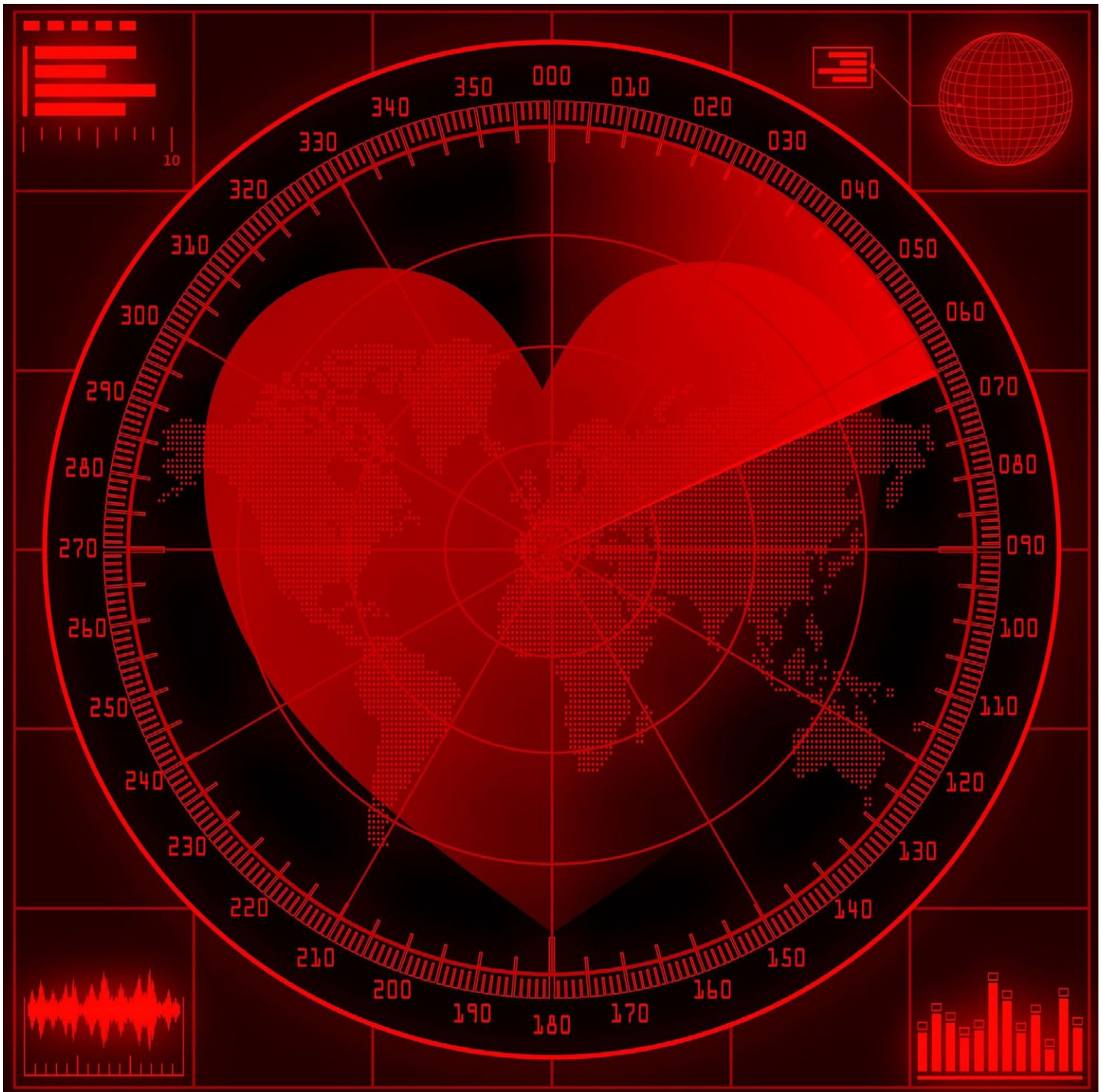
Not only will you receive feedback on your application of the information you are receiving, you will also receive the benefit of Judi's extensive background in leadership, management, image, communication, presentation skills, and service. Her insights and guidance will help you become who you want to be and realize your ambitions and aspirations.

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# WHAT'S ON YOUR RADAR SCREEN?

BY GINA GELDBACH-HALL



**T**

here is a lot of talk out there about the Law of Attraction. In a nutshell, it says that what you put out is what you receive. I like

to think of it as a radar screen. A radar screen is set up to monitor and look for frequencies it is programmed to search and detect. As it encounters these frequencies, it sends back a signal to the source alerting of its detection. We have a similar system within us and our attitude has a huge impact on it.

Have you ever dreamed, researched or obsessed about a big purchase like a car? I have found when looking for my next vehicle I start seeing them everywhere! It's like the manufacturer has amped up production, and sometimes, even in the color I'm thinking about! How do they do that?!? Now, logic prevails. They're probably not making more of them. It's only that my radar sensors

are heightened. My radar is seeking out and searching, then when it spots something I'm tracking, (thinking or giving my attention to) sets off beeps to get me focused on the screen.

Now, if this can be true for a car, could it be true for other thoughts as well? If we go out everyday and say traffic is horrible and drivers are terrible, we are more likely to find evidence to prove our point. See, our thoughts are directed to the frequency we are tuned into. If, we go out looking for rainbows and unicorns, we are likely to see evidence of them as well. If this is true, then why do we focus on those things that make us unhappy? Habit.

It takes practice and awareness to change our thoughts. If you find you are seeking the negative, (and finding evidence of it everywhere) its time to shift! The fastest way to shift your thinking and realign your radar is with

gratitude. Start today putting out the frequency of gratitude and see how your screen lights up! With a replacement of attitude with gratitude, you can start seeing evidence of unicorns (or whatever makes you happy) everywhere. What have you got to lose but a few bad thoughts? Start sending out the signal you want to receive and see how your attitude improves when you start hearing all those great beeps!



#### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Gina Geldbach-Hall is an inspirational speaker, author, life coach, and facilitator with 25 years of emergency services experience from EMT and firefighter to battalion chief. Her book, *Firegal... Rising from the Ashes*, is available on Amazon.

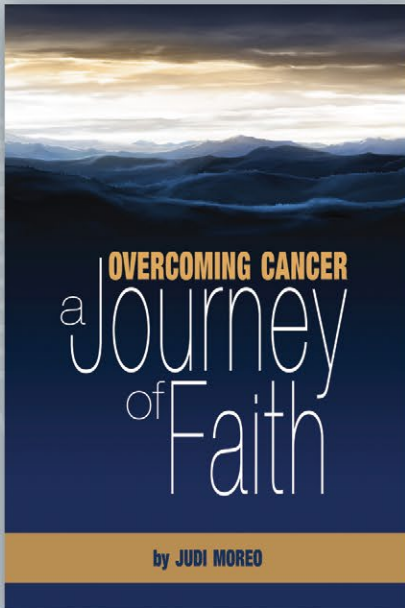
She continues to inspire leadership and service helping others to ignite the flame of empowerment within their lives and work. She is available for coaching and speaking engagements. Visit her website at [FiregalWisdom.com](http://FiregalWisdom.com) for more information.

**“We cannot change our past... we cannot change the fact that people will act in a certain way. We cannot change the inevitable. The only thing we can do is play on the one string we have, and that is our attitude. I am convinced that life is 10% what happens to me and 90% of how I react to it. And so it is with you... we are in charge of our Attitudes.”**

**Charles R. Swindoll**

Award-winning author Judi Moreo knows what it is to travel the journey of cancer and shares that experience in this book.

## Overcoming Cancer: A Journey of Faith



Through her personal story, inspiring quotes and practical suggestions, Judi shows us that cancer and fear are messages to us to make lifestyle changes. This supportive book can help the newly diagnosed cancer patient ask better questions, understand there are alternative and integrated treatments that can work and, most of all, maintain hope.

Even though traveling the cancer road was a rocky and difficult journey, it was also rewarding. The path through cancer requires enormous discipline, work, and change; yet it is filled with excitement, experiences and discoveries that can bring us to a new and better place if we are open to possibilities and focus forward.

"This book may help save your life or that of a loved one. Judi Moreo "gets it." She understands that the question is not "what kind of treatment do I undergo?" but rather "how do I heal myself?" Her personal experience with cancer taught her to recognize that recovery from chronic illness is often a recovery from an unhealthy life in many respects. With humor, grace and courage, she addresses the physical as well as the mental, emotional, psychological and spiritual needs for recovery in an easily accessible, practical way. Whether you are looking for help to reclaim your health from cancer or any other illness, let Judi be your guide."

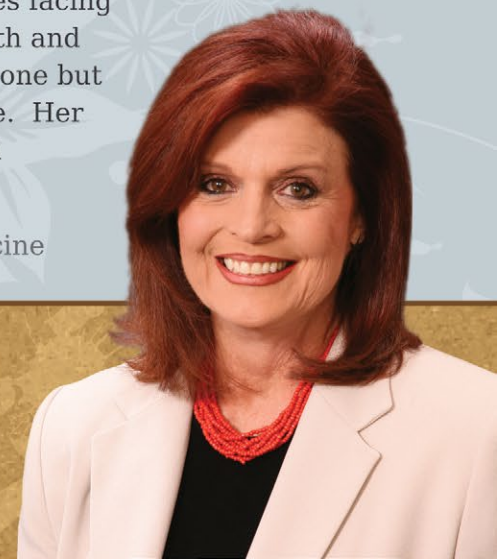
- James Sensnig, N.D., Founding President, American Association of Naturopathic Physicians; Former Dean, National College of Naturopathic Medicine; Founding Dean, College of Naturopathic Medicine, University of Bridgeport, Connecticut; cancer survivor

"This book is a must for those facing cancer and for those who have loved ones facing this fear-filled disease. Judi writes from the heart -- telling her story with truth and emotion. She highlights her course of action, not forcing her opinions on anyone but truly providing options to conventional cancer care that are sound and doable. Her recommendations for nutrition therapy and exercise are quite impressive and fact-based."

- Julie Freeman, MA, RD, LD, Licensed Nutritionist, Integrative Medicine

This Book and Others Now Available Online!

[www.JudiMoreo.com](http://www.JudiMoreo.com)







# LESSONS FROM SCRUFFY

BY SHERYL GREEN

**M**

There's a lot we can learn from our four legged friends, and not just about good sleeping habits. Over

the past few years, I have dedicated much of my free time to rescuing animals in Las Vegas. These furry, little sages have shown me how to be present, loving, and most importantly... grateful.

We hear the term "attitude of gratitude" tossed around like a hacky sack at a Phish concert, but do any of us truly understand what it means? It's easy to be grateful for the good things in life like our homes, our families, and our good health. It's not as easy to be grateful for the painful experiences that we've endured, or the people that have hurt us.

I will never forget the first dog that I physically pulled from danger. I was called to a former job to detangle a homeless dog that had been caught in the bushes. He was scared, hurt, and if Animal Control got to him before I did, he was also a goner. With some assistance and a bag full of treats, we extricated the pup and I drove him

to a vet for treatment. Getting stuck in that bush was probably one of the most frightening and possibly painful experiences of that pup's life.

I looked over at the shaggy, mud covered mess in my passenger seat and found him staring at me. I reached out a hand to reassure him and was met with a single lick. Gratitude. Appreciation. Love. Scruffy, as he was later named, wasn't hung up on where he had come from or what he had been through. He was just plain grateful to be safe.

What would happen if today... right now... you released your story? What if you accepted whatever has happened in your past as passed, and made the conscious decision to be grateful for exactly where you are in your life, and the people (and furry creatures) that helped get you there?

Your experiences have made you who you are today, and you are an amazing person! Instead of harboring resentment for the people that have hurt you, try harboring gratitude for their contribution to who you are. Try this reframing exercise:

1. List 3 events or people in your life that have hurt you. Maybe you were fired from a job, cheated on by your spouse, or abused by a parent.
2. Figure out what you learned, how you grew, or how you actually benefitted from the pain. Did it force you to step out of your comfort zone? Did it teach you to trust your inner voice and save you from potentially worse pain in the future?
3. Offer a 'thank you' for the experience. This could be a prayer or meditation, a letter you have never sent, or a conversation had with your mirror.

It may not come naturally, but instead of being hung up and bitter about where we've been, we can learn to be grateful for where we are in our lives and how we got there. Just like Scruffy.



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

After a devastating divorce, Sheryl Green experienced a deep depression. A self-described "sad--ass," she used volunteerism and a variety of other tools to lift herself out and rediscover the super hero inside. She now teaches others how to go from Sad Ass to Bad Ass.

A passionate animal advocate and rescuer, she approaches life and speaking with humor and heart. She'll make you laugh, cry, and embrace your own super powers.

Find her at [www.sherylgreenspeaks.com](http://www.sherylgreenspeaks.com).



Photo courtesy of NASA

**T**he first time I ever thought of attitude as being different from mood was when I was watching the Apollo Moon Landing on television. I recall the narrator discussing the “attitude” of the spacecraft. Attitude? I thought. Attitude coming from a machine? How can that be?

What he was referring to was the direction the spacecraft was facing and how it was approaching the target. Oh, now I get it! Point of view.

Let’s look at our own attitude that way. What is our angle of view, or the direction from which we are approaching whatever it is we have an attitude toward. For example; if my attitude to-

# ATTITUDE: POLITICS, RELIGION & REALITY

BY JIM CATHCART

ward dogs is that they are “Man’s best friend” and wonderful companions then I will diminish any bad news I hear about dogs and look for some other cause to blame for a dog’s misbehavior. “The owner must have abused him. It’s not the dog’s fault,” I’ll assume. From another view; if I have a fear of dogs then I will see them as a potential threat and dangerous to be around. So I would be more likely to avoid dogs or seek to control them as much as possible. Same dogs, different attitudes toward them. Where did those attitudes come from?

Maybe you were attacked by a dog in your youth, or perhaps your family dog helped save your life.

Now apply this concept to yourself. How do you think about yourself? Are you a fundamentally good person? Are you the kind of person who can be trusted? Are you a good friend? Is your life going to be abundant or limited? Do you have good luck or bad luck? What is your destiny?

Does God like you or when you were

created did He say, "Oops!"? All of these are "attitudes" that you have adopted or rejected. You are in control, you selected the views that you hold. I say you should select the attitudes that will lead you to the outcomes you desire.

You might challenge that by saying, "No! I didn't choose these views. They are based on fact. It wasn't me, it was reality." Not so. Ten people can look at the same reality and see ten different aspects of it. We all encounter the same realities but our "attitude" toward them determines what we conclude from it or what we choose to do about it. That's why there are so many different religions, political parties, and cultures.

For example: this morning I had a discussion with a friend about whether there should be a mandatory "minimum wage" that all employers are compelled to pay their workers.

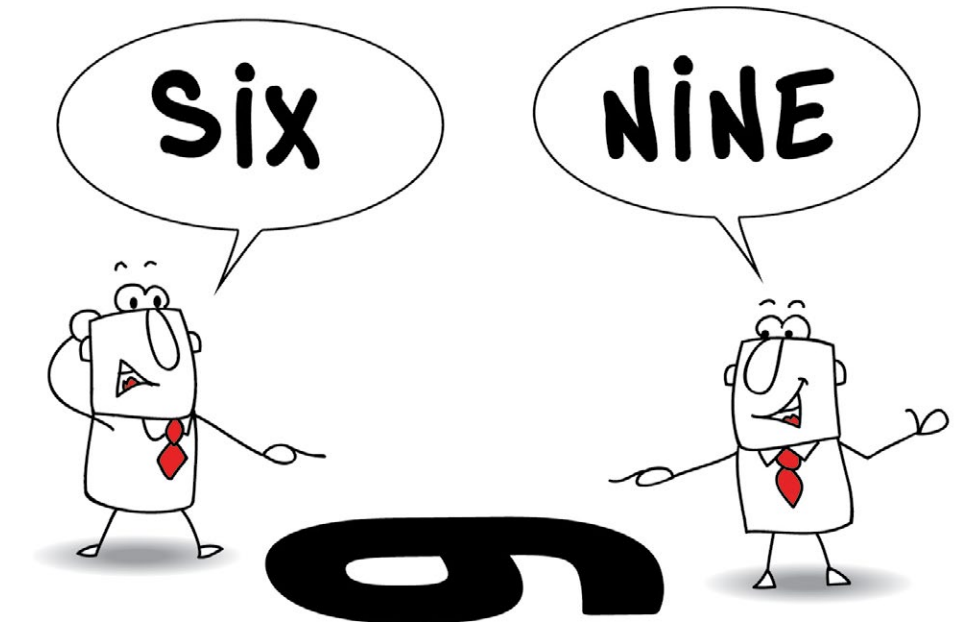
You could easily see the divide between us on our conclusion but not on the realities or facts that we were looking at. I'll describe the conversation and our conclusions. See if you can ascertain our point of view, underlying premise or "attitude" toward the topic.

Don's conclusion: Government mandated minimum wages are valuable and good. Effort should be rewarded at a minimum level. You can't trust the marketplace.

Jim's conclusion: Effort isn't worth anything, only outcomes determine whether efforts were worthwhile and what they were worth. You can't trust the government.

Don: "People can't survive on today's wages."

Jim: "Your statement is too broad to be useful. If you're talking about entry



level jobs, those were never intended to be living wages. Those are simply low paying roles where people can begin to learn a craft and become worth more to their employer and customer."

Don: "States that have a high minimum wage are getting better results than those without them."

Jim: "It is not a high minimum wage alone that is causing those results. It is a combination of factors."

Don: "I don't want to live in a country where those who do well have to live in protected communes because of the pay gap between them and their workers. Henry Ford understood this and paid his employees more so that they could afford to buy the cars they were building."

Jim: "I don't either, and by the way please notice that Henry Ford did this

without the government forcing him to do so."

Don: "The average worker at McDonald's is 29 years old. That's not entry level."

Jim: "McDonald's pays well and provides great training plus a proven system. They don't pay their entry level people what they pay those who are trained and skilled."

Note: Jim agrees that some people can't survive on entry level wages. Don agrees that people should be willing to work hard and pay their dues to learn their craft. Jim agrees that some states get better results and have a higher minimum wage. Jim agrees with the Henry Ford example and the McDonald's average age. The two of us were not disagreeing on the facts. We were debating the conclusion that should be reached.

Now, no matter which side of this debate you like, let's look at the underlying attitude that perpetuates this discussion. What does Don believe about the main topic? Wait, what is the main topic here? I believe it is whether government should mandate pay levels. Don trusts government more than unregulated business owners and Jim sees government as inefficient and unreliable. Jim's faith is in the overall effectiveness of the free market system in a free society and Don doubts that premise. So, as long as they debate they will still end up on opposite sides. In fact, this conversation will never change until there is a change of attitude toward what government should do in society. How does this apply to you? Forget about the minimum wage debate and look at the effect that your attitudes have on you.

We've talked about politics so now let's talk about religion. Here are three prevailing attitudes: There is a loving God, There is an angry God, There is no God.

If God exists and loves His creations then we conclude that life matters and there is meaning to our existence. If God exists and demands submission from His creations then the privilege of life depends on our compliance with His laws. If there is no God then life is about survival of the fittest and we'd better make the most of this one shot at our existence.

Imagine how many debates we could generate from just those three attitudes. By the way, each of these attitudes looks

at the same realities but reaches different conclusions.

Is the attitude you hold a point of view that you selected or just one that you were taught? At some point you need to come to your own conclusion as to which is most true.

How about this one: There is Hope vs It's no use trying. That's the Optimist/Pessimist attitude.

An optimist assumes there is a way. Life is abundant and somewhere there is a solution. This abundance mindset assumes that more possibilities exist and we should explore them.

A pessimist assumes that what you can see is what you get. It's not worth trying again because it wouldn't work anyway. This is based in a scarcity mindset: there's only so much of everything and once it's gone, it's gone forever. Then there are the self-proclaimed "realists". They say, "There is no way and I can prove it!" This is clearly a pessimist just trying to justify his or her conclusion.

As I've said, we all see the same realities but we don't reach the same conclusions because our attitudes filter what we see or notice in ways that justify our point of view. We must learn to become objective and then to select the attitudes that will serve us well.

This discussion can go on forever, find a topic around which there is controversy and then explore the attitudes behind

it. The more you can see these connections the more compassionate and understanding you can be. You will also be more free to choose the attitude that works best for the way you want to live your own life.

When you take time to reflect on your discussions and observe your feelings objectively then you can learn to identify your underlying attitudes. If you find yourself disliking someone, ask yourself: Why do I dislike him or her? What is it; their behavior, their looks, their position on a topic, or what? Learn to see your own attitudes and then identify the roots of those points of view. The more you learn to connect your feelings and conclusions to the underlying assumptions and attitudes the more you will be in control of your own life.



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jim Cathcart is the author of 16 books, a Hall of Fame professional speaker and the creator of over 100 brief video lessons on [Thrive15.com/acorn](http://Thrive15.com/acorn). His brief TEDx talk on How To Believe in Yourself now has over 460,000 views. View it for free at: [www.choicesonlinemedia.com/believe](http://www.choicesonlinemedia.com/believe)

**The more you learn to connect your feelings and conclusions to the underlying assumptions and attitudes the more you will be in control of your own life.**



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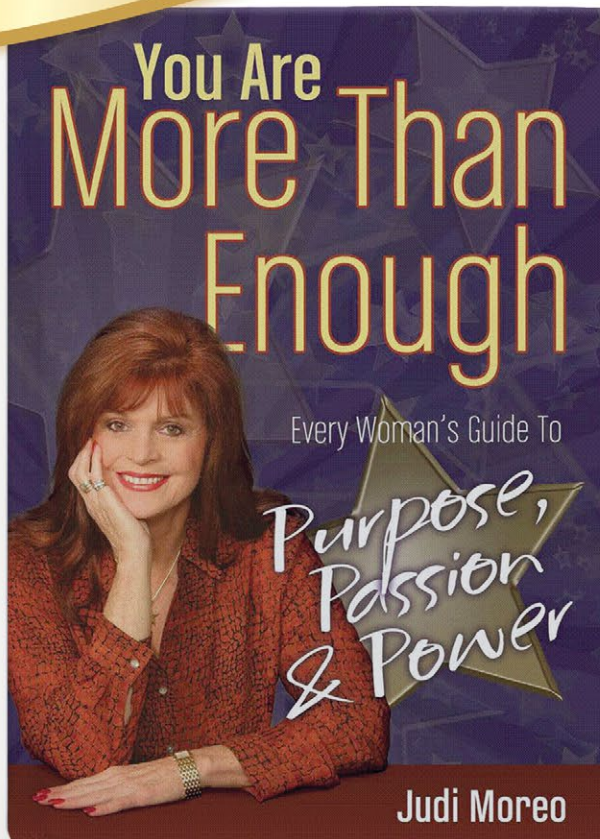
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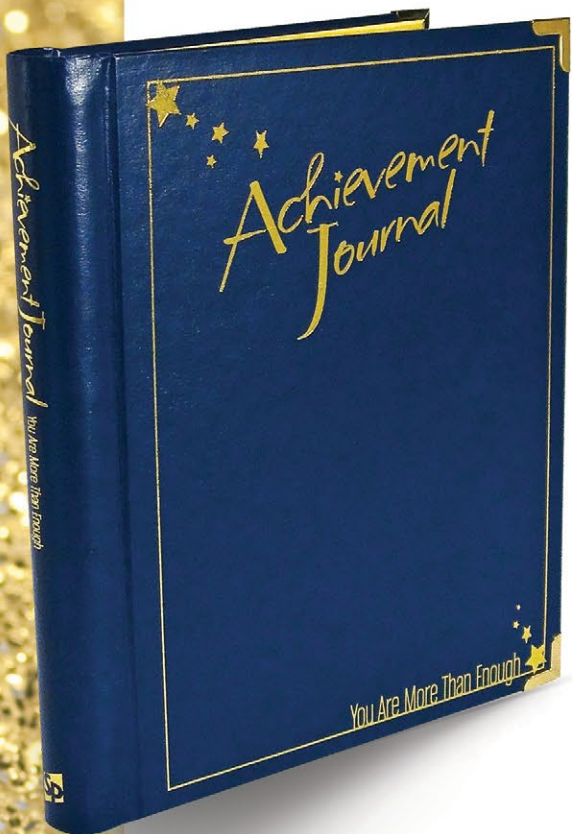
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# SMILE WHEN YOU YELL AT ME!

BY PETER SHANKLAND



k. I am just going to start by stating the not always obvious:

*Our attitude is not easily separated from our accompanying body posture and gestures. They co-exist in an unconscious, interconnected swirl that provides depth and meaning to our words.*

This being my truth, the questions become, a) what is attitude? b) how is it inseparable from our physical bodies? And, c) how can we best align A and B?

The standard, Webster's dictionary definition of attitude is: (n) "a settled

way of thinking or feeling about someone or something, typically one that is reflected in a person's behavior (my emphasis.)"

"A settled way of thinking," addresses the mental aspect of our attitude while "reflected in a person's behaviors" connects it to the body – our gestures and posture. Examples of this truth abound. Think about the "poker face" card player. Her/his conscious bodily control serves to mask an attitude of victory or concern based on the potential of a given hand. Or, cross your arms tightly across your chest while telling someone that you love them; how credible will your words be to the listener? Or, exude a good attitude when feeling physically weak.

Good luck with that. Or, as my title states: Smile when you yell at me. It is virtually impossible. A smile is inherently at odds with the anger and attitude that fuels yelling...for a smile exudes positivity. Similarly, parents must confront this dichotomy when disciplining children. Inside, there is unconditional love, while outwardly there must be firm gestures and a posture that sends a message of displeasure and disappointment.

Having established this mind/body link between attitude and our physicality, what can we do to best align them? My answer: awareness of breath. In Western cultures, we commonly tell an agitated person to "take a deep breath and slowly count to ten." In eastern traditions, the mind/ body link has long been encouraged through yogic or meditative practices.

To foster this connection, start slowly in creating awareness. If you regularly exercise, be conscious of exhaling on the exertion, and inhaling on the rebound. If you take yoga, hopefully, you already have an instructor who emphasizes this critical component throughout your sessions. Not doing so misses the primary purpose of a yoga practice. Or, if you find yourself agitated, pause and give primary focus to your breath as you breathe through your diaphragm. You will notice a calm wash over your mind, and your body will relax – the two naturally align.

Also, if you have a desk job, gain a greater sensibility to your posture. Ensure that you sit upright with a gentle spinal curve and that your chair and computer are ergonomically





friendly. For every inch our head juts forward beyond our shoulders, we place an extra eight pounds of pressure on the neck area. And when upright, remember that gravity has a tremendous role in pulling our bodies down. Make sure you stand like your mother always said, “Chin up and shoulders back. Relax.”

With these few simple activities, you will cultivate a greater mind/body awareness. In doing so, you will improve your attitude. If you disagree and are a yeller, please smile when you do it. Peace



### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Peter Shankland currently resides in Las Vegas, NV where he teaches massage therapy, and practices various complementary disciplines. See: [www.peace.massagetherapy.com](http://www.peace.massagetherapy.com) for more information.



“Our life is what our thoughts make it.”

Marcus Aurelius

# THE “REAL GIFT”

BY DELORES RAMSEY MCLAUGHLIN

**W**hen you change the way you think, you change the way you live. Your attitude is determined by your thoughts. Your attitude about family, friends, work, yourself and situations can affect how you perceive others and self. If negative, it can interfere with having positive relationships.

What people think or say about us is important to most of us and can affect the way we react to the comment. You determine how you feel about yourself which is not based on anyone else’s opinion. Eleanor Roosevelt said, “No one can make you feel inferior without your permission.”

A positive attitude is from the inside out. In other words, what goes on within us is a major factor in how we react through our thoughts and behavior. When you have a positive attitude, it is a gift not only for yourself but for others to experience. The gift wrapping on the outside of a gift box is beautiful but the real gift is inside. When you change the way you think to be mainly positive, you change the way you live which encourages self-worth, knowing yourself and caring for others.

Your thoughts are powerful tools and if used positively can make a difference in how others react or respond to you. Are you demonstrating a positive attitude at work? Home? Building relationships?

Your relationships are formulated by your thoughts. Are you driving others away with mean and uncaring thoughts? Negative or positive reactions?

You can improve your life by practicing the following strategies to promote positive thinking:

- Less judgment and more encouragement of others.
- Be willing to actively listen to others with an intent to gain knowledge.
- Recognize and make every person feel respected and accepted.
- Look closely at what is on the inside of you to encourage others around



- you to speak positive thoughts.
- Practice positive thoughts.

We can choose to have a negative or positive attitude. It is entirely “your” individual choice. Choosing positive encourages self-worth and belief in yourself.

Having a positive attitude encourages momentum not determined by circumstances and that is your “real gift.”



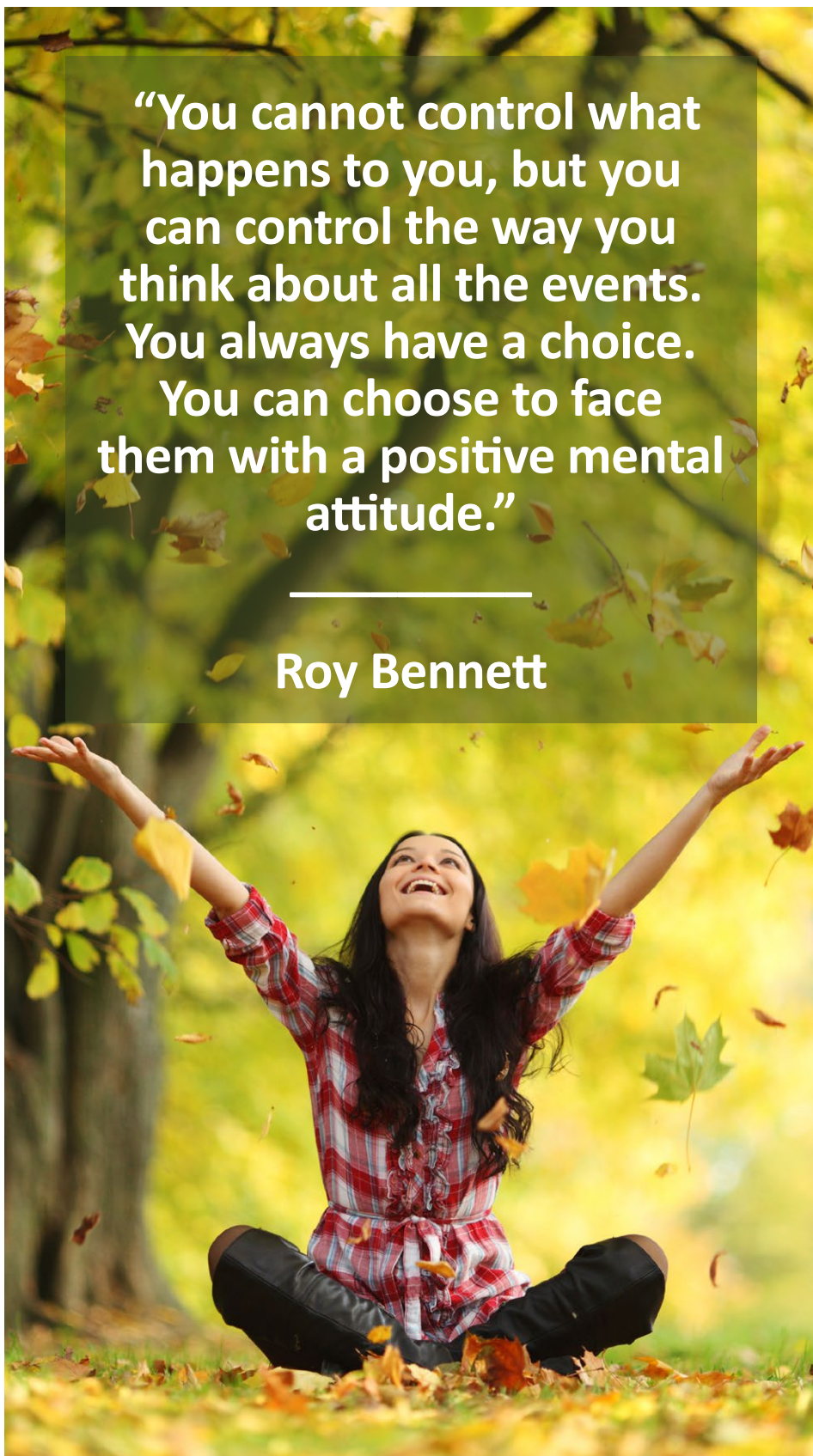
### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Delores Ramsey McLaughlin is a motivational speaker who can inspire audiences from corporate to faith based. She has a gift of making the most serious topics become less intimidating and more accepting. The founder & executive director of “All Out Communication” and “Freedom-N-Christ Ministries,” she teaches effective leadership skills, conflict management, strategies to successfully pursue your dreams and how to bridge gaps between cultural and religious differences.

Delores may be contacted at: Post Box 8205, Phoenix, Arizona 85066 or [nthaeyez@cox.net](mailto:nthaeyez@cox.net)

**“You cannot control what happens to you, but you can control the way you think about all the events. You always have a choice. You can choose to face them with a positive mental attitude.”**

**Roy Bennett**



# THE FREEWAY TO SUCCESS

BY AIMMEE KODACHIAN

“

*A good attitude is the vehicle for a smooth ride along the freeway to success.”*

Our minds have such power. The subconscious part of our minds doesn't know the difference between real and imagined, so it will say yes to whatever we tell it. If we tell it, we are intelligent, confident and happy; it will say "Yes" and help us decide on the road that will take us to the successful action. If we tell it that we are dumb, stupid, and scared, it will also say "Yes" and take us on the road to nowhere.

We can each control the direction of our mind by the road we tell it to take. Our attitude determines where we go in life. We can take control of our thinking and shift our perspective.

You may be asking yourself, "What has attitude got to do with taking control of my success? And what is this thing called attitude anyway?"

Think about it this way: You are enjoying a beautiful sunny day and it starts to rain. You can either think about how this rain is ruining your plans and messing up your day or you can shift your perspective and think how wonderful it is to have the rain supplying the water we need for our lives. Without water, nothing would live.

It is important to process our thoughts so they move us forward in life, not hold



us back. If we maintain a positive focus toward what we want, we won't have time to get sidetracked by things and circumstances we don't want.

You CAN do whatever it is you want to do. Your attitude is what either sells you on doing it or talks you out of it. When you have an attitude of success, then you make a plan, take the steps, and achieve it.

The problem for many of us today is we don't take the time to do an attitude check each time we're faced with a problem and it's made worse by the increase of negativity in our lives. Sometimes we let our ego get in the way of maintaining a positive attitude. It is

my belief that you can look at ego in an unhealthy way and believe it means:

- Eliminating
- Great
- Opportunities

Or you can make one small change, look at it in a healthy way, and have it mean:

- Embracing
- Great
- Opportunities

One word different. A small change. Small changes in attitude can make a big difference.

The key to maintaining a good attitude is to constantly surround ourselves with positive people as well as with resources

from which we can learn and grow. A positive attitude can be internalized by constant reinforcement through reading positive books, listening to positive audio learning materials, and attending lectures or seminars. Then when we are faced with a problem, we are more apt to respond to our next challenge in a positive manner instinctively.

This is why I started my online academy, AK and the Experts, bringing you positive programming at a price that is easily affordable. For less than the price of two cups of gourmet coffee per month, you have access to training programs, lectures, speeches, and interviews with some of the top motivational experts in the world. You can access it online 24 hours a day.

You see, we are in charge of our own thinking and we control our thinking by what we put into our minds. We are the

only ones who can choose our attitudes and the principles that we want to live by. Fill your life with positive people and your mind with positive thoughts and you will free yourself from taking the road of negative thoughts that leads to unhappy days! Instead, You will be on the freeway to success.

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Aimsee Kodachian is an author, speaker, life coach, founder and director of the "Aimsee Kodachian and the Experts" on-line TV show and Academy where she brings some of the top experts in the world to help you transform your business and personal life. She is the author of "Tears of Hope," her true life story of living through the Lebanese Civil War and overcoming many obstacles to becoming a successful entrepreneur.

Write Aimsee at: [ak@akexperts.com](mailto:ak@akexperts.com)



**“Man’s rise or fall, success or failure, happiness or unhappiness depends on his attitude ... a man’s attitude will create the situation he imagines.”**

**James Lane Allen**

**“It isn’t what you have or  
who you are or where you are  
or what you are doing that  
makes you happy or unhappy.  
It is what you think about it.”**

---

**Dale Carnegie**





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—Judi Moreo, author, *You Are More Than Enough*

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Marlene Livingston Curry is available for lectures and workshops based on her book *Resilient Survivor*.

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# LOOK PAST FIRST IMPRESSIONS

BY SUE BRACKSIECK

**I**t was the fall of 1981, and I was just beginning to build my career as a motivational speaker. I was ensconced in coach class, dreaming of the day when I would be famous enough to be flown first class. Instead of the normal pre-flight speech, I heard the words that started my adrenaline pumping. “This flight has been cancelled.” *(The little voice inside my head said: No, I can’t miss this engagement. The national director will be in the audience, and I want the contract for all the regional conferences.)* The flight attendant assured us “You will be wait-listed alphabetically on other flights to Cleveland throughout the day. There are only 4 seats available on the next flight leaving in 45 minutes, but we have seats to accommodate the rest of you late this afternoon and tonight.” *(The little voice inside my head: I am a “B”, but what are the chances there are only 3 people alphabetically ahead of me! Flights late this afternoon won’t work for me.)*

As soon as I departed the plane, I called my travel agent to book the next seat on any airline. Luckily, there was one at 2:15 p.m. which would get me to my destination barely in time for my keynote. I would have to be the first person off the plane, race through the airport, bypass my luggage, hail a cab, offer a healthy bribe to the driver to speed, run through the hotel to



the ballroom, forget about changing clothes or fixing my hair or freshening my makeup, to arrive, if I’m lucky, just as they finish my introduction. I really needed to be one of the four names called for the 11:00 a.m. flight.

Sitting in a hard plastic boarding area chair, I prayed feverishly to hear my name called. *(The little voice inside my head: What am I going to do? I know I am guaranteed a seat at 2:15 p.m. but that will allow me no time to scope out the ballroom, get a feel for the stage, test the sound system, practice my speech while adjusting the range of my gestures and facial expressions to fit the size of*

*the room. I need this prep to make me feel more confident. I’ll have to speak in my traveling clothes. My hair is flat. My makeup kit is in my checked luggage. My client will never recommend me to anyone else. The national director will not be impressed. I will never work again! Please, please, please let my name be called for the 11:00 a.m. flight so I have time to get myself prepared!)*

One can focus intensively only for so long, and then the mind must take a break. My eyes drifted around the boarding area, and I made eye contact with a man across the aisle. *(The little voice inside my head: Oh, no! Okay, smile*



- because Momma taught you to be polite - and then immediately drop your eyes.) I smiled and then immediately dropped my eyes, but he spoke to me. *(The little voice inside my head: Momma taught you to be polite. It's okay just to acknowledge the greeting and no more.)*

"Hi," I said, and then my eyes focused back down on the carpet at my feet, and my mind began praying...really praying because I did not want to converse with this man. I didn't think of myself as a snob, but his clothes were outlandish! He had on butternut-colored cowboy boots, *(I think that is part of the corral encrusted on the edges.)*, blue plaid double-knit pants *(Those are so loud that even Daddy wouldn't wear them on the golf course.)*, a white western shirt with pearl snaps and large engraved sterling silver collar tips *(His collar must weigh five pounds.)*, a pale aqua Members Only jacket that clashed with the blues in his pants *(How can there be that many shades of blue!)*, a stained straw cowboy hat *(That hat has been under his boots more than once.)*, a black onyx bolo tie, and a huge *(On his skinny frame, it looks like it covers him from Adam's apple to knees)* turquoise inlay of a semi-truck on his belt buckle.

*(The little voice inside my head: Oh, no! He's getting up and coming over to sit beside me. God, in addition to Sunday morning church, I will start going to Wednesday night Prayer Meeting.)*

He said, "Mind if I sit here?"

I said, "No." *(Fifty seats in a packed waiting area and the one next to me is open! What are the odds?)*

He introduced himself as Jack from Colorado and went on to tell me about his life as I nodded, half listening *(because Momma taught me to be*

*polite)*, but not looking at him, and bargaining while I prayed *(I will also go to Thursday morning Christian Women's Coffee Klatch. God, just let me be one of the four!)* to hear my name called over the speaker system. *(I am a nice person. Momma says, "If you can't say anything nice, then don't say anything at all." I will just sit here and not say anything.)*

*(What is wrong with me? I can look at him and be pleasant. Oh, no, I can't.)*

It wasn't really the clothes. It was his teeth. I have an aversion to noticeably large cavities, especially if they are crusted with orange fuzz. He did not

have one clean tooth. Every time he opened his mouth there was an odious smell and I imagined I could see a brownish fog.

He said he had flown into town for a relative's funeral. *(Make the appropriate facial expressions for sadness.)* His little brother had been late getting him to the airport at 6:00 a.m. and he had missed his return flight. *(Little brothers can be such a pain; I would like to punch, I mean pinch, his brother. Punching is not allowed in my family.)* He had been on standby all morning. *(Maybe I could afford to buy him a ticket on another airline so he would go to another waiting*



area.) He had missed breakfast and had no money to get anything to eat. (*I could definitely give him money for a snack so he'd leave the area.*) He wished he had his truck because he loved driving. (*I wish you were in your truck, too, so you'd be somewhere else.*) He described how he drove various loads across the country, droning on and on about the pros and cons of different regions.

And then I half-heard him say something about handicapped kids. The little voice inside my head vanished as my focus totally zeroed in on him. I no longer saw any part of the waiting area, people walking around. I just saw his face, his eyes and their soft expression. I no longer smelled his breath or saw his teeth. I no longer heard any airport sounds; just the pleasure and joy in his voice as he regaled me with stories about his off-time spent with the handicapped and mentally challenged patients who lived in the institution that bordered his property. He shared story after story describing not only what he did for and with them, but also how just doing what others might see as mundane daily tasks, enriched his

life. He had no close family, spent long hours alone on the road, and had very few close friends. His off-time activities with the patients were what gave him a sense of acceptance and self-worth.

I am blessed with three generations of handicapped family members. My grandmother was crippled by polio at the age of five and walked with a pronounced limp, my cousin had cerebral palsy, and my beautiful niece has Spinal Muscular Atrophy Type I. I loved them so much I rarely thought of them being handicapped, and I was never embarrassed to be seen with them.

I don't know if my name was called for the 11:00 a.m. flight. I invited Jack to join me for lunch as I shared with him my funny family stories. I arrived breathlessly for my keynote in my rumpled slack suit, flat hair, and very little makeup fifteen minutes late. I didn't give my practiced speech; instead, I related the events of the morning. I really don't remember what I said or how I said it. I received my first standing ovation, and afterwards, I spent at least

two hours signing conference programs and taking pictures with participants. The national director not only hired me for the regional conference but also for the yearly training of the national officers.

I almost missed meeting this jewel of a man and the lesson that "It is never too late ... to look past first impressions."



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Sue Bracksieck is the CEO of P.R.O.G.R.A.M.s, and has provided management skills and leadership training around the globe for business, government, and educational youth organizations for over twenty-five years.

SueB's life motto is "*Aerodynamically, the bumblebee defies the laws of science...it flies.* The impossible is Possible! *It's only your thinking that makes it seem impossible!*"

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# Beauty & the Feast

dining with Sandra



## THANKSGIVING *INTIME*

BY S. L. GORE

Who doesn't get a nostalgic twinge when remembering grand Thanksgiving feasts where dozens of side dishes, created by a bevy of aunts, weighed down big tables set for twenty? Even if you never actually experienced the excitement of sitting at the kids' table with rambunctious cousins, you've seen enough movies that portray the madness and merriness to recognize a real Thanksgiving. But truth is, in today's world, our Thanksgivings tend to be smaller, more intimate affairs. More often than not, we celebrate with friends.

**O** chose a humble, earthy table setting for a Thanksgiving intime. On the table sits an oblong baking dish filled with the best yams you will ever taste. Guaranteed. Discovered so many years ago in the Love's United Methodist Church cookbook from Walkertown, North Carolina, this dish named "Sweet Potato Delight" has never failed to cause a sensation.

Served in the old fashioned champagne coupes is a chilled French rosé champagne. My favorite is Nicolas Feuillatte Brut Rosé.

In my family, we stuff the turkey with cornbread oyster dressing and serve with potatoes processed through a food mill and fluffed with hot milk and melted butter (mousse de pomme de terre), rich giblet gravy made with cream and laced with the minced liver, and homemade cranberry sauce. And of course, the sweet potato delight topped with pecans, coconut and brown sugar. Use yellow yams, not white, for



A small, intimate gathering at Thanksgiving merits a cozy, rustic theme with fall colors, holiday placemats, large plates and a welcome drink of Nicolas Feuillatte Brut Rosé served in an old-fashioned coupe.



I like to stuff my turkey with a cornbread dressing chock full of celery, green onions, fresh herbs, sautéed mushrooms, halved water chestnuts (canned) and a generous serving of oysters you buy in the jar.

best results. See the photo of actual cookbook page for full recipe.

The pièce de résistance is my family pumpkin pie, perfectly spiced and light as air. A big dollop of homemade whipped crème is the crowning glory.

(CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE)

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Born with wanderlust, forever living in a fantasy world, S.L. Gore escaped the prairies of Kansas and followed the yellow brick road on an odyssey that took her around the world. Love of history, languages, mysticism, food, shopping and romance helped create her romantic time travel thrillers of the Isis Trilogy. Her Sex and the Zen of Shopping is a self-help for the spirit and how-to for the practical. Joyously married, she and her Viking husband live in Coastal California.

GoreNovels@gmail.com  
SLGore.com

★ → SWEET POTATO DELIGHT

3 c. mashed sweet potatoes	1/2 tsp. salt
1/2 stick margarine (use less)	1/2 c. milk
1 c. sugar (use less 1/2)	1 tsp. vanilla
	2 eggs (3 if double recipe)

Mix well the potatoes, butter, sugar and salt. Add milk, vanilla and eggs. Beat well. Pour into casserole dish (10 or 12 inches). Cover with the following topping:

1 c. brown sugar	3/4-1 c. coconut
1/3 c. flour	1 c. broken nuts USE MORE
3/4 stick margarine	

Bake at 350° for 30-35 minutes.  
Billie Bowman

*if you double - do not double margarine or sugar  
use 3 eggs only*

The actual recipe with my personal notes for a Southern sweet potato dish that is ambrosia for the gods on Mt. Olympus. Use yellow yams, not white, for best results. Thank you, the Ladies Auxiliary of Love's United Methodist Church, Walkertown NC.

## PRAIRIE PUMPKIN PIE

### PIE CRUST:

(makes 2 x 10" pie shells)

- Crisco, 1 cup
- Flour, 2 cups
- Salt, 1 tsp
- Water, 1/3 c

OR

- Frozen pie crust, Trader Joe's or Whole Foods. (Way easier and no one has ever complained!)

### FILLING:

(Filling for one pie)

- pumpkin, plain not spiced, 1½ cup (approx 1 can)
- sugar, granulated, ¾ cup
- salt, ½ tsp
- cinnamon, ground, 1¼ tsp
- ginger, ground, 1 tsp
- nutmeg, ground, ½ tsp
- cloves, ground, ½ tsp
- eggs, 3 whole
- milk, 1¼ cup
- whipping cream, ¾ cup (can substitute 6 oz can condensed milk)

Note: I always use Penzey's spices which are pungent and fresh. (penzeys.com) If you use spices from the grocery store, which tend to be stale, you might want to bump up the amounts by a bit.

### ASSEMBLY:

1. Mix pumpkin, sugar and salt thoroughly in large bowl.
2. Add spices to mixture.
3. Beat eggs slightly in small bowl.
4. Add eggs to pumpkin mixture.
5. Blend in milk and unwhipped heavy cream.
6. Pour mixture into unbaked pie shell.
7. Bake 15 min @ 400F.



This is a treasured family secret passed down through several generations. I promise it's the best pumpkin pie you will ever taste.

8. Reduce oven to 350F and continue baking 35 minutes. (This should keep crust from burning.)

### THE SECRET:

The pie filling is done when an inserted toothpick is withdrawn "clean." The custard will set more once it cools. If your oven is slow, don't be afraid to cook a little longer. Note: Cooking too fast will cause the pie custard to split, although some splitting is sometimes unavoidable.

If crust starts to darken too much too soon, cover crust only with strips of aluminum foil.

### HOMEMADE WHIPPED CRÈME:

- One pint heavy whipping cream
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 1 Tbsp white or powdered sugar (more if you like it sweeter)

Whip at medium speed until thick. Should stand slightly.

Do NOT overbeat as crème will turn to butter.

If you think the crème got a little stiff, stir briskly and it will soften.

**“Some people dance with singing rain; some  
people get wet with misery and pain.”**

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**Debasish Mridha**





CHOICES MAGAZINE  
AUTUMN ISSUE 2016

# A FINAL NOTE FROM JUDI MOREO

We've come to the end of yet another year! How was it? Did you do what you wanted? Did you accomplish your goals? Did you enjoy it? Or, were you stressed to the max?

Be aware that your life is what you make it. You make the choices as to what you do with each of your days. If you look back over this year and determine it wasn't quite the way you wanted it to be or you didn't do the things you wanted to do, then make up your mind right now to make your next year different. What do you have to do to make next year, the best year you have ever had.

First, get out your Achievement Journal and answer those questions in the front. They will help you get clarity on what it is you really want

out of life. Then start cutting out the pictures of what you want and pasting them on the Vision pages under the eight different stress areas of your life: career; financial; relationships; health; spiritual; education; community; and recreation. Look at these pictures every day. Doing this will keep you future focused toward the achievement of your goals and dreams.

Each day, write in your journal one thing you did that day towards the achievement of your goals. Just think, if you do 365 things this year toward your goal achievement, you most certainly will get what you want. Once you have the momentum, nothing can stop you. Every step you take will bring you closer to the realization of your dreams. And each day, when you write down what you achieved, peel off one of those gold

stars in the back and reward yourself by sticking it right beside your statement of accomplishment.

Your journal will provide you with a record of your strengths and successes as well as an acknowledgement of the characteristics, values, talents, people, and things for which you are grateful.

Success is a conscious choice. Make the choice to make a habit of the achievement of your goals and you will guarantee that next year is your best year ever!

You are more than enough,



*Judi*