

When Prince Charming Isn't Coming

"Do one thing every day that scares you."

~ Eleanor Roosevelt

What was that Tom Petty song—the line that every so often creeps into my mind? Ah yes. Here it is. "She was an American girl raised on promises." A very catchy tune. Loved that! And it's so true, we as women are raised on promises. And we have expectations as to how things are going to happen—they're just going to line up. I mean, why not? Right? They did for our mothers and our friends. Or at least it seemed that way—well, for some of our friends.

But we were right in there. Expecting life to just happen and roll out.

And everything will line up. Everything always looks good from the outside looking into someone else's life.

My life was pretty much like that, I was the oldest of four children, and as the oldest I was expected to set the pace, follow the rules, do as my parents told me. I wasn't so good in that department. My father used to say, "If I had a different daughter, I'd have a different son." As the oldest I was responsible for everything my three siblings did and didn't do. After a while they became "you people" and later on just referring to them as plain "them." It's tough to be twelve years old and be put in charge!

Funny, I was in charge as far back as I can remember. I was a natural at it, but it certainly didn't feel that way as a child growing up.

OK. So let's fast forward this.

The deal was I was supposed to be taken care of, loved, and cherished for all eternity. Some wonderful man was supposed to show up, and spread his cape on the ground for me and we would live happily ever after.

I intentionally waited until I was thirty-six years old to get married so I'd get it right. I had it all planned as I watched my friends get married one by one, disappear into marriage, have children, and become someone neither they nor I no longer recognized. And then the marriage would end, being left with no plan for their financial future, their security, no knowledge, or real skill in the area of money. How were they supposed to make their life work?

I strategized being older and wiser,—I'll have an everlasting marriage, be taken care of, and finally be happy. I got this! And exhale!

No. Wrong.

After sixteen years of marriage and no longer able to recognize who that person was in the mirror, I called it.

And so began my journey.

The Heroes Journey - Finding Your Truth

Things happen in life that you can't plan for, it's the unimaginable happening. And when it happens —that life turning event— everything changes. It could be a divorce, death, bankruptcy, or some event which cuts you to the core, and your world gets upended. For me, it was divorce.

My divorce ripped me to my core, and I was determined to have my life turn out and be happy. Although I still loved my husband, the resentment and constant compromising over the years, took its toll. I knew at year ten when our friends were renewing their vows, when I thought to myself, “Would I marry him again and say ‘yes?’” I knew then what the answer was, and wasn't ready or willing to face my truth. Instead I told myself "things will change"—for another five years! It took everything I had inside me one night to tell my husband that I couldn't do this anymore. It took many years before I could be in the place where the pain had finally outweighed the fear.

My life changed in those few moments it took to express what had been there for years. It felt as though I was in the *Harry Potter* movie where the stairs realigned, changing the look and outcome of everything. And yes it was terrifying. And exhilarating! I had finally put myself first and stepped outside my marriage. Toto, we're not in Kansas anymore!

Healing Your Heart - You Can't Do This Alone

Amazingly, the courage it took to free myself drew other women to me, asking me how I did it. Out of that conversation, my coaching business, *Venus in Transit*, was born! That was truly a gift because it changed the course of my career. I had studied accounting and business in college and worked my way up the ladder to Controller and later CFO. After some mergers and acquisitions, I left the concept of working for someone behind me and created my own accounting business for small business owners and entrepreneurs.

That was 1999. Things were good until my divorce hit and my business income took a deep dive. I quickly surrounded myself with positive, supportive friends and gave

limited face time to anyone, including my mother, who was negative and all about the doom and gloom of being a middle-aged divorced woman.

I instinctively said yes when a dear friend had a position open in her Montessori School for a part-time art teacher. I had studied art and the humanities before switching to accounting and had continued painting and still paint today. This was something that fed my soul, as I was teaching preschoolers, age three to five. It was the best time in my life going through my divorce. These loving little beings would sit at my art table with its tiny chairs and low table especially suited for little tots. The table was covered with colored paper, paints, glue, macaroni, feathers, wooden sticks, and paper bags—all the accoutrements of creativity. And when the classroom became too overwhelming and they were having a "meltdown" they would come to me for some much needed TLC. I remember one little boy sitting next to me and leaning against me for comfort and a hug, and my leaning back to him giving him what he needed. Every day as I arrived, I was greeted by the children running up to me and holding onto my coat looking up at me and smiling. The one who was really having the meltdown here was me.

It was those moments that allowed my heart to rest, regain my inner compass, and feel my resilience take hold.

Financial Success Is a Rite Of Passage into Your Power

Even though I was an accountant and CEO of my own business, taking care of entrepreneurs and small business owners in their businesses, I was a mess when it came to taking care of me, financially. Even though I know numbers, math, statistics, finance, and spreadsheets!

I worked my way up to CEO of my own business, yes, but it meant nothing! It seemed I could take care of three siblings (remember "them?"), accounting clients of all kinds and all types of businesses, figure out how to increase their income and reduce their expenses, and create different streams of income for them. But when it came to me, I blanked out and my eyes rolled to the back of my head.

How could this be? I was indeed a woman after all. Women and money make strange partners.

It came down to the hard wiring. Women take care of everyone and themselves last, if at all. We are capable and giving to the end and it's a hard sell to tell a woman to rest and let others help her. Sometimes you have to fail so you can succeed. I know I did.

After my divorce, I was carrying the mortgage on the house myself (I bought my former husband out in the divorce because I wanted the security of having the home). Never mind looking at my numbers! I wanted the house for emotional security. Between taxes, upkeep, and the real estate market taking a dive in 2008, I didn't reap the profits I anticipated when I wanted to sell. I couldn't afford to live there any longer and I had to sell. I managed to sell in April right before the final dive in August. My business also took a big hit as half of my clients went out of business. This lasted a few years. And to make ends meet I lived on credit cards and cashed in my IRAs. I saw everything I had built be washed away. I had no net. All I had was me.

So there I was, seventy-five thousand dollars in credit card debt, and making 30% of what was once a profitable accounting business. My fledgling coaching business, *Venus in Transit*, was not enough to support me either.

No one knew what was going on in my life.

I was ashamed of the debt, ashamed of not being responsible with money, and thinking things would change but not doing anything different! Even though I never missed a payment, never defaulted on loans, always paid the mortgage on time, I judged myself and felt inferior.

What had to change was me. I realized doing nothing was a decision, and doing the things—taking the same actions— would get me the same results. I chose to do something different. I asked for help.

I negotiated a contract with a debt consolidation company to act on my behalf and pay off those credit cards. Making the decision and signing that agreement was the beginning of regaining my power and feeling good about myself. Not long after that I hired a financial planner and began a new chapter in my life of creating wealth and financial security.

This was the turning point.

Becoming Whole Again

I knew in my heart I was meant to teach and lead, this was always my passion. After all, I had been doing it since I was twelve years old with "Them." But as an adult, it's hard to lead when your life is a financial mess, especially if you're a money coach. It seemed like a cruel joke. Money was the one constant thing I struggled with, I never made enough money to live the life I wanted once I was divorced.

One year I decided I'm going to fix this once and for all and enrolled in *seven* different programs over a twelve-month period. Talk about being busy, confronted, and overwhelmed! Mediation! Certifications! Money Mastery! Business Coaching! Marketing Coaching! Landmark Education! Endurance Running (that was the craziest)! Family Constellations! Spirituality! Transformational Healing! I was cooked, I thought, baked, and now the cake was ready to come out of the oven!

After all that work, when I took stock the result did not meet my expectation. I thought my life would be totally different, it would look different, feel different. Instead it looked the same.

The difference showed up when I changed my relationship to myself rather than trying to change everything *outside* myself. Rather than doing and running and taking on everything imaginable, I stopped and sat down. I stood still. I was with me. Just me. And in that following year I doubled my income.

What really changed was my view of who I am. Truly. I thought of myself as something that was broken and needed fixing. I loathed myself and my inability to make my life work. While I had immense compassion for others who suffered, I had none for myself. I was judgmental and impatient and viewed myself as a failure.

I realized how strong I was, courageous in the face of my own worst enemy —myself. My resilience and persistence paid off and I realized I had everything I needed to create *anything* I wanted all the time. My Manifestation talents were intact and ready to be called upon.

Remember the Good Witch Glinda in *The Wizard of Oz* when she said to Dorothy, “You've always had the power my dear, just click your heels three times and say, ‘There's no place like home.....there's no place like home.....there's no place like home.’” Home is *you*.

And as an aside, I played Glinda in a summer camp play when I was ten years old. Now I get to play Glinda in real life with those I coach. Life truly is miraculous!

Putting It All Together

I love using stories as metaphor, and in writing this chapter. Fairy tales, heroes journey, and of course my favorite, *The Wizard of Oz*, are some of the ways we as human beings express what we all have in common. Our humanity and love of life, our belief, and our hope that the “sun will come out tomorrow.” (HaHa! I couldn't resist!) We all suffer and

feel lost at times, struggling against all odds. And it's in those moments of darkness—when all seems lost forever—that we are given the opportunity to know who we truly are and what we're made of.

And we can't do it alone. Everyone needs support, guidance and yes, even love from those who have walked that walk. The very thing we mess up and struggle with is where our gold is hidden. Think of the grain of sand that irritates the oyster until it becomes a pearl. My mess, my grain of sand, was money, and that's how it manifested materially because the real issue was below the surface. Money is not just paper to get us stuff. It's energy. It's an exchange that points to your self-worth and self-love. When you're on the other side of it, you can also feel quite humble and grateful. Gratitude is something I'm conscious of on a daily basis now.

Take stock, look around at all the goodness in your life and be grateful. Gratitude is the cornerstone in creating a life filled with abundance, love, and prosperity. And true wealth lies in the quality of your relationships and the difference one makes in the world. My life is a constant adventure; I'm always living in a state of wonder, love, and fun. Always tuned in and always turned on.

And grateful for it all.

It's A Wrap!!!

So now you know my story! And today my life is a creation filled with financial success, happiness, and fulfillment. I have a coaching business that not only supports me, but also allows me to live the life I desire to live, and I get to make a difference doing what I love.

Really!

What's important is to know what you desire in *your* life. Maybe you'd like to discover what that is in your life now or maybe you're at a crossroads. Perhaps your business has plateaued and you're ready to take it to the next level and don't know how to get there.

Another important thing here is knowing and choosing. Take a stand for yourself. And don't go it alone. A smart person will go for it and try, and fail, and eventually get there. A wise person hires the person who's already done it and made it.

Don't just survive, you're here to thrive!

Reach out to me here at susanderobertis28@gmail.com for a Complimentary Call. The first 25 people who do so will receive a copy of my *Money Mastery Principles* and a personal invitation to my signature program, *Manifesting Money Made Easy*.

With So Much Love,
Susan

This chapter is dedicated with Love and Gratitude to my Siblings—Ken, Debbie, and Bob, lovingly known as “Them.” I am eternally grateful for all your love and support.

BIO

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Susan De Robertis is a transformation and empowerment coach, motivational speaker and writer.

Susan’s mission is to teach women to live life on purpose, have the confidence and clarity to claim their voice and create financial freedom and fulfillment. Susan believes that when a woman is empowered, she transforms her life and able to make better decisions for herself.

