

THE GREATER ADVANTAGE, INC.

marketing and performance coaching for business and life

A new year's resolution: unleash your SUPERWOMAN!

By Kim Bettie

I have often wondered why the word "superwomen" conjures up so many different reactions from women today. I can recall hearing my mother singing the Enjoli perfume jingle "I can bring home the bacon; fry it up in a pan. And never let you forget you're a man 'Cuz I'm a woman -- W-O-M-A-N". This song represented freedom and choices for women.

So many women are growing weary of unsuccessfully juggling multiple roles and sacrificing one aspect of life for another. For nearly 10 years I worked as an executive coach for General Motors. The executive women I coached were breaking the glass ceiling, but at the expense of their peace of mind. The women I coached felt guilty about just about everything: not doing all they could on the job; not spending enough time with their children; having nothing left for a husband and not maintaining friendships.

We all want to get more joy out of life. However, the number one killer of joy is burnout. Today, women are particularly prone to burnout. The constant demand to be successful both on the job and at home creates an additional demand not necessarily made on our male counterparts. Determined to succeed personally and professionally, we can easily become over-involved and overextended and exert an almost superhuman effort. When you are constantly reacting to small or large stressful situations, without making physical, mental, and emotional adjustments to counter their effect, you can experience stress that can hurt your health and well-being. As the stress continues, you begin to lose the interest or motivation that led you to take on a certain role in the first place. The result is a three-way, mind-body shutdown-emotional exhaustion, physical fatigue, and cognitive weariness. It's more than being tired. You have been sucked dry.

Burnout is the result of stress, but it isn't the same as too much stress. Stress involves too much; burnout is about not enough. Combating burnout involves taking care of one's self and making lifestyle changes. Our personal lives deserve to be as full and as satisfying as our professional lives have the potential to become. Every woman is unique; there is no one-size-fits-all solution.

We are each being called to unleash our "SUPER". Dealing effectively with burnout can lead to increased self-awareness and a renewed sense of direction, energy and enthusiasm. Even a small change can make a big difference. Picture a beautiful butterfly. Scientists believe that when a butterfly flaps its wings; it turbulence is powerful enough to create tiny changes in the atmosphere that may alter the path or delay, accelerate, even prevent the occurrence of a tornado. You have the power within you to make 2009 the best year ever. Discover what's missing in your life. Then, do something about it!