PinkPumps GLOBAL

Internal versus External Boundaries

One Strong Boundary: Our Internal Believe System

Managing Your Personal Brand

Women and Negotiations
I like my PinkPumps!

PinkPumps GLOBAL is the magazine for HER (and HIM).

Diving into the world of women.

For HER, with tips and ideas for the design of an individual way of life.

For HIM, an opportunity to be better able to understand women.

The goal: a cherishing interaction between men and women.

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It is time for women to overcome the barriers of self-limitation. Women can be much more than they ever imagined. They can lead a life in which their boldest dreams are fulfilled. Louise L. Hay

How do you feel if you imagine fulfilling your wildest dreams? Self-limitation seems to be one of the main obstacles keeping women from living a fulfilled and powerful life. It is important that there have been and still are many changes in our environment, socially and socio-politically. But only if we also develop our inner self, so that we can overcome our boundaries, and if we discard our self-limitations, only then will we ourselves be able to wholeheartedly benefit from all these wonderful opportunities.

As always, our authors give you some approaches on how to rid yourself of inner and outer boundaries in great diversity. Just choose those tips and ideas that have the greatest individual benefit for you.

Your

Gabi Schendl-Gallhofer
In today’s world of social media, there is a plethora of platforms to choose from: Facebook, Twitter, Youtube and Pinterest, to name a few. Then there are the more specialized business platforms, such as LinkedIn and Xing, and I’m sure many more.
Everything seemed to be going perfectly well. Her offer was well-received, the early afternoon appointment was made, but then...

Why is it that we don’t sleep in New York City? Life seems to run at a faster pace than anywhere else. I get the impression that New Yorkers walk faster, speak faster and might even have a shorter attention span than the rest of the world.

“Males and Maggots”  
Bert Gronewold  
Allowing Freedom from Inside Out  
Martin Laschkolnig  
Shit happens  
Wolfgang Bönisch  
Saying No to Others is Saying YES to Yourself  
Jack Canfield  
Women and Negotiations  
Angela Weinberger

Turning Into a Queen in 7 Steps  
Susanne Blake  
Clear of Clutter  
Birgit Medele  
Managing Your Personal Brand  
Lesley Everett  
Thoughts on Happiness  
Sabine Osmanovic  
“Charming Chats between Bits & Bytes”  
Elisabeth Heinemann  
Walks of Life  
Susanne Müller  
November 2012  
Celtic Seer  
Booklist
Internal versus External Boundaries

“The Virus and the Lion”
Practical Tips Related to Boundaries
Autumn is the time of year you could easily come down with a cold. Some people get a cold, however not everybody. Isn't that interesting? If you have a good immune system, you might be the one who won’t be affected by the different cold viruses. But if you already have fever, then it might be time to think about a way to overcome this cold. There are thousands of strategies!

How is this related to our boundaries? I would like to share a beautiful definition of boundaries with you that I learnt years ago in my training as a coach. "Boundaries are imaginary lines we establish around ourselves to protect our souls, hearts and minds from the unhealthy or damaging behaviour of others.” Similar to a virus, it often happens that we are all of a sudden attacked by other people’s behaviour. Then it’s up to us to protect ourselves, in order to live a great life. How do we do that?

When we talk about health, we would say we need very good nutrition, lots of vitamins, enough water and of course exercise, sport and time spent in nature. What could be a good mental immune system, regarding boundaries? What do you think? What do we have to look like, so that nobody would even want to attack us? How do we have to behave, so that nobody even dares to do something toxic to us?

Imagine a sleeping lion! Nobody would try to awake a sleeping lion. A lion knows he is the king of the animals. He is proud of himself, strong, incredibly powerful, calm and yet very quick. The stronger we are, the less likely anybody else will cross the imaginary lines we put up.

The key to becoming and to behaving like a lion is self-care. Being incredible selfish. Day by day. Spoil yourself! Reward yourself! Do whatever helps make you stronger, prouder and more attractive. Be really selfish! Think of the lion! Then your inner boundaries will grow!

You need additional external strategies as well, in order to make sure that you don’t allow people to harm you. Train yourself to say NO. Not only once, but many times. Start with small things, like saying NO to an invitation. In the beginning this is difficult. We want other people’s appreciation, love, loyalty or recognition. If we say NO, in the beginning it might look as if we are losing out. Other people will step forward and take our place. But in the long term we expand our own boundaries and gain respect from others. Saying NO is like training a new muscle you haven’t had until today. The muscle might begin to hurt, but you need to continue. If you always keep your voice gentle and neutral, then it will become easier.

Distance yourself from unpleasant people, from unhealthy environments and from people who do not like you. Accept that not everybody will like or love you. They may even dislike you. That’s okay; it’s about them and not about you. Don’t help people unless they have specifically asked you to. A great technique to minimize your hidden costs to yourself. Spend your time with people who see the best in you, and not with those who disregard you or make you smaller than you are.

All this will help you extend your boundaries three or four times beyond where they are now. Good luck!

Heidi Röthlisberger
Heidi has been an internationally recognized Life Coach (Master Certified Coach) for 10 years and works only on the phone. If you want to have a free complimentary session, just send her an e-mail or call her directly: +41 61 534 17 08. You will find more information on her website: www.heidisworldwidecoaching.com
Internal versus External Boundaries

Boundaries

„Boundries“ ©Cecilia Illes

Cecilia Illes
Theologian. She developed the idea of the Society of Esteem called Sikantis. Sikantis doesn’t recognize a hierarchy of values and bases its culture on mutual esteem. She has a blog called “Society of Esteem” and has published a book with the title “Richie und das Geheimnis der Ameisen” (only available in German) as hardcover and eBook on Amazon.

www.sikantis.org
First of all, you should realize that your inner attitude creates your reality. For example, you just banged your head on your wardrobe when getting up, or you just spilled your coffee on your new lovely dress. You will probably just feel frustrated. Stop being angry, frustrated or feeling negative! These things happen.

So stop! Why?
Because running around, frustrated or angry, is not creating positive energy. And being in a mood like this is not making you attractive to men or anyone else. Be aware that you have the power to change this feeling.

Never in a bad mood again… Would you like that? Yes, of course!

It’s very simple. Just follow the instructions. You’ll be surprised at the effect. It only takes 15 seconds!

Never in a bad mood again

» Sit straight on a chair. Your feet are on the floor.
» Now tense the muscles of your legs.
» Then the muscles of your lower back and stomach.
» Next, concentrate on your arms and upper back. Now you have tensed all your muscles.
» And then put a big smile on your face, showing your teeth.
   At the same time look at the ceiling, saying to yourself “yes, yes, yes, yes, yes” about five times.
» Now relax.

What happened? You weren’t able to think about anything during the exercise. This is the fastest way to feel positive within fifteen seconds. Just try it. If I’m angry, I do this exercise before answering the phone, visiting clients or speaking to friends.

Then I feel better right away and my conversation partner and I can have an enjoyable conversation.

And that is all that matters, making another person feel good, especially, if you have just met an interesting man you would like to impress. Being in a good mood creates an atmosphere of joy and that makes you attractive to men.

So remember: You have the power to turn into an adorable, attractive and wonderful woman.

In Part III of our series you will be learning how to define your aims. I will be explaining how to achieve goals in four steps.

I’d like to thank the readers who wrote to me about their experiences. So please write back and let me know about your progress. Send an email to: sblake@the-individual-touch.com.

Good-bye for now and wishing you all the best. Yours, Susanne Blake

Susanne Blake
Since 1997 Susanne Blake has been working as a consultant and life coach in an international context. With an international business background, she provides training with a practical approach. Her trainings are also available via telephone and Skype and meet the demands of junior- to chief-executives. Especially business women profit from her professional coaching.

www.the-individual-touch.com
What is Your Strategy When Winds Change?
Over the last few days I have been thinking about what to write on boundaries. Of course the given topic sets limits. BUT, within the topic there really aren’t any limits = boundaries. So I found this proverb “When the winds of change blow, some people build walls and others build windmills.” A thought immediately came to mind. “Oh, it depends on the wind. Is it a soft breeze, a tornado, a warm summer wind or an arctic cold wind?” This is when boundaries came to mind. “What is more chic? What is more accepted?”

Do you recognize this type of situation? We think through all the possibilities that might possibly come up, and the first person we talk to tells us about a completely different approach? So we often have to press our reset-bottom and start again. And more often than not, we repeat the same procedure over and over.

I work with the MBTI® personality instrument in workshops and coaching. I love to work with this personality instrument, as it concentrates on strengths and how we can use them more efficiently. We live with boundaries, which we have learned from our family, social surroundings, experiences, relationships, etc. On the one hand, this gives us security, but on the other hand it also limits us. An important factor of the MBTI® method is to see, feel and accept our own boundaries = strengths. So when these boundaries are clear, it is possible to look out of “the box” in order to see what other possibilities there are!

I would like to share two exercises for working on boundaries = limitations with you now.

Focus on stillness:

Take your topic or question and go for a walk, to a museum or on a train trip. Empty your mind. Concentrate on your question, not on finding the solution. Allow your inner knowledge to emerge. When thoughts come to mind, look at them as if they were a film. Don’t judge them, and let them go. This exercise of pulling down thought boundaries helps our mind go with the flow and opens up new dimensions. This stillness approach can be found in the customs of native tribes and also in the Theory U.

Go and interview people:

If you need to work out a topic, normally you spend your time on it, until you have a “result”. So let’s shift gears and first calculate the time you need for a topic. Reduce it by half and use the other half to interview people on the said topic. They don’t need to be specialists on that particular topic. I am sure you will be surprised by the variety of possibilities that can come up. So within your own time limits, you will expand the boundaries of the topic. Combining these two exercises can break down our boundaries with astonishing results.

So why not review boundaries and change this Chinese proverb! “When the winds of change blow, build walls to provide the framework for your windmills.”

Barbara Valenti is a business facilitator for international projects and change management. She uses strength oriented and participative methods to help keep people and their organizations in balance. The core areas of her work are personal growth, Work-Life-Management and working in an international context. She is Austrian, currently living in Germany, and has more than 18 years of international experience.

www.teamplus1.de
80% of the time, we only use 20% of our belongings. When it comes to clothes, we never get out of our favourite outfits, while most of our other fabric-made beauties pine away in the darkness of our wardrobes, longing for their next outing. We wander the streets in baggy pants, while our Sunday-best patiently suffocates in its dry-cleaning plastic. We promised to take it out once the special event arrived. Even if we don’t realize it, it’s already here: The rest of our life starts today! How about that as an occasion? Fine feathers make fine birds, but only if given a chance to beautify the body they were bought for. No more limiting beliefs and no more excessive compartmentalisation: This is to be worn at home, this for DIY, and this for going out. In the post-clutter regime gorgeous items are worn again, born again, anytime!

Only outfits we feel well in uplift us, which means only clothes that fit well are allowed to stay. The sorting is done section-wise, to keep feelings of stress at bay. So let’s say, for example, trousers to begin with. If a single category is too large, it is further broken down, for example into colours: black trousers, beige trousers etc. Another approach is to revisit the ‘ten items or minutes at a time’ strategy. Don’t worry if clothes are no longer in pristine condition, charities are happy to accept donations unfit for resale, as they also receive funds when they recycle fabric.

We have to try on every piece we are not sure about, because clothes are tricksters that specialise in looking fabulous – but then suddenly stop once we have them on. They love playing this game in shops as well; looking incredibly funky and sleek on the hanger and - let’s paraphrase it - slightly less stunning, once we are wearing them. Trying things on can also be a way of saying goodbye. “Thanks for being such a gorgeous pair of trousers, we had memorable times together. But bye-bye now!”

A wardrobe filled with items that were on sale could be an inspiration to stop “snapping up” reduced pieces, trying to pass themselves off as bargains. From now on we are going to purchase less clothing, and only items that make us feel one in seven billion each time we step out. We might be afraid of parting with unloved clothes, because we fear an empty wardrobe, but think of life after the edit: no more panicky ransacking, getting angry and running late; but rather swinging the doors of our wardrobe open to find our most beloved treasures in pride of place – imagine the beautiful recharging vibes!

Happy clearing!

Next topic: Clothes (Part II)
Managing Your Personal Brand

Lesley Everett is the creator of the Walking TALL concept to Personal Branding. It has been developed by working with 1,000’s of executives over the past 13 years. As well as providing a framework for building a strong brand, it focuses on managing your personal marketing. She is going to share some of the principles with you here.

It’s no longer good enough just to do a good job...

To maximise your success and career progression today, you need to pay attention to your personal brand, as well as to your exposure & visibility within your chosen target market. Ask yourself:

“Do the people I want to know who I am, really know who I am?”

“Do others have to describe me in great detail to others for them to know who I am?”

“What am I famous for?”, or “What should or would I like to be famous for”?

With your answers to these questions you will know if you are managing your personal PR as well as you should be.

In the crowded marketplace, if you just fit in, you’ll not get ahead. You have to stand out and maximise your success potential. You have to be the architect of the way you want to be perceived.

To discover your personal brand, first think about your fundamental strengths, your individuality and your personality. Uncover from within what you’re outstandingly good at. For this, you need thinking time on your own.

Consider these elements of your character:

- Your personality traits
- Your talents
- Your principles
- Your natural personality style

Now get feedback from others to find out how accurate your perceptions are, and where development areas for your brand are.

Now consider my top tips for raising your brand visibility in your chosen target market:

- Get great at presenting, and be ready to take the opportunities present.
- When gathering information for presentations include your target market.
- Recognise opportunities to go the extra mile in whatever you’re doing.
- Make notes about important personal points. People love to know you’re interested in them as a person, not just in their business.
- Consider the most successful people in your company or industry – why are they well-known?
- Always be aware of occasions when picking up the phone. A face-to-face chat would be more impactful than an email.
- Surround yourself with people you want to be like; people who will talk about you.
- Focus on your unique values, build your brand “Me” and be consistent.

Think about these points - you’ll be sure to build that all-important “Personal Brand” in other people’s eyes and they will talk about you. You will make it easy for them to label you and people like labels – it makes life easier.

And finally, at the end of every week, think about what you’ve done for your brand image and visibility this week.

Lesley Everett is a leading Personal Branding Expert and author of Walking TALL – Key Steps to Total Image Impact, and the US version Drop Dead Brilliant (McGraw-Hill New York – 2007)

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Kirsten looked like a happy wife. Her career was going well; she was married to a great husband, had a wonderful daughter and very good friends. But recently she was feeling more and more tired and exhausted. She had the feeling that she had to constantly run to catch up with her schedule and that everything she was doing was not good enough.

Do you also know that feeling? Then it’s time for a change. And here is where many get stuck. If it concerns others we know exactly what to do and how to help. We know how to change the world to make it a better place. But when it comes to ourselves we miss the wood for the trees. We all know that change very often comes with pain, and who wants to feel pain when it is easier to avoid it? The moment we decide to change something in our lives, we lay the foundation for a brighter and happier future. Unfortunately we are rarely aware of this.

In my coaching sessions I very often experience that people have all the answers deep inside themselves, but they forget to listen to themselves. And time and time again they have negative thoughts and are at risk to fall into doldrums. So, how do we do something about that? Let’s get back to Kirsten and see how she solved her problem:

After repeatedly being late for meetings with her best friend, Kirsten decided that it was time for a change. In addition, she already had physical symptoms. She couldn’t concentrate on the tasks at hand, wandered the nights because she couldn’t sleep, and also her healthy appetite vanished. All in all she felt way ahead of her age. What to do? Should she just roll up her sleeves and get started? Well, it wasn’t that easy.

At first, Kirsten had no idea what to begin with, how to solve her problem. Therefore she made an appointment with a business coach, who gave her the following advice:

Next week you need to write down every task you have to deal with. Please, be honest with yourself. With this method you will see what your biggest time-consuming tasks are and also where you waste time. Take a look at your list and ask yourself why you feel responsible for the tasks you’ve written down. What lies behind this?

Kirsten’s coach gave her a tool that was easy to use and helped her identify the root cause of her behavior. Her coach supported her, so she was honest to herself and didn’t look for excuses for her actions. To successfully change her spots, it was essential for Kirsten to be ingenuous.

With this method Kirsten realized that she felt responsible for the happiness of others. She had the feeling that without her help nothing would go right. Together with her coach, Kirsten learned to let go.

A simple, but highly effective example: She learned to ask her husband for support. Now, twice a week it is his task to watch their daughter in the afternoon. He picks her up from school, takes care of her homework and very often they visit the zoo or go to the cinema together. Kirsten is able to fully concentrate on the tasks at hand, without feeling guilty, and she enjoys coming home to find her husband and daughter in the kitchen preparing dinner. This new routine not only helps Kirsten, but it also has a positive side effect on the relationship of her husband and daughter. This relationship has become deeper and more loving.

Hence, everyone benefited from the change. Kirsten has a lot less stress in her life and her husband and daughter cherish the moments they enjoy together on their own.

Sabine Osmanovic is an expert for Personal Quality Management. Her trainings involve the topics Communication, Goal Setting, Motivation and Problem Solving. She coaches individuals as well as teams. Her main focus is to give her participants as much of a benefit as possible. According to her philosophy, “If you can dream it, you can do it!” She helps people make their dreams come true.
I love DVDs and Blu-rays! The content that’s stored on them, that is. Watching movies is one of my favourite hobbies. Well, just those which men generally prefer, but in that regard I’m a walking encyclopaedia. Movies are my testosterone-equivalent to a lady’s shoe-tick. My fingers and wallet start tingling in front of a shelf full of DVDs. Amazon earns loads of money on me, money I spend for Blu-rays too! That’s how it is - we are naturally designed to be collectors; even though we’re not sitting around the fireplace anymore – evolution-wise we seem to be no more than a firestone’s throw away from prehistoric men. Storing maggots and gathering berries in the past, there must be a similar genetic sequence starting over for stamps or china puppets nowadays.

Now I am terrified by one thought: What shall I do if Blu-rays die? What comes next? And how will that be collected? Will I have to buy five players now, to save me from trouble with defect equipment for my cumulative silvery slivers? Which connection cables will I need and which adapter? I am filled with questions.

Who knows, perhaps I’ll end up with shoes!

Bert Gronewold

Bert Gronewold worked as a policeman, before he went on for a second life as a cartoonist and illustrator. 2007 the born East Frisian started to blog and discovered the fun of vivisecting human weaknesses and failures sarcastically. 2010 this became "www.grafikschlampe.blog.de", which is decorated with cartoons till today.

* Graphikschlampe is a neologism which means “floozie of illustration”. In Germany we call people “floozie” - leaving gender aside - who suppress their idealism to earn their living. It is a sarcastic view on Gronewold’s necessity to earn money with his artificial talent.

www.grafikschlampe.blog.de
Allowing Freedom from Inside Out
Have you ever felt overwhelmed? What a stupid question, you’ll think now – who on earth hasn’t felt that way one time or another?

And have you ever felt free? Totally, utterly free? What if you could reach this feeling of freedom, even from a state of overwhelm?

Today I want to share one of my favourite techniques with you to do exactly that, and the best thing is – it doesn’t have to take long.

What I’m talking about is a technique from the field of energy psychology called Tapping, sometimes also referred to as Meridian Tapping or EFT, which stands for Emotional Freedom Techniques. Practices like EFT are spreading like wildfire and for good reason. I find Tapping to be one of the easiest ways to release stress and other negative emotions that claim way too much space in our perception. I have often enough seen fear, stress or overwhelm dissolve in minutes with these techniques. Tapping combines the ancient Chinese idea of energy meridians, found in acupuncture, with emotional self-actualisation and acknowledging what actually bugs you.

It is, of course, impossible to teach you the process in this limited space, but let me share some thoughts as to why it is really useful to familiarize oneself with this amazing process.

Normally we are so immersed in our problems that we don’t even see the options available to us. It’s even in our language. We say: I am angry or I am sad; which is not true – that’s not what we are. We are so much more; it’s just that right now we feel anger or sadness. So it’s only a feeling, however strong it might be. It’s not us. EFT does a marvellous job of dissecting that with a setup statement, where we acknowledge the problem, while at the same time stating that we nevertheless love and accept ourselves. What a relief lies in that alone!

Which statement is more empowering:

I am sad.

vs.

Even though I am sad, I deeply and completely love and accept myself.

Isn’t it fabulous to know that there is more to ourselves than our momentary sadness, anger, stress or overwhelm? It sure is.

However, there are two core problems with all these energy techniques. First, we need to make the decision that we really want to get rid of our limitations, fear or angst. This would mean really stepping out of our victim mentality. But isn’t that such a convenient place to be? There we can be so wonderfully poor and miserable – “Look what the bad, bad world did to me.” Or even worse, what if we really attain freedom or happiness, only to lose it again later? Oh no, that would be way too painful.

The deciding question we have to answer for ourselves – and only we can answer - is:

Do I want to be happy or do I want to be right?

And as long as we’re not feeling gratitude, love, appreciation or joy, we don’t want to be happy. Now you will say – “Hang on, doesn’t it matter at all what that jerk did to me? He treated me so unfairly and now I should simply shut up about it?” No, actually you should not – when using a process like EFT to help release all that anger, frustration or the feeling of having been treated unfairly, you acknowledge these feelings. At the same time, you also release all these emotions and find back to the vibration of peace, love or joy. However, even to allow yourself to use that process requires your willingness to put your happiness before your need to be right. Being right will keep you stuck in whatever story you created in your mind.

Recently a participant in one of my training sessions said: “I don’t want to be right, I just want him to know that he is wrong!” Well, hint, hint – this isn’t wanting to be happy either, okay?

After all – holding on to resentment and anger is like taking poison, with the goal that the other person feels bad or suffers from it. Hello – this won’t work. The only thing that will happen is that your well-being will be hindered. Don’t you deserve better? Correct, yes, you do!
And the second requirement for these energy psychology techniques to work their almost magical power is that you don’t deny your emotions. Women are usually way better at recognizing and acknowledging their emotions than men. However, in our society we are usually so out of touch with ourselves that we live only in our brains – to be precise - in the left half of our brains. We try to solve everything with logic and by rationalizing, which results in so rigidly denying our feelings of overwhelm, stress, fear and insecurity, that they have no other choice than to show up in our body as chronic headaches, shoulder pain or even more severe diseases.

There are endless case stories of physical conditions simply disappearing within a very short time, once the emotional contributors to these circumstances were addressed and acknowledged. When we finally get in touch with ourselves again – and realize that we are not Super(wo)man, who can wrestle all these emotions to the ground – then, suddenly, the physical symptoms of back pains, headaches, sore throats or the proneness to colds can disappear. That is because finally we are acknowledging our borders and limits.

The funny thing is – when we regularly practise Tapping on all the negative emotions that come up in our lives, we actually increase our resilience to exactly these issues. This means that such situations will become less stressful, even though externally they haven’t changed. We ourselves become stronger and more relaxed. Over the time, when properly addressed, even old limiting beliefs can be dissolved and changed. Borders that have held us back for years or even decades are suddenly nothing more than memories that no longer have power over us.

And that is true emotional freedom – we can live the lives we actually want and deserve. So – I challenge you: Do you dare to love openly and live freely? You deserve it!

Tapping is easy to learn. All you need is a simple protocol and your fingers. In my seminars, where this technique is part of the curriculum, people are usually fascinated by the simplicity and effectiveness of this process.

If you want to learn more about Tapping, you can watch an introductory talk that I gave in Holland some time ago at [www.MartinLaschkolnig.com/eftTalk](http://www.MartinLaschkolnig.com/eftTalk). On the same page you can download a brief overview on how to apply the protocol with all the tapping points. You can also get a free manual at [www.GaryThink.com/eft/eft-tutorial.html](http://www.GaryThink.com/eft/eft-tutorial.html). If you have any questions as to how to apply Tapping to your specific situation, please feel free to contact me.
I have known Sandra for five years. She is a competent woman, who does her job very well and flexibly prepares herself when she encounters new conditions in her environment. Our relationship can be characterized as “management by objectives”: I set the goal, but then leave it to her to find a way to reach it. Only once in a while I force her to follow special conditions, such as that she must hurry. If you now have the impression that I lead Sandra, then you are completely wrong. She leads me. Sandra is my GPS unit. And with that fact, I have been at her mercy since she came into my life. Since then, I have forgotten how to find my way in strange towns by myself. Better said, I am just too lazy. For what reason I should still print out route planners, like I did a couple of years ago, and hold them in my hand, while dangerously driving with one hand and overlooking the street ravines. I also remember the times I asked real people the way – yes, I can do that, I’m a woman! But now I have Sandra. She always makes me offers I can’t refuse…

But recently, it happened anyway. I was suddenly weary of this dependence. Who was driving the car, anyway? Right, me! Therefore, I knew where to go. And I wanted to immediately prove this to Sandra by not taking the third exit of the traffic circle, but – contrary to her instructions and deeply convinced that I was right - the second one. However, Sandra defended herself for three kilometres with a repeated “please make a U-turn,” which I self-confidently ignored. Yippie-ya-yeah, I was the rebel of the road, and I consistently ignored every newly calculated and adapted route suggestion. A casual “the route tracking ends here” and a bumpy farming path brought the rebellion to an abrupt end. As a rule, I admit it to myself and to others once I land at a dead end. In this case, the dead end was inbetween two recently reaped cornfields. Therefore, I turned around and trustingly fell back into Sandra’s “hands”.

And what is the moral of this little story? Nowadays our ubiquitous little friends – smartphones & co. – are virtually indispensable, in private life as well as in professional matters. This begins with the already mentioned GPS unit, continues with the barcode scanner, with which I scan expensive anti-wrinkle crèmes in the drugstore to read the users’ experiences online, and ends with an app that tells me when I am going to menstruate the next time and which days will “bring” me a girl or a boy. Of course these mobile little helpers are only profitable if I integrate them properly into my life and… if I am able to use them correctly. And fortunately, I can decide by myself whether I use the digital “intelligence reinforcements” or not. No, I wouldn’t like to do without Sandra anymore. Only now and then I threaten her at the top of my voice that I will format her hard disk, namely when I hear her say: “Please make a U-turn immediately”, while driving 180 km/h on the freeway.

Elisabeth Heinemann is a professor for computer science, a keynote speaker, a cabaret artist and a book author. Since 2000, she supports people in developing their personal skills (www.effactory.com). And because there is so much left to discover between “Bits & Bytes”, the lady professor started being on stage with her first cabaret programme in 2012.

www.frau-professor.com
Banish Boundaries

“Before the day begins, you are not yet engaged in any physical activities. And it is only physically that you are constrained by the limits of time and place; mentally, there are no such boundaries.”

(Menachem Mendel Schneerson)
You have made the decision – you’re going to work for yourself! And as you start planning, the “prophets of doom” raise their heads and declare: “Bad idea, there are already so many people doing that ... there’s a coach around every corner, beauticians are a dime a dozen. The market is saturated with exactly what you have to offer. Do you even have the right qualifications? Where are you going to find paying customers? What about security? At least with a regular job, you’ve got some kind of insurance!” And slowly your enthusiasm and passion starts weakening, fading, and too often your idea is shelved with those of so many others.

In 1999, it was love that led me away from my homeland, South Africa, across international boundaries to Germany. As my excitement grew at how my decision would enrich my life, the voices of doubt whispered ominously: “Germany? But you don’t speak German! Oh, the Germans ... really cold people, no sense of humour! Germany! Why not England? At least there they speak English!” How ironic that exactly this warning was the recipe for my initial and ongoing success. My German knowledge non-existent, I started teaching English to business people in various companies. Soon I was being asked, “Could you teach me too? I’ve heard you have such a wonderfully unique way of teaching - not like the others!” I knew my methods weren’t unique – what I did know was that I just did things my way – I knew only one me and I was loyal to myself. There were hundreds of English teachers around, but people were asking for me. Soon I was a partner in LCS, a successful language and intercultural training company that now employs freelancers to do what I did when I started. All too often, the boundaries that prevent our successes are those set by others and taken to heart by ourselves.

Turn a deaf ear to the ramblings of pessimistic prophets and do your thing! Find your very own angle on what you do and explore how your diversity, your difference from the rest, makes you and your product or service special – it is exactly this diversity that is your innovation driver and ultimate success factor. Don’t join the ranks of the “rest” - do your thing with courage and conviction and count your client numbers as they culminate!

Over the next few weeks, this column will be dedicated to exploring how diversity can drive your development and banish your boundaries! May the words of Edwin Louis Cole accompany us on the way:

“Boundaries are to protect life, not to limit pleasures.”

Marinda Seisenberger
is a Speaker, Trainer, Coach and expert on MANAGING DIVERSITY. The native South African supports corporate clients to work successfully abroad and to reap the benefits of actively promoting and managing diversity in their organisations. She is convinced that diversity offers the flexibility and creativity we need to recreate the global economy for the 21st century.

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E verything seemed to be going perfectly well. Her offer was well-received, the early afternoon appointment was made, but then...

She left early, three hours by car, no problem. There was enough time for a cappuccino and some cake. But then she was stuck in a traffic jam - on the last three kilometers! Exhausted, she ran into the faculty at the last minute, and only seconds later the purchasing manager stood in front of her, eyeing her up.

Her voice sounded squeaky and hoarse. She cleared her throat and began to babble about the traffic jam. The manager thought: “Was probably not the only mishap” and looked once again at the wide ladder in her tights.

**The first impression counts! Thus, here are my tips for better negotiation results:**

Schedule sufficient time as a buffer. Not only for the journey, but also for your final quick-check. Be prepared for mishaps, such as laddering, stains on your tie and the like. Is everything you need when presenting your offer at hand and in the right order? Get your voice back on track. Speak your claim out loud. Do some stretching exercises and breathe in and out deeply. Visualize your goal and your reward. Smile. And there you go! Good luck!

Wolfgang Bönisch

**The Master of Negotiation Arts. Saved 1 million through Ghost-Negotiation, a costumer successfully implemented 20% price increase after a negotiation training or a doubling of the daily fee during a coaching session.He is supporting businesses and entrepreneurs in multiple ways to improve their negotiation results.**

[www.wolfgangboenisch.com](http://www.wolfgangboenisch.com)
When we talk about esteem, Sikantis knows no boundaries whatsoever. Esteem is given equally to every single person.

Our experience in the society we live in is the opposite. In our society esteem is given under certain conditions to certain people. We know that we have to achieve something, be something or have something in order to receive esteem. As children we learn that we have to do something to receive esteem, may it be in school or at home. We learn that the more we do what others want, the more likely we will get esteem. During our whole life we have to fight for esteem. In our society esteem is given to the stronger, more successful and more competitive persons. At the same time, they’re never sure of always receiving esteem, it’s an eternal effort of reaching out for it.

Sikantis looks at esteem in a different way. The Society of Esteem sees the uniqueness of every single person. Everybody receives esteem just for being there, just for having their own personality. There are no conditions for giving esteem in Sikantis. You can call it "unconditional esteem", esteem without boundaries.

Esteem without boundaries means that people don’t have to do something to receive it. People who can’t participate in society, for whatever reasons – age, health conditions or even people who want to take a timeout from working/learning – these people receive the same esteem as the others, just for being there.

That is what we need to live a fulfilled and happy life. Receiving unconditional esteem makes our own self-esteem grow and flourish. A healthy and strong self-esteem allows us to give unconditional esteem to others in turn.

In Sikantis, this boundless esteem is the basis on which the whole society is built, in the true sense of the word. People who receive esteem without boundaries are able to develop and live their unique talents freely and joyfully. A society where all talents are esteemed and supported can create abundance and happiness for all its citizens, just like the Etruscans did in ancient Italy.

Isn’t this understanding of esteem, as being without boundaries, the proper sense of esteem?

Cecilia Illes
Theologian. She developed the idea of the Society of Esteem called Sikantis. Sikantis doesn’t recognize a hierarchy of values and bases its culture on mutual esteem. She has a blog called “Society of Esteem” and has published a book with the title “Richie und das Geheimnis der Ameisen” (only available in German) as hardcover and eBook on Amazon.

www.sikantis.org
There are only two words that will always lead you to success. Those words are yes and no. Undoubtedly, you’ve mastered saying yes. So start practicing saying no. Your goals depend on it!

If you are constantly saying yes to other people, then you are constantly saying no to yourself and your goals. Ask yourself if what is being requested of you is in line with your goals, will it benefit you in some way and bring you closer to your success, or will you simply be spending your time on someone else’s good opportunity?

**How much time do you waste with projects and activities that you really don’t want to do simply because you are uncomfortable saying no?**

Success depends on getting good at saying no without feeling guilty. You cannot get ahead with your own goals if you are always saying yes to someone else’s projects and agendas.

What a simple concept this is, yet you’d be surprised how frequently even the world’s top entrepreneurs, professionals, educators and civic leaders get caught up in projects, situations and opportunities that are merely good, while the great is left out in the cold—waiting for them to make room in their lives. In fact, concentrating on merely the “good” often prevents the “great” from showing up, simply because there’s no time left in our schedules to take advantage of any additional opportunity. Is this your situation—constantly chasing after mediocre prospects or pursuing misguided schemes for success, when you could be holding at bay opportunities for astounding achievement?
If saying “No” is so important, then why is it so hard to say?

Why do we find it so hard to say no to everybody’s requests? As children, many of us learned that “no” was an unacceptable answer. Responding with “no” was cause for discipline. Later, in our careers, “no” may have been the reason for a poor evaluation or failing to move up the corporate ladder.

Yet, highly successful people say “no” all the time—to projects, to crazy deadlines, to questionable priorities and to other people’s crises. In fact, they view the decision to say “no” equally acceptable as the decision to say “yes.” Others say no, but will offer to refer you to someone else for help. Still others claim their calendar, family obligations, deadlines and even finances as reasons why they must decline requests. At the office, achievers find other solutions to their co-workers’ repeated emergencies, rather than becoming a victim of someone else’s lack of organization and poor time management.

“It’s not against you, it’s for me…”

One response that I have found helpful in saying “no” to crisis appeals or time-robbing requests from people is... It’s not against you; it’s for me.

When the chairman calls with yet another fund-raising event that needs your dedication, you can say, “You know, my saying no to you is not against you, or what you are trying to do. It’s a very worthy cause, but recently I realized I’ve been overcommitting myself. So even though I support what you’re doing, the fact is I’ve made a commitment to spend more time with my family. It’s not against you; it’s for us.”

Few people can get angry at you for making and standing by a higher commitment. In fact, they’ll respect you for your clarity and your strength.

So, how can you determine what’s truly great, so you can say no to what’s merely good?

Start by listing your opportunities—one side of the page for good and the other side for great. Seeing options in writing will help crystallize your thinking and determine what questions to ask, what information to gather, what your plan of attack might be, and so on. It will help you decide if an opportunity truly fits with our overall life purpose and passion, or if it’s just life taking you down a side road.

Talk to advisors about this potential new pursuit. People who have traveled the road before you have vast experience to share and hard-headed questions to ask about any new life opportunity you might be contemplating. They can talk to you about expected challenges and help you evaluate the “Hassle Factor”—that is, how much time, money, effort and commitment will be required.

Test the waters. Rather than take a leap of faith that the new opportunity will proceed as you expect, conduct a small test, spending a limited amount of time and money. If it’s a new career you’re interested in, first seek part-time work or independent consulting contracts in that field. If it’s a major move or volunteer project you’re excited about, see if you can travel for a few months to your dream locale or find ways to immerse yourself in the volunteer work for several weeks.

And finally, look where you spend your time. Determine if those activities truly serve your goals or if saying “no” would free up your schedule for more focused pursuits.

Be brave in saying no to good opportunities, stay focused on your higher goals and let people know that you are committed to those goals. People will respect your clarity and drive.

Remember, just as you are in control of your feelings and attitudes, other people are in control of theirs, so if they do get upset with you for saying no...well that is a choice they make for themselves.

Jack Canfield,
America’s #1 Success Coach,
is founder of the billion-dollar book brand Chicken Soup for the Soul© and a leading authority on Peak Performance and Life Success. If you’re ready to jump-start your life, make more money, and have more fun and joy in all that you do, get your FREE success tips from Jack Canfield now at: www.FreeSuccessStrategies.com
What I will endeavour to do in this short article, is to highlight and share some of my experiences thus far in the ever-changing world of social media, and hopefully share some insights into how to navigate these shark-infested waters of the 21st century. Now, you are probably wondering, what in the world does this have to do with boundaries? Hold on, fasten your seat belt, we are not quite on a roller-coaster ride, but then again, that begs the question, are we?

In today’s world of social media, there is a plethora of platforms to choose from: Facebook, Twitter, Youtube and PinInterest, to name a few. Then there are the more specialized business platforms, such as LinkedIn and Xing, and I’m sure many more.

The next question we need to ask ourselves is: Do we use these tools/applications or do we opt out? And if we opt out, are we cutting ourselves off from others using and participating on these platforms and missing out? At every turn technology is making inroads into our daily lives.

Where do we draw the line? Burying one’s head in the sand like an ostrich is no longer an option; even my elderly aunt of 83 has a computer, and yes, dare I say it, a FACEBOOK page. Thank God for remote applications, now there’s one.
for books … the blind leading the blind. But then how can one refuse to assist one’s elderly aunt, when she calls transatlantic (still digesting the Skyping concept) and is thoroughly frustrated with the help desk we all know and ohm, love, or in this case, NONE!

Where do the boundaries lie and how do we define them for ourselves as women, wives, mothers, sisters, business people and friends! That is the burning question! Each and every one of us needs to define these boundaries for themselves. For that matter, where do you draw a dividing line between yourself on a personal level and yourself as a business entity? It’s almost like consciously or unconsciously writing up a personnel policy, something akin to what companies have to do today, which they relegate to their human resources departments.

How do these communication platforms affect us, and how do we as a society use these relatively new technological tools to effect change in our communities, whilst at the same time maintaining some degree of privacy? This raises an interesting conundrum.

The main question is no longer if we participate, but how and where we participate, and in what manner. How much do you want to allow others a glimpse into your world, or for that matter, how much do you want to share and at what level?

Here are a few questions to ask yourself, when deciding which platforms you want to be on, and how you want to use them and participate on them.

» What do you want to achieve with these tools/applications and how?
» How much time and effort are you willing to put into learning how to use these tools/applications?
» How will you track and monitor the impact of using these tools/applications?
» Once you understand the basics of using these tools/applications, will you continue to do everything yourself, or will you outsource it or part of it to someone else?

Remember, all the above tools take time to learn, master and monitor. It’s a brave new world out there … scary, exciting and overwhelming are just a few adjectives that spring to mind.

There are endless questions that need to be asked and answered. Where does one stop and start? This in itself forces one to define a boundary. It’s not just the use/application of these tools you have to take into account, but the impact they will have on you as a person. Once you head down that road, there is no turning back! The minute you put something out there on the web, it stays there - forever. Unwittingly or not, you’ve invited others into your space, not just those you know, but those you didn’t know existed. And now the world of privacy rears its head … that’s a story for another day!

Now you are asking yourself what this has to do with boundaries. Well - in fact, quite a lot! All these delightful technological tools are encroaching on your time, time you would have set aside for yourself a decade ago. This brings me to my next point. Boundaries are not set in stone, they shift with the changing tides; however, there are some that are sacrosanct, and others that you have to decide on for yourself!

One of my favorite quotes from “Pride and Prejudice” comes to mind when I think of social media, - “What are we here for, Mrs. Bennet, but to amuse our neighbors!” Even the 18th century writer, Jane Austen, understood the need to participate in a community, but she also understood that a code of behavior, which was far stricter then than it is now, must be followed. I wonder what she would have made of our brave new technological world.

Thank you ladies and gents for your undivided attention. I hope you were enjoying a delicious latte or a cup of tea whilst reading my article. I look forward to entertaining you in many more issues of the English version of Pink Pumps GLOBAL. Applause to our editor-in-chief, Gabi Schendl-Gallhofer! And for those who wish to further continue this discussion, drop by and feel free to share your experiences at my SoulHarmony4u website. Arrivederci, till next month!

**SoulHarmony 4U**

Catherine Thomas (pen name) has lived and worked in North America and Europe. She currently lives in New York City. She writes and operates her Metaphysical practice under her brand name of SoulHarmony4U. Her mission is to nurture, assist and encourage others to believe in themselves and blossom in whatever form they choose. She can be contacted by filling out the contact form on her website and she is also available for consultations via telephone and Skype.

soulharmony4u.wordpress.com
Many of these limits come from our belief system that was created during our childhood and at school by parents and teachers. Everyone knows how sentences like: “You will never be a good painter” can become self-fulfilling prophecies and the child and later on the adult will never try to become a painter, because it was said by a person of respect. The belief is that she/he is not capable and that’s it, in many cases for the rest of the life.

One strong boundary: our internal believe system

Who has created the internal boundaries and do they still make sense?

The same is true for general stereotype behavior especially for girls, when we were taught in the past: “Girls have to be modest, they do not shout, they do not fight like boys do.” And this behavior is still in our mind, it sets the limits for our success. If you still believe that you will be successful with being modest and not speaking up loud, this will not work in our actual environment. No one will discover you and will promote you for another position although you are doing a very good job.
You have to promote yourself and self-promotion is something you can learn. I was a modest young woman at the beginning of my career because I heard these sentences in my childhood, but I learned over the years to overcome them. Now I do not have any problem to talk about my successful projects and I know how to promote myself.

Be proud of yourself

Talking about our own strengths is difficult for most women. We know our problems very well and it is easier to talk about them, than to talk about our achievements. If we talk about successes the others might think that we are arrogant or proud. And as we want to be liked by everyone, we better avoid it. We need a change of behavior for this misleading conduct. There is nothing wrong with being proud of successfully executed tasks or projects. Especially your boss should know about them. How can you change this behavior and promote yourself?

» Make a list of your strengths and turn them into benefits for your employer or clients
» Start to talk about your daily projects and achievements with colleagues and friends
» Allow yourself to be proud of yourself and your achievements

Here is an example:
I have just finished a European Congress of Business and Professional Women in Italy where I as the European Regional Coordinator was responsible for the program. It was a great experience for the 350 participants, we had excellent speakers and great workshops (Gabriele Schendl-GAllhofer, publisher od PinkPumps GLOBAL has also done one.) And I am very proud of this congress because it was such a success. If you want to learn more about it: www.bpw-italy.org

Sabine Schmelzer

To Empower Women is my passion. This is due my commitment to BPW Business and Professional Women since more than 10 years. Diversity means business - this is obvious through lots of research and studies. In my leadership trainings for women and as a key note speaker, I encourage women to be proud of their different skills and strengths.

www.diversitymeansbusiness.com
A Busy Walk
New York City – A City

Why is it that we don’t sleep in New York City? Life seems to run at a faster pace than anywhere else. I get the impression that New Yorkers walk faster, speak faster and might even have a shorter attention span than the rest of the world. Sometimes New Yorkers have a bad reputation of being rude while living life in the fast lane. This is not necessarily true. However, as they say, it is a rat race that is beyond hectic, and yes, it truly is all of that. There never seems to be a dull moment in New York. Maybe we pick up that thrilling energy because the lights are on forever. At least I do, I get sucked right into the exhilarating and exciting energy, and I certainly receive an abundance of it here. It’s contagious, but on the other hand it’s also very stressful. I’m aware that I need more time for myself and also more quiet time here. New York is the most difficult city when it comes to meditating and finding a peaceful moment. We have hideous, penetrating clatter, super bright lights and masses of distractions around us, if we want it or not. When you’re visiting, you might like all of this, but when you live here you might wonder how much longer you can take it. The early morning commute in the subway welcomes you with no remorse. Last week my sunglasses were on my head loosely and sadly, they ended up falling into the subway track. The train was so packed that somebody must have pushed me, and the sunglasses fell off my head.

I remember very clearly that when I moved to New York the transition was fairly easy for me, as I was integrated into the Swiss Airlines’ culture with ease. As I always say, in an expatriate assignment the assimilation of the working person is the easiest. You already know the product or services, the greater part of the company’s culture, as well as the mission and vision. So for me it was basically like changing my desk, which we did every day anyway. The hardest part of adapting, I would say, was picking up the phone: it was the language that was not as
in New York that Never Sleeps

fluent as now, the noise in a very open office space and then the phone in itself. I thought, whenever I hit a button, that I was hanging up on the person. It was not so easy. Now I’m used to it and I can even multitask while being on the phone. This was certainly a part of adapting to the speedy New York life-style.

Living alone in New York, I wondered if I would ever find a quiet place in the nonstop hustle and bustle. The first few weeks I visited the fine and luscious rose garden at the United Nations building and found some wonderful quiet time there. It was very beautiful and relaxing to stroll alongside the East River, looking at the grandiose building of the United Nations, where the world seems to reside. Here I was able to make a secret discovery, as secret as a rose garden. Unfortunately, they closed that beautiful garden, due to security reasons.

A few years later, when I decided to go back to school at Marymount Manhattan College, I walked from my office on 42nd Street to 71st Street each night. This allowed me to wander off with my thoughts and get ready for a new subject, “school.” Since I have always wanted to further my education, it was again a fairly easy transition to adapt to the new but strenuous schedule. I was aware that for the next four years my life would be filled with work from 9am until 5pm at the office of the Swiss Mission to the United Nations. Then I would change hats to become an active student, completing my bachelor degree in psychology until sometimes 10pm. Psychology has always intrigued me, so now was the time to get back to school and use my rusty brain cells. It was a new and exciting journey that I truly enjoyed embarking on.

The walks to school energized me; after getting through my work-day I looked forward to the interesting and stimulating classes at night. I would argue that the energy of New York contributed to my success.
I was recently negotiating for a new position. I usually don’t like to negotiate, but I have learned that if you don’t negotiate well, you will later not be satisfied with your salary or other elements of the job, especially if you constantly feel undervalued. I believe that men are a lot better at negotiating the salary packages they feel they deserve than women. This is one of the reasons experienced and well-qualified women are often lower-paid than their male counterparts. There might also be an unconscious bias on the part of the person you are negotiating with. My major learning experience from my last years in Switzerland though, was that you should not settle for a bad package. I learned that compromising on salary and status eventually lowers your motivation for a certain role, even if you love what you do.

We tend to say “Money isn’t everything,” which is basically a rationalization of our failure to reach the salary and grade level we expect and deserve. I have also heard statements like “We don’t care about titles here.” or “How will your title change how you perform on the job?”

I don’t believe these statements are true, especially if they come from a person who has already achieved a very high and respected level, such as a “director” or “partner.”

Maybe we (women) haven’t learned to negotiate well if we are used to having a male breadwinner at home. In the past a women’s salary might have just been an “additional” income, but today women like me contribute their share to the cost of living. In some cases we might not expect a man to pay for our home and we want to be independent.

I worked as a Global Mobility Leader in my last two roles, and was often involved in the package negotiations of expatriates. These packages can be very comforting, especially if the expat is really the only suitable person for the role. I observed that good negotiators do the following:

» They know exactly what their market value is, even if they go to a different host market.
» They never accept a lower net salary.
» They never accept a lower level.
» They want to understand the details of the role and of the package.
» They don’t accept the first written offer, but come back with suggestions.
» They have a back-up plan and don’t lay all their eggs in one basket.
» They have defined limits and are not willing to compromise.
They actually read the whole contract and attachments and raise questions on misleading provisions.

They don’t take all risks involved in an international assignment (such as tax risks, social security and health coverage risks, immigration risks).

So once I understood the details of my new role, I was very enthusiastic about this job. There were some disadvantages, compared to my former role. Sometimes I might not be sleeping at home every night of the week, as I would be meeting clients abroad. I was willing to be flexible, because I saw a lot of learning opportunities and because the company was a well-respected leader in my field. I was also ready to start on very short notice (less than two weeks) and shuffle around all my personal commitments.

I understood (as many times before) that it was critical that I start the job quickly, to take over from another person or pick up the shambles of the predecessor, who had already left (which happened to me most of the time).

I was getting concerned when we started to negotiate my salary. I thought I had already built up a good picture of my salary, bonus and title expectations. Sometimes circumstances change, but in my view, if the interviewers think you are the best candidate for the job, they should meet your expectations, especially if these have already been discussed earlier on in the process. Suddenly it seemed that my flexibility was taken for granted, while the offer of some of the basic discussion points in regard to the package (salary and title) were lower than expected.

I am usually hard-working, and my former managers were happy to have me on their teams, because I know what I am doing, and I can be left running on a long leash. Now, I wondered if it was a good basis for cooperation, if my future manager started reducing my value even before I started the job? When I put myself in the shoes of a hiring manager, I understand that there may be budget constraints, but shouldn’t these be discussed with your recruiters before they start their search? Shouldn’t recruiters be briefed on what a must-have is, and where this role is seen in the organizational hierarchy?

You get to know your counterpart very well when negotiating. I have seen cases where in the last minute assignees didn’t accept a job because of a bonus figure, and I have seen people resign and leave their employers because they were frustrated with the negotiation process for an international assignment. Also, many talented employees resign, when for the second or third time they expect a promotion and don’t get it. At the end of the day, we don’t just want to deliver, we also want a fair compensation. In my case, I turned down a great job offer, because in the last minute I found out that the level of the role was lower than originally communicated. Call me superficial, but for me the status that comes with a title is important, especially in an international context and when you need to build up your network from scratch. Once your clients, superiors and peers know you, the title might not be important, but in the beginning of a new role a title helps people orientate themselves. When you start on a higher level than in your last role, it is usually assumed that you were headhunted for this role. You gain credit. If you accept a lower level, it takes at least one or two years until you have built up the credentials and support needed for a promotion. I was not willing to compromise on the title. So, once in a while you might have to decline an offer and tell yourself that with the next negotiation you will start at an even higher level.

Should the “war for talents” become really serious, companies might also have to learn to invest more in negotiations with female candidates, because at the end of the day, women often have more of a choice to decline an offer, and they are better able to listen to their gut feeling.
Contact and connection – two words easily said. But these words, so easily said, affect us deeply. This impact depends on our experiences in childhood days – especially in early years.
Right from the second we are born, we immediately need contact and human relationships to survive. We know that instinctively. And mothers know – also by instinct – how to cater to this need. But what if, for some reason, a mother has no access to her natural instincts? What if a mother doesn’t respond to her child’s needs in the way this response is needed by the child? The reason might be that she simply doesn’t understand what the child is trying to tell her. Or maybe she is under stress and the crying of her child puts even more pressure on her.

The child’s unmet needs for connection, contact, relationship and emotional affection will be overlapped right from the beginning with feelings of helplessness, stress, fear and anger. And because of the failures of the environment, the child will very quickly learn to deal with these feelings on its own. This lesson will stay with the affected child for the rest of its live.

Really for the rest of life?

I say NO. The lessons we learned as children created emotional, cognitional and behavioural patterns. These determine our adult perception of how our environment responds to our needs – and in turn how we react. This process is actually good for us: It protects us from disappointment. But it also prevents us from engaging in new experiences. In a way we are stuck.

The way out

If we allow the assumption that all the emotions and sensations we experience when we come in contact with another person are just old patterns from our childhood, something in us can open up. What felt like a big knot can be put aside just from one moment to the other. This assumption allows us to ask ourselves: What if this knot is old? What if it is the old chaos of all the unsettled emotions and sensations we had when we were lying in our bed, in the cold and dark, and were crying for Mummy? And what if this knot has nothing to do with the person right in front of us? What if we don’t have to shut out our needs or protect ourselves? What if the here and now is different?

What if?

Thinking these thoughts may make you feel a little bit sad. Welcome this sadness. It’s the sadness of the child that once upon a time wanted contact and connection - and got ... nothing ... or too much. Feeling the sadness is your chance to leave this old pattern behind.

With the feeling of sadness you come in contact with the child you once were. And the moment you do that, you change the pattern, because in the old pattern you were alone. Now there is somebody. Somebody who knows what was missing. Somebody who can heal the results of the failures of the environment; and this somebody is you.

Then the old longing for somebody who will fulfil your needs can stop. You can look at the person in front of you as an adult – and no longer as a needy child. This is the moment contact and connection can start; without inner and outer boundaries.
November starts with the Sun in Scorpio and switches signs into Sagittarius on the 21st. During the month of November, two major eclipses taking place: the Solar eclipse (new moon) at 21° Scorpio 57 minutes on November 13th at 10:08pm, GMT and the Lunar eclipse (full moon) at 6° Gemini 47 minutes on November 28th at 2:46pm, GMT.

Another theme that dominates the heavens this month is that of the planet Mercury, which rules communication and short distance commuting, goes retrograde on the 6th in the sign of Sagittarius. The significance of this date isn't lost on the American public as they go to the polls to elect their next President. The irony of this is that the Moon is in Leo on the same day, which is the sign that represents kings and royalty. So how will Mercury and the Eclipses affect the rest of us mere mortals?

With the Sun in your sign this month, do what your sign does best: take time to reflect on how you want to move forward. Pay attention to your internal cues. In fact, it might be wiser to take a watch and wait attitude for most of this month before making any commitments.

Mercury goes retrograde in your sign and you may have to do a 180 degree turn because all the facts have not been revealed. It may be best if you refrain from blurting out your usual patter or you could end up with egg on your face.

For the past few years you have been feeling a push-pull mechanism regarding change. You’ll be happy to know that some issues that have been stewing on the back burner for some time are heading for a breakthrough by month end.

You may finally get some recognition for your innovative approach to getting things done. However, even as your responsibilities increase, you still have to continue kicking the tires as there are still many more modifications to be studied.

Your best inspiration comes from your dreams, so keep pen and paper handy next to your bed. Neptune, planet of the underworld, your ruler, goes direct around the 11th.

Be mindful of how you deploy your resources this month; you do not want to be caught short. Plan to keep some in reserve, which is not your strong suit, dear Aries, just in case you run into difficulties. Forewarned is forearmed.
TAURUS
April 20 – May 20

Love, relationship and partnerships are being scrutinized. Be mindful that you are only at the beginning of this process, and that the picture that is unfolding is rather blurred and frayed around the edges. With time and patience, the real issues will come into focus.

GEMINI
May 21 – June 20

Diet, health and hygiene habits are coming up for review. Watch out for times when you feel over-stressed and your nervous system runs amuck this month. Rome wasn’t built in a day, so take it nice and slow!

CANCER
June 21 – July 21

Issues around creativity and children will take center stage this month. Be open to exploring your inner self. Revisit those areas of creativity that came easily to you as a child. You may surprise yourself!

LEO
July 22 – August 22

A home makeover is under consideration. Remodeling doesn’t have to be expensive. Simply rearranging the furniture may satisfy this urge. Get estimates for the bigger jobs, but wait with the final decision-making till next month.

VIRGO
August 23 – September 22

Patience is your watchword this month. All your carefully laid plans are unraveling, no matter how fast you tap dance. Don’t be too quick to hit the send button this month, and factor in a lot more time into your commuting schedule.

LIBRA
September 23 – October 21

Finances and cash-flow are somewhat constrained. Venus, your ruler is in your sign at the beginning of the month, beckoning and tempting you to splurge. This is especially true now that the planet Saturn, which imposed restrictions on your sign over the last few years, has moved into Scorpio and won’t revisit for another 28 years.

Tech Alert! Make sure you back-up your PC. Mercury retrograde loves to play havoc with all things electronic. In fact, if you must purchase electronic or electrical appliances, it would be best to wait till next month, even for those individuals who are born with Mercury retrograde.
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