

## *You Can Do It!*

Before we parted, she told me “you’re inspiring me so much, you just have to write a book.”

“Oh Nancy, people have been telling me for years that I should write a book, but I don’t know what I’d say, or what I’d write about, or who’d want to read it.”

“I’d want to read it,” she assured. “If it wasn’t for trailblazing women like you, I wouldn’t be where I am.”

She and I stayed in touch, became friends on Facebook and sent occasional emails. She once told me that she did this and did that, mostly because, she said, “You gave me the confidence that I could do it.”

In the intervening time since meeting Nancy, I thought a lot about our conversation, especially after other women began telling me the same thing: “You ought to write a book!” So many women were telling me how my example and my stories had somehow helped them in their careers.

As I reflect back on my own path, I was a trailblazer in business, no doubt, as evidenced by the fact that I was often the only woman sitting on the board of either a bank or some other institution, or the only woman participating in a business meeting or non-profit group’s committee. I was even one of the first women ever invited to break the gender barrier in Rotary International.

A lot of working women in Broward County, Florida were in real estate during the 1970s, but my situation was different because I had started my own series of businesses. As the men sort of forgot I was a woman, they respected my opinions more. They admired my problem solving skills. There was a glass ceiling, for sure, but I was never aware of it or felt hindered by it.

My attitude was always “who says I can’t do that?” I have always felt that other people’s opinions do not have to limit any of us, we only limit ourselves. Their opinions are not reality.

I was a novelty without realizing it, but I was always careful to make an impression that wouldn’t hurt other women who were trying to enter the business world. These other women were looking at me like a bellwether.

In those days, some restaurants would not even let women in who wore pant suits; that's how nuts traditional social rules were at times. In response, I always projected the best image so everyone would take me seriously. I also respected divergent views and my secret was to try and find common threads between us. That is the best technique for conflict resolution. If we can agree on a thread, maybe we can create a spoon.

This book is for women who want to have a bigger career, or a different career, but it can be helpful to anyone really. It's about building confidence to take risks and assert goals. A thirty-something-businesswoman named Maria commented to me: "It's about learning to feel powerful enough to claim what we want. Women don't always feel worthy. We are still programmed to hold back, not to aggressively pursue what we want."

My granddaughter, Sarah, inspired me too, by what she wanted to see in this book. These are some of her thoughts: "What is relevant, in a timeless way, is learning that we need to feel confidence. Confidence is a huge issue. Feeling confident and knowing how to affect that personal connection in order to achieve goals; treating people with respect and learning to see situations from the other person's point of view; standing your ground and believing that what you want is worth fighting for; and being able to push forward when necessary because women are not usually trained or raised to be that way. It's also okay to make yourself heard, or you won't be heard. This applies to a lot of areas of life. All of this is human centered and all of us could benefit from developing our abilities to be confident, be forward and be heard."

When my daughter Debbie was a little kid still learning to put on shoes and socks, she would become annoyed as her little sock would somehow get stuck and not make it over her heel to pull all the way up. Rather than fix it for her, I created a little song, "You Can Do It," and we would sing the lyrics "you can do it" over and over. Soon she would be pulling that sock on and singing, turning a frustrating experience into a fun one. The lesson from her little socks still applies and now serves decades later as this book's title.

## *You Can Do It!*

What is it that pushes us to succeed or to just go for it? I think it is a knowing that there is a force within us that guides and encourages us. It might manifest as chutzpah, moxie, or nerve, or just as a driving need to accomplish something.

This book can inspire anyone, and it includes some things that are valuable to starting a business and increasing your sales, building your business through choosing the right employees, not taking yourself too seriously, and realizing that rejection of your ideas is not to be taken personally.

Have confidence in your own abilities to make your life happen as you know it can be! Think that you can do it and you are halfway there! I hope this book deeply impacts you as you relate my stories directly to helping give direction to your ideas and transform your life! Even if you don't ever create a business or switch from your current job, this book is about cultivating confidence.

Confidence is revealed by that extra zing in your step, that glow on your face and that knowingness in your smile. It makes you go for it! Like Henry Ford said, "If you think you can or you think you can't, you're right."

This book is meant to show you that YES, You Can Do It!