



# Robbie Motter

## Victorious Woman of the Month

### May 2008

### *“It’s All About Showing Up”*

“*SHOWING UP* is like a treasure map: you never know what riches you’ll find until you get to the next spot.” That isn’t just the advice Robbie gives to women...it’s the adage by which she lives. She’s proved it during her seventy years, through a difficult childhood, divorce, single parenting, job changes and promotions, and unexpected events. No matter what happened, Robbie *showed up* and took control of her life, modeling hope, encouragement and inspiration.

Robbie spent most of her childhood in either foster homes or homes for children. To get through difficult days, she often dreamed about turning eighteen because, she believed, that’s when her “happily ever after” would begin. However, by the time Robbie was fifteen, she was already on her own. She rented a room in a San Francisco boarding house and, by lying about her age, found a ground level office job. In order to get ahead, Robbie did everything she could to learn each person’s job, usually *showing up* extra early and staying really late. What she lacked in formal education, Robbie made up for in “street smarts” or common sense, a skill often preferred by employers over book knowledge. Her ambition and practicality was rewarded with promotions.

During her twenties and forties, Robbie married and divorced twice. The unions produced some good times and bad, but most importantly, gave Robbie her son and her two daughters. With no alimony or child support, Robbie did what every Victorious Woman does: she looked at her options and made a decision. She says, “My choices were to feel sorry about what was happening or to just go out and work harder to support the children, which is what I did. It was not easy and many times I worked two and three jobs. But I always made sure my children were well cared for.” During those years, her children were a “driving force” and Robbie made sure she *showed up* in the communities where her children could get the best education possible. She often sacrificed her own comfort, but never her belief that she was doing the best for her children and doing something good for herself too.

In addition, Robbie did something that every Victorious Woman has to do in order to achieve victory: she decided to live with SELF-control. Every woman has her own way of explaining how they develop their SELF-control. Robbie describes it this way, “I decided that who I was and where I was going was totally up to me. My life was *my* journey and no one else was the driver in that journey but *me*. That meant I really had to go within and find out *Who Was I?* and *Where Did I Want to Go?* and *What Did I Need to Learn to Get There?* I still, to this day, pretty much live my life that way. *I show up.*”

In addition to asking herself – and answering – those weighty questions, Robbie acknowledges “some wonderful men mentors who were my bosses. They always told me how smart I was and how I could make a difference and to just do my passion and it would all work out for me. They were correct. Once I found my passion and started living it, my life became simpler and also more successful.”

Step by step, Robbie *showed up* in one new position after another, each one a bigger career opportunity. Her well-honed people skills got her into management. She worked in Hawaii, Nebraska, Texas, New York and Washington, DC. With each new job, she assumed increasingly more seniority – and power – and, Robbie tells us, “the last 15 years of my corporate career was spent in very high level positions with a large staff to supervise.”

By 1985, Robbie was at the top of her field and working in a high level position in Washington DC. She figured if she was ever going to make a break and go out on her own, that was time. Her company, Contacts Unlimited, was designed to help small business owners learn how to do business with the government. Not only did Robbie *NOT* have a lot of capital for a start-up, but since there could be a conflict of interest, she *couldn’t* and *didn’t* get started until she left her government position. Meanwhile, two of her children, who were still living with her, weren’t sure that Robbie was making a good decision. In fact, they often told Robbie they’d be happier if she found a “regular” job.

Though considering their opinion, Robbie was sure of two things: (1) she wanted to be there for her children to listen if they needed her, and mentor them if they asked, believing, “My children’s success depended on me helping them get a wonderful education and being there to share good and bad times,” but also, (2) eventually, her children would want to leave the nest and she wanted to be personally and professionally ready so she could happily let them go. So, as much as Robbie loved and honored her children, she understood the importance of *showing up in her own life* also.

Though it wasn’t easy getting new clients, and success meant stretching out of her comfort zone almost daily, Robbie worked hard and persisted. She isn’t uncomfortable admitting, “Yes, there *were* times I did not think I could do it, but I never gave up. I just hung in there and, eventually, the clients came.”

Over the next ten years, Robbie grew her business and her children married. Robbie was proud of herself, her accomplishments and her “wonderful children” who were then and are still among “my greatest achievements.”

One day in 1996, Robbie crossed a bad path with a drunk driver. It almost ended her life, and though she survived, her life and her business were permanently changed. Robbie suffered severe back injuries. The pain was so severe that she couldn't walk and was in therapy for a year. As a result, flying around the country to government bases and similar venues had to end. It meant another career change, this time within the parameters of physical challenges.

Fortunately, Robbie found a job doing phone work. During the corporate buyout of a major drugstore chain, Robbie helped them make the transition by staffing stores all across the state with "fleets of people" every day to make all the price changes. Robbie continued to "show up" – even though it meant lying flat on the floor of her living room to make the phone calls. In addition to the overwhelming physical challenge, staffing the stores with temporary help was emotionally and mentally difficult too because, she recalls, "each day I had to really work hard using *all* my people skills." Still, Robbie affirms, "every day is a new adventure and I truly believe we all get stuff into our lives but I know for certain the good Lord never gives us more than we can handle and each lesson is so valuable to our continued growth."

Today, in good health and ever-active, in true Robbie-style, she continues to "show up" as a speaker, seminar leader, mentor, marketing specialist, tireless volunteer, television co-host, master networker, and champion of women and their victories. She was the founder of the Professional Women's Roundtable (PWR) and served as its Executive Director for many years. She is the Gold Founding sponsor of the FOR YOU NETWORK™ an affiliate of the National Association of Executive Females (NAFE), which helps women mentor each other for personal and professional success. Robbie also serves as Western & Mid-Atlantic Regional Coordinator for NAFE, headquartered in New York.

When she's asked what advice she gives to other women experiencing difficulties, Robbie advocates developing a lifestyle that lends itself to seeing life as "an on-going journey." She suggests that women adopt the same "glass half-full" attitude she did throughout her challenges, that is, she "looked at them as opportunities to grow and discover and always asked, 'what can I learn from this?'" When Robbie mentors, she encourages her mentees to persist in their efforts to achieve their goals. She counsels, "If we don't give up there is always another path that takes us down the road to help us survive and to help us to make the money we need to live...it's amazing how the universe will put the right person in front of us. ASK FOR HELP and put it out there." According to Robbie, *that's the secret behind showing up.*

Robbie offers more tips to the women she mentors. They are laden with priceless wisdom. Here are a few:

- Surround yourself with positive women;
- Never stop learning or helping others. Join an organization (one like NAFE that has networks across the country) so that you can mentor and bond with positive people. Let them know what you need and be sure and thank people when they do open a door for you;
- "Do" your passion. If you aren't sure what your passion is, stop and look at what totally makes you happy;
- Think out of the box;
- Refuse to listen to negative influences in their lives;
- Take chances; and most of all...
- *HAVE FUN* in your life!

***Robbie, your victorious life models  
Hope, Encouragement and Inspiration!  
You demonstrate how life's tapestry can only be fully appreciated  
when we look at it from the upside's big picture and **NOT**  
when we focus on the underside of stringy pieces and loose ends.***

***We are so grateful for your wise words...  
And for enriching so many women's lives by  
**SHOWING UP!!*****

Robbie is a speaker and seminar trainer, has been honored with multiple awards, co-hosts a radio and television talk show, and much more! Read more about Robbie and Contacts Unlimited, at:

<http://rmotter.com>, <http://4younetwork.org>, <http://www.divaregistry.com>, <http://www.asla.com>