

WENDY MACKOWSKI

VICTORIOUS WOMAN OF THE MONTH

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Starting Over. Whether we choose it, or it chooses us, it's an experience that brings with it many challenges. When Wendy Mackowski started over, she had no clue how overcoming her obstacles would lead her to a new career...and an exciting new life.

Until 1999, Wendy lived all her forty-plus years in northern California, not far from its Pacific coastline. She loved everything about her home state: the weather, the ocean, the openness, the many vegetarian restaurants, her circle of friends, and more. She considered herself the quintessential California Girl.

A stay-at-home mom with two teenagers, Wendy juggled her at-home responsibilities with a part time job while keeping a thought for her future, empty nest career decisions. Wendy had just earned a Masters Degree in Educational Counseling when her spouse, Jim, started noticing changes at his job – ones with long-term impact.

Believing the stability of his job could be threatened, he looked around the company for other opportunities. Jim found a management position on the east coast and told Wendy about it. Though it would be a drastic change for the entire family, the job seemed like a good career move and the most logical step to take. *But the east coast?* Wendy wasn't sure.

Jim interviewed for and got the job. Their family was moving to Delaware. Everyone felt a bit shocked at first. Wendy set the tone for them by deciding to look on the move as a new adventure. It was, and the challenges came fast and furious.

Aside from the obvious moving logistics and challenges of setting up a new household, there was the task of getting her son and daughter into their respective schools and comfortable in their new surroundings – no easy task with teenagers. And then there was snow – something that mid-western-born Jim grew up with, but Wendy and her children had to learn to handle. Their most common ground resulted from the family's learning experiences with the cultural differences between the laid back California lifestyle and the tighter, more well-ordered one of Delaware. It was quite an adjustment.


Once settled into her new home in Delaware, Wendy started looking for a job. Seeking work as a university counselor, Wendy found there were no jobs to be had. "I had no network to draw from," Wendy explained. "And I was unfamiliar with the area, the people and the culture."

Frustrated, Wendy turned inward, trusting that the universe would guide her in the right direction. She began a series of spiritual rituals that she practiced faithfully. She included meditation, journaling, and exercise, and tuning to her inner voice as part of her every day routine. She also continued to do practical, job-search activities.

Slowly a new direction emerged. Wendy came upon the field of Life Coaching, then in its infancy. It seemed to fit her skills and interests perfectly. So she researched schools and found a program that best fit her value system and budget. She took courses and, over the next two years, completed enough education and practicum requirements to earn her coaching certification.

Once she had her credentials in line, Wendy started her practice. That's when her greatest challenges emerged. The field of Life Coaching was relatively unknown and she would not only have to promote herself, but the service she was offering. Only just getting settled into her new home, the prospect of building a new business from the ground up – in a relatively unknown field, in a new location where she knew absolutely no one – seemed overwhelming. Wendy confesses, "I was very insecure about marketing myself and fitting in with these people I didn't know."

Using coaching skills on herself, Wendy assessed her strengths. Knowing her biggest asset was her people skills, she quickly went to work finding and connecting with new people.



"I joined every networking group I could find," she recalls, and she never said no to an opportunity to meet people. She reenergized her social life and with it came new opportunities for new prospects. She set up classes at local libraries and through adult education programs. Broadening her audience, she looked for opportunities to speak at conferences and for associations. She built a network and focused daily on expanding it.

While Wendy loved what she was doing, it wasn't without its obstacles. She admits, "I would sometimes feel things were too hard and I should just go get a regular job with a regular paycheck. I would get very tired of self-marketing!" What kept her motivated were "the people I was helping. Whenever I stopped making it about me and could focus on the reason I was doing this work, it kept me going. With the help of her husband, who offered a place to vent her frustrations and fears, plus wonderful friends and a couple coaches, Wendy saw that the work she was doing truly impacted the lives of those she touched.

Taking inspiration from the people she coached, Wendy persisted. She built her website, www.innernorthcoaching.com, wrote lots of articles, joined the Philadelphia coaches association, and kept learning more about how to get better at her business. Gradually, she gained both visibility and credibility and her coaching practice grew.

Wendy's turning point came when the Laws of Attraction "kicked in." The basic principals are derived from the ideas that "like attracts like and how one thinks determines what one gets from life." Using these principles and teaching them to others, Wendy's business soared. She went from a fledgling start-up in a new field and new market to a full practice of clients and classes, as well as products sold via her website.

By the end of 2006, Wendy was feeling pretty good about her accomplishments. However, in spite of frequent visits back to California to visit her mother and sister, Wendy felt homesick. She began working with the Laws of Attraction again, this time for a way home.

One day, Jim called Wendy and told her that the company was reorganizing and his job was being eliminated. At first shocked, once they thought about it, neither Wendy nor Jim saw it as a bad event. For them it was the nudge they needed to get back to California. Almost as soon as they decided, practically from out of the blue, they found a temporary apartment in Southern California. With their now-grown children out of the house, and one of them already relocated back to his old hometown, the couple moved quickly.

Though happy to be back in the state she loves, Wendy once again faces the challenge of knowing no one and having to build her business again. However, trusting in herself and her own higher wisdom, she continues to have the courage to move out of her comfort zone. As a result, she has a new confidence in herself that – until now – she didn't know existed. She's decided to see her sometimes daunting challenge as an opportunity to reevaluate and recreate her business in a new way.

When speaking to women, Wendy advises, "Always be true to yourself. Follow your own heart and your own passion and know that in doing so there will be lots of personal fears to overcome. I think it's set up that way. Listen to and honor the wise voice within that will always give you the right answers." It's the advice Wendy follows every day. She intends to continue spreading that knowledge no matter where in the country she lands. And, because she followed her passion and stayed true to herself and her goals, she's never regretted any of the decisions she's made...and she's helping other women to do the same.

Thanks Wendy!

Your new career gave you the ability to embrace change
and see the unknown as opportunities for personal & professional evolution.
Little else could be more victorious!

Thanks for modeling the way!

**You can learn more about Wendy Mackowski at her website
<http://www.innernorth.com>**