

## KNOW WHO'S GOT YOUR BACK

Do you sometimes feel like you are all alone out in the world trying to make a difference? Do you think you have to do it ALL, and that you are the only one who truly cares about getting things done or making an important impact - whether it's a community project, excellence at work, building a business or even maintaining an orderly home? Do you find that in the process of doing and giving, you become depleted, worn out and ultimately ineffective?

When you look at successful people, there is a misperception that great people do it all. They are independent super heroes who do everything with grace and ease, and still have a smile on their faces. The media, mentors, teachers, and other well-intended people tell us, that in order to flourish, you have to work harder and keep going at all costs.

The truth is... the happiest and most successful people know they can't do it all and have built a life filled with an abundance of help and support from many different people. They know how to sustain their success because they balance their own roles with enlisting and receiving the aid of others. They understand who's got their back, create reciprocal relationships in which both people benefit and continually seek out supporters who align with their mission, passion and purpose.

No matter what your role is, being successful in life requires leadership, confidence and discernment in order to claim what you are best at doing, knowing when to delegate to others and recognizing whom you can count on. Successful people are highly motivated, yet they realize they do not need to be the best at everything. They trust others, let go of control, stay open to change, and know when "done is sometimes better than perfect." Most importantly, they know how to build a stockpile of support for whatever they are trying to accomplish and then, boldly demand it when needed.

My best example of this was my own decision to hire my assistant, Meredith, in the spring of 2006. I had started my Life Coaching business at the end of 2003, working only part-time so I could continue to prioritize my children's needs while they were young. Yet, I began to understand that if I wanted to expand my services, I would need help. I was scared to make the commitment, not knowing if I could really afford it. Yet, I knew I had to trust that hiring an assistant, along with having a coach, a mentor, creative collaborators and emotional supporters, was the next best step, and it was. Meredith does what she is best at by handling details, while it frees me up to do what I love and am best at doing, and that is inspiring sustainable change in others. Here is a coaching exercise to assist you in building a strong foundation and your ultimate pillars of support.

### A COACHING EXERCISE TO CREATE YOUR ARMY OF ADVOCATES:

Do you know who's got your back? Do you know who is truly there for you, and for what situations? Let the following exercise allow you to identify and create your best support system.

1. Make a list of your biggest fans and supporters.
2. Consider the various parts of your life, and think about who supports you in each of the following areas:
  - Personal
  - Professional
  - Emotional
  - Spiritual
  - Relationships
  - Social/Cultural
  - Financial
  - Environmental
  - Physical/Medical
  - Community
3. Now consider anything you are struggling with. Write down three things that bother you the most or you would like to change. What needs your attention the most?
4. Write down 4 people who can support you for each challenge. Where are you on the list?
5. Think about one thing each of these people can do to support you.
6. Consider any other ways you can get your needs met (hiring someone or asking a friend vs. doing it yourself.)
7. Now, decide and ask for what you need. People do not know what you truly want unless you make a genuine request. Remember, not asking is an automatic no.
8. Don't forget that relationships are reciprocal, so say thank you, pay on time and honor the people that assist you in being authentically fabulous.

Having people who support you not only allows you to balance and expand yourself and your services, but can also establish a more creative and synergistic collaboration that might not exist otherwise. Your army of advocates can ground you, inspire you, empathize with you, love you and pick you up when needed. The power of these interdependent connections will assist in your achievements and form life-long bonds that will make the journey much more pleasurable and fulfilling along the way.

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