

your
LION
INSIDE

*Tapping into the
Power Within*



KIMBERLY FAITH

Your Lion Inside

Tapping Into The Power Within

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The characters and all stories in this book are real people. The names and identifying details such as individual circumstances, occupations, physical attributes, and geographical indicators have been changed to protect the privacy of individuals.

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Dedicated to Susan B., Rose Agnes, Linda Diann, Linda Sherrill, Heather Marie,
my daughters, nieces, granddaughters, great granddaughters,
and all of my #sweetsisters around the globe . . .

As our past, present, and future intersects,
may our PASSION be timeless,
our LOVE everlasting,
and H.O.P.E. prevail.

May we have FAITH in each other and in ourselves.

Contents

A GIFT FOR YOU	7
BREAKING FREE	9
TIME IS AN ILLUSION	11
THE GLASS CEILING IS ALSO A MIRROR	17
THE DNA OF THOUGHT	41
THE TOOLKIT	45
MEET THE SISTERHOOD	55
Sister 1 – The Kari Story	I expect perfection.
Sister 2 – The Ranee Story	I have to meet all demands.
Sister 3 – The Gabriella Story	I need permission/approval.
Sister 4 – The Darsha Story	I should accept what is said.
Sister 5 – The Avalene Story	I'm not qualified enough.
Sister 6 – The Jalila Story	If I work hard enough, I will be rewarded.
Sister 7 – The Nikki Story	I'm okay in the background.
HOW THE SISTERS COME TO LIFE	133
THE SISTERHOOD MOURNS A LOSS	149
BEFORE I KNEW THE SISTERHOOD	151
WHEN WE ARE TEMPTED TO GIVE IN	165

CONCLUSION	183
A MESSAGE TO MY SWEET SISTERS	191
A FABULOUS FABLE FOR OUR GIRLS	193
WAYS TO SPOT (AND REWRITE) THE NARRATIVE	197
ABOUT THE AUTHOR	211
NOTES	215
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	229

A Gift for You

The reality is that we have an enemy far greater than any regime, any organizational intent, any unconscious bias, any principle designed to keep us in our place. There was a time when we had to battle the collective because the culture was overpowering.

The collective was, and sometimes still is, wrong. And in many places around the world, the battle for the rights of women is still going on – as it should. But while we are looking at that foe, another is trying to sneak in.

Slowly. In stealth mode. Insidious. Quiet, yet so pervasive many don't see it.

Blinded to reality much like a fish is to water.

I saw it and want you to see it too.

As long as we believe the answer is **out there** - above us, below us, beside us - we will never fully embrace the real source of our power.

Each morning when you look in the mirror

~ in the reflection ~

IS the answer you seek.

This collection of wisdom serves as a light in the darkness. A manual of truth. A balm for the battered soul who knows, deep down, there is so much more. Driven by a deep-seated desire to BE more – DO more – GIVE more.

Therein lies the paradox.

8 Your LION Inside

You are already enough. More than enough.

Together, let us remove the dust that has dimmed the treasure and gently begin polishing what is underneath - for you and the whole world to see.

I am enough and so are you,

A handwritten signature in teal ink that reads "Kim". The letters are fluid and cursive, with a long tail on the 'm'.

Breaking Free

“We can’t take a bag of change here, lady!” the clerk said gruffly and loudly. The seven people behind me in line waiting to check out all stared at me. *All I want to do is buy three gallons of gas so I can see my daughter*, I wanted to scream. Instead, I turned and ran out of the store, clutching my bag of change with tears streaming down my face. It was June of 2008 and gas had skyrocketed to over \$4.00 a gallon. I dumped the change onto the seat of my car, pulled out the quarters and went back in to purchase one gallon of gas. I wanted to see my daughter before she left for school.

In our few precious minutes together, my daughter’s happiness filled me with the fuel I needed to last another day. After saying goodbye, I drove to the storage building where everything I owned was stuffed into a 10 x 10 unit. While searching for a change of clothes, I stumbled and fell. Rage, blame and fear claimed what little sanity I had left. I remember sitting on the floor, back up against the wall, looking out at the clear blue sky and asking myself, “How did I get here?”

The day progressively got worse – calls from one debt collector after another, voicemails with threats from an investor relationship gone terribly wrong. I was separated from the husband at the time, and we were alternating months as to who would live in the house with our daughter Heather. It was my turn to live away only, I had nowhere to go. I had no money in my checking account,

no credit card that worked and the start-up I had so passionately launched was crashing around me. All I had was that damn bag of change.

I remember vividly coming to terms with the fact that things were so messed up the world would be better without me. I was driving down Interstate 85 alongside a section of cement medians and it hit me that with a simple flick of a wrist, it could be over. The pain could end. The temptation was *so strong* . . . just think of all the problems it would solve! The million-dollar life insurance policy would take care of everyone who was losing money . . . I would not be able to make any more wrong decisions . . . everyone would heal and move on. I was a failure anyway, so what value could I possibly have left? I knew I was close to making an irreversible decision.

Emotionally, I crossed a dangerous line that night. In the darkness and tears, I had a flashback to something I used to teach in systems thinking, *Structures drive behavior* I would tell audiences. Right then I made a rule – a structure – that I would never ride on the highway again at night. And I didn't for nine months while I fought to save the company my daughter and I started called Sassytails.

I don't know when it happened . . . I don't know *how* it happened . . . but somewhere along the way, I decided I didn't want my story to end that way. I made a conscious choice to teach my daughter *how to fail with grace*.

That dark time in my life forced me to re-evaluate everything I once knew and believed.

Despite the darkness, I discovered a powerful path to freedom.

A freedom which can take life to new heights.

This [manifesto of hope](#) can take you there too.

Time is an Illusion

The afternoon of Wednesday, March 7, began in a remarkably mundane manner. On the way home, I stopped to vacuum my car. When I inserted my first quarter into the slot, it wouldn't fit. *Broken again?* I thought. But no, my quarters were too big. How did that happen? I looked closer – in my hand were several Susan B. Anthony coins. *Haven't seen those in a while,* I thought. I dug up the required quarters and went about my mundane day.

Reading the news the next morning, I saw that it was International Women's Day. As my husband and I headed out to meet his daughters Alicia and Abby for breakfast, I had a thought. *I should give those Susan B. Anthony coins to our granddaughters in celebration of the day.*

But first, some googling. I needed to refresh my knowledge on the achievements of [Susan B. Anthony](#) so I'd be able to explain them in a way that would make sense to a curious 7-year-old.

At breakfast, my 3-year-old granddaughter, Rowen, silently accepted her coins with a hug and a smile. My 7-year-old Ava, as predicted, was full of questions. "Why did she have to fight to vote?" "Haven't women always had the right to vote?" I had to explain to her that her great grandmother Rose was born *before* women had the right to vote. She was SO surprised - she could not comprehend there was ever a time when women could not vote. Once I explained it, she said, "Thank goodness for Susan B. and all of her friends!"

On the drive home, I thought about the journey of the past 100 years and great grandmother Rose, my 101-year-old Italian mother-in-law. Born February 22, 1916, a decade after Susan B. Anthony passed away, my mother-in-law was four when the 19th Amendment was ratified on August 18, 1920.

A momentous occasion in women's history - a history that was staring me in the face, figuratively and literally. Susan B. Anthony, in spirit, and Rose Agnes, in the living room asleep. Day by day, as history and the future collided in the here and now, the purpose of this book was becoming clearer.

And that was the end of Susan B. Anthony and me.

Or so I thought.

Later that afternoon, I was desperate for a break from writing the first draft of this book. For some reason, a certain book called out to me, *The Great Work of Your Life* by Stephen Cope. I'd started reading it months ago, and then, well, life got in the way. But the book's message - to live your truth or sacred duty, your dharma - had encouraged me before. I guess I was searching for further inspiration.

I read about how Jane Goodall, Henry David Thoreau, and Robert Frost lived their dharma. All very inspirational and thought provoking. Then, in chapter six, I saw an eerily familiar name. Susan B. Anthony.

I almost dropped the book!

So, Ms. Anthony and I meet again. All within a 24-hour period and on International Women's Day, no less. Obviously, Susan B. Anthony had something to teach me - and my granddaughters.

I was ready to listen. Recently, in working on this book, I had hit an internal wall. Deep down, I knew I had an important message to share with the world, but still, I was struggling with self-doubt. *What right did I have to live LARGE and shout to the world the wisdom I know as truth? Why am I living small, like a kitten, when I have the strength of a lion trapped inside?*

Unfortunately, I know I am not alone in these struggles. I've been asked these same questions thousands of times after training a roomful of incredibly talented professional women.

Why are *they* living so small when they have so much to offer the world? Why are *they* introducing themselves in a way that does NOT own the value they bring to the table?

Why is it so difficult for us all to accept a mere compliment, much less fully embrace the gifts *we* have to offer the world?

[Susan B. Anthony](#) did indeed have a message that day.

The same sentence that described her life - "No great character in American history has been more ill-served by stereotyping, lame biographies, and stuffy hagiography" - also describes women who pursue leadership positions today. One hundred years later, and here we are, fighting the same fight.

Did you know that Susan B. Anthony would not be content to be a "good enough" public speaker? She had to be great and she became single-minded in her practice. She found a coach in her closest friend, [Elizabeth Cady Stanton](#). Everything - the way she dressed, the way she took care of herself, even the way she spoke - was re-examined. She poured her heart into doing whatever it took to become the powerful person she knew she MUST be to make a difference.

Her [passion](#) fueled her when the world would not.

Clarina Howard Nichols, another women's rights advocate, wrote to Susan, "It is most invigorating to watch the development of a woman in the work for humanity:

- first, anxious for the cause and depressed with a sense of her own inability;
- next, partial success of timid efforts creating a hope;
- next, a faith;
- and then the fruition of complete self-devotion. Such will be your history."

Such will be your history, I whispered over and over again.

And then came the sentence that in my eyes changed Susan B. Anthony from a teacher to a sister: “Susan B. Anthony was determined not only to act on behalf of women, but to mobilize women to act for themselves.”

There it was, THAT was the reason I was writing this book. The. Exact. Same. Reason. **TO MOBILIZE WOMEN TO ACT FOR THEMSELVES.**

Touched at my core, I was overwhelmed with gratitude for this sister from our past. We hear you, sweet sister. We hear you.

It was 9:47 p.m. on March 8, 2017, the evening of [International Women's Day](#).

AWARENESS IS THE FIRST STEP

*Your conscious mind has been telling you one story
but your unconscious mind is writing a different one.*

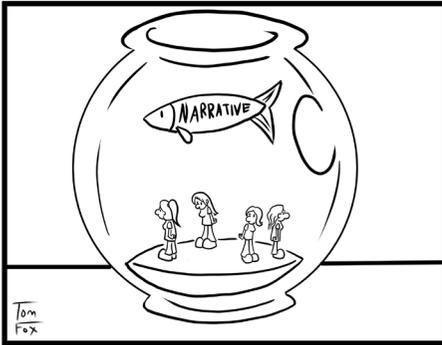
Awareness is the first step when it comes to *seeing* the world differently. When we are in “it,” it is like swimming in a fishbowl. We don’t realize the ones beside us are also in the fishbowl because we are all in the water, looking out. I believe the same thing is happening to women: we are in the fishbowl with a narrative - one that is blinding us to our personal power - and we don’t even know it.

Awareness plucks you out of the fishbowl, shakes you off and sets you down next to it, allowing you to see clearly for the first time. When your perspective changes, everything begins to shift.

Every single disruption we see happening today is because someone chose to step outside of a “fishbowl” to see things differently. An internal choice was made *first* to see things differently. The #MeToo movement is one example of what happens when women jump out of the

fishbowl, see the Narrative for what it really is and disrupt it. And it is only the beginning.

This book is about jumping out of the [fishbowl](#). The time has come to disrupt your own self.



The Glass Ceiling Is Also a Mirror

Once upon a time (in 2017), a newly married couple was in their kitchen, enjoying each other's company as they prepared pot roast for dinner. The husband watched his wife cut off both ends of the pot roast before seasoning it and placing it in the oven. He thought it odd – he'd never seen anyone in his family do that. "Honey, why did you cut off both ends of the pot roast?"

She paused briefly and said, "I'm not sure. My mother always did."

At the next family gathering, the husband approached his mother-in-law. He explained what his lovely wife did and then asked why she cut the ends off the pot roast. His mother-in-law paused—briefly—and said, "My mother always did." The mystery continued.

Weeks later, the family gathered to visit their grandmother at the retirement community she now calls home. The newlywed couple could not help but approach the grandmother, 100 years old, born in 1917. They explained the scenario and asked why she cut off the ends of the pot roast. The grandmother looked at her daughter and granddaughter. "Because my pan was too small!" she said.

Subsequent generations behaved a certain way because of the information they absorbed from observation. No big discussions. It was not written down as part of the recipe. It simply happened in the busyness of life. The unwritten

rules snapped into place. The original problem—a too-small pan—was no longer an issue.

Here we are in 2017. A world away from 1917. Or are we?

REWRITING THE NARRATIVE

Unlike Susan B. Anthony, we live in a society where many (not all by far) people value women and actually want us at the table. We live in the era of Sheryl Sandberg's *Lean In*. Like many, I was thrilled when *Lean In: Women, Work and the Will to Lead* was published. It was exhilarating and empowering to see a woman with such influence change the conversation from what women can't do to what we can do. It was 2013, and I'd been working with numerous women's groups on many issues Ms. Sandberg had addressed. The national dialogue that followed was invigorating, passionate, and fueled a movement in much need of re-energizing.

But then, the [pushback](#) began. The collective conversation escalated into a debate about the role women played in leaning in vs. the role organizations had in breaking the glass ceiling. The pendulum swung from empowering women to blaming the culture, the companies, the good ole boys, and "the system." It reached a fevered pitch when, for the first time in history, a woman was a major party's nominee for President of the United States. We watched live, in color, as the ugliness of the campaign spilled toxicity into the culture. As the results of the election became a reality, tears rolled down the faces of hundreds of thousands of women—young and old—who believed all hope was lost. The heartbreak was real.

The ongoing collective narrative—women must overcome challenges, women are held down by "the system," women must endure inaccurate perceptions—has run amok in the media. Daily, the headlines, tweets, editorials, and updates are reinforcing a mindset that I believe is now standing in our way. What is the mindset? It is our view of *the Narrative*.

The Narrative is the collective storyline we have been listening to since birth—we've heard it from our families, from society, and from the workplace – regardless of where we may live in the world. It has so infiltrated the culture that we have embraced these very distorted perceptions as truth—and nothing could be farther from the Truth. We might not be able to see it, but we sure can *feel* it. It's akin to a ton of bricks sitting on our shoulders, each one representing the boundaries drawn *for* us, the boxes created to *contain* us, and the beliefs suffocating our potential. It is as if every baby girl was given a book at birth on how to live life, already half-written *by someone else* with the unspoken expectation to simply “deal with it.” **We have another choice.** The #MeToo movement is a powerful testament to the choices we do have - a pivotal step on the journey ahead to dismantle the Narrative, brick by brick. Once the Narrative is brought to our attention, we begin to see it for what it really is. Then, and only then, can we consciously choose to close that half-written book and open a new one with beautiful, blank pages to create our reality. Only then will the truth of our potential—our story—come to light. Only then will we truly tap into the power within freeing the lion inside.

A new narrative is asking—begging—to be written. Who will write it? We will. I invite you to join me in authoring this new and necessary narrative. Humanity depends on it.

VICTIMHOOD, POWERLESSNESS AND JUST: THE MEAN GIRLS OF YOUR MINDSET

Victimhood. She was someone I knew all too well, but I had to say goodbye to her years ago. Victimhood seems like a friend at first, shifting your focus from what **you** need to do to what everyone else has done **to you**. It is comforting to have someone take your problems away, to give you a break from your own reality. That escapism is the lure of social media, [our devices](#), and reality television. It is also the foundation for addictions to food, alcohol, and drugs.

Much like other debilitating distractions, Victimhood can be mesmerizing. Empty promises of addressing the pain right now, **today**.

If they would do this or that, Victimhood whispers. *Others need to do their part*. At first, hanging out with Victimhood seems to be helping, until you meet her other friends. Powerlessness—nicknamed “*I can’t!*”—is Victimhood’s best friend. Powerlessness rears her ugly head when Victimhood begins to lose her luster. Drama, friend to both, waits in the shadows to stake her claim too.

“*What do you mean you are tired?*” Victimhood demands. “*Stay the course . . . they OWE you.*”

Powerlessness chimes in, “*How dare they do these things to you. How dare they ask so much of you!*”

“*Don’t they know YOU are the victim here?*” Victimhood says.

“*Just keep doing what you are doing,*” a new voice appears. It’s Just, perhaps the most dangerous girl of the group, for she can explain away anything.

If they could JUST . . .

I was JUST trying to . . .

I would be successful if they would JUST . . .

If they would JUST remove the barriers . . .

If they would JUST stop judging me by their standards . . .

I could earn more if I JUST had a chance . . .

If they could JUST see how *their* bias is standing in our way. . .

THE POWER IGNITES WITHIN FIRST

I know there are larger societal issues that play a big role in the way women are treated, from the bedroom to the boardroom to the big screen. Yes, we absolutely must slay the dragon of disrespect every time it rears its head. However, after many, many years spent coaching women, I have found that if

our focus remains external, if we are always looking at what others are doing *to us*, we miss countless opportunities *for us*. The real power comes when we look within. Once you shift your focus internally, you will find that you CAN change YOUR life.

Much like the energy of an atom, which creates everything, you also have the power to create. Create a new life, a new movement, a new reality for yourself and for others. Once the power is ignited within, it cannot be contained. The power to shift the direction for the next generation lies inside each one of us. As we consciously shift our focus, this new perspective has the potential to create a tsunami of change. One woman—one sister—at a time.

Seeing through the Narrative and embracing powerful mindsets for our own life *first* is the key that will unlock the collective shift we desire. When we change what we see in the mirror each day and the inner dialogue we have with ourselves, the collective power to create a world that truly values women will emerge. The answer does not lie outside of ourselves. Therein lies the paradox. Every time we pause, reflect, and consciously choose our direction, we create a new reality—individually and collectively.

WHICH PATH WILL WE CHOOSE?

As women, we are at a crossroads, a critical intersection between what was and what will be. We are facing an unprecedented window of opportunity this very moment. An epicenter of great change. An invisible threshold of sorts. We have two choices: victimhood or victory. We can take the path well traveled right now and buy into the Narrative that more people are *against* us than *for* us. We can choose to focus on negative statistics like the pay gap. After all, rarely does a week go by without the Narrative reminding us that men make more than women. We can accept the notion that many seem to view our inherently female characteristics as a negative. We can buy into the Narrative's emphasis on inequity. Multiple workplace reports acknowledge how "inequities are taking a toll on women." And why wouldn't they? The sheer thought of tackling the beliefs that we are wronged

in *so many* ways feels daunting. It leads many to feel powerless and look “out there” for reasons why they’re not succeeding to the level they’re capable of. If we believe we are powerless, our language and our actions will reflect it—often unconsciously. You will see this issue come to light throughout this book.

Some of the messages in the headlines today appear to be conflicting. We read about women in technology and their struggles for equality in Silicon Valley. Then we hear that in 2017, the number of female CEOs jumped by 50% to 32, the most women ever to make the [Fortune 500](#) since the list started in 1955. Or do you even recall hearing that statistic this year? Recently, *Time* magazine launched its impressive multimedia project, [Firsts](#), spotlighting the successes of women who have broken into a field. All of these are tap dancing on the Narrative. The momentum of the #MeToo movement and subsequent naming of The Silence Breakers as the 2017 [Person of the Year](#) is offering us all an unexpected opportunity to reassess what we have accepted as *normal*. The time has come to redefine what normal should be.

For women, individually and collectively, the question becomes: which story is going to take root: victimhood or victory? Powerless or powerful? Will we choose to shift our focus to the power we DO have or will the Narrative, with all of its negative perceptions that we (and our neurological pathways) have grown up with and grown accustomed to, continue to take a front row seat?

As a professional speaker and coach for C-level executives, I see the thirst for inspiring messages in women of all races and ages, across all levels of corporate leadership, spanning the globe. Recently, I had a conversation with a wildly talented, ambitious professional, a young woman in the defense industry. The topic of our conversation: where could she find a female role model? Every single week, women around the world ask the same question. Where are our female role models for leadership?

However, there’s a potential problem hidden in that question. As women, are we looking for a role model or are we searching for a hero? Do we want

someone to lead us or save us? Even today it surprises me the number of people, at all levels of an organization, who are still looking for a hero. So many look up for the answer, down for the answer, to the right and to the left for the answer. Yet the answer lies within. You *are* the hero you seek.

We will never shatter the glass ceiling until **each one of us owns our piece of the Narrative.**

Day by day. Decision by decision.

What does owning our piece of the Narrative mean?

- It means not accepting every headline as fact and instead testing it on your own terms.
- It means looking inward for the power to change your future.
- It means being able to articulate your value authentically and fearlessly.
- It means you don't wait for anyone to give you permission to live to your fullest potential.
- It means not making excuses for why you are being held back.
- It means digging deep to uncover the subconscious roadblocks standing in your way.

Here is where the real power lies: choosing to focus on individual change as much, or more in some instances, than collective change.

HOW WE THINK ABOUT CHANGE

“Women early in their career are the least likely to believe they have equal opportunities for growth and development.”

-2016 *Lean In Women in Workplace* report pg. 10

“Young women are . . . significantly less confident they can reach the top of the organization.”

-2017 *Lean In Women in Workplace* [report](#) pg. 19

On September 27, 2016, Sheryl Sandberg wrote an article for *The Wall Street Journal* discussing the findings of the 2016 *Women in the Workplace* [report](#). The report, Ms. Sandberg said, found that women who hit the glass ceiling early, are far less likely than men to be promoted from entry level to manager, and hold less than 30% of the roles in senior management. The 2017 report echoed many of the same findings.

Why is that?

The book you are holding in your hands explains why. Why are many women not making that early jump in their careers? And why do they lose ground the more senior they become? This time, it is not about “them.” It is about our misperceptions that distort what we see in the mirror every day. *Has the time come for us to consider that the glass ceiling is also a mirror?* By this, I mean that it is time for us to look at ourselves in the mirror and see that there are specific beliefs, assumptions, and mindsets standing in our way. These mindsets don’t show up in the new workplace surveys because women themselves don’t even realize that the mindsets are standing in the way. Why? It is unconscious and the Narrative has convinced them otherwise.

I am on a quest to inspire women to realize we have more power than we think we do. May a global, collective conversation be ignited so that we are all more **aware**—for ourselves, for each other, and most importantly, for future generations.

*For my sisters who have little interest in data or limited patience for the background of the premise of this book, I invite you to jump ahead to the section titled **Corporations Can’t Do It Alone** on page 37. Many of your sisters require this insight in order to move forward. Both approaches are valid, just different. The following explanation is based on a US perspective but could be mapped out using multiple global examples in light of when [each country](#) granted women the right to vote. The key learning is the thought process and the power of unintended consequences.*

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