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Sell Yourself Without Selling Your Soul: Secrets to Becoming a Media Sensation

By Susan Harrow

This is an edited transcript of a live seminar recorded in 1995 at the Women's Business Alliance
Please do not copy or send this to anyone. Thank you.

Announcer – Susan Harrow and Harrow Communications presents Sell Yourself Without Selling Your Soul. Susan Harrow is a publicist and media coach for authors, artists, speakers and entrepreneurs. She is an accomplished speaker and has addressed the American Society of Journalists and Authors, the National Speakers Association and the Author's Guild. She also talks to entrepreneurial groups. Today she speaks to the Women's Business Alliance.

Deborah – I'd like to take this opportunity to introduce our guest speaker. Susan Harrow is a publicist, media coach and marketing expert. She specializes in media coaching and creating marketing and publicity strategies for authors, artists, speakers and entrepreneurs whose projects have a lot of heart and art. She has media coached people who have appeared on 60 Minutes, Oprah, CNN, New Attitudes, Good Morning America, Larry King Live and more, and she's worked the range of clients from Jesuit priests and adventurers to Ayurvedic chefs and personal coaches. Her clients include

Random House, Gillette Oral-B, the North Face, Pacific Bell Directory—the Yellow Pages, among others.

She is a publicist for several best-selling books and has given a number of previously unknown clients more than their 15 minutes of fame. Today's topic, as most of you know, is called Selling Yourself Without Selling Your Soul: Secrets to Becoming a Media Sensation. Susan will cover a powerful plan that can get you into the news instantly, get you or your business into the news instantly, three top tips to get on Oprah, publicity secrets of celebrities and spiritual masters, and the biggest mistake that holds women back from fame and fortune. I'm sure that we're all anxiously waiting for [UNCLEAR]... Susan Harrow, welcome her.

Susan – Thank you. A few months ago, a prostitute came to see me and she was an entrepreneur. I didn't know that she was a prostitute. Until that point where she admitted as such, I could tell that she held in a lot and she had great shame about what she did. But she also wasn't willing to give up being a prostitute. She came to me because she wanted to put out—no pun intended—a new product.

What I realized from that conversation is that many of us when we begin to start to sell ourselves feel like somehow we're prostituting ourselves. How many of you have felt that or may still feel like that, in even a small part of yourselves? I realized that myself, as a publicist, felt that, too. Part of that is because of the kind of media hype, if I may use that word, around selling ourselves. What I also realized by my conversation with her is that one of the reasons why she didn't want to give up being a prostitute was because she got so much honesty from her clients. I realized that we all deeply crave honesty at a very deep level.

Why I called this *Sell Yourself without Selling Your Soul* is that I believe that we can be completely honest and in our integrity and still sell ourselves. In fact, what I'm going to talk about today, some of this I've never spoken about publicly, and I'm working on a book called, *Sell Yourself Without Selling Your Soul*—the same title—so some of the secrets that I'll reveal to you today are the very first time that I've talked about this. Deborah very nicely covered all of the topics that I'm going to cover, so I'm not going to go over that, but I'm going to just jump right in with Oprah.

How many of you came here just because you wanted to get on Oprah or you had a dream of getting on Oprah? Would you raise your hand and let me see? (PAUSE) Almost everyone who calls me up on the phone, the first words out of their mouth is, "I want to get on Oprah." I wanted to talk about that first and give you the three top tips for getting on Oprah.

The first one is to get booked on local shows first. I encourage you to think globally and to act locally. I'm saying that because, to get experience with a very fast-pace of media first, because Oprah is at the very top of the line of media and things happen very fast and you have very little control. When you start small, you start kind of getting a sense of how things work and not only how the media is managing you, but how you can manage the media.

Jim Lehrer really compares being on TV with piano lessons. He says, "It's repetition-practice, repetition-practice, repetition-practice." By getting that practice on the local shows first, you'll be able to start to see what works and you'll get a sense from that not only from your host, but from the response that you get from

your audience. I heard the photographer of Elegant Images say that she got 50 phone calls from that particular show, which is fantastic. That can range from anywhere from one phone call to hundreds of phone calls. Publicity is really built one article and one interview at a time. Tallulah Bankhead said, “Working on television is like being shot out of a cannon. They cram you all up with rehearsals, then someone lights a fuse, and bang, there you are in somebody’s living room.” Before you burst through that cannon, it makes for a softer landing if you’ve had some practice.

Secret number two, the second top tip, is to watch the show. I know that all of you are out working when Oprah is on, but I suggest that you tape two to four weeks of the show, not only to get a sense of what they’re showing, but also to see who the producers are of the particular segments that you want to be on. At the end of every segment, there are a couple to a dozen producers—and I suggest you write down those names and the kind of show that they have produced. Then when you write in to them, you can mention that you're familiar with the kind of show that they produce.

Tip number three is ask yourself if your subject matter will truly change the lives of others. Oprah calls her show, “Change Your Life TV,” and so some of us aren't suited to that and some of us are. Now in between all of the change your life are makeovers and who has stolen who’s husband and all of these other kinds of issues. If you fit in with those, then that’s something that you can...if that’s of interest to you, and I’m thinking of you as entrepreneurs are thinking about how to grow your business and not just getting publicity for publicity’s sake.

In doing that, what you would want to do is make a list and collect examples that illustrate the impact you're having on your community. Right now Oprah is very interested in women making an impact in their community. That's one of her hot buttons right now. You can send photos if they speak louder than words. Also a demo video if you have one. One of my clients, Victoria Moran, has just come out with a book called, *Creating a Charmed Life*. One of the things she does is that she meets with a mastermind group of other women every week and they taped a session of that to show how their lives are working in the world, how they're actually leading charmed lives. They've been talking back and forth about six times now and I want to mention to you what happened to her because this is something that's not only...it's typical in one sense and unusual in another. She's been talking lots of different producers at Oprah, as has her publicist and as her publishing house. Then her husband was up on his computer just fooling around and bored at work over the weekend and he went up on Oprah and he sent an email to Oprah. She called him. She called the house three times because they're very interested in him and he did it as a lark.

Participant (Female #1) – For himself, not for his wife!

Susan – He just sent off the email not even thinking for a million years would they call him.

I know that Deborah mentioned to me that some of your past speakers have not lived up to their promise, so I wanted to make sure to give you more than I promised, so I've prepared a fourth tip, and that is to go up to Oprah's website, which is <http://www.Oprah.com>. On that website is a whole list of what she's interested in right now and you can send an instant email to a producer right from

her website. You can click on the area that is specific to you and get an instant link and so you'll be getting to the right producer just by the link that you've clicked.

On top of those main subjects that she's looking for, she also has like topic of the week, what's coming up this week. One thing that you can do, if you're interested in the topic of the week, if you have something that's very timely that fits in right now and you're willing to jump on a plane at a moment's notice, you can respond to that. What happens with a lot of these shows is that things change and people don't show up. On Oprah's site, she actually says, "We can't show you what's coming up for more than a week because our shows are constantly changing," so something that may be scheduled may be unscheduled. I know people who have rearranged their whole schedule and then been called at the last minute and told, "We're not doing that show; you can't come." So it works both ways.

What is the biggest mistake that holds women back from fame and fortune? That they don't plan, prepare and practice before they jump into the media fray. What is beneath that is that they don't know how they're perceived. Often when we put something out in our image, in our writing, in our words, we don't necessarily know how others are perceiving us in return. The way that we get feedback is by how much business we get, how many friends we make, how many phone calls we receive.

What I'd like you to do right now...I know that we've gone around the room and gone over our pitch, and what I'd like us each to do is to find someone in this room who you actually haven't met before and stand up and go over to that person and then I'll tell you the next thing that we'll do. (PAUSE) The first thing I'd like us to

do is to just state your name and what you do to the other person and I'm going to give you 30 seconds to do that and then please stop when I ring the bell. (PAUSE)

Now what I would like you to do is, the person who heard your pitch, I would like them to tell back to you what it is they think you do, in 20 seconds, and then stop when you're done please. (PAUSE) Now I would like that same person to tell you two nice things about yourself that they have perceived. I would like you to tell that person...one person is only talking now; you haven't done an exchange. One of you, tell the other person two good thing that you've noticed about them. Then we'll stop and then we'll switch. (PAUSE)

Now I'd like those of you who haven't told the pitch to the other person to please tell them your name and your pitch and have the other person just listen and perceive it, in 30 seconds. (PAUSE) Now will the person who was listening tell them what they think the other person does, in 20 seconds. (PAUSE) Now will you tell that person two good thing about themselves. (PAUSE) Now would you all please return to your seats. (PAUSE)

I want to ask you all a question. Without judgement, I would like to see a show of hands of how many people were happy with the response that they heard from their partner in terms of describing what they did about their business. Excellent. Great. Now how many of you were surprised? How many of you were disappointed? Good. Now I want to know how many of you were pleased with what you heard, the nice things about yourself.

[UNCLEAR COMMENT FROM PARTICIPANT]

Susan – I know. I think we do that way too little, in terms of talking about what’s nice about ourselves. In fact, when I gave my sweetheart his 40th birthday party, I had a secret message written in there to everyone to please write something about how they’ve been touched by my sweetheart or what they’ve liked about him; it was an incredibly moving experience. He said to me afterwards, “Why didn’t you videotape that?” because he wanted to have a memory of that. I think why do we wait until people die to say what’s good about them.

I wanted you to do that as well because often people are perceiving things about you that go far beyond your words. That’s what I wanted you to hear because when you start to put yourself out there publicly, and start to do a PR campaign, people are often perceiving not only your body language—because on television it’s 93% visual information that people are grasping about you. On the radio, obviously, it’s 100% auditory, so on the radio, your words are of the utmost importance, but it’s your words, your tone, the images—it goes way beyond words that people perceive if they like you, if they don’t like you, if they think you’re a snob. There are lots of different things that they’re perceiving about you with just the tone of your voice as well. I think that a lot of people don’t realize the importance of their presence, particularly in our culture, and the value that people give just with their presence.

Victoria, who I was talking about, Victoria Moran, who wrote the book, *Creating a Charmed Life*, when we did some media coaching, we took a look at her body language in relation to her host. She was sort of extra energetic. I said to her, “Why do you think you’re being extra-energetic?” She said, “Because I’ve got to reach millions of people.” She felt like she had to “up” her energy. We worked on her really creating a more intimate relationship with the host because she’s really

talking one-on-one. You're reaching millions of people, but you're relating to one. On her last interview, after she finished, the cameramen stood up and applauded.

Another mistake that women make is that they don't know what fame and success means to them. You've all come here to gain greater presence out in the world. The first thing that I would invite you to do is write your own definition of success and what that means to you, and what fame means to you, and if it is important that you get on Oprah, why is it important and what do you hope to gain from that. Rose Offner created this definition, "It is to be able to make a difference in the world through your art, your gift, your presence, spirit or words. It's the ability to walk your talk." I invite you to create your own definition of success and then live it.

I'll also invite you to send me your most relevant stories about how you've used PR, how publicity has worked for you. I'd also invite you to send how it hasn't worked for you, if that has been the case as well. But what I'd like to hear is what you've done and the results. So if you would all—I'm going to pass around this basket—put in your card, too, if you want to be on my email newsletter, where I will give you what I'm calling 60 Second Secrets, on ways that you can get out there into the public eye. I invite you to email me, because I'm actually also looking for women entrepreneurs for my book. If you have any interest in being in my book, which will gain you publicity once it's published, I invite you to email me your stories. If I'm interested in pursuing that further, I'll give you a call.

Let's talk about ways that you can plan, prepare and practice. One thing you can do is create your mission statement—why you do what you do. I know that Deborah mentioned Stephen Covey's book, which is an excellent one, *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*—there's another one that's quite good as well—that walks

you through that step if you're never done it. And there's one called, *The Path*, someone mentioned, as well. Also, get your materials ready. What I'm talking about is all of your publicity materials from your bio—which I noticed that some of you passed around—to your press release, to your tip sheet. I'm going to talk a little bit about that later. I'm not going to go over that right now because you can find that out in not only some publicity books, but I have a booklet back there that shows you how to write all of the materials that you'll ever need to move forward in your publicity campaign. I didn't want to go over those now and take up our time for other things that you can't get from books.

The other thing that I want to mention to you is to get your soundbites down. I'm going to speak a little bit more about this later. That means to be ready to talk to the media and convey your most important messages.

I'm going to move on to publicity secrets of celebrities and spiritual masters and how they apply to you. One of the myths of publicity is that success is instant, that it happens over night. Really, what plays for instant success is a lot hard work. I don't even want to say hard work. It's a lot of preparation, I think, and a building of your career, your insights, all of the things that make up what you're doing today.

Secret number one is never turn down an opportunity. The actor James Woods, he left an answering machine message for Martin Scorsese that said, "Any part, any time, anywhere, any price." What happened is that at that moment, Martin Scorsese happened to be watching the movie, with his girlfriend, Citizen Cohen, and he said to his girlfriend, "I think that that James would be write for the part of Lester Diamond," and then he went to his answering machine he got that message.

He called up James Woods and said, “I’d like to offer you this part, but I thought you would turn it down because it was too small.” James Woods said, “I would love to have that part. I would do anything to work with Martin Scorsese.”

Actually, I’d even like to go a little further than that, that you can wait for opportunities to knock on your door or you can put a sign on your closed door that says, “Come in,” or you can answer your door, or you can eliminate the door all together and open your arms to the big, wide world and invite whatever comes in, in.

One way to invite that opportunity is with what I call a “10 Top Tips” sheet. I want to tell you about that because I think that it’s even more valuable than writing a press release, and I’ll tell you why—because it has no ego in it. What I mean by a “10 Top Tips” sheet is, you’ve all seen this in the newspaper. It’s sidebar what it has really just bulleted points—ten thing. It’s usually opened with one paragraph and then there are five or ten bullet points of very succinct points. This is a tip sheet. The reason why I think it’s so valuable and that it is ego-less, is it’s about your knowledge. It’s not about telling people how wonderful you are or what new product you have. It’s really based in what you know and the kind of information that you are planning to give to people. All of you have a lot of expertise in each of your fields, so in real estate, it might be, “How to Create a Beautiful Home So Other People Would Want to Buy It.” In chiropractic it might be, “10 Ways to Get Healthy Before You Come In For a Visit.” Those are the kinds of things that I’m thinking about.

Secret number two is be a nice guy, or be a nice girl. I said be a nice guy because Tom Hanks writes letters to his mom on his typewriter. Susan RoAne, who is a speaker and expert schmoozer, wherever she goes, she asks all the cab drivers,

“Who is nice to you? Who do you like best?” She said every single one of them mentioned Tom Hanks. They said Tom Hanks is a nice guy. She’s asked every author escort service driver that same question and this is what they say. He not only plays nice guys, he actually is one.

I mention this to you because as publicists, what happens sometimes when people call us up is that if we don’t like you, you get passed on to someone else. You can start to know which people have been passed around the circuit—and I ask, “Who have you talked to before me?”—and there are reasons why...I mean, some people think they can just hire a publicist. This is not so. A publicist will not take you on...they often do take on people if they think that they’re marketable, but if they think you’re going to be too much trouble, they may not take you on. I’ve heard the same thing from publishers at publishing houses. They think the author has this incredible book, we might sell a million copies, but is he going to be too much of a pain in the tuckus. Forget it.

I also want to say to that when your clients or customers ask you for something, do it immediately and do it with pleasure. This is the same for when a journalist calls you. That’s our dream, that a journalist will call us, but also, what that means is that if a journalist does call you, you can go out of your way for them. What I mean by that is, even if you don’t have exactly what they want, offer to get it somewhere.

On the other hand, if you're the one who's calling the journalist, which is much more typical, although journalists do find you in all kinds of ways when you start to put yourself out there, they find the people who they need as contacts, and they tend to use people who they trust, and they tend to use them over and over again.

One thing that you can do is when there's a crisis in the news, when there's something that happens just like that that's instant, that's newsworthy, you can call up the journalist that that would be...where your expertise would be appropriate to them and offer to comment. I'm saying this about things that happen instantly because journalists are often in a crunch, and if you can offer them information when they're in a crunch, they'll greatly appreciate it. Does that make sense? Great.

Secret number three—offer love in the face of hate. Offer love in the face of hate. This, of course, is a lifetime work.

I've chosen the Dali Lama because he continues to love the Chinese although they have banned him from his homeland and killed his people. When asked about his current life in exile he says, "Sometimes I think this Dali Lama is the hardest life of all, but of course, it is the most interesting." There's a saying that as long as you can be irritated, something will irritate you.

There will be, when you start to get out into media, inevitable criticisms of you, whether it's your facial ticks or your fat ankles, as with Hillary Clinton, or people will be trying to peek under your skirt, both literally and figuratively. My mother always told me to wear clean underwear—and I still think that's a very good idea. I picked the Dali Lama, too, because the Dali Lama is both a spiritual master and a celebrity of sorts. He has really gotten into the public and maintained his integrity as a spiritual leader.

For the secrets of the spiritual masters, secret number one is words carry our intentions. They're our messengers of our intentions. They're the sort of birds that

go out there into the world that deliver what we want other people to know about us. I studied a lot of the spiritual masters and understanding that, that are words carry our intentions, is the pivotal teaching that every one of the spiritual masters emphasizes. It's about really communicating our thoughts and feelings and being able to make sure that all of those thoughts and feelings are in complete alignment with who you are and what it is you want to convey.

There's a Zen story that illustrates this. There was this big, huge Samurai with one of those big swords and he approached a little monk. Usually little monks are sitting there meditating. He said, "Monk! Tell me about heaven and hell," and he ordered this little monk. The monk said, "You big, fat, stinky, ugly guy. Why should I tell you anything about anything? You don't know about anything." The big samurai lifted his sword and he was about to behead the little monk and the monk said, "That's hell." Then the Samurai sheaths his sword and realized in that moment, this monk would have given his life to teach him the difference between heaven and hell, and he showed his compassion and he became very relaxed and calm and compassionate, and the little monk said, "That's heaven." The heavenly news is that with your words you have the opportunity to express your view to millions and millions of people. The hellish news is that you have less than 10 seconds to do it.

The average soundbite on television has shrunk from 9.4 to 4.3 seconds. So it's very difficult to make meaning in such a short time. Mark Twain said, "The difference between the right word and the almost right word is like the difference between lightning and a lightning bug."

Soundbites are like the lightning flashes that you put out to people. Say what you mean and mean what you say and develop your soundbites word for word and then you'll be free to be spontaneous. A lot of people don't understand what I mean by that when I say, by preparing yourself you'll be free to be spontaneous. It's because when you're relaxed, you'll be able to allow insights into your mind. There's actually research that's been done right now that shows that when people are nervous, there's a hormone that's released that's called Cortisol and it blocks off part of your memory and when you're nervous, you can't access that part of your brain. But if you've memorized something very deeply, the hormone can't get into that other part of your brain.

I was coaching a musician who plays music for Joan Osborne—he toured with Joan Osborne—and he plays with David Sanborn. He explained to me...we were talking about music and how he approached a piece of music. He told me that he approached a piece of music two ways where he has the greatest freedoms. The first way was the very first time you approached a piece of music because your mind is wide open and you have no expectations. He said the second way was to learn that piece of music so deeply that anything could happen.

I also wanted to tell you that if you listen to radio talk shows, Sam Ewing said, "You know that anything goes, and the first thing that goes is civility." In order to speak your way to the hearts and minds of people, you're developing these six soundbites, and they're the essential things that you want to convey. They should be expandable and collapsible, from 2 seconds to 2 minutes, so you can meet every producer's and every journalist's needs—the same soundbites. These are your six jewels.

Someone said of Frank O'Hara that he wrote poetry that was so conversational, casual and easy to like and colloquial that it was very easy to fall in love with his poetry, and that his poetry seemed as natural as breathing. Your soundbites, even though you've memorized them, should feel as natural as breathing, and sound as natural as breathing; and that comes with practice. That's not to say that you're going to say the exact same thing to every single person who talks to you. Why you prepare these essential things is so you will be able to convey your most important messages if you don't have time to convey anything else. If it's a conversation and it's an hour long, six soundbites aren't going to take up that hour. It's a conversation. But these are things to help you feel rooted, in essence, that you know that you'll be able to get out your main message no matter what kind of question anybody asks you and in what context.

They shouldn't be big, sophisticated ideas. In fact, they should be just the opposite. They're really quotable quips that people will remember. And that's why I said they should be expandable and collapsible because they can be everything from one sentence like, "Often times when people are looking at someone else's life, they compare their insides to someone's outside." That's a soundbite. I'm working with a woman who wrote a book called, *The Myth of the Perfect Mother*. One of the things that she says is that people believe that mothers are divinely prepared to become mothers. That's a soundbite. Then we go on to talk about why that's not true.

Participant (Female #2) – Is that book out yet?

Susan – It is. It's called, *The Myth of the Perfect Mother*.

Participant (Female #2) – And the author?

Susan – The author is Jane Swigart.

Practice saying them out loud and then tape yourself. The other thing I wanted to tell you to do with these soundbites is the more you infuse emotion in them, the more people will remember them. I worked with John Bollard who was on 60 Minutes the week before last. The case was called, Sexual Harassment Against the Catholic Church. Did any of you see it? He came in to me for media coaching before he was grilled by Morley Safer. One of the things that we worked on was how to convey how much his dream of being a Jesuit Priest and leaving one year before that dream was completed had meant to him. That was his boyhood dream, and that boyhood dream was shattered because he was approached and sexually harassed by 12 priests consistently over his seven years. You know that that had to be pretty traumatic for someone who had a boyhood dream in order to leave the priesthood. So that's something that we wanted to convey in his interview.

The other thing I suggest you do is to run it by a teenager because they have very good B.S. detectors and they can tell you when something doesn't sound natural and when something doesn't sound right. The reason why I say you should practice them out loud is you can write them down, which is a great idea, too, and then you practice saying them and you'll start to see things that work on paper don't necessarily work out loud and vice versa.

The process of developing your soundbites is really like peeling away the unnecessary to arrive at the essential. Before you peel, though, remember, beauty, poetry, musicality and nuance. The thing that breaks my heart most about stripping

away the essence or stripping away at a story is that some of those really juicy and beautiful and poetic lines sometimes have to come out for the sake of time. But when you do have the time to be expensive, leave the poetry and the music and the nuance in.

Secret number two—make your connections from warm hand to warm hand. Zen Master Shunryu Suzuki, the author *Zen Mind, Beginner's Mind*—he founded one of the very first Buddhist monasteries in the Western hemisphere—said that Buddhism is best passed on from warm hand to warm hand. I think that the same is true for expanding your own network.

I ask every person who works with me to fill out a questionnaire. On that questionnaire is also a list of who can help them—friends, neighbors, relatives, colleagues, competitors, workout buddies, alumni services/your college alumni. I also ask them to make a list of what I call “Image Makers,” people in the media who are influential, who they would love to be reviewed by or interviewed by. I would invite you to ask for help. I know that some of us can't even mouth those words, so I'd like us to all just say those words out loud together. If you've never said them before, we will have a chance to say, “Can you help me?”

Audience – Can you help me?

Susan – One more time, a little louder.

Audience – Can you help me?

Susan – Maybe one more time just for good measure.

Audience – Can you help me?

Susan – Great. Thank you. The more that you express your vulnerability and your openness, the more people actually want to help you. There are a lot of people out there who do want to help and they're just waiting for the opportunity to be asked. I think a lot of people are actually shy about offering their help just as much as we're shy about asking for it.

When I taught my first Learning Annex class, I was terrified. I haven't had much experience as a public speaker. I'm a media coach and publicist. I do everything behind the scenes, and my clients do everything in front of the scenes, and there's a reason for that. When I started teaching my Learning Annex class, I asked a lot of my friends to be there, and that was very hard for me. But I thought, you know, if I'm going to be telling other people this all the time, I should take some of my own advice. And it was enormously helpful. Their little, bright faces and their little eyes out in the audience whenever I felt like maybe things maybe were sagging a little bit, I'd look and some of my friends were smiling, and I'm thinking, "Oh, things are going well."

Can some of your friends even post an email maybe to their email list? We all have fairly extensive email lists now. Can they make an announcement of some sort? I know you're looking for a place to live. Can you ask your friends to send out that email even for something like that? These people in this very room—we all have incredible resources available to us.

You can also allow your friends to take you by the hand and join your hands to the hands of others. Then they'll find other warm hands by holding them. And you'll be holding hands in essence through the hands of others. When I actually got started in PR, I didn't know anybody in publicity. I went to the Alumni Resources actually in San Francisco and I started just by calling one person. Every person I talked to I asked for a referral. By the end of talking to people, I had the referrals of referrals of referrals of referrals who, it was so far removed and everybody treated me like a friend, and it was really lovely.

There's one more thing that you must do after you've asked for as much help as you can, and I would like to demonstrate that by giving away something that I brought for you, which is...this is the booklet that I've got on the back table that has all of the kinds of things that you would need to write for your publicity campaign—the press release, the tip sheets, the bio. It's a step-by-step way to do that. I would like to give this away to someone who can demonstrate for me how they would get this book.

Participant (Female #3) – I would ask for it. I would say to you, “I could really use that and would love to have it. What do I have to do to get it?”

Susan – Great. Excellent. I'm not going to tell you, but I still have it. Yes?

Participant (Female #4) – Can I have that book [UNCLEAR]...?

Susan – Very nice. So we've got a couple of people who will ask me. Yes?

Participant (Female #5) – I really need your help because I’m in a dilemma where I’ve had a lot of problems in the media and any kind of tips would be greatly appreciated.

Susan – Excellent. Thank you for asking me. Yes?

Carol – That’s my book.

Susan – Is it now?

Carol – Thanks.

Susan – Thank you. Let’s give her a hand. What did Carol do? (PAUSE) She took action. That’s what each of you will have to do as you move forward in your publicity campaign is to take action.

Before I tell you my last secret, which is the powerful plan that can get you in the news instantly, I know that we wanted to leave some time for questions, and I would like to do that, and then I would like to save that for last after I’ve answered your questions. Then after I answer your questions and tell you the last secret, I would like to give you a final gift. What questions do you have?

Participant (Female #6) – [UNCLEAR]...when you were first getting into PR, how did you decide that you wanted to do that? Is that something that you knew you wanted to do or did you say, “Well, I think this [UNCLEAR]...?”

Susan – My background is as a writer and also I was in sales. I was in sales for voicemail and high-tech things before they were even called that, in a man’s world. I decided I wanted to shift gears. I wanted a marriage of writing and sales and so I thought that that might be PR. And I loved books so I focused on authors, too. I loved reading, I loved books, and I loved working with entrepreneurs and the entrepreneurial mind because most of my work was very entrepreneurial as well.

I didn't include this in my background, but I’ve been a tennis pro, a high school teacher, I’ve traveled the world. I’ve done a lot of different things before I came up with this. What I did, and the step toward that, was that since I was in some writing groups and taking writing lessons, there was a woman in one of those groups who did publicity for the Northface, so I called her up. I said, “I wanted to chat about publicity with you because I don’t really know much about it and I’d like to know more about it.”

She said, “I’ve just left the Northface—I freelance—I’d love some help. Do you want to come and hang with me?” And I said, “Absolutely.” I started just by...I call it “baptism by fire,” which is really how I’ve had all of my jobs, is that she started just training me. She took me out with clients. She said interview them, write up this press release. I’m like, “Okay.” I said, “Hopefully you’ll help me a little bit.” Then she started giving me more and more work to do because she didn't really like it that much. Then what happened is I inherited her client. She turned a client over to me and so then I started moving forward with that client. That’s how it happened. I did talk to a lot of people in publicity before I actually launched into it to see if that was something that liked and I asked them, “What’s the greatest thing about it? What’s the most horrible thing about it?” I’ve never worked for...I’ve always independent, so I’ve never worked for a publicity firm.

Participant (Female #7) – I’m curious if you can say what it was that client’s husband said to Oprah on his email...

Susan – You know, I don’t know. We didn't actually connect because it was over the weekend. She left me a voicemail message and said, “Oh my god! What do we do?” Her husband is a blues harmonica player, so it had something to do with that, although I don’t know what. I suggested to her, though, “Let’s see if we can turn this around to like husbands of charmed women. Why don’t we find out what the other husbands are doing and have them all on with the women.” She’s on a book tour; she’s on an author tour right now, so she’s across the country and we connect when we can. But if you would email me, when I find out, I’ll email you back.

Participant (Female #7) – Thank you.

Susan – What else would you like to know?

Participant (Female #8) – I’m curious how you advise your clients in adversarial situations, whether it’s with a reporter or they’re being interviewed. If somebody is really trying to cut them off at the knees, if they were in charge of the Exxon Valdez, you know, how do you advise your clients to deal with confrontational situations like that [UNCLEAR]?

Susan – That is a whole process that we go through because actually, in media coaching, if we do a whole program, I go through every kind of interviewer there is, which is the nice person—which we all hope for—the uninformed person who has no idea what you do or what you have done or what you will ever do, the

interrupter and the confrontational. The confrontational, because we prepared for that for 60 minutes because we knew the interview was going to be very volatile, and so some of the kinds of things that we practiced are...they might not be the exact questions that person's going to ask, but how to maintain your composure under pressure, and we're talking about everything from sweating to...because sometimes, by the way, some of the techniques that a camera person will use is by keeping the lights hot on you so you look like you're sweating so you're nervous.

So you need to be prepared by keeping your powder ready, asking them to turn off those lights. We talk about those kinds of things about how to manage what's going on around you. Some of the things that we would talk about are not only maintaining composure, but really sticking to the main points and not letting someone get you off track, no matter what kind of question they ask, and still answering those questions. We practice those kinds of things over and over and over again until the person feels comfortable that no matter what anybody throws at them, they can maintain their composure. I was telling somebody just yesterday about one of my neighbors who her brother was head of the Ku Klux Klan in, I think it was part of the South. I know David Duke had part of it, but he had another part, and he was on Larry King and the opposing person was someone opposing the Ku Klux Klan, and guess what? You were for him, the Ku Klux Klan person, because the other guy was getting all riled up. He wasn't conveying himself very clearly. I thought, "This is really bad. I'm feeling empathetic toward the leader of the Ku Klux Klan and he's coming across as rational, as likeable as making sense, as a strong leader," so...

Unknown Participant – [UNCLEAR]...

Susan – That’s exactly right, the religious right is another...

Unknown Participant – [UNCLEAR]...

Susan – That’s very dangerous...for people who are not for the religious right, that’s a very dangerous thing. Does that answer your question?

Participant (Female #8) – [UNCLEAR] that was great, thank you.

Susan – Great. Anyone else?

Participant (Female #9) – Do you feel that women are interviewed differently than men?

Susan – Well, that’s an interesting question. The thing that popped into my mind is that my...I was just at a specialist and in the middle of our consultation, he told me I was pretty. The next time, what happened is, I’ve got my clothes off and he’s handling parts of my body, and I thought, “You know, that is a really bad thing and I need to tell him that in this particular context that is not a good thing.”

I think that it does happen in the media as well, but I can't say that it's necessarily anything particularly blatant in that way, that women get handled differently than from men. But I think that it's the rapport that you set up with the person regardless with whether it's a man or a woman and to be able to establish your own boundaries and ground rules however you're being treated. If someone is treating you lightly and you don't want to be treated lightly, you take yourself seriously and present your matter in a way that you will be taken seriously. Whatever way

anyone is treating you, you maintain your own composure and your own integrity. I don't know about that. I think that in general men are taken more seriously just, I mean, they've found that research in school, that women call...even women teachers, the teachers call on boys more often than girls and they weren't even aware that they're doing it. So I think that probably unconsciously that happens as well. It's an interesting question, though.

Participant (Female #10) – Can you make a distinction between your top 10 tips and your 6 soundbites?

Susan – They're totally different. Your top 10 tips is knowledge that you have that you can convey to the public. It would be something like...Carol Adrienne, who wrote *The Celestine Prophecy Workbook*, and I, we came up with, "10 Ways to Work Within or Without Your Organization to Find the Purpose of Your Life." That was the name of her book, *To Find the Purpose of Your Life*. With Dana May Casperson, who is an etiquette expert, "Email Do's and Don'ts," the manners of like "cyber civility" we called it, "10 Email Do's and Don'ts," and it was her opinions on what you absolutely could and couldn't do in email today. That's why I say that that's intricate knowledge.

Soundbites are oral versus written—tip sheets are written—and soundbites are the essence of what you want to convey about yourself and your business and the points that you want to make when you have the opportunity on radio and on TV so people will run out of their house and call you or buy whatever you have. Often these are stories or anecdotes or facts—they're a combination. They can be statistics, moving stories, one liner important things that you want to convey, humor. Humor is also an excellent way to get into the media. In fact, I think that's

what Victoria's husband used on Oprah. It was some kind of humorous, flip response. Media loves that. Fortunately or unfortunately, that's a fact of life.

Participant (Female #11) – Do you get involved with political type media coaching...?

Susan – I haven't. I got a couple of calls for that and that is just not my venue or my strength.

Participant (Female #11) – [UNCLEAR]...and everybody always wants to not do the mudslinging, but then it's to get the votes and what ends up happening.

Susan – I think the positive things have to be really compelling—as compelling as the negative.

Participant (Female #11) – How do publicists take a role in...

Susan - How do they...

Participant (Female #11) – How do they get involved in [UNCLEAR] political [UNCLEAR]...

Susan – They specialize in that. There are certain people who...

Participant (Female #11) – [UNCLEAR]...the way that they do their jobs [UNCLEAR]...

Susan – What do you mean by that?

Participant (Female #11) – I don't know. I guess there's just room for improvement the way that it's being handled right now because the public really doesn't really appreciate the kind of political campaigns that are out there. And it's always the ones with the most money that...

Susan – That is very true. Money has a lot to do with it.

Participant (Female #11) – [UNCLEAR]...the most effective. [UNCLEAR]...

Susan – I think that that's a big underlying issue, is the money and the awareness, but I think that there are people who do grassroots work that can be also be very effective as well, but that's something I don't have an immediate answer for.

Participant (Female #12) – Speaking of money, how are you compensated? Do you charge by the hour? By the project? Do you get so [UNCLEAR]...?

Susan – I charge by the hour and with a two-hour minimum. I know there's a personal coach here in the back...I sometimes...people use me in essence like a personal coach sometimes as well, that we start and then to keep people on track, we keep going every week, every month, whatever that is. Some people use me if they're going for a whole media campaign. I write the materials, I prepare you verbally, and on paper, so I write up all of your materials, as well. In essence, I package everything there is to package but I don't do the media placements, which calling up the media and getting you actual engagements on the radio, TV and newspaper. I prepare you all the way up to that point. One of the reasons why I do

that is because I found that there was a gap and that often times good people weren't getting out there because they weren't media ready and then publicists wouldn't take them on.

The powerful plan that will get you in the news instantly—community service. Now, I agree with Mark Twain who says, “Always do right. This will gratify some people and astonish the rest.” I told you a little bit about Dana May Casperson who is a manners expert. One of the things that she did was to teach table manners—forks and spoons and knives—to underprivileged children in different parts of the country. When she did that in Chicago, the Chicago Sun Times covered her. She got on the local news. And those kids went home and taught their parents how to use a knife and fork. Some of them even said, “I’ve always felt outside of society and now I feel a part of society.”

My final words to you are, if you can think of PR in terms of the words of St. Theresa of Avila, and she said, “Words lead to deeds. They prepare the soul. Make it ready and move it to tenderness.”

Thank you very much.



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