



# Finding YOUR Voice Over All the Noise

2023 LeadHERship Conference

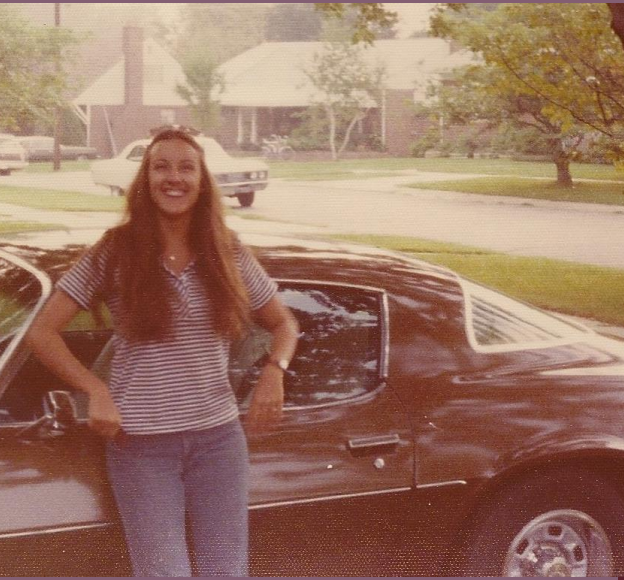
Durham, NC  
March 15, 2023

**Susan  
Hatchell**

*Landscape Architecture, PLLC*

# My Story

- Born in Washington, DC.
- Beautiful, iconic landscape!
- Love of outdoors – urban as well as natural
- Love of plants, trees, wildlife
- Youngest of three girls – sickly, small
- I was VERY SHY as a child
- My mother developed a very serious heart condition when I was 11 years old
- I love to sing
- I never liked school that much, or “fit in”
- Graduated from HS early



# That Girl

Marlo Thomas – “That Girl”

Mary Tyler Moore – “The Mary Tyler Moore Show”

Single woman in the big city,  
pursuing a job she loves,  
surrounded by whacky friends  
having crazy, fun antics



# University of Maryland



BS in Ornamental Horticulture from the University of Maryland

- Show up, sit up front
- Pay attention, take notes
- Read the textbook, take notes, do the extra reading...

*BINGO!!*

*You are now an honors student!*

*I loved it!*

*I also found Landscape Architecture!!*



# NCSU

Master of Landscape Architecture, NCSU 1982

- 10.8% unemployment
- Drafted for the NC DOT, did temp work
- Got laid off
- Worked for a landscape architect doing development work
- I had a large student loan to pay off



50

BROOKS HALL

College of Design

Architecture

Art and Design

Graphic Design

Industrial Design

Landscape Architecture

Design, Research,

Extension, and

Sponsored Programs



**I found my voice when I found my passion**

# Wake County Parks & Recreation

Great job, fun colleagues, nice projects  
Often the only woman in the room or job site

Learned project management

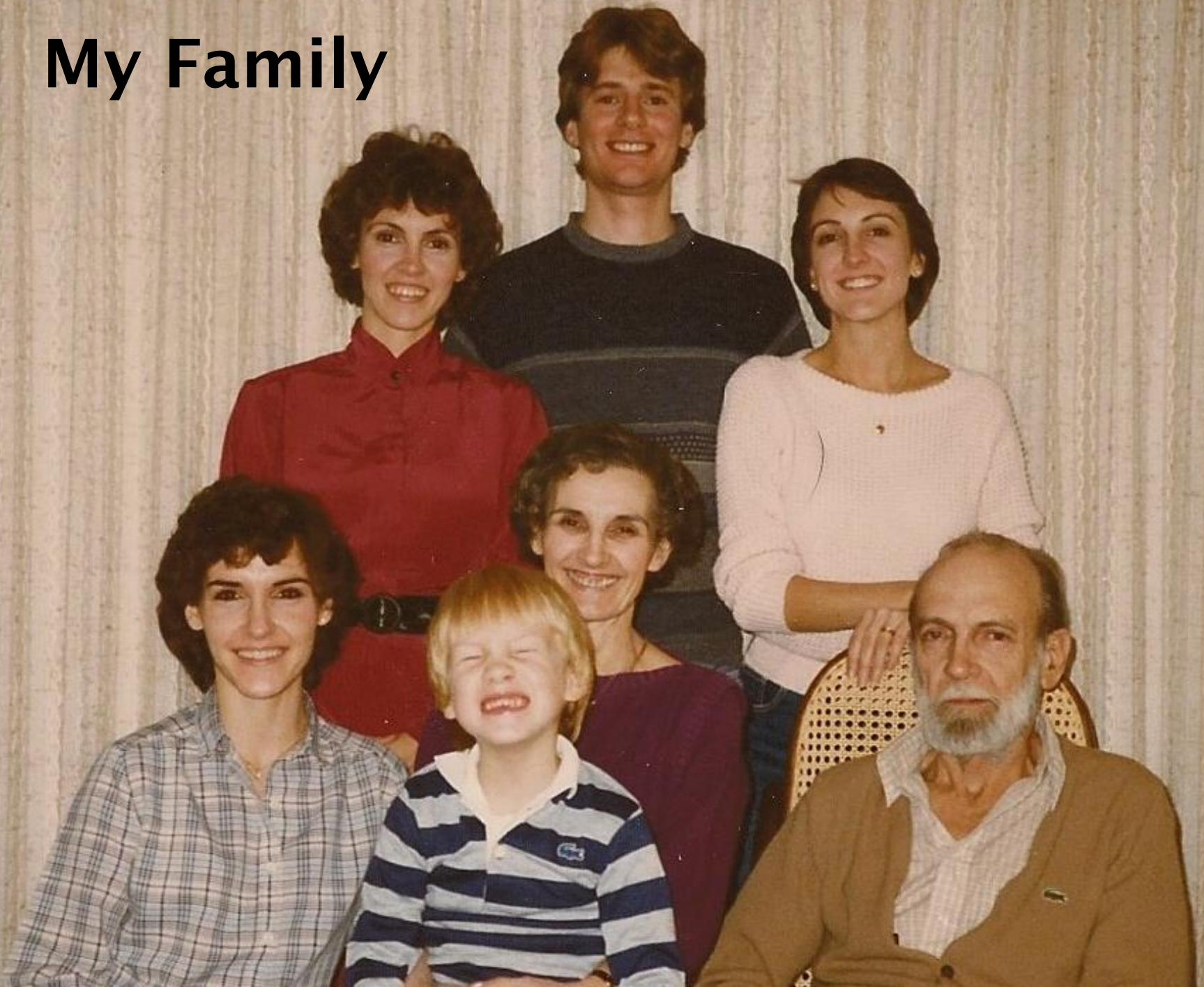
Sent to training: Myers-Briggs, Interaction

Almost laid off in the recession

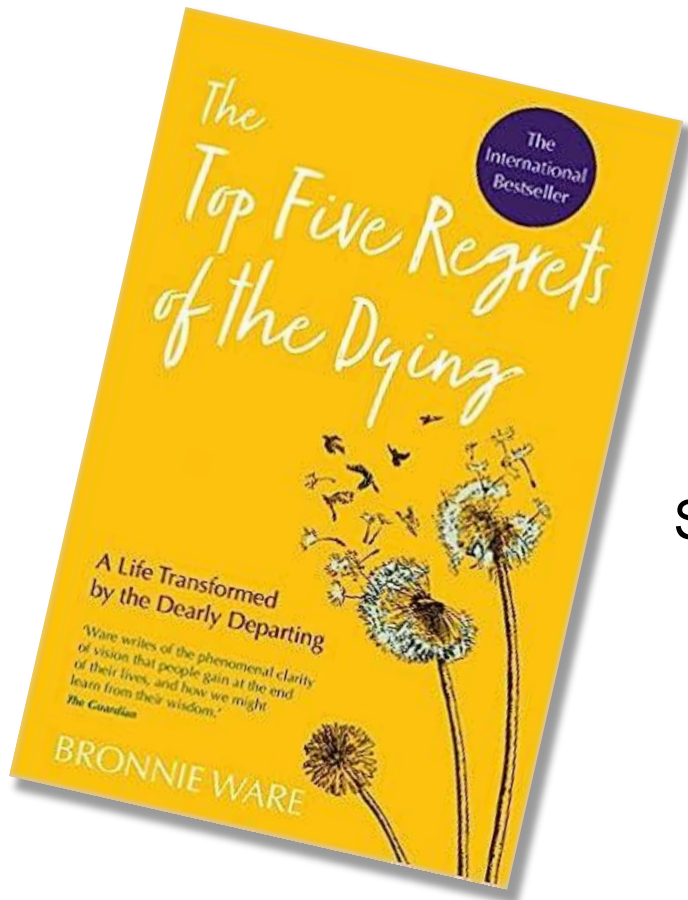
Made me think about *MY FUTURE*



# My Family







So many people are terrified to take risks,  
but not doing so can lead to regrets later  
in life

The average age of death in 2020 was  
73.7 years old

There's no time to waste

***“The Top Five Regrets of the Dying”***  
by Bronnie Ware

**I wish I had the courage to live a  
life true to myself, not the life  
others expected of me**



I wish I hadn't  
worked so hard





**I wish I had the  
courage to express  
my feelings**

I wish I'd stayed in touch with my friends.





**I wish I'd let  
myself be happier**



**I believe you learn and grow the most from times of adversity**

**Adversity pushes you to try different things  
and think in a new way**

*Painfully shy & didn't fit in  
My health, my mother's health  
Grew up in a volatile household  
Moved to NC by myself, broke up with a long-time boyfriend  
Borrowed money for my education  
Got laid off, Recessions  
Parents deaths*

**Persistence, hard work, willingness to take a  
risk and fail, desire to grow and learn**

# ASLA

1991 - Leadership Development Workshop  
sponsored by the American Society of  
Landscape Architects

## **State Chapter:**

Associate MAL NC Chapter ASLA  
Secretary of NCASLA  
President Elect, President and  
Past President of NCASLA

## **National:**

Trustee of NCASLA  
VP of Membership  
President elect of the ASLA  
President of ASLA in 2012 - 23 trips

Thirty-two years later, I will always be a Past  
President of the American Society of  
Landscape Architects!

**Not only did I find my voice, I found a  
CHOIR to sing WITH!!**





# ASLA

My involvement with my professional society gave and taught me so much:

- Learned diplomacy
- Developed patience
- Leadership skills
- Public speaking skills
- Public relations and media training

**Confidence comes with age, experience and practice!**





The band years

# Susan Hatchell Landscape Architecture, PLLC

I opened my firm in 1994 with limited experience in private practice

I like hard work;  
I like to learn new things;  
I like to meet new people;

It was a fairly big risk – but I prepared for it

Twenty-nine years later, I am **STILL**  
President of my firm

Public work such as park master plans and renovations, bike/ped and greenway planning, pedestrian projects, streetscapes and plazas, transit projects

Over 50% is park work, with 93% repeat clients



# What I love about my job

Every day is different

I learn new things every day

I get to meet new people, educate people

We create great places that are important to people

I really DO change the world

I love nature and plants, butterflies, birds, insects

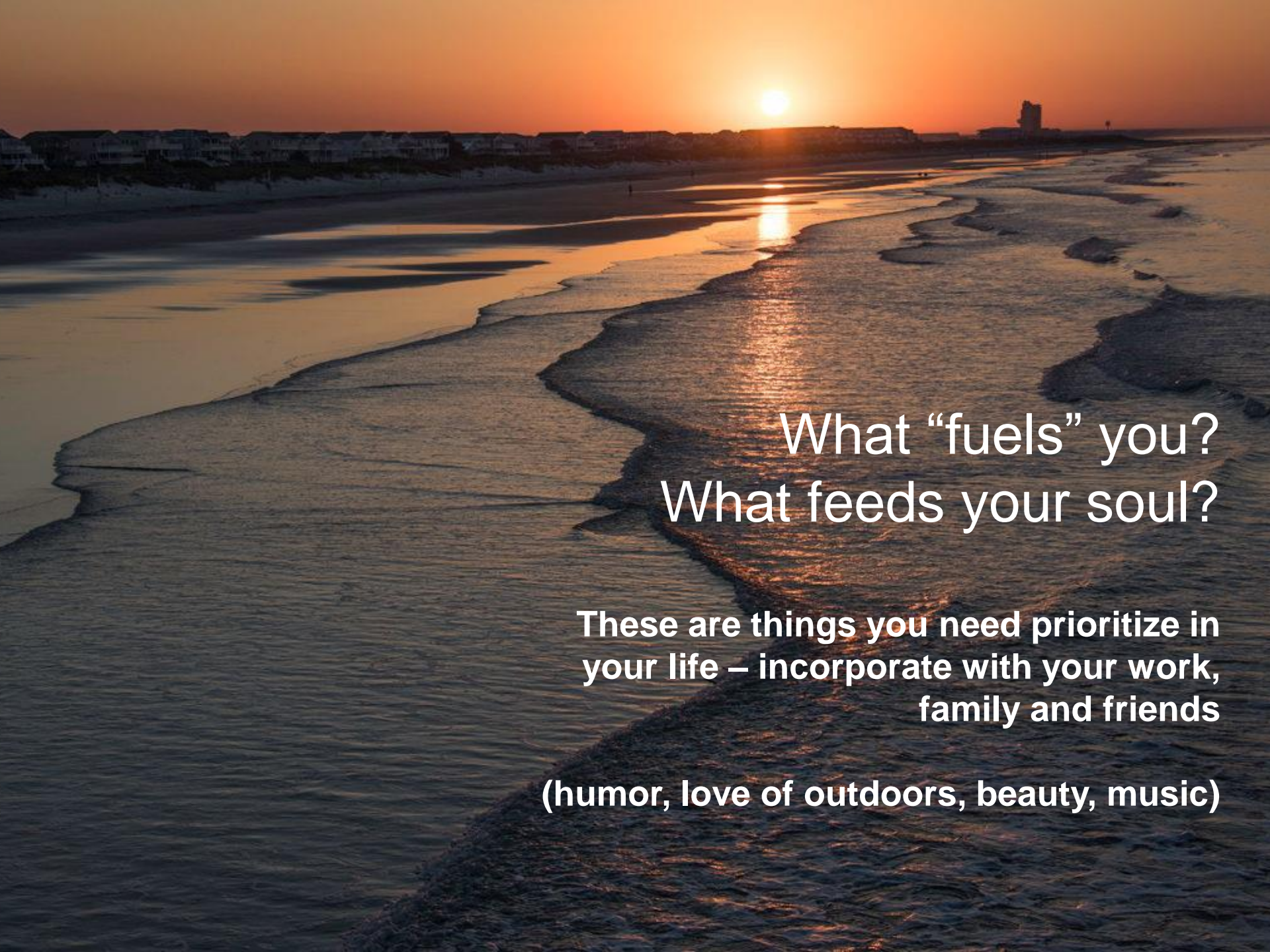
I have built a firm that ONLY does the kind of work I love – we have fabulous projects and clients

I am the boss of me!

I am successful! WHY? HOW?

- *Followed my heart*
- *Listened to my gut*
- *Prepared, researched*
- *Did the work*



A serene sunset scene over a wide beach. The sun is low on the horizon, casting a golden glow across the sky and reflecting on the water. The waves are gentle and rhythmic, washing onto the shore. In the background, a line of buildings is visible against the horizon. The overall mood is peaceful and contemplative.

**What “fuels” you?  
What feeds your soul?**

**These are things you need prioritize in  
your life – incorporate with your work,  
family and friends**

**(humor, love of outdoors, beauty, music)**

# What holds YOU back?

**Busy-ness?**

**Inertia?**

**Attention Deficient Disorder?**



A field of golden wheat under a dramatic, cloudy sky at sunset or sunrise. The wheat is in the foreground, and the sky is filled with dark, heavy clouds. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a bright glow. The overall mood is somber and reflective.

Sorry to say...these are your  
**EXCUSES!**

**How can you overcome them?**

The image shows three runners in silhouette, running on a track. The scene is set against a bright, low sun, creating a strong backlight effect. The sky is a deep blue, and the ground is dark. The runners are in various stages of their stride, with their arms and legs in motion. The overall mood is energetic and focused.

# Take care of yourself

## **Physically, mentally, spiritually**

**WW to keep a healthy BMI**

**Practice gratitude**

**Walk 30 minutes a day**

**Keep music in my life – concerts, singing**

**STOP negative self talk – be your own best friend!**



# Start an “Atta Girl” file

I have a folder where I save all compliments and thank you notes I receive – I handwrite the verbal ones!

Gratitude journal – three things a day



# Encourage and Compliment Others

Give to friends, family, strangers!!

Something for THEIR “Atta Girl” folders!  
It’s FREE – it costs you NOTHING  
It brightens their day – and YOURS!!



# Speak Up a Tiny Bit More

A bit louder, clearer

Be more direct

Stop apologizing!!

Stop asking permission

It's passive!





# Presenting

- **Speak from the heart – tell YOUR story**
- **Talk about something you are passionate about –**
- **Weave a theme, imagery into it**
- **Write your talk, but learn it from bullet points**
- **PRACTICE – out loud**
- **Video record it, listen for speed, cadence, gestures**
- **Edit it after you’ve practiced a few times**
- **Don’t use “upspeak” and vocal fry**
- **Wear something you are comfortable in, but makes you confident**
- **Do not clutch the podium in a death grip**
- **Audience is actually pulling for you**
- **If you stumble, apologize, laugh, but GO ON!**

# Do Your Homework



**Be prepared - Read the report, review the agenda, be ready!**

**Sit up front! Take notes! Listen up!**

**Be an attentive, involved listener**

**“Open face”**

**Keep learning!**

Myers Briggs ([Myersbriggs.org](http://Myersbriggs.org))

Keirsej temperaments ([Keirsej.com](http://Keirsej.com))

# Find a Supportive Network

I joined a Book Club – 25 years ago!

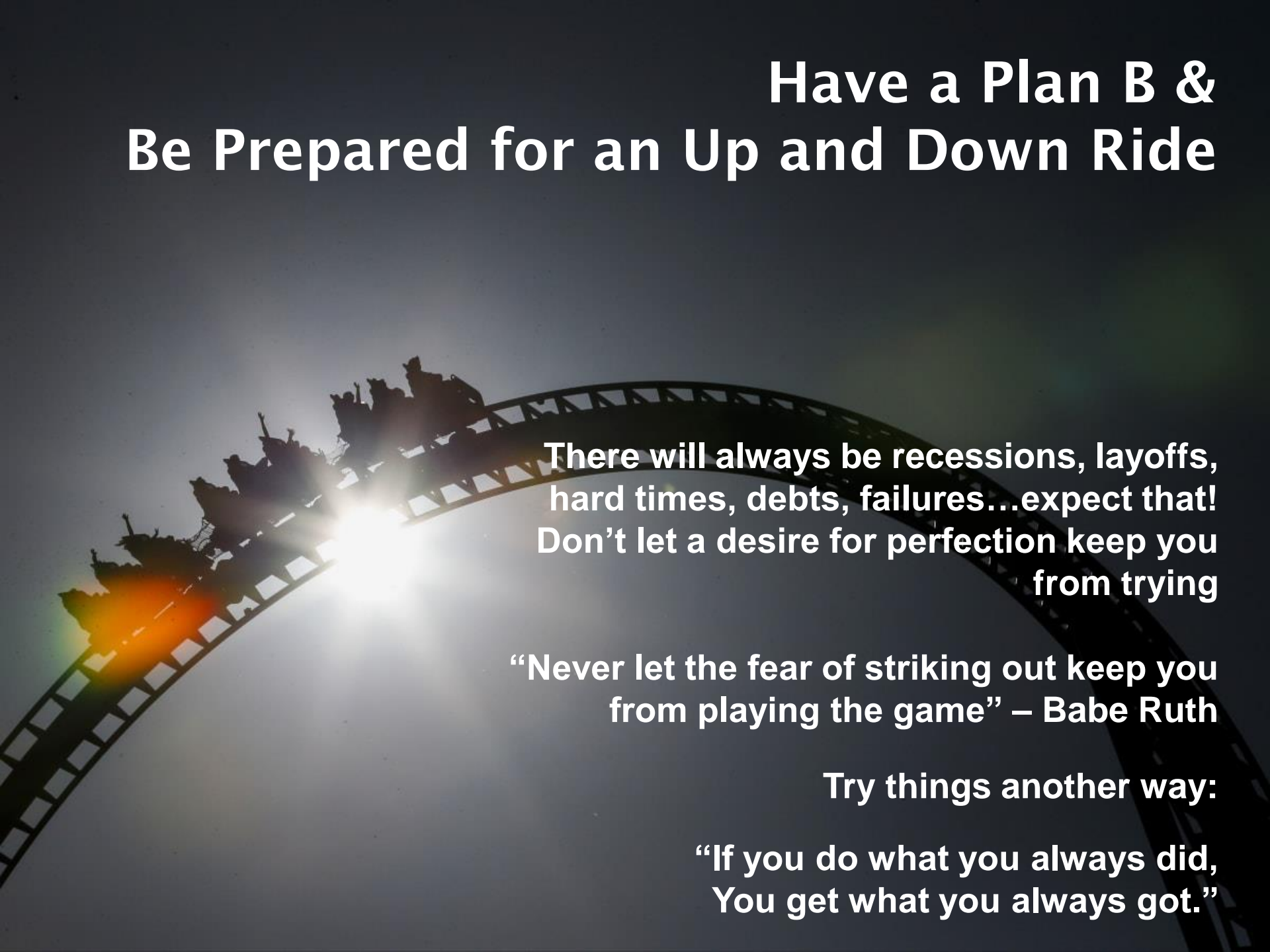
The Band

The ASLA

BPAC



# Have a Plan B & Be Prepared for an Up and Down Ride

A roller coaster car is silhouetted against a bright sun, positioned at the peak of a drop. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a lens flare effect. The roller coaster track curves downwards from the car.

**There will always be recessions, layoffs, hard times, debts, failures...expect that! Don't let a desire for perfection keep you from trying**

**“Never let the fear of striking out keep you from playing the game” – Babe Ruth**

**Try things another way:**

**“If you do what you always did, You get what you always got.”**

# Seek help if you are struggling

**You have my permission!!  
NO BOOTSTRAPS mentality here – go get help!!**

**Personal coach**

**Career coach**

**Social worker**

**Al-Anon, Adult Children of Alcoholics**

**Therapists and psychiatrists**

**Pastor**



# Take a Few Risks

Get outside of your comfort zone  
(Did I mention that I am singing at a fashion show??)





# Take baby steps

Try an incremental approach

You were not born walking, so why should you be able to dance ballet on the first try?

*“There is only one way to eat an elephant: a bite at a time”*

# Setting a short-term intention together

1. Sit comfortably, feet on the ground, close your eyes, and take several long breaths through your nose.
2. Ask yourself, “What do I wish for myself? What small change would I like to accomplish in the next three months?”
  - Specific or general, but keep it simple
  - Start it with “I will”
  - Examples:
    - *I will practice self compassion*
    - *I will be calmer and more loving with my family*
    - *I will walk 30 minutes a day for better health*
    - *I will listen to my heart today*
3. Write down your intention on the other side of the card. Seal it in the envelope that you address to yourself
4. Bring it by our booth to say hello by noon tomorrow, and it will enter you in the drawing to win the orchid back there!
5. I will mail your card to you in the coming three to six months...you won't know exactly when!
6. If it doesn't go well, it's not a big deal, but do think about why
7. Consider starting and ending each day with an intention

**It takes about 66 days to create a habit!**

**Whether you think you can –  
or  
you think you can't –**

**You're RIGHT!!**



I'm a married woman in a big-ish city,  
pursuing a job I really do love,  
surrounded by really whacky friends  
having crazy, fun antics



Season Two  
**That Girl**