



February 2012 – Linda B. James

You can go around a wall, climb over a wall or knock it down: Don't just stare at it, do something. These are the words Linda B. James heard from her mother during difficult times. Linda B. James is the Pink Ladders Woman of Focus for February.

Presently, Linda has a radio talk show at WNJC 1360AM Blog Talk Radio and Comcast/Verizon in the Philadelphia area. She is now writing a book on fitness after creating The Lady with the Moves™ fitness program.

However, Linda's career had been on hiatus for twenty years after making a decision to focus her time on raising her children. Her radio and television career began more than 20 years ago along with a growing motivational speaking business. Plus she had authored a self-published book titled *Simple Treasures for a Complex World*.

When you are building a career, you have to be patient, persistent and passionate. The road is going to get rough, bumpy, filled with detours, many stop signs, and yield signs. That is okay as long as you don't give up.

"The challenges ran the gamut from racial discrimination to gender discrimination. I was in my 20s and I felt I didn't have the emotional maturity to deal with these unexpected challenges. After long days of working, I would go home and cry myself to sleep. I used to cry myself to sleep just about every night, with a headache and with a knot in my stomach. I decided the only way to overcome challenges in my life is to take control of my life," says Linda.

In one instance, Linda experienced gender and racial discrimination during the hiring process. She had applied for a position traditionally dominated by men.

"I had strong credentials and outstanding references. I was close to being turned down for this position. Fortunately, a senior leader intervened to avoid a potentially difficult situation," says Linda.

Working within various corporate cultures, Linda encountered similar problems in all her experiences: the proverbial glass ceiling, discrimination and office politics.

Being engaged in healthy self-talk kept her moving forward.

I tell myself I refuse to allow someone's opinion to destroy my dreams and define me; and I do not have to internalize setbacks. If I do not like something, I change it; if I cannot change it, I change the way I think.

Linda developed a mind transformation technique she has been using now for over 20 years. She begins by writing the same positive, inspirational messages and affirmations twice a day. Then she repeats these messages and affirmations three times a day for a period of 21 days; and she does so enthusiastically in front of the mirror. Generally, 21 days are needed for your subconscious mind to transform your thinking.

"I accepted the fact that corporate America was not what I was expecting. I decided that starting a business would be a better option."

Every great dream begins with a dreamer. Always remember, you have within you the strength, the patience and the passion to reach for the stars to change the world. - Harriet Tubman

Harriet Tubman's powerful quote gives me strength, says Linda.

Linda's career path began with her parent's expectation she would attend college after high school graduation.

She was accepted at Queens College in Flushing, New York. However, Linda decided not to attend Queens College after visiting relatives over the summer in Baltimore, Maryland.

"I knew that I had to go to college, but wanted my independence, so I made a rash decision and enrolled in the Community College of Baltimore. I was not sure what I wanted to do, but I knew that attending college very important to my family," says Linda.

Her daily walk to class past the community college's radio and TV station influenced her career direction. "I was fascinated with the set and the production of shows. One day I mustered up the nerve to open the door and speak with some of the on-air personalities."

"My curiosity started to grow, and I found myself visiting the station frequently. I decided to major in radio and television broadcasting. I got my FCC license, and before long, I was involved in the radio and television production. I was the vice president of the radio and TV production club," says Linda.

The club hosted an on-air holiday show. Here, Linda had an opportunity to meet Oprah Winfrey. "She exuded class, poise and confidence. At that time, she was a local news anchor and she was new to Baltimore."

Linda eventually transferred to Queens College and graduated with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Speech Pathology. At this time she pursued a career in business. Although she stayed in the business field for a number of years, she was unsatisfied.

"The first opportunity that I got to get away from the business community, I embarked on a career in radio and TV broadcasting. I was able to land a spot on WTTM Radio Station in Trenton, New Jersey as a radio host and also on Comcast Cable in New Jersey as a television host and producer," says Linda.

Soon Linda was living her dream working in the broadcast industry, developing a motivational speaking business and writing a book.

Then life changed. I had to stop these ventures to raise a growing family... I gave up on this dream. I never thought it would happen again. But in the back of my mind, I felt it was my destiny. However, I did not have a clue as to how destiny would reveal itself.

"Money was tight. My husband and I did not have the support of an extended family. My husband was the sole breadwinner. My first priority was to raise our sons. I had to make a life-changing decision. I had to focus on what was most important, and that was raising our children," says Linda.

During her pregnancies, Linda gained over 120 pounds. This weight gain and the desire to lose the weight inspired Linda's new business venture: *The Lady With The Moves*™. This is a fitness business for women and an accomplishment Linda is most proud. She plans to deliver her message of fitness and motivational thinking first on a local and national level, and then internationally.

"I started this business to help others lose weight without a gym, without a personal trainer and without a diet plan. I felt ideally suited for this role. During each pregnancy, I gained over 60 pounds. In spite of not having access to a gym or a personal trainer, I learned to incorporate exercise into mundane activities. I have been able to maintain my weight and restart my exercise program whenever I fall off the wagon."

What I contribute to my success is my stamina to work long hours, my tenacity to circumvent obstacles, and my foresight to focus on the future goals.

Goal setting has always been a key component to my success. It is more than a road map; it's a treasure map, says Linda. Many goals are reached before you reach the final goal. It is important to acknowledge those successes along the way. Those small successes will empower you and strengthen you to keep hunting for the treasure.

"Celebrate the small goals and the achievements; gain the strength to overcome the obstacles and leap frog to the next small goal. Ultimately you will reach the final goal," says Linda.

Exercise is a key element in Linda's life in accomplishing both professional and personal goals. "Oftentimes I work

Exercise is a key element in Linda's life in accomplishing both professional and personal goals. "Sometimes I work very long hours and I find myself at the computer, but I have to remember to get up every hour and walk or exercise. The exercise increases oxygen to the brain."

"When I exercise, I make sure I smile because smiling will change my state of mind. I also repeat affirmations. I need physical and emotional change to keep me focused," says Linda.

Linda's advice to women starting their climb up the pink ladder:

Find a mentor. Find a support group. Find books in your field. Due diligence is key. Seek out your competition and partner with them. Keep abreast of current events in your field. You have to be an expert. Remember to network. And most importantly, have a healthy mindset to navigate through the storms.

Mentoring has deepened Linda's success. "I've had the experience of working with disenfranchised women and students that obtained their GED degrees. I have held workshops seminars and keynotes for these groups. One of my greatest joys has been reading their testimonials. Knowing that someone could learn from my experiences and have a more fulfilling life gives me great satisfaction."

Networking has been an unpredictable experience for Linda. Networking is like a fork in the road - you never know if it's going to go to the left or to the right. At times I have gone into networking situations and I've had high expectations, and my expectations have been lowered quickly. On the other hand, the reverse has happened, says Linda.

Linda's support group is comprised of her mother and her husband. "They have always believed in my accomplishments and career goals. Together, they have been my rock and foundation."

There are only two races of men: decent and indecent. - Viktor Frankl, author of *Man's Search for Meaning*.

Linda embraces Viktor Frankl's belief and admires his courage and ability to find meaning in suffering.

"When you're climbing the pink ladder of success, don't bring baggage. It will just weigh you down," says Linda.

Move out the old mindset and move in the new.