



INSIDE EVERY WOMAN
Using the 10 Strengths You Didn't
Know You Had to Get the Career
and Life You Want Now

Don't Wait for Hurricane Season to Find the True Meaning of Life by Vickie L. Milazzo, RN, MSN, JD

As the hurricane season looms and I think about the tragedy and devastation of the 2005 hurricane season, I can't help but realize how much we take for granted.

It's easy to appreciate life when things are going great. And as the distance of time separates me from the last hurricane season, I realize how easy it is to stop appreciating the simple and most important things in life – a drink of water, my husband's smile.

Why is it that we lose sight of these things until a crisis brings them into sharp focus? My mom's untimely death from breast cancer made me face my own mortality. At age 35 I scheduled my first breast biopsy. When I learned that everything was fine I was grateful for every breath I took.

There is nothing like an impending crisis to make you realize how much you take for granted. During the evacuation prior to Hurricane Rita, I closed my company and, like many of my friends, collected those belongings essential to my life (it's amazing how few really are essential) and packed them into our car. My husband Tom and I took what may have been one last look at our home and drove away from almost all of our material items.

As we drove to a safer haven away from Houston, then returned just 32 hours later, I realized how much I take for granted. Things that were in short supply before we evacuated were now almost impossible to find after we returned: canned soup, canned meats, bottled water – even fresh fruit. Almost all the gas stations, restaurants and movie theaters were closed. I realized how grateful I am for all these things. Something as simple as electricity to run my fridge and air conditioner is now on my appreciation list. How fantastic it was to be able to sleep in my bed upon my return to my intact home and how comfortable it seems now. My office, my staff and my friends here in Houston are also high on my appreciation list.

Now almost a year later, with everything back to normal, I know that mindful awareness and appreciation of every delicious morsel of life is harder. Nevertheless, last year's hurricane season did teach me one important lesson – it's not good enough to celebrate and appreciate only the best things in life. Now I remind myself to find joy and power in the mundane, simple and routine things.

In honor of all of those people affected one way or another by hurricane seasons, join me in making all of your life your best every day.

Inc. Top 10 Entrepreneur Vickie L. Milazzo, RN, MSN, JD, is founder and CEO of Vickie Milazzo Institute, a \$12-million dollar education and publishing company. She has trained and mentored over 20,000 women to become entrepreneurs, many of whom have gone on to achieve six-figure incomes. She was credited by *The New York Times* with pioneering a new profession and has won the prestigious Stevie Award (business's Oscar[®]) as Mentor of the Year. Milazzo is author of [*Inside Every Woman: Using the 10 Strengths You Didn't Know You Had to Get the Career and Life You Want Now*](#) (John Wiley & Sons, Inc.) available at www.Amazon.com or wherever books are sold.

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