



LEADERCAST

VOICES OF CHANGE 05.06.2011

SUZY WELCH

Executive Summary

A friend was reminiscing about what I was like at 23. When you're over 30, who wants to reminisce about what you were like at 23? I had to stop him and say, "I'm not that girl. I've changed."

There are a million little reasons I know God that exists – because I'm not the girl I used to be. I'm also not the woman I will yet become. This is cause for enormous rejoicing! It also brings an enormous sense of panic. We may think, "I really want to change, but I can't." We get stuck on that journey of who we used to be to who we want to become. We think, "We can't." I'm here to tell you, "You can." You can if you answer three simple questions.

Let me share with you how I came up with these three simple questions. It was 1995. I had a handsome husband. We had four children we thought were above average. I was editor of the Harvard Business Review. We had a charming home and a cute dog. It was a pretty picture, but when you're living in a picture, it all comes crashing down. We got married because of momentum. We were in the wrong jobs. It looked like I could do it all, but I couldn't. Something had to change. What had to change was how I made decisions.

I was making decisions like many people based on the two deadly G's: gut and guilt. Making decisions based on gut and guilt leaves something out of decision making – your brain. I had to stop reacting. I had to be proactive. I decided I was going to start making decisions by thinking about their consequences in 10 minutes, 10 months, and 10 years—in the immediate future, near future, and future I want to create. I started to slow down and it started to work.

Why does it work so well? 10-10-10 works because it connects your decision making to your values. Values are like your fingerprints. Your values are about the legacy you want to leave, the character you want to live, and the lifestyle you want in your home.

These three questions are amazingly effective in identifying your values:

1. What would make you cry at your 70th birthday party? This question is about legacy.
2. What do you want people to say about you when you're not in the room? This question is about character.
3. What did you love about your upbringing and what did you hate about it? This question is about home. Even when we didn't love something about our upbringing, we still tend to mimic it.

When you connect your values to good decision making, you live authentically. Authentic lives are joyful. 10-10-10 sounds simple, but it's hard. You are forced to live what you believe.

Now I can say "I'm not the girl I used to be, but I'm on the journey to become the woman I will become."

ACTION ITEMS:

- ❖ Find a quiet place and journal your answer to the three questions to help you determine your values. From this exercise, write down your top five values. Share them with someone you trust.
- ❖ How have you made decisions in the past? Have you made decisions using your gut or guilt? What has been the outcome? Think about a decision you need to make. Try using 10-10-10 instead. Think about the consequences in 10 minutes, 10 months, and 10 years. Then make the decision with confidence.