

P A R T I

TAKING CARE OF YOUR  
BEST FRIEND—YOU

*We have to learn to be our own best friends because we fall too easily into the trap of being our own worst enemies.*

RODERICK THORP

*The world is a great mirror. It reflects back to you what you are. If you are loving, if you are friendly, if you're helpful, the world will prove loving and friendly and helpful to you. The world is what you are.*

THOMAS DREIER

I'VE GOT A PRETTY GOOD IDEA what you're thinking. You've opened this book wondering if this is the one. You know, whether it's your first motivational book or your hundred and first, you're probably asking, "Is Florine Mark going to be the one who can turn my life around?" And I can answer you with one simple word: nope.

That's right, I admit it—I can't fix your life. And diet experts or fitness gurus or any others, for that matter, who say they can

are kidding themselves and kidding you. Well, maybe that's not quite true. There is one expert who can fix your life and I'm here to introduce you. Go get a mirror. No, I'm serious, go get a mirror. This is not a figurative request. Put this book down and go take a long look in the mirror. Then come back. I'll wait.

I want you to describe the person you just saw. I've listened to enough answers from people—particularly women—over the years that I can give you a pretty good sampling of what most of you are thinking when you take that look in the mirror: “She's fat.” “She's stupid.” “She's weak.” “She's hopeless.” I've heard all these answers many times.

Now, take a moment and think about your best friend. I hope you have one. If you don't have someone you consider a best friend, think about a good friend from your past or imagine someone you'd want for a friend. How do you treat that friend? If she put on weight, would you say, “You're fat”? If she made a mistake, would you blurt out, “You're stupid”? If she made a bad choice, would you hit her with, “You can't get anything right. You're weak and hopeless”? Of course not. It would never occur to you to treat a friend like that. First of all, she probably wouldn't be your friend for very long, and second, it's just plain abusive. In fact, we tend to focus on our friends' good qualities. Sure, we encourage them to change facets of their lives that aren't working, but we accept their imperfections. We don't see their flaws as devaluing them and we certainly don't beat them up. Right?

Yet if you were thinking any of the nasty thoughts I mentioned when you looked in the mirror, you are abusing your best friend. I'm talking about your friend in the mirror. Think about it: she will always listen to what you have to say. She'll never tire of the conversation. She definitely won't walk out on you. *And you're beating the living daylights out of her!*

This first part is all about how you can learn to care for—and take care of—your very best ally: you! Why is that so important? Because it's the first essential step in getting more joy out of life each and every day. Many women think that if they could just lose weight, get a boyfriend, land that dream job—whatever—then they will be able to love themselves. That's simply not true. Love—real love—is unconditional. Sure, you might think your best friend would look better if she weighed less, but it doesn't stop you from loving her, right? Well, the same has to be true about your feelings toward yourself.

Since I'm going to be asking you some very personal questions, I think it's only fair that I get personal, too. The first chapter in this section will give you an honest look at my life, including how I learned to like the woman I see in the mirror.

I realize that you and I have just met, so you may wonder about my qualifications for writing about self-acceptance. I am the CEO of a profitable business that is renowned for successful weight loss. I was recently voted one of the top thirty entrepreneurs in the world. If you look at my picture on the dust jacket, you'll see a confident woman who's in pretty good shape. In short, you might think Florine Mark has everything—how hard can it be to like the person in her mirror?

There are two things you should know. First, my life was not always like this. Before I made friends with myself, well, there is no other way to say it . . . I was fat and poor. A mirror was the last place I wanted to look. And when I did look, I didn't have nice things to say about the person looking back. Second, despite the success I've enjoyed, I still have to deal with struggle, disappointment, and frustration like everyone else. And when I'm feeling stressed, my first impulse is still to eat my way through it. That's my negative coping mechanism—for

## TALK TO THE MIRROR

some people it's biting their nails or drinking too much alcohol or spending money they don't have. For me, it's overeating. I talk to the mirror to manage those impulses and to overcome life's down times. It's a strategy that's been working for me for decades.

# 1

## MY STORY

*Life isn't about finding yourself—it's about creating yourself.*

GEORGE BERNARD SHAW

*To be successful, the first thing you have to do is decide what you want. The second thing you have to do is decide what you're willing to give up to get it.*

FLORINE MARK

**I**T'S EASY TO RECALL the very best thing about my growing-up years: home. My family gave me a lot of love, in part because they were very loving people, but also because there were so many of them! You see, “home” included two grandparents, my mother and father, six aunts and uncles, and two sisters. We were poor, although I never thought of it that way. The women in my family worked hard to create a nurturing

environment for us with lots of warmth, laughter, and comfort food.

My sister Sondra contracted polio when we were very young, and back then there was no Blue Cross/Blue Shield, no HMOs, no health insurance, *period*. My father was a college graduate, but the living he made parking cars on a rented lot just wasn't enough. My entire family worked to make ends meet, and I was no exception. I had my first job by the time I was eleven, selling doughnuts.

School was even tougher. Remember those thin pretty girls—every school has them—the ones just born to be prom queens? Well, I wasn't one of them. I wanted to be—oh, how I wanted to be—but in a world where acceptance often depends on good looks, I didn't measure up. I was overweight. In my mind, I certainly wasn't pretty. I was a vulnerable girl brimming with tension and envy. And I had good reason to be tense. A malicious boy (who I guess had his own problems) started calling me Fat Flo and the name stuck. I hated it. And I responded by going home and eating for comfort. Those were the roots of my destructive eating cycle.

During the summer months, kids my age went swimming, and of course that was the last place I wanted to go. Putting on a bathing suit meant showing the world my fat thighs. So instead I went to summer school. It was a safe, structured environment where I felt equal with everyone else. I loved learning, and the extra effort enabled me to skip two grades. As a result, I graduated high school at sixteen. Two months later, I married a college student who was a very nice guy. In fact, he's still a very nice guy, but we just weren't right for each other. So why did we marry? Because most people we knew got married young. If a girl didn't get married right out of high school, she was considered an old maid. So I followed the crowd, and I used diet pills to lose fifty pounds so I could fit into my wedding

dress. Even fifty pounds lighter, I wore a girdle that my aunt gave me for the occasion. It was just the way things were done in the fifties.

A year later our child was born, a beautiful baby girl. I tried hard to be a good wife and mother, even worked to help out while my husband completed his education. But before long I realized that my marriage had been a mistake. He was a good person, but no matter how hard I tried, I could not visualize us spending the rest of our lives together. So I did what was practically unthinkable at that time. I asked my husband for a divorce.

We'd relocated to Texas and, being new parents, hadn't had time to make new friends, so I didn't foresee a lot of social backlash. But there *was* backlash, and from a source I'd never considered.

My mother hadn't wanted me to marry my husband. She saw all the things that at sixteen I didn't see. Mostly, she saw that I was entering marriage thinking that he would make me happy. I saw marriage in terms of what *he* would do for *me*. Of course, my mother knew that viewing marriage in those terms was a prescription for misery. When I told her that she'd been right all along and that I was ending the marriage, I expected that she'd be satisfied with my admission that I should have listened to her. Instead, she told me I couldn't get a divorce. When I told her I realized I'd made a mistake and that neither he nor I should spend our lives regretting it, I couldn't understand her response: "But what will my friends say?"

I was speechless. It had never occurred to me that my mother's friends could be involved, that social backlash could be an issue for anyone but my husband or me. And while I was trying to absorb that, my mother said something that shocked me even more: "You're going to kill your father with the scandal." My father was in perfect health at the time.

It was a terrible time. I struggled to balance the sense of responsibility to my family that I'd been raised with (and that I feel to this day) with staying in a marriage that I knew could not work. In the end, I went through with the divorce. It was really the only choice I could make. I knew that any scandal or social backlash would pass but that an unhappy marriage was a life sentence for both of us.

I'd like to say that I was at peace the minute I made the decision, but that wouldn't be true. Divorce, even when you want it, is a miserable experience. My husband found someone else soon after we separated. He married her the day our divorce became final, and I sat on a park bench all day, feeding the ducks and crying. Sure, I knew we weren't right for each other, but to be replaced so quickly, so *easily*, was a terrible blow. Finally there were no more tears left and nothing to do but turn to the future.

I took my sweet baby girl and went back to my parents'. I continued to work, but I wasn't comfortable living at home. I responded to the stress in the same way I always had—I ate my way through it. Still, it wasn't long before I found one of the few ways out for a woman in the sixties: I married a second time.

My second husband was the strong, silent type. He had no highs or lows—he was as steady as a rock. It was all very romantic, but we had little in common except for our children. Having children to love had always been important to me, and soon I had five—and all the responsibility that came with them.

My husband was busy building a career. At the same time, my weight was always going up and down. I was either fasting or feasting. I used the only weight-loss methods I knew: diet pills and a seemingly endless list of crazy diets. All protein; eggs and grapefruit; cottage cheese; cabbage soup; even an all-ice-cream diet—you name it and I tried to live on it. And I have to say that some of them worked—for about a minute. I lost and



gained the same fifty pounds time after time. And there I was, with fifty pounds to lose *again*. My children were starting school and I needed to go back to work. I wanted to get a job, but I had no college degree and little professional experience. Who was going to hire an overweight housewife? So, as usual, I reached for the diet pills, but with far from the usual results.

I was rushed to the hospital. I'd taken only one pill, but the doctor said I'd had an allergic reaction. My body had finally rebelled against all the amphetamines I'd been using. The doctor's warning was very clear: "If you ever take another one, I won't be responsible for your life." At this point, my problems seemed almost insurmountable. I needed to take control of my life both physically and professionally, but I had no idea where to turn.

I read about a new diet that you could only get in New York City: Weight Watchers. It was my moment of truth. I knew this was my last hope to lose weight, so I flew to New York, determined to make Weight Watchers work for me. I met with Jean Nidetch, the founder of Weight Watchers. Rather than attending weekly meetings, I came to New York monthly and stayed for a week, attending three meetings a day for five days. I flew into New York once a month and lost ten pounds each month. When I'd lost forty pounds, Jean suggested I buy a franchise and start Weight Watchers in Detroit. That day my company was born.

Anyone who's been to Weight Watchers in recent years knows that our group leaders provide a strong support system. All our leaders have been on the program and have met their goal. They receive ongoing training and meeting guides to prepare them for the job. That's now. When I first started out in Detroit, all I had was the diet and the right to use the Weight Watchers name in a few counties. That's it. I had no business plan, no meeting plan, and, of course, I had no marketing experience. Where in the world was I going to start?

I started with common sense. Where could I advertise that I would be sure to find overweight people? The answer: I hung a poster in a candy store that said COME LOSE WEIGHT WITH WEIGHT WATCHERS.

I held my first Weight Watchers meeting in a school auditorium on Tuesday, July 12, 1966. I chose Tuesday using the most profound business logic—it was supposed to be a lucky day. The first night thirty people came, but, of course, that number included my five children, grandparents, aunts, uncles, and a few dieters.

I peeked out from the curtain and saw those people waiting expectantly, many familiar faces along with a few I'd never seen. And I had an anxiety attack and headed straight for the bathroom to try to pull myself together. There I was in the ladies' room with my head between my legs, gulping for air, praying that I wouldn't pass out. I'd never spoken in public before! What would I say? What if nothing came out, or worse, I said something stupid? What would they do?

I forced myself to put both hands on the sink and confront myself in the mirror. I said out loud, "Listen, kid, you've got to get hold of yourself." The General Patton approach didn't do a thing to ease my panic. Then I asked the mirror a question: "What's the worst that can happen?" I pondered that for a few minutes, wondering if I'd ever heard of anyone actually dying of fright—I hadn't. More likely, I thought, I could faint. If that happened, at least I wouldn't know until it was over. I actually saw a little smile in the mirror then and my death grip on the sink eased a bit. And then I had a realization that changed my life. These people hadn't come to boo me. There was no one in the audience waiting to taunt me with "Fat Flo." These people had come for help, and it was up to me to give that help. I took a deep breath, walked straight out to the audience, and said what I'd come to say.

I made it through the evening, but I wouldn't be who I am today if I hadn't faced that fear. I could have buckled and gone home beaten. Instead, I talked to the mirror and it gave me just the push I needed. It was the beginning of a beautiful friendship between my mirror and me.

The next week sixty people came to the auditorium, and within a month, a hundred people were Weight Watchers. The business grew steadily from there. I'd bought franchises for a few counties. The territories covered the Detroit metropolitan area; Toledo, Ohio; and Essex County in Ontario, Canada.

In the beginning, I did it all. Besides being the business manager, I was the leader, the receptionist, the public relations director, the bathroom cleaner, and an active member. As I said, I lost forty pounds in four months, but it took me a year to lose the last ten. Many women find it difficult to lose the last of that excess weight, and I was no exception. The program was brutal then—three fish meals and one liver meal every week, no pizza; even watermelon was an “illegal” food. (Today there are no prohibited foods in Weight Watchers.)

Years of stress-induced eating proved a tough cycle to break. I loved my new business, but I was tackling the unknown every day and wondering if I was up to the challenge. My first instinct still was to put food in my mouth. But I kept right on talking to the mirror. Most of the time, I made the choice *not* to respond by eating. Sometimes I did eat but chose a comforting bowl of vegetable soup and a crusty roll instead of a hot fudge sundae. Sometimes I chose the hot fudge sundae. But I'd talk it over with the mirror, forgive myself, and get right back on track the next day. I finally took off those last ten pounds and kept them off.

As I continued talking to the mirror, I made some personal discoveries. Perhaps the most surprising was that although my mind had been focused on weight, weight, and only weight, my

problem wasn't about weight. My problem was a lack of self-esteem and limited coping skills. Weight gain was merely a symptom. As I learned how to cope with life's ups and downs, I learned to like myself, and slowly, controlling my weight became less and less of an issue.

One of my happiest discoveries was that I was a great salesperson. Once I sold myself on an idea and shared it with other people, the passion and excitement I had for it was infectious. To this day, it's the very best thing I do. Equally remarkable is that I was able to recognize my own talent. I was able to look in the mirror and see something positive in the person looking back. I was changing inside and out, and in the process, I was on my way to realizing a dream.

My entire family became involved in the business. My mother answered the phone, and my aunts and uncles worked in the office. My father was a receptionist. My sister Sandy worked as a receptionist and a bookkeeper and, eventually, headed the financial department. Later, I gave Sandy half of my business. My sister Micki became the company's head trader. As soon as they were old enough, even my children became involved. They typed, cleaned bathrooms, and did other chores. When I couldn't get a sitter, they came along to watch and listen to me speak. If your own kids fall asleep while you're speaking, you know you're boring the audience.

This may sound like we were all one big, happy family and, for the most part, we were. My family was proud of the new business I was building and eager to help me in any way they could. I felt—and still feel—enormously lucky to have their support. But I think it's important for you to know that it wasn't all roses. As soon as I dared to dream, I had to decide what I was willing to give up to get it. That's the way it is for everyone, and most of the time, the bigger your dream, the bigger your sacrifice. I gave up time with my children.

To some extent, I had little choice. We had five children to support, a home, and all the other usual expenses; we really couldn't afford my being a stay-at-home mom. I needed to go back to work. Did I need to go out and build an international corporation? Of course not. And it didn't start out that way. But each success provided a new opportunity, and eventually the combined successes paved the path I took. I'll be the first to say that I took the trip not only willingly but *passionately*. Eventually, that path led me to financial freedom and enabled me to provide my family with opportunities that I couldn't have given them any other way. Plus, I've been able to help literally millions of people lead healthier, more fulfilling lives. If I had it to do over, I would.

It would have been easy for me to omit this part of my story. I realize that it will be controversial. Some women will agree with the course I took and others will disagree. I don't think all of my kids have forgiven me for not being at home. And if you're wondering whether I've ever felt guilty about not being there, of course I have. But those days are over and dwelling on guilt about choices isn't good for anyone. Guilt about the past can ruin the present unless you make amends where you can, know when you've done your best, and then put it away. So that's what I've done.

My children grew up and one day I came home to an empty house. The last of the kids had left for college and I was facing an empty nest. My husband had been off growing his business and I'd been off growing mine. We'd never had a lot in common, but now the gulf between us was enormous. We talked about it and mutually decided to end our marriage. The kids were living their own lives now and were not particularly surprised when we told them about our decision. I'd never felt so alone.

I dealt with the loneliness by throwing myself into my

work. I grew my business by buying franchises for more states. I went on all the Weight Watchers diet programs as they evolved. I can't sell a diet program that I don't believe in. One of the changes included physical activity as part of weight loss and maintenance. When I was fifty pounds heavier, I'd never been interested in sports, but I found myself becoming an enthusiast. That's how I came to be on the tennis court where I met Bill, my third husband. I glanced at the court next to where my girlfriend and I were playing and saw a man who immediately caught my eye. He was handsome, tall, very strong, and slim. My friend told me he was a doctor who practiced family medicine and he was single. She introduced us and that meeting changed my life.

This man was my friend, my husband, and my soul mate for twenty-two years. What made our marriage work? By the time I married him, I'd grown up enough to know who I was and what I needed. We had romance, but we also had commonality. We were both professionals and we both enjoyed family, art, golf, movies, opera, tennis, bridge, and travel. That wealth of common experience gave us a strong foundation. We built the rest from there.

Bill and I lived every day as an adventure. When it became clear last year that Bill's life was coming to an end, my husband continued to make the most he could of every moment. He lived every day he was alive, looking at it all as one last adventure we could share together. Bill made me promise to go on living life as an adventure after he was gone. So here I am. I miss Bill every day, but I remember to take joy in everything that is good in my life. There is still so much to be grateful for . . . and new adventures on the horizon.

I'm the CEO and president of The WW Group, the company that began with a poster in a candy store and grew into the largest franchise of Weight Watchers International. At its

peak, The WW Group owned franchises in twelve states and three countries. More than 100,000 members attended our weight-loss meetings every week. Recently I sold about 75 percent of our franchises so that I could focus more of my attention on writing this book, touring as a public speaker, and spending time with my family. When we get together for a meal (which is as often as possible), it's quite a houseful. I make the most of today with my children—and now I have the added joy of grandchildren! Children everywhere, adults chasing after them, ten conversations going on at once—it's hard to imagine anything better. And still, good days and bad, I find myself back where it all started, facing myself, accepting myself, talking to the mirror.

I've always been fairly private about my personal life—I can't imagine anyone being completely comfortable seeing her life story in print. But I thought it was important that you know something about the road I've traveled up to now. Now it's time for you to turn the page and begin your own journey through the mirror to live the life you want.

#### QUESTIONNAIRE: First You Need a Map

When starting any journey, there is one thing you absolutely need to know before you take your very first step, and that is where you are right now. Just think about it. Wouldn't it help—even before you start—to know all the things that are working for you *and* all the things that are holding you back from feeling good about yourself? To that end, I've put together some questions to help you figure out where your life stands. It's an opportunity to ask yourself what you really like about your life and to think about the areas in your life you'd like to change. The result will be your very own walking map through the chapters ahead.

Remember, this is not a test . . . there are no right or wrong answers. No one is going to grade you on it. It's a survey, and everyone will answer differently, depending on her own circumstances. What's important is that you're really honest with your answers. Look into your soul and seek out your feelings. Tell it the way it is—not the way a parent, spouse, friend, or article in a magazine says it should be. After all, this book is about *how you feel* . . . and remember, anything you have to say is just between us.

In this survey, you're going to find questions about many different areas of your life. Take some quiet time to read through them and think about how satisfied you are with each area. "Quiet time" is really a very important part of what you're doing for yourself here. It's crucial that you read and answer these questions without distractions. They don't have to be answered all in one sitting either. You can take your time and think about them—there is no pressure here.

Next to each question is a scale from 1 to 5. Circle the number that best reflects how you feel about each question as it relates to your life.

A 1 means that you really want to make a positive change in your life. You feel that if this area were different, you'd feel a lot better about your life and about yourself. Don't feel bad if you get a lot of 1's. That's why we're here—to make the things in your life that aren't as good as you'd like them to be better.

A 2 indicates less dissatisfaction than a 1, but it does mean that you recognize a pretty strong need for change in this area.

A 3 is a middle-of-the-road response. If you choose a 3, things could be better in this area, or they could be worse.

A 4 means that, all in all, you're pretty happy with this area of your life. Sure, there is a little room for improvement, but basically you're content.



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A 5 means that this area of your life is about as perfect as it can get. You've got it all going for you.

If you read a question that doesn't apply to you—for instance, if I ask how you feel about your relationships with your siblings and you're an only child—it's okay to just skip that question. Grab a pen, a pencil, or my favorite, a purple marker, and let's get started!

### *You on the Outside*

How happy are you with . . .

- |                             |   |   |   |   |   |
|-----------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Your weight?             | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. Your fitness?            | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. The way you dress?       | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. Your hair color?         | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. The style of your hair?  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6. Your makeup?             | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7. Your skin?               | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8. Your teeth?              | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 9. Your overall appearance? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

### *You on the Inside*

Do you feel that you . . .

- |  |   |   |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 10. Are worthy of love?  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 11. Deserve respect?   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 12. Have a good attitude? (On any given day, is your glass half full or half empty?) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

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- |  |   |   |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 13. Spend enough time laughing or just feeling happy on an average day?                              | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 14. Take enough time for yourself to relax/recharge your battery?                                    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 15. Are able to handle the daily stress in your life?  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 16. Can cope with unexpected problems?   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 17. Can face the things in life that scare you?  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 18. Try or learn new things as a regular part of your life?  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 19. Usually make smart choices?  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 20. Embrace change?  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 21. Ask for help when you need it?   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 22. Learn from your mistakes?  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 23. Live in the moment rather than dwell on the past or worry about the future?                      | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 24. Get things done on time—especially the things that you'd rather not be doing in the first place? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

*The Healthy You*

How happy are you with . . .

- |                               |   |   |   |   |   |
|-------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| 25. The quality of your diet? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|-------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|

MY STORY

- |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 26. The amount of water you drink in an average day?                                | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 27. The amount of energy you have?  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 28. How much sleep you get on an average night?                                     | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 29. How much aerobic exercise you get?  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 30. How much time you spend on lifting weights or other strength-building exercise? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 31. How often you see your doctor for regular exams and health screenings?          | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

*Love, Marriage, Family, and You*

How happy are you with . . .

- |  |   |   |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 32. Your love life?  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 33. Your relationship with your parents?                   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 34. Your relationship with your siblings?                  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 35. Your relationship with your children or grandchildren? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 36. The amount of the time you spend with your family?     | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 37. The quality of the time you spend with your family?    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

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38. Your ability to cope with or resolve conflict between your family and you? 1 2 3 4 5
39. Your capacity for being supportive toward your family *and* your family's capacity for being supportive toward you? 1 2 3 4 5
40. Your ability to forgive a loved one who hurts you? 1 2 3 4 5

*Friends and You*

How happy are you with . . .

41. The number of friends you have? 1 2 3 4 5
42. The quality of your friendships? 1 2 3 4 5
43. Your ability to agree to disagree with friends? 1 2 3 4 5
44. Your ability to be as kind to yourself as you are to others—to be your own best friend? 1 2 3 4 5
45. Your ability to give and take constructive criticism? 1 2 3 4 5
46. The amount of time you spend socializing? 1 2 3 4 5
47. Your ability to say no to peer pressure? 1 2 3 4 5
48. How well you handle friends who want more time than you can give? 1 2 3 4 5

MY STORY

*The Professional You*

How happy are you with . . .

- |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 49. The work you do?                              | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 50. The supervisor you work for?                  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 51. The company you work for?                     | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 52. Your coworkers?                               | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 53. Your staff?                                   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 54. The potential for growth in your current job? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 55. Your work's effect on your personal life?     | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 56. The amount of hours you spend on the job?     | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 57. The length of your daily commute?             | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 58. The amount of work you take home?             | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

*For Stay-at-Home Moms (or Dads!) Only*

How happy are you with . . .

- |  |   |   |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 59. Working as a stay-at-home parent rather than working outside the home? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 60. Your family's appreciation of the work you do at home?                 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 61. The respect you receive from peers as a stay-at-home parent?           | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

TALK TO THE MIRROR

*Your Personal Space and You*

How happy are you with . . .

- |  |   |   |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 62. The part of the country you live in?                           | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 63. The environment (urban, rural, etc.) you live in?              | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 64. The home (apartment, condominium, house, etc.) you live in?    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 65. The furnishings in your home?                                  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 66. The layout of your home? (Do you have private/personal space?) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

*The Keepin' It All Together You*

How well do you . . .

- |  |   |   |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 67. Keep your home organized?                                    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 68. Keep your office/workspace organized?                        | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 69. Remember your appointments?                                  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 70. Arrive on time for your appointments?                        | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 71. Return borrowed items (books, videos, tools, etc.) on time?  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 72. Keep maintenance schedules (for your car, appliances, etc.)? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 73. Pay bills on time?   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 74. Remember and plan for birthdays, anniversaries, etc.         | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 75. Remember to write thank-you notes?                           | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

## MY STORY

76. Return phone calls/e-mails in a timely manner? 1 2 3 4 5
77. Set priorities for your life? 1 2 3 4 5

### *The Fiscal You*

How well do you . . .

78. Avoid credit-card debt? 1 2 3 4 5
79. Save for retirement? 1 2 3 4 5
80. Keep a separate savings account for emergencies? 1 2 3 4 5
81. Balance your checking account every month? 1 2 3 4 5
82. Provide for your family (life insurance, estate planning, etc.)? 1 2 3 4 5
83. Pay taxes on time? 1 2 3 4 5
84. Keep a budget? 1 2 3 4 5

### *The Future You*

How happy are you with . . .

85. Your dreams for the future? 1 2 3 4 5
86. The plans you have to turn those dreams into reality? 1 2 3 4 5
87. Your willingness to make sacrifices to realize your dreams? 1 2 3 4 5
88. Having a timeline to realize those dreams? 1 2 3 4 5

89. Your ability to make lasting,           1   2   3   4   5  
positive changes for the future?
90. Your ability to live a full, happy       1   2   3   4   5  
life as you get older?

All done? Good. Now take a look at what you've circled. You are looking at your very own map that shows you everything that is working for you *and* everything that is holding you back. Most important, this map shows you the path you'll need to follow to achieve what you want—a life where you feel good about yourself each and every day.

It's important to know that this map is good for today, tomorrow, and probably next month. But over time, your map will change as your circumstances and priorities change. It's a good idea to take this survey at least twice a year to make sure that you're in touch with those changes. That way, you can continue to place your energies in the places that will make you feel the very best about yourself.

For the record, I have yet to meet anyone who circled all 1's (thank goodness) or all 5's (but I'm still working on it). We all have things that we can work on. But it's important to remember that no one can change everything at once, and anyone who tries is just setting herself up for a disappointment. You can use this exercise as a guide to help you set some priorities. Take a look at any 1's and 2's first. Increasing those scores is going to make you feel better about yourself right away. On the second leg of your journey, you can focus on increasing your 3's, and down the road, you might be able to fine-tune some of those 4's into perfect 5's. How? Read on—that's what this book is all about.

So now that you've got a clearer picture of the road that lies ahead, pack your mirror—you'll be needing it—and let's get moving. And remember, I'm with you all the way.