

Sisters, Unite!

*Creating a Good ol' Girl network to help women
Play Big in the world*

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Internalized Women's Oppression reveals that at this time in history, what holds a woman back is her limiting beliefs about her value and abilities, and the way we project those limitations onto each other. At one time, the only way a woman could climb the ladder in the corporate world was to take on a very masculine way of relating and interacting. My dad referred to these women as "ole brods". Times have changed, but in some ways, we haven't; we are still running old programs.

Last week, I was talking with a very successful woman who has no girlfriends and doesn't want any because women are "weak" and she can't stand the things that they want to talk about. Over the years, I have heard and seen every kind of relationship—loathing and loving—that women have with each other.

Every time I hear a woman say, *Women are worse to work with than men*, it makes me cringe! I want to jump up and say "Stop! You are sabotaging your Sisters!" This disempowering statement makes the problem worse. Don't get me wrong—there are times that I've felt frustrated with other women. When you get burned by a mean and reckless Sister, it stings much worse than being stung by a man! But we can choose another way of relating to each other—we can choose to see every woman's incredibleness, which will elevate the consciousness of women as a group.

Sometimes I stand in front of groups of women and ask them to view me as a dumb, incompetent, goofy speaker that annoys them. Their faces turn nasty as they judge me and I begin to experience their rejection and disdain. I get them to watch how they feel when they view me through that perspective. They appear to shut down emotionally, tensing up in their bodies and facial muscles. If they looked at me like this for long, I'd feel defeated and demoralized, ready to shrivel up and die or shut it down and go home!

Next, I have them admire me as a brilliant, courageous, sharp woman. As they shift their perception, their faces transform into happy, approving, approachable people who like and respect me. They again open up and become receptive and at ease. Feeling empowered and happy, they transform in that very moment to be energized, engaged, and willing to interact.

And I feel appreciated and open to doing anything I can to support them as they take on their journey!

PERCEPTION IS EVERYTHING!

When women choose to judge rather than support each other, we set obstacles in each other's way. We limit each other, ultimately negating the opportunities that are now open to women to excel in the world. Women need to develop the equivalent of the good ol' boy system to get behind, believe in and support each other. Every time a woman sees another woman's greatness and affirms it, she is building her own power as a woman. Every time a woman supports her Sister in seeing herself big, she is transforming small thinking into big thinking for all women, past, present and future!

Have you heard of the "butterfly effect?" This scientific phenomenon postulates that when a butterfly flaps her very delicate wings, it produces a small breeze that reacts with the atmosphere to create an energetic chain reaction detected around the world.

Everything we do impacts the world. Consider Hillary Clinton's race for the presidency in 2008. Even though she won't be our next president this time, she has made a huge difference for women in the world by running. Consider this powerful excerpt from her concession speech:

When I was asked what it means to be a woman running for president, I always gave the same answer: I was proud to be running as a woman, but I was running because I thought I'd be the best president. **But I am a woman**, and like millions of woman, I know there are still barriers and biases out there, often unconscious, and I want to build an America that respects and embraces the potential of every blessed one of us.

I ran as a daughter who benefitted from opportunities my mother never dreamed of. I ran as a mother who worries about my daughter's future and a mother who wants to leave all children brighter tomorrows. To build that future, we must make sure that women and men alike understand the struggles

of their grandmothers and their mothers. And that women enjoy equal opportunities, equal pay and equal respect.

... You can be so proud that from now on, it will be UN-remarkable for a woman to win primary state victories, UN-remarkable to have a woman in a close race to be our nominee, UN-remarkable to think a woman can be the president of the United States, and that is truly remarkable, my friends!

... As we gather here today in this historic, magnificent building, the 50th woman to leave this earth is orbiting overhead. If we can blast 50 women into space, we will someday launch a woman into the White House. And although we weren't able to shatter that highest, hardest glass ceiling this time, thanks to you, it's got 18 million cracks in it, and the light is shining through like never before, filling us all with the hope and the sure knowledge that the path will be a little easier next time. That has always been the history of progress in America.

This historical speech was a powerful reminder of how much progress we've made as women, and how our support and encouragement of someone like Hillary is a support and encouragement to us all. Every time you Think Big, Play Big and come closer to realizing your dream, your progress opens doors of opportunity for women worldwide.

Next time you notice your observations turning against a woman in judgment, disdain or indifference, stop yourself and change your perception in that very moment to "Wow, what an amazing, powerful, brilliant woman I see in front of me!" Hold these thoughts for a minute or two until your belief about her changes. You'll notice yourself naturally wanting to connect with, support and affirm her. With practice, it becomes easy and natural.

I love being a woman, and I love my Sisters! We are powerhouses making a difference in the world! Support other women by:

- Practicing the "No Gossip" policy—and when you slip up, re-commit yourself to watching what you say about others
- Looking into your sisters eyes with loving support to create a deep and powerful connection with her
- Seeing her power even when she doesn't, and encourage her to Play Big
- Be the first to smile and say "hi!"