



# BARBARA GLANZ

An internationally respected motivational speaker and author of 11 best-selling books, Barbara says, "Life is difficult. When people are on the edge of despair, I help them understand they still have choices. You need to look at what has changed and what hasn't changed. One thing may have changed, but not everything."

Her credentials are impressive: she's the first speaker on record to speak on all seven continents; she's spoken in all 50 states; she is one of fewer than 550 Certified Speaking Professionals worldwide that includes only 195 females—to name just a few.

## BARBARA GLANZ

**E**ven when you're hurting, Barbara Glanz reminds us that every day is a gift. As an internationally respected motivational speaker, Barbara says, "You have to work through the struggle. Change infers loss which leads to grief. You must understand that grief is a process that you must pass through. You can let it get you down by thinking about it all the time or you can ask yourself what you can learn from the experience and how you can grow as a person."

As a speaker and author of 11 best-selling books, Barbara talks about change. "Life is difficult. When people are on the edge of despair, I help them understand they still have choices. You need to look at what has changed and what hasn't changed. One thing may have changed, but not everything. What was—it is gone. Whether it is a forced or chosen change, you must go through a period of struggle. Just like the playground monkey bars, you must let go of what was in order to move forward."

Barbara's motivational presentations to hospital, health care, and human resources employees and to women's groups focus on improving morale, employee retention, customer service, remaining optimistic, and how to make a difference to those around us. "I was given a gift that comes with an awesome responsibility to use the gift. I believe God puts me where he wants me to be. I am blessed with a lot of energy. I don't view my work as just making presentations or a job; I am merely the messenger. I am authentic and real and people respond to that. I give how-to ideas that will inspire and that are immediately applicable to the lives of those in the audience."

It's immediately apparent that Barbara loves people and wants to empower them through her speaking and books. She is the poster child for her theme for this year—"Spreading Contagious Enthusiasm." She advises, "Accept people as valuable human beings no matter what your relationship is with them. Listen and see with your hearts. In hotels and restaurants, express appreciation to employees for the way they do their job. Let people know how valuable and special they are. We don't know when the extra encouragement will make a difference in the way they perform their job or in their self-esteem."

Barbara herself is no stranger to change. At age 28, she lost her father, mother-in-law, son, puppy, and found a lump in her breast. In 2000, she lost her husband as they were about to embark on his retirement on Siesta Key. She says, "I could have remained sad, angry, or bitter. Death has taught me three things. One, every day is a gift. Two, I hurt so much right now that I will never be anything other than what I am now so no one can hurt me. Three, when you don't think you can go on, don't fight it. Live five minutes at a time, but be fully present during those five minutes. I lived life five minutes at a time for almost three years when I didn't think I could go on. I have a favorite saying: 'Oh, God of second chances and new beginnings, here I

am again.' And remember to write in your blessings journal every night before you go to sleep."

Barbara feels that, "A person's emotional bank account can become bankrupt or overdrawn. When that happens, you have to give yourself a deposit. It can be a five-minute vacation, exercising, planning a vacation or party, making a call, or buying a treat. In general everyone needs to lighten up—have fun, color in a coloring book, play with Play Doh, play twister or board games. Use laughter to create an atmosphere of fun at home and the workplace."

Overlooking the Gulf of Mexico in her Siesta Key condo with its white baby grand piano, 200 dolls, and photos of her three children and four grandchildren, Barbara is relaxed and animated—barefoot in a sundress with flawless make-up and hair.

Her professional credentials are impressive: she is the first speaker on record to speak on all seven continents; she has spoken in all 50 states; she is one of fewer than 550 Certified Speaking Professionals worldwide that includes only 195 females; she has been featured on ABC, NBC, CBS, CNN, FOX-TV and other national radio and print media.

Her clients include Southwest Airlines, Nordstrom, Publix, General Mills, Chick-fil-A, University of Notre Dame, U.S. Travel Association, Carolinas Health Care System, Disney, and many others.

After graduating from the University of Kansas, Barbara was a high school and college English teacher and then a stay-at-home mother to her three children ("with another one in heaven," she says). In 1988 she became manager of training and customer service for an international company. Leaving the secure corporate world, she made "a risky move" and started her own company at age 49 with two children in college and a husband nearing retirement. After her husband's untimely death in 2000, their plans to spend more time on Siesta Key came to a screeching halt.

Living in the Chicago area and trying to decide where she wanted to live, she received a call from the manager of the building where she now lives that there was a condo available that she should consider. She bought it, totally remodeled it, and finds Siesta Key a welcome respite from her many days of travel every month.

Barbara walks the beach three to five miles a day or swims a mile in her condo pool, reads, goes to movies, and shops. She has ridden a camel, and elephant, and a Harley in the Thunder on the Bay ride a couple years ago. A wish yet unfulfilled is to enter into a relationship or marriage again.

To women, Barbara says, "You can have it all. You just have it at different times in your life. I suggest women choose a theme for the year that exemplifies what their priorities are for the year."

Barbara closes the interview with homework. "If you were writing a book about your life, what would the title be and what would the titles of the chapters be?" ❧

Story: Carol Darling  
Images: Andrea Hillebrand