

# Wisdom from Women

In honor of Mother's Day, the *Angus Journal* again features special women who are making a difference. This year's focus is on women who share their motivating messages to help inspire others.



by *Kindra Gordon*

**P**ublic speaking ranks among most people's top fears. And that's without considering speaking to an audience about personal — and often painful — issues that one has overcome. But some of the best and most inspiring speakers are those who share from their heart in hopes of helping someone else.

That's exactly what this year's featured women do. They travel the country sharing their stories with audiences in an effort to inspire positive change and self-improvement among all ages and groups of

people. Here we bring you the messages they share from their own experiences.

## Overcome adversity

Professional speaker and singer Jane Herlong believes "abundance grows out of adversity." Herlong, who is a former Miss South Carolina, also has farm roots. She was raised on a vegetable farm and married a cattleman.

She cleverly weaves her agricultural roots into her presentations, one of which she has titled "Hamburger Helper or Prime Rib:

How cooked or overdone are you?"

Through wit and song, Herlong challenges audiences to set their priorities and be their personal best — or what she calls "being prime rib."

She acknowledges that everyone faces difficult circumstances, but she advocates rising above those pitfalls.

"Out of adversity, great things can happen," she says. "It's up to you."

To overcome adversity, Herlong suggests you surround yourself with positive people and thoughts. "Find people who make you bloom and remind you what your prime rib is. Try to keep each other's tides high," she says.

*"Do not let fear stop you. You do it afraid."*  
— Jane Herlong

A sense of humor is another essential ingredient. "You have to find the humor in life. If you can just learn from it, you can grow," says Herlong, who peppers her presentations with some of her own personal family challenges.

With the right attitude, Herlong says she believes anything is possible. Growing up as a self-described tomboy on her parent's farm, she says she learned early on not to give up.

"I learned that you just have the seed to grow and become; the sky's the limit. Do not let fear stop you. You do it afraid," she says.

Herlong encourages each individual to "be the person God intended you to be. Find what makes you feel your best."

For her, it is giving back to others, and she credits that to being raised in agriculture. "I was raised to serve," she says. "You don't stop, you don't quit, you get your prime rib together and you serve."

Herlong believes helping motivate others is something each of us can do in our everyday lives by being a mentor.

"If someone in your life inspired you, please pass it on to the next generation," she says.

## Get beyond imperfections

Author and speaker Julie Barnhill pokes fun at a lot of things — including herself — during her presentations, but her message is a serious one.

She encourages audiences to embrace the fact that “we’re not perfect and don’t have it all together.” Instead, Barnhill advocates living a real, authentic life.

*“Let go of things that don’t matter. Find peace with people, family and relationships. That’s what makes us better people.”*  
— Julie Barnhill

“The only way we get to be our real self is to sandblast away the veneer of pretending we have it all together and know all the answers,” she says. “It helps us stretch and grow when we embrace ourselves.”

Barnhill says “being real” starts with letting go of unrealistic expectations and thoughts of “should have, could have, would have.”

“Let go of things that don’t matter,” she says. “Find peace with people, family and relationships. That’s what makes us better people.”

The Missouri-based mother of three speaks from her own experiences. She has made peace with the fact that she was adopted, as well as her lifelong struggle with her weight.

“It’s your personality and the essence of who you are that you give to others. “That’s what matters and what makes an impact,” Barnhill says.

“You don’t have to live with your mistakes or bad decisions forever,” she adds. “There’s grace for that. Likewise, be more gracious toward others, be more real and be yourself.”

## Read More

Each of these amazing ladies has authored at least one book sharing their inspiring messages.

Julie Barnhill offers several books and DVDs on topics ranging from parenting and marriage to grace. They are available at [www.juliebarnhill.com](http://www.juliebarnhill.com).

Jane Herlong has authored the humorous book *Bare Feet to High Heels: You Don’t Have to be a Beauty Queen to be a Beautiful Person*. It and several of her music CDs are available at [www.janeherlong.com](http://www.janeherlong.com).

Rebecca Chaney has chronicled the experiences from her time in the Australian Outback in the book *Bulldust in My Bra — An American Couple’s Working Season in the Outback*. It is available at [www.bulldustinmybra.com](http://www.bulldustinmybra.com) or via e-mail at [chaneywalkabout@aol.com](mailto:chaneywalkabout@aol.com).

Barnhill says by doing those things, you will live a deeper, more meaningful life. She challenges individuals to think ahead to things they want to accomplish — not just financial or everyday goals, but broader contributions to society.

“Go deeper,” she encourages. “Find things that stretch you, that are outside your comfort zone, things that add meaning to life.”

Barnhill also champions helping others. “Look at others in your life; remember where you’ve been and who has helped you get to here and now.”

She adds that it is especially important that women be supportive of one another. “Women tend to be competitive with one another,” she says. “But, it is important to relax and stop competing and live our life with women who can be powerful allies with us. We limit that when we compete.”

## Take risks

Rebecca Chaney of Maryland dares audiences to take risks through her unique story about a spontaneous trip to Australia. On a whim, Rebecca and her husband, Lee, sold their dairy herd in 2000 to move to the Australian outback for eight months to work on an 880,000-acre cattle and sheep station. The trip was not without its ups and downs, but Chaney says it was the experience of a lifetime.

In telling the story of their adventure, Chaney shares three life-changing lessons she and Lee brought home.

Foremost is to take advantage of

opportunities. “The biggest reason we don’t make life changes and try new things is because we’re afraid of what others will think,” Chaney says. She adds, “People thought we were nuts, but I’m so glad we went to Australia.”

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— Rebecca Chaney

Second, Chaney learned through experience how important it is to show appreciation and respect to your co-workers and loved ones. She tells that during the first months of their new employment in Australia, she was very depressed and disliked the work. That all changed one day when her boss complimented her horsemanship skills. For Chaney, receiving that appreciation changed her whole outlook, and the Outback came to be a place she loved.

Most importantly, Chaney says, their ranch experience an ocean away from home altered her and Lee’s priorities for the better.

“Before the trip I was very career-oriented, but being in the Outback taught us you’ll never be able to replace time with family and friends. Family values and faith are so important to us now,” she says. Since returning to the U.S., the couple has twin daughters and manages a small beef herd.

