



Boomer Babes with Brilliant Dreams

www.BoomerBabesRock.com

Karen Power

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www.christianspeakerservices.com



Karen is the CEO of Christian Speaker Services. With a passion to help Christian communicators share their messages with audiences around the world, she utilizes her multi-faceted skills to empower speakers to be the best they can be.

She has written stories in *Making the Blue Plate Special* by Florence Littauer, Marita Littauer and Lauren Littauer Briggs, and *Your Spiritual Personality* by Marita Littauer. She has also served as support staff of a large church, children's ministry director, women's conference coordinator, event planner and concert promoter, as well as praise team member for various churches. She has worked in the credit union industry for 17 years with much experience in the marketing area, as a course developer for a Fortune 500 company and as the Speaker Services Manager representing almost 200 motivational and inspirational speakers for an internationally-known Christian training organization. She has been a facilitator for the Glorieta Christian Writers Conference, Pitney Bowes New Sales Manager Training, and Personality Principles' Advanced Personality Trainers Workshop.

1. As a baby boomer woman, what do you find most comforting about growing older?

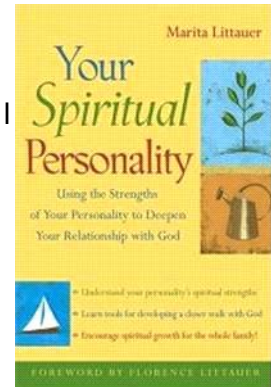
I'm not so sure that I find it comforting to consider growing older, especially being single. As a single Boomer Babe, I have many of the same issues that my married Boomer sisters have; however, there is a different spin on it when it's all up to you. I do not have a built-in community (family/children) for helping me with some of the concerns of aging. However, if there is anything comforting, it's that I can make changes in my life now to build community, plan for the future and take better care of myself. There are also many resources available to this generation to help us with aging that were not available to my parents'

generation. Thankfully, this generation is aging more gratefully and gracefully, and it's more acceptable for us to use Miss Clairol than it used to be.

2. At what point in your life did owning your own business become your career and did it find you or did you find it?

I think we found each other. I've dreamed long and hard about owning my own business and life's circumstances finally changed in November 2006 to allow me to do so on a full-time basis.

I started my own part-time desktop publishing business in 1994 when I needed extra income and wanted to help some friends with marketing their own businesses. Through the years, and as technology has changed, my business has evolved. It even sat on the shelf for a few years while I pursued other parts of my dream and worked elsewhere to make a living.



As early as I can remember, I used to dabble with writing. I even have some of my stories from the first grade. I chuckle when I hear Allison Bottke's stories of writing plays for her dress up collection as a little girl. This brings back memories of putting on magic shows and plays for the neighborhood in my own backyard. Eventually my interests turned toward music. At age 11, I found that I had rhythm and begin playing drums in a gospel group. A few years later, I found my love, the bass guitar. I used to live, eat, breathe and sleep gospel music. All I wanted to do was move to Nashville, own my own recording studio and book music groups. I did briefly move to Nashville, TN in 1982 to pursue this. However, the economy took a turn for the worse so I moved back to Tallahassee, FL and returned to my job at a credit union. I remember driving back home and turning the corner into my old neighborhood and thinking, "I'll never get out of this place so I might as well quit dreaming about it."

Somewhere along the line, my sister gave me a piece of needlepoint she had done that read, "Never give up on your dreams." Obtaining my dreams, or maybe getting a glimpse of them, was often a part of my life, but many times my dreams were on the backburner. Yet, it was those small glimpses that kept me going. Thankfully, God had a plan and He gave me enough of an adventurous spirit to take some major steps of faith. I moved from my hometown of Tallahassee, FL to Atlanta, GA in 1999 and then to Albuquerque, NM – to follow my dream. At times I'm sure my family thought I was crazy when those moves turned into nightmares. Through it all, I **knew** I was where I was supposed to be, doing what I was supposed to do. Not always understanding the circumstances, but standing firm in what I knew in my heart was the right thing to do.

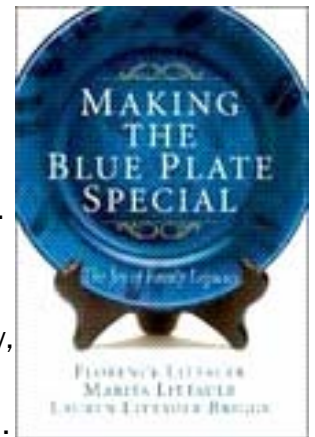
It wasn't until the last five years that I realized that all the experiences, both personal and professional, good or bad, were just parts of a tapestry – a bigger picture. Through the years, I have often had my hand in activities that related to what I loved doing, those activities have

taken on many shapes and sizes. I have promoted concerts, conducted women's events and helped Christian businesses with their marketing. While living in Atlanta, GA, during some of the darkest days of my life, I caught a glimpse of the big picture – working with Christian communicators.

3. As a little girl, what were the dreams of your heart and have you realized those dreams in some form or fashion as a woman?

I'm not sure as a child that I knew how to articulate my dream. It's taken years of learning my strengths, gifts and talents before I started seeing the colors come together in some form of a picture.

I remember being about 5 years old and playing church in my living room. My older sister used the coffee table for her piano and I was the preacher. Back then I had no concept of Christian speakers, other than the preacher at my church - and women speakers were virtually unheard of at the time. Yet, that memory has stuck with me until today – just as clear as a bell.



At age eleven years old, I remember being on a family vacation in Monterey, Mexico and realizing that I wanted to be a missionary, but not to a foreign country. I wanted to use music as a means to reach people with the gospel. Contemporary gospel music was just being born and for the next 20 years, I pursued music and songwriting. I was blessed to travel and play music around the southeast region of the United States and meet many great people. To borrow a line from a friend, "I know a lot of famous people, and some of them even know me."

As I started my professional career, I worked in various areas that sometimes didn't seem to relate to my dream – credit unions, course development, marketing, accounting, and sales – often just to pay the bills. Yet, each turn along the journey allowed me to acquire skills that would be valuable today.

Looking back, I realize that every step I have taken, every experience (good or bad), and each person that I've met along the way, was preparing me for the fulfillment of this dream. When we follow God and pursue His plan for our life, our dreams can come true!

Between November and December 2006, I lost both my full-time job of seven years and a part-time job of two years. When the shock started to subside, I realized that I had been given a gift. If ever there was a time to JUST DO IT! and go for the dream, it was now. In January 2007, I officially launched Christian Speaker Services.

CSS is dedicated to empowering gifted communicators to share their messages of healing and hope with audiences around the world. More than just a booking agency for Christian communicators, I also spend many hours coaching speakers in the business side of the speaking and writ-

ing industry and providing technology services to make their web sites and businesses running more efficiently and effectively.

I have been given the opportunity to make a difference in the lives of those who have a message as they spread the gospel around the world. The stories I wrote as a child, the pretend preaching, plays in the backyard and the years in music have enabled me to learn the industry and work with a variety of Christian communicators.

I've learned through the years that many of these communicators are trying to be lone rangers when it comes to running their business or ministry. Many people attend conferences that teach them different speaking or writing techniques. Often neglected at these conferences is the business side of the industry. Most of the communicators that I have been working with are dreaming of being full-time yet do not have the infrastructure in place to accomplish this. It's been exciting to see that after all those years of seemingly unrelated jobs; I've actually been learning the business and technology skills to help others. It's such a joy to be able to give a little guidance and watch these communicators achieve the steps needed to move forward and strengthen their businesses and ministries.

4. How important is it for us to listen to our heart and why?

It's absolutely essential that we listen to our heart since it's in our heart that we hear the voice of God and His leading for our lives. God has wired each of us differently and given each of us a unique set of gifts, talents and desires. While I wasn't wired to be the President of the United States, I have always been drawn to those having a platform and I have a desire to help make the behind-the-scenes run smoothly to enable those people to do their best and spread their message.

It's often that little voice that we ignore until one day it is so clear that it is God's voice leading and guiding us to the place He wants us to be – a place where we can grow and flourish in our gifts and talents. Sometimes, though, in the adversities of life we get discouraged and start believing that we have heard the wrong thing and we give up. Often, it's those long dark days, those tough situations that cause us to learn more about who we are and what we want, than in the good times. Out of those difficulties are birthed new ways of doing things – new inventions, books, plays, breakthroughs, growth or new directions – the very things that little voice, our heart, was saying all along.

I have been challenged in the past week to stop and review my goals for the next year. Stop? How? As busy Boomer Babes, our lives revolve around one word, BUSY. Yet, in our busy-ness, we breed barrenness. I raise the challenge for us to set aside some time in our schedules and block it out – just as we would any other important appointment. Then find a quiet place with no phones, no laptops, no iPods, or other devices and just be still and listen.

Listen to that little voice, our dreams, our goals, our hearts, and our God. We might learn something. We might begin to live our dream, or start a new chapter of the current one.

5. What single piece of advice would you give to a fellow baby boomer sister who decides she has not been listening to the dreams of her heart and wants to change course in midlife?

One book that I have read and recommended through the years is Bruce Wilkinson's, *The Dream Giver*. We often let others steal our dream with discouraging words. Remove the naysayers from your life, whenever possible. Surround yourself with those who believe in YOU!

No matter how long it takes to see your dream come true – wait, pursue, plan, get education, do the things that seem to be unrelated as the doors open, and follow your heart. Never give up! Never lose hope! It's never too late! Your dream may not look exactly like what you thought it might – in reality, it might be better than you ever imagined!

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