



Learning to accept yourself is the first step on your road to fabulous.

Fabulous *Curvy* & Rocking It!

by Ellen Lubin-Sherman

As a leadership/executive coach, I have the privilege of working with a remarkable group of accomplished people – people who either lead companies, want to move ahead or widen their social network. After many hours of consultation, I've come to the conclusion that in order to be a standout, your light has to be so bright and incandescent that you are impossible to ignore. You can't be okay these days – you have to be, well, fabulous.

Where to start

The road to fabulous starts with self-acceptance. This is non-negotiable. There are many individuals walking around with the self-esteem of a gnat and then there are those who have the world on a string. The secret: they accept themselves, they love themselves, and they don't want to be anyone else. How do you do that? How do you turn off those demeaning voices that sap all your strength and make you fearful of new situations? It's a conscious decision and it takes courage. But, it will change your life. Let me tell you how to do it.

Whenever you're inside your head, listen for that negative remark that makes you feel sad. That remark isn't coming from a colleague or a friend – it's coming from your own head. The minute you hear it, tell yourself to "knock it off." Now it's

possible you'll hear the voice later on, comparing yourself to someone or feeling self-conscious. Remember, this is all coming from your head – no one has said anything. Once again, tell your head to "shut up!" Good, now you're aware that you've been listening to this monologue of nonsense.

Now, write down everything you love about yourself. I mean everything – your wit, your dimples, and your sparkly eyes. This is good stuff and you are going to use it later on for a new tape you'll be listening to. Be patient, it doesn't happen overnight.

Repeat the words. Memorize them. Then upload them to a soundtrack (aka, the head trip tape) that you're going to play all day. Look in the mirror while you're listening to that interior monologue and see the way your face lights up with joy. That is exactly what we're shooting for: How to get you to focus on the positives – your positives – and erase that negative self-talk.

Fabulously curvy & passionate about living

People who wear their passion on their sleeve enthrall me. Passion is the life force, the rocket booster and the launch pad that sends you into the stratosphere, ready to take on the adventure of your life. Do you know what makes you excited? Can you speak with gusto about the things that move you? Look inside your heart and decide what it is that you love – knitting, books, travel or just spending a quiet evening

with your family. When someone says, “what’s up?” please don’t say “nothing.” There has to be something going on in your life that you’d like to share.

Passionate people throw themselves into their lives with such a zest that they sweep us up, carried away by their focus and drive. And most important, fabulous people do not care what people think about them so they’re free to be themselves at all times.

Years ago, I lost my job and would go to the grocery store after 7 p.m. when I knew I wouldn’t bump into anyone I knew. I avoided people because I was ashamed. Then one day I had a little heart-to-heart with myself and asked myself, “why do you care about what people think? And what makes you think people care about you? Don’t you know the secret to the universe? NO ONE IS THINKING ABOUT YOU BECAUSE THEY’RE ONLY THINKING ABOUT THEMSELVES.”

Whew

Can you imagine how freeing that was? No one was thinking about me or judging me. Just go ahead and live your life, and do it with the understanding that if you love yourself and accept yourself, everyone else will too.

Fabulously Curvy with a Fabulous Attitude

People with a fabulous attitude are fun to be with because “attitude” is shorthand for fun. Who can’t use a little more fun in their lives? It doesn’t matter what we start out with – brains, beauty or an excellent metabolism (boy, I wish I had one of those) – our cheerfulness and positive outlook is the best predictor of success.

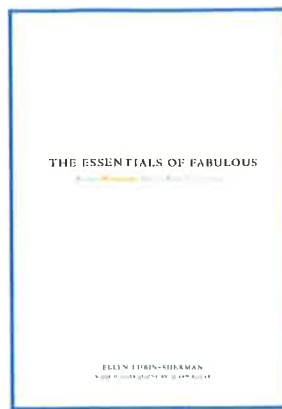
Now you may be asking, “How do you acquire such a stellar attitude?” Start by being grateful. Appreciate the friends who care about you, who wish you well and who are standing by you when you need support or give you a high-five when you’ve nailed it.

People with great attitudes are also superb at re-framing. When things go sour, don’t be mad at yourself for the detour or the roadblock that’s keeping you from your destination. Give yourself a pat on the back for trying because most people don’t even do that! It’s tempting to throw in the towel when things go awry but that’s not how the fabulous ones earn their reputations. They keep setting goals and they keep going.

Fabulously Curvy & Fabulously Warm

Aren’t you sick of all the blasé and jaded types that rob the fun out of everything? People who are warm and accessible are magnets – they attract the nicest people into their air and give them a lift with their brio and enthusiasm.

How do you project warmth if you’re naturally shy? Just smile. Initiate a hello. Don’t wait for someone to introduce himself. I always say the first one who says hello wins because they are indeed winners. They’re the people you think about when you leave and they’re the people you’re grateful for when you don’t know anyone in the room. It takes a little practice but try it! It’s fabulous to circulate with your confidence on full display.



Fabulously curvy & stylish

When actress Marilyn Monroe appeared on the screen, the only words about her curves were “va va voom.” When Sophia Loren stepped into the limelight, she was “bellissima.” These icons of beauty were celebrated for their luscious bodies and their feminine silhouette. Then came the 70s and the birth of fashion magazines extolling the beauty of half-starved models. Women bought the magazines and thought these ‘x-rays’ were incomparably beautiful.

Today models come in all shapes and sizes and the designers are realizing there’s a captive audience for stunning clothes for fabulously curvy figures.

Fabulously curvy women understand how to play up their best assets. They also know that they can be quirky, original and demonstrate true panache with a smart wardrobe of clothes and terrific accessories. Stylish people share an absolute belief in the importance of polish – clothes that fit perfectly, shoes that are always shined, impeccable grooming and, of course, that smile that indicates your charm. You don’t need to spend a fortune either so don’t hesitate to walk into an ethnic bead shop and buy five to eight strands of luscious wood beads. The more the merrier especially if the beads are in the same color. Or, look for vintage faux pearls that are as long as a rope. Put a few of those ropes on a simple sweater and pants and voila! Or, wear red glasses instead of the predictable brown. Be different!

Fabulously curvy with a personal board

There is no way you can climb a huge mountain (i.e. “life”) without a group of helpers to lighten your load and give you a needed boost. Look for people who have the generosity to see you succeed and ask them to serve on your board. Select people with savvy, know-how and charm who will not only open their phone book but also their hearts. We all need help at moments in our life – it’s the fabulous ones who ask for it and give it willingly. And when you do, you are without a doubt, truly fabulous.

So, here’s the choice if I haven’t convinced you: Fabulous or All Right. Fabulous is guaranteed to change your life and open the door to equally fabulous people. Fabulous is going to give you the confidence to take on the big. Fabulous is going to give you the confidence of a 150-watt bulb – brighter and illuminating.

All Right is sitting on the sidelines wishing you had a ticket to ride the rocket booster. Now you do – welcome aboard! ●



about ellen...

Ellen Lubin-Sherman got her start in business feeding gossip items to Liz Smith, the esteemed gossip columnist. Those early days of name-dropping were the perfect foundation for her later work in cultivating and branding identities for some of the country’s most luxurious products. She worked for some of New York’s top communications firms, advising top-tier brands including The Gap, Perrier Water, and Martha Stewart. For more than 30 years, she has flexed her “fabulous” muscles, guiding leaders and luxury brands to infuse their identities with flair. In 2003, she founded LAUNCH, an executive coaching firm for business leaders who wish to break out of the pack and lead with charisma. In addition to writing books, Ellen is a sought-after speaker renowned for her witticisms on society, culture, manners and style. For more about Ellen, please visit her website at www.essentialsoffabulous.com.