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Chicken Soup for the **Woman's** Soul

With Stories By:

Oprah Winfrey

Maya Angelou

Dolly Parton

Bessie Delaney

Linda Ellerbee

uthie Lee Gifford

And Many More

**101 Stories to Open the
Hearts and Rekindle the
Spirits of Women**

CHICKEN SOUP FOR THE WOMAN'S SOUL

101 Stories to
Open the Hearts and Rekindle
the Spirits of Women

Jack Canfield
Mark Victor Hansen
~~Jennifer Read Hawthorne~~
~~Marcia Simonoff~~



Health Communications, Inc.
Deerfield Beach, Florida

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We have taken a risk with several of the stories. After an exhaustive search, we were unable to find the authors or copyright holders of the following stories, which we have included in the book:

A Little Holiday Magic by K.M. Jenkins

Help Wanted—The Ideal Mother by Joan Beck

A Doll for Great-Grandmother by Jacqueline Hickey

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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Chicken soup for the woman's soul: 101 stories to open the hearts and rekindle the spirits of women / [compiled by] Jack Canfield et al.

p. cm.

ISBN 1-55874-429-0 (hardcover) — ISBN 1-55874-415-0 (trade paper)

I. Women—Conduct of life—Anecdotes. I. Canfield, Jack (date).

BJ1610.C522 1996

96-24700

158'.12—dc20

CIP

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Jennifer Read Hawthorne and Marci Shimoff

ISBN 1-55874-415-0 (trade paper) — ISBN 1-55874-429-0 (hardcover)

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Publisher: Health Communications, Inc.

3201 S.W. 15th Street

Deerfield Beach, FL 33442-8190

Cover re-design by Lawna Patterson Oldfield

Phenomenal Woman

Pretty women wonder where my secret lies.
I'm not cute or built to suit a fashion model's size
But when I start to tell them,
They think I'm telling lies.
I say,
It's in the reach of my arms,
The span of my hips,
The stride of my step,
The curl of my lips.
I'm a woman
Phenomenally.
Phenomenal woman,
That's me.

I walk into a room
Just as cool as you please,
And to a man,
The fellows stand or
Fall down on their knees.
Then they swarm around me,
A hive of honey bees.
I say,
It's the fire in my eyes,
And the flash of my teeth,
The swing in my waist,
And the joy in my feet.
I'm a woman

Phenomenally.
Phenomenal woman,
That's me.

Men themselves have wondered
What they see in me.
They try so much
But they can't touch
My inner mystery.
When I try to show them
They say they can't see.
I say,
It's in the arch of my back,
The sun of my smile,
The ride of my breasts,
The grace of my style.
I'm a woman
Phenomenally.
Phenomenal woman,
That's me.

Now you understand
Just why my head's not bowed.
I don't shout or jump about
Or have to talk real loud.
When you see me passing
It ought to make you proud.
I say,
It's in the click of my heels,
The bend of my hair,
The palm of my hand,
The need for my care.
'Cause I'm a woman
Phenomenally.
Phenomenal woman,
That's me.

Maya Angelou

With love we dedicate this book to
the 2.9 billion phenomenal women of the world.
May these stories touch your hearts
and inspire your souls.

We also dedicate this book to our parents,
Ellen Taylor and Fred Angelis, Una and Paul Hansen,
Maureen and Brooks Read, and Louise and
Marcus Shimoff, for the extraordinary gifts of
love and life you have given us.

Acknowledgments

Chicken Soup for the Woman's Soul has taken more than a year to write, compile and edit. It has been a true labor of love for all of us. One of the greatest joys in creating this book has been working with people who gave this project not just their time and attention, but their hearts and souls as well. We would like to thank the following people for their dedication and contributions, without which this book could not have been created:

Our families, who have given us love and support throughout this project, and have been chicken soup for *our* souls!

Dan Hawthorne, for always believing in us and in the importance of this project. Dan, thank you for helping us to keep our perspective and take ourselves lightly. We deeply appreciate your love and wonderful sense of humor!

Rusty Hoffman, for his unconditional love, his extraordinary support, his huge heart and his Internet expertise. Rusty, thank you for continually reminding us to enjoy the moment. You are a true saint!

Maureen H. Read, for reading and giving us feedback on hundreds of stories, and for always being there and cheering us on. We love you!

Louise and Marcus Shimoff, for their eternal support and love. We thank you for your constant willingness to research anything we needed, and for being one of our best sources of stories. We love you!

Elinor Hall, who assisted in every aspect of this project, from managing the *Chicken Soup for the Woman's Soul* office to doing research and providing emotional support. No job was too big or too small, and we thank you for your love, your friendship and your bliss—we couldn't have done it without you!

Ron Hall, for his unbounded consciousness, vision and love.

Carol Kline, for her great skill in reading and researching hundreds of stories, and for interviewing several women and writing their important stories for inclusion in the book. Carol, we are so grateful for your constant love and friendship.

Joanna Cox, for countless hours spent typing the preliminary manuscript and for always being there for us with infinite patience. We loved your steadying influence, and we loved working with you!

Nancy Berg and Eileen Lawrence, for their first-class job of editing numerous stories for us. We deeply appreciate the way you were able to capture the essence of *Chicken Soup for the Soul* in the stories you worked on.

Dan Clark, for sharing many of his stories and for working long and late hours editing stories to enable us to meet our deadlines.

Suzanne Lawlor, for her research and her generous heart.

Kristen Bernard, Bobby Roth, Susan Shatkin, Emily Sledge and Mary Zeilbeck for their editing assistance.

Peter Vegso and Gary Seidler at Health Communications, Inc., for believing in this book from the moment it was proposed, and for getting it into the hands of millions of readers. Thank you, Peter and Gary!

Christine Belleris, Matthew Diener and Mark Colucci, our editors at Health Communications, Inc., for their generous efforts in bringing this book to its high state of excellence.

Kim Weiss and Arielle Ford for their brilliant public relations efforts.

Patty Aubery and Nancy Mitchell, coauthors of *Chicken Soup for the Surviving Soul*, who guided us through the process of creating this book and never wavered in their encouragement and inspiration. Patty, thank you for always being there with answers and understanding. Nancy, thank you for an outstanding job obtaining the permissions for the stories in this book.

Heather McNamara, for editing and preparing the final manuscript with such ease, talent and clarity. We deeply appreciate your patience and your valuable suggestions. You are a joy to work with!

Veronica Valenzuela and Julie Knapp, for helping in Jack's office to make sure everything ran smoothly.

Rosalie Miller (Auntie Ro), who nourished us with her food and her love in the final weeks of preparing the manuscript.

Barry Spilchuk, for sharing with us stories, cartoons, quotes—and cookies when needed. Barry, we greatly appreciate your encouragement and your sense of humor!

Mark Tucker, for telling his audiences across the country about this book. His efforts resulted in hundreds of stories being contributed.

Recie Mobley, Diane Montgomery and Jenny Bryson, for putting out a call for stories to the professional speakers in their companies.

Mavis Cordero and Women Inc., for supporting our project and inviting us to participate in their New York conference for women, "Uncommon Women on Common Ground."

Dan Fields, Elaine Glusac, Joann Landreth and Sheryl Vestal, for featuring *Chicken Soup for the Woman's Soul* in their publications.

Bonnie Bartlett and Elizabeth Caulder, for their enthusiastic support, and for spreading the word about our call for stories.

Aliza Sherman of Cybergirl Internet Media, for designing our Web page and getting us onto the Internet.

The following people, who completed the monumental task of reading the preliminary manuscript of the book, helped us make the final selections and made invaluable comments on how to improve the book: Patty Aubery, Kim Banks, Christine Belleris, Pamela Bice, Laura Chitty, Lane Cole, Debbie Davis, Linda Lowe DeGraaff, Pam Finger, Elinor Hall, Jean Hammond, Stephany Harward, Amy Hawthorne, Rachel Jorgensen, Kimberly Kirberger, Robin Kotok, Nancy Leahy, Jeanette Lisefski, Priscilla Lynch, Teresa Lynch, Barbara McLoughlin, Karen McLoughlin, Heather McNamara, Barbara McQuaide, Jackie Miller, Nancy Mitchell, Cindy Palajac, Debra Halperin Poneman, Maureen H. Read, Wendy Read, Carol Richter, Loren Rose, Marjorie E. Rose, Heather Sanders, Wendy Sheets, Louise and Marcus Shimoff, Carolyn Strickland, Paula Thomas, Debra Way and Kim Wiele. We truly thank you for your heroic contribution!

Craig Herndon, for his help in typing the manuscript and for managing all our data entry. Craig's work was instrumental in providing us with information from our manuscript readers to help us make our final selection of 101 stories.

Fairfield Printing, especially Stephany Harward and Deborah Roberts, for their enthusiastic support of the book and their willingness to put *Chicken Soup for the Woman's Soul* ahead of almost any printing project at any time.

Jim Rubis and the Fairfield Public Library, and Tony Kainauskas and 21st Century Bookstore, for their outstanding research assistance.

Rick and Irene Archer, for their artistic abilities and for their design of beautiful promotional materials.

Felicity and George Foster, for their talented design and color work.

Jerry Teplitz, for working with us on our cover design.

Terry Johnson, Bill Levacy and Blain Watson, for their astute guidance on aspects of this project.

Georgia Noble, for opening her home to us in the final days of the project, and for sharing her light and love of beauty.

M., for the gifts of wisdom and knowledge.

The following people, who contributed through their emotional support and encouragement throughout the project: Amsheva Miller, Robert Kenyon, Lynn Robertson, Loren and Cliff Rose, Janet Jenkins, David and Sofia Deida and our support groups.

Many of the contributors to previous *Chicken Soup for the Soul* books, for their love of this project and their continued willingness to share their stories.

We also wish to acknowledge the hundreds of people who sent us stories, poems and quotes for possible inclusion in *Chicken Soup for the Woman's Soul*. While we were not able to use everything that was sent in, we were deeply touched by your heartfelt intention to share yourselves and your stories with us and our readers. Thank you!

Because of the enormity of this project, we may have left out the names of some people who helped us along the way. If so, we are sorry—please know that we really do appreciate all of you.

We are truly grateful for the many hands and hearts that made this book possible. We love you all!

Introduction

This book has been a gift to us. From the moment it was conceived, we have felt the love, joy and indomitable spirit of women every step of the way. Our hope is that this book will be a gift to you as well.

For many years the four of us have been speaking to audiences—often women’s audiences—about living our lives more fully and joyfully. We’ve been inspired, even overwhelmed, by how eager women are to share their hearts, their stories and their lessons. It is from this inspiration that *Chicken Soup for the Woman’s Soul* was born.

We experienced miracles every day in the creation of this book! We felt as if an invisible hand was guiding us along the way.

For example, we searched for more than a year for Phyllis Volkens, the author of “A Goodnight Kiss,” to get her permission to use her story. We finally located a distant cousin, who told us that Phyllis and her husband had moved to Iowa, where they were living only miles from Jennifer and Marci! More remarkable, however, was the response of Phyllis’s husband, Stanley, when we called. He told us how happy he was we had found them. They had been *Chicken Soup for the Soul* fans for years, but Phyllis had only about one week to live. He couldn’t wait

to tell her that she would be part of our book; he later told us how much it meant to her. She died two days later.

Women who sent us their stories told us repeatedly how grateful they were for the opportunity to write them down. They said that even if their stories were not included in our book, they were happy just to have expressed them. In doing so, they felt cleansed and renewed.

Because of this book we, too, are changed people. We see more clearly what's really important in life. We appreciate more deeply the human experience. And we live more fully in the moment.

Women bring such beautiful gifts to the world through their openness, compassion and wisdom. Our deepest desire is that each time you read these stories, you will come away with a greater appreciation for yourselves and for each other—as we all did.

As one of the women who wrote to us, Mary Michalia, so beautifully said:

All women go through periods in their lives when numerous demands are placed on them—family, work, spouse, ex-spouse, children, stepchildren, parents.

It is important, indeed necessary, to step back and re-evaluate one's priorities, to reflect on one's mission in life. For it is only in nurturing one's soul that one can nurture, take care of another. Sometimes, one must say, "Stop! Listen to me. I have a story to tell."

So from our hearts to yours, we offer you *Chicken Soup for the Woman's Soul*. May you experience the miracles of love and inspiration when you read this book. May it touch your heart and move your spirit.

*Jack Canfield, Mark Victor Hansen,
Jennifer Read Hawthorne and Marci Shimoff*

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