**INSPIRATIONAL SPEECH**

**FOR**

**CANDY OLMSTEAD**

Hello everyone! It's a real honor to be here with all of you this evening. I have several people I'd like to thank for this privilege. (**Mention those you wish to acknowledge**) I would like to extend my gratitude to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, I would like to say that \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Tonight we're here to celebrate all of **YOU**. We're here to acknowledge your hard work, your diligence, and your determination to give to others and in turn, give to yourselves. No matter your age, level of expertise, no matter the length of your personal and professional history, each one of you owe it to yourself to be the best that you can be. From this point on, let's focus on **success only... there's no excuse for failure**!

Mark Twain said, "A man (or woman) cannot be comfortable without his (or her) **own approval.**" Each one of you is to be commended for your work and accomplishments in the hairdressing and cosmetology field. Yours is an industry that, at its core, provides a means to reveal and celebrate your customers' awareness of their own personal pride. You work your magic diligently and through your efforts, a client's truth and strength are reborn. So I ask all of you, why wouldn't you want to celebrate and encourage your own talents, passion, abilities and contribution?

Whether you work for a large company or you're on your own; whether you have years of experience or you're just starting out, whether you have an army of clients or you're just beginning to build your following, you are an entrepreneur. No one else is responsible for your success, and no matter how difficult it may seem at times to keep your spirits up and forge ahead, that is what you.... and ***I*** must do each day. Not every day is a "good" day, but every day we get up and haul ourselves out the front door is a golden opportunity. Every day we are presented with the gift of possibility and it is up to us to determine whether we will make the most of the chance or leave our fate in someone else's hands. I have to tell you something that you may or may not want to face.... but if you're sitting here, you're **BUSTED**! (**Wait for the laugh**) You already know there's no choice but to succeed, so let's figure this out together!

I don't know about you, but when I walk into a room, **I own it**... I don't "try" to do my best, I know who I am, what my capabilities are, and I take pride in myself, the impression I leave on others, and how I can make a difference to those whom I meet in any given situation.... whether I have had a bad day or if I may be suffering on some personal level won't be able to be determined as I make my entrance because I believe in being a **professional**. My goal is to empathize with people I meet. It is through empathy and understanding that we grow as people and as professionals. Although no one is capable of walking fully in anyone else's shoes, it is our humanity that encourages us to relate to one another and to find the best ways to make the pieces of whatever puzzle that currently engages you to fit to benefit all involved. The other side of this is expressed by Alice Walker who said, "The most common way people give up their power is by thinking they don't have any." **STOP IT.**  It's not true. That negativity also generates power... albeit of a different kind, but why fight against yourself? What do you hope to achieve in failure.... or even worse... in mediocrity? **NOW** is the time to listen and get in touch with your strength and your unique abilities to succeed.

No one ever said life would be easy or that life would be "fair." And unless you have a craving for cotton candy and testing your aim at a ring toss by going to the big county get together, I invite you to drop the word "**fair**" from your vocabulary. Life is not "fair." Get over it. Let's move on. Then what **IS** life? Life is a context. Every day provides an opportunity and it's up to you to go for it. Every day you have a chance to check that proverbial glass and see if it's half empty or half full... it all depends on your perspective.... but here's a hint... in my world.... if it's half empty that's an opportunity to find the way to fill it with productivity, curiosity, and the motivation to succeed. If it's half full, then that's also an opportunity... to stay on my current path and see where it takes me.... but no matter how I perceive a situation, I will work towards my goals and I **WILL** succeed... and progress.

Some of you may be thinking.... "How **DOES** she do it? Where did **ALL OF THAT** come from?" I'll tell you. I learned at an early age to set goals and work toward them. I learned to acknowledge my progress and examine my mistakes. Yes. Thank goodness I too, make mistakes! (**Wait for the laugh**). And although I was fortunate enough to be exposed to these lessons early in life, it's never too late to learn... and ALL of us need periodic refresher courses!! (**Wait for the laugh**). Actually, the wisest of people have a way of telling us that failure can be our best teacher.... Richard Branson has said, "You don't learn to walk by following rules. You learn to walk by doing and falling over." And speaking of falling over, we all should know the classic and simple definition of success... and that is to get up one more time than you fall... and that's something all of us can... and **MUST** do... our survival and success depend on it. Ultimately and in addition, it's the wit and wisdom of the author Sam Levinson that sums it up... "You must also learn from the mistakes of others. You can't possibly live long enough to make them all yourself...." (**Wait for the laugh**).

If I had to sum up the secret of my success... no matter how great... sometimes.... or small... most of the time.... it's that I pay attention. I try not to exist in a vacuum. I know that everything in life is based on action and reaction and I do my best to keep my eyes and ears open, I set goals for myself... ultimate... longer term goals... I was taught to do a "five year plan," and I set interim goals... micro goals to get me from one day to the next... one week to the next, etc. it is through the minor achievements that we build the foundations to the bigger ones. And please don't be misled by what I say... not every day is a good day... you **KNOW** things don't always... or usually... go as planned... but when we pay attention we are more prepared to modify, react, and as our GPS's remind us.... RECALCULATE..... and just as we CAN'T STAND to hear that voice in our car telling us we might be going the wrong way, nonetheless, we're still thankful for the reminder! (**Wait for the laugh**).

All of you are in a wonderful profession. You get to beautify the world... or at least a part of it. Every client brings you a gift.... the chance for transformation, the chance to assist each person in that chair to rediscover their inner strength through their personal presentation. And although some might offer more of a challenge than others, every interaction provides a chance for you to grow and learn more about yourself, your purpose, your drive, and your potential.

As professionals, although you may be at different phases of your careers, each one of you has a context or a matrix within which you must function. Whether you're an owner or an independent professional, no one works in a vacuum and no one can do this... or any job alone. And no matter your level of knowledge or expertise, being a professional means that you need to be able to self generate. You need to understand your aspect of the business ... and it helps to have a grasp of the complete picture. Do you understand the ebb and flows of business? Do you anticipate the busy season and are you prepared to make it through the slower times? As entrepreneurs we always have a consideration in the back of our minds that our last client just might be our **LAST** client.... there are no guarantees in life. Do you do whatever is possible and necessary to insure continuity? Do you work on your personal and professional marketing and do you know how to get your name out appropriately? Are you constantly looking for new techniques and strategies to learn?Or are you waiting for encouragement and a pat on the back.... because that may not be the most solid plan... too many people wait for a push.... NOT. GONNA. WORK. Part of knowing failure is not an option is knowing how to self generate. An "atta boy" attitude won't cut it in today's competitive atmosphere, but if you're good, and if you keep up with the times and trends and education so necessary in your field, there's no reason you can't or won't succeed.

A critical expression I'd like to share with you is "Adapt or die." Of course to this crowd I should say "Adapt **WITH** **D-Y-E**" (**Wait for the laugh**) but you know that already! I want to acknowledge each one of you for your passion, your drive, and your enthusiasm. I want to thank you for being willing to keep an open mind and to listen to what I have said. I want to tell you that I appreciate the effort you made to be here and the passion that you bring to your profession. To be a hairdresser or cosmetologist is so much more than technically knowing how to cut or color or curl a person's hair. At any given moment you might be called on to give advice and council.... and then discuss hair... (**Wait for the laugh**)... you might be asked for your aesthetic professional opinion... you might even have to listen to problems and personal issues.... all come with the territory of supporting your clients to be the best that **THEY** can be... so don't lose sight of the fact that you too, must be properly prepared and sufficiently aware and knowledgeable to deal with whatever might come your way. By being honest, respectful, and self-aware, you will definitely be on the right road to success... no recalculating needed!! (**Wait for the laugh**). Thank you all for this wonderful opportunity!