

# **The Visible Woman**

**A Collection of Blogs on  
Women & Visibility**

**By Irene Brankin**

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**Stop trying to  
be something  
you are not!**

**By Irene Brankin**

As I've got older, sometimes when I've allowed everything to get on top of me and I can see others are out there changing the world, I hear myself saying –

just do your own thing

who do you think you are?

let go of trying to change the world

what difference do you think you can make?

be satisfied with caring for you and your family

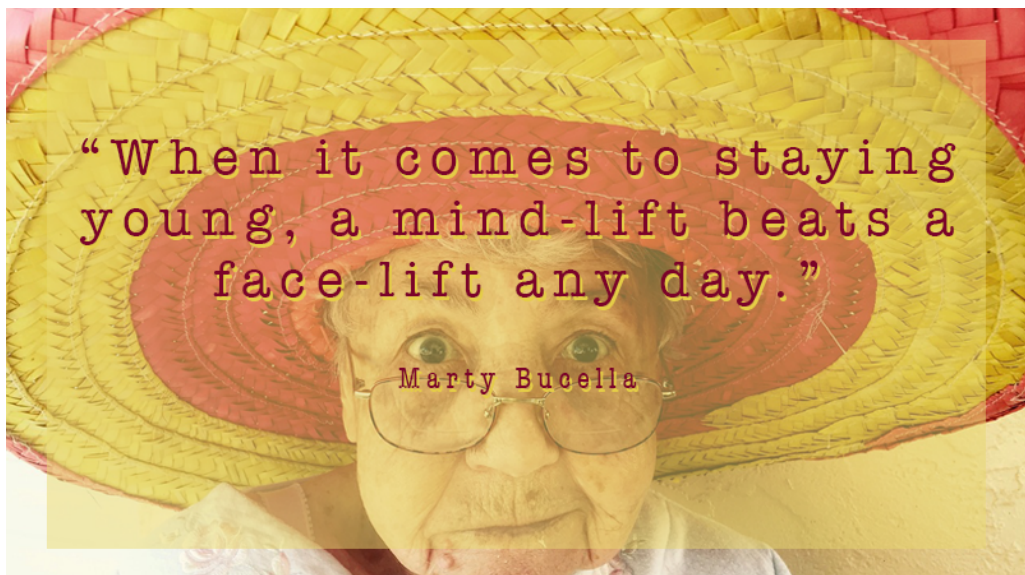
allow others to take care of themselves

And I wonder –

Am I making a difference to others' lives?

Have I connected or touched them in any way?

Am I (and others like me) a Role Model for others?



# Acceptance

When I allow and accept the feelings of where I am at that moment, I know that I have to listen to what is happening for me before I can move on. It is usually because I am pushing myself too hard – wanting to be at point ‘z’ when I need to allow myself to listen to my inner voice that says – trust yourself, go at your own pace and when you are ready, you will surface again.

*“Trust yourself, go at your own pace”*

## Role Models

I simply want to say to all of those questioning yourself at the moment – whatever age you are – don’t be deterred by those doubts surfacing, simply allow and go with them!!

Just look around you, there are women you will know personally, professionally or through the media who don’t know there is a glass ceiling and haven’t allowed themselves to give up on their dreams.

There are so many women of all ages starting up their own businesses, running the London Marathon (did you see them on the T.V. or in real life?), deciding to write books (Louise Hay wrote her 1<sup>st</sup> book in her 50’s and now commands an empire).

# I Dare You

Come on, I dare you to do something different in your life – do it daily, every other day, weekly or monthly, whenever – **JUST DO IT!!!**

Well, I'm saying **NO MORE** 'faffing about'. It's time you started taking all those risks you've put off while you've waited for life to happen. This is your Season to realise that **YOU ARE THE ONE WHO MAKES IT HAPPEN!!**

Take your courage in both hands and jump – make that leap into the unknown. I can tell you that it is worth it and especially when you are shouting, '**I DON'T CARE**' as you make that leap. Come on – let's do it together – 1, 2, 3.....

Do it softly, loudly or anything in between - **DO IT.**

# Is your sap rising?

By Irene Brankin



Spring is the Season for the 'sap to rise'. It is not January when we make all these resolutions and don't do them or make a start and let them slide! It is Spring time when we are coming out of our Winter hibernation that the magic happens.

As the buds start to open, and as the flowers and leaves appear and the skies become bluer – so it is your time too. If you've had the blessing of going with the Season, you will have turned your attention inwards, and your body will have rested. Now you will be turning outwards again and facing the world in all your glory – allowing us to see your colours appearing in full bloom.

## Challenge

This is my challenge to you as you are opening, standing tall and becoming visible to yourself and the world again.

It's now time for you to start living again, or for the first time, with excitement, laughter, the 'pull in of breath' kind of living. The one that contains both fear and excitement when you've only been focusing on the fear kind. I know you know that they are simply two sides of the same coin!!



*“Are you hearing me, all you lovely women out there?”*

## Are you hearing me?

Don't you know that **Life is for living**? It's **all** the colours of the rainbow not just grey and dreary with the odd sparkle of colour.

Are you hearing me, all you lovely women out there? Are you doing it already? Then that's **fantastic** as I'm speaking to the converted – those who are able to hold all the colours of the rainbow.

Then I'm talking to **YOU** - those of you who are still 'faffing about'. The '**stuck in your rut**, I will when.....

I'm **taller, smarter, slimmer, prettier, older, have money.....**

You can fill in whatever you want here as you know exactly what it is you are telling yourself - you are the '**let's play it safe**' kind of woman. Nothing wrong with that if you want to be stuck in that rut – remember it means '**a living death**'.

There are so many women of all ages starting up their own businesses, running the London Marathon (did you see them on the T.V. or in real life?), deciding to write books (Louise Hay wrote her 1<sup>st</sup> book in her 50's and now commands an empire). I also include myself in this one although no empire! Someone like Mary Berry still demonstrating her expertise as well as giving her expert opinion on others' abilities; a 73 year old climbing Mount Everest; an inspirational grandmother, making a triumphant return to the catwalk aged 80, and those being the best people they can be (you know who you are). You can add your own names to this list and maybe you are even on it!

And the two wonderful women who are my Role Models – Judi Dench and Helen Mirren – are still working whether 70 or 80 years of age. You and I are enjoying the benefit of their longevity and experience.

## In Common?

What do all these women have in common? They listened to their Inner Wise Woman or their Soul and decided they could no longer dim their passion or their lust for life! They heard their call to allow themselves the possibility of fulfilling their life's dream – regardless of whether they would succeed or fail by others' standards. They were willing to go ahead and take the steps towards it.

## Talking to You and Me

We will all get old – if we're lucky to survive. You and I have got so little time on earth that the biggest risk is to spend it dissatisfied!! It's time to give the focus on the ageing process or our doubts a break. Yes, you and I may doubt ourselves, and the alternative is death so grow old gracefully or disgracefully and listen to your inner voice.

# Striving to be the star

By Irene Brankin



This is one of my many blogs in different forms on being Ordinary and Extraordinary as I think it is important for us all to be able to hold this fact so I'm waving the flag on your (and my) behalf once more.

## Pressure of Striving

You see, in my opinion, so many of us are striving to be that Extraordinary Woman – to be one of the ones who are seen as The Stars in their fields – whether Media, the Arts, Sports, Academia, the Neighbourhood ..... Those women who stand out, are head and shoulders above everyone else and we wish we knew how they do it and want to be them!!

## Average or Ordinary

A lot of women are afraid to accept that they are average or ordinary. Why? Because if you do that then there can be the belief that you will have to acknowledge that you never will be one of The Stars. You will never have made it!! And this can lead even ultimately to what is the point of you being here on Earth! What have you achieved in simply being you??

# Reflection

That is something for you to reflect on. In my opinion, you will have achieved the fact that you give of yourself by going about your daily (and sometimes mundane) business knowing that life is crazy and even painful at times as well as contains unexpected miracles of beauty, joy, sharing and laughter. Life isn't ordinary as it has everything that you need to accomplish (whatever it is you want to accomplish or not) with you being ordinary. You don't have to be The Star to do this.

You may simply have forgotten, or even don't know what a wealth of experience and knowledge you bring to this life by being fully alive and that means with all your natural abilities and qualities.

“I no longer have to go about striving to be noticed by others.”

I am at the stage in my life (and perhaps this is a natural ageing process) where I can accept that I am Ordinary and there are moments when I can consider that I am Extraordinary. These moments don't last for all that long externally and they can feed me internally. You see, this helps me to relax and know that I am not going to be the 'next big thing since sliced bread' as is said here in the U.K.

I no longer have to go about striving to be noticed by others. My feeling of grandiosity can abate. I can simply be me going about my daily business of being Ordinary, and sometimes I may do or say or make or meet or write something that someone might find Extraordinary.

I can be free to be the Best that I can Be regardless of the comparison with others or the pressure I have put on myself to be The Star. What a Relief!!

So how would it be for you to care for your ordinary moments by being the person you truly wish to be regardless of whatever you are doing, no matter who you are – and watch the everyday miracles take root, blossom and become extraordinary.

Remember you are extraordinary because you are unique – there is only one of you!!

Go Well x

# **The Power of a Retreat to Heal your Weary Soul**

**By Irene Brankin**



“The Soul is placed in the body like a rough diamond and must be polished or the lustre of it will never appear” - Daniel Defoe

I remember this expression being used (at least within my family circle) ‘I am a weary, old soul’. Are you a weary soul? If so, I wonder how you handle this situation when it arises.

One of the many ways to deal with this inner weariness, is to attend a Retreat. Why? Because this gives you time for yourself, and away from the many commitments in your life in order to feed your Soul.



# Your Soul

The Soul hungers for meaning and purpose, a spiritual life. It wants:

Awareness, experience, depth and realisation

To rest and 'be'

To be free from the illusion that this is all there is

To love freely, no pressure, generosity, acceptance and courage

To be compassionate towards you and others.

To understand the Divine, and its place in the Universe

Your job then is to help feed your Soul and fulfil its desires e.g. through meditation, prayer, travel, writing, dancing, singing, solitude, nature, companionship, art, music, stillness ..... and deepening your own personal development. You can ask your Soul what it needs from you and you will then be caring for your Soul when you give it what it wants.

## Retreat

On a Retreat, you can have space for reflection, renewal, re-connection and re-discovery. Also there is that feeling of being able to rest in you with a big sigh, relax and enjoy the simple things in life - being taken care of, feeling free to be (or to learn) who you are whilst in a safe environment. You are able to laugh, cry and share with other women without judgement so can let go of some of the protective armour you've built up around you over the years.

Being in a small and supportive group of women can be such an enriching and enlivening experience for your Soul to relax into the safe and warm holding provided perhaps for the first time which enables that re-connection with yourself.

# Re-connection

When you re-connect with yourself, you are aligned with your Soul and you can come from that deep well of Love inside you. As you love, nourish and accept yourself from this place, you can include all your imperfections as well as how perfect you are in your uniqueness. You are then able to accept and connect with others from being at home in yourself.

You see, Love is the Beauty of your Soul and your Soul needs this to be expressed in the world. There is so much abundance – no lack - when you are expressing the best you can be in life.

“On a Retreat you can allow your vulnerability to be seen.”

## Flaws

Remember, we are all flawed and are going to make mistakes and get life wrong. We will all experience pain, uncertainty, loneliness and fear in our life. When we stop denying our flaws and imperfections and own them, you can then shift your focus to all that's good and growing in you. You can then commit to nurturing your talents, skills and abilities.

Remember you are also compassionate, loving, creative, talented and unique – you are all of that. Both-And. On a Retreat you can allow your vulnerability to be seen.

# Rut

If your intention is to begin to change your life, my Retreats for Women can help you to break out of the rut (did you know that rut = a shallow grave?) you're in while you're focusing totally on you. You will be nurtured, challenged and supported by someone (me) who has already been through this struggle themselves and found the courage to break free.

I will be enabling you to make changes from the inside out, and helping you to come out of the box you have kept yourself in. By turning inwards, the loving, creative, talented and specialness of you can be allowed to be seen.

Remember you only have one life to live and what better way than to come on my Residential Retreats. My retreat will enable you to start making your forgotten dreams a reality. It is never too late to find the courage to do something for yourself – nurture your weary soul.

As You grow and become aware, you feed your Soul as you acknowledge that we are all miracles just as life itself is truly a miracle. It is a wonderful world we are part of regardless of some of the cruel happenings in it.

Being on your Soul Journey is a very long process and it's not about getting somewhere. It's about re-connecting with You. Therefore, I salute you – you are more than enough - you are wonderful for simply being YOU.

I am a mature, well experienced facilitator, who will give you time for quiet reflection, personal growth learning, laughter and time for what women do best – sharing their stories with other women.

# Be that one today

By Irene Brankin



When I've reviewed my blogs from over a year ago, I realised that some of them also will appeal to those of you, women, who are now in contact with me and my work. I have adapted this one as I am so touched by the simple words used in the poem and know you will be too.

## Overwhelm

Life can be overwhelming at times with all that is happening in our personal, professional and the world in general. If you allow the media to be your only source of information, it can cause you to get pulled down, confused, and even upset with all that is horrible happenings across the globe. It can be most depressing, I must say.

## Simple words

A while back, I came across a poem on one of the 'Timeline Photos' and so liked it that I want to share it with you here in order to support you in those times. It was not attributed to anyone as far as I know.

The words are so simple and I know you will want to breathe them in –

## One

One tree can start a forest;  
One smile can begin a friendship;  
One hand can lift a soul;  
One word can wipe out darkness;  
One laugh can conquer gloom;  
One hope can raise our spirits;  
One touch can show you care;  
One life can make a difference;  
Be that one today.

## Choice

I would love it if you would choose one of the lines or choose the whole poem as your mantra for the moment, hour, day or week in order to support you when you may feel overwhelmed with what you are hearing and seeing in the world. This will enable you to re-connect with yourself again.

Simply breathe in and out normally and then as you breathe in say the line or each of the lines of the poem – whatever feels comfortable to you.

I am choosing to breathe into 'Be that one for today'.

# Simplicity

You may also, like me, be touched with the simplicity of each line. It is also a reminder of how you can create something simple, and uncomplicated to support you to remember all the goodness there is also in the world.

I'd like to leave you with - Don't try so hard! Let go and 'Be that one' and would really love to know your thoughts on my blog. Please leave me a comment – thank you.

# Thank you for reading.

If my words touch you and you want to know that you really matter, then visit my [website](#) or [contact me](#) and let's see how I can do that for you.

A handwritten signature in white ink on a dark teal background. The signature reads "Dene" in a cursive style, followed by a small flourish or mark.