STORY | LEADERSHIP

Making A Significant Difference

"I always wanted to make my living by making a difference, and do well by doing good."

from **The Greatest Networkers in the World** *by* **John Milton Fogg**

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Sandy Elsberg was born Brooklyn. Then the family moved to a city project in the Bronx where Sandy, her sister Stacey and brother Brad grew up.

Sandy's father was a trucker. He drove 18 wheels for 60 years of his life. Her mother was a checkout person at a supermarket. "I had great love, had a great life," she says. "We were never shallow on hugs and kisses and food on the table. Times weren't easy. A lot of times they were pretty tough."

At least once a month, Sandy would dip into her babysitting money and peel off one-dollar bills to give her father so he could put gas in his truck. "He always paid it back with interest," she said.

"The three of us had a beautiful childhood," Sandy remembers. "There was no sibling rivalry. No fighting. Just had a house full of love. Money was an issue, but it didn't affect our being together."

Sandy moved back to Brooklyn, graduated high school, went to Queens College, got a BA in education, and then went on to get her master's degree. She became a first grade schoolteacher in one of the worst schools in the city of New York, Ocean Hill Brownsville, Brooklyn. It was the 60s, around the time of the Vietnam War, and being on the "front lines of change" was important to Sandy.

> **"I always wanted to make my living by making a difference, and do well by doing good."**

That was Sandy's motto and it became the theme of her life. For Sandy it was always about inspiration and making a difference in the world. It was about being significant.

"And it was about giving a life to these children," Sandy says, "and having them step into the world of possibility, knowing that there isn't anything that they can't do."

Sandy took that on and she took it on huge. She was that rare committed, creative teacher most parents pray for, but rarely find.

At the beginning of the school year, Sandy had each of her children bring in an empty juice can. They spent a day going through old magazines and cutting out as many eyes as they could find. Then they pasted the eyes to the outside of the cans, and Sandy filled each can with beans and sealed it. She called them "eye cans."

Every time a student had trouble with a problem, the whole class would shake their cans to encourage and support. And when the problem was finally solved, and it always was, the cans shook even louder to congratulate. Sandy always believed in her kids, and she made sure that they knew they could do anything they set their minds to.

Sandy taught school there for 10 years. Her kids performed over the city average and she loved every minute of it.

In her next life, Sandy became a holistic practitioner. That's where she met and married her husband, Bill. She practiced deep tissue massage, neuromuscular massage and colon health. She took that career on the same way she took on teaching. The same way she takes on everything.

Bill introduced her to Network Marketing. He always laughed and said, "I created a Frankenstein."

They were living in Phoenix, Arizona at the time. Bill came home one night and said, "Get dressed up. We're going to a hotel." Since they shared a health facility and a home with another couple, Sandy thought, "Oh, private time. Yippee!" She put on her high heels, low-cut dress, and

Bill took her to... a business opportunity meeting for a company selling aloe vera products.

There were 300 people in the room. The man in front was wearing gum -soled shoes and plaid polyester pants, and he was clapping. He went, “Hi everybody!” and clapped his hands. Then he said, “It’s going to be a really great night!” and he’d clap his hands again. Sandy was looking over at Bill thinking, “What are you doing to me? I hate you.”

Sandy had other ideas for the evening, but by the time the night was over, she was mesmerized by the testimonies and people who were doing well by doing good. It was stimulating. It was exciting. Yet she just couldn’t wrap her head around it. Couldn’t believe it.

She thought, “This has to be a Brooklyn bridge thing, you know?” Bill told her, “I really want to do this with you,” and Sandy said, “Well, I’ll tell you what, I’m really not interested. I came out here to build a clinic. I’m not going to support you in this,” and Bill said, “Come on. What would it take for you to be supportive?” Sandy said, “Well, if you can get to a thousand dollars a month in six months…” That was their overhead. Sandy figured that would be impressive. Wait and see.

Bill was gone every day, every night. He would leave the clinic early, come home late. Sandy’s father kept calling and saying, “Where’s Bill? He’s never home.” And when her dad would call Sandy would say, “Well, he’s out doing this Network Marketing thing.” Her father said, “Well, how much is he making?”

When the first check came it was $111, Sandy’s father said, “Follow him, baby. He’s got a girlfriend.”

The next month, the check was $300. The following month it was $500 or $600. In 90 days, Bill spent about $3,000 investing in the business and was not even making $1,000. Sandy’s thinking was, “Okay, what’s wrong with this picture?” Bill said to her, “You told me I would have six months.” The next month the check was over $1,000, then over $3,000, then over $7,000.

By the time it hit $3,000, Sandy was licking stamps and saying, “Can I take a letter, honey?” and “You need to write a manual for this,” and “How can I be of assistance?” Sandy was finally and fully on board. It started little and it went really big really quickly. They were successful enough that Sandy and Bill went away on a trip through the Grand Canyon.

When they left, their check was around $7,000 and Sandy knew it was going to drop because it was summer in Phoenix— 100 days with of 100+ degrees— and they’d be gone for almost a month.

When they got back and Sandy first looked at the check, she thought it was $1,100. Her heart sank. “Boy, that’s really a big drop,” she said with real disappointment in her voice. “It’ll be like starting all over again.”

But Bill said, “Come here and take a look at this,” and Sandy said, “Yeah, what about it? We’ll build it back up.” She was trying to be positive. Bill said, “*Look closely.”* It wasn’t $1,100. It was $11,000. They’d created momentum. “That’s where you’ve duplicated yourself so many times that people can go on without you,” Sandy says. “Now you can just get out of the way, sit in the back row and not have to be in the front of the room. And what comes after momentum? Pandemonium.

Sandy has experienced that same wild ride a number of times in her 27-plus year Network Marketing career. After her initial success, she experienced an equal degree of failure. She walked away from the industry a couple of times. But she always comes back.

“I don’t quit,” Sandy says. “That was the first thing. I didn’t quit.”

“There was a lot of falling down,” she says, “but I never stayed down. And I didn’t look to the right or the left. I just ran the race— like Secretariat. And no matter what the disappointment, I always had positive expectancy. I saw myself already being there on top.”

“Even though I was driving a beat-up Volkswagen camper van with no heat, no air conditioner or radio cassette deck. $250,000 in debt. Putting back the large bag of diapers to get the small, for crying out loud, just to put milk, butter, eggs and bread on the breakfast table... Oh when you remember those days,” she said. “But I never lost sight of the goal.”

Sometimes there is fortune in misfortune: Sandy's been in different Network Marketing companies eight times in her career. She worked to the top of each one. Some left her and other's she left for greener pastures. Not the green of money or envy. Integrity issues were more often than not literally the heart of the matter.

Leaders are like that. And Sandy Elsberg is a leader of leaders. "Leadership moves me from the seat of my soul," Sandy said. "Leadership is about purpose and principles. I think that you're leading and coming from the God within, everybody gets it."

"They know your heart," she says. "They know your goodness. They get through your New York brazenness and the Brooklyn accent. And they get to a place where they love you and they trust you and they know that you're in this every step of the way with them."

"I think leadership is about respect and about treating everybody equally, because you never know when the sad, tired and broke woman driving the beat-up car is going to be the next leader of your company."

"Respect, treating everybody equally, coming from the God within, and that's love, isn't it? I think love is what leadership is all about." Sandy says, "MLM means Make Love More."

For Sandy, Network Marketing is the means to getting to your life's purpose.

"It's about getting what you can from life and being the possibility of your own existence," She said. "I think that Network Marketing is a vehicle to create a great life and to show what a great life can be like."

"Once you get past the grind and the grunt of working in a place of just being alive and functioning and biting your nails until they bleed because of the bills... Once you get to that place of being financially independent," she says, "you can then give to the world in ways that you've never dreamed of before."

"Network Marketing is about the transformation of lives and communities. It's about building significant relationships. For me it's about connectivity, it's about being on purpose to connect with people," Sandy said.

“I mean, people have done amazing things in this business. Look at the lives of the leaders in our industry who are doing big things in the world. You’ll see proof that Network Marketing truly is a vehicle you climb on and drive away and make a difference.”

“Network Marketing is all about creating a tipping point where the momentum changes people’s lives so they become unstoppable.”
“Network Marketing isn’t the end; it’s the beginning,” Sandy says. “The beginning of making your life count and being the king and queen of your world. The royalties given in Network Marketing allow you live your life’s definite major purpose.”

"It’s not, ‘What can I get from life?’ It’s, ‘What can I give to life?’ What are my gifts? What are the strengths that make me unique and how do I play with them full on? How do I do that? How do I get out of the stands and onto the field?”

Sandy’s answer is Network Marketing.

When Bill Gates, who dropped out of Harvard to do his thing, spoke at their Commencement he said, “I hope you’ll judge yourselves not on your professional accomplishments alone, but how well you have addressed the world’s deepest inequities.” Sandy thinks that’s what Network Marketing does for people. It is a way to help the world connect and raise its consciousness. She believes that at the end of the day it’s all about love, being kind and it’s all about doing good.

“There’s a huge change coming,” Sandy says, “and I think Network Marketing is allowing a lot of people to move forward in ways they could never have gotten to without the ability that this industry gives people to go from a *residual income* into *retirement* and *respectability* and then on to a state of *rejoicing* where they can *recreate* the planet.

For Sandy Elsberg, that’s making a difference and that’s significance.

From ***The Greatest Networkers in the World***

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He is the founder and former Editor-in-Chief of the highly regarded publication Upline®... was a Contributing Editor to SUCCESS magazine... the founder and former Editor-in-Chief of Network Marketing Lifestyles magazine... founding editor of Networking Times... the founder of GreatestNetworker .com... co-founder of TheNetworkMarketing Magazine.com and is the creative force behind TransformingMLM.com. You can connect with his writings on a regular basis at TheFoggBlog.com and learn more about what he is up to by going to http://JohnMiltonFogg.com

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