



Lisa Marie Platske

Victorious Woman – September 2011

Designed Destiny

A marriage that works. That's what every woman is looking for when she marries. Lisa Marie Platske was no exception. But when she got engaged to a man who lived in another state, her desires and her values were suddenly at odds with each other. That's when Lisa Marie decided it was time to re-evaluate everything – and came up with something completely different.

Lisa Marie Palansky worked for the US Customs Service in the New York/New Jersey area. Just before 9/11, she attended a train-the-trainer workshop in Maryland. Because the class was seated alphabetically, Lisa Marie Palansky couldn't help but meet Jim Platske. The two didn't connect right away, but Lisa Marie definitely noticed Jim's presence and intellect. After 9/11, her agency was reorganized and she moved to the newly created Department of Homeland Security.

At the beginning, Lisa Marie was living in New Jersey and Jim was in Washington DC. But then they both got transferred: Lisa Marie to Georgia and then Texas; Jim transferred to California. Because of their busy careers, they both had the flexibility to enjoy a long-distance relationship; it was fun. But things changed during a visit to St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York the day after Christmas was supercharged with Jim's marriage proposal.

While obviously happy and excited, Lisa Marie quickly recognized problems on the horizon. The ever-positive Lisa Marie admitted, "I thought it was *really* optimistic to think we could have competing jobs and lives and end up closer together." Something would have to change if she was going to have a marriage that really worked. And also, Lisa Marie knew that if she was going to be happy, she had to do something that honored not only her relationship value, but also her two other core values: freedom and flexibility.

After much reflection and consideration, Lisa Marie decided to start her own leadership training and consulting company. At the time, not everyone thought Lisa Marie was doing the right thing. "There were people," she explains, "who didn't understand why I'd walk away from a steady paycheck from Uncle Sam doing work I loved and in which I believed to pursue an unknown."

But Lisa Marie felt strongly that her vision and her values were in alignment with her desires and capabilities. And Jim was in agreement; he was – and still is – her biggest supporter and cheerleader. So Lisa Marie moved forward because "it allowed me the freedom and flexibility to spend the time I wanted to with my incredibly loving and supportive husband."

In retrospect, she laughingly says what many entrepreneurs have admitted, "I probably never should have done it... I knew nothing about how to run a business. My background was in Criminal Justice and I had never taken a business class in either my undergraduate or graduate education. Additionally, I had just moved to a new state where I didn't know a soul – no friends or family to rely on for physical or emotional support."

But where's there's a will, there's a way. By the next summer, Lisa Marie was married, living in California with Jim and the owner of a new company, Upside Thinking Inc.

And that's when the "fun" began.

Though Lisa Marie knew she could do the work, she wasn't prepared for all that went into running a successful business. She laughs when she talks about how she didn't know at the beginning how many details are involved with your own business (like contracts, taxes, follow-ups). And, Lisa Marie admitted, "There were plenty of times when I thought, 'maybe I should just get a job' but that would have been giving up." And for her, giving up was *never* an option.

Lisa Marie soon accepted that every new beginning has challenges – there are always aspects of the adventure that aren't easy and which require a victory stretch to get out of an established comfort zone. One victory stretch at a time, Lisa Marie grew both personally and professionally – even successfully navigating another move from California to Florida to accommodate Jim's "dream job" opportunity.

And she's not done yet. Looking both back and forward, Lisa Marie acknowledges, "I'm still learning and growing." She also says, "there have been hundreds of eye-opening, jaw-dropping, a-ha moments in my business and my life. The tears and disappointments have been tangible reminders of how much I still have to learn."

But with all of the challenges, Lisa Marie's "Upside Thinking" continues to honor her values of freedom and flexibility and still give her the all-important "marriage that works."

If you are starting a business or starting over, Lisa Marie Platske has advice for you:

- **Whenever you face challenges, you *can* find the answers.** Lisa's connections to other business women made a difference. She says, "I asked a lot of questions and invested in professional development. I stayed engaged because I focused on one mission: transforming lives through leadership development."
- **Build a strong network.** You want to have outside support both in and out of your profession. Lisa Marie created her own networking and support systems, including an "advisory board" whose members, she says, "challenged me to think big, and not ever have a pity party when events or situations didn't go as I planned."
- **Get help.** Hire a coach for help with direction and accountability. And hire someone to do the things you aren't good at doing. Lisa Marie didn't like detail work and says, "I hired my assistant four months after I opened the company even though I didn't have the dollars to pay her. I just knew that if I was serious about growth, I needed the support...you cannot do it alone."
- **Be grateful for the challenges as well as the opportunities.** "Do you believe that you can achieve victory? Do you see yourself as a winner?" Challenges are only challenges if you perceive them as challenges.

Nice Work, Lisa!

You're living proof that, with some reflection and creativity, you can live by your values and enjoy great happiness and success!

Learn more about Lisa Marie's Upside Thinking at www.UpsideThinking.com.