

**MARY LOU
DOBBS**

the only female to win a national sales contest with Lincoln National Life in over a hundred years. The number one sales executive nationally with Wells Fargo Insurance for six consecutive years, now a Lifestyle coach and sales trainer. Dobbs is the author of Badass Old White Woman How to Flip the Switch on Aging, available on Amazon.

As Dobbs was turning seventy-five, she decided it was time to "ignite" her "fun meter" and restore balance to her life. The result is Badass Old White Woman How to Flip the Script on Aging, a book that shares the secrets of adding adventure and inspiration to your life. Dobbs began a fifty-year executive career in corporate insurance. At 55 she began riding motorcycles. Dobbs currently rides a BMW motorcycle designed to help her live life Full-Throttle. She has become an accomplished writer, speaker, and Lifestyle Coach.

Dobbs can be reached by phone at 505-688-6703. Email: mldobbs@comcast.net. Web: maryloudobbs.net.

BROKER WORLD

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How To Close Fifty Percent More Sales

On the morning of an invitation-only Pacific Life educational symposium, my inner guidance told me to arrive early and sit in the front row. A noticeable buzz filled the room as six hundred attendees of Pacific Life's most successful insurance sales brokers anticipated our very famous keynote speaker—none other than the amazing Magic Johnson.

He was given the nickname "Magic" at the age of fifteen after a sportswriter watched him play basketball. As our speaker's long and accomplished introduction wound

down, loud applause and a standing ovation followed. Finally, the audience quieted. Magic's tall frame purposefully strode across the vast stage toward us. Looking directly at me he asked, "What's your name?" Because it was so surreal, I sat stunned in a momentary brain freeze. Finally, in a shaky, high-pitched voice I replied, "Mary Lou."

"Come up here!" Magic boomed. I jumped up as a camera flashed and the presentation was recorded. Magic enveloped me in a bear hug and thanked me for showing up!

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"Showing up is when the magic happens," he said! Not just showing up, but also following those inner promptings can turn a regular day into a miraculous one! Trusting that guiding voice led me not only to a great seat, but it turned out to be a memorable moment with a big-time celebrity!

Coincidence? So, what does life look like when we pay closer attention to those nudgings? At the time of Magic Johnson's talk, I was senior vice president of Wells Fargo Insurance for New Mexico and West Texas running the Insurance and Executive Benefits Department. I was recognized for my ability to close sales. The business banker's customers were the key to my success. It was weird for me to be working in a bank environment with stuffy conservative financiers. I was in the smallest market with only two million people in the entire state of New Mexico. Yet, I held the number one sales position nationally in corporate insurance sales for six consecutive years!

Wheel of Misfortune

My most successful and creative idea to reach bank customers came from watching a game show. The bankers invited me to make a presentation to 25 of them. I knew I needed to cultivate trust to receive their business-owner clients as referrals.

For our very first meeting, I purchased a rotating tabletop wheel and dubbed it "The Wheel of Misfortune." I showed up early and loaded the large mahogany conference table with a plethora of prizes. These included gift certificates to upscale restaurants, car cleaning supplies, and coolers filled with beer. Educating these bankers to recognize the consequences and pitfalls of their business owners failing to fund a buy-sell agreement or purchase key person insurance was the primary goal.

I wrote out a variety of probable disaster scenarios on three-by-five cards for my "contestants" to think through. To win a prize, they must give the correct answer. I taped the cards around the spinner and invited a banker to give the wheel a whirl. Wherever it stopped, they took the card and read it aloud.

You're a business owner with a partner. He/she dies unexpectedly (always kills off the other partner). Now your new partner is the spouse.

You'll do a hundred percent of the work and get fifty percent of the profits. Wheel of Misfortune!

(The solution) is a funded, life-insurance buy-sale agreement. If a partner dies, the tax-free money will be available to buy out the partner's heir. The insurance proceeds are available to redeem the stock according to the buy-sale agreement. The remaining business owner owns a hundred percent of the corporate stock. The banker avoids calling in any loans. Meanwhile, a financial breath allows the owner to build back any lost revenues from the difficult disruption and loss of their partner.

This Wheel of Misfortune training game turned out to be both educational and lots of fun. They learned how to identify client leads. I learned—too late—that they didn't allow beer on bank property.

Power Phrase

I use power phrases to close sales. This first power phrase is how to get a "yes" with a "no" as a young insurance agent and financial advisor. One of Carol's jobs consisted of making many cold calls a day to acquire new clients. That meant a lot of people said no to her. In Carol's business, running into many "no" answers were a real confidence crusher.

One of Carol's most problematic concerns was a high threshold of anxiety. Fear prevented her from asking new prospects to move their money to her firm or buy insurance. Carol confided that she battled daily with fear and severe anxiety when making these calls and hearing the word "No."

I have successfully used this first power phrase with my business-owner clients (and one previous long-term boyfriend whose first reaction to anything new was always no.) The answer "No" is used by those who are afraid, or unsure of how to move forward or when they don't want to rock the boat. "No" is heard thousands of times before the age of three and programs a subconscious negative response, which can make new decisions or altering choices difficult. Why not harness the power of "No" and make it work for you?

How can you get your clients, coworkers, or prospects to fully cooperate and agree with your request? With this phrase I've helped my clients move through the decision-making process, and I have high hopes you'll

want to integrate it into your sales strategy going forward.

An example: when I presented a pricey Executive Package for a client's internal power-maker that big changes create big fears. During the closing statement, when I wanted to help them through the buying process, I always started with having them make a small buying decision.

In this case, a corporate client would be spending \$100,000 per year in premium for ten years on a deferred compensation plan to retain and tie a key executive to their company. The sought-after CEO would be rewarded and retained, promising to improve the business's bottom-line profits through his or her skill set. This enhanced financial incentive assures the owner loyalty and commitment from the CEO, who gains financial reward. If the prospect has an analytical personality and you have a driving personality you may run out of steam explaining all the features and benefits and walk away with no sale. The power phrase: *In your opinion do you feel you would benefit in spite of your concerns? Draws out a yes answer.*

We're looking for a "Yes." The prospect makes an unconscious shift to their emotional side. When you ask someone their opinion you inflate value and respect into the equation and even better you invite them to feel an emotional electrical charge from the vagus nerve. The vagus nerve supports feeling safety, relaxes tension, and enhances cooperation.

Second Power Phrase

I then would ask the client, "Would you have any objection if we cleared your executive medically to see if he qualifies for the coverage?" "No" is the answer I'm looking for. The phrase, "Would you have any objection" smooths the way for cooperation and provides others with an opportunity to move past the trigger response of the negative, "No" mindset. "No" is a small word with big consequences. This second power phrase uses a "No" response, but it evokes a yes to move forward.

Faucet of Fears

As a professional speaker, my most
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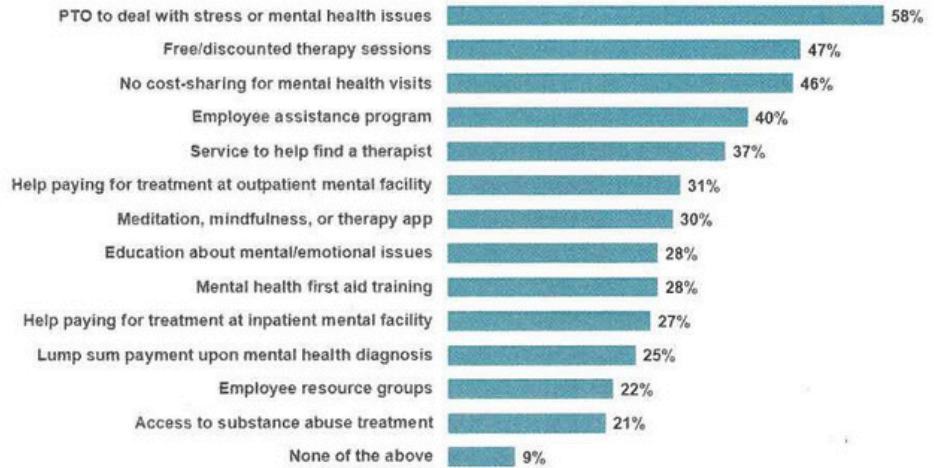
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might do. One quarter are also interested in a benefit that provides a lump sum payment upon the diagnosis of a mental/emotional health condition, such as a critical illness product might offer.

There is clearly a significant need for mental health benefits. Employers that want to help workers and their businesses should be looking for benefit solutions to support employee mental health, as well as carriers that are working to introduce new offerings to address this demand. May marks Mental Health Awareness Month—a time to raise awareness of and reduce the stigma surrounding behavioral health issues, as well as highlight the ways in which mental illness and addiction can affect all of us. 🌍

Desired Mental Health Benefits



Source: Preliminary results: 2024 BEAT Study: Benefits and Employee Attitude Tracker. Based on all employees.



FOCUS

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popular talk is, "Success is a Risky Business." **Owners and executives** in the corporate and business world have a big fear of business success. You may have great products and services, but then become overwhelmed with fear of growing your business or worse—failing. Chart 1 is called the Fear Regulator. (With permission: Adapted from "Badass Old White Woman" *How to Flip the Script on Aging* by Mary Lou Dobbs).

Fear can obliterate growth and destroy businesses and long-term goals. But other types of fear can prevent us from living our best life. The fear of failure, risk-taking, fear of the unknown, or of being rejected by prospects. Magic Johnson said, "Showing up is when the magic happens." I believe showing up prepared with these two power phrases will make the magic happen. 🌍

Chart 1

Fear Regulator

