



The Sky Is the Limit for Women in Business

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Sora Vernikoff

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By Fatima Gorezi

Sora Vernikoff is a No Diet, Weight-Loss Coach who healed herself of compulsive overeating and has helped hundreds of unhappy dieters do the very same thing. Sora teaches her program to private clients both online and offline, has spoken at Lennox Hill Hospital and has also taught her program at The Learning Annex and at the office of a leading New York endocrinologist.

She lives in Manhattan and is passionate about traveling and is a volunteer with rescue dogs. She shares with us some details of her entrepreneurial life and speaks about how the current innovations happening in positive psychology influence no-diet coaching today.

Can you tell us about your childhood and upbringing?

I grew up in Brooklyn, New York in a place called Canarsie. I was raised in a middle class Jewish home where the focus was on education, family and eating well. I think that it's the eating well part that contributed to my challenge with food because my mother was an amazing cook and baker and there was always wonderful food on the table.

Tell us a bit about your professional background? How did you get started in no-diet coaching?

From the time I can remember I always wanted my own blackboard and wanted to be an educator. So I studied education in College and in a Master's Program eventually going on to teach the 2nd grade, the 4th grade and the 7th, 8th and 9th grade. Most of the kids that I taught lived in very underprivileged urban areas *which as you can imagine* came with its own very unique set of challenges.

It was over 20 years ago, while teaching *a very challenging 4th grade class* (while I was in the process of *yet another diet*) that I looked at this sea of 35 4th grade faces and thought to myself; "Sora, why do these kids who walk, talk and do all those "other" things listen to you, but food which has no animate qualities, you can't stop thinking about and you can't stop eating?" Asking myself that question, at that moment in time completely changed my life. It was then that I decided to stop dieting, eat the foods *that I really wanted* but to additionally journal every eating experience to find out exactly why I couldn't stop myself from eating.

As a result of that decision, I had lost 25 pounds *when I reached my non-dieted weight loss goal*, and I knew that I could transfer my classroom “management” techniques to food “management” techniques and Sora’s Weight-Loss “Management” was born.



You are the author of the bestseller *Eat What You Want! Stop When You Want! A No-Diet, Weight-Loss Program*. The title looks curious enough. What more can you tell us about this project?

To me enough is everything. Until you have the choice to know that you can provide yourself with enough food, enough money, enough resources or enough gratitude, then nothing is enough and you will never be *truly* happy or satisfied, always living in what I call The Land of Lack. I learned what I call Enough Factor through my journaling and through my food choices, and the two techniques that are taught in this book teach you to do the same. That is, *“to eat what you want, stop when you want and become forever thin and healthy **and all without having to diet.**”*

What inspires you in everyday life?

My Faith inspires me every day. My belief in God and that I am here for a purpose is what keeps me afloat. I believe that I'm here to help unhappy dieters **learn to** eat and stop themselves by giving them the opportunity to make peace with food. At this point in my life, I'm also very inspired by a deep knowing that everything is a process and that when you are feeling stuck, that means that you're just not able to see things differently. The Kaleidoscope that I keep near my **computer** is a reminder that the same pieces in the Kaleidoscope, when moved, appear differently. So when I'm feeling stuck in something, I'll turn the Kaleidoscope, see a new design and hopefully that will help me start moving forward.

What are the most common questions you get asked from your clients & how do you answer? Give your best 3 health tips that people can implement right now?

Well, the three most common questions that I get from my clients are “Sora, can I really have the food that I Really want? Sora, how do I know how much is enough? and Sora, how will I know for sure that I can eat and stop myself?”

So here are the answers to those three questions *so you the Reader* know them as well!

The way that you eat and stop yourself is by using what the system calls The “Green” Technique. You get the food you *really want* and before you can eat the food you have to ask yourself two important questions. You have to ask yourself how much of the food is enough and how much of the food is too much? Then after you've decided on those two amounts you need to push aside the amount that's too much, called your Marker. I call these actions your “Think Before You Chew Actions”. Then you can eat the amount that you decided was enough but not your Marker. Not eating your Marker lets you know that the amount that you ate was enough and that you ate and stopped yourself. So there you go. It's a practice and fun to do.



How are the current innovations happening in positive psychology influencing no-diet coaching?

Today there is a movement called Mindful Eating. Mindful eating supports the act of not dieting but doesn't teach specific eat and stop yourself techniques so that you know BEFORE YOU TAKE YOUR FIRST "BITE" THAT YOU WILL HAVE THE CHOICE TO EAT AND STOP YOURSELF. Mindful eating teaches you to focus your attention to the food that you are eating and not make judgement. In addition, as a non-dieter, there is no right or wrong way to eat but that there are different perspectives of awareness that are just part of your eating experiences. Mindful eating supports just what it says it does: "Eating with awareness and no judgement" but again doesn't provide concrete managerial eat-and-stop yourself techniques.

What life and business lessons did you learn from your experiences?

I think that for me, my life lessons were directly proportionate and intermixed with my business lessons. The first thing that I learned is that I wanted a personal life and a business life and that I was going to do my best which at times was so very challenging to find that balance. Also I learned that I wanted to be in the moment. Yes, I set daily, weekly and monthly goals, but in that mindset I was committed and still am to taking one day at a time and to remain as flexible as possible. *In addition to that, I wanted to find the courage to try something new if something that I was doing wasn't working. I wanted to stay open to that possibility!*

In your opinion what is happening with women in business on a global scale and what does the future hold for us?

I think that the future is wide open on a global scale for women in business. However, I think that the choice to become global in one's business is each woman's soul searching adventure. I believe that each woman has to ask herself what kind of balance she wants in her life between her business life and her personal life. In other words, it is down to what kind of lifestyle they are yearning to lead. I think that it's different for every woman. But for the woman who commits to building her business on a global level, I believe that the sky is the limit!!

Do you have a favourite quote regarding business/entrepreneurship that you would like to share with the readers?

My favourite quote regarding business/entrepreneurship is: Inch by Inch Anything's a Cinch, Yard by Yard Life is Hard.