

# Sue Thompson's BeExceptional

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## If I Had a Job, I'd Hammer a Few Things

Remember the old folk song? "If I had a hammer, I'd hammer in the morning; I'd hammer in the evening all over this land . . ." Well, I know a number of my readers don't *have* a hammer right now, and no place to go to in the pursuit of a nail. I encourage you to stay on top of your emotions. The pull of despair and hopelessness is powerful, and sometimes it takes everything we've got to resist. Here are five important strategies to help in the battle:

**Get up and get dressed.** I am an advocate for wearing professional clothes to work because it sets a psychological tone, and I am even more of an advocate for wearing presentable clothing to establish the day as a potentially productive one. You're not retired, you're just out of work. And if you *were* retired, is pulling into yourself and wallowing in the slough of despond your idea of healthy? Fight despair by making the most of this period in your life.

**Exercise.** This is one way to make the most of the time you have! Exercise every day. Your body was made to move. *It was created to be in movement!* Give it that opportunity, somehow, some way, at least once a day. Walk your neighborhood, run with the dog, go on a nature hike. Move!

**Listen to uplifting things.** Fill your house with upbeat music, inspiration messages, beautiful symphonies. Silence is a gift, but sometimes it is an invitation for too-deep introspection and depression. Download some motivational talks from your favorite speaker and remind your mind that *you* are in charge, not it, and *you* will determine your mood and outlook. Take authority over yourself and keep your atmosphere filled with positivity.

**Do anything for now.** Volunteer somewhere, get a part-time job, help your elderly neighbors. Seriously, let's not get stupid about "I'd be embarrassed to work at Walmart." You're the one who sets the tone for yourself, so if someone you know sees you at the cash register, you smile big and tell them you're doing research for your book on minimum wage workers. Consider

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[www.BeExceptional.biz](http://www.BeExceptional.biz)

[Sue@BeExceptional.biz](mailto:Sue@BeExceptional.biz)



it a new experience, not a sign of failure. Being productive is a tonic. Find ways.

**Practice gratefulness.** One of the most solid interventions to promote happiness is to note three or four things for which you are grateful every night before falling asleep. Write them down or consider them as you're settling in, but be mindful about it. Make it a habit. "It could be worse" is an absolute truth. Start with being grateful you have a bed. And coffee. I'm grateful for coffee.

I know that financial fears and burdens can be crushing, but it is the honest truth that it is not the crisis that defines us but the way we respond to it. Fight, my friends—fight! Fight to keep a smile on your face and move forward! \*

“

*People often say that motivation doesn't last. Well, neither does bathing—that's why we recommend it daily.*

*Zig Ziglar*

## So, here's the thing . . .

This little piece is for women, but men can feel free to forward it on to a significant other or friend. If you don't know what cosmetics *can* and *cannot* do for you, please don't take the word of a department store salesperson, no matter how high-end the store. They are rarely trained as makeup artists and they are not skin care specialists. They are selling something, and they have been instructed in what to say by the manufacturers of the products they are selling.

I know I am more educated about this than the general population, because I long ago found Paula Begoun and [The Cosmetics Cop](#) after reading *Don't Go to the Cosmetics Counter Without Me*, her enormously instructive tome on cosmetic ingredients and their properties. So I know that someone wishing to sell me a little jar of eye cream at \$125 a pop will feign horror when I tell her that I do not use eye cream, and she will tell me *everyone must wear eye cream*, no matter their age. Baloney. Consider the "rinse and repeat" admonition on shampoo bottles, an advertising ploy to get you to use more of the product. Eye cream is one of those things a cosmetic genius created to sell the same old thing in a different package. Every industry does this. (Have you noticed, for example, that Excedrin Migraine has

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exactly the same ingredients as plain old Excedrin Extra Strength, but is often sold at a higher price?) We will pay more for something we perceive to be better because of the name, the packaging, and the store, even if we could purchase it at the drugstore for \$7.99. With cosmetics, that is usually the case: that \$125 jar of cream can be purchased at the drugstore for less than \$20 under a different label, and it will be exactly the same thing.

Begoun researches everything and probably deserves a PhD in biology, medical cosmetology, and several other things, and here's her take on eye cream: **“There is no evidence, research, or documentation validating the claim that the eye area needs ingredients different from those you use on your face or neck area or décolletage.”** What I like about her is she doesn't say this means *you* shouldn't use eye cream—perhaps *you* might get some benefit from it—but she wants you to be informed. She started her own line of affordable skin care and cosmetics years ago, but still very fairly and rigorously reviews all skin care and cosmetic lines on her [www.BeautyPedia.com](http://www.BeautyPedia.com) (the site is similarly-branded and looks the same as Cosmetics Cop). I consistently check her reviews when I want to try something or I'm looking for an inexpensive mascara instead of one the big name store sells for quadruple the amount. Buy whatever makes you feel good, but recognize that's probably all it's doing—making you feel good. \*

## About Sue

Sue Thompson is a personality expert, etiquette trainer, and an instructor in life lessons. Her work on recognizing and developing talent, identifying personalities and working effectively with the people who possess them, responding appropriately to difficult experiences, treating others with respect, and behaving like a professional have caused companies and business organizations throughout the country to value her consulting skills. She trains those entering the workforce how to present themselves with style and authority; new employees in the importance of respecting one's work and the workplace; managers in the value of understanding employees' talent and temperament; and everyone in the timeless rules of behavior that will always bespeak excellence.

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