

# The Unemployment Adventure

By Jennifer Vacchio

On July 31, 2001, I was in a dark editing room doing post-production on a sales video for one of my clients when the team secretary, Regina, came over the intercom and informed me the Vice President of Marketing needed to speak with me. That's when I knew—today's D-day. Numbers had been falling over the past year and it was only a matter of time before our creative marketing team would atrophy from the corporation. I was handed a packet from Human Resources giving me information about how to roll over my 401K, sign up for Cobra, and apply for Unemployment benefits. I was then given 15 minutes to pack up my desk so I could be escorted out of the building. WHAT? NO GOING AWAY PARTY???

The devastation didn't hit me right away though. In fact, it didn't really strike me until September—after the World Trade Center—and right after my boyfriend and I decided to go our separate ways after a ten-year relationship. I knew the way I was used to living my life had changed and changed drastically.

There I was: 29, single, and living back home with the parents to conserve as much of my savings as possible — not to mention the total chaos going on in our world. Could things be worse? Of course, but it didn't feel that way at the time. In between researching jobs on the internet, sending out resumes, and making follow-up phone calls, I had to remember to just breathe. "Just breathe. You'll get through this," I kept telling myself.

But nobody was hiring! I mean NOBODY!! Especially not in marketing. No matter how many resumes I sent out — around 30 a day — the phone wasn't ringing. With more free time than I knew what to do with, I felt completely cut-off from society and the day-to-day busy-ness I had become so accustomed to. As someone with a type AAA personality, it was more than I could stand. I felt friends slip away, money slip away, and became more and more lonely and depressed. It felt like one day I was in demand, and the next quarantined.

So I decided to make some changes and began making a daily schedule to keep myself busy. I began at 8:00 every morning with the Pennysaver and looking for part-time work — something to do in the interim. Then I would head to the local library for four hours to research and send out e-mailed resumes, then the post office to mail hard copies, then home for lunch, then follow-up calls, then out to the gym to workout. I became so involved in

physical fitness that five months into my unemployment (yes, five months) I decide to become a certified trainer and work at a gym part-time. I lost 15 lbs. and was in the best shape of my life — better than when I was 15! I took classes on personal development, and networking and met many new people.

I began to regain my confidence and self-esteem and felt like I was, once again, a part of society. A couple of months later, on July 22, 2002, an opportunity arose at Ideal Mortgage Bankers, Ltd. and I accepted a position as Marketing Director. I am working full-time once again and continue to do personal training part-time.

During this confusing and painful time in my life, I learned and adopted many beliefs and strategies to ensure I would never experience that amount of pain again. For those of you who are unemployed and are struggling with the issues I went through, the best piece

of advice I can give you is have patience. Have a lot of patience! In this economy, with the state of the world especially, it can be extremely difficult to come to terms with just how drastically things have changed since the last time you were looking for a job. The same rules just don't apply. Network, network, network, and take this time to do the things you love to do. Remember, you used to complain you didn't have time to exercise, plant a garden, or write a book when you were working full-time. So do it now! Unemployment just might end up being the best adventure of your life!



## MEETINGS RESERVATION FORM

*If you are planning to attend our November 18th and December 8th meetings . . .*

The L.I. Center will be distributing a roster of all those in attendance, including their company name. If you wish to appear on this roster, your paid reservation must reach the Center office by November 13th for the November meeting and December 3rd for the December meeting.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Company \_\_\_\_\_

Member: \$40 per meeting enclosed  November 18th  December 8th

Non-member: \$60 per meeting enclosed  November 18th  December 8th

**METHOD OF PAYING:**  Check  Visa  MasterCard

Name as it appears on credit card: \_\_\_\_\_

Credit Card Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. date \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to **the Long Island Center** and mail to the L.I. Center at 60 Weston St, Huntington Station, NY 11746.

There will be a non-reservation surcharge of \$5.

### CREST HOLLOW COUNTRY CLUB

Dinner Included • Showcasing Spots Available

*Reservations are a must!*

*Call now for reservations for meeting and/or showcasing:*

**631 / 673-0209**