

BE
BIG

**STEP UP
STEP OUT
BE BOLD**

daring to do our best work together

JUDITH H. KATZ & FREDERICK A. MILLER
AUTHORS OF THE INCLUSION BREAKTHROUGH

an excerpt from

Be Big:

Step Up, Step Out, Be Bold

by Judith H. Katz and Frederick A. Miller

Published by Berrett-Koehler Publishers



Contents

Introduction	1
The Need to Be BIG	
Part One: ME	9
Chapter 1 Being my small self	10
Chapter 2 Being my BIG self	20
Part Two: YOU	29
Chapter 3 Seeing YOU as small	30
Chapter 4 Seeing YOU as BIG	40
Part Three: WE	51
Chapter 5 Making ME and YOU small	52
Chapter 6 ME and YOU BIG together	62
Conclusion	75
Daring to do our best work TOGETHER	
Acknowledgments	80
About the Authors	83



Introduction

The Need to Be **BIG**

I am daring you to think bigger,
to act bigger and to be bigger.

I dare you to think creatively.

I dare you to . . . lead and
inspire others.

I dare you to build character.

I dare you to share.

I am promising you a richer life
and more exciting life if you do.

Excerpts from William H. Danforth, *I Dare You!*
(St. Louis, MO: American Youth Foundation, 1931).

William H. Danforth (1870–1956),
founder of the Ralston Purina Company.

Organizations need us to bring more of ourselves to work

Many of us know a secret that is rarely spoken: too many of us in most organizations are hiding things. Important things.

We are hiding *our full selves!*

Sometimes we hide just parts of ourselves. Sometimes we hide all of ourselves.

By not letting our full selves be seen, we make ourselves small.

Yet within many of us is often another secret. An even **BIGger** secret.

Many of us have a strong desire to **Be BIG.**

To give our best every day.
To not hide out or be small.



To Be BIG is not about ego or fame. It is not about showing off or showing others up.

Many of us want to Be BIG in order to bring our voice and add great value—and to enable our coworkers and partners to do the same.

To Be BIG is a life stance of learning and growing and partnering with others.

Some are fortunate to be able to live life BIG every day, but many others have not yet found a way to Be BIG. They feel they need to stay hidden and be their small selves.

Why?

Why does it feel safer to be small?

While some of us may feel small because we lack self-confidence, certain management styles and workplace cultures contribute as well.

In some organizations, it can be dangerous to Be BIG enough to stand out. It can be dangerous to step out of the box you, or others, have put you in.



It can get you criticized.

It can get you ostracized.

It can get you fired.

So a lot of us are in stealth mode.
We are trying to fly under the radar.

We are trying to stay out of sight.

We are trying to blend in with the
landscape. We want to appear
harmless, nonthreatening, small.

We are keeping our heads down and
even encouraging others around us
to do the same.

And for many of us, the thought of
being **BIG** is positively frightening.



Most organizations today are in a competitive struggle for their very survival.

Organizations need all of us to bring more of ourselves to the workplace.

Innovation, problem solving, and productivity depend upon us being **BIG**. Each person must contribute to collectively have a **BIG** impact on achieving the goals of the organization.

But just when organizations need us to Step Up, Step Out, and Be Bold, many of us are being our small selves.

And it is not just that we are keeping ourselves small.

We may wear blinders and not really see other people for who they are. We may make assumptions that put others in a box.

We may block others' ability to be who they are.

We may fear their **BIGness**.

And, therefore, we may not see others' real potential or capabilities.



As a result, many organizations have a culture of smallness, where being small is accepted and expected. Where being small may seem like the safest way to be.

But being small isn't really the safest way for the organization.

Organizations need all their people to be willing to Step Up, Step Out, and Be Bold. To be willing to

dream BIG

act BIG

reach BIG

so that we can

do our best work TOGETHER.

If this doesn't happen, organizations won't be able to achieve their goals. And soon those organizations will become small—too small to exist.

So we need our organizations to enable all of us to Be BIG.



And each of us as individuals needs to find ways to enable ourselves to **Be BIG**. And each of us needs to support others to **Be BIG**.

And, most importantly, we need to find ways to **Be BIG together**.

It will take daring to **Be BIG**.

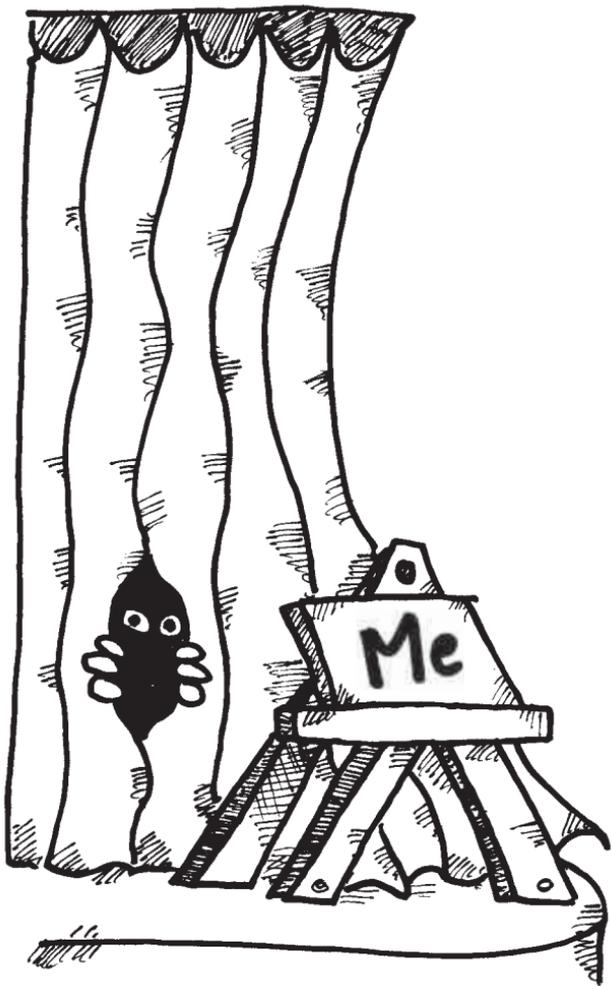
It will take a willingness to step up and reach for higher goals.

It will take a willingness to step out of our comfort zone and to try new and bold things.

Many of us have learned how to be our small selves. Now we need to learn how to **Be BIG**.

And the payoff will be not just for our organizations but also for ourselves to live fuller lives and reach **BIGger** dreams. Individually and collectively.

This book is about each of us as individuals being willing to **Be BIG**. It is about our willingness to see others as **BIG**. And it is about finding new ways of partnering so that we can **Be BIG together**.



PART ONE



ME

Life has taught many of us how to be small by

- not having dreams that are too ambitious.
- not acting too bold.
- not reaching too high.
- not standing out too much!

And yet, many of us want to Be BIG by

- adding value every day.
- expressing who we are.
- engaging ourselves fully.
- stepping up to new challenges.
- stepping out and trying new things.
- being bold and sharing our voice.

*Chapter 1 is about the
ways we have learned to act
small and the messages
we tell ourselves that
keep us small.*



CHAPTER I

Being my *small self*

At times, I may not even be aware that I am being my small self.

At times, I stay small to stay comfortable.

At times, I stay small because I think others will like me better or find me more acceptable.

I make myself small in many ways:

I do not show up.

I do not step up.

I do not speak out.

I do not share my ideas.

I do not take up too much space.

Here are some examples of ways I keep myself small.

I stay in my comfort zone

Things are fine the way they are

I have settled into a nice little routine.

I know what is expected from me, and I will deliver just that.

I am seen as competent at what I do, and that's good enough for me.

I can get by with things the way they are. Why should I step out?

Better safe than sorry

I have learned enough to know how to avoid taking risks. Risk taking can be dangerous.

I do things in ways that are familiar to me rather than in new ways.

People often don't notice the things I do right, but they never miss what I do wrong, and they never forget my mistakes. I avoid being noticed.



I know my limitations

This is a large organization, and one person can't make a difference.

Ideas and suggestions are valued only from higher levels in the organization than mine.

I don't know everything and I am sometimes wrong.

I don't want to be a pioneer

Most pioneers died in the wilderness.

Why should I stick my neck out?

I will let someone else volunteer.

Others are not stepping up. Why should I?

I am no hero

Sure, some things aren't fair and some things could be better, but dealing with those things isn't my job.

That is not what I signed up for.

I try not to be seen

I don't let others see me

If I am careful, I can usually get to my work area without anyone seeing me.

I can avoid conversations and confrontations.

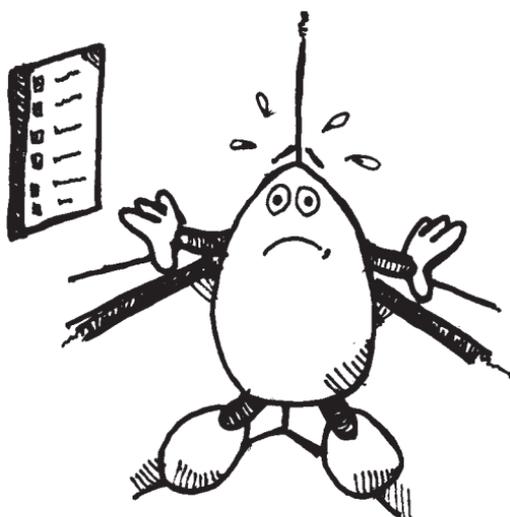
I just take notes in meetings. I don't share my thoughts until after the meeting is over, and then only with a few people I really trust.

I don't take up too much space

I stay close to the walls when I am standing in the elevator or walking down the hall.

I just try to stay out of everyone's way.

I keep my head down so I won't be noticed.





I don't stick out

If I look and act like everyone else, I can't be singled out for criticism.

Others can blame all of us, but they can't blame just me.

I don't make waves

I don't ask questions.

I don't complain.

I don't initiate.

I don't report problems.

I don't bring bad news.

I don't rock the boat.

I avoid others

When I pass people in the halls, I don't make eye contact.

If I don't notice others, then maybe they won't notice me.

If I don't want others to bother with me, I stay away from them.

I silence my voice

I keep my thoughts to myself

No one really wants to listen to my ideas.

If others don't hear my ideas, they can't criticize or judge them.

Ideas from people at my level aren't valued anyway.

I spoke up once two years ago and ended up regretting it.

I ration my voice

When it comes to speaking up, it is best to let other people take a turn. That way, I don't get too much notice from the higher-ups or resentment from my colleagues.

If I speak up, others will think I am trying to make them small.

I might not sound smart

I worry what would happen if everyone stopped to listen and I got so nervous that all I could say was, "Umm, er, I ahh, sorry, what I mean is, oh, forget it."

I worry that my ideas might sound dumb.



It has probably been said already anyway

I don't need to say anything; it has all been said.

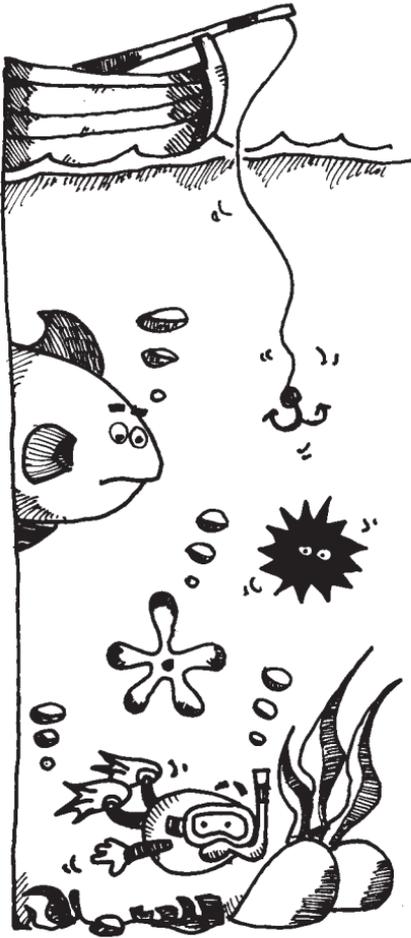
I let others represent my point of view.

I don't matter: Why try?

I am a small fish in a BIG pond

What I have to add isn't going to make any difference in the great scheme of things.

No one listens to people at my level
(or department or job).





No one really values what I contribute

As long as I do my job and don't make waves, others will leave me alone.

It isn't my job to make suggestions, and that is just fine with me.

I'm not good enough

A lot of people here seem a lot surer of themselves than I am.

It looks like others know something I don't.

I am not sure I fit here

I seem way too different from the people I work with.

I am not sure this is the right place for me.

Few people really listen to my ideas or seem to want me to succeed.

I feel very alone here. Why should I reach out?

this material has been excerpted from

Be Big:

Step Up, Step Out, Be Bold

by Judith H. Katz and Frederick A. Miller

Published by Berrett-Koehler Publishers

Copyright © 2008, All Rights Reserved.

For more information, or to purchase the book,
please visit our website

www.bkconnection.com