

Interviewer's tape no.: 2

WU FL, FL & OHA Accession no.:

Interviewer: Sandra Jean Pomerantz

Address: 1334 State Street, Apt. 2
Bowling Green, KY 42101

Interviewee: Janet Lee Barton-Stratton

Address: 3118 Huntmaster Drive
Bowling Green, KY 42101

Date: October 12, 1985

Place of interview: 3118 Huntmaster Drive, Bowling Green, KY 42101

Other people present: Betsy Stratton, Thomas Anthony Stratton

Equipment used: Sanyo M-s300K Stereo Radio Cassette Recorder

Reel-to-reel tape: Brand: Size reel: Tape Mil: Speed:

Cassette: Brand: Scotch AVX60 Studio C-30/C-60/C-90/C-120 (circle size)
Master Cassette

Amount of tape used: (Side 1): 30 min. (Side 2): 30 min.

Brief description of interview context and tape contents:

In this half of the October 12 interview, Janet Lee Barton-Stratton who sells Mary Lee cosmetics, talks about Mary Kay's (the woman) history of establishing the company, the effect of her selling on her social life, the effect of the fetal collagen rumor on sales. She also talks about her feelings on America's image of beauty, the educational and economic background of her customers, religious beliefs, women's lib, meeting her husband and family holiday celebrations.

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(Opening Announcement)

S.P.: You were just talking about you wanted--your goal was to be ready by your class reunion so that you can--

J.S.: --go back as a director. Right. Uhm, that is the management position in Mary Kay. And I really feel like that I do want to get into management. With Mary Kay, you promote yourself when you're ready. You don't have to wait till a position comes open or somebody else decides that you're ready. You have certain requirements that you have to meet. You must have fifteen personal recruits and \$7,200 in production over the past six months. And you have to be a consultant at least six months; and so basically what's in between me and

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016 J.S.: that is my fifteen personal recruits. I have five at the time--at present and am working on getting fifteen, and then you go into qualification for three months, and you and your team have to double your team so that you become, you know, have thirty in your unit. And you also have to do certain levels of production in those three months, and when you do that, then you debut as a director. And so it is my goal to work and to become a director by June of '86. My goal before that is to win my VIP car which is an Oldsmobile Forenza, and it's really a pretty car. It's ivory-colored and it has four doors and tan interior and a cassette player and several nice little options, but the nicest thing about it is that it's free. When you win one it is totally free. The insurance is paid. All you do is put the gas in it, and you have to qualify for it each month, but once you build your team, then that's really not that hard at all. You and your team have to \$3,000 production for three months in a row. And then you yourself have to do \$600 production, and this in all wholesale. So I am looking to win my car sometime probably around the first part of the year. Then, once you do that, then it makes your team strong and you start really working as a team. And it's just kind of a natural sequence that you're recruiting so that you can win the car. And you have to keep recruiting really to keep the car. As you're doing that you're also building to get your fifteen. And so it's kind of a natural progression that once you win the car, you're also going to get ready to go into director qualification and become a director. So that's my goals for the next year or so. And short range goals--my average--I try

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J.S.: to hold at least three shows a week. In order to do that I have to book five shows because we have a natural fact of life called "postponement." It's like a doctor, he has to over-schedule appointments to make sure that he has people that are there for him to do his business, and so we also over-schedule because the people's kids get sick or they forget or whatever. I try to hold three show a week and then sometimes do an extra facial or two, a one-on-one appointment. I try to show the marketing plan to two people a week. Try to have at least an average of \$350 to \$400 a week. I'm real proud of myself 'cause about the last two months, I've been doing that really consistently. So I feel like that everythings really falling in place, and that by the first of the year I will be on track for the car and for the directorship. So I'm really pleased about that. But goals have really helped me because I do have it broken down by week, and every day I think about what I've got scheduled for the rest of the week. And if an extra show's postponed or something, then I try to get some other things on the books so that I can meet my goals for the week. And every Saturday afternoon if I haven't met my sales goal, then I try to make a few phone calls and meet that sales goal also. And it really helps, because if you don't have those, then, on Saturday afternoon, then big deal if you only sold \$200 as opposed to \$350 or whatever your goal is. So it really helps, and you have to break it down into small portions so that you know that it's achievable. For instance another goal that I have is to be my "Nationals Queens Court of Sales." That takes \$8,000 production for the year, or

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J.S.: \$16,000 retail. We do make 50% of everything that we sell so you just kind of know when you're talking about retail. So that takes \$16,000 retail. So I have that all broken down as to how often I have to order and how much I have to sell each week in order to reach that. So far I'm on target for that. It really helps even in life because I just lost thirty-three pounds, and it helps in setting your goals, you know, even in that because I have another seven to go, and I have it on my refrigerator and the date that I want to achieve it, 'cause you have to have a specific time period to meet your goals or else you'll just dilly-dally around with it. I have all my goals on the refrigerator; I have them on my mirrors; I have them on the mirror on my car, so that every time I check my make-up I also see that I want to weigh one thirty-five and that I want I want to be a VIP and win my car. So you can constantly keep those goals in front of you; then you're constantly aware of them and it helps you meet those goals.

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S.P.: How do you--how do you acquire the famous pink Cadillac that you hear so much about when you hear about Mary Kay?

J.S.: Well, they win those based on their unit's production, and you do have to be a director to win one. They do a production for six months in a row, and it comes out to, I'm really not sure, I think it's \$72,000 that they have to do over a six month period. I think that's \$12,000 a month is what it averages out to. That's their entire unit doing that. Your unit is comprised of any girls that you have personally recruited and then also anyone that they recruit on down the

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J:S.: line. Now, before you become a director, you don't receive recruiting commissions on anyone except your personal recruits. So we're not a multi-level like pyramid company--

S.P.: --like Amway, or something.

J.S.: Right. So like my--my personal recruits are all that I receive direct recruiting commissions on at this point. Then if they recruit someone then they receive a commission on them, but I don't get anything on their recruits. But then once I become a director, then their recruits come into my unit and I receive a director's commission on their production. So basically it takes, I think they say, around ninety to a hundred unit members on the average for a person to win their Cadillac. So you're talking about a pretty large organization, but, really if you're just willing to consistently put some time into it it's very achievable. There's a director in Nashville that comes to Bowling Green a couple times a month to work with her girls and she's won her Regal. You can win the Regal by doing \$6,000 production a month for six months in a row. So you win that, and they always say, "You're going to grow up and be a Cadillac", the Regals are, but the girl in Nashville has won her Regal, and she is now also on target for her Cadillac. There're several "Cadillacs" in Nashville. There are several Cadillac directors in Nashville. My director in Illinois has her Regal, and my senior director is on target for her Cadillac.

S.P.: You see, these are some terms that you use, like "my Regal" the "Queen". What are some of these other--what are some of these various things; I mean, and these various rewards that Mary Kay--I know there are some other things. Aren't there

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diamonds or something else?

J.S.: Right. Diamond bumblebees. And, Mary Kay--

S.P.: --Talk about those!

J.S.: O.K. I'll tell you a little bit about Mary Kay's history, and that'll give you--

S.P.: --That'll be very good.

J.S.: --an idea. Mary Kay--now I haven't read her book in about three years, so I might be kind of fuzzy on some of my facts, but, she has three children and her husband left her, so she had to support these three children. So she went into sales and she was in sales for many, many years. She was one time the top person in the whole company. They gave her a flounder light as the top prize for this whole company. Well, she was probably one of the very few women in the whole company, and so I guess if a man had won, he probably would have been tickled to death with it; but she wasn't really very excited about winning this flounder light for having worked so hard--

S.P.: --What is that?

J.S.: It's a fishing light, you know, one of these lights you take out fishing.

S.P.: Ohhh. Oh.

J.S.: So she wasn't very excited about it, so she vowed that if she ever had a company that she would make sure that the prizes were something that you were really motivated by and something that you wouldn't go out and buy yourself. Women, we usually will not really treat ourselves to really nice things 'cause we know that kids need shoes and other things. So when she started her company, she wanted to

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J.S.: start a company where women could go as far as they wanted to go. We do have some men in the company; we don't discriminate at all, but it is primarily a company for women. So she has made prizes and things that she knows that women would really work for. There are the pink Cadillacs, and the pink Regals, and there are also furs. She gives away well over a million dollars worth of prizes in Dallas once a year at "seminar." The people who are in the half million dollar club or more all win a full-length fur coat. They alternate between white and black each year so you don't get the same thing from year to year. They all get like diamond bar pins that say the amount of production that they made. Then each year she also awards "Queens" in each of the areas--in several different areas. We have four different seminars, that she has, because we have them in the Dallas Convention Center and it only holds about 8,000 people. And so she has four different seminars so that 32,000 women can come to Dallas and be motivated at Seminar. So she has four different ones; so she has four different areas that she has the company broken up into, according to who your national sales director is. So we all get to go to Dallas, and in each of those four different seminars, she has a Queen of the Consultants, Personal Sales, and then a Queen of Recruiting and a Queen of the Directors Personal Sales. In each of those areas the queens get a gorgeous diamond ring, I think it's like four carat diamond ring, a fur, a husband's ring--the husband gets a gorgeous diamond ring, also. Then, like this year, they go to choose if they wanted a

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J.S.: piece of jewelry that they could design themselves or, I don't even remember, but anyway, there are gorgeous prizes. And mostly diamonds and furs and things like that. She also gives a diamond bumblebee to each of those people. The bumblebee is Mary Kay's symbol because aerodynamically the bumblebee really should not be able to fly because its wings are so light and its body so heavy that the little wings should not be able to support the bumblebee. But then Mary Kay laughs and says, "The bumblebee doesn't know that it can't fly, so it goes about flying anyway." Basically that's her philosophy. We go out and we do that which we don't know is impossible, then we can do it. That's kind of what she uses as her symbol, is the diamond bumblebee. They're gorgeous, also, and something that they wear very, very proudly. It's really a great honor to be in the Queen's Court. Usually about--I guess there're about fifteen to twenty that make the Queen's Court and then they name the Queen and the two runners-up and they get, like furs and diamonds and stuff.

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S.P.: Uhm, I notice you called some people a Regal. That's a name for the car.

J.S.: Right. Umm hmm. A Regal is--

S.P.: --Like you're called--this is a Regal and this is a Cadillac, like the person is the car.

J.S.: (Laughs) Well, you're a Regal Director, and basically that just means that you have won your Regal. And you're a Cadillac Director and you've won your Cadillac; or you're a VIP which means you've won your Oldsmobile.

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S.P.: Tell me the story of the cosmetics. I remember you saying something about tanning of animal hides.

150 J.S.: umm hmm. Well, there was a man whose business was tanning hides, and one day he decided if he could take this biggyugly stiff hide and turn it into a beautiful soft piece of leather like a glove or a handbag, then surely you could do the same thing with the human skin, especially since you have living cells with which to work. So he began to experiment with his own skin using these same techniues in a modified form with the result that at age seventy-three, it's said he proved his point because his skin gave the appearance of that of a man many years younger. And from this developed Mary Kay Cosmetics. It's really kind of interesting; this is also in her book, but she was at a Stanley Home Product demonstration that she had just done, and after she finished the ladies were all standing around the dining room table getting these products in these, I don't know, I guess like pickle jars, in, you know, homemade type jars. And she said, "What are you all doing?" and she said, "Well, this is our skin care program," and I guess that this was at this hide tanner's daughter's house. She said, "Well, my dad has developed this skin care program." And Mary Kay got to looking around the room and said, "Wow! Look at all this gorgeous skin," and everything, and she said, "Well, maybe I need to try this." And so she got some alsome also, and I think she used the product for almost ten years. Then the hide tanner died, and Mary Kay purchased the rights to manufacture the product from his daughter. And that's what she

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J.S.: decided to start a company with. And she decided when she started her company that she would base it on the Golden Rule that we treat everyone as we would like to be treated, and on the philosophy that most women need to be able to put God first, your family second, and career third. And most of the time out in the working world, you know, that's not the way it is. They expect you to put the job first, and if the children are sick, well, that's too bad. You have to come in for work anyway. But Mary Kay wanted to be able to make our career so that you could keep your priorities straight, because that's how women are the happiest. And when women are the happiest then that's when they'll do the most.

S.P.: There's an emphasis, sounds like, on Mary Kay people being family people, being married. Is that necessarily a criteria?

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J.S.: Well, no, no, not at all. I really don't even have any idea of how it would break down. Probably pretty much like an average segment of the population, because there are a lot of women--one of the top paid Nationals is not married. Several of them, of course, are older women who've been widowed. Then there are several who have husbands, and then there're some of them that are divorced. All across; there's several also who are single. Women go into it for all different reasons. There're some women who do it to support their family, because they are the sole supporter of the family, and so they need the income for that reason. Then there's women who have very successful husbands, who

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J.S.: need something for themselves, so they just do it for the personal growth and the satisfaction of: "Hey! I can do something, also." And then there's women who do it, you know, like to have a second income, like to put the kids through school or something. So really, for whatever reason you do it you can get whatever you want to out of it, because it is your own business.

S.P.: What happens to your daughter when you when you--when you go around on these various appointments?

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J.S.: Well, usually I have a "Mother's Day Out" program that she goes to. I can take her two or three days a week. And so I usually try to schedule everything only on Monday, Thursday or Friday from nine till two, because that's when she goes. And so automatically I have babysitters then. Then at night usually Tom keeps her for me, but Tom also has some time flexibility in the daytime depending what time of the year it is, 'cause some days, you know, like certain seasons he has no time, and then at other times he's very slow. So he can keep it for me, like sometime in the afternoon or something. We really just work together, and we try to one of us be with her as much as possible, but we do have "Mother's Day Out" and then we have a couple of girls that babysit for us when we do need it. But I usually only work about probably twelve hours a week on the average. When I work that twelve hours a week I make more than I did at my forty hour job before. And so I can have my time with Betty and still bring home the income that I used to be able to, and then not have to leave her for forty-five hours a

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J.S.: week, you know, in the day care or whatever. Betsy really is a very big reason why I do Mary Kay, because my director always laughs, and this isn't a put-down on anybody, but she says there're three types of motherhood: You have "otherhood" when someone else raises them; you have "smotherhood" when you have nothing for yourself except, you know, you just do everything for the kids, and you're with them twenty-four hours a day; and then you have "motherhood" which is where you have a nice balance, because you have a lot of time with the kids, but yet you do also take time to have something for yourself. And basically if you learn to set your priorities right and you learn to schedule your time properly, then with Mary Kay you really can have motherhood, and keep your sanity and yet have a good relationship with your kids also.

S.P.: When you go out places with your husband--when you socialize, do women tend to start talking to you about make-up and things like that, just like people who know that the person at a party is a doctor will start to talk about all their complaints and things, you know, that sort of thing; do you have any of that?

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J.S.: Uh, sometimes. I really, uh, I personally do not bring up the fact that I'm a Mary Kay consultant socially, usually. I just feel like that's a good philosophy. If I want to talk to the particular person like sometimes in Tom's business we'll go out with his customers or something, and I'll meet somebody and I think the lady's really sharp. But I try not to personally, like bring it up, because I really don't feel like that that's the right atmosphere, and I

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J.S.: don't want her to think I'm trying to be pushy or anything. So a lot of times then I will call them, like a day or two later and tell them, you know, "Hey, I'm a Mary Kay consultant and I was really impressed with you, and I was wondering if we could get together for a facial?" But, if they bring it up, then yeah, I love to talk about it, and it's just like it's my job, and to me, just like you say, they're talking to a doctor or whatever. And a lot of women will ask me, "Hey! My skin's like this." And I'll usually say, Well, let's get together for a facial. So, yeah, it does come up socially, but I personally try to usually make it my policy. Now if they ask me what I do then I tell them, and sometimes that will spark a conversation, but I don't just always come out and say, "I'm a Mary Kay consultant." in the conversation.

S.P.: Do you get affected at all by, or do you have any--get into any discussions by some women who think that you shouldn't wear make-up or that today's problems with additives, they're worried about, you know, the chemicals and things that are in make-up and that sort of thing? Do you have any of that?

244 J.S.: No. I really run across that very often. Mary Kay is really good about giving us the information that we need as far as additives and things like that. Collagen is one of the big things now. There's a lot of controversy about that. Mary Kay recently came out with an article that says that we only use animal collagen and not fetus collagen. "Cause there was a big thing about some companies were using it from [Mr. Stratton walks in the front door and calls "Howdy!"]

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J.S.: But there was some--I don't know if they're rumors or if they were in fact substantuated (sic) but that some companies were using collagen from aborted fetuses. Mary Kay came out and said, "Definitely make your customers know that we do not use human things to make our collagen, that it all comes from animals."

S.P.: Now there is a--there is a possible folklore thing there, because sometimes legends, urban legends come from rumors. Sometimes these things are not true, but then they get spread as common belief. Did you ever hear of any basis in fact . . . (garbled phrase)? Have you read anything anywhere?

J.S.: Well, uhmm, just, you know, not really. I just picked up that undoubtedly there was some concern about that on some people's mind, because the company felt a strong enough need to come out with an article--

S.P.: --Have you had any customers ask you and have heard that story?

J.S.: Mmm hmm, yeah, and another, uh, well, yeah I've had some, and then another consultant I know has had some. And one big controversy, too, is about animals even being used, you know, because there are people who--

S.P.: --vegetarians!

J.S.: Yeah, who do feel very strongly about animals being used for these type things and animals being used for testing and things like that. And I know one consultant lost about probably eight or ten customers that were in, like I don't know, maybe the Humane Society. I don't want to maybe blame it off on the wrong person, but one of those. And they were

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J.S.: very upset, because Mary Kay does use animals in our testing, you know, all our cosmetics. But, then she also wrote this particular consultant and said, that is all very humane as it can be. They son't do-- I think there's one test that they do where they spray the stuff in the eyes, and it's very, very painful to them. And we do not do that test. So she said that she would send some more information so that this consultant could be more knowledgeable in dealing with her customers on this particular issue, because they were very upset on the fact that we do use animals for testing. But the pharmaceutical industry and the cosmetic industry, you know, that is very common practice. I do not know of any company that doesn't use them. But Mary Kay does try to be very humane and very . . .

S.P.: That's interesting. Uhmm, do you have any particular superstitions or beliefs around your selling, like do you consult horoscopes? Do you believe in any of that? Do you believe in astrology at all? Or do you have particular things that you see--lucky things for you or, you know?

J.S.: No, not really. No, I have a lot of faith in God. I feel like that he really blesses my efforts in my business. And that when I'm willing to put forth the time, that it pays off. I don't really believe in horoscopes and things like that. I probably--I guess, I don't know, I may have a lucky dress, I don't know. I have a dress I really feel good in, and I feel like that that's probably the biggest reason why. But when I wear it I do do well at . . . But again, I feel that that's based because of the way I see myself, because I feel good when I wear that dress. So more than a super-

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J.S.: stition, I feel like there's probably really a valid point for why that is my lucky dress (laughs) or whatever. But I really have a lot of belief in the way you see yourself is the way that you will act. A lot of the positive mental attitudes, or whatever, the beliefs that are going around--I really do feel like that there's a lot of validity behind those in the positive affirmations. If I tell myself that I am the thin one hundred and thirty-five pounds, successful VIP driver, then my mind will bring those things about, because I'll start seeing myself as a thin person and as a successful person who's winning her car. I really believe that those work. I really feel like that that's something I need to constantly do, and so every morning I get up and tell myself those things. And, so maybe, I don't know if you'd call it a superstition, but that's something that I do, and it's a ritual that I follow.

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S.P.: Mm hmm. I thought of something, a whole topic in fact, that occurred to me, and that is--a lot of people today look at things like big beauty contests. And there're a lot of people these days that don't like that--that say that with the whole "Women's Lib Movement"--that this whole way of displaying women around their bodies and--that that's ridiculous, you know, showing them off in swim suits, and, you know, and to say that this one's better in a swim suit than the other one, and so on. What do you think about this whole thing about women and their bodies and their self-esteem? And also, how does that affect your customers when you come to them? Do you get them talking a lot about their feelings about themselves? Are some of them kind of

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negative?

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J.S.: Yeah. I find that a lot of women don't have good, positive feelings about themselves. I feel very strongly about staying home with Betsy and being a homemaker, priorities, I mean my primary sense of being that. But I find that usually the women who have the negative self images are those who just stay home with their kids and have nothing for themselves. That's what we were talking about before, kind of like the "smotherhood", and that's just what I've found. It probably has no scientific basis or anything like that. But when they just stay home with their kids and they don't have anything for themselves, they usually don't have a very good attitude or feeling about themselves. One thing that I do try to do is to help people feel better about themselves. Usually if a lady is running around the house in her housecoat and rollers and no make-up on, then she doesn't feel very good about herself. So I come and I help her learn to do her make-up and look better, then she'll also feel better about herself. So I really feel good about what I do in helping people feel good about themselves. I really don't get much objection as far as people should or shouldn't wear make-up as far as being on display or whatever as far as the Miss America thing or whatever. I feel like there're--personally I probably feel like there is too much emphasis on the thin, glamorous actress type personality, because most of us don't look like Linda Evans, or whoever when we're forty. But they've done a lot of talking about the older women now because of people like Joan Collins and Linda Evans and so now there's not such a bad thing

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J.S.: about being older and things, that you can do it graciously. And I think maybe that if we can learn that promise then there's really some good things to come out of it. But I don't think that we should be so preoccupied with looking great and being a hundred and ten pounds or whatever. I think for our health we need to watch our weight, and that for our self-esteem we need to wear make-up and have nice hair-dos or whatever makes us feel good about ourselves., if that's what it takes, but if it doesn't, then you don't have to do it either.

S.P.: What do you think of the advertising that you see on television that seems to sell everything with the women being this glorious, glamorous--and the image that that creates for men, what men look for in a woman?

388 J.S.: Well, I think it's probably a fact of life that people want to look at attractive people selling their thi--I mean, you know, selling things, and that you'd probably be more attracted to somebody with gorgeous hair than somebody that's not very pretty, even if they do have pretty hair. So I guess that's just a fact of life, that somebody's going to use the best packaging available to sell their product. But I also think probably that we shouldn't be quite so obsessed with it. It does, I think, probably make it unfair to the average woman, when you're trying to live up to that, but, I think, probably the average man also knows that he's not a Tom Selleck or whatever, and so if he's got a good head on his shoulders, then he thinks, "Well, I'm not Tom Selleck, and she's not Linda Evans." So (laughs), you know, I think that maybe that if you can look at it that way. But

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it probably does make it kind of unfair for the average woman trying to live up to that extra . . . (trails off).

S.P.: Do you have women, when you go to their home, who start to tell you all about themselves, who really need to talk, and who use you as a--as a sort of a--lay--

J.S.: --sounding board? (laughs)

S.P.: --or a lay psychologist? What's that like?

J.S.: Uhmm, well probably--

S.P.: --. . . any particular--

J.S.: Really probably not real heavy conversations, no.

S.P.: Problems with their husbands or problems with their children or--do you get any of that?

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J.S.: No, I've never had anybody tell me they're a child beater or anything like that (laughs). NO, I really don't. Of course in my business I basically come; I make the presentation; I do ask them a little bit about themselves at the very beginning. I ask everybody to go around the table; tell me what they do and if they have any children or if they're married, you know, a little bit about themselves, if they work. And so I fi--

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