

SALLIE HOLDER, AUTHOR + ENTREPRENEUR

Sallie Holder had it all, and was taking the world by storm as a young attorney practicing labor law with an internationally recognized law firm. But, 10 years into it, she finally admitted what she had known for a while. She was miserable, and felt like an imposter in her own life.

Recently on Sea Island for The Southern Coterie's annual summit, both Holder, author of "Hitting Rock Middle," and Lydia Fenet, author of "The Most Powerful Woman in the Room is You," took time out of their busy schedules to discuss their books with us.

Holder, who grew up in Greenville, S.C., began searching for ways to change her life, all the while being conflicted about how she would be perceived, both personally and professionally.

That journey resulted in her new book, in which the business coach, thought leader, author, podcaster and former attorney packs advice for women who are at a crossroads in their lives and want to forge a new path.

"Coaching women one-on-one, I learned that many of them had difficulty with what to call that space where so many women find themselves," she said. "Trapped, in a cage of their own making, all with the same struggles. No one had created a road map out of that."

What didn't work for Holder was the traditional method of goal-setting, which is to start with meeting

short-term goals before tackling medium and long-term objectives.

"My philosophy is to turn that completely on its head," Holder said.

In the older method, she said, people tend to stay where they are, never moving much past those initial short-term items.

"Define the destination first. Then reverse your way into what you want to do on a daily, weekly or monthly basis."

Holder said to picture an inverted triangle, with the ultimate goal at the top, and the smaller ones beneath it. This maps out the plan clearly, and allows people to visualize where they are going.

"As Mary Oliver said, 'Who do you want to be at the end of this wild and precious life?'" Holder asked. "If you don't start at the end, how will you know?"

Holder's three goals were freedom, flexibility and travel, which she most certainly did not have at her law firm. People who are wanting to shift gears in life, she said, have some serious soul-searching to do, and deep questions to consider.

- What can I create that will get me to my final goal?
- What are three interests/goals/ideals that I have?
- Does that opportunity fit my goals?

When answered, these questions,

which Holder calls the three pillars, will ensure people reach their desired goals, if the answers are practiced with extreme intention.

While her book is a memoir of sorts, it was Holder's desire for it to help others.

"My journey is about the ability to light someone else's candle."

For example, Holder tells of a woman who has created great change in her life through this method of goal-setting.

The woman to whom Holder was referring is a real estate agent, but had always wanted to be a stand-up comedian. Because she set goals, using Holder's method, the woman not only works as a part-time stand-up comedian, but just fin-

ished her highest grossing real estate year ever.

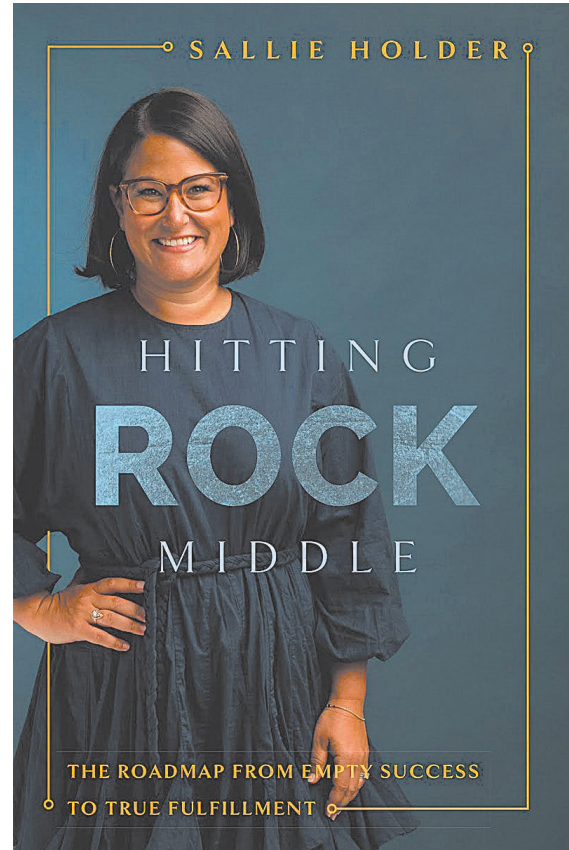
"If we try to shut down part of ourselves, we lose a little of our fire," she said. "When we pay attention to our internal voice, and include that as a part of our goals, we open the doorway to freedom, and allow ourselves to flourish."

Of course, all this change can make one's partner in life a little anxious.

Holder says having a non-supportive partner can be a hurdle, but she has a solution, and it begins with good communication. A woman

must be able to articulate her goals clearly in order to bring her partner on board.

"I find what men are looking for is clarity, and what women fail to communicate is clarity," she said. "The best gift I can give women is clarity. The more we own it (goals), the more power we have and can get back."



LYDIA FENET, AUTHOR + AUCTIONEER

Lydia Fenet, a Louisiana native, is the global managing director of strategic partnerships for Christie's, the New York auction house. She is also the lead charity auctioneer for the firm, where she has worked since 1999.

With her latest book, Fenet tells the story of how she became successful with the hope of inspiring other women to harness powers they may not be aware they have.

"I've been a charity auctioneer for Christie's for 16 years, and people were always asking me how I did it," she said. "That's where the idea of the book came from."

Ultimately, she said, success becomes more about selling oneself.

"Your power in life comes from selling yourself in the best way you can."

Fenet personifies a successful

Manhattanite, but still retains a lot of her Southern upbringing. She is religious about sending thank you note (monogrammed, of course), and she favors a brightly colored wardrobe. But make no mistake about it, when she takes the stage at a high-dollar charity auction, people notice.

She utilizes what she refers to as the "strike method" to capture the attention

of the audience. When she arrives on stage, at the appointed time, she picks up the auctioneer's gavel and slams it down on the podium with a resounding whack. Admittedly, she relies on humor to engage the audience and push the bids ever higher.

"I don't leave things to chance," she said, adding that knowing exactly what she will do keeps her calm and focused. "I do pre-work."

Doing pre-work means familiarizing herself with the charity and its principals, having knowledge of the items up for auction and understanding the makeup of the attendees.

Women, she said, need to ask themselves that their "strike method" is.

When setting goals, people should be mindful of their overall impression.

"Think through what you want people to see. How you walk, how you smile, how you speak, the openness of your character, creates an image of yourself."

All this work leads women to finding themselves in a comfort-

able place.

Fenet believes, just as every mother told their daughters, that one's wardrobe matters. Even with that advice, however, she encourages women to develop their own style and to be themselves.

"Dressing a certain way creates armor for that moment," she said, adding that it's all in how you want to be perceived. "All those things come from within and you can choose to change those things if you want to."

Fenet worked with a colleague whose approach was very direct and combative, so she coached the woman into a healthier mindset, by having her learn a new way to approach people.

"No one will work with you if they don't like you," she said. "Ultimately, the goal is to bring people up with you; if you step on them on the way up, there will be a target on your back."

