



# Soloing: Realizing Your Life's Ambition

*Harriet Rubin*

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Soloing has two meanings: "going it alone" and being "complete in yourself." . . . But you don't just leave--a company/a career/a paycheck--and cross over to a more satisfying life. There's more to it. There is a mysterious passage to be negotiated, a delicate transition required to go from alone-in-the-desert to complete-in-yourself.

Harriet Rubin, bestselling author of *The Princessa: Machiavelli for Women*, returns with inspiring advice for professionals dreaming of crossing over from a corporate world of prescribed boundaries to the limitless opportunities of soloing. She describes how people can do great things--things they would never be able to accomplish inside the corporate structure--when they manage or lead no one.

As one successfully navigates the passage toward a truer sense of self that Rubin describes, four invaluable freedoms await:

- The first freedom is regaining your sense of identity.  
Walk out of any big company and who are you, stripped of that mighty identity? Potentially bigger and better than before. Who were you before the corporate you? To get back one's sense of self is why people go solo.
- The second freedom is independence.  
Why is working alone so important in doing great work, given that it's also the scariest part? Imagine having complete command and control over your time and the work you do. This is how soloists realize their great strengths: They are reduced to themselves.
- The third freedom is income.  
You can earn in one year what you earned in two before. Do you work harder to do this? Yes. Do you enjoy it more? Yes. Solo money is alive. Unlike a salary doled out like an allowance from parents, the money earned by soloing is a true emblem of a person's worth.
- The fourth freedom is illumination.  
A professional builds a career, but a soloist builds a portfolio and a life free of boredom, full of challenge. Direct contact with work itself is direct contact with life.

With insights as diverse as Henry David Thoreau's "I want to be sure the world doesn't change," and Michael Jordan's response to the statement: "There's no 'I' in team,"--"That's right, but there is an 'I' in win,"--Rubin gives readers the chance to bring their dreams into alignment with reality.

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