

S01 Episode 01: Leadership is Feminine
Episode Transcript



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Hey, hey, hey, this is Kris Plachy, and this is Leadership is Feminine season one, episode one. Are you ready? Let's go.

All right. Hello. Listen, in the vein of reinvention, I have reinvented this podcast. So today I'm going to talk to you about why this podcast has been reinvented and what you can expect going forward. I have thousands and thousands of you that listen. I love that you are here and I think you're going to be just as happy with what we're doing on this podcast and the direction that I'm taking things as always. But I also always love to hear from you, so you can let us know what you think as we go forward. But Leadership is Feminine.

Several months ago, I actually recorded a podcast and that was the title. It was something that I was writing about one morning, as I do. I tend to do a lot of journaling in the morning. And I was thinking about leadership and women and men and the clash of what I've been witnessing in the world in terms of approach to leadership in a way that we have never really, at least in my lifetime experienced, certainly in my awareness experienced.

And of course, we're also coupling that with an absolute blooming surge, which is lovely, of women inserting themselves into, especially the entrepreneur space and leading and managing their own teams and businesses. And while we don't have, from a percentage perspective, the kind of level of women in the CEO seat in the larger organization, so Fortune 100s or Fortune 500s or even thousands, we have millions of women sitting in founder, CEO, business owner seats. And my invitation in this Leadership is Feminine podcast is to create a space for us to talk about what I know are the unique challenges that women face, who lead.

I also want to take a minute, if you're new here, to make sure that I'm also very clear about something else. I love the men. I do not have anything against men. I do not intend for this to be some sort of feminist rants about how men are terrible and women are the only thing in the world. I love everybody. I love men. I have a marriage to a man for 25 years and I have three children, two of whom are beautiful sons. I see how men who would be better suited to lead with their feminine attributes and skillset, how they struggle to lead with their feminine assets, as opposed to being forced to or taught to or trained to only leverage what is the masculine.

So as we think about who we are and what we expect of leaders, we have to recognize that everything we know and have come to desire, expect and curate in people who are leaders and really reinforce by followership, is built out of a model that is thousands and thousands of years old. And that model, with very limited exception, has been at the cost of and repression of the feminine. And again, this is not to say that people are bad people. This is just to tell the truth. And as more and more women enter the workplace, and I should say as more and more women enter leadership roles, especially entrepreneur leadership roles, because that's who I focus on. I'm watching more and more women stumble because they're trying to adopt leadership

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tactics, style, approach, personas that don't suit them. And then they're out of integrity and they're uncomfortable.

And so instead of then building great teams of people who can help us, we don't hire people because we don't feel comfortable leading because we don't want to lead that way. The way that the world shows us we're supposed to lead. That doesn't look good to me. So I'll just hang out over here and not have employees. Thank you.

That to me is a crisis. And because I coach women every day in the How to CEO program, and I am witness to that pain and that suffering... I am really not being facetious. If you are that person, you know what I'm talking about. It causes so much struggle to think that you are supposed to be a way in the world that does not suit you. I want to stop that for you. I know we've already done a lot of this work on my previous podcast, but we're going to continue that in a framework that I'm super excited about. I want you to lean into everything that you are and leverage it, not bury it.

And when we look at the world, women may not have been the leaders of the companies and the businesses and the countries, but we have been leading them. We have all the skills required of leadership in a world that's desperate for those skills. Compassion, empathy, nurturing, listening, collaboration, teamwork, communication. The typical masculine leadership skills are: force, aggression, power, very directional one-sided patriarchal.

I really do think we're at a point in the world that we can reimagine just about anything. And that's why there's a lot of pain in the world, too, because as a species, it's fascinating. We were born to change, like we're so well suited for change. We have to be given... Look at what we've done in the thousands and thousands of years we've been on this planet. And yet you introduce change and people completely lose their mind. So we need more feminine leadership. We need people who listen, who collaborate, who lead from the heart, who are kind, but not soft.

It's interesting because I think a lot... I've been doing leadership training forever. There's always been the soft skills and the hard skills. And leadership and all the things I just mentioned are always soft skills, which I have said for years, like listen to me, learning how to listen, learning how to collaborate, learning how to be empathetic. That is not easy. Those are the hard skills to learn. Hard skills, easier.

So interesting. The hard skills are considered like the more business acumen stuff, budgeting, accounting and all. No, those are easy to learn. Trying to teach someone how to be selfless and a servant leader, yeah, that's easy. So we've already had this dismissiveness and I think because people associate kindness, empathy with weakness, we steer clear of it. And why is that? Because it's feminine, because masculine is strong, feminine is weak and demure. And I'm not saying that's right or wrong. That's just how it's been y'all. So don't yell at me for the message. I'm just telling you what's true.

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I actually think however, being kind takes a tremendous amount of strength. Being empathetic takes a tremendous amount of strength. You know what doesn't take strength? To not manage your mind and your emotions and yell at people, control people, force people. That does not take strength. That just takes brute. There's no intelligence in that. But when you align with the other elements that I've already mentioned that are more feminine, and then you go out and you try and build a business and you're surrounded by people who are modeling the opposite and telling you that you will fail, no wonder you're confused, frustrated, tired.

So I'm here to tell you, given my editorial or life experience and that of thousands of other people I've worked with, that they "are wrong" and you are right. And you get to lean into who you are and be more and more of that. But what I was going to say is I think there's this misconception that feminine is weak, masculine is strong, except have you ever met a mother who's just had it? Have you ever met a mom who's at the end of a rope? Have you ever met a mom who just needs five minutes to think? So leadership can be feminine and can be tough and strong and clear and decisive and have clear boundaries and set clear expectations, but we can also do so in the context of a whole other sort of culture. And that's what I want to invite you to believe with me.

So in this first season, we're focusing on reimagining and reinvention. When this is recorded... I'm recording this in August 2021, for those of you who listen to it later. We are still in the throes of a global pandemic. The impact on businesses globally is nowhere near ending.

As I am recording this, we are having significant challenges, especially to people who run businesses where they pay people hourly, maybe under 20 bucks an hour, under 25 bucks an hour, really struggling to find great talent. Restaurants are not operating at their full hours. One of our favorite restaurants in town is closed on Sundays right now because they just don't have enough staff. So if you're a small business owner and you need people to help you, this is that kind of a time where there's a lot of impact still.

And so I know, and even though it's been tremendously challenging for all of us personally, professionally, all in our own way. And that's the other thing I think that's so important to honor, is we've all shared one common circumstance as a global society, which is a virus. I mean, I guess there's still some people that don't think it exists, but for us let's just leave that. [inaudible 00:11:05] go away. The rest of us know there is a virus.

Now, there's thousands of thoughts about that virus that have sort of defined how people interact with it. Some people are having thoughts that if they breathe air with anyone they're going to die, so they need to go live in their closet. And there's other people who are like, this is ridiculous. This is stupid. Everybody's wasting everybody's time and they don't do anything about it. They're not in any fair, but they're annoyed with everybody who is. Wherever you sit on that scale or that range, whatever it's fine. But nonetheless, there's no way to escape the

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fact that it's had a grave impact on all of us in our collective communities. And so I do believe that we're going to look back on this time as a time when we were really called to evaluate, reinvent, reimagine lots of things. What does work mean to us? What does our business mean to us? What does family mean to us? What does time off mean to us? What does health mean to us? So many things.

And so I actually am inviting you as you think and listen to this first podcast, because this will be a season. So we're going to do 13 episodes. We're focusing on reimagining. I wrote down as I was brainstorming all sorts of ideas about what might need to be reimagined. But then I also wrote what needs reinvention in my own life. And I wrote a list of what came to me. So I'd love to invite you to think about the same thing. What is calling to you for reinvention in your own life or your own business or your own experiences in the world? For me, I wrote down my wellness, my boundaries, my tolerations, my organization structure, where I invest my time, my body, my energy. Those are just a few that I wrote. I'm curious what you would put on your list.

I'd certainly always love to hear from you, for you to share that with me. So you can always email that at hello@krisplachy.com. I'd love to know what is calling to you like, "It's time. Now, it's time. It's time."

So what we're going to do over the course of the season is really draw out some of those critical areas that I see in my clients that people are really either craving to work on and reinvent, or are blocked from reinventing, blocked from reimagining because they don't think they can, or like it never would occur to them, or like nobody else does it that way? Why would I do it? And so the topic just resonates so much for me, even with the name now of our podcast and the direction of this podcast, which is Leadership is Feminine. Let's reimagine leadership.

We've had a definition of leadership forever, and in many ways it's served us. But in many ways, it hasn't. Are leaders really people who have power? Should they be? Are leaders really people who automatically deserve reverence just because they're the leader? Are leaders in front of the organization or are they behind it? All sorts of things that come into my brain that I want you to think about. So we're going to have Leadership is Feminine topics related to reinvention. We're going to also have How to CEO topics related to reinvention and reimagination.

So just like in my previous podcast, where we would focus on how to lead and manage and coach and build a high-performing team, we're not going to stop doing that. I just want to keep expanding how we think about those, all those elements to support you. And we're going to also complement each season with some interviews with women. And in this case, who are incredible models for and have taken the risk of reinvention and re-imagining their business and their life.

So I'm beyond excited. I'm thrilled to share this time and space with you. I'm honored that you are here. The world needs you. The world needs more women stepping into who they are with

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total confidence, and competence and ownership, releasing the need to apologize for being you and instead finding your leadership is feminine voice. I believe the more we do that individually, the more the collective moves everything. So I have no small goal. I do want to change the world. I believe we're ready. Are you coming? I'll see you next week.