

S01 Episode 02: Leadership as Self-Care
Episode Transcript



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Leadership practices built from feminine integrity, foster and support your self-care. Welcome to Leadership is Feminine podcast. I'm Kris Plachy. Let's go.

Well, hi. First of all, thank you for the warm welcome and graciousness and yahoos and I love it, and all the things that you're sharing with me on social media and in my inbox. It honestly means so much just to hear back from you. You know, it is kind of funny to do a podcast for those of you who don't do one, to just sit here in my office and talk to you. I see you. I experience you. I relate to you, but I can never have an exchange. And so it's so lovely to hear back from you. So whether that's a podcast review or a DM on Instagram, I just want you to know it really, or share on Instagram, it really doesn't go unnoticed. It means a tremendous amount to me. So thank you.

I'm really enjoying this re-invention of the podcast. Re-imagining really so much, and it's making my brain work in a way that I'm really savoring. And I know from my own life experience and my own trajectory of my career and my thought leadership, this work is right on time, and has been brewing for many, many years. And so I'm just honored that you're here listening to me, and I want to share with you something that I think is pretty powerful today.

So if you'll follow the bouncing ball, today's podcast is about leadership and self-care and really how leadership skill practices are a form of self-care. And I think actually one of the highest forms of self-care for entrepreneurs, especially for women. So let me kind of bring you with me.

All right. So stay with me here. So as women, I watch my daughter, she's 16, and I remember ... I have this vague memory of when I was 16. And all I was really thinking about, right, at 16, was what I wanted to do. Like I wanted to go to work. I wanted to go work out. I wanted to hang out with my friends. I wanted to ... I was a cheerleader, please don't hate me. I was a cheerleader. I was the captain of the cheerleading squad. Not going to lie. I loved that. But it was just all about that, right? There was no nurturing, codependency, of taking care of other people, right? I was raised in the '80s, right? We didn't worry about anything.

And so I watched that in my daughter too. There's just this age of freedom when it comes to the psychic commitment we make to people to care for them. But something happens to women, I think, as we get a little older and we get into a partnership, a loving partnership relationship, and we start to see more than ourselves, right? We start to embrace what might be in many cases, very intuitive and instinctual, to care for people and nurture people and support people.

And I taught this in my Overwhelm class, that it's actually a really natural step that we take as we enter our earlier 20, mid-20 years, right? Somewhere in there, this kind of starts to hit people probably maybe by 30 at the latest. And we actually start accepting a lot of responsibility because it's fun, right? Like, "Oh, I'll take care of this. I'll do this in the house. I'll make sure we have food. I'll make sure we have meals. I'll make sure the bills are paid. I'll make

S01 Episode 02: Leadership as Self-Care Episode Transcript

sure all the Christmas and holiday vacations and dinners are planned. I'll make sure that the Christmas presents and the Hanukkah presents and all that are purchased. I'll make sure we don't forget people's birthday. I'll make sure ... "

And there's this initial, I believe, at least I relate to this, a time in our lives as younger women that that's fun. Like, "Oh, yay. I'm doing all these things. And it's fun."

Until it isn't. Until it's obligatory. It's expected by both you and the people in your lives. So what went from you embracing this role of yours, goes from you and others expecting this role from you and as is often the case for women, it gets to a point where it is at your detriment. Your self-care. Your self-love. Your freedom. Your emotional health.

And it's very insidious. It just kind of creeps in, and then we wake up. I'm 52. I have three kids. Been married 25 years. I have a business. I'm working this just as much as I know you are. That's why so many women, when they get to that sort of quote-unquote empty nest phase, right, where the children leave or whoever you've been caring for sort of goes into the world and does their thing. There's like this vacuous hole for a lot of women, because they have poured so much of themselves into others that they don't know who they are. It's empty. And yet you don't want to take care of people anymore either. So who the hell are you, right?

So enter you into this picture, somewhere in between there, you decided to start a business. Crazy chick that you are. What were you thinking, right? Just kidding. So you start a business. And what it is unfortunate is that as we are developing that whole nurturing and caring for other people thing, most of us are simultaneously learning and starting to believe that us having boundaries, us having lines that we protect for ourselves means that we are selfish, unkind, irresponsible, not thoughtful, mean even. And so we don't want people to think that about us, so we don't hold our boundaries at all.

So here we are, this woman, with this life that we have accepted a lot of responsibility for willingly. And then we build a business. And the only thing we know is how to give and nurture and support others at our own expense. So now of course you have this business, and you're over-giving. You aren't holding space for yourself. The last person on the list is you. Physically, mentally and emotionally. Or one or two of those, right? Everybody's a little different.

So then we hire these team members. And I think we have this secret belief that when we hire people, it will be different. Like, "Oh, I'm going to get some other adults in here and they're going to act like I do. And then I don't have to take care of them. I don't have to follow up with them. I don't have to chase them because I do that with everybody else in my life. I don't have to plan for them. These are other adults and they're going to do it." And you know what, they're also even other women, because a lot of women hire other women. And then they don't. And then you start the pattern with the team. The, "Okay, it's just easier if I do it. It's all right. I'll just take care of it. No, it's fine."

S01 Episode 02: Leadership as Self-Care Episode Transcript

And then you realize, "Okay now, not only am I still over here, not managing any boundaries and doing a lot of things for those people in my life, but now I'm doing it with the people in my business." And it's not surprising that so many women wake up one day and say, "What the holy heck is happening and why did I do this?" And so what I want to share with you is I believe learning how to lead is an incredible path for you in your business and also in your life.

Because what I can say for sure is I certainly have a lot of commitments as a woman and as a mom and as a daughter that I wrangle with, and I am bad with boundaries and I'm working on that. I'm getting much more aware and I'm working on it, but it's like 25 years of unwiring myself, which I watch in all my clients. And however, in my business I'm much cleaner. And so I actually leverage my leadership skill in my life because when I can have a business and a team that I have clear boundaries with, that I have clear expectations of, and that I hold, that is a form of self-care for me. In fact, in many cases, it's the best place.

So what I want for you listening is to hear me say that you can learn these approaches, right? We call it in *How to CEO*, your leadership operating system. And that system is your foundation for how you make decisions ahead of time so that you aren't taxed in the moment and how you set boundaries and expectations with the people on your team. And what I really believe to be true is that you can build leadership practices that are informed by your own feminine integrity.

So what do I mean by that? Leadership practices that are informed by your own feminine integrity. You have a way that you want to be in the world, and that is aligned with your values and your vision and how you want to show up. And what I like to do is help you harness that and be more of that in the world instead of adopting what everybody else thinks you're supposed to do. And then you are leading with a lack of your own feminine integrity. You are not who you are in that leadership role. You are imposter, which only adds to a lack of self-care, because then you beat yourself up, you insult yourself, you judge yourself. You're not in alignment.

So what if we could build practices that are out of your vision as a woman, as a leader, as an entrepreneur, and those practices also support the critical need that you have for self-care. If, for no other reason, for you to hear me, hear this. If you have your own business, and you have people who rely on you for that business and you have a family, most of my clients are the primary breadwinners in their families. You're the engine, mama. You sputter along. You go out because you're burnt out, because your pistons break? I'm terrible at the car analogies. Any of that, it falls apart. Your self-care maintenance is as important as anything else you do. It's most important.

But you have to believe me that you can use leadership practices as self-care mechanisms. Because what most people do is they think about themselves being the leader of their business, the leader of the team or manager. And they equate that with overwhelm, burden, inadequacy,

S01 Episode 02: Leadership as Self-Care Episode Transcript

incompetence. And that only contributes to your lack of self-care. Do you see that? Especially when it comes to emotional wellness, mental wellness. This to me is less about how many hours you're working and more about the boundaries that you set, the clarity of practices you reinforce, the expectations you declare and hold people to, and your consistency.

The more you work through that, the more competent you become, the more free you are. Boundaries create breathing room. And I know that initially when we start to practice boundaries, everyone in our lives panics, which means that a lot of us then drop the boundary because it's too hard to show people who you really are, after 20 years of compromising. But isn't that actually what you owe people? Show them who you are. Let them love you that way. Let them love who you are and not who you think you've had to become to make everybody happy. Show them who you are.

So a leadership practice in the way that I teach it, is that you get to decide what the rules of engagement are in your business. Your employees don't. Your team members don't. You do. It's yours. It's not your job to make them happy. You are not responsible for other people's emotions, y'all. Now that's not a license to go around and be a total tool. But I know you know that. I know that's not what we're talking about. I know that what we're talking about is just those moments where you think, "Oh, do I really have to address this? I'll just take care of it. It's too uncomfortable for me."

Right? That confrontation thing, that thing that you just dread, you are poisoning yourself when you don't handle it. So leadership practice is built from feminine integrity, foster support, and self-care. They foster who you would want to be for others, but for yourself, right? Because aren't we really good at that as women? We look at each other and tell each other, "God, you got to take care of yourself more." It's easy to see in other people, but for you, it feels impossible to get out of.

So we take little steps and we make little practices. We set little boundaries. Just little ones, maybe it's one at home, right? Like, "Hey, you know what? I'm only going to cook on a Thursday night. You know what? I'm going to find a carpool instead of taking the kids every day. You know what? I'm going to go to yoga in the morning." And the same thing is true with work, right? You know what? The next time someone says to me, "What should I do about this?" I'm going to say, "I don't know. Why don't you come up with a couple ideas and let me know what you come up with."

The next time someone doesn't meet a deadline, I'm not going to do it for them. I'm going to ask them why they didn't do it. And I'll give them a deadline that is like the end of the day or first thing tomorrow morning. Stop accepting other people's expectations as your responsibilities. It's just a lie that we've gotten really good at believing. And let's tell the truth. It feels good to make people happy, yeah? It makes you feel valuable and important, needed,

S01 Episode 02: Leadership as Self-Care Episode Transcript

dare I say loved. But we crossed the line somewhere in there where then it just becomes what people think you do. And the reasons why you did it in the first place don't exist anymore.

So I'm going to just invite you to notice in your business where you don't hold space and boundaries, and it might be time to reimagine who you are as a leader and what integrity looks like for you as a leader and where you are compromising on that integrity in a way that no longer serves you, to the point that it is a detriment to your wellness, emotional, mental, physical. Because what I know for sure is you feeling better, you taking better care of yourself, you allowing and creating space and breathing room between a request and a do, and you holding other people to the expectation that they can do for themselves, that actually is a better gift to the world than you just doing everything.

I see, as a leader, I see a responsibility to show people what they're capable of and to hold it for them until they believe it's true. I see that as my responsibility as a parent. To hold the expectation of what I know they are capable of until they see it for themselves. But if I always just do it for everybody, they never get a chance to win either.

So see, do you like how I tied that all together? Your self-care is ultimately the growth and development and success of others. So learning how to lead, learning the systems, the practices, the techniques of leadership is one of the highest forms of self-care for a female entrepreneur.

What do you think? Let me know. You can ping me on Instagram. Send me a message on hello@krisplachy.com, or you can just join the How to CEO program and tell me yourself. You can go to howtoCEOregister.com to learn more about that. Otherwise, I will talk to you next time.