

S01 Episode 04  
Reinventing Emotional Powerlessness for Women  
Episode Transcript



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## Reinventing Emotional Powerlessness for Women

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Well, hello. So this weekend I had a coaching call with my coach, Natalie Olsen, and we had a shared moment when I said something to her and we both got goosebumps, really, really like the kind that go to the bottom of your toes. And I want to talk to you about that today on this episode of Leadership is Feminine. Let's go.

How are we doing? Are we loving this? I'm having so much fun with my new podcast, you guys. I don't know, it's probably not that much different to you. Maybe it is. I feel different. And I'm so grateful to all of you that have been sharing it and writing reviews about it, and I just want to invite more of you to do that. It's a deep honor for me. I know it takes time for you to do that, you have to kind of like think about it. But if you love what we're doing and you want other people to know, the more you could share your thoughts the more it sort of serves up for other people to hear and tune into this podcast. But thank you, thank you.

So to be very honest, on Saturday, I have my coaching call. I always meet with my coach on Saturdays at seven in the morning, and it's lovely. And she catches me in my hour of ... I feel like that's where the most of my wisdom sets is between the hours of like 5:30 and 8:00 in the morning. Does anybody else feel that way? And so we were talking, and this is on the heels of ... There's just so much happening in the world, and this was on the heels of so much injustice for women. We're watching what's happening in Afghanistan and then we're watching what's happening in Texas, and from my source knowing and who I've always been, there are just so many egregious things happening to women.

And I also think that there are people, women who have very unique experiences in the world that are very different. They inform them very differently. And good, bad or indifferent, I was raised by a single mom who did not want to be single and found herself when I was six years old jobless, she couldn't get a credit card, she couldn't get a home loan, she needed to get a job, she did have a very good Ivy League education in home economics. And so she received a loan from another woman who said, "Don't ever pay me back, just pay it forward." And so from that, my mom put together a beautiful life for she and I, and it took a while, but she ... Man, she did it.

And my mom ... I think I'm a lot like my mom. She's strong, but she's not masculine strong, right? Like in the way that I think a lot of women have adopted that to be powerful. She's quite feminine, but very strong, but also deeply sensitive. And she ended up working in an industry that was all men. She worked in the beef industry and there's cowboys, there's not much more male than that. I don't know, right? And she negotiated that for years until the politics of the industry, just as everything, right? Becomes unnecessary.

And so I learned a lot from her and I think because of what I observed in her, and I also think maybe this has a lot to do with the dad that I had, who was, even though not the right man for

## S01 Episode 04

### Reinventing Emotional Powerlessness for Women

### Episode Transcript

my mom, he is a good man and he's loving and he's sensitive and he's compassionate. And to me, he is not the ... He's very strong and builds everything, but he's never needed to be the ego in the room ever. He's definitely the character in the room, but he's not the ego.

And so I never watched my mother be powerless to men, and I said this to my coach. I said, "I've never felt powerless to men." With men, I've never felt powerless. I've never felt like I couldn't have a voice. I just haven't. But I know that's not true for a lot of women, and she was helping me really identify what is this that goes on for me. I feel this incredible sense of injustice and I'm so seethingly upset about it, and it sits with me in a pattern that I watch so many women in.

And again, so I promised you when I started this podcast, I have nothing but love for men. This is not a disparaging podcast about men at all. It's about how to help women step into a new world that we're in, that we've been evolving into. And yeah, there will be men who hate that, but I don't really care. They'll be fine. We're all normal, good people eventually, mostly, I don't know, maybe not.

Anyways, so the pattern I watch is this powerlessness that a lot of women have when it comes to their relationships with men and really even within themselves. So this has less to do with that, but just this general lack of power within themselves, and powerlessness leads us to become victims. And I know we hate that word and I know that word is used in a lot of sentences and in a lot of meanings. And when I'm using it here, it's not in the sense of being the victim of a crime, although it can be used that way. It's more the stature of a victim. The psychology of a victim. The belief that things happen to you, that you are powerless. So if you are powerless, you are then a victim of what goes on around you.

When you are a victim, you have several different kinds of ensuing behaviors potentially. One is to hide. One is to be very passive. One is to abdicate more of your power. One is to blame. And one is to victimize someone else so that you can feel powerful. So then the pattern repeats, right? So if I hide, I'm passive, if I blame, if I victimize, I continue the pattern, I remain powerless.

And where this applies to what I do in the world is when I look at female entrepreneurs, I see a lot of women who remain in this powerlessness stature, and then that leads them to be victims in their own businesses of their employees behavior. And then they blame their employees for how horrible they feel, how overwhelmed they are, how frustrated they are, how burdened they are, how resentful they are, and then they remain powerless.

And the irony, right? Is that we blame people for how we feel, but then we want them to change so we can feel better. Listen, if we're going to make it their fault that we feel like

## S01 Episode 04

### Reinventing Emotional Powerlessness for Women

### Episode Transcript

terribleness, can we not wait for them to change so we feel better too? That's silly, but this is a real pattern I would just watch over and over again, and it's very simple. I mean, these aren't like big deal issues, but they become that way, right?

Oh, my employee is always late. They're so disrespectful. No, your employee is just late. You hold them accountable. My employee is so sloppy. My employee makes so many mistakes. My employee doesn't respond to me on time. My employee is this. Whatever. All of the things that I know you know what I'm talking about, because I know you know, and then you blame. And listen, I'm not above this. Everybody steps into this every now and then. I get it. I want us to see the pattern. And then we do it in our lives, right?

I wrote a pretty powerful blog about this a couple of weeks ago, about women and their deference to men. And here's what's interesting, if you're in a relationship with a partner, a male partner, and you choose deference, you choose to let him decide, you choose to let him be in charge and direct your energy and your efforts and your activities and all those things. If that's what you choose and you love it, do it.

But that's not what I see. I see a lot of people, women, that that's what they do, then they're furious about it, and then they blame. They blame their spouse, their husband, their partner. He doesn't ever let me do anything. He doesn't like it when I ... Right? No, you don't get that. That's the part we have to decide we're going to stand in the position of our own risk if we want to have a voice.

And that to me is part of the leadership growth that I think being an entrepreneur pushes you to, that you and many other women did not expect. And think that's why a lot of female entrepreneurs struggle sometimes in their partnerships, because in order for you to be the woman to run this business, you have to stand differently in your relationship with your partner. But being powerless is just an interesting thing that I see because in my experience, I've got a lot of stuff I've worked through in my life and I still have to work through, but feeling powerless to men has not been one of them.

And since I can remember, I have always been that friend who would talk to my friends and say, "Dude, really? You're going to let him? You're going to ... That's okay with you?" I am puzzled. And like I said, if that's the deal you make and you love that deal, get it, mama. But that's not what really is happening for most people. What's really happening for most people is they're saying yeah, yeah, yeah, okay. And then they're going out and having wine with their girlfriends and everybody's complaining about how controlling and demanding and he doesn't do this, and blah, blah, blah, right? No, that to me is not okay. That's not fair.

# S01 Episode 04

## Reinventing Emotional Powerlessness for Women

### Episode Transcript

So where you are invited through listening to this podcast is where are you consciously or unconsciously powerless? And where are you matching that with a willingness to choose a new way. And in your relationship with your employees, where are you putting yourself in a position of powerlessness? It's your company. And I say this to my clients all the time, "Listen to me, it's your company. You can do what you want." If this person's not doing their job, right?

I had several people last week who were like, "How do I talk to this person so that they don't [insert here] say this, do this, feel this, whatever?" That's not up to you. How about we stop trying to control everybody so that we feel like we're in control? Let's just tell ourselves the truth. I have no clue how they're going to respond to me, but I'm going to be prepared for a response instead of pretending like we can avoid it. That keeps you powerless. Just be ready. Oh, they might yell at me. All right, let's be ready. Oh, they might quit. All right, let's be ready. Oh, they might cry. All right, let's be ready.

You're not powerless unless you continue to believe that way and act that way. And is there risk associated with that change? Yes. Are you willing? And my invitation to you is as you're re-imagining this, as you're thinking about what it means to be powerful, what it means to not be the victim, but to be the director of your life and your business, what fear do you have when I say that?

It's a confronting question, but I believe it's a worthy one to explore and to answer because it's usually rooted in if I do that, they [insert here whoever they is] won't love me, won't stay, won't listen. And to that, I say, well, I would much rather know now if I'm truly who I am and I have my voice, and I say what I mean, and I own my life experience, and I am the director of my life.

I would much rather know now that the people in my life don't like that version of me because what I've been showing them isn't the real version of me, it's been the tampered down, quieted down, don't rock the boat version, and that's a lie. Let's be you out loud. The people who are in your life when you get to be you out loud, those are the people that are your people, mama. Those are your people.

And right now, if you're crazy quiet and they can't find you, they don't know where you are. And that's part of what I love about what I do is I feel like those women have all found me, man. And we have a damn good time together. It's so nice to be seen and to be powerful and to be admired and loved and cared for that way than to hide who I am and blame others for not being able to be who I am.

So as we look at the world and we look at what's happening, there are literal systems totally suppressing the powerfulness of women at a macro level. I look at us, here in the U.S. especially, Canada, Australia, we live such different lives, we have such more opportunity. We

## S01 Episode 04

### Reinventing Emotional Powerlessness for Women

### Episode Transcript

have such an incredible opportunity to me to participate in that huge ... It's like a misnomer, or maybe that's not the right word. It's that scientific random event that happens. The hundredth monkey, right?

The monkeys that were separated on an island by a huge wall, they could never get across to one another, and one of the monkeys discovered how to do something. And now I can't remember what it was, it was something with a potato if I recall correctly, but I can't quite remember. And then after the hundredth monkey on that side of the wall figured out what to do, then the monkeys on the other side of the wall that have never interacted with those monkeys figured it out. And there was no reason for that.

We have that opportunity as women to do that for women that we will never meet because we can change what energetically it means to be a woman who leads. We get to do that. We have the ability where we sit to do that. The dramas we're going through and the day to day lives that we face that are unnecessary, that are burdening you and slowly killing you, you don't have to worry through that like you do. You have so much more ability to have power and have the authority to direct your own decisions.

But I think you first have to look at what are they? Are you willing? Are you willing to assume the risk and is the woman that you are re-imagining and reinventing and working to become, is she worth it? Because collectively the more we do that, the more we prove what's possible to women halfway around the world who genuinely are living in environments where this is not an option.

But I believe our change creates that change energetically, and it gets to be a point where we'll hit that hundredth monkey. And as I've said to you several times, the men have had plenty of time to rule this planet, I think it's time for women to assume the seat of leadership. I think it's time. What do you think? We'll talk to you next time.