

EPISODE 91

“ECM: I’ve always been very brainy, but I did have that thing of like I live from the neck up and my way of processing and continuing to move on was that I wasn’t very present in my body, particularly sexually, for very, very, very long time. Now, I’m really lucky because I did all that hard work and I get to kind of rip the rewards of it and I think it’s a very valuable effort. I also talk about it publicly because I think it’s really important for people who have been traumatized by sexual abuse as children can see that there are those of us who have lived through it and survived it and have even learned how to thrive and that it becomes integrated into part of our story.

To me, one of the biggest lessons of this whole path, like speaking of circling back, is just being present with what you feel, because if you — Let’s just say the example of like the downturn in the business where you don’t make any money for a month or you only make a few hundred bucks and you’re like, “Oh my God! What am I going to do?” If you can be present to the panic of that, or the fear of that, or what that triggers in you without acting on it, then you are able to make decisions that leave you in a more positive direction.

I think, for me, the big lesson was about this has been that dissociation of all kinds actually takes away from my ability to make good decisions. If I’m not feeling what I’m feeling, instead I’m seeking to like numb it in some way or another or I’m seeking to kind of get out of my body in some way, I’m actually missing part of the lesson.”

[INTRO]

[0:01:32.7] AS: You know battling food in your body doesn’t work. You want to love and accept yourself, and because you’re insatiable, you want results too. You bring the same intensity to your life, wanting to maximize your time, potential, and experiences you have here on our beautiful and wondrous planet Earth. Fair warning, it will be a rollercoaster. But for those insatiable, this is your primetime to thrive. Here is just saying yes to the hunger of wanting it all.

I'm your host, Ali Shapiro, who is dedicated to pioneering a saner and more empowering approach to health and weight loss.

[INTRODUCTION]

[0:02:13.3] AS: Welcome to episode 91 of the Insatiable Podcast; *The Body's Role in the Rise of the New Heroine, with Elizabeth Cronise McLaughlin*. Wow! Do I have an episode for you today? I was originally introduced to Elizabeth a couple of years ago. I've been casually following her work and then after the election she became a source of clarity, grounding and daily reminder I have political agency on her daily resistance live Facebook videos.

What started out as friends and family watching Elizabeth explain the law and what the hell was happening has become a viral sensation and incredible community of resistance activists who refuse to accept this is just how things are with the current political reality nightmare and feel called to show up differently at work, home and with ourselves. To me and thousands of others she's the new face of leadership, one of them, right? There is never just one. She speaks truth to power in a clear and fiercely loving way.

I wanted to have Elizabeth on because she's been very open about how honoring her body has propelled her recent rapid rise in visibility and has been a powerful guide in making choices that have taught her profound lessons and skills that have prepared her for this moment in time. We discussed how the new heroine requires honoring the body with all its brilliance and scars.

In this interview we also discussed how Elizabeth honored her intuitive bodily knowing during each of her heroine's journeys from dealing with Wall Street sexism and departing as business partners and friends with Ivanka Trump once the Donald declared his presidency.

The signs that you aren't living in your body and how Elizabeth reclaim feeling safe in her body after childhood sexual abuse, to today, seeing her body as an ally and expanding what is possible for the impact she wants to make in the world.

Lastly, how women are being called to a new type of leadership roles at work, in their communities and own personal lives. As Elizabeth says, "We can bring home a world of good."

Here's more about Elizabeth professionally. Described as a celebrated career coach and fearless entrepreneur, she is the CEO of Gaia Project Consulting and the founder of the Gaia Project for Women's Leadership. Her work has earned the support and recognition of women such as Arianna Huffington; Daily Worth and Worth FM founder, Amanda Steinberg, and many others.

Elizabeth has a story tracker record of success as a Wall Street lawyer, serial CEO and entrepreneur, and high-powered executive coach. After a 15-year career as a full-time Wall Street securities litigator and trial lawyer, Elizabeth founded Gaia Project Consulting, an executive consulting and coaching firm that serves senior executives across tech, finance, banking, law, fashion, healthcare, nonprofit, and consulting, propelling its clients to new heights of growth and professional alignment.

She's been featured in major media such as CNN, forbes.com, O Magazine, Harper's Bazaar, The Huffington Post, Huffington Post Live, and the New York Times. She's also the host of the Women's Leadership Podcast, a top business podcast on iTunes and has set courses to thousands of executives worldwide, including at Columbia Law school.

She has a JD from the George Washington University Law School where she graduated with honors, and she obtained her BA from Carnegie Mellon University here in Pittsburgh with college honors where she triple majored in creative writing, professional writing, and French.

It's Elizabeth mission in life to transform traditional paradigms of leadership so that all leaders and women leaders in particular can lead lives that allow them to share their gifts, achieve epic success on their own terms, and lead lives in alignment with their deepest values and to change the world as a result. She lives in New York City with her two kids.

You are going to get much from today's interview. Can't wait to hear what you think. Enjoy.

[INTERVIEW]

[0:06:32.7] AS: Hello Insatiable listeners, before we get to our rock star guest today, Elizabeth Cronise McLaughlin, I just want to let you guys know that in next month, in September, I'm doing a workshop in New York City with Melody Wilding who was also on our podcast about turning emotions into power instead of over eating, and we're doing a radical self-care workshop in New York City on Wednesday night, September 13th from 6 to 9. If you register on my website before September 1st, it's \$50 bucks, you save \$25. You can go to alishapiro.com/radicalselfcare.

Then, in the fall, I'm going to be doing a program that some of the intellectual property I developed, that's in Truce With Food, but a later version for six weeks on getting on to the emotions underneath food. We're all about not asking the question, "How I not get triggered or tempted by food, but how do I become the person who isn't tempted or triggered by food?" That program will open for early registration in September and start the first week of October. If you've been curious about working with me, those are going to be some really easy ways to do that, and you can sign up on my list at alishapiro.com to be the first one to know about that registration.

Okay. Today, we have Elizabeth Cronise McLaughlin. Elizabeth, welcome.

[0:07:49.2] ECM: Thank you. I'm so excited to be here.

[0:07:51.3] AS: So excited to have you. Elizabeth is a leadership development coach. You work with women and corporate cultures as well as your political activism work, and all of your work is around the rise of the new heroin. I wanted to kick off our podcast episode today with what does that new heroine look like?

[0:08:09.2] ECM: It's such a good question. We have all these great representations of the new heroine right now in our culture, right? From Wonder Woman, to Sally Yates, to Kamala Harris, to Elizabeth Warren, all these icons right now of great warrior women who are doing great work politically, or in fiction and on film that have kind of led us to a place of being able to recognize that new heroine more.

I would tell you that, to me, the new heroine is it's a myth and a metaphor so to speak that is really based in what we used to refer to as the hero's journey in Greek and Roman mythology where a hero was sent out into the world to face a number of challenges and to learn certain things about himself and then to bring back the spoils to his community. Sometimes he would be rejected for that. Sometimes he would be welcomed home, but the point was that the journey was part of the lesson, right?

One of the things that I've been thinking about really honestly since the election is how it is that so many women leaders right now are being called to our own journeys, to our own awakening at a faster speed than ever before, and also for many of us in much more public ways that we've ever been before. We are bringing back to our homes and to our communities and to our workplaces and all of that each of those lessons. I happen to think that unlike the hero's journey, which tends to be very linear, the heroine's journeys are so much more cyclical and that's not surprising because we're women. We learn and recycled back to the same kinds of lessons or the same kinds of issues over and over again as we refine, and that also means that the good news of that is that at every stage of our own learning we bring those lessons back to the communities and the people we care about.

It's a unique moment to be alive, I think, as a woman leader, and that's the good news and the bad news, I guess. I do think that the heroine's journeys at this moment in time is, at least here in the United States, probably more challenging than it's ever been in part because were fighting for our survival, not that the generations before us haven't, but our democracy is in real trouble right now and women are leading the resistance and leading the way to saving it. It's an interesting moment to be alive.

[0:10:05.2] AS: I love that you brought up the cyclical nature of that, because my master's thesis was on the heroine's journey.

[0:10:10.6] ECM: Oh! I didn't know that. Oh! That's wonderful.

[0:10:12.2] AS: Yeah, but part of the yin archetype is cycles, right? I always think about in the food supply, we try to dominate — The hyper- masculine dominates the earth and now we have GMOs. We're not even eating real foods. We're eating chemicals. I totally love that.

I always say to my clients that the work we do is like a spiral staircase, which is that linear and you're revisiting. What's interesting is it implies — The hero's journey implies that we're going up and out to the world, and the heroine's journey starts as a descent.

[0:10:43.0] ECM: Yes.

[0:10:43.7] AS: It's a rising, but it's descent. One of the things I want to kick off, look at this heroine's journey rising in descent is through the body and talk about that with you today because you've been very vocal about how you're learning, how exercising is making you stronger, but you've also had quite a heroine's journey yourself to get here, like this isn't your first rodeo.

[0:11:05.3] ECM: No. Not even close.

[0:11:09.6] AS: To me, what you've shared and what I've researched on you is this quintessential heroine's journey. What I want to open up with, which I found is so profound, is you said that when you were little you felt like you were here to make a massive impact in the world. How old were you and how did this knowing come to you?

[0:11:29.2] ECM: Oh my goodness! Nobody's ever asked that question before even this story is kind of known about me, so that's really fun. I will say that I was always a really big personality, like even as a little kid, and I was very fortunate to be raised in a family that was politically aware and left-leaning, and in a community that was very politically aware and left-leaning, but I felt from probably about the age of five that at some point, and I had no idea where or how or when, that I was here to change the world. It was sort of an internal knowing. I tend to be a very intuitive person, but it was sort of an internal knowing that was very aware. Almost like this prodding forward that has sort of been leading me my whole life. Also, it's the voice, by the way, inside me that at moments where things were not going well or not going

according to plan was sort of like, “You have to keep going, or you have to make different choices, or you’re here to make a difference but you may not know how it is yet.” That’s been sort of like the backbone of the residence of my life, honestly.

I’m not sure why. It’s interesting it I share with a lot of other high-profile women entrepreneurs that I know, Amanda Steinberg who’s the founder of DailyWorth. She and I have conversations about this all the time, about how we knew somehow is really little girls that we were here to make an impact.

Honestly, I say that it’s really important for me to just reiterate that I say that not from the position of arrogance, but really just from this position of great internal knowing. It was just this sort of like inevitable thing that part of my purpose was to make the world a better place. That’s been like a guiding force for much of my life.

[0:12:55.2] AS: I love that, because it’s not — Again, part of honoring the yang over the yin is rational and reason over intuition and you elevating that on par even when things weren’t going right, because we’re going to assure this was not like a classic accent for you.

I’ll share, I always felt that way for myself as well, that like I was here to at least contribute in some way. I know for me when I went through — I was diagnosed with cancer at 13 and didn’t have the words for it then, but part of that certainty left, because it was trauma, and I know that you went through childhood sexual abuse. Did part of you disappear at that point, or part of that confidence or that intuitive knowing? What was your experience with your body as a result of that?

[0:13:39.4] ECM: Again, it’s really interesting to talk about that, because my child sexual abuse started right around that same age as you being diagnosed with cancer, which is sort of an interesting thing. It’s sort of like turning from girlhood toward teenagehood and such a vulnerable moment for us physically and emotionally, right?

For me, my reaction to being sexually abused, and that that went on for several years for me unfortunately, was dissociation from my body, which I know is the way a lot of people who

experience trauma, all kinds, not just sexual abuse, deal with the experience of it. My recollections of it even while it was going on was that I was out of my body, like I was in a tree outside the window of the room where it was happening and that's where I would go. I would go hang out with the birdies in the tree while it was all going on.

This has been an ongoing kind of challenge of my life and really was — I think it's really only honestly, now that I'm in my 40s — I did so much healing work. I've done so much therapy. I've done so much body work. I've done EFT. I've done everything you can imagine. I've done a lot of work to get the trauma even out of cells of my body through various methodologies. I've always been very brainy, but I did have that thing of like I live from the neck up and my way of processing and continuing to move on was that I wasn't very present in my body, particularly sexually, for very, very, very long time.

Now I'm really lucky because I did all the hard work and I get to kind of reap the rewards of it and I'm really — I think it's a very valuable effort. I also talk about it publicly because I think it's really important for people who have been traumatized by sexual abuse as children can see that there are those of us who have lived through it and survived it and have even learned how to thrive and that it becomes integrated into part of our story.

It's certainly true that that experience made me a fighter. I took the person who did this to me to court when I was 19 years old. It's my first experience with the legal system. I testified on the stand against him. I became a lawyer because I had great warriors around me, right? So much of my path, even though I wouldn't ever, ever, ever wish what happened to me on any one, has been built on the necessity for me to survive and fight back and push beyond it. It's, in many ways, made me the person that I am.

[0:15:47.8] AS: I love that you say that, because I'm really about us having agency of our bodies and I think at the end of the day the only true choice we have is the meaning we make from experiences and it's very healing when we take the thing that wounded us the most and then we go out in the world and we offer the gifts that we're birthed because of that. We would never choose either of these experiences, and what am I going to do with it now that it's here?

You said some really important things that I want listeners to pay attention to, which is really interesting. My husband and I just moved and I was going through old papers and I found when I was struggling with my weight so much, and I'm very list-oriented and brainy-oriented as it is like you are, but I went back and I looked — I made this list of 20 negative things about myself and 20 positive. It was probably some self-help thing that did not work what I was trying, and it was like the inability to be present, the inability to deal with uncertainty, always in my head, overthinking everything.

For those of you listening, a lot of my clients who struggle with their body, they think it's a weight or a food thing, but it comes down to these experiences when you were younger and it may not have been as dramatic as childhood sexual abuse or cancer. A lot of my clients, it's bullying. The culture we live in is not very nurturing. If that's you, realize that it's not a food issue. It's not an over exercise issue. It's you got to come back into your body with whatever means that is.

One of the things you said that I'm curious about is how do you know that the trauma is no longer in yourself?

[0:17:14.1] ECM: I got to tell you. This is great stuff. I've done — Don't get me wrong. Talk therapy was great for me, and I still to this day have a therapist I work with more for like communication purposes, but I also work with a coach. One of the things that I realized after I had done pretty much all the mental processing that I could do of what had happened to me and its impact on my life and how it was impacting my current behavior was that I realized there were still physical things that were happening in my body as a result of being sexually abused, like shutting down, or not being able to be present, or having like anxiety in particular places in my body that I knew were resident to what had happened to me.

This is actually where a couple of things came into play that have been pretty significant. The first is what's called parts work, which if you don't know about that, it's a type of therapy that is oriented toward talking to the parts of yourself that existed when you were younger and maybe lived through some kinds of trauma that you can identify as living in particular parts of your body. You sort of go into a quasi-hypnotic state when you do this work, and you go back and

you work with the parts of yourself that aren't integrated in ways that address where they live in your body, basically. That was really helpful to me too.

I'll also just add that I work with a woman named Claire Hayes who's one of the best emotional freedom technique, the tapping technique people that I know, and she works particularly with women who have experience trauma of all kinds. Her EFT work is very deep. It's what's called matrix work. Again, it involves the idea of going back to difficult memories or difficult moments in time, stopping time, stepping in as your adult self and really trying to rectify or help to communicate with that younger version of yourself that might've experienced it, and in a way you start to rework the memories.

The benefit of that to me was, honestly, that when I started to clean up that really younger version of myself that was still sticking around inside my body, my physical symptoms of trauma went away. Not completely. We're all works in progress. This is stuff I'm probably going to be working on until the day I die, but I will say that from the standpoint of — I think most people who are listening who probably are survivors of some sort of sexual trauma understand this. The trauma lives in your body, right? It doesn't just live in your head. It lives in your body. You have to have some sort of work to complement the therapeutic talk therapy work that you're doing that also addresses how your body is holding trauma.

I'll add, I do all sorts of other things related to this too. I do acupuncture once a week, and I do a lot of massage, and I am very mindful of creating safe space for myself because it's so important. Whether that's safe space in my body or safe space in my home, that helps to kind of like resolve what might be lingering around in myself, I guess is the way to put it.

[0:19:50.8] AS: No. I'm glad you brought that up, because I did something called visual imagery that I — Again, there was parts of me that were gone that I didn't know were gone, and then I was depressed in 2012 and an integrative physician recommended a guy who — For those of you insatiable listeners, it's the episode; Fat is Not a Feeling, it's about the imagery of being fat, but for me it wasn't fat, it was just going back to when I was diagnosed and knowing that I could handle it emotionally rather than checking out.

What you bring up that I think is so important is that, often, when we're trying to heal, we only address the head part, and that's part of, in a culture, that only values the rational and the logical and not the body. That's why I love the coaching work I do, it works on the heart and the head and not that it's not focused on trauma, but when you engage both, I find that the healing is exponential compared to just — I'm glad you brought that up.

You took your abuser to court. How was that? Was that —

[0:20:50.1] ECM: Oh my goodness! I can't talk about all the details of it.

[0:20:52.0] AS: Right. No. No. How was —

[0:20:54.2] ECM: Settlements and stuff, so I can't disclose it. I will say that —

[0:20:57.4] AS: Was it healing, I guess?

[0:20:59.3] ECM: Yes and no. I will say that I am a very big believer in the necessity of using our voices when boundaries have been crossed, because when we internalize actions being taken against us, it eats us alive, basically, I know that's the sort of platitudinous way of putting it. To me, there was no question that when I was able to speak out, which didn't happen until I was able to actually disclose all of these to my father several years after it stopped, that there was no way that I wasn't going to take action on that front.

I will say that I feel like if I had not done that, the path back, which was really freaking hard in and of itself probably would've been a lot more difficult, because at least I knew that I'd spoken the truth. I had said it to his face. I had said it in front of adjudicators and my family, and that meant that it was out there whether he believed me or not or whatever was said about me in the trial that I had spoken out about it.

I also think it's very important. Everybody has to make their own choices about how to survive and come through something like that. I don't judge anybody who chooses not to, because we'd all have to make the right choices for ourselves. I will say that, for me, had I not done that, I

think it would've been much worse off, because the thing that it did do was empower me to continue to speak truth to power throughout my life in ways that have made a really big difference in all sorts of ways.

[0:22:28.2] AS: I love that, speaking truth to power, because that's a big one. Then, you do that, and like you said, it fortifies you. There is good and bad, and then you spent 15 years on Wall Street.

[0:22:41.2] ECM: Yeah. I became a lawyer.

[0:22:43.1] AS: Yeah. You actually did a case against the Donald.

[0:22:48.0] ECM: I did. I was sort of against the Donald. It was a case where — It's one of the bankruptcies in Atlantic City and we represented some parties to a proceeding related to the bankruptcy, but he was involved in it. Yeah, he was involved in it.

I had a great time being a lawyer. I will say that part of being a fighter in the way that I was, was that profession worked really well for me for some time. I was a courtroom attorney. I did huge securities litigations and some of the largest cases that have ever been litigated in the nation. I did a lot of human rights work too on the side, which was fantastic. I did work on behalf of families who lost people in the World Trade Tower, pro bono. I had a really broad and wonderful experience practicing law.

Also, circling back to what you asked about at the beginning, never met that voice inside of me that was like, "You're here to make a difference." When you're representing Goldman Sachs, it's kind of hard to feel like you're making a difference. Even though in my human rights work got me part of the way. There with the consistent sense the whole time that I was practicing law that it wasn't really what I was supposed to be doing.

I'll also say that I feel like I hit a point kind of in my late 30s where I got tired of fighting. I just got tired of the constant — When you're a litigator, you've got people on the other side of the fence who are coming at you all the time trying to prove that you're wrong, arguing with your theories.

The law in litigation in particular attracts certain kinds of personalities, and I decided a couple of too many times of like old white guy is yelling at me on the phone where I was like, “I just have got to do something that's more meaningful with my life.”

I will say that it led me to teach at Columbia Law School. It led to all sorts of other good things. It also meant that I when I left to start my consulting coaching practice, I had a great base of clients who already knew who I was and were very active corporate people. That's led me, in many ways, to be able to do that work from the inside of corporations, which is the chunk of what my company does that really makes a difference for women who are still in that world. I can resonate with it because I was there for so long and understand what it takes.

[0:24:36.5] AS: In the words of Maxine Waters, you were reclaiming your time.

[0:24:39.3] ECM: I was reclaiming my time. That's exactly right. I reclaimed my time.

[0:24:44.9] AS: In the 15 years where you're in that fighting mode, you're dealing with sexism, what kind of swing around the spiral staircase you think you learned? Do you think it was that — Because it was purposeful. It served its meaning for you.

[0:24:56.7] ECM: It did. I'll also say that I feel like — Because, as women, we all know that our personal and our political and our professional transformations are all integrated. There's nothing that happens to us internally that doesn't impact what happens to our lives outside and vice versa. My point of not wanting to fight anymore and not wanting to be in that environment that was so back and forth and aggressive and difficult and stressful also mirrored with wanting to be able to have more control over my own life personally. I got married. I wanted to have children. I knew that if I was working 90-hour weeks and flying all over the world three weeks a month for my cases that that wasn't going to be possible. I had to figure out how I could still meet financial requirements, the desire that I had to be ambitious, the difference I wanted to make in the world in a different way. I'll email also add that the last seven years, at least, that I was practicing law, I was in an ongoing debate about, “I'm miserable. I can't stand it. I want to get out, but I'm so good at it and they want me, and I write briefs, and argue, and I haven't lost a case for three years.”

There was a real push-pull there between what's more important, the external validation or the internal desire to do something different. The risk that it took — Because the way I left the law is kind of an interesting story which maybe I should share. I had hired my own coach and I was working with her and she was asking all sorts of pointed questions, and we've be working together probably about a year and a half. She said, "There's very people out there in the coaching world doing executive coaching who come out of the world that you are in right now. They may come out of HR. They may come out of other forms of professional development, but you don't see X-Wall Street lawyers and bankers becoming executive coaches, because it's a risk, and you make a lot of money doing what I used to do, and like what it's going to look like if you leave?"

That kind of raised a question mark in my head and then realized that I was pretty much coaching everybody inside my law firm anyway. I had all these junior women coming to me asking for advice. I had senior partners saying, "I can't get this client to listen to me. What do I do?"

I was naturally coaching people, and then did I a coach training program and then all of a sudden, right before Christmas one year, and this like the height of the recession, my boss, who was a great mentor to me, came to me and said, "You've survived for layoffs at the firm through the recession. There's going to be another one. Your name may be on it and if you wanted to leave now, let's see if we can negotiate you a good package and get you out and on your way." It took me a few months to think about it, but it was one of those sort of serendipitous things that happens when you're meant to be pushed out the door. I left the law firm with a really nice severance package that allowed me to kind of hit the ground running, and that was also really important message, I think, speaking of like the cyclical thing about. It was this message that when I was on the right path, the right things would show up. I'm a big fan of that quote from Paulo Coelho in *The Alchemist* that when you know and articulate what you want, I'm paraphrasing here, but all the universe lines up to help you. It felt that way to me, like I was stepping on to what I was supposed to be doing without knowing completely what it would look 10 years down the line, but stepping on to the path of what I knew I was to be doing and the universe was lining up to help me.

[0:28:07.3] AS: This is a great entry, because what I love is you are so — Your feminism is intersectional. You're not like, "Oh! We're all equal here." It's like, "No."

How do you reconcile? Because this is something that we're talking before the show, this meritocracy lens that I was looking life through. I grew up in a very progressive household. Pittsburgh Sunday school teacher. We're very — Like, learn, learn. My dad was always telling me the real deal. When everyone loved Reagan, my dad was like, "Ugh."

The election was a big wake-up call to how unfair it is. How do you reconcile this when you're on the right path? Because I feel that too, things line up. In fact, amazing things are lining up for me right now. How do you reconcile that spiritual belief, that spiritual compass with the fact that there's reasons that we have a prison industrial complex, that black and Latino women don't even make \$.79 on the dollar. I would love to hear how that works for you.

[0:29:06.2] ECM: Let me say this, I have a lot of faith in myself. Let me just that first and foremost. I also think that I benefit from my privilege and I'm aware all the time that I was born white into what was a lower middle-class household with a very ambitious father who then proceeded to become very successful in his own right, in his own business I should say. That allowed me to grow up with some very significant privileges from the standpoint of a private school education, a lot of opportunities that were presented to me, and I, as I said, grew up also in a very progressive town that allowed me to have great conversations with people of all stripes while I was growing up. That was an education in of itself.

Don't mistake me. When I say I have a lot of faith and that the universe conspires to help you when you're on your path, I don't discount the fact that we also are living in a country and in a world that operates in hierarchy, and privilege is real. It's real. I certainly don't think that if you happens to be somebody whose family has folks in prison or you are not making equal pay, that because the universe isn't conspiring to help you. I want to make that really, clear.

However, with all of that said, is that in moments of challenge or moments of risk, having faith in our ability to survive and to push through and to get where we need to go by will and maybe by

some collaborative universal luck is a fairly easier way to live than spiraling down into hopelessness.

I guess from the standpoint of where I said, it's that we all have things that we need to rely on to get us through and this happens to be one of mine. I'll also just add that I think that — I say this all the time when I do women's leadership work. One of the things that we need to remember, those of us who are privileged or those of us who have experienced great success even if we have built it up from nothing, like I did, need to remember to give back and that the part of the point of being intersectional and part of the point of trying to build a better world right now is that we have to constantly be reaching down to pull up our sisters, whoever they are, of whatever background. Nobody gets left behind in helplessness. To me, that's a big part of what I do every day. It's sort of an integral part of what we do as a company. Every event that we run, we are purposefully intersectional in what we do. We invite everybody to the table in one form or another. We offer massive numbers of scholarships to all of our virtual programs. We do all sorts of things to make sure that we are living by that in principle as well as in action.

From the spiritual standpoint, that's one of the things that just really keeps me grounded and keeps me going, and I've gotten to a point, I think, because of my journey from having been a lawyer to leaping into my own business of getting way more comfortable with risk. That's something that I think we all have to do when we move through major transitions in our lives, is get used to the idea that if you believe enough in yourself, you'll find a way to dig out of whatever it is you're experiencing. There's a synergy there, I guess is the way to put it. I hope I'm explaining this well.

[0:32:03.6] AS: Yeah. You are. I'm even seeing like — As I think of your spiral, it was a huge risk to take your abuser to court right, than it was a risk to leave Wall Street, than it's a huge — We'll talk about some of the other risks. It's like each time your risk it's bigger because you're developing your own internal sense of safety. Let's put your cards on in expanding your internal sense of safety and ability to take risk, and then let's acknowledge that some of this is privilege and how can we make it more of a playing field. I just have to call you in and say how wonderful it was when I saw you doing the latest leadership event. You made sure to have women of color on the panel. You guys had really difficult conversation, and I just want to thank you for that because as someone who kind of dabbles between health coaching and all these coaches who

are trying to empower women, often it's white, skinny, thin, privileged women, and you're not, and I just think everyone needs to understand you're doing the work, and I just want to thank you for that as someone who is paying attention to that.

[0:33:05.3] ECM: You're welcome. I'll also just add, the thing that was amazing to me particularly about that conference, this is our Gaia Women Lead Conference that we do annually. We're going to do it next year in Santa Barbara, is that if you put your mind to it, it's really not that hard. Tow this is one of the things that I get pushback from other white feminists about sometimes of like, "Oh, it's so hard to be intersectional," or "Oh, it's so hard to have difficult conversations."

If you open up to the possibility that everybody deserves a voice and then you create a safe space, like we do in these conferences for people to have challenging conversations about race and gender and maybe how we've let each other down, maybe how we need to hold each other up, tremendous feeling can take place in those spaces without it being anything more than really setting the intention of putting your money where your mouth is. I feel like we all need to be doing more value.

My view on this is that we don't survive the current regime to build a world that we all want to live it if we don't start to link arm-in-arm with people who don't look like us and don't worship like us and maybe don't have the same sexual preferences we do, have come from different places. We don't just start crossing all of these lines that are used to divide us. We're not going to be able to rebuild a society that we want to live in.

It's important not just in the standpoint of like history right, but is also really important from the standpoint of what's coming down the pike for the future. I guess the thing I just want to say about it is that it's really, to me, if you set the intention to create it and you actively seek to live by the principle of intersectionality, it's reality not that hard and it's so much more necessary than it's ever been before in my view.

[0:34:34.3] AS: I feel like women of color, Native Americans, all of these cultures that have been doing this for ever have so much to teach us. Some of the article I've read, I'm learning

like you can do this joyfully and fight at the same — Kind of like you said, you were tired of fighting. You're still fighting but it's in a different way — Or pushing, pushing the envelope and rebuilding in a different way, and I think we can learn so much rather than, again, thinking we have all the answers as white people.

[0:35:02.4] ECM: Right. Oh yeah. No, we don't have all the answers by the stretch of the imagination. One of the things that we need to do as intersectional feminist period is listen more. We talk a lot is white feminists. I've been involved in women's circles since I was like a teenager, and the running joke was always, "it takes every single women's collective I've ever been involved in an hour and a half to make a decision about which cookies we're going to order. We need to just shut up and listen, especially if we want to be intersectional, because there is so much that we need to learn from each other and we also need to bear witness to the experiences of others that don't look us. This is a very layered nuanced conversation, but I also feel like the most important thing about it is that we actually just create space for those conversations to take place.

[0:35:42.1] AS: Yeah, because then you realize it isn't so hard that we all want the same things in life, like to have fulfillment, raise good kids, have creative expression.

One of things that I want to circle back to that I think is so quintessential on the heroine's journey and why we need to listen to your intuition and our bodies is there was external validation and then there was this internal lack of the fulfillment, and it's almost like the tension between ambition, hyper masculine ambition and self-actualization in a way.

How did you — Your intuition didn't shut off. It was always there, but you're just kind of like you're rationalizing in a way and then you get this opportunity. I mean you looked at it as an opportunity.

[0:36:24.0] ECM: I did.

[0:36:24.8] AS: I think that the meaning of that is such a critical point because you were noticing the internal lack of fulfillment and you were noticing that tension. I think a lot of my

clients — One of my good friends is Dr. Kelly Brogan and she gets people who — Antidepressants are not working for off of them and she said she has an 80% divorce rate. By the time people get done with really feeling their feelings and staying present, and I think in my work I probably have an 80% career shift or change rate of mind because people are starting to realize part of their fighting with food, once they start to get these pieces back to themselves and they feel safe within themselves, they start wanting to take risks and they want to make that impact and so their career shift happens. How did you — You see there's an opportunity because you notice that tension, and then you leap. How do you build your parachute as you're —

[0:37:21.5] ECM: Oh my God! Let me say, it was terrifying for a first couple of years. The first year after I left — You have to keep in mind, I'm a type-A no matter where I am, like I was Type-A on Wall Street, I'm a type-A now. There's no question. I wasn't going to stop working. I pounded the pavement for the first year solids to build my business. I did a lot of free events and free workshops. I network relentlessly. I try to bar association. My goal was just to get my name out there so that executive women and executive men, because, by the way, we do have a fair amount of work in corporate just with the leaders generally, but to get my name out there so that people knew who I was and knew what I could do. It was a lot of hard work, and the first year out I think I made like a sixth of what I had made the year before on Wall Street. I also got pregnant, which was kind of an interesting bit of timing in there. It was scary. We drained our entire savings. I've drained my 401(k). You hit a wall where you're kind of like, "Oh my God! What am I doing?" There was a chunk of time in the second year where I went back and did some part-time legal work just to kind of like make ends meet because I was the primary breadwinner when I was married.

You have a kid and then you have another and you're the person who's supposed to making all the money. You do what you have to to kind of make ends meet. I will say that I got used to the up and down and the ebb and flow of income and entrepreneurship to a point now where when we — Every business, by the way, this is a thing a lot of entrepreneurs don't talk about. Every business has walls. There are periods of the year where like nobody's paying attention, they're all on vacation, or you don't have clients coming to the door because we're focused on other things.

One of our programs that we normally run launched right after the election and we had three people sign up and canceled it. This still happens to me eight years out, and even with the profile that I have where you sort of have these moments where you're like, "Oh, that didn't work, and we've got to make payroll this month and now what do we do?"

You do get used to the sense of the egg and flow, and I think when you've been through risk enough you do start to recognize that it's not permanent. The moments that are the downturn are not permanent, that there is an equal and opposite reaction for every action. To me, even when things are really tight in the business or things aren't going the way that we planned or we launched something and we don't sell as much as we thought we would, or we have a corporate client who changes their plan, we kind of sit with it and go, "Okay, what are the decisions that we have to make now and how we going to get from here to when the next thing happens is going to be big and awesome," because we know it's coming.

I will also just add, I have also never been somebody who thought about quitting. I do not knock people who take big risks and don't have them work out the way the want to and decide to go do something else. We each have to make our own choices there, but to me, it was like once I stepped on to this path, that voice inside of me that said, "You're here to make a difference," is like, "Okay, now you're where you're supposed to be. Keep going, and let's see where this leads, and let's see what it becomes." I always knew that I was going to keep pushing through it even when I had to go back to make some extra chump change for the sake of being able to pay my rent and feed my kids. Yeah.

[0:40:21.2] AS: I like that you showed that because a lot of times I see, when coaches are kind of marketing, they imply that if everything's going right then you're in the flow and it's meant to be. Whereas what you're saying is like, "No," that there are cycles in and I always say that creating and building my own business did as much to heal me from cancer as chemo did to cure me, because the exact uncertainty and feeling like life was just coming at me, like where cancer did that happen to me, now, I was learning to roll with that happening of the cycles, of the ups and downs and not making them mean something about me personally, because I think trauma, we think it's about us where actually it's like, "No, you live in a really sick culture on multiple levels," and life is just mysterious at the end of the day. I'm glad that you shared that,

that it is about learning to deal with the ups and downs, not that everything going to magically work out for you.

[0:41:18.1] ECM: Right. I also will say that what I said a little bit earlier about the fact that my faith in myself and my ability to survive, which by the way circles all the way back to the child sex abuse. It's like the idea that if I could survive that, I could survive anything was something that I told myself through my later teenage years when I was struggling with everything else that came as a result of that. That I was a survivor and I don't mean that in the lingo of what we normally say and we talk about sexual abuse survivors. I'm a freaking survivor. It was not going to kill me. What didn't kill me was going to make me stronger.

That means, for instance, that when I'm in a downturn or something isn't going right, I know that I will figure it out. I'm also very fortunate, I should say. The coach who I worked with all the time talks about — Lindsay Parra, who's very awesome, well-known, very mystical coach, talks all the time about this concept of the third door, which is that sometimes when we're in a situation where we have to make choices and neither choice is working out the way that we wanted or one door that looks kind of good, the other door looks kind of good or they both look equally bad. What's the third door? Because there always is one. There's always a third option. For me, when I hit that point of, "Okay, I didn't make as much money my first year out as I thought I was going to. I'm kind in the pavement. I'm getting success, but I still have to feed my family." The third door was take on some part-time legal work for a little while so that I can keep going on my purpose, so that I can keep pushing forward on my mission. I do think that the capacity to know that you can get through allows people to get through. I think that's a big chunk of — It sounds like your experience has been and my experience has been too.

[0:42:52.3] AS: Yeah, I think what happens to people, at least what I see with my clients is they — Maybe they haven't, again, been through something quite as dramatic, but they've been through a lot and it's like if they don't get those pieces of themselves back, that left, they're like, "I'm too smart for this. Why am I stuck with this? I got through this," and then they get in that — We talked about this on the podcast a lot, that fixed mindset, which is really a safety mindset. It's the all or nothing. It's the A or B, and so you could only know C or D because you have to be present, you have to have rolled with enough "failures" or pivot points that you have context. I call it compost, because I'm into food, but it's like you got to compost the soil a little bit so that

you know those C and D, because one of the things that we talk about in Truce With Food is a lot of my clients, a lot of their emotional eating comes down to fear of failure and day-to-day life and it's like, "Is this a data point or an endpoint?" It's like you get to choose, this is not an endpoint. It's a data point.

When you can start doing that, then you get to see the doors C, D, E. There's infinite, as much creativity as you can handle, but it comes with — I think with both of us are saying is that feeling of safety internally and that you can handle this so then you can then take risks, which then it becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy in a bigger and bigger spiral.

[0:44:12.7] ECM: Yeah. I also will just add in that, to me, one of the biggest lessons of this whole path, like speaking of circling back, is just being present with what you feel, because if you — Let's just say the example of the downturn in the business where you don't make any money for a month or you only make like a few hundred bucks and you're like, "Oh my God! What am I going to do?" If you can be present to the panic of that, or the fear of that, or what that triggers in you without acting on it, then you are able to make decisions that lead you in a more positive direction.

I think, for me, the big lesson about this has been that dissociation of all kinds actually takes away from my ability to make good decisions, right? If I'm not feeling what I'm feeling and instead I'm seeking to like numb it in some way or another or I'm seeking to kind of get out of my body in some way, I'm actually missing part of the lesson. The tolerance of discomfort, to me, is a big part of not only learning to get used to risk, but also learning that it is exactly as you put it, like a data point and not an endpoint. That it's a path and you move through it, but you have to feel it to move through it. You can't ignore it or stuff it or throw it out the window or drink it away. You have to kind of like be present for what it feels like in order to then move on to something better.

[0:45:27.0] AS: I love the you said that, because you of my master's was in adult learning and for adults to truly change, adult learning and change, the change has to be meaningful related to work or their lives. People think they want to get healthy to save — Add 20 years to their life. No. They're going to change because they'll make — It's like it has to be meaningful in life and

work and if you can make staying with the discomfort that, that you're going to have more choices and more creativity in your work life or how you parent or how you spend your free time. It becomes a lot more compelling than, "I'm just doing this do it. What's the point?" Thank you for bringing that up. That's a gem.

You're pounding the pavement and then you said the past couple of years have been intense for you and one of the things that I found so shocking is you have this — Just for everyone who is new to your work, the election happens. Even though you're a lawyer, you've been a feminist, I've learned in an interview you had never called your reps, or anything, and all of a sudden you are doing this resistance live Facebook video which was so helpful for me, being the lawyer, explaining the legal process, explaining all these stuff. I was like, "Oh my God! I don't know how our government works," and you, on behind the scenes, are going through a divorce that none of us know about. The election happens.

Prior to this, which is important for people to realize, is part of — I assume that was helpful with your business, is you had a business relationship with Ivanka Trump.

[0:46:50.1] ECM: I did.

[0:46:50.9] AS: You're quoted in her book, and that relationship has ended and you don't have to — Obviously, you don't probably want to comment on the details, but that was another risk, I think, because part of what I've — Now, this is kind of a tangent, but as I see so many male congress people not speaking up and I see all the women, the Maxine Waters, the Sally Yates, I'm just like, "Oh my God! I don't want to be around people who are quiet. Who say, "Well, it's too risky to say something."

I think a lot of people in your position could have rationalized maintaining that relationship with Ivanka's business brand, but you spoke out about it.

[0:47:27.8] ECM: Yeah, I did.

[0:47:28.3] AS: How was that? Because you lost a friend.

[0:47:30.5] ECM: I did lose a friends. We were friends. It was interesting because I didn't know that Donald was going to announce, and I have never met him personally, but Ivanka and I at the time he announced, we've, probably been working together for — Gosh, at least eight or nine months consistently. That was a very big surprise to me when that — I've been inside Trump Tower and I had been in her offices and I was working with her team and she and I did interviews together. I has been there right and then all of a sudden he's coming down the kind of gold encrusted staircase escalator to make this horrible racist announcement.

I had a moment at the beginning, I think a lot of us did where I thought, “This is just about renewing the apprentice and this isn't going anywhere.” This isn't going anywhere. Yes, it's a polling. Yes, it's important, but this is just a reality TV star and so this can't possibly be real, I think is what a lot of us thought.

I kept working with Ivanka probably for another few months, and then at the beginning of 2016 — Let me just say, we had an editorial calendar that was planned out for the whole year. We had an agreement. It wasn't like — It was all very well organized from a business standpoint, but it was really at the beginning of 2016 into that early spring when it started to become apparent that he might actually have a shot of getting the nomination and I, of course, had been present that whole time to a lot of the things that he was saying, that I started to raise questions with her team, with her, about what it was representing. She and I were doing work together on her women who work were campaign and we were like aligned as feminist leaders and the material that I was writing for her site was about how women can succeed at work and overcome discrimination and deal equal pay issues and fight for maternity leave and family leave. She never edited anything that I wrote in any way other than to correct some typos. There was never any denial of anything that I wanted to advocate for in that platform and she will work with me. She was one of the guest teachers and one of our women's leadership seminars.

The alignment that I had with her was a good one until the campaign became what it was, and it became very apparent that she was going to be pulled into that. I also just began to meet — My tolerance for it, for any association with the last name, became harder and harder to justify just simply because of who I am and what I believe. Finally, I think it was about March of 2016, I went to her team and I just said I can't. I can — Let you see what happens in the election, but I

can't, in good conscience, associate my brand and my name with what this name is coming to represent. They were very gracious about it, to be honest. There wasn't any sort of like massive falling out. There was no rage about it.

I did speak to Ivanka the night she gave the speech at the Republican National Convention. I had emails with her the night her son was born, but then once the election happens, that was kind of it. I will say that I don't regret anything related to it. Sure, she's got a platform of a million people, but I also have to say that you have to operate on principle. If you're not living up to the standards that you know you should be living your life by and your business and everywhere else, that's going to come back to bite you in ass in big ways. To me, it was really about having to draw a line in the sand about what I was willing to tolerate, and there's no amount of money or no amount of social media traffic, no amount of business juice that you can get that will compensate for the selling of your soul. It was a no-brainer, really, in the end.

[0:50:48.6] AS: You phrased it that way, and I think you're brave about it, but I do think a lot of people do sell their soul and still make a lot of money and benefit from it. I think you need to give yourself — I'm sure you give yourself credit, but I just think admirable. As someone who knows the would have just rationalized it and justified it.

Again, I think that intuition that body, just knowing that comes from being in your body versus in your head. Also, again, that tension between, "Look, I left this for internal fulfillment, and this is my journey to make an impact and it's not going to look like anyone else's." Even though the business case to stay on is there — Because I think, like you said, we're all being called on this new heroine's journey and it hasn't been done before. No template, and that's part of, I believe, women have never — Well, at least since patriarchal religions, haven't felt safe in their bodies, and a big piece of this is the obstacle is the path.

[0:51:44.3] ECM: Yes.

[0:51:45.3] AS: We don't know what it looks like, but we have to go on trust and betting on ourselves as you were saying that you've done.

[0:51:52.9] ECM: It all worked out incredibly well in the end. Clearly, I made the right decision. And I hope it continuous to. I will say that the path to where I am right now with this crazy viral daily resistance broadcast — I have 25,000, 26,000 people following me right now on Facebook and we have like average views of around 15,000 to 20,000 per broadcasts right now. That was completely unexpected and unplanned. That’s also kind of a crazy outcome of this particular story, because I have always been a political junkie, but I was posting things on Facebook through the election and action items from friends and I had like 1,100 people who were all personally known to me on Facebook when the election happened, and I had a couple of friends who said, “You really want to just turn on the live button on Facebook and talk about this stuff, because people want to know what you had to say about it and your background is a lawyer and the business affiliations you’ve had in the past combined with your coaching work and your leadership work is a really unique nexus at a really unique moment in time.”

I hit the live button kind of thinking I was just going to talk to my friends, it was the easy way to communicate without having to type it all. Then the next thing I knew, we were like thousands and thousands of people following every single day and it just continues to grow.

That’s also, by the way, been a releasing transition, because it's not anything that we've ever done before and now my whole business model is having to consider like how do we meet the needs of all these great leaders most of who are women or want to be leaders and activists. How do we meet their needs to propel them forward in what they want to do? It’s caused some really interesting conversations inside the business. Also, this is part of the ability to be comfortable with risk and being present in your body to what feels right, as you're pointing out, is a big chunk of being able to ride even that transition.

[0:53:42.4] AS: Yeah. Yeah, that's what's so amazing. You went from just sharing this to 26,000 people and now you’re switching your —

[0:53:49.3] ECM: And counting.

[0:53:50.0] AS: And counting. Yeah. How has that rapid visibility been and how do you protect your knowing with — Because I think part of what’s challenging, and we know women have

more estrogen, we're just more receptive to temperature to the outside world. It's a hormonal thing. That I know gender is socialized and all that stuff, and we have more estrogen in general. How do you protect that knowing, and I know it gets clearer and clearer. The more you do it, the more you trust. It's just how it goes. How do you protect what you're doing versus this rapid visibility? You shared last week, you got some pretty nasty messages. I don't know what they were, and this is part of the territory. This is a new level of learning, a new —

[0:54:31.6] ECM: A new runaround the circle on the spiral. Yes.

[0:54:33.8] AS: Yeah, new swing around the staircase.

[0:54:36.3] ECM: Exactly.

[0:54:38.0 AS: What learning curve are you on right now?

[0:54:41.7] ECM: That in and of itself has been a real test, because there were couple of things that happened right after the election. I got interviewed by a couple of major media outlets about my relationship with Ivanka and a lot of the quotes ended up on the cutting room floor, but I had a moment right before we and — Now I know that this was part of the preparation for everything going as crazy viral as it did, but I had a couple of moments where I thought, “Gosh! I’m going to need some good boundaries here around what I’m doing on social,” if the story that I’ve told to the people at the New York Times happens to be a part of the current reporting.

One of the things that means is that I don't use Facebook all the way that I used to. There's no pictures of my kids up there. Nobody sees pictures of my kids. I never mention their names anymore online. I'm really adamant about protecting them and keeping them safe and some of that of course comes out of my own experience as a kid of not having felt safe, and so it's really important to me that I do that.

I'll also add that as it's gotten bigger and bigger I've had to be just much more mindful about my boundaries in general, and there a lot of people who follow me who say, “We love that you’re as open as you. You’re as transparent as a sheet of cling wrap.” It’s true. I do share a fair amount

of who I am. I'm very what you see is what you got. What you're hearing today, what you see on the broadcast is who I am every damn day. It's not any different.

I have had to be more thoughtful about how I share the details of my personal life, and that's been particularly true around the divorce. It's been particularly true in the emergence from that, and there's a lot of things that are going on there. I hinted this occasionally. I said even on today's broadcast, it feels like I'm being put through the ringer this week. Aren't we all? Which is true, but there's also stuff going on in my personal life that nobody really needs to know about.

I think there's a point — I was asked this question not all that long ago; how do you decide what to share and what not to share when your public profile is this big and growing? To me, the point is that I will share things that have been a part of the lessons that I am learning when I am through. But if I am in the process of trying to figure something out or things are really not going well and some arena and I don't have it all integrated yet, that's mine, mine and my besties, mine and my besties in my support network. That's not something that I'm out there kind of talking about.

Part of that is because one of the things that I've really realized as I've gotten bigger is that people project all sorts of things on to you, and that actually has been the most surprising thing about being the spiral is that people have sent me messages saying I'm arrogant or sent me messages saying that I've taken a turn they don't like or that they're tired of the way me imposing my knowledge on people, whatever. I'm like, "You can go watch somewhere. You're not required to be here. I'm not forcing you to watch me every day."

But it is interesting because the stories that people tell themselves about you are almost always all about them, and that has been a really important learning lesson for me, is that even when I have haters, and I've got haters now.

[0:57:32.6] AS: Which means you've arrived.

[0:57:34.2] ECM: I guess means I've arrived. The thing about it is that I think it takes a certain articulation when people are attacking you, for instance, to understand what's yours and what's

theirs. I know I have certain trigger points related to certain things in my past where if somebody is online saying the same thing, I kind of be like, “Ooh! God, that hurts,” and then I have to be able to say, “Okay. But wait a minute. They don't know about this story in my own personal life that's but getting triggered by this, so let me not react from that place. Let me remember that there's this public me that people are telling stories about that really has nothing to do with who I am,” and it's my job to take care my own business, just like it ought to be everybody else's job to take care of their own business even if they're playing it out in relation to me.

That's one big learning moment, but I will also say that I do not hesitate to block people. I just think there's no reason at this point to kind of allow people to step into your virtual living room outline and sort of like do whatever they're going to do to you. I wouldn't let people do that in my house, why should I let them do that on my Facebook page. I'm very adamant about that.

[0:58:34.4] AS: That's one thing that I really admire about you is you feel — I feel like what you disclose, it's not asking us to do the emotional labor for you, which I think a lot of this fake vulnerability that's out there now is like, “Oh, I want you to get wrapped into this so I can sell you something and you take on my pain. I feel with you, like you said, you know what's yours. You know what the other person's. Of course, we're all in learning curve with that, but I feel like when you share it, it really is from this generous, here's what I've learned and I'm chopping off my hair into new beginning. I love that you said that, because I believe in symbol and metaphors and all that stuff. I think you definitely — I admire that about you, and you're just like saying to people, like, you deliver in a way that it is what it is. There's no value judgment there. It's just it is what it is and you can leave or you can stay, and I just admire that, because a lot of the work that I know that I do with my clients, a lot of why they end up eating or have these fantasies that life will be easier when they lose weight is because they've a deep fear of being misunderstood.

I think women in our culture have been misunderstood and yet then there's the personal — There's the cultural level, but then there's the personal and we are the culture or personal as political, like you said. I think of women, especially, can get to that place where they are unattached to that — Not attached, because it doesn't mean — I don't know what I'm trying to say.

[0:59:53.0] ECM: I can tell you. It's about knowing where you got it from and whether where you are getting it from is healthy or whether it's not, because I know I can go to my best girlfriends and say, "This horrible thing happened today in my life," and they're going to reflect back to me that like I'm good, like, "You're okay. You're going to get through this." Just like everybody does with their best friends. I get that there. I don't need that from strangers on the internet and I believe it's about a different type of engagement, and it's also, by the way, about effective leadership, because this is the other thing that's really important, is that the most effective leaders don't make the people who they are trying to uplift get invested in their own crap. What they do with a lead from a place of, "I'm here for you. We're all going to rise together, but I got this," and that's about having good boundaries. Frankly, I think we all need more of them and I think that, particularly, for people in corporate workplaces, boundaries get elided all the time and that's not a good thing we all ought to be able to say this is what I need and I know where I can get it, that it's safe, speaking of safety, as supposed to I'm going play it out over here because I have nowhere else that I can get it and that has to be very conscious effort on all of our parts, because otherwise things start to get really messy.

[1:01:01.1] AS: One of the things that you shared on your Facebook page and everything is how you've been working out with a trainer and how has that pushing those physical boundaries helped your emotional boundaries.

[1:01:11.2] ECM: Yeah, it's huge. I will say that I've always been somebody. I come from a family of yoga teachers is my joke. My sisters in a yoga teacher now. My other sister was a yoga teacher for like about 15 years. My mother taught yoga when I was a little girl, and I had a really active yoga practice, seriously, like 6, 7 days a week until I had kids and then you kind of can't find the hour and a half anymore to go kind of like get down on your mat and do your thing.

I've always used physical practice as a more of a meditative practice, but this experience of choosing to start — I'm 46 years old also, so muscle density matters. Muscle mass and bone density and all that sort of stuff matters more now in the transitions that my body is going through naturally than it has before, but there's something about lifting weights and creating physical strength, and my trainer in particular is so careful in the gradations of this. She'll push to failure but she won't push beyond and she's so intuitive about watching what that looks like that it doesn't, even if I'm pushing a muscle to the point where there's failure lifting weight, it's

not painful the next day. Don't ask me how she does this, but it's like magic. She's just a really, really, really good at what she does.

The ability to be physically strong has led me to places of being able to be more emotionally strong. I'm already pretty good on that front, but knowing that I can push through — Once again, this is about like the tolerance of discomfort in the body. You push through these points of discomfort physically. You do things beyond the point where you think you can. You're not just training your body, you're also training your mind. She's really adamant about that too. From here on out, they'll be a certain point in a set we're doing or we're — We do a lot of working outside in the summer where we're running around the playground and I'm doing sprints or whatever it is that she's got me going where she's like, "All of these right now is mental. Your body can do this, and the issue now is your brain going to do what it needs to do to get you there?"

Those are lessons for life. Yes, they are about what's happening in ourselves and in our bodies, but this is the other thing. It's like if we can hold drama in ourselves, which I do believe we can, why can't we hold success in ourselves too? Why can't we hold like the knowledge of what is possible for us even in extreme conditions and our capacity to survive? All of that work is constantly reinforcing what I am doing right.

We're great friends now also and she is also going through a divorce and there's a lot there that could be said about our friendship just in general, but she said something really interesting to me yesterday morning when she was in my house which I thought was so significant, and it was about the idea that — And she put this in the context, by the way, of bodywork, like how, as women, sometimes we look back and we're like, "Okay, when I was 20 years old I weight X-amount and look at how good I looked and here's this picture and I know that when this picture was taken I weighed 127 pounds or whatever it was and now I don't and therefore I've got to get back to where I was."

She said to me part of the problem of the way that we live our lives sometimes is that we are thinking about getting back to where we were rather than thinking about creating the new person we're going to be, and maybe the new person that you're going to be isn't 127 pounds,

they're 140, and that's okay, but you get to decide what your future is going to look like and your future may not look like your past. In fact, the less that we're looking back at what came before us and looking more toward what we want to have in the future the better off we you probably are, and you know if you watch the broadcast yesterday, that I put this whole thing into the translation of where we are politically, because if we're looking at what's falling apart and what's being left behind and the offices that aren't being staffed and what's happening with our government, yes, there's grief there, and yes, we can mourn what came before, but if we aren't also looking at what we can build for ourselves as a future, as a nation, as a government, as a movements, we're not doing our best work. It doesn't have to look like the password to be adequate. In fact, it may look like something completely different and. The question is; what do we want to create from that?

I'm getting a lot out of this process of getting into my body in different and new ways that I didn't even expect and it's also really, really, really important from a self-care standpoint, from a motivation standpoint, from a translation standpoint of the body to the heart to the mind. It's all really, really good stuff. Really, really good stuff.

[1:05:11.4] AS: There are two really great things I want to circle back to is, first, one of my favorite quotes that I learned in grad school was by Buckminster Fuller and he said, "You don't create change by railing against the existing structures. You create new ones and make the old ones obsolete," and that was my motivation for making my own model of food, nutrition, body. My tagline is radical truth for everybody, but for people to have agency and choice and how they take care of their health their weight. I love what you're saying about that. It's like what are we for, rather than what we're against.

I think, also, the other big thing that I see in your story and all of my clients' stories my story is what your trainer said about she's pushing you to the point of failure but not much beyond, and I think when we take risks a lot of times for in that all or nothing mindset or we don't feel safe in our body, we take big gigantic risks and then fail because we haven't developed knowingness the skills at that level. Everyone wants to be that overnight success, where it's like it takes 15 years to get to that overnight success. It's kind of like the people who — I don't know why the voice popped into my head, like a lot of these people, it seems like it's so fun to get plucked out of obscurity, but then they haven't developed the fan base. They haven't learned how to tour.

They don't know who to trust in the music industry. There's no shortcuts, I think is what's important. I love that metaphor of like taking just enough risk.

One of the interviews that I listened to, you talked about stretching your voice. Can you share that with everyone about stretching your voice, like just far enough? I forgot how you phrased it.

[1:06:39.1] ECM: Yeah. Is it the deep inhale? I think that's what I talked about when I talk about this, is the idea that you do have to — Let me say this, you have to push beyond your comfort zone when you're taking a stand for things. I think everybody knows this, and it is — By the way, this also really maps on to the body really well. You have to push beyond your comfort zone to see results in whatever that you're doing for yourself physically. Whether that's how you deal with food or how you deal with your exercise or anything like that. You have to do things that are uncomfortable.

To me, at every new level of success that I've had, there's been a requirement for me to use my voice in bigger and bigger ways. It's funny, because this circles back to Ivanka Trump actually. The way that this happens originally for me where I became aware of what was going to be required for me was the first time that I walked into her office. This, by the way, was like ages before he declared for office or anything like that, and she was who she was and she was doing the woman who work platform and we we're going to be great collaborators.

I was walking to her office and I said to myself, "Okay. Here I am, I'm going into this place with Ivanka Trump, and I've been invited to be here. I have to get myself to this place of recognizing that I actually deserve a seat at this table. This is the path that my life has led me to." I literally took this huge inhale right before I walked into her office. It was like the deep inhale of like, "Okay, I'm going to take up more space now. I, as a person, energetically, emotionally," and with my voice, I'm speaking to a larger audience now by my work with her or this room than maybe I've spoken to before, and the deep inhale allows me to have that physical experience of knowing that I'm literally, physically, taking up more space to match the fact that I know that I belong here.

That, to me — I think about that metaphor all the time in other arenas and Ivanka was only like one, this has happened now in exponential other forms where all of a sudden you're on NPR or I was interviewed on CNN, and every time you do that sort of thing you have to kind of acclimate your voice and your body to the experience of taking up more space energetically and emotionally.

Yeah, that's a big chunk of one of the lessons that I've learned, that you have to — The mindset can be masked by these small gestures in the body and I'm such a big believer in the shift in breadth and what that can do for you physically and emotionally. That one is a big significant one for me.

[1:08:51.1] AS: I love that, and I love how you see the metaphor taking up more space, because what I've seen in my work is weight isn't about weight. It's this tension between wanting to be visible for who we are, the ultimate heroine's journey, and then being invisible. Often, there this fear of taking up too much space, which is why we want to be smaller. It's a metaphor. It's not just physical. It's emotional and stuff.

I know we have to wind down. One question I wanted to ask, because a lot of my clients are women leaders and one of the things that they start to realize in our work together is the more that they can bring this listening that we talk about, the more they can bring their intuition and stuff, they become more effective, but there's also corporate cultures that don't support that. A lot of them are hyper masculine. In theory, they want support that. What are your thoughts on that and one thing that may be people listening can start to take up more space with their voice in a corporate culture that they don't know if it'll be accepted or not?

[1:09:50.6] ECM: Yeah, absolutely. That is a really great question, because the work that we're doing in corporate right now that's gender-neutral is based a lot around us. Our whole leadership model is very holistic and we're big believers that you have to be a happy person in order to be a successful leader even on Wall Street. If you're letting everything else go, you will not be as effective. Honestly, the data shores this up.

One of the things that we recommends, particular to women leaders, but just two weeks ago I taught this to a team inside an investment bank that is very male-dominated, is that people start to explore the concept of emotional intelligence, because emotional intelligence, by the way, has gotten a lot of play in the leadership materials, like HBR, Harvard Business Review, has this great summary book that you can get in the airport. I travel all the time for work, so I'm always in this airport bookshops, but they have a top 10 essays on emotional intelligence that are really easy reads.

This group that I worked with inside this investment bank said, "We really want you to teach our male leaders about how to be more emotionally intelligent and why they should be," and from this perspective, with the Harvard Business Review behind what I was talking about and an opening to understand that if the leaders of this group and this bank didn't shift their behavior in the direction of being more empathetic toward the people on their teams, being more collaborative in the way that they communicate, being more intelligent, really, and how they meet their people where they are in terms of development and growth and all that sort of stuff, that they would be leaving money on the table.

That's a way — The conversation about emotional intelligence, to me, is the doorway, speaking of third doors. Think about how the qualities that have traditionally been called soft skills that women are supposedly so good can be brought into more masculine environments in ways that are palatable. That's one of the openings that I see happening. I do think that conversations about emotional intelligence, by the way, are getting more and more airplay even inside the most traditional corporate environments, because it costs money to love people. People quit bosses, they don't quit company. If you have somebody in your organization who is a screamer, and traditionally very aggressive masculine leader, people won't work for that person at this point anymore.

One of the things that's so obvious about the millennial generation of workers, again, the data shores this up, is that they have zero tolerance for the. You will lose people who you've invested money in training for and that you've invested in developments and that you've paid to hire. Money gets left on the table, and it's still true in corporate environments that the bottom-line metrics are always about the cash. You can show through the data about emotional intelligence that allowing some of these more holistic, traditionally feminine, again, that's a big broad

generalization, but traditional feminine leadership qualities being let in the door in more traditional masculine environments and being welcomed and supported really does improve the bottom line. That point of accessing is a really significant one, and I would just say if you're interested in this and you happen to be a woman leader in a more traditional masculine environment, pick up the HBR book and bring into your office and have conversations with people about it, because there's essays in there that talk about how people quit when they feel like they're not seen and how much money it costs corporations and all of those data points are really good data points, I think, for starting broader conversations holistic inside the corporate world.

[1:13:00.6] AS: I love that. I'm reading a book right now about how science has been, basically, left out women and is prejudiced against women. It's just because we haven't been studied often and it reminds me of emotional intelligence and what you're saying, traditional feminine qualities. They've always been valuable. We've just never really looked at the value of them, and I think that's important to realize.

Elizabeth, you give us so much to think about. I'm like buzzing from this conversation. Where can people — You have events coming up. We have people listening all over the world. Tell people where they can see you live, how they can benefit, if they want to bring you into their company? Please tell story where we could find more of you?

[1:13:37.4] ECM: Yeah. I'm so happy to share that. Our corporate website is gaialeadershipproject.com. Everything that we do is on there. You can find our corporate offerings under corporate. There's a whole tab for that, and we do consultations with potential clients on that all the time. I love to go in and build programs to help grow whole leadership team. That's pretty much what our expertise is in corporate, is going in and doing targeted work for teams that need improvement in all sorts of areas, and we love that work and I have a whole team of coaches who work with me to do this and it's really fun. Making a difference on the inside, and that makes me really happy.

We also do virtual online programming for women leaders in particular and we do live, this live conference I mentioned, Gaia Women Lead once a year, which is an opportunity for real activist

women leaders to get together in a room for three days and talk about how to take their leadership to the next level make the world better place. Our next one is going to be, as I said, in Santa Barbara next May. Then, as well, we still do a little bit of one-on-one coaching. I don't do a lot of it, but I train other coaches inside my team to do it. I'm the highest price point, of course, as the CEO, but I still do a little bit, and there's quite a number of other folks who work with me who are trained in our methodology who do a lot of work with women leaders as well as just with male leaders who are looking to meet a more aligned leadership model and all of that is available there.

Then if you want to watch the broadcast, you can find me on Facebook. Also, we have a broadcast button on our website that drops down and will tell you how to connect. We're on iTunes, we're on YouTube, and obviously on my Facebook page.

Then the last thing I should mention is that we're doing this speaking tour. Starting next week I will be doing a speaking tour all over the West Coast. We're hitting Portland and Seattle, Los Angeles, Palo Alto, San Francisco and then we're winding down this leg of it in Dallas in October, so we have three different legs of this tour and there's still tickets available for some, although we're sold out in a lot of places. You can check that out on the website as well.

[1:15:20.1] AS: Thank you so much. For those of you listening, we'll have links for all of these on my website so that you can just go to alishapiro.com/podcast and we'll have that there as well in addition to Elizabeth's site.

Elizabeth, thank you so much, and thank you for doing the work through changing things on the progressive edge. I love hearing that.

[1:15:42.4] ECM: Thank you. This has been so much fun.

[END OF INTERVIEW]

[1:15:47.3] AS: Have questions or reactions about the episode? Reach out to me on Instagram and Twitter @alimshapiro, or Facebook at facebook.com/alimarieshapiro. If you love this show,

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