Creating Safe Conversation Spaces That Actually Work with Sarah Barnes-Humphrey Transcript

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Introduction to Belonging and the Guest

I'm Anna the intuitive psychiatrist and you're listening to Stepping Into Soul Power. Friends, have you ever looked around and realized that you might be the odd person out, you may not quite fit in.

In this episode of Steppin' Into soul power, we're gonna explore belonging and how maybe, belonging doesn't always mean blending in, sometimes the spaces that make us feel out of place are actually the ones calling us to step into our power and create something beautiful.

Our next guest is globally recognized entrepreneur, creator, community builder. She's written some books that are wonderful. Founder of Let's Talk Supply Chain, Sarah Barnes Humphrey.

Welcome to the show. Thank you so much for having me. I'm super excited to be here. Yes. So you're in a field that there are not a lot of females. It's getting better.

And thank goodness, right? But you are a trailblazer. But not everyone in our audience knows your story. I'd love to hear your path. Yeah, I would love to share that.

Thank you. So I actually went straight into the family business after high school. I didn't go to college or university. And I started off as reception and I worked my way up and i actually did courses by correspondence.

so this was before there was online courses. i did it by correspondents where they actually mailed you the books and then they mailled you, the tests and somebody had a proctor had to like Oversee it.

Sarah Barnes Humphreyu2019s Career Path and Podcast Origins

Anyways, so I did that. I also had some side hustles during that time. And so, I had eight years of operations, eight year of sales, and then I was director of Sales and Marketing.

We needed to be able to tell our brand story. and I listening to Lewis Howes. He's got the School of Greatness podcast. If Lewis can have a podcast, why can't Sarah Barnes Humphrey?

And I asked a male colleague from the company and I said, will you be my co-host? And tongue in cheek, we called it Two Babes Talk Supply Chain, because I wanted to see how far we could push the industry.

And then we got a thousand downloads overnight one night. So I knew I was on to something, but a week before my 37th birthday, my dad closed his doors and I, was out on my butt with nowhere to go.

I lost my team. And I had companies paying a small amount, and they were paying to come on the show and, I have to learn graphic design, social media, website design.

You name it. and to keep the podcast going. started the woman in supply chain series right after that happened in January, 2018. And by April 2018, no women would come on a show called Two Babes Talk Supply Chain.

So I rebranded it to Let's Talk supply chain. The rest is kind of history. We've now got the second podcast called Blended, we've got The Nonprofit. we have a team of 14 people where 98% are women owned businesses.

which we're super proud about. Oh yeah, that's a little bit about my story. How have you reconciled with being different? Kind of been different my whole life.

And for a long time, I blamed myself. Like I blame myself for really long. I was bullied in elementary school. Growing up in the family business was very difficult because you didn't really know who you could trust and all that kind of stuff.

And yeah, that's a strong statement. What do you mean? You didn' really no who could you trust? Yeah. Well, being a part of a family buisness, you don't know whether somebody's talking to you because they're trying to get ahead.

And they're trying to get through you to, you know, your parents who essentially run the company. I see. So there was a lot of trust issues there. But I will say that for a long time, I blamed myself because I thought I was the common denominator.

Right? It was different. People didn't treat me very well. I was bullied. And there was a lot of things that I went through. You'll see that through the book, actually.

If you read the books, you'll that because I do talk about some of these instances. But for a long time, I blamed myself. I had to work through that to really find my, and I know we're talking about belonging today, so I want to be mindful of that.

But I have to worked through a lot of, like I've been in therapy since the beginning of my 20s. And I to have worked a through lot that, to find out where I truly felt like belonged.

I see, I think you bring up a really important point because First and foremost, kudos to you for going to therapy. As a psychiatrist, I'm a huge proponent of really looking inside, figuring your stuff out, because everybody's got stuff.

Losing the Family Business and Rebranding

Even the people who don't go to therapy, you have some things too. And so self-reflection is really important. I guess I want to get a sense of, it sounds like there was some sort of there, was a turning point.

and I, guess if you could speak to what that was. Well, and, I talk about this in the book as well. Like I talked about it being a journey, not a destination, And I think we all have a lot of different turning points, but I don' think, we really take the time to step back and recognize it.

One of the biggest turning points for me was losing everything in my family business. I thought I was going to take it over. It was my identity, it was who I.

And then I lost everything and I had to rebuild. That in itself could potentially be a turning point or considered a. But I think realistically, it was all the steps that I took there after that were also turning points because I would put myself in really uncomfortable situations.

Cause I have a fear of public speaking. Yes. And I did some really out of the box things to overcome my fear. Public speaking, and I still have to work, work on it today.

Like I've spoken on stages. I speak on stage is all of a time and still work to this day. Sometimes we get caught up in the fact that there's this one moment that changes everything and we're going to be perfect for the rest of our lives.

It's not true. Yeah. Some days we're going to wake up and it's 100%, some days, we are going wakeup and its 40% and we have to work through those things.

To be able to find how we belong and find our voice and figure ourselves out in the world and who we want to be and the impact that we wanna make. Absolutely, absolutely.

You're saying a lot of things that are really important for anyone. I think that the journey is the destination. The

words that come to mind, there's this self-compassion that you talk about really having as you've gone through this process.

had any experiences where you felt like you didn't belong, how did that shape the communities that you've built? That's such a great question. And I talk a little bit about this also in the book, around how I went to this energy healer.

She said this thing to me that I will never ever forget, it's one of the reasons why I put it in there, is that my personal life has been so messy. because it set me up for what I do today.

And that's creating safe space for conversation.

Therapy, Bullying, and Reframing Difference

And that has been my first step towards community, not even realizing it at the time, because I was only told this, I think it was last year, maybe in 2024. But that helped me in the fact to stop blaming myself, right?

Like these are the types of things that happen to you so that you can create and figure out what your superpower is and the impact that want to make in a world.

And so my stepping stone to community was creating safe space for conversation, no matter what topic that we're talking about. Like, Let's Talk Supply Chain is about supply chain.

The blended podcast that I have is About Inclusion in the Workplace, and I bring five different people together from different walks of life to talk about it.

And they're not all experts. They just share stories and perspectives, And we talk through really hard topics like privilege and things like that. And so it's through creating those safe spaces and understanding through empathy, because I've been through a lot of things and things have been messy for me, that I can create that safe space and then in turn create community around that.

Having done that, can you describe what are the criteria? What do you need to create a safe place for conversation? Because this is something that everybody, everyone can learn from this.

Yeah. And I think there's all sorts of examples in that podcast. I'll be honest, I would really highly encourage everybody to go listen to one or two of the episodes.

They could be a little bit longer, an hour, hour and a half. But some of these examples I give is, um, can't remember which episode it was, but I use the wrong word.

And everybody, all the guests were like, wait, we need to stop this episode. You know, you really shouldn't be using that word. And I was like okay, let's talk about it.

Why shouldn' I use it? What does it mean? What can I do instead? What does that look like? And so we had a conversation where I was asking questions and I generally interested because obviously I want to make sure that, um, I'm doing a service to the people who are listening and the guests who were coming on the show.

And at the end of it, we, figured it all out. and at end, they said, okay, so you're going to edit that out of the episode. I said absolutely not. This was a teaching moment for me, but this is also a teacher moment, for everybody else.

This is how you have a conversation about. This how the conversation should go to be able to create that safe space for that dialogue to have the conversations so everybody can get to their own destination.

And so I don't know if it's an inherent skill or muscle that I've kind of like built up over the years. Some of it comes from experience and the fact that i've been through a lot of mess.

that sort of ultimately creates that empathy and that compassion to be able to create that space. But I think it's also really about being open to different perspectives.

Creating Safe Spaces for Conversation

And understanding that if something triggers you in a negative way, that that's not them, That's you. And what is it that triggered me and why? Absolutely.

So many great points, right? So components of creating a safe space, being empathetic is one, Being compassionate is another. You also talked about modeling, like the love that you did that.

that you didn't just tell, but you showed, like, hey, this is how we have a conversation. This is we create a space to have difficult conversations. And then you also talked about being open.

having, being open to hearing what other people are saying. Beautiful, beautiful things. I wonder for you, was there a particular moment where you felt that you will never be quite the same in terms of a community builder?

So me being the the person that I was before? Yes, I think the turning point was writing the book because I really had a year of like self-reflection and talking about which stories would make the Book, which Stories wouldn't make The Book and taking a look at who I was in that moment and how I handled those situations and realizing how i handle those now.

And seeing how far I've come. It was in writing the book that like, it was kind of therapeutic. I'm not going to lie, but it wasn't writing. The book and really opening up myself, being vulnerable and authentic around the stories and just reflecting, like I said, on how I handled things, how it triggered my response.

Yes. And what I could learn from that and how I handle things now and what does that look like? Can you talk about that? How do you handle thing now? Because you're right in a lot of ways that we learn so much from the interactions that have with other people and especially our triggers.

So if you could speak to that, how your response has shifted. Yeah, and I'll be honest, there are some days I get it right. There are a lot of days, I got it wrong.

And so I'm still working on it. It's not that I am like a hundred percent cured, but I think I just a little bit more aware and less blameful. I don't even know if that's a word.

But you know how when you get into conflict with other people. A lot negative emotions come up, really a a of things come around blame. And you're blaming the other person for doing things.

And I think I've really been able to shift my perspective from having some conflict in the fact that I'm no longer necessarily blaming them. I can now articulate what it is that.

Or how it triggered me because of what I'd been through and I could articulate and talk about that and not blame them for it. And so the conversation is different.

The conversation, is less combative and more open to dialogue and conversation to work through it. I love that. It sounds like the inner dialogue that you're having with yourself has shifted.

Vulnerability, Conflict, and Taking Responsibility

And then, so you approach the person much in, I guess, it sounds like a more open… Well, and I think I'm more opened to taking responsibility for my side in things, right?

Because when there's a story or there is a narrative that's put around something, there are my sides, their side, then there the truth in between. Yes.

And so I think just recognizing and the fact that they're looking at it differently. I'm looking it one way and it could be right. It could wrong. There could some filler that I put in there as far as the story, right?

But being open to taking the time to working through it through conversation and sharing my authenticity and my vulnerability to be able to get there.

Instead of putting up the walls, right? Cause like before I would put up a walls and be like, you want to treat me that way? Absolutely not. You know, cut off.

Bye bye. And that, that really doesn't serve anybody. that you're so right. There is a word called stonewalling. Like he described, you just like putting up walls.

It's so beautiful to see how you've transformed and really embraced authenticity and vulnerability. I wonder, what do you think it takes to build communities like this that are authentic, where you can be vulnerable.

Because I feel like right now, when we look at entrepreneurship and many of the businesses that aren't out there, There is a lot, like, people are under a lotta stress.

A lot of stress, high-pressure environments. Um, a lots of fluctuation as far as, you know, what's going on. I wonder, are there specific practical things that you've learned along the way to help keep you centered while you're building these communities?

Yeah. So actually, and I'm sorry, I keep going back to the book, but I put some affirmations in the books that I actually tell myself while I walk the dogs every morning.

Yes. I will say to do that in the morning before I sort of start my day kind of helps me put my frame of mind together. It's what I'm grateful for. it's What I would like to achieve and what i want that to look like and that I am this person that can achieve these things.

And so I shared that In the book because it actually took me a couple of years to put it together because It is a compilation of different things that people have said.

One of them is Tyler Perry. At the end of it, you know, I talk about miracles happening every single day, and that's from Tyler Parry, right? And so I think there's a little bit of that.

I there is some gratitude journaling as well. It's really important to think about what you're grateful for in the day but then grateful in for the future.

What is it that you want to do and accomplish and write it down that, you're actually grateful for it already happening. And that sort of helps me in keeping focus on like what's important.

Mindset Practices: Affirmations, Gratitude, and Feedback

What am I working towards? What does that look like? And I think like feedback loops, talking to people, and I also think trying different things. So a lot of people get caught up in, you know, I try this thing and then it didn't work out.

And then, oh my goodness, i'm a failure and i've got to shut it down. Most people don't care and they're not paying that much attention to you. I'll be honest.

So I try things all the time. I tried things and I put things out there and put this brand out and it didn't work. And I shut it down or I sundown it and nobody notices.

So, I don't get caught up in the failure of it. Just keep reinventing and innovating to figure out what it is that's going to work I love that. Not getting caught in failure.

Being able to walk away. It's a strength. Can you, I wanted, cause you talked about a couple of different things that are great, like affirmations, gratitude journaling.

And then you said something that I haven't really, and I've heard, about feedback, but feedback loops. I have, tell us a little bit about like what feedback loop were you making that were particularly helpful in helping you keep like centered.

So I talk to people all the time. I'm very grateful in the fact that I get to travel all of the. Time I got to go to a lot of different conferences and I am talking to different people.

And actually every day on Zoom, I have back-to-back meetings every single day, and, um, talking. To different. People, And I really just ask for feedback.

It's just about asking kind of right questions, right? Or asking good questions. Yeah. In what it is that you're trying to accomplish. Right? So if they're part of the community, I'll talk to them about the what you like, what do you don't like?

You know, What could be better? What can be done differently? And so being open to feedback and understanding that it is a discussion and a dialogue and not something to take personally.

Okay. I love that. So when you were saying it, so I guess I just needed clarification. It's like you're asking for an evaluation and you are being very open.

Yeah, and even if they're not part of the community, it's questions like, what's missing? What would you like to see? You know what I mean? So really just asking people for opinions and perspectives about the different things that you're doing because you are doing it for them.

Yes, yes. Okay. You've spoken really openly about overcoming a fear of public speaking and growing into visibility for women who are afraid to take up space or share their voice.

I guess what mindset shift or practice can help them show up more fully? I think it's just the pebbles every day. Just trying to do something to either celebrate a win every.

Or putting it out there that they have done something or accomplished something today. And I don't, I, don' think that we do that enough. Like I have this woman in supply chain series and I'll be honest.

We feature this women, these women they're excited to be on the show and then crickets. They don't post about it. They won't promote it and when we ask them, they say they're bragging and that's, that really got to stop because it's kind of like we're, we want all these things.

We want to be featured. Do we wanna tell our story? We wanna be able to make an impact, but we can't make it impact if we keep making ourselves small and thinking that we are doing it wrong, right?

Who's going to tell you doing a right or wrong or indifferent? I mean, only you.

Visibility, Small Wins, and Celebrating Success

Somebody can tell from the outside that you're doing something that they don' like. doesn't mean you're doing it wrong. It's true. Right. And I just think that a lot of times we need to build that muscle as women to be able to recognize not only in ourselves, what's holding us back, but also recognize and make sure that we are recognized for our accomplishments and we're celebrating those wins.

Cause that's really where true growth comes from. And that's how we're going to elevate each other. That's, how are we going bring each. Cause if we don't see other women doing it, or we only see a few women.

Then they're gonna look at that and be like, Oh, that not me. I don' accomplish enough. But if they see everybody celebrating small wins, accomplishments, whatever that looks like.

then we normalize it. I love that. How are you celebrating your small wins? I do it in a variety of ways. Sometimes I'm really bad at it, not going to lie.

But recently I made a purchase while I was in Paris. I bought a purse and that was celebrating my win of accomplishing the book and also having the it.

Now that the book's been out for a little bit, just a bit. What has been the most surprising response that you've had regarding the books? I have had men reach out to me and tell me how much the And it's not that I didn't write it with men in mind.

I wrote it for sort of a female audience in the fact that, I wasn't sure if my stories would resonate. And I had one gentleman reach out to me and tell me he was only 12 pages in and he crying already.

Because he resonated so much with the stories. And to be honest with you, every single review, everybody single, you know, somebody reaching out to say how much they resonated with the story and thank you so much for sharing so authentically has meant so.

But those have been the most surprising. Wow. Lovely, lovely, I wonder as you've gone through this journey, this can affect our mind, our body and in our spirit.

Book Response, Healing, and How to Connect

And I guess I want to ask you, how has this affected those three things? Which? The book? Yeah, the book. It's affected in a lot of different ways because, again, I was able to self-reflect on a lots of these parts of my brain that I either handled well or didn't handle well.

And, and I also was also able reflect on what I wanted to talk about, what And I was very intentional around this book about sharing the fact that this was stories from my perspective.

And that there's always two sides to every story and I wasn't trying to take somebody else's perspective from the story. I wanted to make sure that the audience knew that.

Thank me for that in the fact that sometimes we tell these stories and we own it, but really at the end of the day, there's two parties to that story and you don't want to speak for somebody else.

And so I was very intentional about that. Um, and also spiritually like sharing, you know, the facts that I go to energy healers and mediums and I like crystals and all that kind of stuff.

It's been, it's in fascinating to find my people as well. Right. Lovely lovely lovely. I know that our audience is going to want to connect with you. Can you tell us like how can they find you?

Yes, yes, so on Instagram at Sarah Barnes Humphrey, on LinkedIn at sarahbarnes-humphry, and then we've got the website sarabarneshumphrey.com. And then, of course, you can find the book on amazon.

com. I buried her in a French press, a memoir about finding my voice and the power of being heard. Wow. Sarah Barnes Humprey it has been a pleasure to have you on the show.

Thank you for coming on. If you haven't heard it yet today, I appreciate you. The soul in me honors the soul you if you'd like to see more episodes like this, please subscribe or click here.

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