

# Taking Back Our Power with guest Tara Furiani| TIS Ep. 60

## **SPEAKERS**

Tara Furiani (she/they), Sharon Hurley Hall (she/her), Lisa Hurley (she/they)

### **Sharon Hurley Hall 00:03**

Hi, I'm Sharon

### **Lisa Hurley 00:04**

and I'm Lisa

### **Sharon 00:05**

and together were the introverts. We never get that done together. The introvert sisters podcast is sponsored by all things equitable. We make it easy to be equitable. Okay, folks buckle up because today we're welcoming a very special guest, Tara Furiani. Aka Not The HR Lady. Tara is a mom of seven, a keynote speaker host of Not The HR lady podcast, one of seven must follow HR influencers in 2022. And the author of F Yes, we didn't say the full word, Tara, welcome to the show.

### **Tara Furiani 00:46**

Thank you so much, Sharon, Lisa, I am so glad to be here. I love you guys. I think you know that. And I am so pleased and excited to be a guest on your show today. Thank you.

### **Sharon 00:58**

So mutual feeling is so mutual.

### **Lisa Hurley 01:03**

Absolutely mutual. I mean, I think it's definitely a mutual admiration society here.

### **Tara Furiani 01:08**

Thank you.

### **Lisa Hurley 01:09**

So thanks for being with us. And we are going to jump right in. Because of course, something that naturally stands out about you on LinkedIn is your moniker not the HR lady. That's your brand, right? Yeah. For me, it appeals to me because it sounds like I am not the one. No, I don't I don't know if that's the energy behind it. But that's what you're here to answer. So it's a strong statement. Can you tell us where the name came from?

### **Tara Furiani 01:37**

I would love to tell you. So it's rooted in a real story. And I think well I know as I know, you guys know, but maybe not all your listeners, I'm the Chief People Officer for 12 years before COVID. And in the world of work, you know, in this discipline, why whether it was training or you know, people, I mean people business in the corporate world for 20 years. And in one of my latest or, you know, later positions, and I won't tell you which one, although there aren't many. So it's not hard to figure out. There is one organization that I went to work with. And the CEO at the time was somebody I, I still love admire. And he'd been brought on to sort of a lie in the parent organization with some subsidiaries that they bought in a reverse acquisition kind of deal. And so he and I had worked together before we're good friends, and he's like, come on board, help us, you know, really assimilate all of these cultures and get a wrap around all these different systems and all this good stuff. And so we're doing sort of the roadshow, if you will, and where we're going to all the various venues and headquarters are different office locations that there are around the country. And it's the executive team, you know, so the CPO which is me, CEO, CFO, COO, etc. And we're in Atlanta, and the one of the one of the presidents of the new companies got up on stage and it was his kind of job at this one to introduce me and he like clearly just didn't like me from the jump. Here's an really older kind of old school just like white dude, right? Like you can picture the type like wearing a suit, little side comb, you know, and he gets up there and he says, you know, pronounces my name completely wrong. He's known it and we've been in this same speaking circuit, if you will, six times already. So we've done this in six different locations. So he's heard my name pronounced Tara, Furiani, and it's not hard. And so you get up on stage, she calls me Ta Furnene, I don't really know how to say her name. She's the new HR lady. And so I was kind of taken aback because I hadn't been so publicly and there's like 300 employees at this call center type environment. And I hadn't been so publicly like harassed in such an open forum before because you wouldn't introduce any he didn't introduce the CFO is like, you know, the bean counter, or like no marketing officer as like, oh, you know, the guy who does the graphic, cool stuff, like everybody gets their respected title, except for my role, which is the chief people officer. And apparently, he's unable to say that or unable to say that. So I of course, in true my fashion, you guys would know, I got up to the stage. And I took the mic. And I said, Well, hello. Let's clear a few things up to jump. To jump off with my name is Tara Furiani. And I'm the chief people officer here for x company. I am not nor will I ever be the HR lady. So I just want to kind of explain to you what my role is and what it entails and how many different departments my team oversees because you'll likely be interacting with us at some point in my you know, my spiel And so that in that moment, not the HR lady was born.

**Sharon** 05:04

I love. Gosh, I love that story. And I have to ask if you know, you were the were the only woman on the team? And, of course, of course, that's what was going on there,

**Tara Furiani** 05:16

I was the only, not only the only woman, the only other. So like, every other of my counterparts were white men over 40. And I wasn't over 40 even at this point. So I'm, I'm a little, you know, I'm a little on the younger side, which is weird. And the C suite definitely the only woman Absolutely. And the only, you know, person who identifies as queer on the team, and then absolutely zero people of color.

**Sharon Hurley Hall** 05:43

Oh, wow.

**Tara Furiani 05:45**

Yeah.

**Lisa Hurley 05:46**

We, unfortunately, can relate. We can that there, you know, we've all been disrespected. Shall we say. Yes. Um, so what what I love is that you took that and turned it around, and made it into something really powerful. Yes.

**Tara Furiani 06:07**

I've learned have to take it back. Right. There's so many examples I think of, of us just being dumped on, where, you know, where we are we we are taught, I think, at a very young age, especially women are taught to just be quiet, you know, like to not retort if you don't have anything nice to say, and therefore, you know, not you say nothing. And then there that behavior is allowed.

**Sharon Hurley Hall 06:32**

And, isn't it so liberating to get to the stage where you say, Wait, I'm not letting anyone else define me. I am taking back my power. Yeah, I am deciding what works for me and what's right for me. And you know, that that is an act of revolution, right there, isn't it?

**Tara Furiani 06:50**

You know, it is. And it's a luxury that I think that I wish more people were afforded. I've been in a place and I, you know, at times, I get nervous that I could still be in a place where I have to assimilate to, to succeed. And I talk about a friend named Antoine, he owns a consulting business. And he's a Black man, and he coaches other Black men exclusively, who are aspiring to the executive space. And a lot of it is about assimilating in a lot of ways. And I hate that for all of us, who have to subscribe to other people's norms, norms that were never designed for any of us in the first place. So you know, let's put that aside. But we have to assimilate in order to be successful. And I love that you said it's a revolution. And it is, and I think that we're seeing that more and more now that people are just choosing, you know, to work maybe two or three jobs to get an active side business going to do, you know, put action to some of the things that they believe in, so they're not reliant on the corporate world, and then those in the corporate space are trying to affect that change at that level. So it gets

**Sharon 08:07**

because we have to, we have to liberate ourselves because nobody's coming to save us.

**Lisa Hurley 08:15**

Nobody is. Nobody is speaking of liberating ourselves. Your book. Right, it's called F Your Office Snacks. Yes. I have. I have literally, I and others have written that. Or, you know, similar similar posts on on LinkedIn, like, we don't want your snacks. You don't want the pool table. We don't want the scooters, whatever it happens to be, you know,

**Sharon 08:43**

can we just have some freakin equity around?

**Lisa** 08:48

Take us back again and tell us okay, what, what inspired that because I know what I think it is. But for our listeners tell us what the backstory is.

**Tara Furiani** 08:58

So the backstory is a lot about a lot of what you just said, and it's understanding sort of how we got here in the first place. So it's so funny. And now when I when I say what I'm about to say, I realize that myself being a woman you to being women and women of color. Yeah, we have a lot of what I'm about to say we really didn't benefit from but those benefits now really aren't applicable to anybody. So it used to be back in the day, you could work at nine to five job, literally leave your work at the office because it's paperwork, I mean, maybe bring a file or to home but you're not, you know, digitally connected to your workplace. There used to be pensions used to be able to work at a company and that's where loyalty and really wanting to, you know, engage and attract employees through that equity that you mentioned. That was what was called pensions. And the younger generation I think doesn't even know that that used to exist. You could work at a place and then retire actually retire with a meaningful income post retirement, you could have a one worker household and raise two and a half children and own a home. This was a reality for a lot of people in the workforce, you know, back in like the 50s 60s 70s. And then the early 80s rolled around, and things started to shift and they started ditching the pensions for the more tax averse or tax less tax risk and expense for the business than a traditional pension, while allowing the employees to have to put a piece in it with pensions, you didn't have to put a piece so there was this, like, real big sell on how much money you can make in the stock market. And yes, you have to contribute, but we're gonna contribute to and this money is going to grow even more over time. People really bought into the idea and pension started to fall away. And then like the whole .com thing came around, and nobody knew how to do computer programming. They're hiring these hacker kids and whatever. And people are really excited with slides. And really excited with like, who there's a chef at our office, there's a doctor at our office. And when you're when you're just a little older, and maybe just a little wiser, you realize how very manipulative, all of those things are. And the craziest part is, we traded compensation, you know, companies like Google, Amazon, etc, that are like the gold star for anybody in the tech space to go to, will often pay and they still do this today. They can't really do it right now, because there's such a shortage, but they were doing this pre COVID, you can bring a software developer with experience in 20 to 30 \$40,000 under market, because they sell the promise of all these fringe benefits that are offered, while you don't realize you're now enslaved to that office, there's a doctor because they don't want you to leave, there's a chef because they don't want you to leave, they want you to work. And and now we're taking less work. And then COVID happened. And you realize, Holy, Holy S Holy S word. You can you can say the holy shit, because here's the shutdown, there's no when I when COVID happened, and I'm still a software developer at that same company. But now I'm \$30,000 under market, now I can finally work from home because there's this newfound trust that I can do my job from the comfort of my house. But the one thing I'm missing is that private chef, there's no private chef, there's no slide in my shitty apartment that I have to rent, you know, all the way up in like, you know, the middle of like, nowhere San Francisco area so that I can afford life and that's a real hard awakening right, and it's not software developers, this is like across the board.

**Sharon Hurley Hall** 13:02

As you were speaking, I was getting these real sort of early Industrial Revolution vibes, you know, when they would build a town around the factory, and they would have the shop, and they would have the vision, they would have the VAT and everything that you did left you in debt to the company so that you were technically working for money, but half of that money was going back to the company. And if you lost your job, you lost everything. Yeah, no. And and,

**Tara Furiani** 13:29

yeah. And how shares work, right. So like Amazon's a great example. And I feel like I'm picking on them. There's reasons to pick on them. I'm not actually trying to, they've just made a lot of missteps. They give it's funny, they give you like, let me give you all this equity, while you work for less money, while this company values more. But you are you are literally you used a great word, you're indebted to us for at least four years in a minimum contract kind of situation with that company where you're not fully vested. And the minimal amount of vesting, you're going to get doesn't make up for the compensation you've lost for X number of years, like there is a sense of indebtedness, and does that and what they've realized is that that makes an employee work harder because they want to push out those products that behooves them to drive the stock prices up. But also that they're stuck with them for the long haul so that on call page nonsense that they had going on like you know all these things that the company makes you do that you're like, God This doesn't feel right but oh my gosh, if I can just stick out you know, like it just stick it out for four years. The craziest part most people can't like their turnover is absolutely atrocious and software development. so like you can pay people but when you you can pay people the promise of payment later, but if in the present, you treat them like shit and you give them you know, meaningless things that end up giving you tax breaks as a company Not as an individual

**Sharon Hurley Hall** 15:03

That says a lot

**Tara Furiani** 15:03

It's a win for you, it's win lose for me and a lot is riding on your wins for me to win. And that's if I can stick it out or you don't fire me or anything else. I mean, it's crazy.

**Sharon Hurley Hall** 15:15

Yes,

**Lisa Hurley** 15:16

yeah. And I don't want to name names either. But you know, I've definitely worked obviously for some, you look at my LinkedIn profile and figure it out. Yes, I understand exactly what you're what you're talking about. And yes, I mean, a lot of these huge companies have that kind of culture where it is just, you're constantly grinding. Yeah, yes. Constantly grinding constantly churning. Like you said, you know, the, the doctor, and the gym and all of that stuff, you know, and be patient room, sauna, you know, whatever it happens to be. It's just it's-

**Tara Furiani** 15:53

slavery.

**Lisa Hurley** 15:54

It is! I was trying so hard not to say that, but that's what it is!

**Tara Furiani** 15:59

it is it really, it really. And it's very

**Lisa Hurley** 16:03

poorly disguised as cushy, cushy slavery, but slavery nonetheless.

**Tara Furiani** 16:08

Exactly right. To hurt, you know, you're benefiting, you know, in the very good at what the bare minimum wage is by getting paid a wage and having access to health care and food. I mean, like, that's the bare minimum, while you are lining the pocketbooks of majority shareholders and executives with exorbitant bonuses. I mean, these are just

**Sharon** 16:28

They will turf, you out the door, and it no longer suits them. Right.

**Tara Furiani** 16:32

Yeah.

**Sharon Hurley Hall** 16:34

Anyway, I know that that in itself could be a whole episode. Right? That's a whole other, a whole other episode. But I want to ask about something else in your LinkedIn headline, you have a mom of seven as the first entry. Why is it so important to you to have it there? What does it mean to you?

**Tara Furiani** 16:54

So I have a really interesting love hate relationship with parenting. And this may cause a funny funny story or funny surprise, maybe I don't know, because I do have seven children, five or my bio kids, I adopted my niece and nephew. So in total, I've got seven. And the my niece and nephew have been with me for five years. So they're, they're my kids. Yes, now. And, for me, I didn't have I didn't start having children until I was in the C suite, frankly. And the reasons that I did, were in large part because it felt like having children would be a hinderance, you know, I was never a person who wanted necessarily to be a mom, I didn't play house when I was little, you know, I was I was a I was a grown up pretty early on. And, and I never really wanted at the time, what I considered that burden, I wanted to live my life, I wanted to be famous, I wanted to, you know, tour the world and, and I never thought that kids would would solve for that. And I didn't end up thinking kids would solve for that until I was you know, 10 or so years into my career. And then I met my husband, I re-met him, we'd gone to high school together. And then we got married. And we started having a bunch of kids. And we ended up having five together. And I think what's really interesting is kind of how my mindset shifted, in that time. And I didn't realize how, like, I'm Kid Friendly that I had become because I didn't have kids that like I didn't necessarily understand what you know, peers around me, you know, subordinates even in some situations, and bosses we're going through as parents and it left me with a lot of I would say nothing

crazy, but some remorseful lack of empathy that I could have displayed where it probably does it is not meaningful to that person. But as I reflect back like, man, I was could have handled, got like a lot better, had better word, you know, now that I know. And so when I started having kids, I realized exactly sort of what I had been doing, which is you often times get sort of pigeon holed like the, you know, you can't come out because you have a kid you are on the team, but you're not a part of the team, because you can't go drinking with the guys because you have a child, you know, I can't just run to, you know, New York City from California, because we have to do a high level termination. And I have to do it today. So I have to get on a plane right now, like, realities that I hadn't really faced, became kind of staring me in the face and kind of ugly ways. And I realized, funny, I guess funny or maybe empowering enough that having children made me such a better leader. Having children really taught me so many things I had never learned before and when I think about my jobs and the places I've been and where I've worked, I fully will say that a lot of that defines me. My work really does define me. But my work as a parent just has superseded any definements external companies could provide. But it's no less a job, it is absolutely a job every day. And raising people like these people are going to have a job at some point, and I want to set them up for success to have the right interaction. So, you know, I take that role incredibly seriously. And I want everybody that I know that that works with me that that's number one, you know, first and foremost, that's the thing that is the most vital to me, as far as my work is concerned. And that always comes first.

**Sharon** 20:43

I love that. I love that. I

**Lisa** 20:45

love it too, because as you kind of alluded to it earlier that a lot of women either are actually sidelined, or they fear being sidelined. As a result of reason. I just remembered abilities.

**Sharon** 21:02

Right, I was working, I was working in England, at a place that will not be named, but could be found on my LinkedIn profile. And those of you who knows certain key dates, we'll be able to put it together. Right, but suffice it to say that I was entitled to years maternity leave, because you know, that's England, right? And I've been working there for a while. But I remember that my male sexist misogynist boss said to me, Oh, you're not going to want to take all of that. Are you? Kind of thing? You know, it's like, yeah, that's what he said. That is that is what he said, like, if I would be some kind of lightweight, if I took my entire maternity leave, I took it. I said, Yes, I am. And I took it. But you know, those are the attitudes that we often have to deal with, in relation to, to being parents, right, in relation to valuing that role. And I think you're right Tara in a sense that, you know, if you've ever had anything to do with a, with a young person, they teach you so much about yourself about the view that they have of the world, you know,

**Tara Furiani** 22:09

yeah, well, what comes back at you? Yeah, the view they have of the world, that's it, what they start, how they start approaching things, and, and what they start saying, and I think that's a real pivotal moment for any person who interacts with with young people is, what are they saying back to you? And how does that look, and if you like what you hear, like, Good job, good job. Parents, if you don't like

what you hear, you know, and I don't think that's a hard conversation that I have. And for me, I think, you know, I was I was really sad, and just crying a lot. And, you know, having a really hard time, you know, post divorce and, and all of that, and I would, I would cry, just the drop of a hat, you know, and the kids would think that at first, it was something maybe that they did. And I had to realize that I can't allow my, I have to keep myself in check, because they're watching very closely. And I think that when you really listen to what kids say, instead of just brushed off that they're speaking, and you can hear every third word as we do sometimes, when you really stop and listen, it can tell you a lot about yourself, and especially if you have a lot of close interaction with them.

**Sharon 23:23**

Agreed. Agreed. Agreed.

**Lisa Hurley 23:24**

Yes. And I'm glad actually that you brought that up, because that literally segues nicely into the next question that we want to ask you, which is about mental health. Right? And, you know, we follow each other you and I have both both post about mental health and have both posted very recently about it, you know, right, right now, at the time of this recording, we're in the middle of mental health month, although of course, I believe that every month is mental health month,

**Tara Furiani 23:54**

Me too!

**Lisa Hurley 23:55**

Right. And one of your posts really stood out to me and I want to just read a portion of it for the benefit of our listeners. So it says, I have struggled with my mental wellness ever since February 2019. When my marriage was ending, it wasn't the ending that was causing my mental decline. It was how did I let it go on this long and feelings of absolute stupidity? I am a smart woman. I was valedictorian of my high school. I was accepted to numerous top schools. I received a full academic scholarship yet here I was knowingly allowing a man to financially and emotionally abused me. Whoa! and so literally I

**Tara Furiani 24:45**

It's hard to hear it back! it gives me a lot of emotion.

**Lisa Hurley 24:48**

Listen, I my entire body from like my face all the way down goosebumps. It kind of like slightly uncomfortable goosebumps. Yes, I'm feeling the emotions are I feel a bit teary eyed. I mean, I know I'm wearing I'm wearing these glasses right now. And you can't see. But there's stuff going on behind here. Because I'm part of it is because I can unfortunately, relate. I don't, I don't have kids. But I have, you know, I've had I've had that marriage that had to end. Yeah. And this, what you what you wrote, I could have written? Right? And, you know, I want to thank you for being so transparent and sharing something like this, because I feel like if a lot of people don't feel comfortable being so open, but, you know, part of my question is, Why have you chosen to be so transparent about your mental health issues. And the reason behind that, because again, similar to what we were just discussing, in terms of

being a parent, and all of that there is a stigma, right? There is a stigma, especially with relation to one's career and professional life. So why do you choose to kind of like, put it all out there.

**Tara Furiani 26:07**

So it was a conscious decision. And thank you for asking me, I think that a lot of that first, it really seemed like people thought I was like crying for help. And I'm not I'm sharing emotions that I've either already worked through or working through them in real time with with you guys, as a means of a part of talk therapy for me. For me, I as much as I love to talk, I love to articulate my thoughts down as well, in writing and get it out and get it out of my, my, my space. And I know, you know, time and time again, as I started to get more open and more vulnerable, especially, you know, on formats like LinkedIn, or like on our show, that people would say exactly what you just said, Lisa, and it's that, oh, my gosh, I could have written this same thing. And what I was thinking was, is that all this time, I thought there was something wrong with me, I thought that you know, that it was me. And you can apply that to any number of things that I have feelings that affect my mental health, about, you know, whether that's, you know, my body or negative or negative self image or my divorce or worrying about being good enough, or pick whatever tab, and you guys all know what I mean, one of the various tabs I have open at any given time. And, and so I made a decision that's my superpower is sort of saying what other people are thinking, not only to benefit, sort of my own mental health, but to maybe get get people to realize that this isn't one something to be ashamed or embarrassed or feeling like you're the only one of, and then allow for like that. Maybe for me that validation that other people are experiencing what I am, and then I believe, I believe that other people are experiencing a lot of the same things I'm experiencing, then I'm validated, and then you're validated, and it's a win win. And I think humanity is just so often overlooked, especially in the world of work, which is why you'll get those comments. And I know you guys get them, I get them, so many of us get them take this to Facebook, take this to Instagram, this doesn't belong on a professional site, you know, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. And it's like, Don't you realize that politics directly impact the workforce? Don't you realize that the issues we're talking about are normal human issues that we have held down for just far too long? Like, we're normalizing normal things, and, and mental health is one of them. Like until we put a name on it. How many times in your lifetime of your career. Have you called out sick not to play hooky for a fun reason, like they depict in the movies, too, because you literally can't get out of bed, because you just literally can't get up but you're not sick. You're not going to the beach. You're not shopping. You're not having a spa day. You can't get up. You can't do it. You can't do it today.

**Lisa 29:23**

Yeah, yeah. I mean, unfortunately, I relate to that all too. Well. I mean, there are times you know, all of us. There's a lot there's always a lot going on, right? So there are times where it's, I don't know, seven, eight o'clock in the morning, sometimes earlier and I swing my feet over the side of the bed, and I'm done. 7 AM Yeah. Had the effort to even I'm still sitting I'm still seated. I haven't actually stood up yet. Yeah, I'm sitting on the side of the bed. At seven in the morning. And I'm done for the day, but I still have to actually go on. Yeah. Right. And this is like, again, like you said, it's, that's my reality, maybe sometimes it's yours. It's other people's. But I do believe, like you said, by speaking out about it, it helps normalize it and helps people maybe also feel like feel less alone. Right?

**Sharon 30:22**

I think I do think yes, that, you know, a lot of people can see themselves in the things that you share and things that you both share. Actually, even even people that might not say, they don't feel like they fit into a particular category, but I think many of us, for different reasons have had those days. You know, for me, for me, it's usually been in relation to an experience of racism, or something where you feel like you just can't cope today, you know, or somebody you know, you know, you're, you feel like you're wading through treacle for the entire day. But you have to go on, in spite of it, you know, and so, um, so thank you, thank you both for, you know, for putting that out there and, and giving voice to what so many people, so many people are feeling and experiencing and may not actually be able to talk about, right, because I know a lot of people, a lot of people that are activists in different areas, get DM's from people saying thank you for talking about this. I can't actually like your post but. Right? You heard that right.

**Tara Furiani 31:24**

And how crazy is that? Yes, I have so many of those. It's mind blowing. And it makes me infuriated. So I always go to see like, who are they working for? But they can't post something like that. Because not that I'm going to call it out. I wouldn't betray their confidence like that. But like, what places are doing that, like I get those? I know you guys get them to that my boss monitors my LinkedIn stuff. And like this would be absolutely I get fired if I just even like your post, and it's like, what kind of world are we living in? Like, oh, my god,

**Sharon 31:55**

it's so wrong. It is so wrong.

**Lisa 31:58**

It's so wrong. Another thing that you mentioned when it when I was reading, reading your posts back to you. But you mentioned you mentioned that a lot of emotions came up for you can you can you name some of the emotions that came up for you?

**Tara Furiani 32:15**

you know, that's the risk Lisa, right? It's, it's, you asked me about, you asked me also about like, you know, what about the you know, the negative potential or like putting yourself out there could tarnish your reputation? And I think like it's maybe a little bit of that it's a little bit about the situation itself, though. I've worked past that. But I think I didn't answer that question before. And for me, I'm in a unique position that I've always been beholden to a company, until COVID. And then I started not the HR lady, which I was starting anyway. But then COVID happened. And then here we are. But when I was starting, not the HR lady that was a big part of it is that I wanted to talk about things that people weren't talking about. And I had to be in a place where I could do that on my terms. Otherwise, then I'm concerned about getting fired, right, then I can't say or do the things that I think make an impact, empower others, and really, hopefully help shift some narratives here and there. And, and I think that has a lot to do with it. Like the feeling of hearing that back. It is vulnerable. I mean, I'm talking about my very personal life. I mean, you know, my post yesterday was about starting my period, and the injustices related to FSA. And that, you know, it wasn't until 2020, 42 years after FSA became a thing that were able to use that tax, you know, free dollar, essentially and that account for these products for menstruation products. And on top of it, you know, I needed to spend all day with a heating pad and

how great that, you know, now that we're working from home, these little insecurities where I don't have to worry about bleeding all over the place, because the board meeting ran too long. I have to talk about that stuff, because that happens that has happened to me, that has happened to me. Oh, yeah. And it's happened to all of us. If you have a uterus,

**Sharon Hurley Hall** 34:22

if you have a uterus, it's happened to you.

**Tara Furiani** 34:24

Yes, if you have a uterus, it's happened to you. And and it's just it's one of those other ways that like just workplaces just sort of weren't designed for us. And so my, I guess my long winded answer, but kind of to wrap it all up is that, you know, there's a lot of risk and hearing those words back. And there's, you know, there's a lot of ridicule, of course that that I have to deal with and that takes its toll on on mental health as well and hearing it back I'm empowered by myself. If that makes me doesn't sound too egotistical. I don't know I'm not sure-

**Sharon Hurley Hall** 35:00

No! I love that!

**Lisa Hurley** 35:01

It's great.

**Tara Furiani** 35:02

I'm empowered by myself at the same time, like, I'm also self reflecting going, like, Oh my God I posted that? And, that's, you know, that's who I choose to be. And I just I have to I feel like it's my calling, I guess. So I got emotional because it's a it's an interesting self reflection to both understand and recognize the risk. Every time I put something out, and at the same time still feel inspired by what I wrote, because that's what I'm, that's what I'm solving for I write me.

**Lisa** 35:38

Oh, my gosh, I'm glad to hear you say that. Because I was, I had a conversation with another LinkedIn connection a couple of days ago. And one of the things I basically said what you said, like I write for me, yeah, I write for me. Yeah, I hope and pray that somebody else finds, you know, catches the vibe. I hope they catch the vibe, I hope they get the lesson. I hope they're inspired, I hope they feel better, or, you know, reflect on themselves and do better. Yeah, right. But primarily, in a lot of cases, I am writing for me as part of my process, because I feel that's where it has to start.

**Sharon** 36:18

writing, writing is the way that I process things, as well as, and so a lot of the stuff that shows up in my newsletter is me remembering or trying to come to terms with something. And you know, and then you know, after I've done the first draft of it, I might go back and then say, Okay, well, here's what you can do about this. And here's how you can think about this. But the beginning part is basically what was in my head, you know, always,

**Tara Furiani** 36:41

yeah, I'm the same I stream of content. Just like that's, that's how I write my LinkedIn posts. Like I wake up, usually, I'll have a thought for the day, and then it'll just turn into something and then I'll spend like, a little bit of time editing it, and then it's just like, Don't overthink it, and then post. And for me, it allows whatever that thought was, that crept in, and my own internal rationalization or excuse, you know, however it was that I'm thinking about it, I like to just put it out, put it down. And then that allows sort of, to, I guess, to your point allows for me to get it out of my space. And then I hope that other people feel something by it. It's intentional. You know, because I'm feeling I'm feeling something and I want to share that.

**Sharon** 37:26

that I think that's that's true authenticity and I think that's what people relate to.

**Lisa** 37:32

Yeah, I think I think that's part of your again, from your from your, your, your brand and your, your titles, right, you can Okay, this is a No BS person. What you see is what you get. Yeah, even like Sharon said, like, first the first entry on your LinkedIn headline being okay, I'm a mom. Yeah, that's a boundary that's actually that's a boundary statement to me. Right after that. Yes. Right. That's part of it. And so I think that's why like authenticity people people really feel that and can relate to and I think that's why so much of your stuff resonates you know, I don't I don't I don't get the impression you know, and I could be wrong right? I don't get the impression that you're no back, you're not back there behind the scenes, you know, strategizing seo keywords. \*laughing\* this is how I feel.

**Tara Furiani** 38:32

That's that so you are absolutely right. So I think when it's funny somebody did like a podcast about like marketing, they asked me if I wanted to be on the show for like to discuss marketing strategies. And I think I was funny but wholly disappointing with what they were looking for. Because I don't have any marketing strategies. Literally, I swear to God, I don't use any posting services. If you see it on any of my social media, it is me, I am doing it by hand, right then in that moment, I don't schedule them. I do it on a whim, I if I see something that inspires me, or I feel something, I have a thought like, I'll put it down and if I don't, I won't post anything. Like I haven't posted much but maybe once a week lately on like LinkedIn. And it's I'm just doing other things right. I'm not inspired to put anything down right now. And and so there's I'm not trying to target algorithms in any meaningful way. Like I'm not I go back and edit sometimes when I noticed that I fucked something up. Like there's no strategy like I literally have no strategy. I didn't intend, I just didn't intend for it to be like, like, I guess I'm grateful that whatever, like I had to have a marketing degree, but I didn't end up going that route. So I'm glad whatever little bit of marketing knowledge that I have applies because I built our website. I do all of our social media but like, it's all me, there's no. Well, Justin, Justin does all of our editing of Korra. But there's not any program or any I don't use HootSuite or anything. It's literally me in the moment. Whatever I feel so if you see it know that that was what was going on in my mind right then. And it could be that it worked through it could be a story of a time of something I was going through, but but whatever it is, it's it was in my head, then. And now you all get to hear it too.

**Lisa** 40:36

Cool. Cool. I think I think that is awesome. And something that you mentioned earlier, I don't remember your exact words. But you mentioned something about processing. Right. And so I want to ask you, I mean, you know, we're the introvert sisters. And you know, introversion is partly about how you how one processes the world, right? And so of course, we have to ask you do you identify as introverted, extroverted, somewhere in between? Like, what was your what would you describe yourself?

**Tara Furiani** 41:10

So I think that most people would take the liberty of just describing me for me, which is an extrovert. And I think that it's so funny, I think I come across that way. And I am I'm in happy, energetic, like, really, I'm a WYSIWYG, what you see is what you get. And love is the way that I talk it. This is me all the time. I can't be different versions of me. When I'm supposed to be me, you know, I just can't do it. And so I'd say that like, what's funny, though, is I have so many introvert tendencies. I'm very logical, I'm definitely I like to process information. I like to see things written down, I like to write things down. I'm not overly excitable in group situations, it's one of those things where I would really prefer somebody else sort of take the lead, but if nobody is, I will, I mostly just want to kind of take a step back, because I like to observe people. And I love to see people's varying behaviors in those situations. And when I'm in charge, I can't observe those things. As easily, you know, when I'm kind of in the back, like, I like to see what's going on. That doesn't mean if you don't hand me a microphone, things are gonna get real. But, but for the most part, I'd say like between introvert and extrovert, I would say in my public life, and if you can believe it, I do have a private life that is still even though I talk about abortion, and my period, and all kinds of things, racism, all the things, I still do have things I keep, you know, kind of close to the vest, I would say, I am always happy and you know, a glass half full, kind of energetic person. But I'm way more extroverted in my public life. That I would say I am in my private life and my private life. I'm a little quieter. I still like to have good laughs with my kids. But we're gaming players. We watch Jeopardy. We play cards, we sing we create music, like together like just, you know, kind of just aren't little pods. So my again, long winded answer because I love to talk. \*Laughter\*

**Sharon Hurley Hall** 43:27

It is a podcast. \*laughter\*

**Lisa Hurley** 43:29

Talk away!

**Tara Furiani** 43:31

Oh, I'm somewhere in between, right, I think is how I show up for most people are somewhere in between. I'd like to think that I'm a little, I'm a little I'm a little bit of both a chameleon hummingbird. Yeah, yeah.

**Lisa Hurley** 43:45

I love that. I love it.

**Sharon Hurley Hall** 43:47

I love it.

**Tara Furiani** 43:49

I like snakes gonna be like a carnivore or something? \*laughter\*

**Lisa** 43:56

Why not? Okay,

**Tara Furiani** 43:57

I just told the mom joke.

**Sharon Hurley Hall** 44:00

You did, you did! It's totally okay.

**Lisa Hurley** 44:03

We said we're done. Mom jokes around here.

**Sharon** 44:07

So I have to ask you, although you did start to talk about it earlier, you know, I was going to ask what your superpower was. And you mentioned one superpower earlier. Do you have another superpower that you want to talk about?

**Tara Furiani** 44:18

Yeah, sure. I think that for me, my superpower is, is you know, I am a I am people just through and through like that. I think that the resonance that I have for the lived experiences of so many because of my own lived experience. You know, gives me such a unique perspective on the world. And there's not many of you have a story quite like and to kind of have the the lived realities of of having, you know, the kind of upbringing that I that I have. I have a you know, adopted black father, white mother, you know, they were married 30 something years. years, by the time I came around, you know, who'd faced they were married before interracial marriage was legal. And, and so we grew up in Southern California, certainly in a far cry from, you know, the South or where, you know, there were real overt displays of racism back in the 70s and 80s. In California, it was maybe less overt. And my parents had a pretty, you know, okay, time, but my childhood was really strange. And, and I think, in my life, or sort of, with my life, that's developed into just wild empathy, you know, I can put myself into other people's shoes fairly easily. I've seen a lot, you know, I was in the foster care system, I, you know, I've experienced racism directly sexism directly. And indirectly, the racism part, not the sexism part, I've gotten a lot of that, and misogyny and just there's been so many things, I climb the corporate ladder, very young, and, you know, with that has its own unique set of, of fuckery. That happens. And, for me, I think that superpower is just a big ball of empathy. And then and then fight, you know, vigor, the real willingness to take the injustices and the things I've seen, and turn that into either stories you can understand, so that that helps you inspire action, and that you know, that is repetitive and creates volume, and then more people are talking about it. And then, you know, through the general work that I do, in the sense of feeling emboldened and empowered to speak these truths that I think we've buried for just too long, especially in the world of work the world at large, but especially in the world of work, where this is a strict, you know, pull the curtain down, we're not talking about this, we need to talk about these things. And I think that's my superpower, empathy and a real drive and vigor with a loud voice, who seems to

have the ability to resonate with people. So if that's a long cape, you know, it's got a lot of words on it, but, but I like it, I take it.

**Sharon** 47:20

Great. It's great. It's great. I

**Lisa Hurley** 47:22

love that. And speaking of empathy, as an ambivert, which is now what we're going to do, we've decided that that's what we're going to call you, right? What words of guidance or encouragement do you have for introverts, like, like ourselves, for example, I mean, whether in a general sense from an HR corporate perspective of because for many introverts, it can be a struggle, just dealing, dealing with the world in general, but definitely in corporate, yeah. You know, it can be challenging. Do you have any words of advice,

**Tara Furiani** 48:02

I would love. So I'm certified in Myers Briggs, and predictive and lesson desk, and I've been doing these behavioral assessments for, you know, 17 plus years. So I've had the very good fortune of working with all different types of people directly, I always in my corporate roles, have I coached, you know, the leadership team, one on one, you know, a safe space, someone to go to. And with that, I think understanding their intrinsic behavior styles, like introversion extroversion, really helps to, you know, channel that, that feedback and I think the feedback that has always been come back as the best feedback given to my introvert, friends and colleagues, and this is what I'm going to impart on you is that you guys are, you guys have so much power in the room? Because I think like me, you see things through a slightly different lens than everybody who just wants to hear themselves talk. And that's a lot of what as extroverts, when we lean on that side you know, that's what we're doing. We want to talk, we're exuberance, we're, you know, we're excited and you kind of get to really digest. Since we're using so many adjectives and so many verbs, you get to really just pull out the nuggets. And you can because all you guys are the Smarties. You can pull out all that extrapolate all that all what they're trying to say, process what you need to. And then the thing that's missing is is that where I think work from home helps, is that a lot of times what do you do now with that with that, and it can be to your point, just hard sometimes being and so now you have some thoughts, you want to share them. Do that, like if you could just work to make your voice heard in whatever capacity it's powerful, it's meaningful. It's necessary. And I think when we're in such a virtual environment, the ability to type it out, the ability to put it down in writing, instead of having to verbalize it to somebody is really helpful and really beneficial for folks who have introversion, but also have maybe other you know, things going on we are having that sort of in person dialog is just absolutely terrifying. I think there's so many good benefits, and then this is just my plug for work home really quick.

**Sharon Hurley Hall** 50:31

We're right there with you!

**Tara Furiani** 50:32

It just solves for so many things, you know, you want to be participants are in a meeting. And you know, a lot of times you're just over talked by people in the room. And I think with having things like teams and

zooms, and whatever, you can type those in the chat box, and it feels comfortable, you can contribute in ways that feel comfortable to you, instead of just the forced, everybody sit around this table, and we're all just going to talk and you're gonna have a turn and you're gonna have to say stuff and, and that can be really terrifying. And so that is I guess, it's a two pronged kind of deal. Like one work from home is so beneficial for so many people with so many neurodivergencies whether it's introversion, at a base level, or its others. And the second piece of the puzzle for introverts directly, is do make your voice heard though, in whatever means possible. Because without that contribution, and I'm gonna say some harsh things without having that contribution without injecting yourself and keeping things inside and I know you guys do it, I do it. Without doing that we could be missing vital pieces that can make our companies better the world better, our selves better, each other better. Really leaning into you know that it's not the person who talks the most. It's the person who has, you know, what's what's necessary to be said. And I think we're introverts fail sometimes is not not allowing themselves to have a voice and it can be in whatever manner you is relevant for you. If you are in one of those big meetings right now, if you're back in the office, and you're at a round table, and you don't have the luxury of being on teams anymore, because that's the reality for some people. Go back to old school times when that meeting is over and type your notes back out to the team so that your voice can be heard. still continue to to have that outlet for yourself. If you can't do it face to face, you don't want to do it or doing it causes you more than it's worth saying go back and and still allow for your voice to be heard and recognized and contributing to the group.

**Sharon** 52:46

Thank you so much, Tara. This has been absolutely wonderful, amazing, empowering, healing for us and hopefully also for our listeners. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you, folks, be sure to follow Tara everywhere LinkedIn, IG Facebook, her site and I'll drop the links in the show notes. This has been the introverts sisters. Thank you for listening, and we will catch on the next episode. Bye