



Episode 132: SHEDDING SOCIETY'S LAYERS

This is the *Become an Unstoppable Woman* podcast with Lindsay Preston Episode 132, Shedding Society's Layers.

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Welcome to the *Become an Unstoppable Woman* podcast, the show for goal-getting, fear-facing women for kicking ass by creating change. I'm your host, Lindsay Preston. I'm a wife, mom of two, and a multi-certified life coach to women all over the world. I've lived through enough in life to know that easier doesn't always equate to better. We can't fear the fire, we must learn to become it. On this show, I'll teach you how to do just that. Join me as I challenge you to become even more of the strong, resilient, and powerful woman you were meant to be. Let's do this.

[music]

Lindsay: Hey there, my friend. Today is a very enlightening episode. I hope you're ready for it. Today I have a very special guest, her name is Alyssa Hall. You may have heard me talk about her recently. She has been my anti-racism/DEI coach since January, so for the past eight, nine months now, we've been working together. Today we are going to talk about what the journey has been like for me to do this work and I'm going to share what the journey has been like and felt like because, in essence, what I've been doing these past few months, yes, on paper, it could look like DEI training, anti-racism training, but it's really been me shedding society's layers.

This is work we all need to do regardless if we are business owners, or "leaders". Just to throw this out here, we're all leaders. Regardless of if you consider yourself a leader or not, you're influencing at least one other person, so you are a leader and this is work that needs to be done for you to live a deeply fulfilling life for you. It's for you to go in and say, okay, what are all these, in essence, beliefs society has thrown on me without me even knowing it? What do I want to think instead about the world and about others and about myself? How am I playing into these beliefs without knowing it and, in essence, maybe even too causing harm to other people?



Today, Alyssa and I are just going to walk through this journey of what it's been like for me these past few months. Why I came to her, what people think the journey is going to look like and what it really looks like. A lot of people, for example, think the journey is going to be people bashing on whoever the client is, especially if they're white of like, "Oh, you bad white person," totally not the case at all. My journey has been full of empathy and full of growth and it's been a very beautiful process. Again, we break down all those common misconceptions about how it feels to do this work and Alyssa is going to share some nuggets with you today, to open your own mind about how society's layers may be impacting you.

Just a little bit about Alyssa is Alyssa is an African American and Cuban woman, and she is a certified life coach. Upon completing her training at the Institute for Professional Excellence in Coaching or otherwise known as iPEC, she began her journey coaching corporate leaders and business owners on mindset and leadership. She now uses those same skills to coach on anti-racism. Her main area of focus is strengthening the leadership skills needed to have an anti-racist environment. Alyssa also focuses on the personal growth each individual needs to go through to become anti-racist themselves.

She also uses her own experiences as a Black woman to call attention to certain issues that may not be highlighted in the broader community. I have absolutely loved working with Alyssa, so much so that even though we're wrapping up one-on-one coaching together, I'm now going to be in her group program, which I'm so excited about to continue to learn off of her. I'm thrilled to share her with you today so you can learn off of her as well. Without further ado, here is my interview with Alyssa Hall. Hi, Alyssa.

Alyssa Hall: I'm so excited.

Lindsay: [chuckles] This is a very bittersweet moment. This is our last one-on-one session. Now I'm going to move into the group program with you so this isn't the end but it has been such a journey over these past few months working with you.

Alyssa: Yes.

Lindsay: I wanted to reflect on that today and then just, as I said, hit record and so everyone can hear of what it's really like to do anti-racism work or commonly known as DEI work. What do you want to call it? What do you call it?

Alyssa: I've been really playing around with it. The way that I really conceptualize this work because I feel like DEI is step two and anti-racism is step one since we focus so



deeply on just you as the individual person to then allow the DEI stuff to happen afterwards.

Lindsay: Where do you think we've gone? What would you consider this journey? [chuckles]

Alyssa: I feel like this journey with you, I'm just beaming this whole time. Working with you and having you as a client and seeing your growth has just been something that I've had to ask myself just like, "Okay, how do I do more of this? Where do I find more Lindsays?" Because this growth that you have had of being prepared for diversity is what I see anti-racism work as; figuring out what's going on within you and seeing how that is being shown through your business in terms of the way that you have set things up in your business, or even just the clients that you're seeing coming into your business. How that's a reflection of what is going on inside there and some of the things that you have been, I don't want to say upholding because that sounds very conscious but have just been inside there.

Like when we talked about the body thing, I still will never forget that call. That links to so many things and I feel like where you are in your journey now, you are so ready to take that next step. This next step will be a little bit hard, like bringing in new people, bringing in diverse clients, seeing what all that looks like is going to be hard but you have done so much internal work and you've been tested so many times on this internal work. [laughs]

Lindsay: I know, right? We have to talk about that. That's what I want to talk about, Alyssa. I started to think before this interview, what most people think either anti-racism or DEI work is like. Here's what I wrote down. You tell me what you think, okay? They think that you're going to come on this and you're just going to be made to feel really bad about yourself, especially if you're a white person. Oh, my gosh, they're just going to make you feel like the shittiest person alive and that you're going to stay there and it's just constant shaming almost, like "You bad white person, right?"

Alyssa: Yes.

Lindsay: I also think when people do this work, they think, "Oh, they're going to tell me to include everyone. To not have standards or boundaries."

Alyssa: Yes.

Lindsay: We have to talk about that.



Alyssa: [chuckles] We did.

Lindsay: Okay, because that was part of the journey. I think they also think they want me to become politically liberal.

Alyssa: Yes. [laughs] Reading all the notes.

Lindsay: Yes. I also think they think they're going to take my power away as a person. They're going to want to control my thinking and not have me think on my own. In essence, make me a little robot.

Alyssa: Yes. Oh my God. [laughs]

Lindsay: Then I also wrote that, okay, this is especially for the sensitive souls out there. If I go and I do this work, I'm just going to feel like shit all the time because I'm actually going to have to face how shitty the world can be. What did I miss off that list, Allyssa?

Alyssa: I don't even think you missed anything [laughs] because that's exactly what it is and I hear it from so many people. I think another thing too, is just people feeling like they have to be a martyr in order to do this work correctly. Like, "Oh, well, I can't sell high-premium pricing anymore. I can't do X, Y, & Z," and it's just like, "Yes, you can." You can still make money, you can still hit your goals, you can still do all of the "selfish" things that you want to do, we're just maneuvering, how it gets done.

Lindsay: I'm so glad you brought that up because it's so freaking true, so freaking true. It's like, you let everybody out and you don't get paid. It's so not true. Here's what I want to say first. None of that is true and I want to prove it in regards to how this journey is fun for me. I want to start with how you and I met in January of 2021. It was the week of the Capitol thing. What do we even call that anymore? Whatever.

How this all started is my events, social media manager came to me who is a Black woman, and said, "Lindsay, are you going to say something?" I was like, "Oh, the mics on me? You want me to say something?" Because the way I treated my social at the time was just like, "Oh, I'll just throw stuff out there." I sort of comment on things, I sort of don't. I don't really know if anyone's paying attention, whatever. She wanted to make me more intentional. I sat with them. I said, "Okay, what do I really want to say here?" I even re-read the post today.



I said something along the lines of, yes, Trump and his supporters, it's no surprise what has happened here. He's obviously narcissistic, and that was a big stretch for me to just come out and say that. Then I also came out and said regardless of their behaviors, let's find love and forgiveness. Let's come to a place where we can move forward in action, of course, but in a way where we're not super angry. I got a lot of great feedback from that. It was like oh, yes, Lindsay. Thanks for that reminder. Great, so awesome. I posted it right before I went to bed and those were the first people who responded.

I was thinking about how I had been coaching my clients and coaching my own brain throughout those past three months to not be in just hatred toward Trump and his supporters. Then I woke up the next morning and then there were some women of color who posted on it who were like, Lindsay, you have no right to say this as a white woman. Two, also taking in when things like that happen, be it the Capitol takeover or whatever, my MO is typically let me just be somewhat informed but I'm not really going to take in all of what happens because it's very uncomfortable for me and I don't want to really see everything. I'll just get informed and then peace out. They were like, Lindsay, they were coming in there with all the different kinds of racial hate. I forget all the details, Alyssa. Do you remember?

Alyssa: It was the most, I feel like, alarming thing that I've ever seen in my entire existence but there was just so much hate but also there were weapons, it was just a really strange-- I feel like strange is the nicest way to put it but it was just so much immense hate that was in that large crowd of people.

Lindsay: Yes, and then too, looking back on it, it does to me very much represent potentially how it looked whenever we ended slavery. Just that anger from one side and so that can be triggering to a lot of people, right?

Alyssa: Right.

Lindsay: Especially if you're a person of color or a Black person in America. Anyways, these women were calling me out like, you have no right to say this, and of course, at first, I was very defensive and then I started to sit with it and started to say how could they be right? I started to sit with, "Lindsay, you didn't really take in all the videos," and two, when I started to get really uncomfortable with it all, I was like, "Ugh, who cares? F-it. Why do I even care about race?" Then I was like, "Oh, yes, this is white privilege. This is white comfort. All of the things you have been reading about, Lindsay," because I have been



doing my work intellectually for a couple of years. I was like, you can just check out but they can't.

Seeing that blind spot and not catching it faster was so eye-opening to me. They say a lot of times when people change, it's because they had a broken heart or an open mind. I had both at the same time like, "Oh, shit," and so, immediately, I took action probably like 24 hours later. I went into a community that you and I are a part of and I said, "Hey, I really want to hire an anti-racism coach so I can become the advocate I want to be." Your name was mentioned and I interviewed a couple of coaches but I knew from the start, I was like, "I think Alyssa's my girl."

[laughter]

Then you and I got on the phone and I don't even remember what you said to me or anything. I was just like, I love her energy and your niche is anti-racism work for coaches, where the other coaches it wasn't their niche, and then we started this journey. I remember you looked me up, Alyssa, right?

Alyssa: I did. [chuckles]

Lindsay: Tell everybody what you thought about me.

Alyssa: Oh my gosh. I love this. Whenever anyone reaches out to me, I'm always just like, oh, what do they do? I always look everyone up. The main thing that I noticed with Lindsay's is that she to me, and I feel because I'm in the world of coaches a lot, particularly life coaches to me have a very similar marketing style. I don't know how to describe it but it's like super vanilla is the best way that I can describe it. I'm seeing this whole thing and then I saw the Capitol post and I was like, oh my, okay. [chuckles] Okay. I'm just like, oh my gosh, this poor woman. I'm hoping this is why she's reaching out to me.

[laughter]

Because I can see where her intentions are and I can also see where it went left. Something that I just remember too, even in thinking about that moment, and when I think about one of the deeper parts of what this work looks like is being able to take a situation and connect it to other things that are going on and see how they connect. Even in thinking about the Capitol thing, for me, what I was thinking about was how there was so much hate and anger and just danger in that situation but it was not treated as such. It was just treated as, "Oh, look at these people just doing a thing. Hopefully, they don't hurt



anybody," and nothing really happened to them, compared to when nothing is actually going on where they're treated as if they're all going to go on a murdering spree and they need to be controlled and taken care of.

I feel like when I saw your post, I was like okay there are surface-level things that she's seeing but there's underneath things that she's not able to connect to, whether it be like you mentioned, not having the full information, or not seeing how it connects things, whatever. The main thing that I remember is the way that your content was, was very much like the same that I always see. I remember bringing it up to you and I'm like I don't know if she's going to understand what I mean by this. [chuckles] I need her to see this as a reason when we talk about diversity being the second step of this work, we need you to be able to feel 100% comfortable with who you are and show people that. Because then I got on the consult with you I was like, wait a minute, she is so chill. I really love her vibe, where is this in the social media?

Lindsay: Yes, which we would've later in the journey when you call me out on that, right? I think that's so interesting too because going back is like I hired Alyssa, we start working together. I'm going to come back to what she said because it was super important. Where we started was you had me take Monique Melton's Anti-Racism Habits class. Am I getting that right?

Alyssa: Yes, the Racist Habits class.

Lindsay: If you don't know Monique Melton, how would you describe her, Alyssa? I view her as very outspoken.

[laughter]

Alyssa: This is a little like you all are finding out all my secrets today but I purposefully give my newer clients her workshop because I know 120 things are going to pop up. There's going to be the thought that she is too abrasive. When we were talking earlier about what we believe anti-racism work is, that is the way Monique presents herself in a box and seeing all the thoughts that come up from that. Then on top of that, what she's saying is accurate. She's really good at teaching minute concepts but in a way that is going to be triggering to people.

Lindsay: Exactly. I remember coming to you after I listened to that class. I was like listen, Alyssa, I am totally on board with all of these things. I know intellectually that these are the things not to do but why can't she say it nicer? Remember that?



Alyssa: Yes.

Lindsay: You were like, part of it is to not say it nice. From that, I was like, oh shit, I've been tone policing and I myself have been people-pleasing and watering myself down for the comfort of everybody else along with this. That's where we started that ball rolling of, Lindsay, your social media is not in alignment with who you are as a person. I knew that and I was like, "Yes, Alyssa, I hate social media. My podcast is totally in alignment, the way I coach is in alignment but I freaking hate it. I don't want to do it," and you were like, "Yes, it shows." [chuckles]

And too it also showed is that we were talking about some consults that I had and I was like, "I feel like I'm jarring to people or they just feel off by me," and you were like, "Yes, Lindsay, because you are not fully authentic in every step of your business." Again I was like, "Oh shit, you mean I'm still people-pleasing," and just me having to shed that own layer because to me, social is where everybody sees you. I didn't feel comfortable with that because it was like, well, once you get into my world, I'll show you who I am. You were really challenging me, Alyssa. You have to show it from the start because you're not going to attract women of color at all or even just the ideal client that you want because they're going to be like who's this cookie-cutter white girl, in essence, right?

Alyssa: Yes, exactly that, and that's what for me, being on the consult with you, before, I'm not going to say I was nervous, I was just like, okay, I'm wondering how she's going to conceptualize the story of what happened on your on your social media platform, how she's going to tell me the story. Then when I met you, I was like, "Oh my God, this is a completely different person." I know so many coaches do this, and it's from the same thing of just as women, we're conditioned to people please and to do the thing that we need to do in order to get in. Then once we're in, we will hopefully feel safe or comfortable enough to take the bra off and--

Lindsay: Right, shed the layers.

Alyssa: Yes, exactly.

Lindsay: Yes, you were really challenging me from the start of like, okay, Lindsay, we've got to shed the layers, and it started with that class, again, of like, oh, you mean people are allowed to just say it however they want and they're allowed to be angry? I took in too from that first call I think, Alyssa, even maybe our consults, we talked about you we're like, "What you said, Lindsay, necessarily wasn't bad. You just weren't thinking about women of color when you said it." That to me was such a huge aha because I was like, "You're totally



right. I was thinking about myself, how I coach myself and my white clients," through this whole thing.

That to me was like, that's not okay. I need to be thinking about other women's journeys. If I'm going to sit here and say, I'm a coach for women, then it needs to be inclusive to all women. Part of our coaching journey, Alyssa, was then really getting in the headspace of very typical stuff, but the typical Black woman, that I would work with. The typical Asian woman I would work with. Getting in their shoes and what steps they needed to take in order to get to me, which I thought was so powerful.

Alyssa: Yes. Yes, and I feel like, for people who don't understand what it is am I talking about, [chuckles] for me, I'd talk about it in the sense of, as women, we have a ton of societal messages that we have just been raised as this is how we have to do things, like what we spoke about with the people-pleasing. That's how we're taught. This is how we exist, this is what you do, blah, blah, blah. Depending on your cultural background or depending on your race, there's layers more of societal messaging, but then also the way that society treats you shapes what your journey is.

What we did with you, Lindsay, was really talking about what has their journey been and why is it that they're coming up to you to want to own their power? Where have they lost that? What is that they're trying to gain from working with you?

Lindsay: Yes, which is so powerful because I've always understood the general woman's experience, but then to just go a little deeper and it's like, okay, what is it with white women? What is it with Black women? What is it with Hispanic women? And so on and so forth. To a lot of people, they'd be like, well, again, shouldn't we just be color blind? Shouldn't we just treat everyone the same? If you're still at that stage, you're probably need antiracism training 101. [chuckles] I was there a few years ago, I totally get it. As somebody who's always had a very diverse group of friends, when people would come out and say, "Let's do anti-racism training," I'd be like, "Why? I don't need that."

It's so important for people to be fully seen as themselves and to just acknowledge, Alyssa is a Black and Hispanic woman, Lindsay is a white woman, and just taking that in. It's not to put people in different boxes, right, Alyssa?

Alyssa: Right.



Lindsay: It's just to fully allow them to be seen so then we can fully allow them to heal, in essence, what they may have gone through, so they can fully step into who they're authentically meant to be. That's my take on it. What would you say?

Alyssa: Yes. That's exactly what it is because when we ignore parts of people's stories, how are they going to heal from that, and how are they going to acknowledge how it's actually a part of their own story? Because when we don't acknowledge things with people, it just brings on a lot of shame. It brings on a lot of, "Oh, this was me. Oh, okay. There's no explanation for this thing. Okay, it was clearly my own fault." Really it's like, nah, girl, it wasn't you. It was this and this and all this messaging and this way that these people have been taught to treat you and all of these things to make it so that, "Oh, okay. I'm aware of this now. Now I know how I can move forward knowing that this is going to be a part of that and what I can do."

Lindsay: Yes, and I think for so many people, they think on two ends. If you're not that person of color, they're like, "Oh, well, then they're just going to stay in victimhood. That's what they want. They just want an excuse. They just want a ticket of why they're not successful." I've also seen from my clients and people I've been around, is they don't want to acknowledge their culture as well because they are aware of that stigma of other people judging them for it and being like, "I don't want to acknowledge I'm Black." Because then it's going to be like, "Oh, poor Black girl," right?

Alyssa: Yes, exactly.

Lindsay: We just have to say, "Hey, this is just what it is. Here's general societal messages because of that." Because like you said, they internalize it of what's wrong with me? Why can't I get what I want? Yes, some of it may be on them but it's so freeing to know too of like, well, here's just what society typically is, it may not be your fault.

Alyssa: Right, right, and the best way for people to understand and the way that we have talked about it a lot is how our experience as women have been similar. What are things that we have been taught and we have been treated in a certain way, and just like how does that frame our story, and what good does it do to pretend that that's not happening?

Lindsay: Exactly. It just makes the stigma of us being crazy. It makes us feel more crazy.

Alyssa: Exactly. Exactly.

[laughter]



Lindsay: What the hell is going on here? Yes, so we've been going through everybody's shoes and really like, okay, what is their journey to get to me? On that, Alyssa, part of that really breaks that one thought I mentioned earlier is that DEI or anti-racism work is saying let's include everyone. You've really challenged me to be like, let's get really clear on who your ideal client is and see what her qualities are, and in that journey, I've actually upped my game. I've taken on less people at certain stages because the reality is, and you called it, one of our sessions is like, "Lindsay, you really need a client who already has self-awareness," and I was like, "Holy shit, how am I not seeing that?"

I just want to blast that of like, it is so not true that this work just has you accept everybody at saying, "Here's what my boundary is. How can I find more diversity in that boundary?" That's why we did that work too of everybody's journey to get to me.

Alyssa: Yes, Oh my God. I'm just like, after this call, I'm definitely going to cry of happiness. [chuckles] Yes, exactly that because I remember we had a conversation too about standards and what does it mean to uphold standards while at the same time understanding someone's journey? It's like, okay, well, we need to pay attention to what is important to us in terms of the way that we want to work with people. Are there parts that we just can't do? That is okay. Are there parts we're really good at, we just need to understand how it looks for different types of people and getting super clear on that. That has been just amazing seeing you go through that.

Lindsay: I go back to a couple of different stories that pop up for me. The first is, remember we were working through, I was going to let someone go on my team who is a woman of color. I said, "Alyssa, I'm doing this work but I really don't think this woman fits anymore. Am I potentially showing bias here?" You sat me down and you were like, "No, Lindsay, this is just a standard or a boundary."

Also in that journey of me realizing, okay, it's okay to let her go, you opened my eyes to the power dynamic between me being a white woman and any woman of color. You were like, "No matter what happens, there's probably going to be this unspoken dynamic between the two of you," and me just being aware of that was so eye-opening too. If you want to just touch on that, Alyssa, what that is?

Alyssa: Yes. Oh my gosh. That was really a deep conversation too, of just understanding the way that people are going to behave around you. When you have a client or someone on your team, or just a person, in general, who's at that same level of power dynamics, and



what I mean by that is, in the pyramid of society that we are currently in, the very top of the totem pole is straight CIS white men, and then it's like everyone else underneath that.

For everyone, I'd love for you to conceptualize, wherever you are on the pole someone who is exactly like you, what that relationship dynamic is like compared to the way that society has created this power dynamic of maybe you and a man or you and a white man since they're at the very top. What does that conversation look like? What are the expectations that you are expected to behave like or interact like based off of that power dynamic? A lot of these things aren't rules that we have in our head, we've just been socialized to behave in this way in order to just- for survival, to keep moving forward.

When it comes to women of color and white women, there is automatically a power dynamic that no one wants to be there, no one is asking for it to be there. It is just there because of society, therefore, or even just like an employer and an employee, there's that power dynamic there. No one is asking for it to be there, it just happens to be there. Therefore, the way that we interact with people is going to be very different based off of the power dynamic that's at play and that's something that we had spoken about of don't expect a woman of color to interact with you the same way that a white woman is going to interact with you because the level of comfort is wildly different.

The way that you interact with a person may be taken a different way because of the societal power dynamics. The things that you would say to a white woman may be taken differently than if you said the exact same thing to a Black woman, because our brain is almost like translating it different because of the culture, because of power dynamics, because of all of the things that are there. It's just like, even if you decide to let this person go and hire another woman of color, this thing is something that you still need to internally work on to make sure that that relationship is amazing and runs smooth, and feels comfortable for your team.

Lindsay: Yes. That was one of my takeaways too from that was okay. Moving forward, Lindsay, how are you going to create even more comfort for women of color just because of this dynamic. Whereas to me, I never saw it obviously, because I'm higher on the totem pole. When I did compare it to me and men, I was like, oh, it's totally there. If I walk into a room of men, even though I'm doing the mindset work to be like, okay, I'm but there's still just those unspoken messages and that discomfort that comes up in me of "woo I'm in a room of men."



The other thing too was really interesting. When you and I coached on that, I was letting go at the time of a woman of color and a white woman on my team. I handled it the exact same way but their response was very different. The woman of color just quietly left, didn't say anything, and the white woman came to me and said Lindsay, what can I do differently? How can I get better? I came to you and I said, oh Alyssa, I wish the woman of color had come to me and said that. That's where again you were like, yes, but Lindsay you didn't create enough comfort probably. Two, you've got to think of the difference in conditioning between the two. Can you explain that, Alyssa?

Alyssa: Yes. This is another one where it's really good to think about the way that men are socialized compared to the way that women are socialized. Women are socialized to be quiet like we mentioned before, people-pleasing, just being motherly, nurturing, whatever those words mean, that's how women are socialized. Men are socialized to be aggressive and forward and to ask for things and not even ask for help, but ask for the thing, whatever it is.

That's men and women. Now, when you think of women of color, depending on their cultural background, they may have been socialized differently of just like, listen, we need to do X, Y, and Z in order to remain safe. These are all safety maneuvers that have been turned into just how we've been culturally raised and understanding where that is depends on the cultural background of the person. Like someone who is the child of an immigrant may behave been raised very different from someone who's been born here.

America we, since I am the child of an immigrant, I can see both sides. Americans are raised in the terms of being very forward, getting what they want. That is their thing. When you're the child of an immigrant, it's like, let's just not make too much noise. Let's not cause too much trouble and let's just do what we got to do. That's the mindset. Seeing how that looks in the way the person is then brought up was a lot of things.

That we have to instill in ourselves, what is the word? Not aggressiveness, that's not the word I'm trying to look for, but being able to ask for what you want and continuing to do it and not stopping, that is like us having to do that or even like seeing our parents having to do that and then we have to try and do that ourselves. A lot of it comes from culture. A lot of it comes from societal messaging. A lot of it comes from safety measures that our parents and grandparents had to use, but we aren't socialized in the exact same way as white women so you see like things that can be seen as-- My God, my brain is like-- This ADHD loves to turn itself on and turn itself off when it wants to.



[laughter]

Lindsay: I know, I know.

Alyssa: Things that can be seen as entitlement, that's the word. Entitlement. That can be looked like in many different ways but a lot of people of color are not raised with that being a part of the way that we are brought up of we are owed this thing, like, duh, of course, this is ours, versus we have to work hard, we have to do this, we have to do X, Y, and Z. The mindset is very different, so when you see how someone is reacting to something, it can be from a lot of these core things. I don't know if that made sense. I hope that made sense.

Lindsay: Yes, that totally made-- It totally makes sense. That's where again, as a coach, it's so important for me to understand everyone's mindset, right? Granted, it's asking questions I can put that way, but just getting a general idea of what is probably going to be their mindset based off their experience being whoever they are, right? Being able to just be aware of that so I could find blind spots that maybe they won't even know is there.

Then also looking at it from a space of being a business owner of how can I create so much comfort that we lessen that power dynamic. You had even told me with the woman of color who didn't ask for questions for feedback, to just tell her and say, hey, here's what you can do to improve in the future. I will tell you between those two women, then, with the white woman, we were able to talk things out and we were able to continue on the working relationship, whereas the woman of color, we didn't get to really have that and so then that relationship ended, and that right there is just one example of the difference of why certain people get farther ahead than other people.

I still take blame for that because, like you had said, Alyssa, I don't think you created that comfort because I didn't even think there was a power dynamic. I was just like, here it is, we're all at the same level, which we are not.

Alyssa: Right. Right, and that's the main thing that I hear from a lot of people too of just like, well, why can't- and you touched on it a little bit before, too- just like, well, why can't my whatever client just tell me that this has to do with whatever, or why can't she, that has to do with racism or this has to do with society, whatever. You mentioned it before of just, if that person doesn't have comfort with you, then they have been, just calling it what it is, they've been gaslit their whole life around these situations, made to feel crazy, so they're not going to just openly tell a person when they don't even know how much you know about the situation because they've been made to feel like, okay, you know what, let



me just not say anything about the race thing because they're just going to tell me that it has nothing to do with it even though I know it does. There are so many, thinking of someone who's been gaslit about their existence, their whole life, how much more can that show in other places as well?

Lindsay: Yes. Well, and I can only relate to it from a gender perspective of being gaslit, and some days too, it's like, I'm not fully consciously aware, oh, I can't say this right now because I'm not safe. I just intuitively know it of like, oh, I just don't feel comfortable to say this in this space. If I am consciously aware of it, I will then think something along the lines of, I already feel like I'm trying to heal the last traumas, I don't want to add on another trauma of you not being able to hold space for me.

Alyssa: That is huge. Yes, that is very much so too, of just like, and thinking of the different layers of where gaslighting shows up. Because it can show up in exactly what we're talking about of how it relates to our identity, but it can even show up in telling someone about themselves. Let's say we were to go back to the situation with the team member. If that team member even had anything in their mind of just like something that they may have felt that you did wrong for example. If they've been gaslit their whole lives about everything else, it almost, like for me, the way that I say to my brain is like, is it even worth it to have this whole roundabout where I'm not going to get anything out of it? Let me not even bother so that, exactly like you said, so I don't add another layer of frustration, anger, trauma, whatever.

Lindsay: As I did this work from a lot of Black women, especially, they're just like, "I'm so tired. I'm so tired." Even as I did this work because not only am I doing this work intellectually, which I felt like I'd already done, I finally was doing it in my body and feeling through it. A lot of the time also like, "Ooh, this is tiring," because you do, you have to go in and fully recognize, "What has really happened to me in my life? Where has society screwed me with its own layers in essence or structure or beliefs?" It's not like we're here to be mad at anybody, point one finger, it's just the system we've all upheld, but it is. It's shocking and jarring.

You and I have had conversations on many different topics about society over these past few months. One of which we were just talking about before, about the diet or the looks call that we had, where I got on the phone with you and I said, "All right Alyssa, I'm finally ready to talk about the diet industry and how it impacts everybody," because I must admit, I have benefited from that. I've always been naturally thin, and so when all these other women are like, "Oh, I hate the diet industry," I've been like, "Well, it's bad, but it's not so



bad." For whatever reason, I can't remember what woke me up to it, but it was like "F" this, let's talk through it.

I just share that because I view this work of doing DEI Anti-Racism, whatever you want to call, it is such an internal transformation. You and I have talked about this too, is like, it is very uncomfortable. It's uncomfortable work for sure, but it does lead you to your authenticity in that process and people fear that so much, because they don't want to be uncomfortable but in essence, you're shutting all of the stuff you didn't even want to be a part of anyway.

Alyssa: Yes, that's the most amazing piece is, a lot of us are just down with the patriarchy, "Burn it down, blah-blah-blah," and it's just-- Clearly our values are aligned with it, but we don't realize how much we're still taking in all of the same stuff, but we're translating it and it looks different but it's the exact same thing. Not only are we harming ourselves in the process, honestly, but then just everyone else that just comes into our space, they aren't able to heal from it in the way that we really want them to.

Lindsay: Yes, you're speaking with coaches. If we don't do the work, how the hell are we going to ask our clients to do the work? If I'm sitting here all about women owning their power, becoming their authentic selves, this was the work that I needed to do to get there even more. This is something you said on one of our calls too. It wasn't like what I was doing before was not authentic or "wrong or bad" it's just then I grew and my perspective changed. So many times in our society, it's like, "Well, was one of these posts acted good or bad?" Well, it was a little good and a little bad.

Alyssa: Exactly.

Lindsay: Then she shifted in the vault

Alyssa: Right, and that's something that I feel like is important. I'm glad you brought that up because with everything that we do, there's no all good or all bad, it's just, "How can we be more aligned with our values and taking actions to uphold those values and stepping further away from problematic stuff?" That's literally what this work is and without it, we're just continuing the cycle of the problematicness, but again, it doesn't make us all good or all bad.

Lindsay: Yes. I want to go back to what you just said a bit ago of--Yes, we're all like-- Especially a lot of the women I work with, they're like "F' the patriarchy, we see how it



impacts, especially in corporate America and it's BS." Well, you can't just sit around and in essence-- What do they call it? What do they say? Just talking the talk.

Alyssa: Yes.

Lindsay: You're moving your lips, performative allyship. It's like, you actually have to go in and really feel through this shit of like, "Okay, how has the system impacted me and how am I upholding the system in ways that I don't want to be a part of?" Having some mourning in that and some self-forgiveness in that, and asking for forgiveness in that process too of anyone you may have harmed and then being like, "Okay, all right. Now, how can I do better?"

Alyssa: Exactly. I always talk in the context of coaches, because that's who I work with but honestly, it's all of us. I can even think of my own self, where my journey really began. I was just opening up like, "Oh, this is what's going on," and that changed me a lot in the way that I saw my parents raising me. There was even a deeper understanding there of just like, "Oh, okay."

That allowed me to release some annoyance and frustration there, and then what that shifted to was like, "Okay, well, how can I in my privilege of being a business owner, say, 'how can I continue to align myself with this and just by existing, make it so that we're shifting further and further away from it?' What is my place in this, and what does that look like and how can I acknowledge the privileges I have so that I can help other women get to this place too?" There's so much deep work in doing it as just a regular person.

Lindsay: Totally. That's why we all should do it. In my world-- You and I coached on this recently of just, even my husband, I'm like, "Dude, you've got to do the work of just seeing how you say you're a feminist, but there are things you do to me where you mansplain on me, talk me out of my truth, you don't even realize you're doing it, and it's super harmful to me. It's super hurtful."

It has this trickle effect of like, "Bring everybody else who needs to do their work." It's all human work. It's not just for white people, or for coaches, it's for everybody to do. That's why, Alyssa I've brought you on this next year to work with my group clients-

Alyssa: You have.

Lindsay: -and my mastermind for ongoing clients, because it's like, "Oh, my gosh, everybody has to do this just for their own self-transformation even if they don't want to



be an activist, or all of the things. Just by you shutting your own layers, You're going to transform the world just with that." Would you agree?

Alyssa: When I tell you random life things that-- I have this one colleague, we're in a group together. Her name is Nina Everflow. I remember I was really not feeling well, but-- I had a call with you that day actually. This is a whole other story, but there was a day, this other woman was stalking me. It was a very--

Lindsay: Oh, yes I remember that.

Alyssa: It was a bad mental-health day because of all that, and I remember I was just like, "I don't want to cancel my calls, blah, blah, blah." Nina was like, "By doing this, continuing to work even as you're not feeling well, you're doing the thing that you hate. You're aligning with white supremacy culture and saying like, 'oh, yes, we just keep pushing forward even when things are terrible.'"

I was like, "Oh, my God, you're right. Okay. I'm just not going to do it. I'm still going to feel weird about canceling all my calls today, but I know that I'm aligning with something that is important to me instead of continuing to perpetuate the norm of, 'hey, we're terrible. We are sick. We are mentally not feeling okay, but I just have to show up anyway.'" No.

There are so many little things like that and just everyday life of just like, "Okay, I'm noticing a thought coming up. Where is that thought coming from?" Challenging what I'm saying about myself or what I'm saying about other people on a regular day, just so that I can then feel better, because there's so much stuff that we have weighing on us, or we feel like we have to align with in order to get ahead. That's very heavy, and to be able to just release that is amazing. Like you said, regardless of what you do or regardless of who you are.

Lindsay: Again, we could talk so much about just that one thing about professionalism and white supre-- Because even if you hear that word white supremacy, and you're like, "Oh crap, that's scary." It's not as scary as you think. A structural system that we're all-- Even white people are not benefiting from.

Alyssa: Honestly.

Lindsay: Yes, but that's what's been such a benefit of this, Alyssa is, I went in thinking, "Okay, I'm going to do this work for other people, and be an anti-racism advocate even more because that's what I want, and that's what I want as my legacy," but going in and



being like, "Oh, shit, I'm going to transform in this process too?" Or "I have to do the work? I'm going to have to set these layers and get really incredible," because just that one you mentioned, a professionalism and showing up what we think. We have to show up all the time and be perfect. Just shedding that and continually shedding that is so uncomfortable for a lot of people, especially I think business owners, because they were like, "Holy shit, are my clients going to fire me?" My livelihood is on the line," and realizing that you can do those things, everything will be okay. Then it inspires somebody else to be like, "Oh, I get to call in sick too. I get to take a mental-health day." Everyone's talking from the Olympics of Simone Miles-

Alyssa: Exactly.

Lindsay: -and it's like, "When one person does that, it's a trickle effect."

Alyssa: Exactly. When I think of what my work is, it's like, "To make it so that other people are also creating the trickle effect in their worlds, in their lane." That's why I'm so excited about what you're doing and how you've grown in this journey, so now your clients can do the exact same growing and how this can show in their lives. Even if it's their moms and their children, seeing how their daughters will now see themselves differently and grow to be just more stronger and powerful, again, just as a result as you deciding to do this work.

Lindsay: I'm glad you brought that up. With my own daughter, we've always read the books and done the things and she's been even more of an advocate than I have, but her owning her own power in these past few months in so many ways, and me not even really talking about this journey as we've gone on, Alyssa with anybody really, because it's just been work that-- You know when you're going through something, you don't want a lot of people's opinions in it, you're just like, "I just want to keep my head down and really figure out what's true for me" but just people feeling my energy change like her, for example, and seeing her step into it. I'm like, "Holy shit, what's going on?"

I've told you too of-- There's a period where I had a bunch of consults a couple of months after we started working together. I didn't close them like I normally did, but I was like, "But they're not really clients I want to move forward with." Then there was kind of a dry spout, and then all of a sudden I've been getting these consults again and I'm like, "Alyssa, these women are so different," But my social still needs a lot of work. I really haven't even talked about the work you and I have been doing, but something about my energy is different. People can feel it off of me, so that's the power of this work for sure.



Alyssa: Yes. I'm a mom, I have a five-year-old. Sometimes I notice some things that my mom would say in the exact same moment, and things that I don't say. Something that I noticed a lot about my own mom was that she-- She was Hispanic, but she was also very, very anti-Black. We don't have to have to explain what that is, but definitely go look that up.

Interviewer: What? Even though your dad was?

Alyssa: Yes [laughs].

Lindsay: Oh, my gosh, Alyssa.

Alyssa: Her current boyfriend is also Black.

Lindsay: [chuckles] That's a whole other topic.

Alyssa: Not my business, not my problem [laughs], but there were so many things that she would say to me. A lot of these things are just very normal in Hispanic culture, where it comes to the hair conversation. That's a whole thing. Having your curly hair be natural, that's messy but there's so many little things that I notice that my daughter does that remind me of myself, and I'm just like, "Wow, my mom would say X here, and just with me not saying that, that alone is having my daughter feel more comfortable with herself."

It's little changes like that. Even if we don't say-- That girl doesn't know what I do. I feel like it'll be so long before she actually understands the work that I do, but what she will notice is how much-- Like she said, she's able to own her power and own her individuality just from the things that we are now either saying more, or not saying to them.

Lindsay: Yes, that's like so many days when I'm journaling and I count my wins, like on a day if my kids are really representing themselves and owning their power, I'm like, "Win for me," because I'm creating that, because I know what it's like not to have that. On that note, Alyssa, to wrap this up, I would say that doing this kind of work is really the biggest middle finger you can give the society ever.

Alyssa: It is.

Lindsay: Don't you think? Of like, "I'm going to first figure out this whole societal structure that I've been part of," what some people then call the matrix, "That I haven't even really even signed up for but I was born into it. What is this thing?" Then, "How do I want to fit into this?" Especially as a woman to be able to do that, especially a woman of color to be



like, "How do I want to represent myself intentionally and authentically in this?" Which is a whole other conversation, Alyssa, that you-- You and I really coach on intentional decisions, making sure we always make intentional decisions.

Then, being like, "Okay, how do I want to show up?" That is so rebellious. That to me is the ultimate definition of success, to be able to fully be yourself in this world regardless of any room you put yourself into. Can you ask for a better existence?

Alyssa: That's what I'm saying. It is so good to be able to redefine for people what things are. I want to be a millionaire and still look and act the exact way that I always have, and show that this is what it looks like. This is what success looks like. I don't have to assimilate it any way, shape or form. I don't have to look "professional". That is like the-- Like you said, the biggest middle finger that you can give to the Patriarchy, and it's just like, "Yes, why don't we all do this? This is amazing."

Lindsay: Yes. This goes back to the line I use often, is, "I hope you create the success you want while feeling good in the process," because so many of us create the success and we're like, "But I've totally lost myself," or "This is exactly what I did not want, but I've run in to please XYZ person." This work is like, "Okay, not only are you going to shed this one layer, but you're going to shed all of [crosstalk]."

I even told you during part of this process and my skin was literally shedding and there were areas I was like, "What the hell is happening?"

Yes, I know, Alyssa, the journey's not done for you and I. I'm going into your group program the next few months, but anybody who wants to start their journey and doing this kind of work, where would you suggest they start?

Alyssa: I really feel like the best places to start is just within yourself. We've talked a lot about self-awareness during our time together, and really noticing in yourself, what has come up for you? What do you feel like is missing for you, and seeing what feels uncomfortable? There's so many little markers that I see whenever I look at other people's social media, I'm like, "I can see it, yes. You should be doing this work." It's little markers. One of them is-- Like we were talking about, if you feel like you feel uncomfortable being your full-self, that is one thing.

If you feel like societal messages for you have been almost constricting, and it's very difficult to release yourself from that. Even when it comes to societal pressures about being a mom, they all come from the same place to keep women in their place and not



doing anything. It all has the exact same route. If you ever hear me say white supremacy culture, it's the exact same thing as the patriarchy. They're brothers.

It's the exact same thing. If you notice that for yourself, then you know that it's time to be able to do this work and you'll be able to do it deeply, instead of just feeling. I know a lot of people are just like, "Just tell me what to do," and it's like, "No, that's only one part. I can tell you what to do but you also have to internally do the work so that you can execute on doing those things."

Lindsay: I will tell you from my experience, once you just get the ball rolling, it just starts coming out. It's like, "Oh, and that's bullshit and that's bullshit and that's bullshit." And like, "Oh, God, I didn't know this was going to come up for me." Once you open that door, it's just like you go on this journey and you just get guided, and you just start shutting all of these things that no longer serve you. Luckily, you have a coach along the way to hold you and be like, "Okay, it's going to be okay," because there is a very uncomfortable moment.

Some feelings you have to feel, but I want to go back to it and with this is that a lot of people think, "Oh, I'm going to come in this." Especially as a white person, it feels so bad. I will say during this whole process, it's been the opposite. You've held a lot of empathy for me. There's been a lot of times you're like, "Lindsay, you don't have to do everything today. You're doing more than enough." I think especially for a lot of coaches or just people in my world, they want to really impact the world and like, "Okay, let's just simmer down. Let's just look at you for now. What can you do right now? How can you heal? What can you shift?" and that can be more than enough.

Alyssa: Yes. Literally, I feel like when I talk about this, especially then like, "Oh, I don't have a business. I don't have the--," You are an individual person and the way that I classify a leader is if you have one person who will listen to you talk, and actually take in what you're saying. Whether that be your friend, if your parents actually listen to you, that's amazing, that alone. You have a child, whoever that is, if you have one person that will listen to you, and that means if you shift, you have one person who will at least be able to see things differently.

Lindsay: Totally. Go do this work, go check out Alyssa's stuff. We'll put all the links in the show notes. You're only working with coaches now, Alyssa, right?

Alyssa: Yes, mainly coaches and other service-based business situation people.



Lindsay: Yes, but still go follow her on Instagram.

Alyssa: Yes.

Lindsay: What's your handle on Instagram?

Alyssa: It's ARleadership

Lindsay: ARleadership, because there's a lot of great teaching and then get on her email list. Every time I get your emails, I'm like, "Damn that's good."

Alyssa: [chuckles] Thank you.

[laughter]

Lindsay: Thank you for this journey, Alyssa. It's been such a joy and I'm so glad we're going to keep doing it.

Alyssa: Yes, me too. Thank you for having me.

[music]

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