

PODCAST TRANSCRIPT



EPISODE 53

*A Return to Episode 32:
You are the Author of Your
Own Life Story,
What Will You Create With It?*

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HAPPY EXECUTIVE WOMAN

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### **A Return to Episode 32: You are the Author of Your Own Life, What Will You Create With It?**

I've always had a vivid imagination even in childhood. Being a daughter of older parents and the youngest in my family meant that there was a lot of alone time. My childhood is where I grew to love reading, listening to music, and business.

I would get lost in my imagination traveling to the places I read about, and seeing myself there, especially when things were chaotic or confusing. I could always retreat to my inner sanctum and create what I wanted or needed at that moment...

*...And so can you!*

The imagination, or as we call it as adults, visualization, can help you create the life that you want.

**You are the author of your life story.**

Meet me inside the episode as I share with you a few stories from my childhood and where my motivation came from, for wanting to be in business. And then I will give you a few things to consider so that you can begin to create your own life story, no matter how busy, tired, or frustrated you are.

See you inside the episode.

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Who are you?

No, *really*.

If I would have asked you, who are you, how would you answer? Would you tell me your name, who your parents were, where you grew up, where you work? Maybe how many businesses you own, or the number of boards that you sit on?

Those things would help me understand a little about you, but they wouldn't answer the question, not in the way that I'm looking for.

So when I set out on the path to find my truth, my happiness, I had to take a good look at my life, especially since I have not always been in the best of situations. So I had to figure out who I wanted to be and what type of life I wanted to have.

You see, ever since I was a little girl, **I knew that I wanted to be in business**. I was surrounded by people in my life that left a lasting effect on me. My dad was a plant supervisor at Hunton Wesson, now known as Beatrice Foods. My Aunt Carrie was an office manager, and my mother was a beautician that owned her own salon. We now call them stylists, but my mom was a beautician and she had a beauty shop.

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**So I have several fun childhood memories that I'd like to share with you today.**

Whenever possible, I recall rushing home after school to see my dad off to work. I love the fact that he carried a big old briefcase to work every day, and that he had the... what was that called? It's the plastic pen holder that they used to put in a shirt pocket. I forget the formal name of it, but he had one of those, several of those and he would swap out once the ink would leak from his pens. He would swap it out and get a new one, but I love that about him.

**My dad was my hero.**

He had mechanical pencils in his pockets, he had files and cigarettes in his briefcase, and people reported to him. In my eyes, that made him super important. The way I saw things, if they left him in charge, he might as well own the place.

The level of respect his team had for him was amazing. They would come up to us asking him questions, some about math, others about temperature. No matter what they asked, he had the answer.

I never saw him raise his voice to his staff, and they seem to truly care about him.

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The briefcase was also my favorite, because every Saturday morning, I would check his briefcase, and just like that, like *magic*, a pack of Chuckles would appear just for me. And for you, younger listeners out there, you may not have any idea what Chuckles are, but just think of, if you're familiar with orange slices, they were the pack of candy that you get in the vending machine that has the red, green, yellow, and black. In there, it was red, green, yellow, black, and something else... the purple! It was five different candies in there, and that will be my treat every Saturday.

So I loved my dad, you know, he just seemed like the best, the best boss ever. And I was like, oh my goodness, whenever I become the boss, whenever I'm in charge, I want to be that type of person.

But I also knew that my dad, he was very matter of fact, right? You could smile, and he would smile and laugh with his team, but they knew he meant business. So they always got the job done, and they did it right. If they didn't do it, right, there was, you know, they had to answer to him. But as far as I know, that didn't happen too often.

Next was my Aunt Carrie. That was my mother's sister. When I went to work with her as an office manager, she had her own desk, right? You know, sometimes, when you go into the office, or when children come into the office, you see the parents sitting at one desk, and or they're getting up and they're going into their boss's office, and they're doing things in the boss's office. And that's how it used to be when my kids would come

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to work with me. But my Aunt Carrie had her *own* desk.

Now that I think about it, it could have been her boss's desk, but he was never there when I went to work with her, so she sat at the desk.

But she was always in charge, and she just commanded the office. She had this presence about her. She was in charge of office supplies, which meant that I could pick my favorite color of post-it and any color pen I wanted. Well, it didn't matter what I wanted. If I wanted it, she let me have it, and that's probably what started my obsession with Office Supplies.

#### **Hmm, it's funny when you pick up from your family...**

Anyway, she paid the bill. She took the phone calls, she managed everything about the office, and her boss trusted her so much that he left her there all by herself. And in my child-brain, I'm thinking she has the keys and everything.

Oh my god, she was the smartest person in the world to me, and so she was also one of my role models. She was also someone that I looked up to because she was in charge and she made things happen. She was also no-nonsense.

And then **there's my mom**. And if you've been listening to the podcast for quite some time, you've probably heard me tell you the story about my mom never having graduated from elementary school. Yet she graduated with a 98.6 out of 100 on her final exam in cosmetology school. I know this because she is so proud of this, and she tells

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the story as often as she can.

She worked in a shop beauty shop with another woman named Bernice. So my mom and Bernice shared this shop together. It was if you think of a garden apartment, they had turned the front two rooms, one into the actual salon with, you know, two sinks, and then the beauty chairs and dryers, and then the next room was the waiting room. But there was also an apartment down there and this old man lived in the back. If you needed to go to the restroom, you had to walk through his living room to get there. So it was a little weird, but he wasn't there too long.

And soon after he left Bernice decided to retire, and when Bernice retired, my mom took over the business full time, right? So I saw my mom as like, oh my goodness, my mom is running this business by herself. It used to belong to her and Bernice, and then the guy in the back. I can't remember his name. He used to live there.

Now the whole place was my mom's and when I would have to, you know, go to work with her, I didn't have to sit up front. Didn't have to sit in the hard chairs all day. You know, I would go playing with the kids outside, or I was her errand girl. I'd run to the store or run to the restaurant for her clients.

But it didn't matter, right? Because **Mom was the boss, she was in charge.** And she kept her beauty shop outside of our home until maybe about my sophomore year in high

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school. After that, she built a salon in a basement, once again, proving that she could do anything and that regardless of her lack of formal education, she was going to handle it all. She covered the household necessities, and she even paid for my private school tuition.

Mom bought my clothes, and since she was a stylist, my hair was always fresh, and I'm using air quotes here, I was her “walking billboard”. While I didn't have to pay her to get my hair done, I was still the errand girl. I was the designated Uber driver back then, picking up clients and taking them home. Once I got my driver's license, I kept her inventory picked up her supplies, restocked her products, and clean the beauty shop. I would eventually pick up a thing or two about doing hair, which still serves me to this day.

So after digging into my family history, I learned that **I came from a long line of entrepreneurs and individuals who held prominent positions in the workplace.** So there was no way I can escape it.

*It's in my DNA.*

My mother and her sister were from a small town in Louisiana, and my father was from the Bronx. But even though they were from different parts of the country with different experiences growing up, **they decided to create their own story.**



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They set out on the path to create a life according to what they saw as possible for themselves.

Looking back as I write this episode, that is the greatest gift that could have ever given me.

My experience as a single mother, domestic abuse survivor, Black woman in corporate America, as challenging as they were, they never stopped the vision I had for the life that I wanted to create.

I knew I wanted to be in charge, and I've done that in the military as a sergeant, as a single mom, as a woman that walked away from an abusive marriage, in the many leadership roles have held in corporate, as an entrepreneur, owning and operating several businesses, as a volunteer, as a mentor, and in many other ways.

And if you've ever worked with me, now you understand what the drive and the will to keep getting up no matter how many times I've been knocked down comes from.

My ancestors were not only survivors, they were trailblazers. They had warrior spirits, and **they didn't take no for an answer, so they showed me the way.**

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For years I ran from the strength of my ancestors, not giving them credit for fear of not being able to assimilate into the culture which paid my bills and put food on the table for my children and me. But the more I step into my truth, heal my own wounds and allow a safe space for my clients, the more authentic I become.

As the author of my life, every now and then I sit down and look at where I am in the following areas of my life, mental, spiritual, financial, educational, recreational, career-wise, business-wise, and relational. I look at what is working for me and what isn't, and I get to the root of why it's not working, and then dive into the reality of what needs to happen in order to create the life that I want.

Some will tell you that calling attention to what you don't have is counterproductive, and I disagree. If you don't look at your current situation, and then compare it to the life that you really crave, how will you know what you need to change in order to get there?

You can either create your life *on your own terms* or *allow others to create it for you*.

**Patience is required.** Don't beat yourself up, life is a journey.

You may never reach your destination fully, but as long as you are intentional about where you are, what you're doing, to get where you want to go, why you're doing it, and whether or not it feeds your Spirit, *you are creating your own story*.

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Being intentional means understanding that your journey, if fully lived, will involve delays, setbacks, and even disappointments, but those things are all a part of the process.

Just like my family members before me, **I can do anything I put my mind to**. I have the ability to create the life that I want to experience, and I'm intentional about it every day.

And if I can do it, so can you.

Just keep creating, what have you got to lose?

See you in the next episode.