

PODCAST TRANSCRIPT



EPISODE 66

*A White Person  
CAN Lead DEI Efforts*

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HAPPY EXECUTIVE WOMAN

## Episode 66

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### A White Person CAN Lead DEI Efforts

*I'm going to let you in on a little secret...*

**Most of my Black and Brown sisters and brothers don't believe in or trust the DEI efforts that companies spend so much time and resources on.**

To be fair, it is truly a slippery slope operating in the corporate arena while attempting to address mental, emotional, and financial trauma that has resulted from companies and corporations for centuries. Companies are not currently equipped to handle this level of responsibility, but that doesn't mean that there isn't something that they can do. With DEI training companies popping up all over the place, owned and operated by people of color, you still have to know what questions to ask, what problem you're trying to solve, how you will present this level of training to your employees, and what the follow up will be.

See you inside the episode.

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**Companies should never do training just to check a box.**

## Episode 66

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### A White Person CAN Lead DEI Efforts

However, it happens this way all of the time. Ironically, some companies are interested in shifting the culture and making a safe place for all and are putting the time resources, and an honest effort into figuring out how to do so. Still, **it's impossible without involving the people you are trying to reach in the planning process, if not letting them take the lead.**

What ends up happening is that companies don't take the time to do their homework to identify precisely the root of their diversity and inclusion issues. The financial, the equity portion is usually addressed more so than the diversity and the inclusion. *They're all important*, but today we're going to focus on the diversity and the inclusion portion.

So I was having trauma-informed conversations with several of my White friends recently, who I know to be great people. They are faithful supporters of people of color, but they would never know what it's like to live in a Black body and work in corporate America.

Something occurred to me as we talked about the lack of Black and Brown people in conversations about what would be helpful and meaningful to us. I have lived in a Black body for 57 years, I have also spent the last 30-plus years learning how to assimilate into a world that was not my own, get along with those in charge of my livelihood, and navigate the world as a Black single mom trying to do whatever she could to provide for

## Episode 66

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### **A White Person CAN Lead DEI Efforts**

her children. In addition, my continuous study of metaphysics has helped me ask myself more profound questions, which has given me a level of understanding about myself and others that most will never reach.

I can quickly identify my client's challenges, which helps me guide them and their healing in the right direction.

I can also detect a person's insecurities and weaknesses, allowing me then to fill in the gaps whenever needed to continue to move up the corporate ladder.

**Most people have not dedicated their lives to personal development.**

They have not unzipped their body suits to go deeper into the core or the spirit of who they are, how and why they respond to things or people in a certain way, and what they need to change to become on the outside the person that they think they are on the inside.

So if this is true for most individuals in corporate America, how can I expect them to look at things the same way I do? **I can't.**

But what I can do and what you can do is utilize the subject matter experts available to be that lens of consciousness that is needed.

## Episode 66

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### A White Person CAN Lead DEI Efforts

If you do not have any people of color and leadership positions or very few, *you are still operating on an outdated model.*

I don't know your company structure or how long it takes to make a cultural change in your organization, but there is still something that you can do.

As the DEI leader, you can enlist a Black mentor's help inside of the organization or hire a consultant from outside of the organization to assist you in this effort. Someone that isn't afraid to call you on your blind spots and your BS and hold you accountable.

**Before doing this, you need to do quite a bit of soul-searching.**

Putting yourself in this position will not be easy. There will be times when they will question your character, or it will feel that way. Sometimes your ego will get bruised or your feelings will get hurt by what is said or insinuated, and you are not to react. There will be moments when your privilege will question why you are allowing yourself to be handled by a Black person and allow them to speak to you that way. *You will have to check that also.*

## Episode 66

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### A White Person CAN Lead DEI Efforts

Moving into the DEI space as a company cannot occur without the leaders having gone through a reorg of how they see themselves as part of the problem and the complicit-ness they have subscribed to.

**Being a faithful ally will mean you will willingly step into the eye of the storm**

**spiritually, mentally, and emotionally.** It means being reborn like Neo in *The Matrix*, and layer upon layer of falsehoods and misrepresentations will be exposed and need to be discarded. More on this subject in episode number 57 of The Happy Executive Woman Podcast™ titled “To My White Friends and Colleagues”.

The bottom line is that **if you're going to be a conscious leader, whether or not you are functioning in the DEI space, it is imperative that you grow as an individual first.**

You must make the shift and start leading your department, your area, your district, your region, or organization by example. Your company must figure out what stand it wants to take on all things DEI, then do what needs to be done to share and reinforce this message from hiring to retirement, from the lowest position to the CEO. And for goodness sake, **stop trying to lead in an area where you have no lived experience if you are not yet ready to face your truth without getting defensive.**

## Episode 66

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Black people have had to learn how to assimilate into White culture and tone down what they honestly think and who they are to make you more comfortable. *Now it's your turn.*

We are not looking for a handout, a savior, or sympathy. We want to make things better for all of our Black and Brown sisters and brothers who will come behind us. **We want our ancestors not to have died in vain and our lives to mean something and to have the same opportunities at the same pay rate afforded to others.**

Well, now that you know this, *what will you do about it?*