

PODCAST TRANSCRIPT



EPISODE 77

*I'm Black, I'm Beautiful,
and I'm Proud of It!*

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HAPPY EXECUTIVE WOMAN

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### **I'm Black, I'm Beautiful, and I'm Proud of It!**

I got the idea for this title from a gif I received on Martin Luther King Jr Day from a friend. There was no sound, but the words followed the movement of his mouth. **I'm Black and Beautiful, Yes! I'm Black, and I'm Proud of It!**

She has no idea how that made my entire week, month, *AND* year. Starting my morning with this gif will carry me throughout the week as I continue to do this work, no matter how challenging or energetically draining it can be.

Reading the captions brought to mind a few conversations I have had over the past couple of months with friends and colleagues who experience the world through White bodies. Even though these conversations were similar, *the awareness of the individuals was different.*

**Join me inside the episode to see if you can identify yourself on either side, mine or theirs, and what you can do about it** if you find yourself in conversations like these in the future.

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### **I'm Black, I'm Beautiful, and I'm Proud of It!**

As I continue to grow more confident in my voice as a beacon of change for the Black and Brown experience in the workplace, **I am more open and honest about my experiences in corporate America and of those that look like me.**

So this means that in conversations with my friends and coworkers that do not look like me or experience the world through White bodies, *I am more direct than I have been.* Based on where they are in their understanding of our differences, their level of allyship, and their knowledge of the Black experience in America, their reactions vary from defense to acknowledgment to **"help me understand what I can do differently."**

I haven't always been in touch with or courageous enough to stand in my Blackness in corporate spaces in the way I am today. It's as though everything that took place in 2020 shook me so violently to the point where *I walk through life with my eyes wide open vs. partially closed*, as I did before. I've talked about this time in my life on several podcast episodes, so feel free to go back and binge the podcast if you'd like to learn more.

Due to the balance of power and how the corporate environment was set up at the beginning of my career, **I learned how to navigate the corporate space safely.**

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Even now, I see myself explaining in this fashion instead of just saying, "White people." The voice in my head reminds me, "*watch your words,*" you don't want to come across as the angry Black woman, even though that is not my intent. **It's a conditioning that I am slowly learning to grow out of.** One that, if I'm really honest, isn't mine to "police." But that's another story for another episode.

For those that have met my alter ego, **Shanequa Shay Shay**, and for those of you that haven't, this is the persona that I created that was free to speak her mind, and she was expected to. And she was even requested to appear at specific meetings other than showing up as my *polished* self. **The people that know this person or have seen this persona understand.** Instead of seeing me as angry, they know and have shared that I am justified in having been slighted, disrespected, talked down to, overlooked, underpaid, yelled at, micro-managed, *you name it*. They can sit with me in those moments, trying to understand better what happened and how not to inflict more of the same on other Black or Brown people with whom they come in contact.

In other words... **I'm not judged.**

Suppose you speak up as a Black woman "**too much**". In that case, you get in trouble, you get labeled a troublemaker, and there is a silent investigation started to gather

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information to help get you out the door in a manner that doesn't reflect negatively on the company.

**Doing this work is not for the faint at heart.** You must have the inner strength to withstand the stress, the overwhelm, the looking over your shoulder, the cya-ing, collecting of receipts, and other items to make sure you have evidence to counter any false claims or slander of character.

#### **According to Leanin.org:**

"Even as they navigate an incredibly difficult experience, Black women are pushing their companies to do better. Black women are more likely than any other group of employees, including men of color and women of other races and ethnicities, to spend a substantial amount of time on DEI work that falls outside their formal job responsibilities. They are more likely to speak out against bias and discrimination at work—and more likely to experience retaliation for doing so. And they are more likely than any other group of employees to step up as mentors and sponsors to other women of color. Many Black women say they do this work because they feel it wouldn't get done otherwise—which speaks to the urgent need for employees with more privilege to show up as allies." (1)

When I read this quote, I was like, **"Oh my gosh, this is so me!"**

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This is a quote that was taken from “*Women In The Workplace: Black Women*” Insights from the 2021 Study conducted by LeanIn.Org and McKinsey & Company. I will make sure the link for this article is in the show notes for you.

As I read that, I was like, “Wow, that is so me!” It has often been *me* that has been the voice for those that do not have a voice or don't know how to use their voice or can't speak their voice. I started being that voice of the silent sufferers when I started doing speaking engagements and relationship coaching, and when I came out as a domestic abuse survivor myself. So, for me, finding my way out of a situation or finding the courage and the strength to stand in the face of adversity, whether it's racism, or whether it is domestic violence or any sort of negative action that is taken towards me, whenever I find my voice, I tend to use that voice to amplify the voice of others, **and that is exactly what I'm doing here.**

This quote also mentions that Black women are more likely than other groups of women to step up as mentors and sponsors. So that shocked me because that is also what I do. I have at current probably 3.5 mentees that I'm working with in this space, and then I also have clients in the same space that I'm working with. So it's not just enough for me to grow through these things, but it's also important for me to reach back and to help other women that look like me, other Black women get through these challenging times as well.

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### **I'm Black, I'm Beautiful, and I'm Proud of It!**

Even though this work is taxing, as the Corporate Metaphysician™, it is my mission to answer the call of the Black and Brown women who hire me to help them heal from corporate and relationship trauma, increase their confidence, and improve their leadership skills. **They recognize that they can't heal what they are not willing to face.** Since everyone is not in a position to walk away from their jobs, we work together to help them find ways to navigate the waters confidently and calmly, *all while being in command of their emotions.*

So if you're not really sure about what that means, **let me break it down.** So we work together to make sure that they can go to work, do what they need to do, and face the people and the situations that they need to face without losing their minds. Okay, *that's about as plain as I could put it for you.*

I was asked, do I only work with Black and Brown women? Absolutely not, but here's the thing. If you're conscious enough to be coached by a Black woman, I'm comfortable enough to coach you, and **I know that I can help you!**

I want to share two conversations that stand out to me as examples of what it means to be involved in this work every day and the possible responses one may receive.

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Conversation #1 –

I was asked a question that would have made any other Black person's hair stand on edge on the back of their neck. I didn't remove myself but instead took it as an opportunity to spend the extra energy to attempt to have a conversation that would lead to an eye-opening experience.

Results: Defensiveness, frustration, and quite a bit of back and forth with me having to explain why my comments were justified. Ultimately leading to the other person seeing things differently.

Conversation #2 –

This individual reached out to me directly to ask an honest question about their ability as a White woman to lead DEI efforts. She didn't have to do this, but she valued our friendship and understood subconsciously that "something just didn't feel right."

Results: Eye-opening conversation where the truth was shared, acknowledged, and appreciated. Along with the confession, "I recognize that I have the privilege to take the DEI topic off the shelf and put it back up there when I don't have the capacity to deal with it, **but you don't. You're Black every day!**" And she was absolutely correct.

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### **I'm Black, I'm Beautiful, and I'm Proud of It!**

This is the type of person that will eventually as they continue to move through the DEI space will become an ally and really understand the voice of the Black and Brown people that she is looking to be an ally for. If you're not open to the conversation, if you can't accept the truth coming back at you, no matter how uncomfortable it is in that moment, imagine how we as Black people feel every day. **This is our everyday experience every day of our lives, for our entire lives**, and if you can't handle one conversation, you know, then *there's some growth that needs to happen there*.

During 2020, before doing the necessary work to reconcile my own corporate trauma, the forgiveness of others and myself, finding then using my voice, identifying what needed to be healed, and then embarking upon that healing, I would have steered clear of these conversations altogether. Not because I didn't have anything to say but because I didn't want to upset the friendly White people.

**Today, I take the opportunity to be THAT voice.**

*The voice that...*

- Is on a mission to heal corporate America from the inside out, from the top down and the bottom up.

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I'm Black, I'm Beautiful, and I'm Proud of It!

- Helps my Black and Brown sisters feel heard, seen, understood, valued, appreciated, more confident, and ready to lead despite the challenges they face every day.
- Trains, Speaks, and Consults for Dynamic Organizations looking for ways to do things differently, are open to learning how to create Conscious Sustainable DEI and Conscious Leadership programs, and are willing to consider doing things differently to ensure they follow through on their promises even if that means bringing in someone that may disrupt their regularly scheduled programming.

Do you consider yourself an ally for your company's Black and Brown team members?

Are you willing to have your conditioned ways of thinking challenged?

Ready to learn how to have *transformative* vs. *performative* conversations?

The truth is, you may never be ready, but **if you're willing to do the work, it's time you get started!**

Thank you so much for listening, and I will see you in the next episode. Be sure to check the show notes for upcoming speaking engagements.

I am going to be in Miami at the Flourish Media Conference. The conference is on February 17 and 18th in Miami, Florida. I will be in Miami though starting on the 15th of

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### **I'm Black, I'm Beautiful, and I'm Proud of It!**

February. So if you are in Miami, reach out to me, and maybe we can grab a coffee! We can connect or I can send you a link for you to meet me at the conference. Totally up to you.

**In March, I'm the keynote speaker at the IREM** which is the Institute of Real Estate Management chapter luncheon **on March 30, at the Drake in Oak Brook**. The topics that I am discussing there - I'm the keynote speaker - I'm discussing conscious, transformative versus performative DEI programs and how they impact your employees. You can click on the link to learn about the other topics that I will be speaking about.

And I forgot to give you the topic that I am covering for the Flourish Media Conference. I am creating a workshop for them, and I'm also speaking on How to Heal from Workplace Trauma for Black and Brown Women. Now, this is a conference that is for us women business owners and small business owners, and it was created by two Black women. However, all women are welcome, so you do not have to be a woman of color to attend or participate.

**I would love to see you there.**

*Until next time...*

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(1) *Women In The Workplace: Black Women*; Insights from the 2021 Study; LeanIn.Org and McKinsey & Company; September 2021

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#### Recently featured in...

- [ValientCEO Magazine](#)
- [Speaker's Magazine](#)

For all coaching, media, or consulting inquiries, don't hesitate to contact Anita at <https://anitacharlot.com/contact>.

To learn more about how to partner with Anita, go to <https://anitacharlot.com/services>.

To join the waiting list for the upcoming For My Black and Brown Sisters monthly membership community, go to [bit.ly/formyblackandbrownsisters](http://bit.ly/formyblackandbrownsisters).

#### Upcoming Speaking Engagements:

Flourish Media Conference **2/17 - 2/18** Miami, Florida

Topic & Workshop: How To Heal From Workplace Trauma for Black and Brown Women

IREM Chapter Luncheon **3/30** Oak Brook, IL

Keynote Speaker; Conscious Transformative vs. Performative DEI Programs and How They Impact Your Employees