

PODCAST TRANSCRIPT



EPISODE 78

*Healing Corporate America
Consciously from the
Top Down*

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HAPPY EXECUTIVE WOMAN

Episode 78

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### Healing Corporate America Consciously from the Top Down

Just when you thought companies were starting to understand the importance of caring about and caring for the mental health of their employees, **this happened...**

A global survey by Headspace Health shows that at a time when employees need them the most, some companies are *cutting back on mental health offerings*.

**71% of workers** say their company increased the focus on mental health in the wake of Covid-19, but **just 25%** say they have kept up that focus in the last year.

**83% of CEOs** and **70% of employees** report missing at least one day of work due to stress, burnout, and mental health challenges. **(1)**

With this information, how can companies afford to go backward?

#### **What should they do?**

Over the past three years, I have become increasingly interested in corporate America's mental and emotional state. I've asked if companies are willing to tap into mental health and even if they are equipped to do so from an infrastructure or legal perspective.

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Healing Corporate America Consciously from the Top Down

Join me inside the episode as I share my thoughts and my prescription as a corporate metaphysician as to **what companies can do in order to heal their companies from the top down.**

See you inside...

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In conversations with DEI representatives at various companies, I've heard comments like...

*"We provide as many external mental health resources as possible but would need a complete overhaul and training of our managers to do more internally. I can't even imagine what that would look like."*

*"My company feels there should be a separation between our internal programs and mental health-specific focus like church and state. There are too many legal things to consider to stand up an entire program. Where would we even begin?"*

*"My company would NEVER take on this challenge; they are unwilling to face the truth, and the leaders would never bring it up for fear of losing their jobs."*

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When I decided to take on the mission of healing corporate America, I had the same thoughts and more, especially around corporate trauma, diversity, equity, and inclusion, **and** the corporate experience of Black and Brown women.

I asked myself questions like...

- Is it even possible to heal corporate America?
- What would it take?
- Does this rest in the Human Resources department, or should it be a separate department altogether?
- If so, should the members of this department be employees of the company or hired as an external arm?
- Should there be Psychologists on staff like there are in schools?
- Would the C-Suite even want the responsibility?

The more questions I asked myself about healing corporate America from the top down, **the more I questioned my sanity for wanting to embark upon this journey in the first place.** I may not see it come to fruition in my lifetime, but I believe in the benefits of it and will do my part to at least plant the seeds.

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### Healing Corporate America Consciously from the Top Down

Recognizing the challenges ahead of me, *what is my prescription for corporate America as the Corporate Metaphysician™?*

**Working from both the top down and the bottom up... one company, one leader, one Black and Brown employee at a time!**

It only takes one person at the very top to recognize the infestation of outdated and discriminatory practices to turn the ship's helm in a different direction. Even with budget cuts, **it is still possible to make a difference by focusing on the company's missions and values.** And I'm not just talking about doing lip service, but *putting in the effort to grow as leaders*, then craft performance reviews and evaluations on the new mission and values created with *real* diversity, equity, and inclusion practices in mind.

I would even go as far as to prescribe personal development in diversity, equity, and inclusion, including urban trauma training, as a requirement for advancement, raises, and promotions. **How can a company claim to be conscious or be led by conscious leaders, employ and promote unconscious managers?** It makes no sense... Make it make sense to me! **Until you've walked a mile in a Black or Brown woman's shoes, how can you create programs that speak to her traumatic experiences?**

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Healing Corporate America Consciously from the Top Down

So what is required even to head down this path? *Leaders that are willing to grow in consciousness.*

Leaders that are not afraid to...

- Hire a Black or Brown coach to help them (and their leadership) recognize their privilege and expose their unconscious/conscious biases and microaggressive behaviors.
- Do the difficult introspective homework necessary to understand the effects of corporate trauma on their Black and Brown employees and how they have been complicit.
- Begin to acknowledge the trauma and learn how to create transformative DEI efforts, not just "box-checking" or performative.
- Admit that they have the luxury of dealing with DEI topics at the office when they want to or have the energy to, when their Black and Brown employees are Black and Brown every day, without the same luxury.
- Realize that doing this work will not be easy on them mentally, physically, or psychologically and may result in them being treated like the Black and Brown people they are looking to support.
- State out loud to themselves and their direct reports that there is so much to learn and that the only way to do so is to learn from Black and Brown people that are not afraid to "call a spade a spade."

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### Healing Corporate America Consciously from the Top Down

"Talking about mental health or anything to do with employee wellbeing used to be the sole responsibility of human resources," says Pascual. **"Now it's the responsibility of every leader." (2)**

(You can find the link to the quotes that I'm providing in this episode in the show notes.)

When companies realize that it's not only up to the CEO or the HR department to shoulder this responsibility, but **it is the responsibility of every leader**, the requirements to become a leader will be very different.

Suppose leaders are unconscious of their privilege and how that leads to their microaggressions and behaviors perpetuating workplace trauma. In that case, *they should not be in leadership*, especially in the DEI space.

Conscious leaders are not *blindly* focused on the bottom line, their salaries, or their bonuses; **they care about connecting authentically with their team members, understanding their stories and history, and making them feel more accepted for who they are and being included as such.**

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Healing Corporate America Consciously from the Top Down

Is this possible? **Absolutely!** But you can't get this way just by listening to this podcast or reading several books. You need to work with Black and Brown coaches and trainers that can "**read between the lies**" that you and your ancestors were taught all of your lives and then call you out on it so that you, too, can see it for yourself.

Working with someone as outspoken as me is not about shaming you or making you feel bad for being born into your skin. **It's about working with you through the lens of someone that has "lived experience," someone that can point out your blind spots and help you "grow through them."**

Should you be brave enough to step into this arena to do the work of healing corporate America from the top down, you have to be ready to be talked about, ridiculed, become the subject of a smear campaign, possibly be called an N*-lover, by your peers, *maybe even friends and family*. You'll soon recognize the difference between those that *truly* desire transformative change and those that are for change as long as it doesn't take anything away from them.

In other words, to fully step into the arena of being a true ally, a true champion of change, **you risk losing friends and relationships** (both personal and professional) and **enduring the same workplace trauma that your Black and Brown employees**

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**Healing Corporate America Consciously from the Top Down  
have suffered from all of their careers.**

*You could be treated like "one of us."*

It may sound like I'm trying to discourage you from doing the work. Not at all, but I do want you to recognize that IF you are going to do this work, **you have WORK to do on yourself FIRST.** Black and Brown employees don't need a White savior; we need White people in power to Act with Transformative vs. Performative DEI strategies.

Looking for a Black coach to come into your organization to speak, train, or consult with and train your leadership on Conscious DEI and Transformative DEI Practices? **You know where to find me.**

Head on over to my website [AnitaCharlot.com/Contact](https://www.anitacharlot.com/contact) and let's have a conversation.

*Until next time...*

### **Sources for Today's Quotes:**

CNBC.Com (1)(2);

<https://www.cnbc.com/2022/05/10/companies-are-pulling-back-on-much-needed-mental-health-benefits.html>

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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