

She Said/She Said Podcast With Laura Cox Kaplan

Episode 242

Title: How To Shift Your Mindset, Boost Your Mood, And Build Your Influence!

Guest: Meaghan B Murphy, Editor In Chief, Women's Day Magazine

SHOW OPEN

Laura Cox Kaplan ([00:06](#)):

Building influence is something anyone can learn. It's an investment you can make in yourself, and it can hold the keys to achieving your dreams and having the life and impact you want to have. I'm Laura Cox Kaplan. I've learned a lot over three decades about building and sustaining influence and how using it and using it effectively can make a big, big difference in your life and career. Here on She Said, she Said Podcast, we're digging into the different dimensions that help us build and sustain influence. If you thought being an influencer was just for social media, think again. Whether you're starting a business, raising money for a cause, negotiating a promotion, running your household, or trying to connect with those who don't share your views, understanding and using the different dimensions of influence will increase your chances of success. Whatever your goals may be, listening to She Said, she Said Podcast is a smart, efficient investment you can make in you. I'm really glad you're here and I'm excited. We're on this journey together.

EPISODE 242 INTRO:

Laura Cox Kaplan ([01:20](#)):

Hey friend, welcome to the podcast. Have you ever heard the advice to dress for the job that you want versus the job that you already have? How about a different take on that same concept dress for the mood you want versus the mood that you might currently be in, especially if it's bad? The concept of engaging in little micro habits and tactics and practices, things like wearing things that you like to make you happy and feel good is scientifically shown to have mood boosting power for many people. The same can be said of a lot of other types of micro habits that we can engage in that actually help us create the conditions to impact the way we might react to setbacks and roadblocks along our path. It's about mindset and things that we can do to create a mindset that's geared to support us better when we ultimately fail.

Laura Cox Kaplan ([02:24](#)):

Now, I've just completed teaching a course on influence that I developed for the Women in Politics Institute at American University here in Washington dc. As part of that course, we did a deep dive into the concept of mindset and the science behind it and how all of that relates to our stories, both the stories we tell ourselves and the stories that we ultimately share with the world. Mindset and engaging in activities that help us achieve a level of optimism is actually a powerful concept that goes all the way back to the king of influence. The much celebrated, and I would say often parodied Dale Carnegie, his book, how To Win Friends and Influence People, which he published back in 1936, has sold more than 30 million copies and has been published in multiple languages. It's been republished multiple times, including a more recent re-release just a year or so ago.

Laura Cox Kaplan ([03:26](#)):

The thing is, the concepts really are timeless now. Carnegie was a devotee of the founders of what we now know as the positive psychology movement that we think of today. Think people like William James

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and Martin Seligman. But what's so powerful and potentially useful is the connection to how shifts in behaviors, often really small ones, when practiced consistently and habitually can impact not only our mindset, but how we face a challenge, and then the potential impact that that has on the outcome. So even if our mindset doesn't change the ultimate outcome, it can shift the story that we tell ourselves about the potential value that comes from a setback. Now, this week I'm drawing from our archives a conversation that I loved that we recorded back in 2021. I think it's one of the better conversations that I've had on this podcast to actually illustrate this concept of mood boosting micro habits.

Laura Cox Kaplan ([04:33](#)):

My guest is Megan B. Murphy. She wrote a terrific book called *Your Fully Charged Life*, where she illustrates so much of what I'm talking about. Megan is a journalist and she's currently the editor-in-chief of *Women's Day Magazine*, and she is a source of consistently practiced positivity and mood boosting habits on Instagram. She is also a regular guest on the *Today Show* as well. Megan is a journalist, the current editor-in-chief of *Women's Day Magazine*, and a source of consistently practiced positivity and mood boosting habits on Instagram. She is also a regular guest on the *Today Show* as well. When I originally released this episode, quite honestly, I wasn't happy with the audio quality. So we have gone back and with the help of my new fabulous editor, Sona, we've cleaned it up and tightened it up, and I think you will get a lot of great food for thought and certainly some great tactical tools that you can draw on to help you shift and maintain a positive mindset and outlook.

Laura Cox Kaplan ([05:38](#)):

She'll give you a lot to think about. No one is 100% positive every minute of the day, but if the science is to be believed, there are things that each of us can do that will impact that and can ultimately make us feel happier overall. But now let's connect this concept just a little more directly to the concept of influence. Some 80 years ago, Dale Carnegie actually saw this influence mindset connection. Specifically, he noticed the difference between how some people faced obstacles and setbacks, his opportunities versus those who didn't, and the impact that that particular mindset seemed to have on influence and power and ultimately success in life. It's not hard to understand why someone who looks at challenges and setbacks as opportunities might indeed be more influential and more in demand. When management is deciding on who should be given a promotion, it's not hard to understand why someone who looks at challenges and setbacks as opportunities might indeed be more influential and more in demand might be the person that management goes to when they're deciding who should be on which team and who should be selected for a promotion. Friend, I'd love to hear your thoughts on this topic and the conversation with Megan B. Murphy. You can reach me via the link in the show notes, or you can email me directly at info@shesaid.media. For now. Here is my conversation with the fabulous Megan B. Murphy.

Laura Cox Kaplan ([01:15](#)):

Meaghan, welcome to *She Said*. She said,

Meaghan B Murphy ([01:25](#)):

Yay. Thanks for having me.

Laura Cox Kaplan ([01:26](#)):

Well, I'm so happy to have you. I am a big fan of your book. Um, one of the things that I think would surprise people if they follow you on Instagram, if they see you on all these morning shows, is that this idea of being the yay person, of being this constantly positive and optimistic person mm-hmm. <affirmative> did not necessarily come naturally to you. You've not always been this way. Talk about that.

Meaghan B Murphy ([01:53](#)):

Oh no. I find this so amusing because I, I trained to live this way. Right? I trained to live with optimism and joy. I trained to, to practice positivity and to prioritize positivity. So in the same way, I may have trained to run a 5K and then a 10 k and then a marathon. I trained to become an optimist. I trained to fart rainbows. Like, this does not come naturally to me. I think it's amusing because, I mean, my nickname was grumpy As a child, I wore a necklace with Grumpy, the Dwarf, this gold necklace that my parents had given me an award. So proudly like, yes, life sucks. And I am the embodiment of negativity. I mean, we even, I did a play in fifth grade, which was wonderful cuz that's how I learned. I had a talent for performing and acting uhhuh. But we wrote our own characters and my character was Maggie.

Meaghan B Murphy ([02:44](#)):

And that character was legitimately the embodiment of negativity. And anything anybody said, I was like, and that was like my character <laugh>. And it was my entry into acting. And so now I'm, I'm really super happy for that. But when I look back, I'm like, who was that kid? Yeah. Um, who was that person? And it led me to some really crap times, right? I mean, I was always just sort of like, you know, I was a kid with lots of emotions. I'm an empath and I feel big. And as a young person, I didn't know what to do with that. Right? Um, and I would cry, you know, and laugh in the same breath. And it was just all these big stories of emotion. And I didn't, you know, didn't know what to do with those emotions. And I can now look back and say, oh, well, I developed an eating disorder to stifle them, to quiet them so I didn't have to deal with them.

Meaghan B Murphy ([03:33](#)):

Um, and I became like a ragy anorexic and landed myself in the hospital. And, you know, I tell the story in the book, but my best friend and I were, you know, kind of partners in this spiral. And she tragically jumped out of a car and died in route to be hospitalized with me. So, like, I had some crap crap teen years. Like, those were hard times. And I can just look back at them kind of casually now, cuz I'm 45 and a mother of three and so far past that. And it almost feels like someone else's life. But, but boy was it hard to live that way. Um, and so I began, you know, I, I did therapy in outpatient treatment and a lot of work on myself. And I began to live a little bit more normally, right? Mm-hmm. <affirmative>, I, I got over my eating disorder and all of the things, but I still wasn't a very happy person.

Meaghan B Murphy ([04:22](#)):

I wasn't a very joyful person. And I think it wasn't until, and I talk, I talk about this in the book as well, that I was an editor at Cosmopolitan Magazine and I, and I was assigned this story called The Seven Secrets of Happiness. Mm. Like, that's what happens as a magazine editor. The boss is like, okay, happiness is trending. We need something unhappiness. Seven secrets of happiness. Go. And then as the editor, you're like, okay, let me figure out what the heck that means. And you start to do your research and you start to do your reporting and then, and you turn that into a six page feature. And so that's what I was challenged to do. And I turned it into this, you know, six page feature. But in the process, I looked at the field in positive psychology and looked the work of Martin Salman.

Meaghan B Murphy ([05:00](#)):

I looked at neuroscience and I started to have this awakening of sorts that wow, happiness wasn't just this bullshit bumper sticker platitude that meant nothing to me. Cause it was so elusive and, and frankly like annoying. Um, but it was actually something you could actively pursue, actively do, make choices every day to inch toward happiness to move the happiness needle. And that was intriguing to me. Mm-hmm. <affirmative>, that there were these people who researchers were called, who were flourishing, um, and thriving and had a zest for life. And they lived differently than me. And I was sort of, I was intrigued by that. I was intrigued by the things they were doing right. And the action steps they were taking to live differently. Um, and I sort of dabbled in positivity and I dabbled in optimism and I, it, um, and I, and then started to make gradual and gradual changes living that way. And then figuring out like why things were working, why things weren't working, kind of living the science and testing it all out on myself as a Guinea pig.

Laura Cox Kaplan ([06:11](#)):

Yeah. Wa was it hard for people around you as you began to make this pivot and doing these small things every day and really turning yourself into a person who has what seems like irrepressible positivity. You wear, you wear lightning bolts on your clothing, you have yay days. I mean, you're your whole

Meaghan B Murphy ([06:33](#)):

Yeah. I only have my lightning bolt necklace,

Laura Cox Kaplan ([06:36](#)):

<laugh>

Meaghan B Murphy ([06:36](#)):

Just me being subtle.

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Laura Cox Kaplan ([06:38](#)):

But was it

Meaghan B Murphy ([06:39](#)):

Too

Laura Cox Kaplan ([06:41](#)):

<laugh>? Was it hard for people who had been in your life to come along with you on this journey? It could be hard for us when we pivot and evolve as people, for the people who have been with us sometimes to, to stay with us for that. It's, it's weird for them.

Meaghan B Murphy ([06:55](#)):

Well, frankly, it wasn't like this black and white night and day transformation. I mean, it was over the course of, you know, probably 15 years, right? Yeah. Like, it wasn't like, who is that?

Laura Cox Kaplan ([07:07](#)):

Right,

Meaghan B Murphy ([07:08](#)):

<laugh>, we don't recognize Megan anymore. <laugh>, she smiles a lot. It wasn't like that. It wasn't, it wasn't like aha. Happiness Gates opened and here she is. Um, it was very, very gradual. And frankly, it was also in a time, it was in my twenties and thirties, big growth years anyway, right? Where you're evolving and changing. So it wasn't, it wasn't drastic, it wasn't dramatic. Um, it was gradual and small. And I think that's the key in all of this. Like, I will say this to people, your fully charged life is not a life overhaul. It's not a makeover. It's not even a guide or a plan. There are small things that you could do every day that might change the way you see things, change the way you feel things change, where they do things and ultimately make you happier and give you, um, like, you know, a little joy jumpstart.

Laura Cox Kaplan ([07:58](#)):

Yeah. Talk a little bit about the methodology that you came up with that you have now included in, in the book. Right? I guess I should back up and say, um, you, you came up with these theories, but may maybe talk about which came first. Did you decide to write the book or did you come up with the methodology? Which of those actually came first?

Meaghan B Murphy ([08:20](#)):

Mm-hmm. <affirmative>. So I basically just lived a lot of life, um, realized a lot of what I was doing was working and then kind of backtracked and tried to, you know, give it a framework and give it a name and understood, understand why it works and support it with science. Um, and

so, you know, the journey to the book was basically, I lived all this life and I changed, um, and so much for the better. And I got, I had the tools and the resources to do hard, go through hard things more easily. When my dad was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer and was gone in five months, it sucked. Yeah. And it was awful. But I had the tools to get through it, to move through it with grit and grace. And I wanted to share those tools with other people. Cuz at my core, I'm a service journalist, right?

Meaghan B Murphy ([09:13](#)):

I've worked everywhere from, you know, cosmopolitan to Good Housekeeping to Self Magazine for nine years. Like I'm a service journalist. Like, if I find something that works, if I find some news that I think you could use, I, oh, I have to share it. That's what I'm compelled to do. Um, and so when I'm was sort of faced with yet another challenging time and sort of realizing like, Hey, wait a second, like these tools in my toolkit, they're getting me through this and it doesn't numb the pain, it doesn't close the hole in my heart, but, but I'm getting through this and I'm getting through it more easily than I would've imagined, right? Like, I'm, I'm moving through this mm-hmm. <affirmative>. Um, and so it was really, I just felt very, very compelled to share those strategies. I think my skill as a journalist and as an author is simply that I'm able to, what I like to say is fun filter science, fun filter facts.

Meaghan B Murphy ([10:12](#)):

So that I'm gonna give you the action step that might actually work in real life. Hmm. So I might look at a concept like cognitive reappraisal and think, wow, that's genius. But if I tell the average person, okay, or rehearsals think called cognitive reappraisal, go. And I'm like, okay, not what are you talking about? But if I say, okay, we're gonna reframe what's lame, here's how to change that stinking thinking, here are three examples I might get you on board. Mm-hmm. <affirmative>. Um, and that's really my skill as a magazine editor are a journalist, is, you know, these are lots of concepts that you've probably heard of or probably know, but I feel that they're fun filtered and they're, they're, um, you know, they're bite size action steps put into real world, real world contexts. So that you're gonna be like, oh, that's what, that's how I could do that. Oh yes. That's how I could, that that might work in my own life. Great.

Laura Cox Kaplan ([11:05](#)):

Yeah. Talk about how Covid te enabled you to really test these theories. And, and, and where was the book at the point in which Covid hit? Because the book wasn't published until, I think February of 2021, right? Yeah, it

Meaghan B Murphy ([11:19](#)):

Came out in February. Um, I finished the book in April. Um, so we went on, it was a kind of a crazy time for me because in March right before lockdown, I was named editor-in-chief of Woman's Day Magazine. So I'd been an executive editor of Good Housekeeping for six years.

And then I was named editor-in-chief of Woman's Name Magazine. Um, and then we went on lockdown. So I never cleared out my Good Housekeeping office. I never moved into a new space. Think it's all the same company. It was still Hurst and whatnot. So like, they sent a computer home, they sent a monitor home. Um, and then I gradually as the year went on, built out a home office cuz I had never worked from home in my life. Did you

Laura Cox Kaplan ([12:07](#)):

Know the team though? I mean, were you literally

Meaghan B Murphy ([12:09](#)):

So No, no, this is like that. So, I mean, I knew of some of them. Like, so my creative director I had been in a meeting with or a room before, but we had never worked together. Wow. Um, my deputy editor, who I hired remotely through on during the course of the pandemic was somebody I had worked with prior at Good Housekeeping. And I was basically like, Hey, listen, I'm gonna be doing this thing. You wanna do it with me? And she sort took a leap of faith and was like, okay, yeah. Okay, I'll be your deputy. Uh, and I'm like, I, you know, it was, it was crazy. I couldn't even tell her salary or the exact title or anything. I'm just like, you wanna do this? Um, and then like my art team, and many of the people, like I knew of them, but we'd never worked together before. Right. And then we're tasked with kind of reinventing the magazine, refreshing it, redesigning it. I mean, we changed the logo, we changed everything. And,

Laura Cox Kaplan ([12:58](#)):

And, and that was happening. Covid notwithstanding, right. You were hired, you were hired to recreate this, but then you're also doing it in the context of Covid.

Meaghan B Murphy ([13:07](#)):

So what was very wild?

Laura Cox Kaplan ([13:08](#)):

What was that like?

Meaghan B Murphy ([13:10](#)):

I mean, it was, it was pretty, it was pretty wild, right? And the joy and the beauty and I silver rely everything. So this is what you'll learn about me quickly. Um, I felt like it was such a great opportunity because, hey, listen, if I fall on my face, if I really eff it up and do a terrible job, I'll just blame it on Covid. Well, it was a pandemic. What'd you expect? Right? So I was like, let's just go for it. Let's just shoot for the moon because there's no failure in this. Right? Like, we got an scapegoat. What kind of pandemic we could blame on? Blame it on let's blow up the logo, let's blow up the inside pages. Let's, let's get rid of everything and start fr like, you know, I just

felt like this immense freedom from failure because I was like, eh, we got an excuse team, don't worry about it. <laugh>, we're planning on a pandemic

Laura Cox Kaplan ([13:59](#)):

<laugh>.

Meaghan B Murphy ([14:01](#)):

That's amazing. But it was pretty wild too, because simultaneously I was homeschooling three children. Right, right. Because at that point, my three kids, I had a kindergartner, um, a second grader and a fourth grader. So like they're, I'm trying to get them onto Google Classroom this and zoom that. And like at one point, like I just, I'm, I'm making a paper sloth with my kindergartner. I'm trying to do this new math where you don't carry ones. And I thought even carrying the one back in the day was hard. So now not carrying the one and really making my brain fall out of my ear.

Laura Cox Kaplan ([14:35](#)):

Amen.

Meaghan B Murphy ([14:36](#)):

<laugh>, I have a book due, like, so my book is due in, that was, my book was due in April, April 14th. My book was due, it wasn't finished. Um, and I'm making this new magazine Oh. And I have a podcast I'm now doing in my attic. Um, cuz there it's a little bit quiet. It it was, it was like very, very surreal. Um, and there were moments where you're just like, I was like, okay, I'm crying in the shower because I'm scared. I'm scared of the mail, I'm scared of my groceries. We can't leave the house. I'm scared of people. I'm scared of the world. I'm completely overwhelmed. Um, and like, granted, like we were lucky enough in those early days not to be sick. We ultimately did get covid. Um, and, you know, we were lucky enough to be healthy in the early days, but it was, it was, it was a lot.

Meaghan B Murphy ([15:29](#)):

Yeah. It's fun to like go back and be like, we did that <laugh>. I mean there were so many beautiful silver linings during Covid. My, one of my favorite things is like, my husband became like a secret handyman. I mean he was like changing lights, you know. I was like, oh, now that this little closet is my office, like I really like this secret. Like he's YouTubing and make changing out light fixtures and he fixed the plumbing un we just leak in the sink. Next thing I know he's got tools. I didn't even know he had all these tools and he's like, under the sink. Yeah. Watching a YouTube video and fixing the sink. Like, so like that was one of the fun highlights and silver lines of cos we realized that my husband is pretty damn handy, you know, and the family dinners and the more time with my kids. And then ultimately as things eased up, we were able

to put them in school this year, um, into like a little private Catholic school that went eight to three, which was beautiful. Um, but, well, I, I remember what the question was cuz I just went on a covid tangent, but it was a crazy job right. Of a year. So

Laura Cox Kaplan ([16:34](#)):

Let me, let me ask you a question because I'm, I'm struck by the fact that you're writing this book on positivity and on, you know, charging your day and the little things that you can do all day long. And yet you are faced with an existential crisis that everybody is dealing with at the same time. Mm-hmm. <affirmative>, did you struggle with imposter syndrome or sort of self-doubt as it related to just getting through this extraordinary period? Or was it really, as you dipped into your tools, was it something that you were like, wow, this really does work? I mean, talk about sort of how you, because I can imagine writing a book on how to be positive and turn bad days into good ones when you're experiencing something that is just, no one had an, we've never dealt with anything like this. How did you deal with that?

Meaghan B Murphy ([17:27](#)):

Well, it was really kind of cool actually. So we, uh, three weeks before, so I ultimately did finish the book about 4:00 AM wake ups and furiously writing and all the things. Um, but I ultimately finished the book, turn the book in. I was ready to go and three weeks before the, the launch, which is like a big deal in all their life. Mm-hmm. <affirmative>, like that's your media blitz. That's, you know, you know, satellite media tour and radio winter using all your TV appearances and all the things. Um, and I was supposed to do the audible, I was supposed to narrate the audible and I got covid and my three kids got covid, my husband got Covid, and my mom got covid. Oh my gosh. My asthmatic. And I've been in the hospital for pneumonia before. So I was freaked. I was like, how is this happening?

Meaghan B Murphy ([18:11](#)):

Right? How is this happening? I cannot have covid right now. And PS I can't open my eyes, I can't stand up. Um, my kids are 103 fevers and vomiting all over the house, and my husband is on the couch incapacitated. And like, I have to narrate a, oh my gosh. Like, it was, it was like surreal, right? But it was such a gift because if I hadn't had any doubts, any imposter syndrome, any, any, any, anything, um, I now got this gift of being able to completely lean into my toolkit, lean into all the strategies and all the things I talk about in your fully charge life, apply them once again and come out the other side smiling. Um, and, and so I, I just, who is actually a gift to, to get to one more time, put your fully charged like practices into practice and know how well they work.

Meaghan B Murphy ([19:13](#)):

And it just reinforced how badly I wanted to give this gift to the world. Like, this is my legacy. And so, um, I was really, really thrilled and I can just talk you through what that, what some of

living fully charged looks like in the face of any adversity. But for me, that day I was diagnosed with Covid. It was like, okay, what does a fully church person do? Yeah. They, they own the bag, right? Like, you give yourself full permission to sit with what sucks. Like, damn it to hell, I want to cry right now. I wanna rage right now. I wanna scream right now. And then I locked my bedroom door and I was like, what? And like had the moment of like, it's my husband's fault. He shouldn't have gone to the eye doctor. Maybe he got it at the eye. Doctor <laugh>, how did, I shouldn't have gone to the grocery store.

Meaghan B Murphy ([20:03](#)):

Maybe I got it from the produce section. Like, you have the full, like rage and anger and blame and tears and fear and everything. So like absolutely felt it all went through that full range of emotions, but I don't get stuck there. And so instead of saying Why me, whoa is me, then I reframe it and I say, why not me? Why not me? Why is, why not? And then I will tell myself things like, Hey, listen, you're an otherwise strong, healthy person. Like, you can do this. And then I will flash back to something hard I've done in the past and realize I'm a person who does hard things. Wait, you know, I had pneumonia and that wasn't fun, you know, and being in the hospital on oxygen wasn't fun. But I got through that and I will get through this because I'm a person who does hard things and then I find purpose and I try to assign purpose and meaning to the struggle.

Meaghan B Murphy ([20:58](#)):

Okay, how can, how can I give purpose to this? Well, listen, I have neighbors and friends and people who, who had covid and, and lied about it and hid it because there was this stigma attached to having had covid. And I was like, hell to them, no, I'm gonna wear that scarlet letter seat loud and proud and let people know, you know what, COVID happens and it happens to the best of us and it happens to the most careful of us. And it's okay. And if you have covid, like get the help you need. Don't be embarrassed. There should be no shame in your game. And I helped destigmatize that I've got a loud platform and, and I'm a public figure for whatever that means. So I'm gonna destigmatize it and I'm getting now given purpose to my struggle. And I also felt that when I got Covid, I didn't want to do, I called my doctor.

Meaghan B Murphy ([21:46](#)):

I didn't get a response. Like I felt very helpless and I didn't want anyone else to feel that way. So it became very important for me to create a co covid toolkit, a covid recovery toolkit. I was able to call a doctor that had been on my podcast. She mapped out a recovery toolkit for me. And I'm like, okay, I'm gonna share that on Instagram. I'm gonna put it in my highlights. I'm gonna make sure that anybody who covid has this same resource and support. And once I started to give purpose to this struggle, to flashback to things I've done in the past that were hard, that I got through mm-hmm. <affirmative>. Wow. I started to inch forward, I started to get unstuck.

And then I relied on other full charge strategies. I have like fill in my house with fresh flowers that is mood magic.

Meaghan B Murphy ([22:27](#)):

Great Harvard research around the power of fresh flowers to reduce anxiety and stress. And I called a very good friend. So I reached out, I was social, I had that human connection, which is so important. And I was like, I need you to go to, I asked for help, which is also very empowering, accepting help, also really healthy. My friend went to Trader Joe's and FaceTimed me and flower shopped and then dropped off the flowers on my front porch. And then I arrange flowers in my house in my sickest days. And damned did that improvement.

Laura Cox Kaplan ([22:59](#)):

Yeah.

Meaghan B Murphy ([23:00](#)):

These little things. I have endless little strategies like this all science proven that can help me get unstuck. Yeah. Because I think a lot of those I'm feeling right now is a little bit joyless. Even as we come out of these hard times, the future is scary, it's uncertain. And so how do you get unstuck? How do you get outta your own way? It's just creating positive momentum and there's tons of little things you can do to begin to create that momentum.

Laura Cox Kaplan ([23:26](#)):

Yeah. It ties into a topic that we talk about on this podcast a lot, which is this idea of mindset and how you show up to the world and the fact that you can often, maybe not a hundred percent of the time, but much of the time, you can choose how you show up. You can choose the actions that you take. And this book really reinforces that whole notion of it's about choice and little choices that you can make every single day. Um, you have a daily yay list. Maybe talk about that because I love this idea.

Meaghan B Murphy ([24:00](#)):

So gratitude is, is, um, the secret sauce in life, right? Grateful people are happy people. That that's all the research will say that p and the perma theory of wellness is positive emotions and gratitude is one of the key things that causes and creates those positive emotions and feelings. And I'm a person who I'm not very oo now, crystal's in my pocket. Like I respect all of that. It just doesn't work for me. Mm-hmm. <affirmative>, it, it feels homeworky. Um, I just don't stick with. So as much as I know keeping a gratitude diary, keeping a gratitude journal really beneficial and awesome, I can't keep that up. I can't do that. I, maybe I'll do it for a day and then it goes away. And so what I really started to practice was the yay list. Now you will ask my family what made you say yay today?

Meaghan B Murphy ([24:47](#)):

I'll ask my kids, what made you say yay today? And it's a way of seeking out the good in the world, prioritizing positivity, appreciating the good in your day, the good in the world, and verbally documenting it. Maybe you're documenting. I documented on social media. I have my ended up my own account called The List. Mm-hmm. <affirmative>, which is just a, a positive community sharing good times and good thoughts with good people. Um, but that's our gratitude practice. So like for me, I'm not gonna say to my kids like, what are you thankful for? Cuz that feels like something you do on Thanksgiving or something you do for homework and a gratitude diary and it just doesn't work for my family. Um, but if I'm like, okay guys, what made you say yay today? They've always got something. I mean mm-hmm. <affirmative> Brooksy lost both front teeth within a two day span this week. And he's like, got a toothless front smile and it's like the biggest yay ever.

Laura Cox Kaplan ([25:40](#)):

Tooth fairs doing double duty,

Meaghan B Murphy ([25:42](#)):

Tooth fair is doing double duty. The tooth didn't have any cash either. Tooth spirit was in trouble. <laugh>. Oh,

Laura Cox Kaplan ([25:50](#)):

It's making it fun though, right? It's, it's taking these things that, you know, it's based in science. We know that it works. We know why you wanna have these gratitude lists and to be thankful and all those things, but you're making it fun and accessible, not just for kids, but for grownups as well.

Meaghan B Murphy ([26:07](#)):

Well, I'll say that. So I have a fun filter. The only filter I have is a fun filter and I filter all things through that lens. How can I make it more fun? How can I make it more enjoyable? How can I make it more doable? Because it is so fun. Um, and that's really my secret sauce is this kind of fun miss. Yeah. Right. So we're, we're just making gratitude, fun. That's it.

Laura Cox Kaplan ([26:34](#)):

Yeah. It's amazing. It's really amazing. Um, maybe let's talk a little bit about, um, you know, self-talk is a big topic on this podcast. And oftentimes for women whose, you know, women are my primary audience, I talk to women about topics that affect us and our lives and our journeys. Self-talk can be something that we struggle with because we do tend to be really hard on ourselves. It's not that men are, but we, we really kind of hold the hold the, the, the tough card

as it relates to how tough we can be on ourselves. So maybe talk about the role of self-talk as it relates to living a fully charged life.

Meaghan B Murphy ([27:16](#)):

Yeah. I mean, I think the only thing that really matters are the things we tell ourselves. Um, and I have pretty in depth conversations with myself. Um, I'm really big on mantras and, um, and keeping those positive messages front and center. So you'll often see me wearing a message tank, a message sweatshirt. I have a mug, you know, like a designated grownup, marga, you know, um, kind of keeping these light, like light and powerful, inspiring motivational messages and mantras, front and center. Because like if you're not, you have, in order to get the message, you have to see the message. And sometimes I really need it drilled into me. I mean, there was, when my, um, my dad was dying, I had a mug. They said, you're stronger than you think you are. And I had my coffee in that mug. Every morning, you're stronger than you think you are.

Meaghan B Murphy ([28:10](#)):

You're stronger than you think you are. You're stronger than you think you are. I needed that self-talk. Um, and I think it's great when that self-talk is quick and simple and on repeat, and then front and center too. Whether it's on your mug, on your tank top, on your screensaver, on your phone. Like, you know, I have, my phone is this lightning bolt and it reminds me to stay electric, to stay fully charged, to stay present, to think to, to live all the mandates of a fully charged life and have a tattoo of the lightning bolt because this is a power symbol to me that makes me feel connected to my mom, who's the old OG bolt who believed, um, that everything was always possible and taught me that, um, and was relentlessly confident, something I always wanted to emulate. Yeah. And so these symbols, these words that we surround ourselves and these things we tell ourselves aren't chiefly important.

Um, I think at its core, a lot of it has to do with how our negativity bias and how eea, so how easy it is to focus on the negative, to dwell on the negative, to, to ruminate or stew about the negative thing you heard or the negative thing you're thinking. And the only way to counterbalance that is to make the positive and the good stuff louder. Right? And so the only way to do that is to put that on repeat. Um, or you, I mean, think about it. Like, if someone says to me, oh, I hate your scratchy voice, why am I, I'm repeating that, versus the 10 people who are like, oh, you have a radio announcement voice, or Right. I find it very soothing. You hang on the negative, you dwell on the negative. Our negativity bias, our primal urge to prioritize negativity is pretty, pretty strong, right? And so you have to do a lot of work, a lot of hard work at first to counter that. And so by telling yourself the good things on repeat to putting the good things, the stronger messaging, making that louder and front and center on top of mind, it can counterbalance some of that.

Laura Cox Kaplan ([31:08](#)):

I love that. That's so well said. I wanna dig in a bit more to your career journey, because we talk a lot about that. We talk a lot about the challenges associated with pivoting. Um, there's so many people who are pivoting from one job to the next, or an awful lot of moms out there, probably dads too. But we're talking to moms, um, moms who are taking a break as a result of covid and just the overwhelm of trying to homeschool or whatever the world looks like. Hopefully we're coming out of this. But nevertheless, a lot of people are rethinking careers and professions and those sorts of things. You talk about something that I thought was so fascinating in the book that you refer to as job crafting. Mm-hmm. <affirmative>, I'd love for you to talk a bit about that and the role that that's played for you.

Meaghan B Murphy ([32:20](#)):

Sure. So I think we often have more flexibility or freedom within a job than we realized. Hmm. So when I was the executive editor of Good Housekeeping, like on paper, my job was absolutely to executively edit the magazine to, you know, paper, edit the articles, write the headlines, work on the cover lines, work on the text of the magazine. And I was good at that and I was getting that done. But I had been doing that for 25 years and I was bored. The things I like about my skillset and I like to do is I have an acting background. I have a television background, so how did I job craft? I started, you know, doing TV segments and doing life hacking, and I love cleaning, I love organizing. I started videotaping myself doing that. I started doing more of that on my social media and that got the attention of nbc.

Meaghan B Murphy ([33:14](#)):

And I wound up being able to do this better Ways life hacking series from my home as the executive editor of Good Housekeeping. Um, but I was getting to tap into something I really liked to do and then doing that on the SED show live with Kelly and Ryan. So that was not in my job description, right. But I made that part of my job so that my job was more fulfilling, that it was also using some of these skill sets and resources that I enjoyed, that I like to do. And, and ultimately it created more value for me personally in the role because then I was also this forward facing personality, forward grade housekeeping who did all these TV segments and all of this. But that wasn't part of my job description. That's not what I was hired to do. Yeah. I continued to do the job I was hired to do, and I did it well, but I created these additional outlets for me personally, because it wa I wasn't feeling completely fulfilled.

Laura Cox Kaplan ([34:10](#)):

Uhhuh, <affirmative>, Uhhuh, <affirmative>. It feels like there's an element associated with this, maybe a big one related to innovation and problem solving, right? And you are in, uh, a sector of the economy that not withstanding the incredible readership of Women's Day Magazine, which as I understand it, is about eight 18 million readers a month, which is extraordinary, especially at this, in this period of time in which print advertising is kind of, you know, viewed as being a bit passe, right? Yes. You, you took this job knowing that and knowing that this was

gonna have to be a turnaround. Maybe talk about how all those tools fit together and advice for others who are looking for ways to innovate in sectors or in careers where, you know, we really have to look at something new and innovative and different. Mm-hmm.

Meaghan B Murphy ([35:02](#)):

<affirmative>. So I think at my core, I'm an expert problem solver. Um, and when I took over the job of Warren's Day magazine, I really looked at this global problem, right? We were all in this like, state of angst and panic and fear. Um, the world was so crashing and burning around us. And so the way I reimagine this magazine was one, if this is the escape one, if this is destination celebration, no holiday left behind from Taco Tuesday to Christmas, and one, if this is a place, this joyful escape for people that 'em to put happy on the calendar and even in ha even in hard times celebrate, find some moments of levity and light because guess what? That's really necessary and that's gonna carry us through. And so that's the way I reimagined reposition the magazine. Um, and it was really just noticing a problem, feeling what the like, sort of taking the temperature of the world around me and then trying to come up with a solution, um, that would help, you know, hug it out, right? Like I really wanted this magazine to feel like this big hug in this moment and it was kind of selfish. Like I needed to create this thing cuz that's how I was feeling, right? And I wanted to like get excited about National Donut Day, which happens to me today, <laugh>. Or I wanted to get excited about, you know, watermelon cause it's National Watermelon Day. I wanted to be able to give myself permission to find joy and hard times. And I wanted to give the reader permission to put Puppy on the calendar.

Laura Cox Kaplan ([41:15](#)):

Maybe talk about how to respond to the haters as you refer to them in the book.

Meaghan B Murphy ([42:43](#)):

You can't get sucked into it. Um, and I will meet any of that negativity with kindness. Um, people who actively hate on me, you know, think that hurts for a second, but I understand that's about them, not about me. Right. Because how do you hate someone you've never met who's trying to give you some strategies that are based in science to live more positively? I mean, I, I don't, I don't harm puppies. Uh, I don't like, I'm like a good unit who tells his kindness. Um, so if you hate me, that is absolutely about you and not about me. And I will let you own that. But I will not, not get sucked into that negativity. I will always meet a hater with kindness and compassion. Um, or I just simply will not engage in it. But I think it's very interesting because if I were to look at any of my social media platforms, I don't have any trolls.

Meaghan B Murphy ([43:42](#)):

I don't have any haters because it is such a place of positivity and good energy that that is, it's very clear that hate is not welcome. Mm-hmm. <affirmative>. Um, and it is in, there's a lot of good research about that. And, um, they looked at Facebook and it's like that one negative. So

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Episode 242

Title: How To Shift Your Mindset, Boost Your Mood, And Build Your Influence!

Guest: Meaghan B Murphy, Editor In Chief, Women's Day Magazine

you get that one negative comment, then you'll get five more negative comments mm-hmm. <affirmative>. But if everything is, is positive and you know, on the up and up that that hate's not gonna sneak in. And that's the key is that creating a place of, and that, and this is not that. You're gonna deny what, what sucks, but you're just not gonna, you're not going to broadcast it. You're not gonna put it front and center. You're not gonna indulge it. Um, and especially not in a public forum where it's like, like that's just not productive. Especially when it's just pure nastiness based in nothing.

Laura Cox Kaplan ([44:34](#)):

I love that, Megan. I am grateful. Thank you very much. This was wonderful.

Meaghan B Murphy ([45:59](#)):

Yay. Thank you.

EPISODE CLOSE

Laura Cox Kaplan:

Hey Friend, thanks so much for being with me today. You know, I could really use your help. I would love your feedback on today's topic and on any others that you think we should cover here at She Said, she said podcast. I would really, really love to hear, be sure to send your thoughts and your feedback my way. You can reach me at info@shesaid.media. In the meantime, have a great week. You take care and I'll talk to you soon.

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