

Ep #17: Drama: How to Lead Instead of React



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Diana Murphy

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Welcome to *Empowered Wellness for Leaders*, a podcast that teaches CEOs, entrepreneurs and sales leaders how to deal with the unique challenges of balancing a high-stress career, family, AND their own health. Here's your host, Certified Executive Wellness Coach, Diana Murphy.

I had my own internal drama yesterday. I had a mini freak-out looking at my week. As I was driving back home from the mountains, I accidentally clicked on my own podcast. I decided to keep listening – yeah, it really is weird listening to your own voice. But it was actually helpful to be reminded in last week's episode that my mindset shift from trying to being committed to doing something can really make a difference.

And it really did draw me out of my own internal drama. You know, that is why I'm bringing these podcasts to you, so that you have a resource to lean in on when you need it, to have a library where you can go back to an issue and either re-listen, or if you're just starting with me right here, go back and choose those that really apply to what's going on in your life right now.

Because of that, because of my intention of having something that's just really available to you and is addressed to your personal needs, I am developing a Q&A podcast episode. So to develop that, I need your help. And I'd love for you to email any questions you have; they'll be answered on that podcast. Just email me, diana@dianamurphycoaching.com, title the email so I don't miss it, Question for Podcast. And I'm going to start collecting those and create an entire episode for you. I'd love to meet you there.

I want to talk about an issue on the podcast today that is sneaky and truly affects our mindset, our confidence, and our wellbeing. I want to talk about drama. Not the internal kind that I mentioned as I started today, but the drama that comes from others; specifically, how another person's drama might be dialing up your emotions and how your reactions are harming your own wellbeing.

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I sound so dramatic, right, but it's really true. Have you had one of those days – you're feeling great and positive, but then you walk into work and you walk right into your boss yelling at someone and literally biting everybody's heads off. Everybody in the office is walking around with their tail between their legs and now you're a little bit freaked-out as well.

Or you and your spouse or your roommate just had a ping-pong game of crabbing at each other about taking out the garbage and fussing around the dishes and now you're both stomping off to work. What I'm going to offer you today is truly one of the most empowering ways to manage this type of stress in your life.

We cannot get rid of our fellow humans, although that sometimes appears to be the solution, right? But the truth is we don't want to. We just want to get along better. We just want to feel better. What I am going to do is help you to know how to react the next time you feel like a conversation or situation is ruining your day.

It's really about showing up in a way that is productive and that you're even proud of when there's drama all around you. It's all about staying in your own business, not only conversationally but emotionally. Let me show you what I mean.

Like the example above, you walk into work, your boss just yelled at someone, everybody is now walking on eggshells in the office and is very distracted. You can feel like the hum of that energy, right? You feel a pit in your stomach and you're worrying that you might just be the next victim. And your reaction is to stay out of their way, even though you have questions and issues to discuss with that person that's been yelling, whether it's your boss or another work partner.

And then you find that you're tearing them down verbally during lunch with other officemates and you really regret it because you hate to gossip and you really do like the person that you're working with, even though they had a bad morning and really regret this conversation afterwards.

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There are two reasons this feels so bad. One, you've been triggered by that drama as you walked in and now you're feeling upset as well. You weren't even the one your boss was speaking with, but you feel just as bad. This next reaction, I think, is even more harmful. You're not showing up in a way you're proud of. You avoid your boss even though you have issues you need to go over and work that needs to get done. You're procrastinating, and then because you don't know what else to do with these crappy emotions, you share them, you spread them and you get everybody else worked up.

And by you, I mean you and me and most humans all have done this. I was really good at gossip. Most of us deal with drama in this way. We let someone else's fear create drama and it's not ours to carry. There is another way. I want to show you how to stay above the fray in these situations and react in a way that is better for you and everyone involved.

It's a stronger way to show up in our lives and lead others to do the same. I focus on two approaches; focus on the facts of the situation, and another tool, test whether it's your business in the first place. Both of these approaches interrupt this negative spiral that we all experience when someone else is upset or being dramatic about something.

Even think of examples where people are being really negative. We all have those; the chronic negative person. They are dramatic all the time. You can use these tools in both these situations. And you can even use these tools separately or together and I like starting focusing on the facts first. Remember this situation.

And we think in this situation that the facts are – my boss is such a jerk, I might lose my job if I get into it with him, he shouldn't act this way, he's being so mean to that woman, I hate working here, this is terrible. These are not facts; they are just thoughts. They are triggered by our own viewpoints. They are our normal way of sorting the situation, but they are just that.

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They are thoughts and beliefs that come through our own filter and our own viewpoint. By stepping back and getting facty, we can dial-down the drama. So step back. First, list all the facts. Facts would be true to anyone that saw the situation. They can be proven in a court of law.

This is what I mean; same situation, these are the facts. Boss came into the office, he asked a person to do something, he used a loud voice, he appears to be upset, I'm at work, I need to speak to him later today, I'll talk to him later, I'm getting to work. This practice of using neutral facty words to describe the situation in a clear manner and to avoid our judgment of them is critical to dialing down the drama.

It's a beautiful way to not feel a victim of the noise and negativity in situations that are beyond our control. If we can avoid getting triggered and involved then we're calmer, we stop wasting time and we're not being in their business. This leads me to the next set of tools to disrupt the drama.

Ask yourself, is this my business? Is this something that is truly my responsibility? If it isn't your responsibility, it is not your business; you can just move on. It really takes the air out of the drama balloon for me. You know, it's just none of my business when neighbors are talking about something and I just want to join them and go on and on about another neighbor, or the water-cooler conversations you'd call them.

But if I really ask the question in those situations, is this really my business? That takes the energy out of it and it really helps me to kind of show up in those types of conversations in a way I'm more proud of. And that is leading me to another question that you can always use in this situation.

You know, we might need to take these steps of separating out the facts and then asking if it's our business when we're feeling a lot of drama and drawn into drama around us. It helps us to take time to calm down and lay out the facts and then ask the is this my business question. But sometimes, we can start with, how do I want to show up in this situation versus feeling

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like a victim? Our brain loves answering good questions. Put it to work here.

Again, using the situation above, if you had asked, how do I want to show up here, this might have been what would have happened. You might want to check in with your boss and see if you can support them. You can meet with them objectively about what you needed to work on and not even discuss it. Again, it wasn't your business and it can kind of take the drama out of the air for him as well by you showing up to that conversation calmly and objectively about a totally different subject.

You can also stop the negative spiral in the office by just not getting into it with others. This is how we show others how to stay out of the drama. I had a really personal example of me just getting triggered the other day with my husband. You know, my husband has been just amazing, supporting me while I was away for seven weeks.

And I noticed I was getting really triggered and crabby when he was telling me how to do a few things around the house; you know, methods that he'd figured out while I was gone. And he kept saying, "Oh, I do it this way now." Or, "We do laundry this way." Or Tahome, our dog, you know, "We do it this way now."

I'm like, what – I was so angry, I was like, "What is happening? Where did that drama come from?" It was triggering something in me that had nothing to do with my husband. He even called me on it. He goes, "That response is way out of line. What's going on?"

So can you see how easily drama happens? It happens to all of us. I am so thankful that he didn't dial it up but called me out on it. He disrupted it. He took the air out of my balloon. I took some time to step back and took responsibility for what I brought to that situation. I was the drama trigger. And I realized that I had some leftover feelings of being left out of some things while I was gone. I was really having my own little pity party about all that I missed while I was in Florida – drama for sure; so unnecessary too.

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We can always have some compassion and patience, like my husband did for me. Like, you might, when somebody gets really angry in a work situation, you might really understand where that's coming from because it wasn't about the laundry or the stuff around the house for me. But do you see how he disrupted my drama by calling me out on it? I'm so thankful for that.

We can always do this for others by taking these steps in our own personal situations. Remember, if you want to dig deeper into this issue and figure out what is going on for you, take advantage of my mindset manual. The link is in the show notes at dianamurphycoaching.com/17 and you'll receive the full manual with those worksheets that relate to every podcast for Mindset May. It's going to be a great resource when it's done.

Alright, why is the wellness coach even talking about this? We're certainly not going to solve our relationship issues and work environment in one podcast, and that's why I try to deal with one very narrow subject, so it's something you can sink your teeth into. But what is so important and so available to you is an opportunity of dialing down the stress and the drama in your life so you can take better care of yourself.

It really is around emotional and physical wellness here. Emotional wellness, I define, as living and reacting to life in a way that's good for us; living in a way with others that we're proud of. You might even call it being authentic and living in your values.

Now, there's also physical wellness. In this situation, this is really dialing down the stress or drama in our lives so that we have much less of a fight or flight reaction that we're giving to our body. When we process drama in a healthier way, we're not washing our body with stress hormones all the time. And for some of us, this is the absolute key to reducing stress overeating and drinking.

This is why I talk about it a lot. And if you missed my episode fully diving down into stress overeating and drinking, it's one of the earlier episodes. I

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want to remind you, there are two very simple ways when you realize you're feeling that bodily sensation being drawn into a dramatic situation around you. Just stop right there and just take some time to breathe; most of us need to calm down a little bit.

Ask what are the facts? Is this my business? When we disrupt the drama or negative spiral, we can answer the most important question; how do I want to show up? Especially in this situation, what's really amazing as we practice this process and slow down when we experience drama with others, we can even bypass these steps of separating out the facts. We can start the process by disrupting any of our own personal reactions by just asking, how do I want to show up in this situation?

I love this again because one reason we feel so crummy after letting ourselves get drawn in, either to another person's drama or negativity, is because of how we react. Many times, we respond in ways that just do not line up with how we want to show up in our relationships and work environments.

We gossip, we get crabby, we crab back at people. We walk away from people that we really care about and we're totally in our own head and not listening at all to what they might be dealing with. Remember the example I gave with my husband? He loves me enough that he was patient and my reaction was totally inappropriate.

And he kind of knew ahead of time that something else might be going on, so he just disrupted it by calling me on it. We can do this for others if we stay in our own space, right. Disrupting our natural triggers of being pulled into these really emotionally charged situations gives us an opportunity to be calm, confident, supportive and bypass all the drama by asking the right questions and taking the right actions as a result.

It's a beautiful way to lead in your life versus just responding and indulging in every dramatic moment that comes around us. Remember, we're

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humans; it's natural to be drawn into this. Give yourself some compassion around if you're drawn into things.

But if you're noticing and getting some attention that this might be something for you to work on, do take time with this. Thanks so much for listening today. It means so much that you take time to listen to these podcasts and I love hearing from you.

I love seeing your reviews on iTunes and I want you to know, did you know I'm doing Facebook Lives and even created a YouTube channel out of these Facebook Live videos? So wherever you're living on Facebook Live or want to search on YouTube, I am creating teaching videos with some flipcharts with short video modules on every podcast.

So this week, you will see, by Wednesday noon – and usually, Wednesday noon is when I try to hit it – I will be on Facebook Live teaching this again. So if you need to drill down and have another place to ask your questions, that's where I'm living.

I'll see you next week. I'm going to teach you how to create more confidence in your life. It is the absolute key to getting what we want around anything in our lives. This can be applied to relationships, obviously. You high achievers out there, it is also about really accomplishing what you want.

So I'll be bringing that to you next week. Thanks again for listening and have an empowered amazing day.

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