

WOCAndAllies_EP87

Lisa Gillette: What does it take to be a true leader? What are the critical skills, qualities, the mindset needed to become a transformational leader? And how can women leaders, particularly women of color, address the unique challenges of systemic gender bias and racial discrimination they will inevitably face as they advance in their careers?

Lisa Gillette: How can they step into a role of higher leadership without sacrificing their wellbeing? Fortunately for us, my guest today has the answers to these questions. Elaine Lou Cartas helps heart led, high performing women leaders create a legacy defined by their own terms. Elaine has supported over 500 women leaders in 24 countries, coaching them to create an aligned, purposeful legacy in their professional and their personal lives.

Lisa Gillette: Elaine's high level leadership coaching skills have also led to significant financial success for her clients, including multi six and seven figure clients. Corporate incomes. Elaine has been featured in Forbes, digital marketer, money, business insider, and HuffPost to name just a few. Apple news recognized Elaine has one of the top five business coaches.

Lisa Gillette: LA weekly named her a number one thought leader. MSN awarded her the title of best leadership and executive coach. Elaine is also a LinkedIn learning instructor. Her course is called using AI to make a career switch. And she's got a second course on the way. Identity crisis, how to realign your career with your life.

Lisa Gillette: And she's also got a second course on the way. Identity crisis, how to realign your career With your life, Elaine, you are a rock star. And I want to personally thank you for all you're doing to empower women leader of color and helping them advance in their careers. All the way into the C suite, Elaine, welcome.

Lisa Gillette: Thank

Elaine Lou Cartas: you so much. Also for those that listened to that incredible bio that the head of her chest like, Oh my gosh, this woman. I just want to remind people that I have failed. So I've also been fired three times. I've quit twice. I've left a job with no savings. So just. Let's know that I've had my fair share of beautiful mistakes.

Lisa Gillette: I love that because that's, can we, before we get into the questions, I just want to throw out one question, growth mindset, because you so embody it. It was like a mistake, it's taking a situation where you go, wow, that didn't really turn out the way I thought it would. And then making it a triumph.

Lisa Gillette: just talk to me about your mindset, please. Oh, gosh, a lot of therapy Coaching. I, it was interesting. I was doing another interview with another podcast host. It was like, what, made you, same question. I was like, do you like anxiety? Let me ask, you that, Lisa, do you like anxiety?

Lisa Gillette: Oh, anxiety is my middle name, but no,

Elaine Lou Cartas: I hate it. I don't like anxiety, so how I solve that problem is asking for help. mind you, I get it sometimes for some people coaching in therapies, I don't know what this is, I'm scared of it, so finding one or two people that you feel safe enough to share.

Elaine Lou Cartas: With and at times in my career, I shout out to my former boss, Bobby Abram. She was person I was able to go to. And then sometimes you notice you're just tired of hearing your own bullshit over and over again. As you talk to your friends going through happy hour, which has happened to me. I'm like, you know it.

Elaine Lou Cartas: I can be a better friend by not talking about my problems all the time and not doing anything about it and just hiring a coach or hiring a therapist to heal this shit and figure out what to do. Because I was catching myself. I'm like, Oh my gosh, I sound like that friend that I go to happy hour all the time and they keep complaining about their boyfriend who clearly they need to break up with, except I am that friend now talking about my job that I hate.

Lisa Gillette: Oh, we're always hardest on ourselves, right? And we are going to talk about that because, that for women, this is a big issue. We're always hardest on ourselves, but I want to come back to the big question and we've talked about this. Why is there such a lack of diversity in senior leadership, especially with women of color?

Elaine Lou Cartas: Yeah, What do

Lisa Gillette: you think?

Elaine Lou Cartas: it's not just think. I actually have research on it. Thank you. So I was just interviewed by Huffington Post. They, there is a recent article and research made, done in partnership with the Kinsey and Company as well as Lean In, which is Sheryl Sandberg's nonprofit that helps women move up and see sweet in leadership.

Elaine Lou Cartas: And for every 100 men. Promoted to manager. There is only 87 women who get promoted and less for women of color. And it's because of unconscious bias and performance bias. And the, and for, it's not because women are not asking, Oh, we are asking. It's just the unfortunate thing is that for companies or people in leadership, when they see men are assessed based off of what they could do in the future.

Elaine Lou Cartas: And women are based off of what they've done in the past. Exactly. So what is really great is if you're listening to this and you're like, Elaine, I have been asking you to show them this study by McKinsey, which is a very well known management consulting firm. hey, it seems like you might be part of this, you might be part of this problem of performance bias.

Lisa Gillette: That

Elaine Lou Cartas: you're assessing men based off of what they could do in the future and not for women. What are we going to do about this to change? That's what we're

Lisa Gillette: Yeah. Exactly. it's really tough when you look around and you see everybody in the C suite is either named Bob, Dick, John, or Mike. They happen to be Caucasian.

Lisa Gillette: They happen between the ages of say 35 to 55. So if you're a woman and you're a woman of color and you even get near the C suite, in order to be there, you are really good at your job. Cause you didn't get there by, Hey, let's go play golf or, Hey, I really like you. Let's go have a beer. You got as far as you got cause you are super confident.

Lisa Gillette: So you look at women of color who are in senior leadership. not only are they determined, not only are they incredibly competent, not only are they probably very empathetic, they're probably also suffering some burden.

Elaine Lou Cartas: They are. And they've had to do more to get there because of that unconscious bias, right?

Elaine Lou Cartas: Like possibly going to an Ivy League, spending 100, 000 to do an MBA. Being part of a top firm management consultant, like literally doing the check marks and what's unfortunate, so often when I meet

clients that get to that level, they sit at that table, they see their colleagues like, what the hell, they don't even have these check marks and not even understanding the possible value.

Elaine Lou Cartas: That they could provide when they speak up, how often have we unfortunately been in those tables where you, where as a woman, you say something, then Dick literally as being a Dick says the same thing, Dick, that is such a great idea. And then, what I remind my clients to do, I'm like, take, I'm so glad that you reiterated the idea that I shared five minutes ago, and it made sense to the audience.

Elaine Lou Cartas: To everyone here, was there anything, can you get, can all of you help me understand why when Dick shared that, was there talking points that I didn't share that you didn't hear clearly? Oh, no, You said it was like, why don't we have a conscious conversation of how there might have been some unconscious bias.

Elaine Lou Cartas: I do not mind having these conversations.

Lisa Gillette: Yeah. fortunately we have the tools to teach all of us. How to have that conversation so that you're seen, heard and understood as a woman. Yes. Looked upon as a leader because female, not Caucasian, the list goes on. So if you were going to just get some really like boots on the ground advice to a woman who said.

Lisa Gillette: I, really feel called to leadership. I know I can do a better job. I know the world is in dire straits right now. We need greater diversity in senior management. We need greater perspectives, wider perspectives. We need more voices. What are some things you would tell to a woman, specifically a woman of color?

Lisa Gillette: Okay, here's some challenges. Here's some ways you can navigate around them. Just really zero ground, zero advice.

Elaine Lou Cartas: Yeah. and a follow up clarity question is that if they want to be a leader within their organization or in general or both.

Lisa Gillette: Good. Good. I love that. So let's say they want to climb the corporate ladder and then I want you to come back and answer, no, they want to really be a leader, be a role model for women coming after them.

Lisa Gillette: Let's start with them in the corporate ladder and then let's go into, The truth. Yeah. Of transformational leadership.

Elaine Lou Cartas: let's, if you want to be a leader, right? And let's say you're within your company and you want to get to that place as a woman of color versus, let's see, asking yourself a hard question one, and then to doing some research on it is, are you in an organization that could help propel you to that?

Elaine Lou Cartas: So how did you figure that out? Okay. one is, do you feel safe? Yeah. do you psychologically feel safe to have a direct conversation with your supervisor or other leaders? before doing anything, before having a conversation to ask yourself that question, if you feel in your body like, no, I don't feel safe, then I'm sorry to be direct with you, but it's not going to be that company or organization. Now if you do feel safe, like if there is a boss that you feel safe enough to have a conversation, if you do see, In leadership and I, and so often it's like bullshit. A lot of companies are always like, Oh my gosh, look at us. We're a fortune 10 company and we're so diverse. Okay. that's in rank and file.

Elaine Lou Cartas: I want to see C suite. Exactly. I want to see the leaders, so looking at even, looking at leaders, C suites, if there are also people of color there, then you know you're safe and then you can have the conversation with the closest direct line of leader that you do work with and asking like, Hey, I would love to get your feedback.

Elaine Lou Cartas: I really want to move up in leadership. I could see myself doing A, B, C. What's your feedback for me? Can we create a roadmap to do this? Okay. Thank you. And if they're open to having that conversation, that's great. If they may say something like there's budget cuts. I don't know what things are happening.

Elaine Lou Cartas: I know that may not feel good, but at least, I call them like the define the relationship, the DTR, when you're dating someone, you're like, what are we? at least they're having it. They're not going to fire you if you're having this conversation. And if they do, you go find an employment lawyer because it has nothing to do with your performance in your company. So having that conversation, if they say no, then you could start looking elsewhere. So what happens if it may not be a safe company that you want to continue to be a leader in one or two? What happens if they start making excuses because of budget cuts or this is just the way things are culturally?

Elaine Lou Cartas: then you could start asking yourself and looking at other companies and looking at, their org chart. Seeing what people are in the org charts, if there is diversity in there,

Elaine Lou Cartas: that's like a targeting it.

Lisa Gillette: Yeah. Yeah. Is it the role model of who they're promoting? And then the next question is, do you want to fit the role model? Which brings me to my next question to you, you coach around a lot, the topic of having an identity crisis in your career. That, I think. It's so true for so many women, and yet we don't really acknowledge that.

Lisa Gillette: Can you talk about that phenomena and how you coach around that? Because it really does exist, but many of us don't even really think of, we always consider, Oh, the problem must be me, not my environment. Talk about identity crisis in one's face.

Elaine Lou Cartas: I don't know if we have all day to talk about this. My

Lisa Gillette: podcast.

Elaine Lou Cartas: I don't write just so or just so your audience knows right before I think we're talking for 30 minutes before we hit record because we're just having a ball talking to each other about industry things, whether coaching or corporate. Sorry. You have to ask me the question again. Go ahead.

Lisa Gillette: So many times and I saw this because I did my research on you because, I'm a little nerd that way, but you really talk clearly about the concept of an identity crisis and, all of us, all women suffer from this.

Lisa Gillette: So just talk about the phenomena and how you identified it and how you coach around it and why we should not be ignoring it.

Elaine Lou Cartas: Yeah, before the phenomena, I just want to remind people what society and culture has taught us as women of what to be, right? So women, we are the supporting actress. We are there for our family emotionally, which tends to be the caregiver, the family for aging parents, women, right?

Elaine Lou Cartas: Who do our kids go to when they need emotional support? They're moms. And for women, I just want to remind people because I know I work with clients who have challenges when it comes to money. Like I don't, it's hard for me to ask more and it doesn't even mean ask more in terms of your salary, but even asking more in terms of a project that you're working on or even putting boundaries together.

Elaine Lou Cartas: But women weren't allowed to have their own bank accounts until the 1970s. And then prior to that, we needed a man to co sign with us. The 1970s is not that far away. That is what, 50 years ago.

That's not far away. so women making money is actually. a revolutionary thing. And the concept of then putting ourselves first is also new.

Elaine Lou Cartas: I'm not saying there's anything wrong with it, but just in society and culture, what was taught for us. And, because we're, thankfully, or at least in this country, we have this right and privilege to work. And we live in a capitalist society of constant doing and being measured by productivity. We're just doing it to do the next thing.

Elaine Lou Cartas: Then, you get to this stage of wait, what is my life? What am I doing? Why am I constantly doing? Who am I proving this to? And then the question of what the hell do I want? who am I? What am I? What do I want? Do I really want to have this next title? Hold on. I'm seeing everyone. Like I'm seeing my quote unquote ladder, I'm seeing how their personal lives look like, it's shit, they don't see their husband or wife, they don't see their kids, I don't want that's what I mean so in terms of answering the question of identity crisis, it's then realizing that you've been in this constant doodling, doing your job, doing and being the best wife, the best mother, partner, spouse, daughter, son, that, wait, what do I want?

Elaine Lou Cartas: And then realizing, wait, I need to honor my voice.

Lisa Gillette: I think that's so true that we are brought up to be helpmates. And this is the whole back when we get into positions of authority in corporate, we're looked upon as, you can help, but you can't have the primary seat. You might have a seat at the table, but it's not going to be at the head of the table.

Lisa Gillette: Let me ask you this. I know many women. Especially as they get into the leadership roles, they go, you know what? I'm done with this. I'm going to go out and I'm going to start my own business. How would you coach them for any woman who's it's got to be better. I'm going to start my own business. What are some of the questions you would ask them?

Elaine Lou Cartas: before you've been like asking this, like wanting to start a business, right? It's just actually asking yourself these questions. So pen and paper, take it out. Or if you are driving, quickly look at the timestamp and then listen to it again so you can take notes when you get home. what do you want out of your life?

Elaine Lou Cartas: Like in general, and also honor the stage of life you are in. I hear so often we compare ourselves like, oh my gosh, if I was just in my 20s, actually, I'm so glad I'm not in my 20s. I am so glad my body is telling me that I am tired and I can't be in front of a screen for X hours and I can't do all the things.

Elaine Lou Cartas: So what do you see your life as? Is that making sure you're clocking out at 5? making sure you actually have weekends, not responding to emails. what, does your holistic life look like? And then Asking, does your job support that? Like realistically, can your job support that? Is this the job company culture problem?

Elaine Lou Cartas: Or what is in your control or do you have control over creating boundaries because you haven't been able to enforce that?

Lisa Gillette: I think that's really brilliant. The deep dive. Yeah. Bye. I wanna share with our listeners that Elaine has a podcast. I wanna, I want everybody who's listening to this podcast.

Lisa Gillette: Her podcast is called WOC and Allies Business and Career Real Talk. And you can also find her on LinkedIn. You can take her courses, which I mentioned in my open, but it's Elaine, E-L-A-I-N-E, Lou, Carta, C-A-R-T-A-S. Find her on LinkedIn, follow her. Listen to her podcast. Elaine, you just you're resonating with me because these are my topics.

Lisa Gillette: I'm like, When you're talking about women didn't have a right to have a bank account purchase or open a loan, get a mortgage until 1974. This is, wrong, but we are working to change that all of that. And to keep women's rights equal because women's rights are human, right?

Elaine Lou Cartas: I, Yes.

Elaine Lou Cartas: Sorry. And I just have to do a plun because it's election year. Just please vote. That's all.

Lisa Gillette: Thank you. Thank you. this is a great segue into what you were doing before you started coaching because you had a very. interesting career and talk about working in a male dominated environment. Wow. Yeah.

Lisa Gillette: Share, share your first career with all of us and how you navigated that.

Elaine Lou Cartas: I survived it. Once again, how I navigated therapists and coaches. So that's my answer. And by the way, if you're hearing this, I just want you to know that it's about finding the right therapist and coach for you. If that is something you do want.

Elaine Lou Cartas: You're here. It's not about having to work with the best. It's, like dating, finding the right person that you need to work with. But so I did, I graduated college around the recession. So 2010 and I am from Southern California doing this podcast episode from Los Angeles. And it was hard for me to find a job.

Elaine Lou Cartas: And I was taught, I was very like heart led, like wanting to do a service. So I worked on a state. My first job was statewide Senate race. In Iowa, and, I was making a staggering 500 a month but it was actually a wonderful experience. I was an organizer. I was doing 300 calls a day, organized 157 volunteers in six months, so I learned rejection really quick.

Elaine Lou Cartas: I learned how to build the empathy, the relationship building, and then from there I've worked on statewide, local, national campaigns in Iowa, Indiana, Montana, New Mexico, Massachusetts. Not just that work experience, but I, understand that people complain about how expensive California is, but I feel like I'm very privileged to be from here and live in LA because it's so diverse.

Elaine Lou Cartas: I didn't have similar experiences when I was in the Midwest, even in the big cities in the Midwest, like where I experienced A lot but it was also eye opening and it taught me to be assertive and speak up for myself, advocate for myself. And then from there quickly got burnt out, hired a coach, started doing informational interviews and I landed my dream job at Paxi City College Foundation as a fundraiser where we raised a million dollars for about 200 scholarships.

Elaine Lou Cartas: That was an amazing experience and the reason why I left it. It's because that, this sounds cliché, but I wanted more. Like I graduated from my master's, got my leadership and management, realized, Oh shit, I've been doing what everyone's told me to do. Big aha, right? Yeah, like I, if, for those that work in government, you probably understand, you need to get your master's or PhD so that your little salary increases in the box.

Elaine Lou Cartas: And my salary did increase the box. I'm like, wait, this wasn't much. I'm like, hold on, what if I try to do something on my own? What if I became a coach because I love the coaches I worked with my career coach, but there was also no woman of color coach I was able to find. So I became a coach for women of color and allies and yeah, actually I was looking through my numbers, but I crossed the 700 threshold of clients that I've

Lisa Gillette: served today.

Lisa Gillette: okay. So my numbers are wrong cause I had you at 500. So there's 700. Yeah. One thing you said that I find so interesting and I saw it repeatedly in your story is that you have a natural ability to motivate and inspire others. You can't have that ability and not be able to fundraise to work. And academia, we know is.

Lisa Gillette: It's pretty rigid, but when I talk about leadership, one of the things that I always hit is that the true leader is able to motivate people to do things they didn't know how to do and inspire people to do things they didn't believe they could do. And even though you're not using those words, that's exactly what you were doing in your career leading up to coaching.

Lisa Gillette: it makes complete sense that you're now an extremely You're a successful business owner, coach, empowering coach, and you're helping women of color to be leaders, to step into this environment, which is not always user friendly. It's not. Yeah. It is not. So I just want to talk a little bit more about you and your journey.

Lisa Gillette: What was the biggest challenge you faced and how did you navigate beyond it?

Elaine Lou Cartas: I don't know if it's like a challenge. I think it's an ongoing challenge in life, right? I appreciate your compliments. I will say thank you and I receive it and I say that Oh, I'm so straight spoken. always that

Lisa Gillette: other woman model it.

Lisa Gillette: Hold on. I'm so straight spoken. There's no fluff here. If I say it, I'm not blowing smoke. Yeah. If you're

Elaine Lou Cartas: And I wanted to say it because this is being recorded. Thank you. And I receive it because unfortunately, like when we're like, Oh my God, I love your jacket. Thanks. It was on sale and large trim rack.

Elaine Lou Cartas: Like just say thank you. Oh,

Lisa Gillette: we have to talk about that. Wait, before we go to the ongoing challenge, we know that women are mostly not comfortable accepting compliments because we've been told, keep your head down, do your job and you will get rewarded. And we know that as BS. how do you coach a client around the, Oh, it's nothing or, Oh, anybody could do this?

Lisa Gillette: How do you, break that habit?

Elaine Lou Cartas: it's a hard, you know what? Educating just like what I was explaining earlier, right? Like women couldn't get a job. We were taught to like, be really polite. I remember that get us? Nowhere. I know. Back of the row. I'll just share a hilarious story and then I'll talk.

Elaine Lou Cartas: I think you asked me a question about motivation. If you can't tell, we are just having a ball with this podcast episode. And I'm not

Lisa Gillette: alcohol involved either.

Elaine Lou Cartas: We're, I know, no, this is completely water. Come on, completely sober. I am drinking. I am drinking non caffeinated tea. I'm caffeinated, non caffeinated.

Elaine Lou Cartas: There's a quote on it. But I remember when I think I was four, right? And so this was early 90s, late 80s. And back then, I think like men just normally had their shirts off when they're driving. So my dad

had his shirt off, right? And as a kid, you model your parents. So I like take my shirt off at four, my mom yells at me.

Elaine Lou Cartas: You can't take your shirt off. Like why? You just can. And she just did not explain it to me. Now there's beautiful, gentle parenting that's happening from our generation, which I know I unfortunately would have to explain, Oh, based on gender bias, yeah. So my mom, yeah, my mom never explained it to me.

Elaine Lou Cartas: So I was just having a tantrum. So it's just. I know it's just hilarious, just you see how society and culture is in this stuff. So it's actually just say thank you and own it because when you're, when you have your annual review, when you're going to ask for a raise, you have to showcase like what have you done in the past year?

Elaine Lou Cartas: And so an action item for everybody, if you don't have this yet, I know people have different terms for it, but have, I'm going to call it what it is, have a brag sheet, an ongoing brag sheet, everything that you have done. And then right before your annual review Print your job description, print that brag sheet, showcase how you've been doing all of it and above.

Elaine Lou Cartas: And if you realize, oh shit, I'm doing two jobs, print job descriptions from other companies you're doing. And hey, just help me understand. Thank you for the past three years. Like I've been able to accomplish this, X equals this. But it seems like I'm also doing another job. I want to show you other competitors where they have other positions doing this.

Elaine Lou Cartas: So can we talk about. How I can have a raise or maybe you don't even want to raise. Maybe you're just like, I should not be doing this job. Can we talk about how we could have another role of doing this instead? no. Okay. let's talk about how we can have a raise and then decrease my responsibilities because I'm doing two jobs, going back to the inspire and the motivation, what I've done about challenges, going back to the original question, it's funny, you're asked, you're giving me that compliment, which I've received, because I was thinking about when I was.

Elaine Lou Cartas: Starfishing on the floor crying when I found out that I didn't receive because I was an interim developed fundraising manager at Pasadena City College. So I had to apply for my own job. My boss who I love Bobby Abrams, shout out to her. She just got a new job at Santa Barbara Community College Foundation.

Elaine Lou Cartas: Anyways. So I had to interview for that job. Didn't get it. So I was starfishing crying and then I will be honest. this Lisa, there are times in my business where I'm like, what the hell, maybe I should look for a job or maybe I should do this even throughout my career. And I, the biggest challenge is not one moment.

Elaine Lou Cartas: The biggest challenge in my life. And I'm pretty sure a lot of people could relate. It's been a conversation I've had this past week with a lot of clients Honoring my voice. Like, how am I honoring my voice at this current stage of life? Two years ago in my business, I was burnt out because I was being caught up on what these other coaches were doing.

Elaine Lou Cartas: wait, hold on, What do I want to do? I just want to serve. I don't need to go rent a Rolls Royce and pretend that I'm like the other coaches. I just want to serve my clients and let me just have my client results speak for themselves. If you check my LinkedIn out, I have like incredible results.

Lisa Gillette: Yeah. And for everybody listening, one, I always say this, you don't have to do it alone. If you want to advance in your career or start your own business, get an expert and to ask them what their process is and how many clients have successfully followed it to achieve the results that were promised for everybody.

Lisa Gillette: Because coaching is, also. Yeah, please add, you got it. No,

Elaine Lou Cartas: I,

Elaine Lou Cartas: want to add, I'm just, I'm going to warn you. I'm going to make you laugh and it's going to be inappropriate, but I know you'll put the explicit easy. Lisa and I were just talking about it, but a huge problem, I will just be transparent in this coaching industry is seeing these big names.

Elaine Lou Cartas: And then they're all self promoting. Like I just had a client who worked with one of them, not sharing the name. And just I thought this person was great. I was like, what made you think that they're great? everyone was talking about them. Okay. who's everyone? the other day, I'm like, that's because they're actually doing an affiliate business model.

Elaine Lou Cartas: And the question to ask is their client results and client testimonials, because the model you're seeing is circle jerk of coaches who are just cross promoting one another, like actually look at the results and even ask, and let's say they're not a big name that you want to hire. Whatever coach, whether it's even me or Lisa, ask, Hey, can I talk to one of your clients?

Elaine Lou Cartas: I remember asking that from a coach that I was considering to hire like, Oh, I don't do that. I'm like, red flag, big red flag. They're not willing.

Lisa Gillette: Cause you know, there was the confidentiality issue. Yes. Yes. And definitely.

Elaine Lou Cartas: And we would ask our former clients for permission if they could talk, of

Lisa Gillette: course.

Lisa Gillette: Of course. But you know what? There's the client, the potential client is not asking, what did you talk around? The potential client is asking, did you get the results you were promised? Where were you? What did you need help with? And did you get the results? You were promised, the potential client is not saying, Oh my God.

Lisa Gillette: So HR saw that you got slapped at the ass by the chairman of the board and they did nothing. They're not asking those questions. By the way, that did happen to me. Not that I'm sharing. Yeah. Anyway. So I want to ask you, Elaine, something that, I think a lot of listeners. would really like to hear it's when you're having and this is part of your teaching when you have a conscious conversation, because you impressed me as someone who was always really very clear on your highest intentions and making sure that your actions align with them.

Lisa Gillette: And you have a concept that you teach around called having a conscious conversation. How would any list or how do you teach that to your clients? Can you go through that process? Cause I think this is just Yeah, mind blowing and so empowering

Elaine Lou Cartas: well, let me first explain what conscious conversations is So conscious conversations just think of it as another term of difficult conversations Yeah, that we often want to avoid and so I know we're talking conscious conversations in a way rear and professional but if we think about it personally if you're in a relationship with your partner and You something has happened, you have that conscious conversation, and then usually what happens is some, amazing lovemaking.

Elaine Lou Cartas: I'm not saying that's gonna happen at work, but, what I'm trying to say in the personal life is when you have that conscious conversation with your partner or romantic partner, you end up having this common understanding of one another. oh, that's why they react the way they do. They were raised this way.

Elaine Lou Cartas: Or I didn't see it from their perspective. So I just want to share that personal analogy because it helps with work. So with work, it's Before even having the conscious conversation, I just want to make sure you are asking that question once again, going back to psychological safety. Do you even feel safe enough to ask this question or this goal to this other person?

Elaine Lou Cartas: Like I'm working with a client right now. He does not feel safe around his boss. His boss is the, Oh my God, I'm such a good ally, but just does not have great behaviors of it. And he knows that if he were to give feedback, he would be gaslit. Yeah. So he does not have that conversation with her. So I'm not saying you need to have it all the time.

Elaine Lou Cartas: Like you think people are going to change all the time. Just ask yourself if you're safe. If you do, you feel safe enough, then it is as being able to frame the question where you're asking. So you could better understand the other person or if you want to even give them feedback, Hey, I want to give you feedback.

Elaine Lou Cartas: When you did state this at a meeting, it actually came up as Microaggression, and this is why, and I just wanted to share that with you so you could work on it. I remember when I was, at, this job and I was working with a consultant, and every single time I did a good job, he would say oh, good girl.

Elaine Lou Cartas: And I just, he was like, good girl. I'm like, yeah, exactly your reaction. That's how I felt in my body. Oh, that's that why, that's I felt that in my body, but I didn't show it. I hope I had a really good poker face. I don't know. And. And I told my boss, who I respected, Hey, I just want to let you know, dick, that's not his name.

Elaine Lou Cartas: That's not his name. But we're going to use his name. I just want to let you know that dick would always say good girl when I do something great and it's just condescending and makes me feel like a dog. And he was like, okay. And then that, and then my boss didn't do anything about it. at the same time, I know that.

Elaine Lou Cartas: My boss at the time is not responsible for providing that feedback and I reflected, you know what, I think I need to give them feedback. Yeah. there was a meeting and a group meeting and I just told Dick, hey, Dick, do you mind if you stay after I want to talk to you about something? everyone left, the door closed.

Elaine Lou Cartas: I'm like, Dick, I really appreciate you talk, us working together. And mind you, I've never had any issues or challenges with Dick, so that's what I want to share. I felt psychologically safe with this person. So I let him know, Hey, when you say good girl, it comes off condescending and it makes me feel like I'm a dog.

Elaine Lou Cartas: And he had the slide problem and he's Oh my God, I never realized that. Whenever I worked with a young woman like you, I would give that compliment or I thought it was a compliment. And mind you, that's another step, being unattached to the results and the response. That is another step. Which is important.

Elaine Lou Cartas: Yeah. And he took the feedback. He said, thank you. And he stopped saying it. And at the time, I want to say he was in his 60s when I gave this feedback to him. But what that made me realize, oh my God, he's what, had a career for 40 years. He's obviously worked with other women. He's said this before.

Elaine Lou Cartas: And no one has shared this with him, and I was probably the first one that shared that with him, and he's changed that behavior. it was actually eye opening, the importance of having a conscious conversation, of being direct with someone, if you feel psychologically safe with someone.

Lisa Gillette: And that is the criteria.

Lisa Gillette: But how interesting, though, that you were able, once you, knew, okay, I can have this conversation, to say it, And that kind of speaks to all our listeners, if you do feel psychologically safe and you make a comment, you can make things better, not only for yourself, but for every woman following after you.

Lisa Gillette: Cause here's a 60 year old guy who's thought he was doing something supportive and until he was told, he didn't realize. How it really sounded, how it really did. So for many women who might be listening at this point, I know a lot of us, and I've fallen into this too, where it's I'm tough, I can handle it.

Lisa Gillette: I'm just going to brush it off. I'm just going to make a comment like, Oh dude, that's a stupid comment. But when you can actually. Say something and make a difference for every woman coming after you kind of empowers all of us to go ahead and say that thing We're a little uncomfortable saying but to Elaine's point if you don't feel psychologically safe, there's no upside Yeah, there's no and

Elaine Lou Cartas: I also want to share the opposite end of it, too When I have received it because I'm not perfect.

Elaine Lou Cartas: So I said thing. Yeah, I've said things so So, when I notice someone gives me feedback or have, has the conscious conversation with me, and, that I'm actually receiving it and I agree, because there are times when people give me feedback and I don't agree with them, I'm like, I often just reply thank you for feeling safe enough to share this feedback with me.

Lisa Gillette: What a great affirmation.

Elaine Lou Cartas: Huh. I, think people forget to say thank you. It's actually important because, how I, when I've started new jobs. And even with clients now that I'm a coach, I let people know, I really want you to be direct with me when you do see a challenge. If maybe because we're human, I might say something and just come off, Please let me know.

Lisa Gillette: Yeah. So important. So let me just throw this in because this is a question I don't want to lose it. If you could give your younger self advice, what would you want to tell

Elaine Lou Cartas: yourself? And it goes back to the theme that we were talking about, hey, what do you want?

Lisa Gillette: Not what do you think you should be doing because everybody has told you that's what you should want. What do you really want and can you give yourself permission that not only say, yes, I want that and then go ask for it, whatever you need, whatever the resources do you need, the training. Yeah. Yeah. So important.

Lisa Gillette: So important. You have a very special offer for listeners. One just say, how can listeners contact you because they're going to want to speak to you, Elaine, just lay out the easiest way they can reach you. And then I want to talk about your special gift.

Elaine Lou Cartas: Yeah. So if you want to reach me, find me on LinkedIn.

Elaine Lou Cartas: I know that you spelled it out earlier, but just in case it's. It's going to be in the show notes as well. So just know that. Click on the link. So it's Elaine Lou Gartas. So it's E L A I N E and then Lou, L O U and then Gartas, C A R T A S. So contact me there. Our conversations pretty much very similar to my own podcast.

Elaine Lou Cartas: So look up business and career real talk and any streaming platform. So that's how you find me.

Lisa Gillette: Oh, so please share this gift that, this is priceless. Talk about.

Elaine Lou Cartas: Yeah.

Lisa Gillette: Because that you're, offline.

Elaine Lou Cartas: So if you are possibly interested in wanting to work with me, I always do, a complimentary call.

Elaine Lou Cartas: So if you want to schedule a career audit call with me where we look at your goals and challenges and I give you at least three aligned actions towards your career. You could schedule a call with me at elainelou.com forward slash call. That's E L A I N E L O U .com forward slash

Lisa Gillette: call. That is one of the biggest gifts because we know so many times that we, talked about this before we actually started recording.

Lisa Gillette: There are many people out there who are calling themselves coaches who have no real, leadership coaches who have no real leadership experience. Let me just call it out. And I see that a lot that you were in positions where you led teams, you're responsible for big budgets. and anybody who is good at cold, calling, God, my hats off to them, but you have been in very important.

Lisa Gillette: Leadership roles. And we know a lot of coaches when you get on a call with them, it's nice. And you walk away and go, what did I get? But to walk away from a call and to actually have three action steps that you can actually start making the change and creating a difference and understanding what it is you really want to do with your life.

Lisa Gillette: Oh my God. I just thank us. That's all. That's all I can say. If there was one message. That you really wanted listeners to understand from our conversation today. What would that message be? You get

Elaine Lou Cartas: to define your own definition of success and happiness and be okay that it will continuously evolve.

Lisa Gillette: Yeah.

Lisa Gillette: Yeah. So if I would paraphrase that it's stop the self judgment. Oh my gosh. We haven't talked about the inner critic. The little voice that shows up at the most inopportune time. The itty bitty shabby committee. That's what I call it. That's the one. That's the one. some people refer to it as imposter syndrome, which is a subset, but I want to share with all listeners, if you suffer from imposter syndrome, guess what?

Lisa Gillette: You're a high achiever because that voice wouldn't be so loud and cranky unless you were a perfectionist driving yourself to always over deliver. So let's just acknowledge that. So what did you call it? The itty bitty shitty committee. .

Elaine Lou Cartas: Oh my God. So when you, not my term, I heard, not my term, do not coin it for me.

Elaine Lou Cartas: It's from someone else. I have no idea who it is, but thank you for the term .

Lisa Gillette: But that, is awesome. So let's just talk about that for a minute, because you know we all have that voice. Some of us much louder than others. I've got the feedback loop. And, wow. How do you coach clients around that?

Elaine Lou Cartas: Yeah. also not a therapist, right? So if it's like you want to get rid of it, then definitely work with a therapist go to psychologytoday.com and then you could find therapists and you could do it based off of specific things. So there's a plugin for therapy there, but for coaches, it's actually helping you to hit a goal.

Elaine Lou Cartas: But I would just ask my clients if I was working with you, Okay, when did you start realizing that? How old were you when you started realizing that was there, right? Just so they know that they, it's been there for a long time and usually it's five or seven when they're young. Okay. So it's Small kids.

Elaine Lou Cartas: Yeah. Yeah. So it's been there for a long time. I literally did this coaching session with a client. So it's hilarious you asked me that. okay. It's five or seven. So tell me a time when you were dealing with this. and how you felt and what'd you do to honor it? And so my client, when I was doing the session, she was like, Oh, I want to go on a trip, but I felt really nervous.

Elaine Lou Cartas: I was like, okay, so is the feeling of nervous happens when you, when it shows up, yeah, okay, so what made you decide that you wanted to go on this trip? I knew I wanted to, but I could hear, this voice of, you should be working. You shouldn't have to go on a trip. Whose voice is that? Oh, that's my parents.

Elaine Lou Cartas: Okay, what's your voice saying into that? I, want to go on a trip. Okay, we'll note that. when you go through situations, and I'm not saying your feeling's going to be nervous. It might be a different feeling, right? What is that feeling? Where is it in your body? Okay. Exactly. It's okay, they, oh, hey, it's you again.

Elaine Lou Cartas: What's up, ? So yeah, acknowledge you. yeah. Acknowledge it's there. what are the thoughts coming in? And then it will help pen to paper, like literally pens, paper just helps. okay, the thought is, you shouldn't be doing that because A, B, C, okay, what? What voice is this? Okay. Nope, that's, someone else's voice.

Elaine Lou Cartas: Okay. Oh, this is my voice. This is what I wanna do. So that's how I coach my clients to it. But I will say. I went to therapy and it because it was really hard for me to distinguish like which one is my voice. I don't know and honoring it. So there is a lot of healing I had to do. So just wanted to be transparent.

Lisa Gillette: Yeah. I think there's a lot of healing all of us need to do. And for listeners who are going, do I need a coach? Do I need a therapist? The ICF definition is coaches help people who are. Functioning, reach an even higher level of functioning and fulfillment, whereas psychiatrists, therapists, psychologists are really helping people deal with things that happened in the past that are keeping them from really functioning in the present.

Lisa Gillette: So you know, for those of us who want to advance in our careers. This is something you could talk to Elaine about, especially someone on her level, because she has got so many tools and so many processes, and she did this herself. She ascended the leadership ladder. So for anybody listening, who's thinking about a coach, get an expert and also ask.

Lisa Gillette: What's the process? Who else have you helped? What are the results? And you got any clients I can speak to? Those are all legitimate questions before you pay, the price of admission to get a coach. I have a coach and I have a therapist and yeah, their own trifecta. Thank goodness. Thank goodness.

Lisa Gillette: So Elaine, you've got two classes. What about to launch and when you're already launching, just talk about the motivation for creating your classes on LinkedIn learning, because I think it's brilliant and just talk about your process and what reader listeners could expect if they wanted to take either one of those classes.

Elaine Lou Cartas: Yeah, so the LinkedIn learning course that's out live right now, maybe the second one will be out by the time this goes live. I am not sure. One is called using AI to make a career switch and then the second

one is called identity crisis, how to realign your career with your life. I will say that the process comes from my personal experience and how I've been able to help my hundreds of clients go through it.

Elaine Lou Cartas: As a lot of people are familiar with, that during the recession, there was a great resignation. People who quit their jobs and who quit their jobs because they hate it and they want to even completely change industries or even start their own business.

Lisa Gillette: Yeah.

Elaine Lou Cartas: But re the pandemic was real. At the same time, it also gave us a gift being stuck in our walls of what do I want?

Elaine Lou Cartas: Who am I? Yeah. We were talking about identity crisis earlier. So I actually give you steps, right? Similar to what I've shared in this podcast episode, so I did a little appetizer here of what is your holistic life? look at the different parts of it. How do you want your life to look like?

Elaine Lou Cartas: And then if you want to explore a different industry or job, what steps you can do. So I talk about looking at your network, doing informational interviews. It's what I did when I wanted to get out of politics and go into the non profit sector and make my first six figures. Yeah. And then how you could actually.

Elaine Lou Cartas: So often I hear from people, Oh my God, I want to change industries, but like my whole resume and LinkedIn is like all this. I was like, you could frame and change the words according to a specific job. And I show you that process of it. And guess what? Like you could take this course for free because there's a 30 day trial.

Elaine Lou Cartas: LinkedIn will ask for your credit card. So you could take the trial. Or if you just want to buy the course, it's 24. 99.

Lisa Gillette: Oh my gosh, no, it's like 499. So to all listeners, here's one thing you really want to get clear on. Talk with a coach who's actually experienced what it is you want to do and has gone through it themselves and has been successful at it.

Lisa Gillette: Those are the questions you want to be asking. Yeah. So important. and you have, I've been through your LinkedIn profile. I've been on your website. I see your methodology and you've got one and I am very process oriented. and you are very clear in your process about take these steps and this is where you, this is the destination you will arrive.

Elaine Lou Cartas: I also want to remind people, whether it's me, Lisa, or another coach, like I will take you through these steps, ask questions, But I want to remind you that you have choice in agency. So I always let my clients know Hey here's my, I do a mix of coaching consulting because if it was true, coaching would just be all questions.

Elaine Lou Cartas: So I do a mix. I'm just being transparent. I do coaching consulting. So I just, I remember talking to someone who wanted to work with me and she said, I was always like the A plus student with all the coaches I work with. When I got on the call with her, I'm like, I don't want you to be the A plus student.

Elaine Lou Cartas: Working with me or any other coach. I actually want you to show up and making sure your voice is being honored. So question I always ask going through the process with clients is, Does this resonate with you or not? And I don't want you to people please me, Because this coaching is for you and not for me.

Elaine Lou Cartas: And so when clients are like, Oh, I really don't want that. I'm like, Okay, so how do you want that? Or what do you not like about it? So you have choice and agency. I want to giving a history lesson. again. I want to remind everybody that we still unfortunately live in this industrial revolution,

Lisa Gillette: just

Elaine Lou Cartas: like Ford company, doing things by the clock, putting like tires in 12 hour days, like constant doing like American culture and capitalism has taught us to constantly be doing that.

Elaine Lou Cartas: We get so tired. We're not thinking about what we want to be or do a really beautiful book is called to read as rest is resistance. By Trisha Hershey. Oh my god. Book was transformational, but this culture this country and society has taught us to constantly work So we never question what is happening.

Lisa Gillette: Exactly.

Elaine Lou Cartas: And that is what's happening right now. I know it's like scary we see And we see these movements and parades, but it's But actually, also, that's what this country was also made out of, too. There's also that positive of being able to speak up with our voice.

Lisa Gillette: Yeah. And I'm just going to say what the message is I'm taking away, and then I want you to add your closing thoughts.

Lisa Gillette: But I'm hearing that really to be in alignment with your career and your personal life and to avoid that burnout, that desolation, that sort of numbness that comes from that, no, I'm okay. I'm just going to keep doing what I'm doing. I'm going to keep my head down to prevent that burnout. You have to one, truly honor what it is you want, understand it, not get caught up in this is what society's telling me I should want, but truly do understand it and then use your voice.

Lisa Gillette: That's the empowering tool it can be to really speak and stand in your truth. I'd love to hear your closing thoughts because this has been By far, one of my favorite podcasts has been, I could talk to you for five hours. I really.

Elaine Lou Cartas: if all of you really this podcast episode, but Lisa knows, so she, actually, so you already told me that I was going to come on again.

Elaine Lou Cartas: Oh, you're

Lisa Gillette: totally coming on again because I want to talk about,

Elaine Lou Cartas: yeah closing thoughts. You know what? I. I've shared a lot of tips. I know Lisa has shared a lot of tips, not just in this episode and in this podcast. It is okay if something doesn't feel good for you. I actually want to remind listeners to feel in and ask yourself what you want.

Elaine Lou Cartas: for example, my boyfriend's like, Why don't you like olives? I'm like, I hate olives. I will never like olives. I am anti olives. It is just my thing. See, I know who I am. Anti olives. Now, I didn't mean to get political in this podcast episode, but I know who I am,

Lisa Gillette: And you stand in your conviction.

Lisa Gillette: And again, I want to say, and this is something I tell my clients, what is your highest intention? Are your actions in alignment with your highest intentions? Thanks. Why do you think they're not? Or what are you doing to commit to make sure that they are?

Elaine Lou Cartas: Yeah. And I'm going to be TMI right now, I'm privileged that I do have my business, but for example, I was at the gym, I was planning to be there for an hour.

Elaine Lou Cartas: I was there listening to your podcast episodes prior to hitting record for this. And I was fine to be there for an hour, but then I had cramps and I'm like, Oh my gosh, I just stayed there for 30 minutes. And lo and behold, Auntie Flo, AKA Period, came. knew it, but my body just couldn't. I was just like, I just don't want to, and that's how I honored myself.

Elaine Lou Cartas: Like a small little thing. So action could also be not doing

Lisa Gillette: action to be exactly. Giving yourself permission to say, I wanna time out. Yeah. Yeah. Which points to what you said just earlier about we're So part of that we must be doing, and doing for others, and we put ourselves and our own needs at the very back of the line.

Lisa Gillette: that's a topic for next time when we talk. Yeah, thank you so much for having me on. Oh my, this was my absolute pleasure. So for all listeners, find Elaine on LinkedIn. There are so many resources. It's Elaine Lou Karkas, Elaine, E L A I N E, Lou, L O U, Karkas, C A R T A S. You could also. Google her website's on our LinkedIn profile.

Lisa Gillette: there are so many, it's just a wealth of resources. And I'm just really honored that you agreed to be on my podcast and this was just an awesome episode. really, it was like so impactful.

Elaine Lou Cartas: Oh, I'm so glad I enjoyed it. Thank you for having me on. Absolutely. My pleasure. Until we talk again. Yeah.

Elaine Lou Cartas: Bye.