

EP101

Elaine Lou Cartas: It's been a week since elections, whether you are feeling triumphant or not. It's also nasty online or even the conversations that are being had. And to be transparent, elections are hard for me in general. See, working in political campaigns was the first industry I worked in after college. I did it throughout my twenties, so I know this feeling really well.

And I also figured out what to do to protect my peace. Not in terms of this past elections, but even in past ones. So here is my intention and goal of this episode. is to help you figure out how to protect your mental and emotional well being during this time. Because, as after elections, presidential elections specifically, it's the holidays, right?

If you're an American, it's Thanksgiving, and then there's December with all the holidays, depending on what religion you believe in. how can you protect your mental and emotional well being? All right? Let's drop the beat.

So I am California born and raised and after college, I moved to Des Moines, Iowa. I was making 500 a month where I was a field organizer, also known as political grassroots organizer. If you don't know what that role is, it's working insane hours, 12 to 16 hours a day, doing 400 calls a day, knocking on 10 doors an hour.

I'm not exaggerating. And my goal then was to recruit volunteers. and train them in having conversations with voters of what are important topics for them so they can make a decision to vote for a certain candidate or not. That was my job, teaching volunteers how to have conversations. And since then, throughout my 20s, I worked in different targeted congressional races throughout the country, not just Iowa, but Montana, New Mexico, Massachusetts, and even here in California, where I am from.

I also worked on local school board races. And I think it's just important for you to understand my background because trust me, I just, I have been there. And I got into campaigning because. I'm so grateful for this country. It allowed my dad, his parents to immigrate here, work in the grapevine fields of central California.

And it's because of laws that were passed that I wouldn't have had this privilege to talk to all of you in this podcast where I'm wearing my PJs with my hammer off because that's how I'm feeling right now. But you might relate to this regardless if you work in political campaigns or not, you Doing that, it became my full identity, and each move I made was critical, and it felt like it would impact the livelihood of Americans.

Honestly, it's easy for a lot of grassroots organizers and campaigners to create a codependent relationship with their work. I remember You know, when I started in the industry, I would have colleagues bragging, yeah, I'm missing my friend's wedding to be here. And I was like, really, this is something to brag about.

And if you're relating to this, not necessarily working on campus campaigns, but also having a codependent relationship in your job or your industry or both, you might want to check out episode 11, Identity Crisis, how to quit or realign your career or business and your life. And I'll put that link in the show notes.

But yeah, that was. My life. So what I did when I realized I was in a co dependent relationship with my work one went to therapy to Realize, you know what? I don't need to just be a grassroots organizer to create change and impact I could do things differently Where I can actually have sustainable life, where I can work eight hours or even less, or even go to the gym and not have to brag that I was working all these long hours.

And that's when I became a fundraiser in Pasadena City College. Like I've said many times in other episodes, it was my dream job, but then I realized I did miss the fast pace of campaigns, but not too much. And I had a third career change. And Where I'm a business and executive care coach and podcast hosts that you are listening to right now.

I figured hearing my background would help you understand where I'm coming from as we talk about how to protect your peace post elections and during the holidays. All right, so as promised, I have three very simple tips for you. One, set boundaries from media and end. social media consumption. A reminder, you do not, I'm going to repeat that again, you do not need to share how you feel or what others should do on social media.

As a former grassroots organizer, you might assume I would share how I feel, what to do, all these resources, but I don't want to. And I'm not going to. you might have judgments for me not doing to, but I did my part, which is to vote, and I remember how it felt like to work on campaigns and to be defeated or to win and to talk to others, and it felt like just fire, like adding fire to a fuel.

accentuating emotions and I just don't want to do it. I want to feel my emotions on my own. If needed, talk to a therapist. Shockingly, I do not have a therapy session this month, but I feel like that because of elections, but I feel like that in itself has shown growth because I have dealt with this with elections.

Not just presidential, but even local and special elections. Just a reminder, there are also local and special elections to vote. It's not just every four years for a president. All right. That is one thing I do want to educate people on. Please vote, not just presidential, but local and state. And when it comes to setting boundaries for media consumption, if you are triggered by certain people who might be loved ones or friends, just a reminder.

You can unfollow them and they're like, Elaine, they're going to find out that I unfollowed them. Okay, on Instagram, there's a mute button so you can mute them. Just a reminder, protect your peace. And create time away from screens. For me, it's been so nice to put my emotions out doing Muay Thai, which is known as Thai kickboxing.

I enjoy and love it. It feels really good to put my rage and anger there. Which kind of puts me to sleep. The second tip is connect with people in person from diverse perspectives and backgrounds. Q4 has been crazy busy. I started Q4 in We're Chicago speaking to 200 plus executives. Last week, I was at an LA chamber procurement event where I was meeting with potential clients, and then I was in Atlanta for national minority business enterprise, and tomorrow I'm getting ready to go to the Grammy museum for a sports entertainment event for a woman of color.

It's been really nice to be with people in person, outside of social media, because Social media, you're going to get more people like you because of the algorithm, regardless of what platform you're in. And I've realized as human social beings, this is, we're missing as great as technology is. But there are cons as well as great as technology is.

And I'm a futurist. I know that there will be a need. To be in person in community, to learn, to understand, to grow with one another. Now I have a hard tip. If you're ready, if you want to, you don't need to, but this will be a challenge. And I did this recently connect with people who have differing political views and have a conversation in place of curiosity, see.

This is what I did when I was a field organizer, right? I would talk to people, ask them what are important issues for them. Why was it important? Came from a place of curiosity, not trying to convince them, but just wondering why, and then letting them know the different policies a candidate agreed in or opposed it, so that they can make a decision.

I also remember back in the day when we used to go to work in person, this is for millennials and older, and we would talk to colleagues that might have differing views. And despite it, there would still be a sense of respect. So I said that this happened to me before, but the other day I was connecting with a friend and he shared his views that were different from mine, rather than wanting to scream and yell.

I came from a place of curiosity to understand. The challenges and issues that were important to him, and it was fascinating. Now I may not agree, but I was like, okay, I could see why this individual believes in this certain thing, but I just came from a place of curiosity. I did not want to challenge or have to argue.

I was just curious. Hopefully, as we continue connecting with different people, we learn and grow from diverse backgrounds. Now, I know some of you may think, no, I don't want to. And that's okay. I'm just sharing my thoughts. And once again, these are my thoughts and opinions. I am not giving a prescription of what you need to do.

I am sharing it from a perspective of my experience being a former political grassroots organizer that worked on targeted congressional races throughout the country. It was tough, man. I, drove my car across country working on these campaigns. And then when I became a fundraiser, because I did fundraising too, in campaigns, I was also in a plane every week, raising money, doing call time with candidates.

All right, I'm going astray, but let's get back to the third and final tip. Managing family and social dynamics. So do anticipate. Those political discussions, especially if there's alcohol that's involved, people are probably going to want to talk to you about it and be ready for strong boundaries and scripts.

So here is one that you could use. Okay, you might want to look at the timestamp. You got it? Just in case you're driving or running or whatever you're doing, maybe cleaning. Are you got the timestamp? All right, I'm going to tell you the script. I'm focused on enjoying our time together. Let's chat about something lighter.

Just say that. And then I get it. I know sometimes family members like, no, come on, let's talk about no, I really want to enjoy our time together. And if you want to talk about it, I'm just going to step out then. That's it. they might be pissed at you. They might say things that you're gonna be pissed about, but protect your peace.

It's all the same. So just in case you need the three tips again, one, set boundaries for media consumption. You don't have to share or post, you could limit your times, you could mute and follow people to connect with people in person from diverse perspectives and backgrounds because it's not geared towards an algorithm and come from a place of curiosity.

And third, use a script. I'm focused on enjoying our time together. Let's chat about something lighter. As a former grassroots organizer, after elections, post elections, I was going to place a reflection of, okay, what can I learn? What am I assuming? What's in my control? And what's outside of my control? I'm excited for what we can learn and grow from this moment.

And I hope you do too, or we'll get to a place where it is. And if you're in a state of F that, honor all that. Honor how you're feeling.

Alright, I wanted to make this podcast episode short and sweet because I am heading to Australia and New Zealand this Saturday and I'm gone for two weeks. I'm so stoked and excited. So how do I protect my peace? I'm leaving the country to two other countries, but I'm so excited for that. But if you enjoy this podcast episode, here are four things you can do, if you feel called to do them.

One. If you could leave a five star rating and review, that would mean a lot to me. My team and I created this podcast for accessible education for women of color and allies, and each episode takes about four hours to create. It takes me one hour to prep, another 30 minutes to one hour to record, or in this case it was like 15 20 minutes.

Then my team spends another two hours to edit and mark it. And number two, because I care about accessible education, share this with a friend who might be going through it this election season. Three, don't forget to hit that follow button and subscribe. When you hit that follow button, it lets the podcast platform you're listening to know how important this podcast is to women of color and allies like you.

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