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Sheri Fella: Trusting yourself provides your truest compass

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When you have worked hard to build deep and wide self-awareness, trusting yourself and your intuition is an acceptance of your truest compass—you. That was a profound proclamation to take in while I soaked up some transformative learning at California training center 1440 Multiversity. Trust is the cornerstone of any relationship, especially in the relationship you have with yourself. For me, that is why it is always front and center in the learning process.



SHERI FELLA
IN THE WORKPLACE

Clients cannot learn if I don't build trust with them and between them. Families don't learn to grow together without it. I don't learn without trusted mirrors to reflect back to me what I cannot see from my own blind spots. Trust is fundamental to learning and to relationships, and we need both of those to grow.

For me, learning is the courage to put myself out into the abyss—"the arena," as author Brene Brown shares—and trust that I will come out the other side with new insights. The courage to be in a situation, a context, an immersive journey where I am untethered to certainty. Where I have the power of my curiosity, but not the confidence of answers.

When I am in this space, I know I have to unlock new doors of possibility to increase my understanding, and I find that exciting and scary. The scary part is made less so if I have a trusted mirror along. Someone who might not have any more answers, or comfort than I, but who does have my best interests at heart and has the courage to share his or her reflections with me along the way.

A mirror of trust reflects to you what you cannot see or what you see but aren't ready to accept. In learning, inviting those mirrors in is key. In fact, I don't know how I would learn what I cannot see without them. Sitting in the redwoods at 1440 watching the flames of the bonfire, I reflected on the many mirrors I have had already this year.

An all-male executive team continues to show me how trust in the learning climate we have created is so expansive that it opens possibility after possibility to let difference join the team members, challenge them and help them grow. They didn't yet have the diversity they desired on their executive team, but they did have mirrors all around them and they creatively invited those mirrors in.

A client, who has grown to be a close friend and important teacher, expressed her frustration that she was labeled a "woman" business owner. No man she knew was introduced as a "man" business owner. That took me aback for a second and helped me to build awareness around my own labeling and the unintended consequences that might come with it—such a powerful reflection.

My business team is constantly showing me new ways of thinking and new perspectives to explore, and sharing different reflections of how we show up versus how we intended to.

Trusting in yourself means you can trust your inner voice. So when you hear it say, "I need help" or "I don't know" or "What am I missing?", trust it and look around your room of learning. What mirrors do you see? If

it is only you in the room, whom might you invite in to offer different reflections? To open new possibilities? To enlighten new perspectives? Who might shed light on things you do not know or see?

To deepen our clients' awareness, we must continually deepen our own. And when we build trust solid enough to help them see what they can't yet see themselves, we create a learner who will pass that ripple of possibility on in their next interaction. •

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