

Corey Andrew Powell ([00:03](#)):

Kara Goldin took the beverage industry by storm with a simple idea and her kitchen concoction, the end result, she created an entirely new product category. The founder and CEO of Hint water joins me today in a discussion about leadership, creativity and the power of perseverance. I look at women often for women, especially, there are these other obstacles at play. Sometimes unfortunately, that women are still dealing with limited funding trying to launch a business, sometimes misogyny, sexism. And I just wonder, did you have any of those instances when you were trying to get your business started and how you overcame that?

Kara Goldin ([00:41](#)):

Yeah, well, I think that the biggest thing I learned about the fundraising avenue was that, I mean, it kind of speaks to a similar situation of finding people that really get you and believe in you. So I had come from the tech industry and knew a few investors, particularly in Silicon Valley, Sandhill Road, from my experience at America Online. And I found that I've never to this day had a problem, getting meetings. People would be interested to, you know, have me show up, spend some time with me. They have a lot more time than I do. My goal was to actually get some of these people to be interested and invest. And there's two things I'll say about this. One - I remember taking a meeting in particular in Silicon valley with a group of very well known A-list Silicon Valley venture investors. And first of all, we were way too small.

Kara Goldin ([01:46](#)):

I mean, if you look at their portfolio, they typically invest in companies that are, you know, not pre million dollars as we were. They have to have some sort of tech tie in all of these things. But I showed up in the parking lot, actually with my husband, who's our chief operating officer. He was kind of Chief Bottle Washer in the beginning, helping me out. He's a Silicon Valley attorney - taking a break and helping me deliver cases and kind of think about how to figure some stuff out. And so when we showed up for this meeting, the venture partner had just pulled into the parking lot at the same time. And my husband was very nice. I had heels on and he dropped me off at the curb and uh, said, I'll go park the car.

Kara Goldin ([02:32](#)):

And so the venture partner walked up and he said, oh, Kara, really nice to meet you. And he said, I was just reading your story. I can't believe you have four children and you're starting a business. And I thought, well, that's interesting. I mean, it was like the first thing that he said, when, you know, here I am to try and raise money for my new business. And I'm thinking, not that he's gonna talk to me about my children. And it was the next thing that he said, which I thought was, you know, really? Huh? Where, where did that question come from? But he said, so who's watching the kids? And I thought, and it, and huh. And I did something at that moment that was actually totally the right thing to do. But uh, didn't even know that I was gonna do it. It just sort of blurted out.

Kara Goldin ([03:27](#)):

I said, oh my gosh. <laugh> and he said, is everything OK? And I said, uh, yeah. Uh, oh my gosh, I, I can't believe it. Did you know that there's babysitters <laugh> and I mean, you know, I'm still trying to figure out how I knew to actually call, call a sitter for my four children. I mean, I've got so many and I'm running a business. I don't know. I said something like that. And he looked at me and he said, oh my gosh, that was so rude. Not what I said, but he caught himself. Right? And it was, and it was funny and what's even funnier. I've seen him since then over the years. And oftentimes it'll be at a conference, places I'm speaking. And I saw him at a dinner and he'll actually take the opportunity to call himself out on what he said to me.

Corey Andrew Powell ([04:22](#)):

Wow.

Kara Goldin ([04:22](#)):

And so it's a story of, you have to not be afraid to speak your mind. Right. And in the end, people have asked me, did he invest? No, he didn't invest. It was a very pleasant meeting. But like I said, at the beginning of this story that he only invests in tech. We didn't even do direct to consumer at that point. And I think he was really curious, like why was this product in Google and Facebook and some of the other places that he frequented and watched. Right. And so I think that sometimes people say stuff that they just are stupid. Right? They, they just don't know. They might be actually very intelligent people, but they just don't really understand. Mm-hmm <affirmative> I guess you call it EQ now. Right? Yeah. You just don't understand. Now, do you forgive somebody for being an idiot right?

Kara Goldin ([05:26](#)):

And saying something that made you feel uncomfortable? No, but I think if you have an opportunity to teach people, mm-hmm, <affirmative> in a way by all means. Right. And maybe I think something that he said to me at one of these dinners, when he was describing his own faulty situation, one of the people said, I can't believe you said that. And he said, I know, but you know what? I've never said it again. Right, right. Yeah. It's teachable. And I think instead of being quiet and thinking, oh gosh, I've talked to so many venture people. They don't invest in women. They don't invest in mothers with young children, whatever. Maybe they didn't invest in it because it didn't have a tech aspect to it. We were too small or also they didn't really understand the diet Coke situation. Right. And they weren't my target market. And so the thing that I often coach other entrepreneurs to think about is instead of actually putting yourself into a position where you can feel sorry for yourself and you are stopped and you think, okay, I'm never gonna be able to raise money. Nobody will invest in you, you know me because I'm X, Y, Z. Right. Mm-hmm <affirmative> instead go think about who will.

Corey Andrew Powell ([06:53](#)):

Right. Find your tribe so to speak.

Kara Goldin ([06:55](#)):

Speak, find it because yeah, the reality is that people often won't tell you this, but they don't invest in what they don't know. Mm-hmm <affirmative> they don't. And maybe they don't invest in women cuz they've never invested in women. But I mean, we had people saying to us in the early days when they saw my husband walking in the door, they'd say we don't invest in married people. I think back on some of those conversations too, that probably really isn't even it, they didn't sit there and think, oh my gosh, this is a great idea. Everything about this business is perfect. Except the two of them are married.

Corey Andrew Powell ([07:38](#)):

That's a silly business move if that's what they did. Yeah.

Kara Goldin ([07:41](#)):

But people will tell you something like that because they think that they can get off the hook. <affirmative> at that point, it's you not them.

Corey Andrew Powell ([07:50](#)):

Versus just saying I'm not interested. Right? Which is like, if they weren't interested that would be much better than to insult you, throw out these crazy sort of anecdotal weird things. Just say you're not interested.

Kara Goldin ([08:00](#)):

People don't really tell you exactly. Steve Jobs used to say they don't, don't expect people to tell you what they need, show them, but you can show them and people have the option to say no. Right? And that's the world we live in. And so your job is to just go and find your people.

Corey Andrew Powell ([08:23](#)):

Thank you for listening to Motivational Mondays presented by the national society of leadership and success and available wherever you listen to your favorite podcast. I'm Corey Andrew Powell. And I'll see you again here next week.