

Corey Andrew Powell ([00:02](#)):

Author Hitha Palepu is a sought after speaker on political news, investing in entrepreneurship. She joins me today in a discussion on these topics, as well as the work life balance of having a career and parenting I'm Corey, Andrew Powell, your host, and this is Motivational Mondays. I'm so happy to be joined today by Hitha Palepu . She is a woman who wears many hats, among them, a feminist, a politics enthusiast, an investor, a writer, a speaker. And of course we won't leave out the most important- mom. Her upcoming book is titled, "We're Speaking, The Life Lessons Of Kamala Harris, How To Use Your Voice, Be Assertive And Own Your Story. Hitha welcome to Motivational Mondays.

Hitha Palepu ([00:42](#)):

Thank You so much for having me

Corey Andrew Powell ([00:44](#)):

To kick things off I wanna talk about this book because many people might not be aware of the political moment that sparked that title. And so if you'd be so kind as to share with us, <laugh> that moment and what it meant to you and how it inspired you to write this book?

Hitha Palepu ([01:01](#)):

Yes. Well, the title of the book was inspired by the vice presidential debate last year of after many times of being interrupted. Finally at the time candidate Harris said, excuse me, Mr. Vice President, I'm speaking. Mm-hmm <affirmative> and anyone who has ever felt othered knows how she in that moment. And I think all of us just had a new phrase added to our vocabulary for the next time it inevitably happened to any of us. And so my brilliant editor came up with the concept of "we're speaking because this book is really meant to be an inclusive rallying cry for all of us to come together, collectively step into our power and help remake our lives and the world on our terms and not what society defines for us.

Corey Andrew Powell ([01:52](#)):

There were women, of course, on both sides of the political spectrum. You have conservative G O P you have your Democrat liberals, whatever those titles all are two opposite sides of the fence. And that moment happened. I went to Twitter just to see like what, you know, what the ladies were saying about it. And like consistently, consistently, it was like, well, I'm not a Democrat, but you know, and women rallied around this moment and the political stuff got put aside. And I thought that was an interesting observation of how maybe, you know, we can find solidarity.

Hitha Palepu ([02:23](#)):

Yes. And you know, it transcends women, right? There are so many of us who don't look like or act like the people who have traditionally held power. And I think in, in writing this book and researching it, something I came to a realization of is that power has always been viewed as finite and that the more people that have it, the more it gets diluted and the less effective policymakers, lawmakers leaders can be. Motherhood has shown me the absolute opposite. Power is really infinite, much like love is. When I had my second child, my love didn't divide in half, it doubled. And I view power very much in that same way is that the more people that have it, the better off we all will be. And so it is very important to have people of diverse experiences and perspectives, be it race and gender and identity to be in the rooms where decisions are being made for all of us to be able to thrive, not just fairly survive.

Corey Andrew Powell ([03:28](#)):

We often see these really bad, like marketing ideas from brands and you literally are like, was there not a black person or an Asian person or a gay person, like, did they not check with the audience first to make sure that was okay? Yeah. So we see so much of that. And why do you think that continues to happen though, with despite all the debacles that we continue to see?

Hitha Palepu ([03:51](#)):

Well, a lot of macro issues at play, but that is those who are traditionally held power are threatened by a world where they will not be the ones in charge to which I would say, Hey, we've survived it, you will too. Yeah.

Corey Andrew Powell ([04:08](#)):

Yeah. We're living proof that it could definitely get through it. <laugh>

Hitha Palepu ([04:12](#)):

But also I think it's, I think some of it is rooted in fear. Mm-hmm <affirmative> I would like to think more of it is rooted in fear than in bigotry in hatred, but people have a hard time letting go of what has been to imagine what could be. And I think it is a journey. I think it is being patient. It's also remembering that progress is not linear. It is very much like a giant squiggle and for every advancement, we're also gonna make some setbacks. And it's about playing the long game, not the short term game.

Corey Andrew Powell ([04:45](#)):

It's really apparent to me that it's been a handicap. I mean, I can't even imagine how much farther along we would have been, or we would be right now if everyone had been invited to the table, right? If all the ideas were exchanged because so many times the great ideas may come from the person that you shut out of the conversation. Now you did mention your motherhood as well with your sons. And one interesting thing again about you that I love is that your bio says proudly raising two feminist sons. So I wonder what are the lessons in 2021 that a mom teaches her sons about the feminist movement?

Hitha Palepu ([05:25](#)):

I think it's modeling it, not just as myself, of being a woman who proudly has a career outside of the home that she loves and is intentional about making choices and living those choices, but also for them to have a father who is as supportive as he is ambitious about his own career. And I think a lot about this because you see these books written for girls to encourage him to be ambitious and assertive and to step into their power and be leaders. Yet there are no books for boys to model being supportive and sensitive and caring. And one, I think that is a huge opportunity for children's literature. But two, we can't just raise our daughters like our sons and assume the world is gonna change. We also need to start raising our sons like our daughters

Corey Andrew Powell ([06:13](#)):

Mm-hmm <affirmative> yeah, yeah.

Hitha Palepu (06:15):

And that's a Gloria Steinem quote, that is not all me, but that is something that sits in my mind because society is going to shape my son's perspectives and views in time. But at home, if we can give them a very solid foundation of this is what equality and equity looks like this, you have parents who both do things at home and who both work have careers outside of the home. You've seen them both take breaks from their career to focus on family at different chapters. And this is not a mommy or a daddy thing. These are just parental things.

Corey Andrew Powell (06:53):

Mm-hmm <affirmative> yeah, yeah. It must have been almost 20 years ago, I read an article and I think might have been in the New Yorker or something, but a really, you know, prominent magazine and the article title was, "Do we raise our daughters and spoil our sons?" And I'm not even sure what spoil meant, but you can take that any kinds of ways. But the point was that, you know, the, the girls were sort of being the ones raised with the sense of discipline and responsibility, the own ability, even sometimes having to be accountable for the male sibling.

Hitha Palepu (07:22):

Well, and I mean, let's see how, what, where that's taken us? You know, today, every woman you ask, if she says, do you know someone who is a survivor of sexual assault? Mm-hmm <affirmative> says, yes. You ask a man, do you know a sexual assaulter? They almost all say No.

Corey Andrew Powell (07:37):

Yeah. Perspective. Yes absolutely. You know, as you said, we have to raise the sons with that exact same sense of responsibility. You have this wonderful five smart reads and it's a social series that shares five must read articles every day.

Hitha Palepu (07:51):

Yes, I am not a journalist. I am just very curious. And I, since high school have been an avid reader of the news and understanding what's happening in the world. And for me, it's my way of amplifying stories that are under reported and perspectives that are often underestimated in mainstream press to help us all be a little bit smarter, faster. And what's been wonderful with that is that it's grown beyond me. I have an credible team of guest curators who are so smart, who I learn so much from. And I really enjoy this ability for us to have an opportunity to learn more about the world in a judgment free zone. Mm-hmm <affirmative> but you know, my goal is never to change anyone's mind. I hope in everything I do, I just open their minds to a new perspective.

Corey Andrew Powell (08:42):

Yeah. A lot of these speakers I, um, have on the show often we talk about the idea that nobody really communicating with each other today and it's such a divisive culture, Talking past each other. So how do you feel that we can move beyond that? Engage with people who maybe don't agree with who we are or what you represent?

Hitha Palepu (09:05):

Whew. We're all gonna take a deep breath right now because <inaudible>, because this is a big question and I think it's also so specific to a certain in person circumstance that there is no one blanket answer

here. I think if there is an opportunity where you have agreement on outcome and you just differ on the path to getting there, there is an opportunity to have a real dialogue. And I think there it's really important to space for each party to listen to the other and come at it with a, I am not here to change your mind, but I am here to share my perspective. And what I have learned and what I have lived. Mm-hmm <affirmative> yes. And if those people are open to it, I think that's an opportunity to start a dialogue that again, is not gonna change minds but might shift our mindsets and our perspectives and offer new information that otherwise was never known by that party.

Corey Andrew Powell ([10:03](#)):

Yes. Very

Hitha Palepu ([10:03](#)):

True. But I think, you know, if there is someone who firmly believes that, because I am a brown woman with a non-Anglo sized name that I have no place in this country, I have nothing I can say to you.

Corey Andrew Powell ([10:16](#)):

Yeah. Some things are like, non-negotiable right. Like that's exactly right. You're right. There are. Well, it's interesting because this question came up with an amazing woman. Uh, I spoke with named Libby Steger and she has a group that she, an organization called [moveforamerica.org](#). And they sign up to be put in communities that are different than their own. And they work in those communities and they do it specifically to who sort of take that wall down of the fear of the interaction. So it's a really beautiful program she does, but you're right. You know, there are some times where it like a person just doesn't wanna be bothered because of bigotry or prejudice. So I have more important things to do with my time in many cases than to try to convince someone who's that far gone.

Hitha Palepu ([10:54](#)):

And to protect your peace. Cause I think if are a person of color or someone who's been othered in this country, you have to protect your own peace and your own mindset because we're already battered enough in society that sometimes doesn't recognize our own rights that are equal, uh, to yours. So yes. Please put, protect your piece of prioritize that first.

Corey Andrew Powell ([11:20](#)):

Now you also talk about something I love called finding your north star mm-hmm <affirmative>. And I would imagine that has to do with sort of like your purpose or like something that drives you. But I would love for you to explain what you mean by finding your north star.

Hitha Palepu ([11:34](#)):

I think so often in life, we are, are dividing ourselves into the roles we hold or in the boxes that society tries to put us in. And it dilutes our individual selves, like all these roles, it dilutes who we are, our essence, our truth, our value. And so one way to push back against that is when you know why you have been put on this planet and what you are meant to do, it's sort of your guiding principle in everything you do. And so a lot of this book is about embracing your multitudes versus trying to fit yourself into these little boxes that don't embody who you are. Mm-hmm <affirmative>. And one way to do that is when you have a north star, even a north constellation where you know what your purpose is, it's your way of reminding yourself who you are when you live in a time, people are trying to tell you who you are

or trying to tell you, explain yourself, explain you to yourself in a way that you don't see is who really who you are.

Hitha Palepu ([12:42](#)):

And so this is just for Vice President Harris. Her north star is like, we always speak the truth, like truth and justice is what drives her in everything she does. For me, it is I wanna help people save time and energy on the things they have to do. So they have more time and energy to do the things they actually want to do. And that's been sort of my driving, why in everything I have done from my old blog to my books, to five smart reads and social content. And then even I work in pharma, I think it's can we develop drugs that can help save lives and make them affordable and work with strategic partners to execute on that vision so people can stay alive and do the things they actually wanna do. So it becomes a filter for which you push every decision and every choice you make through your life to make sure you're aligned with your purpose that you have decided for yourself, not what other people or not, what society expects of you.

Corey Andrew Powell ([13:41](#)):

I know you also are very passionate about investing in women owned businesses. What drives your passion for helping that particular demographic really excel and get ahead in business?

Hitha Palepu ([13:52](#)):

Well, traditionally men have invested in a wealth and women when they have wealth have donated and one party is expending their funds. The other is growing it. I think we can do good and get rich at the same time and make other women really rich mm-hmm <affirmative> by investing in early stage companies. So that has been my "why" behind, why did I start investing? I've been an accidental investor. It happened very organically where a friend of mine, whose company I was a big fan of and the customer of had mentioned she was starting to raise. And I said, oh, I'll invest. And she goes, can you invest? And I go, what do you mean? She goes, are you an accredited an investor? And I was like, oh, Google, let me find out.

Corey Andrew Powell ([14:39](#)):

Yeah, I never even knew that it was a thing.

Hitha Palepu ([14:41](#)):

Yeah <laugh> but now, you know, there's great like crowdfunding platforms and equity raise platforms like Republic where anyone can be an investor in an early stage company. And it's a really exciting opportunity to start building wealth within your own values versus necessarily what funds or stocks are doing well in the market that may not align with your values.

Corey Andrew Powell ([15:04](#)):

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