Corey Andrew Powell ([00:02](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/XpqOm2JsrzM5sTF_DjYvmNYVT6HcI4tE0d7NIkjFsBQ2ZhCUQoLPJ5DJ4vNK6faYlTsxA9QekEz1tfF9y8JRO-IsIQE?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Hello everyone. I'm Corey Andrew Powell, and I am so honored to be joined today by entrepreneur Dana Marlowe. So Dana's the founder and executive director of I Support The Girls, a nonprofit that provides bras and menstrual hygiene products to people experiencing homelessness, refugees, uh natural disaster survivors, and many others. Dana has worked and touched the lives of over 1.7 million people and distributed more than 21 million products worldwide. That's a lot of work. So today we're gonna learn more about Dana's incredible journey and the challenges she's faced and what motivates her to continue to make the world a better place. So, Dana, welcome to Motivational Mondays.

Dana Marlowe ([00:38](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/XpqOm2JsrzM5sTF_DjYvmNYVT6HcI4tE0d7NIkjFsBQ2ZhCUQoLPJ5DJ4vNK6faYlTsxA9QekEz1tfF9y8JRO-IsIQE?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Thank you so much for having me. I'm delighted to be here.

Corey Andrew Powell ([00:41](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/XpqOm2JsrzM5sTF_DjYvmNYVT6HcI4tE0d7NIkjFsBQ2ZhCUQoLPJ5DJ4vNK6faYlTsxA9QekEz1tfF9y8JRO-IsIQE?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Oh, thank you. It's an honor, as I said, for for me to have you here as well. First, I just wanna start with my respect for women personally. Let's start with that. I come from a home of three generations of women. I was lucky enough to have mom, grandma, and great grandmom at one point Wow. And two aunts <laugh>. So I just really, you know, I get it and I'm so happy that there's an ally for women who are in need. But we'll tell your story. First, I wanna just to ask you just to begin by telling your story, what inspired you to start the I Support The Girls organization.

Dana Marlowe ([01:10](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/XpqOm2JsrzM5sTF_DjYvmNYVT6HcI4tE0d7NIkjFsBQ2ZhCUQoLPJ5DJ4vNK6faYlTsxA9QekEz1tfF9y8JRO-IsIQE?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

So it was an accident. I didn't mean to start a global nonprofit, uh, but, but sometimes accidents happen, right? So that is how this began. Um, back in the summer of 2015, I woke up one morning and my husband said to me, you know, I think you need, it's time to shop for new bras, which I'm sure a lot of your Motivational Mondays probably open up with. Let's go shopping for bras.

Corey Andrew Powell ([01:41](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/XpqOm2JsrzM5sTF_DjYvmNYVT6HcI4tE0d7NIkjFsBQ2ZhCUQoLPJ5DJ4vNK6faYlTsxA9QekEz1tfF9y8JRO-IsIQE?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Right? <Laugh>.

Dana Marlowe ([01:42](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/XpqOm2JsrzM5sTF_DjYvmNYVT6HcI4tE0d7NIkjFsBQ2ZhCUQoLPJ5DJ4vNK6faYlTsxA9QekEz1tfF9y8JRO-IsIQE?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

So I had to, to bring it back a step. Um, before that I had worked hard at exercising and losing weight over the entire year before that moment. And I'm also a mom of two kids who are amazing. But things shift and change as one ages and goes through ages and stages in life. And after losing weight over the course of that year, things that were up here, you know, higher up, are now lower down. Right. Just how gravity works, right?

Corey Andrew Powell ([02:15](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/XpqOm2JsrzM5sTF_DjYvmNYVT6HcI4tE0d7NIkjFsBQ2ZhCUQoLPJ5DJ4vNK6faYlTsxA9QekEz1tfF9y8JRO-IsIQE?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Yes. Yes.

Dana Marlowe ([02:16](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/XpqOm2JsrzM5sTF_DjYvmNYVT6HcI4tE0d7NIkjFsBQ2ZhCUQoLPJ5DJ4vNK6faYlTsxA9QekEz1tfF9y8JRO-IsIQE?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

It's life.

Corey Andrew Powell ([02:17](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/XpqOm2JsrzM5sTF_DjYvmNYVT6HcI4tE0d7NIkjFsBQ2ZhCUQoLPJ5DJ4vNK6faYlTsxA9QekEz1tfF9y8JRO-IsIQE?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Mm-hmm <affirmative>.

Dana Marlowe ([02:18](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/XpqOm2JsrzM5sTF_DjYvmNYVT6HcI4tE0d7NIkjFsBQ2ZhCUQoLPJ5DJ4vNK6faYlTsxA9QekEz1tfF9y8JRO-IsIQE?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

And one that hot morning, my husband said, you know what? You're wearing all these suits, like you need, like you need a bra that fits. And so I went to my local, um, mall and went to a, um, a bra fitting and like they sell, um, undergarments and pajamas and lingerie. And I went to go get fitted for a bra. So for any listeners who have never had the experience of getting fitted for a bra, it's a little bit uncomfortable because you're potentially going, you know, into a small space and someone's getting particularly close to your chest to get their proper measurements so they can then go and pick out the best fitting bras for you. So it's a little awkward for those of your listeners, um, who are, or viewers are like, oh yeah, this is a weird experience. They're probably like nodding their head like, oh yeah, cuz you're in, like, there you are.

Dana Marlowe ([03:12](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/XpqOm2JsrzM5sTF_DjYvmNYVT6HcI4tE0d7NIkjFsBQ2ZhCUQoLPJ5DJ4vNK6faYlTsxA9QekEz1tfF9y8JRO-IsIQE?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Like, I was in this small dressing room with this lovely woman who is taking my measurements so that I could get the proper size bra to support me. Um, and I am somebody, I, I am a person who chooses to wear a bra out and about, um, for back support, for pain, right. For comfort. And I was getting, as I got fitted, it dawned on me, I had one of those little light bulb moments, you know, ding. And I said to, I said to her, her name is Danene. Uh, and I, I turned to her and I said, what do I do with my perfectly good but no longer fitting old bras because I have so many of them that are shoved in my drawer as my body changed shape, I just kept putting more and more in because I didn't know which ones I would need and which ones would fit.

Dana Marlowe ([03:58](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/XpqOm2JsrzM5sTF_DjYvmNYVT6HcI4tE0d7NIkjFsBQ2ZhCUQoLPJ5DJ4vNK6faYlTsxA9QekEz1tfF9y8JRO-IsIQE?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Right. And I wanted this one for this outfit and this bra for this dress and this one for working out. And she said, well, I said, what do I do with my perfectly good but no longer fitting me bras? And she said, four really important words, Corey. She said, homeless women need bras. Mm. Full stop. And I hadn't thought about that until that moment in time, standing in this little tiny dressing room with, with Danene, because I'm somebody who does donate a lot of my stuff. I, I donate my clothing, winter jackets. Um, I donated my wedding dress after I got married. I donate furniture, my children's books, whatever it is. Like, I'm happy to keep like, being part of that like sustainability free cycle lifestyle. But I had never opened up my top drawer where I keep my bras taken the bras out. Cause I didn't know that they could be donated.

Corey Andrew Powell ([04:53](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/XpqOm2JsrzM5sTF_DjYvmNYVT6HcI4tE0d7NIkjFsBQ2ZhCUQoLPJ5DJ4vNK6faYlTsxA9QekEz1tfF9y8JRO-IsIQE?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Absolutely. Yeah. I was just thinking about that too, because I used to work at Sachs Fifth Avenue in New York and um, and sometimes I'd have to work in different floors and one of them would be women's lingerie. And so you, there's a thought pattern that those are personal, intimate. So, you know, once they're on one body, even if it's just once that they must be <laugh>, they must be sanitized and thrown away or Right. And you were just, you, the distinction is that, you know, you're like, these are, uh, gently used products like any other and that could benefit other people. And that's the distinction you make.

Dana Marlowe ([05:21](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/XpqOm2JsrzM5sTF_DjYvmNYVT6HcI4tE0d7NIkjFsBQ2ZhCUQoLPJ5DJ4vNK6faYlTsxA9QekEz1tfF9y8JRO-IsIQE?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Correct. And, and clean, you know, once they're, you know, properly cleaned and washed and whatnot. And so I went home that day and I'm super nerdy also and went online. I was like, okay. She said, homeless women need bras. Let's take a look. I, I happened to live in the, in the Washington DC area and I went online and I found a home homeless shelter near where I live in DC and I picked up the phone and I called 'em up and I said, I just learned about this need. I noticed that you were in this very recent article where you're looking to distribute bras to some of your clients that identify as women is do want some bras, but let me just tell you, I have 16 perfectly good bras, but they're all used, they're all washed. I will rewash them again, but they're not new. Is that okay? And the guy on the other end of the line, his name is Greg, said, oh my gosh, how soon can you get them here? Mm.

Corey Andrew Powell ([06:19](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/XpqOm2JsrzM5sTF_DjYvmNYVT6HcI4tE0d7NIkjFsBQ2ZhCUQoLPJ5DJ4vNK6faYlTsxA9QekEz1tfF9y8JRO-IsIQE?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Wow. That's incredible. I mean, that's really incredible. Wow. Yeah.

Dana Marlowe ([06:24](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/XpqOm2JsrzM5sTF_DjYvmNYVT6HcI4tE0d7NIkjFsBQ2ZhCUQoLPJ5DJ4vNK6faYlTsxA9QekEz1tfF9y8JRO-IsIQE?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

And I didn't know that. I was like, oh, okay. I was like, well, I don't know what I don't know. So what else do you all need? How can I be of service? How may I help you? And he's like, well, if you're willing to bring your bras to donate to our clients, would you possibly be also willing to pick up some packages of maxi pads and tampons? Because we do not have them as, as a budgetary line item. We can't cover them in a, you know, in a lot of states they are not covered under, like even, um, under any of the snap programs, food, um, stamp programs, any of those like benefit programs, you still have to pay for them. They're not covered by them. And in half the number of states, there's also a sales tax on these items, making 'em that much more out of reach. So I was like, sure I can go to my local Big Box store and pick up some packages of pads and tampons. And so then I took it from there and I decided to post on Facebook and the response blew up. And my 16 bras immediately, like things doubled, tripled, quadrupled. And ultimately that first donation turned out to be just over a thousand bras and over 7,100 maxi pads and tampons.

Corey Andrew Powell ([07:43](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/XpqOm2JsrzM5sTF_DjYvmNYVT6HcI4tE0d7NIkjFsBQ2ZhCUQoLPJ5DJ4vNK6faYlTsxA9QekEz1tfF9y8JRO-IsIQE?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Mm-hmm. <affirmative>. I just think that is, it's fascinating cuz there's so many things happening in that story. One is just the empathy, first of all, just to put yourself in a position to be like, you know what, I wanna just help some people because they may be in need. But you talked about, you know, browsers are not just cosmetic and many aspects. They are for support. They can help with posture, they can help people with, you know, just, just, um, more of a clinical need versus just sort of like this idea that they just can help you look cute in a blouse. Right. But more importantly, the fact that there was such a need for them and that you went to social media, which can be a hotbed of all kinds of madness from political arguments, debate, fighting over like, you know, cats, um, <laugh> anything.

Corey Andrew Powell ([08:23](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/XpqOm2JsrzM5sTF_DjYvmNYVT6HcI4tE0d7NIkjFsBQ2ZhCUQoLPJ5DJ4vNK6faYlTsxA9QekEz1tfF9y8JRO-IsIQE?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Totally. Right. And then, you know, it's an example of how the internet can be used for good. And there's another woman I interviewed, uh, they call her the black fairy godmother. And she has a very similar story where she went to Instagram to say, there's a woman in need in this town who's electricity has turned off and she's got like three babies or something. Right? Is is anyone in that area who can help? And someone she, you know, she, she vetted the person and that person was okay and they were right and she went and she got them a space heater, like portable or something, you know, and it became this huge network now that she's in with Oprah and Kelly Clarkson. And, but it started from a very similar, similar story. So first of all, just as a human, thank you Dana, for caring, you know, to help other people.

Dana Marlowe ([09:08](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/XpqOm2JsrzM5sTF_DjYvmNYVT6HcI4tE0d7NIkjFsBQ2ZhCUQoLPJ5DJ4vNK6faYlTsxA9QekEz1tfF9y8JRO-IsIQE?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

I, I think we all have to do our part, right? I think we all have to do our part. And the one thing that I'm really clear about is the beauty and I support the girls is it's never, it's never been just me, even from the beginning when it was like my family was involved or immediately once I learned about this and I shared it on, on social, I, I learned that sometimes you just have to be able to provide a platform for people to, to do good in a, in some kind of small bite-sized, digestible way. And they wanna do good. And it's just not always easy when the world is so vast and, and you're not sure where to go. And people are super busy and time sliced that sometimes these very specific asks of, does anyone have any spare bras in the back of their drawer? Or next time you, if you have a coupon and you're going to pick up your preferred package of tampons, can you pick up an extra box and we'll get that out to somebody you need. Cuz that was when I first started then learning about period poverty and menstrual equity and what that looks like.

Corey Andrew Powell ([10:12](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/XpqOm2JsrzM5sTF_DjYvmNYVT6HcI4tE0d7NIkjFsBQ2ZhCUQoLPJ5DJ4vNK6faYlTsxA9QekEz1tfF9y8JRO-IsIQE?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Well, you bring that up too, because it's a little disturbing that those things are not covered under, so the, some of the social programs you mentioned, which is really a little, um, you know, upsetting to me because it's almost as if it's kinda like, yeah, well, you know, it, it feels like that, right? Like, no, that's a clinical need. Like the food, like the clothing, right?

Dana Marlowe ([10:35](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/XpqOm2JsrzM5sTF_DjYvmNYVT6HcI4tE0d7NIkjFsBQ2ZhCUQoLPJ5DJ4vNK6faYlTsxA9QekEz1tfF9y8JRO-IsIQE?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Sure. Yeah. I I think there's a lot of programs that negatively impact women because sometimes women's needs are an afterthought.

Corey Andrew Powell ([10:44](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/XpqOm2JsrzM5sTF_DjYvmNYVT6HcI4tE0d7NIkjFsBQ2ZhCUQoLPJ5DJ4vNK6faYlTsxA9QekEz1tfF9y8JRO-IsIQE?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Mm. Yeah. And also the current, I mean, I thought I'd get to this a little later in the conversation, but this is a great segueway. A lot of what we see now when it comes to women's body autonomy stories like, um, almost like policing women's periods, for example, young girls periods in high school. It really shows you that sort of like, there's this weird segment of society that believe that this part of women's existence is somehow theirs to regulate. And I will never, as a man understand that I have to be honest, and I hope other men out there listening to this really like, get it like us. If we think about it from our standpoint, if someone was gonna come and tell me what I can do with my body or certain parts of my body specifically, you know, we would be in the streets burning buildings down.

Dana Marlowe ([11:31](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/XpqOm2JsrzM5sTF_DjYvmNYVT6HcI4tE0d7NIkjFsBQ2ZhCUQoLPJ5DJ4vNK6faYlTsxA9QekEz1tfF9y8JRO-IsIQE?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

A hundred percent. A hundred percent. I think. And, and I'm, I'm thrilled to jump in here so, so early in our conversation, because I do think that there are a lot of men and people without periods who want to regulate periods because periods and the menstrual cycle falls under the reproductive cycle and then this gets into a larger conversation and now suddenly periods became politicized.

Corey Andrew Powell ([11:57](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/XpqOm2JsrzM5sTF_DjYvmNYVT6HcI4tE0d7NIkjFsBQ2ZhCUQoLPJ5DJ4vNK6faYlTsxA9QekEz1tfF9y8JRO-IsIQE?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Oh man, did they.

Dana Marlowe ([11:58](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/XpqOm2JsrzM5sTF_DjYvmNYVT6HcI4tE0d7NIkjFsBQ2ZhCUQoLPJ5DJ4vNK6faYlTsxA9QekEz1tfF9y8JRO-IsIQE?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Um, and I, I'm holding up here. So for any of your audio viewers, we just did a, a big campaign and I realize that this might be being viewed in reverse, but it, it says, just say period. Uh, it's a postcard that I'm holding up to the screen and it has a couple images, um, in addition to the, I Support The Girls' logo. It has like a smiling tampon and a yo a uterus doing yoga and a little blood drop and a menstrual cup smiling and whatnot. And then on the back it has information on this postcard that's addressed to, uh, governor Ron DeSantis, the governor of Florida, who is in Tallahassee. And we basically say here, and I'll just read this little quick excerpt, that menstruation is a natural bodily process that affects nearly half of the population and it's time to stop treating it as a taboo topic.

Dana Marlowe ([12:48](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/XpqOm2JsrzM5sTF_DjYvmNYVT6HcI4tE0d7NIkjFsBQ2ZhCUQoLPJ5DJ4vNK6faYlTsxA9QekEz1tfF9y8JRO-IsIQE?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Mm-hmm. <affirmative> in Florida schools, because if you're not a familiar, they put a house build together the spring in Florida that focuses on not letting girls in elementary school that are fifth grade and younger in some places, sixth grade and younger, who have periods, they can't talk about their periods, they can't ask for menstrual products. And this is a natural process. So if you ha, if you have a fifth grade kid who goes into the school bathroom and there's no toilet paper, I mean, like that's uncomfortable, but I would hope that someone can speak up and say, excuse me, can we please have some toilet paper in that restroom? So the same thing is about menstrual products and having access to them. And so we talk about by educating students of all ages about periods, we can empower them with the knowledge and resources they need to manage their menstrual health and succeed academically. And so it goes on about providing access to menstrual products and creating supportive environments and whatnot. But it's a big issue when legislators want to regulate people's bodies, especially when they don't even understand the bodily functions.

Corey Andrew Powell ([13:54](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/XpqOm2JsrzM5sTF_DjYvmNYVT6HcI4tE0d7NIkjFsBQ2ZhCUQoLPJ5DJ4vNK6faYlTsxA9QekEz1tfF9y8JRO-IsIQE?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Absolutely. Well, you know, we had all those really bizarre statements in the past from certain members of, uh, the Senate and Congress who said crazy things about, oh, well, if a woman gets raped, her body will shut down the pregnancy. And not like there's like not one case in which that's a thing documented by science. So, you know, to have the grownups in the room, in many cases be the ones to put forward all this misinformation. And, you know, I'm sure that, um, it is not uncommon for a girl to be maybe 10 or 11 or even as young as nine, nine today menstruating. And then that goes into a whole other area of, God forbid that young girl gets raped and becomes a victim of incest and have to have a baby. There's legislation now to force her to have that baby. I mean, when I unpeel all those layers, I'm at a loss for words. I just, I can't imagine it. And it's a battle that's been going on, I guess forever for wo for women. And it's shocking that it's still happening in 2023. I think that's the more important thing. Like we haven't progressed from that argument.

Dana Marlowe ([14:52](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/XpqOm2JsrzM5sTF_DjYvmNYVT6HcI4tE0d7NIkjFsBQ2ZhCUQoLPJ5DJ4vNK6faYlTsxA9QekEz1tfF9y8JRO-IsIQE?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Correct. It's, it's, it's wild to me that I have these conversations with my aunt who is 80, who is advocating for women's rights in the US years ago before I was born mm-hmm. <affirmative>. And here we are today. And I know that if my grandma Fran, who passed away decade, you know, who, who well knows, she, she passed away, uh, 11 years ago if she were listening to the podcast, and she'd be a huge fan of yours, Cory, again. Aw. I mean, thank you. She's no longer here to listen to a podcast, but Grandma Fran would've totally loved you.

Corey Andrew Powell ([15:27](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/XpqOm2JsrzM5sTF_DjYvmNYVT6HcI4tE0d7NIkjFsBQ2ZhCUQoLPJ5DJ4vNK6faYlTsxA9QekEz1tfF9y8JRO-IsIQE?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Hey Grandma Fran in heaven.

Dana Marlowe ([15:29](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/XpqOm2JsrzM5sTF_DjYvmNYVT6HcI4tE0d7NIkjFsBQ2ZhCUQoLPJ5DJ4vNK6faYlTsxA9QekEz1tfF9y8JRO-IsIQE?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Hey Grandma! Shoutout to Grandma Fran.

Corey Andrew Powell ([15:31](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/XpqOm2JsrzM5sTF_DjYvmNYVT6HcI4tE0d7NIkjFsBQ2ZhCUQoLPJ5DJ4vNK6faYlTsxA9QekEz1tfF9y8JRO-IsIQE?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

I love it.

Dana Marlowe ([15:33](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/XpqOm2JsrzM5sTF_DjYvmNYVT6HcI4tE0d7NIkjFsBQ2ZhCUQoLPJ5DJ4vNK6faYlTsxA9QekEz1tfF9y8JRO-IsIQE?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

She would have been, I mean, she was, she would've been so riled up about this and she was born in 1919. So yeah, there's that, one of the things I Support The Girls does is our advocacy arm so that we can help raise awareness to combat these taboos and break down stigmas around menstruation and basic dignity too. Right? So much of what we do at our organization, at our nonprofit focuses around dignity. Mm-hmm. <affirmative>, right? Because a, a proper fitting, well-fitting bra can make you, can make you feel more confident, stand up straighter, have your clothes lay right, and maybe go out for that job interview because we do serve, you know, with, we're now up to 22 and a half million products donated to 4,500 different social service agencies. Right? And so in nearly eight years, 4,500 different agencies, thereby supporting a lot, you know Yeah.

Dana Marlowe ([16:31](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/XpqOm2JsrzM5sTF_DjYvmNYVT6HcI4tE0d7NIkjFsBQ2ZhCUQoLPJ5DJ4vNK6faYlTsxA9QekEz1tfF9y8JRO-IsIQE?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Worldwide, millions of people are talking about these needs and they're receiving products that we've been able to donate from like our generous community. And we're doing this advocacy work, whether it's at the state level, to remove the tax, the tampon tax or advocate at the Capitol Hill, like in the nation's capitol level or in other countries, uh, with their foreign ministries or companies to have to disclose what's in the tampon, what's in the maxi pad, what are the ingredients that comprise these products that menstruates are putting on their body, in their body next to their body.

Corey Andrew Powell ([17:05](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/XpqOm2JsrzM5sTF_DjYvmNYVT6HcI4tE0d7NIkjFsBQ2ZhCUQoLPJ5DJ4vNK6faYlTsxA9QekEz1tfF9y8JRO-IsIQE?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Mm-hmm. <affirmative>. Yeah. It reminds me of, um, I, I reference other people I've interviewed, but some, a lot of great women I've had the show. And now there's an author named Suzanne Corso who's really funny. And she said, you know, you think we'd get more respect. I mean, after all we do kind of give birth to the entire population. You'd think we'd get a bit more <laugh>, a bit more respect with how our bodies are governed. But yeah, I, I just, you know, I'm hope hoping that, uh, legislation will continue to maybe be on the side of women, but it, it's a little scary now in that landscape. I do wanna ask you though, as far as starting your business as a woman entrepreneur, a business that is very women-centric, did you have any outstanding obstacles that come to mind where you're like, oh, this was not as difficult? Cause you know, you mentioned that you kicked off really strong organically, but then as it formed into a business, were there challenges?

Dana Marlowe ([17:55](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/XpqOm2JsrzM5sTF_DjYvmNYVT6HcI4tE0d7NIkjFsBQ2ZhCUQoLPJ5DJ4vNK6faYlTsxA9QekEz1tfF9y8JRO-IsIQE?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

So we're not a business, we are a 501c3 nonprofit. So just for, uh, clarification, um, we run like a business. Um, most nonprofits do. So yeah, there, there have been not. The biggest challenges early on have been trying to solicit donor financial donations from men.

Corey Andrew Powell ([18:17](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/XpqOm2JsrzM5sTF_DjYvmNYVT6HcI4tE0d7NIkjFsBQ2ZhCUQoLPJ5DJ4vNK6faYlTsxA9QekEz1tfF9y8JRO-IsIQE?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Mm.

Dana Marlowe ([18:17](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/XpqOm2JsrzM5sTF_DjYvmNYVT6HcI4tE0d7NIkjFsBQ2ZhCUQoLPJ5DJ4vNK6faYlTsxA9QekEz1tfF9y8JRO-IsIQE?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Right. People who don't get why this is a big deal. People who don't understand why period poverty exists, why it's a big thing and what it must be like. And so we, and we have a variety of different programs that do everything from education, like the intersection of mental health and menstrual health or our disaster relief programs so that when folks are evacuating from hurricanes or tornadoes or wildfires, you know, obviously they're encouraged to grab their medication and their pets and some, and food and staples. But oftentimes folks forget that they're gonna need menstrual products and they might need those products two days after evacuating whatever their home is. And they'll just be like, well, I'll be back. It won't be a big deal. I'll run to my pharmacy nearby and there is no pharmacy nearby to go to, or there is no home to go to. And the federal programs don't always supply enough menstrual products is what it turns out because we constantly get emails literally every month from the Red Cross and we're, we're not the size of the Red Cross. Like, make no mistake. We try to educate men that these issues matter because it's, you wanna be able to safely and, um, healthily manage your menstrual cycle.

Corey Andrew Powell ([19:36](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/XpqOm2JsrzM5sTF_DjYvmNYVT6HcI4tE0d7NIkjFsBQ2ZhCUQoLPJ5DJ4vNK6faYlTsxA9QekEz1tfF9y8JRO-IsIQE?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Yeah. And also men and for the most part, uh, well, I don't know about for the most part, but a lot of men clearly have women in their families, young women who are still in the menstrual phase of their lives. And you would think that they would want to then just kind of arm themselves to take care of the women better in their lives as well. So I think that's a part of it. For me, that's a big missing part of this. Like I think if men understood that, hey, that could be your niece, your daughter, your cousin, whomever, and I'll share quickly a little story. Someone very, um, lovely who was a friend of mine shared with me that her mother passed when she was very young and the father had to then care for her and her three sisters, or two sisters, I believe it was.

Corey Andrew Powell ([20:15](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/XpqOm2JsrzM5sTF_DjYvmNYVT6HcI4tE0d7NIkjFsBQ2ZhCUQoLPJ5DJ4vNK6faYlTsxA9QekEz1tfF9y8JRO-IsIQE?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

And so there's the father being this beautiful, endearing father trying to <laugh> explain and, and very as astutely and effectively like on the other side of the door, right, trying to ex share with her how to utilize these products that he's doing it alone as a, as a dad. I love that story. And I think, you know, it's, it's that mindset that men have to have, it's just another bodily function and the women in your life need to be taken care of accordingly. And, um, so again, men listening, please, please understand that this is not just a women's issue, it is a people a people issue.

Dana Marlowe ([20:48](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/XpqOm2JsrzM5sTF_DjYvmNYVT6HcI4tE0d7NIkjFsBQ2ZhCUQoLPJ5DJ4vNK6faYlTsxA9QekEz1tfF9y8JRO-IsIQE?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Right. And as you said, I guess as you said from your prior guest, Suzanne Corso, I I definitely share that same sentiment is everyone on this planet is here because of a missed period, right? Like so, so we should be able to talk about how periods work, <laugh> because

Corey Andrew Powell ([21:04](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/XpqOm2JsrzM5sTF_DjYvmNYVT6HcI4tE0d7NIkjFsBQ2ZhCUQoLPJ5DJ4vNK6faYlTsxA9QekEz1tfF9y8JRO-IsIQE?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

I mean there it is.

Dana Marlowe ([21:05](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/XpqOm2JsrzM5sTF_DjYvmNYVT6HcI4tE0d7NIkjFsBQ2ZhCUQoLPJ5DJ4vNK6faYlTsxA9QekEz1tfF9y8JRO-IsIQE?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Everyone, I mean, everyone here is either here because of a person with a uterus gave birth to them and they had a period. And like, so it's, it's mind numbing to me when folks can't empathize and feel and get that understanding because it should be that easy. And for your example, that lovely story with the then single dad with the daughters. Yeah. I mean, and there's a lot, again now there's a lot of resources out there for folks to go to, but it's even just having access and knowing where those resources are because it can be scary for, for some young, you know, for some young girls who don't know about what's happening to their body as a normal process.

Corey Andrew Powell ([21:47](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/XpqOm2JsrzM5sTF_DjYvmNYVT6HcI4tE0d7NIkjFsBQ2ZhCUQoLPJ5DJ4vNK6faYlTsxA9QekEz1tfF9y8JRO-IsIQE?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Yeah. Because there's a whole other part too. Some, some young girls, I mean, not to like reference an extreme, but I think of the movie Carey for for example. But you know, there are some kids in homes where like, it's even taboo within their own family structure because in many cases the parents may think, oh, that means my daughter's gonna be sexually active now. And they, you know, that has nothing to do with the fact that her body is doing what it's going to do regardless of if she's active or not. But it becomes a taboo thing and the girl may not even be able to talk about it to her own parents. And that's why legislation of like not being able to talk about a period if you're not un over the fifth grade is just, it's ludicrous because sometimes schools are a first line of connection for kids who are not getting it at home. Whether it be gender identity issues, so many other potential things.

Dana Marlowe ([22:39](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/XpqOm2JsrzM5sTF_DjYvmNYVT6HcI4tE0d7NIkjFsBQ2ZhCUQoLPJ5DJ4vNK6faYlTsxA9QekEz1tfF9y8JRO-IsIQE?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Totally. Yes. School playgrounds, I feel like is where so much communication happens and whether that information is accurate or inaccurate remains to be seen. Cuz that's gonna happen on school yards all globally no matter what. Cuz kids are sharing, sharing what they learn. Yeah. And but having that access to have correct information about one's body so that they can make decisions and have their own body autonomy even at those young ages is so critical.

Corey Andrew Powell ([23:08](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/XpqOm2JsrzM5sTF_DjYvmNYVT6HcI4tE0d7NIkjFsBQ2ZhCUQoLPJ5DJ4vNK6faYlTsxA9QekEz1tfF9y8JRO-IsIQE?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Mm-hmm. <affirmative>. Absolutely. And you know, you're doing great work and it's, and it's successful by all accounts. And, uh, I I did wonder, was there ever a moment where there was like, as you were doing this, there was like this one like memorable moment throughout the work you've been doing. You're like, wow, that was a really great thing that just happened with through, you know, through what we're doing here. Any standout moments?

Dana Marlowe ([23:29](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/XpqOm2JsrzM5sTF_DjYvmNYVT6HcI4tE0d7NIkjFsBQ2ZhCUQoLPJ5DJ4vNK6faYlTsxA9QekEz1tfF9y8JRO-IsIQE?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Oh my God, there have been so many. Corey, there's so many standout moments. One that comes to mind is my conversation with a woman named Crystal, uh, here in the DC area. And I was bringing in, um, to a homeless shelter in Washington, DC around, um, a thousand bras and about 2000 pads and maybe about 5,000 tampons and about 5,000 other toiletries. And, and this is, we were earlier, earlier on maybe like, maybe we were about two years in at this juncture. And I had a moment where I was able to talk in their part of the building where they have their clothing for clients that they can kind of shop, you know, like, um, shop through and, and receive products. And there was a woman there who was just standing outside waiting and she's like, I heard there were gonna be bras delivered today.

Dana Marlowe ([24:25](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/XpqOm2JsrzM5sTF_DjYvmNYVT6HcI4tE0d7NIkjFsBQ2ZhCUQoLPJ5DJ4vNK6faYlTsxA9QekEz1tfF9y8JRO-IsIQE?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

May I have a bra? I was like, sure. I'm like, I don't, I don't know how they're distributed here, what the policies are at this particular entity cuz we always wanna make sure that policies are being followed based on the other nonprofit that we're partnering with. Sure, sure. And they came and they said, absolutely feel free to like, you know, get her some bras. So we fit Crystal that day and she said, you know, I said, look, we have a thousand bras here, so we absolutely have your size and, um, styles. I'm sure we can find what you're looking for. So what, what do you, what would you like? And she said, well, may I have two, two things. And I said, absolutely. She said, well, the first one is I would love a red lacy bra. Hmm. And I said, okay. So she was measured, we knew her size, so I wanted to get her several red lacy bras.

Dana Marlowe ([25:09](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/XpqOm2JsrzM5sTF_DjYvmNYVT6HcI4tE0d7NIkjFsBQ2ZhCUQoLPJ5DJ4vNK6faYlTsxA9QekEz1tfF9y8JRO-IsIQE?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

So then she went back and she was trying them on in the dressing room and she'd come back out, um, when she was done and she said, okay, this is great. So she found one, I said, okay, no problem. Can I ask like, does that color or style have any meaning to you? And she said, well, when you're, she said she's, she's a person who experiences homelessness and has for a long time. And she's like, you know, but I used to be an artist. I used to love painting and watercolor and my life took some unexpected turns and here I am years later and it's not, it's not safe living on the streets. It's not fun living on the streets, but this is my life right now. And when I'm out and about in DC in the metro or the subway system, sometimes there's bra like, um, big ads and photos of pictures of women in red lacy bras for like different advertisements and they always look so happy.

Dana Marlowe ([25:59](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/XpqOm2JsrzM5sTF_DjYvmNYVT6HcI4tE0d7NIkjFsBQ2ZhCUQoLPJ5DJ4vNK6faYlTsxA9QekEz1tfF9y8JRO-IsIQE?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Mm. Um, and sometimes I see them on magazines like at corner stores or bodegas, like in the magazines covers. And I want a red lacy bra too. So I was like, okay. So she got the bras that fit her that day and she said the thing about a red lacy bra for her is she's like, so often I have to carry all my belongings on my back. So she was in a lot of layers that day even. I mean, it was, it was, it was a chilly day, but she was in multiple sweatshirts and sweaters and button down shirts and, and long sleeved t-shirts and jackets and scarves, like heavily layered while we were indoors even for a bit mm-hmm. <affirmative>. And she, um, she said, I can go to the different shelters even if it's not particularly safe. And the thing about a red lacy bra is that I'll know it's here near my heart. I'm gonna be able to know it's there and it's gonna make me smile and nobody can take that away from me. Mm-hmm. And they won't even know it's there.

Corey Andrew Powell ([26:56](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/XpqOm2JsrzM5sTF_DjYvmNYVT6HcI4tE0d7NIkjFsBQ2ZhCUQoLPJ5DJ4vNK6faYlTsxA9QekEz1tfF9y8JRO-IsIQE?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Oh man. Wow. Or oh woman, I should say, uh, <laugh>, that's an amazing example of the emotive response that things like that can do for someone. And I think that's amazing because, you know, my follow-up question to you was, was actually gonna be connected to that which is tied to obstacles of dealing with misconceptions of homeless people and the stereotypes of homeless people. Like I wondered if you had to deal with some of that, this, this notion that they don't care about themselves. Well they're homeless, why would they care about a bra? Like, I mean, it seems like that would be something that also based on stigma and misguided stereotypes you would have to also face, but then she's the example of why that's not the case.

Dana Marlowe ([27:41](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/XpqOm2JsrzM5sTF_DjYvmNYVT6HcI4tE0d7NIkjFsBQ2ZhCUQoLPJ5DJ4vNK6faYlTsxA9QekEz1tfF9y8JRO-IsIQE?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Yes. And I would say on this journey for me, in the last nearly eight years, I've met a lot of people experiencing homelessness and refugees and assignees and survivors of domestic violence and victims of human trafficking who have received our products and who have shared their stories with me. And each story is so unique and so special and meaningful and it propels me to do more. It propels me to think differently. It propels me. And that's how we've created some of our programs. I mean, we have a, during covid, we, we wound up not because we don't normally do direct service mm-hmm. <affirmative> because we're donating to established, vetted other nonprofit social service agencies. We had to come up with a, a way to help people during early covid when a lot of those agencies were closed Right. Because of the pandemic. And so we came up with our dash kits for survivors of domestic violence. And then from there though, we started getting requests. Um, we already don't. And we donate hundreds of thousands of products to centers and organizations that focus on the trans community for folks that are trans, non-binary and gender non-conforming.

Corey Andrew Powell ([28:52](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/XpqOm2JsrzM5sTF_DjYvmNYVT6HcI4tE0d7NIkjFsBQ2ZhCUQoLPJ5DJ4vNK6faYlTsxA9QekEz1tfF9y8JRO-IsIQE?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Oh, wonderful.

Dana Marlowe ([28:53](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/XpqOm2JsrzM5sTF_DjYvmNYVT6HcI4tE0d7NIkjFsBQ2ZhCUQoLPJ5DJ4vNK6faYlTsxA9QekEz1tfF9y8JRO-IsIQE?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

And yes, great. But there's, they tend to be in larger cities.

Corey Andrew Powell ([28:57](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/XpqOm2JsrzM5sTF_DjYvmNYVT6HcI4tE0d7NIkjFsBQ2ZhCUQoLPJ5DJ4vNK6faYlTsxA9QekEz1tfF9y8JRO-IsIQE?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Mm.

Dana Marlowe ([28:58](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/XpqOm2JsrzM5sTF_DjYvmNYVT6HcI4tE0d7NIkjFsBQ2ZhCUQoLPJ5DJ4vNK6faYlTsxA9QekEz1tfF9y8JRO-IsIQE?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Okay. And this is, this is how we had this need because we started receiving emails of folks that were in more rural communities, right. Or communities where there were no services. And so we created our slash kits so folks could request, if that's a US only program where they could request things like, um, a a binder or, uh, period underwear or packers or makeup or toiletries or other kinds of, uh, menstrual products depending on also what we have in our inventory, but that it's a customizable bespoke, uh, box set chips in the mail to them if they don't have access to a center nearby.

Corey Andrew Powell ([29:35](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/XpqOm2JsrzM5sTF_DjYvmNYVT6HcI4tE0d7NIkjFsBQ2ZhCUQoLPJ5DJ4vNK6faYlTsxA9QekEz1tfF9y8JRO-IsIQE?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Wow. Yeah. So you think about that, like if you're like in Wichita, Kansas or something, or like, you know, really where there's no, we, we take for granted being in DC I'm in New York, we have a lot of opportunities and services, but you're right, if you're like in Nebraska and on a farm right, it's not, not so much.

Dana Marlowe ([29:50](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/XpqOm2JsrzM5sTF_DjYvmNYVT6HcI4tE0d7NIkjFsBQ2ZhCUQoLPJ5DJ4vNK6faYlTsxA9QekEz1tfF9y8JRO-IsIQE?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Right. And, and a lot of, the, lot of the, the same sentiments that folks who are messaging in into us and our social media or writing in, I've said it's not safe for them to go to the store and buy packages of maxi pads or tampons or vice versa. Yeah. To go get fitted for a bra. How can we help? And so, uh, a lot of times the stories that folks share makes us think differently so that we can better support more individuals in need when we start seeing similarities, um, you know, in requests or you know, you know, requesting items.

Corey Andrew Powell ([30:23](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/XpqOm2JsrzM5sTF_DjYvmNYVT6HcI4tE0d7NIkjFsBQ2ZhCUQoLPJ5DJ4vNK6faYlTsxA9QekEz1tfF9y8JRO-IsIQE?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Awesome. Great information. Thank you so much Dana. We're so happy you were here today with us. Dana Marlowe is the founder and executive director of I Support The Girls, a nonprofit that provides bras and menstrual hygiene products that people experiencing hardships. So thank you so much for being here. We appreciate it.

Dana Marlowe ([30:38](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/XpqOm2JsrzM5sTF_DjYvmNYVT6HcI4tE0d7NIkjFsBQ2ZhCUQoLPJ5DJ4vNK6faYlTsxA9QekEz1tfF9y8JRO-IsIQE?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Thank you so much for having me. Have a great day.

Corey Andrew Powell ([30:41](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/XpqOm2JsrzM5sTF_DjYvmNYVT6HcI4tE0d7NIkjFsBQ2ZhCUQoLPJ5DJ4vNK6faYlTsxA9QekEz1tfF9y8JRO-IsIQE?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

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