Welcome to the Outrageous Workplace Stories series of the podcast. In these episodes, you'll see ways to handle even the toughest of workplace situations with power and impact, while making humanity a priority. These stories shaped how I went from receptionist to HR manager in four short years without a degree, without the qualifications or experience that you would have thought I needed. This series is designed to help you turn everyday challenges into momentum for your next level, no matter where you're at right now. If staying grounded in your humanity and being true to who you are as a person is important to you. Yet, you also want to get to your next level. You want to earn more money and you want to create a professional life you're proud of. That is also at the top of your list. I'm here to tell you that you can do both. And this is where you start. Let's go. 13 outrageous workplace stories that you won't even believe happened. So I sit down, I'm checking my email and I see an email from somebody who works with me. Her desk is nearby, but she's not there. I open up the email. I start reading it. I notice it's very long. I'm like, hmm, okay, this is not good. This is not good. And very quickly I start to see where this email is going and it is accusatory. It's got some bad language in it and it's telling me that I'm sexist and racist and that I've made these comments to people and that she's witnessed it and that I'm not gonna get away with it. It's a very long, long letter. So I'm skimming and immediately my brain goes into fight or flight response. And for me, it's usually fight. Some people like to avoid confrontation at all costs. I'm the person who likes to move towards it. So I'm like, where is she? I need to get information. I'm starting to well up and feel angry. I'm activated. My boss isn't there. She's on a trip. She's probably on a plane. So I decide I'm going to go for a walk and I'm going to cool off before I respond or do anything. I go. out on my walk and I start to coach myself and I start emerging some better quality thought patterns. For me, that was anybody who knows me knows that I am not that. Anybody who knows me knows that I would never intentionally do those things or be that way. And then it's curiosity. I'm really curious. And then I'm like, maybe I did say something racist or sexist and I wasn't aware. Maybe it was beyond my awareness. I could have. And I'm calming myself down a bit and I'm like, okay, I'm just curious. She could be right. I'm willing to admit if she really was right, maybe there was something that I needed to look at or adjust. come back to my desk and then I decide from that place that I'm just going to let my boss know that I got this email. I forwarded it to her and I said, just so you know, this person who I won't name her name, my boss knows her cause we're on the same team, sent me this email. And I just thought, you should know. I'm not sure why I've received it, but I wanted to let you know. And enjoy your trip. We don't have to do anything about it right now. So anyway, my boss eventually responds back and she says, thanks for sending this over. We're going to have to chat with this person to see where she's coming from. And then my brain activates again and I'm like, what do you mean? See where she's coming from. She's clearly buggers, right? What do you mean? I can see like my brain just going nuts at every turn in this situation. I had to coach myself to be like, okay, that is a reasonable statement. We do need to see where she's coming from. That is a reasonable thing to say. Cause I jumped to she's not on my side. She's doing exactly what she's supposed to be. She's impartial cause she doesn't know we need to investigate, right? But I'm thinking she should immediately know that I didn't do this and she should be on my side and she should just be automatically responding to this person telling them that they need to stop. sending these emails. Then the coaching that I give to myself was you need to actually see that if you're in your boss's position, you would need to see what was going on because you don't have all the

information yet. So the two main lines of thinking that have been most helpful in these situations for me are one, curiosity. You cannot go wrong when you go to being curious. So curious is more helpful than being defensive or shutting down. When you're defensive, Your tendency is to want to throw stuff back at the person. Oh, would it be, I can't believe she did that. Or would an a-hole, I have a few things to say about them too. You just want to throw stuff back at them. That's defensiveness, like fighting. And then shutting down is I don't need this. This is ridiculous. I'm just going to stay home. I work so hard and this is what I get for it. I can't deal with it. So that's like shutting down versus being defensive. Neither of those are helpful because we will eventually need to. deal with the situation. Curiosity and open to being wrong, open to being imperfect. When I know my own heart and I know that I'm a good person and I didn't mean to hurt anybody, I'm open to seeing that, then the defenses can come down and I'm not feeling attacked anymore. It's like Eminem's rap battle on 8 Mile where he just says all the facts about himself, like when his opponent is supposed to come up and attack him with a rap. with the rapping and he just says everything about himself. Like I live in a trailer with my mom and he says all the things about himself. So then there's nothing for the opponent to say anymore. So that puts me at ease because I'm like, I'm always willing to do that. I'm always willing to admit that. So a confrontation is never scary to me because I know that it can only end one of two ways. Either me seeing it wrong and admitting it or apologizing it, or me. seeing that I'm not wrong and that I haven't done anything wrong. My name is Natalie Fisher. If we don't know each other, I'm going to be sharing 13 outrageous workplace stories where you won't even believe that thing happened. If you want to get on the list to get all 13 sent to you, click the link below and we'll get you signed up. I help people get into their new jobs and then tackle the problems that they have once they get into their new jobs, including workplace dynamics. Like having somebody attack you verbally or in an email, having priorities changed on you at the last minute without asking, having extra work put on you that seems unreasonable for one person, having a boss that isn't listening to you or feeling like you're being dismissed or shut down, having one-on-ones cancelled endlessly so you never feel like you get anywhere. We're going into lots more examples on how to navigate these situations. in a clear, concise, professional way that aligns with who you are, your values, and your soul, and so that you can feel much more confident and much more relaxed and much more productive at work. I will see you next time. Thanks for joining me. If you enjoyed that story and you gleaned something from it, if you want to learn how to master your professional life while being both impactful yet deeply human, join the waitlist for professionally. The link is in the show notes. I can't wait for you to see what I have in store.