

Have you ever left a job where you left and you were not the same person as when you came into the job? If you've been feeling like you were successful before, you had all this energy and passion before, and it's died or shrunk, or the air has been taken out of your balloon, I want you to know it wasn't lost. You did not lose your capability. You just lost conditions that made it safe to express. When we have a fish in water and the fish gets sick, we don't look at the fish, we look at the conditions. When the plant's not growing and we don't know why, we don't think that the seed is bad automatically. We think it hasn't been watered. We look at did it get enough sunlight? Is the soil rich and pure, is it good soil for growth? We don't look at that seed and automatically think, "Oh, the seed is the problem." This is no different. You need to put yourself in environments that allow your growth. I talk about post-traumatic stress versus post-traumatic growth. What that means is, is an experience can shape you one of two ways. One, it can mean that you create post-traumatic stress from it, which means you shut down, you never share your ideas again, you allow yourself to shrink because the environment around you was conducive of that. Or you can use it and create post-traumatic growth for yourself. And what that means is you use it to create a stronger, more articulate, more creative version of yourself instead of a shut down version that is afraid to share again. If you're interested in learning how to use these experiences for post-traumatic growth, stay with me. Here's what happens. Somebody starts a job, and they're feeling really confident. They're feeling inspired, ready to share ideas, ready to go in with lots of good changes to implement, and then their idea either gets ignored, it gets shut down, it gets micromanaged, or they speak up and they don't get the response they had hoped for, and they make that mean something about them or their idea. Or they don't articulate it again. They allow that stonewalling or shutdown or ignoring of the idea, they allow that to mean that they shouldn't share anymore. Maybe they get conflicting feedback from a bunch of different people in the room. Maybe they're given an impossible deadline with way too many things to complete on time, and they're not able to get across that things need to be prioritized. So they just make it mean that they should have been able to figure it all out, they should have been able to do it, and that there's something wrong with them. What happens is they slowly start to interpret these external circumstances as meaning something about who they are. What starts to compound is that speaking up starts to feel more and more risky, more and more unsafe, and they're not trusting themselves to do it anymore. And so then they just stop. And when that happens, they start to create a pathway in their brain that says, "You aren't good enough. Your ideas aren't good enough. You shouldn't be sharing that," or, "People are not gonna listen anyway," they shut down. You might stop speaking in meetings, stop sending drafts, stop voicing ideas that could make a difference. And then before long, you're like, "Hey, what happened to me? I used to be confident. I used to contribute." Before you know it, you've turned into a version of yourself that you didn't wanna be. And guess what? That the environment itself is what's giving you accurate information about your capability. About the culture, about how things run. It has nothing to do with you or your capability or the worthiness of your ideas. A room that's chaotic, a culture with too many people working on the same projects or having hands in the same pot with too many unrealistic expectations will leave anybody feeling the same way, feeling incapable, like they can't keep up. It will do that to anybody, and it's important that you recognize that just because you happen to find yourself there, it doesn't mean that you're not a capable person. That kind of environment would make anybody doubt themselves. That is a normal human response to an unsustainable situation. Now, you may have

thought in the past, you might have thought, i'm really good at what I do. I can contact anybody I need to. I can reach out. I can do what I need to do to get things done." Now, you may have thought those things in the past and then realized that the environment that you were in or that you have been in for a while or that you maybe you've been in and you've left has created some different neural pathways that have made you feel like you needed to shrink. If you're in an environment for years where you're constantly experiencing the same treatment, like you're being micromanaged constantly, or you're constantly being shut down when you try to say something, that is going to make anybody feel that way. My client, for example, she described it. She was in a startup culture where her boss was micromanaging her. She wasn't able to speak up and be heard. She tried several different things where she tried to set boundaries and set priorities. Her brain did what brains do. It tried to make sense of the experience, and the way that it could make sense of it at the time was to make herself feel like she was the small one, she was doing something wrong. The fastest explanation, especially for women, is usually, "I didn't do enough. I should have done this better. I'm not capable. It's me. I'm the problem. Sharing is unsafe. That explanation is wrong. The first thing you need to do is separate the environment from the person. Ask yourself, if any other reasonable person would've been in that situation, would they have thrived easily or would they have had the same struggles that you had? When we're able to look at it honestly, the likelihood is you're gonna say, "No, you're right. The person who was in that same situation would've definitely had the same struggles" and then you'll probably start to see the defects with the environment. They were disorganized, they didn't have clear priorities, they had too many people making decisions about the same things. The communication was disorganized. They were contradictory with many of the things they said. They weren't really growth-minded. You'll start to see the flaws in the environment and take the personalization off yourself. You're gonna start to see those themes emerging when you're honest. That matters because when you're honest about how you see the environment, you can take the focus off you. Now, I'm not saying we blame the environment for everything that happened, I'm saying you can take reasonable expectation from yourself as far as somebody who did everything you could in that situation, and also realize that anybody in that environment would have had a similar struggle. Once you start seeing the environment clearly, you can stop using this past experience as evidence that there was something wrong with you. The second thing is to stop treating your in-between phase as a verdict. For example, if you haven't quite figured out how you're gonna be speaking up yet, or if you're in between career moves right now, that doesn't mean that you are not capable. It doesn't mean that you're broken, it doesn't mean that you're not hireable, and it doesn't mean you need to over-explain yourself to anybody. People don't really understand what your experience has been, what you have been through, and the things that you have tried. That's not their fault. They just won't always get it. It's important that you stop treating your in-between as a verdict on your capability, your worthiness, or your ability to create results. You can be in a period of transition and not be in a period of shame. Let that land. You can be in a period of transition and not be in a period of shame. You can be in a time of transition and not feel ashamed of that. The third thing is to rebuild your voice and your identity in small ways. Don't have to go from being quiet and shut down to being a keynote speaker overnight. You don't have to go from feeling like you're not worthy of contributing to feeling like now you can speak up and share every idea. What you need to do is contribute in small ways that will remind you, "I have a voice. It is valuable. I have

contributions. They are worthwhile." You will need to rebuild yourself step by step after an experience like that happens. One of my clients, she experiences feeling really low energy and feeling ill quite often. And the answer is not to keep pushing through. It's not to keep trying to just do as much as possible in those states. The goal is to do little things. For example, what worked for my client was she was able to do three easy lifts, three things that were easier for her to do rather than trying to sit for eight hours a day and focus on something and get a whole bunch of productive work done. Now, three easy shifts, three small things can have the impact that creates a big ripple effect in your life, in your career, in your project, in whatever you're working on. This is to say little compound effects over time, more sustainable than trying to force yourself to do one thing for a long, period of time forever, because that is not sustainable, and that is how you will get burnt out. This is how you rebuild the trust with yourself. You do small things. Every one of those small things matters more than making yourself a big promise that you don't follow through on repeatedly. That is how we build trust back into our bodies with ourselves. If you're resonating with what I'm saying in this episode, I want you to practice believing. The room didn't make me small. I learned to make myself small, and I can unlearn that. My past experiences with career or jobs did not erase my capability. They gave me information about what I don't want to repeat, and I can choose from there. I don't need to explain myself or my journey to people who don't understand, to people who have had very different lives than me. Allowed to be in an in-between phase without shame. You've been feeling like you've been carrying a shrunken version of you around, like you were successful before, you had all this energy and passion before, and it's kind of died or shrunk or the air has been taken out of your balloon, I want you to know when you're in the right environment, you won't be able to help but grow. It will be impossible for you not to grow. When you're in an environment that makes it hard for you to grow, shuts you down, you're trying to sprout like that plant wants to sprout, the seed wants to sprout, and someone keeps on stepping on it, and it won't let it, of course it's gonna be kept down. Your job isn't to become anybody new or different. It is to remember who you already are, who you were already supposed to naturally be, and then you find the environments that will support that growth. If you want help with this, I have a free quiz called *How to Know If You're Underselling Yourself*, it's personalized to you. So you're gonna answer a few questions, and then you're gonna give yourself a score, and then your score is gonna reveal the exact next step for where you can have the biggest payoff in the next 30 days. Now, if you're underselling yourself, you'll see results like you're not earning the money that you wanna be earning. Maybe you are getting shut down and you're not prioritizing yourself. You're feeling like you've shrunk. You're feeling like something's off. You're feeling like you are being kept in a box. Maybe you are that sprout that is trying to sprout and somebody keeps stepping on it. You will feel it, and it will add up over time, it is not just one time you didn't speak up or one raise you didn't get or one thing you didn't put forward. It adds up and it compounds, just like it compounds in the opposite direction. So if this resonated with you and you wanna go deeper on it. Get the free quiz below. And once you fill that out and you submit it, I'm gonna send you a free gift to help you go deeper on this work with me. If you liked this video, give me a thumbs up. If you didn't like the video, give me a thumbs down. I appreciate you being here. Let me know what kind of content you wanna hear from me, what kind of scenarios or situations you're dealing with so that I can help you further. Great to have you here, and I'll see you next week.