



Be An Effective Advocate

It's not a coincidence that the Movement for Black Lives was started by three women, Patrisse Khan-Cullors, Alicia Garza, and Opal Tometi. Their low-ego, high-impact, lead-with-love model has inspired and activated people of all races across the country and the world. In this episode, Gloria shares heart-forward movement-building tips to stay engaged, energized, and to lead change.

Gloria Feldt: Like I always say, a movement has to move. Power and energy come from moving into new spaces, not from standing still. Hello, and welcome to Power to You. I'm Gloria Feldt, here with secrets and tools to prepare and propel you with training and coaching to harness your incredible power to in your professional lives. I cofounded Take the Lead because I figured out how to crack the code that has been holding women back from equal leadership and pay. My mission is for women and men to hold equal power, pay, and leadership positions by 2025. At the end of each podcast, I'll share specific tips that will help you lead and succeed.

It makes total sense to me that Black Lives Matter was started by three young women, and it is moving, as they say, at the speed of trust. In response to the acquittal of Trayvon Martin's murderer in 2013, Patrisse Khan-Cullors, Alicia Garza, and Opal Tometi started the organization that now has over 40 chapters globally according to their herstory, and I love that they use the term herstory. It's growing by leaps and bounds as a result of the current demonstrations sparked by the murder of George Floyd at the knee of a white Minneapolis police officer.

You may be wondering how you can help. I'll give you a roadmap based on the model of Black Lives Matter. Their movement leadership principles include low ego, high impact, and lead with love. This is about as far from the hypermasculine power over and as close to the power paradigm shift to power to as you can get, and it makes total sense to me. As a women's activist for many years, I am moved to tears that young women working together have provided the vessel for massive demonstrations against police violence and over policing in general, and yes, for social equality for African Americans. It's happening in an authentic speed of trust way that is activating people of all races across the country and the world, igniting empathy, the best of the human spirit in response to the worst.

This is the Black Lives Matter moment. The moment when rampant injustices against Black Americans are at long last blatantly visible to anybody with a shred of conscience. The yellow-painted Black Lives Matter on newly minted Black Lives Matter Plaza in Washington, D.C. communicates boldly that this moment is a

movement that will not be stopped, even in the face of teargas. It symbolizes exactly how the murder of George Floyd was the flashpoint that ignited the cauldron of anger and grief. There had been so many travesties that they finally, inevitably, boiled over. And the activism they spawned is a testimony to the Black Lives Matter founders' brilliant use of movement-building principles.

We are witnessing Democracy 102. A new civics, a new politics, a demystified politics, a no cynicism zone politics. It suddenly feels like a necessary part of life. Not an obligation, not something for other people, but necessary work that turns couch commentators into activists on streets, and activism into something to do routinely, like brushing your teeth. Something to take pride in doing, like helping a neighbor in need. Inclusive action that every citizen can take part in.

It's a movement that while initially attracting some marauding vandal hangers-on is increasingly organically disciplined. This is another reason I'm not surprised that women founded this movement. Women's participation in nonviolent movement success has been demonstrated and studied for years. On the same night as there were peaceful protests in downtown Phoenix and Scottsdale in early June of 2020, the shopping center across the street from my apartment was vandalized, freaking out the local police so much that they didn't even go to the crime scene. I wasn't phased, I have to tell you. I've done a lot of organizing in my life and I knew it would settle down, because the moral framework of the movement has been set and it is unassailable.

Erica Chenoweth at the Harvard Kennedy School found that nonviolent movements tend to be more successful in making social change than violent movements are, and that there is a direct correlation between the success of protest movements and the participation of women. [Axios sums up the data.](#) "Protests are more likely to remain nonviolent when women participate," according to a United Nations report. Women effectively take on many roles during protests and mass movements, from organizer, to caregiver, to protector. Women playing visible roles in protests have become symbols of freedom and progress, and this is true even though women can become sidelined and underrepresented in political processes, government transitions and negotiations.

Women also often risk their personal safety by participating. So, for those of you who want to get active, here are nine ways to supercharge your activism's power and effectiveness with these movement-building tips I've learned from a life on the front lines.

1. First, start by clarifying your why. Know where you stand. Spend some time deeply thinking about the values and issues that you feel most passionately aligned with. The fastest route to self-esteem is to stand up for what you believe, so commit to standing up for it publicly.
2. Second, employ the three elements of all movement building. I call it #SisterCourage, and I include brother partners in this. I mean, let women be the default for a change. Now, this is not easy, but it is simple. All sustainable

movements go through this process. A, be a sister or brother, reach out to connect with other people who share your concerns. Don't go it alone. You need each other to be effective. B, have the courage to raise the issues. Speak of them. Socialize them. Paint them on the street. Like Black Lives Matter, call out injustice by name. And C, put the two together with a strategy. A plan that can push the levers of power forward to greater justice. Without a plan, you have only free flowing energy. Learn more about this from my leadership power tool seven, create a movement.

3. The third point I want to share with you is to be realistic about what you will do personally. No one has to do everything, but everyone can do something. Pick one or two actions and then do them fully. Do them well. Give your time and your money in a way that is meaningful to you. You'll be immobilized if you try to do it all or all at once. Spend your money at businesses or for products whose values align with your own. Black and female-owned businesses, for example. [Here are 115 places you can donate](#) to support Black lives and communities of color.
4. Number four, don't think righteous anger is an outcome. I know, righteous anger feels so good, but making substantive change feels better. Keep your vision focused on the desired outcomes.
5. Number five, have a clear, focused agenda with specific outcomes that you can communicate in simple terms. One of the liabilities of the Women's March is that it tried to please everyone with its agenda that was so broad, it pleases no one. As a result, it lacks the poetry, I would say, to inspire.
6. Number six, use media strategically and remember, everyone is the media. Anyone can post on social media or write a letter to the editor. Anyone can speak up to a neighbor or a family member about why you support racial equity and justice. You don't have to appear on NBC or be published by the New York Times to have an impact. If you need guidance, check out [The OpEd Project](#). You have a voice. Use it.
7. Number seven, know when you've won. It's easy to get so immersed in the battle that you fall in love with the emotional high of fighting the good fight, but the purpose of activism is to get results. As an example, I'm on a feminist journalist listserv. It was founded by the Center for New Words in its more recent incarnation, and it was called WAM, Women Action Media. Its mission historically was the advancement of women in journalism. When the organization folded after 30 years of evolution, there was much sadness. And yet, the transition was not a sign of failure, but a sign of success. The evidence was on the cover of the New York Times Book Review that I saw about that time. Of the probably two dozen essays noted on the cover, over half were women I knew in WAM. They need to use that collective power. You gotta know when you've won and use that power effectively.
8. The eighth tip that I'd like to share with you is understand that nothing is ever won forever in a democracy. Stay engaged. Always have a next step, a new agenda item, a legislative initiative or other policy change up your sleeve. Like I said earlier, a movement has to move. Power and energy come from moving

outward into new spaces. Never from standing still. Most movements fall short of the world-changing goals they start with because they ignore this reality.

9. Number nine, that includes voting. Every time. In every election. Make sure your registration is current and join with others to make sure your local voting systems are going to be fair and accessible. Spend a few hours a week helping candidates you believe in to make phone calls, to raise money, and encourage voting. You know, it matters who makes policies. Let me say that again. It matters who makes policies. Your life and the lives of those you love depends on it.

When leaders don't lead, or when they lead in the wrong direction, it falls to us as individuals and as a people to take the lead, and that's what's happening on the streets right now. Each of us plays a part by our actions or our inactions. You have issue shaping, world changing power. Use it!

Let me know how it goes for you by sharing me on social media @gloriafeldt or emailing me at powertoyou@taketheleadwomen.com. Until next week, Power to You!

Power to You is produced by Lantigua Williams & Co. Cedric Wilson is our sound designer. For more about my work, please visit gloriafeldt.com, and follow me on social media @gloriafeldt. To learn about Take the Lead and our courses and coaching services, go to taketheleadwomen.com and follow Take the Lead on social media. You can also send me comments about the show and questions on leadership and power to powertoyou@taketheleadwomen.com. I might even use them on future episodes. Be sure to subscribe or follow Power to You on your favorite listening app, and you'd make me so happy if you would leave a review on Apple Podcasts, as those really help us get to know what you like about the show. Thanks.

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