



How to Own Your Power

In this first episode of her new podcast, renowned leader for gender equality and cofounder of Take The Lead, Gloria Feldt zeroes in on how women can embrace their power with “intention, confidence and joy” despite our culture, which discourages them to do so. Starting now, these weekly succinct but wisdom-packed coaching sessions will offer concrete ways you can draw from your strength, intelligence and knowledge to grow professionally, face challenging people and situations, and ultimately manifest your fullest potential.

Gloria Feldt: Hello, and welcome to Power to You. I’m Gloria Feldt. I’ve spent my entire career advancing women’s rights and equality in health, education, Corporate America, politics, and every other area from the boardroom to the bedroom. I’m so proud to have co-founded [Take the Lead](#), which prepares and propels women with training and coaching in how to harness your incredible power in your professional lives.

Power to You is my new, and I’m excited about this, weekly podcast, in which I will offer one-on-one, high level, intimate conversations about how to know and tap into your power, how to shape it to all types of situations, and how to grow and wield it in positive ways that are meaningful and impactful to you and others. A big hello to those of you who previously listened to the Take the Lead Women podcast, which will now be replaced by Power to You, starting with this episode.

Stay tuned for equally engaging episodes as I unpack what I’ve learned in a lifetime of leading like a woman and leading women to find their inner power.

I love it when people say to me that no way are we going to be able to reach gender parity in leadership by 2025, which is Take the Lead’s stake in the ground mission. Nothing motivates me more to reach that goal. And you know, it happens frequently. It just gets my adrenaline going. Tell me I can’t do something and you can believe I’m going to do it.

It is so much fun and rewarding to be able to have a vision, articulate it to inspire others, and work together with a whole organization of talented people to put together the strategies and resources to make it happen and then execute it. Being able to have that long view and do big things, even those that others might call impossible, might just be the most fun I’ve ever had. But nobody tells you that. You have to discover it for yourself by doing it.

When it comes to [gender parity in leadership, or rather why we don’t have it yet](#), I had to do my own research to survey the current situation and look through the breakthrough strategy that everyone else in the field had missed, and that is what informed my book, [No Excuses: Nine Ways Women Can Change How We Think](#)

[About Power](#). Mostly, the previous research about why women, at that time it was under 20% in congress and the C-suite, concluded that women had less ambition than men. Well, I thought [that is just not true](#), so I dug deeper and identified the missing factor in every women's leadership program that I studied.

It's women's culturally learned ambivalence about power. They told women how to be like men to succeed, but that didn't work, because it wasn't authentic. And women were smart enough not to want that kind of power over that men had thrived in. After all, women had borne the brunt of many negative aspects of it, like abuse and violence. That, plus [the implicit bias still in the system](#), reshapes our brains, and makes us stand back, be more risk averse, and less likely to self advocate.

The traditional view of power also postulates that it's a finite pie, [whereas women who had been socialized to be more collaborative](#) love it when I show them that power is an infinite resource, and also they can always make more pies, because there is no limit to human ingenuity. So, when I showed them how to change the power paradigm to the more expansive and innovative power TO, it was as though masks fell off and women would say, "Oh yes, well I want that kind of power, where I can innovate, create, make life better for my family." That was when I knew I had cracked the code holding women back, and that if Take the Lead can reach a critical mass of women to help them embrace their power with the kind of intention, confidence, and joy that I saw in the women in those first workshops I did, and give them the tools to thrive in the world as it is while changing it, we will be able to reach parity by 2025, not 2095, which was the most optimistic projection when we started.

And what's the worst that can happen if we don't? I mean, any progress is going to be better than where we are now. But I want to be able to say we did it, because reaching gender parity will be a nice, big bow around all the work I've done in my life to advance women, and the more individual success stories we have, the more fun it is to keep going.

You know, I used to sew all my children's clothes using cloth left over from my father's clothing factory. There's something of an analogy to leading with vision that translates to action in the creative process of figuring out how to take a piece of cloth and turn it into something beautiful and useful. The cool thing is that every person who starts with that piece of cloth will create something different. Your vision is unique.

So, what is your vision? What are the different pieces of cloth that you're going to need to turn your vision into reality? And then most importantly, how are you going to execute on that? Oh, and what do you imagine are the things most likely to rise up and bite you on the butt? You'll never know that in advance, but it's fun to speculate. And by the way, I have some good news. Women are now approaching 25% of top leadership across all sectors. We'll talk more another day

about how we're going to double that in the next five years, but let me just say yes, we can.

So, I want you to practice your power this week by illustrating a vision that you have. Write it. Draw it. Sing it. Whatever modality suits you. Then take at least one step to start making it happen. Let me know how it goes for you. You can always email me at powertoyou@taketheleadwomen.com. I can't wait to hear from you.

Until next week, Power to You.

Power to You is produced by Lantigua Williams & Co. Cedric Wilson is our sound designer. Emma Forbes is our assistant producer. 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 us 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 on your favorite listening app, and please leave a review on Apple Podcasts, as those really help us know what you like about the show. Thanks.

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