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MBS ([00:00](#)):

I am deeply curious when it comes to the future of work. I mean, the pandemic seems just to have accelerated this conversation in a way that two years ago, say, felt inconceivable. But the future of work isn't just let's Zoom everything. The bigger questions are, "Well, how does power work? How do we stay human centered? How do we figure out our way through complexity?"

MBS ([00:30](#)):

Welcome to Two Pages with MBS. This is the podcast where brilliant people read the best two pages from a favorite book, a book that has moved them, a book that has shaped them. Lisa Gill, is also a future of work obsessive. She's the host of a podcast called Leadermorphosis. I think that's probably the podcast that explores the edges of how work is evolving. She's also the co-author of the intriguingly entitled *Moose Heads on the Table*, which is really about how



organizations are doing things differently in the Nordics, I think in Sweden, in particular. Much like the rest of us, Lisa started her career in a traditional AKA slightly archaic company system. So when did you realize that things had to change?

Lisa ([01:16](#)):

I think there were a series of moments really, of being a frustrated employee and being annoyed that I couldn't get involved more with things because they weren't officially in my job description, and bumping up against the hierarchy and the bureaucracy of various different organizations. I remember a particular moment where an organization I was working in, that I had really started to find my place and was enjoying. Overnight, the management team put together this secret PowerPoint presentation that they revealed to the company the next day of the new organizational structure.

Lisa ([01:56](#)):

It was this series of boxes, and they had created all these levels of hierarchy. This was quite a small company. I remember the atmosphere in the room where people were just like, "What is this? What are you thinking? Why haven't you consulted any of us?"

MBS ([02:12](#)):

Snatching defeat from the jaws of victory.

Lisa ([02:15](#)):

After that moment, things really changed. I was fascinated by that, that the climate really shifted, and suddenly this us versus them thing occurred. I think after that, I started to read more books and go to more conferences and speak to more people who were doing other things. I realized, "Hey, there are alternatives. It doesn't have to be like this. There are ways of involving people more, and you don't have to have this kind of rigid hierarchy. That you can have



a much more creative, fluid, exchange of power and information and things like that." So that was I think the moment where I was like, "Okay, I think I think I'm done with this now. I'm going to start something else."

MBS ([02:55](#)):

I sometimes wonder whether this future of work stuff is for a small group of Mavericks and weirdos and outsiders like me, and maybe Lisa, perhaps the occasional quirky founder. But can it be a mainstream thing?

Lisa ([03:10](#)):

I really don't want it to be a fringe thing. I think I have come some way in my thinking. Because I know in the beginning, when I started reading about these ideas, I was a bit snobby, and a bit dogmatic. I felt like self managing teams is the future and anyone who's not doing that sorry, you're going to get left behind, see you, kind of thing.

Lisa ([03:32](#)):

I realized at some point that it's kind of harsh and cruel in a way because I've met so many people since who are right in the middle of a big, hierarchical organization, for example, often like a public sector organization. They're so desperate to try new things, and they have so many brilliant ideas. They're often really lonely. Those people are able to do things. It might not be as radical as some of the organizations at the other end of the continuum that I talk to or work with. But for me, it comes down to impacting individuals, those closest to you. So if someone in the middle of an organization starts using liberating structures, for example, to have totally different kinds of meetings and just inviting in different voices or creating more safety for people to really open up, that is meaningful, that's worthwhile.



Lisa ([04:30](#)):

So I think, for me, it's really important that this is accessible for everyone. I'm really trying to learn or unlearn speaking in jargon, for example, and really boiling this down to well, what are we talking about here? We're talking about people being more involved in things that affect them, and people being more human with each other because that is going to make it more likely that I can be intelligent and creative and share things openly and will solve problems and come up with new ideas. That for me is what it's about really.

MBS ([05:05](#)):

I love that. I love you pointing to the loneliness of the person who can sense that I want things to be different, I'm just not sure how. It feels like there's a lot of unmutable-ness around me, unchanging-ness around me, and I'll come to that. I want to come to that after we hear what your two pages are. So tell us what book you've selected to read for us.

Lisa ([05:30](#)):

Yeah. So I've selected *Leadership and the New Science: Discovering Order in a Chaotic World* by Margaret Wheatley.

MBS ([05:39](#)):

The legendary Meg Wheatley, this is fantastic. Because I remember finding this book when it came out and going, "This book blows my mind, and I have no idea what to do with it." Both of those things. But how did it come into your life? When did it show up?

Lisa ([05:56](#)):

Yeah, I can't remember exactly. I remember reading about it somewhere or other and being amazed that someone had written about self-managing organizations and teams in the 90s, when I had just started to discover this, this was like, five, six years ago. Also because I studied drama, I think I'm always



really interested in using different lenses to gain new perspectives in field. So I loved the idea that she was saying the same quantum shift that we had in science we now need in management and organizations. that seemed like a really interesting lens for me.

Lisa ([06:37](#)):

So I remember reading about it, and then picking it up. I read it on holiday with my partner in Portugal. We were in Lisbon, and we had got the train up to Sintra, just this magical place up in the hills. I was reading it on the train down. I just kept reading passages out to him and highlighting entire pages because I was like, "This is amazing."

MBS ([07:01](#)):

Exactly.

Lisa ([07:01](#)):

This is just articulating exactly my frustrations with the world of work and exactly the way that I think we need to look at things completely differently, that paradigm shift means. Yes, it felt so current, and yet it was 1992 that it first was published.

MBS ([07:18](#)):

What a combination, Meg Wheatley and Portuguese custard tart. Two of the best things in the world. So you're highlighting all these pages? I'm asking you just to pick two, how did you choose which two pages to read?

Lisa ([07:30](#)):

It was really difficult because I have an app on my phone that's like my second brain. I had, like I said, highlighted entire pages throughout the whole book. So choosing two pages was difficult. But I wanted to choose two pages that invoked for me one of the key themes, which was about relationships. So I



found a good little passage that I think captures the essence of why the book was so special to me.

MBS ([08:00](#)):

Brilliant. Well, why don't we hear these two pages? I mean, let me introduce you formally. Lisa Gill, podcast host and author, reading from Meg Wheatley, classic and radical book on leadership, *Leadership and the New Science*. Lisa, over to you.

Lisa ([08:18](#)):

To live in a quantum world, to weave here and there with ease and grace, we need to change what we do. We need fewer descriptions of tasks, and instead learn how to facilitate process. We need to become savvy about how to foster relationships, how to nurture growth and development. All of us need to become better at listening, conversing, respecting one another's uniqueness because these are essential for strong relationships. The era of the rugged individual has been replaced by the era of the team player. But this is only the beginning. The quantum world has demolished the concept that we are unconnected individuals.

Lisa ([09:06](#)):

More and more relationships are in store for us out there in the vast web of life. Even organizational power is purely relational. One evening, I had a long exploratory talk with a wise friend who told me that power in organizations is the capacity generated by relationships.

Lisa ([09:30](#)):

It is an energy that comes into existence through relationships. Ever since that conversation, I have changed what I pay attention to in an organization. Now I look carefully at a workplace's capacity for healthy relationships. Not its organizational form in terms of tasks or functions, span of control and



hierarchies. But things more fundamental to strong relations. Do people know how to listen and speak to each other, to work well with diverse members? Do people have free access to one another throughout the organization? Are they trusted with open information? Do organizational values bring them together or keep them apart? Is collaboration truly honored? Can people speak truthfully to one another?

Lisa ([10:22](#)):

Because power is energy, it needs to flow through organizations. It cannot be bounded or designated to certain functions or levels. What gives power its charge, positive or negative, is the nature of the relationship. When power is shared in such workplace redesigns as participative management and self managed teams, positive-created power abounds.

Lisa ([10:49](#)):

For years, many people and researchers have described the positive impacts of these new relationships, power that shows up a significant increases in productivity and personal satisfaction. In other workplaces, leaders attempt to force better results through coercion and competition. Sometimes they exhibit a flagrant disregard for people and their abilities. In such organizations, a high level of energy is also created. But it's entirely negative.

Lisa ([11:21](#)):

Power becomes a problem, not a capacity. People use their creativity to work against these leaders, or in spite of them. They refuse to contribute positively to the organization. The learning for all of us seems clear, if power is the capacity generated by our relationships, then we need to be attending to the quality of those relationships. We would do well to ponder the realization that love is the most potent source of power.



MBS ([11:51](#)):

That's a perfect place to end. Nicely edited nicely chosen. Love is the most perfect form of power. That's wonderful. There's a lot there, Lisa. What about this passage in particular struck home for you?

Lisa ([12:13](#)):

Yeah, I think I often quote that conversation she had with her friend, that power is the capacity generated by relationships when talking about organizations, but I think that applies to just about everything actually. So that, for me is really powerful and speaks to what I focus on now in my work, which is, it's all about relationships, and having different kinds of conversations, totally different kinds of conversations to what we normally have. In normal organizations, we talk about budgets and schedules and processes and deadlines. But it's the relationships, the things going on between us that really influence whether we work together well or not, and whether we're happy or fulfilled or not, right?

Lisa ([13:05](#)):

Also, for me, that idea that it can be a negative or a positive power, and that when the relationships aren't attended, to when they're not important, and managers, for example, even disregard people, that there's power there, but people are kind of working against them. They're sort of like, "Well, screw you, I'm going to do it my way or I'm going to do the minimal viable amount of work for me to not get fired," which is such a waste. It's such a waste of potential in the organization. It's such a waste of life for those people. But I find that that's so prevalent, sadly, in lots of organizations. So for me, this piece, it's really beautiful. It also evokes this almost rage in me. It's not rocket science. But it's something that we so rarely talk about or pay any attention to in most organizations, I think.

MBS ([14:01](#)):

I mean you talk about rage, what is it that makes you so angry?



Lisa ([14:05](#)):

I think it's that I was a frustrated employee, I was angry at managers and management teams sometimes because I felt like they were the villains, right? The enemy, like they don't understand and if only they knew this, da, da, da. Looking back, I can see that I was also guilty of dehumanizing those people and realizing that it's also really lonely to be a manager. The higher up you go, the colder it gets, someone once said to me. So much of management is also pretending. It's trying to look good. It's trying to maintain some semblance of control.

Lisa ([14:53](#)):

In some ways, my anger is now redirected. It's not necessarily at those individuals because I don't think they're wrong or bad. I ask I guess collectively for continuing this system that doesn't work for people. Now, we know it also doesn't really work for organizations, but we're so wedded to it. You can see that in the aftermath of COVID as well, that some organizations are embracing remote working, for example, or working in less rigid ways. Others are going even stronger in the other direction, like only engaged employees are the ones who come back to work or now we're going to reintroduce this and this and this. It's just like, why are we so afraid to open our eyes to a different possibility where we can trust people to be the capable adult humans that they are?

MBS ([15:47](#)):

What is the fear that lies at the heart of traditional management?

Lisa ([15:54](#)):

I spend a lot of time in trainings with managers. What I pick up is that there's such a strong sense of responsibility and pressure, I think, to have the answers, to do the right thing. That I have to get the team or the organization to do this. To say, I don't know or to say, "Hey, I really want us to work more in this way. But I don't really know how to do that. I'm going to try, but I'm probably going to fail



and make mistakes." That takes so much courage and is so counter cultural, I think. So I think many managers also know that people like me, back when I was a frustrated employee, are vilifying them to some extent. Therefore, they feel misunderstood, unfairly represented. Like I'm trying, I'm really trying my best, but I'm tired and busy and under pressure. I don't know-

MBS ([17:05](#)):

The existing structures that are directing my behavior in a way that's beyond my control or influence.

Lisa ([17:10](#)):

Exactly, yeah.

MBS ([17:13](#)):

Lisa, how would you diagnose the brokenness of relationships in organizations? I mean, you talk about and Meg Wheatley's piece talks about the power of relationships. But I think just to your very point, you're just making now, when lots of people think about the relationships they have, they're like, "I don't want to replicate that. I don't want to double down on that. It's a bit crap, quite frankly." Is there a lens or a way that you look at relationships and kind of go, "This is the broken bit."

Lisa ([17:45](#)):

Yeah. Margaret Wheatley herself says in the book, I think that we haven't yet learned how to be in this new age of relationships. I think that's true not just in organizations, but in general because I think we're seeing shifts now in parenting, for example. Also like personal relationships. A friend of mine, Alana Irving wrote a great blog about running an agile retrospective on her relationship with her partner.



MBS (18:13):

Right. She's based down in New Zealand. Right?

Lisa (18:15):

Yes.

MBS (18:16):

Yeah, perfect. I know her stuff.

Lisa (18:17):

Yeah, yeah. So that shifted for me, my relationship with my partner, for example. That I think often, in many of our relationships, we accept that the good ones are good, and the bad ones will maybe always be bad. But there is a potential always to shift relationships. To use a cliched metaphor, it is like gardening. You have to attend to them to maintain relationships for them, to be healthy. That means if I have a small gripe with you, a pebble in my shoe with you about something, that I bring that up with you, which is scary for me personally because I have a desperate need to be liked.

MBS (19:02):

I have that too.

Lisa (19:02):

I don't want to be rejected.

MBS (19:03):

Yeah, yeah.

Lisa (19:04):

Yeah. So for me, it takes a lot of courage to say to someone, "I have this kind of minor irritation with you. I really don't think that's your intention, but is it okay if



we talk about it, because I really want us to have a really open and trusting relationship?" Or for me to say no to people that I care about is really tough. I'm learning now the art of boundaries and that it's important for the relationship for me to be able to say no in a good way also, otherwise, I let people down further down the line or I burn out.

Lisa ([19:38](#)):

I think if I diagnose the problem in many of our broken relationships in the world, it's probably a lack of attending to the quality of our relationships and a lack of having conversations about the relationship. Kind of seeing it almost as a thing that we placed between us. This I've learned mainly from my colleagues at Tough Leadership training that we actually teach managers. Not just managers, but everyone, a relationship conversation. We have a framework for that, because it's something that we don't really learn or practice, but it's so game changing.

MBS ([20:17](#)):

Can you help me and perhaps some people listening? How do I go from zero to one, because I hear you talk about having the courage to talk about the pebble in the shoe? I'm like, "Yeah, I get that." Yet it's quite, "Where do I even start with that?" Where do you start? If people are listening and they're going, "Actually I'd love to commit to paying attention to my relationship," what guidance would you give me and then as well, but mainly me?

Lisa ([20:50](#)):

Yeah, I guess the first step is to do a bit of self reflection, like, "What is it? What do I tell myself when I choose not to bring something up in a relationship?" For example. If I know that a relationship has deteriorated a little bit, what excuse do I give myself for why I don't try to clean that up" That's not for you to then punish yourself about that because it's human and natural that we do those things. But as I said, for me, I know that I have to overcome my need to be liked,



to be reliable, to belong, and choose the relationship over that. That it's more important for me to have an open honest relationship than it is to be liked. There's first that self reflective-

MBS ([21:47](#)):

Let me interrupt because that's the crucial exchange. This relationship and the quality of it is more important than me being liked or morally superior or right, even in my own head, or the winner, or better than. There's a whole bunch of things you can substitute in there. What was the moment where that balance tipped towards relationship for you? Was there a moment where you went, "It's worth it?"

Lisa ([22:19](#)):

Yeah. It's funny you say that because my colleagues at Tough and I often say to people in trainings, "Do you want to be right or do you want to have a relationship?" Because to give up being right is painful, it's much more fun to be right. For me, the tipping point, I think with colleagues, it's been I think, through many different opportunities to practice. I'm think I'm thinking about my example before of learning to say no. Last year, I had an example where a friend of mine actually who's also a coach. We talk to each other every two weeks and listen to each other. She could hear that I was really struggling with another project that I'd taken on.

Lisa ([23:11](#)):

She said, "It sounds like you need to talk to that colleague and tell her that you need to pull out of that project." That was really scary for me because I thought, "Oh, but I don't want to let her down. I don't want her to feel like I'm rejecting her or that I think that projects not important because it is I just I'm doing too many things." So everything in my body was really emotional about it. I was like, "Wow, what is this?" Suddenly, there's all this energy and emotion. Through help from my friend and also in therapy, I've been exploring this a lot.



Lisa ([23:46](#)):

I worked up the courage to say that to my colleague. She was lovely and really supportive and loving in response. So I learned from that okay, the relationship is stronger than I was giving it credit for. That if I approach it with authenticity, integrity, generosity, chances are the other person will see that and appreciate that and say, "I get it. Of course, I'm disappointed. I wanted you to be on that project. But thank you for saying that. I can see it was really hard for you to say that. We'll be okay. We'll figure it out." So learning each time you do it, that the relationship can take it. That it's stronger than you think, that you can always clean something up most of the time, starts to give you more courage, I think each time you do it.

MBS ([24:38](#)):

I want to ask you a follow up question if I can because you said in that telling that story. When she said you need to have a conversation and you said, "I could really feel my response in my body." How important is it to have that embodied connection? I'm speaking as a guy who sits in my head most of the time, not that brilliantly connected to what's going on emotionally or physically for me. But is that just a nice to have or is there something more crucial there around embodied-ness?

Lisa ([25:11](#)):

I, like you, have also been someone very much in my head. I'm learning to pay more attention to what my body is telling me because I've become very good at suppressing it. So it's often in moments like that, that conversation with my friend. She had asked me at the start of the conversation, "Is there anything you want to talk about?" I was like, "No, I'm fine." But the more she probed, the more she realized, "Wow, it sounds like you're really stressed. You have a lot of things going on."



Lisa ([25:37](#)):

I was like, "Yeah, I do." Then when she challenged me like, "Sounds like you need to have a conversation with that person," then it was impossible to ignore. I think it is really helpful to pay attention to those embodied signals. So much of this stuff, it's like mindfulness or meditation, just paying attention to things, observing things without judging them. So that's the same thing with the self reflection.

Lisa ([26:05](#)):

So what what I'm telling myself is, I can't have that conversation because then they will think this and this, or I might hurt them or whatever it is. Just sitting with that and being like, "Okay." What's to be gained? If I do have the conversation? What could that mean? What's going on in my body? Well, I feel sick and my stomach and my palms are sweaty. Okay, can I take some deep belly breaths? Will that help? So I definitely think that makes a difference.

MBS ([26:36](#)):

If you take that insight around the importance of embodied-ness and just hearing what's going on, and you come back to the bigger game around the future of work and organizations transforming. I'm really clear that ideas are never enough to convince anybody to change anything. But I don't really know how to scale embodied learning in organizations. So the organization feels that in its bones. That works as a metaphor. But how do you make it work more literally? Do you have any insight around that? I mean, in your podcast, you've talked to so many interesting people on the edge of thinking about this. Is there a way for an organization to feel an embodied need to change and evolve?

Lisa ([27:23](#)):

Gosh. That's such a big question.



MBS ([27:29](#)):

It's definitely not a rhetorical question because I have no idea.

Lisa ([27:35](#)):

Yeah, and it's interesting because I had the privilege of speaking to Margaret Wheatley on my podcast. Her conversation really challenged me because I think she's come along in her thinking since this book, *Leadership and the New Science*, and in some ways has become a bit more you could say cynical.

MBS ([27:59](#)):

Yeah. I found her work quite pessimistic. When you read her stuff now, it's not rainbows and unicorns at the end of this work for her.

Lisa ([28:07](#)):

Yeah, I think she has decided for herself it's not worth trying to change systems, for example, or maybe that's not paraphrasing correctly. But I think she is realizing that the individual needs to change, needs to want to change. So she's working with individuals now that are up for that, what she calls humans of a warrior spirit, or humans for the warrior spirit. I think in some ways, I haven't cracked this, I'm sorry to say.

Lisa ([28:41](#)):

But I think if you can find ways to create spaces for conversations in organizations, and that in itself is it sounds really simple. But it's already tricky, because you have to create a space for a different kind of conversation to happen. Because we're so used to having conversations in a certain kind of way. I think about in my work with Tough, we're often talking about paradigms. That there is this parent child paradigm of leadership at the moment. So to try and have a conversation about new ways of working without addressing first that we're in that paradigm isn't really going to be effective because you're talking into that paradigm.



Lisa ([29:34](#)):

So if you're training people in or if you're saying in an organization, "Let's start to do Agile or coaching or whatever," if you're not first addressing this place from which we operate, then you're just parents doing Agile, parents doing coaching. So I think it needs to be some kind of conversation or even like a training space, a development space, that shifts people. That is completely different to how they normally have conversations. Michael Wiley has some good research about this, that he noticed that to create positive relational dynamics, safe spaces and interaction scripts helped.

Lisa ([30:20](#)):

So because you're asking people to take risks in terms of new ways of interacting with each other, it helps to create a space that's totally different right to the spaces they normally interact in. Even if that's a virtual space, but say, marking out, "This is going to be different." Then interaction scripts, something that people can step into. Complete this sentence, the thing I'm most afraid of in my leadership is or something, I don't know.

MBS ([30:46](#)):

That's interesting.

Lisa ([30:47](#)):

Yeah. That's where I'm at at the moment. But it's a question I'm also wrestling with because I see that so many people are averse to change or even when they say they want to change, they quickly realize when the change starts to happen, "Oh, this isn't what I signed up for."

MBS ([31:06](#)):

Right. Yeah, it's like change is good. You go first.



Lisa ([31:09](#)):

Yeah, exactly. I didn't know I had to change.

MBS ([31:12](#)):

Yeah, definitely there are some people I know should change. Me, I'm probably okay. Hey, to come back to one of the things that you read out from Meg Wheatley's piece. One of the short sentences you read was, "Power is energy." I'm wondering what you make of that?

Lisa ([31:33](#)):

Yeah, I think power is a topic that I'm still learning about. I've had quite a few conversations about on my podcast, for example. One of the things I'm interested in at the moment is reclaiming negative aspects of ourselves and things. So like I said, before, I was someone who at first thought, "Oh, all hierarchy is bad. We need to destroy hierarchy. If we do that, everything will be great." Now I realize hierarchy is neither good nor bad. It's a technology, it's a tool. It can be used for good.

Lisa ([32:17](#)):

I think power is sort of similar. That, again, a lot of organizations that I'm working with that are interested in being self managing or working in a more decentralized way shun power or power is bad. Anything that resembles leadership or influence is bad. We must shut that down. We must stamp that out.

Lisa ([32:37](#)):

But power is energy. When you do that, if you try to shut it down, you choke that energy, I think and that life force gets ... You put a lid on it. I think what's needed is for us to reclaim those things, to acknowledge that I have the capacity within me to share power, and I also have the capacity to dominate. I also have the capacity to abdicate. To try and explore and have conversations about how



do we want power to be used? Where is power currently to really confront that in terms of privilege, and gender and race, for example, in organizations like, "Where is power? Where is it not?"

Lisa ([33:26](#)):

Mickey Cashtan talks about this beautifully in a conversation I had with her that we need, in addition to the shifts or the shift in our organizations of the key processes and structures, two other shifts need to happen. One is a shift within the people who have power, and one is a shift in the people who don't have power. So for example, if I'm a manager, I need to learn how to let go or step back sometimes, invite in other voices. If I'm someone who hasn't had power, I need to learn how to take more initiative, responsibility, challenge things because I've become very used to deferring or being a bit passive or getting my manager to sort out my conflicts, whatever. So both of these transformations are really tough and challenging. Perhaps it's even more challenging for those without power because there's more at stake, perhaps more at risk. But I think that's what I'm really interested in is shifting our relationship to power, seeing it as a force and an energy force that can be used for good.

MBS ([34:34](#)):

Do you have any insight on how to make just power more tangible? Because even as you set up that, people who have power, people who don't have power, part of where I go, Lisa is I go, "The people who have power don't always see the power that they have." They don't always know it because it's invisible, because it's integrated or it's in privilege or whatever it might be. People who don't have power have more power than they realize. To make it just a black and white, you either got it or you ain't got. It reduces the nuance and the complexity of what's really going on. But it's so damn fleeting and tricky to understand what your power looks like, and what it is, and where boundaries for it might lie. Do you have any insight on how to articulate power?



Lisa ([35:30](#)):

Yeah, I think this is something that I'm still quite new to. But what I'm starting to explore is having conversations and trying to figure that out together. It might be things like asking who tends to talk a lot in meetings or talk the most. Who tends to talk the least? When do I experience that I feel comfortable to say something and that I'm going to be heard? When do I fear that if I say something, I might not be heard or someone might talk over me or to look at the micro habit manifestations of power, sometimes I think can be interesting and helpful or what are the ways in which I feel that I don't have power. What are the ways in which I feel I do have power?

Lisa ([36:30](#)):

Just talking about that, because you're right, I think we all have blind spots about how I exhibit power or not, I might like to think I'm really evolving, caring, but for sure, there will be ways that people gave me feedback I'm sure that I interrupt people or talk over people or shut people down or dismiss certain ideas or just the fact that in situations where I feel like, "I can say this," and I don't even need to think about am I going to get rejected for saying this. Is it safe for me to say this? Then there are definitely times where I do ask that question.

MBS ([37:03](#)):

I want to write a book called The Seven Manifestations or Levels of Power, and just find ways of bringing spheres of power into the world. So people can go, "Oh actually, in this sphere, This is the power I have. This is the power I don't have." Well, I want to write lots of books, and most of them start off with a half assed idea like this, which has a title and nothing behind it. So maybe I won't write that book. Maybe somebody's listening to this. Maybe Lisa, you will right this book.



Lisa ([37:35](#)):

It needs to be written, I know. There's a great guy called Simon Mont, who does a lot of thinking about power and how it sort of shows up in systems and that changing structures and processes isn't enough, because the power is baked into so many things. We need to make it visible.

MBS ([37:52](#)):

Yeah. That's interesting. One of the things that you mentioned before you read the passage was the loneliness of wanting to change. Can you tell me more about that?

Lisa ([38:08](#)):

Yeah, so what's really helped me in my journey with all of this is finding my tribe, finding other people who also share the same frustrations as me or the same longings as me. For those people that I meet in events, in trainings, in Zoom calls, webinars, whatever, who I can see when they talk, I can hear that they're feeling that loneliness, that I'm the only one in my organization that's talking about this stuff or read this book. I've tried this, and I've tried that, but sometimes I feel like I'm working against so many things.

Lisa ([38:52](#)):

I think to find your fellow rebels is so valuable. To find other people so that you don't need to do this journey alone helps. So that even if I'm alone in my organization, for example, I know that I have like a network of buddies out there where I can say, "I tried this and it didn't work so well. Any tips?" Or I really want to do this now in my next meeting.

MBS ([39:17](#)):

I mean, you've done a lovely job at your building your tribe. I mean, I know part of it's through the podcast, because you look at the list of the guests you have and I'm like, "There's so many cool people there. One of my favorite people in



the world of the moment is [Bayo Camolafe 00:39:31]. He's the most articulate man I've ever met in my life.

Lisa ([39:38](#)):

Yes.

MBS ([39:41](#)):

I actually haven't listened to the episode of your podcast, but I'm wondering how much of it is a monologue from him because when he gets going, he talks. Do you have any guidance for people listening around how you start building a tribe? Because there are some people who are like, "Yeah, I could do with people on my corner." How do I even go about doing that?

Lisa ([40:04](#)):

I guess my first thought is to see if there's already a tribe out there that you could join. In the context of what we're talking about now, there are some really good ones out there now, like Reinventing Work is like a global tribe with communities and meetup groups all over the world. Even though it started in the UK or the Reinventing Organizations book by Frederick Laloux has a whole tribe of people and various different communities and spaces where people hang out or Liberating Structures, the same, they often have slack communities or meetup calls.

Lisa ([40:44](#)):

So it's worth seeing if there's a tribe out there. If you're not sure how to look for that, I started to find and grow and build my tribe, I guess, by reaching out to individuals. If I read an article by someone, if I heard someone on a podcast, I reached out to them and said, "Hey, I love your work. I love what you're saying. Are you up for a chat?" Now people do that with me also, which is really fun. I love connecting people to other people. People in this field are so generous. So many people are up for a chat and up for connecting you with more people.



MBS ([41:21](#)):

Love that you're bringing it back to conversations. That's a really nice way to bring our conversation full circle. I wonder, as maybe as a final question, Lisa, what needs to be said in this conversation between you and me that hasn't yet been said?

Lisa ([41:38](#)):

I really want to acknowledge and thank you for the work that you're doing.

MBS ([41:44](#)):

Thank you.

Lisa ([41:44](#)):

Because it's really really valuable for me. I'm often pointing people to your books and your work around coaching, which I think is so accessible and practical and useful.

MBS ([41:59](#)):

Thank you.

Lisa ([42:00](#)):

Also your work with this podcast and also showcasing and championing diverse voices and people from all backgrounds and experiences, which I think is so important. I've learned so much from listening to the guests you've already had on this podcast. So it's a real contribution you make to the world. So thank you.

MBS ([42:28](#)):

I'm very struck by Meg Wheatley's words these are the final words leads to read, "Love is the most potent source of power." Now, Wheatley, again, as I said in the interview, Wheatley's become a little more bleak on her outlook these days. I do wonder if she stands by that statement. But what it's got me thinking about is



how power is generated through relationship. I often think of powers residing in different amounts in individuals or with individuals. She has it, and he doesn't have it, and I have it, but only in this amount, and only in this different context. But this conversation, for me was a great reminder that we're always defined by our context. Part of that context is always relationships, the ones you have, the ones you're excluded from, the ones you aspire to. So if you look at now, at the relationships that you have, and that you don't have, what do they tell you about the power you wield and don't wield? What does that provoke in you? Perhaps today, who might you reach out to?

MBS ([43:34](#)):

You're going to find Lisa's podcast at [Leadermorphosis.co](#). Her personal website is [Reimaginaire.com](#). I'll spell that for you, R-E-I-M-A-G-I-N-A-I-R-E.com. Of course, all of these links, as they always are, in the show notes. At our website, you'll find more information about her book, *Moose Heads on the Table*. If you're a Twitter fan, her handle is Disrupt and Learn or [@DisruptAndLearn](#).

MBS ([44:01](#)):

Thank you again for listening to the show. If there's somebody who you're like, "Oh yeah, these people also love conversations about the future of work," please do send the interview to them. I'm always on the hunt for great listeners, people who are going to be inspired and moved by the conversations. Thank you if you had the chance to rate the show and the podcast on your favorite podcast app. Thank you if you've joined our free membership site that you come free. It's where you can get unreleased interviews, transcripts of all the interviews and some other great downloads as well. You're awesome. You're doing great.