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

So before I introduce Nathalie, I mean, I am an entrepreneur. I'm an accidental entrepreneur. I'm not a particularly great entrepreneur, but I've somehow found myself being an entrepreneur, mostly because I'm largely unemployable. I mean, bosses hate me and it's forced me as a matter of necessity to be an entrepreneur. And as exhilarating as it's been, it's been really hard at times as well.

([00:23](#)):

I mean, one of our previous guests, Bobby, was saying his first five years as an entrepreneur are five years of fun he hopes never to have ever again. And, it's been hard for me as a white man. It's hard for Bobby as a Latino man. There's just a ton of statistics that say, "Look how difficult it is to be an entrepreneur, to lead a company, to start a company, to get funding for a company, if you're a woman."



(00:50):

And I am delighted to speak to Nathalie Molina Niño, who is author of LEAPFROG, and I'm going to read this out, 'the New Revolution for Women Entrepreneurs', really digging into what it takes to lead, to fund, to grow a company. Nathalie is the CEO of Oh Three. She's an investor, she's an entrepreneur, and of course she is an author. So Nathalie, thank you.

Nathalie (01:14):

Thank you for inviting me, especially in such great company. I see some amazing names, including friends. And by the way, it's Oh Cubed.

MBS (01:24):

Oh.

Nathalie (01:24):

That's all right.

MBS (01:25):

I'm sorry. I'm, I'm a factor of X, short of what you're about. So Oh Cubed. So thank you for ...

Nathalie (01:25):

Exponential.

MBS (01:33):

I know. I was thinking of the, it's a British company I think is Oh Squared. I'm sorry about that. Hey, Nathalie, when did you find your entrepreneurial spark? When did you know that you were an entrepreneur?



Nathalie ([01:46](#)):

I think a lot of us, it was accidental for me, too. In my case, I think I actively resisted it because I grew up with immigrant parents who maybe, similar to your experience, for other reasons, right? Found themselves really having to become entrepreneurs. And I thought it was hard. I thought, I mean that's the truth. It's hard. And growing up I had these romantic ideas that if you could, in my case, be a scientist and save the planet, you would be free. And you could live in the Amazon and study volcanoes. And there just felt both freedom and also maybe security in a job, right?

([02:32](#)):

And when I actually got a little bit older and went to college and saw that life and watched as some actually amazing scientists who were doing work in the Amazon got their funding pulled right out from underneath them. And I realized there's some suit in a building in another country somewhere that just totally pulled the rug out from underneath these people who are not just doing this as their job, but they're doing this for humanity. This is really important work. And they had no agency over whether the program existed or was killed. And that's when I kind of realized maybe my parents were onto something. Maybe there's something about this controlling your own destiny thing that's not so bad. It's hard. But I never shied away from hard work before.

MBS ([03:19](#)):

I mean, I'm right with you around the illusion of the safety of having a job. And I think this pandemic that we're all living through has shattered that illusion for a number of people who went, I thought I was safe. Wow. Maybe not so much. I mean it's difficult for everybody, but it certainly is breaking down the entrepreneur risky job safety. Because I don't really know you very well, I mean, we got connected, I'm curious to know, what do you see in yourself that makes you a successful entrepreneur? What are the qualities you have that help you succeed?



Nathalie ([04:00](#)):

As you were talking to, just in terms of the choice or even the skills? One thing that comes to mind that I always say is, nobody goes to college to study balancing your checkbook, right? That's a life skill. And we all agree that that's a life skill and everyone should have it, right? And my thought with entrepreneurship is that if you are exceptional or sometimes lucky or maybe sometimes unlucky, right? Circumstances, but especially if you're exceptional at anything, you're probably going to have to be an entrepreneur at it. So if you're a really good lawyer, you might end up starting your own law firm, right? If you're a really good doctor and a leader in your field, you might end up starting your own practice. And so I actually think that being an entrepreneur is more of a life skill than it is a career path.

([04:51](#)):

What are artists? What are professional athletes? At the end of the day, they're entrepreneurs and they're managing a business, right? Some well and some not so well. And when you see people getting taken advantage of, partly it's because they have deferred that life skill to someone else, right? And so I would say that for me, because I see entrepreneurship as a life skill, maybe that's it, right? I never saw it as optional. I saw it as what we need to survive. And especially having been an immigrant and a child of immigrants in the US, it becomes very clear that it's a survival skill, right? And I think that's what it is. It's this sense of, it's not optional.

MBS ([05:34](#)):

I remember hearing a speaker talking about something similar and he actually said it's not just a life skill, it's also a way of holding an identity. He said there's a real difference between somebody who says, for instance, "I'm a dentist." To somebody who says, "I'm an entrepreneur who practices dentistry." It really changes how you see yourself, how you identify yourself, what becomes possible for you. And before I heard you ...



Nathalie ([06:03](#)):

[inaudible 00:06:03] band.

MBS ([06:04](#)):

Well, I think it is, exactly, both hand. Before I heard him, I would've said, I'm probably going to end up as a dentist, not an actual dentist, but something with that type of label. And him opening up that piece, going actually an entrepreneur is a way of showing up in the world. You still get to be an expert, but you get to think a little broadly about it as well, was a very liberating moment for me of, a giving of permission that I hadn't really heard before.

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

And for people who are in corporate jobs, I think it's also liberating because they're using that life skill, whether they're within or without a corporate environment, you can't turn it off, right?

MBS ([06:40](#)):

Exactly. Hey Nathalie, I'm wondering if you would read us a couple of pages from your book, LEAPFROG.

Nathalie ([06:45](#)):

I would love to, and I'm going to make a game time call. I was deciding between first couple of pages or last couple of pages and I think I'm going to go with last couple of pages.

MBS ([06:53](#)):

Nice. Fantastic.

Nathalie ([06:58](#)):

I'm going to just explain that ...



MBS ([06:58](#)):

Please.

Nathalie ([07:00](#)):

... this last two pages of the book comes after having provided some examples of hacks, which is what the book is primarily made of. It's 50 hacks for women entrepreneurs. But in the very last section, I give some hacks that are divisive, in that people might disagree, people might think that those hacks are a little too far, maybe beyond their ethical lines. It's up to you to decide, right? But I put them out there as just examples and so this is where we begin.

MBS ([07:34](#)):

I love that. I'm all for a bit of provocation, so that's perfect.

Nathalie ([07:40](#)):

You can't help but root for these audacious women, yet it would be irresponsible for me to 100% endorse their tactics for a couple of reasons. Only you can decide which lines you're comfortable crossing. Also, these tactics are clearly provocative. They could backfire. Do you have the appetite for the potential negative attention? Again, that's for you to decide. Just make sure you're willing and able to someday defend your choices on the front page of the New York Times. This is a messy, messy world full of idiots looking to put powerful women back in their place and there are no secrets. The truth is you may not need white hat hacks. I look at the same messy world and I also see abundance and generosity. The more you look, the more you'll find leapfrogs that don't require crossing ethical lines. The more these leapfrogs will actually find you.

([08:37](#)):

A State Department official recently reminded me where my own line falls. This man, we'll call him Jerry, sent me an email asking me to help recruit women to



attend a summit in India where they could meet potential investors and partners. It was an initiative started in the Obama White House. But that was then, and this is now. And the host at this summit would be one Ivanka Trump. To participate would be to shake hands, however briefly with the Trump administration.

[\(09:14\):](#)

When I balked, Jerry pushed back. The summit was a good enough leapfrog, he tried to convince me, that women entrepreneurs looking to scale globally should briefly make nice with the administration in order to attend. It was a fair point, but after thinking about it, I turned him down again. This was an aisle I would not cross, not even for a minute. I want better for my fellow women than to have to align themselves ever with the basis elements of society in order to move forward.

[\(09:50\):](#)

Further, this summit was far from the only opportunity in town. There were at least five other equally awesome upcoming events that I could direct women to. This particular event carried far too high a price for the group in our society that is by every measure, the most entrepreneurial, the most promising, the most investment worthy, and yet also among the most under attack by the Trump administration.

[\(10:19\):](#)

No, Jerry. Still, I was appreciative to him for showing me my line and for provoking me to start a new campaign of donations to planned parenthood in Ivanka's name. The question of legacy and how we will be remembered weighs heavily on me. How does one do business in a time of desk goods? As the inspiring Melissa Silverstein, founder of Women in Hollywood often asks, "What cave paintings will survive us and tell the world what we cared for and fought for?"



[\(10:51\)](#):

More urgent? What are we leaving for the next generation to inherit? As you move forward in your career I hope this is a question you turn over as well, not once, but often. As you know by now, it has led me to set very clear guidelines around what and to whom I'll commit myself. Our time is short, but the potential to contribute is great. In the years since I committed to setting my own terms, what I achieved while feeling evermore whole and authentic in the effort has leapfrogged wildly.

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

I write this just days after giving my first ever keynote in Spanish, a language that until now I use exclusively to navigate love and family. Suddenly the door into a whole new sphere of influence is opened. And not only was the talk in Spanish, I gave it in Ecuador, my ancestral home. Planned Parenthood International had a summit in Quito and invited me to speak about investing in women's health. My dad watched proudly from the audience. Later we traveled together to Cuenca and after a little shake of a small earthquake, I settled in to find my own equator once again. Happiness for me is all of this.

[\(12:05\)](#):

The author Yrsa Daley-Ward once tweeted, "My destiny is louder than my comfort. We are living and loving in uncomfortable times and there is no better time than now to join the fight. My wish for you, fellow revolutionary, is that you may stretch beyond your comfort, find your own equator and leapfrog into greatness."

MBS [\(12:33\)](#):

Nathalie, that was awesome. Thank you for that.

Nathalie [\(12:36\)](#):

Perfect.



MBS ([12:37](#)):

I love so much of that. I love hearing a story of your return to Ecuador and giving the talk for Planned Parenthood, and I love that moment of being confronted with your line and deciding is there a line in the sand here or not for you? For all of us, but particularly as you say, for women entrepreneurs who are so ripe with potential and under attack and underfunded in this world, there's a way of needing to find courage to be bold, but also support to understand how far is far enough and what rules shouldn't be broken. What guidance do you give through your book, but also just as an experienced entrepreneur yourself around, how do you figure out, how do you find the courage and how do you help figure out the boundaries?

Nathalie ([13:32](#)):

I love the word courage. I think sometimes it gets mixed up with the word ambition or maybe the courage to be ambitious. One of the things that I talk about in the book and that I just generally work that I do in the world is to remind people that ambition doesn't have to be egocentric. It can be ambition for your community. It can be ambition for the people that will come after you, your kids, your kids' kids, seven generations down, right? What are your ambitions for them? And I think that when we reframe that, suddenly people find their courage, right? Where they might not have found it in them to stick up for themselves, whether it be in a negotiation or on the street, as women of color are having to find courage just to defend themselves existing in the world. But when you suddenly frame, I can pick my battles, I can be quiet, I can just take this and move on.

([14:37](#)):

But what does that look like in the eyes of my daughter? What does that look like in the eyes of my community that are relying on me? Because one battle translates into so much more. I think even the most, I don't know, even those of



us who think we are the least courageous when we frame things that way, we find it right? Because it's about the people around us.

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

Nathalie, I love that. It's reminding me of some research I read about women negotiating salaries and how men are shameless, basically, about going, this is how much I think I'm worth. And women will constantly undervalue themselves, and here's what the research said, which is as soon as you reframe it to go, I'm not negotiating for myself, I'm negotiating for my family, then the negotiating field is absolutely leveled and it's such an interesting fit to go, when you find who you serve, it fills you with a courage and an audacity that you might not otherwise have, if you go, this is just for me. So I love that you're pointing to that.

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

It's also the context. I would say that a lot of the times it's one of those chicken or the egg things. Like the behavior that women exhibit in a negotiation context is oftentimes responding to cues that they have been getting consistently about what gets rewarded. There was another study in Stanford that said there was a negotiation competition and when the rules were set up that being aggressive and take no prisoners, that's what's going to win. Well, women didn't perform well in that context, but when the rules were set up and explicitly said that here, what wins is collaboration. Here, what wins is win, win. Suddenly, same rules, same game. The women outperformed the men, right? Nothing changed. It was just they were set up in a context where they identified with the qualities that are winning qualities and they won.

MBS ([16:34](#)):

Yeah, beautiful. There was a tweet I saw the other day from a dad going, Look, I was playing D and D, Dungeons and Dragons with my daughters, and I set up a wolf army and they had to fight the wolf army to get to the village, but he went,



"But my daughters, what they did is they made friends with the wolf army and then they went and they won the game." And he's like, "Girls, women, they will run the world." And I love that, which is let me redefine the rules and let me win in a way that is actually a victory for more than just me. So that's perfect.

Nathalie ([17:11](#)):

I love it.

MBS ([17:12](#)):

Nathalie, it's been so nice to talk to you, to meet, for you to hear and share some of your wisdom. For people who want to know more about you and your work, can you point us to somewhere?

Nathalie ([17:22](#)):

Absolutely. I'm available on all the social channels, but my website is nathaliemolina.com and that's pretty consistent. So that's my Twitter handle as well. NathalieMolina. My full name, of course, is Nathalie Molina Niño, but our bros who code our software limit characters on names, not too friendly for Latin Americans who have long names. But in Instagram, for example, on LinkedIn and on Facebook, it's my full name, Nathalie Molina Niño. And yeah, constantly working on advocating, especially for this group of people, especially women of color, who happen to be this single most entrepreneurial group in the world, especially in places like the US that is my sphere of influence and what I'm really passionate about. So if that is something people care about, tune in.

MBS ([18:15](#)):

Thank you for listening. Thank you for being a fan of the podcast. Thank you for giving it love. As a review or stars or words on a site somewhere, thank you for sharing the interviews that strike you in particular. I love slowly but surely growing the listener base of this podcast and I appreciate all you've done to help with that. You're awesome. You're doing great.