DAY 24

Directness in a Politicized Office

Balancing Directness and Workplace Discernment

Today's Diary at a Glance

In Day 24, Kimberly reflects on entering professional spaces expecting competence, integrity, and honest communication to drive advancement, only to encounter unspoken hierarchies, perceptions, and politics. As an African American woman with a neurodivergent preference for directness and consistency, she recounts speaking up against perceived unfairness, an act that felt like it carried professional and financial consequences. She also navigates the tension between collaborative teamwork and documenting her individual impact during evaluations. While acknowledging the painful reality that silence sometimes protects one's livelihood, Kimberly clarifies that maturity does not mean accepting injustice. Instead, it involves pairing courage with discernment—choosing the right timing and setting without surrendering core values. Recalling supportive leaders as well, she advocates for ethical leadership, transparency, and neuroinclusive workplace cultures.

Key Life Lesson

Workplace politics can be especially challenging when expectations are unspoken and communication is shaped by hierarchy, relationships, or perception. Developing professional maturity does not mean silently tolerating unfairness, but rather learning to advocate effectively by understanding context, documenting contributions, and choosing the right setting. Organizations and leaders must also recognize how race, gender, and neurodivergence influence these experiences, fostering transparent practices where professionalism never requires abandoning one's voice.

Spiritual Reflection

Ecclesiastes 3:7 (KJV)

Reflecting on Ecclesiastes 3:7, Kimberly recognizes that discernment and timing determine when speaking up or remaining patient is the wisest response. Rather than allowing fear to dictate silence or frustration to drive speech, she seeks the grace to advocate with intentional purpose and preparation.

Moment of Grace

Extend gentle grace to yourself for the times you spoke up at great personal cost or chose silence simply to protect your peace. You are allowed to release the pressure of navigating every complex workplace dynamic perfectly as you continue learning to balance courage with discernment.

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Today's Self-Reflection

1. Have you ever faced a situation where speaking up felt professionally risky? Perhaps you questioned a decision, advocated for fair treatment, or struggled to ensure your contributions were recognized. Perhaps you remained silent because you feared how your concerns might be received. Or perhaps you have learned that navigating workplace dynamics requires skills that were never formally taught.
2. Consider how you balance honesty, advocacy, and discernment. Are there moments when you need to speak more confidently?
3. Are there situations where a different approach might help your message be heard?
4. And how can you contribute to environments where people are treated fairly and encouraged to communicate respectfully?

My Journal

1. If you wish, write about a time you experienced a conflict between wanting to speak directly and feeling pressured to remain silent in a professional setting.
2. If you wish, list the practical strategies you can use—such as documenting contributions or choosing private settings—to advocate for yourself while protecting your peace.

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Prayer & Application

Prayer prompt: If prayer is part of your practice, ask for divine discernment to recognize the right time to speak and the right time to keep silence. Pray for the courage to stand by your integrity without letting fear govern your quietness or frustration drive your words.

Practical takeaway: Before addressing a sensitive concern at work, pause to reflect on timing, context, and format, choosing strategy alongside honesty to ensure your voice is both respected and heard.

Reading Circle Discussion

1. How do unwritten corporate rules and unspoken expectations complicate communication for people who value directness and consistency?
2. What does it look like to celebrate team collaboration while still ensuring that your individual efforts and impact are accurately recognized?
3. In light of Ecclesiastes 3:7's wisdom about a time to keep silence and a time to speak, how do you discern whether a moment calls for patient restraint or courageous advocacy?

Your written responses belong to you. You may leave any prompt unanswered and decide whether to share anything in a group.

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Read the complete chapter in your published book.

The Diary of a Neurodivergent Black Woman

30 Days of Faith, Identity, Healing, and Becoming · Kimberly J. Lewis, M.Div.

This companion includes manuscript-based summaries, the original questions in Today's Self-Reflection, and newly developed companion exercises. Scripture reference: Ecclesiastes 3:7 (KJV). Source: Approved manuscript · Day 24 · pages 178–186.

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