

Episode 238: Making entrepreneurship an INCLUSIVE space with...

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SPEAKERS

Hannah Summerhill, Kathrin Zenkina, Yseult Polfliet



Kathrin Zenkina 00:14

Welcome to The Manifestation Babe podcast. My name is Kathrin Zenkina, and I'm a manifestation expert, master mindset coach, and multiple seven-figure entrepreneur. I'm obsessed with helping you achieve everything that you once thought was impossible. If you're looking to massively uplevel your life, your finances, your relationships, your productivity, and success, then you have come to the right place. My goal in this podcast is to help you see the infinite potential within yourself to be, do and have anything that your heart desires. Think of this podcast as your weekly dose of mindset development to help you maximize who you are and where you're going. Leave it to me to provide you with the tools, the resources, the strategies and teachings that you need to manifest the reality wilder than your wildest dreams. I know we're about to have so much fun together, so thank you so much for pushing play today and now let's begin. Hello, my beautiful souls and welcome back to another episode of The Manifestation Babe podcast. I missed you so much and I'm so happy that you are here. On today's episode, I'm bringing you an amazing interview that I had with Hannah and Yseult from The Kinswomen. You may remember Hannah from a past episode, which I will actually link in the show notes for you, where she shares her MBA transformation and all of the amazing and insane things that she's been able to manifest in her business with her business partner Yseult. Having taken their program on inclusive entrepreneurship, I actually asked Hannah at the end of that episode if she was willing to come on the podcast with Yseult to share the principles that they teach in their program and share it with you on the podcast. So for a little bit of a backstory super quick, Hannah and Yseult started their business, The Kinswomen, with the intention to create a foundation for building trust and bridging the gap between women of color and white women. Their passion for bringing humanity back into conversations about race and diversity in a digestible and engaging way has led them to create an absolutely incredible course, an incredible podcast, and they even have a book on the way which is so amazing. Hannah and Yseult are on a mission to bring more inclusivity into the entrepreneurial space by embracing discomfort, teaching their four tenets of trust, and breaking down the unconscious biases around race to create a foundation for allyship between women of color and white women. The level of awareness that these two beautiful individuals are bringing to this topic is

so impactful and I cannot wait to share their powerful messages with you. So without further ado, let's dive into today's episode. All right, Yseult and Hannah, welcome to The Manifestation Babe podcast. How are you guys doing today?

Y Yseult Polfliet 03:12
I'm doing great,

K Kathrin Zenkina 03:14
Amazing. Hannah?

H Hannah Summerhill 03:16
Me too, I'm doing great. So happy to be back so good to see you.

K Kathrin Zenkina 03:19
I know this is actually Hannah's second time on the podcast. The first time, she came on and shared some incredible feedback about the Manifestationbabe Academy and it was such a lovely conversation and I really wanted Hannah to come back to the podcast, but also bring her business partner Yseult to talk about their work that they do in their business and their company called The Kinswoman. So you guys are really changing the game in inclusive entrepreneurship. You have a course, you have a podcast, you have a book on the way, which I know is such a big deal, and also such a labor of love just like thinking about all that goes into writing a book and even creating a course and honestly anything. And you know, you guys are talking about bridging the gap between white women and women of color. Can you guys go deeper into that, like kind of give the origin story or share a little bit more about who you are? What you guys do? how you help people? or anything that I missed kind of in that like introduction to who you guys are.

Y Yseult Polfliet 04:23
You want to go ahead, Hannah?

H Hannah Summerhill 04:25
Sure. Yeah, I'll tell my version of how we met and then you can tell your version. So yeah, we, our work is all about bridging the gaps between women of color and white women and building trust between us two and understanding why we don't have trust and our work really focuses on the interpersonal. So societal historical is really important, but a lot of the times it just comes down to those like everyday interactions that end up causing the most harm. So I'm Hannah and I'm identified as a white woman. Yseult and I met at an event about race about three years ago and it was a really great conversation. I was quiet the whole time, I was sitting

in the back and Yseult got up and she called out the white women, or called in the white women to really participate. And I realized I had been sitting more as a voyeur and not really wanting to take up space, but I realized the whole point was to be a part of the conversation was to be accountable. So I ran into Yseult a couple of weeks later and I said, thank you so much for what you said, I would love to continue these dialogues, do you want to come over? We'll bring a couple of friends, we started having these monthly dialogues about bridging the gaps between women of color and white women. And then from there, we started a podcast, and then after we started course, and now we are writing a book. So that's the very short version.



Yseult Polfliet 05:51

Yeah, on my end, it's I think that like, obviously I identify as a black person. I grew up in Europe, Belgium, and then I ended up being an American around like 2008. I always realized that, and I studied interpersonal communication by the way in university, so I'm so happy that my parents paid my education for something like this, you know, like, people asked me why what are you going to do with communication? it's just like, I'm actually using my degree to the fullest and I'm really happy, but I studied interpersonal communication in college. Then like, I just noticed that living in Europe, being African then moving to America, when I was like, 20 until now, I realized that like it was kind of like the beast is the same it just declares itself differently and the issues are always the same. Like it being white people in Europe or white people in America, it's almost like a systematic, like setup that just like brings people to be a certain way or feel a certain way. And like these automatic reactions, and like, you know, the things that we talk about the fragility and like the frictions, and like the gap is caused by the same kind of like fundamental things. Depending on obviously America is set up in a different way and then Europe is set up in a different way, these things portray themselves differently, but it comes from the same problem. So it's like when I arrived to America, I always felt like I was so empowered to speak more on the things that I saw, because like there's such an amazing civil rights movement, and like advocacy around like, injustices that exists in America more so than in Europe, from what I had experienced. And I've always wanted to have a conversation that not just like, what brought people together, but also like highlighted aspects of this conversation that I felt was never presented to the table and just humanize the whole interaction. So instead of people seeing me as this statistic and like a number and like this like non person thing, like bringing back humanity within this conversation, because as much as we talk about, you know, over there, there's hunger and there's violence and there's antisemitism and there's like racism and xenophobia and all. It doesn't feel like we portray these things as real people experiencing it. So when I went to this event and I saw all these white women just like looking at these like people of color, you know, open their heart and talk on what they're seeing and experiencing, I felt so disappointed. I was just like, this is so lame because we're supposed to come to bridge a gap, but you guys are just sitting there. And then I understand that there's a lot of education, education is such a powerful tool to make people want to change, and so presenting things where it's like digestible and visually accessible to people is the only way people will actually feel like they want to be involved. And I feel like people weren't presented to that we present facts, they're just so horrible, we can all agree that it's horrible, but then we don't present like why these trickle into these like very interpersonal interactions are very cringe. And it's not like the raging racist, but it's your homie that you're friends with and that happens to be white, you know. So that's why I wanted to be in the space of having this conversation.

K

Kathrin Zenkina 09:29

I love that. Something I so appreciate about The Kinswoman is just how relatable and like you said, how fun and how accessible it is and makes you like want to be a part of the movement makes you really want to be a part of like learning from you guys. I watched so many of your guys' interviews and read so many of your posts and it's just like, I so want to keep reading them and so want to keep engaging with them. So you guys are doing an amazing job with that. Speaking of mistrust, like how can you kind of share like, you know, between you guys, the two of you how did you bridge the gap? Like, how did you use what you guys are teaching in The Kinswoman? And how did you bridge the gap between the two of you in your relationship, in your friendship, and also business partnership? Like how did that how does that manifest? And what does that look like, in terms of bridging the gap?

H

Hannah Summerhill 10:16

That is a good question, Kathrin. I will say, it's an ongoing journey for me as a white woman because no matter what I will always be looking through my own white lens, I'm conditioned in white supremacy and so my interactions with Yseult, despite my best intentions, sometimes unfortunately are painful for her and I have to sit with that. Luckily, we have a relationship where we can talk to each other about it and we trust each other, but trust is definitely not something that is just assumed, especially in cross-racial relationships. So I think often as white women, we think, oh if we're kind and we treat everybody the same, that we are given the benefit of the doubt. But we have so much work to do because we're never starting on square one. And with Yseult, sometimes I feel like I really really messed up and it happens, it happens a lot, but we talk about it and we have these four tenants of trust building that we teach. And then I of course try to implement between us and that's communication, consistency, time, and transparency. So just time is patience, you know, just knowing that, like, it's not going to be perfect from the jump. Transparency, just being radically honest. Communication, making sure that we talk all the time. And then consistency, making sure that it's not one and done. I think you see so much of that now we're you know, two years, almost after the summer of 2020 and there's been a lack of consistency. So those are the four tenants, but as it shows up interpersonally every day, I fail sometimes. Like I fail a lot and I'm so grateful to Yseult because you know, we have the love there and she gives me so much grace and space to grow and that's beautiful to me and we're growing together. But the trust is definitely something that's ever evolving and it's not something that's static or is that the right word? Yeah, it's always evolving. It's not just there and staying there.

K

Kathrin Zenkina 10:20

Amazing. Yseult?

Y

Yseult Polfliet 11:42

Yeah, I think that it's, for sure. It's like forever, something that like grows. I would like to say this, and I know it shocks people because it feels so pessimistic, but it's kind of like the best way that I can explain this. It's like accepting as a black person with the heightened awareness and, like, applied advocacy that I have, I have set myself up to understand that like, in order to

be close to white people, either dating or, you know, being friends, whatever it's like I assign in this like, non-formal contract that like I will be set up in a situation, not just like so messed up, right. And so like, I think that this is not an aspect that spoke on often where like, either you're a good person or you're a bad person, either you're racist or you're not a racist. But the problem is, like, when you grew up in a system that sets you up to see the world a certain way, you're going to have these automatic reactions or thought process that sometimes are so subconscious and so deep in you that like they catch you in moments where then your friend, that's a friend of color, find themselves in situations where there's like, wow, I'm discovering a person that I didn't know you were. And sometimes it can be so traumatic because people don't expect it and because we want to see the best in someone, you know, it's nature. I'm super, I have high levels of trust issues so I have a hard time giving any type of benefit of the doubt. I let you be and I'm open, but I also understand that we're unperfect and so I take on the decision if am I down for this or am I not down for this. And like the best way to kind of put it in a way where like, you know, white people can get it. It's like when you decide to be friends with a guy, you know men grow up in societies thatpatriarchie patriarchy and like there's like toxic masculinity, and you know all these like things that we talk about in society and they can be the best friend that you want. It could be even your partner that you like, really love and he's a great person. But then at the end of the day, you'll find yourself in a conversation, which I have found myself in conversations like this, where I'm talking to my best friends, and they're like, I don't understand what you mean? Like, don't you guys, like, you know, compliments like what are men supposed to do? Like, you know, you're gaslighted in this feeling of like, oh so now I'm the problem, you know, like, or it's like, yeah, but you know, she does go to reaction of like, yeah, but you know, she was super wasted. It's like, oh, wow. So you know, these automatic misogynistic ideas that a woman needs to behave a certain way in order to get out of danger is so toxic, but it's embedded in men to try to justify whatever is happening, you know, to gaslight us, basically, and feeling like whatever you're experiencing as a woman is not that serious. And so you have super problematic dudes, and then you have super not like, you know, mildly problematic. Yeah, like, there's a spectrum and this and like, that's kind of like what I've accepted and being in this space, specifically, because I'm doing advocacy. But I'm also in the same mindset that any person of color that decides not to be close to that to have proximity to white people, I get it, like, I get the, because all of this creates trauma, you know, like, I'm born in it, like my father's white, I have a whole side of the family. Like, I grew up in Belgium, and it's kind of like, I have almost had to learn how to navigate that very early on and so I think that's why I'm where I'm at. But sometimes some people are just like, I have friends are just like, these are actually not, I can't I don't even understand why you do this, like, why are you in this space? Because it's also an emotional weight that you decide to take or not to take. And that's okay, you know.

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Kathrin Zenkina 16:32

That is so powerful. You mentioned you know, unconscious, like beliefs and unconscious, like programming and things like that there's so much that we talk about on this podcast that has a lot to do with unconscious beliefs, you know, creating our reality. And, you know, there's a lot of unconscious biases that come into the topic of race. And I know that there's, you know, when I talk to people, about like, unconscious beliefs, like a lot of people ask me, well, how do I know what they are if they're unconscious? Right, if they're unconscious, I'm unaware to them. So I'm curious, like, what are your guys's tips? You know, this question for either of you, or both of you of like, how people can uncover these biases and become more aware of them? Because at some point, you have to even realize that you do have some sort of bias in order to even listen to a conversation like this, right? So there's like people who aren't even aware that this is a

very important conversation to have, that there is mistrust between, you know, women of color and white women. So like, how can people or maybe even going beyond that, like, how can we encourage other people as well to open up to these and become aware of these unconscious biases so that we can shift them and change them and then transform the world around us?

Y Yseult Polfliet 17:47

I mean, if I may have it.. I don't think that you have to like know them. Like it's, that's, you know, you're not supposed to the mindset is not to say that perfection is so toxic in the space of advocacy. There's like perfection and urgency, it's like, and a lot of the people that we talked to they're like, I want to be quick and an ally, I want to be a good person, I want to be perfect. You can't undo like, I don't know, 20 years or 50 years or 100 years or like 400 years of literal like oppression within like one conversation with a friend or like one friendship or whatever. So it's just like giving yourself grace, that first of all, you will not be the savior; because like, every time a change has happened, it has come from the people that are oppressed. In America, in Asia, in Africa, anywhere in the world, it's always the one that's oppressed that has made the shift right? so we have to give that type of credit that is due and then also take yourself out of that equation as the savior because you're giving yourself more grace to grow and learn. So it's not like how do I know? it's more so like, what's my attitude when I don't know? And your attitude has to be open, it has to be like open, work on your defensiveness, work on your like fragility, work on being open to hearing something that's hard. Deal with that with you and your friends, because you can't put that on the weight, you can't put that weight on the person of color that's coming to you visible minority or nonvisible minority, you know, to deal with your feelings, you know, or like to teach you. I think that we've come to a point where there's so much advocacy, there's so much books, there's so much things that are happening around the world where we can learn from, it's not up to that one interaction that you're supposed to be like, well yeah I want to learn, no like I'm going to tell you and then you have to learn how to be to be graceful in that ignorance and say, okay, like this is a moment to grow rather than to attack or to deny or so it's like really nurturing, learning how to be uncomfortable and bracing, that discomfort because it literally is the go to feeling. Every time you talk about something that's going to tap into a core belief or core fundamental thing that's made who you are, that's made you who you are today, you know.

K Kathrin Zenkina 20:25

That's amazing, thank you. Embracing, you know, discomfort, I think is such an important life skill just in general to have I think it translates so beautifully. Like if you're open-minded and you are able to face like uncomfortable situations and be open to which I wish I had a communications degree. Now that I think about it, like back when I was in school, we used to make fun of, I mean, in the science community at least, you know, we used to have like this ego around like, oh, I have a science degree even though fucking sucked. Like, unless you really want to go deep into science, like just getting a degree in biology fucking sucked. And I was like, wow, I could have learned so many more amazing life skills. Like I have a friend who has a degree in communications and anytime me or my husband need help, like with an email and like crafting a really good email, we're like, hey Kate, can you help us craft like, especially in like a, you know, a hard situation or uncomfortable situation. I don't know where I was going to I think I was just, you know, mentioning that facing discomfort. So important. Hannah, in the beginning of your journey, like, how did you grow to be comfortable being uncomfortable? Like,

did you face any resistance? And like, what are some tools that you embrace that you use for yourself so that you are able to sit with these feelings of discomfort in conversations with Yseult or other women of color, or anything else that came up in this topic of race?

H

Hannah Summerhill 21:49

I think it just felt like we were pursuing truth and liberation and my discomfort was never going to be more important than truth and liberation and justice. So that's always kind of been like my motto. So it was easier for me to put aside my discomfort, but that doesn't mean I'm not still uncomfortable, and I'm not still fragile, and I'm not still defensive. Because I'm definitely all those things that Yseult will tell you and it surprises me sometimes, because I'm like, have come so far, but education has been number one for me. So starting with like, there are a lot of books that people have read like people have read how to be an anti-racist, white fragility, maybe stamped from the beginning there are some popular books out there. But for me, I was like, I'm going to try to read as much as possible, listen to as many podcasts as possible, and so if I'm getting, if I'm stretching the edges of my comfort level, a little bit every day, then I know that I'm going to be growing every day. So I set an allyship goal for myself to do anti-racism reading or education every single day, for at least 30 minutes, kind of treating it like I'm in school like I'm studying this, I'm a white person who has been willfully under-educated about our own history and it's really my responsibility to do that. So it's also been personal for me, I think I shared on the last episode that I was on that my husband is black. And it wasn't until we met, where I was like, oh, my life is completely different than his and how is this fair when somebody that I love so much experiences has such a different experience has so many less opportunities and has to worry about so much more than I do that just doesn't seem fundamentally right. And going back to the idea of like truth and liberation and justice, just being my guiding star, I try to let that supersede that discomfort. But again, it just comes up a lot. I think as Yseult mentioned, sometimes I have to work through it on my own. I don't want to like, if she's triggered by something that I say, and then like, I have to work that out in front of her and she has to kind of like, see me go through that, that is hard. You know, like when we were writing the book, I'm growing as an ally every day. So as I'm writing the book, I'm changing. And she would tell me like, oh, I read something that you wrote a couple of months ago, or now I think I said, oh, I'm like so embarrassed about what I wrote a couple of months ago, because I feel like I've grown and she would be like, yeah, like that was problematic. And I had to kind of sit with that. And I let it go. And so the people around you giving you grace are awesome. But I think too, as a white person, having conversations with other white people is something that we can do that's really powerful. So like our best friends, our parents, our family members, our partners, people that we think are on the same page as us might not actually be and those can be that's really good practice to put yourself in uncomfortable situations and start having harder conversations is with the people closest to you. So that's a good first step.

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Kathrin Zenkina 25:02

I love that. What is your guys's inspiration behind, you know, bringing this work into the spaces of entrepreneurship? Like what got you guys inspired to be like, we really want to help because like your, you know, your course for inclusive leadership has a lot to do with entrepreneurship. So what is like that? Where does that passion come from? And like, what are some of the, I want to get, I want to unpack that a little bit more. So let's just start there. Like, what is your inspiration behind helping entrepreneurs?

H

Hannah Summerhill 25:29

lâ€™m gonna go first? Okay. I think, seeing so many problems in this space, oneâ€¦

K

Kathrin Zenkina 25:39

I want to ask also what those problems are, and like how, yeah, what to be aware of in this space, too?

H

Hannah Summerhill 25:46

I think that I've seen so many white women try to reach out and bridge the gaps and do it in a way that's maybe more harmful or more performative than actually helpful or maybe done in a way that's really, the end goal is to make that person look better instead of actually lifting people up. So that's an incredible way to bridge the gaps. There are so many businesses out there, there are so many services, we all need services, and I just, I felt like I just saw it being done so badly and causing so much harm in so many ways. And, yeah, we wanted I come from the corporate world so I saw that happen in business a lot. And I wanted to create something with Yseult where we could address those issues.

Y

Yseult Polfliet 26:32

I mean, for me, it's like on the personal level is because I don't want my children to experience what lâ€™ve had to experience as seen other people like me experience. So the overall kind of dream is, you know, to create a better world, but it's also because like, every time something really bad happens or is like, something bad happens every day, but like when something is very, you know, under the media and there's like a visible person of color that's being you know, murdered or, you know, attacked or something horrible happens, you have this very go to reaction that doesn't sit well with me and that, like shows that it's very surface. You know, it's very, like, let me just, like, deal with this on the surface level, but not really tackle. And so for me, it's not a question of like, they don't, sometimes people just don't care. But then a lot of the times what I've seen is like the DI industry is very the way they've been doing clearly is not working, because when you have a brand that does the same type of error more than once. Well, it means that whatever you did to try to fix it didn't work out, right? And then also the flawed idea that like, the person that works within a company is going to be the person that like blows the whistle on something that's messed up, that happens. It's also a flawed idea. Because most of the time (A) it's like a person of color and then (B) it's like, do you bite the hand that feeds you? no, like, you intrinsically want to keep your job. So you're not, and I'm not even criticizing that I 100% understand that. And so whatever dynamic that was happening, whenever there's a situation for a company, whatever, something that whatever the way they went about, it didn't work out. Right? So having someone from the outside, like us, would, we don't have to be afraid of losing our job. Like we have people that come to us because they want to do this work. Yeah, we benefit from the fact that like, these are people that are motivated, and they want to do something they want to change. And we've worked with schools like Yale and Columbia, or we've worked with, like corporate, so this subject is literally something we can find, from fashion industry to corporate, you know, financial companies, it

doesn't matter. It's just some sort of the same idea that I was I was speaking on earlier, where we grow and we function under a certain type of idea of how things are supposed to be and so we go into like this, like automatic founded like drive towards ideally certain things. And this has not been working for people of color. Either in like the way people hire or either how they handle scandals, or how they don't find themselves in these scandals anymore. Like somethings don't work out and so that's why also, you know, making a difference in that way. So that people of color are not supposed to just like deal with it and like, learn to deal with it rather than a see change. Is something that I really want to normalize.

K

Kathrin Zenkina 29:43

Yeah, that never happening in the first place is better than keep happening. What are some of the things like bringing back you know, the original question, what are some of the things that you see like done in the business space and in the entrepreneurship space that are like, they have good intentions, but there's still problematic, like, can you guys give some specific examples, because I'm sure someone listening is making these mistakes. And they don't want to be making these mistakes, because they also want to be part of the change. What are some of those that you guys see the most common?

H

Hannah Summerhill 30:18

I think when brands who have really never showcased you know, black models, or black creatives or black talent, all of a sudden start posting BIPOC models on their feed or on their website, when it doesn't represent their customer base, and it doesn't represent their company, as a way of virtue signaling. I think that's really misleading. And that's kind of a common thing that we see often, people want to, you know, they want to do that they want to have a positive impact. And I think when they think they're putting up pictures of diverse models or inclusion, that it signals that the company is diverse, but there's usually a big gap between those images, and then what's happening behind the scenes and the impact on customers or employees of color. So we work on closing that gap in our course, which is, you know, you want to have an inclusive business, you want to have a diverse employee, base, you want to have a diverse client base, how do you do that in a way that's actually authentic and genuine and not just putting up pictures. So that's a big thing that we see, another big thing is only posting about social justice or inclusion when everybody else does. So Martin Luther King Day, Black History Month, when something traumatic happens, like Yseult said, going back to the four tenants of trust, needing consistency, if you're not consistent, and you're only doing it when everybody else is doing it, that doesn't really show that the business is inclusive to me. So those are two things off the top of my head, but we see those, I mean, we see that a lot. So those are two things we work on together in this inclusive entrepreneurs course.

K

Kathrin Zenkina 32:02

Yseult is there anything you would add to that?

Y

Yseult Polfliet 32:05

Yeah a big one for me is that like the people that come towards us that to talk about this they

Yeah, a big one for me is that like, the people that come towards us that to talk about this, they think unconsciously, again, they realize, while we have this conversation that like, you can't have a hierarchy in who you decide to be allied to. And so for example, we, you know, we've had this conversation, and I was saying you, can't claim to be diverse, because you are, supportive or an ally to the visible minority. But like, for example, like people that don't seem like minorities are not benefiting from this. So you have a company and you're doing all this stuff for like black and brown, or Asian employees or whatever. But then like you make, like you have employees are Jewish, and they feel uncomfortable whenever they have to take off for high holidays, or whatever, they feel uncomfortable about being visible with their Jewishness. So that's a problem because you can't decide like, and it's a performative, performative way of being an ally, because it's almost like, look, let me show you like, I have this person next to me, they make me look good. Like it's a visible minority, where like, if you're able to tap into minorities, that we are not necessarily obvious, like, for example, people that have learning disabilities that you might not see with your eyes, but you are, if you are in the space of being inclusive, you have to be speaking to these communities or existing within your space. So that's something that really like, you know, crazy, because one day, there's a person in our course, I was like, Oh, my God, I never thought of Jews as like, but there's still like, antisemitism, and there's still, you know, and I have a lot of Jewish friends, that feel very uncomfortable being openly Jewish. So it's like, you there's something there that has to be addressed. That's something that I find really important to mention. And also another one I think, is headed. Having in mind that don't remember,

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Kathrin Zenkina 34:11

Maybe it'll come up in a second. What about expanding on that, like, what are some of the because you guys also help in like corporate environments, and as well as like, you know, entrepreneurship spaces where people are hiring, what are some mistakes that you've seen, like the hiring process? Like how can entrepreneurs and CEOs and whoever's in charge of hiring, make the whole hiring process a lot more inclusive and diverse and anti-racist?

H

Hannah Summerhill 34:40

I think first if you say that you want a diverse employee base, you have to define diverse from what. So first, the default has to be established, like, what is the default at our company or who are the default customers or consumers? Because if that's not acknowledged, then it's like the idea of diversity is kind of like morpheus, you don't, you can't really have clear goals. But one of the things that we teach a lot about is like getting away from the norm getting away from the default. In order to do that, you kind of have to like acknowledge what that core nucleolus is. But there's this, like, there's this idea that a viable candidate comes from a four-year college, or has been recommended through a friend or English is their first language. And all of those are kind of like really classist and can be very exclusionary to a lot of people. So just really thinking like, why do we have these requirements for hiring? What like, what makes somebody who went to college better than somebody who did it, or somebody who went to a two-year college or somebody who's older, so rethinking about like, the typical, very standard corporate patriarchal white, viewpoints of like business and hiring and current like figuring out what makes sense to deviate from like, why do we even have that in the first place? I think that can be a really, really powerful tool for starting out with hiring. And then once those people come on, you have to be super clear about the environment that you've created. So just because you have a diverse, you might have a visually diverse group of employees, but do the people who

are outside the norm feel comfortable? Like, do they feel comfortable speaking up? Are their voices valued? Are they getting paid the same? Are they do they have the same opportunities for advancement? Because a lot of times what happens? I think is the diversity makes white people feel good at the risk of harming the people of color who are there who have to code switch and conform to that ideal. So we also talk a lot about how representation for representation's sake is really just performative allyship like it has to be, you have to create a company and there's no like perfect answer for this. But you have to create a place where people of color nonvisible minorities want to stay, and what makes them want to stay and like if they give feedback, that's hard to hear, is it being validated? Is it being implemented?

K

Kathrin Zenkina 37:13

Those are such good points. Yseult do you have anything to add to that? Which, by the way, I just want to say thank you for letting me practice interviewing two people at once. It's been such a unique experience for me. So yeah, I'm really enjoying this conversation.

Y

Yseult Polfliet 37:27

Not I did actually remember my other point. So for example, like I'm on the board of like a nonprofit organization, and it's arts, it's nothing to do with, with the work that Hannah and I do, but it's in the art industry. And I remember like being invited on the board and like talking about basically my role was to like kind of guide through the conversations and like the scheduling and like, the agenda, like the stuff that we wanted to do and the people that we want to have over and whatever. And so one of the things that I told him is like, I think that we focus on diversity from the lens of like trauma. And in order to really create a diverse space, you have to normalize everything that you love. So if you love cooking, diversify it, like go find like a person that does a cuisine from other countries, like if you do art, find amazing curators or amazing museums are that owned and curated by people of color. Like if you love running, like find out history around running to minority groups, like it's just like, normalizing BIPOC people in spaces where they're humanized, is absolutely the fundamental of how you are shifting your space, not being like driven by like what I need to do, but rather, like, how do I need this to change for the betterment of the whole community? Right? So I think that's a big one, too. What do you like more, it's harder, it requires you to actually care so that you have to do the research in order to incorporate this in an organic and like, natural way. But it requires you to like kind of switch your go to spaces. Like for the board, for example, we would be thinking about oh, who do we want to have over for this conversation? And so like everyone, there mostly is white. And so all the connection in the art world, the art world is very very like white and old and wealthy and so it's like everyone knows very white people and old people. So I was just like, expand, like expand outside who you know your network because then if you go towards your network, which is a natural go-to movement, but it doesn't feed into the culture that you want to nurture in our space. Right. And so it was harder because they're like, oh, I have to talk to this person that might know this person. I was just like, but that's the energy that we need to have, so I think that's a big one that comes up when we have this conversation. Number one is, the weight of change shouldn't go to people visible people of color like it shouldn't be on the person of color. Because it's assuming that because a person is of a person of color, they know how to navigate this trying to find to go to work, they might just be trying to do what they're supposed to do, they went to college, or they have some type of, you know, learning to do what they're doing, they just want to go and do that. So we can space

to that, and finding the ones that are doing it that exist, you know, is really, really acknowledging that like, we are humans. And that's the whole point of, like, having this conversation and, and being in the space for me is not so much like, how do you how do I convince white people to care, but so much like, white people should care? Because it's reinstalling, the humanity that white supremacy has stolen from you. Right? So it's like, putting things where you feel like you're connecting to people on a deeper level, beyond what you think they need from you what you need to save what like how hurt they are, but like, I might just be someone that loves to read, and that likes to like, I don't know, hike or whatever, like, being a human is part of being, you know, in that space as well.

K

Kathrin Zenkina 41:25

These are such great points. This is a question for both of you guys. As we start to tie out this conversation together. What are some of your favorite moments in your work so far? Like, what are some moments that have come up? Where you're like, yes, like, The Kinswoman is making a difference?

H

Hannah Summerhill 41:43

Oh my gosh, I like sometimes I feel so frustrated. I'm like, is this worth getting through, but we do have more and more moments where it just does feel so fulfilling for me. Because I see the ripple effect like we worked withâ€¦ Well, I'll go back to our course. So every month we do these Q and A's for a course where anybody past and present students can come and check in with us, ask questions. And so when we had ours last month, we had students who took our class last year, and they just spoke about how their time in our course changed their entire company. And like the ripple effect of that, like the knowing that the employees not only are changed, but any future employees and anybody, any customer that touches those employees, it's changed for the better, just makes me so happy. I mean, that's just such a beautiful thing. And of course, I have to say there's so many moments, but our book deal to is really special to get, which I talked about when I was here, last

K

Kathrin Zenkina 42:52

Yseult, what about for you?

Y

Yseult Polfliet 43:00

This work is really challenging for me in so many ways. But I think that like I find a lot of joy, knowing that I'm part of a legacy that's forcing white people to be genuine in their allyship. So whenever I feel like someone had to dig into their darkest part and them and be mad uncomfortable in order to make a difference is when I find joy, because it's genuine, it's real. And so I really believe in like the power of like, one person, you know, and that, you know, we think that we need to do the big move in order to have great change. But it's really when you have people that are collectively conscious, on the same level, right? And so like when I see this one person that comes through, and I feel like they've dug in a really weird place for themselves, and that they're coming through in a space where they're still there, I'm really

happy for them. Like it's good and I feel like I'm part of, I'm creating a legacy for myself and for you know, my future and our children and grandchildren, where they're a part of something that's like much bigger than me, you know, so that's why I find joy in this.

K

Kathrin Zenkina 44:14

That's beautiful. I'm so glad I asked that question because I know that there's probably a lot of challenges a lot of painful moments, a lot of discomfort that comes up in the work that you guys do so hearing about your favorite moments is also amazing because it shows that your work is making an impact and that's what matters and the ripple effect I totally you know even in my work when I help you know one individual change their life they tell me like oh my God and my husband and my cousin and my boss and my and it just like stems from this one single person and you just never know how your work is actually going to impact someone 10,12,100 connections away from you. Intelligence all comes full circle and who knows maybe when we die we get to find out you know how we really impacted other people, which I just like to think about, because it's so wild, where can people find more about your work? Like, where can people follow you? How can people sign up for your course? And then if you have any details on when your book is coming out, please share that as well. And if there's like a waitlist that we can get on to get first dibs on the book, that would be amazing too.

H

Hannah Summerhill 45:22

Oh, okay. So our Instagram is @the.kinswomen, and it's women plural. And then our website is kinswomanpodcast.com. So you can sign up for a course there, you can look at our resource library, you can learn more about our mission there. And then our book comes out fall 2022, fingers crossed, the publishing industry can be a little bit slow. Right now we are deep into draft two. So our editors like before, we were brainstorming with her about marketing. And she was like, You need to finish the book before you can talk about marketing. So we don't have a waitlist yet, but we keep our audience really up to date on everything. And we actually did an episode on our podcast, all about the highs and lows of writing a book together because it brought up so much for both of us, so we get super transparent there; because that's part of our work. Like we want to be super honest about what the whole process of writing this book and getting this book to was like from both of our perspectives. So

K

Kathrin Zenkina 46:27

Where can we find the podcast as well? What's the name officially?

Y

Yseult Polfliet 46:32

It's called the podcast, Thekinswomen in podcast.

K

Kathrin Zenkina 46:34

Amazing! The podcast of all podcasts. Found we're all podcasts are found. Amazing. Okay, I'm gonna go ahead and link all these in the show notes. So you guys go ahead and check out

gonna go ahead and link all these in the show notes. So you guys go ahead and check out Yseult and Hannah's work, definitely sign up. If you're an entrepreneur, no excuses, get inside their course it is amazing, it's so awesome. You guys are doing such incredible work. And I'm so grateful for you coming on this podcast and sharing your energy and your message and all your tips and tricks and like the deep deep meaning behind what The Kinswoman stands for and how you guys are bridging the gap between white women and women of color. And hopefully those who are listening, this really inspires them to go deeper into their own work and their own discomfort and their own bridging of the gap. So thank you. Thank you both so much for being here. Thank you for giving me practice on interviewing two people at once. Great, it's been such a pleasure.



Yseult Polfliet 47:36

Thank you for having us and being part of this community, it's really cool.



Kathrin Zenkina 47:42

Aww! well and to the rest of you listening. Go ahead and check them out and I'll catch you in the next episode. *Mwah* bye. Thank you so much for tuning into today's episode. If you absolutely loved what you heard today, be sure to share it with me by leaving a review on iTunes so that I can keep the good stuff coming your way. If you aren't already following me on social media. Come soak up extra inspiration on Instagram by following @manifestationbabe or visiting my website at manifestationbabe.com I love and adore you so much and can't wait to connect with you in the next episode. In the meantime, go out there and manifest some magic.