

Agency for Change Podcast: Eimear Zone, Certified Confidence Coach

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Eimear Zone: 0:01

Confidence is the key that unlocks you at your very best.

Announcer: 0:09

Welcome to Agency for Change, a podcast from KidGlov that brings you the stories of changemakers who are actively working to improve our communities. In every episode, we'll meet with people who are making a lasting impact in the places we call home.

Lyn Wineman: 0:24

Hey everyone, welcome back to the Agency for Change podcast. This is Lyn Wineman, president and chief strategist of KidGlov, and today I am very excited to introduce you to a new friend of mine. Eimear Zone is a coach, a mindfulness meditation teacher and a writer who helps women break free from the waiting room of their lives and step into their full potential. So today we get to talk about her journey of radical reinvention, as well as what it truly means to choose yourself. Eimear, I can't wait to talk to you today. Welcome to the podcast.

Eimear Zone: 1:16

Thank you so much, Lyn. I am so happy to be with you here on the podcast, excited to get into a really great conversation with you.

Lyn Wineman: 1:26

Me too. Now you invited me to be on your podcast, so we've had a conversation that way and I had so much fun that it was only natural to have you on, and I've been reading your book and I'm going to have some questions for you about that as we go along. But I just want to start with could you just share the story behind your coaching practice? How did you get into this work and talk a bit about your journey of reinvention?

Eimear Zone: 1:56

Absolutely Well, I think I have to start on a park bench in Miami is where I think my story really started and or crystallized at least, and it was after a sort of cross-continental move from the UK 10 years ago I found myself sort of my life upended, three children over from a very settled life. You have kids. You remember this, Lyn. They're settled and happy in school.

We have all the friend groups. We dealt with a few bumps and then it was time for me to kind of go okay, now I can get back into. And then everything changed. My husband who's American job over in Miami, and I felt completely untethered and what I had been doing just didn't translate. I'd been working in law, and that doesn't naturally translate to another jurisdiction. And then I had three children to reacclimatize to a whole new ecosystem.

Lyn Wineman: 3:08

Country schools, friend groups, activities yeah, let me guess they were a little bit grumbly and needed a lot of your support during that time.

Eimear Zone: 3:20

They needed a lot. So, you know, I felt myself pull back into that really central role where you're needed a lot, and so I found myself kind of a little bit sort of untethered, as I say, and I was sitting on this park bench having a conversation with this woman and I was really just plastering on a smile, going everything's fine and playing my part, and how are you and I have to make new friends. And she started talking about something called her dream line, and it came at the response to a very. I just asked her hey, I need to get a cleaner for my house. Do you have a cleaner that you could recommend? And she said, oh, I don't at the moment, but it's on my dream line. You know, it was this kind of format that she had for the type of the way that she was going to, you know, realize certain goals. And I was like, oh, my God, you have a dream line. I'm drowning.

You know, I felt like she would show me like this lifeline and we started talking about dream lines, lifeline and we started talking about dream lines. And that really led me into back into the world, really, of personal development and listening to more podcasts and then saying, okay, you know what it's up to me, it's up to me. I think it was that moment really crystallized for me that it didn't matter what happened externally, with an intercontinental move, with all of these external challenges that I was facing, really I could create an internal dream line, I could activate things internally and I was entirely up to me and that wasn't a bad thing. So I think that's where that began. And I was, you know, in my okay, I'm 55 now, so I have 45, 45 and feeling like I have to start everything again and that had to be somebody else's fault and it had to be wrong.

And I think really that was the point where I pivoted and said that's really unhelpful, that's not going to get me anywhere, and really beginning to say to myself and believe it, you're better than this. Yeah, and it doesn't matter what happens externally. It's not that it's going to be easy or immediate, but that doesn't mean it's not possible or that it's not going to be really fulfilling. So that was, you know, when I just became an experimenter and I just started trying new things and I said what am I going to do here in this new country? Okay, well, I can. I took courses, I decided oh, I think I'll learn to code.

My husband works in IT and I had learned like French, Spanish, German and Gaelic Irish. And I was going, oh, I don't know how to. That all seems very technical and difficult and mathematical. And he said it's a language, Eimear, and you speak lots of languages. So I said, huh, so I so again, that was me sort of stepping away from a rigid view. So I joined like the code academy, I think it was called, online, started learning and then went to a place in Miami, one of these incubators where they were teaching people to code and launch apps, and I signed up for some 12-week program. It lasted all of like a week because I went there for the first time and I said this isn't for me.

Lyn Wineman: 6:53

But maybe something else will be.

Eimear Zone: 6:55

Yeah, so it really was. I took on this role of I am going to create my life and I'm going to do that by exploring things and not having a rigid view of who I think I am.

Lyn Wineman: 7:07

Yeah, I really appreciate what you said and I read this because this is how your book opens, the story of the dream line and I, as you were telling the story in the book, I could really feel, like you know, you in this state of like just a little bit upset, right. Like upheaval and maybe even if you don't mind me saying it like maybe even kind of settling in this, like I'm unhappy with this. But then here's somebody that says I've got this dream line, which A. is a little bit annoying because she's got this dream line, and you're like, what are you talking about? But then B. well, if she's got a dream line, I could have a dream line too. That's kind of how I interpreted you telling this story and I thought that was just so much great information and such a great lesson all packed into one there. And so I'm curious, like, how are you taking this journey of yours and translating it into the coaching and really empowerment for women?

Eimear Zone: 8:20

Yeah, well, I think that has always been a core interest of mine and when I was in law I was in the employment law department of a major law firm in the UK really interested in the area of discrimination law which is what we call it in the UK. For me I saw an awful lot of barriers that the law was looking to remedy, to bring about equality and more opportunity and you know, that kind of even playing field, and I also saw how it didn't work great. Because we had lots of work. We had lots of work, so I'd kind of seen that. But I was very interested in that area of giving women more opportunity and one of my first endeavors, really when I was in Miami was to set up an online business that was giving back to women and it was products created by women, mostly sort of accessories, and then giving back to the Global Fund for Women and so always interested in that providing opportunity for women, women's empowerment. I think through that work I saw that you know there's a lot of and my background in law is like there's a lot of the external landscape that's going to take a while to kind of transform and change and evolve and I don't have to wait for that.

I think that was the inside job part. You know I found it frustrating kind of looking at, you know I was writing these blog posts about the situation of women in lots of third world countries, or you know the lack of access to education or the disparities here. And I was going I'm depressed. I needed to bring more inspiration into it and I said there are so many internal barriers to creating opportunity and that's something that I can control and that I can have massive influence on. So that became in my first book, the Little Book of Good Enough, which I wrote before I was a coach. It was really this I felt that that was the main one. It's like that's the core belief that keeps women out of big, off bigger stages in their lives, like taking that spotlight position and saying, yeah I'll do that, I'll give that a go, I'll try, yeah. And so I wrote that book because I felt that was probably the one that was holding me back most. I don't feel like I'm good enough to be doing this, to be, and I felt it very strongly as a middle-aged woman who had

been through an upheaval and a big transition in time for life, when she was expecting things to go along humming much as they had beforehand.

Lyn Wineman: 11:12

Right, you should be kind of in that humming phase, right the upward. I paid my dues, because that was when I started in the work world. Paying your dues was such a big concept. Right, like I paid my dues, I've moved up the ladder. I've developed my I don't think I really called it this at the time, but I've developed my personal brand and my network and people know me. It's time for me to go on that upward coast. But your upward coast was stopped by somebody else who you loved dearly but probably felt some anger at the time.

Eimear Zone: 11:50

Totally so I was like that was, I had decided like blaming anything external, including my husband, wasn't bloody useful, you know, and it was really an inside job and you need to get serious about it. So that the Little Book of Good Enough was I was reading a lot, listening to podcasts, doing courses, like on a project of I am going to figure this out, and that resulted in, you know, writing that book. And that was putting myself in the ecosystem around other people who were in that sort of creative, follow your curiosity, bet on yourself kind of people, because I feel it's so important to be around them. And that's when I created that book. And from the back of that book then people asked me do you coach?

The book did quite well and it was picked up by Amazon, you know, to promote it. One Christmas, you know, they sent me an email out of the blue and I was like what, my little book? So people were seeing it and finding it, and when you create anything like that, it's just a scary thing. I was like, oh, this is the thing that was in my head.

Lyn Wineman: 12:58

And you're putting yourself out there, right. I mean, I work in a creative industry and what I respect about creative people is they're putting themselves out there every single day in a way that you know people can criticize, poke fun at, feel like they know better, but putting yourself out there is, I think, such an important part of life.

Eimear Zone: 13:21

Yeah, and you can't get better without feedback. And if you're in any creative role, you have to get feedback. In any role, you have to get feedback from a great manager, from a, you know, from great peers you have to and from them, you know, the big ecosystem of out there potential readers will give their opinion. And so when I did that, I just wanted to be better, like I like to be really, you know, excellence is a core value. Pursue excellence. It's not like perfection, which perfectionism is unhelpful and a barrier, but excellence just constantly improving, being open to feedback from other people and being open to failure, things not going well and being able to kind of go okay why isn't that, why didn't that go the way I wanted to? So the book was really the catalyst and then I trained as a coach and began coaching and it has just been a constant process of learning what works best. How do I help somebody become who they're capable of being? Yeah, I believe confidence is the key for that. But that's the real journey.

And then, even when I wrote the second book, Choose Yourself, you know I was really I want to be a very good writer, and so I took time looking for a very good editor and when I found her and we were in our first conversations, you know, I said I'd like you to be brutal. You know? Tell me where I suck. Tell me how to get, I'm prepared to, to learn. It's not that I'm going to be the greatest writer who ever lived. I want to be the very best writer that I can be in this moment. Show me, you're the expert.

Lyn Wineman: 15:32

It's a very good book. Eimear and I would recommend it to anyone. But how did the process go? Was she brutal?

Eimear Zone: 15:40

She was lovely and she thanked me for being so clear on what I was looking for, because some people don't want that. They want you just to fix up around the edges and think you're taking away my voice. I was going oh no, you're going to hear me, like anyone who knows me, who's read the book, like recognize, oh, that's very Eimear, and I definitely come through across the pages. But she was what some people might call, you know, quite nitpicking in some ways and I really appreciated it. She was like this could be better. Here are some options you know.

Lyn Wineman: 16:20

So, Eimear, I feel like I know so many people right now who are working to break into the coaching business and it almost feels to me like you were invited in. People read the book and said you have something here that I really want. Could you coach me? I mean, how was that like getting started?

Eimear Zone: 16:41

It's very flattering for somebody to come and to pursue you. Obviously, and I actually didn't coach anybody until I was fully qualified.

Lyn Wineman: 17:00

So you didn't like take this side let's have coffee and I'll coach you. You, of course, because excellence is a core value. You wanted to make sure, before you did this, you were really prepared. I hear you.

Eimear Zone: 17:13

Yeah. So I wanted to serve deeply. So I really looked for the best coaching school that I could find and when I did train, I knew I was in the right place right away and really felt it was. I felt then that I was ready and I and I say that very consciously, because sometimes we one of the core concepts in the book is about being in the waiting room and spending too long waiting around, feeling that you're not ready.

This, for me, is an example of you know, being prepared for when opportunity is there and when opportunity came along and said I'd like you to, you know, to coach me when they read my book, I said I'm very interested in being a coach and I can have a conversation with you, but I'm not a qualified coach and so I want to learn more about this so I can be of more deep service to you. So I did go back and

coach people who had been interested in working with me when I had just published the book, but I really wanted more tools and techniques and approaches so that I could serve more deeply.

Lyn Wineman: 18:21

Yeah, absolutely. So since you brought up the idea of the waiting room, that is a concept that I have taken away from the book Tell us what does that mean to be in the waiting room?

Eimear Zone: 18:34

I think it's many people might feel that they're a little bit stuck, but it's even before you feel consciously that you're stuck that you can be in a waiting room.

It might be when you're in the position and things in a company, for example, and things are humming along and you're just kind of waiting for somebody to come along and say we think you'd be great for this role, or isn't it about time that you took things to the next level or took on this extra training module so that you'd be prepared for it's this tendency that we have to think that something or somebody external is going to issue some sort of an invitation to us to bring us out of this sort of state of waiting and move us into the next level of our lives.

And I think people spend, I have spent far too long in certain waiting rooms and we miss opportunity and we get a bit stale. And I think there are lots of signals. Normally they're sort of emotional. Sometimes they can be financial. If you're looking at your bank account and you're saying, well, maybe I'm waiting around for somebody else to offer me the job, my best friend to say hey, and really, you know, we need to be thinking about where am I getting a little bit overly comfortable and not pursuing?

Lyn Wineman: 19:59

So what advice do you have? So for our listeners, somebody's feeling like, oh, I might be stuck in the waiting room. What advice do you have for somebody who is in that point of their life?

Eimear Zone: 20:13

Yeah, I think one of the most useful things to do when you're in a waiting room is to get really clear on what it is that you want from your life, where you want to go. I mean, most of us spend more time planning summer vacation than we do our lives. You know, we might be putting money into our 401k or or whatever else, but we don't have a really spectacularly exciting, magnetizing vision for how we want to experience our lives. And I think it's really common if you're in a waiting room is that you don't have something that you are kind of looking forward to. You don't have this overarching view of what your life might be. I forget who it is, who came up with the term of this idea of this ultimate concern. You know which is this big overarching narrative for our lives? What's the ultimate concern of your life? Mine, I would say, might be, you know, deeply serving women to develop confidence so they can step into living the full expression of their potential. That would be, maybe my ultimate concern.

Lyn Wineman: 21:19

Yeah, that's very well said. Obviously you have worked on that very intentionally.

Eimear Zone: 21:25

Well, actually I was saying I know what it is and it's written on a card somewhere. I'll just go with it. And when you can do that, it's very easy to not get stuck in a waiting room because you feel that you're drawn to this overarching. There's this overarching narrative for your life, what's important for you? And I think it starts with understanding your values, getting really clear on what those are, and then creating a vision for your life, for how you will live into those values throughout your life.

I think for me that's been really important work to have a vision of your life, to be able to inhabit that vision. And then that becomes, it becomes too uncomfortable to stay in a waiting room. And this idea of you know that book, the Five Regrets of the Dying you know that we all hear about but we'd not. The biggest regret is, you know, not living true to who you really are. So I think that will propel you. As I do a number of exercises I'm not sure whether you've gotten to that stage in the book yet where I really make people uncomfortable in waiting rooms by bringing them to the end of their lives.

Lyn Wineman: 22:46

I've gotten to some of those stages and I'm going to tell you it's really interesting because one of the things I follow in my life that I feel is really helpful to me is a system called PQ and I forget the author of the book right now, but I use the app and every day there's a lesson and a meditation. And so yesterday morning I got up and the lesson was think about today as if it were the last day of your life and I thought, okay, that's interesting, I'm going to think about that. And then I got on my Peloton and I was listening to choose yourself. While I was riding on my Peloton, as a matter of fact, I found an Irish scenic ride in your honor, Eimear, and I got to the exercise that talked about being at your own funeral and revisiting your own funeral and what would people say at your eulogy and what wouldn't they say at your eulogy.

So yesterday for me, was all about the last day of my life and my funeral. I'm like this means something, that these two messages came to me within an hour of each other. So I did appreciate that exercise. It did make me uncomfortable. But I think that someone told me the other day the more you push the boundaries of your comfort zone, the wider your comfort zone becomes, and I was like that's kind of an interesting thought, right, and I can picture myself pushing the boundaries of that envelope. So, Eimear, what's next for you? I mean, wow, you've transitioned your life. I mean I'm assuming the kids are good and they're doing their thing. You got them all settled, because that's been a decade ago. You've got two books. You've got a successful coaching business. What's next?

Eimear Zone: 24:42

Well, right now, I've just launched the podcast earlier this year and now I am looking at bringing that message of confidence building into a digital program that I can offer more broadly.

I love to coach and I love to serve in that intimate space but I'm really driven when I talk about that you know, ultimate concern, that overarching journey of how I will serve in my lifetime. It is to really help women take up more space in the world in every domain, and I think it's the inside obstacles that hold them back more than anything external. So I am in the process of building my knowledge into a program that I will begin to share in March and it's going to be called The Confidence Key. So that is the next thing and I am in the you know, when you start any project or you're, I'm in the weeds part of it where I

have too much and I'm going, oh, and I can share, and I want to do this and I'll share that. And what is guiding me through that it's like the messy middle part is this mantra of simplify to amplify.

Lyn Wineman: 26:10

Ooh, yeah, I like that. You know, take it in smaller, smaller pieces and get them done and move forward. I sometimes feel, when you say messy middle, I feel sometimes in the middle of projects, where my mind is going in so many different directions and I'm kind of in this spinning, striving, feeling almost like I'm drowning and thrashing around in the smaller goals go this doesn't all need to be done at once. Then I have a bit more clarity and calm in the process too so I do appreciate that. Eimear, I'm really curious in all this work that you've done and you share a number of stories in the book or in both books, is there a success story that comes to mind for you? Somebody you've worked with or observed that, as they have really focused on themselves and internally and their confidence, you know what can happen.

Eimear Zone: 27:25

Yeah, definitely somebody comes to mind and it's a slightly unusual story because she was sort of mid-level management in a banking sector and it's quite a male dominated area that she was working in and she was presenting a front that was highly competent, highly confident, very, you know, can speak in front of a lot of people. So you're thinking like why, why is she talking to me this? And really it was this you know, fake it till you make it sort of energy that she was managing that was costing her a huge amount and to the point where she was feeling like she was burning out. And so we did a lot of that inner deep work. She doesn't need help learning how to present confidently and how do I, none of that. But it was this internal job. So we actually used a lot of techniques. We haven't mentioned this yet, but next weekend actually is the graduation ceremony for a two-year journey that I have been on to train as a mindfulness meditation teacher with Tara Brock and Jack Kornfield, and so I've been weaving mindfulness practices and meditation and visualization and that sort of deep grounding into the body into my work for a while, and we did a lot of this work with this lady and it was about managing all of that internal chaos that she was just holding together and bolting down while she was performing at this very high level, and so I would say she's somebody who comes to mind a lot, because it was that helping her to tune into a sense of groundedness and okayness and for her to be able to be with the nervousness, the agitation with I don't know Josh or Brad or anything else, and and hold that all together and it not be an inner battle, kind of like what you were saying, Lyn, when you said about your expanding the domain of your comfort zone.

It is about becoming everything she is able to be in the space and her whole nervous system is very regulated.

Lyn Wineman: 30:14

Life feels better when you achieve that level of serenity. Right yeah.

Eimear Zone: 30:23

Yeah, so that is. You know, that's confidence. When it's alive it's not there's no I don't need to pretend and I don't need to steal myself to fake it. It's not that we don't have to give a little performance when we're at work and we do our performance and we get into a certain persona, but it shouldn't be so rigid

that it's hurting us and causing anxiety and stress, which is so detrimental. So I think that's a big gift of real, genuine confidence is that you own it right from the very center of your being.

Lyn Wineman: 31:02

That's beautiful. Own it from the center of your being. That's beautiful. Eimear, for people who are listening, who want to learn more either about the two books, the coaching, the future podcasts, the new program that you're doing, how do they find you?

Eimear Zone: 31:22

Well, I am easiest to find and active on Instagram at the moment and the handle I'm sure you'll share in the notes, but it's at @EimearZoneCoach and the website is EimearZone.com and you can just email me directly at Eimear@EimearZone.com if you'd like to chat, and you can also find a link both on Instagram and on the website to book just a, you know. No, no stress, no pressure introductory call, just to talk about what you're looking for. And then the new program, The Confidence Key. I'll be sharing more about that on Instagram in the coming weeks and on the podcast which is called Girl Choose Yourself.

Lyn Wineman: 32:13

I love it, Girl, Choose Yourself. Eimear. We'll have all those links. For anybody who didn't catch that, we'll have all of those links in the show notes on the KidGlov site as well. That's fantastic. I have to say, as a marketer I really like that name The Confidence Key, that to me. That gives me a really good picture of what you're going to be doing with that podcast. So I want to ask you my favorite question. I've asked it on every episode. I feel so lucky that I get to speak with knowledgeable and inspiring people like yourself, but could you give us an original Eimear Zone motivational quote to inspire our audience?

Eimear Zone: 32:56

I guess I'll leverage the name of the new program, because it really is, or to my thinking. I think confidence is the key that unlocks you at your very best.

Lyn Wineman: 33:12

Oh, I like it. Confidence is the key that unlocks you at your very best. Very, very nice. I might have to print that out and put it on my wall. Eimear, thank you for that. So I love talking to you every time we get the chance. As we wrap up this conversation today, I'm curious what is the most important thing you would like people to remember about the work that you're doing?

Eimear Zone: 33:48

The world needs more women to stop seeking permission and to step into the full expression of their power and their potential, and that takes developing your confidence. And we need more women doing that.

Lyn Wineman: 34:05

Those are powerful words. What a way to end Eimear. I'm going to say I fully believe the world needs more people like you, more people talking about confidence and empowerment and getting out of the waiting room and not waiting for permission. So thank you so much for taking time to share. I can't wait to finish the book Choose Yourself and really look forward to future episodes of your podcast and the new programming that's coming out.

Eimear Zone: 34:37

Thanks so much, Lyn. It's been an absolute pleasure speaking to you today.

Announcer: 34:43

We hope you enjoyed today's Agency for Change podcast. To hear all our interviews with those who are making a positive change in our communities or to nominate a changemaker you'd love to hear from. Visit kidglov.com at K-I-D-G-L-O-V.com to get in touch, as always. If you like what you've heard today, be sure to rate, review, subscribe and share. Thanks for listening and we'll see you next time.