

2. Disruptive Change



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With Your Host

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Disruptive change is radical change that breaks the status quo. Disruptive change is also personal. While brands and businesses must fuel and fund the structural and systemic change that we need, disruptive change at its core starts with you. It starts with us.

You're listening to *Watch Us Lead* where hard conversations become significant actions. I'm your host Kimberly Y. Bennett founder of K Bennett Law and Designing the New Legal. Together we'll create the brand shifts that lead to sustainable change. Now, let's dive into today's show.

Last week, we kicked off our episode with an overview of legacy level impact, and the key brand shifts to achieve it in your business and in your being. Now, this week I want to shift our convo and discuss disruption. More specifically I want to know are you ready for disruptive change? Are you ready to cause a disruption? Maybe you're just simply talking about it, and this path isn't for you. Maybe since you're here, you actually are ready, but it's fear that's keeping you from stepping up.

Disruptive change is radical change that breaks the status quo. Disruptive change is also personal. While brands and businesses must fuel and fund the structural and systemic change that we need, disruptive change at its core starts with you. It starts with us. If you are tired of the status quo, I mean legit tired of the status quo, you have a vision to do better, and you realize that there's a gap in our current system and structure where your skillset can be utilized to do this work radically better. Well, if that's true for you then you're on the path to embracing radical change in your being and in your business.

Let's just take a moment and think about this past year. From the pandemic to the protest to end racial injustice to the ongoing struggle to protect our environment, we have plenty of work to do. None of this work is new work, in fact. We can look at our economic structure, educational system, our policing structure, our congress, our unhealthy work life balance, the inequities and injustices in our legal system. All of it. There are so many issues that impacting our society, and those are just a few examples.

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While we respect the work that has been done and continues to be done as we work towards creating a just society, you know we have so much more to do. We must do it at a pace we haven't seen before. So what do we need to do different? We need disruptive change. We need radical change that breaks the status quo.

So this brings us back to our question that we kicked off our conversation with. Are you ready for disruption? Or better yet, let me rephrase it. Are you ready to lead the disruptive change we need? Let's think about current examples of brands and individuals living this. We have Ben and Jerry's, a brand that steps out consistently through resources, through statements, through actions, through the commitment over the years to be a brand that is changing the way brands show up. They've even been early adopters of that B Corporation business model in aligning purpose and profit and not putting profit first.

We can look at AOC, Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, and the work that she's doing in congress. It's disruptive. It's different. Let's be frank. There are others in these same systems that are doing disruption in ways that are not positive. They're not purposeful. They're not leading to the greater good for society. While that's happening, that's not what we're focusing on. The disruptive change we're talking about is positive and it's purposeful, and it's talking about moving the greater good.

Then we can look at another is Alicia Garza, one of the founders of the Black Lives Matter movement. Maybe you didn't know about the movement a couple of years ago. Maybe you heard about it, but it was just something you heard and you didn't know much about it. Today, right now, the work that was done and continues to be done by those leading this movement is disruptive. It's disruptive change. It's radical change that's breaking the status quo. It says how movement building before can't be how we are going to do it in the future. These are just a few examples.

I'm sure you're thinking of individuals in your immediate life, brands maybe that you're using, celebrities, influencers you follow, businesses or

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business owners you trust. All of these that are embracing and living disruptive change.

So here's my quick ask. Go grab a notebook because I want to give you three questions that I want you to think about, and then I want you to answer as you decide if this path is for you. Because to create legacy level impact, we need people and businesses that embrace disruptive change. So the first question is are you willing to be courageous? Being a disruptive change agent means that you have to embrace the fear and doubt that's inevitably going to come up.

Are you willing to push past that fear? Push past that doubt while accepting that some of what you're doing has a bit of an unknown element to it, and that you're still willing to forge a new path, a radically different path from those that have come before you. Are you willing to hear the naysayers? To be challenged by the naysayers? To be told that doesn't make sense, but that you're still going to do the work. Will you recognize these moments when they happen, address them immediately or seek support so you don't get stuck, and then continue to move forward? If so, then you have to answer are you willing to be courageous?

Second, in fact, are you willing to break the status quo even when it's so engrained into every bit of who you are and how you operate. This includes moving past the traditional models, traditional structures, traditional systems and towards embracing curiosity and creativity. How you're going to workshop issues, challenge your beliefs. Because some of these beliefs that you're going to be challenging are beliefs that you've held for years. They encompass years of education and/or experience that you may have, and that may be in fact keeping you on the same hamster wheel achieving the same predictable results.

To be clear, I do embrace predictability. Just not when it leads to maintaining the same structures and systems that create the very outcomes in our society we are trying to change. So when you're ready to break the status quo, you are always learning. Then you're challenging

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what you learned. And then designing innovative ways to achieve specific outcomes based on your learnings and based on your realization that sometimes doing the way that you were taught is not the way that's going to get you to the new path forward.

Then finally, are you ready to embrace collaboration and the power of the collective? As a social impact or purpose driven leader, you recognize the power of the collective. In fact, you know the work that we're doing is not work we should be doing alone. You know there's a greater purpose to what we're doing. Whether it's for your family, your industry, the greater good.

There are levels to breaking the status quo, and there are levels to this radical change that we are looking to achieve. While it starts on a personal level like we discussed earlier. Because, in fact, our impact work needs to be personally sustainable before we can grow our sustainability outside of ourselves. Once we have reached personal sustainability, we need to join forces with others to create radical change. We cannot and should not do this work on our own.

I always remember one of my college friends that had this saying, and I think his mom passed it on to him. Four hands are better than two. I want you to think about this saying as well as you are on this journey because this isn't a straight path, an easy path, or a path without naysayers. While you can kickstart the change on your own to create the level of impact we need, collaboration is key. Social impact is achieved through collaboration. These structures and systems were designed by many people. It will take a powerful collective to dismantle, rethink, and redesign a new path forward.

So on this path towards legacy level impact, we need to lead disruptive change. It won't always be easy. You won't have an exact plan to follow, but you know this is the work that must be done to achieve the type of impact we require. So go grab that notebook. Start thinking about these questions and be honest about your answers. I look forward to chatting

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more about legacy level impact, disruption, building an activist brand, and more on upcoming episodes.

To celebrate the launch of the show, I'm giving away Audible gift cards to 10 lucky listeners who subscribe, rate, and review the show on Apple podcasts. It doesn't have to be a five-star review of course, although I sure hope you love the show. I want your honest feedback so I can create an awesome show that provides tons of value. Visit kbennettlaw.com/podcastlaunch to learn more about the contest and how to enter. I'll be announcing winners on an upcoming episode. See you soon.

Thanks for listening to the show. I look forward to sharing more insights with you on upcoming episodes. Let's continue to take imperfect action. See you next week.