

Ep #2: Bringing Power and Self-Mastery into Your Romantic Relationships



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Hosts

Radiah Rhodes, Dr. Roni Ellington & Tawana Bhagwat

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This is a real conversation with women about self-mastery. The most powerful method of turning seemingly abstract concepts, like being and intention into visible and measurable realities. Join engineers, strategists, and transformational thought leaders Tawana Bhagwat, Radiah Rhodes, and Dr. Roni Ellington to accelerate your results, make significant change, and achieve your most stretching goals without snapping in the process. Welcome to the Power Paradigm.

Radiah: So today on the Power Paradigm, I'm here with Dr. Roni and we're going to be talking about relationships. In the last episode, we kind of eluded to it. Dr. Roni kept calling me out every time I said relationships so we said well, let's talk about it then.

And so today she's going to share her most recent personal - just something that probably most of us have encountered, experienced as it pertains to relationships, dating, and just being you out there, out here in these streets and how people might come at you. So I hope you enjoy this conversation and I hope you get something from it. Here we go.

Roni: We had an event Thursday, Friday, Saturday, and my girl Geo - hey Geo. She was like, I'm surprised you're out here like this in these streets because everybody knows, I don't be out in these party streets. But every five years when we have an anniversary, I'll go.

So there was this guy who was like, I've been watching you since Thursday and you were looking good, so I had on my Bornatty dress. Shout-out to Martone because she makes the best dresses. Oh my god, they're awesome. So anyway, I'm wearing my dress and so I got my little hairdo. Thanks Miki. I got a whole lot of people that's responsible for this. My skin is by Constance. My hair is by Miki, my clothes are by Bornatty.

All that together equals fabulous at 49. But anyway, I just have to tell that part of the story. So this guy comes to me, hey, I've been watching you,

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blah, blah, blah, so we're talking. I'm like, well okay, you went to Morgan. He was at Morgan. Girl, I come to find out this dude is married.

So yeah, so I'm like, now mind you, I'm dealing with something with my primary relationship person I've been dating for years who I love but is just something's going awry there. So usually I don't even entertain dudes, but this time I was a little whatever. So I said I'll talk to you, whatever.

So I talk to him, he was like hey beautiful, all this kind of stuff. Come to find out - I asked him did he have children and he said no. And I said yeah okay, I could see that. He said why? Anyway, come to find out - he said I'm going to be fully transparent. I'm married. I was like, well, why are you talking to me? Why did you want my number?

I was really just really confused. Where is this going? I don't get it. So he went to I thought you were sexy and I could not - literally, I was just on the phone like, are you kidding me right now? So not only my deal with a guy I really truly love to pieces, my ex, he's doing his thing with us being parents. Then the guy I'm thinking oh, you're cool, it ain't like I got to deal with you, but you know, you're married.

Radiah: So let me just get the story straight real quick. So you saw him on the yard or...

Roni: No, he saw me at a party. Several parties apparently.

Radiah: So he's watching you this whole time and then at some point you all exchange numbers because this confession came through on a phone call.

Roni: No.

Radiah: I'm following the story wrong. Get me right.

Roni: So he asked me, he said well, you know - he knew some of my lines. He just knew people I knew and I was like, I never knew you in school. And

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to be fair, I was kind of nerdy and I was a math major so most people didn't know me in school like that. So I was like, okay, well, you're cool, we go to school, I wasn't thinking nothing of it. But clearly, there was an interest there. So I'm like, if you have an interest and you think I'm sexy, what all this other stuff you're saying, but you're married. Why are you talking to me?

Radiah: So this is awesome. This is so awesome.

Roni: No it ain't.

Radiah: Yes it is. Because in the last episode, we talked about self-mastery and that people going to people. And married men talking to other women, women other than their wives is one of the most peoplest peopling things I know of. So given that - so this is why I'm trying to go back and get the story straight. So at what point was the phone number exchanged? When did that occur?

Roni: This was Saturday.

Radiah: Okay. And this was at a party? At which point you were not aware he was married.

Roni: No.

Radiah: Right. And how are you feeling about that? What was the...

Roni: It was not a big deal because I'm not - because part of my thing is I don't really open myself up to a lot of dudes, especially when I'm seeing somebody. But I feel like that relationship may not make it because there's just some things happening that's unworkable. So I was just like, again, I'm just like okay, I'm being open, I'm not - because usually I don't. I'm very like, a brother come to me, I'm like no pass. No.

Radiah: So move with me. So you give him the number, y'all exchange numbers. I don't know what we do now with the cell phones.

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Roni: He took my phone, he put his number in it. And I said okay. And he's like whatever. And I ain't gonna give too many details because it might actually tell who the person is. I'm not putting his business out there, but I'm just saying. So anyway, he called me when he got back to where his hometown was and was like, yeah, I hope you recover from homecoming.

I was like yeah, I did. So we just chit-chatting. He was like, it'd be nice to get to know you, blah, blah, blah. I was like, cool. So then eventually, like I said, one of the calls, we talked. We actually talked on the phone and I asked him questions because I'm very much interested in okay, whatever.

So I said well, do you have children? I talked about my favorite daughter who's Nasha, my poodie. And I was like yeah, she's 19. I only have one. And I said well, do you have kids? He said no, and then he proceeded to say - I said well, did you just never want children? I just was curious. And he said, well to be in full transparency, I'm married. I was like, oh. Got it. Check.

Radiah: So did you react or did you respond in that moment?

Roni: I responded. I didn't even react. I literally was like, okay, well this is done. There's no reason for me to get a new friend. I was like, oh, it'd be nice to meet your wife. Like because if you're going to get to know me, then I'm going to get to know your wife. I don't play them games.

So I said - I got off the phone because I was like, okay, well I had to redo some deep work. So I text him, I said oh, you're married. Very interesting. I said okay, well I don't engage with married men unless I'm engaging with them and their wife. If we're just cool and you whatever, because nothing else is possible. But we're cool, and if we're going to be cool, then I'm going to be cool with you and your wife.

Radiah: So let me ask this question. But what made you text him after you got off the phone?

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Roni: Because I was curious. Because I wanted to really understand - it was shock because I was like, you were checking for me since Thursday and you're thinking I'm this and that, but you're married. So I didn't understand well, did you think I was going to be a part of some kind of random get to know you on the side? What did you expect? I was confused. It was like, really?

Radiah: Interesting. So you were confused. Because...

Roni: Yeah, I was because this is a person that I...

Radiah: You're never confused.

Roni: I was confused in that moment. I ain't confused now. And then I was on the phone with my buddy Ed and he called me and I was like yo, I shared with him what happened. So he kept saying, I'm curious like, he might be in a situation. I said the situation is he's married. That's the situation. I don't care what the other situation is.

So I started to feel some type of way about me like, do I look like I'm going to engage with you as a married man? Because after he told me, he was like, well we can still get to know each other. No, we can't. I'm not getting to know you. Are you bugging?

Radiah: So what's the energy on it? Because you know, I feel like that happens all the time. We know the divorce rates. It's public information that this is just a common occurrence.

Roni: No, it's not common to me. I might be approach by men who dealing with chicks because everybody dealing with people. Because everybody grown dealing with somebody. I have never, not in my 40s - it happened when I was young - been literally actively approached by a man with interest who is married.

Radiah: So how did - and you said that at one point, so your first thing was curiosity, you were clear like, this isn't going to happen. And then you were

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confused and started to think like, well who are you being such that somebody would approach you knowing their married?

Roni: Exactly. And I was talking to Ed who is the king of like, well ask these questions. I'm just curious. Because we didn't just become curious.

Radiah: So now y'all playing.

Roni: Right. It's like, give me some answers. What did you think? Just in the mindset because me and Ed are just so like, we just had what is going on in people's minds? People are people, but I'm always curious of the logic. After you told me that, what did you - because he even invited me to where he lives like, yeah well you could come down. I'm like, what?

Radiah: You know, I mean, I would say he must have done it before and it worked. Period. It ain't got nothing to do with you.

Roni: Well, I know this on the self-mastery level. This happened yesterday so give a sister a minute for her to get her life together. You know what I'm saying? I'm already in my male troubles. So I'm thinking okay, and so I'm literally just being open because that's one of the things I'm committed to and I just couldn't believe - I was just like whatever.

And then he was like, well, I thought you were sexy. I said all of that is factual. I am. But what does that what to do with you approaching me and being married and trying to get to know me? That's crazy. I said, it was nice meeting you. You take care. And then he was like, take care, and that was the end of that. But I was...

Radiah: Well that's good.

Roni: Yeah, that was it. I was like, it really nice meeting you, sound like a nice guy, that's it. That ain't going anywhere. So anyway, so what came up for me is - because I have a whole back story because we talked about stories, that somehow, me having a man that is faithful to me who loves me and honors me is like a pipe dream.

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And the more evidence I collect in these streets, because again, men approach me, people think I'm pretty. Usually short dudes. Short dudes, I love you, but I'm 5'11. If you're under 5'6, I can't do nothing. But that's just the thing. But they're nice, they'll come up, whatever, and compliments you, whatever. I know women, you experience that.

But then I'm like, what's your end game? Do I look like somebody that's going to be your end game? You're happily married with your wife, post it up on Facebook with his wife by the way. Once he told me his name I checked. I was like oh no, you ain't even in no situation. You just on a month ago talking about how this is your lover, your life. What in the world did you think I was going to be to all of that?

Radiah: So here's what I hear. Okay, because I'm getting the insider story. I get it inside of the whole story of what happened. You was out there looking fabulous with the hair by, nails by, clothes by, and you attracted some onlookers, some of which are automatically disqualified. One of which was automatically disqualified by his nuptial status.

Roni: His situation. That's what he called me. I wasn't going to approach you. He didn't even say I wasn't going to approach you because of my situation. I was like, it ain't a situation. You got a wife.

Radiah: Well, it could just be that you were so fabulous that you were just irresistible and he's human. And again, I don't want none of y'all out there to hear me say this like that's some shit that I think makes sense. But to be clear, there's all kinds of stories we can tell about the situation.

And so - but wait. No true facts. But the story that you're also telling whether it's my weight or whatever, anything in life, wanting to get to this place where I'm done, where I don't have to put in effort or energy and it just does what it does. It's unrealistic. It doesn't happen anywhere and it doesn't happen in relationships. As long as you are on this earth, you are energy, you are going to exert energy, you are going to put in energy into whatever it is that you're putting your focus on.

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Roni: Radiah...

Radiah: Wait a minute. Wait a minute. But from a relationship perspective, and I'm going to tell you from my own experience in relationships and creating relationships. The most rewarding, freeing, enjoyable aspects of my relationship are when I show up fully in alignment with what I believe in, with what my values are in any moment.

And it is self-mastery. My partner is going to do what he does. He's going to show up how he shows up. I, inside of that, have preferences, I have requirements, I have values. I know who I am, I know what's important to me. And there are times, to your point, where I tolerate, meaning I don't honor my own values or I don't honor my own preferences or I don't honor my own requirements.

And that gives me the worst experience of a relationship I can have. However hard it might be, in the face of whatever is happening and however people in partners are partnering, it always requires me to show up inside of who I say I am. Period.

So if I say I'm not going to do the laundry one more time. I'm just going to use that simply, which I never do the laundry. My husband looks at me like, would you please? You said you wanted this laundry room on the second floor. Could you use it? But anyway, but if I say the laundry has to get done and it's not getting done, I have to deal. And how I choose to show up with the laundry not getting done is my choice.

Is it a requirement? Meaning it's not done all bets are off, out the door? Is it a preference? Okay, I'd like it to be done but you're not doing it, so are there other ways it can get done? Knowing that about myself and honoring that, and that may sound abstract, but I'm telling you, that's the realest shit ever. Because people are going to people.

You can help some of it by finding people of course, or choosing - not finding. By choosing someone who has similar and matched values. That

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will certainly set you up to have less areas where you have to show up with a lot more energy and that might make you weary. But people are going to people. You're going to you. Somebody got to deal with you.

Roni: I know that.

Radiah: So let's keep it all the way real. And this is where people get the boundaries. I'm going to just do me. Okay. It's a choice. No matter what, it's a choice. How you...

Roni: But see, the thing that you say that - again, you know me. You know my heart. I have worked with people and I'm willing to show up, but this whole notion of who can I care to rise it, this complete and utter disregard for what I have shared bothers me and hurts me. And then you continue to do it like it's not going to come and have this impact is problematic.

Radiah: Yeah, so I would flip that because the continuing to do that's happening is the continuing to allow it, tolerate it, and set up for it to happen again, knowing - I said this somewhere recently. I was speaking on a relationship with someone who's in a relationship with one of my family members. And the relationship didn't work out and I said it's interesting because from the very beginning, it was pretty clear that there was a high risk that this wasn't going to work out, that the man you wanted this person to be was not going to show up necessarily. You knew that.

How do you know? How do I know you knew that? Because you went to great lengths to try and lay out what exactly you wanted, what you required because it's almost like an appeal because you already doubt that they're going to show up in that way. So you start to over-communicate, hoping that that's going to get through and that's going to make a difference.

And that's going to set it up for success, as opposed to just honoring what you already know. That this is probably not going to work the way you think or want or hope. And so it's a flip that you know when you're with someone, you know. You know what works, what doesn't work. You know pretty

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much how they're going to show up. When a person shows you who they are, believe them.

All of this knowing - there's a whole lot of knowing, but when it comes to the prospect of a romantic reward at the end, this amazing romantic life, we act like we don't know, or we try to overcompensate for what we know, hoping that that covers it up at the end. So all I'm saying is you're right. How you feel is totally valid, that there are values you have, there are desires you want, there are preferences that you have, there's a requirement.

And for someone to step over the line of that when they're aware of your values, your requirements, your preferences, is an affront and you get to choose how you want to respond to that. And sometimes, what we do is we respond to that in pleading and forgiving and that whole thing. But I'm saying that's where it starts.

Roni: That ain't my - I've been there and I ain't...

Radiah: But that's usually where it starts, right?

Roni: I ain't doing that.

Radiah: Like why did you do this? I really - and given the benefit of the doubt and all of that. And the minute you do that is the minute you open the door to say oh, this isn't a requirement. This is not even really a preference. This is just a nice to have, which now is setting up how people come at you again.

Roni: That's true. That's the gospel truth.

Radiah: And you ain't even got to be nasty about it. When you're younger, you're like, oh he better not call me, I don't even deal with people like that, right? You have that energy on it because you're just trying to stand your ground, and you got to have some oomph energy on it to be able to do that.

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But once you get real settled in with whatever requirements and not only what your requirements and preferences are, but also you have some compassion for yourself that you might not always stand your ground the way you would hope. Then you don't feel no kind of way about it. You just moving through what comes up and what happens.

Roni: That was definitely the case, even with the brother that's married and my boo, who I love to pieces. I just said, you know look, I'm just not trying to have that kind of relationship. I wasn't even up in arms.

Radiah: Right. I remember us talking about it.

Roni: Yeah, and I was up in arms last time it happened and this time I just wasn't. I just felt like you want to have a certain thing, have at it. I just don't want to participate. I'm not - that's not what I'm trying to create, that's not what I want, you go ahead, go all in on it, and that was that. And so I am definitely growing in that because I used to be up in arms and why you and pleading and hoping. I ain't doing that. I'm too old for that. People are going to people, and I get to choose. And...

Radiah: That's it right there. People are going to people and you get to choose. That will change your whole love life right there. Those two things will change the whole game. People are going to people because that's going to free you up from feeling any kind of way about when people do what they do.

And we're human, so yeah, you're going to feel a little emotional, you're going to feel angry, pissed off, you're going to feel some hurt and pain because of some wound you got from the past, whatever. That's going to happen, but you can handle that. You can handle that, you can move through that.

But people are going to people frees you up, and then you get to choose, it's just you get to say. Now that people have peopled, what say you? Is this a problem? Is this a violation? Is this a requirement that now

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everything's off? But being willing to own what you say, take responsibility for it, not blame it on anybody else, not justify it by something external other than because you say so is powerful. So I ain't perfect in that either. I've been married 12 years and you know it's a challenge. It is for real, for real, a challenge.

Roni: But I can say you have a person that is partnered with you who is willing to take himself on in certain ways. And in certain ways not. There's a fundamental foundation of like, okay, you know what I'm saying? We're in this together. That's my experience, just knowing y'all that I would love to have.

Somebody who's willing to be like, you know what, we are peopling. I'm peopling. I got my stuff with me, which I ain't going to reveal at this time but you know what I mean? You're right. People got to deal with me on my tendency to withdraw, my hard to knowness. Sometimes I'm not open because I'm dealing with my own shame around things and choices I've made and things that have happened.

So I am clear that has an impact on how my occurring is for someone. But the difference is somebody who's willing to walk hand in hand with me to go and heal that and go through that is what I'm looking for.

Radiah: See, that's perfect because that's clear and that's absolutely possible for you to find someone. So when we put all this other stuff around it like you know, well men out there married, trying to hit on other women and it's just not - what's available or what's not available. That's one way to look at what you're actually up to as it pertains to relationships.

However, when you say it the way you just said it, which is you know what, I really am looking for - maybe there's some demographic or some basic character traits, and then what I'm really up to right now is partnering with someone who is looking to heal themselves as a way that we can go through that together, or someone who values that as a priority.

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Roni: And values me and knows like, when they are with me, whatever that comes with, we are coming with that together. Because I really am that way. When I choose a man, I choose what he comes with.

Radiah: But I think that's a developed thing. We can hit that another time. So this idea of valuing someone else and taking on what they come with, not taking it on like it's yours, but being willing to connect with them and engage, I believe that that is a progressive thing. That's not something that necessarily is sourceful if granted right up front.

Roni: Oh no, this ain't upfront.

Radiah: But that's the progressive thing so that where you start is hey, I have these values and these preferences, here's what my standards are. And I remember doing this when we first started this a long time ago. On my little spreadsheet, I literally was like, these are my standards. These are my rules. These are my preferences. These are my requirements.

These are some nice to haves. These would be fantastic and fun. And I had to really prioritize. Everybody got their list. Well, prioritize the list. Everything on the list ain't the same thing.

And so when you look at that, it really gave me a way to connect with people and to partner and engage with them and it gave me some tools to respond when things came up, and I could then choose, even if I didn't choose in alignment with what I had defined for myself, I did that knowingly. Eyes wide open and I had to take responsibility. I know what I am choosing here.

And that has served me throughout my marriage and before. But I think on this thing about relationships, a couple things we could take away. I see - y'all can't see Dr. Roni's face but she gave me the side eye.

Roni: Oh they can't. Good. I'm being masterful. Go ahead.

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Radiah: No, because first of all, you have grown tremendously. Even just you stating I used to be up in arms on these things and no longer I am, it doesn't even take my energy in that way, and although you have somewhat of a resignation around maybe dating, I don't sense that you are not being up in arms at this latest situation is because you're resigned.

It really is because I get it and I'm responsible and I'm willing to move forward in that. Now, as I move forward and look at this whole dating pool, I feel a little resignation towards that because of how people are coming. How people peopling. And that's 100% you, that's the next phase of growth.

But the great start is in you defining what you're looking for, which is someone - the biggest thing I heard you say is someone who values their own healing and their own evolution and growth, right? So you might want to roll up in church this week.

Roni: Girl, that's another story. I'm all in this top since you made me come continue with my life but anyway.

Radiah: But that was awesome. I'm glad you were open and willing to share it, but you're doing great. You know that already. You know that already. You know you're going to bust this out the park just like you do everything else.

Roni: I hope this helps some people. So if by me putting this out there helps some people, it's worth it, but I don't want to talk about this. I'm just putting it on the record. This is all raw as of yesterday. I'm like, really?

Radiah: Alright y'all. Well, thank you for joining us and listening. Once again, please subscribe, share it with a friend, we are going to have all types of conversations. Some will be heady and cerebral, and some will just be a lot of fun and personal, just connecting and sharing. And we appreciate you joining us for all of them. Please subscribe, leave us a

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review, let us know what you want to hear about. Thank y'all. Have a great one. Love, light, and power.

Roni: Alright, see y'all next time.

Thank you for listening to the Power Paradigm. If you love what you've heard today and want more, come visit us at evoklife.com.