

Laura 00:00

Hello, and welcome to the Next Level Leap podcast. My name is Laura Meyer. And I'm thrilled to be your guide on this journey. With over 20 years' experience as an entrepreneur and growth strategist for some of the country's fastest growing nonprofit and for-profit organizations, I'm passionate about the power of marketing, creating massive positive change in the world. In this podcast, we'll explore how you can use marketing to create a ripple effect of change that will impact lives and communities for years to come. I'm so excited to share my insights and strategies with you and to help you discover how you can use your talents and skills to make a difference in the world. So, let's dive in together and create a marketing report that will change the world.

Laura 00:43

Hi, everybody, I want to introduce you to Maraya Brown. She is a women's health expert. She's also a certified nurse midwife. And I'm really excited to bring her onto the show today to talk to you about this idea of health, like holistic health, not just the kind of health that your doctor might talk to you about, but from a total comprehensive standpoint. And Mariah works almost exclusively with CEOs. And I'm just really excited to share her perspective with you today. So, thanks, Maraya for joining us.

Maraya 01:13

I'm happy to be here.

Laura 01:15

So, you just backing up to the beginning, you left fortune 50 corporate career to serve women. Why did you decide to make this transition?

Maraya 01:24

Yeah, it's a good question. So, I grew up in a family owned business, and always knew I'd go into business. And my undergrad was in marketing. And then I ended up with Procter and Gamble. And I was, you know, top 10% in the nation, your mark for future corporate living between Cincinnati and LA. And my best friend from high school was pregnant and asked me to be at her birth. Wow. And she went into labor. And I showed up, and it changed my life. There's the power to watch a woman give birth. I mean, there's just nothing like it. And she's known me since I was since I was 12. And I'll never forget after that the OB left the hospital room. The nurse left the hospital room. Her mom was out of the room. It was just her and I and I all I was doing I was just crying. I mean, it was it moved me so much. And she said Maraya, come here. She said the only touch I felt was yours. And the only voice I heard was yours. I feel like this is what you're meant to do. And I said, me too, but like, what the heck. This is not what I expected. I was in business suits and stilettos and thought I'd get my MBA. And so, I got certified as a doula and I started volunteering at UCLA, Santa Monica and the Hollywood

birthing center. And take hiked the Inca Trail in in Peru up to Machu Picchu. And it was on day three of the four-day hike that I just decided, I said, this is just silly for me to continue a journey that I thought was predestined, because it's what I expected, and it's good money. But I have a calling that I can't deny. And so, I came back and I quit my job. And I booked a one-year solo around the world trip and applied to grad school and worked with midwives while I traveled. And it's when I was actually in West Africa, working with midwives there that I got accepted at Yale for their CNN program. And that's, that's a quick snapshot of how that all went down.

Laura 03:48

Wow, what a fascinating experience and story. Yeah. And so, you went to Yale you got or I guess, I'm assuming that's the nursing.

Maraya 04:00

That's the CNN. Yeah. So, it's a nurse practitioner training, and I specialize in OBGYN. So, I'm called a certified nurse midwife.

Laura 04:09

Oh, wow. Very neat. And so, a lot of women were in talks specifically to women, business owners, CEOs. A lot of who's listening today. They've been wearing a lot of hats. CEO, mom, teacher. Why is this so hard for us to prioritize our health? Do you think?

Maraya 04:29

Well, I think we're really good at focusing on other's needs and putting out the fire that's in front of us. We're great at multitasking. And for some reason, many women have an end man too, to be honest. I do have male clients. They're my VIP clients. But for some reason, some of us are allow ourselves to give from a cup that's either empty or half filled, or we keep filling it up and it's cracked. And we don't set aside the time to go, Okay, wait a minute, if I'm serving and I'm giving my gifts, but they're not from a really empowered, filled up place are, am I really giving to my full potential and is the person who's receiving from me actually receiving my greatness and that's my children. That's my employees. That's my clients. And so for many, it's a big bold decision to say, wait a minute, I'm actually going to prioritize myself specifically health, because a lot of my clients will say, Well, I've invested heavily in business coaching, and that has a direct ROI on the bottom line, but to invest in themselves, in in who they be in their health and their energy in their sleep, and their skin and their radiance. That's like when you walk into a room how you make people feel. Yeah. And in my world, it has a phenomenal direct ROI. But it definitely requires a bit of reframing for people.

Laura 06:17

What are some of the common symptoms? Do you think people?

Maraya 06:28

So often, it's I'm tired, I wake up tired, or I have the afternoon slump. I get very irritable, crabby or feel anxious. I'm not sleeping well, specifically that like two to 4am Wake up where my mind is buzzing, but my body's exhausted. Brain fog. So, I just can't maintain the mental clarity throughout the day. Having a harder time losing weight, and specifically putting on more weight around the abdomen. Many women come in and they have lost their libido. And, you know, I say is it that they're not turned on? Or they're not turned on by what's being offered to them? And is it physiological? Or is it just simply that they're not prioritizing themselves, they're not doing the things that they love. And so, they're kind of like not turned on by their life in general. Strange cravings, so women will come to me that they have really strong cravings one way or the other, often, salt. menstrual cycles will be irregular, so heavy, painful periods, irregular menstrual cycles, or a woman's experience through her 40s and early 50s is really intense. Where it's it shouldn't be that way. There shouldn't be such extreme PMS, irritability, menstrual migraines, heavy periods, hot flashes, sleep disturbances, all of that stuff, it all, it all comes back to our foundational I mean, from a functional medicine, functional medicine trained to so from a functional medicine perspective. It's how's your gut, how's your adrenals how's your liver, how your hormones and how's your mental well-being and your stress management. And I love that you said at the beginning, we're going to talk about health, but not just kind of the cookie cutter health advice that we get when we go see our doctors. One of the things that most all of my clients will say is I'm having these symptoms. And I've gone to providers, and I'm saying here's what I'm feeling. And they say well, we ordered some labs, we order some tests, everything looks normal on our end. And they come to me saying, Okay, I'm being told that everything's normal, but I don't feel normal. And so, for those of you that are listening, I want you to really listen to yourself. Like if you are having symptoms that feel abnormal, okay, just because it's common does not mean it's normal. And if it if it feels like this is not my normal, even if your provider has said, Nope, all your tests are normal, I want you to continue to advocate for yourself. Because when we look under the hood in different ways. And when I look at your lab tests with different ranges in mind, it's amazing what we can find? And most all of the time the solutions don't need a prescription.

Laura 09:42

Yeah, so that's actually what I was wondering when I was hearing you speak. So, there's those are some of the symptoms, what are some of the underlying issues that you typically see with women in their 40s and 50s? And yeah, I would imagine that being an entrepreneur or CEO worsens the challenges that most women face every day from a stress standpoint, from a feeling of responsibility, from a time challenged? What are some of the results that you typically see those symptoms?

Maraya 10:18

Yeah, absolutely. And I get it. I'm a CEO, too. I'm a mom, I have three kids, they're 10, and younger. And I also run a successful business. And, you know, I think we get to be the CEO of our business, we also get to be the CEO of our lives, we get to be the CEO of our health, we get to be the CEO of our relationship. And so, I heard two parts to that question. First is, what are the most common causes? And second, what are the results that I see in the clients that come and work with me foundationally the, the byproduct of high stress, and skipping meals, and dealing with sleep deprivation, and potentially not putting the most nutritionally dense food in your body and taking a shelf of supplements that you have no idea what they are, that will catch up with someone. And so often, what I see is, there's something called gut dysbiosis, where the good bacteria are low, and the bad bacteria is high. So now we're not absorbing the nutrients from the food that we're eating. It's causing body aches and brain fog and immune dysfunction. So now we get sick easily, or it takes us longer to recover. It impacts how we produce our hormones that make us feel happy and connected. And it also helps it also impacts our sleep hormone. So, it impacts our sleep, okay, then our adrenals. The adrenals are the place that produce cortisol, that's that fight, flight or freeze. And when we're go, go, go, go, go, go put out the fire, put out the fire, go, go, go, go, go, right, we've got cortisol being produced, produced, produced, and after a while, the adrenals just simply get tired. And for the woman who is the CEO in her 40s and early 50s, that's a really dire scenario, because the ovaries start slowing down a bit. And they're not producing as much of the hormones that we really want, for energy and mood stability and libido, and in great menstrual cycles and brain clarity and healthy bones. So as the ovaries start slowing down, it's generally the adrenals that will pick up the brunt of it. But if we have been taxing our adrenals, under high stress, then when the adrenals get the knock on the door, they say nope, sorry, door closed.

Maraya 12:49

And I have the visual of like the clothesline that shows up in the window when you walk up to the store, sorry, closed. And so now women feel more irritable, more exhausted, they're putting on more weight, they're still sleep is more disturbed, right. And I can keep going. But I think you know, there's lots of other factors, it has to do with what we're putting in and out of our mouth, in and out of our eyes in and out of our heart. But the results that I see, oh my gosh. So, the clients that I work with, they come back saying, first of all, their lives change. They say things like I've come alive again, I recognize myself in the mirror, the bloating is gone. All the GI disturbances are gone. My energy is back. Now, when I have free time, I'm not going to the park with my kids. Sitting on the side with my phone, I'm actually out playing with my children. I just had an amazing weekend getaway with my husband, and we connected, and we made love and I feel so hurt and they feel so seen and my libido is back. I have I'm just like thinking through some of the clients that have lost, you know, a lot of weight, but it's not about the weight loss in my world. It's more about the cellular vitality, and the new zest that's in their life, which then converts to more confidence.

Maraya 14:09

And once again, I love I think it's Maya Angelou says, people don't remember what you say they remember how you make them feel. Yeah. And so, as we start making these shifts and prioritizing ourselves and feeling spectacular, and not having the aches and pains in the body, weigh us down that then becomes emotional labor. That gets in the way of CEOs being in their vision. When we move that out of the way we come alive, and the light bulbs turn on in the room. And so, women go oh my gosh, I just have this great idea. And now I'm building this new business and I quit that thing and I fired that person, and I can think of so many examples. I've got one who was afraid of flying and so that's kind of like wait, what does that have to do with anything but in the midst of, of my flagship program, it's a multidisciplinary team. So, it's me, I have a dietician, a mindset coach, a sexologist, and a trauma release specialist. So, with this specific client, the fear of flying became debilitating and was affecting the ability to run a business.

Laura 15:26

So, would you say that, like, a lot of the trends we're seeing is like low carb or intermittent fasting? Would you say that there's like general trends that you see very effective with women who have these types of struggles? Or would you say that it's kind of its customized to the person?

Maraya 15:46

That's a great question. Yes. And so, I don't think one size fits all the most mainly women that come and work with me, we're looking at functional tests. So, I'm able to see quantifiably through their stool, their urine, their saliva and their blood, what's actually going on in their scenario. And so, the dietician and I come up with a very customized plan for each individual. And with that being said, I think most women, I know that intermittent fasting is a big fad right now. And I see value in it from the perspective of insulin, more resiliency. But I don't think that intermittent fasting in the morning, suits very many women, I think we actually need quality protein and fat first thing in the morning. But intermittent fasting at night, is phenomenal, because it's when our metabolism is already slowing down, it helps so that our brains can actually truly rest and rejuvenate while we sleep. So, stopping caloric intake within two to four hours of going to bed, and then getting eight hours of sleep, there's an intermittent fast when it comes to low carb. If that means cutting out fruits and vegetables, then no thank you, I think we all need a wide variety of fruits and vegetables, that's one fad that's never going to go out of style. And I'm and I think many of the clients that I work with actually benefit from some quality grains in their body. I can think of one where a no grain diet really did work best for her constitution. Yeah, and most all of them do eat some meat, it's quality meat. I'm not opposed to a vegetarian diet, but I think women, particularly women that have high stress jobs, in that 35 to 55 age range, we really do need quality protein, and most of the time that's going to come from eggs or fish or quality chicken. And, you know, I have some general like if I had it all my

way in, I would love it if most everybody didn't eat gluten, or dairy or sugar or caffeine or processed foods. And for some they go, you know, they're no longer going to listen to the rest of this podcast or like. And so, I think we have to meet each of us based on where we are and make sure that it can whatever the change is, it can become a lifestyle change rather than a short-term quick fix. And we get to take baby steps that that push us slightly out of our comfort zone. But don't take us over the edge to the point that we do nothing at all.

Laura 18:48

Yeah, yeah, that's really good advice. So, as we are wrapping up here, is there one thing in particular that you think like everybody could start doing, especially if they're a woman? They're working high stress lifestyle. They're running a company, like, is there one thing that you would say they could start doing tomorrow and it would make a pretty big difference for them?

Maraya 19:10

Yes. Three things that I'll highlight one. So, the three things are hydrate, well, lots of water. Yeah. The second thing is eating more produce, if you can get every color and every day or a minimum of just when you sit it look at your plate are there at least three color colors and food coloring doesn't count. Okay, but the one thing I want to highlight is the one thing that you could all start tomorrow is something called adaptogens. Okay, so adaptogens all come from the plant mushroom and botanical kingdoms, and they help the body better adapt to stress. There's lots of them out there. Some of you might have heard of one before such as dark chocolate, green tea, ashwagandha, Reishi, Chaga, Shatavari and now we're seeing a lot of them more mainstream, I'll go to the natural foods store and there's an adaptogen elixir premade. So, I have some adaptogen elixir recipes, I would highly recommend you just download them, they're free. If you go to my Instagram, I'm sure it'll be in the show notes. The in the link in the bio, you can grab those, I can also just give you the link that will be in the show notes to download the adaptogen elixir recipe. So, what it looks like is you're going to drink an adaptogen elixir every day, maybe even a few times a day. And there's three main components. It's the adaptogen, a protein source and a fat source. And then you add hot water and some nut milk and sweetener to taste. So, we've got the adaptogen when you look at the recipes, rasa and Four Sigmatic are two very common brands also a NEMA moody I love them NEMA Mooney. So, you have your adaptogen. And they have all different flavors. So, this should be an enjoyable hot beverage experience, ideally as a coffee replacement, or a coffee titration down and then you add your protein source. So, most of the time for me that's a powdered collagen. If you don't do collagen, you can do a plant-based protein powder instead. And then you'll add hot water. I like to add dandy blend sometimes because it gives that kind of coffee flavor, but it's also supporting my liver and supporting your liver. And also adding something that's called prebiotics. And then you add your fat source. So fat sources generally going to be MCT oil, coconut oil, you could use avocado oil, olive oil, organic key, there's lots

of options. And then depending on how you enjoy the texture, you can emulsify it with a little hand frother add some nut milk to taste. You know, maybe you like really light nut milks, like a rice milk or almond milk, I like really creamy like the nutpods or the Costco organic soy milk. And then I'll usually do just a couple drops of Stevia. And pretty much everyone that works with me ends up making these and then sometimes we'll supplement with additional adaptogens that are personalized to the individual at a very specific time in the day based on their 24-hour cortisol curve.

Maraya 22:27

But what this does is it goes into your body and helps the body better adapt to stress. That's great. Yeah, and each adaptogen kind of has its own magic, so to speak. I'm not going to get into all the specifics here, but just know that it's feeding your immune health, it's helping your thyroid, it's giving you more stamina, it's helping with juiciness and vitality. Some of them are great for mood. And that alone plus when you're adding in the protein and the fat source, now we're helping to stabilize your blood sugar's so you're not having the big roller coasters through the day. And now your body at a foundational kind of unconscious level feel safe. Right? It's not in starvation mode. It's not in fight, flight or freeze. So, when you feel safe, now you can think more clearly. Now you're when you when your body feels safe, that's when it will produce kind of the fun hormones or estrogen or progesterone or testosterone, right? Because the body will choose either stress or bless. And if it's in stress, that means survival. So, it's always going to choose survival first. Do I need to run fast, fight hard or freeze. And so, when we can get ourselves out of that place and actually feeling safe, then we get to really get the juiciness flowing.

Laura 23:55

That's so neat. Well, I'm going to go download that. That sounds really fascinating. And if you'd like to share your Instagram just so that people if they're like wanting listening to this and wanting to check it out, please do.

Maraya 24:10

Yeah, yeah. So, it's underscore Maraya Brown. And Mariah is M-A-R-A-Y-A right. Yeah. So, underscore Maraya Brown underscore. Yeah. And we'll have it in the show notes, I'm sure.

Maraya 24:24

All right. Well, thank you so much for coming here today. It's fascinating information. I love learning from you. And I know our listeners did too. And I am just very grateful for your time today.

Maraya 24:34

Yeah. And excited to have you over on my podcast, I think. I think we're doing an interview in the next couple of months. So, well. You know, fun to do a swap.

Laura 24:45

We'll put that in the show notes as well. All right. Thanks, everybody, for listening. And we'll see you next time on The Next Level Leap podcast.

Laura 24:51

Thank you so much for joining us today on the Next Level Leap podcast. I hope you enjoyed this episode as much as I did, and that you gained valuable insights from our time together. If you want to see any of the visuals I mentioned in this video, you might want to head on over to our YouTube channel where you can see a lot of the things that I'm explaining and in a way that might be a little bit more applicable. And if you want to learn more about our consulting business, make sure to visit Joybrandcreative.com. And finally, if you're enjoying this podcast and you want to support our mission of creating a ripple effect of change in the world, please subscribe and leave us a review on your favorite podcast platform. Your feedback means everything to us, and it helps us reach more people who can benefit from the power of positive marketing. So, until next time, keep making waves and spreading joy. I'll see you soon.