

# It's ok

What permissions would you like to give yourself in order to access your full potential?

This is a question we ask at the end of almost all our reflective workshops with women. We are always touched by the power of the answers that come up. Here are some of the permissions we have heard of. Please feel free to use them in your context and share with others too.



# #1 It's ok to take credit for my work

Sally Helgeson and Marshall Goldsmith in their book "How Women Rise" talk about how one of the greatest strengths of women is their ability to deliver high-quality work. But equally, one of the things they cringe at is bringing attention and visibility to their successes. Sounds familiar?

## Reflect

Why do you think this happens? What has your experience been? Of allowing yourself to take credit or of encouraging the women in your team to do so?

## Try this out

In your next group meeting share an achievement of yours that you are proud of. Observe and make a note of your feelings while talking about your efforts in making it happen.

#2

## It's ok not to be perfect



How often have you experienced this? The feeling of never being good enough to meet your own standards, not trying something new (because of the fear that you won't do a *perfect* job), Spending hours trying to find one perfect picture for a presentation (that 99% of people are never going to notice anyway)....

Sure, having an orientation to doing your best is helpful....up to a point. But when we end up flagellating ourselves for weeks on end for one error or are constantly second-guessing ourselves....that's when this permission would really be helpful.

### Reflect

In what way does your need for perfection hold you back?

### Try this out

- Volunteer to do a task that you are a little scared of or believe you can't be perfect at.
- Spend a whole day without judging yourself negatively

#3

It's ok to focus  
on my job and  
my career



This one can seem a bit strange at first glance; however, in our work with women leaders, we have seen multiple examples of women focusing on their jobs more than their careers.

One way in which women tend to put their jobs before their careers is hesitating to take up new opportunities as they feel guilty about abandoning their manager/teams who have put their faith in them. It could also be getting so focused on mastering the job to perfection that you are not taking actions that build long-term careers.

#### Reflect

In what way are you possibly putting your job before your career?

#### Try this out

If you were to start focusing on your career along with your job, what's the one thing you would start doing this week?

#4

It's ok to ask  
for help



The three toughest words in the English language for many of us.....I need help.

That's why we find this particular permission so powerful every time some one says it at the end of a workshop.

Asking for help can be an act of great strength; that it's ok to not always be a rock or an island; that there is tremendous support and compassion in this world if one opens up to it. This is not to say that it's easy...you could still feel a pit in your stomach when you ask for help but it gets better with each time.

#### Reflect

What are the voices in your head saying when you think about asking for help? Are they true?

#### Try this out

Ask someone to help you today, instead of trying to figure it all out by yourself.

## #5 It's ok to leverage my professional network



In the book "How Women Rise", Marshall Goldsmith and Sally Helgeson say this: "While women are often stellar relationship builders, they tend to be less skilled at leveraging relationships. Or maybe not exactly less skilled, but noticeably reluctant to do so...we see talented, hard-working women who rebel at the very thought of engaging others to help them meet either specific or long-term career goals. They'll gladly spend time and energy getting to know people, offering them help, listening to their problems, giving advice, and drawing them close. But they shrink at the prospect of engaging them in a way that furthers their own ambitions."

The communal qualities that make women great at building relationships may play into the aversion in leveraging those relationships (the feeling is it's not ok to be seen "using" someone). The truth is that asking for a favour can actually be a source of great power.

### Reflect

How have you leveraged your professional network so far?

### Try this

Ask someone in your network for a favour today

To know more about the work we do with women leaders, please visit [navgati.in](http://navgati.in) or write to [deepa@navgati.in](mailto:deepa@navgati.in)