

EPISODE 1502

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FT: So Money episode 1502, Samara Bay, author of *Permission to Speak: How to Change What Power Sounds Like, Starting with You*.

SB: ‘Public speaking,’ this awkward, I think, old-timey phrase. Public speaking is set up in all of our minds because of the culture we live in as something that’s fear-based. We’re supposed to hate it. It’s supposed to make our nervous system go wild, and we’re supposed to wish that we were in the casket, rather than giving the eulogy.

FT: Oh, my God.”

SB: And my offer is what if with, just a little mischievous twinkle, what if you decide that public speaking is love-based instead? That you get to talk about what you care about in a way that makes the care potentially spread?”

[INTRO]

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FT: Welcome to So Money, everybody. I’m Farnoosh Torabi. Have you ever been told to change the sound or the tone of your voice? Voice bias is a real thing in our society, and it oftentimes encourages us to conform the way that we speak in order to get the power, the money, the job, the opportunities that we seek. But that’s no way to live.

Samara Bay is here. She’s a speech coach to the stars and author of *Permission to Speak: How to Change What Power Sounds Like, Starting with You*. Samara writes for women, people of color, immigrants, and queer folks. There’s often a dissonance between how you speak and how we collectively think powerful people should speak, like the wealthy white men who have historically been in charge. But she says the sound of power is changing. Her book is a toolkit for making that change.

Samara and I have a really good discussion on how to use your voice to get what you want, how to create a new definition of what power sounds like, and how to strike the right balance of strength and warmth to land your message. Here's Samara Bay.

[INTERVIEW]

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FT: Samara Bay, welcome to So Money. Congratulations on your new book *Permission to Speak: How to Change What Power Sounds Like, Starting with You*. I love this message. Thank you for writing this book.

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SB: Thank you. Thank you for having me. It's a pleasure.

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FT: Your book is – it talks about so many things. The centerpiece, the theme is really the voice and how to source your power from how you sound naturally. We go through life so often being told that we don't sound the part. We don't sound the part. We need to change our voice. We're too high pitch. We're too low pitch. We talk too fast. We talk too slow. Get rid of the ums. What is this up talk or up speech or vocal fry, which kind of is a modern slam? I think that maybe reality TV and there was like the Valley Girl. Remember that. Needless to say, there's a whole department of “bad talk, bad speech, bad ways of voicing.”

Your profession, your career is helping everyone from actors and artists to orators to help develop their natural voice, so they can rise to the occasion. How do you do this in a world that is so upset and so unprepared and unhappy with how everybody's sounds?

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SB: Oh, my gosh.

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FT: By the way, how are we supposed to sound, right? We also should sound like white, educated men. Crazy.

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SB: Like alpha men, not even men because if any man is listening to this –

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FT: Right, alpha men.

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SB: Who fits into that category, they may also be thinking, “Yes, but I’ve secretly had doubts about my own voice and how I show up in public.” So part of my way into all of this is realizing that even when working with movie stars, because I have this background coaching actors in Hollywood on accents, even when working with movie stars who we would think of as the most “successful” but also, quite honestly, confident people out there, the voice is nonetheless a site for insecurity for literally everyone.

When I realized that because of my sort of rarefied position coaching both them and then also popping in and working with CEOs of billion-dollar companies, I’m like, “Okay, something’s going on here.” Because when it’s this universal, but everybody thinks they’re alone, obviously, as you say, there’s cultural stories. I love what you said. There’s bad talk. There’s just bad talk. There’s bad ways to talk. It’s become, obviously, internalized for most of us. So it becomes instead, shoulds rattling around in our mind when each of us has the chance to get up and speak.

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FT: Well, it's just so horrible. It's like telling someone, "I don't like the way you laugh," or, "I don't like the way you walk," or, "I don't like the way your nose looks." Okay, first of all, talk about vulnerability. Talk about I can't change this. Now, you're telling me that this is going to be a barrier for me. How did it all begin that we associate strength and power to this alpha patriarchal tone?

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SB: I mean, we live in the white supremacist patriarchal society.

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FT: Wait, what?

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SB: I think that might be how it started too. I jumped back and did some really specific research. There's this woman in the UK who's really celebrated named Dr. Mary Beard, who's written a book called *Women & Power*. She's a classicist, so she actually studies ancient texts and sees the ways in which the themes that were read then live in us now. The ways in which we can sort of cast that aside and be like, "Oh, that's so old-timey." No, no, no, no, right? It lingers. The stories of our societies' origins linger in us every time each of us listens to somebody on a stage and decides whether to take them seriously or not and sometimes ourselves.

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FT: You have been told to change the sound and tone of your voice, at least once. I have many times as someone who was in pursuit of a job on television and giving newscast and all that. I had a boss telling me once, "Stop saying shoulda and coulda. You sound like a kid. You sound like you're uncertain, ums." Even to this day, I'll admit, I go back into the podcast and get rid of some of my ums and awkward pauses, mostly because I just want to make it a faster experience for the listener. People already play the podcast on one and a half speed, so. It's more for like –

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SB: Meeting them where they are.

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FT: Meeting them where they are. If you meet me in real life, I don't sound exactly like I sound on the podcast because I'm not so polished in real life. But even like the newscast, right, you have to sort of take on that Walter Cronkite in the beginning. I'm talking – I'm dating myself. But back in the day, it was about sort of this. I had a guy who I was dating one day. He was like, “Can you do that? Can you say – can you read this menu in your newscaster voice?” It was a joke, but it wasn't. It was like there's a voice that I reserve for when the cameras are on. It's crazy.

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SB: These are social norms inside of any of our industries. Certainly, the ones that are public-acing, there is this just age-old, I mean, age-old going back to the Greeks, but also age-old meaning 100 years since radio was a thing and then talkies. There is this age-old sense of what a polished, sophisticated, elite voice sounds like. The BBC in the 1920s decided. The BBC in England decided like, “This is what the Queen's English is, so this should be the standard here.” The US didn't have that.

Then, oh, my God, the talkies came out, and all of these actors started talking in that voice. So we associate with that time period. That was a made-up accent, right? I mean, it was very much drawing bits and pieces, cherry-picking from what was already considered like a prep school fancy, a prestige accent. But it was codified in a way that was deliberately meant to be an answer to the BBC. “Oh, oh, oh. We Americans, we Yanks, we can have a standard too. See, see.” If you don't meet that standard, you don't deserve to be heard.

This is the ways in which, you know. I am not kidding, obviously, when I say that there's a white supremacist, patriarchal element to this. There are ways in which standards, which are, by the

way, absolutely arbitrary, are codified. Then we are judged against those standards. Who do they help? Well, obviously, the people who codified it.

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FT: So this is a huge problem.

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SB: I mean, just to name it. I call these voice biases. So in the list of biases that all of us are really grappling with in 2023 and in our – for many of us corporate institutions through DEI work. There is this other invisible bias called voice bias that linguists know all about. But inside of academic institutions, it's one thing. I'm happy to bring it mainstream and just ask all of us to start to notice the ways in which we're accidentally categorizing who we should take seriously and who we shouldn't.

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FT: Right, right, right. So in this world where there are voice biases, and it can sometimes mean the difference between getting the job or not getting the job, getting the money or not getting the money, getting the opportunity or not, how do you navigate that? Because in an ideal world, I'd say embrace you. Be you. Up talk your way, however, which way, up, down left, right. Do you. But we have to also reconcile that what the reality of the world. What's your advice for someone who is navigating an environment that isn't patient that has these biases?

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SB: Yes. So this is the real meat of it. I'm coach, first and foremost, so I think in terms of what is responsible coaching, what works, and what's practical. So, yes, it is not my job. It's irresponsible to go around saying, "Just be yourself. Embrace yourself, right?" Because at the end of the day, who does that help? The people who naturally hew to those standards and not the people who don't, which is all the rest of us, right? I'm looking right at women, people of

color, queer folks, anybody for whom English is their second language, or they have any accent. That you know, if you're listening, that is on some level in your bones feels different.

For all of us, I just named, right? We're the ones who have to grapple with, "Well, okay. What do I want out of any given day?" If what I want is a true sense of integrity all the way through that I am not negotiating with any aspect of my identity, okay, well, then certain rooms just aren't going to get us. We are not going to get that job, and we're not going to get that money, and we're not going to get that power in that room.

There's another way of dealing with this, which is what is negotiable? What am I willing to sort of play the part on today in order to get a little more power, a little more privilege, a little more position, and then spend it really wisely tomorrow to help the next generation? I like to say that there's really no shame in either one of those. But knowing what you want on any given day will help in terms of what your actual goals are vocally.

Then there's another part of this, which is what we're talking about is the kind of day-to-day negotiations of what version of our self comes out in the room we're in. Then there's this other thing, which is what I'm really interested in, which is what do we do in those big moments. When we have the chance to give that talk or look into that camera and talk about what matters to us or pitch our take or pitch our product to those VCs who are actually secretly desperate for something that feels purpose-driven.

Those are the moments when it's not about the mundanity of office politics. But rather what does leadership sound like in the future? How can we choose to embody that by bringing more of ourselves into those moments? Because, to me, that's really what's at stake here. What do we want leadership to sound like in the future, and what can we do today to help tell that story?

[00:12:14]

FT: Have you ever – that was so well said, and I am so here for all of that. I still wonder about – sometimes, I'm thinking like extremes. Okay. If you have somebody who's like, "If you're going into that room of VC investors, and you are, first of all, a woman, which immediately you're –"

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SB: Good luck.

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FT: Good luck. But on top of that, maybe you don't have the right "voice," you're distracting to them.

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SB: [inaudible 00:12:45] way to put it. Yes. You're confusing.

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FT: [inaudible 00:12:47] a lot for words, like I cannot.

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SB: No, this is –

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FT: How do I articulate bias with voice? I don't know. But do you call it out? You have a consciousness of this. Do you address it? How – what do you do? What do you do? Because now, you're setting yourself behind even more because, one, you came in as a woman, and that doesn't help give you points. Then number two, you have like maybe sort of a laugh-out-of-the-room kind of voice because of your audience.

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SB: Yes. I have two answers. One is about how you prep before that so that you have the likelihood of bringing your most powerful self into that space. Because, of course, what we think

about, how we prime ourselves in advance of those moments makes a big difference. We can prime ourselves by thinking they're going to laugh me out of the room. That does not do well. I mean, literally, MRI machines will tell you what that does to your brain. It's not helpful.

Some of it really is about how each of us individually taps into this sort of collective. A moment, I think, we're in. A movement, almost, one might say, around permission to speak. There's a real sense. Not just my book, but there's a real sense, I think, culturally, of my sisters, my friends who aren't in this room with me are in this room with me. They have their hand on my back, and I'm going to show up, like the version of me I love, around my friends. We will see what kind of an impact I can make when I'm that emotionally available. So some of it is really about how we choose to mindset our way into those spaces.

Then the second, which is practical and I think what you're getting at, is do we or don't we name the bias in the space? It can feel a little scary. It certainly helps to have like HR or someone in there to do it for you. But the reality is that's not often what's happening. I like to say someone asked me recently. I think this feels a little bit lower, less loaded. So I'll give this as an example. Somebody asked me recently. I have a stutter. It doesn't come out very often. So they're not going to know until they know. Should I name it up top?

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FT: What did you say?

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SB: I said, first of all, let me say, first of all, it is so, so personal. Like thank you for asking me, but also you may know it deep in your soul what the answer is without asking me. But since you're asking me, I'll say this. Naming true things helps with connection. Ignoring true things makes for disconnection. That goes for like if a loud noise happens in the middle of your talk, right? If you ignore it and pretend it's not there, oops, suddenly the audience's like, "Is she real up there? What is – wait, are you a person? Do we – are we all person-ing together?"

So name the true thing. If you know for sure that your voice is going to affect them or if you even want to play with it, I don't know, as this sort of a weird little brave act, a mischievous act, you can say, "You know, I have been told I come across a little girly, a little naive. And I'd like you to know, it's just the sound of my voice, and you may be having all kinds of accidental assumptions that you're making based on that. But if you wouldn't mind putting them aside for a moment, I think I've got something here you really want to know about."

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FT: Yes, yes. That's – I love that. I love that. So then, your book is about giving power to your speech, to your voice. How do you center your own joy and as you are speaking and do that and be powerful in spite of these biases? Is there like a four-step program?

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SB: You know, there sort of is. But I feel like with your very speedy and beautifully quick –

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FT: Is there a shortcut? Yes.

[00:16:35]

SB: Is there a shortcut? There's this book that just came out called *Permission to Speak*. It's a great shortcut. It comes out in audio as well. Yes. Here's my thought. It's even quicker than that. It's even quicker than reading a book or a four-step program, if what you're talking about is how to bring a little bit more joy. I call it inner squirrely. It's like a little mystical, a little twinkle in the eye.

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FT: You're still girly.

[00:16:54]

SB: Yes. It's like some – right? Like just remembering that no matter how rough this room is that we're about to head into, how potentially hostile or inscrutable the faces will be. We are walking into that room for something having to do with something that will make our life better, right? Like a yes in that room will improve our life. It'll improve our kid's life. It will improve our parent's life. It will improve our friend's life. Like, oh, my God, the potential for delight.

My question is how do you think about that ahead of time? Some of it is the prep work. Honestly, if you want five minutes, samarabay.com/goodies. You guys, I have a free five-minute warm-up. It's literally what I do before I go on to a microphone to set myself up for the most permission version of myself possible.

But I have one other thought too, which is “public speaking,” this awkward, I think, old-timey phrase. Public speaking is set up in all of our minds because of the culture we live in as something that's fear-based. We're supposed to hate it. It's supposed to make our nervous system go wild. We're supposed to wish that we were in the casket, rather than giving the eulogy.

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FT: Oh, my God.

[00:18:12]

SB: My offer is what if with just a little mischievous twinkle. What if you decide that public speaking is love-based instead? That you get to talk about what you care about in a way that makes the care potentially spread?

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FT: What if. So what you're saying is – because I'm writing a book about fear, and I just stole that line now. What if we just were patient with these fears and didn't think that they were out to

get us but that there's wisdom? So when you're having a moment of trepidation around speaking, what is – if you took a minute to sort of lean into that and say what is it that I'm actually after here? What is the goal? What is this fear saying that I need to protect?

I think that it's saying you need to protect your joy, your success, the way you measure success, not how someone else is measuring success. Go out there and give the speech, but go with these goals in mind. Use this fear to protect these goals, as opposed to trying to change your voice. It's about trying to –

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SB: Oh, yeah. Oh, for sure. Well, I mean, this is the idea of being the new sound of power, right? That actually how we sound when we are on our voice, when we are actually connected to our sense of what matters to us, what if that's what power sounded like, instead of the 2,000-year-old story?

Also, for all of you, for all of us, think about who you like to listen to, Farnoosh included. Who do you invite into this intimate space in your ear? Who do you watch a one-minute speech of, whether they're an actor winning an award or an activist or a politician, and you feel the physical? I don't mean intellectual. The visceral urge to share it, they are our lighthouses. Not that old sound of power.

Every one of those people who might come up as you start to think about whose voice do I actually lean into and love. Of course, it's content, but it's also how they talk, right? Each one of them is an example of the new sound of power and is an example of what we can do when we step into that VC room.

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FT: To bring it to life more, Samara, like what are they doing ineffectively that is allowing, that is giving us such – that's pulling us to them. So their voice is maybe not conventional or the sort of patriarchal tone and that –

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SB: Like you're literally hearing pitch that's higher, and you're hearing like pitch variation.

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FT: Yes, like for example –

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SB: And you're hearing an accent. Yes.

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FT: Exactly. An accent or I'm trying to think of some of the – there are so many people I love to watch that have very unique sounding voices.

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SB: I like to – for example, two examples that come to mind that offer, I think, a little variety. I like to think of AOC and I like to think of Esther Perel.

[00:21:07]

FT: Yes.

[00:21:09]

SB: Right? I mean, there's also – I mean, Cory Booker, when he gave that like loving speech to Ketanji Brown Jackson when she was in the confirmation. So when we think about those moments or when we think about those speakers, what's happening on a practical, practical level, right? Some of it is accent, as we said, et cetera. But some of it is they are willing to be emotionally available in a way that takes work. It doesn't happen naturally.

For most of us, we have years, decades of practice, hiding when we actually care about something because it is vulnerable. That's literally what vulnerable means. You are showing what matters to use, so people can hurt you. But also, it's the only way we make the biggest impact to show, to not just say this matters to me, but to show it. How do you show it vocally? You allow the emotional content of what you're saying to be totally obvious.

That will make your pitch variation more up and downy, rather than caught in your throat on a practical level. That codes for vulnerability. When we get caught in our throat, it's usually called monotone or even vocal fry. We end up sounding like this. When we sound like this, what we're saying is I'm here but like I'm also kind of not here, and I'm in a protective mode. Protecting makes sense, right? No shame. But those moments, when we really want to make an impact, we cannot be in protective mode. We must be willing to share.

[00:22:37]

FT: For the record, the vocal fry phenomenon that I think was sourced from – I don't know. I read a New York Times article about it. I mean, come on. Are we writing articles about this now? Yes. But it was like about the Kardashians and some of the folks on – I'm P.S. they are laughing their way. They are vocal frying their way to the bank. Okay. So can we stop picking them apart like this? There's many things you can take to edit. There are many issues maybe that you can have with certain celebrities, but like let's not be the voice.

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SB: It's low-hanging fruit. You're totally right.

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FT: It's low-hanging fruit.

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SB: There is a generational element to this, right? Who really hates people who speak with vocal fry? Not the people themselves but the vocal fry habit. Who really hates that? Well, I'll tell you this. Everyone I've met who was my mom's generation in the seventies. Oh, my God. You're writing a book on speaking. Thank God. Girls these days really need to save themselves from themselves. I heard it over and over and over and over.

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FT: Wow.

[00:23:38]

SB: Right, because they don't have it. Because it's generational, and we sound like our friends. As I like to say, we sound like the people we love.

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FT: Well, isn't a lot of this –

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SB: So like can we take a second and actually celebrate that? Sorry, what were you going to say? I got excited.

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FT: Yes. But I think this also speaks to we don't do well with difference and change. We as a species, like we just don't like things that are different than us and we take – I also find that when you ask like who's criticizing these women, it's often other women. We can be our biggest critics. We wouldn't necessarily identify vocal fry in a man and say, “Ah, I don't like that.” But we would in a woman. So what does that also say about the culture around voice bias?

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SB: I mean, I think you just said it, right? Just even sitting with that truth and how – look, we don't hold ourselves outside of that realm of who we're judging. Because ask anyone how they feel about their own voice. Really, really dark, complicated things come up, including the phrase – maybe not for everyone listening. But for one of your friends, if not you, I hate the sound of my voice.

It is so normal that to say I don't hate the sound of my voice is actually the anomaly. So we're including ourselves in that list of people we're judging and to what end? What is that costing us financially and in terms of joy and delight?

[00:25:11]

FT: I just went back and watched a video of myself from 2008, so 15 years ago. I mean, can we also talk about when you get older your voice changes? When you're younger, your voice is different. I couldn't believe anyone took me seriously back then because I was young. But I also sounded young, and I also remember, on top of that, applying for an anchor position and the news manager saying that I look like a school girl because I wasn't wearing padded shoulder blazers, and I had my glasses on. She didn't like that. She's like, "Please go buy yourself some blazers. No more cardigans."

It's all part and parcel to this stereotypical image that we want to be persisted because it's comfortable to us. It's safe. It feels safer when you're doing the "expected normal status quo thing."

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SB: It's the status quo.

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FT: It's gross. I left that room in tears. I went to Zara, and I bought those blazers, but I did it with a lot of tears.

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SB: Yes, yes. This is why having a moment where we catch ourselves and go, “Is it me? Or is it society?” Do I have the support, the little bit of power, a little bit of privilege, whatever, to actually plant my flag and say, “Right here, right now, in little ways that bring me joy, I am going to up in the status quo. And I know that when I step out –”

For example, for me right now, right? When I step out, and do a podcast, and I sound like me, and I do not work not to sound like me, and y'all are hearing me, right? I sometimes sound young and say like a lot. I sometimes stand in my power and take pauses because I know I'm saying something big and important. They're all me. That is how I sound in public, and I'm modeling it on purpose. It brings me delight. I'm so loving spending time with you. I'm breathing that in and feeling it, right?

When we choose to do this, to bring the full range of human experience to a public moment, despite the eons of stories that say the public is only for a certain type of person and a certain sound, we are being radical and revolutionaries, even when all we're doing is having a bleep it out conversation.

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FT: Yes. How accessible is that? Everyone's got a voice.

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SB: Everyone's got a voice.

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FT: Except when you don't because you lost your voice, and I lost my voice at one point. You lost your voice for many months.

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SB: Well, but when we lose our voice, yes, it's because of the – as I like to say, we're all functioning members of a dysfunctional society, right? So where are the tradeoffs? In what ways have we taken on the societal dysfunction? What was your story? Tell me this.

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FT: Oh, when I lost my voice?

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SB: yes.

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FT: I will tell you. It was 2000 and I want to say 16. I was doing this podcast for about a year. At that point, I was doing it almost every day. So now, it's a three-day-a-week show. But it started out, Samara, as seven days per week. Then I went to five, and now we're at three. So imagine all those interviews, all those conversations back-to-back, plus living your own life and talking in your own personal life. My voice just gave up, and it was about a week until I got my voice back.

Not a huge problem. I've ran reruns, I think, or I had enough podcasts in the can to run them. But it was actually kind of nice to rest the voice for a little bit. But it's also scary because it was like, "When is this going to come back? You really take your voice for granted."

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SB: Yes, you do. Did it teach you anything? I mean, I guess the question is did you do anything differently afterwards?

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FT: I think I took the podcast from seven days a week to five days.

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SB: That was it. That was it.

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FT: Well, I wasn't really – I don't think that I at that point because at that point, I think I had learned a lot of my lessons about the challenges, the blow-ups that come with trying to have an artificial voice, and be someone that you're not. So the podcast, for me, was a way to feel very much myself. I just finished a conversation with someone else on the show about figuring out the Internet. I had – I just didn't really want to be someone who had courses and was doing promos on all the time every day on social media.

But I thought, well, a podcast is kind of Internet-adjacent. So that's going to be my Internet thing. I can be in my pajamas, just use my voice. I don't need to use my face. I don't need to use my feet. I don't need to use my hands and do this thing. It's sustained me for eight-plus years. I think I was onto something. I think because I just made it easy. I was like, "What's the easiest thing?" What's easier than just using your voice? I mean, it took me a while to get to that point, to that realization. But then it happened, and it paid off.

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SB: I'm still stuck on you not using your feet, as though that's like a major benefit. But maybe it is.

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FT: I mean, I don't have to. I mean, maybe I'll start doing this podcast on a treadmill because I really feel –

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SB: Ooh, yes, yes, yes. Or on a run and like we hear you heavy breathing.

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FT: It hasn't been good for my hips. Yes.

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SB: Well, listen. I similarly had a moment of voice loss, as you suggest. For me, it happened in my 20s, and it was months in the making, and I felt it coming on and was sort of trying to ignore the pain. For me, there was a real pain element. It just felt really existential. I would have these late nights of what is my voice trying to tell me, as I shut down from society. I was in this acting graduate program. So, of course, I dropped out of the play, I dropped out of singing, I dropped out of talking to people, and I would show up in class like a ghost.

Then, for me, the major aha that in a way turned into this book 20 years later was that the day that I got diagnosed with vocal nodules, and the guy, the ENT, stuck a tiny scope. For anyone who's experienced this, you don't forget this feeling, a tiny little camera up my nose and down the back of my throat, into the throat of my vocal cords. It's not painful. It's just odd.

Anyway, I got this picture back. I got the diagnosis, and I got back to class. I had missed the morning session. I had this experience of all eyes turning on me, as I walked back into class. The guy who ran the whole program stopped everything and said, "So what's the diagnosis?" I said as audibly as I possibly could through these like extremely inflamed vocal cords, "Vocal nodules. I have to go on vocal rest." He said, "Ha, just as I thought, bad usage," which actually stuck with me way longer than the actual problem did.

I went to a speech pathologist. I literally relearned how to talk. It turned out I've been speaking habitually a tiny bit lower than my body's ideal pitch. I had to figure out how to speak a little higher and allow this sort of ego jolt that happens when we hear ourselves talking a little differently. I had to deal with that, and it took a few weeks. But the shame from that bad usage

moment outlasted the actual problem by years. It rattled around in there, and I was just like, “Why? Why did I do this to myself? Why did I sabotage myself?”

That was the part where I wish I had the book I've written now. I just didn't put it together, until I finished the book. Then I was like, “Oh, that's what's happening here.” Because the reality is when any of us get told you'll be taken seriously if you stop saying like if you lower your voice, if you do this, if you do this. We are left with two things. One, the practicals of how do I fix that. two, this more existential question with often a bit of shame around it of why am I doing this to myself.

So I like to bring in, and I realized we're probably at time, so maybe this was a good ending. I don't know. But I like to bring in that linguists will say that every one of the vocal habits any of us have picked up, we've picked up for a reason. It has served us in some way. Those hedgings, the likes and the – or whatever's. They soften our speech when softening, in fact, helps us get what we want, until maybe that day it doesn't. Until maybe that day it doesn't. That's the interesting inflection point.

[00:34:01]

FT: In defense of ums, I will end on this. I read that or I saw it on Instagram or someone was talking about, it was a linguist, that when you say um, your brain needs a break sometimes when you're talking. Or your brain – you talk sometimes faster than your brain is thinking. So it's actually helpful. It's a mechanism that helps you to clarify and make more clear your thoughts because you're giving yourself that opportunity to pause.

Me, it comes out as an um, whatever. Sometimes, you don't say um. Or you say uh. But it's not because you're bad at talking. It's because your brain is doing what it naturally does, which is like it's processing. So permission to use um is okay.

[00:34:45]

SB: Permission to use um. Well, and also, Farnoosh, you know who else needs time to process? Your listener. An um and a uh is a gift. It is a generous act that our body naturally does to say, “I’m going to catch up to myself. Give me a moment. I bet you need it too.”

[00:35:01]

FT: Yes, yes. Oh, my God. So many permissions. Thank you. Thank you, Samara Bay. Your book is called *Permission to Speak*. Tell us the link for the goodies. I need that.

[00:35:11]

SB: My website is samarabay.com. It's just my name/goodies. It's a little secret link that you're all getting. But it's just a five-minute warm-up. Seriously, it's – people are always like, “But what's your tips? But what's your tips?” I'm like, “Just do a quick warm-up.” It's not what you expect. It's a little bit of breathing stuff. But it's a little bit of mindset stuff because we really have access to huge amounts of power and permission inside of us. But how do we get there quickly?

[00:35:39]

FT: Thank you. We'll put that link in our show notes. Congrats again.

[00:35:43]

SB: Thank you.

[END OF INTERVIEW]

[00:35:46]

FT: Thanks again to Samara. Her book is *Permission to Speak*. The link is in our show notes. Be sure to stay tuned for Friday's episode. If you have any money questions, career questions, send them my way, farnoosh@somoneypodcast.com. You can also direct message me on

Instagram. You can also go to the website, somonypodcast.com, and click on Ask Farnoosh. I'll see you back here in a couple of days. I hope your day is So Money.

[END]