

EPISODE 1516

[INTRODUCTION]

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FT: So Money Episode 1516, Shanna Hocking, author of *One Bold Move a Day: Meaningful Actions Women Can Take to Fulfill Their Leadership and Career Potential*.

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ANNOUNCER: You're listening to So Money with award-winning money guru, Farnoosh Torabi. Each day, in a 30-minute dose of financial inspiration from the world's top business minds, authors, influencers, and from Farnoosh herself. Looking for ways to save on gas, or double your double coupons? Sorry, you're in the wrong place. Seeking profound ways to live a richer, happier life. Welcome to So Money.

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SH: And there's so much advice for women. I mean, wear the dress to the interview so you look more feminine. No, wear pants to the interview so you look more masculine. I don't know how anyone supposed to make any good decisions when all you hear in your ears is desperate advice and really, it's not authentic to who you are as a person.

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FT: Welcome to So Money, everybody. I'm Farnoosh Torabi. Wouldn't it be nice to have an essential roadmap to help you feel more confident, clearer, intentional in your goals at every stage of your career and your life? I'm raising my hand. Our guest today is Shanna Hocking. She has written a new book called *One Bold Move a Day*, which reveals that practical hands-on roadmap to achieving your own professional goals with intention and joy. This includes bold mindset shifts leading from where you are, and recognizing the boldness, and courage, and

even the smallest and seemingly mundane moves we make every day. This does include getting up out of bed.

Shanna leverages her 20 years of experience as a successful manager leading large teams in billion-dollar, nonprofit organizations, and a leadership consultant to universities and companies. But the road wasn't always easy. Early on in her career, Shanna tried to do everything "right." She leaned in, spoke up in meetings, supported colleagues' strategies and raised her hand for new projects. Her enthusiasm helped her get ahead in some ways, but the pushback from others nearly derailed her. It took a while, years in fact, before she was able to see what she was doing and regain the power of becoming her best self. She's got some advice for us on just that. Here's Shana Hocking.

[INTERVIEW]

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FT: Shanna Hocking, welcome to So Money. I'm so excited to learn all about all the bold moves that I'm going to be making now in my life, because you have done the hard work of putting that together for us into a beautiful brand-new book called *One Bold Move a Day: Meaningful Actions Women Can Take to Fulfill Their Leadership and Career Potential*. Welcome to the show.

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SH: Farnoosh, thank you so much. I'm glad to be here and make bold moves together.

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FT: Your book came out in the fall of 2020, emerging out of the pandemic. In some ways, was your book influenced by some of the experiences of the last few years and how so many of us were isolated? It was very challenging to show up at work, we had to kind of relearn how to be at work, as we were also at home and doing it virtually. I'm always fascinated with authors that

come out with books, have come out with books since 2020. I always start there, because I think that it's an inevitable influence on your writing and also your advice.

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SH: Absolutely. That pandemic changed all of our lives personally and professionally. Though I had been writing what was eventually the first draft of the book that didn't ever come to be. Everything changed during the pandemic and it felt even more important to support women in particular, and leading themselves and others when the world was out of control and upside down. It felt so important to do this because everything we had ever known changed overnight. There was never really any kind of roadmap for us anyway, but anything that would have been a scrap of a roadmap burned up overnight, and we had to rewrite the whole story.

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FT: Yes. I love how your book encourages simplicity and focusing on one move per day or one move at a time, as opposed to what we normally are we gravitate to doing. Especially as women is, all of it all the time nonstop, doing it all, having it all. It kind of reminds me of the book that I read years ago called – at least the title called *The One Thing*, which completely dispels everything we've been taught and everything that culture has implied, which is that, you have to be good at many things. You have to be like the seven-at-one stroke kind of person.

But no, maybe if you do just have like one area of focus and you just become the best at that, that that can be your winning ticket. Tell us about how you arrived at this concept. I know for you, like many authors with great advice. There's a personal story there, and I was reading how you were that employee who checked up on a lot of the boxes, you participated, you leaned in, you did all the things. Then yet, you did end up feeling a lot of impostor syndrome. Can you walk us through that stage of your life and how it informed the advice in the book?

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SH: Well, I kept trying to do everything that I thought I was supposed to do. There's so much advice for women. I mean, wear the dress to the interview, so you look more feminine. No, wear

pants to the interview, so you look more masculine. I don't know how anyone supposed to make any good decisions when all you hear in your ears is desperate advice. And really, it's not authentic to who you are as a person. In my effort to emulate people that I admired or wanted to be like, I stopped really making decisions that were based on what I thought was the best way to show up as a team member, as an employee, as a leader.

I've really got to a point where very negative voices had gotten into my head, because there was no shortage of people telling me that I was too much, or I needed to not share all of my ideas, or could I stop looking good in that meeting to make them look better, at no shortage of things, that all women hear when they are high achievers. When I felt like, "Oh my gosh, I really don't even know where my own voice is anymore." I started to figure out a way to reclaim it. One bold move a day was that pathway. It was the reminder that I didn't have to get it all right, I just have to move forward, learn, and grow. I could just do that one time, one day that I would have the energy and motivation to do it again the next day.

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FT: I think a lot of this is raising the consciousness, because I'm sure there are people listening, myself included who are doing the bold things, but we don't appreciate them as bold moves. We don't consider them brave moves, let alone bold moves. But can you maybe give us some examples of some of the everyday things that we may already be doing. But recognizing them as bold, it can be such a game changer.

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SH: One of the fundamental messages from this book is to celebrate progress. Women and women in particular are always doing the next thing, just like you were saying, the infinitely long to do list. Instead of saying, I have done so much, I have learned so much, we're always thinking, "What more can I do? What do I have next to have to be done?" When I was thinking about how to make this tangible, it was really about helping people honor their own progress. When you define a bold move, as I do, as an intentional action that helps you move forward, learn, and grow. This means that a bold move, some days is getting out of bed. And on other days, it's nurturing your personal relationships, it's connecting with a mentor, it's saying hello to

someone in a coffee shop. That shouldn't be so radical, but it really is for many people. When you start to recognize that all of these things are helping you to grow, try something in a different way, get more comfortable. Then you can say, "Wow, I really have done so much rather than, "I'm never going to get to the end of this to do list."

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FT: Before you get to the to-do list, we have to anchor it in a goal in what is the payoff, right? What are we trying to pursue, at least maybe going back to your own personal experience with this. When you reflect on your own journey, what was it that was anchoring you throughout all of this? What did you want to do, become, pursue where these bold moves where you felt they were adding up towards that goal, that promise to yourself?

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SH: I found my dream career at age 18. That's pretty unusual to find your dream career at age 18.

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FT: How did you do that? For like a minute, talk about that.

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SH: Yes, for sure. I mean, it's definitely one of those moments in a movie where everything starts to slow down and get fast all at the same time. There's definitely like really good music playing in the background. But for me, I was standing in the back of a room where a young man from a certainly wealthy family was naming a gym in honor of his mentor. For me, it was just this realization of all of these things happening at one time that you could create meaning through money, through philanthropy, and that I could play a role as a conduit for creating that meaning for an organization and a person. Up until then, I wanted to be a fashion designer, and a writer, and a social worker, and a rabbi. For me, fundraising was all of those things. I got to be up on a

stage in some capacity, I got to do a lot of writing. I did a lot of listening, sometimes being a fundraiser is like being a psychologist, and a rabbi.

Ultimately, it was a chance to create meaning for my donors that I worked with, but also for myself. It's a very wonderful profession, but to find it at age 18, no one even knows fundraising is a career. I found it really early on in my life, and my goal was to work my way up to the magical corner office and, and lead a large team, and that's exactly what I was able to do.

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FT: Of course, along the way, as you mentioned, there were some trip ups, there were some voices in your head, there was that, as I say, like falling into that likeability trap. You want to kind of do it as others, expect of you, or what you think other people's success, playbooks look, you're going to follow that. What were some other challenges in your way towards that corner office? Then, along the way, did your goals change because you have a nicer office, but it's not the corner office. As we know, the expression, you're in your home, which is even better than a corner office in my estimation. But what were some of the things in your way?

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SH: I think one of the biggest things of being in my way was being a woman in the workplace. There were so many men who I'm sure were well intentioned, but not well delivered in terms of giving me feedback about how to show up in the workplace. Don't be too aggressive, but also make sure you get work done, and you're going to need to get your elbows out to do that. All in the same breath, all on the same day. I don't know whether it's possible for anyone. I had a senior leader say to me, "I'm not going to recommend you for this traveling, international traveling role, because you have a family at home." He said that to me during an interview, which only made me more determined to go do that job, which I did get.

But the voices in my head were reflection of the voices that were happening all around me. "Don't negotiate Shanna, because they don't negotiate there, and you don't want to be seen as a not kind, not good girl." All of these things really tripped me up, and yet, I still kept moving forward with my own bold moves, with my own learning, making a lot of mistakes learning along

the way. To your point about not being in the corner office, I got to that magical corner office, and the pandemic happened, and life changed for all of us, goals changed. What was important to us before maybe wasn't exactly the same thing that was important anymore.

In January of 2022, I left my dream career to start my own business, and write this book, and put it out to the world. I could never have expected that when I first started on my career path.

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FT: Sounds like really, this book is teaching you how to be your biggest advocate your own best advocate in the workplace, and even when you're at home thinking about work. Sometimes it just starts with getting out of bed. You have had many managerial roles, but for those who are in any role, who want to feel as though they're working towards a goal post, maybe that is, whether that's the corner office, or it's exiting one day, and starting their own business. How can you and you talk about this in your book lead from where you are, so that you don't get discouraged? It could be years until that day arrives. How do you do that? No matter where you are in your career, whatever rung of the ladder.

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SH: Leading from where you are is a quintessential term for how I believe everyone is a leader. Leadership is not a reflection of your title, or your authority, or where you are on the org chart. It's the energy by which you serve others each day. To be a leader, if you're in the workplace, you are listening and learning, you are connecting the dots across the organization, and offering your ideas. You are supporting your colleagues, you are giving, and receiving feedback. You are saying yes to something you want to take on as a new assignment. All of these things contribute eventually to – if you do want to be a people leader, those are some of the similar experiences that you'll have to do when you're in that role, but you don't have to wait for that official role in order to make these wonderful changes in the workplace now.

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FT: What are your thoughts about women in work, whatever model women had designed for themselves, how they were going to show up at work, and also probably manage a family, whether it was their own kids, or their parents, or their community. A lot of that was upended in the pandemic. We're seeing many more women return to the workforce now. But as we are in this new era, what are some of the new rules of finding your way in the workforce, especially as a woman who might be – like during the pandemic and even before the pandemic, managing a home front and also trying to pursue a career?

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SH: Well, I want to work to a world and I know you do too, where you can love your career and love your family. I think for so many years, we were told that you had to choose one. It is not easy to do this and you cannot do it alone. It does require a lot in your village, whatever that means for you, your bold move community as I call it. When you are in that workplace, for women to thrive in the world that we're in right now, it requires seeking proactive mentorship and sponsorship.

This to me is something that you actually can do even better in a remote world. I can reach out to you, Farnoosh and I can say, "I'd really love 15 minutes of your time to learn from you about how you navigated X, Y, and Z." Women often feel uncomfortable, men too, but women feel uncomfortable with asking for something for themselves this way. But being proactive to find mentors, to find sponsors, to say, "I want to learn, I want to be in that field, in that role that you're in someday. What advice do you have for me? What should I be doing differently? What's something I should be thinking about?"

I think that we have to expand beyond our immediate company and also look beyond even our industry to find people who can help offer those insights to us. It's so different now to talk about family at work. I was in an era where I didn't even have any pictures of my family in my office for many, many years.

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FT: By design.

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SH: By design, because I had been told so many times that it was going to hold me back from getting the promotions that I wanted. Not only did I not have any pictures, I didn't talk about –

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FT: By the way, can we just say you're young. We're not talking about the nineteen fifties, we're talking about the mid-2000 or 2008, something like that.

[0:16:11]

SH: Yes, it's not that long ago and this is why it's so important to keep working towards this change. To be willing to say, to your manager, how do you do all the things that are important to you? How do you show your family that you care about them when you are working as many hours as you are here? Really challenging them to talk about work and family too, which gives you the space to then talk about yourself. I also think about for women to thrive in the workplaces that we're in now, to keep moving forward your career and not doing it for anybody else. You can do it for your family, you can do it for your partner, but not for your boss, and not for your team.

You are the only advocate for your career. So if opportunities come along, and you think, "Gosh, I don't know if I can leave my team." Think really hard, who is watching out for you, and making those moves that feel important to you, that helps you use your strengths, especially now in the world wherein stop settling.

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FT: Our loyalty as women, it's one of our best attributes. It's also one of our greatest hurdles, I think. To hear what you're saying, this idea of asking yourself, what do you want? It sounds like a very simple question, but we have not been conditioned to answer that question. I think about my own mother, who she and I are only 20 years apart. She's not like – I guess she's a boomer,

but a young boomer. Nobody ever asked her, what are your dreams? What do you want? Then the most important follow up to that, which is, okay, great. How can I help? She had what I have now come to realize as an adult woman who – we all have our issues with her moms, but how I've sort of come to peace with that, because we have a great relationship. But then, of course, we had our challenges, was that she had what I never had, which was stunted growth.

She got married right away, she had me right away, her 20s were entirely wrapped up in taking care of other people. What were you doing when you were 25? What was I doing when I was 19? I was traveling Europe. The point in reminding ourselves of that is that, this is a new way of thinking for women. How do you give yourself the permission to as a modern woman, as I'm checking out about our peers and our contemporaries to go, "I'm going to do this for me, and not allow all that guilt that you may feel, but also that the culture puts upon you to interfere with that"?

Because we know women who want money, who want their careers who are "ambitious", they're cast as greedy. I just did a whole episode on this with Elise Loehnen, and who wrote about *The Seven Deadly Sins* and how biblical times, like we're still reeling from that. It's an attack on women. I guess, the simple question here is, how would you advise a female friend, a woman at work who's feeling afraid to do what she wants because she's got a lot on her plate?

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SH: Yes. I mean, the word guilt is really hard when I think about this, when coaching and giving advice to women. Guilt is the weight of other people's expectations for you. You can be afraid, you can be worried, you can be excited and unsure all at the same time. But guilt holds you back from being in the present. It is all about what just happened or what might happen in the future. I'm sure you're going to write about this in your book. I can't wait to get a copy of your book when it comes out, that it's okay to feel unsure. It is okay to even feel afraid and to say, "I can best serve myself and others by making this choice." It doesn't have to go exactly the way that I've hoped or planned, but I'm going to learn from this. And being that role model of what you want your children, or children you care about, or friends, or team members to see when you make those choices too.

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FT: What I would only offer extra to that is, if you're afraid now, imagine the fear you're going to experience 10 years from now, because you did nothing with this fear. You allow this fear to keep you still, and following the status quo, that you didn't listen to this fear, and that it was pointing you towards what you wanted to protect, which I think we can all agree is our independence, our happiness. I mean, when I'm happy, my family's happy, we know how it works. It's a trickledown effect.

Imagine how much scarier things could get. So if we want to really flirt with the fear, like, I'm going to tell you right now you're afraid and that's fine. But this fear is not moving you to do anything, and that's not a good fear. What you need is a really scary fear. Imagine 10 years from now, you didn't ask for the raise, and you're still earning less than your peers. That has not only impacted your ability to come up in life, and afford the things that you want, but also secure your retirement, provide for your family. I think we need to extrapolate and think about how this fear when we ignore it, or we allow it to just kind of keep us still, how it compounds. The fear doesn't go away, it only gets bigger.

Sometimes we think about that worst-case scenario, because that is the thing that actually mobilizes us, because I don't know what's scarier than imagining yourself in old-age, having to suddenly lean on your adult children. That for me personally, I can say, that would be a failure. That would be a true failure on my part.

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SH: Well, everything that you're doing is helping you to keep moving forward so that that scenario doesn't ever happen. I think a lot of people can learn from that thought process that you just shared.

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FT: Yes. Tell us about your company today and how you are living this bold life today, how you're practicing this book in your life today, even as you have reached the heights and that you have brought home that goal that you promised yourself years ago?

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SH: Well, I firmly believe that when we stop learning, we stopped growing. I think that what I'm trying to do now is to keep myself learning. That's where the joy and energy comes from, for me. I am in my business focuses on the intersection of leadership and philanthropy. We are advising nonprofit organizations to raise meaningful philanthropy from their community, and advising families to give money away strategically in a way that aligns with their goals and values. Then, that really, underpinning all of that is leadership, how are we supporting the leaders, and individuals who are making these choices. It's been really fun to be on the other side, I get to work with clients that include universities, family foundations, individual leaders, companies. Every day, I'm doing something completely different. I enjoy that. It helps me to really feel energized. I'm in charge of my own schedule for the first time in my entire life. I was just reflecting on how freeing that is too.

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FT: Going back to what you were saying earlier about, like when you're talking to mentors, women mentors, how do you show up for your demands at work and everything else you care about? It's not journaling, it's not meditating, it's not even getting like eight hours of sleep sometimes. It is about organizing your life in such a way where you afford yourself the time. You get your time back. Which means, maybe having the right partner. Not everyone can do this, but having the right partner is so, so important. Working from home, that work-life flexibility is so important. Running your own to-do list, so your to-do list is not attached to your boss's to-do list, right? Talk a little bit about the reality of that, and be as brutally honest as you think.

I mean, even if though it may not apply to everybody, but for you honestly, what has afforded you the ability to, like you just said, for the first time in your career, call the shots? It's obviously years and years of building up to this, but in terms of the logistics, and the architecture of your day, what supports that?

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SH: Oh, I have so many supports. I will say that it changed pretty significantly after the pandemic. I'm going to talk first about what life was like in the before times because that was really the energy that I needed to get to where I wanted to go with my personal and professional goals. I have an incredibly supportive spouse. We have been together since we were 17, another slightly unusual thing in our generation.

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FT: Got your job at 18, figured out your life partner at 17. Oh my gosh.

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SH: Done. Yes. But we fell in love before we knew who we wanted to become personally and professionally. We've really had to grow together, and we are a dual career family. He works in academia, and I worked in universities for much of my career. Though we had that in common, our jobs are radically different. But we did have to do all of this, "Okay, who's going to pick up on Tuesday? Who's going to do the school program in the middle of the day? Who's going to go food shopping?" This was before *Drop the Ball* and *Fair Play Life* came out. I really wish that they had come out sooner, because those two books did help us significantly. But we really have had to figure out how to support our careers and our family. We live very far away from any other family members.

That meant that financially, when I was able to, I did hire people to help support our family, and I called it a household manager. We had someone working in our house to help our family run smoothly, it was the Amazon returns, and preparing the vegetables for dinner, and grocery shopping. I feel like this was an essential thing, and I told every woman I could about this job. So many of them would say, "I think I feel guilty if I didn't do the laundry." I was like, "I do not feel guilty not doing laundry, because it allows me to show up as my best self with that limited time that I have for my family."

I think that I grew up in a time where mothers really did feel like they have to do everything, and I know that that still is true, but it was different because we didn't talk about how hard it was to be a mother in broad circles at that time. There were a lot of tears. I had a really tough time figuring out how to show up the way I wanted to, and always – I think that's important, too. I wish that someone would have talked more openly about that with me, in order to help navigate my way personally and professionally as I grew my career.

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FT: Thank you for sharing that. I read the other day online, like the secret to child rearing, and having a career at the same time is living as close to your in laws as possible.

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SH: I read that too. I read that too.

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FT: I'm like, "Well, ain't that the truth." It comes with other issues, maybe, but I know. I know people who have moved when it wasn't convenient in many ways. But they moved to where their parents lived, or their partner's parents lived because it was going to make their lives just run a lot smoother, at least in those very difficult child rearing years. I will credit that I had because I grew up in my career in New York City. My first job was in New York, and my last job was in New York, and my business is still – well, I'm incorporated in New Jersey now. That's recent.

I worked with a lot of very career-minded women and who were very ambitious in their personal lives too, like family, and marriage, and seeing their friends, and going out, and vacationing, and all that. I think I worked with this one woman who was just on apologetic about herself, and her needs as a mother, as a woman, as a wife, as a sister. She came first in her life. I mean, this doesn't mean like she didn't – she wouldn't throw herself in front of a car if it meant saving her child's life, she would 100% do that. But my point is, is that, I never saw her carry any guilt

around her decisions. She would figure it out. She worked hard, so that she could also have the allowance to invest in the other people to help her navigate her life the way she wanted.

It was a privilege to have the career that she had and the money that she had, but she invested it in ways, which then would pay off so that she could get her time back., and that she could live her life in myriad ways. Not just as a mother, or just as a career person, or just as a wife. She would go on a vacation with her girlfriends by herself, and would arrange for childcare, but maybe not entirely, and her husband would figure it out. I never saw her feel guilty or regretful of her personal decisions, even as her plate got fuller and fuller. I just thought, I'm going to borrow that. It's not easy. It doesn't – I mean, I have my days, but I think I think back on these women who paved the way for me, who were maybe five years older, 10 years older.

I also saw the struggles. I saw the day when she came out of HR when she was six months pregnant in tears because she realized that there was no real maternity leave. It was a two-week vacation; you can piece together. It could be like 10 more days, and then the rest of it is, you have to do short-term medical leave or something like that, and she was in tears. I've seen it on both ends, but gratitude to all the women before me who did it, and made it look easy, but obviously probably wasn't. But it gave me the confidence. Shanna, thank you so much for joining us. Your book, again, is called one bold move a day. Can you leave us with a bold move that you like to recommend. Where do I start? What's one thing I can do starting as soon as I move on from this podcast?

[0:30:44]

SH: The very first bold move that I like to recommend for people is to go find a plain manila folder around your house. This is going to become your bold move folder. You are going to put into it the notes, accolades, and accomplishments that you receive, and you define what these things are. If it's a note that you receive from a reader or a listener, who says, you really helped me at the moment where I needed it the most, you can print it out and pop it into the folder. When you start to look for these things to celebrate your progress, you will find that your folder fills up very quickly and you make the commitment to then fill up other people's folders too. The bold move folder, I think is the perfect place for anyone to start with their bold moves.

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FT: I love that bold move folder. It can be any color, right? It doesn't have – I don't have a manila envelope or anything.

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SH: No, it can be any color.

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FT: Anything you want.

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SH: That's right.

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FT: Thank you so much, again. We'll put your book link in our show notes, and you're welcome back anytime. Thank you for this incredible, incredible hour.

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SH: Oh, Farnoosh. Thank you so much for what you do for all of us.

[END OF INTERVIEW]

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FT: Thanks again to Shanna Hocking, founder and CEO of Hocking Leadership and author of the new book, *One Bold Move a Day*. I have that link in our show notes. Thanks so much for

tuning in everyone. I'll see you back here on Wednesday. In the meantime, I hope your day is so money.

[END]