



Unstoppable: Becoming a Lifelong Learner

Molly Fletcher is an unstoppable woman. If you've never heard her story, check out her blog post on "How I Lived Rent Free for 9 Years"! Molly is also a follower of Jesus and a 4word woman, and her approach to life and love of learning are Game Changers - which just so happens to be the title of her podcast. Molly joins us this September for two Work, Love, Pray podcast episodes, so be sure to listen in. The following is a brief recap of the main points from our 4word interview with Molly interspersed with the Scriptural truths that undergird Molly's wisdom.

Why should professional women make room for lifelong learning? And how can we incorporate learning into everything we do? Molly Fletcher, a former sports agent who's been described by CNN and ESPN as the "female Jerry McGuire," offers up some practical ways we can change our views of life, work and even failure so we can become all that God intended us to be.

Be curious.

"Fools think their own way is right, but the wise listen to others." - Proverbs 12:15

From Molly's experience with professional athletes, she knows that peak performers have a common attribute: they are insatiably curious. They welcome feedback, they read, learn, and ask questions. Simply put, curiosity is part of their DNA.

Curiosity is a key gateway for learning. Young children are curious by nature because everything is brand new to them. If you've ever been around a three- or four-year-old, you know that they are constantly asking "why?" The world is fascinating to children and curiosity is how they begin to make sense of things.

But along the way, most of us learn to contain our curiosity and we stop asking endless questions about why the way things are the way they are. Our childlike wonder about the world tends to get supplanted by more complex emotions. But what might happen if we were to inspire kids to keep pushing the limits and asking questions? And what might be different if we recognized that there is still an opportunity, even for grown-ups, to think outside the box and challenge the status quo?

During her career as a sports agent, curiosity drove Molly's ability to get into the heads and hearts of the athletes and coaches with whom she worked. She was interested in their personal stories, so she asked questions and sought to listen well. And by honing these skills, she began to be able to identify unconscious barriers to peak performance. As a result of her genuine curiosity, Molly was able to offer insights to her clients to help close the gaps.

Insatiable curiosity made Molly an effective agent, but it was also beneficial for gaining new clients. Because she was curious with everyone, not just those she worked with, she was able to be generous with her insights which pleasantly surprised a lot of folks. People are drawn to someone who's genuinely interested and knows how to listen well. By listening, Molly was able



to identify gaps in mindset that could be overcome with a few adjustments - and she was generous enough to share these even with those she wasn't yet working with.

Molly's advice is to be curious about everything - not just about our own careers but about life in general. Because curiosity is a lynch pin for growth.

Ask questions and listen well.

"Understand this, my dear brothers and sisters: You must all be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to get angry." – James 1:19

Everyone has a story and many of those stories are remarkable. So, don't be afraid to ask questions from people within your circle of influence, and be just as open to those who are outside your circle. Anytime there's a human interaction it's an opportunity to ask questions and increase your understanding of what motivates people. Asking questions conveys confidence and shows that you are comfortable enough with yourself that you aren't afraid to admit you don't have all the answers.

Through asking questions and listening well, Molly began to see common denominators between NBA coaches and other high-performing professional athletes. Once she identified the qualities and characteristics these top performers had in common, she was able to pass on that knowledge to her clients - and to a wider audience - through her books.

Molly says that good questions are a vehicle to getting the most out of life. So, channel your inner child and ask questions, and create safety for others to ask questions as well. This makes life exciting and interesting – and basically just more fun!

Shift your mindset.

"Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think." – Romans 12:2

Lifelong learning means embracing a limitless mindset. Our mindset drives our behavior and determines how we react to life's circumstances. A person who believes in possibilities and embraces change is someone who has shifted from a "challenge" mindset to an "opportunity" mindset. This is an important distinction because an opportunity mindset helps us tell a different story about our circumstances, and the stories we tell ourselves end up shaping our thinking, our reactions, and our experiences.

The wrong story can cause us to get stuck. But when we adopt a better narrative, the story can compel us forward. That's why it's important to identify negative gaps in our stories – to recognize the parts of our stories that are keeping us from making progress. Once we recognize the gaps, we can ask ourselves, "What's a different story that might help me move forward?"

We have around 80,000 thoughts per day, and many of those thoughts are automatic. But a change in mindset can change our thoughts and make a huge difference in how we show up in the world. And it's only when we begin to tell ourselves better stories that we experience a mindset shift.



Don't just bounce back - bounce higher.

"...our great power is from God, not from ourselves. We are pressed on every side by troubles, but we are not crushed. We are perplexed, but not driven to despair. We are hunted down, but never abandoned by God. We get knocked down, but we are not destroyed." – 2 Corinthians 4:7-10

Resilience is essential for athletes and anyone who wants to excel in their career. Molly has learned that resilience is not just about going back to the level where you were when you experienced failure; it's about going higher than that. Errors and bad calls happen, but the ability to flip the switch and recover quickly is critical. When mistakes happen it's important to monitor your self-talk and to be intentional about recovering and moving forward so you don't end up in a slump.

When mistakes and failures happen, it's easy to consider all the reasons why it's someone else's fault. But if you own the moment and avoid blaming and complaining, you are better positioned to be resilient. And when you take responsibility for your failures, you can invite other people into your recovery process. Resilient people don't try to solve the issues by themselves, instead they get input and ask for help. Great athletes show up early to get extra coaching. They solicit tough, honest feedback from the people around them so they can bounce back higher.

What's stopping you?

"This is why I remind you to fan into flames the spiritual gift God gave you when I laid my hands on you. For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline." 2 Timothy 1:5-7

Many people stop learning because they are afraid to admit they don't have all the answers. They falsely believe that asking questions or asking for advice will make them look dumb or incompetent. The truth is that fear blocks us from the path to a better life and keeps us from being curious and making the relational connections we all crave.

For others comfort is the obstacle. If you want to be a lifelong learner, you're going to find yourself in uncomfortable moments where you have to step out of your comfort zone to grow. But pushing past fear and comfort yields great rewards. Molly wants us to remember that curiosity creates chances and choices. Curiosity allows us to learn what matters most to others and connect deeply with them so we can serve, lead, and create solutions. Lifelong learning is a pathway to fulfillment, to connection, and to a life of purpose and meaning.

Discussion Questions

1. How do you seek to be genuinely curious about the world and about the people you encounter each day?
2. How comfortable are you with asking lots of questions and listening well? What could you do to improve?



3. Can you readily identify any “gaps” in the stories you tell yourself that might be keeping you from making progress?
4. Which of the barriers to being a lifelong learner do you most relate to – fear or comfort? How has that played out in your life?
5. What might God be prompting you to do to become more curious, more resilient, and more connected with other people?



Hailed as the “female Jerry Maguire” by CNN, Molly Fletcher made a name for herself as one of the first female sports agents. During her almost two-decade career as President of CSE, Molly negotiated over \$500 million in contracts and represented over 300 of sports' biggest names, including Hall of Fame pitcher John Smoltz, PGA TOUR golfer Matt Kuchar, broadcaster Erin Andrews and basketball championship coaches Tom Izzo and Doc Rivers.

As a World's Top 50 Keynote Speaker, she delivers her inspiring message to audiences around the world. She is the author of five books, including *The Energy Clock* and *Fearless at Work*, and her latest TED Talk, “Secrets of a Champion Mindset,” has more than one million views.

Molly is the founder and host of the *Game Changers with Molly Fletcher* podcast, where she interviews experts and celebrities in every field including Arthur Blank, Dabo Swinney, John Mackey, Matthew McConaughey, Priyanka Chopra Jonas, and Simon Sinek.

Molly recently launched her first on-demand course, *Up Your Game*, to help people unlock their drive and up their game. Her company *Game Changer Performance Group* helps clients unlock peak performance through training experiences on Energy, Negotiation and High Impact.



Marion is the Director of Programs for 4word. Marion served in pastoral ministry for 17 years at three local churches including, most recently, Willow Creek Community Church. During her church ministry, she incorporated her organizational development skills with her practical knowledge of effective discipleship to create growth strategies that focused on the equipping and mobilization of congregations on the mission of Jesus. She holds degrees from Trinity International University and Wheaton College in Organizational Leadership and Missional Church Movement.



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Why 4word?

At 4word, we know you want to reach your God-given potential so you can have a Kingdom impact on your workplace and the world. To do that, you need resources for professional and spiritual growth - and a community of like-minded women to cheer you on!

The problem is your time is limited and meaningful connections are hard to find. This can leave you feeling overwhelmed, frustrated, and isolated on your life's journey.

We believe you shouldn't have to navigate work, life and faith on your own because God designed you for community. You are worthy to be surrounded by loving and supportive women who "get you."

We understand you face unique challenges as a Christian woman in the workplace, which is why we create easy-access opportunities for leadership development, spiritual growth, and connections to influential women around the globe.

Our Simple Empowerment Plan:

- Connect to a community – We offer virtual and in-person Community Groups specifically designed for working women – and we also have special groups for executive women.
- Access relevant content – 4word's podcast, blog, and our Community Group Discussion Guides are specifically geared to women in the workplace to help thrive on your journey.
- Get matched with a mentor – From our pool of over 220 amazing mentors we connect you with the right fit for a transformational mentoring experience through 4word's Mentor Program.



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