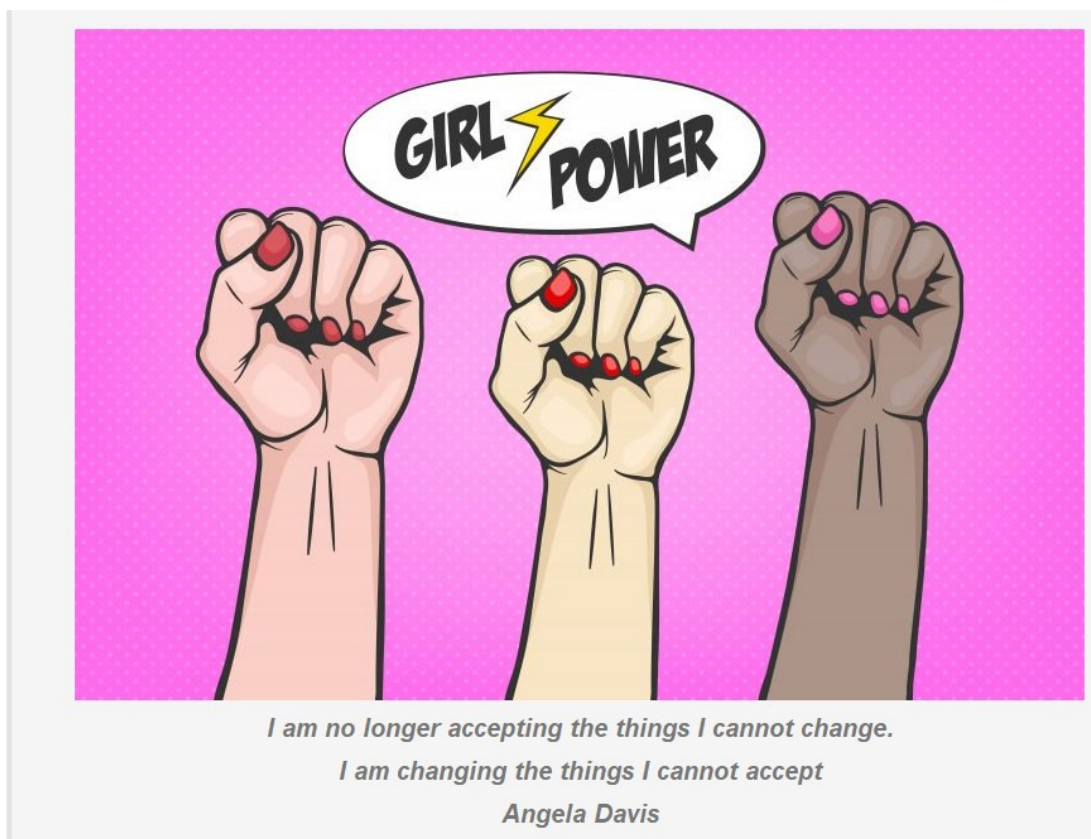


Stop being obedient and summon your inner revolutionary

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I recently enjoyed a creative opportunity to choreograph a new play called *The Cause* about the two suffrage leaders, Emmeline Pankhurst, a militant activist who engaged in acts of civil disobedience and destruction and Millicent Fawcett, who campaigned via socially and politically peaceful means.

Through their radically different, and utterly authentic voices and values, these extraordinary women were revolutionaries whose legacy lives on and continues to shape every aspect of life for women today.

And we are witnessing many revolutionaries in action all around us – from Malala, taking a bullet for girls rights to education in the third world, to Greta Thunberg, infant terrible of the Extinction Rebellion against climate change. The list marches on.

Revolutionaries have big visions and irrepressible spirit. They don't retreat from the words, "this can't be done." They believe in their vision. Whilst we stand on the shoulders of these giantesses, being epic and iconic are not prerequisites if we want to stop being obedient!

Within you is your *own inner revolutionary*, poised for acts of courage, risk-taking, standing up and being counted, speaking up, initiating, or taking on a personal stretch, whatever that may be for you, like taking a visible stand on something that tests an important value for you or calling out something when you see it, like an unconscious bias in operation.

Within you is your own inner revolutionary who wants to change the story of "living in an epidemic of obedience" as Nancy Kline put it, and who dares to do something differently for herself and others: dressing outside the unspoken company convention, owning your ethnicity, your difference, your *otherness* in a more visible way, helping initiate better conversations about diversity, creating something you'd love to see in your workplace, like a choir or book club or taking the lead on getting a company crèche set up.

Stop and reflect for a moment about a risk you'd like to take, a stretch you'd like to make, or action you'd like to take. What would it look like if it was manifested? Now ask yourself: What will be the consequences of *not* doing this?

When you summon your inner revolutionary you can create your own template for your leadership and help change the story of what professional life looks like. Nothing short of expressing your inner revolutionary is needed to create the change you want to see in the workplace, where you and you and those around you can thrive.

The call of the revolutionary within you, whether gentle or gigantic, silent or seismic, diplomatic or disruptive, is your unique energy and gift that must be expressed. As Martha Graham reminds us:

There is a vitality, a life force, an energy, a quickening, that is translated through you into action and because there is only one of you in all time, this expression is unique. If you block it, it will never exist through any other medium and will be lost.

So think *Life Force* rather than *obedience*. Go forth. The world needs you.

About the author

Diana Theodores is an international women's leadership expert. Her new book *Performing As You: How to have authentic impact in every role you play* is out now. To find out more go to: <https://www.amazon.co.uk/dp/1781333823>

