



Women Leaders' Circle: Answering the Call

Format The same 6-8 women leaders will come together in circle for two hours monthly for six consecutive months. In an effort to foster a safe and supportive learning environment, there will be no more than one woman representing any one organization and all participants will be asked to maintain anonymity by not sharing their titles or organization/company names.

In addition to the six monthly-facilitated circles, participating women will also receive three one-hour individual executive coaching sessions with Lael (before, mid-way and as a follow-up to the series of six). These coaching sessions will enable women to customize their experience of the circle and will also afford them the opportunity to create clear intentions, process and solidify their learning so the outcomes are more sustainable.

To add richness and depth to our monthly dialogues, participants will be given a reader which includes numerous articles and relevant chapters for each monthly topic. While women are encouraged to use these and other resources to enhance their experience, it is not a rigid expectation; women are trusted to have all they need as participants.

Using her skills as coach, consultant and retreat leader, Lael's role will be to facilitate the dialogue for the monthly circles, offer questions and relevant insights and models, challenge assumptions and self-limiting beliefs and track the group and individual process/progress. She will also serve as an executive coach to women through the series.

Monthly Topics

October 23 **Our Stories as Leaders**

Putting aside the traditional constructs of roles and resumes in favor of their true essence, beliefs and perceptions, women will be invited in this first session to speak to what has shaped them as leaders. We will hear stories of the people who have influenced us, discuss the messages we received and learn more about how we hold all those in the context of who we are as leaders today. In conjunction with the first one-on-one executive coaching sessions, this month will be a springboard for the series, offering women the chance – individually and collectively - to reveal their vision for who they wish to be as leaders and stating their intentions for participating in this group.

November 13 **Power: Inside and Out**

Assuming women of the circle are powerful beyond measure, we will seek to examine our relationship with that power. This topic will not make space for being modest or demure, but will instead demand participants to step forward and more fully claim the power they know to be roaring inside of them. We'll invite that power to come out – individually as leaders and collectively as a group of women – into the light, giving us a better sense of how we perceive it in ourselves, what we do (or do *not* do) with it, when we give it away or deny it and how it could serve us better. We'll also be looking at how we can support ourselves and other women in standing (and staying) in their power as leaders.

December 11 **Impatience & Anger**

What if women could be more effective leaders by unleashing their impatience and getting angry? This is a radical notion for most women and directly bumps into our feminine culture that perceives these emotions as “unproductive” and “bad”. In this session, we'll turn that notion on its ear and explore the most recent business research that invites women to assert themselves as they never have before – to be more intolerant of bureaucratic systems and ineffective business practices. Knowing this can be new and foreign land for women, we'll orient ourselves to how that might look, giving voice to our concerns, worst fears and internal resistance. This topic will seek to honor the potency that lies within the “fire in our bellies”, giving women a new perspective and a fresh use for energy that traditionally gets pushed down or denied.

January 22

Stepping Up & Standing Out

This month's topic asks women to address the question, "what if *you* were the leader you've been waiting for?" We'll acknowledge how this simple question has many complex answers – answers that may never have been tested, yet are firmly entrenched as truths in our culture as women leaders. We'll explore what it takes to step up and stand out as women leaders and what happens when we do. We'll look at the ways in which we hold ourselves back – whether it's waiting for someone else to take the lead, hesitating for too long or feeling like we don't know enough or aren't qualified enough. This conversation won't rest at having "influence without authority" or "informal leadership," but will push ahead to have us look at stepping into more traditional positions of power – whether it be in politics, corporate boards or institutional offices – to enable us to affect change and have greater impact as women leaders.

February 26

Sabotage & Fear

With every leap of faith and bold move, it seems there is a corresponding fear or voice of doubt. During this month's conversation, women will name their fears as a means to bring them into the light of day, rather than silently feed them in the darkness. The premise of this topic is that until we familiarize ourselves with our patterns of self-defeat and sabotage and take responsibility for them, we will forever hold ourselves hostage. Through this conversation, women will recognize and differentiate the choices they are making from the choices they are avoiding, abstaining or abdicating – consciously or unconsciously. By looking with a laser focus at the chains and shackles that can hold us back, women will "desensitize" themselves to fear and gain a deeper appreciation for it as part of a healthy process of growth, risk and transition.

March 19

Allies on your Team

This topic invites women to consciously, creatively and strategically put together a "team" that will help them to stay bold, stay the course and stay true to their intentions. We will courageously embrace the practice of asking for help, and in doing so will surface our natural tendencies as women to do it alone. Who will be our chief advisors, our midwives, our medicine women and sages? We will also look within ourselves, taking inventory of those pieces or parts of our essence that we can harness as allies when we need them most. This final group conversation will fortify women for venturing out and, indeed, answering the call and will also set the stage and a clear agenda for the final one-on-one executive coaching sessions.

Location

All circles will be held 3:00 – 5:00 pm at the Maine Women's Fund, Suite 306 in 565 Congress St. Portland, Maine

Cost

\$925 for series of six (monthly billing is available)
\$850 if all six months are paid for in one advance payment

20% of your registration fee will be donated to the Maine Women's Fund