

## S3, Ep. 1: Full Episode

# Title: What do gender equity and public loitering have in common?

[00:00:00] **Neha Singh:** Struck the woman, you struck a rock, you die you. So

[00:00:12] it's been a year of shocking testimonies, more and more women around the world are speaking up about big experiences with sexual assault and harass. Since the me too movement began in October, 2017. If you see all around us, there are men sitting everywhere, but you don't see any women sitting, just hanging out now, or maybe even after seven 13 in the evening, you don't really get to see a lot of

[00:00:37] **Ntombini Marrengane:** just women walking from Hollywood to Paris and the streets of Istanbul stretching back decades from the union buildings in Victoria, South Africa, to the streets of Mumbai.

[00:00:51] Women have been protesting various issues, such as sexism, gender based violence, gender inequality, and corrupt political systems [00:01:00] apart date in South Africa and Jim Crow laws in the us are examples of these women around the world have campaigned for equal rights to vote. And the first nation to fully adopt women's suffrage was Norway in 1913.

[00:01:14] One thing that has been illustrated throughout history is that there is great power in the collective voices of women and men who stand up against issues of inequality, including gender inequality, the collective power of showing up. Welcome. I am Don Bei. Marani the new host of this podcast. I am a senior

manager at the Berthe center for social innovation and entrepreneurship, which is based at the U C T graduate school of.

[00:01:43] In season three of just for a change podcast. I have conversations with change makers from South Africa and further a field we hear from innovators, social entrepreneurs, industry leaders, activists, and more about the work they do and what [00:02:00] makes them tick. We'll find out how they keep the fire burning.

[00:02:04] When it comes to tackling some of the most to user systems, change phrase, wicked problems facing the world. Fortune magazine published an article in 2020 titled the difference between gender equity and equality and why it matters the author of the article, Dr. Agnes bin, GU vice chancellor of the university of global health equity in Rwanda wrote the piece.

[00:02:32] You'll hear shortly. I've asked my daughter Pila to read it as a future fighter for gender equity and equality. This is her future. We're talking about

[00:02:44] **Phila:** while gender equality is simply focused on providing men and women with the same equal opportunities, like making it illegal for women to own men or even attend [00:03:00] school.

[00:03:01] Gender equity works to correct the historical wrongs that have left women behind such. Restrictions on employment.

[00:03:12] **Ntombini Marengane:** According to the latest global gender gap report, 2022 published in June by the world economic forum, it will take another 132 years to reach gender parity. For this reason, gender equality and equity are issues that we need to focus on and to do the work in our homes, places of work, communities and nation.

[00:03:35] We simply cannot afford to forget the collective power of showing up someone who has grasped this truth and is no stranger to getting public attention. When it comes to working towards gender equality and equity is Neha sing. Neha is a

theater to maker, author, and campaigner from India who encourages women to ignore harassment and take up more space in public.

[00:03:59] Neha is the [00:04:00] change maker joining me for today's conversation. And it's a great privilege for me to welcome. Just to note that the nature of recording online means that we sometimes have internet glitches and can't always control the sound quality or noises in the background of recordings. Neha, thank you so much for joining me today.

[00:04:20] Reading your biography is inspiring. You're an author and a theater maker. And you were also included in the BBC's top 100 women who have made a positive impact on the world in 2016 for your work on the hashtag Y loiter movement. From what I understand, you were inspired to start the movement after reading a book of the same name by three Mumbai based women.

[00:04:42] Shepa fat Samira K and sh. can you tell us a bit more about what the, why Loit movement entails and what inspired you to start it?

[00:04:53] **Neha Singh:** Um, so as you might be aware in 2012, there was, uh, a very brutal [00:05:00] gang rape and murder of a girl in new deli. And at that time, a lot of ministers and a lot of people said that, you know, what was she doing out at 9:00 PM, watching a movie she should have been at.

[00:05:15] She was being too reckless and too adventurous and a lot of women and men, um, you know, from all, um, walks of life felt very angered. Uh, so I was one of them and we were protesting in different cities, across India and as a theater maker, I also, uh, I was also involved in a protest play that a few of us created and we were, you know, going around the whole country, doing shows of.

[00:05:45] But I did feel like I needed to do something that was more sustainable. That was more personal, uh, and that I could do as part of my daily life. And just around that time, in [00:06:00]

2014, I happened to read a book called Vilo, uh, which has been written by. And this book, um, basically says, For women, uh, to access public spaces, the way that men do, we have to stop justifying why we are outside, which is what we do our entire lives, you know?

[00:06:23] Uh, oh, I'm out because I have to go to college I'm out because I'm going to school or I'm buying vegetables or I'm out with my family. Or, you know, I'm going from one place to another, but we, we are never really out just to be out and loiter without any purpose, without any justification. Whereas for the men in India, at least, and in other countries, I'm sure they never have to justify why they're outside in a public space doing nothing.

[00:06:51] Uh, so the book kind of said that to make public spaces safer for women and to kind of normalize the site of women in public. [00:07:00] Women have to come out and do nothing and not justify why we are outside. So that book really spoke to me because I, till then I was considering myself to be a very independent, educated, progressive feminist woman.

[00:07:16] But to be honest, even I had never done what the book was suggesting. I was always coming out in public spaces for a reason and not being out there, you know, just to. So I never really thought of it as a campaign or a movement or something to involve other people in it, but I just wanted to do it for myself to change my own conditioning and to change the way that I had been brought up.

[00:07:43] Um, and, and of course the way society nurtures you in a way as a woman in India. So I remember that first Sunday, uh, in May, 2014, I just, uh, told my flatmate at that time, David. That, you know, I've read this amazing book and it [00:08:00] says that to make places safer for women, women just need to go out and do nothing.

[00:08:04] And, uh, I'm going to try that. And if you're interested, you can come with me. So I'm just gonna go to a park and I'll sit there and do nothing. So she was like, okay, it sounds bizarre, but

okay. I'll, I'll come with you. Uh, so the two of us, we went to a. And, uh, we just sat there and did absolutely nothing.

[00:08:25] Like we did not listen to music. We did not read any book. We did not buy any tea or coffee or anything to eat. We just sat there and just stayed at the sky and just chatted and to our surprise, uh, it was like a very problematic, uh, thing for people around us. They couldn't digest it, that they are just these two girls sitting here doing nothing.

[00:08:50] So the throw, right from the gardener to the security guard, to everybody else in the park, they kept coming and asking us, why are you here? Why are [00:09:00] you here? You should go home. You should go home. Uh, you know, if you are here in the park, you should at least exercise or do yoga or, you know, do jogging or something.

[00:09:11] Like, why are you just sitting here doing nothing? And that's when we realized that, oh my God, This is actually like such a political statement for women to do nothing, uh, which we had not realized till then. So we just had fun and we, we did not bother about all those people who were staring at us and telling us to go home.

[00:09:34] And we kept sitting there enjoying ourselves, and we clicked a lot of selfies and photos like regular people. And, uh, we posted them on social media and we hashed it by Loit. And then much to our surprise, a lot of other women were like, wow, this looks like so much fun. And what is this place that you went to?

[00:09:56] And what were you guys doing there? Nothing. You were doing nothing. [00:10:00] That's amazing. That's so cool. We wanna come with you. And we were like, okay, fine. We'll do it again. And then, then we did it again and then more women joined us and then we did it again. And then more women joined. And that's how it kept on building.

[00:10:17] And then the more women that joined us, they had new ideas. Okay. Let's do cycling or let's sleep in the park or, you know, let's go, uh, walk in midnight because I've never done that. Or let's

take the last bus back home. So a lot of new ideas kept coming from different people who joined us and we kept incorporating those ideas.

[00:10:38] And basically we never stopped. Uh, so now it's been eight years. And, uh, we've been doing nothing.

[00:10:46] **Ntombini Marrengane:** You talk about doing different activities in the park or potentially doing different activities, uh, while you are out taking up space. Why did you specifically choose to start doing it at night?

[00:10:58] **Neha Singh:** Oh, well, initially [00:11:00] we were doing it in the daytime.

[00:11:01] Um, but then after about two, three months, uh, one of, uh, one of the participants, her name is Cheena. She said, you know, It's like my dream, uh, to just walk in the night because I've never done that in my life. Uh, and, uh, uh, I mean, I've done that with family and, you know, with husband and father and brother and all that, but never like alone.

[00:11:30] And when, when I say alone in India, even if they're a hundred women, we are still alone because we are all women. So even if there is one man, you are with somebody, but if you are a hundred women, then you are, oh, you are all alone, all a hundred of you. Uh, so it's bizarre like that. Uh, so she suggested this and we were like, okay, let's do this.

[00:11:53] So then the next time we planned it, uh, like a midnight walk. So we met at 12 in the night and then [00:12:00] we walked till about four in the morning. And for all of us, it was the first time. That we were experiencing our city, you know, just outside in the night when there's no traffic, when the sun isn't, you know, harsh and it was so much fun.

[00:12:18] It was so enjoyable because in a city like Mumbai, which is super crowded and there's so much traffic, that's the only time that, that it's actually kind of peaceful and quiet and there's no traffic. But what we didn't realize was that all the people who

had such a problem with us doing nothing in the daytime, uh, that kind of increased 10 times when we were doing it in the nighttime.

[00:12:45] **Ntombini Marrengane:** Can you share what some of the reactions were that you experienced while loitering at night?

[00:12:49] **Neha Singh:** Uh, so we had many, uh, boys following us, um, on foot in cars, a lot of AIA taxis stopping, staring at [00:13:00] us. Wondering what we were doing, commenting on us, uh, stalking us. Uh, and then of course, uh, the police, uh, so we got stopped by policemen and they started shouting at us and they initially thought we were sex workers because, uh, those are the only women who come out at night, uh, because women from respectable so-called families do not come out at night for no purpose.

[00:13:30] um, so they initially thought we were sex workers, but then they saw the way we were dressed or the way we were talking. They kind of figured that we are not sex workers. So they got very confused. And then they started threatening us with saying things like, gimme your father's number. Does he know that you're outside?

[00:13:48] I'm gonna call him up right now and tell him that your daughter is just walking on the road at one in the. So we said, okay, fine. Yeah. Take the number and call up. And it's [00:14:00] fine. So then, so then they got even more confused. Uh, so then they were like, what are you doing at one in the night outside? You should be at home.

[00:14:09] This is not safe for you. This is dangerous. So we were like, yeah, but you know, we just felt like coming outside and, you know, look at these, all these men, they're also just hanging out outside and it's so nice. The Moonlight is so pretty and it's so quiet and peaceful, they were like, yeah, but it's not safe.

[00:14:29] Uh, you know, if something happens, you'll come running to the police station to file complaints that, you know, I got raped or I got this or that. So we were like, yeah, you know, in a way you're right. But then what do you think is the solution, is the

solution to put women back into the homes or is there some other solution?

[00:14:48] So the police, uh, they kind of thought for a while, and then they. You know, if there were like many, many, many women outside on the roads everywhere in the city, then [00:15:00] it would be safe, but you are just six of you, so it's not safe. So, uh, basically we said to the police that if you're going to put back into homes, the first six women who want to come out in the night and just loiter, how will there ever be hundreds of women?

[00:15:18] So that kind of made sense to them. And then they were like, okay, fine go. Uh, but also that we never tell policemen or anybody else who stops us or harasses us that we are part of a campaign or we are part of a movement because that again becomes a justification. And I don't think that justification is required.

[00:15:38] We could just be women who just wanna come out and later. Which is also the reason why we don't have any branding. We don't have any t-shirts that say Vilo, or we don't have any, uh, badges or bags or anything because that's like, again, you are again justifying why you're

[00:15:55] **Ntombini Marrengane:** outside. It's very interesting.

[00:15:58] You mentioned justifying why you're [00:16:00] outside, but they. The police effectively wanted to get permission from your family to validate your being outside, doing nothing. What was the reaction of your family, uh, when you told them about your campaign and the extent to which they've

[00:16:15] **Neha Singh:** been involved? Well, initially it was very difficult for them to understand why we are doing this and why it's important.

[00:16:23] Uh, for many reasons, one that it is actually. And they do not want, you know, their daughters to be involved in something that could actually be physically, you know, dangerous for us. And secondly, the idea is like, how will one person doing



something change the whole world? You know, just you going out on the road is not gonna change the whole country.

[00:16:49] Um, so these were some of the apprehensions. So initially they did not understand and they did not even, uh, appreciate it. Uh, but when they [00:17:00] saw that, um, a lot of women were joining and then it was getting covered by a lot of newspapers and, uh, you know, TV channels and. Then a sort of BBC covered it. So all these things kind of, you know, gave it more credibility.

[00:17:17] Okay. My daughter is doing something that's important. That's a, that other people are appreciating. So it must be something good

[00:17:26] **Ntombini Marrengane:** at face value. Women taking up space in public might not seem like a big deal to some, but clearly the reactions you've received allude to another truth Al. Why do you think the people react the way they do when they, when you're out uploading?

[00:17:40] **Neha Singh:** I think because for so many years, uh, the site of women in public spaces, uh, has not been normal. Like there haven't been enough women outside doing nothing. Uh, women have always, uh, you know, used public space just as a, [00:18:00] uh, As a, as, as a space that they need to get by, like from one private space to another.

[00:18:08] And then if there's a public space in the middle of that, then they need to navigate that. But not as a space which they own and which they are occupying, you know, just for pleasure and for leisure and for doing nothing it's, it's never happened before. So the site is not normal. I mean, even for other women, Forget men, even for children, even for men or for policemen or for women, this, this site has never been normalized.

[00:18:37] And now that in the last, uh, you know, seven to eight years, that more and more women are talking about loitering in public spaces and occupying public spaces and reclaiming public spaces as spaces where we do not have to justify our

presence at all. Um, , it's obviously a shock, uh, to the people who are looking at us because they have never seen it before.  
[00:19:00]

[00:19:00] Um, but hopefully what will happen is that as the years go by and as we keep on loitering and being visible and not justifying our presence in public spaces, that at some point, maybe 10 years down the line or 20 years down the line, uh, it'll not be shocking for people to see women out doing nothing.

[00:19:22] **Ntombini Marrengane:** Thanks in, in the book, why loiter, the three authors made and I quote a case for loitering as a fundamental act of claiming public space and ultimately more inclusive citizenship. We believe the right to loiter for all has the potential to undermine public space hierarchies. What is the link for you Neha between claiming public spaces and more inclusive citizen.

[00:19:48] **Neha Singh:** So loitering mainly means that you are outside in public spaces that are free and open for all. So when you go to a mall, when you go [00:20:00] to a restaurant, when you go to a movie theater, that's not loitering because you're going from one private space, which is your home into another private space, which is the mall or the movie theater, which pose themselves as public spaces, but are actually private spaces.

[00:20:17] And you are paying money to be there and you are paying money, not just for the movie or for the dinner, but also for your own safety. When women go to malls, they're also paying to feel comfortable to not be scared there to not be harassed. But the case for loitering is that you need to do it in spaces which are free and open for everybody where you do not have to pay to be.

[00:20:43] But you do not have to buy something to be there. So in that sense, uh, there's a, there's a sense of inclusivity in that because it's free and open for all. And when in spaces that are free and open for all, and all kinds of people are there regardless [00:21:00] of gender, class, religion, cast, uh, economics, when

they see women in spaces like these, doing nothing, this site becomes normal for people from across.

[00:21:13] You know these demographics. So, which is why I think the right to loiter and the practice of loitering in public spaces, uh, is so integral to the sense of inclusivity and, uh, citizenship. Now,

[00:21:28] **Ntombini Marrengane:** how have you seen the, why L movement grow over the years and how have you used social media to spread your message?

[00:21:35] **Neha Singh:** So, um, I find it very magical and very ironic that when I started, I never thought that it's going to be a campaign or a movement. I just wanted to do it for myself, uh, for my own internal change. Um, but I feel. The power of the politics of loitering, uh, and women occupying public spaces is so powerful. [00:22:00] Uh, that, uh, when I put up the photos, it kind of grew organically and women just were drawn to it because it seemed like such a simple idea, but such a political and such a powerful idea.

[00:22:13] And also the fact that I think this is the first time that women's rights movement was based on fun. And pleasure rather than anger and fear.

[00:22:28] **Ntombini Marrengane:** And I have to tell you just like on this side note, is that often in South Africa, as what you explained happens in India, there's, there's often a, a very loud and, um, Visible reaction when something terrible happens.

[00:22:46] Right? Yeah. But in the meantime, people are just trying to get by just trying to survive. Don't have the energy for, and we have a lot of infrastructure problems here that I'm sure. Um, we share with you and all of [00:23:00] those things kind of get people down. So it's actually really nice to hear about a joyful way in which you're tackling a problem.

[00:23:08] Um, yeah. And very inspiring.

[00:23:12] **Neha Singh:** Yeah. I, I guess it's a, it, uh, that's the only way to keep it sustainable because how long can you sustain anger? Yeah,

[00:23:22] **Ntombini Marrengane:** yeah, no, it's draining. Yeah. When you talk about women loitering, um, in public spaces and possibly at midnight, how do you think the idea of safe space factors into that?

[00:23:37] Do you think that a safe space for women is necessarily linked to gender equity?

[00:23:42] **Neha Singh:** Absolutely. Because, uh, forget about public spaces, even private spaces, uh, are not safe for women. And in fact, there's a larger number of crime that happens in private spaces for women, [00:24:00] uh, than public spaces and the crimes that happen.

[00:24:04] Two women in private spaces are under reported because this, those crimes are being committed by, uh, relatives, uh, and brothers and fathers and grandfathers and neighbors and teachers and coaches, and, uh, women find it very, very difficult to go and even report that. And I have conducted a lot of workshops across schools and colleges and, uh, institutions and.

[00:24:31] I ask, uh, boys and girls of, you know, what they would term as like absolutely safe spaces in their lives. And for the boys, there are a lot of very, very safe spaces where they feel absolutely safe, like a hundred percent safe, but so far I haven't, uh, come across any girl in India who has given a hundred percent safety to any.

[00:24:59] Even if it's [00:25:00] her own house, even if it's her own bedroom. So the idea of safety, physical safety is, is very, very different and it's extremely gendered. And, uh, to make it safer, not just for women, but also for, uh, you know, the queer community for the religious minorities, for the caste based minorities, uh, for men who do not fall into the stereotype of, you know, a macho strong.

[00:25:30] Even those communities, uh, spaces will become safer for them. When spaces become safer for women, as

[00:25:38] **Ntombini Marrengane:** you've pointed out. Now, gender inequality is not just a women's issue. It's in fact, a human rights issue that goes beyond women and girls. How do you think we need to shift our narratives and perspective to bring this awareness to everyone at every level of society?

[00:25:54] **Neha Singh:** So I'll give you a very small example. Uh, when we started loitering, a lot of our men [00:26:00] friends, uh, they kind of felt discriminated because they were like, oh, you, you, women are having so much fun and you're loitering in the night. And you know, you are cycling and playing these games. And we feel like, uh, you know, we are being discriminated against.

[00:26:15] And, uh, I was like, okay, if you want just on a whim, I said like, if you wanna join us, come rest in skirts . And, uh, they actually took it on and they were like, okay, we'll come in skirts. So we actually designed a session called walk, like a woman, uh, where we invited anyone, um, you know, from the whole gender and sexuality spectrum.

[00:26:39] To come dressed in what is traditionally and typically called women's clothing in India, at least like, so like skirts, SAS, Salva, cammies, Langa Chos and you know, with full makeup and traditional makeup and bangles and anklets. And we got so many [00:27:00] straight men, um, people who are BI curious, bisexual, gay, uh, and just on the, on the spectrum.

[00:27:08] And we were about 30, 40 of us who were on the Juhu beach, which is like this really crowded beach. And all these men dressed in, you know, beautiful, colorful skirts and SAS and Salva cammies. So I'm saying that sometimes, you know, you just try something and then it, it works and it works in ways with that.

[00:27:28] You had not imagined. That's

[00:27:31] **Ntombini Marrengane:** a really, uh, fantastic example of the collective power of showing up. And I keep mentioning this. Um, what role do you think that plays in helping us to build a more equitable society?

[00:27:43] **Neha Singh:** So I feel that rather than just sitting, you know, in your, uh, comfortable living rooms and discussing feminism and discussing gender rights, it's so important to actually do it like to come out on the road and just. [00:28:00]

[00:28:00] because when you are walking, you are internalizing your politics rather than just, uh, intellectualizing it. And I think that makes the whole difference. And that's when the internal shift happens over years and years and years of doing it. Uh, which is what I often tell to also younger feminists who.

[00:28:24] Very taken up by, you know, numbers. Like we need to have big numbers. Like we need to get 10,000 people on the roads with banners and slogans and candlelight marches, which is also, of course, you need to do that when you know, something happens and you need to protest that and you need to show your anger and your grief.

[00:28:44] But what about after that? Because something on that scale where you have 10,000 people on walking on the. You can organize it maybe once a year or twice a year, but what are you doing on a daily basis? And I [00:29:00] think what, uh, you do on a daily basis, uh, towards a more equitable world is actually the thing that's going to be the strongest, the most powerful and something that's going to make a change, not, not just to show to other people, but actually inside.

[00:29:18] Because we all have grown up with extreme amounts of conditioning and no matter how much we read and, you know, we discuss feminism and gender. We are never able to actually get out of that conditioning. That is so strong unless we practice it on a daily basis. I

[00:29:38] **Ntombini Marrengane:** think the idea of focusing as much on internal work as external demonstrations, um, of alignment with this idea is a really powerful idea.

[00:29:50] So if it's required that each of us spend time and energy, Committing ourselves to the internal work. Then what does [00:30:00] a world with gender equity

[00:30:01] **Neha Singh:** look like? It would be a world where everybody's constantly asking why, because I think, uh, we, some somewhere we stop questioning the things that we do. And we just take it for granted and we just think this is how it's supposed to be, or this is safe, or this is what's best for me, or this is least amount of conflict in my life.

[00:30:27] But, uh, I think constantly for all of us to keep questioning, no. Why, why does it have to be like that? Why does it have to be like this? Why do I have to settle for this much? Why do I have to settle for this much? Am I not, uh, equal to a man? So why should I settle for, oh, you can be out till 12 in the night.

[00:30:46] And after that you come back home, or if you want to go out at two in the morning, then, you know, take your brother with you. No, I'm not gonna settle for anything less than a hundred percent.

[00:30:57] **Ntombini Marrengane:** Why? Indeed, I. [00:31:00] Just stepping back from, from the particular work that you're doing with the why loiter movement. I wanted to ask you, what have you been able to gain from connecting with other change makers, both at a national level and internationally as your work gains more popularity?

[00:31:16] **Neha Singh:** Um, the one thing that I think I have sort of connected with, or, uh, with women and, uh, people from across C. Unfortunately is the fact that things are not very different for women across the world, even in Europe or America or, you know, India or Pakistan. Things for women are pretty much the same. They might look different a little bit superficially, but deep down it's



the same fear, the same anxieties, uh, the same, uh, inequality that we all face.

[00:31:50] And the second connection I feel is that there's a lot of. And there's a lot of desire to change the world and to not [00:32:00] run away from it and not just to, you know, all, just let me lead my life, uh, comfortably. And let me forget about what the rest of the world is going through.

[00:32:08] **Ntombini Marrengane:** That's powerful. My, my second last question to you at the end of this conversation is.

[00:32:16] About how you keep the passion alive. The work you do as a change maker is taxing. No doubt. How do you keep the fire burning when things get overwhelming or get difficult as you walk this path? So

[00:32:28] **Neha Singh:** I think one of the main reasons is that it's a lot of fun when we loiter, when we plan these activities, they're all based on fun.

[00:32:36] We are singing, we are cycling, we are dancing. We are chatting, we're eating, we're sleeping, you know, So it's like, that's my idea of a party anyway, and I'm exercising my right to pleasure. I'm exercising my right to taking risks, which I anyway love to do. So what I love to do is [00:33:00] also what, what I want to do to make a change in this world.

[00:33:04] So it's, it's absolutely amazing in that sense. And secondly, I never let the vision of the ideal world. Fade from my eyes ever. You know, so I know that this is not the ideal. This is very, very, very far away from how the ideal world should look like for women, for men, for everybody. And, um, I'll, I'll constantly keep doing, uh, things that I do to try to bridge that gap between what is right now and what I want to see in

[00:33:39] **Ntombini Marrengane:** this world.

[00:33:40] Definitely keeping it fun helps, but you're right. A lot of women share the same conditions all over the world, um,



regardless of their status or class, um, or geographies, lastly, Neha, where can people connect with you and the work that you're doing should they want to learn more? So we have

[00:33:57] **Neha Singh:** an Instagram page called, [00:34:00] uh, VI loiter campaign.

[00:34:03] Uh, there is also an Instagram page of the book, VI loiter, which is called VI Loit. Uh, we have a blog called, uh, while loiter.blogspot.com, where we keep, uh, putting up our, um, uh, you know, experiences of different sessions. And we also invite other women from other parts of the world to contribute, uh, to the blog.

[00:34:31] Uh, there is a Facebook page called by. Uh, which is about the book as well as the campaign

[00:34:38] **Ntombini Marrengane:** NHA. Thank you so much for your time today and the way that you've shared your story and your work. I've really been impacted by this idea of women being out in space. Um, And being challenged on, on why they are there.

[00:34:55] That's quite a remarkable idea in 2022, um, to [00:35:00] think that you have to justify your presence, um, and even get permission from family members really, really. Um, yes. Uh, an incredible idea. And I wish I could say I was surprised by it, but living here in South Africa, which as you know, also has, um, the unfortunate distinction of experiencing a lot of gender based violence against women against the vulnerable.

[00:35:25] Um, those are attitudes that we also encounter quite often. Um, but your story and. The artifacts you've shared have, have really encouraged me. I think I might need to go out and ask my friends about us loitering over the weekend. So thank you so much. And add to your Instagram page. Yes.

[00:35:48] **Neha Singh:** Yeah,

[00:35:48] **Ntombini Marrengane:** you should absolutely hashtag hashtag absolutely.

[00:35:52] And contribute to the campaign.

[00:35:53] **Neha Singh:** It's hashtag.

[00:35:55] **Ntombini Marrengane:** So, thank you so much. Um, thank you for spending time with us this afternoon and [00:36:00] for starting our season three off on this really amazing and important note. Um, and I wish you all the best as you continue your work.

[00:36:09] **Neha Singh:** Thank you so much. Thank you for having me here.

[00:36:14] **Ntombini Marrengane:** Thank you for tuning into season three of the, just for a change podcast, powered by the Berthe center for social innovation and entrepreneurship. If you are interested in hearing more conversations with Changemakers, then make sure you subscribe to this podcast so that you don't miss any of our upcoming.

[00:36:32] If you've enjoyed this content, I'd also like to invite you to rate and review it wherever you listen to your podcast and feel free to share it with your friends, family, and colleagues, let's stay inspired and keep changing the way we're changing the world.

[00:36:47] **Neha Singh:** Be a little carefully. They said where your skirt a little longer your hair neatly.

[00:36:57] Don't talk to strangers [00:37:00] and don't ever, ever smile.

[00:37:04] **Ntombini Marrengane:** Just be

[00:37:05] **Neha Singh:** a little careful don't sing or dance or laugh. So loudly do not lie down on the grass sleep. Don't even think about it. Just be a little careful. My sweetheart, this world is full of Wolf. And you, my precious

[00:37:27] **Ntombini Marrengane:** jewel,

[00:37:29] **Neha Singh:** you need to be safe, protected, preserved,

[00:37:33] **Ntombini Marrengane:** treasured, just won't you.

[00:37:37] Can't you be a little more careful

[00:37:42] **Neha Singh:** talk a little less. Don't be so adventurous. Don't take risks. Don't run in your sports bra. Don't get wet in the rain. Don't sit on that park bench, just don't loiter. [00:38:00] This world is full of

[00:38:02] **Ntombini Marrengane:** dangers and

[00:38:04] **Neha Singh:** you are responsible for your own safety.

[00:38:09] **Ntombini Marrengane:** Just be a little careful, just be

[00:38:12] **Neha Singh:** a little small, just be a little nervous, just be invisible.

[00:38:22] And I am saying this because I love

[00:38:26] **Ntombini Marrengane:** you. Of course,

[00:38:28] **Neha Singh:** all this is for your own. Good. So you were all these things for all your life because they loved you and they were wise. So did it help, were you safe? Did no one violate your safe space? If your answer is. Let's get together and try something new from today on and every day don't be so careful.

[00:38:57] Don't be so nervous. [00:39:00] Don't be so small. Don't be responsible, sing and dance and laugh and talk. Say hello to strangers. Lie down on that green. Run as fast as you want or sleep for as long as you want, sit on that pavement and read that book, go out in the day and in the night alone or together, embrace your village, your city, your country, your yours, as much as it is anyone else's and you are not responsible for your own.

[00:39:40] question, engage, demand that your city be safe unconditionally for you ask for more street lights, public toilets,

public transport, sensitive police, everything, and anything that will make you feel safe, whether you [00:40:00] dress modest or bold, whether you were together or alone, whether you were drunk or stoned.

[00:40:06] whether you were loud or small, whether you were risking it or not. Whether whether, whether it doesn't matter loiter without reason, without explanation without justification. Loiter without conditions because it is joy, unconditional, because it is fun. Unconditional, because to experience joy without even a hint of fear is a basic human right.

[00:40:37] And that my sweetheart must be ours unconditionally.