

WTC 'Let's Move Faster' with Demi Clark

[00:00:06] **Christi Powell:** Hey everyone, welcome to the women talk construction podcast, where we discuss women in construction and other non typical careers. My name is Christi Powell, and I'm with my co host, Angela Gardner. Thanks for joining us today.

[00:00:22] **Christi Powell:** Hey Angela, good morning. I just want to say, I'm so excited about the success your daughter's had in golf in the last week. Well, actually the last several years, but she's had a lot of hard work. work in and I'm so thankful to see that she's doing so well.

[00:00:40] **Angela Gardner:** Oh, thank you, Christi. Well, you know, we're big supporters of our daughters, like in any young female, you know, lifting them up and getting them out there and knowing that they can be on boards.

They can own companies. They can be a leader in their company, right? And that's what we're doing just by doing this with our daughters. So it's so, so amazing to watch.

[00:01:01] **Christi Powell:** It is amazing. And. Speaking of amazing, the next five guests we have coming on the podcast are going to blow your mind. Our next guest is going to motivate you to thrive and succeed in spaces where the population is of women is only 10%.

So let's give Demi a warm welcome. Demi, thank you for being here today. We're really excited to hear. Some of your words of wisdom and how you can make these next generation know that they can do anything.

[00:01:29] **Demi Clark:** Yeah. Thanks for having me. And, uh, I've, I've seen the posts on golf. I would love to say that I, if I'm a lefty and I've always had left handed clubs, I'm terrible.

I, you know, it's, it's also lack of practice, but, um, good for her. And I have a daughter who's 12th grade and, uh, she's a tuba girl. She's a sousaphone. So she's always been the only woman in low grass and wine. So carrying around this. 40 pound tuba, you know? Oh, wow. Well, that's a whole other hour.

[00:01:59] **Christi Powell:** Same thing, right? We're just, there's just a few of us choosing the same space and that's okay.

[00:02:04] **Demi Clark:** Well, and that's, I mean, I know you have questions, but you know, I was just talking to a woman about that yesterday. There's several conferences, as you know, going on, it's the fall, right? So it's, it's fall conference time in construction and this one's fab tech.

So it's welding, which is a little more of my world in the, and I know that's a segue, but You know, I'm not going to age qualify the three of us, but I'm 46 years old and I was one of seven and 7, 000 women in the largest publicly traded home builder when I started in this business that rose to leadership.

And that was 20 years ago. Like why are we still saying this stuff? Why are we still talking about it? You know, 2 percent of women in golf are into buzz or like, what the heck? Like, so that I, to your point on, you know, moving the needle, like that is my life and saying, okay, it's one thing to be first, but I'm so sick and tired of saying we were the first X in construction or in the trades.

Like just why, why 30 years later, we're not moving the needle fast enough.

[00:02:57] **Christi Powell:** I totally agree. I feel like we've been having the same conversations for 50 years. I'm a little older than you, not much, but a little bit older than you. Yeah, we both are. It's time to start moving and quit talking. .

[00:03:10] **Demi Clark:** So my, my origin story, since my kids are all into Marvel, Avengers is, uh, oh, I love that.

My grandmother was one of the first female Marines in World War ii, and that's what my TEDx talk was about. I got into welding very late in life. I always wanted to do it, but everything came into the pressure point, right. Of like, go to college, you know, and, and not, I don't even think you should make a choice.

Like if you wanna go to college, go to college mm-hmm. and be a welder. Like, why do we have to say track? This is another thing that I get really fired up about is, is the color of the collar. I do not believe I don't like that either. I can't stand it because it separates us. It says like you have to choose one path over the other blend it all.

But so my grandmother was a huge trailblazer in the 40s right to your point on the 50 years. It's gone way beyond that of she was a Rosie. Uh, marched right up. She was actually a model in New York and she marched right up to the

Marine Corps recruiting station that was at Penn Station in New York and literally was coming home to have the marriage talk with her father of like, Hey, you got to get married.

You can't do this thing on your own anymore. So she was like, heck, if I'm going to do that. And she went up to him and said, would you take women? And they were like, oddly enough, we have this kind of pilot program for women in the, um, women's army air corps. And she went in, she was a Rosie and she just, she loved it.

The story she would tell was she was so obnoxious to the navigators on these Corsair airplanes is they were like, can you just put her in the plane? Like, she just peppers us with questions, which is a lot of us, especially in construction, right? It's got where we are because we, we just constantly were, I mean, I don't want to say obnoxious, but we never gave up on asking questions.

I know I did that with my mentors at DR Horton. I had an amazing set of male mentors that I wouldn't be here today if I didn't have them. So, you know, to this day, This tune of allyship, and I know I'm bouncing everywhere, but male allies ask me all the time. Like, how do I be a better ally? And I'm like, just be open when women come and raise their hand or look for the ones that you think should be raising their hand and give them that confidence.

Just answer their questions.

[00:05:06] **Christi Powell:** Yeah. To the point,

[00:05:08] **Demi Clark:** right? Usually the women are the ones that are being cleaner, faster, stronger, better, whether it's construction management, whether it's welding, whether, you know, any set of the side of the business that has the Delta, right. That has less women in it, which is everywhere.

Yeah. So just pay attention. You don't have to do anything quite frankly, but pay attention. Just pay attention.

[00:05:26] **Christi Powell:** Yeah. I love that. All right. So let's get started. podcast in school someday.

So we're really, really trying to highlight our career trajectories and our leadership paths with these young ladies who may or may not think that they can do it on their own.

[00:05:49] **Demi Clark:** At

[00:05:55] **Christi Powell:** Women Confidence Builders, our mission is to educate, mentor, disciple, and empower all people while building confidence and creating inclusivity. We want to grow a sustainable, healthy environment where women, men, and children feel the effects of the love and care our organization has for our community.

[00:06:36] **Demi Clark:** So

[00:06:37] **Angela Gardner:** you're already kind of started highlighting your incredible construction industry background, but I wanted to go into having you maybe explain a little bit about your journey and You know, because you've thrown the hammer and you've scaled production, home builder divisions, you've moved up that ladder.

And how do you think that these experiences have shaped your perspective on disrupting the industry? Cause you certainly are doing that.

[00:07:05] **Demi Clark:** Yes. Yeah. It's a great question and I'll take it from just one. There's so many ways to answer this, right? So I think that's the other thing. Maybe that's the season I'm in is really leaning into it's okay.

However, you. Perceive and see, just look at things through a lens and then other people's perspective and lens rather, rather than like the right or wrong answer. I think women are like, we have to have the right, you know, before we like dive in and do something. And I was just at a conference yesterday where, and this is any men, you know, anyone who identifies as a man, who's listening to this, please, like, we're not bashing you when we say these things, we're saying it from a confidence level of like, A man would never question what we just asked each other.

Cause I said, would you ever stand behind your credentials? Cause I sound like I'm bragging. And she was like, what a man is that? No, just go like you earned that credential, whatever it is. So really I'll answer it from that is. Uh, for me, I talked to a lot of my daughters are 19 and 17. So right into this career choosing trajectory, right?

One's in Clemson. She chose architecture. She wanted art, but she was amazing at calculus. And I was like, don't lose the math, you know, like choose something that, and so we figured out that architecture blends her love of art and. Math and engineering. So, you know, I always look to say, what are the

openings that you can lean into rather than saying, like, no, don't give up X for Y because I made those decisions.

I kept hearing from people early on in my career, like, oh, you know, I had a trailblazing grandmother. So I felt this pressure to be like, oh, go to the place where. Women aren't, and I still do that, but that's just more of my DNA. I think that was passed down. What I say to, uh, women and non binary individuals right now who are really in the delta, right?

There's, there's just not enough to see each other and to really feel included is to go into your season. Um, because I was, I'd say in the last 10 years because I have, I've done some jumps because that's what's interested in me. Um, and I've seen men do it and be okay. Uh, where I went to Yale, I didn't go to Yale until I was 40 years old because I was in the job.

I was at in the seat saying no man has been in a city manager seat or regional vice president seat or this far ahead. So it was very, see it, be it for me. And I don't want to say that was a sacrifice to say. I'm not going to go get an MBA or I'm not going to go do this, but it was very important for me to say that was my milestone because people were telling me that was my milestone.

And then I think, I don't know if it's, you just turned 40 and you're like, okay, we're going to start throwing off the bow lines here of caring. That might be a little bit of it, but I wish, yeah, I wish somebody had said this to me when I was 25 to say, listen, you're going to go through seasons. And that's what I tell my daughters who are like struggling to say, what is it like?

Don't pick your next 30 years. None of us, not the three of us, not anyone else you're interviewing. Interviewed a lot of people in your, your life would tell you that they've just had this, you know, linear trajectory. I say it's a mountain range. It's not a summit. It's a mountain range. So for me, my trajectory went from, you know, one of seven and 7, 000 in leadership that were women in the largest publicly traded home builder and said, you know what, my season ended.

That doesn't mean the company's bad. It means my effect there is done and I've circled back with them and we've done amazing things. There's no drama. There's no like, you know, dumpster. Fire leaving and then opening this next book. I then went into, uh, you know, the vendor side of that. I then went into saying, go back into the, the, uh, Yale world.

And I said, well, I wanna be in the bleeding edge of home building. So I started my contracting firm for one to go with uh, or NC Hub and, and, uh, women run business in Wbo o and then also in my consulting world, and then also back into FinTech. to say, like, how can we disrupt the way AI is coming into this and then welding.

So, you know, add that to a bio, which could take 20 minutes. I don't need to go through my bio. I just want to tell women and especially girls is to say like, what is it the season? This is where I just told my daughter at Clemson the other day, she was like. Is it historic preservation? Is it, you know, should I go more engineering side and, and sustainability, what should I do in my architecture?

I said, you're 19 years old. Like what is firing you up right now and take that into a season. If that's a year, that's a year, but do what you love with it. And then it's going to take you to that next mountain range. That's going to take you to the next one and the next one. And I think we really need to give permission for that right now, especially for girls and women, because we can't let them explore.

We're just going to keep having 2 percent and they've gone through that linear trajectory that. Zero people go through, right? Right. So that's why are we making them run the gauntlet? You know, that, that men don't.

[00:11:30] **Christi Powell:** Yeah. So this is a great segue into, you know, I know we face challenges every day and obviously you've overcome many on your zigzag approach to leadership, right?

I know Angela's had a zigzag to get to where she's at. I know I have. There's been many times that I ended up in places and I looked around going, I never thought I'd be here, but it was necessary to make that change to me. There were no challenges in landing somewhere where I was curious and wanted to learn more.

And even though it wasn't straight and linear, like you say, they weren't challenges. I was looking around going, this is cool. This is new. I'm going to learn something new. I'm curious. I'm gonna ask a lot of questions. And see if it's a good fit for me and the company, you know, I'm just going to just have a lot of grit.

I'm going to ask a lot of questions and I'm not going to care what other people think. So, uh, what, what kind of challenges do you see with not being linear?

[00:12:25] **Demi Clark:** You know, I, that's such a good question. And I love how you phrased it is, uh, I'm going to, I'm going to put it on its ear a little bit. Cause I talk about this a lot when, when I'm on stage or like podcasts is I equate that with fearless for some reason with women, if we are curious and we're like pretty unabashed about it, right.

And saying like, yeah, I'm confident. I love this. You know, and we exude that confidence of saying like, yeah, I don't, I'm not an expert here, but I'm going to always, you know, ABC always be curious. And then somehow you get this moniker of fearless. I get it all the time. I don't know if it's the tattoos. You can't really see, but you know, like I just do things I love to do.

I'll climb a mountain. I'll go run a marathon. I'll do, I'm curious. And I, so I'm going to, I'm going to take, I'm gonna steal this and be like, it's just curiosity. It's not being fearless. But the way that I phrased it is like, I think that's a way of people being comfortable with women who are confident.

It's to call us fearless because you can, again, it's that spacing, just like the color of the collar to say, well, she's fearless, but I'm not because I've had women come up to me after, you know, speech or something, some talk, um, and say like, well, you're fearless. And it's a way for them to feel a little more comfortable about not making some.

Some maybe challenging choices or to kind of get out of that comfort zone. And so I always say like, I'm not fearless at all. I go to bed with the light on cause I hate the dark, but it's not about fearlessness, it's about what you're saying is like leaning into curiosity and us making that an inclusive environment, which I think is the other thing that's so critical.

Is it, is it necessary to know? Cause women have had to do this forever is be okay with their own curiosity and not have validation from the outside world to do it. But I think that's how allies can help. It's not just like showing up to be an ally. It's being active. saying like, women should be so comfortable to put themselves failing forward and be curious.

And that's what fires them up and lets them become really great leaders or love something that women aren't in a lot of like golf. Right. Um, but if you feel like you've got to be perfect from the first swing, who's going to stick with that? Like that's a thousand percent burnout. You know, so yeah, I think, I think it's that is, is just giving yourself permission first because nobody's going to give it to you and then surrounding yourself with people that it sounds like we've,

we've been in the same boat of having good mentorship or people around us, or I, I don't think that's a coincidence.

I think you manifest. that right? Yeah. So somehow we've got to manifest this for more women and girls is to be around people that they have gravitated to, you know, to say like, okay, this person's going to help me whether I have to say a word or not. And then I can be comfortable and in an inclusive space that's safe enough.

But, um, I can ask questions about it and fail forward.

[00:15:05] **Christi Powell:** 84 Lumber Company is the nation's largest privately held supplier of building materials, manufactured components, and industry leading services for single and multifamily residences and commercial buildings. The company operates 310 facilities, which include stores, component manufacturing plants, custom door shops and engineered wood product centers in 35 States.

84 Lumber also offers turnkey installation services for a variety of products and services. including framing, insulation, siding, windows, roofing, decking, and drywall. For more information, visit 84lumber.com.

So I really did not have a mentor. So honestly, one of the things that I think was, was really pivotal for me is when I found somebody that wasn't interested in answering my questions, I went and found another one, and another one, and another one, and another one. I was not going to stop asking the questions I was curious about.

Until somebody took the time to answer me in a way that I felt like it was enough information for me to do my job better or for me to, to grow or to succeed. So, I love that. I love that you had mentors. I, I just was not lucky enough to have that. Once in a while, I had a few people that were like my sponsors or allies, I guess Angela and I call them that would just like stand up for me if they knew I was doing something that was good and right and had brought ROI to the team, but I didn't have like per se people that were like, Hey, let me guide you here.

And so that's why I have a huge passion for mentorship right now, because I didn't have it.

[00:16:48] **Demi Clark:** What I'm I'm glad you said it that way, because I probably should have qualified, especially in my 20s again. I mean, maybe this

was my grandmother's DNA flowing through me in the red hair was I didn't ask for it.

I just like said, you're my mentor. I made my own. I'm going to be chicken hawk to your foghorn light horn. I'm just going to bite your ankles until you tell me what to do. And, you know, so through exhaustion of a regional president, I mean, we still share Christmas cards and his daughter, but you know, I think it was that active.

And then I'll, I'll give a quick story is when I went to Yale, there was one woman who was on a stage in front of us. It was a lot of men. Um, again, I was one of six women that was in the classroom. So we were the Yale team, six, we called ourselves and you stick together. Cause you always do with your female compatriots.

And we had the CEO of a Weight Watchers. Mindy Grossman, and she was also the former CEO of Ralph Lauren, former CEO of Home Shopping Network. And she was the first person on a stage to validate, you can go through seasons. She didn't name it as such, but she was basically like, I never went backwards. I stayed a CEO and I changed industries because I had transferable skills.

And so I, I marched right up to her. I was terrified afterwards. And I said, I'm sure you get this question a lot. Would you be my mentor? And she was like, you know what? I never get that question because nobody ever comes up to me. So I think that should be, she's helped me incredibly pivotally in being able to ask these very things of like, how did you not, because I've always gone back.

If I switched industries, I would be like, well, I have to pay the education tax. Right. Yeah. We'll start from the middle, take the pay cut and earn your, no man would do this. And again, I say this with love for any man who's listening, but you know, we're right. When we say that it's women who are like having to be perfect before they get the thing.

Right. And so it was great to have that person in my life that now I've taken that forward is to say, I will not back down if I feel qualified or I've earned the thing. Or what, or even if I have it right, you know, and I think that's what I see it in Gen Z so far, at least in my daughters, they kind of innately have that, but then it has to be like sharpen the saw, you know, where you, you have to hone that in them a bit, but they do have it in them.

So I do have hope for the future on that.

[00:18:52] **Christi Powell:** I do too. Listening to my daughter makes me have hope for the future. My 17 year old, my 34 year old is totally different dynamic. I'm not going to say a little, it's a totally different dynamic. I think Angela, you've got some questions that you wanted to ask me before we.

She's got so much great information. We want to make sure and get it all out

[00:19:10] **Angela Gardner:** there. Yeah, and I'm going to change it up a little bit, um, with this next question, but we're going to talk about you being the founder of a nonprofit called She Built This City. You're highly dedicated to supporting women in the trades.

We, we know that, but I would love to hear more about the initiatives of this program. And, you know, just how you implemented it and how you empower women in our industry through this nonprofit, what are some of the key initiatives?

[00:19:37] **Demi Clark:** Yeah. Well, and I have to qualify that too. I started it in 2019 after, again, I was kind of coming off the ride of DR Horton and working in the industry.

And, uh, again, having a lot of support there. So I certainly don't want to put them on the firing squad of this women. They've actually done a phenomenal job of really getting women into leadership in these last five years. Um, not really. through a ton of influence with me. Uh, and, and going into back to school and saying like, okay, again, like what is the Delta move?

It's not moving fast enough for me. I don't know if it's moving fast enough for anybody else. What's not. And what is my impact on that? And so I had never done anything nonprofit. I was slightly terrified, but I had batted her around for like 10 years. And so I think I came out of school saying like, okay, so what now?

Why just do it? And so long and the short I did it. Uh, it was December of 2019. COVID happened in March and, uh, I had my first 25, 000 grant, um, and it was like go to the races and it was my normal game of scaling and pivoting. I feel like I've made a career of how to, how to figure out the tangents and the pivots.

And so when COVID happened, everybody in the nonprofit world that I was kind of learning from in different sides of the business. You know, not all trades, nonprofits, Charlotte, huge nonprofit, uh, sector, uh, was people were

like, Oh, well you can't do workshops. You can't do stuff. And I say, can't, they were giving guide guide posts of what has happened in the past.

Like if you're anybody that's trying to do school type stuff, like it's, it's dead. You're done. You're dead in the water for a while. Get a PPP loan and be done with it. And I was like, well, that's crazy. You know what I mean? There's still people out there. So I bought an Airstream. We had a woman make it murals and super cool.

And so you can see it coming down. highway and I took it on the road and I was like, we'll do it in parking lots with masks. I mean, we work in construction. We work outside. Yeah,

[00:21:23] **Christi Powell:** there's no COVID outside. Yeah, there's no COVID

[00:21:27] **Demi Clark:** in construction outside, right? For safety purposes at the time. And so, yeah, I started there and I think that started the ethos of just thinking differently on how you get your funding and then also like grants.

I knew nothing about writing grants. And so what I did was just do what I knew, which was go to corporations and say, like, hey, hey, I know you have, like, 3 women on staff, but you're always talking about saying, how can I be more inclusive start here? You know, so at the time it started with effectively two populations, workforce development and moving the needle immediately for the jobs for women and the inclusivity.

And then you have to do the, to me, the double side of that coin of what's the next generation. I think now it is moved into, that's a huge. Huge percentage of, you know, trying to solve a lot. So they've gone a little more granular to say, we're going to focus on the workforce development and then be working with high school programs with girls.

And the other piece of it, of it is, the workforce zone is 99. 9 percent of what she built the city does right now. But my caveat to that and good friend, Nora, um, who's out of Raleigh that I know you've talked to, we've had this conversation before of. Not wanting to be in founder's disease. So I exited early.

She's, she's still there and doing the great way of saying like, this is where I need it. And this is when I need to step back. So hopefully I'm not speaking for Nora, but, um, she's amazing. And I love how she is amazing what she does. Um, but so that's what I did was I rolled off the board after two years, everybody was like, what's, what's going on.

What happened? I got to get out of the way like they need to be about the mission. They don't need to be about my face. I had seen so many of that in, in, um, especially women led initiatives. Unfortunately, it's not the founder that does that. It's, it's kind of projected onto them. And that was the other piece is like, listen, I'm a woman who identifies as white.

I recognize there's privilege with that and there's a massive Delta there too. So I did not want my face everywhere. I literally wanted to transition over into a greater think tank than my lived experience. And I was learning a lot of like, wow, I never knew this perspective existed. I never knew this, yeah, this was a problem in this side of the industry.

So I'm super happy to have just like taken a back seat. And now I get to just clap for them and say, this is amazing. If I ever go to anything, you let me know, but really on the whole, they're autonomous and they run it and they're scaling it. And, uh, yeah, they

[00:23:37] **Christi Powell:** are so helpful for me because I'm literally doing the same thing right now with our nonprofit.

That was so confirmation of you. And she said, yes, because I don't want it to be about me. And yeah, I founded it and yes, we got to a place where we're successful, but it. It needs to be the next generation of leaders that are really pulling these young ladies in and teaching them confidence. Our, our nonprofit's called Women Confidence Builders, but thank you for that.

That was like a mentorship moment for me. It's like, Oh, I am on the right track.

[00:24:08] **Demi Clark:** Yeah. Well, and normalize that, right? I mean, there's a lot of women, again, women have founded these types of additions because who else is going to do it. Right. And then the struggle is real of saying, Hey, and then I think there's a little bit of imposter syndrome.

Did I have to do what I did? No, no. That was just one pathway. Right. There's a lot of different ways to, and I don't even want to say exit because it's not exiting. It's not like walking away from the mission. You're, you're letting the mission grow itself. And so I look at it like the startup world, because it's so inclusive in the tech startup world.

It's like, nobody remembers necessarily the founder, unless it's a very like. Right founder. Um, they remember the company that went public. So you're just

letting the company be itself and you're, you're clapping it out and saying like somebody had to start. Yay. If it's greater than you, then that's success, right?

At least that was my success. Awesome. Then this is way beyond my wildest dreams of what I ever thought would be possible. Neves

[00:25:06] **Angela Gardner:** Construction, a general contractor and woman owned business, specializes in assisting construction companies with finding and creating short and long term solutions for employee placement in areas of professional and skilled trades. Neves Construction further provides construction services to owners and developers, including owners rep, interim project Management and supervision, fight inspections and lending progress reporting.

For more information, visit [neves construction.com](http://nevesconstruction.com). That's N E V E S construction.com.

[00:25:53] **Christi Powell:** I feel like I would be keeping the organization in a silo if I kept moving at the direction I was moving. So yeah, it was great mentorship

[00:26:01] **Angela Gardner:** moment. I, I think she just validated. What you've been thinking,

[00:26:04] **Christi Powell:** Chris. Yes, absolutely. I

[00:26:06] **Demi Clark:** appreciate that. Also, last nugget is to say like you have so much subject matter expertise or SME, right, is to say like, how can I stay involved, but pass on my knowledge that way through others who take on the leadership roles, right?

So then it ultimately is like, that's the mission. You are living the mission, right? Yeah.

[00:26:24] **Christi Powell:** And, you know, I'm sure you probably feel the same way, Demi. I can tell by your conversation. I want to make a difference the last few years of my career so that the next generation, or, you know, even boys and men that are out there, not in our industry, would consider it because we have a passion for what we do.

We love what we're doing. We know the industry is the best on the planet, and we just want to make a difference and let people know that at the last I do in the last 10 years of

[00:26:52] **Demi Clark:** my career. Absolutely. And then also to your point on on boys meant, however, you identify and we're trying to be as inclusive as possible.

It is. I mean, it really and I found that out if she built the city was when we started doing programs for the kids and it's not just girls that haven't had a power drill in their hand. It's everyone at age 6 to 10. It's more of that. Like, You know, you get into the, we grew up with the stranger danger generation of parents.

I had an army ranger dad. So he threw me in the garage really quickly with my older brother building Pinewood Derby cars. Whereas that wasn't every kid's experience, but that was a lot of the eighties kids experiences. So, you know, this generation has been the phone. And while that brings phenomenal things, it takes us away from the hands on activities that also solve for, for big future problems.

So yeah, I think it's everyone. It's every kid, you know, and how do you partner? That's my life now is how do you partner that technology that's going to ignite them what they know as digital natives, but then ignite their curiosity of saying, let me do things with my hands and then engage the technology however I want to.

Well, and I think, I mean, for me,

[00:27:56] **Christi Powell:** I am super tech. I'm not techie. My husband would laugh if he heard that and he's going to hear that. I love technology. And I'm always curious and I want to learn more about it and it changes so fast, so I never get bored. But at the same time, I don't have the wherewithal to be able to just adapt as well as this next generation.

And my point here is, is that when I do get the opportunity to be out using my hands again, it's therapy. So I've been in the office, you know, I am an executive now. And so I don't get to be in the field like I used to be, but when I get the opportunity to use my hands, and I think a lot of these kids need to understand that it literally is therapy.

I think that's part of the reason we're suffering from, you know, all the depression that we have in our country right now is we're, we're sitting and looking at a screen instead of being out using our hands and what we were

[00:28:49] **Demi Clark:** created to do. Oh, a thousand percent. And I say it all the time in, in my welding journey, when I'm telling people, I mean, that was my TEDx was to say, the, the story I tell is the minute you put that hood down, you are doing yoga effectively.

You have to be a thousand percent present. Yeah. A thousand percent mindful. It's like being underwater. And, and if you, you know, you can't sit there and think about what's on your phone, because then you're going to be cutting something, including yourself. And I mean, and that's in many construction situations.

But for me, my, my frame of reference right now is welding. And I, I, Crave it. It's kind of like when I've been away from it too long, like when people start talking about running or exercise, like you get a little antsy and your family's like, would you go run, please? It's the same thing for me. It's like, when I'm too far away from a torch for too long, I just know that it's like, it's too much digital.

It's too much all the things. Yeah. And you have to find that piece that, you know, yeah. Or I remember back in the day of, of being in new homes is, um, yeah, the field days were the best days. Cause I knew where you could see when a construction manager would come in and have to do the invoices and stuff.

And they'd get antsy after about four hours of saying, hi, they're like, I gotta go snifter. I gotta get out of here. And I was the same way. I was just like, I get it. It's just a different. Being in air, you have clear head. I, I used to solve for thing in the car, truck all the time. Me too. I worked in my car.

You know, like that's your thing in

[00:30:06] **Christi Powell:** time. So yeah, we, again, normalize this. Yes. Yes. Well, thank you so much for being on. We are running out of time, but before we finish, I really want our audience to know exactly how to get ahold of you. Tell us a little bit more about how to reach you.

[00:30:19] **Demi Clark:** Uh, yeah, honestly, the, the best ways are Instagram.

I'm super loving Instagram. That's like my one social, I try to pick one thing and go with it. I get overwhelmed by all the social media. I just let my daughters tell

me like, do I need to know anything on TikTok? Cause right now it's so confusing to me. I'm super dating myself, but yeah, so I'm Girl Friday's Garage on Instagram, which is a lot more of my welding life.

And then, you know, more business life is LinkedIn. I think that's. That's a good thing though for any industry to know because it's the way to connect. We have the QR code, do the thing. Uh, and I, I love to connect with especially women. Um, I connect all the time with girls and women who are really, really curious about welding or running their own business, which I think we need to see more of in terms of prime, you know, contractors, et cetera, and WBOs, but, um, yeah, that's, that's the best way to find me.

And then, uh, yeah, I'll be, uh, Well, we're doing the first welding ever at 10 women next month. So I'm super excited about that. So you can basically just find me. Uh, this is in Atlanta in October. Okay. So, um, that, that's kind of my quest in this next season of me with my construction is since it's a little more of a part time is my own journey of welding a stem and wanting to be into the NASA world with that, but then also taking welding to places that have never been introduced to it.

So, you know, it's, it's kind of taking that thing. Stop shoving trades down what you think are trade kids, uh, throats and get it out to everyone. And so for me, that's getting out to women who have never picked up a torch because it's the coolest thing ever. You're not falling in love with it, right? Oh, they're just like, I want to do it again.

Like, what do I do with this? And these are like CEOs of banks. Yeah, I know. I

[00:31:52] **Christi Powell:** was at the NAIC when you did your welding class. I didn't get to actually participate, but I got to look in for a minute and take a few pictures. I love what

[00:31:59] **Demi Clark:** you're doing. We're doing that at TED. Yeah. So, more to come. There's, uh, I won't be the only one.

Good.

[00:32:03] **Christi Powell:** Good. Well, thank you so much for joining us today, Demi. We really appreciate you. And get on the forum introduce yourself so that these kids or Women that want to know more about welding can ask a question.

[00:32:17] **Demi Clark:** Absolutely. We'll do it. Okay. Thanks. Demi Thank you. Take care.

[00:32:25] **Christi Powell:** Well, that's all for this episode Thank you so much for listening to the women talk construction podcast with your hosts christy powell and angela gardner See you next time