

THE COMBUSTION CHRONICLES

WITH SHAWN NASON

PRESENTS

KISS YOUR *Dragons*:

A Metaphor, a Credo, and a Rallying Cry

WITH
AUTHORS:

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EPISODE 39



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Shawn: Welcome to *The Combustion Chronicles* podcast, where bold leaders combine with big ideas to create game-changing disruption. I'm Shawn Nason, your host for navigating the upside-down world of disruption. We're excited to depart from our usual programming for a few weeks to present a special mini-series based on my new book, *Kiss Your Dragons: Radical Relationships, Bold Heartsets and Changing the World*. Throughout these mini-episodes, I'm joined by my co-authors Robin Glasco and Michael Harper. Together we'll be digging into the heartsets and mindsets featured in the book and getting real about our personal journeys that led us to launch all of this into the world. Like it or not, you've got some dragons in your life that need kissing. So, pucker up and let's have some explosive conversations.

[00:00:50]

Shawn: On this episode, we're going to talk about why Michael and Robin and I wrote *Kiss Your Dragons*. And, I want to read a little bit and then we'll dive into this. It says, *Kiss Your Dragons*. The title of the book is metaphor, a credo, and a rallying cry we use to describe the unique, powerful, and equally crazy hard journey. It is to commit to creating positive change always, everywhere, with everyone in both work and life." And, I remember when we started this journey. You know, we were in the middle of the pandemic. We'd been talking, really we had struggled to be...to write this book, for what? A year and a half, almost two years? And, we didn't know which direction to go. And then, all of a sudden, the three of us were on the phone with the team and we started into this, and *Kiss Your Dragons* came to life. And, you know, Robin and I, you know, we've known each other for several years. You're my twin sister. Robin, I'd love for you to share with us why it was so important for you, and for us to collaborate on this book together and bring this to life?

Robin: Yeah. As recovering healthcare executives, one of the things that got in the way, whether inside your organization or consulting with, you know, Fortune 1 to Fortune 1,000 companies, there's a consistent theme, and it's this notion of, "We cannot, we've done it this way before, fear," you can name it. There are just things that get in the way of being able to make change, to make progress, and to get anything past incrementalism.

And, you know, *Game of Thrones* had this horrible ending. So, I think all this was happening around the same time. And there was this fear of a dragon, and we're like, "Well, let's, just as we typically do, let's reframe that." Let's not look at this thing that usually we tend to as employees or people who are working with organizations, we automatically put up this wall of this thing we must fear, or this thing we cannot conquer. But, given how we roll, let's flip it around, and let's not fear it, this dragon. Let's embrace it, and let's use the tools that we've had

and we've developed over the years to teach that as a metaphor of not fearing your dragon, but embracing it, and better yet, puckering up and kissing your dragon.

Michael: And why do we, as a people, so quickly jump towards a common enemy? Like, why is that so important to us that we've got to come together and call this out as the problem?

Robin: You know, I think because, I think just in general, when you are doing a group project in school, if you're on a team, you have to find commonness, you have to find similar, you have to find we're wearing the same jersey. You have to find that. And so, it's just a natural thing of let's find a common enemy, let's find something that we can quickly...

Michael: Rise up against. Yes.

Robin: ...quickly agree on...

Michael: Yes.

Robin: ...and then we can move.

Michael: Right.

Shawn: Yeah. And I know we'll jump into this in another podcast around the Swarm concept, but I do want to lean into, because I remember we were on these conversations with the team, and I don't remember how, if it was you or I or which one, but we leaned into the movie series, *How to Train Your Dragon*. Right? And the story of Toothless and Hiccup, you know, this young man who had been taught his whole life, his journey, right, his whole life by his father, grandfather, society to hate dragons and to kill them.

Michael: And to live in fear of them.

Robin: Yes.

Shawn: And to live in fear of them.

Robin: Yes.

Shawn: And the day that he was faced with confronting that dragon, Toothless, he couldn't do it.

Michael: Right.

Shawn: That's not a pivot, that's that change that we're talking about, right? And instead of killing that dragon, he leaned in and he trained that dragon. And if you go through the three movies, if you ever watch them all, but by the end of the third movie, he had radically, because he had leaned into that, changed society, changed the whole world that he knew. Right? And, they were using these dragons to do work and to fly on and they were part of society. And, I really want to lean into that, you guys, with the three of us who are on this journey. And, why we leaned into that? Because I think that is really important because each of us here have our own story of how we want to see society changing, business changing, especially in the world we live in today. It's almost frightening to me that the rest of the people in the world don't think like us. Right? Michael, share a little bit why this was so important to you.

[00:05:40]

Michael: For me, the world did not need another business book.

Robin: Yes. Right.

Shawn: No.

Michael: And that was, I think, my angst at the beginning of all this, is why do we need any other book? Why...? Is this just an egotistical thought leadership launch, another business book by another person that no one's going to ever hear of, or is there really something to this that might actually have an impact on the world? And I quickly got to, "Yeah, there's an impact here." There is a possibility, and it comes back to this whole notion of training your dragon. And I even wonder if the folks who made that movie might even change the word "train" at this point. Because it's not about... Training infers that there's a power differential. Right? And this is not about power differentials. This is about equality and sharing in that power dynamic and the radical relationships that we talk about. So, it's about engaging with your dragons, engaging the things that are the scariest, hardest, grossest, most scary thing that you could ever imagine...

Robin: Right. Right.

Michael: ...and, somehow engaging that in ways that you didn't think you could do by yourself.

Shawn: Yeah.

Robin: I love that. And I love that in terms of what you can imagine, because I am the best movie producer and director and star of my own movie. And, we often think in our head, or we hear that folklore of that one employee, you know, of yon, who, of yesteryear, who didn't survive because they thought differently. And I just think of all the things we enjoy today that used to bring fear upon, you know, whether it's a flight, of fire, of, you know, someone who's of a different color, that meant now because we shift a mindset that we look at it different and we have advanced as a society as a result. And so, being able to just literally lean in, embrace it, and shift your mindset can just open up so many different possibilities.

Shawn: So, my question to you two, and I'll share a little bit, is this journey worth it, to lean in to kiss your dragon?

Robin: Hell, yeah.

Shawn: Right? Like, so I would say yes, but again, understanding that there is a new way of having to do it. Right?

Robin: Right. Right.

Shawn: Like, this journey is not the typical journey, it's not. And, Michael, I so appreciate it, and you and I have had conversations about we don't need another self-help book. We don't need another here are the seven steps to go, you know, to go be a great leader. Right? This is not about that. And for those of you that haven't read the book, it's a conversation. Just like you're watching here and hearing here, it's a conversation between Michael and Robin and I sharing where we were and where we are on this journey. And I know for me this journey never ends.

Michael: Yeah. Yeah.

Shawn: Because, when I think we've arrived, something else comes up.

Michael: So, is it worth it?

Robin: All day, every day, twice on Sundays.

Michael: Because?

Robin: Because, you know, I see the struggle. I've lived the struggle. There's a lot of grey hair under here. And, we get in our way, and we get in our way up here more so than anything else. And being able to put these mindsets in practice from our own experiences and then those, what we work with others when they've been able to put it in practice, you just, you get light years beyond what you could have ever dreamed. So, to me, as someone who enjoys watching that happen, I think 100% it is definitely worth it.

Michael: Is it worth it?

Shawn: Absolutely.

Michael: Because?

Shawn: Because it will make you a better person.

Robin: You're such a pastor.

Shawn: When I say that, I think we just live in such closed-mindedness in our society today. We don't want to turn this into a political thing or a social justice thing, but it's because of our closed-mindedness in our world today that we are where we are. And what I have learned from Toothless and Hiccup is that when you embrace that, even in fear. I wouldn't say that Hiccup leaned in and went, "Oh, this is going to be fun."

[00:10:00]

Robin: Right.

Shawn: You know, and I remember a part in the movie when he's in the arena and he's got to kill the dragon, that was that moment when it flipped for society when he didn't do it, but that wasn't easy. He was afraid he was going to lose everything, his family. Right? And that's the part we have to be aware of. Would I still do it? Absolutely. What about you?

Michael: I would answer, yes, reluctantly.

Robin: I felt that. That's the slowest yes.

Michael: That it's a reluctant yes. And I think one of the spiritual gifts I bring to the table is that I'm always about five steps ahead on things, and I see the hard work, and I see the pain, and I see the time that will be used up. I would rather work more efficiently and not have to do any of that.

Robin: This is a moment of truth.

Michael: It is. It is.

Robin: It's fascinating because I also am five steps ahead and not thinking anything about that at all.

Shawn: But that's the beauty of our relationships, right?

Robin: One million percent.

Shawn: Because I'm five steps ahead and not thinking about anything you two are thinking about, right? But that's the beauty of what's happening on this journey, right, is there is such a diversification of thought, of how we move. But that's what makes this relationship beautiful.

Robin: Yeah. Yeah. Absolutely.

Shawn: I do want to finish with this Sioux legend that says, "The hardest journey in life is from your head to your heart." And I think that is what this journey, and that's what *Kiss Your Dragons* is about.

Robin: A million percent.

Shawn: Awesome. Thanks, you guys.

Michael: Thank you.

Robin: Thank you.

Shawn: Thanks so much for listening to this special presentation of *The Combustion Chronicles* featuring the lessons and stories behind our new book, *Kiss Your Dragons: Radical*

Relationships, Bold Heartsets, and Changing the World, which is available now at Amazon. If you'd like to bring *Kiss Your Dragons* into your life or workplace, head to ShawnNason.com, where you can check out our resource kit for teams, a free book club discussion guide, and information about self-paced and in-person training. If you're ready to dive deeper with us, you can also learn more about our mastermind group and personal coaching. And don't forget to connect with us on Facebook, Instagram, and Clubhouse so we can continue the conversation about radical relationships, challenging the status quo, and being the people the world needs us to be. Thanks for joining us . . . Now get out there and kiss some dragons!