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INSIDER: Huddle: How Women Unlock their Collective Power
Isabella Ip, MBA Candidate

INSIDER: The High 5 Habit: Take Control of Your Life with One Simple Habit
Tyler O’Mary, MBA
INSIDER: Huddle: How Women Unlock their Collective Power

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As a female in leadership, or even in the workplace, it is easy to feel isolated, out of place, and exhausted after consistently managing perceptions. In her new book, Huddle, Brooke Baldwin examines the powerful concept of a huddle, which empowers women to replace these negative feelings with feelings of being seen, of deserving the position they hold, and of being ready to take risks and challenge the norms in place.

THINK POINT #1: Huddles are a Decision

Baldwin stresses that women are each other’s most valuable asset via a collective group coming together to provide a safe and authentic space to support and embolden one another. During a time when women may sense they are fighting each other for a limited number of seats at the table, they should create their own table and welcome others to a seat at that table. While men can be included in huddles, Baldwin maintains that there is a confidence that can come from “boy-free zones.” For some, single-sex environments can provide a safe space to stand out, embody independence, speak up, and take risks.

Applying the term “huddle” to the concept of women supporting, relying on, and empowering one another is not a new concept. Huddling was evident during the 1960’s and 1970’s through the League of Women Voters, who fought to demand legal equality. Baldwin also shares how African American huddles were created in our history through “generations of struggle, hardship, patience, and joy.” Huddles have permeated government, sports, and popular culture, and they can also be applied to the current daily lives of everyday working women.

THINK POINT #2: Huddles Provide Support to Do Hard Things

Women must intentionally lean on one another for support during situations of injustice and loneliness. Huddles are a great tool to find support and, conversely, give support when fighting an uphill battle. The idea of a collective can also provide support for individuals to feel confident about their actions and taking a risk. Not only do huddles provide emotional support to face difficult and seemingly impossible situations, but the influence of huddles can also be enhanced through multiple minds (and experiences) working to produce a solution.
Baldwin tells the story of 19 African American females elected as judges in Harris County, Texas. These women fought fiercely “[to restore] compassion to the bench in a county where people of color and the poor were disproportionately penalized by the justice system,” for representation, and for the future generations of young Black women. These 19 women were overlooked by their party, regarded as a guaranteed loss, and called unqualified, even though many had ample experience practicing law. As a response, these women created a huddle and campaigned together, motivated one another, and cared for one another, even looking after one another’s children. Even after winning their positions, these women continued to use the huddle to support one another in uphill challenges, such as when outgoing judges refused to help transition their courts. Additionally, these women continue to benefit from their huddle by asking each other specific questions and depending on one another for advice. Not only does this prove the collective power and support of a huddle, but also shows the expanded wisdom that comes from 19 collective minds.

**THINK POINT #3: Huddles Require an Abundance Mindset**

Within the workplace and in life, women can feel motivated to compete with one another. Women often perceive a glass ceiling in the way of advancement and accomplishment, or that there are only a few favored positions at the top of the ladder. This scarcity mindset encourages competition—a competition where women believe they must hoard the resources they have and possibly even sabotage other women. The scarcity mindset is the opposite of that of a huddle, and the two cannot work in congruence.

An abundance mindset creates the idea that there are always resources to be shared and sufficient for additional individuals. Female leaders must intentionally provide access to other women when receiving access themselves to power or resources. *Huddle* creates the idea that power can be seen as a party, and keeping the power to yourself is like being at the party by yourself. An abundance mindset also means experiencing genuine happiness and excitement when others in our huddle succeed as we fight our own insecurity or envy. A huddle stresses benefitting others—rather than merely oneself.

**THINK POINT #4: Huddles Provide Safe Spaces to be Authentic and Vulnerable**

A huddle is stronger when it includes women who are personally and professionally connected, but this connection comes through vulnerability. Vulnerability allows women to focus on one another and work together to target challenges. In personal and professional spaces, women often worry too much about how they are perceived by men (and also other women). In these situations, a huddle provides space where energy does not need to be consumed by overthinking perceptions. Such an atmosphere allows room for women to be unapologetically authentic and understood.
Authenticity and vulnerability can be difficult. When women are bold enough to share their thoughts and pains out loud, they are opening a protected space for others to follow suit. Vulnerability is difficult and can take practice, but openness is a necessary to create connection and trust within a huddle. An action of vulnerability indicates an intentional choice to invest in the huddle.

**Real Estate Implications**

Huddles have proven successful in many different industries, and real estate is no different. Because 64% of real estate professionals are female, the situation is ripe for the creation of new huddles. Working women are constantly balancing different roles: mom, friend, daughter, wife, employee, boss, and more. As such, it may seem as though working women are too busy for huddles. Despite the balancing act, Brooke Baldwin stresses the importance of pushing against the demands of competition and perfection to find and maintain a huddle with those who will help widen your perspectives and experiences.

**Recommended Reading**


**About the Author**

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Isabella Ip is a graduate student from Coppell, Texas. She earned a Bachelor of Business Administration in Business Fellows and Economics with a secondary major in Biology from Baylor University in May 2021. Isabella is currently pursuing an MBA at Baylor University with a concentration in Healthcare Administration with hopes to work as an administrator in a hospital after graduation.