

Episode 26 Transcript

Wambui: Hi there Elizabeth, thank you very much for being on my show.

Dr. Elizabeth: Absolutely. You are most welcome. I'm glad to be here.

Wambui: Very nice. So please tell my listeners who you are and what you do.

Dr. Elizabeth: Absolutely. So in short, my name is Elizabeth Wachira depending on where they may connect with me, I'm also called Dr. E based in the Dallas Fort Worth Metroplex. I am an ordained minister, a pastor, and I work with young people, but I'm also a professor. So I teach young people. So I love being in that space of supporting, encouraging, and empowering young people, whether it is on the pulpit or in the classroom, all in the community.

Wambui: Very nice. Now what do you like to be called? Cause I know you personally through your family, should I call you Dr. E? You earned it, Dr. E. Tell us a little bit about your journey. And I know you moved from Kenya to the States. Tell us a little bit about that and your professional journey.

Dr. Elizabeth: Yes, that's a great question first, because sometimes we get focused on seeing where somebody is and not the journey. So, moved to this country with my parents, , I have a wonderful, wonderful family, two amazing parents, and I always say they're the best parents in my world, my personal world, two siblings, I'm the middle child. So we moved to the United States in the late nineties and transitioned and acclimated , to a new place. Although , it didn't feel necessarily too new, but I think it's because we were blanketed by our parents in terms of how they navigated all of that. And then they gave us a semblance of normalcy. Yeah, and it was a continuation of kind of just in a different place, different time zone with a lot of heat. Because I was in Austin, it was hot. Yes. And so lived there and of course, middle school, high school, and then college did a degree in nursing. That's my bachelor's degree. And then later on did a master's in public health. And then later on did a PhD in population studies. And so in all those places, I was also very active in ministry, very active in the church in terms of just using my talents where they would fit. My family is, my parents are really big on serving. They're big on, you're not just in this world to be and to take, you're in this world to also give and to serve. So we were always encouraged and challenged to what you can do for your community. Through God and what can you do in the church? And so I would volunteer in Sunday school and then later on with a youth group. And that's where I was a youth leader during my nursing career. And then , at that point, I couldn't be called a pastor since I was ordained, but naturally people started thinking of me as that. Okay. So that's how I evolved in the ministry area. And I always say. ministry and profession for me go hand in hand because it's the same person doing the same thing in a different setting. The things I use in teaching are the same skills I use in in administrative

work, in ministry, in teaching and preaching. So I developed all of those skill sets and I always say my work experience comes from the church. I learned how to public speak, doing announcements. I learned how to deal with people running events and, and all those skills just came together. And now I am a professor. So I teach, I run a A public health program at A&M University Commerce, I'm the public health program director. So my job is to write curriculum, to teach classes, to advise students. So it's very people centred and using my talents. Again, that's the thing, using my talents, my skill set to empower the young students trying to figure out their career and their trajectory and in the same way working with youth, young adults. I'm the student pastor. So from Sunday school, all the way to young adults and planning events planning services and very people centred, people oriented. So my journey has really been people centred, people oriented and what's how I came to be a navigated career. I navigated the school setting and here I am.

Wambui: Yeah. Wow. That's beautiful. And I do know about your parents. When you say that they are the best parents in your world, they are the best parents. I know they're just great. And like we were talking before we started, I did interview your brother and he did say the same thing that your parents you know, were very big on giving back and serving the community, giving back to the community. And that's what all of you are doing. So you're such good listeners.

Dr. Elizabeth: Thank you. Thank you.

Wambui: You're the best teens in the world for your parents.

Dr. Elizabeth: Yes, I would hope they would say the same thing. I think they do. They tell us personally, not just publicly, but they really reinforce us personally. In our WhatsApp groups, it's a lot of great job, kick off first, you're doing great, you're here to serve the community, shine Jesus everywhere you go. So they do that privately and publicly.

Wambui: Wow, that's just awesome. And we'll talk a little bit about that too. So let's talk about your journey to your career. And it sounds like if you connect the dots back, I think this is something that you started, even like you're saying you served in the youth, a church, and now you're here, you are, you're a teacher, you're a professor, working with the youth. Does that seem like when you connect the dots, it's like it, it started all the way back when you were younger?

Dr. Elizabeth: It did, right? It did, for me, it did. It was a very logical journey, and I know sometimes that's not the case, so I don't want to make it seem like it should be very logical, it should make sense, it should develop naturally, but that would be the hope. And for me, I'm blessed and thankful that that was the trajectory that mine did and I want to say it's really because I didn't focus necessarily on the title of what I wanted to be. I always said, for example, I want to be a doctor because I want to help people this way. I want to do this because I want to do this. So it was always

connected to my passion. and that's what I tell my students. I go, what are you passionate about? Follow that, pay attention to that and pay attention to what makes you happy, what brings you joy and follow that. And I would say the way I was able to connect those dots and navigate those big decisions. And I was very attentive to myself and what I wanted to do because I was raising a family that was very big on one authenticity, but also really serving the community with your specific talents and your specific skill sets. So you have to know what those are. So I think being raised in hearing that and also seeing my parents doing that, they love this. My mom is a prayer warrior, my goodness. So that's her area. She loves that. So that's what she says and operates. And my dad is an extrovert, he never meets a stranger, he loves knowledge, philosophy, theory, he loves religion, he loves the word, he enjoys being in the word, talking the word, teaching the word, so naturally he's a theologian, he's a teacher, he's a pastor. So I have an example of passion in form, purpose and career and ministry. That's how I was able to weave that thread through all my teens, my twenties, and now my thirties, I always follow. My passion and I believe as a believer, those are God given those desires that I have are really God given and he's aligned them to my purpose. So if I follow what brings me peace when I'm doing it, then I know that's affirmation from God that I am where he wants me to be. So I was able to serve and I enjoyed working with young people. I had a challenge for planning mission trips. It just came easy for me, but not necessarily that it was easy. I was just passionate about it. And I was strategic and very planned oriented and goal oriented. So it was natural for me to be the one that coordinates the mission or the future and that developed and now those skills that I use, I'm using them to develop and plan curriculum. And so yeah, for me it was passion connected progress.

Wambui: Passion connected progress. That's really beautiful, Dr. E. And your parents, I mean, it's amazing to hear that they are that encouraging just really giving life because really the words we use, the, or destroy, so I'm really happy to hear that's what they do and they affirm you all. So that's good at this, you know, really a current time that we have, or even just a lot of, I know a lot of people didn't grow up that way. So you're very, very fortunate, very blessed to be here. I've grown up that way. So now you're, you're here with and you teach, you're a professor. Tell us a little bit about that and why you chose and you've already told us, you know, your passion connected the purpose. Is that what you said? Yes, passion connected progress.

Dr. Elizabeth: Progress. Progress. Okay. I actually need to remember that myself. I know. I like it. That's it.

Wambui: Passion connects the progress. Yeah. Tell us what you do and how has that been your, your teaching? What area do you focus on at your job?

Dr. Elizabeth: So I focus on public health. Okay. And it makes sense. Public health is all about working with other people to positively impact the health and well being of people. Education through programs through empowerment, so I'm literally in my niche area. And I want to say it, Gordon, about a day, you know, the scripture that

talks about, in human's heart, they plan their ways, but it is the Lord that directs their plan. Yes, but if I give that and commit that to God and I say, Lord, not my will, not my plan, but your plan, He will direct them. He will ordain certain connection points and open certain doors and close certain doors. Yes, I've had doors opening and closing. So when I graduated, but with my master's program, of course, I wanted to do a PhD and the reason I wanted to do a PhD. I'm not going to lie to you on board. I wanted to be a boss. I wanted to be a boss. Yes, and it's good to know who you are and what you want. And so I think I wanted to be a boss. I wanted to be the one that informs things that at least in some way I have. Some influence. A voice.. And, and what is happening and what is being done. And I am so glad that what I spoke into existence and the desire to be a boss is nothing wrong with that. It's not over confidence. It is God's confidence because we asked and it shall be given unto you, seeking you shall find. So I said, God, I wanna be a boss, babe. I want to be a boss lady for you. Right. So when I graduated with my master's, I was applying to a PhD program because I knew, okay, a few ways to become this are to have 20 at that time, 20 to 30 years of experience in a field or be highly educated. Well, it makes sense to be highly educated because I am a nerd. I love learning. I'm learning about anything. It doesn't matter what it is. So it makes sense. And again, I was following in the footsteps, my father, my brother. So it wasn't an example I didn't know and see. So I started applying into programs. And this is where having a group of people. Right? And people you can trust and you can trust with your goals, your dreams, your desires to pray with you, but also to, to counsel you, you know, blessed is the one that walketh not, not in the counsel of the ungodly, meaning I'm blessed if I walk in good counsel. So counsel, one has always been defaulted, my family, even my younger sister, but I consulted with my brother and I said, I'm looking at the programs. And I say I've applied here, but by chance, he said, Oh, I just met a lady and she graduated from this program. You should apply. I had never heard of Texas Women's University. It did not come up in my searches. But I said, You know what? What will it hurt? Let me apply. I applied. And that's cool. I had applied for University of Houston. I didn't get in. At that point, it was a pride check because I was confident I would get in. I had the CV, I had the grades, I had the community service, the experience. I was a poster child for a PhD program at U of H, but I got a denial letter and I got an acceptance letter to TWU. I was disappointed, but I said, you know what, end the course, but God directs the path, so if one door closed, another one opens, so this one opened TWU, and I remember the first semester I started, and every so often when I'm on campus, I go back to that area, and it was right at the first week of class, and I say, God, this is not where I wanted to go, and you know God. But you open this door. So this is the right place. And I may not feel like it's the right place, but I'm going to accept that it's the right place for you, for me, and I'm going to make the best of it. And whatever happens, I know, whatever happens when I graduate, you will be with me, you will open the next door for this. And that, that was what I prayed. So I graduated, I was applying for postdoc fellowships because I felt I wanted to do a postdoc. I applied all over, all over the country, all over. I didn't really want to because I was like, oh, I want to be home. I want to be close to my

nests. I love my siblings. My siblings will fly everywhere, but it's good to know yourself. And that's not me. Yes, I'll fly off the nest, my parents, but I want to be within a driving distance, and I knew in my heart that was my desire, right? Even when I was applying to San Francisco, to New York, I was doing it with if I don't get in, I'm okay, because it's okay. So I didn't get in, of course. Okay, and people can say you spoke that into a business. I go, well, I prayed for the desire. I say, you know what, God, you know what I want, but I'm open to whatever. So be open to whatever you want. It's applying everywhere and wherever God opens us, where I will go. So God's knowledge here and there. Again, I was getting ready to do my defense, my PhD defense that day, April 5th, 2017. Okay. I'm getting ready, I'm nervous, and one of my previous students A classmate, says, oh man, Elizabeth, congratulations. You'll do great on the defense. And they ask, so what do you want to do? What are you looking for? I say, well, I'm looking at postdocs, but I'm also looking here and there. He goes, what about teaching? I go, yeah, teaching as well. I've enjoyed it because I was a TA. He goes, I just emailed you a job. I said, oh, okay. I opened the email. I have never heard of A&M Commerce. You see, the link? Yes. I said, well, what would it hurt? I'm going to apply. Okay. I applied. Forget about it. The day before my graduation, May 4th, No, my graduation was May 5th. May 4th, I got an email saying that I'll be selected for a phone interview. The phone interview is the day of my graduation. So that morning, I woke up to do a phone interview and then I graduated. I forget about it. Three weeks later, I get an email saying I've been chosen as one of the candidates to go for a campus interview. Oh, now they're okay. I went to the campus interview. A few weeks later, I got a call from the hiring department head saying, Hey, Dr. Wachira, I want to offer you a job. I was like, Say, okay, let me think about it. Well, there's not much to think about because there's literally nothing else. And I'm glad it works this way because Wambui, one thing for me, I'm very indecisive.

Wambui: You don't look or sound like you could be.

Dr. Elizabeth: But you know what, God loves me so much as my father, that he knows his own child, that if I give Elizabeth all these choices, Yes. She's going to become chaotic, and I'm confident, and not picked. So, rather than give me A or B, he gives me A. And closes the meeting. And I'm happy with that. And every choice that has been A, only A, select A only because there's only A as the option. I've selected it and I can tell you my path is God ordained. Did I plan for TWU? No. Did I plan for A&M Commerce teaching? No. But God did because I prayed a prayer. God, I commit my words to you. I commit my plans to you. First and foremost, it's not to have a career or to do this. It's to love you and to serve you. Then you will give me life in abundance, which is a good career, a stable career. But he seeped up to my soul first and he blessed me with everything else. And that is how my trajectory has been. And throughout all of it, my passion has grown for people. My passion has grown, for community and service at every level. And that is how I came to be where I am today.

Wambui: You have so much confidence and a lot of faith. Where does this confidence come from?

Dr. Elizabeth: I will say it comes from my mother, but it also comes from God. Bye. God speaks through his people because we are the hands and feet and the mouth of God. Yeah. So for me, and I know this is not the example or the template for all people. I've mentioned at the beginning, I've been blessed. We planted in a family that is really God centred, not by just now, but by the way God is God is God. And the way I've seen my parents navigate situations, decisions. They don't bring in God later. They start with God and they say, God, this is what we have. We release it to you. Open the doorway. We trust you. So I've grown up seeing that I've grown up being a product of that prayer. And so I emulated that and my mom is. My biggest kingdom partner, she prays with me, she speaks to me about what God is saying, she encourages me, she challenges me because she's also a mother, so she knows her child, you know, she knows when I'm feeling not confident or when I'm feeling scared without ever saying anything because she knows me. She feeds into me. She pours into me. And now I am at a point where I can pour into my own self without her, because she's taught me to be a woman of faith as well. And it started with my mom teaching me, nurturing me. And even to this day, I'm blessed to have her voice and her voice is one of the most influential in my life. And then now I have God. Yes, a huge influential part with his words and what he speaks to me and that is where I get my confidence. It has nothing to do with Elizabeth because who I am, where I am, what I am is a product of God in me and a product of my upbringing. And so I stand on that firm foundation, knowing God has never failed me. He never will. This is where he wants me to be. I know that without a doubt. Yes. I know my parents are Solomon and Tabitha. My name is Elizabeth. I am confident that this is where God wants me to be and that assurance is what gives me confidence that even when I walk in situations, I don't know what will happen. I go, God, I know you want me here and you know what I am. You know who I am. You know, my mistakes, you know, my challenges, you know, my inadequacies, but you Thank you because your Holy Spirit has given me not a spirit of fear, but of adoption to where I am child of God. And if I'm a child of God, I have access to all these resources. So that's the confidence. It's not, it's God in me.

Wambui: I love that. That's beautiful. And I do know that your mom is a big prayer warrior. She's my sister's friend. So I knew that friendship and just knowing that she's such a prayer warrior, actually your mom and your dad. And so I see where all this is coming from also, you know, that influence and that upbringing, it's made a big impact. And here now you are, you're impacting others. It's just amazing. So just amazing. So most of my listeners have a lot of self doubt. They're professionals and sometimes they want to go to the next level of their career. Some of them are aspiring entrepreneurs. Sometimes, you know, they want to maybe start a business or something like that, but they hold themselves back.

And I'm seeing that you know, that confidence and that just really that faith. Would you say, what would you advise? Those people who are holding themselves back and lacking that confidence and just not believing in themselves. What would you tell them? What advice would you give them?

Dr. Elizabeth: Yeah, that's a great question. And you know, first to say that is everybody. I have some areas in my life where I'm very confident and in some areas I am meeting a push and so I'm there too, right? Imposter syndrome kicks in. Comparison kicks in and I'm there too. So I may look like I got it, but it's not all the time that I got it. But what keeps me is, again going back to that, having a space. A counter space that challenges your thoughts. Adequacy and challenges, what the world expects of things about you. So having a group of friends, family, whoever, a support team, a cheerleading team that knows you through and through knows your capacity and your inadequacies without you ever speaking. So if you come and say. I want to go to the moon, like Elizabeth, you've never liked physics, anything like that. Okay, tell me to shop, to eat at their coffee shop. So people that, when you come up with an idea, it may be great, but maybe not for you. Or it may need to be baked out. They will not question it in a way that shuts you down. They will question and challenge it in a way that gets you to look at it twice and put yourself in the mix. So I would say a group of people, and that's why, even for me, I'm very intentional because I know, Just as much as I'm very confident in this, yeah, we did struggle. Yeah. Right. And people that are perfectionist. I'm a perfectionist. Oh. Yeah. So you have to have people that will say, Elizabeth, it's good enough. Put it up because it will never be good enough for me. And I'm dealing with that. But by myself, I will deal with it for 20 years. But with other people, I may shorten that time and put it out there and be scared. And I'm like, Ooh, it's out there. It's gone. Yes. I'm afraid, but my friend made me hit the submit button because I never would have done it myself.

Wambui: Cause you are crossing the T's and dotting the I's.

Dr. Elizabeth: And I'm like, no, let me sleep on it. You know, but my friend would say, no, submit. Like, ah, okay, fine. I can't take it back. So having a circle. And for me, one way I've done that is one. I have a book club called becoming engaged for women and this one, I launched it because I love reading and as an adult, you realise making friends or connections is actually not easy because we make connections in school, in the playground, but we're not in the playground or the schools anymore. We're working from home remotely. So you're never with people, that kind of thing. So I would look up for women and any women you're most welcome. We just, we read books. We read books. That helps us. We talk about them. It looks a little different now than when it started. We used to have the traditional meet once a month to talk over a book, but now it's over Zoom every two months because the women are mothers, they're working, they're busy, they can't read a book in three weeks like we used to.

It's going to take 12 weeks, but we've read books from, I have many of them, Daring Greatly, Dr. Brene Brown, Latina Intelligence, and. For me, listening to the experiences of the book of women as they have navigated finance and they've navigated mental health challenges and they've navigated dating or a marriage or making a business move, I listen, right? And I listen and I learn. I'm like, you struggle with that? It affirms what I'm feeling. It affirms the fear. I'm like, okay, so I'm not by myself. And then you learn how they did this. And so that's one way. And then another way is I'm launching what I'm calling my God given assignment in this season, which is creating a nation of blooming women, blooming is the same way of flower. Every flower has a bloom season and, you know, some bloom once and then they're gone. Others bloom every season, every whatever. So we are, we bloom. It's seasonal. It may not be continuous because there's some time to plant, to weed, to cultivate before you sprout out. And that is a multi generational space. I will end with this. I believe we need at least three types of people in our life. And I borrowed this from Michelle Obama's quote, but she talks about needing three types of women. You need a woman that you're pulling up, that you're pouring into, that you're mentoring. You need a woman that's your friend, your BFF that's doing life with you, going through what you're going through together. And then you need a woman that she can look up to, a woman that is a mentor, that can point to you, that can teach you how they navigated this. And sometimes we may be focused on me spending time with my mentors and that's it, but it's directional the same way I'm reaching up towards somebody I should be reaching down as well. The same thing that woman that I'm reaching down to. I'm her first. She's pouring into me. She is a second level person. And she also has somebody pouring into her. And if we keep doing that, we will raise up a nation of blooming women that can celebrate one another, that can connect together, be empowered and supported, and celebrate when your bloom may come in the summer, right? I'm gonna celebrate it because it's my blossom. Yes. Mines come in the winter 'cause I'm a winter blooming flower. So in the summer when you are not blooming, and in the winter when you are not blooming, and I am, you can celebrate it because we belong to this beautiful fabric, a beautiful garden of blooming women. As long as somebody is blooming, we are all blossoming. We are all blooming. We are all, exactly. So that's why I'm saying your bloom is our blossom. I may not be blooming at this moment, but I'm blossoming because you are having an individual bloom. So it's creating that space because we need that from the time we are young. We don't just need it in our 30s or our 20s. Even in our teenage years, we need that. So that's the bloom experience. And I'll share those details so you can share.

Wambui: Please. I would like to share all those details because first of all, count me in. I'm in that group already and the book club too. I'm just going to be in everything that you say.

Dr. Elizabeth: All right. So yeah, I navigate those challenges and confidence fitness is creating spaces that nurture me and pull me out when I'm in my funk. You know, when I'm

Wambui: Yeah, that's beautiful. And I love that you say that you got that from Michelle Obama. Cause I know she's big on friendship and community. She has what she calls, I don't know, a kitchen cabinet or something, her friends. I like that concept that you're creating and it's actually multi generational. So every season, because, and like you're saying especially even for teenagers, you know, that's a very challenging time. So if we can have that kind of you know, that concept that you're having where everybody is blooming and that's a very good support system. My answer says that we were not created for isolation. We were created for community. So I believe that is so important. And I think that's very helpful especially at this age of a lot of mental health issues, it's something that can help with that.

Dr. Elizabeth: And, you know, it's good that she brought that up because research shows that Now that we live in a very isolated place, you know, just because I have my phone with me, I feel like I'm connected, but I'm really not. Right. And there's research that shows the more time, for example, among adolescents or young people, the more time they spend on social media, it's actually core. There's a positive correlation with having mental health challenges, right? Because in that moment you are isolated, but also in that moment, You are now comparing or being compared to millions of people. And , anytime we get a like, it's an endorphins kick, but then you can get a like. We're like, nobody wants to post nobody. So you slowly get your work from the liked post, but there's so many factors. So. Social media is a great tool, but it's also, if it's mishandled and not managed well, it can be a very detrimental tool that can be very disruptive, especially in those formative years. And even for us as mature people, individuals. We get disrupted and you end up spending five hours on your phone just scrolling, that's five hours of productivity. So we know it, there's some great things in there, but it also can be very easy to build bad habits that impact not only your mental well being, but even your productivity.

Wambui: Right. And I know you're also big on that mental health and you do mental youth. Tell me about the program.

Dr. Elizabeth: Yeah, so we've done a few things. They've gone a little dormant now, you know, especially post COVID with everything, but still very very active in various things. The Youth Engagement Society. It's one that my brother and I co founded, but also supporting other youth-led initiatives or youth initiatives, such as Inspire Spaces, right? This idea of giving, right? It's again, serving in space. I may not be able to give money, but I can give my intellectual capacity. I can give my experience. Yeah, I may not be able to invest. in your company with 10, 000, but give me an hour and I may be able to teach you how to not lose money when you do get it.

So in turn, that one hour of mistakes that I share with you, it can save you millions. Right. You may have won 10, 000 for me. I didn't give you 10, 000, but I saved you millions in the long run because I shared my mistakes. That's something I've been thinking about. So yeah, so serving in anything that is youth, youth centred, but really people centred, right? People centred and I'm big on connections. I'm big on empowering and equipping and supporting because I need that. And if I need that. Other people need that as well.

Wambui: Oh, other people, we all need it. We all need it. And again, we're going to share all the links to the, all the information you're giving us here. This is such valuable information and I'm really appreciating it. Now you were, and I don't know if this is still current, but I know you were the first Black woman, to have tenure, in your current department

Dr. Elizabeth: Yes, in my current department, yes.

Wambui: How was that? Congratulations.

Dr. Elizabeth: Thank you. First of all, I didn't know.

Wambui: Wow.

Dr. Elizabeth: Right? , and it was a shock, but , it was a humbling realisation and it made me realise. You may be setting trends and opening spaces without you ever knowing so The best thing you can do is walk worthy of that, right? I didn't know I was the Black first woman tenured faculty in that department, but I'm so glad I walked worthy of that, but because I walked worthy of my God. To be excellent, to be kind, to be all these things. So it was humbling and I don't see myself as a first. But hey, who am I? And borrowing from our VP Camilla Harris. It's to say, I may be the first, but I definitely will not be the last because now I have given an example to another black girl or another immigrant girl or another Mocarino girl or another short black girl, whatever you want to put on me. I've given somebody a visual that she looks like me. Yeah, she can and I can't. Right. Oh, and I love that. That's why diversity and representation is so important. And I'm glad I walked and carried myself as if I was the first. Yes, I would have been very embarrassed if. I had a reputation of not being a first, right? And so, that was challenging to me to say, you know what, don't belittle where you are. You may feel as if it's insignificant, but man, to somebody, somewhere, you are winning and winning in ways they don't. Think it is impossible, but you are giving, you are empowering them. Yes, you can too.

Wambui: You are winning a lot in so many areas. I'm just listening to you and I'm just so inspired already in this just half an hour that we've been together. So inspiring. And I know you, another mo Carino girl and you know Yes. You do wear a turban, which is good, and I'm curious to know. If that has ever been seen as something to

stop you? I know it doesn't stop you, but have you seen some lack of maybe diversity or even acceptance because of that?

Dr. Elizabeth: Yeah. So unfortunately, yes. And, and I say that. For me, and I know this is God's favour, it's nothing to do with me or anything like that, but I have not experienced that personally.

Wambui: Okay.

Dr. Elizabeth: Just because I have not experienced that personally, people that look like me, act like me, experience it. I am a part of that. I feel that. I empathise with that because that could be me. Yes, that has solved glories and opportunity for girls back home in Kenya, which is a huge injustice because borrowing, I'm a cool person if you would tell by now, but you know, in Martin Luther King, I have a dream, you know, creed or colour or race or socioeconomic status. should not keep you from achieving something that somebody else does. So a turban should be added on there because that's religious status. And, it's an injustice when an opportunity is pulled away all because of an identity, whether that is gender, whether that is race, whether that is ethnicity, whether that is economic status or religious status. It's an injustice. It is wrong. And it happens, unfortunately bias and stereotypes happen. When I came to this country, it was interesting. The discrimination that I experienced changed. And it still changes. When I go to Kenya, the discrimination I experience is religious based. When I come to America, it's skin based. No, they see me, I'm black. So the stereotypes, the bias that a black woman, a black person gets in this country, I pick up as well, not religion, but when I'm in Kenya, it's religious. So discrimination happens, unfortunately, but we have to make and work to make a change. And that change starts with. Representation that change starts with creating this idea of creating diverse spaces where that white person can interact with that black person and see You're human just like me. , when I say this, you get hurt just like me. That's where empathy starts. It's realising we're connected and we're the same. So if I cut you, you're going to bleed just like me and I'm going to be cut. So I'm not going to cut you. And the same way is interacting with a corinos and others because you realise, that we're just human beings you. We have feelings. We are imperfect people. We make mistakes. We are basic everyday individuals. We want to be loved. Things hurt us. And if you ridicule us, it's gonna hurt.

Wambui: It's going to hurt. Yeah.

Dr. Elizabeth: So if you don't want to be ridiculed, you don't ridicule me. If you don't want to be judged in terms of just because I wear a turban, you assume that my intellectual capability is limited. Shame on you.

Wambui: Exactly.

Dr. Elizabeth: Shame on you, especially if you have had an opportunity. You have refused to learn otherwise, or you have refused to look otherwise. So it's not a shame on you for somebody that has never interacted with somebody different. But once you interact with somebody different, and you connect with them, and you see they're human beings, you'll continue to discriminate. Shame on you, but it's a loss for you as well. It's a loss for them. You lose out on great connections. You lose out on great workmanship. You lose out on smart people because of a bias, whether that is religious, racial, socioeconomic status. Let's level the playing field and see people as people. People that you love and treat your neighbour as yourself.

Wambui: So good. The minute you started talking, I was just listening and looking and I'm like, Oh my goodness, and I'm absorbing all this. And if someone is just looking at this person, looking and criticising, then you lose out because I'm thinking, you know, Oh my gosh, what else can she see that I can take home with me? It's just so powerful. So, yeah. Those things are unfortunate, and especially when they happen at home, you know, the religious discrimination, that's unfortunate, but yeah, I'm so happy to speak with you, Dr. E. And I would like for you to come back again, but what's next for Dr. E. Tell me what is next for her.

Dr. Elizabeth: What's next for Dr. E is what I alluded to earlier. Planning, launching into this God given assignment the Bloom Experience happening August 24th in Dallas. And to just create spaces like this where it's not just me reaching, it's also empowering other women to reach other women and recreate many Bloom spaces everywhere we go. Everywhere I go, I should be looking. For a woman to connect with, to support and to celebrate. Everything I go into, I should look for somebody to pour into. And so that's my assignment is to create that space and equip and empower girls, From sixth grade all the way to grow to be able to do that. It's not a Dr. E thing. It's a everybody thing. And so the Bloom experience is what is next. And even as I do that, just continuing to develop, to grow spiritually, to grow professionally and to just grow as an individual, right now we'll be reading a book club book that we selected. It's called I am black. I'm not depressed. Of course, it's a play on words. It's actually by a Kenyan author. I'll find out. I'll give you the link. Yes, please. And I am not getting any promo benefits. You gotta give people flowers and that's to give people flowers for sure. The next time I talk, who knows, maybe I'll be reading Brene Brown. So that's the book we're reading. So I plan to continue just growing and mining. So that way I can be a woman that can pour into somebody else as well.

Wambui: And that's exactly what you're doing. You've poured so much today. I thank you. Thank you so much. Is there anything else that we missed that you would like to say to my listeners?

Dr. Elizabeth: I would say keep going. Keep going. Every day you wake up, it's a gift. It means your job is not done. Your purpose is not done. You still have something to do. And sometimes we may think purpose is outside of the house, but it could be

very much in your house, in your family. So even as you grow elsewhere, grow yourself and grow those around you, whether it's your family relations, whether it's your social relations, the immediate connection, those also need to be watered because as they grow, you will also grow. So just continue doing just that.

Wambui: Awesome. I love that. Now, where can people find you?

Dr. Elizabeth: They can find me on Instagram, our bloom nation, this word, our bloom nation. on Facebook. Bloom with E. And on LinkedIn, Dr. Elizabeth Wachira, if you want to connect professionally. And yeah,

Wambui: Very good. An event in August that's open to everyone.

Dr. Elizabeth: It is open to every woman, sixth grade to grown, and the reason sixth grade is, you know, at some point we have to start somewhere, and maybe one year we will have elementary girls, but for right now. A sixth grade all the way up to a hundred and then I would love to see 11 year olds to 101 year old you can pour into one another and so it's for every woman within that demographic group and Most welcome.

Wambui: Very good. Ah, oh, very good. Thank you. Thank you so much, Dr. E.

Dr. Elizabeth: Thank you. I appreciate it so much.

Wambui: And you have a good rest of your day. Likewise, you do the same.

Wambui: Thank you very much.