

Gender equality... Even though this phenomenon seems improved as compared to the past, there are still things to do to make it better. After all those years, patriarchy still affects society and many women do nothing but obey those maxims of patriarchy. The stated maxims don't let women become more powerful and freer than before.

Accordingly, women already have what they need for their living and they shouldn't want more. Moreover, society tells women if they want to fight for more power, they should fight with other women. Basically, they say that women are not enough to fight with men to gain power; they should fight with each other.

Fortunately, American soccer player Abby Wambach asserts new ideas in this book. After nearly 20 years of teamwork with other women and being successful in sports, she emphasizes that women are not enemies of one another, instead, they are all in a wolf pack. In wolf packs, every member supports and give confidence to each other to achieve their goals and show others what they can do when they are together.

Innovative women are like the wolf in the tale of Little Red Riding Hood.

Society always imposes the idea that if a girl disobeys, she pays a heavy price for the behavior. Just like in the old tale of Little Red Riding Hood, the girl disobeys her mother's clear instructions and she comes across with the Big Bad Wolf eventually. The writer's message is clear: rules are not made to be broken, and young girls shouldn't get too curious. However, Abby Wambach doesn't approve this old story, as she shows on her life and career. Moreover, when Wambach's life is scrutinized, it is obviously seen that she went off course just like Little Red Riding Hood and diverge to the beaten track.

For example, she dated boys when she was a teenager. Because every other girl was doing it that way. However, she was not sure about what she was going through while dating boys. During high school, she realized that she was homosexual. She was scared about what would her family say and she hid this fact and she couldn't even confess to herself.

Towards the end of high school, she saw a girl and fell in love. She embraced her sexuality and came out. It was the first time that she went off course and was against the tide. She followed her heart rather than following the usual.

As she chose her own life, Wambach's female role models chose their own way in life too. In fact, if it weren't for the pioneer female soccer players that played before her, Wambach's amazing sporting career couldn't have happened. Because the pioneers refused to accept the idea that soccer is a man's sport.

They also were the ones that fought for the Title IX, the federal law that states, no one, on the basis of sex, shall be excluded from participating in any educational activity including on the sports field. These women created the leagues for professional women's soccer and started to live for earning in this professional job.

In the light of her own and her pioneers' success in their careers has arisen from their refusal to do what society imposes them to do, or stay on the same designated path, she now believes that all women should make an effort to be like the wolf in the story – strong, brave, and always hungry for more.

Being appreciated is not better than equality.

After Wambach retired from the professional soccer in 2015, ESPN conferred her in the ESPYS show with an Icon Award. She was so happy at that moment because she realized that she was being appreciated by the others. However, when she went to her home her state of mind changed. She got mad about the things that happened in the evening.

The reason why she got mad was that she had shared the stage with Kobe Bryant and Peyton Manning who are also retiring athletes receiving Icon Awards. After they got their awards they left the stage and it was that moment that struck Wambach that, all of them were famous athletes with equal amounts of perseverance, commitment, and adherence to their sports, there was one flagrant difference between her and them.

The difference was that they were men and she was a woman. In other words, men could look forward to a calm retirement, however, she would have to think about what to do next in her career. Because Bryant and Manning had financial freedom, they don't need to work anymore. Unfortunately, this freedom is rarely afforded to female athletes. With a brief glimpse at the earnings, someone could easily see the inequity between male and female sports stars.

When we look at the male winners of the 2018 FIFA World Cup, each member of the team earned \$38 million, which is 19 times more money than the winners of Women's World Cup were awarded (\$2 million) in 2015. Moreover, the U.S. Women's National Soccer Team contributed over \$6 million in revenue, yet the male team brought in less than \$2 million. Given these numbers, the inequity becomes more shocking than ever.

Obviously, the inequality of paying is not particular to sports. Women have this problem everywhere. In 2015, U.S. citizen women made only the 4 out of 5 percent of male citizen's earnings.

What's the reason behind this ongoing inequality? According to Wambach, one of the reasons is gratitude, which she felt at the ESPYS stage that evening. Respectively, gratitude makes women so overwhelmed that they feel not excluded and known by others. Also, getting a paycheck makes women fear from asking for more.

Women must learn to refuse inequality and become stronger than ever, to resolve the inequality in pay.

Women should not be afraid of failure, instead, they should use it as a fuel.

When Wambach was chosen for the Youth National team, she was given an exciting tour of the U.S. Women's National Soccer Team locker room. She was thrilled about learning her idols' lives on the soccer team. She was looking at everything with a passion, and one item caught her eye – a photograph of the national team from the 1995 World Cup match with the Norway National Team. However, something was wrong, she was aware of the fact that her idols lost that game. So, she was curious: Why did they hang a picture from a defeated match on the pride of place?

Five years later, when she won the place in the National Team, Wambach finally got the courage to ask about that photograph. The answer to that question affected her too much that the way she looks at a failure changed, since then.

Team's seniors said that the team was never scared of losing games, and their biggest goal was to win games, of course. They didn't reject the idea of failure, in contrast, those failures made them stronger than ever. Because they remembered those failures and made strong comebacks. They added: Failure should be embraced as a fuel, not as destruction. Fuel to show the world what they can do to make it better.

Accordingly, this method has worked for the team. One year after that match, they hang a photograph of their first gold medal at the Olympics. After learning this inspirational story, Wambach realized that failure is not a bad outcome all the time. She learned that failure can lead to bigger success.

In this story, women made a great success, yet it's not the same result for the other women around the world. Patriarchy imposes that a woman should be a perfect figure for whatever she is doing. Thus, when women fail at something, they get disappointed and lose their motivation, because they think that they are not perfect.

However, their counterparts – men don't have the same state of mind when they show their disabilities. They don't think that their imperfections affect their success. Think about successful people with disabilities in the world throughout history: Stephen Hawking, U.S President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, Van Gogh, and Beethoven.

All in all, either you forget about the U.S. Women's National Soccer Team's story in here, or you start to do it like the way men do for centuries.

Women shouldn't forget to praise each other when they succeed, regardless of the context.

In the soccer match, teams should score a goal to win the game. Whichever team scores most wins. So, scoring a goal is the most joyful moment in the match, because the team comes closer to the winning. Throughout her career, Wambach scored 184 goals and after scoring every single time she praised her teammates by pointing at them.

By doing that, she gave the message that without their help, she couldn't score and their joy at that moment wouldn't be possible.

Soccer is a team sport, in other words, every teammate should support each other while defending their field and attacking to the opponent's field. Only one person scores the goal, however, that person scores for the team. So, at that moment not only the scorer but also every team member should be praised for the good work leading to scoring the goal.

Also, not all the time you will score, but also your teammate will score, too. At that moment, you should join the celebration of hers right away. It doesn't have to be in the game, in other areas of life another woman's success should be enough to celebrate her achievement and praise her.

Society imposes women to be competitors against each other. Because of that, women don't praise each other so much. Instead, if they had praised and celebrated each other when their best times, female power wouldn't have been as weak as right now.

However, according to Wambach, this weakness is not real. Female power, joy, and success exist and they should be divided equally, she thinks that if one woman gets a piece from a cake, others should have the same amount of cake. This power is not limited, instead, it is infinite that all women can get equally and more than ever.

When we – the women realize that this power is infinite, we can all benefit from it and we can join to celebrate each other's success. There won't be any struggle for trying to get awarded from the patriarchic society. Rather, by working together and being stronger than ever, we'll create a new social system that all women can benefit from equally.

Wambach realized her real power when she saw her idol exposed her own.

When Wambach was playing for the youth team at the age of eighteen. A chance of playing against one of her idols fallen into her lap. That idol was Michelle Akers who is one of the world's greatest soccer players. For the purpose of extra training in, she decided to play against Wambach's team. That match changed Wambach's idea of Akers permanently.

At the first 15 minutes of the match, everyone was relaxed, Akers was giving her younger opponents advice to do their best. It went on like that for a while. Except that, the match headed into its final 5 minutes and Akers' team was three goals behind. They were losing.

Seeing that, Akers got serious. She yelled at her teammate to have the ball. She got the ball and dribbled down the field, passing the opponents one by one. Then, she kicked the ball with her full power and scored a goal. Now the gap was 2 goals. She did the exact same thing twice by using all her confidence and power.

She needed to score one more goal to win that game. She was so close to winning and the match was about to end. She scored one more time and her team won the game.

After witnessing this “miracle”, Wambach realized that her idol definitely deserved being one of the greatest soccer players in the world. She was confident and powerful. She was literally radiating in the field.

That match was the milestone in Wambach’s career. She was afraid to show her real talents because she thought that her teammates would be got offended for being better than them. Therefore, whenever she played, she only showed a little part of her capacity to avoid resenting anyone.

When she saw how Akers wanted and got the ball, she realized her real talent’s source was not being afraid of resenting anyone, but craving for winning the game, motivating others to unleash their real power. She craved to win the game and eventually she made it, she was not afraid, she was not embarrassed and most importantly she was not a competitor against her teammates.

She was using all her talent to win the game, in contrast to Wambach who had been using only a little part of her capacity. For now and then, Wambach thinks back to this miracle when she feels not appreciated or incapable of doing something and uses in favor of herself.

Leadership doesn’t always have to resemble power and dominance.

In the year of 2008, U.S. Women’s National Soccer Team was the world’s best soccer team and the reason why they are the best was that they were physically dominant. Wambach was co-captain in the team and they were defeating their opponents one by one, without even thinking. So, one can easily say that they were really aggressive when they are in the field.

After the new coach Pia Sundhage took up the position, on the first training session she took out her guitar and sang a song by Bob Dylan. This session was totally new to the team. Players were so surprised that they started to ask each other if the new coach is really suitable for the team.

Why Sundhage played guitar and sang a song for the players? What was behind this rational action?

Pia was not one of the regular leaders that society describes. She was unusual and her difference actually made permanent positive changes in the team. First of all, she showed that a leader doesn't have to be a dictator-like to be able to manage the team. She revealed her true personality, the team realized that she is authentic and she doesn't imitate others, she was just being herself.

The team used to be managed by dictator-like strict leaders. However, by the help of her leadership, the way the team cooperates with each other changed positively. Wambach and her senior peers helped to issue instructions and juniors had took place in decision-making. They became less aggressive and listened to others' suggestions. Used-to-be dictatorship became democratic leadership. Teammates and directors became more supportive and understanding. From substitute players to the physiotherapists in the team started to give advice to each other.

According to Wambach, the story of change in leadership in her team can make lots of teams, even the teams not from the sporting realize that leadership doesn't have to show power and dominance only. The best teamwork happens not only when all the members support, motivate and listen to each other, but also when the leaders aren't afraid to leave the old styles behind.

A woman is a lone wolf by herself, she needs her wolfpack.

At the end of the seventeen years of professional career, Wambach decided to retire. When she retired, she gave herself 3 years of recover – resting and relaxing. When she recovered she wanted to start doing exercise. Whenever she went out for running, she came home in pain. Her whole body ached every run after.

So, the questions arise: she was a former professional player, so what was wrong with her now? Why she had pain in her body after every time she ran?

Her friend Michele found out what was the source of the problem. When Wambach was a professional player, she had her friends aside, whenever she pushed her limits, her pain and sufferings were soothed by her teammates with the help of jokes and laughings. Now that she was alone, she felt her pain deeply. She was like a lone wolf who needed a wolf pack to support and sustain her.

Every woman needs a wolf pack in their lives. Without the support and motivation of others, we are more inclined to struggle. Wambach talked about this subject in one of America's most prestigious women's universities – Barnard College. Her speech was supported and liked by hundreds in the hall and by thousands from social media.

After her speech went viral lots of women contacted Wambach and said that they loved and spread her speech; even a woman wrote to her that she read Wambach's speech to her young daughters at bedtime. Women loved the idea of the wolf pack and some of them even hang wolf pictures in their homes to show that they care about the idea.

One woman contacted Wambach and said that men always had their own packs but women had no one, they were always lonely. Whether a compulsory elected woman in the board or a housewife when the husband is away with his own pack. She asked how we can create our wolf packs as the men do.

Wambach's answer to that question was that the only solution is to get out there and try. If you want to have a wolf pack try and search woman like you, women you trust and respect. The best example for creating a wolf pack would be the winning the World Cup in 2015 and taking gold medals in the Olympic Games twice.

Not only she won the cup and medals, but also she gained lots of brave and successful women companion. For not following other people's rules she chose her own way in life and she accomplished great things. Even if you don't have a wolf pack to have fame and glory, you can always have successful and courageous women by your side. And with all those women by your side, everything is possible as long as you believe in each other.

WOLFPACK: How to Come Together, Unleash Our Power, and Change the Game by Abby Wambach Book Review

Patriarchic society imposes woman that they should stay behind the men and never become more powerful than men. However, Abby Wambach and her teammates and the women players before them refused patriarchic limits and choose their own way.

They became stronger, braver and more successful. You can do the same. Find powerful and courageous women like yourself and stay with them. Praise, celebrate, support and sustain each other.

Be your own hero. Not always good things happen in life. The important thing is when and how to handle bad situations properly. The more you handle, the more you become closer to be a leader. Don't forget that the leadership is not given by others, it is gained by your own efforts. Every woman has natural-born leader features, they just need to unleash the leader inside of them, and choose their own style of life.

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