



Still Here: Lessons on Reputation, Resilience, and Rebuilding with ADHD

An eBook for professionals
navigating whispers, walls,
and rebuilding with grace.

by Kiki Meyers



PREFACE

Doing the right thing doesn't always come with respect.

Sometimes, it brings silence. Distance. A rewritten version of events. For those of us with ADHD—who lead with instinct, feel deeply, and show up fully—this truth can be hard to swallow. You can bring strategy, clarity, creativity, and results... and still be sidelined, misunderstood, or quietly questioned.

Not all harm is loud. Some of the most destabilizing moments in our careers don't come from obvious wrongs, but from what's left unsaid. The quiet retreat of support when it matters most. The subtle undermining dressed as professionalism. The discomfort that settles in when you speak a truth others would rather ignore.

I've had incredible leadership in my corner—smart, kind, principled.

But when things got complicated—when accountability was needed—silence sometimes took the mic. Support evaporated. Trust shifted. Proof didn't matter. This isn't about pointing fingers. It's about addressing the gaps—between values and actions, between policy and protection, between who we say we are and how we show up when it counts.

It's not a story of blame. It's a story of resilience. Of calling things by their name. Of staying rooted in your values even when it costs you something. Of choosing yourself—not out of defiance, but out of deep alignment.

For every ADHD woman who's been told she's too much, too direct, too emotional, too confident—this is for you.

For those who've been asked to shrink, to soften, to wait their turn—here's your reminder: you were never the problem. You don't need to perform for proximity. And you most certainly don't need to earn respect.

You just need to stay grounded in who you are. Let's begin.



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CHAPTER

THE INSTANT IT
CHANGES

THE INSTANT IT CHANGES

"Reputations don't die in disasters—they disappear in whispers."

It happens in the blink of an eye. One moment, you're respected, trusted, and recognized for your efforts. The next, you notice the side glances. The missed invites. The polite-but-cold messages. No one talks about it directly, but the air shifts, and you feel it.

For neurodivergent professionals, especially those with ADHD, this sudden change can feel even more jarring. We often don't see the warning signs until we're already standing in the wreckage. This section is about that devastating moment when things go off-course: how to recognize it, what it feels like, and how to find clarity when everything around you feels like it's falling apart.

There's no warning—just silence where there used to be support, and suddenly, you're left to navigate the storm alone.

You did the right thing—and yet, you were quietly shut out for it. Have you ever lost something? Respect, opportunity, or connection, because you stood up for what was right?

You're not alone. This is the real cost of integrity in a world that often rewards convenience over courage. Remember: the ones who truly matter will always see your actions, or at least verify.

Trauma Is Not a Vibe

Leadership trauma doesn't look like TV drama. It's quieter. Slower. It lingers in your nervous system and your calendar.

- Hyper-focusing on being “fine” is still a stress response.
- When your work ethic is on autopilot, burnout can actually look like success.
- ADHD brains normalize chaos until the crash hits.

Your takeaway: Your nervous system is telling the truth. Listen. Rest. Rewire. Then rise.

 Further Reading:

[Harvard Business Review — When You're Being Left Out at Work](#)

 Resource:

[MindTools — Managing Your Reputation at Work](#)



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CHAPTER

THE SILENT DAMAGE:
WHAT UNDERMINING
REALLY LOOKS LIKE

THE SILENT DAMAGE WHAT UNDERMINING REALLY LOOKS LIKE

***"Undermining doesn't always shout—it whispers
behind closed doors."***

You don't always hear the damage when it's happening. It's subtle. A stray comment. A shrug. A meeting you're not invited to. The constant sense that you're included—but not fully considered. If you're neurodivergent, especially with ADHD, you often feel these micro-moments with a different kind of intensity. And that's not a weakness. That's your radar.

These quiet cuts add up. They chip away at your sense of safety, make you second-guess your instincts, and leave you wondering if you're the problem—for noticing at all. It's not paranoia. It's pattern recognition.

The hardest part? It's invisible. Sometimes even to those causing it. It shows up in passive tone shifts, "accidental" exclusions, and the message between the lines: Your presence is tolerated, but your power is not.

This chapter is about naming that experience. Because when we name it, we can move through it. We can reclaim our voice, set better boundaries, and lead ourselves out of the fog. You're not imagining it. You're just finally seeing it clearly.

Not Everyone Who Smiles Is Safe

Some people weaponize likability. When power's at play, kindness isn't always character. If you're someone who feels deeply, you might over-trust. You might over-explain. But you also learn faster than most.

Your takeaway: Your radar sharpens. Your peace becomes non-negotiable. And you stop performing for people who only cheer when you're quiet.

 Listen:
[WorkLife with Adam Grant – How to Love Criticism](#)

 Read:
[Psychology Today – The Subtle Art of Workplace Undermining](#)



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CHAPTER

WHEN DOING THE
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"When You Speak Up and It Still Goes Wrong"

I've watched harassment get swept under the rug. I've seen brilliant, kind teammates pushed out for being labeled as "too sensitive" or "too vocal." I've stood up and said, "This isn't okay"—even when I knew it might cost me my seat at the table.

Sometimes, doing the right thing doesn't come with validation. It doesn't end in resolution or gratitude or applause. It can lead to isolation, retaliation, or being rebranded as "difficult" or "too much." Those who stand firm often find themselves painted as the problem, even when all they've done is speak up for what's right.

But here's the truth: I'd do it again. Because the things you lose by standing up? They're nothing compared to what you lose when you stay silent. You may walk away. You may lose the job. The security. The sense of belonging. But you won't lose your values. And those values? They're what will keep you going and carry you forward.

The quiet strength of knowing you acted with integrity? That's something no one can take away. And when you keep that at the core of who you are, you find your true power.

Your Future Team Will Thank You

The things that broke you? You're building protection from them now—for others.

- You're writing the policy you once needed.
- You're the leader you were looking for.
- ADHD women have clarity that cuts through the noise. That's your edge.

Your takeaway: This story doesn't end with a lesson. It starts with your next chapter.

 Explore:
[Project Include – Speaking Up in Tech](#)

 Tool:
[The Courage Checklist – Catalyst](#)



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CHAPTER

LESSONS IN TEAM
BUILDING
(ESPECIALLY WHEN
SCALING FAST)

LESSONS IN TEAM BUILDING (ESPECIALLY WHEN SCALING FAST)

"Scaling Doesn't Just Stretch Systems—It Exposes People"

Fast growth exposes everything—especially your culture.

Here's what I've learned:

- Kindness scales. Egos don't.
- The best teams fight for each other, not just with each other.
- You don't need rockstars—you need communicators.
- The ones who create safety also create the conditions for real innovation.

Culture isn't ping pong tables. It's who speaks up when something's off, it's who shares ideas over ego. It's who gets credit, who gets overlooked, and how trust gets built or broken.

Fast Growth Breaks What Was Barely Holding Together

You don't really see how shaky a culture is until it starts to scale—and then it cracks wide open.

- Pressure doesn't just test people. It exposes them.
- Some rise. Others get loud. The helpful ones start quietly over-functioning.
- If you're neurodivergent, you might miss early cues because you assume logic will win.

Your takeaway: You're not too much—you're just in a place that was never built for someone like you. Build it better.

 Tool:

[Culture Amp – Platform for scaling teams with healthy cultures](#)

 Guide:

[First Round Review – Building a Great Startup Team](#)



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CHAPTER

HR ISN'T ALWAYS
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***"HR Is There to Protect the Company.
And You Deserve to Know That."***

This isn't an attack on HR. Many HR professionals are deeply empathetic and genuinely want to help. But here's the hard truth: HR doesn't work for you.

They work for the organization. Their job is often to reduce liability—not discomfort.

When systems prioritize protection over people, individuals get lost.

If you've ever left a meeting with HR feeling worse, not seen, or like you were the problem for naming the problem—you're not alone.

Your gut is still your best policy.

Document everything.

And find your real support system beyond the org chart.

HR Isn't Neutral. Never Was.

You walked in thinking HR was a safety net. It's not. It's a seatbelt—for the company.

- Advocacy is applauded until it challenges someone's comfort.
- Being direct is "intense." Being quiet is "concerning."
- ADHD women often get mislabeled while others get protected.

Your takeaway: You're not difficult. You're disruptive—in the best way. Keep your receipts and keep your power.



Reference:

[SHRM – The Role of HR in Workplace Investigations](#)



Insight:

[Fast Company – Why HR Can't Always Be Trusted](#)



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CHAPTER

REBUILDING WITH
CALM POWER

REBUILDING WITH CALM POWER

"Still Here. Still Growing."

You don't rebuild by retaliating. You rebuild by remembering who you are.

Here's how to start:

- Find the people who really see you.
- Stop waiting to be "given" your reputation back. Build it on your own terms.
- Stay kind. Stay steady. Stay unshakably you.

Don't let hearsay define you, ever.

Let go of being liked. Focus on being aligned.

Still here. Still growing. Still choosing the right thing—even when it's hard.

Rebuild Like You've Got Nothing to Prove

You don't need a viral comeback. You need your peace. Let the silence speak for you.

- Not every exit needs a monologue.
- You don't need their apology to move forward.
- ADHD women burn energy chasing justice. Channel it into building instead.

Your takeaway: The right people don't need an explanation. The wrong ones wouldn't believe it anyway.

 Worksheet:
Brené Brown – Living Into Our Values Exercise

 Support:
BetterUp Coaching — Personalized leadership coaching and career support.



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CHAPTER

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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Kiki Meyers, Cofounder & CEO

Kiki Meyers is a seasoned marketing executive, startup advisor, and community builder who has spent over 15 years navigating the highs and lows of leadership in fast-moving industries.

Known for her candor, creativity, and calm under pressure, she has built and rebuilt teams, brands, and reputations—both for companies and for herself.

After spending nearly a decade in corporate environments, thriving in the scrappy world of startups, and consulting, Kiki found herself facing the quiet consequences of doing the right thing. Rather than let it define her, she turned that experience into something bigger: a voice for those who've been quietly pushed out, shut down, or sidelined for speaking up.

She still works with scaling companies and also advises on culture-first growth, gtm, and resilient brand strategies. But more importantly, she mentors individuals navigating complex work dynamics—especially women in business and neurodivergent professionals—helping them reclaim their voice and value.

Kiki lives on the stunning Sunshine Coast of British Columbia with her family and enjoys making candles inspired by the rugged, grounding beauty of the wild West Coast. Whether it's through marketing, writing, or wax and wick—her mission is the same: to create warmth, light, and space for people to grow, and to be heard.

🌿 *Mantra: Rise above and stay grounded.*





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