

**EPISODE 47**

[INTRODUCTION]

**[0:00:06] ANNOUNCER:** You are listening to 10,000 Swamp Leaders, leadership conversations that explore adapting and thriving in a complex world with Rick Torseth and guests.

[INTERVIEW]

**[0:00:20] RT:** Hi, everybody. This is Rick Torseth and you are listening to 10,000 Swamp Leaders, a podcast where we have conversations with people from around the world, who have made a decision to raise their hand and lead on some very difficult challenges that they experienced and they face and they've made a decision that they want to lead on it to make a better world.

Today, I have the pleasure of a woman that I had to hunt all over the world to find. Her name is Nyuon William, and she is from South Sudan and she is an accomplished lawyer. She's an advocate for diversity. She is working on justice, peace, gender equality and human rights with a very strong emphasis on women and girls' rights. She is a founder of a couple of organizations, or at least partially founder of organizations, the Global Network of Women Peace Builders and also, she was the national director of the National Alliance for Women Lawyers. I probably got some of that wrong, Nyuon, so I'm going to bring you in here and welcome to the podcast. I'm so glad to have you. We went through some technological challenges to finally get ourselves connected here, but we are together now. Please, take some time to introduce yourself and tell people what you want them to know about you that's important for our conversation. Welcome.

**[0:01:42] NW:** Thank you so much. I'm not the founder of Global Network of Women Peace Builders. I'm sorry, I have to correct that. But I am a former peace building fellow with the Global Network of Women Peace Builder. It's an organization, it's an international organization that is empowering young women from conflict affecting countries, especially on women peace and security.

I founded the National Alliance of Women Lawyers in South Sudan and also, the Sisterhood Solidarity. This is organization working to ensure that women empowerment, protection of women rights, especially girls and women and girls are really part of this compositions in terms of leaderships, inclusion, women economic empowerment and others related.

Thank you so much for having me here today. It is good to be here, because getting these invitations to be interviewed by 10,000 Swap Leaders is a privilege, because I feel very honored and I'm very proud today that I was found by Rick through some of my work that I have been doing. Sometimes it speaks volumes and it sends a very strong message to myself that I am doing well. My action, or my effort is getting visibility outside there, because sometimes when somebody introduces you, or you are recommended, you feel like you are not doing enough, you need people to commend you.

This is very good that my work as **[inaudible 0:03:13]** and has reached one of the greatest researcher, who is giving us a platform, the voice of leaders across the world. When we talk about leaderships, sometimes people take it in a way that you have to be a leader in the government, you have to be a big boss in a certain big corporate organization, or company. Then again, our voices as young leaders who are working at the community level are not recognized globally. Today, I am very proud and I thank you so much, 10,000 Swap Leaders, for giving the life of my soul a platform to share our stories with those outside there. Thank you.

**[0:03:54] RT:** You are welcome. You humble me. You're doing the harder work. Let's get into it a little bit, because as you and I discussed before we started recording, there are all sorts of people around the world who are a little less experienced, but looking to have impact. Part of what you and I are doing here is helping them by talking about the decisions and choices and the insights and what you've learned in this journey of leading to have impact. We're actually going to pass some of your lessons on to future generations as well, so we're going to build a stronger place here. Question I had when I was learning more about you is why did you become a lawyer and why did you focus on women?

**[0:04:33] NW:** Yeah, that's a very good question, Rick. Personally, I am one of the women, or one of the generations that was born before we become an independent country at South Sudan, but during the Sudan, when we're a country, when we're part of the Sudan as a country.

Born in a time that the country was in war, civil war, and my father was a soldier at the time. Then they call it the Sudan People Liberation Movement and **[inaudible 0:05:04]**. This is the movement that actually have fought for our freedom and brought us to where we are today as independent country.

Being somebody born during the civil war and grew up throughout the 21 years of civil war, I have seen a lot of things. I did not have the privilege to go to school like other children across the world, who have the opportunity to go to kindergarten and that kind of educational flow. I grew up in the SPLA, which is the movement that was fighting for South Sudan in the SPLA control areas. My father was a soldier and he was an educationalist. He fought. After that, also, he was doing a lot of leadership stuff.

He was one of the people who was also advocating for education within the SPLA control areas. I also, with my sibling and other children who were in the displaced camps has the opportunity to go to school. Those schools were supported by the UN and other international organizations. I had the opportunity to go to schools and actually, I got a scholarship for my high school. What I'm trying to explain is that I grew in the displace camp and I have seen how women have suffered and how women were taking care of families, because their husband, they were single mothers not by choice, but by this situation, including my own mother, because the husbands were in the battlefields, they were fighting.

Other women lost their husbands and they became breadwinners. I mean, the head of their families. I have grown in that environment, seeing women struggling. Also, I've seen how women were also abused, because despite the war, there was some sort of conservativity. The patriarchal society, where women were not given the freedom to including young girls. I grew up seeing young girls being forced to marry and I've seen women also being abused sexually, psychological and all these things.

As a young girl, I was first thinking that, oh, I think I need to be a doctor, because I need to treat children, because I hate to see children malnourished and sick and all these things. Growing up in the displaced camp was not easy. I was so privileged that also, my family were around, my mother especially and she really made sure that education was a priority. She kept keeping us to continue to go to school. Despite the depression we were having was not a luxury, or some

smart education. It was this education that you stayed for years, two to three years, or one year without going to school, because of the fighting here and there, or because you have to move from displace camp to another.

My mother and my father at the same time were able to ensure that we have to continue with the school. I was also very lucky, because I was a very brilliant young girl and I got a scholarship to do my high schools, and with one of the international organization that was supporting children from the displace camps. I finished my high schools and I was missing that I am going to do my medical studies.

Later on, I realized that there was something more than doing a medical – being a doctor, because I saw there were so many doctors around and there were many people, I think, were going to help in terms of medical. I was thinking that, okay, women are suffering. I've seen women being abused and – I thought, I also have to be a lawyer and be standing for the right of women and children, especially when I was seeing most of my egme were forced to marry at a very young age.

I'm sorry, I felt so bad, because I remember, one of my friends, when we used to sit in the same class, she was supposed to marry and later on, even she lost her life, because her life wasn't really good. That's why I choose to be a lawyer. I want to speak for the right of the women. I want to be a voice of South Sudanese women. I also want to be a role model to young girls to see that law is not for men. It's for anybody who is capable to do it. Thank you.

**[0:09:32] RT:** Wow. Let's unpack this a little bit then. Talk a little bit about, you make a decision to be a lawyer, but that's different than actually going to law school and learning how to be a lawyer. What was the work like, what surprised you about the study of law? How was it that you're able to actually stay in the study of law and graduate and become a lawyer, when you sometimes for young people, we make decisions like this, big decisions that can affect the direction of our lives and we get into it and we realize, "Oops. I'm probably not a lawyer. I should have been an accountant, or such like that."

Tell us a little bit about once you've made the decision to become a lawyer, what the work was like to learn how to be a lawyer, and what lessons and insights did you get from that learning experience?

**[0:10:28] NW:** To be honest, at first, I was also confused, because I was thinking, maybe I'm making a wrong choice. Also, like I told you, I grew in an environment where also, sometimes your parent choose for you what to study. I know a lot of my friends, or my colleagues who were given the career of their choice, but not the choice, but the career of their parent choice, or their guidance. I am privileged. To be honest, I keep saying that because my father, as somebody who was educated, he actually ensured that I have to go to law school. I later on appreciate that, because for some reason, I was comfortable with being in law school, because it was my background and what I was learning, I realized that this is where I belong. I need to speak for those who are voiceless, and I also need to really work for the rule of law and also have to work for SSP justice.

That was being in school. But then, again, the practice being a lawyer and practice and be in the society and to speak out is not an easy thing. By the way, it's not for the weak. Because I come from a patriarchal society, a society where women are not allowed to speak beyond the limit of what they describe for you as a woman. Not just a woman, like as a young woman who is being married, or you have a certain status, the certain age group, there are certain things you don't like to talk. It wasn't easy. It is challenging. After now, it's still challenging, because first of all, the environment for practicing law in my own country is not very free, because there are so many challenges politically, socially and even economically.

It has been a very difficult path. I remember, also, some of my colleagues who were doing the same have to quit, not because they are not able to do, but because of the situation they find themselves in. Then again, it is an individual choice. It's my choice whether I'm getting something, earning something or I'm not earning, I need to do that. It's what I have choose. The path is very difficult and the practice, the environment is difficult, because even some of our egme, the young men, some of us have names, wrong people in the society were seen by some people, we can be the role models for their daughters, because at the certain point, some of us have to get married. At certain age, you do not do that, so you can be a role model to some of the daughter.

Okay, there are certain way you need to talk and there are certain things you don't need to talk about. It's not easy, because also some time, if I do not have a very strong family background, like my parents were not very strong, maybe I would have not been where I am today, because the society defined the kind of behaviors, or kind of thing we need to do, but not to do the right thing for the greater populations.

**[0:13:28] RT:** All right. I'm going to stay on this journey with you. You are becoming a lawyer, you become a lawyer, you are a lawyer. In based on what you said, in a situation where as a woman and as a lawyer, I'm imagining people who are listening to us right now, one of the questions they may be asking is, what did you learn about yourself as a person to be able to stay on this course when it's hard and your friends and colleagues and people you knew were dropping away and you stayed in this process to arrive where you are now? What did you learn about who you are as a human being, independent of being a lawyer, but was essential to become a lawyer?

**[0:14:10] NW:** I personally, at this point, I am in a position where I look out for something positive to change somebody's life. Even my own friends, or even people who are around me, young people my age, older, younger, some of them don't believe in me, but importantly, I am doing what is good, because I know sometimes I will wake up and find a message being written to me by young people, especially either young people, younger than me, or people of my age, saying, "Oh, my God. You inspired me. I like what you are doing, this and this."

These are the few people I am counting on every other day, because if I get a message today, a positive message of somebody who said I have inspired her or him, I count that as a lot. Then 10 messages I am getting, or stories I am hearing of 10 people sitting and saying bad thing about me, not believing me, I am taking a positive feedback, because majority will not believe with me, because of whatever reason, their thing is the opinion and I respect that. Then I count on those few individuals, especially few young people who feel that I inspired them and their role models, they admire what I'm doing.

I'm sure when they hear this record, or this interview, they will definitely be like, "Oh, my God." The social media we are in, you find people share you and say a good thing about you. Of

course, there are people who would think what I am saying is not good and all this. What keeps me in this path is that few people I'm touching their light positively. I believe, I will reach the target so long as I am still on the earth. Even if I go today, I am still going to highlight on my story.

Another thing is not about South Sudanese as well. I have people who are not even South Sudanese. These are people who see my life and these are young women who think I can be their role models. I'm inspiring them, because my story resonates with the other stories. I feel good about it. This is what is keeping me going. I tell young women that when you see us, or you see some of us, you will think that, "Oh, my God. Maybe I get all this thing in silver plate." No. I need to tell my story, so that people know that we did not reach here from nowhere, where like, everything was smooth and all known. We have backlash, we have rejection, we have all this bad comment around. But I have bad comment around, I have all this thing, but I have to continue going and pathway for my daughter, for my niece, for my other young girls around either within my family, my community, my country, or across the region, or the continent, that well as hole.

**[0:17:18] RT:** Let's talk about the actual work then that you do as a lawyer. As we said at the outset, you're an advocate for women and girls' rights. You started, you're national director for the National Alliance of Women Lawyers, dedicated to promoting and protecting the rights of women and girls. As a lawyer every day with this orientation, or drive, what is the work that you do every day on behalf of these young women and girls that need your support as a lawyer? When you're actually working, what are you doing?

**[0:17:56] NW:** Basically, one of the things I do is to ensure that we look out for women who are in country with law, women who are detained arbitrarily, or detained, but they don't have lawyers to represent them, or they don't even know their right, they don't know where to go, whatever reason they are detained. Also, conducting some awareness, what we call the right awareness, right awareness to ensure that we talk about the available, the bill of rights, the laws, what the laws say about individual rights, about women's rights, girls' rights talk about, because we have beautiful laws that prevent, for example, when we talk about child marriage, or child marriage, it becomes something that is against the culture, but then again, we have laws that prevent –

there are certain age young girls should not be married. Also, there are certain age that the girl have the right to choose for her partner, or when to marry.

These are some of the advocacy and awareness we do every now and daily. There's either with a group, or individuals, or reach out to a certain number of people. It's not me as an individual, but we are a group of women lawyers who are doing this, and even other such men and women who are not lawyers, they are doing all these things. It's an everyday conversation that you find yourself doing in your own capacity, because we are still a country where women are still really coming up in terms of education, or time of right awareness, self-awareness, it's an everyday kind of activities. You do it in your capacity. You do as a group. You do have a discussion also with stakeholders, right barriers and duty barriers.

**[0:19:47] RT:** Talk then a little bit about your successes, the things you've been able to accomplish, both maybe as yourself, or in this group of lawyers that are representing women, that progress you're making in the work that you're doing that it keeps you going forward, what can you speak to about that?

**[0:20:03] NW:** First, I was a practicing lawyer and I can say, I was successful, because the South Sudan bar council have to award me my license as a full lawyer and being an advocate. That's something I consider as a success. Then again, my success, I've typed them earlier that I don't have something that, because sometime when you are working on the community, in the community and you're working on certain issues that are against culture, or things that are not considered part of the practice, it is very difficult to count on your success.

The success, I would say, is that my boys, or my conversations have tied the life of so many people and I have built a network of women who believe in me and even some men who believe in me, and also have built a network of different stakeholders who also trust me and without me, either to provide advice, or to provide my comment, or opinion on certain issues. I feel like this is some of the success I have achieved, because if people think about you to be part of certain decisions to be made, it is something that I feel it's very important and I appreciate them for that.

**[0:21:24] RT:** Okay. You provoked two more questions for me on this topic. There are people who are listening, we need to give them some resources here. You mentioned, one, you're a



network builder. There's a lot of people out there who say, "I don't know how to network. I don't know anything about what that is. I know I'm supposed to do that stuff, but I don't know how." What practical experience and knowledge do you have that you can share with somebody who knows they need to network, but aren't really sure about how to go about it? What secrets do you have? What ideas do you have to help these people?

**[0:21:56] NW:** Well, this is one of the biggest, and I'm going to really speak highly about women, because women, regardless of where you are, whether you're in the United States of America, in developed countries, or in developing countries, let me say that. Sometime we find ourselves in our comfort zones and this is why we don't really have to know so much and get connected a lot. This is one of the challenge. What I want to say is that get off your comfort zone. Try something new. Reach out to people, identify, do the site, we are in the internet world. Reach out.

If you have a focus, for example, me, I have a specific – By the way, I do a couple of things, but in each month, I dedicated that this month, I'm going to do research on this and this topic. If I am not knowledgeable enough on that topic, I reach out. I will do my research online, identify certain group of people, or individuals, reach out. They have contacts. Get to know people and ask for ideas and try something new. This is how you build a network, from different part of world, from different work of life, different experience as well. It's very important to reach out if you really need to learn something.

I personally, when I'm talking about women issues, they are very vast. There are issues related to women, economic empowerment, there are issues related to women in leaderships, there are issues related to girl child education, because we are women, but in different capacity. There are educated women, highly educated women, and then women like myself, women from the rural areas. How do you get to learn about this difference and values and bridge the gaps? I reach out to people. Basically, I reach out. Don't fear to fail. Try things and fail.

Another thing is with network building, not everyone is going to appreciate your boldness. Some people will think, "Why do you have to reach out to me?" Some people take it like a competition. Maybe they don't want to share ideas with you, because they don't want you to be like them. But there are good people outside there. There are very, very good people outside that when you

reach out to them, even sharing your own biograph, your CV rhythms, and say, “Help me with this. Can I reshape it in a way that fit my –” They will be available.

There are people also outside their – For example, with this interview, you never know there are 10 people who will criticize it. “Oh, look at her. What does she know? She thinks she did this and that.” Yeah, it's fine. That's their opinion. I respect that. But there are people will be even adding some of the thing I have not added into this interview. These are the people you need to look into. I told you from the beginning that look at the positive side of life. Let others, those who don't believe in you, those who don't agree what you are saying, that's the opinion and it's fine. take the positive path.

This is how I build my network. I build my network. I don't mind where you come from. I don't mind how you are doing, but what I mind is to gain knowledge and share knowledge and share experience and work together for a common goal.

**[0:25:26] RT:** Okay, so we're going to keep going here with your masterclass about how you become powerful. You also said, you use your voice. Talk about what using your voice actually means for you, because I think you probably are as aware as I am that a lot of people use their voice, but they don't use it in ways that are very effective. How are you using your voice for yourself and for the causes that you're working with them? What do you know about using your voice in order to move things forward?

**[0:25:56] NW:** Thank you. To use my voice, I use my voice in different ways. It's not that I need to keep talking just anyhowly, but I have a specific people, or specific things I target. In South Sudan, for example, we are talking about laws as women lawyers, and we are talking about what we call the sexual offense act. Sexual laws need to be enacted to protect women, to our provisions. I don't just talk on the streets, or just talk with nobody. I mean, with people I know, they are not in the decision-making position.

I use my voice to advocate, especially talking to people who are in the decision-making positions. Talk to my colleagues who are in the same fight with me, so that we also do things in a certain way, to see the entry approach. You see? This is how I use my voice. Also, I use my voice when an incident happened, or what I know is not right is happening, I speak about it. For

example, I use my social media platform to speak about certain things I think they are not good. There are those who can read, to those who are on Facebook, for example, or Twitter, or those who are on Instagram, other social media platform, they will have the assets to read my opinion. Of course, they will use my opinion to share with other people. What I mean by using my voice is to target specific people, identify the entry point and see how I can influence and lobby them to achieve what I'm trying to say.

**[0:27:30] RT:** Imagining that also, part of using your voice is to be consistent in using your voice, so that people start to understand that when things occur, they should seek out your points of view on social media, because you're a reliable, consistent contributor to those ideas. Is that a fair thing to say?

**[0:27:48] NW:** Yeah. Consistency is another important thing, because sometimes there are so many things that happen at the same time. When you jump from this to that, people will not understand what is your problem. What are you trying to address here? Consistency is very important. It doesn't matter who is. For example, a year ago, there was an incident. One of the young women who was abused, because certain people believed she did not address it in way and all these things.

I came to appreciate my effort, because when I reached out to young women and other men, they were able to respect my opinion. They were able to listen to what I was trying to say. In fact, this is a collective responsibility. We really walk together and we even did a lot of fundraising together. People respect what I was trying to say, which means we have the same idea. The difference is that I took up the case by myself and I say, let us do this and advocate with the policy makers and also, trying to see other avenues on how to protect these young women from being harm and also, to get her liberty and being protected by laws. Consistency is very important in this way. Yeah.

**[0:29:04] RT:** Okay. I have one more tactical question for you, because you're getting a lot of stuff done. You had mentioned to me before we started recording and I found it online, you're a pretty significant researcher. As you well know, research isn't for everybody. Some people find it boring. Some people don't know how to do it. As an advocate, let's advocate a little bit for helping people who are trying to impact something positive in the world. What's the value of

researching the issue that you're trying to address that will be beneficial to people out there if they decide to do that work, as opposed to had they never done any research on this issue? What do you know about the potency of research to the cause?

**[0:29:57] NW:** Thank you. It's very important to understand. Because sometimes we might assume things and say, "Oh, maybe this is going to be like this, or this is going to be like that." If you go on the ground and interact with people on the ground, the people who are actually either affected, or who are the beneficiaries, or certain things, you get to understand from the primary source. It will inform how you make some of the decisions.

For example, a year ago, I conducted a research on the role of women in peace building. This was supported by international peace institutes. This research was for them to understand whether the belief that there is a need for women in the peace operations is what the post communities want, or it is not what they want. My interaction was very informative. Up to now, I kept mentioning that aside, because I went on the ground, I sat down with women and men from the local community, the host communities, and some of the thought and the belief and what they actually want was even beyond what we were as a recital, what I was trying to understand.

That would come actually provoked and actually get very important decisions. It informed and shaped the decision to be made. I have a colleague also, who did a research to understand, academic research, that was to understand the role of women as perpetrators, or supporters, or violence against women. I did that. I was one of the researchers and enumerators. I even interviewed my own mother. As an African woman, I was asking her what she thinks about – I was trying to understand how women also supported violence against women. It was so amazing. As my mother protected me from a very young age.

Up to now, she doesn't want me to be abused and all that. But I could echo certain things that as an African woman that they need to be done in an African way, because this is how we do it in our culture, right? Research is an important tool for you to understand certain things. That's why I love to do research. There's nothing difficult about research. What you're doing now is a research. I can say that. You can be able to talk freely and confidently about me as Nyuon Susan said it, because you have spoken to me directly. You heard from my mouth what I am doing and how I think this should be done.

Research is an important tool for any leader to address certain things. That's why it is important. I always advise people and whoever asked me to do research about this. If I want to understand certain things, I do research. I don't need to have the whole project, but it is a very simple concept. Reach out to the target number of people, the audience, get to know what they are thinking before you come out with a conclusion.

**[0:33:14] RT:** All right. That's so cool. Let's shift gears a little bit here. You're a parent. How has your life's work influenced how you are as a mother for your kids?

**[0:33:29] NW:** Oh, my God. It's so interesting how life shifted so fast. As a mother, I am very privileged, because I have a family. My mother, my sibling, my sisters, they really love my daughter. My daughter also have her grandparent from her father's side and her aunties and uncles. She's very privileged also, because she's being over loved by both parents. Watching my life is that parenthood is a different things. There are certain things as a woman, when you have a small baby, you cannot do, especially traveling.

I had my daughter during COVID. I was lucky. There was no a lot of traveling, but I did a lot of online work. Sometimes I was on Zoom like this. I was on other meetings. Sometimes my daughter will just like, what just happened. She will pop up and start streaming. I will have to mute myself. Life really changed so quickly, because children also change our life. There are certain things we cannot do, because especially when they are certain age, I have to attend to my daughter.

In terms of being a mother, or being, having my husband, I am privileged, because I got a man who also asked me to do continue with my life, do what I love to do and support me at a certain point. When this interview came up, I reached out and said, "Hey, this is – Look at this." He has been telling me actually, "Yeah, do it. Quiet. This is good." These are some other things that life change either way. I have a partner who's supporting me. Do it. It's good. I have a daughter who will sometimes interrupt like you see. Also, maybe I would have not traveled, because no one is remaining with her and all this thing. As a woman, things are not as **[inaudible 0:35:22]** as they used to be.

**[0:35:24] RT:** You should know, your daughter is the first guest appearance of any child on 10,000 Swamp Leaders. We shall forever have heard number one as a guest list.

**[0:35:35] NW:** Thank you.

**[0:35:36] RT:** I believe that we tend to learn more from our leadership failures than we do our successes. They tend to stick with us. They leave a mark a little bit. We learn from them. People out there younger on the journey who are listening to you talk, what can you share about some failures as a leader that you've learned from, that could be beneficial to younger people so that they don't at least make the same error that you may have made? What council do you have for them on that area?

**[0:36:05] NW:** Yeah, thank you so much. I think my message to the younger generation, or younger people who are struggling, or who are trying to put their leads and put their path of leadership is to ensure that they don't give up, because sometimes when we as leaders, when we fail, we think that's the end of it. One, do not fear failure. Failure is part of our leadership skills and is one of the aspects of our motivations. As you fail, try and try three to four time. It's fine. To five time, to 10<sup>th</sup> time is good to try if this is what you want. Like I mentioned earlier, consistent is important. As you keep doing it, you keep failing and failing. Do not fear failure.

Second, do not fear judgment. Trust me, in this world, we have so many people who judge us. You know what 20/80 rule is? That's the real thing. The 20/80 rules, 80 people will not appreciate you and 20 people will appreciate you. Take the positive. Do not look out for appreciation, accomplishment. Do not look for positive compliment. There are people outside that wouldn't want to hear you.

Again, when we are looking, even some of the leaders, because personally, too, there are people, either they are men or women, who are my motivational leaders. But at a certain point, they drop me and jag me and make me feel bad. I'm like, okay, I'll give you that. There are people who are younger than me and they are successful. I want to be like them. I want to also get knowledge from them, but they reject. Rejection is okay. People will reject you. People will judge you. It is up to them. It's fine. Look at the positive. I keep saying that. It doesn't matter if

the 80 people don't want you and 20 people supported you, go for that. If you fail 80 times and you succeed 20 times, work hard to get the 80% success.

As a young person, you still have a life ahead, work so hard, continue to reach out, build your network, don't listen to those who judge you, those who reject you, appreciate them. By the way, do not also hit them, because me, I don't hold grudges, because somebody doesn't believe in me, someone don't like me. I appreciate it, because those judgment, or those negative comments also share my life. I sit and reflect and see where I can go right. Thank you.

**[0:38:51] RT:** What's your superpower?

**[0:38:53] NW:** What do you mean by that?

**[0:38:55] RT:** You know, the part, that power that you have somewhere deep inside you that keeps you moving when it gets really hard. Quitting could be seductive and it could justify quitting this time, but you don't. You keep moving. What's your superpower?

**[0:39:14] NW:** My superpower is optimism. I'm always optimistic.

**[0:39:20] RT:** How has that served you?

**[0:39:22] NW:** It has served me in a way that whenever I'm optimistic and I'm looking forward for something, it doesn't matter if I'm rejected, or I'm not sure this thing will work out, or it won't work out. In most cases, in most cases, I always get positive, okay? What I mean is sometimes I have this anxiety. If I am saying, "Okay, I'm going to get this," but I have some feeling inside, did me that this is going to be difficult. I'll not get it. I actually failed. If I'm saying, it doesn't matter how hard it is, I'm very optimistic and I'm going to – it doesn't matter how hard it is, I get it. I think optimism is one of the things that is my superpower that give me that path me the way to achieve most of my things. Yeah.

**[0:40:13] RT:** Good counsel for all of us. We've talked a lot here. Some nice stuff, cool stuff, some good learning. What is it that I've not asked you that's important for the people who are listening to know about you?

**[0:40:26] NW:** Wow. I think you have covered a couple of things, but maybe what you did not ask is that if there are time I have failed, or if there are time I did not do well, I think I do not – I don't remember discussing that with you. But trust me, over time, most of my time, I have been having a lot of challenges. It's very important for people to understand that as much as I'm coming up in my small capacity, most of the time, I feel very rejected. I feel not loved. I feel a lot of challenges come around me, because the kind of environment I'm trying to thrive in is not environment that is conducive for the things I'm trying to work for. There are a lot of judgment. There are a lot of rejections. There are a lot of bad comments. As I continue to fall and work, stand up and all these things and juggling all these things, I am looking at the positive part of my life. That's what positive part of my leadership is.

**[0:41:37] RT:** Okay, thank you. As we come to the end of our conversation here, what's ahead for you? When you look out into the future, what is it you'd like to accomplish that's holding you forward?

**[0:41:49] NW:** Oh, my God. This is a very good question. I was asked, I think, a year ago, two years ago, somebody asked me the same question. I always say that what is ahead of me is a positive life. I want to really see myself getting into a decision-making position, where I will be able to implement what I'm talking about now. Also, looking ahead of me that I will have to create a positive change within my community and even within my country. I see my future very bright. I'm seeing myself work so hard, to reset the level where I will be able to make a positive change. This is the only thing I want to do.

**[0:42:32] RT:** Nyuon William, thank you so much for coming into the swamp and having a conversation with us about your work, your life, your history, your point of view about how other people can have impact in the world. It's just been a pleasure to have this conversation with you. Thank you so much.

**[0:42:50] NW:** Thank you so much.

[END OF INTERVIEW]



**[0:42:54] ANNOUNCER:** Thank you for listening to 10,000 Swamp Leaders with Rick Torseth. Please, take this moment and hit subscribe to follow more leadership swamp conversations.

[END]