

VOCABULARY OF WOMEN'S REALITY

THE WORDS THAT EXPLAIN THE

*SYSTEM, NOT
THE
SYMPTOMS*

We can't change a system we cannot see.
These **five words** reveal the architecture
behind women's everyday struggles.



PATRIARCHY

DEFINITION

A system where men's power is treated as the norm, and women's presence is treated as an exception that must justify itself.

How it shows up workplace?

- 👉 Men being called "strategic" for the same behaviour that gets women labelled "difficult."
- 👉 Women needing evidence, data, and calmness to be believed — while men are believed on confidence alone.
- 👉 Women's pay, safety, and promotions treated as "negotiations" instead of rights.
- 👉 A woman's ambition seen as individual personality; a man's ambition seen as leadership potential.

Why it matters:

Patriarchy determines not only who gets a seat at the table, but whose seat is seen as natural.



EQUITY VS EQUALITY

DEFINITION

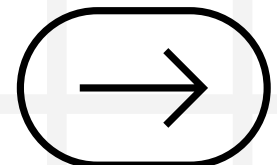
Equality gives everyone the same starting line; equity acknowledges that not everyone started in the same race.

How it shows up workplace?

- 👉 Mothers being seen as “less committed” while fathers are praised as “responsible.”
- 👉 Women doing double shifts at home but judged by the same “availability” standards as men.
- 👉 Women penalised in performance reviews for traits men are promoted for (assertiveness, clarity, ambition).
- 👉 Workplaces expecting “neutral” behaviour without recognising that neutrality was defined around men.

Why it matters:

Without equity, “fairness” becomes a myth workplaces use to avoid changing the structure.



POWER DYNAMICS

DEFINITION

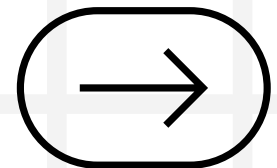
The invisible hierarchy that decides whose voice matters — long before anyone speaks.

How it shows up workplace?

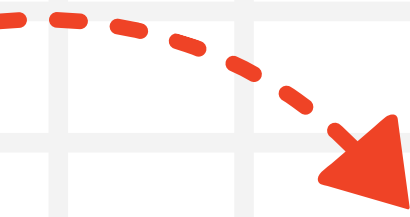
- 👉 A man's discomfort stops a conversation; a woman's discomfort is seen as an overreaction.
- 👉 Women preparing longer, cleaner, more cautious emails — because their margin for error is smaller.
- 👉 Men interrupting without consequence; women being interrupted because consequence is assumed.
- 👉 Decisions that shape women's lives are happening in rooms where women aren't present.

Why it matters:

Power isn't always loud. Sometimes it's the quiet understanding that your truth will need proof — and someone else's won't.



SOCIALISED SILENCE



DEFINITION

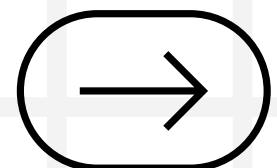
The learned habit of staying quiet because speaking honestly has historically cost women safety, respect, or belonging.

How it shows up workplace?

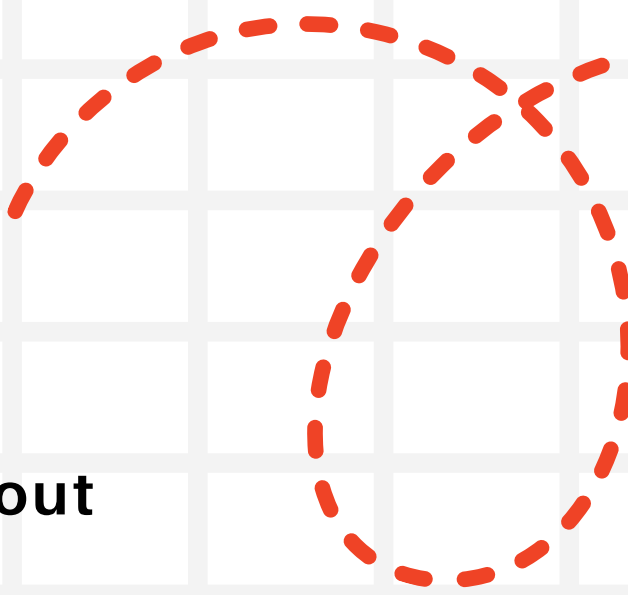
- 👉 Women rehearse sentences in their heads before presenting an idea; men don't need to.
 - 👉 Women lowering their voice, softening their feedback, adding "just" and "actually" to sound less threatening.
 - 👉 Women choosing "peace" over truth — because truth has never felt like a safe option.
 - 👉 Women learning to be grateful for opportunities men take for granted.
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Why it matters:

Silence is not a communication issue — it's a survival strategy programmed over generations.



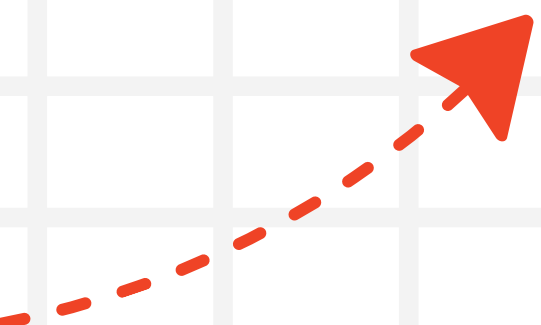
BOUNDARIES



DEFINITION

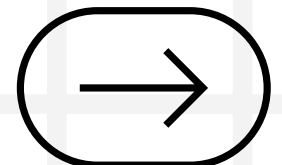
A label used to dismiss women who speak about fairness, safety, or inequality.

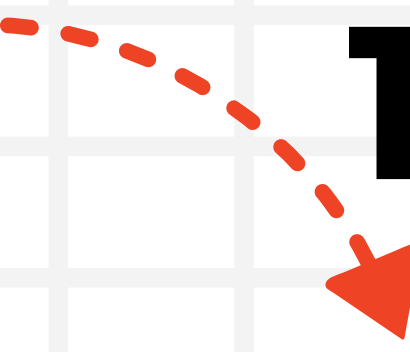
How it shows up workplace?

- 👉 Saying no without writing an essay of justification.
 - 👉 Leaving workplace emotional caretaking to the workplace — not to yourself.
 - 👉 Refusing to match someone else's comfort at the cost of your own wellbeing.
 - 👉 Choosing rest without guilt.
 - 👉 No longer setting yourself on fire to keep the system warm.
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Why it matters:

Boundaries aren't rebellion — they're the first step in breaking generational conditioning.





These systems were never invisible.

Women were simply never given the language
to see them clearly.

When women name the structures shaping
their experiences, they stop blaming
themselves for the imbalance and start
recognising the design behind it.

**Clarity doesn't create conflict.
It creates direction — and direction is how
change begins.**

