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Psychologist creates strategies for women to conquer bias

[Haley Barnes](#), News Editor

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On average, for every dollar that a man makes in the professional world, a woman makes 22 cents less than that, psychologist Dr. Rachel Elahee said. Elahee is a professional life coach from Cleveland, Ohio who currently works in Atlanta, Georgia in the new field of science called positive psychology. Positive psychology is the study of what makes life most worth living. She dedicates her life to motivating women and she sheds light on bias in the workforce. Elahee is the author of the book 'Choose You!', which she described as a book that has 100 strategies for women to live by. Her strategies advocate ideas that can help women gain confidence.

"Your life is not a democracy," Elahee said. "Other people can offer their opinions, but they do not get a vote in your life."

Elahee said something that she feels more women need to indulge in is 'best friend therapy.' She explained best friend therapy as women need to treat themselves the way they treat their best friend. She said women do anything for their best friend, but when it comes to them, they do not go and get what they want. She said with her strategies, women can combat bias in the workforce and help propel themselves forward.

Elahee said that she believes that the workforce is still biased for women and that this is proven through statistics.

"It's still biased because there are more men in the workplace and more women have degrees," Elahee said. "In the workplace, we do not see that same percentage reflected."

Elahee said that part of the problem is that women are sometimes not bold enough and that they are not willing to take risks.

She said she feels that women often feel discouraged when applying for jobs because they feel they do not meet all the criteria for that specific job, while men apply for jobs on a gamble.

"Part of that is that we don't feel confidence in ourselves," Elahee said.

She said one thing that women need to not do is take no in a personal matter.

"Don't take 'no' personally," she said. "It means no for now. It doesn't mean you are a bad person or if there is something wrong with you."

She also added that women should not view work, like the way they view relationships.

"If you wouldn't do it in a relationship, don't do it in the workforce," she said. "Otherwise the job will end the exact way a bad relationship does."

She said college students can promote gender equality in various ways.

"College students need to be critical," she said. "If you find yourself declining an opportunity, you need to really figure out why that it is."

Vice president of the Feminist Majority Leadership Alliance (FMLA) and freshman English education major, Victoria Davis for the most part agreed with Elahee's insight. Davis said that she has no doubt that bias still exists in the workplace.

"Women are less comfortable with asking for raises in the workplace," Davis said.

Davis said that something she has read about lately is that when a man asks for a promotion, he is seen as ambitious and responsible, but that when women ask, they are seen as overbearing and problematic.

She said that from birth, women are raised to believe that they are not made for certain jobs. Davis explained that this can be changed through education on diversity. She said that students need to be aware of this topic.

"You need to educate people before you can expect to change society," she said.

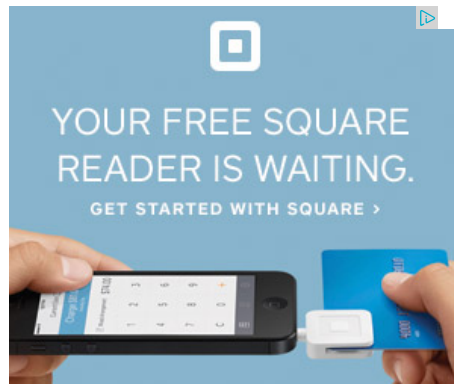
Elahee said that there plenty of resources available for women, including a free survey from www.viacharacter.org. She said that this survey can help women understand their character strengths.

For students looking to get involved with gender equality on campus, FMLA meets Monday nights in the Women's Center at 7 p.m. Students are also welcomed to visit the Women's Center during the hours of 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Monday through Friday.

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