

Wichita Chamber Business Accelerator

Episode 76

Tasha Parker

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Don & Ebony: [00:00:00] Welcome to another exciting edition of the WCBA powered, of course, by Evergy. Thank you for listening. Don't forget to like us, love us, share us. We truly appreciate you checking us out. Today, Institute of Development's in the house. I am so excited about today's podcast. We have Dr. Tasha Parker in the house.

How are you?

Tasha Parker: Thanks for having me.

Don & Ebony: Absolutely. Of course I do. I was just wondering my dear friend. That's was waiting for. So excited to have you here. Tell us who you are and what do you do? Ma'am

Tasha Parker: So I'm Tasha Parker. I have a PhD in community psychology I'm also a social worker. I've been in private practice probably for about 12, 13 years. recently I started the Institute development really focusing on capacity building for a nonprofit, for profits, the private sector organization.

I'm really trying to bridge the gap between sustainability and equitable service outcomes. Yes. I love it though. It's like therapy for organizations. Like I love it,

Don & Ebony: So, okay. Let's back up a little bit. So you are, you're a therapist

Tasha Parker: I'm a licensed specialist, clinical social worker.

Don & Ebony: And so that's what you've done for 10 to 12 years. Now, you're this community psychologist, what is, okay, so you're doing all this. So,

Tasha Parker: So I have a private I'm in private practice so I have a little practice, and then I started the Institute of development and eventually we'll bring them under the same umbrella, but. Yeah, I love it. I get to do a lot of supervision, for newly licensed therapists. So that's fun helping mold the next generation because I've been around for a long time, 13 years, a long time. providing services.



Don & Ebony: Is that's, you know, a couple of years. It's not a long time cause us old.

Tasha Parker: A long time for me.

Don & Ebony: Okay. That's fine. So tell me exactly because we, the, what is community psychology? What does that.

entail?

Tasha Parker: So community psychology is really about systems. like we really help navigate organizations, navigate systems, and we want to improve the way systems provide services and how individuals interact within their systems.

It's like multi-layered we talk a lot about the Bronfenbrenner's ecological perspective This really is about the individual is embedded in all these other systems that impact them and the access to services and things like that.

Don & Ebony: That's deep.

Tasha Parker: I'm telling you, this is great. Everybody should do it.

Everybody do it.

Don & Ebony: one Every one it. I'm going to steer away let you all do that. That is a wonderful program though, as Dr. Lewis, yes, shout out to Dr. Lewis.

She is amazing, like her a lot. so let's talk about the Institute of development a little bit. So this is new, right?

You just began this. So where did this thought concept come from?

Tasha Parker: So probably in about, I wanna say 2015, I had stepped away from doing full-time therapy and I was all doing it part-time because I was running the mental health at our county jail. And that was one of the first plate. So the thing about therapy, when people get better they just leave.

Like, you don't often get to discharge them successfully and you get to see people get better but not The same when you're involved in system. and working at the jail, been involved in processes and policies, you could actually see the efficiency happening from the work that you were doing. And I was doing some things that could be considered evaluation, and I liked it. I was like, I need to be good at it. And so I started doing some community work with Dr. Lewis, the Tabernacle Bible church, and. It was on from there. And once I figured out, like, oh, that's

what you. [00:05:00] So you can really get good at these things. and so a long time ago, originally the Institute development was geared to at these different, homes that people could come and heal it. But then I thought about like, well, why not help organizations become these safe havens for the people that they're providing services to when those who are providing the services. And So

Don & Ebony: So your Institute can help both non-profit and for-profit.

Tasha Parker: Oh, anybody. Anybody. Yes.

Don & Ebony: the key.

Tasha Parker: Yes. And a lot of people, the thing I like about evaluation, I really think about almost like, treatment planning and capacity building. I need to know what is contributing to my capacity, but also. taken away from it. And you do that through evaluation and some people get scared.

Like, I don't want you to say that my program, I do what it's supposed to do, but try to take this therapeutic approach. of No, no, no. Like you probably already have some good things. We just to teach you how to tweak it. Like maybe you should be measuring this instead. it's my same philosophy with therapy. When people come to therapy, they already have the tools that they need to feel better.

They just don't. They're trying to use a screwdriver like a hammer.

Don & Ebony: So, so wait a minute, like a hammer that was like, cause I'm not trying to get out of this.

Tasha Parker: You just got to teach them like, Hey, That's not really how you use that. right there. Yeah. But people have the tools that they need.

Don & Ebony: Well, you know, the, the first thing that comes to mind is, again, going to tell me the little mermaid, you remember when the C golf found a, a fork and they was like, oh, this is what the humans use to comb their hair.

And that's not what we use it for creative, but that's not the key.

Tasha Parker: There's a more efficient way.

Don & Ebony: So in your evaluation stage, what are we looking for? What, you know, what questions that we look for, how. We are impactful or like, what are we doing? Why are we doing it? What are the things you look for in evaluations?

Tasha Parker: There's a variety of different types of evaluations. Some evaluation looks at your program theory, you know, are we are we doing what we say we're doing?

And is it making an impact? some just wants to know what are you. you know, it's just outputs. Like who are we provided to them? There's outcomes and impacts. There's all different types. Some are formative where we're just informing you what's happening. and then some are seminars where we're like, no, let's look at the details And nitty gritty that may be, when we're collecting data, analyzing data. I like to consider it, when I think of evaluation. I think of it three phases like phase one, really being the discovery. Well, we see like, what do you have? What are you already doing? And then we say, okay, this is what could be done. And which are, these are your priority? because people may not have the funding to do all the things that.

I believe needs to be done. And so giving people the autonomy to choose. And my goal is to this concept of empower empowerment, evaluation. where when I walk away, like I want to keep having work, but I also want people to feel like they can implement these things and continue to do some of this on their own.

If they need to, when things like the pandemic hit, You know, funding changed for a lot of people, resources, revenues, everything went down.

And so during those times, people have at least some baseline skillset that they can get through.

Don & Ebony: I like that now, I guess, you know, one of the things that I'm trying to understand is, cause it sounds like it's a lot of work. So it's this service, I mean, is it affordable to small nonprofits as well as, I mean, is it a one size package or is it individualized for each?

Tasha Parker: See, so people been onto to me cause they say you need a one side. I was like, I'm not going to do that. I won't do one size. I think it has to be individualized because resources look different and once again, what people need. may look different. A lot of people are doing good things they don't know it.

or they don't know how to utilize some of the services that they're offering. And So I try to individualize based off the needs. Because it needs to be usable. There's no point of Even if you only pay, you know, \$500 for an evaluation, you need to be able to use it. Particularly when you start to get in these more in-depth evaluations, that cost thousands of dollars for organizations, you need to be able to use it. And So it has to be. individualized in my opinion.

Don & Ebony: And I'm going to turn it over to Don, but I have this last question about this phase, and I know there's much more to your business than the evaluation, but this, this is uncovered quite a bit, in this stage. Right. So do you find that a lot of people think that they're doing one thing, but they really aren't doing what they set out to do?

Tasha Parker: You know, A lot. and sometimes we're well-intended and so it's like your heart's in the right place. And like, I really think we're doing good stuff. Yeah. You're doing good stuff, But it's not. doing what you believe it to be.

And you look at your [00:10:00] goal. you're not, This is not helping you get there. when you think about, organization outcomes and success. in there's preconditions to have to be met. If my goal is is for people to be healthy, or to have coping skills or transitional housing, there's preconditions, that have to be met in order for that to happen. And often people your activities, the programming, have to be to get to The preconditions. And so,

Don & Ebony: That's interesting. Yeah. Just wondering, whew. I don't know if I should jump in here or not too much. Let me go to the entrepreneurial tip here. well first did you grow up here in Wichita?

Tasha Parker: Yes.

Don & Ebony: What school did you go to high school?

Tasha Parker: Wichita North.

Don & Ebony: It's a lot of North High graduates. Wow. And that's okay.

Tasha Parker: Yeah.

Don & Ebony: Nice. Nice. So how long, when did you start this business?

Tasha Parker: The Institute of development I started it in December. And so I've been spending all December of 20, 21.

Don & Ebony: Like, oh,

Tasha Parker: This is a

Don & Ebony: it's brand new,

Tasha Parker: And so when I'm doing therapy. I did some consulting, but like I said, not to the level that I want to be able to do. it with the Institute of development. So I've been spending time as I finish it, finish up school, making connections, getting the foundational thanks for the business together. And so fortunately I have a successful practice and so I consider myself kind of business savvy. So that part wasn't difficult.

It's Just putting the time. in to do it.

Don & Ebony: Okay. What was the pinnacle moment that made you say you wanted to hang up your own shingle? I mean,

Tasha Parker: Generally speaking like in private practice even. Yeah. I mean, I just don't like being told what to do, to be honest.

Don & Ebony: Well, there it is.

Tasha Parker: And I'm not a, I'm the most noncompliant compliant person in the world because listen, listen, let me explain. So I will follow the rules, like I believe, but if it's not okay, it's not okay. And you cannot convince me that it's okay. And I'm going to say something about, it and I don't have to just go with it. because you say we have to do it? If harm has been done? I, I hold myself to a high moral, ethical compass as. a professional.

And It's difficult to work for other people like that because it's like, Nope, I don't agree. Okay. And so it.

Don & Ebony: She said, you cannot tell me what to do.

Tasha Parker: Particularly if it's if it's at the cost of people. I won't do it.

Don & Ebony: Excellent. Okay. How would, how will, you know, if you're successful as an entrepreneur and what you're doing?

that

The clinical part, but I mean, maybe it's in between. I don't know.

Tasha Parker: I think for me, I will know I'm successful when I'm able to provide some services and a pro bono.

rate. And when people, organizations that I am working with, they are feeling empowered to continue to push themselves to do more work.

For sure. Cause I know that was my whole goal of getting. into private practices. I needed to be able to provide more pro bono services, but in order to do that, have to be able to still make enough money because I do more free work now than I ever did working in a nonprofit.

Don & Ebony: So do you have a staff.

Tasha Parker: Hm, it's just me.

So The goal is, I'm going to convince a lot of people to get into community psychology. Okay.

So, but the goal is to just subcontract all the work out to new and upcoming, evaluators like myself, or, you know, people who've been around for a long time.

Don & Ebony: Okay. And yeah, if it's proprietary, forgive me. But what made you come to that decision to have contractors or versus employees on the clock? On the, on staff?

Tasha Parker: Because I don't want to manage people and when we're subcontracting, it's more of a partnership or collaboration and it gives people more. autonomy Because I think there's enough work out here for everybody.

And if I can create an environment where maybe somebody is thinking about going out on their own, but they're a little scared. Maybe they can come subcontract with me for a little bit and I can help guide them to the point that they can be off to the races. doing their own thing.

Don & Ebony: Excellent. So along that vein, tell us what services you offer.

Tasha Parker: I do a lot of stuff. And so I'm really big on action planning, which is kind of a shift from strategic, [00:15:00] planning where I think of action planning like a treatment plan for organizations. And these are our goals. These are things that we need to do. to get these goals, And we're constantly reviewing that. I really like program theory. We, most people know about logic models, but often program theory gets forgotten about, and I think as funding sources continue to there's nonprofits and org popping up all the time. And so there's more competition for funding. And so I think with this model of really helping organizations to. There's a program, theory is going to help them be more competitive. for federal funding, which is needed for some organizations to be sustainable because they're often multi-year So so facilitation.

Don & Ebony: Facilitation.

Tasha Parker: Yeah, and, as a therapist, I that's my jam. I love it.

Don & Ebony: So facilitation and Don, I know you have something to say

ask a quick. Is your revenue stream based on if you can share or want to share, is it based on grants or is it based on this actual services being provided?

Tasha Parker: So for the Institute of Development, it will be based off the services being provided as I continue to move away from therapy and spend more time less time doing that, the goal is to be able to have some more. to yes, to pay for myself, but to also help organizations who may not be able to afford any evaluation to be able to fill in that gap for them. So.

Don & Ebony: Wow. Okay. Thank you. So what do you do after you evaluation? Do you go over and do what's the next step? You sit down with them and then you come up with a plan. Is that, I

mean, what, when you're thinking about all the services that you provide evaluation facilitation, but what else? What about the in between and what about the, what happens?

Tasha Parker: So it depends on what you need. You know, you may call and say.

Hey, Tasha, I think we got a problem, but I don't know. Or we got this grant. And so I come in and kind of talk to, you to get to know, what you're looking for. but at the end of the day, if it's evaluation, it's always going to be recommendations. Like These are the recommendations. and These are the steps that you can take to get there. But also that depends on your resources and people forget outside of money, time and personnel are big reasons.

Don & Ebony: Do you develop the programs?

Tasha Parker: I do program development, but If that's something that they want. Yeah. If I can't do it, I'm not going to pretend like I could do it, but I also, the joy of having a PhD, I'm a good learner. I learned how to learn.

Don & Ebony: Learn how to learn.

Tasha Parker: Yeah. Well

Don & Ebony: And you do grant writing. And what else?

strategic planning, planning, whatever you want to call it. Grant writing, grant research. I talked about evaluation group, facilitation data,

Don & Ebony: what I

Tasha Parker: all types of

Don & Ebony: Perfect. So a business or a nonprofit can come to you for any of these types of services and where can we find you at?

www.IODICT.com.

Don & Ebony: And are you.

Tasha Parker: on social?

I mean, I'm on LinkedIn. You can find me on LinkedIn.

Don & Ebony: That's something. What about tick-tock? Cause Don is dying to get on Tik TOK. Can you create something?

Tasha Parker: You know, Someone told me that I should do a tick tock targeting different evaluate community psychology components and like, and I thought about it, but I'm not, I don't know.

Don & Ebony: my gosh

Tasha Parker: you right? you feel me? Yeah. Yeah. It's like,

Don & Ebony: you need to do it. And I'm going to convince you

Tasha Parker: Then you have to keep up with it. You got to keep up with it, then you gotta go. You gotta be having a library. I don't do that.

Don & Ebony: Well, all right,

Tasha Parker: You do it.

Don & Ebony: Well, friends, we're going to go here,

Dr. Tasha Parker[00:20:00]

Welcome back friends. We're here with Dr. Tasha Parker of the Institute of Development. And we're really excited because she has a brand new business. That's here to help us as a city and as a community, as an it, as. As individuals. Right? So it's all of those multilayered. I've learned a lot on this segment layers.

Yes. I love that. Why Wichita you born and raised here?

Tasha Parker: Born and raised in Wichita. I moved away for a little bit to play basketball, but the goal was just come back It was easy. my family's here. How'd you now.

Don & Ebony: I can't, I can just

Tasha Parker: Yeah, but I'm strong for it. So I can go to the center if I need it. I'm real strong. but you didn't take of me anyhow. but my grandmother's,

here. I'm pretty close with her and my mom everybody's here, so I want to come back and I like.

Wichita. some people are like, Oh, it's too slow. It's fine for me.

Don & Ebony: Oh, Wichita, I think has, grown tremendously over the years and we have many activities and, we have fun people like you, to make our community better. So thank you for

staying and giving back to the community. Yeah. Now that you've began your business and you're a member of the chamber, how has the chamber been beneficial to you?

I think the networking aspect and having someone to go to, to connect you to the right people, So if it's like. You know, the Kansas nonprofit chamber, who's the connect. And I have someone to talk to who say, okay, here you go. His introduction. That's the best part. And for some reason I feel more legitimate. like part of the chamber. So I think it does create some legitimacy. And so Been a baby organization to the chamber. I haven't necessarily started to get work rolling in yet, but I think.

Tasha Parker: End up being a benefit for sure. It's people knowing about you, the podcast opportunities like this, because when nobody else is going to ask about the Institute of development, like, I mean, I was going to keep doing what I've been doing, taking everybody out to lunch in the city.

Don & Ebony: And tell them about the Institute of development. All right. I'll be waiting for my lunch date. You've been doing this for a minute. Let's just say, December 20, 21

Tasha Parker: Yeah. That's when I started the business actually filed the LLC, but it's been

Don & Ebony: She's been doing it. Yeah, I know she's been doing it. Yeah. But what this, what made you say I'm going to hang out my shingle.

And, and was there somebody that inspired you to do that?

to go out on my own? Well, I knew that we're getting a PhD. Most people get. In academia, academia. I wasn't interested in that, but Dr. Lewis has been really supportive of me since the beginning. That's the whole reason why I went back to school, which is a little bit you don't hear a lot of people I'm gonna get a PhD, so I could go into independent consulting, but she really like encouraged me to do it, connected me with the right. People. And it's just continued to feed. right. And she was one that People like, Hey, you get your business stuff started. So hold me accountable for school, but also continuing to encourage me to step out and, you know, go the untraditional route.

Don & Ebony: Excellent. And we're talking about Dr. Rhonda Lewis, right?

Tasha Parker: Rhonda Lewis

Don & Ebony: Okay. She's still at WSU. Yep. Okay. Excellent. she's good people by the way, but everybody knows that. Not a news break here. you've been in it for four months. This, this arm of it. Wasn't it.

continuing to try to secure contracts up contracts right now, in the last four months I've been

spending a lot of time. so there's a nation wide, like there's so many independent consultants that have these smaller practices So I've been networking with them, going to groups, learning as much as I can. And so next is continuing to grow. Get out of there, showcase some more, do some work and allow that. So getting people to trust you and to see the need for it .

Don & Ebony: But more power to you on that. you got any thing else? No, sir. Sir. See, she throws that sir, in there sass is just too much. It's time to wrap this up. Now let's wrap this up, going and have some fun, you've dealt with Ebony long enough time to have some fun word associate. This ought to be

Tasha Parker: Oh, so

Don & Ebony: It might be turned around on me.

there we go. I'll give you one word. You give me one word back. It's not wrong because it's your word.

Tasha Parker: okay,

Don & Ebony: Ready to go?

Tasha Parker: Maybe

Don & Ebony: Leader.

Tasha Parker: [00:25:00] Leader. Influence.

Don & Ebony: Success.

Tasha Parker: Individualized.

Don & Ebony: College.

Tasha Parker: Necessary.

Don & Ebony: Excellent. Wasn't K-State. Entrepreneur,

Tasha Parker: Determination.

Don & Ebony: Hero

Tasha Parker: Anybody

Don & Ebony: Fun.

Tasha Parker: where

I'm just playing fun. Laughter.

Don & Ebony: Excellent. Family.

Tasha Parker: My granny.

Don & Ebony: Chamber.

Tasha Parker: of commerce. oh, we gotta be kicked quick. I'm sure of it.

no

remind me

Don & Ebony: of family feud, just to digress a minute. Steve Harvey asked a guy. What comes after pork, and the said you pine.

We're back.

first. I got caught up.

Yeah,

Vacation.

Tasha Parker: Beach.

Don & Ebony: Nice.

Failure.

Tasha Parker: Your mind.

Don & Ebony: A Nice.

Wichita.

Tasha Parker: Home

Don & Ebony: Last but not least. And you've tell truth about this one. Beverage.

Tasha Parker: What beverage?

Don & Ebony: You tell us,

Tasha Parker: Gin.

Don & Ebony: Thank you for thank you for coming through.

Tasha Parker: Thank for having me.

Don & Ebony: you. Yes. And it's always a pleasure. What a wonderful conversation and lively. Thank you for being here.

Tasha Parker: Oh, thanks for having me.

Don & Ebony: Absolutely. Well friends we've come to the end of our segment. make certain that you share this with your friends or someone who may find value in hearing her entrepreneurial story.

It makes our new leave a note for us to let us know who you want to hear from that's till next time.