

Mechelle Degree, Profiled by Influential Women, Says We've Gotten Resilience Wrong

RALEIGH, NC, UNITED STATES, September 16, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The global keynote speaker, executive coach, and Resilience Architect™ is challenging high-achieving women and leaders to stop confusing resilience with endurance.

For years, women have been praised for being resilient.

We push through. Carry the load. Lead the team. Meet the deadline. Take care of everyone else and somehow keep going.

Me'chelle Degree believes we have gotten resilience wrong.

"We've confused resilience with endurance," says Degree. "Resilience isn't about how much you can carry or how long you can keep pushing. Sometimes resilience is having the courage to pause, reassess, and realign."

Degree didn't arrive at that philosophy in a conference room. She arrived at it on a beach in The Gambia, after one of the most difficult seasons of her life.

In January 2020, she was diagnosed with breast cancer. That spring, her father, the man this self-described "daddy's girl" adores, was rushed to the hospital. By September, she had filed for divorce. Five months later, she stepped into a new professional position.

And she kept going.

Because that was what resilience looked like to her.

Until it didn't.



By the summer of 2021, Degree had hit a wall. She was burned out from surviving one life-changing event after another without giving herself space to process any of it.

A trip to The Gambia with friends gave her something she had not allowed herself in a long time: space to simply be.

She noticed how people made time for tea, conversation, rest, and one another. There was no rush to fill every moment. Sitting near the water, listening to the ocean, Degree began to remember what it felt like to be fully present.

She returned three months later.

And on that second trip, sitting quietly on a beach, everything clicked.

“I realized I had been doing this resilience thing all wrong.”

For years, Degree had believed resilience meant getting back up quickly, pushing through and continuing to perform regardless of what life placed in front of her.

But what if resilience wasn't about pushing through?

What if it was about knowing when to pause, reflect, realign, and then move forward differently?

That realization changed not only the way Degree lived, but the way she taught others to lead.

Today, Degree is a global keynote speaker, certified executive coach, and the Resilience Architect™ for women in transition and corporate leaders. As founder of 3rd Degree Solutions, she works with leaders navigating career pivots, burnout, leadership growth, organizational change and reinvention.

Her work has taken her across the United States and around the world, with professional and speaking experiences spanning Africa, Europe, Sweden, Latin America and Canada. She has also been featured across FOX, CBS, NBC, ABC, Yahoo, and other media platforms.

From Endurance to Alignment

Out of Degree's personal and professional experiences grew her signature Resilience Compass Framework™, centered on four anchors: Purpose, Passion, People and Practice.

The framework helps leaders stop long enough to ask whether the direction they are moving still makes sense.

“Sometimes you don’t need to push harder,” Degree says. “You need to check your compass.”

She now brings that philosophy into corporate environments and boardrooms.

As a keynote speaker for the Women of Cisco Carolinas Women of Impact Conference, Degree delivered “Spark the Future: The Resilience Advantage for Women Who Thrive Together,” exploring how women strengthen resilience through connection, community, and collective leadership.

At the Alabama State University Foundation Board Retreat, she facilitated “Resilience Isn’t Endurance: Building Strategic Strength for Sustainable Success,” challenging leaders to rethink resilience through the lens of mindset and leadership philosophy.

Across keynotes, workshops, coaching and board engagements, her message is clear:

You cannot build sustainable success on exhausted people.

For the Woman Who Has Always Been “The Strong One”

Degree has a particular passion for the accomplished woman everyone assumes has it together.

She may be leading teams, managing multimillion-dollar initiatives, caring for her family, mentoring others, and checking every box associated with success.

And quietly wondering, what about me?

Degree understands her because she has been her.

“There comes a point when strength is no longer about proving you can handle everything,” she says. “It becomes having the courage to decide what deserves to be carried into your next chapter.”

Through executive coaching, Degree helps women strengthen emotional resilience, regain clarity and confidently answer a question many successful women eventually face:

Who am I becoming now?

Resilience for What Comes Next

For Degree, resilience has never been a solo pursuit. People is one of the four anchors of her Resilience Compass Framework™ for a reason.

"We were never meant to do life alone," she says. "God created us for connection."

That belief is captured in one of her favorite phrases: "My tribe is my vibe."

The people around us matter. We need those who celebrate our wins, sit with us in hard seasons, tell us the truth, challenge us to grow, and remind us who we are when life gets noisy.

The same is true professionally. Mentors, sponsors, coaches, colleagues and strategic partners can provide perspective and create opportunities we simply cannot create alone.

That is why Degree also says "networking is the new currency." To her, networking isn't about collecting contacts. It is about building authentic relationships before you need them and being willing to both give and receive support.

As AI, workplace transformation, economic uncertainty and constant change reshape how people work and lead, Degree believes resilience will only become more important.

Just not the old version of it.

Not resilience that asks, How much more can I take?

But resilience that asks:

Am I aligned? Who is walking with me? And what needs to change for me to move forward well?

Through her global keynote speaking, executive coaching, corporate workshops, board engagements, and Resilience Compass Framework™, Degree is bringing those questions to women and leaders navigating what comes next.

Me'chelle Degree is reframing resilience for a world that has spent far too long confusing endurance with strength.

Pause. Reflect. Realign.

Because resilience isn't about proving how much you can endure.

It's knowing what grounds you, who walks beside you and when it's time to check your compass and realign.

Learn More about Mechelle Degree:

Through her Influential Women profile, <https://influentialwomen.com/connect/mechelle-degree>

Influential Women

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