

# Feminist Leadership & Accountability

## Hosted by Leila Billing (We Are Feminist Leaders)

What does accountability mean to you?  
What can make practising accountability difficult?  
What does failing to take accountability look like?

These are the questions we explored in our third Feminist Leadership: Eight Weeks of Exploration session with Leila Billing, co-founder of We Are Feminist Leaders.

Key takeaways: accountability can be rooted in care and connection, is about centring the other rather than myself, and is a context-dependent and collective process of co-creation.

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**"There's this intoxicating idea that our leaders have to be perfect (and feminists are held to an even higher standard). But there's no purity in a deeply damaged world. If we acknowledge we're already complicit, accountability can feel much less painful."**

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### Care and connection

Accountability is about addressing harm without causing more harm. Judgement and punishment are exerting power-over, but there is a way to frame accountability positively, in terms of care, connection and improving trust.

### Centring others

When we focus on our intentions rather than the impact, we are centring ourselves rather than the person we've harmed. It also gives the other person no sense of how the situation might improve. Ask them: what changes do you want to see? How can we monitor my progress?

### Context-dependent

Also important: there is no one-size-fits-all feminist approach to accountability, because accountability doesn't take place in a cultural vacuum - it depends on the particular hierarchies in the society where we are situated. Constructing your own practise of accountability will therefore be both an individual and collective process in response to local power relations.

**"A feminist approach to accountability needs to be a proactive, everyday practice."**

### More resources

**Feminist Accountability**  
by Ann Russo  
**Sister Outsider**  
by Audre Lorde  
**INCITE! Network**