

Well-meaning women  
Often give me advice  
On how to smile more  
Speak more softly  
Watch my face, my tone, my dress  
How to get ahead  
How to hide my anger and distrust  
How to be a professional.

But my heroines  
Have always talked shit  
And spoken loudly  
They've made messes and made friends  
They have less titles, less awards, and less degrees  
They have more stories to tell.

I know I should "work on things"  
I know I should "listen more, speak less"  
I know I should "practice self care"  
I know I should "be more positive!"  
I know I should "keep things to myself"  
But I can't help but feel  
Like I will lose who I set out to be

And I wonder  
What our coaching seeks to replicate  
Who we seek to imitate  
What we're trying to moderate  
And why we cannot tolerate  
A woman, yelling, braless, from the back of the room