

# In Her Words: April



## Judith Martinez



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### **“I’m in a season of imaginal goo.”**

*Every woman has a story. But some stories shake rooms, open doors, and redefine what’s possible. In Her Words is SAR’s series spotlighting trailblazing women who lead with courage, shape community with intention, and inspire the next generation through purpose, resilience, and grace.*

For Judith Martinez, this season of life is not defined by clarity, but by becoming.

“I’m in a season of imaginal goo,” she says, referencing the biological process where a caterpillar dissolves before becoming a butterfly. “It feels like a season has ended, but I’m on the brink of something new.”

It is a space that can feel uncertain, even uncomfortable. But rather than rushing to define what comes next, Judith chooses to stay within it. To trust that growth is still happening, even when it is not visible.

That trust has been shaped by both her lived experience and the work she has built over time.

A first generation Filipina American, Judith moves through the world with a deep sense of responsibility to her community. She names herself first as a daughter, a sister, and an aunt, roles that ground her in something larger than herself.

“I was raised by a village,” she reflects. “So everything I do is about giving back to the community that gave to me.”

That commitment has taken form across the spaces she has built and led. As the founder of InHerShoes, a nonprofit dedicated to helping girls and women live more courageously, Judith has created a platform centered on one powerful question. What would you do if you were just one percent more courageous?

In her work as Director of Social Impact at Rare Beauty, she continues that mission on a global scale, contributing to initiatives that center mental health, community, and belonging. Alongside this, her podcast *Imaginal Goo* offers a more intimate extension of that work, creating space for honest conversations around growth, transition, and becoming.

Across each of these spaces, her work invites people to move beyond fear and into possibility.

“I hope people feel warmth,” she says. “I hope they feel seen, heard, and valued. Like they have space to just be.”

There is an intentionality in how she shows up. Whether she is building programs, leading conversations, or simply present with someone, her goal is not just to be seen, but to make others feel seen.

But holding space for others comes with weight.

“Just because I carry it well doesn’t mean it’s not heavy.”

It is a quiet acknowledgment of the roles many women hold. The caretakers. The listeners. The ones who show up, even when it costs them something. For Judith, naming that weight is part of the work too. Learning when to hold, and when to release.

Over time, this awareness has reshaped how she defines success.

“Success means my mind, spirit, and choices are in alignment,” she shares. What once looked like titles and external validation has shifted into something more internal. “When you’re no longer trying to prove your worth, it becomes about fulfillment. About being proud of who you are.”

That same evolution has shaped how she understands empowerment.

“Empowerment is the power of choice,” she says. “It’s agency. It’s knowing you can choose the life you want.”

Not something given, but something accessed. A reminder that even in moments of uncertainty, there is still something we can hold onto.

For women still finding their voice, her message is both grounding and expansive.

“Stay true to yourself. And get to know yourself deeply, intimately, and radically.”

Because the work we do in the world is only as strong as the work we are willing to do within ourselves.

“We need healed leaders,” she adds. “No one can do that work for you.”

When reflecting on her younger self, there is both honesty and hope in what she would share.

“Life will most likely not go the way you expect. But it can be so much better.”

Letting go of control, she has learned, is not about losing direction. It is about creating space for something greater than anything we could have planned.

And when asked what she hopes others take from her story, her answer returns to something simple, yet powerful.

“I want people to feel seen. To feel like they have permission. And to believe they can choose the life they want.”

Because even in transition, even in the unknown, there is one thing we always have.

Choice.

And in that choice, there is hope.

**This is Judith. This is SAR.**

**By Hector Zamora**



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