

Ep 132 Shira Gill Full Episode

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SPEAKERS

Jen Marples, Shira Gill

Shira Gill 00:00

clutter bombards our minds with excessive stimuli. So it's like we already have so much to keep up with in life and so much to process. But when you're surrounded by piles, even just like a few piles in your office, there's literally more for your brain to have to process your brain is working harder in that environment, then in an environment that's clean and clear. So I think you know, in a world where we have so little control over so many things, our environments are a place where we can exhibit control and start to make small tweaks and changes that can help our mental health.

Jen Marples 00:43

Hello, and welcome to the Jen Marple Show. I'm your host Jen Marples, a champion of midlife women and cheerleader for all women dedicated to helping you embrace and rock the second and best half of life. Each week, I'll bring you conversations with incredible women who will inspire us educate us and motivate us to live our very best midlife. I'll also pop on solo to share my best advice, tips and tricks to help you unapologetically go for your dreams, embrace your age, and become unstoppable. If you aren't itching for a change, ready to pivot, or looking for a second act, stick around as this is the show for you. And know this you're not too fucking old. Hello, everyone, and welcome to the Jen Marple show today I've got a gorgeous guest and her name is Shira Gill. She's a globally recognized Home Organizing expert and best selling author, you might have heard of her first book minimalist, because that's kind of how I think of Cher is a minimalist stuff. But she is now in the process of launching her second book and you're actually writing your third book as you're launching your second book, Sherry is going to be dropping some bombs for us today guys, we are going to learn about how less is more. And how actually having a clutter free life and environment really impacts our mental health. I'm going to let her talk all about that. Without further ado, share Welcome to the show, I cannot wait to dig in with you. And as we were talking about before we hopped on to record just having shear on made me look at some of the piles I have in each corner of my office and made me think about my my crowded closet. So this is gonna be some therapy for all of us today. And we're gonna have action items when we leave. But let's let Sherif explain all that and how we're going to live our best clutter free minimalist lives. But all that's your welcome to the show. I'm so excited to have you here today. Whoo, let's go.

Shira Gill 02:41

Thank you so much. I'm thrilled to be here and love everything you do. So very happy to be on the podcast. So before we dive

Jen Marples 02:49

into your books, and what you do currently to help us all live a wonderful minimalist life. Give us your story, because I know you have a fun entrepreneurial journey. So she is like one of us. She's an entrepreneur, she's a mom, she's doing it all. So tell us your whole story. Because we love getting into the nitty gritty to figure out and find out I should say where you've been and how you got to where you are

Shira Gill 03:14

today. Yes, my story begins when I was laid off when I was eight months pregnant. I had a full time job as an event planner, I was somewhat miserable in this job. My thought had been I'm going to birth this child and then maybe some epiphany will come of what my new career will be. But as fate would have it I got laid off in a big wave of company layoffs at eight months pregnant. And so I kind of found myself at this crossroads of feeling like I knew I was ready to be done with event planning. It was not feeding my soul. I had previously to that been an actor for 20 years. And I had let that career go. I know I said, Jim, you're going to have some surprises today. Really, I was a basket case. To be perfectly honest, I did not know what to do. When we started crunching the math around child care for this new baby. We were having an a month living in the San Francisco Bay Area as I know you do as well, eating cheap. And so we started thinking about what I could do to make enough money to both pay for childcare and then some. And my background in event planning had not been super lucrative. My husband at the time was working for a nonprofit. Really, it was this thing where I think I had listened to some business podcast ones and what had resonated was that a successful business solves a problem that other people want to pay money to solve. And so I just started thinking like, Okay, if I want to be home with my child Monday through Friday and not pay for childcare, and I could do something on the weekends to make money, what could I do? And in speaking with a bunch of my girlfriends, there was sort of this huge cut The Census of you know how you always helped me, cut the clutter, clean out my closet, organize my desk, I think you could do that for money. To be honest, you know, this was pre Marie Kondo Free Home Organizing kind of taking over in the zeitgeist, nobody knew that this was a career. So I was really skeptical, but I just had nothing to lose. I cobbled together a website, I literally put out an email announcement to everyone I had ever met, including my dentist, saying, I am launching a home organizing and decluttering business in the Bay Area. If you or anyone you know, need help, or support decluttering your home or life, I'm your girl. And of course, I was breastfeeding a new baby at the time. So I realized I could only leave my house for three hour increments. So I structured my business around that. And really all that I had to offer was, I can do a half day session in your home, tackling clutter and organization. It just kind of started slowly taking off with referrals and word of mouth. And then I was, you know, shared in a handful of local moms groups and school auctions and things like that. And it really was something that I thought would be kind of a stop gap, you know, not even a career with a capital C, but something that I could do to cobble together money until I figured out my real career. And what ended up happening was within months, I was full, you know, my weekends were booked out three to six months in advance, I couldn't keep up with the demand. Every person that I talked to, was overwhelmed by flutter. And I realized in our kind of fast paced high stimulation, high

consumer society, this was not a little niche thing. This was something that really everyone I met needed help with. And so it just kind of took off from there. So that's like the origin story.

Jen Marples 07:03

Oh, I love it. And what was that quote? Because I think that's so powerful to just restate that of figuring out something that you'd like to do that. So what was that thing? You said? Yeah, it was

Shira Gill 07:13

something to the effect of like a successful business is one that identifies a problem that you can find a solution to that people are willing to pay money to solve. And that's the key part is when I was thinking about different businesses I could do, I came up with a handful of things that nobody really wanted to pay me for. And so I kind of kept going and iterating until it was like, oh, clutter is such an oppressive force in people's lives. And disorganization has such a cost, that this is something people really feel the pain point and want to invest in solving.

Jen Marples 07:48

I love that so much. So it's like, you know, starting a business based on a need. And this show was started really talking to midlife female entrepreneurs. And I love that you with the baby, I've got this many hours a day, on a hunch, figured it out. So you started going doing it became really you know, popular, successful. So how did then you get into being a published author? And I know you have a really big following. So there are a lot of people that look to you for solutions. So how did you sort of go from breastfeeding mom to now you've got this organization, mini empire that you're building because you're working on your third book, and I love it. I mean, I love this whole story was how did you kind of make that transition to go to that next level?

Shira Gill 08:33

I'll be really like none of my business has been by design, which is funny because I teach about like, mindfulness and intentionality. And I do feel like I'm very intentional. But it was kind of like one thing just kept leading to the next thing. You know, I started off running this very tiny local business. I got pregnant with my second daughter had her kept this very small and part time. Then once my kids were both in school, and we had worked out the childcare thing, and I had more time, I was booked with a waitlist seeing clients five, sometimes six days a week and I was getting burnt out. And my back was hurting. I started feeling like God this is not really sustainable for a woman getting older and moving into mid and late later life. I was hauling people stuff all around town like a Sherpa, you know, and so I started thinking, because at this point, I loved this career that I had kind of fallen into so much. I didn't want to leave it but I literally like felt like back when I was waiting tables as an actor and you know, you go home and you feel like you've been hit by a truck. I was feeling like achy all over my body and was just thinking like how can I do this but in a way that is less taxing on my body. Initially, I developed a suite of online programs to teach you know to others online, what I was doing and my philosophy and my tool Okay, and that started taking off. And then I started writing articles for different magazines. And I loved that, but it didn't pay at all. And then I was approached by a publisher who said, If you were to write a book, what would it be? And I think writing a book had always been on my bucket list. But I didn't really have a structure in place, or a specific dream of what that exact book was. But somehow, somebody's asking me and saying, we could do this, what would it be? What would it look like? What

do you have to say that's different from a Marie Kondo or a home edit? Just having that question posed? How are you different? What do you have to say, helped me crystallize how I am different, I'm a certified life coach. I'm a minimalist, I love style, I am a minimalist, who loves pretty things. I'm big into sustainability. And so I just started kind of pulling out all of these differentiating factors and ended up writing a book proposal, which ended up selling and becoming minimalist. I really imagined I'll write a book and then be done. And then like, on to the next thing, but I enjoyed the process of writing the book so much, it actually surprised me, because most people say, you know, writing a book is like death. And I found God, I love this. I love the creative process. You know, I worked with a big publisher. And so I had a team of creatives and a graphic designer and an art director, and, you know, multiple editors. And I had felt so isolated as a solo entrepreneur that I just leaned into that process and loved it. And so as I was wrapping up Minam, Elista, on a walk by myself, I had this funny little idea that, you know, I tell everyone now, like, follow those little sparks, because I almost threw this idea out, because it seems kind of silly. But my idea was, you know, gosh, I'm connected to this really funny, like niche community of professional organizers. And I have a lot of friends who were professional organizers. So I go to their house, and I rummage around and I nosy. And I look under their kitchen sink. And I asked how they organize their medicine cabinet. And I just had this spark of an idea. What if I could travel around the world with a photographer and interview the most organized professionals in the world, and share their wisdom and their systems and their hacks and their tips for how other people can be organized at home. So instead of just me and my philosophy, we're now getting 25 different people from different cultures, different house sizes, different types of family. And so I came home from that walk, and I just told my agent, kind of thinking that she would be like, settled down, you know, like, that's not a thing. And in fact, she said, I think that's brilliant, I think we should pitch it, write it up. And we sold it before minimalist even came out. Amazing. I really can't emphasize enough how close I was to throwing out that idea because it seemed kind of far fetched. And like, Who's going to pay me to travel around the world with a photographer, interviewing home organizers. So I just like share this story for anyone who's had, you know, a little idea that they kind of haven't followed through on to just say like, you just never know.

Jen Marples 13:29

Oh, you don't. And so I'm so glad you brought that up, because we have a really good way of talking ourselves out of almost everything. Yes, I love that you immediately went and told your agent, because somebody else had mentioned to I can't remember which guest it was that said basically. And this is the power of just talking things out. Because you keep things inside. That's where great ideas just die. But if you speak it out, you can speak it into being. And you were lucky in that maybe that was even if it wasn't that exact idea, maybe then it would have been some iteration of that you would have never known unless you said you know, I'm just gonna go ahead and say this to her and like, see what she said. Yeah, I love this. So let me ask you this, because I didn't know you're also a life coach. But it feels like that goes hand in hand with decluttering because you're probably maybe you even need a psychology degree or something. Because I'm sure there's so much psychology wrapped into why we all have clutter. So why do we all have so much clutter? Sheriff? Why?

Shira Gill 14:32

Why? There's no simple answer, but I want to blame our consumerist culture. You know, first and foremost, I just think we are bombarded with messages that we need more to be happy. I think it's

infused in everything and it's hard to resist because marketers are really good at their jobs. And there's lots of cute stuff out there to buy and the promise of buying something to feel better and get that dopamine hit is real. I felt Ready to that all the time, I'm a little down or a little lonely, I get to buy myself a new purse, right? And then you feel good for three seconds. And then you have credit card debt and maybe a purse you didn't need and more stuff to organize. So I do think there's pressure coming at us all the time, from every direction, like even my own mother, when I got pregnant was like, you have to get this and you have to get that and you know, my friends. And really, I had to kind of slow down and think, Well, what do what does a baby really need? Do I have to fill my home with 9 billion toys and all of the latest gear? Or do babies just need diapers and food and some clothes? You know? So I think it's much harder to slow down in question than it is to just like go with the energy that's all around us. Bye bye, bye more, more more. I think what I've seen in my work a lot is especially for midlife women, filling a void of emptiness or loneliness or feeling lost with consumerism, buying things, doing things that really aren't going to fill that hole, ultimately, but it's so so so common. And I think it's almost similar to overeating or over drinking, I think over consuming comes from that same place of buffering or wanting to numb out a deeper pain. You know, it was six years into my career as an organizer that I decided I've got to go get certified as a life coach and get a bigger toolkit to be able to deal with the guilt and the shame and the loneliness, and all of these things that are so human and normal to feel. Because I can tell you, almost every client I've ever worked with has burst into tears at some point during a decluttering session or an organizing session that goes so much deeper than this stuff.

Jen Marples 16:54

I'm so glad you mentioned all that, because you're just reminding me when I went through coaching training, it was at the very beginning. And we had to just do some, you know, test coaching, I was very new into it. I was still going through the training, and someone who recommended a friend of a friend and I remember chatting with this woman. And she was standing in a room filled with like 40 boxes. And it was a real interesting exercise to go through because it's not about like you're saying it's not about the stuff. It's like what it represented what she needed to let go of. And she was transitioning into a new phase of life and it was very layered. And it was very sensitive, very raw for her. Yeah, I never want to like to use your term minimize. You know what all of that represents. And I used to joke with my mom, I call her a hoarder just joking. She's not a hoarder. And Mom, if you're listening, sorry, we just because she has like little things in her car. And then she's the one who's got the buckets filled with photos and all these things. And I realized like to go through that stuff. It is an emotional thing to kind of go through all the pieces, especially when it involves children. And then there's this and that and the other. So I know we're gonna get into that in a minute. But before I ask you sort of one of my big questions. Your whole philosophy is when we live with less we create the possibility for more, what does that mean?

Shira Gill 18:16

We need to have breathing room in our homes and our lives to be able to imagine new outcomes and possibilities. I think if we're surrounded with stuff, and we're constantly putting our energy and attention into managing stuff, and that means buying, returning, cleaning, organizing all of the things that go with stuff. There's not a lot of breathing room, to daydream, or to just even think clearly. And I think you know what I've seen as I've pared down more and more as I've gotten older, I've become actually more and more inclined to pare down. What I've experienced firsthand in my life is that owning less stuff

translates directly into more money, more financial freedom, more time of what resources is limited as time but to have less to clean and maintain and organize and deal with, we get to recover some extra time and spaciousness which I think people are so hungry for people are literally starving for time. In this kind of fast pace. Go go go like overstimulated society, especially I see now, you know, with tech taking over so much like, I feel it all the time, the notifications and the email alerts and the nonstop news feed that there is this sense of like, Oh, I just want to breathe. I just want to hear my own thoughts. And for me, my mind is so busy, that if my environment also feels busy. I just can't think straight and so it's almost a way of kind of like by cleansing the area around me Having less to process mentally, it creates so much more freedom to dream and think and be creative and be productive.

Jen Marples 20:09

Did you incorporate like Fung Shui and like energetics into all of it because that's where I'm curious to know because I know a lot a big Fung Shui expert by any means. But I did have a functionally expert come into not the house I'm in now but before because I felt like something was off. And there was weird stuff happening. But interesting, just about like energy blocks, and just having filling your space with everything. So I definitely feel that when I've cleaned out and taken things out of corners, even organized drawers that you don't see. But I feel like just knowing there's crap in a drawer, like that's gonna mean something to right, like you can't just shove it all the way or close a closet door.

Shira Gill 20:45

Right. And I think it's so common for people to be like, I'll deal with it later. And then they have like the depression piles and the closet full of doom. But I do think that just turns into a like layer of mental clutter. Because you know, it's unfinished business, it's something that you have to eventually deal with, that you haven't dealt with. So which is a form of emotional clutter. I think in terms of I'm certainly not a Feng Shui expert, or an energy expert, but I've always been super sensitive to my environment. Even as a little kid, I remember when my parents divorced when I was little, one of the ways that I kind of soothe myself was like rearranging my room and making it feel good. And it was more about just being intuitive about how am I space can feel good. And I think that's different for everyone. But when I work with a client, it's really around starting with, what do you want your life to be like and to look like and to feel like and how can we get your space to support you in that and to help instead of to hinder. Most people I talk to say, My Space stresses me out, my space is taking up energy, my space is like, you know, not in good enough shape where I can invite people over even you know, even the most highly functioning people that I work with are saying like I don't host playdates because I have shame around having too much crap in my living room. And so I think it can be so limiting. And I think the idea is to really start with, what do you want in your life? And how can your environment create that?

Jen Marples 22:26

Oh, I love that you're making me think of. And I know you're not like a psychologist. But I feel like there's a correlation between clutter and mental health. And just senses like of being calm. And it's one thing that we can control that I can speak for myself of just having gone through, I like to have a clean desk. And there are the days where you're like you leave your desk and there's like 30 Lacroix's and this snacks. I'm sitting there all day, and then I run to like help the kids make dinner and then it's homework, and then it's and then all the sudden and like, I didn't do that thing that I like to do, which is to kind of tidy up. Yeah, and then I come in in the morning and and immediately gives me distress, I

immediately feel out of control. And that I don't know what I have to do for that day. Or I feel just overwhelmed by the stickies and the notes and everything that's all over the place. Like I've been known to like walk away, it's almost like you kind of want to walk away. And I feel like people probably just do that on a grander scale. When it's not even the office. It can just be the house. It's the garage. It's the whole the kitchen.

Shira Gill 23:24

Yes. Yeah. I mean, research has shown that a cluttered space can lead to anxiety and depression, especially for women, that scale is really tip towards women. And what I've seen in my work is cluttered bombards our minds with excessive stimuli. So it's like we already have so much to keep up with in life and so much to process. But when you're surrounded by piles, even just like a few piles in your office, there's literally more for your brain to have to process your brain is working harder in that environment than in an environment that's clean and clear. So I think, you know, in a world where we have so little control over so many things, our environments are a place where we can exhibit control and start to make small tweaks and changes that can help our mental health.

Jen Marples 24:12

Oh, I love that. And it's the only thing I can think of I remember when my kids were little and so I had three in diapers when we lived in the city, and a flat on the third floor was 1700 square feet. So every little spot of space like meant everything. And everyone listening when you had little kids you can remember this and you can sense that room of just all the plastic toys all that shit you were talking about before. I would be shaking up just being so tired but I had to clean it all up. Right? I could not go to bed. Yeah, with that chaos because everything was total fucking chaos. Those kids were young that I remember my husband saying like why are you doing the dishes and putting things away? So it was that control? I think it goes exactly to your point because they said this is the one thing I can control I can control Well, my kids get get can control much. But I knew then especially in that small space, that all that had to be tidied, it was all going to get destroyed within five minutes when they all woke up in the morning. But it gave me that that peace of mind. So let me ask you this. So for the women out there, because now you're sparking, like everyone's thinking, Oh, my God, they're all looking around at their piles. They're thinking, I'm thinking, I'm like, Oh, my God, my closet, my this my car, all of it. Yeah. So it's not overwhelming. What are the top like, say three to five pieces of advice you would give to all of us to help us declutter and give us peace and give us that Zen and give us a feeling of sort of control? In this world for full of chaos?

Shira Gill 25:43

Yeah. I love that question. So I would say, you know, my number one step, no matter what I'm doing, what project what client is just to clarify, what do you want to create more space for? So before you roll up your sleeves and hit the piles? Just answer that question, write it down? What do you want to create space for? So that you have a motivational why I can give a quick example. For me it was I love travel. And when I got married and had kids, I had this big fear that I won't be able to travel. And so I wanted to always be able to rent my house out to fund travel, literally, I would get stuck on an object. And I would be like, Well, would you rather get rid of this object or, you know, maybe you want to go to Paris. And so it was like worth it to let go of the thing, because I had such a compelling reason of why I was creating that space. So number one, just get that clarity of what do you want more of in your life. And also, what

do you want less of in your life, maybe it's like less cleaning, less nagging. If you own less stuff, you can have less of all of that. Then in terms of the like actionable practical stuff, I think the biggest mistake that I see is people trying to do it all at once and to bite off more than they can chew. You cannot go from zero to 100. And start by trying to tackle your entire home, it's not practical. So I always tell people pick one space, and then within that space, a micro space. So maybe you decide I want to tackle our entryway. And today, all I'm going to do is edit the coats. That's it one tiny micro project. And what I find is by doing it that way, you immediately get a sense of accomplishment. I did a thing. I started decluttering I see results. Now there are less coats in my entryway, it feels a little bit lighter. You can do that with one drawer at a time, one surface at a time. I like to personally stay in one room until it's done and just knock it out one micro project at a time. So I developed a thing called the 15 minute when super simple, pick an area, set a timer for 15 minutes, declutter, put things back nicely, the end and then you go about your day. If you just do one of those a day, you will start to see your whole home transform. The other thing I would say so it's basically like step one, clarify your vision. Step two, pick a space and break it into itty bitty tiny micro spaces and just check one off a day. And I also would say what I see in a lot of homes is just not batching. like with like. So if you feel like you lose things, or it's hard for you to find your keys when you're racing out the door, just start paying attention to do the things that you use all the time have a designated home and if not create one that can be as simple as putting a little dish in your entry and saying this is where the keys go, or a hook in your entry. This is where the dog leash that always gets thrown around the house goes. So finding those really simple systems I think, can be a game changer. And I think people really overcomplicate organization, it doesn't have to be color coded. It doesn't have to be alphabetize. You want to make it as easy for yourself to succeed as possible.

Jen Marples 29:18

I love all those. It's funny. When you think of organization, too, you probably think of I have this immediate thought of like Tupperware bins or the glass jars with key Nhuan like beans and this and then you think we've all seen those Instagrams or things magazine, you're like, oh my god, like how do you even tackle it? Do I order 8000 like glass jars from Amazon. And here's one question that popped up though. Say you want to do this, but your main person, maybe your primary partner and the main people in your house aren't on board. Yet. How do you navigate that? Because I will say that I'm more apt to throw crap away like I'm not sentimental about saving like I'll take a picture Have a love note or something while you're throwing that away and like it's just more shifts in the house. I did this with the kids art projects. Everyone can relate to that three kids over a long time, a lot of art projects. So how do you get rid of stuff without like causing trauma and drama with your people?

Shira Gill 30:14

That is the number one question that I get. And I think what people really want is for me to come up with a way of changing other people, which I wish I could, what I will say, and I live with someone who is not naturally, you know, my husband is not naturally tidy or organized. We have very different values around that. So let's say you're the person who craves order and tidiness and cleanliness, you've got to be in the driver's seat of that. And you have to start with your own stuff first, and not touch anybody else's stuff. Until you have literally edited and organized, every single thing that you personally own. So that would be tackling all of your clothes, all of your photos from childhood, your sentimental stuff, anything that you came to the relationship with, edit and organize and style, all of that first, before you

even broach the conversation. Sometimes there is kind of a lovely like, absorption that happens if people just witnessing, without the nagging without the cajoling like, oh, things are looking a little nicer around here. Or like Jen seems like she's really created something beautiful in that corner. So always start with you. And then it has to be a values based conversation, I think, where I got my husband more on board was talking about how do we want our house to function, what do we want to do in our home, and we both love hosting and entertaining. So it was like, Okay, if we want to host and entertain and kind of have an open door policy, our house can't be a wreck. So that's something he can get on board with. I'm always in the driver's seat of being the one to like, buy the bins and the baskets and say this is where the mail goes. And then I asked my husband and kids to just respect the system. But I can't ask them to create the system because they could care less. So I think it's like letting go of that dream of other people wanting exactly what you want. And seeing if you can find a common ground, I will also say I run a tight ship in our home. But during the pandemic, when we were all on top of each other, you know, my husband was like, I feel like I don't have anywhere where I can be messy. And we literally built a little shed in our back yard that is like five feet by 11 feet that now it's his workspace, he can dump whatever he wants, he can keep it I will never go in there or touch it. So if you have opportunities to have like a clean zone and a messy zone or a minimalist zone and a maximalist zone, that can also help because it's never you're never going to be perfectly aligned.

Jen Marples 32:57

Well, I love that my husband always likes to joke when I get into a thing. And you've already talked us out of that when you get into kind of a frenzy of cleaning. And I know I do that. Everything Must Go like we were moving. We first got married 100 years ago, and then we were moving to Asia. And then I think I was having a psychological sort of break about that. So there was a lot of layers in there. I just started purging, I threw away new handbags. Like he's like, remember that time you throw away like wedding gifts, like I was purging to the point of I don't know, I probably needed to shrink the time and I was just so it's become the big joke when I'm like, I'm gonna clean he's like, remember that time you throw away all your new handbags? Like throw them out, like in front of like the house and the tree and like, like brand new. Like, okay, well, I was having like a thing that I liked that idea of sort of modeling it because I have seen that before when I've done that my closet edits to like the girls would be like, okay, Mom, we want to purge this weekend. So that's my term. So we'll go through all the old clothes and then we can put stuff new and they will say to them, nothing new is coming in. So we get things out. Yes, but I love all these tips. Because you know, all the women listening like everyone's in midlife, everyone's got 1000 things going on. Any way and any tips, tools and hacks that we can feel calm or cool collected and free up that space and especially women with businesses. Just as you were talking about clearing up the space, I could actually feel myself thinking broader and bigger and brighter, because you're not weighed down by all this stuff. This question just popped up. I know this all goes to like that societal stuff of what you know, we're supposed to be more and more like you mentioned and acquiring and Biggers better and I remember walking into a home. It was this crazy huge house it was like some parent and parents on the soccer team clearly they're they're doing really well. They're very wealthy. We're like a 12,000 square foot house. All I could think of was God that so much space and filling up that space and all the stuff that's in that's Bass and just sort of that minimalist thing of that it felt completely overwhelming to me to actually think about that. So I'm sure you encountered this all the time. And I'm curious, do people downsize after they work with you because I'm feeling this need to my kids will be completely out within three years. Like, we don't need a big house. Like I want to go

streamline minimalist, like turnkey, rent this thing out. So we can travel, like I want to do that kind of thing. Because I think our parents are all most of our parents are all in the same house. And let's talk about all the crap they have my parents have a storage unit for all their extra crap. I'm sure your clients do too much. You know, that's a whole other thing, right?

Shira Gill 35:39

Yeah, that's like my dirty word. I'm like, don't say the storage word. Yes, one thing I want to recognize is, the bigger the house you have, the harder it is to edit. Because I work with a lot of high net worth individuals that have massive houses and sometimes multiple properties. And when you don't have the constraint of the physical space, limiting how much you can keep, you have to really decide you want to make a choice to live with less, even though you have plenty of room to store as much as possible. So I think, yes, I have definitely had people work with me and decide they want to downsize, or they want to rent their house and you know, monetize that way and travel the way that I have done. I've seen a lot of people that just almost feel like physically ill with how much they own. A lot of shame and grief around people feeling like how did things get? So off the rails? How did I get here, and I think our stuff has become more suffocating really than liberating. And likewise with the huge home where the multiple properties why? Well, that can sound glamorous, I can tell you the reality for the people that I've worked with many, many, many people is, I feel like I'm suffocating. I don't want all of this responsibility. And so I have one woman in my upcoming book, who went from, I think, 5000 square feet to 3000 to an Airstream trailer, and went from literally 300 pairs of shoes to every thing. And her entire wardrobe can fit in like two bins in a little cubby. And she's living her best life, her and her husband are now retired, they travel, they drive all around the country. They don't have to pay bills, they don't have to like they have just completely liberated themselves by owning less. And that's an extreme example. But I see it in all different shades of you know, people just deciding on purpose. I don't want to be weighed down in this way anymore. So sometimes there's kind of a trial of just like living in your space with less stuff and feeling how that feels. And then I think the bigger jump is I want to downsize purposefully. Even if I don't need to financially, I want to, I want to live simpler, I want to live with less.

Jen Marples 38:02

I'm gonna assume and I'm one I'll ask you, but I'm assuming you probably see this a lot with we call him Freebirds here on the genmark. This shows that Freebirds. Because you don't need that space anymore, and the kids are coming and going. And certainly when the kids get older, they're not going to be there. So you don't need to be a hotel for the rest of your life for your children. Because that also can, I'm thinking that can also add just a lot of weight and pressure. And then you can't go do a lot of these other things you want to do because you're maintaining maybe a bigger home. So I'm you probably see a lot of people downsizing for that reason, or do.

Shira Gill 38:37

I definitely do. You know, I'm actually working with a number of people right now who are Freebirds. And their kids are off and have established their own identities and homes. And they realize a there's this association of this is the home where we raise kids but wanting to step into a new chapter and a new season of life. Sometimes it can feel really fun and freeing to actually start from scratch, whether by yourself or with a partner, like a reinvention project of how do we want to live now? How do we want this new phase of life to look? Do we want to go be in an apartment in New York? Do we want to go

travel around the world, but I think I am seeing a real movement around downsizing and selling or renting out that big family home in favor of something that just feels like it represents a new phase of life, whatever that may look like.

Jen Marples 39:33

Whew, that's exciting. And that really ties into you know, being in this midlife phase of just kind of questioning everything we question you know how we've lived our lives. We question like the careers and we're at this midlife inflection point. And I just had this conversation with my husband because you know, we're on this cusp. You know, we've got three more years and then we don't have kids living in our house full time. And then that opens up for so many of us so much possibility and people We're working remote. So I'm like, Honey, do you want to still be doing the thing you're doing? Like, we can navigate. I love this designing this next thing. It's like almost like we get to be in our 20s. Again, you know, and it just sounds so exciting to me versus like what our parents do, just because that's probably what our grandparents did. Everyone just kind of stayed. And I love that idea of thinking crazy. Like, you could live in the Airstream trailer, you could live in New York, you can live in two different tiny places, you can have a little tiny place and go rent Airbnbs around the world and work I mean, I that's the kind of stuff that I think we need to really lean into all that fun possibility. But we can't do that. If we got tons of stuff, weighing us down the cars and the houses and this 20 surfboards and bikes and this and that and storage units and all that. So limiting. So I love that this all bubbled up, I need to know this was going to come out of this conversation, because I just think it's like one more thing that's exciting about being in this midlife phase.

Shira Gill 40:57

Yeah, I think it's really juicy to think about. And I think it is it can be hugely motivating to think about that next phase. And I love how you said it's like we get to redo our 20s Again, that feeling of like reinvention, and where do I want to go? What do I want to do? What do I want my place to be? Like? There is so much possibility and I do think our homes can set us up for that juicy life we want to lead.

Jen Marples 41:22

This has been such an amazing conversation, I guess. Like I'm trying to think about my micro spots that I'm going to be tackling after this. Yes, do the purse, I'll do the purse and my purses aren't that bad that it's one of those things that drive me crazy. You'll never see the receipts and gum wrappers and rag bags like that just gives me hives that I want as I'm you guys as I'm looking at sure I keep turning to the right because there's a pile of like magazines that are taunting me and some notebooks that I have to get rid of. And there's a drawer it's kind of like that crap drawer. It probably has the taxes in it like the tax files from like four years ago. Like

Shira Gill 41:58

why are they here? Yeah, 15 minute when

Jen Marples 42:01

15 I'm gonna go for my 15 minute when? Yes, so I'm gonna switch it up a little bit and ask you a couple of final questions before I actually go. But I could have you here forever. What do you wish for women in midlife?

Shira Gill 42:13

I feel like society tells us the story that men increase in value as they age and women kind of become expendable or disappear. I know that's horrific. But that's at least what I grew up kind of feeling surrounded by. And I remember my mom saying how invisible she started feeling as she got older and that she just felt ignored. So I would say what I wish is the opposite of that. I wish for women to be hugely visible and celebrated. And I think we should be and we have every right to be. But I think it's a big shift for society to get there. So that's that's my dream.

Jen Marples 42:56

And we'll get there. We'll get there. Yeah. What do you think the best thing is about being in midlife,

Shira Gill 43:03

I feel much more confident as I get older. And I think that was surprising to me to just feel and I know I've listened to your podcast. So I know this is like a reoccurring theme of just feeling like more comfortable in your own skin, able to own who you are and what you like and what you don't like. And kind of no excuse living leaning into a more authentic life feels much more available to me, the older that I get.

Jen Marples 43:29

Oh, I love that. And of course, the whole home conversation that we just had about that. I think that just marries into that. Who are you? What do you want to be doing life on your terms? Not because you need to impress the Joneses or because it's something the way that it's always been done? Yes, it's a great time to like, ask those questions and ask yourself what you want. I love it. Love it. Love it. All right, I want you to finish the sentence. I'm not too fucking old to

Shira Gill 43:56

this is such a silly one. But **I'm not too fucking old to order from the kids menu.** And I am a person who loves mac and cheese. I always want the kids menu. And I'm at that point in life where I'm just like, if I want a chicken tender, I'm just going to ask so that is what I would say I freaking

Jen Marples 44:15

love that as long as it let you order from that goddamn man, you know, like you have to be 12

Shira Gill 44:21

That's the great thing about getting older is that I just don't care anymore. And I'll be like, it's okay. I just really want it and I get it. I would never have done that when I was 20 or 30.

Jen Marples 44:31

Yeah, because we're worried about what people think so don't care in order the damn chicken nuggets. Okay, so where can we order the book because I know you're on preorder now. So tell us all the things about the book where we can find you support you follow you and get all your great advice.

Shira Gill 44:46

Yay. So yes, I have two books minimal Lisa is out and available wherever books are sold so you can get from your local indie shop Amazon, Barnes and Noble what have you and ditto for my brand new book organized live Seeing the pub date is October 3, but you can either order or pre order literally wherever books are sold. And you can find me online on my website is just my name sher@gmail.com and actually regale on Instagram you can share your 15 Minute wins with me. And I even have a whole highlight sharing 15 minute wins from women all over the world. If you want to get inspired and see other people cleaning out their junk drawer or refrigerator.

Jen Marples 45:27

Oh my god, I love it. And you're gonna want to follow her on Instagram because it's like daily inspiration will just like make you perk up a little bit. You're like, Okay, what do I need to do like everything. So Chris playing in Oregon Nice. So I'm gonna link all that in the show notes so you guys can find her follow her order the book and all that kind of good stuff. But sure, I could talk to you for hours. Likewise, if you're all listening and looking around your house like I am, we've got work to do. But thankfully, we don't have to do it all at once. We know how to do it in bite sized little chunks so we can have those little wins and I just love I love anything that's like a little win. And that sets you up to have that next little win. Right so

Shira Gill 46:06

yeah, great. Well, thank you so much for having me.

Jen Marples 46:09

It has been such a joy and hope I get to see you soon.