

Ep 184 Shelley Paxton

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SPEAKERS

Shelley Paxton, Jen Marples

Jen Marples 00:10

Jen, hello and welcome to the Jenn Marples Show. I'm your host. Jenn Marples, founder of the Jen Marples agency, mentored to women worldwide and your number one champion and cheerleader dedicated to helping you embrace and rock midlife. The Jenn Marple show has one goal, to empower you so you can go out empower the world. So each week, I'll bring you conversations with incredible women who will inspire us, educate us and motivate us to live our best lives. I also pop on solo to share my best advice, tips and tools to help you unapologetically go for your midlife dreams, embrace your age and become unstoppable. If you are looking for a change, ready to up level your life in business or pivot into something new, then this is the show for you. And know this, you're not too fucking old to step into the midlife spotlight and claim all that you desire. It's your time to shine, and I am so glad you're here. Hello everyone, and welcome to the Jenn Marples show today. I have a most beautiful and fabulous guest, and her name is Shelly Paxton, and I have been fangirling her for a few years, and she is a friend of a friend of this podcast, Bronwyn, sadly, Benny. She's just queen bee to us here on the podcast. And so Shelly was on Bronwyn podcast. I was kept saying, Oh, hell yeah. Oh, my God, oh, good lord, listening to that podcast. I said, Bronwyn, you need to introduce me to Shelly stat, because I need her on, and you all need to listen to this Queen's magic. Shelly, welcome to the show. I'm so glad to have you here today.

Shelley Paxton 01:47

Oh, Jen, finally, we're doing it. Thank you for inviting me on. I am also a fan, and this needs to happen. It

Jen Marples 01:57

is happening, and I'm gonna read you guys a little bio about Shelly, but we're going to get into all the things, and it's going to be fiery. Her color is orange. My color is pink. We are what would that be merged? Are we purple, or is it brown? Like, what would we be if we merged? I don't even know. I

Shelley Paxton 02:13

feel like we would be some really wild magenta situation.

Jen Marples 02:17

Don't you think maybe that's what it would be if our brand sort of collided, like on the like the color palette, and we just sort of merged and seeped together. But if you're not watching this on YouTube, Shelly is wearing a fabulous vintage creamy chocolate blazer with this amazing necklace. I'm dying over it. But without further ado, Shelly Paxton is a queen. She's a chief soul officer. Hello. How amazing is that she's a best selling author, and she's a former CMO of a little company you might have heard of called Harley Davidson. When you think of shell, you think of Brene Brown meets biker babe with a dash of Liz Gilbert. And when she was the CMO at Harley Davidson, she found herself feeling success empty instead of success full. I know a lot of you can relate to that. I certainly can, and that awakening led her on a profound journey that became her mission business and a Simon and Schuster Hello, best selling book called Soul batical, a corporate rebels guide to finding your best life. And today, she's helping leaders redefine success in ways that celebrate humanity, well being and soul. She has been all over the news. She has spoke on TEDx stages, and she is an overall badass. And I'm so happy to have you here today, and we're going to talk about all the things, and it's funny for this podcast, we decided not to do like superstructure, and I don't really do superstructure, but I just know we're going to have this organic, amazing conversation, and so many gifts and so many blessings are going to come out of this that I just can't wait. So let's get into it. Shelley, tell us all the things. How did one become a soul rebel? Write a book called Soul batical. Tell us how it all happened.

Shelley Paxton 04:00

First of all, thank you for the beautiful intro. And as these things happen, and I know your listeners can appreciate this. At some point when we aren't living our truth and our lives, our success, scripts are not in full alignment with who we are, we get the cosmic kick in the ass, and sometimes we get multiple cosmic kicks in the ass, which I did my final one was when I had this like you described this dream job. So as a marketer, is there any greater role than to be stewarding an iconic brand that people love so much they tattoo it on their bodies. Probably not for me, it was a real honor. It was incredible. I was in, you know, rarefied era. I was one of a very few number of women in the senior most ranks of the company. I was in pinch me moments riding motorcycles around. Around the world for a living, and that made what happened to me even more dramatic. And my final year, from the outside looking in, people were like, you know, oh my God, you've got all you dress in your skinny jeans and your hot leather jacket and your boots, and you stomp into a boardroom and you ride motorcycles around the world, and yeah, from the outside, it looked super, super sexy. And on the inside, I started having a nightmare. I was waking up like every single night, 2am the same nightmare was waking me up to my truth. I was tortured, honestly and terrified. I know many of us have health wake up calls or the tragic loss of a loved one, or the diagnosis, or we lose our jobs, and often, you know, we might even lose a job we didn't like in the first place, but we've lost the comfort and security of what we know. And so I found myself in this place thinking I've ticked all of the boxes. I've done everything that my dad's success script said to do. I have climbed the corporate ladder. I have gotten the accolades. I am making, the good money I have the title. I am working for sexy brands. So how can I possibly feel on the inside like I'm totally empty? And so this nightmare that I started having was the first in sort of the truly, really wake up call to say, Shelly, yes, you've got all these amazing things. But is this your truth? Is this connected with who you are at your core, your truth, your values, your essence? What I later understood was my

soul, but I didn't really have any of the language, so I got that total ass kicking in my final year of Harley, I've been in the corporate world for 26 years, and so you can imagine it just shook the foundation of who I was and started me on the journey to I am nearly eight years later. And there's a lot to dig into there. So you tell me where you want to start to unpack this.

Jen Marples 07:24

So how old were you when that happened?

Shelley Paxton 07:26

I was 45 years old, so the nightmare lasted my entire final year at Harley started when I was 45 and I left Harley when I was 46 and I love that you asked that question, Jen, because a big part of this for me was as I was trying to make sense of this nightmare, and when I finally realized that what I was seeing in the nightmare was a Roxy for my soul, and my soul was dying, what I was actually I'll talk to you about this. And spoiler alert, for anybody who hasn't read the book, this is where the book begins, and there's still a lot of juiciness there. But what I ended up seeing is I would be led through an apartment that was kind of sort of like the apartment I was living in at the time, but then it would just get darker and darker to where I would land in a room I had never seen that was windowless, hold no sign of life, and I would go into the room, and there was always this invisible force I was constantly fighting the journey of walking to see what this force wanted me to see. And every night, it brought me across this dark, chilly, windowless room to a little utility closet, and there was this faint flickering of a light on inside so I could just barely see and I would be cold across the room, forced to open this closet, and when I did, I was heard whimpering, and I would look down and on the floor is my pug who had been dead for more than six years. My pug, my precious little Mocha, who is the guardian angel of my marriage. And I got divorced before I went to Harley, my pug had passed away, and I am now seeing that he is alive, but he's on the floor. His fat, little roly pulley body is now just like all of it draped across the floor. He's malnourished. He's whimpering. He's longing for love and attention and wanting to be nourished and held. And I reach down. I pick him up, I hold him in my arms. I kiss his little velvet ears. I start to tell him how much I love him, that I'll never leave him again. And I wake up every single night when I say I wake up, I wake up in my bed. In Milwaukee, Wisconsin, senior executive at a company. I can't sleep, I'm sweating, I'm crying, I can't make sense of what I'm seeing. I'm up all night, every night. So now I'm in a place where I was already burned out. I was already feeling empty and wondering, is this all there is at the, you know, top of this proverbial mountain, and now I can't sleep because my soul and the universe are conspiring to help me understand that Mocha is a proxy for my soul, and my soul is malnourished and neglected and longing to be held and nourished. And when I finally figured that out months later, that was the beginning of me knowing something had to change. And one of the pivotal moments to the question that you asked was I was like, what if I still feel this way when I turn 50? What if this is even worse, and I am a shell of myself, feeling empty and basically kind of posing in the world, because people say this is what success looks like. And I knew that that was not who I was. That wasn't my truth. I was hell bent on making sure that wasn't where I was going to be when I turned 50. And fast forward, we can come back, but fast forward, I made a decision six months later, after I figured out this nightmare, I end up leaving Harley, and when I turned 50, I had just published my very first book. My book came out two weeks before my 50th birthday, and I was able to share this entire journey and this story and this opportunity to rewrite your own script of success with the world.

Jen Marples 12:02

Okay, so there's a couple things we've got back here. One, when you said pug, I just need to sidebar everything, because I'm a pug mom. Oh, I didn't know. I know when you said pug, I'm like, oh, okay, so I love you even more now, because we are a special type, and if anybody has pugs listening, but I have Ollie, and I've got Oscar, my other one, his ashes are down below. You can't see Emmys off camera, so Oscar's down there, my first baby, and I've got Ollie. Pugs are very, very special. So I can't imagine having this dream of any type of dog, but much less your sweet pug telling you that that was your soul. So I like really related to that. There's so much there. So I, too, had my own burnout. My audience has heard this, and there's a podcast episode dedicated to it. What I'm wondering and what you're seeing with all the people you've been talking to, because you've gone through that burnout. And I know this happens, if we don't pay attention to us, then the body starts to break down. Things start to happen, so we cannot ignore it anymore, and that's what happened to me. Do you think that this happens to most of us? I'm just gonna say, especially women, when we kind of hit midlife, mid 40s, it's exactly when everything blew up in my life, because we had just been and you said it playing by these rules told what was supposed to make us happy, marriage, check, climb the corporate ladder, just house, cars, kids, whatever you added in there. And then you wake up and you think you should be happy, and people want to pay you for things, and all you want to do is cry and crawl into a hole and not have anybody talk to you. I mean, that's definitely where I was. Sounds like, that's where you were. So do you feel like that? It's this big inflection point. Like, what do you think happens

Shelley Paxton 13:46

to us?, from the day of the nightmare to where we are today, having this conversation and one of the most profound things I read along the way. And I feel like there are two versions of this. One was stated by Carl JunYeah, I have done so much work and so much reading on this, and the other one, more recently, I read by Father Richard Rohr. The general idea is this, when we kind of hit this midlife point, we're in this inflection point where we're shifting from the ego being our primary operating system to the soul being our primary operating system. And so that shift from ego to soul, I didn't understand it when I was going through it, but I can see it so clearly now in the rear view mirror. And as I have understood and done the work and interpreted this and wrote my book. I'm like, That's it. I also think we become as we start to listen more deeply. I think we give ourselves a little bit more permission to listen to oh, wait a second, our soul is going to make sure we're listening to it. It is going to find a way that's where the cosmic. Kicks in the ass. It is through what is happening in your body, our bodies break down. We emotionally, mentally break down. There is no it's no surprise to me, and it's no shock to me that we had the mental health crisis happening. I read another stat just today that mental health leaves of absence have increased 300% 2017, to 2023, and 69% of those are being taken by women, and it breaks my heart. So yeah, when we start to get the signs, we can't ignore them. Our bodies and our Souls in the Universe are going to make sure that we listen. And I think there's another crucial thing in what you said. So not only are we shifting, we're being forced, we're being nudged. I always say like your soul whispers, and then it shouts, and then it hits you with a two by four. So we often get the two by four. So that's happening, which is sort of forcing you into your soul being your primary operating system. The other thing that's happening is we start to become aware that we're shoulding all over ourselves. So you said that word, the shoulds, and we start to see that the shoulds are what our script has been based on up until this point. And so a big part of my journey and my work has been around releasing or shedding the shackles of should, and we start to see how many should are just at the

foundation of how we are living, and that it's not actually our truth, it's someone else's truth we've often been conditioned to believe, and that most of it is the should, to me, that's a game changer, and that starts pushing us in the direction of listening more deeply to our soul and allowing that to emerge as the operating system.

Jen Marples 17:07

I think you just said the title of this podcast, and I'd be surprised if it's not called releasing the shackles of should,

17:15

because, yay,

Jen Marples 17:17

that is so powerful. I've heard about this. You know, don't shut all over yourselves. But like releasing the shackles of should it's so important, because you said something too about like the ego making decisions versus the soul making decisions. And it's really hard to separate. I was actually just talking to a client earlier of and I think it speaks like following the joy, which is following your soul and following what lights you up, and having the courage to be led in that direction and to follow that so one of the questions I want to ask you, first of all, you had your breakdown. You obviously wrote the book. So the in between, when you quit, where you're like, did you go on retreats? Like, what was the process that you went through to kind of get to the other side?

Shelley Paxton 18:00

So much more than we have time for. So let me give you the highlights. And if this is interesting at all, you can read the book and follow my work and dig more deeply into it. Here's the thing. So my book you read in my bio, it's called Soul batical, and one of the most profound things is when I decided that I needed to leave Harley, when I was having that nightmare, I finally understood what the nightmare was telling me, and I felt this deep longing to reconnect with myself and my soul. I was kind of looking around me, going, I don't have any role models for this. I don't have any mentors for this. I don't see anyone else doing this, because I was surrounded by people like me. We were all doing, you know, following the script. We were handed, we were we were ticking the boxes of traditional success, and we weren't asking ourselves like I believe now, success is a feeling, not a checklist, and I didn't know that at the time. So here's the funny thing about the word sabbatical. I was tortured about how to explain to the world why I was leaving Harley because everyone in my family and even those closest to me in my community were like, You're nuts. No, actually, you're more than nuts. You are bat shit fucking crazy. No one leaves a job like being CMO of holly Davidson. People would give their limbs for that role, and it says so much about how we think about success, because it's like, well, you're standing on the mountain top. Why would you leave it? Well, why I would leave it is because when I got to the mountaintop, I felt success empty, not success full. I didn't find full. I wasn't doing the things that were my version of full. And so. I was tortured around this idea of, how do I communicate this and of course, I'm a marketer. I grew up in the advertising and marketing business. I was like, I need to find a way, like a handle, to help people understand. And I swear to you, Jen, I woke up one day and it was like a love note on my bedside table.

20:18

Oh,

Shelley Paxton 20:19

I'm going on a soul battle, because it's not a vacation. I am not just going to go Lounge on a beach somewhere. It is not a sub article which professors take, you know, and it's this very formal thing. I am doing, this thing where I am taking time away unpaid, to reconnect with my soul. So I merged these words together. I came up with, you know, this imaginary term, and I was like, that's what it is. I'm going on a soul battle. I don't know if it's I said I was going for a year, but I gave myself permission to say at any point I can course correct at any point, if I'm like, this doesn't really feel right, or maybe I need more time. Maybe I need less time. So that's where it started. And I knew I was Chrissy myself, Chief sole officer. And I'll be really honest, that came because I then realized, not only did I communicate it to Harley, and I started to communicate it more broadly. I had to put something on LinkedIn. This is how much I cared about titles. I was so title sensitive that it was like, What am I going to tell the world and what am I called? The beauty in creating this title, Chief sole officer, which to this day, is the most important and most powerful title I've ever held. It is the one I will keep until the day I die, because I now understand that it means I have this responsibility to be true to myself and to listen deeply to my soul and to allow it to guide Me in whatever I do, these were two gifts. Now the funny thing is, I say this at the beginning of the book, when I came up with this idea of soul batical, I truly thought it meant leaving your job. And now that I've gone through, and I'll talk a little bit about what it looked like to go through, I understand that it's about finding yourself. It's not leaving your job, it's finding yourself. And I love language, and you'll find this out if you start to follow my work, you'll know I love to make up words. It is one of my great joys in life. And I actually wrote for this word and many others. I wrote a definition. So the definition of soul, batical, is a way of being in full alignment with one's truth. It's a conscious choice to live and lead with greater authenticity, courage and fulfillment. And I think the key there at least the way I choose to live and what I offer to everyone listening to this is intentional way of being. I think that's so powerful. Listen, I'm human. I find myself caught in these same cycles again and again. I find my ego fighting with my soul day after day. Of course I do, and I've created more awareness around it, and I have more tools to really reconnect with my soul, and I make very intentional choices, and I'd love to talk about some of the choices that I make, because these are practical tools that I think can help ~~your readers~~ if they're feeling like, holy shit, Shelly. I'm in this right now. I make these intentional choices day after day, and I think that's what's become so powerful about this idea of soul batical is I now say, especially in my keynotes, I quit so you don't have to. In fact, I've made that the title of my keynote for a few stages, but that's my gift. I want to pay forward what I've learned from the work that I've done and the tools that you can use in your life. Right now, in this moment that aren't like tomorrow, I'm waking up and I'm quitting my job. No How about we take some baby steps? Because they believe that every badass accomplishment is a series of tiny steps. So let's talk about some of the tiny steps we can take.

Jen Marples 24:34

Oh my gosh. I love all of this for so many women, because, in fact, women who are in corporate jobs listening, or women who are a lot of entrepreneurs, or women looking to pivot or start something new, and they haven't done something for a while. And I feel like through line of what I hear, and certainly I put myself in this camp, and I had to talk myself out of it is the sense that once you decide to do

something, that it's like the end all be all. It means that it needs to be the next. 25, 3040, years of your life. And I know that's just because it's what we've been taught. And it's the same reason why your whole world and all your people were like, nobody quits the job as like, CMO, but you're like, you don't understand I'm dying. Same thing for me when I shut down my first business, my PR firm, your family like, what? And then my husband's an entrepreneur too. You're both going to be entrepreneurs. Still to this day, nobody understands most of alien friends, yeah, like, what? It's so risky. It's this and that. So I totally get what you're saying about you cannot go on one more day. You could give me \$17,000 an hour, and I cannot do this for one more moment, because I got hit by the two by four. So that's the reason I do all that I do, too. There's a way. There's a process. We don't have to burn boats. We don't want anybody sick. We don't want anybody having horrible dreams about their their pug, you know, we don't

25:55

want that to happen exactly, exactly. I'd love to,

Jen Marples 25:58

because there are a lot of women, you know, looking to pivot and make changes in multiple areas of their life. I'd love to know, because you mentioned them, sort of the some of those top ways you got yourself through into the other side. Because I know you can feel desperate in a moment. Or there's women who are just, you're not doing it and not doing it and not doing it and it gets heavier and heavier. And I know a lot of you beautiful women listening. A lot of it feels really heavy and you don't know how to begin. So how do we get to the other side? What did you do? Shelly,

Shelley Paxton 26:29

yeah, in the book, I tell you about all of the adventures I went on. So listen, there's a lot of there's privilege and good fortune in this story, for sure. And I want to be really clear that that was also learning for me. Because whoever said, Wherever you go, there you are. That's the lesson I learned, like I went to France and New Zealand and the Canadian Rockies, and I did all of that. And what I ultimately realized is that my real work was to navigate the high seas themselves, right? My real work was to reconnect with me. It didn't matter where in the world I was. So I had a lot of beautiful adventures, but this is part of the Pay It Forward that is so important to me in communicating what I've learned. So as an interesting place to start, what I'm saying is there are some things you can unpack right where you are today without having to make a major like, I've got to get out of here tomorrow. I've got to quit my job. Maybe ultimately, your path is to quit your job. Maybe it's not. Maybe it's to help shift the culture right? Set an example. Be a leadership role model for your team, help to shift the culture of your organization, whatever it looks like for you. Here's a great place to start. So two things that I think would be relevant that both lead to like little exercises. One on the topic of releasing the shackles of should. One of my favorite exercises is to kind of do an energy audit, and literally invite everyone take your journal or a single piece of paper. You can do this on your laptop. Draw a line down the middle of a piece of paper so you have two columns. This is called the soul fuels versus the soul sucks. Exercise and Jen, you may have done something similar. I love this idea, because this is how we start to uncover the energy leaks and often the shoulds that are in our lives, and they've been so deeply entrenched in our lives for so long that we can't see them. So take your piece of paper entitled the left hand column soul fuels, and the right hand column soul sucks. And so soul fuels are exactly what they sound like.

These are the people, places, things, activities that light you up, that bring you energy, that put you in flow, that give you light. And the soul sucks are the exact opposite. They're the things that drain you, the energy vampires, again, people, places, things, activities. They kind of throw the damp, wet blanket on the fire of your soul. Like, think of it that way. And yeah, of course there are some things that are going to fall on the soul sucks list where you're like, Yeah, okay, taxes. We all have to do taxes. The idea here is to spend three minutes on each column and just let yourself go stream of consciousness. Don't pick up your pen, don't pick up your pencil. Just give yourself three minutes to go. What lights me up? What lights me up, what lights me up like? Just keep doing it. And then flip to the second column, what drains me dry, what drains me dry, and when you've done three minutes on either side, take a step back and give yourself a few minutes of reflection, looking at both of those lists in black and white, staring at you and see what surprises you, what scares you. What inspires you, what do you want more of, and what do you want less of in your life? And then, when you really start to dig into it, where are the shoulds hiding in that list? And then, where can you start to make tiny step decisions to shift what do you want to do more of? What do you want to do less of? What's one tiny soul aligned step you can take to get more of what fuels you and less of what drains you. And sometimes it's saying no, sometimes it's delegating, sometimes it's realizing I only ever say yes to that thing, because I've always said yes to that thing, and now I feel empowered to say no to that thing. Sometimes it's creating boundaries, okay? Yeah, that person's in my life. Maybe it's a family member. I'm going to create boundaries, right? So I always say we choose boundaries over burnout, and I have a great boundaries question too. I'm going to merge these two things together if you're really stuck for how to create boundaries. And I was one of those people. I was like, I thought I understood boundaries, and I realized I didn't understand them at all. Here's how I've crystallized it for myself, a boundary is what's okay and what's not okay, in service of my values and my well being, ask yourself that question and the what's okay, great, the what's not okay, start to create some boundaries around that, and then, yeah, it takes courage to have the conversations to put those in place, but that is already going to start shifting you to feel more energized and more aligned in how you're showing up in your life and what you have energy to do. So that's a lot of stuff right there, but those are super, super practical, important pieces that I still use every day in my life

Jen Marples 32:05

that was amazing. The soul sucks versus the soul fuel. I love it. **I think boundaries. Let's rip on boundaries really quick, because I think this is, might be the hardest thing for most women, because we give, give, give, give, give.** And you said this before, and there's all this stuff that we've been doing, and we've been doing it because we've just been doing it, and we don't actually question that we're doing it. And I've woken myself up out of a super like, why am I cleaning my house and doing all this? When I have three teens home from summer, get to work. Kids, you know, get to work. That's just one small thing. I know, for a lot of women in the workplace, running their own businesses, a big boundary is over servicing over delivering at work. So this just popped up for me because it's something I think it's establishing your worth it all goes into that imposter syndrome, and I'm just not good enough, or I just need to over service. A guy wouldn't do it. It's five grand. You get 10 minutes of my time in and out. No apologies, women, I could add 20 more things into this maybe, if I throw in some flowers and then write a thank you note and then get their kid into college and offer free babysitting. That it's enough. **Can you go into a couple of your tips?**

Shelley Paxton 33:15

Totally, here's one. So, so you've got the question around boundaries, right? So sit with that. It's really important. And then here's another one that's related exactly to what you just said, Jen, this idea of people pleasing, we are so conditioned as women and even as a rebel spirit, like I talk in the book about how I was always a rebel. I would bang my head 18 times against the brick wall just to be stubborn, right? I went in my way. Now I understand that that was rebelling against, and my invitation is to rebel for. However, even in that being wired into my DNA, I was conditioned to believe that I had to be a people pleaser to get where I wanted to go to get these things that I was taught were success. That I was taught were valued, not my values, but valued by society. And so one of the things I talk about. And I am, if you're not watching the video, I am holding up a pad of orange post it notes. So here's the thing, your choice, and again, these are choices we make intentionally every day, because soul batical is a way of being. We want to show up more bold, more brave and more badass. So one way to do that is to write yourself a permission slip or a set of permission slips every single day, and if you need it multiple times a day. So this is also fun, because you love your hot pink. I love my bright orange. It makes me smile. They. To me, is badass, and so honestly, doing this little exercise puts a smile on my face every day, because I just get to see my favorite color. But what I do is I ask myself this question so that I know I'm intentionally giving myself permission for what I need that day or in that moment. So this is what I asked myself, and you can put this in the notes to make sure everybody gets it. What do I need to allow myself to do, not do or feel right now, today or in this moment, in order to show up as my most bold, brave and badass self, what do I need to allow myself to do, not do or feel in order to show up as my most powerful self? You can also have fun. Make the question your own, tailor it to the language that fires you up. I'm giving you my language, and then write yourself one or 10 or 25 of these permission slips. And give yourself permission, because then we are intentionally choosing, like, some days it's like, I just don't have it in me to have all of these back to back meetings. I'm giving myself permission to Jen, I think I did this you and I had this schedule before I went to Mexico. And I'm like, I have so much stuff going on, I can't be fully present to record this podcast, and I don't want to show up that way for you, for me, for your people. So we moved it to now. That was a permission slip that I gave myself. And , oh, I can't do it. It's inconvenient, whatever. Stop making excuses. Stop making excuses. Write yourself permission slips for what you need. Maybe it's like, you know what? I'm going to ask somebody else to get the cookies for the kids. You know, school thing. I'm going to ask somebody else to go to that, you know, Hoa or condo association meeting, start to give yourself permission to not do all the damn thing.

Jen Marples 37:22

Oh, my God, this is gold. Shelly, this is gold. I'm gonna get my stickies out. I'm

Shelley Paxton 37:27

gonna write lists. Oh, I have them all over my house. Girl, I have them on my laptop. I have them on my bathroom mirror. I have them on my fridge. Do whatever serves you most powerfully.

Jen Marples 37:41

It's so powerful to, you know, to put yourself first and to have this your own self defined structure. I talk about it a lot too. Like looking at your calendars similar to you, if it makes you go, uh, get rid of it. Yeah, the taxes, sometimes you can't get rid of things like that. But as much as possible, we're surprising

even when you when you're rescheduled. It's funny, because I totally get it, because I become that person too, where I don't want to operate in a frantic nature. I don't want to come in and arrive 75% I don't need to do that. And if I do that, it's because I've fallen into old patterns and old ways of being. You have to actively rail against it. So I love all these tips that you're sharing. I want to make sure I ask you this question, because I heard you talk about this on Bronwyn podcast, and it goes to all that we're saying about we started off with climbing the ladder and burnout, and you know what society thinks we should do, and now we've learned about okay, we're not shooting on all of ourselves. We're figuring out what we want to do. You talked about the arrival myth with Bronwyn. And I talk about this kind of similarly, but the way you said it, it kind of just smacked me between my eyes. And that is the theory that once you get to something similarly, like I got to the CMO job, so there's nothing else left for me. That's it. That's why everyone was freaking out, because we've all been told, that we're climbing to Everest, whatever your Everest might be, and that's going to equal joy and happiness and fulfillment for all your days until you die, which could be 50 fucking years. It's all a bunch of bullshit. So tell everybody what the arrival myth is.

Shelley Paxton 39:15

Yeah. So this is the arrival fallacy, and I have figured out on Bronwyn podcast, I could not remember who coined this phrase, and I want to give appropriate attribution, so it's a psychologist. His name is Dr tal Ben Shahar, so you can go deep on his work, and it is exactly what you said. Jenna, so he calls it the arrival fallacy, but the idea that, Oh, when I get the promotion, when I get to that certain level, when I lose X number of pounds, when I get married, or get the dream boyfriend, when I think we put so much pressure on those things to say that's going to deliver joy and fulfillment on a silver platter. You. And then when we get there and we get those things, and we go back to that sort of baseline, or even below baseline, of happiness, joy, fulfillment. In fact, oftentimes we feel empty. So then we find the next thing, and we go, oh, okay, well, it wasn't that. So when I get to the next level, and there's a peak higher than Everest, and we keep telling ourselves these stories so we get really stuck in this arrival fallacy and in believing, I mean, this is really at the core of my work, is this idea that we are searching for success and validation outside of ourselves. And the thing that changed my life and that I offer up to everyone here is that we choose our values over someone else's validation. This is one of my intentional choices, a way of being. We choose our values. I'm going to say, say this an I, because I want everybody to repeat it as I I choose my values over your validation.

Jen Marples 41:07

Oh, God, damn, that's powerful,

Shelley Paxton 41:09

and I know how hard it is. I'm not sitting here all smug going, I got this all figured out. I use this every day, every day. It goes back to the beginning of our conversation, where I just catch myself, you know, I've got this thing, I've got the bully loop, I've got the talk, I've got the ego, you know, springing surprises on me too. I can catch myself and I try to be more intentional every day. And so I'm able to pull myself back and go. Wait a second. Shelly, my truth, my values, my essence, are what guides me. So here's a great example. I recently said no so my my three values. The values exercise is another great one. I use Brene Brown's dare to lead list of values. It's free on her website. Get clear on your top three values, it will serve you so powerfully so mine are freedom, authenticity and courage, which, if you

know me, or you know anything about my work, you're like, Well, duh, of course they are. But it wasn't clear to me before. It wasn't now I live so powerfully in service of those values and my truth. Well, those values are my truth that I make every decision in my life, and when I don't, I know I'm out of alignment, and I can see things starting to go off the rails. So very recently, I was asked by somebody who I really admire, who's very big in the speaking space, and keynote speaking is a bigger and bigger part of my business. And he said, I want you to do this particular thing with me in Chicago. It's your backyard. This would be great. It's a way for us to start working together. And I was like, Sign me up. That's amazing. I can't believe this person called me, and then when he sent me three weeks before the gig, he sent me the details the client and what I was being asked to do. Now, I thought he understood my work enough to kind of go, oh, this is going to be perfect for you. It was a total disconnect. And so I stood back, and I went, you have a choice if you continue on this path. You have to knowingly do it completely out of alignment. And I've made a commitment to myself that I don't show up out of alignment. And so I went back, and I had a very courageous conversation, and I said, I have, I literally, I do. I have authenticity tattooed on my forearm. My forearm says authenticity is the truest form of rebellion, because the world wants to put us in a box, and the best thing we can do is show up in our truth. And when you show up in your truth, you are a rebel, rebelling for what matters most to you. And I went back to him, and I said, I cannot live in service of my values, I live in service of my truth and my mission, and I can't, in good faith, stand on that stage, even though I am dying to work with you. I hope this leaves the door open like please find somebody who's better suited for that, and I hope this leaves the door open for future collaboration. And I just cried a little bit, and I held my breath. And what I got back from him to me speaks the power of us standing and our truth and our values. And he said, It is so rare that you see this kind of courage and integrity in the speaking business, let alone in business in general. I want to work with you even more now the door is open for collaboration. And I was just like, it worked. I mean, this is it

Jen Marples 44:49

that gave me chills, because it's the truth and it's authenticity. Is the true way of rebellion, and that's what, that's one of my messages, too. That's what. You're not too fucking old and stepping in. To your power and showing up as your truth self, and not caring what people think, and being true to your mission. Oh, my God, what you have dropped today is so powerful. There's so many like peel away quotes and lessons. There's probably like a mini ebook that could be created from this conversation today, because it's just so juicy and rich. And thank you so much for being on the show. I have just a couple final questions to ask you, because I could only talk to you for five hours, literally. Well, we'll

Shelley Paxton 45:27

do it to be continued one day. Sister and I hope it's in person. I know we'll

Jen Marples 45:32

make it happen. I have family in Chicago, so it's not totally like out of the realm. I ask all my guests this, what do you think the best thing is about being in midlife,

Shelley Paxton 45:41

the wisdom, I think it's the wisdom that we have from experience, and I truly believe, especially as I sank deeper into kind of the shift from ego to Soul, that wisdom and that trust and believing that All of

my experiences led me to this moment so not beating myself up about decisions I've made or the path that I've taken, no matter how bumpy, no matter how curvy, no matter how loop to loop, no matter how many times it made me nauseous and you know what? Freaked out, really trusting and believing that it led me here, and now I get to make these intentional choices, to show up more bold, more brave and more badass in my life and just trusting, trusting in that, in that wisdom. I love that.

Jen Marples 46:36

I love that. Okay, now every guest finishes this sentence, and I can't wait to see what you say. I used to have it be I'm not too fucking old too, but I'm changing it so you can shout out to the world, because I want this to be the last bit of your big rah, rah. You know, advice your spirit to leave my listeners with before you depart. So I want you to finish this. You're not too fucking old too.

Shelley Paxton 47:01

You're not too fucking old to rewrite your script on your own terms.

Jen Marples 47:09

Mic drop, I love that. Oh, it's been so fucking fabulous. Chatting with you today. Shelly, I knew it was going to be amazing, and I just want to talk for five more hours, but tell everybody where they can get the book, where they can find you and lap you up on a daily basis.

Shelley Paxton 47:25

Oh, thank you. Thank you. Thank you. My website is Shelly paxton.com so that's the easy place for all the things, speaking books, my book, you can find both in hardcover, paperback, in audiobook, all the formats on Amazon or wherever you buy your books. I am on LinkedIn. My two platforms, my playgrounds, are LinkedIn, so I'm Shelly Paxton. Please follow, connect with me. Happy to play there and also Instagram, where I'm at the Shelly Paxton and I'd love to get in conversation. I would love to learn from each other, inspire each other and be on this badass journey together. I love this.

Jen Marples 48:05

I love it all. So Mike, I have one final question for you. I wanted to ask you this before. What's next for you? Is there another book?

Shelley Paxton 48:12

Yeah, two things are happening right now. One is, I know there's at least a second and a third book. The second one is it's still percolating, and I'm still getting clarity around what it wants to be and it might be around I quit so you don't have to, because so much of what I wrote about in the first book has evolved, and some of the nuggets, some of the nuggets I shared, are from the book, and I've gotten wiser as I continue to be on this journey every day, and I want to continue to share that. So there's that a book number two that I'll write, probably starting later this year, definitely into 2025 so stay tuned. And also a workbook. So I am in the process of doing a companion workbook called, What Are you rebelling for a soul companion that I'm going to self publish that you can literally use as you read soul batical, and that will be before the end of this year. Ooh,

Jen Marples 49:11

what a gift. That'll be a Christmas gift to all of our ladies in business. Need to know what to do. So keep us posted. Well, it has been just a delight and a joy, and I know this is the beginning of a beautiful friendship between us, and I can't wait to stay connected and see you, IRL, because that's what's going to happen. We're going to make it happen.

Shelley Paxton 49:28

Yes, I love it. Thank you so much. Jen,

Jen Marples 49:31

you are an absolute fireball.

49:33

I

Jen Marples 49:34

love you. Yeah.