

Episode 35: Why there's no quick fix to change habits: Recalibrate through resistance

MERYL: Hey everyone.

Welcome back to the Rebel Nutritionist podcast today. It is my honor and privilege to be able to interview Shari. Who is an amazing life coach she's been doing coaching for more than 10 years.

She is my personal coach has gotten me through many a crisis. And thank God for you, shower you when I was going through my divorce, because that was totally life changing. So I appreciate, honor you and part of why I wanted to do this podcast. I mean, we've had many conversations, we'd done a couple of YouTube videos together, but I feel like every time you and I get together and we talk about something, I'm like, oh my God, we have to do podcast topic, and conversation about that because it's so relevant to, to our clients, both your clients, my clients, and what we're seeing out there.

So thank you. And welcome.

SHARI: Thank you. Thank you for having me. And it's always so fun to have these back and forth dialogues together, because as much as you get these ahas I do too, and then I get to share with my clients or even just live it myself, because sometimes it's nice to. You know, have these back and forths.

MERYL: Yes. and I think they're so important and you, and I like, if we recorded all of our conversations together, I think it would be life-changing for people, but you know exactly right. If they could only hear us. But I think that is the beauty where we know each other so well, we know how to support each other in that.

and being able to then bring that to our clients. So, so without further ado, the conversation that I want to have today is a little bit about. The resistance, the excuses, because. What I have found as of late, right? Is that, especially since the pandemic and people are starting to come out of it, and people are realizing how just overall unhealthy their minds are their bodies, their habits.

In the beginning of the pandemic, it was great. People were sort of, I don't, I don't mean it was great, but it was nice in the sense that **people were taking a step back. They had**

the time to reflect. And then all of a sudden we get back into this craziness and it's a little bit of a different craziness now.

So people are on one hand are realizing, well, I needed to really get healthy and I really need to change these things yet. They're starting to get back into their life. And so what I'm seeing is they're coming and say, yes, I want I want to get healthier. I want to. I want to eat better. I want to do all of these things yet.

As soon as we start to give them the modalities for how to do it. And we start saying, okay, well, here are the things you need to start to shift. All of a sudden they get lost in that fear and the overwhelm because rationally they understand they need to make a change. Right? People say this to me all the time.

How fear impacts our desire to change

Oh, **I know I should be eating better. I'm just not. And what is that barrier for people?** And so you and I have those conversations all the time. And of course, with the coaching that we do as well, it does the support and the accountability is important, but more importantly, is the mindset. So I want you to speak a little bit to that

SHARI: Fear it's **fear**, right?

Fear is, that four letter word that is. Bad taboo, scary. And yet **when we can reframe fear and use it as a motivator, it can liberate us.** Okay. So like all of these books that say, get rid of fear and never have fear again, it's kind of BS because. **We do need fear.** So when a client comes to you or comes to me and they're in fear, cause they, they want to change.

They've been trying to change. They're hitting that wall. Now. there's a fear there. And in this day and age as well, there is a lot more fear and a different type of fear that. We didn't even know that we had right. in today's climate for whatever reason on top of you know, the pandemic.

So when your clients are coming to you and they say, I know I should eat better, but I'm not. There's a, there kind of is this Hallway **between what do you say you want and what you are willing to do?** one of the best questions that we can ask ourselves is **what is really our willingness to achieve a change,** because sometimes Meryl, we have spoken about this Are we willing to make a change and if you say yes, sometimes overwhelm can arise within right anxiety and more fear and discomfort.

And then what do we do? We kind of go back into our old coping skills and then. We're hitting that cement wall and then we're banging our head against the wall. So what are we doing? We're beating ourselves up and then we're tired. We're drained we're sick. And then your clients are leaving you and jumping shark.

My clients too, because there's fear. So yeah, go ahead.

MERYL: No, so I was going to say so, so what, what is one of the tools? What are one of the things. That, that someone can do, you know that? Cause we pointed out to them too. I had a comment yesterday, a woman, 74 years old. Right, right. It's like, oh, well how can I change now?

What tools can we use?

I'm 74. And I'm like, there's lots you can do now. And I think people feel very hindered by not just their age. Right. I think like you said, the overwhelm, the discomfort. So what is something that they can do to help alleviate or get past that fear. What is a simple tool may or may not be simple, but what is a tool that they can use?

What would you suggest?

SHARI: Well, first I just want to go into a one thing and then I'll share some tools, but I just want your listeners to understand that **there really is this gravitational pull to remain safe and a lot of this is happening unconsciously.**

So our human nature is to feel safe. And me and you have discussed this. I say to my clients, when they first start with me, that we have to kind of poke the little ants. Which is your unconscious mind and all the little ants are going to come out and it can be scary. Do you ever poke an anthill?

You see all these ants come out, right. And then and then it comes down and either they create a different hill but they, they go back to living and it's all good. That's what's going on. Unconsciously, because again, there really is that unconscious pole to feel safe. And sometimes to keep within that safety, we hide or we'll deny ourselves something or we'll sabotage ourselves.

So we need to feel safe. So **overwhelm can equal lack of safety.** It doesn't mean the type of lack of safety that your. Parking in a dark alley. So of course you want to be safe. You don't want to do that. It's the safety of our humanness to feel safe in our world, especially now with our world that we're in.

MERYL: Yeah. Not to interrupt that, but **I think people feel safe in unhealthy habits.** If that's a habit, they have cultivated over time.

Right.

They're safe, even though it's not healthy, they don't know any better right here. And it gives them some. Yeah, so that there's their coping skill, right?

SHARI: The, the Facebooking, the social mediaing, the eating, the drinking, the smoking, the zoning out, whatever it is for me, my, my little zone out, or one of them is I pick my cuticles. And I will realize like 20 minutes later that I, I just made myself bleed, zoned out. But clearly that was, that was, that's how I, I don't really do it that much anymore.

Cause now I'm more aware. so now we go into the tools in part, **one of the tools is you just really need to recognize and remind ourselves we are safe.** So it's safe to change. Because we are going to take care of ourselves. We've been doing it for 20, 30, 40, 50, 60, your client's 74 years.

We've taken care of ourselves. So we have to acknowledge that we are safe to make a move outside of our quote unquote norm. So your clients are being held by your amazing coaches by you as well. My clients are being held by me. And so yes, accountability is, is so important, but also reminding them. To poke an anthill of your unconscious it can feel like it's anxiety-producing, but to remind yourself first and foremost, that it's okay and you're safe to make a change.

MERYL: I liked that. And I do like how you bring it back to the coaching piece, because that is, I think where the differences and people don't understand, or maybe don't recognize that that is the huge difference that having someone there as kind of your safety net, right? **I'm the safety net for my clients.**

My coaches are the safety net. And you're your safety net for your clients that. I think is a huge difference because there's so many self-paced programs out there. There's so many programs that say especially again, since the pandemic, everybody can do these oh, join this masterclass, join this program and, and have these changes.

But I think where the. The change, **the real lasting change comes from it is from knowing that someone literally has your back, that someone is there to not judge you.** Right. I always say to people here, you're going to be tracking your food, not so that we can judge you, but so that we can help.

SHARI: No. So it is about with your clients, my clients too, it's about holding them accountable. And also as coaches, recognizing resistance is going to come up. And your clients, my clients. I mean, one of the things when me and you first started it's people including myself, right.

You know, we start off gung ho. Yay. I'm going to do it week one. Yes. Week two. Yay. Week three. Okay. Week four can I reschedule my appointment today? You know, something came up. Okay. Week five. All right. I'm going to come in. I didn't do my action steps or I ate a lot that I knew I shouldn't week six.

A lot of times there's a no-show. Bingo. Because resistance is there and we want to work within, I started off the call with that hallway, between what we say we want and **we're getting in that hallway. We work with that resistance. Because resistance is not bad.** You guys can see me, but I work a lot with air quotes.

you know, that doorway that we're working within resistance isn't bad it's part of our humanity. So when we make it wrong, we're actually picking up this bat and saying, I knew you couldn't do it that way. And then you feel shame and for no showing, and then you're just beating yourself up. So what are you doing?

You're going to go back to eating and picking your cuticles or drinking or whatever that sabotaging behavior is. So **working with a coach is about interrupting the resistance piece that is keeping you connected to the part of you that really wants to change.** So we get to cut that cord.

MERYL: Yeah. Oh my God.

That was like, so spot on. I'm going to play that for every client that walks through the door, because here's the thing I think you know, especially for the clients, with weight loss, weight management, and, and even some people who are sick, they make it bad because.

Because they've been stuck in diet culture for so long, right? So they are stuck in the mindset that, oh, well, if I'm going to be successful, I need to be deprived. I need to be starved. I need to almost beat myself up And I need to sacrifice so much if I'm going to accomplish this goal.

And I think what you said hits on that. So poignantly is that. You know, it is, it's about **interrupting the conversation and reframing it** for these people. Especially we're stuck

in diet culture because people want the quick fix. They want to be able to make the change in their diet and then see it in.

In their waistline. And I always say to them, it is not about that. And you have got to go back and change the behavior. **You have to change the dialogue in your head, which then is what actually, manifests in your body**, right? Until you believe it in your head and you say it in your mind, and it becomes who you are now.

You're not going to really live that, true self of, what you're capable of. You're going to keep going back to that. You know, you gonna keep run the other direction in the hallway, go back down that, that where it's safe

SHARI: in reverse.

MERYL: Yes.

SHARI: You're going back in reverse because the gravitational pull, to be, I use the word safe, but.

Why it takes time to change

We are creatures of habit. So you could take the word safety out and just put habitual because we are creatures of habit. So **it really does take time to change.** So change, let's just talk about that for a minute. People want quick fixes. Yes. I am super guilty of that. I mean,

You know? Cause I'm guilty of that too. However, **When I remind myself that to use my breath, to land in my body, to remind myself that I have two feet on the ground, right. I calm myself.** Then I get to ask myself **if change was so fast that could also create overwhelm.** Change is slow, but if we can reframe and acknowledge the process and actually enjoy. Really feel the joy of moving towards change, whether it's fast or slow that in and of it's going to create the confidence to, to build that momentum of change.

So I have a client. she was so fun to work with because she's like I want change now. And I would remind her that change can be slow. And I said to her, you have to love your inner snail. And she was like, I hate the snail. I wanted to be a Jaguar. And if you're listening, you know who you are, and I just love you to death.

We had work within loving the snail part, the slow part. And as you do, there is freedom and then you can love the rabbit and then you can love the leopard, but it's really about **loving the first piece of the part of you**. That's resistant to the change. I'm throwing a lot of stuff out,

accepting. That change is slow, really accepting that change is slow actually makes the change happen faster because the resistance, the wanting it to be different or is only kind of, it's like smushing it with a bug it's like trying to squish who you are like a bug.

MERYL: That's fabulous. I know it resonates with me. I know it will resonate with the people listening because this is what I talk about. And I always say look, you and I have lived this, right. We have lived the journey of the change and it's always easy. It's easy for us to say trust us, trust the process because it's easy to say it is work, but I love the way you framed it because people always say to me, oh, well, This is so much work and this is so hard.

And I say, **none of this has to be hard. It is work**, but anything, anything you want in this life. **That brings you that satisfaction and that gratification requires work.**

You want to be successful in your career. You need to put work into it. You want to be successful at raising children who are well adjusted and well-rounded, you know, you have to, you have to work as a parent, right?

So any of this is work. What I love what you said was **finding the joy in it, rather than the discomfort and the frustration of the work.**

SHARI: It's like the Ugh, Ugh up. And that's what I saw. That's how I talked to my clients. Like you have to embrace the ugh, you have to embrace the ick, you know?

And it is hard. Change can be hard because we are poking the anthill of your subconscious and we are turning a direction of a habitual way. So in that way, it can be hard. However, **finding the joy in the hard is where change is going to occur**. So if you want to.

Live healthier than you get to be healthier by doing healthier things. And then you're going to have better health. You know what I mean? And it's not just losing weight. I mean, Meryl, how long have I been talking about intermittent fasting and resisting giving up my morning coffee with my cream.

Right. Talk about change being slow. We're talking kind of years, right? Absolutely. Two years talking about it. I finally did it. And all my inflammation levels go down like mindblowingly down. But instead of saying what took me so long, I really accepted that. The slowest part of me wasn't ready because I go into the willingness, am I really willing to change?

And **as much as I said, I wanted it. I really wasn't willing to do it up until now.** And then when I did it, I allowed myself to feel the joy.

MERYL: Absolutely. I mean, look, I can even equate it back to the stuff that you've taught me that whole swiping right. Like when you told me to swipe right on myself, right.

We had that whole conversation.

I'll never forget that light bulb moment.

Right. Right. And so you made me, you were like, you have to do it in the mirror. You have to say to yourself, right. I am worthy. I am. And I'm like, I just, I remember like going on that night, I really have to do this and the mirror

Exactly. Right.

But I did it. I mean, I did all those other things, but it is, it's embracing the uncomfortable it is. It is looking at, okay. Am I ready and willing and able? To do this now. And yeah, look, there's a lot of people who often say they don't and people say to me all the time, oh, well this person is so sick.

Why aren't they making a change? And I'm like, because they're just not ready, but, but if you want to have as I always say, health and wellness and longevity, at some point that light bulb needs to go off. And we hope that it goes off.

Why we often end up pushing back as we start to make changes

SHARI: So one of the things that I do share with my clients is that there is that trap to be to, to stay the same, because again, we're creatures of habit.

And especially in the climate that we live today and we're not feeling well. And. we're heavier now because of the pandemic or just unhealthier **the fear that has been in our bodies. And if you don't know how to fully express it in a supportive way, it will make you sick.**

So one of the traps that we do, it's that, again, that hallway between what we want and what we are willing to do. So I just invite your client. To really ask themselves. What **what is your willingness?** Because if you're really going to be honest with yourself and you say I said to you, I really I'm not.

And I said it to you for years. I am not willing to give up my morning cup of coffee. Remember I just wasn't willing to, it makes me feel good. It made me feel good. It made me feel. Like wrapped in a safe, warm blanket. I wasn't willing to, and you know what that was okay. The consequences for my willingness made it.

Okay. So when I was more willing to get healthy, to feel better in my body, And I say this to my clients too. Then you, you can **reevaluate your willingness because it really does come down to, willingness equals change.** And then working with me as a coach, you're amazing coaches it's about going, going into that piece of resistance because we do not want to make ourselves wrong for being in.

In our humanist for having our human emotions, our human sabotaging skills, coping skills. We just want to gently massage that by just acknowledging that it's there and when we get to move, move from it.

MERYL: Well, and that is a good point because I think like you said, You can start and you can say, okay, now I'm willing and I'm doing, and I'm doing, and I'm doing, and then all of a sudden there is something that comes up that throws in whether it's a self-sabotage of any of your, or the resistance or something that comes up and they become, I don't want to, it's almost like a stalemate, right?

They, they become like, oh, wait a minute. This is now coming up. I knew I couldn't do this, or this is again, it's, if this is hard or whatever, whatever, all of those things. I like what you said about that and getting people past that.

SHARI: Yes. Because one of the big things, Meryl, and you just said that is when we're changing and we're starting to see.

Some movement, right? **The little needle is moving and we're starting to see a little bit of change. One of the things that happen is resistance is going to pull us back**

because, oh my God, who am I, if I change, am I going to be a different person? So then it becomes this new identity and we create the story in our heads that it's bigger than what we are.

And the truth is, again, I go back to breath. When you breathe and then you acknowledge that the chain. That's why I even say to my clients, listen, change it. I like to do changes slow. I like to go from a to A and a half to B, to B and a half to C. Yes. I make up my own alphabet. But the truth is. We go slow because I know the movement of pulling back and that's what sabotage some of sabotage happens because the first step of change.

Yes, it's scary. But once you do it, then you start seeing the momentum. It's going to pull you back because there, and then you start, who am I? Who am I going to be? If I'm definitely. Yeah. I can't even imagine being a better version of myself, a skinnier, a healthier, a wiser, whatever it is, person of myself.

But that's why you work with a coach because it comes back to lowering the voice of the inner critic, raising the voice of your inner cheerleader and doing it slowly and creating a new storyline.

MERYL: Well, I do like that and I do think for people creating a new storyline is challenging. And scary, like you said, the fear, because a lot of times it comes back to, because we're comfortable in that old dialogue, creating the new one also creates this creates fear, and you said something right.

It becomes bigger than what we are. And I think some of that is also goes back to. **Do we feel worthy? Do we feel valued?** And the reason I say that, well, if I can, I can say that from personal experience, because I've dealt with that. And I hear that from, from women more so, because I think women really have just been victim to that diet culture more so than men let's say traditionally, but even from women who whether it's a woman, you know, younger girls, the what they're told, right?

What you need to be thinner. You need to look better, especially with social media, right? I can't tell you how many clients I have who were put on diets and were told they needed to lose weight from very, very young ages and that's creating trauma and **that's created a story and they're still living by that story.**

Right there. You have to interrupt it, but right. But when you've lived with that story and you're all of a sudden don't value yourself and you don't think you're worthy trying to

change that produces. And I can tell you for myself, it produced a tremendous amount of anxiety, right? Because you didn't know where you were going with it.

Like, like you said, who am I going to be? If I'm not that person, because there is as, as screwed up as it sounds there is safety in that unhealthiness.

What is your belief system?

SHARI: I mean, there is, that's why and again, we're just unconscious creatures of habit, but to change an old belief system, **you have to first understand what that belief is.**

And that's a whole other podcast that I could spend time and time and time is on its own. I love that conversation, but it really is about **uncovering what that unconscious belief system is. That is actually running your life.** That's the filter in which you're viewing the world.

MERYL: Yeah. So, so I do want to mention, I do want to bring up something because I think that this is something, it was funny.

We had a coaches meeting yesterday and we talked about this, so, and I'm digressing, but I think it's on the same point. So you'll let me know how this sort of fits in. So I'm going to run a scenario by you because I do think that this is important because so many people, so, so, so many people come to us with this, right?

Okay. I'm starting on a plan first, 2, 3, 4 weeks. We're seeing change. And you know, some of these people come in for weight loss, but they also have medical issues. Right. And all of a sudden we do the testing and it reveals, oh, there's inflammation and there's hormone imbalances. And especially if we're doing genetic testing, we're looking at some of these genetics that are interfering.

With their body's ability, not just to be balanced, but to also achieve weight loss and weight loss as part of that balance. So I have a whole bunch of clients

who recently they're like, oh yes, I'm sleeping better. I'm feeling better. I'm doing this, I'm doing that yet. I'm still not losing weight. Right. So their story is.

Their value is in the weight loss, their successes in weight loss yet. So many other things are changing and I'm like, look, weight loss is a symptom of that imbalance. It's

just like having inflammation, inability to balance all of that will not result in weight loss yet.

I have so many people that are so hung up on, oh, well I'm not successful because I don't see the scale moving. And I'm like, well, you're not seeing this gambling because you got to fix a, B and C first. How do I. Rational. Like, I just like, you want to shake people and go, but don't you see what I'm saying?

I see what you're saying. No, but no, but you know where yes. But yes, I see what you're saying, but I want this,

SHARI: well, I was guilty of that too with the whole intermittent fasting and. And then when you, I 'm, losing weight, but, and you would say, but how do you feel? And I'm like, I feel 10 times better and I'm sleeping.

And so I am that person too. And then you said to me when, oh, and then you did my blood work. And then when my, my levels were down, he said, look at that to me, that was. **That was my shift that I began to focus on that shift. Well, I'm sleeping better. I feel better.** And that will come too. But then I even had to ask myself, but what is my willingness to.

You know eat a little bit better, right. Within my timeframe. So I had to work within that. So it really is about asking. It's always about really asking yourself self-reflective questions, but if someone's continuing to ask you, but, but, but I'm not losing weight, but I, the is not moving, but they're in, I would ask them.

You're putting the power on a scale. So what are you making that mean? Meaning that they're assigning to that. Cause that's an important question and it would have them self-reflect. You know, is that more important? Cause if that's more important than maybe the inflammation markers or the genetic stuff I don't know, I would have to speak to the client, but they're obviously making that mean something.

And then it's like, where's your power? **Are you putting it on a scale or you putting it within yourself.**

MERYL: Well, and that's part of the problem, is that because **that was their measure of success for so long**, right? So yeah, they, they relinquished their power to the scale and **they're allowing the scale to then dictate their level of happiness, their level of success.**

And to me, it's just I've maybe like you said, it is, what, what is that meaning you're assigning to that outside factor. And how, how do we take a step back and reflect on, on what is important?

SHARI: And that is a, it really is an important question to ask them because, **if that's their focus Meryl, then they're not going to feel success.** And then, and then that's probably the week six of a no-show. Right. But in order to remind them that A to A and a half B will be the weight loss so things are a process.

And, and one of the things I tell my clients all the time, Trust the process, especially when I first started with a client the first couple of weeks, a lot of times they're like, what is this? And if any of my clients are listening they would probably be like, yeah, for sure. What is this?

What is this? Well, and we find that's where, like, they're starting to see that the weeks are building upon each other, and then they're going to be able to So it's just about really trusting the process. And let me just say something else to your point, if it takes nine months to have a baby, let's just say.

It could take nine months for your body to get back to. Norm, no one could see me with my air quotes, but norm. So if somebody is coming to you and I was somebody coming to you too, but if somebody is coming to you and they're at a high level of auto immune inflammation illness, so. We need to remind them also that **it's going to take time for your body to just recalibrate itself.**

And so sometimes it's going to hold on to the old until it recalibrates and then it'll let go. And then when it lets go, because you're getting healthier than the weight will come off. So it's really about reminding them to trust. The process.

MERYL: Yes. And I say that I'm so glad you said that. And you know, I didn't prompt you to say that

I do think reminding them to recalibrate, I really, really liked that because I say that all the time. I say, if you're going to work with me, this is not a quick fix. This is not get thin quick, not, it's not get healthy quick. We are going under the surface. We have to look at really where are those root cause issues, whether it's an illness, whether it's with weight, loss, resistance, all of it.

And yeah, it takes the body. I always say it's a minimum of three months for most people. It's six to nine to 12, and sometimes it's more than that. Right. And i, and you do

start to feel better sooner, but that doesn't mean that the body is going to, I love how you say recalibrate as quickly. And so. Ah, I'm stealing that actually, but

SHARI: go ahead.

But **it's really about enjoying that, that you're making changes, that you're feeling better**. I mean, how many times, how many years, or months, or days or hours you know, or in reverse hours, days, years, have you not felt well? And now you're starting to feel better. So, you know what acknowledged.

That **you are doing the work that it takes to make the changes that are making you feel better**, having better sleep create recalibrating your body not just your endorphins, but your hormones and. All the other stuff that you know, I don't, that's not my area of expertise, but really just enjoying the process and just being your inner cheerleader.

And one of the things that I do with my clients when we hang up the phone is **I ask them to acknowledge themselves for something**. And I gotta tell you Meryl all of my clients, most of my clients. Have said to me that that is probably the hardest part of the whole entire session is the end of the call.

Having them acknowledge themselves that one of them had a cheat sheet, which was hysterical. But the fact that she even had told me that she had a cheat sheet, we went into the resistance. **What is in the space of what is she resisting turning within and what's arising there**, right? Because, but that's what it is.

It's, it's, it's hard to acknowledge herself. I'm telling you nine out of 10 of my clients have always said that is the hardest part, especially in the beginning when we started, when we start working together. So the hardest part of the whole session.

So it's the same with you with your clients? Enjoy the process. I'm like eventually you're not going to need a cheat sheet to acknowledge yourself.

MERYL: Right. Well, I think it goes back to the idea that **we're much better at beating ourselves up than we are for giving ourselves accolades** or right.

It's very easy to beat ourselves up. It's very hard to acknowledge that we've done something great and good and good for ourselves. And so as always a conversation, is amazing. I do want to wrap it up. I again, you and I can talk for hours on this, but I think people's attention span is starting to wane.

Yeah, well,

SHARI: I am so grateful that to be a part of your community and sharing this and thank you so much for having me today. It was so much fun.

MERYL: It really was. And the next time we'll have to go into the whole belief thing because that'll be, that'll be the next thing that we do, but. But I do think this is really helpful for so many people.

This conversation is so needed. So thank you. And yes. So everyone makes sure we'll share Shari's contact information. If you want to talk a little bit more to her, she can certainly guide you. Definitely take her up on that. But in the meantime, everybody, this is your Rebel Nutritionist signing off till next time.

Make it a great day.