

MERYL: Welcome back everybody to the Rebel Nutritionist podcast. Today I have with me, our amazing client, Natalie Castro. She has so graciously agreed to do a little video testimonial. So welcome, Natalie.

NATALIE: Thank you. Thanks for having me. I'm excited to be here and share. Yeah.

MERYL: So. You're here. So let's talk a little bit, I mean, I want to kind of let you take the floor, but like, let's talk a little bit about what prompted you to contact us and what has your journey been like?

NATALIE: So. My journey has been wonderful as, um, wonderful and at the same time difficult.

And I think that's what you should expect. If you're getting ready to do this. Um, would made me look for someone like you. — Um, was definitely the fact that I have like this. Issue with my stomach. I was told I have IBS, but I've always had issues with my stomach. There's cancers in my families. And I didn't grow up with good examples on nutrition, exercise, anything of the sort, and for one stage in my life, um, I was able to kind of do like exercise program and stuff, and I was at a healthy weight. When I was doing the right the right recipe.

And my family tried to support me then, but as an adult on my own two feet, I was like, I need more resources. I need to educate myself. I need guidance. I need to better myself. And I wanted, I was curious about my tummy, right? And I looked at so many programs out there and yours felt like it was curated to me.

And that's definitely something I was looking for, something that was. — For me and my needs and not a program was going to follow or an injection or anything, the sort, and I've seen my parents struggle with their weight. I've seen so many people in my family struggle with their weight, with so many diets. Um, even surgeries. So for me, I said, no, that's not the path I'm going to go on.

I need you. — And what you can bring to me. —

MERYL: Right. So, uh, so we had our first conversation and I have to say, I think, you know, you're very aware. You'd like, you. When we spoke, **you were pretty aware of what you needed, what you wanted, you had done your due diligence and the research like you mentioned.**

Um, so let's talk about, because you were, you were really super motivated, um, So, and we did some of the testing. Right. So what was that experience like? The testing. ———

NATALIE: Oh, my God. It was like looking through your soul. —————

Um, I got answers to things. And I didn't even expect to get answers to from that city from Lang gene testing to, oh, that's why I always feel that. — It was like, um, you know, you always need to scoot just to live with it. You always think that you know yourself best, but in reality, you don't, it's like once you get an exam like this and you have your intelligence and your background, your experience, read it to you. Explain it to you, right? You're like, wow.

NATALIE: Why did I got my money's worth? ——— It's always a good thing. Yes. And too, I think. — This, this is what I needed. This is what I wanted. And now I know.

MERYL: So you had mentioned and that's important, right? And then we **tailored a program specifically with your, with the nutrition piece.** And I want to say it was the whole thing, right?

We always say it's about all the pillars, right? It was the nutrition, it was the exercise, it was the mental, emotional, um, and I want to touch on that in a second, but, um, all right,

We'll touch on the emotional mental piece in a second. Cause I know that was a huge chunk for you as well. Um, but when you say it was difficult, right. And I do say that I say to, and I don't say it's difficult, I guess maybe it's just mincing words. I say, it's work. ——— **This requires work because it's like anything in your life.**

If you want to have success at it, you have to put in the work you have to put in the effort. 100%.

I think it's kind of like the excitement of moving. Oh, I have this brand new house. — And I'm going to read Zachary, and then you're in the middle of all the boxes and you're like, oh my God, does the moving end?

Like. — What's the, what do I have to do to get settled in?

Yes.

I love that

analogy. That is a great analogy.

Thank you. I've been telling everyone. So now you heard it from me. Um, so I think. You have the excitement, you have the goal, you see that beautiful house and then you don't, you still, you still have to pick up some boxes. I have to pack.

You have to declutter, or you have to unlearn bad habits. You have to commit to the workout. You have to, you know, I read something, it really resonated with me and said, Everything is hard.

Mm, right. —————

Pick your hard. And when I saw that, I said, well, **I'm worth it. So I'm going to pick this hard because it's going to be hard no matter what.**

MERYL: And that applies to everything. Finances, Marian. Do you know any. I always say, choose your hard, right? There's a good meme out there. And, and, you know, look, I. — And we don't have to divulge too much, but you dealt with a lot in your life.

You've had a lot of trauma. Yeah, right. And

so, and the reason I say that not to expose them. So we don't have to go into it. **But when we have trauma, it gets carried into our, our tissues ourselves. Right. And we hold on to that in different ways. And it reflects in our health.**

Yes. So I would say this is a part of your healing journey and **a lot of people talk about a healing journey like psychological and emotional, but your health, your gut. Your body is part of your healing journey.** — And one of

the things I still to this day, cause you're always healing and you know, I had a therapist tell me it's kinda like having lasagna and onion.

There's always another layer to pull back. Yeah. — And so, um, I've noticed that my body needs to start feeling much more safe. And it's funny how life will put you in certain situations where it tests you. Like, did you learn from this. And it was just recently at a job that was very unhealthy for me and grateful for everything I learned. But unhealthy and it was. — Killing me. It was really ruining right. Hello. — And I say, no, this is not what I stand for is not my morals. And my volume was I didn't overcome everything I overcame to be here while I'm still on this journey and committed to me because at my commitment to myself is. That goes to the grave with me, right.

That goes to the grave with me.

And so I say, no, this is not how I'm gonna live my life. And so with your guys's support too, you're like, let's get a new job.

you're going to actually, listen, there you go. —————

NATALIE: Even my stress levels. When you told me my stress levels, I was thinking, oh my Lord. And I've always just, um, struggled with chronic stress, right. And I'm learning to live in a state of calm, right?

: Isn't that a nice place? And I have to kind of tell my, my body I'm going on three to five mile walks every day and I'm telling my body you are safe.

Yes.

I took you out of there. I always, you can depend on me. I am here for me. I don't wait for anyone to do it for me. I go here to the nutritionist. I buy my groceries. I take myself to do exercise. I am conscious. I have to be happy with myself, but it's homework. It's packing the boxes. Monitoring.

Absolutely.

MERYL: And so is that, you know, so you, your coach was, is, um, Michelle. — So how did, and this is what I always, you know, **we talk about the experience here of connecting with not just myself, but the coach. So talk about how has that, because I know the coaching piece, how does helped**

you really gain the courage to do what you're doing? And the, um, capacity to feel safe right. In, in a certain way. There is no judgment. I think that it's really hard when you're in. — In a place where you're trying to learn, it's kind of like, you don't want to be the smartest person in the room, but you would only be judged by the smart people in any capacity of life, whether it's work life, whatever it is. — **And coming in here, I felt a sense of home.**

I felt. I felt safe. And for me, someone was dealt with so much trauma.

That's not typical. Right.

And then not only this it's, you know, I remember Michelle telling me, like, not only focused on your mental health, I was going through the loss of a family member. I was going through the change of starting a new job, going into a new job. Um, you know, all this stuff and she's like, I remember telling her like laundry and eating. It's too much for me right now.

Like I'm about to break and shift like mental health first I'm here and I always felt supported any questions I had. Um, and I could be wrong. I could say like, well, I don't know this. I didn't learn this. I didn't come from an environment.

And she always say, but you're on the right track. And she wouldn't let me feel discouraged.

She always brought me up with her. ———

MERYL: So what else, what more do you want? Right, right. I mean, and that's, you know, I want people to hear that because it doesn't matter how many times we say it. Right? **We say, this is a non-judgemental place. We're like, we're all about the support. And everybody needs support in a different way.**

NATALIE: Right? Your support is different than someone else's support.

MERYL: But I think that understanding because people come in and we start talking about all of these things that we want to focus on, right. Whether it's the sleep. And it becomes, it sounds overwhelming. It can be like moving right to that beautiful, whatever dream home it is.

But it's, it's homework. It's difficult. Yes. It's overwhelming.

It's supposed to be. Yeah. It's supposed to be. So how, what was one of the things that you found most helpful for you? I mean, I know there was a few, but give or give a couple, you know, but **what was really the thing that helped move the needle for you?** Move the needle as in like get results. — Well get results or whatever you want to call it.

NATALIE: I mean, Honestly, it's the support. Yeah.

Because it's okay to not know something. And I would be like, I'm I want to go to this restaurant. What do you think I should eat here? Cause I didn't even know how to order a restaurant without it messing up what I, what I was trying to do in my personal life. Learning how to order all the cart and walking me through it, or, you know, the holidays came and she's like, — Take a second.

Enjoy your family dish. Right. You know? —————

But I remember asking for vegetables on the side. I run my vested. — But, um, you know, all these things, are you making a schedule on like food planning? Because I think we get so lost in I'm too busy that choose your hard again. Right. Um, Um, you know, she sat down with me. She's like, let's think about it. Like, okay, what are you going to get Monday through Friday? Let's buy all your groceries. **What's your plan, you know? I didn't realize I needed to be, um, handheld to that extent. It's it's sometimes you have to be like, oh my God, am I really this behind? Like, do I like. I feel like a toddler in nutrition.** ——— It is what it is, what it is.

MERYL: Well, you don't know what you don't know exactly. And I think part of it is at least what we hear from other people as well, is that, **you know, there's so much information out on the internet. That it's all, it's overwhelming information.**

And then you don't know how to apply it to your life. So I always say what we do has to be sustainable and realistic for your life, because what. What fits in your life is not going to fit in someone else's life? Yes.

NATALIE: So like I would tell Michelle, oh, like me and my partner were cooking. And she's like, okay, well, why don't you do this? And he could have whatever, you know, Have your carb heat wants, but you get the good carb. And it's like, yeah, let me learn. How to rework our lifestyle. At home, you know, um, all these things and, you know, you inspire the people around you as well.

MERYL: Absolutely a hundred percent. So, so, and then what, what to that point?

Yeah, one of the things people think when they come in and do a plan or program, right? It's like, oh, well, I'm going to eat so different than my family. Right. But that's not the case.

MERYL: It's not because you're going to the store in our case, we go to the store together. Um, what protein are you having?

Well, I'm going to have this carb. What carbs do you want? Right, right. Hey, I didn't see you eat veggies. What, like, what can we do to help you get them? You know? Cause he's different from me. So it's like me also supporting my partner, but the reality is we're on us. Like. Maybe a little bit ahead, but he's right there with. Yeah. And it's, um, planning, having, you know, **she kind of gave me the script I needed to have in my mind.** — Don't do that. And so then I taught home and I'm like, well, this is my script and I'm going to follow it. At the grocery store list, and this is how we're going to do it.

And look in the reality is like, you're not going to have time for everything. Right. So. Make a plan for the times. You don't have time. Like Michelle had to teach me this because it's easy to fall back into old habits. But I'm. — Like just, no, that's not me. I'm done with that. I'm done with that. And I, if I'm going to move forward, I'm going to move forward. I'm not going to take three steps forward and then two steps back. Right. But it is normal.

I didn't do that. Right. I don't want people to think. Cause I often say right there is no perfection. It is just the process. And yeah, and we get stuck on

some of that stuff and people do sometimes take a step back, but it's okay to take a step back.

And I had to tell myself like,

Hey, it, I can't do the exercise right now because unfortunately at this moment I'm working 60 to 70 hours a week. Who can get the exercise in right. Let me forgive myself, but understand that I'm still working towards what it needs to happen. So the time I had off it's let me find, I have five hours.

Let me look for jobs. Let me apply. That was still a workout to the right step. Yes. It's your priorities, right? And it's like, ——— It's going to change. It's going to fluctuate and we have to forgive ourselves. We have to be caring to ourselves and it's kind of like, you have to know how to parent and love yourself.

MERYL: But I think that it's. — You're going to find that you're going to find that on your journey. If you don't know how to parent and love yourself, you will discover that here. Um, and you have the support to do so, but at the same time, it's a relationship with you. So you need to also be your supporter.

You're going to have your support system, but what does not need, not only needs to sleep. I remember she'll tell you 90, if your body's not telling you to sleep, please just sleep. Like, I wasn't even hungry. She's like you're skipping meals, but if your body's saying sleep, let's sleep. — Because I needed to recover.

I needed to recover. Yes. And then I woke up and I was like, okay, now what am I going to let me focus on the right. The nutrition, right. And I would figure it out and **I would tell her like I'm struggling and she never criticized me or made me feel bad for the struggle. She always helped me through it. Um, there's that she was kind of like a lighthouse in a dark time.** — Yeah.

So she's. It's hard to weather a storm. It's very hard. Right? And you need that, that beacon of light and you need a direction and then you, and you need to know you'll get there, you know, with that, with that guidance, with

that support. So, how are you feeling now? Because you're some months in, I mean, you've been doing this work for awhile. Yes.

So I will say that I feel really good. I feel really good. Um, I know that I haven't gotten the, I'm not, I've not yet achieved exactly everything I want to achieve and that's okay. It's a journey it's like going to college, like it's a four year plan. — It's going to take me this long to get my degree. But it's patience.

It's also understanding, reading my body of what is my body trying to tell me. What, how do I improve this week? How do I am? It's always a constant improvement. Um, but **what I feel is proud. What I feel is I'm breaking chains in my family. Um, when I have my children, I will be able to educate them. I'll be able to do family walks.**

I'll be able to do all these things that I didn't have growing up. I didn't have a foundation. So I'm giving myself a foundation to share with my children.

Um, and I'm also just like much more confident in learning. Yeah. And I'm okay with learning. I'm a forever student when it comes to my health and you have to be a forever student, all aspects of life. But, um, I've learned so much about myself and at the end of the day, when I go to sleep at night, I say, I'm doing hard things.

Not only can do really. Things.

You certainly can. And I think a lot of people would let themselves be defeated and I choose not to be defeated. And so you kind of have to be determined and have you just got to be committed to you? And when I sit down and I, I analyze everything I'm doing, like I have always wanted to eat like this. Um, my partner. He always tells me. You eat like a YouTuber?

Oh, ———— Yes, I do. And I'm proud and, um, it doesn't take more money. It doesn't take anything. It's just like, I can do these things and it's become what I like. Right.

MERYL: Now it's become your way of life. And I think that's, you know, like, like when you say, well, I'm committed to myself, I think that is the first step. Yes, it is.

You have to be committed

to you. And I know with a lot of our clients, whether it's women, whether it's men, right. Especially if they've got children already and they're right there, they're dedicated to their family. They're dedicated to their children, to their husbands, to their parents, to their friends. **And they're more dedicated to other people than they are to themselves.**

And we have to take that mirror and turn it around and say, okay, am I willing to participate in my own journey? And how do I do that? And what do

I need to do

that? And it's really difficult to do it alone. Yes. And so getting someone to help you, just like you say is, you know, be that beacon of light, be the, the voice of reason when there's so much misinformation.

Yes. Because again, right. It is all about your individual. What makes you individual? What is, what is your testing show that makes you unique that we have to focus on. Because that's where the imbalances are.

NATALIE: Well, and that's where my body needs to heal first. And I told myself, I told my body, I speak to my body as if it's an inner child.

MERYL: It's a great tip out there. I really recommend this. — And I got a good tips for giving. Giving us. Thank you.

NATALIE: And I walk, I go on my walk and I told my body you are safe. I am taking care of you. Tell me what you need. For me to help you. And so I do have that parental child aspect with my body and I'm like, okay, am I use, am I having the bowel movements and my drinking enough water am. This is dicey. Well, I'm aware I'm in tune.

I'm listening. And my body's communicating to me and I say, I'm not going to be mad at you for you not being exactly where I want you to be. But I'm going to work with you for us to get there. It's like, if you have your child, you're going to watch them grow. And I'm, uh, I've come to understand that I'm watching myself grow and you know, you don't have to run the 5k by Saturday. — Exactly. You know, and it's, it's

even an Olympic athletes

like, um, haven't you noticed that they always don't do themselves. Right.

Absolutely.

They do. And they put

in the time and the training and the effort. Right.

MERYL: And so, um, yeah, it is, it is an effort in. And a commitment and you, and it's just, um, kudos to you for, for a, having the wherewithal to recognize that and the maturity. Yeah, the, the, I want to say foresight, right? Like to just be so present with how you are in your body.

And I know look, and I'm like that. And our coaches are like that. And it's like, that's where this is exactly where we want our clients to be. Right. And so where you are is, and, and then just to continue and continue because the more you practice these behaviors, and I think you've seen it. You have you mentioned it right. It's now become your way of life. This is all you know, now this is all I know. This is all I want my life to be.

NATALIE: Um, and also I feel better. I used to be someone TMI, but I used to know how bowel movements, like every week. And I become a daily person and I'm like, I could do that. Well, Oh, look at me. It's it's an improvement. Um, just like, you know, being

Less bloated, I'm still not completely bloat free, but I'm working on it. Um, And I have my stomach issues. So, you know, It is what it is, but I'm.

True, but I'm learning to heal with you.

And so, um,

uh, step forward is still a step forward, a little wins to a win, and I'm going to cheer myself on and I do feel better than when I started.

I have people telling me you look so much better. I don't know when you look like, I don't know. I don't know what it is. You're like you're glowing. You're.

You're. I dunno if it's all encompassing my mind, my body, my emotions. And, um, I also feel like, because I'm at this level, I can bounce back from things.

And someone, if you're going through anything hard in your life or traumas and things, ———— When you get to this level of like listening and like

parenting yourself. You are unstoppable in a sense, not that there, things are not going to affect you, but you things that momentum. You have momentum, you're strong, you have strength.

And also I tell myself if I nourish my body, I'll feel better. Yes. Like I'm a nice, you know, a fancy car, you know, and I have to put good gasoline in the car. There's some cars that only take certain type of gas. Right. — And it's like, well, I'm like that too. Now I upgraded. Fine tune machine. There you go.

And so putting myself on that pedestal annoying,
I feel good.

Cause I'm on a pedestal and I see improvements and I'm happier and I'm this and I'm going to be even better in three months. I'm going to be even better in six months.

MERYL: It goes to the deservingness and I think there's so many people out there and I think it's especially women. Right? We feel we don't deserve it. And so I think that's a big conversation. I know it was sort of a big conversation with you. So that deserving and that commitment, it all speaks to the same thing. And so, you know, it's just a Testament to your fortitude. Thank you. And you're like later. So, you know, your commitment to yourselves,

any, any last thing that you want to tell our listeners viewers out there?

NATALIE: Um, I would say. As long as you're moving forward, you're moving forward. — Period. Um, I would say don't criticize yourself, love yourself, accept yourself where you are. I think a lot of times we don't know how to accept the version of us, but when you grow there's times. I look back and I say that version of Natalie saves me here and she got me through this and I may not need all her skills, but I need some of her skills today.

And so every version of you requires love. And archive them because it's this version of you, that's going to take you to the next. And so that's where we are. Love starts. Right. We. I have to look in the mirror and say, I love myself today, whether I'm overweight or whatever. I love myself today to diversion today had the awareness to get me here.

What happens? There we'll get you here. So it's all this stepping stone, right? I say, how do you get across a river? Right? That's rushing with water. You got to go on one step at a time and you've got to make sure you've got your balance. When you get to each of those. So it's not like just running across when he goes to do it.

I don't know. Maybe you'll fall in, but like you need your bearings at every juncture. Because it it's it's change and change requires that. — Yeah. Great. So move forward. —

MERYL: I love it. Thank you so much for joining us with.

So great to have you keep up the great work because you are doing phenomenal. We are so proud of you. Thank you. — All right.

There you go. A little excerpt. And,

uh, um, video from our amazing, amazing client, Natalie. And, uh, yeah, we've got more, more amazing stories like that. If you want to share your story, let me know. We can get you on and do a little client testimonial as well. Uh, and as always like share subscribes and comments, and this is your Rebel Nutritionist signing off, make it a great day, everybody.
