



Episode 33: SHELLY'S COACHING STORY

This is the *Become an Unstoppable Woman* podcast with Lindsay Preston Episode 33, Shelly's Coaching Story.

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Welcome to the *Become an Unstoppable Woman* podcast, the show for goal-getting, fear-facing women for kicking ass by creating change. I'm your host, Lindsay Preston. I'm a wife, mom of two, and a multi-certified life coach to women all over the world. I've lived through enough in life to know that easier doesn't always equate to better. We can't fear the fire, we must learn to become it. On this show, I'll teach you how to do just that. Join me as I challenge you to become even more of the strong, resilient, and powerful woman you were meant to be. Let's do this.

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Hi there, friend. Thanks for tuning into this week's episode. We are continuing the segment we're doing on the show where I have current/former clients coming on to share what coaching with me was like and what results they got from coaching. Today, I have Shelly Criswell. Shelley and I started coaching together in April 2019. We wrapped up in early December 2019. Shelly's journey is so interesting to me, because when she came to me on a consult call in April, we had a lot of things we wanted to work on together.

She said, "I want to lose weight. I want to lose over 50 pounds. I want to leave my day job. I want to start or boost up of VA business and be a digital nomad. There's a lot of things internally that I want to heal with my confidence and other things." I told her on that consult, "We can absolutely get the internal stuff, the external stuff of losing the weight, it's going to feel really rough the first few months. You probably won't see any results but after that, the weight should start to fly."

I said, "With switching your job, we may be able to get you closer there but I can't guarantee that you will be able to quit your job by the end of the year." Shelly rocked it. Oh my goodness. She did all that and more, as we coached together. She's now lost, Gosh, I think 50 pounds. She left her job in October and now as a full-time VA and she's starting a blog as well.



We killed all that internal stuff. Shelly's journey is one that I think a lot of people can relate to because she just had been doing a lot of personal development, reading this here, doing this there and not really getting the results that she wanted. When she finally decided and went all-in on coaching with me, she showed up along the way. Now, was it all easy? There were some "Come to Jesus" talks, Shelly and I had. One in particular, we share on this podcast.

There were times that I thought maybe Shelly would give up but she had come in back for more and kept striving. The more we continued healing her and the more results she started to see, she just pushed through some of that discomfort. I hope you listen to today's interview and you see some of maybe where you are in this or it just inspires you to keep going with your goals. Without further ado, here's my interview with Shelley Criswell.

Shelly. Thanks so much for coming on the *Become An Unstoppable Woman* podcast this week. I already told the listeners a little bit about you and why I wanted you to come on and share your story, but I would love for them to hear it from your mouth. Kindly, tell us where did you start? What was life like when you and I met and you decided to start coaching with me?

Shelly: Oh gosh. Hey, Lindsay. Thank you for having me. I was very stuck, sad, overweight but had been there so long, I didn't realize how unhappy I was. When I saw your email, I don't know, something just said reach out to you. I did. I didn't even realize what I was going to get myself into.

Lindsay: There's just something inside of you that said let's just explore this. Then, you and I got on the phone and we did a free discovery call. I have my notes from that call which looks like it was, I don't have a date here, but I think it was around March 2019. The notes that I took as I just said, your dreams never happen or if they do, then you self-sabotage. Was that right?

Shelly: Yes.

Lindsay: You wanted to work for yourself, wanted to work hard for something that you believe in. You start things and then you quit them. You had lost a hundred pounds but then you gained it back. There were just reasons why you hadn't forgiven yourself and you felt like you had a little bit of imposter syndrome and you were tired and scared. You had some mom guilt. We had all these things on here to work through.



I remember saying, "Okay, I think we can do all the internal stuff but I know you want to quit your job by," I think it was the end of the year, right? I said, "I can't guarantee that we'll get you there but we'll try, but I know I can give you the internal stuff" Kindly, tell people what ended up happening between basically the month of April 2019 and early December 2019.

Shelly: Well, we started our work and it was hard. It was a lot harder than I thought it was going to be, but I slowly started making changes and by October, I was working for myself and as of now I'm down 47 pounds.

Lindsay: Your goal was 50, right?

Shelly: 60. Yes.

Lindsay: 60. Okay, almost there.

Shelly: Almost there. I did not start the weight loss until after Unstoppable. I think I needed to do that inner work first before I was ready for that.

Lindsay: Then basically, you've lost that amount of weight since September.

Shelly: Yes.

Lindsay: How many months is that? September, October, November.

Shelly: I started in July whatever.

Lindsay: The weight loss didn't come off until September, right?

Shelly: It was July.

Lindsay: Okay. July. Got it. Wow, Shelly. That's awesome. Now, what about the internal stuff? What changed there?

Shelly: Oh my gosh, everything. I started realizing that I was worth it. I learned a lot about my self-sabotage and why I do that and how to be more aware of it. Just more self-confidence and knowing that I can do whatever I put my mind to and realizing that, that inner mean girl, learning all about her was amazing. Oh my gosh, I just remembered our inner mean girl interview how horrible that was. I think that was the hardest thing of coaching with you for sure.



Lindsay: You went there. Let me tell the listener. We do this thing in the Unstoppable course where we interview your inner mean girl. Your inner mean girl is that inner negative voice that has basically been conditioned and grown because of things that have happened to you. When we go in and we interview her, I ask questions backed by neuroscience has happened to that part of your brain.

For Shelly, she went there. She told me all the negative stuff she tells herself and she laid it all out on the table. Then, when we end the interview, you go back to a normal headspace. I know it sounds weird. I promise it's not as weird as it is, but she went back to this normal headspace and I said, "How was that for you?" I remember you just crying.

Shelly: Yes. I didn't realize how I spoke to myself. That was awful. I would never speak to anybody else that way.

Lindsay: Oh yes. I remember you saying that. I would never speak-- Then after that, it's like a switch went off with you like, 'I don't deserve to treat myself this way anymore.'

Shelly: Yes. I would never treat him by that way, so why would I treat myself that way? I was worth more than that.

Lindsay: Eye-opening. If we only knew how to do those things before right, Shelly? Life would be so much easier. Oh my gosh. Okay. Can we talk about that one moment in Unstoppable? Let me find a list or two. In Unstoppable, I have everybody journal and I tell them some of the neuroscience benefits of journaling. I say, "Okay, I want you to start doing this every single day ideally, so you can start to tap into a deeper part of your brain and start to understand it."

Shelly, for a while there, she would come on the calls and she would just always be happy. It was really surface level. For a coach, of course, you're going to have weeks where the client's doing great and you're so happy, but you're also stirring up a lot of things inside of them, especially in that Become An Unstoppable Woman course. Two or three weeks after Shelly was like, "Oh, everything's good, I'm doing great," it was such a red flag to me. I said, "Shelley, are you journaling?" You Remember that?

Shelly: Yes.

Lindsay: She was like, "Oh, sort of." I said, "Because you were way too happy. We are shaking everything up inside of you. There should be some turmoil because we're shaking that up right now." I remember telling you that and thinking, "Oh gosh, I hope she rises to



the occasion and doesn't have it eat away at her and just want to avoid," but you did it, Shelly.

Shelly: Yes. I needed that tough love for me that day. I remember that day.

Lindsay: That was so great for you to be able to admit and lean in enough. What gave you the courage to do that at that moment?

Shelly: It was you. You called me out and just at the exact right moment because I would journal and then I would get to the hard part and I would be like, "Oh, okay," and done and close it and walk away. You called me out on it, and you knew I was doing that. Once I pushed past that and actually trusted you and the process and journaled, I had a lot of more aha moments.

Lindsay: Yes. Tell us about those aha moments. What were some of the big ones?

Shelly: I remember one person said some things to me, it really hurt my feelings, and of course, my IMG started saying, "Yes, that's right. You're not worth it. You're not smart, blah, blah, blah." I just journaled about it and still didn't have clarity, but the next morning when I woke up, I was like, "Oh, wait a minute. That's her. That's how she feels. It's not a fact. It's her opinion." Then I don't know, it was okay after that when I realized that it was not true.

Lindsay: What you essentially started to do was build your logical brain?

Shelly: Yes.

Lindsay: You were able to see outside the triggers, and when Shelly says IMG, she means that inner mean girl voice inside of you. Shelly, it's so hard because I feel like your aha's were so little, these little minute ones every week, but they resulted in these big changes of the things like the weight loss and leaving the job and having the courage to leave the job. Tell everybody what happened recently with the job if you want.

Shelly: They reached out to me and asked me to come back for a little bit just to help them because they were needing some help, and I did consider it, but decided that was my pleaser inner mean girl voice coming out, and that it would set me back with my mindset and decided not to.

Lindsay: In essence, Shelly went from being in a job where you were pretty much treated like crap, where you're not?



Shelly: Sometimes.

Lindsay: To then having the courage to leave and creating this side hustle, that's now her main hustle, to leave while doing this personal development work. Then her side hustle that's now her main hustle, makes more money than what she made before. Now her old job that once treated her like crap is asking her to come back. Who does that? Who does that in a few months? No big deal. All while losing weight as well. It's just incredible, Shelly. That's why it's like, what were your aha's and it was just all these little bitty things that resulted in these big things.

Shelly: I don't think I ever had any major aha moments. Just all the little ones they added up.

Lindsay: I know for you, a lot of what we needed to work on before you can move forward and really start to thrive was healing some past stuff. We all make decisions that we regret or we think, "Oh, why did I do that?" For you, you really needed to heal that and close that chapter. Don't you agree?

Shelly: Yes. For sure.

Lindsay: Now, looking back on it, Shelly, and you think about how many years you were just stuck of beating yourself up about that, what would you tell old Shelly?

Shelly: Oh gosh. I have learned to be-- I'm just so grateful now for that, for my past, whereas before I hid from it, but that's who made me who I am now and I'm just so grateful that it happened and to have that gratitude is what changed everything.

Lindsay: Yes, because who you are now, you've totally fallen in love with.

Shelly: Yes.

Lindsay: Whereas before is it almost like you have this self-hatred?

Shelly: I did, and I was just so ashamed and couldn't get past it.

Lindsay: Yes, shame is such an evil monster. Isn't it, Shelly?

Shelly: Yes.

Lindsay: Let's go back for a sec. Remember you reached out to me via email, we get on that discovery call, we start talking and I say on my end, "Okay, I know I can help you heal



all this internal stuff. I think I can help you get the external with quitting the job, but I'm not going to make guarantees." I told you to the weight loss is not going to happen right away, but it will happen later. What was it for you to sign up and finally say, "Okay, I trust this girl enough to make this happen, and I'm going to devote this time and energy to this?" What was that?

Shelly: I just feel some connection on the call because I didn't really-- As you know I don't want to talk about my feelings, and you just kept pushing and kept asking questions. Then finally, when we started getting into like the why of everything you were like, "Okay, here we go, now we're ready." Just knowing that you could do that, get that out of me, and have me trust you just on that first phone call it's what did it.

Lindsay: Wow. Well, that's cool. Well, what was it in you that said, "Okay, I'm fed up. It's time"?

Shelly: I don't know. I think just being so unhappy for so long and knowing I was ready for change and didn't know how. I didn't know where to start.

Lindsay: I remember writing down that you had done a lot of personal development, but you hadn't gotten the results.

Shelly: Yes, I think I knew I couldn't do it on my own anymore.

Lindsay: Ah, so you needed a partner to help you along the way.

Shelly: Yes.

Lindsay: Yes. That's awesome. Can you describe to somebody what the coaching process was like for you? Just to tell everybody, Shelly did Life Lovers with me for those first 21 days. We did that in April. Then May, June, and July, we did Unstoppable together, and Shelly did weekly group calls with that. She did a couple of one-on-one calls at certain points in the process. Then we went into my last program Become Authentically Awesome for those last three months together. Shelly, describe to somebody who hasn't done that, what it felt like and how the process went for you?

Shelly: Well, Life Lovers, that was fairly simple. It was all about learning how to create a goal and actually stick with it and the tools that you need to do that. I thought I had always known how to create goals. I had lost a hundred pounds by myself, but after going through your course, I realized, no, I really didn't know how to create a goal that aligned



with my values and my passions and to keep the why in the forefront and then the tools needed.

That was just so amazing. All the work that I did was things that you can rinse and repeat and do forever. That's really amazing. Then the Unstoppable work, it's hard, it's hard. It's hard, you are in some dark places sometimes, but the result at the end is worth it. There's no words you can say that make it worth it. Then Authentically Awesome is just so amazing. You like falling in love with yourself in that course.

Lindsay: Yes, I totally agree. Even though Unstoppable is dark and scary at times, like you said, there's such a bright light at the end. It goes back to Renee Brown's quote or something like, "You can't feel the light if you don't go into the darkness thing," and so many of us are so used to numbing out that stuff. Do you remember when we talked about boundaries, Shelly, that week?

Shelly: Yes.

Lindsay: What did that do for you?

Shelly: Oh my gosh. I learned so much from distractions and boundaries. I learned I was using-- I don't like to look at my feelings, but now I know they're okay. They're a good thing, but before I would numb them with food with alcohol. I have not had a drop of alcohol since July.

Lindsay: Wow.

Shelly: I had my nightly wine for months. Then, just creating boundaries and it is okay to say no, it's okay to put yourself as number one.

Lindsay: Yes, and still be loving and kind.

Shelly: Yes.

Lindsay: With you, because you had such a high inner mean girl that was a pleaser, pleasers are used to just go, go, give, give, give, give, give, and you were exhausted. It was so important for us to work through that and say, "Okay, Shelly, you're on the table too. Let's look at your needs and your wants and what's important to you," and when you did that, it just changed everything, I think.

Shelly: Yes, it did.



Lindsay: What have been some of your biggest results from coaching thus far? We talked about the weight loss. We talked about the job change. We talked about some of the inside aha's, but wrap up for us what you would say.

Shelly: I think just I got rid of all my limiting beliefs. I honestly feel like if you want something to happen, you can make it happen. My self-worth, I'm somewhat more like confident and know that I'm worth it. I think the biggest thing was, I have two teenage daughters and they have witnessed my transformation and feel so much closer to them. I don't know, I just feel like it really helped them too, to watch that.

Lindsay: Yes. I remember you sharing that they were interested in learning some of the tools that you were learning and how cool that was. Especially as teenagers, when that inner mean girl voice is so nasty at times, to say, "Hey, that's just an inner mean girl."

Shelly: Yes, sometimes I'm like, "That you inner mean girl talking," and they're like, "Oh my God, here we go."

[laughter]

Lindsay: If they only knew-- What about with your marriage?

Shelly: I just feel so much more connected with him too, because like I said, I didn't want to talk about my feelings and would numb them. At the beginning of the year, we created goals together. I will come to him and say, "Okay, we're having a problem. Let's talk about this." Whereas before I wouldn't.

Lindsay: Yes. Do you remember that one time, Shelly, when you said something like "I'm a horrible communicator," and I said, "That is such a lie"? Don't say that about yourself. It's not true.

Shelly: Yes. I made that into a mantra. I'm a great communicator. [laughs]

Lindsay: Yes. Now look at you. You communicate about really uncomfortable things for a lot of people. "Hey, we're having a problem. Let's talk about it. Hey, the teenage years, let's talk about it." The ripple effect of the work you've done already is getting to be so big. Now, I know you have this passion inside of you to want to help other women. Can you share with us about that?

Shelly: Yes. We go through a module in Authentically Awesome where we have to learn our life's purpose and I remember I had such a hard time. I could not figure it out and we



had to do a one-on-one call. I discovered that my purpose is to inspire change. I've decided to do that through blogging. I would like to eventually create a membership on Facebook. I just try to let other women especially know that they can change, and to forgive themselves and be grateful and everything I learned through your courses. That's what I'm doing on the side.

Lindsay: That's so awesome, Shelly. Again, once you do this work, I think for so many people, they just think, how can I share this? How can I give this to more people? Because it just makes such a difference in your well-being and your quality of life. Don't you think?

Shelly: Yes, for sure. I had a friend reach out recently and was just having a really hard time. She said she felt like she always had to be on and positive, and then when she was struggling, she had a hard time. I said, "Do you ever journal?" She's like, "No, maybe I should." She did, and it really helped her.

Lindsay: Oh my gosh. That's amazing. It's so awesome, Shelly. Oh, and then just for the listeners out there. Shelly is now a VA, so she does a lot of VA work. You remember that was your dream was to be a digital nomad?

Shelly: Yes.

[laughter]

Lindsay: Now you could do it, right?

Shelly: I can. Just the other day, I'm like, "I'm going to go on camping trip.

Lindsay: Versus going to an office all day. Before Shelley, and I got on this interview, I had written down on our consult call, "What's an average day for you like?" She said, "I get up at 4:00 and I do my VA work, and then I get ready at 5:30 and I go to work at 6:30 and then I'm at work the whole time. Then I leave at 3:30 and then I have activities, and then I do more VA stuff until 11 o'clock at night." I was like, "Oh my goodness." Then before we got on the phone just now, or we got on the phone and you said, "Oh yes, I just sleep in, wake up whenever I want, do my work." Don't you take the girls to school or something now?

Shelly: They drive, but I do pick them up and it's just-- I don't know. I just go about my day. Now, I don't sleep in. I'll still get up, but I still sleep until it's like 6:30. [laughs]

Lindsay: Versus 4:00, and hustling all day.



Shelly: Yes.

Lindsay: Oh my gosh. That's so great. Shelly, is there anything else you'd like to share to somebody out there who's thinking, "I'm thinking about coaching or just doing some development, but I'm on the fence." What would you tell that person?

Shelly: Oh my gosh, just do it. Just do it. Find a coach that you can connect with and trust the process. Do whatever they ask. Even if it's hard, especially if it's hard, because that's where you need to work, and just do the work. Just do it. You won't be sorry.

Lindsay: It's so hard to trust though. Isn't it?

Shelly: Oh my gosh. Yes. That's [crosstalk]

Lindsay: I know. I have a newer coach right now and she's wanting me to grow in all these ways and I'm like, "How do I know you're guiding me to where I want to go?"

Shelly: Yes. [laughs]

Lindsay: That's why in coaching with me, we have goals and we're always going back to the consult call notes or other call notes and I'm saying, "Hey, this is still where we're going, right?" We're checking in with those things, so they get that reassurance because otherwise, it is scary. "Where is this person taking me?" You're growing and that can feel uncomfortable and stir up things, but then you get to the other side and you're like, "Man, that was amazing. Let's do it again."

Shelly: Yes. [laughs]

Lindsay: Shelly, thank you for coming on today and sharing your story with all of us. Where can everybody find you and connect with you?

Shelly: I'm on Instagram @shellydcriswell, and Facebook. I have a group that if you're interested in joining, I would love to have you. It's called Elevate Your Best Life, and that's the name of my blog also.

Lindsay: All right, Shelly. Thank you so much. I appreciate you.

Shelly: Thank you. I appreciate you too.

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