

Hey there, beautiful! 🌈 Before you dive in, a quick heads-up: this transcript is a super close-to-verbatim buddy from our podcast, but it's got its quirks! We didn't call the grammar cops on it, so you might bump into a typo or two. But hey, that just adds character, right? 😊 Embrace the wild side of language and enjoy the read! Happy exploring! 🚀



Stop Living on Autopilot

Carmen Hecox: Many people have big dreams that scare them. How can the readers overcome the fear of taking action steps toward living the life they truly desire?

Shannon Talbot: So, I have an exercise in the book that I like to go to. It's very morbid and people are like, really Shannon, really? And it's unfortunately where we have to go sometimes. And it's to think about, you know, if you were to write your obituary, it sounds horrible, I know, I'm sorry, but if you were to write your obituary right now, what would it say? And are you okay with that?

Carmen Hecox: Well, hello there, beautiful souls, and welcome to Create The Best Me. I am your host, Carmen Hecox, and today we have a truly remarkable guest joining us. She is a beacon of wisdom, resilience, and empowerment. A woman who knows that midlife isn't about slowing down. It's about breaking free from limitations and soaring toward our true potential. Shannon Talbot is an author, speaker and fierce advocate for women. Her latest book, *Breaking Free*, is a roadmap for transformation. A compass guiding us through the labyrinth of self-discovery. Shannon has walked the path herself, and now she's here to light it up for us all.

Breaking free, Shannon shares her personal journey, a tale of courage, reinvention, and the audacity to dream anew. She reminds us that midlife isn't a crisis. It's an invitation to rewrite our stories. To embrace our passion and to dance with the wind of change. So, my dear friends, grab your favorite cup of tea, settle into your cozy chair and let's dive deep into the heart of breaking free. We'll explore how to shed old skins, spread our wings and soar higher than ever before.

Are you ready to break free? Let's welcome Shannon Talbot to the show.

Shannon Talbot, welcome to Create The Best Me. I am thrilled to have you on the show.

Shannon Talbot: Thanks so much for having me. It's great to be here.

Carmen Hecox: Shannon, before we begin, can you please tell the viewers and listeners a little bit about who you are?

Shannon Talbot: Sure. So, I am Shannon Talbot. I live in Toronto, Canada. I'm a mom. I'm a wife. I have two boys. I have a dog. Uh, and I currently have a speaking and coaching business in which I help professionals live happier, healthier, and more fulfilling lives. But before that, I actually worked in the corporate world.

I worked in banking for 15 years, and I worked in advertising for two years. And had a really great life, but, uh, had a lot of things I chased for not always the right reasons, which led me to where I am today and helping other people to really just live happier lives.

Carmen Hecox: And you have this amazing, beautiful book. I will say I've taken this book with me everywhere because I need to take advantage when you're in waiting rooms to read. And I have gotten so many compliments on how beautiful this cover is.

Shannon Talbot: Thank you. Yeah, it's one of my good friends actually designed the cover and it brings a smile to my face every time I look at it.

The Significance of Birds

Carmen Hecox: And can you tell the viewers and readers a little bit about the birds on this book? And something you did with these birds.

Shannon Talbot: Yes. So, the book is called Breaking Free. And for me, the birds signify, you know, living a more authentic life, just letting go, letting go of the stuff that hold us back and keep us stuck and just going after the life that you want, that perhaps you dreamt of or just that you desire and going after, whether it's the career or just the life or whatever that looks like to you, but going after that.

And Um, I have just always been drawn to birds and just the freedom that they represent to me. And it's funny, when I was in corporate, I thought I couldn't have a tattoo. And especially when I worked in banking, I don't know, it was just the way and I wore a suit every day and just, I felt this, that you had to, you know, show up a certain way and show this professional side.

Uh, but about, I guess it was almost two years ago now, I went and got my first tattoo, and it is birds in flight to remind me to like, chase your happy, to, to chase your freedom.

Carmen Hecox: Ah, When I read that, cause I have no tattoos. I read that and I thought, you know what? Shannon and I are like sisters from some other life because you and I both kind of have the same mindset that, when you're in the business world, you have a certain persona that you are trying or image that you're trying to portray. And, you know, sometimes people might look at things and say, oh, she did that. That's not right.

Shannon Talbot: Yeah, yeah. And it's, it's silly and its funny cause I don't, never said, oh, you can't do this. But it was all in my head that yes, you had to act a certain way and be a certain way in that type of environment.

Carmen Hecox: Yeah. You share your own personal journey in the book, including struggles, rejection, loss, anxiety, and stress. Could you elaborate how these experiences shaped your perspective and influence the advice you offer in this beautiful book?

Shannon Talbot: Definitely. So, I go through the book, and I talk about what holds us back and it's, you know, the excuses we tell ourselves, it's the fears that we all have. And we're all way more alike than we think sometimes. I think because we're, we don't go around sharing our struggles all the time or we show our highlight reels on social media.

I also talked about, you know, bad habits that hold us back. And then really the big part too, is our mindset, right? The stories, otherwise known as fake news, that we tell ourselves. And for me, again, a lot of stuff is coming from the corporate world and, you know, I had great years in the corporate world, and it really shaped who I was to who I am today.

But a lot of my insecurities and a lot of my fears and a lot of these things came out, uh, when I was in the corporate world and with each new title I got and actually started with, with the title wife. So not related to work. But when I first became a wife, I told myself, oh, you have to act a certain way.

And then later when I became a people manager at work, I was like, oh, you have to act a certain way. And, and I kept putting later mom, I kept putting expectations on myself of how I should act and how I should be. And in essence, I started losing a little bit of myself with each new role, each new title I had.

And for me, you know, this, a big part of writing this book was I wanted to open up. I wanted to be vulnerable. I wanted to share my struggles, my insecurities, the fears I had, because I don't think we share them enough. And I think once we start hearing other people's struggles, it makes us feel less alone. But also, we can learn, okay, how did they overcome them?

Okay, maybe I'll try that. And that was really what I wanted to do with this book. Also, I share a lot of my stories, but then I also interviewed 10 other amazing, what I call everyday women, although they're incredible, um, but everyday women that we can all relate to. So even if someone can't see themselves in one of my stories, maybe there's another story in the book that they can see themselves in and, you know, be able to understand what that person went through and how they overcame it.

Vulnerability and Shared Experiences

Carmen Hecox: Yeah. And what I admired about your book is that a lot of people might look at you and say, oh, Shannon, she's a big VP. She doesn't know what I'm going through because she's a big VP. She manages a lot of people. A lot of people look up to her. But like you said, you were very vulnerable in this book. You shared that even though I was never a VP, I was never in charge of all these people that you were in charge of.

You had the same struggles that I had. You hurt just like I hurt. You process things or you thought about, I'm not worthy or, this is happening to me because whatever. Just like I do. And I admired that

Shannon Talbot: Hmm. Thank you for sharing. And I used to think at the end of the day, and we all do it, right, I'll do it too. Or people more senior than me or, other or you'll do it too and be like, oh, that person's more successful. And it's like, you don't actually know, right? In my instance, on paper, I looked really darn successful.

I was young. I was doing really well. I was married. I had the house. I had the kids. I had, you know, all this stuff. But inside, I didn't feel successful. I didn't feel happy. Uh, and you know, it's sometimes we have to listen to our gut and trust it and go after things that maybe aren't what we traditionally defined as success or happiness or fulfillment.

Uh, and for me, it's funny because, you know, I went from making my best salary ever to starting my own business and having, you know, I'm almost back in my twenties and thirties with what I make, you know, when I started working with what I was making, but I was the happiest I'd been. And so, it's really interesting too, because, you know, you go through all these ups and downs of life, and we can all relate and we're all really going through the same stuff just at different stages in our lives.

Finding Balance as a Career Woman and Mother

Carmen Hecox: As an ambitious career woman and a mother, you navigated the demands of both worlds. How did you find balance? And what practical tips can you share with other women facing similar challenges?

Shannon Talbot: Yes, I'm going to be honest. I did not find balance for years. This was a struggle I had for so long. Um, I'll say I found balance, you know, I was good at prioritizing my kids. And my job, you know, those were up there, but I wasn't good at prioritizing myself. And I wasn't good at prioritizing my well-being, which meant I didn't look after my stress. I didn't look after my anxiety, all of that. So, it actually took me until my late thirties before I ever started doing that. And how I finally got over the, I was, you know, I'm guilty of being that person who writes a new year's resolutions every year. It was like, I'm going to work out, I'm going to eat healthier.

And every year they never happened at all. And, uh, it was finally my late thirties when I started getting up in the morning and I created a morning routine. And I started, I joined the 5am club, and I started waking up at 5am and I had one hour to myself before my kids woke up, before, you know, any work would start beeping me or trying to get a hold of me, hopefully more than an hour, but no one was trying to get a hold of me at 5am.

And so, I had an hour to finally dedicate to myself and I started practicing mindfulness. I started journaling. I started, uh, working out. Maybe not all every day of the week, but a lot of the days of the week. I started reading more. And that also just gave me the time I started. I went back to school to get, you know, my coaching certifications. And also, just allowed me to be more creative and have more space and time to think for myself.

That was my biggest thing was starting that morning routine to get me over the hurdle of my famous excuse was I never have time. So, I had to make the time. So, once I made the time, I was able to stick with it.

Creating a Morning Routine

Carmen Hecox: I remember reading in the book where you said that one, you struggled getting up that early. That was a big thing.

Shannon Talbot: Yes.

Carmen Hecox: And then two, you wondered what benefit were you going to get out of journaling? You know, you kind of like went into it kind of like, is this really going to work? What is this really going to do for me?

Shannon Talbot: Yep, yeah. And I have to say the journaling, cause I'm a person, I don't know if anyone listening, if you're really analytical and I'm one of those people who I go to bed at night and I would be, you know, analyzing my day or my conversations and thinking, oh, should I have said that? Or should I have done this differently?

You know. And you get caught up in your head sometimes. Um, and so, especially during COVID, right, when we're not going out and seeing people as much, we're spending a lot of time in our heads. And for me, journaling is my way to get out of

my head. So, I'll even just write down, okay, what are the things concerning me right now, or keeping me up, or bugging me, or whatever that is, and I write them down. And sometimes just by doing that, I, you look at them and you're like, well, these are kind of silly or ridiculous. Like, why are they, why am I letting them get in my way?

But the other thing I do, and I just, I credit a lot of where I am today to journaling is I write down my 10 dreams, uh, for 10 years from now. I write down my 10 dreams and I write them down as if they've happened. And you know, with really descriptive words. And that started with one line that I wrote in 2019. I wrote, I am a successful entrepreneur who helps women live happier, healthier, more fulfilling lives. At the time I was in banking, my whole background is business. And I thought, how the heck am I ever going to do this?

I'm not qualified, but I didn't worry about the how. And I just wrote it down and I wrote it down every day, Monday to Friday. That was 2019 I left corporate to start my own company in 2021. So, it came true in just over two years. And that's the beauty is now too, like I'll write things down and just, it also, you know, maybe it's not going to come true or maybe it's not going to go exact exactly as I'm writing down, but it gives me hope to get through a tough day sometimes too.

So that's the other thing I love. I just love about journaling. It gives me hope. And then I also write down three things I'm grateful for every day as well.

Manifestation and Journaling

Carmen Hecox: So, would you say that you began your manifestation journey in 2019?

Shannon Talbot: Yes, a hundred percent.

Carmen Hecox: Because I like the way you quoted it in the book where you talked about manifestation is not, and I'm totally not quoting you because my book, book's closed, so I'm going to sabotage it. But you said, you know, manifestation is not dreaming about what you want. It is visualizing that you are there and what would you look like? What would you say? How would you act? I mean, really like almost like watching a script of yourself doing what you want. I loved it.

Shannon Talbot: And it's funny. It's an exercise I do with my clients, and I even do it. I did it with a, I did a talk for, for a group of women last week and I did it with them too. And its funny cause you can tell usually at the start, they're like, oh, this is, this feels weird. This is uncomfortable. Or I'm not good at visualizing or I always think other thoughts.

And I'm usually met with a hesitation. That is the exercise my clients come back to months and years later. And they're like, oh, Shannon, that is the exercise that, you know, got me through and like, got me to continue working, even though it's hard and it's messy. And, but it, you know, it's keeping me wanting to move towards my goal.

I think that's the thing that it does, right. Is it, it gives us, I liken it to a house renovation. Every house renovation starts with a vision. You need a vision or else why are you going to gut your kitchen or bathroom or whatever you're doing, um, and go live through a mess and spend a lot of money.

You're not going to do it unless it's going to look better at the, you know, uh, at the end of it. And that's the same with transformation and change, right? We need to have that vision that's going to guide us through the messiness and the work and, and the bad days, um, because it is, it's going to get worse before it gets better.

And it takes work. It takes a lot of work, but you know, usually it's, it's worth it.

Flexibility in Manifestation

Carmen Hecox: And you also talk about that, as you're traveling through this journey of, reaching your goal or your manifestation, you allow flexibility. That at the end it may not look like you manifested it in 2019. And so be open to that.

Shannon Talbot: Yeah. It could be even better. Right. Or it could be just different. And we don't know, we don't know how it's going to end up. And so, yeah, it's great too, it's great to have a vision and trust in the process, but yes, just also, I may not end up exactly like that, but it's going to be pretty good, I bet you if you put in the work, it's going to be worth it.

Inspiring Stories of Women Overcoming Struggles

Carmen Hecox: You highlighted inspiring stories of women like Stacey Mowbray, Nora, who overcame life's struggles to achieve greater fulfillment. Can you share more about their journey and the lessons we can learn from them?

Shannon Talbot: Yeah. So, Stacy Mowbray, um, it's just another reason I wrote this book is because when I was growing up and trying to learn to balance it and balance motherhood and career and all that, there weren't a lot of books out there for me to go to and be like, how do you do this thing called life and work? And how am I supposed to do this?

Um, and I went, I took a year off my work, and I went and did my MBA. And I heard Stacey Mowbray speak, she was the CEO of a coffee, company here in Canada at the time. She then went on to actually be the president for Weight Watchers for the Americas, living in New York. And she got up on stage and she talked about how she was a VP at a company, and she had little kids; and she didn't know how to manage her stress and just all the pressure and everything. And when her five-year-old daughter got out of her car one day, she went to turn and ask her a question. And Stacy was like, no, no, I don't have time. Like you're going to make me late, just go. And she said, the five-year-old daughter's shoulders just slumped, and she walked away. And it was in that moment that she was like, no, this is not okay. This is not okay, I need to do something about this and my life and my, you know, just my patience and all that, because I don't want to be that kind of a mom.

And interesting she actually, she didn't mention this during the talk when I heard it, but when I followed up with an interview, she went and hired a life coach. And she worked with her life coach on her definition of success and balance and all of these things, her five-year plan and all of that. And it's interesting because I think, you know, sometimes we think, oh, I can't go for a senior position, or I can't go for that if it's more demanding.

But you kind of, your values align. And you kind of, if it's the right fit. And so, for her, she then went, to become CEO of a company, but because her values aligned and everything, it just was more, it was right for her. And it didn't mean working like really long hours and all this stress and everything, she was able to find a way

to make it work and balance for her family. And she also shared too, which I was shocked at when I was interviewing, you know, the imposter syndrome and the, who am I to be leading this company. And, and all of these things. And literally she was the most down to earth person I've ever talked to. And just chatting with her you're like, oh yeah, everyone is just a human being at the end of the day, struggling with the same things.

And I just admire that she's so open and she's so like sharing her vulnerability. And it was so inspiring for me to hear that. And then, you know, she now sits on boards and like has this incredible relationship with her daughters who are grown now and her husband and her have a great marriage. And it's just, she's done all the right things. So, it was really great learning some of her lessons and sharing some of those in the book.

And then Nora's story is really lovely as well. And it's a story of not trusting your gut. So, Nora was, she was doing well at work and everything, but she was like you know, oh, is the grass greener on the other side?

And she took another job right before the pandemic hit. Um, and they also had decided to renovate their house right before the pandemic hit and they had three really little kids. They moved into this like tiny condo for a little while and then, you know, everything changed overnight, basically. And the company was not the right fit for her. And it also wasn't the job that they told her it was either. So, you know, a whole mix of things. And she was let go. And it was a blow to her ego, and she actually went into a depression. And had a really hard time even just being able to get through the day. And I love the piece of advice her husband gave her was if you can do just one thing today, one small thing, like empty the dishwasher, then that's what you can focus on.

Just focus on one small thing a day that you can do. And then don't worry about anything else. And she went from leading this big team and working on all these big marketing projects and everything to she could barely unload the dishwasher. And she went through that for a while and her confidence hit a low and everything. But luckily, she had really great people in her world that she let in, and she shared what she was going through and they helped lift her back up. And then she did go on to find the right fit and really this time did her due diligence to make sure, okay, is this the right role for me? Is this the right company for me?

Is this the right culture for me? And was able to move into that role and, uh, and she's doing really, really well now in all areas. But again, was, it was amazing that she was willing to open up and share her struggle with depression and, and everything she went through.

Carmen Hecox: I loved both of those stories. Both of those stories because if, I was Stacey. I remember, you know, telling my kids, no, not right now. Right now, I'm doing this, not right now. And it's just when I read that it's just like, I wanted to cry. In fact, when you started telling the story, I'm like, oh no, here it comes again. I'm going to cry. And then, Stacey, I'm like, oh my gosh the beauty of having an amazing support system. Be it your partner and the community, that helped her get back on her feet. And I thought, a lot of us are scared to take that leap because we're scared, we're going to end up like Stacy. But I think that Stacy learned a lot.

She learned a lot about who her support system is. Who they are, and how to get better in tune with who she is. And trust her gut as opposed to just, ooh, that grass looks nice over there. I'm going, I'm jumping ship.

Shannon Talbot: Yeah. Yeah. And I love, she shared a line that I love. It's don't run away from something, run to something. Because when you run away from something, you may just be taking that first opportunity that comes along and it may not be the right opportunity. So run to something, not away from something.

Practical Tools and Exercises for Visualization

Carmen Hecox: Yeah. In your book, you provide practical step by step tips for readers to visualize their dream and uncover what's been holding them back. Could you share a few of these tools or exercises that readers can apply immediately?

Shannon Talbot: Definitely. So, I think the first thing is to, you know, with the visualization, it's just take, you know, take five minutes, close your eyes. Think 10 years. I like doing 10 years from now because we don't get bogged down in the high, in the high, in the how. Take, so take five minutes, close your eyes. Picture your ideal day. From start to finish, from the time you wake up in the morning to what you're wearing, you know, your pajamas, your, what does your bedroom look like? What's your house look like? Where do you live? Who are you with? If

you're working, what does your work look like? If you're not working, what does your day look like?

What activities? And just let yourself dream, let yourself go there. Don't worry about the how or anything. So that's step one is just, you know, and I call it what lights you up, like what lights you up? What are those activities that you would like to have be part of your day? And then the second piece I would say for the what holds us back, is having awareness.

Overcoming Excuses and Building Awareness

Shannon Talbot: So, awareness is so key, and we don't, I don't think we always, we necessarily realize. So, we on average give two thousand one hundred ninety excuses a year to justify our decisions. So, I'll give my example. I am the queen of not liking to work out. I do it. It feels good. I always feel better after, but it is still a struggle for me.

It really is. So, you know, I might wake up in the morning and be like, oh, it's too cold to go for a run. Or, oh, you know my sleep wasn't that great tonight. So, I'll wait until I have a better sleep to work out right. We, we make up all the excuses we want to feel better. So, it's just to start to notice what excuses are you using when you're trying to get out of something that is going to be good for you, but you don't want to do it.

Confronting Fear and Taking Action

Shannon Talbot: And then, the third tip or the third tool I love is around fear. Right? So, we all have big fears. It's funny I joked with this, group I presented to on Friday because 95 percent of people are scared to death of public speaking. Like they would rather die than public speak. I'm weird. I love it.

Public speaking is my favorite thing to do. But here's the question I ask whenever I'm afraid to do something. I ask myself; will I die from doing this? And really, I can't think, there's not much out there where the answer is going to be, yes, Shannon, you will. So, it's like, okay, then what's, then if the answer is no, what's the worst case that could happen?

So maybe you want to speak up, you want to share your opinion more, you have ideas you want to share. Okay, maybe you'll look silly or maybe you'll look like you don't know what you're talking about. Then what? So, you feel weird for a few minutes and then people move on, and they forget everything that you said.

So, it's, you know, what's the worst case that can happen? And then on the flip side, what is the best case that could happen? If you don't let this fear stand between where you are today and where you want to go, what's the best case that could happen? Right? If you overcome fear of embarrassment or fear of rejection or fear of failure, if you go for that job you want, or, you know, ask that person on a date, whatever it is, wherever you are in your life, what's the best case that could happen? And usually that's then can help propel us forward because we're really great at imagining all the worst cases that can happen and picturing them coming true. But we don't always picture the opposite that could happen too.

Embracing Authenticity and Setting Boundaries

Carmen Hecox: That is very true. Authenticity is the center theme of your book. How do you encourage the readers to embrace authenticity in their careers and lives? Additionally, how can setting boundaries play a role in achieving authenticity?

Shannon Talbot: So, one of the things I liked, you know, to think of is when you were a child, what did you really enjoy? What did you like to do? What were those activities? You know, not every child's confident, but a lot of kids, we were confident as children before, like people were telling us, you know, hurtful things or society was telling us to act a different way.

So, I like to say, think back to that when you were at your most confident, what was happening? What was going on? What are your strengths? You know, just kind of pump yourself up think of when you're at your best, right? What are those factors of when you're at your best?

And I love there's **three P's** I find that keep us from being authentic, I call them the three P's and they're **people pleasing, perfectionism, and perception**. So, caring too much about what other people think. And those three P's also get in the way of us having boundaries because we don't want to say no, we don't want to push back.

We don't want to, you know, guard our time and things like that because we don't want to disappoint people.

We don't want to let people down. We're worried what they'll think of us. So, it's all intertwined. And so, the easy solution to that is if you can prioritize yourself first; if you are always at your top of your priority list, you know, the put the oxygen mask on first, then just imagine what you can do, the energy you'll have if you're able to look after yourself first. The joy you'll have that then you can spread to other people. And who is going to benefit when you're able to prioritize yourself. Because when we're busy pleasing everybody else, we're spreading ourselves so thin we don't have the energy, we don't have the joy. And like, we're just, we might be miserable to be around. I know I was.

You know, my five-year-old gave me a goal, a couple of years ago to be less angry. So, talking about Stacey too, my five-year-old, it's like, mommy, can you be less angry this year? You're angry all the time. Like he's right. But now, and it's, it sounds opposite, right? It sounds backwards, but if I can prioritize myself first, he gets a better version of me. I'm a better mom. I'm a better wife. I'm a better, like, professional. I'm a better friend. I'm a better daughter, by focusing on myself, looking after myself, and then letting other people in after that.

Discovering Personal Preferences and Identity

Carmen Hecox: This, this is something that I read in the book that really resonated. It was about people pleasing. And you talked about Runaway Bride. But you talked about that she didn't know how she liked her eggs. And I stopped and thought, I thought, you know what? I am guilty of that. Of just, oh, okay, I always tell my husband, I just show up. I just show up. You tell me, I show up. And I thought, do I know what I like? It was that something that you struggled with, because like you said, your first title was wife and then it was manager and, and so forth. So, it's just you were doing, acting like you thought you were supposed to act. So, you, I'm assuming you lost your identity in there. So, did you know, when did you discover who am I and what do I like?

Shannon Talbot: So, I think it's still, I'll, I'll be honest, it's still a work in progress. I'm definitely, I've come way farther than I, than I was. But I think it took my, it's funny, there's always something that happens when my kids are five. So, when my

oldest was five, five years ago, he was hospitalized for 31 days for his appendix. And my husband and I took turns spending every night with him. Every other night we took turns. And um it was during that time, you know, my son would fall asleep early, and I'd just be sitting in a dark hospital room. And I asked myself three questions. I said, am I happy? Am I healthy? Do I feel fulfilled?

And my answers were like, not really. And that is when I said, okay, enough is enough. It's basically, it's time to get like authentic Shannon back. And so, it definitely like, you know, it was a process, and it took a while. Um, but I moved when I moved from banking to advertising. I, again, I don't know whether because it was a less corporate feel and more creative or because it was a smaller company, but I was able to show up a lot more authentically there, which was awesome.

And actually, I realized I'm a better leader and things when I am more authentic because you know, I'm not hiding bits of pieces of myself. I'm not trying to fit in with everyone else, which is, I think, you know, the challenge we try to fit in. And by doing that, we don't show up authentically. So that was my first step.

And then I also wrote on a, I wrote on a sticky **C W L O T**, and it's **care less what others think**. It looks like it's a dirty word. It's kind of funny. Makes me, makes me giggle. And that's another thing. So, I also am like, okay, care less what others think. And I, like, for example, I love karaoke and this past January, my friend got married at this venue that has like, it's had the Rolling Stones and stuff here in Toronto.

And they did, they had a live band and did karaoke. And I got up on stage and I just gave, like I was dancing. I was singing by myself. And I, at the end of the day, I'm like, I don't care. I'm having fun. I don't care what anyone thinks. And so, I've started to try and do that. You know, I don't want to be a jerk. I don't want to be mean to people or, you know, go to that extreme, but I've just been, you know what, Shannon, like I'm going to be me.

And I'm just, yeah, if people don't like it, that is on them, not on me. And I'm just trying to have more fun and, and care less and just not carry the weight around of having such high expectations for myself.

Letting Go of People Pleasing and Overthinking

Carmen Hecox: And another thing you talked about, cause it's care less what other people think. And I never thought about it this way until I actually read it in your book that you said, we tend to think more about what we think others think about us. Cause people, it's just like, they think about it when it happened and then they don't think about you anymore.

It's like, it's over, but you're in your head. You're like, oh my God, they're thinking about that thing I did. Oh, I did that thing. And it's gone out of their head, but it still lives in our head.

Shannon Talbot: Yes, like right now, as people are listening to you and I, they're probably thinking, oh, I've done that once. Oh, do I know what eggs I like? Do I, have I done this? You know, and it's funny because we all do it, right? We, we, we think about ourselves as we're listening to other people, which in a way is a good thing because it does show people aren't sitting there constantly analyzing.

What did Carmen say? Why did she say this? Oh, you know, they're not constantly analyzing everything we're saying because they're tying it back to how it relates to them.

Overcoming the Fear of Pursuing Dreams

Carmen Hecox: Many people have big dreams that scare them. How can the readers overcome the fear of taking action steps toward living the life they truly desire?

Shannon Talbot: So, I have an exercise in the book that I like to go to. It's very morbid and people are like, really Shannon, really? And it's, but I think it's, it's unfortunately where we have to go sometimes. And it's to think about, you know, if you were to write your obituary, it sounds horrible, I know, I'm sorry, but if you were to write your obituary right now, what would it say?

And are you okay with that? And I think a lot of times we play it safe, right? Or we just, we're just trying to get through the everyday. We're trying to survive. And at certain times in our lives, that is totally okay, right? There's certain periods of our lives we're going to go through where it's really rough and we just have to get through the day.

But there are other times in our lives where we know we're holding ourselves back, where we know we could be destined for bigger and better, and we're just scared. And then to that, I would ask, then are you going to be okay with not pursuing it? Are you going to be okay with hopefully after a very long, long, long happy life, you're lying on your deathbed being like, yeah, I'm really glad I didn't go after my dreams.

Right like. Because sometimes that's what it takes. And it's interesting I get, especially when I first left, you know, corporate to start my own business, people are like, oh, it's such, wow. I'm so amazed. Like you took such a big risk. But I think because I broke it down and I'd been doing steps along the way, it didn't actually feel like a big risk to me.

And I was like, no, you know what, if you can break it down and if you can have a plan and start the steps, you know, in my case, I started things on the side while still working. I saved money. You know, I had this you know whole plan going so that when I did go and start my own business, it wasn't like, okay, all the sudden just like left a paycheck and have no idea how I'm going to make tomorrow's dollar.

Right. So, I think that's the other thing too, is we sometimes think it means this chasing our dreams means going from A to Z and it doesn't. It just means taking one step in that direction and then another step and to keep going until you get there. But if you can break it down into smaller steps, it actually won't seem that risky at the end of the day.

Intentionally Designing Lives and Careers

Carmen Hecox: And I think when I read about that in your book, I thought about how many times have you sat there with a girlfriend or maybe your spouse or somebody and you said, I always dreamed of X. And maybe that person dreamed of the same thing. And then you reconnect with that person, let's say a year later and you're still stuck saying, I dreamed of X and that person is doing it. You know, sometimes you get a little jealous. You're like, they stole my idea. But it wasn't, I don't think that they necessarily stole your idea is that they got fed up of dreaming. and began taking steps toward living the life that they desire.

Shannon Talbot: Yeah, and that's the other thing too, if you're noticing that envy, you know, if you're seeing somebody over there doing a thing and you're like, oh,

how come they get to do that? Or, you know, oh, they're doing that. It might be a sign that you would also be doing that and maybe just start exploring that.

Carmen Hecox: You emphasize that our lives and careers are choices we make. Could you elaborate how readers can intentionally design their lives and careers even when faced with obstacles?

Shannon Talbot: Yeah, so I think that, and I'm seeing it right now, you know, especially in corporate, I think the stats are only 33% of people feel fulfilled at work. And I'm like, you know what, we work on average ninety thousand hours in our lifetime. And if, you know, two thirds of you aren't feeling fulfilled, that's a lot of time to be working and not happy.

And I just think people should take more ownership and decide if you are listening to this and you are not happy at work, then decide what will bring you happiness. And it doesn't necessarily mean leaving your job, looking for a new one, or things like that. It just means maybe you need to find ways to bring more joy into it or to put your hand up to do something a little bit different.

You know, relationships too, sometimes we just feel a bit stuck in our relationships and it's, okay, maybe you need to spend more quality time with your partner and maybe you need to be carving out that time. But no matter what, they all require decisions of how we spend our time and how we spend our energy.

And I think a lot of times we get used to taking the easy way out and not dealing with it, but then wondering why are we so miserable. And so, I think you just really need to realize, first admit, if you are unhappy. It's okay but admit it. And then secondly, ask yourself, okay, what would make you feel happier or more fulfilled right now.

What is it? Is it work? Is it a certain aspect of work? Do you need to make the difficult decision and find another job or find another company? Right? And it's not fun. That process isn't fun, but it's probably going to be better than sitting and being miserable for another five years or however long, you know, you're going to stay stuck.

So, it's **admitting you're not feeling great**. Two **taking some type of action to change it**. Because no one else is going to do that for you. You have to do it for yourself.

Building Communities and Networks

Carmen Hecox: Another thing that I noticed was a trend within your book is that a lot of these people that you talked about or stories that you talked about the common thread between all of them getting to their happiness was community, network. Can you talk about how people can build those communities or maybe look up and recognize the communities that are right in front of them to help bring them the happiness that's out there?

Shannon Talbot: Yeah, and I'll even share, you know, one of my stories is, you know, when I was really miserable at work, and I didn't know what I wanted to do. I didn't know what my path looked like, and I just felt really stuck, but I was like, where do I even go? I don't even know what's next. No idea what I want to do. And I started reaching out to my network and I would start with one person, and I finally started admitting to them, I'm not happy. Which is really vulnerable to admit, especially when it's kind of, you know, somebody that you don't know who they could tell or whatever, right?

You know, it's not my closest friends I'm telling, I'm starting to tell people in my network. Like, I'm not that happy at work, but I don't know what that next move is, or I don't know what direction I want to take. And I just started being really honest.

Because I'd find people be like, well, what role are you? Like, you know, what's that thing? And I'm like, I don't know. Um, and which is also hard to admit sometimes, especially to certain people, because they're like, well, then you better figure that out. But for me, I was like, no, I don't know, and I need help. And I was amazed, I was prepared for people to be like, well, you, you better go be doing some thinking about this, but no, instead I got, you know what, I think you should talk to this person, and they'll have great insight. And then I would go talk to that person and they'd be like, you know what, I'm going to set up a meeting with you to talk to this person. And my confidence had also been at an all-time low because I just missed out on a job promotion.

And I was just in a, you know, in a very vulnerable state and to all of a sudden have people helping me and introducing me to people. And again, at that time, you know, I was like well, they see something in me that I don't see myself right now. But it helped build that confidence back up. And it, I had met all these great connections that it's funny years later now, like I've had those connections, bring me clients.

And, you know, it's just wonderful when you can start building up, but really for any of you listening, it takes one person. You know, ask, telling one person you need help or sharing a bit of your story and opening up. And then you can even ask them, you know, do you have someone you could introduce me to?

Or do you know of anybody? Or even I do this too, you know, reaching out to people on LinkedIn or Instagram or wherever you are DM'ing them and starting a conversation. Um, that's worked for me too. And it does, it feels a bit weird. And I also want to make sure I don't come across as like icky or slimy. So, I'm very careful with how I craft my message. But it's amazing at sometimes what people are willing to do and how they want to help.

Um, and it, yeah, it just really starts with one person to start forming that or, you know, going and seeing what networking groups are going on in your community. Or what, other groups there are common interest groups and going and just getting to know people. And, you know, it takes time to build relationships.

So, keeping that in mind, it takes time. It takes effort. Again, it's the work, but if you're doing it, then, you know, there'll be some really amazing things that can come from it.

Carmen Hecox: First step is get out of your comfort zone and be open to be vulnerable.

Shannon Talbot: Yes. Yeah.

Carmen Hecox: Cause that was a common thread that I saw in the book that, it was community. A lot of these women moved to the next level because of the community that they embraced.

Shannon Talbot: And I hate saying this because I know a lot of people are job searching right now, but I never, none of my jobs were from me just applying online. All of the jobs I have ever gotten in my life have been through connections. And I think it's just, we need to value our connections more than we realize. And even if nothing, you don't need anybody now to help or support or anything, just keeping the communication opening or offering your help to other people um, so that, you know, down the road when you're, when it might be your turn, that they'll repay the favor.

Shannon's Current Projects and Future Book

Carmen Hecox: Shannon, what are you currently working on? And when can we expect to see any of these projects you're working on?

Shannon Talbot: So, I have three different areas in my business. So, I do, I do talk. So, I go into organizations and associations. Uh, and right now at one of my talks is about my book. So Breaking Free. So, teaching people how they can, you know, stop holding themselves back and start living more authentic lives. I also, uh, do a talk on chasing happy.

So, bringing more happiness. into our lives and into the workplace. Uh, I talk about burnout and other topics like that as well. Uh, I also coach, um, I do coaching. So, I do small group coaching and I do one on one coaching, uh, primarily around helping people build more confidence and clarity in their career paths.

And then my, I started working on my next book. So no, I have no timelines or dates yet, but ah, it's called "Chasing Happy." And it's again, about bringing more happiness into our, into our everyday lives.

Carmen Hecox: Where can people learn more about you and begin to work with you?

Shannon Talbot: Sure, so you can visit my website at ShannonTalbot.com. There's a way to [book a free 15-minute session with me](#). If you want to learn more, you can buy my [book](#) from the website and also just see all of my different programs.

Carmen Hecox: And I will say anyone who is looking for a way to discover what really is holding you back. I strongly recommend this book. This book was not just a pretty book. It was an amazing book, and it has really, I love the lessons that you put in this book. You know, the dig deep, you know, because sometimes some of the, I mean, what I found quite fascinating is some of the things that might be holding you back might not be something that happened in your adult life, it might be something that happened in your childhood life. And so, your book kind of digs deep into discovering what is it. And break you free from that. And I recommend the book. It's a beautiful book.

Shannon Talbot: Thank you.

Carmen Hecox: Shannon, thank you so much for coming on. I will include all of your information in our show notes.

Shannon Talbot: Thanks so much for having me.

Carmen Hecox: A heartfelt thank you to our incredible guest, Shannon Talbot, for sharing her wisdom and experience on today's episode. Shannon, your insights have been truly transformative.

Before we wrap up, I have a special recommendation for our listeners and viewers. Dive into Shannon's book, "Breaking Free." it's a treasure trove of practical tips and tools to help you uncover what's been holding you back and empower you to live the life of your dreams. Find Shannon's information and today's transcript at createthebestme.com/ep072.

And now a quick reminder if this episode resonated with you, hit the subscribe button to stay updated. Next week, we'll be exploring the fascinating world of harnessing creativity and passion in your forties and beyond. Trust me, it's packed with actionable steps. You won't want to miss. Until then, keep dreaming big, take care of yourself, and remember, you are beautiful, strong, and capable of creating the best version of yourself.

Thank you for watching. Tune in next week. Bye for now.