

Ep #335: Attention with Shaun Roney



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Brooke Castillo

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You are listening to *The Life Coach School Podcast* with Brooke Castillo, episode number 335.

Welcome to *The Life Coach School Podcast*, where it's all about real clients, real problems and real coaching. And now your host, Master Coach Instructor, Brooke Castillo.

Brooke: Well hello, my friends. Today, we have a very special guest and a very awesome topic. We are going to talk about attention, or lack thereof. I'm really excited to have one of my coaches, an amazing coach who does coaching on attention with me today to have this conversation. Welcome to the podcast Shaun Roney. So, why don't you just introduce yourself and tell us a little bit about you before we get started?

Shaun: Yeah, thank you so much for having me, first of all. This is a bit of a dream. I got into your podcast four years ago and it was my favorite. I loved it. And this just is exciting and fun, so thank you. I coach women who have ADHD tendencies. And a lot of your teachings resonated with me and my brain was always thinking, like, this applies. And there's a little subtle thing that feels a teeny bit different. And it was also helpful.

And so, I think the way I would put it is you talk about overdrinking and the sliding scale of functioning versus non-functioning. So, I tend to work with people who see themselves on that higher end of the scale, high-functioning.

Brooke: Okay, but before we talk about that, because I love all of that and all your work, I just want to know a little bit about your history. How did you come to being a life coach? How did you come to this journey? Take us back a little bit.

Shaun: Yeah, so I actually wanted to be a child psychologist when I was in college. I got my degree in child development. That takes it way back. And then I did all of the things. I've had like nine careers between then and now, a little bit like a cat with nine lives.

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Brooke: Okay, tell us a few of them.

Shaun: Yeah, so my very first job, I wore a squirrel costume for a picnic ranch in San Ramon.

Brooke: Stop it.

Shaun: I did.

Brooke: No, you didn't. I've always wondered what it's like inside there.

Shaun: It was super-hot. We had to go stand in the full-size freezer to cool off.

Brooke: Oh, my gosh. Okay, so was it awful? Was it terrible?

Shaun: It was, you know, it was not so awesome. I got pulled down one time by the tail. We won't go into that, but... So, I took everything from that, to I was a director at a preschool for a number of years. For like 15 years, my career was preschool and early childhood development. And then I moved into, like, I worked for a payroll company. So, just totally random. And then, I owned a dance studio for seven years and had a bunch of teachers. I danced throughout the whole thing. It was my hobby that became my jobby.

Brooke: What kind of dancing?

Shaun: Tap, jazz, ballet, hip-hop.

Brooke: What?

Shaun: Yeah.

Brooke: Do you have that video of you hip-hop dancing?

Shaun: Oh, my goodness, I don't even know. I will have to dig into the trenches and see.

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Brooke: Alright, check the website, y'all. If she finds one, and she's willing for us to post it you'll see Shaun hip-hop dancing. It's probably amazing. Awesome. Any dancing would work.

Shaun: Okay, I'll see what I can find. And then yeah, life coaching. I hired my first coach when I was about 40 because, actually, I also worked for an international hair product company for seven years. And that really stretched me. So, it felt like a lot randomness in there. But through it all, I loved helping people.

Brooke: So, what did you do at the international hair product company? What was your job there?

Shaun: Everything. Like, I literally started as an assistant, and when I ended, I had like three job titles. It was like the marketing director and the trade show coordinator and the product development person. So, it was an experience that really grew me, yeah.

And then I hired a coach. My son had some struggles. I was taking him to appointments. It sounded like ADHD maybe. And I was like, "Oh, that kind of sounds familiar, some of what they're talking about." And so, I hired a coach. I hit this tipping point at about age 40 where the plates that I had been able to keep in the air started crashing and I couldn't figure out why.

Brooke: Okay, and so were you diagnosed with ADHD?

Shaun: I was.

Brooke: Okay, tell me a little bit about what that was like. First of all, can you tell me what the symptoms were that you were experiencing before you were diagnosed?

Shaun: Yeah, I would just say I didn't actually realize I had symptoms before I was diagnosed. What I noticed was that things felt challenging, just kind of comparing myself to my peers or my sister. I would think to myself, it seems like I'm working super-hard, running on the treadmill faster, and

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kind of not getting to the same place. So, I think that was a subtle thing. And I managed to figure out a lot of workarounds and strategies.

Brooke: Okay, so just tasks and projects and stuff at work would just take you a lot more effort and time than other people?

Shaun: That. And I could see my strengths for sure. Like, oh I have this amazing ability to creatively solve problems and think on my feet and relate with people in a way that some of my coworkers weren't. So, I definitely saw that. But then I was also like, "And it's really hard for me to complete something on time," unless I have that hard deadline or the fear of God. Like, something horrible is going to happen or there's an absolute deadline.

Brooke: Okay interesting. So, you notice some of these symptoms. You took your son in. It sounded familiar. Did your son have it as well?

Shaun: Yes, he did.

Brooke: Okay, interesting. So, when you go in and get diagnosed, I'm just curious, how do they diagnose you? Did they have you take a test or...

Shaun: They ask you a lot of questions. It's a self-assessment, and then you get an assessment done through people that have known you, like an extended period of time in your life.

Brooke: Interesting, okay. And so, what was that like, to get that diagnosis?

Shaun: I mean, it was interesting. On the one hand, it felt like a relief because some things made sense. I was like, "Oh, there's a reason some of this has felt more challenging. And then, I kind of flipped very quickly to the other side and so, like, now what do I want to do about it? Because I don't want it to be an excuse. Like, it's not a reason meaning, "Okay, let's just accept that and that's what I'm going to wave in front of me." It was more just like, "Okay, I have more information. Now, where do I want to go?"

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Brooke: Interesting, okay. So, do you know, do many women have ADHD, or even some tendency towards it that interferes with them being able to get their work done?

Shaun: Yeah, it's interesting. I don't know the percentage of women in the general population. But what I do know is it's very common for women to be diagnosed much later in life.

Brooke: Interesting, okay. Why do you think that is?

Shaun: Well, a lot of it has to do with there's three different types now, according to the DSM. And I'm not a doctor, but I'm just going to share what I know of this. There's hyperactive impulsive type, and then there's what's called inattentive type, and then there's what's called combined type. And so, all the research and studies, a lot of it has been done on that first type, the hyperactive impulsive, and done on boys in school.

Brooke: Right, because they can't sit still and they can't get their work done. Interesting, okay.

Shaun: It's very visual and easy to notice versus, for women, for girls, it's more of the daydreamy creative types, like maybe in class they're looking out the window because the teacher's kind of boring. So, they're less noticed until they hit this tipping point later in life where it's like, "Oh wait, something's going on here."

Brooke: And the symptoms, the things that sounded familiar, what you had said, you can't keep focused, you can't get things done, you can't keep all the plates spinning all of a sudden. And so, you go in and find out that you have, you know – and maybe someone doesn't even need to go in and get diagnosed. Maybe they just recognize this tendency in themselves. So, when we do acknowledge that, or maybe we do get a medical diagnosis with that, what do we do after that?

Shaun: Yeah, so I think that was where that question was, like what's next? And hiring a coach was really helpful. That's when I hired my first coach,

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before I really even knew what life coaching was. I didn't really want to go on medication, but I was open to trying anything. And I tried it for, I don't know, a week. And I didn't like all the side effects for me. So, personally, it wasn't the route that I decided to go. So, then I was like, what's next? What else can I do? And just started Googling and found a coach that specialized in ADHD.

Brooke: Okay, and can you tell us a little bit about what that experience was like? That was your very first coaching experience, so what was it like for you?

Shaun: Yeah it was. Honestly, it was amazing. She was, like, it could be done online, and she happened to be not that far from me. I was in Sacramento at the time, Elk Grove, and she was in Granit Bay. And I was like, "No, I'm going to drive to you every week, if that's okay." And she was like, sure. So, it was good. I just had this hour where I felt like I could go and dump by brain out and she could kind of help me sort through it, and then she would lift up the stuff that maybe I wanted to spotlight or needed some attention. That's how it felt.

Brooke: That's such a great explanation. I would think for anyone who has a hard time paying attention – so, all of what we teach is let's get a hold of what's in our brain and have a look at it. But if you have a hard time focusing, if you have a hard time getting stuff done, it may even seem like you don't have that hour to be able to – I love the way you described it. It's like, empty it out. I see all these puzzle pieces that you're emptying out and then having someone help you sort through it and look at it. And for me, when I do it, it's really about clarifying what is worthy of my attention, what should, if I have a limited amount of attention, if I have a deficit of attention, then it's even more important for me to understand where should I constrain my attention to?

So, okay, so you would go in there and she would help you pull some of those things out. And then would you leave feeling differently or what was that life?

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Shaun: I would. I would leave and it felt like I had just gotten a really great massage. I don't know if you know that feeling, but I'd be kind of floating for a couple of days after. I felt like that, but it was like a mental massage. I was just like, I felt clearer. I felt heard.

And it was mixed with a little bit of, I will say in the beginning, trepidation. I remember actually having the thought, like, I don't really know – like, she's good and I love the way this feels, but I'm expecting her to be doing more. Like, I expected her to be doing some of the heavy lifting.

Brooke: That's good. And sometimes, as coaches, because now you're a coach, you probably understand that, it's like I remember when I went to my first therapist and I was like, "So, can you fix me?" I feel like, I can I just deliver myself to you and you just fix this hit mess and then I go back out into the world? And of course, thank goodness that's not how it works because you have to figure out how to do it for yourself. Okay, so you were sold on coaching. You thought this is great. And then at some point, you decided you wanted to become a coach, yeah?

Shaun: I did, yes. So, I was in the hair job, the international hair job at that time. And I just started to think, like, what's next for me? I started that on a whim almost and it has been great, and I felt like there was something more. I had figured out a lot of the challenges and that was attractive to me. And once the challenges started to calm down, which I think is another quality of having a neurodivergent of ADHD brain, when the challenges died down I was like, "Okay, now what?"

Brooke: Interesting, okay. So, not good at staying focused and keeping going when there's not a lot of stuff that requires you to focus on it, right?"

Shaun: Yeah, fires or burning buildings...

Brooke: You like putting out fires.

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Shaun: Yes, and I think literally, that is common also. You will find a lot of neurodivergent brains, ADHD brains in those jobs, firefighters, navy seals...

Brooke: Like literal firefighters?

Shaun: Literal because of the dopamine involved. So yeah.

Brooke: That's interesting. It's funny, when I first started my company, we talked a lot about how we don't need people that are good at putting out fires, right, because we don't want there to be any fires. And sometimes, you know, when we get bored and our brains want a little excitement, it's almost like we inadvertently create those fires and create the drama to keep our brain focused and stimulated. So, that's kind of fascinating. So, your job become easier and then you got bored.

Shaun: Yes, and then I kind of went back to, like, how do I want to help people? Like, I started with this child psychologist thing that I wanted to do and then life got busy and I had kids and now here I was, they were getting older and I had options. And so that coach offered a certification program specifically to be an ADHD coach and I went through that.

Brooke Interesting, okay, cool. And so, they basically teach you how to work with people who – now, the people that you work with don't necessarily have to be diagnosed?

Shaun: They don't. About 50-50 I'd say, for people I work with.

Brooke: Okay, so how would you describe a client that would benefit from working with you?

Shaun: So, feeling overwhelmed, scattered. They think they're not quite living up to their potential. IQ has nothing to do with it, so super-smart, really brilliant minds and yet they feel like there's this hurdle that they can't even see, let alone get over. They're not sure what the hurdle is, how high

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it is. They just think it's their brain, honestly. Like, something's not quite working with their brain, so there's some brain blame, and a lot of shame.

Brooke: Brain blame, I do a lot of that, Shaun.

Shaun: Yeah, I think that's why I loved your podcast also.

Brooke: There's a lot of brain blame. But I mean, in this case, it really is their brain, right? It's something that's going on in there.

Shaun: Which is awesome because I feel like that's where I meet them, when we first get connected. They don't realize that often. They think it's them, there's just something wrong with them and they can't figure out – they know what they should be doing, and yet they can't get themselves to do it. There's a lot of shame. I think executive function challenges, which is what ADHD is, affects things like time awareness and the passing of time and productivity and planning, prioritizing. And we almost, as a society, like it's almost a moral sin to be late or a moral sin to not be as productive as you want to be...

Brooke: Or miss a deadline.

Shaun: Yeah, so I think that's the first piece when I find them. It's kind of the same with weight loss. You can't shame yourself to a lower weight. You can't shame yourself into changing the way you show up. So, let's look at why it's happening.

Brooke: Well that's interesting, right, because if you have something going wrong or something ineffective with your brain and feeling like there's something wrong with you literally because you can't get stuff done on time or you can't complete projects or you're not showing up on time, I think that could give the impression to someone that you just don't care, that the work doesn't matter. And then, all of a sudden, you're heaping that on top of this challenge that you already have, which will probably affect your self-esteem and your ability to then have the energy to even overcome the issues that you're dealing with in your brain. That is really interesting.

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Shaun: Yeah.

Brooke: And I love that you said that it has nothing to do with your intelligence because I do think that you could start making that about, “I’m just not smart enough. I’m just not capable enough of getting this work done.”

Shaun: That is the main thought that comes up, like belief in their capability is just not there. Like, this sounds great. I think it’s the biggest challenge when I’m talking to someone who’s tried thinking about coaching is, “It sounds great and I see what you’re saying and how it’s helping you, but I don’t know that I’m capable of that. My brain’s different.”

Brooke: Yeah, and in many ways you’re right, but that doesn’t mean that you can’t accomplish what you want to accomplish. So, I think that’s pretty extraordinary, the way you saw that was, I have this diagnosis, I have this challenge, I have this obstacle, and now what will I do? Not just to overcome the obstacle or to utilize tools to make it so it doesn’t affect me negatively, but how can I also use it to make me stronger? Because like you said, you have all these strengths that you had acknowledged in yourself and you are able to get so much done now and be so organized and have your own business. So, how did coaching help you get there?

Shaun: It, I think, just really helped me take a look at my thoughts, first of all. So, awareness around what I’m thinking. I think a big thing is, you talk about thoughts running in the background, just beliefs we’ve had. And yes, that’s happening all the time for all of us. And the percentage of them that are negative and the percentage of them that are on repeat from day to day.

And then, in addition to that, I feel like what I noticed for myself was when you have this type of ADHD brain, you also have a big bold thought that will pop to the forefront of your mind, let’s say like every 10 seconds. So, if you think of it as like a computer operating system and there’s those silent thoughts that are just kind of running in the background, and then you

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picture, every 10 seconds, like a big bold bright different colored, sometimes sparkly thought that pushes through to the forefront. That is kind of what it can feel like.

And I think coaching helped me realize I don't have to give attention to those thoughts that are pushing through. Like, nothing awful is going to happen if I just kind of let it recede back into the background.

Brooke: Because otherwise it would come and distract you?

Shaun: Yeah. You're like, "Oh my gosh, that's a great idea." And then there's like five more ideas that spiral off of it."

Brooke: Okay, it's like you should go do this and did you forget about doing this thing and maybe this is a good idea... interesting. You could just be like, "You're noted. Go back." Interesting. Okay, that's cool.

So, what do you think about this idea, when I was thinking and preparing for this podcast, I was thinking about how attention is so rare now, even just getting someone's attention in a conversation is so rare because of all of our technology and all of the devices that we all have that seem very important, like those little dings and those little notifications and all of that?

So, if you already are struggling to focus and then you have a phone that's constantly – you have these sparkly thoughts that are coming in your mind and then you have this phone that's like, "Don't forget about me, something probably happened in the last six seconds online." What are your thoughts on that and how do you talk to your clients about that?

Shaun: Yeah, it's funny. It's not helpful. The sparkly things are everywhere. I also think what it's done though, those people that are at the 10 end of the scale, so very high functioning, or don't even consider themselves on the scale yet maybe, so just typical society is experiencing some of the challenges that someone with ADHD tendency have. It's kind of being recreated in this way where people are now like, "Doesn't everybody have ADHD?" Well, not really, but you probably know what it feels like because

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what you just described is what's happening, right, all the distractions and having to pull yourself back and refocus.

Brooke: Interesting. So, if you have both, it's kind of like – I would think if you have ADHD tendencies, you would want to be super-careful about phone usage, or at least having your phone on or dinging or whatever because you're already dealing with a layer of that – is that true or what are your thoughts on that?

Shaun: Yes. I think yes and no. I think it's really individual. So, I think there's as many – ADHD looks as different as there are people that have it. and so, it doesn't show up the same for everybody. So, for people that are really visual, they may be tied to their calendar and, like, keeping it on their phone and nearby is handy. But then turning off the sound may be really helpful or setting notifications to visual-only. And I think that piece of it is different for everybody.

Brooke: Yeah, I think that for me, when I was thinking about – because I am able, more than most I think, to stay really focused on something for a long period of time and to be uncomfortable and to be tempted and to have lots of distractions and still not give into any of them and stay disciplined enough to get it done.

And I was trying to figure out – because I don't think I was always like that. When I was in school, I was always last minute, procrastination. But I do think that since I've been doing thought work, I have become much more aware of my thoughts just being thoughts. I think that kind of speaks to what you were saying. It allows me to recognize them for what they are and not for, like, commands.

So, I'm like, that's just a thought. I don't have to get up and go see who's at the door. I don't have to answer the phone. I don't have to see what's going on, on the internet, I don't need to go to the bathroom right now and I'm not hungry. Those are all the thoughts that I just had in this three minutes. And just, like you had said, push them back to the, "Not now, not now, not now,"

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because I recognize that they're thoughts. And I think when you don't have thought work, you think that they're – I mean, they do kind of feel like commands, don't they? Like focus on this now. And isn't this boring? Which your ADHD brain is not going to like, which is what so much of the hard work of building your business is and working on stuff, right? I mean, that's what it feels like. So, when you're coaching someone, is it really just a lot of awareness thought work that you're doing with them to help them understand that?

Shaun: It is, for sure. Especially in the beginning, to get rid of that whole shame piece, because it's just so not helpful. I like the analogy, I used this recently and it seemed helpful. When you consider an Olympic sprinter that runs a mile in, let's say, three and a half minutes, and then you consider an Olympic marathoner who runs a marathon in two and a half hours, the marathoner runs a mile in five and a half minutes. So you've got three and a half minutes and five and a half minutes. And so, if the sprinter were to jump in and decide to run a marathon and run it at their normal pace of three and a half minutes, about mile 22, they're going to pass out. Are you with me?

Brooke: Yeah, totally.

Shaun: So, I think when we have ADHD tendencies, that happens a lot. I get 80% of the way and I just can't. I lose it. I drop it. I set it down. I just can't continue anymore. And I think it's a very similar thing that happens. And so, they tend to think something's gone wrong or something's wrong with me. But the Olympic sprinter doesn't think that. They just are trying to run the marathon at too fast of a pace. So, it's counterintuitive. But getting someone to slow down is what's really helpful in the beginning.

Brooke: Interesting. Because the tendency is, I'm not getting stuff done, I'm not meeting my deadlines. The last thing I need to do is slow down. But because I'm running so fast, I'm not pacing myself, I'm not managing my brain properly, so I'm never going to make it to the finish line. Oh, that is a really good analogy.

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Shaun: Yeah, and slowing down can look like constraint, which you talk about, which was really hard in the beginning. I was like, “I don’t know about that. I don’t know that this constraint thing is going to be helpful.” But that is what slowing down can look like, or planning, or any of those things that are actually using our thinking brain and on purpose and deciding what we want. So, it is uncomfortable.

Brooke: And I do think – I’ll be curious to hear what you think about this. I do think a lot of our attention is based on our decisions. And so, we don’t recognize how valuable our attention is, what we focus on, what we put into our brain. Because we intend to do is what we’re going to put into our brain, and what we put into our brain is going to help us with whatever we produce.

And so, if we’re not deciding consciously what to focus on during our day or what to think about or what to ingest, literally, into our brains, we lose so much of our power. And I think that’s why the way you describe it is we feel scattered and we feel overwhelmed and we feel like the world is crazy because we can’t be conscious enough with our own decisions on our attention. So, have you found for you and your clients that that’s an important piece, like what you had said planning, deciding what matters, to focus on that sort of thing?

Shaun: Yes. Decision-making is huge. It’s the other strong component, along with working on reducing the shame, making more powerful decisions, figuring out what you really like, what you really want, why you want to be on time or why you want to plan is important. Because if you’re doing it because the voice in your brain from when you were a child is saying you should be doing more, you’re not living up to your potential, why can’t you just be on time, which are the thoughts that they normally come with, you can’t really work on them with that. So, deciding on purpose, no, I actually want to be on time because it feels good, I enjoy being on time, and I now believe I’m capable, right?

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Brooke: Yeah, that's interesting because this can end up becoming part of your identity, especially, I think, if you get a diagnosis of it, right? Oh this is an issue with my brain, this is why I can't do all these things I wish I could do. I can't be on time. I can't get my work done. I can't stay focused. And I think utilizing the tools that you offer in your practice, to be able to understand – and I think this is key too – understand yes, your brain is different. And how you decide to think about that and how you decide to feel about that will affect what you end up doing.

And especially in the beginning, I think it would be super-important to process all your emotion about that. Because like you had said, there could be a sense of relief. But there could also be a sense of, you know, unfairness and frustration and why me and I don't want to have to deal with this. Or I tried the medication and it didn't work for me or I didn't like the side effects, so now I'm just screwed, being a person that doesn't show up on time or doesn't get their work done.

And what you're saying is that it doesn't have to be that way. And yes, it may be more challenging, but it's less challenging when you utilize the tools, yeah?

Shaun: Yeah, and then once you strengthen those muscles, you start to change your beliefs about yourself. So, then you start to have evidence that you can be on time or that you can finish things. I literally broke it down for myself, when it came to finishing things, I remember the belief was, I'm not a finisher. I'm a great starter and I just don't finish things well.

And then I inched my way up the scale. I asked myself for evidence. And this was when I was listening to your podcast way back when. Where is evidence that I do finish things? What have I finished? And then I found that and that got me up the scale, to like a 10 maybe, from zero. And I kind of inched my way up until I found myself at 51%. Like, half of the time, I finish things. Half of the time, I don't. And then I tipped to 51% and I was like, "I'm a finisher."

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Brooke: That's awesome. Which is true, right? That's so good.

Shaun: Well, then once I believed it, I just finished much more often. And now, if I don't, it's because I chose not to. It's not because I had no control over it.

Brooke: That's so good. So, I'm imagining someone listening to this. It's kind of meta, right? Let's think about there's someone just like you who just found my podcast who's listening to us talk right now who is like, "They're describing me. This is totally me." And also imagine them saying, "But I don't have time to go and get a coach, and I don't have time to slow down. I'm already so overwhelmed, I have so much to do, I don't know that I could hire Shaun to help me with this." What would you say to that person?

Shaun: Yeah, well, I love the whole concept that you teach about time being a mental construct. It really is. And so, I think it's almost like how can you not take the time to do this? I would give the analogy of I used to believe I didn't have time to walk in the morning because I had too many things to do. And inevitably, every time I'd walk in the morning, I would kill my schedule, knock everything out, and have like three hours at the end to spare.

So, it's kind of the same, if you do the heavy lifting on the frontend, even if you don't believe it will be helpful, you'll start to build up evidence, like, how did I think otherwise?

Brooke: Yes, and even your example of just, like, having somewhere to empty your brain. I remember Lauren Cash one time said it's like saying you don't have time to program the GPS before you start driving. It's going to take you so much longer to get there if you don't know where you're going and if you don't have a plan, and especially if you have a tendency to be distracted and have a hard time focusing on what you're doing and just staying committed to it.

I think that taking the time to just talk about your brain, to talk about the thoughts that are going on in there and then to make a conscious decision

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about how you want to spend your time and attention. I think that one of the most important things – I see this a lot with my friend Kris Plachy, who I talk to all the time on the phone. I can always tell what she's been paying attention to by her voice. I can always tell if she's been watching the news. I can tell if she's been on Twitter. I can tell whether she's getting her work done by, like, her affect, how she's showing up. And she'll go, "I just decided to take a break," is what people say, "I decided to take a break from coaching and take a break from managing my mind and just kind of let myself be free."

And I think what people think is, like, because I get a relief in that moment, I let myself off the hook in the moment. This is a healthy good thing for me to do. And I think it's the opposite. What do you think?

Shaun: I think it's the opposite. I mean, I would call it an indulgent emotion. And I teach a lot about them from what you've taught. So, I'm like, yeah, if you get relief in the moment – this has come up in the last week quite a bit. If you get a little bit of relief in the moment but it's keeping you from what you really want to do, what you've decided ahead of time to do, it's an indulgent emotion. Let's just call it what it is.

And then I think the other piece of that, that came up recently was yes, there can be this tendency. I loved your all or nothing podcast because that is another tendency that shows up. So, to swing from the highest of highs down to the lowest of lows, and are you willing to look at that a little bit? Like, let's just do the math. If productivity, you're know you're going to have so many hours where you're highly productive and so many hours where you're low-productivity or less productive, how do you want to allocate those hours, instead of knocking it out during the week and then crashing on the weekend? How does that feel?

Brooke: Yes, and I think too, I think it's important to normalize thoughts like, "I really just need to take the rest of the day off." I must have that thought, like, seven times a day, "I should really just cancel the rest of my day and take the day off." And I never do it. But the thought always comes. And I'm

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like, I'm sure there's something on Netflix. It would be so fun to just put my curtains down and just climb in bed. And it just sounds like a legitimate idea. And it is. I mean, you can do that. And sometimes, I do. I mean, usually on the weekend I'll do something crazy like that for myself. I'll just be like, "Okay, let's do this."

And then, I get in bed in the middle of the day and I'm like, "Okay, this is not what I want." But it's just the brain, like, this is uncomfortable, I want to get away from this. So, I think it's important to just normalize that. A lot of us have those thoughts and you're going to have them, like you said, a lot more often if you have ADHD or any kind of attention deficit at all, you're going to have those more often. But you can recognize them for what they are. You don't have to let them completely run your life. Coaching can help you with that.

So, what would it be like if I wanted to work with you? If I'm intrigued, I'm like, "Okay, maybe I do need some coaching around this." What would that process look like?

Shaun: Yeah, so we would jump on a consultation. You would tell me all the things, like why you were even curious, interested, what's been going on? Basically, we cover the life, some major areas in life so I can see if there are any patterns. We talk about sleep and caffeine, just because I know the things that kind of feed into ADHD and how much of a role they're playing, exercise.

So, my tipping point came because I stopped teaching dance 40 hours a week and started a desk job. And I didn't know it was dopamine related, right? So, I notice patterns like that. And then we go from there really. Yeah, if it seems like a good fit and they were experiencing enough discomfort, I think that's another thing you alluded to a little bit. Like, what if the person thinks they don't have time? Then I'm like, they're not quite at the place where it's interrupting their day enough and they've gotten really uncomfortable and they're just over it.

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I sometimes think it's the last frontier because when you are really smart, you're able to figure things out and troubleshoot and problem-solve. And you can get a lot done. It's kind of like the way you talk about willpower. And so, I think they don't look at it until they are like, "Okay, I've pushed it and now I just can't get any further unless something else changes."

Brooke: Yeah, you know, it's interesting. I have a friend who I think has a hard time focusing her attention. And what happens with her is she tries to use willpower to break through it and then she gets exhausted and then she gets brain fog. So then, she gets to the point where she can't even think at all. She can't access any kind of high-functioning brain, you know, strategy. And I think that's another time where it's like – because when she told me that, I'm like, "You need to get help. You need to get a coach. Even if it's just someone you can talk to about it."

Even you just telling me, on a consultation call, someone is able to tell you what's going on with them. There's something powerful about having someone listen to you, just hear your thoughts out loud with you and understand, especially since you personally have the same experience. I think that's really powerful too. Okay, so if they do the consultation and decide it's a good fit, is it just that I would meet with you an hour a week? How does it work?

Shaun: Yeah, so it's an hour a week. I tend to work with people for six months at a time now because that is just where I've seen the most traction. Like, the beliefs they have, have been there a very long time. And it just takes some time. It's not like – they come to me and want me to tell them what's the best planner...

Brooke: What's the best planner and is there a vitamin I should take?

Shaun: Yeah, I haven't found the right planner. Or we'll get off and they're like, "Yeah, you're hired. But can you just tell me, what's the best planner, in your opinion?" And I'm like, there's no planer, people. The people that

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make planners are not the ADHD brains. They make them for ADHD brains and none of them...

Brooke: That's so funny. That's what people ask me all the time. They're like, "You're so successful. Which calendar do you use?" I'm like, listen, my calendar does not make me successful. It's my coaching on my brain and being able to focus and understanding without judgment. I love what you said, you know, you just work through the shame first. Like, however your brain is functioning is exactly how it needs to function. And a lot of people that have ADHD are also my favorite people because they're so creative and resilient and able to overcome obstacles too.

So, I think that there are a lot of benefits that you can see within any diagnosis that you get. You can use it to make you stronger or weaker. Isn't that absolutely the case? Okay, so tell us, if we want to work with you, how can we get ahold of you? How can we get this free consultation with you?

Shaun: Yeah, so you can go to my website, revealedpath.com and book a consult right there. And we jump on Zoom or the phone. I do either. Because of the tension, some people prefer phone. And we go from there.

Brooke: Okay, let me just play devil's advocate here a little bit. Like, if I am a little freaked out about doing that, like I don't know what I'm going to say to you, you seem like an amazing professional coach, I don't know how to describe, or maybe I'm embarrassed to tell you everything that's going on, what are your thoughts?

Shaun: Yeah, like just take the chance for yourself, honestly. My goal on a consult is to just offer as much help as possible. I remember where I was when I found my first coach and it took some work to actually find someone and I don't think, like, nothing will surprise me, honestly. I think that's a nonissue. And I just love people and having the conversations. It is my favorite subject and I think awareness is key and so, the only way people are going to get more awareness is to take a chance.

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Brooke: So true. Awesome. Thank you so much for coming on the podcast and talking about this. I know that so many of my listeners struggle with this. And I think probably many of you haven't known what to call it or haven't understood that maybe that could be me. I think based on what you said, Shaun, I think when people think about ADHD, they think about the young kid in the school classroom that can't sit still.

And many of us can sit still. We just can't stay focused long enough. And so, if that feels like you or if you're unsure, you're not sure, I'm sure that talking to Shaun will be very beneficial and she'll be able to kind of lead you in the right direction of anything that you want to be doing that you're not able to currently be doing. So, thank you so much for coming on the podcast. That's revealedpath.com?

Shaun: Yep.

Brooke: Revealedpath.com Co check her out, my friends. Alright, talk to you all next week. Take care. Bye.

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