

Rai ([00:00](#)):

Welcome to the SOAR! Podcast. Today, we have Shanna Robinson, the CEO and creative director of the Branding Boutique, and one of my closest friends. And I'm so excited to have you here. So tell our listeners a little bit about you. Introduce yourself,

Shana ([00:19](#)):

Everyone. So I am just like grace said, I own the Branding Boutique, which is based out of Miami, but I'm actually Canadian from Winnipeg, Manitoba. Just that experience in itself has given me such a wide range of experience as well as just the opportunities that can come when you really decide to bet on yourself and dive into this entrepreneurial world. I know we're going to dive into so much more, so I'm not going to do the boring, normal accolades, whatever type stuff I know it will all come out as we unravel.

Rai ([00:57](#)):

You don't do anything normal, Normal is not your thing. You go several notches above normal. So I've had the privilege of being your copywriter on your team. And so I've gotten to know a lot of your backstory and that's one of the reasons, one of the many reasons why I really wanted to have you on the show because you have such a beautiful story. That was like, "why haven't I been doing this my whole life?" And so you mentioned the phrase betting on yourself. So tell me about how your, you know, I usually say freelance journey, but for you, it was really a journey to becoming a CEO, to stepping into your CEO shoes. Tell me about what that was like for you.

Shana ([01:36](#)):

So if we go back a long time ago to 24, you know, that's where it all started. I was at this crossroads just personally in life where, you know, I didn't go to post-secondary education. I was working in daycares and, you know, just odd jobs, which are obviously very respectable, but, I wasn't thinking about that plan, future planning. And I was also what I would say. I had a PhD in clubbing back in those days, I was in the clubs like every single night, I knew all the bouncers. It was a lot of fun. For anybody who knows me, I have a big personality. I love to dance. I have a Caribbean background, but in the life department, I wasn't really doing myself a lot of service. And so one day I walked into my job. I was working for a chiropractor at the time.

Shana ([02:32](#)):

Who's actually my cousin's husband. And I walked out not very long later without a job. And that was kind of that moment of you're like 24, you fail. And I had to go home and kind of hang my head and really be able to say like, what am I going to do now? And I remember feeling like I was out of options. My peers had, you know, gone to university, they had educations here. I was in this word of failure, just kind of kept coming up for me in life. And you know, we all believe in different things. So whether you believe in the universe, God astrology, whatever, everything was aligned. And life coaching was something that I typed in. And I started to look at programs and there was this lady who had actually done a teaching for us when I worked at a daycare and I recognized her and she was hosting like a summer intensive.

Shana ([03:35](#)):

I had no job. I had no commitments. I was free. So I, you know, I got fired on like a Wednesday and I was down in her office on Friday dropping, you know, quite a bit of money on my mom's credit card. And

you know, that was it. And so from that part, I went through the program. I was the youngest in the program and my instructor saw something in me and she asked me to join her team. I joined her team and I thought I had made it right. I was like, this is it. This is what I'm going to do with the rest of my life. I'm going to be a life coach is going to be amazing. Like everything's fantastic. And it didn't take a long time for some of those old habits that I had to creep in one and two to recognize that, you know, the vision that I had for myself as a life coach, even though I was given that autonomy to build whatever I wanted, actually wasn't there. I describe it like becoming the glorified secretary to my boss. And so it didn't take long for me to start venturing out and finding my own clients so that there was no conflict. And I started coaching evenings and weekends. And you know, about two months later, I decided to leave and step out on my own. And it's so funny for me because Facebook constantly reminds me that, like, I don't know if I can cuss on here,

Rai ([05:04](#)):

Okay, yes to cussing, this is early in the show. Let's warn everyone. There will always be lots of cussing on the soar podcast.

Shana ([05:14](#)):

Like Facebook constantly reminds you that like four or five years ago, you weren't shit. Like I thought, you know, I was like, I'm doing the thing. Getting three likes. And I thought I was killing it. Like no comments, no engagement leading nobody anywhere. But I was doing it and being paid like 50 bucks an hour for a session. And I was just on top of the world. And I want to go back to that far because I think a lot of us forget what our beginning stages look like. We forget who we were and what led us there. But the journey has continued over the past six years of ebbing and flowing between life coaching and finding like myself in that. And it, the, the best part of it was that my clients told me what I did for them.

Shana ([06:07](#)):

You know? I remember them just being like, I feel so confident when I'm around you. And I feel like I can do anything. And in life coaching, you're taught to just coach generally, but they gave me my niche. And, you know, as I progressed through that, working with different mentors and different programs, it really was. Finding where do I fit in, in all of this? I had a lot of coaches tell me, nobody's going to pay you for life coaching the way you want to be paid. Nobody's going to pay for this. Like, you have to change this. There's all of these. This is what you should do. Yeah. And I think through that process, I wasn't strong enough to really know what my core was. So you go, okay, I'm paying this money. They know better than me. They're in a better position than me.

Shana ([06:57](#)):

So you listen. So I went from life coaching to teaching other coaches how to coach and the business of it, because that was something that I wasn't taught. I did have to figure that out. And so that was a lot of fun. And I remember that being called the program Behind the Brand, that's the first time when I created Behind the Brand. And since we've repurposed that, but it was a lot of fun to teach other people what I hadn't learned about this. And very shortly after it was, you know, I got connected with one of the top speakers in the world, and this was such a massive lesson for me this season of life. But I got connected with one of the top speakers in the world was completely infatuated with them, their program, everything invested thousands of dollars that I did not have and went all in. And this all started because he said like, what does it look like to bet on yourself? If anytime in my life, I bet on myself, it was then I said, I was going to yeah,

Rai ([08:00](#)):

You bet big on yourself, multiple times But the pattern that I'm seeing is that every time you've done that, even if this, the experience itself didn't end up being what you're doing now, it got you one step closer to what you were meant to be doing.

Shana ([08:15](#)):

Absolutely. And in the midst of it, you feel like you're lost, but when you can kind of come to a full circle spot, which does happen he gets really exciting. But yeah, I decided, okay, I'm going to go all chips in. I went through this program, I came out the first female, first Canadian speaker out of the speaker program. And, you know, it was such a disappointment to see that they didn't follow through on what they promised. So you do all the work, you make all the payments, you scrounge that money together. I remember drinking water for meals and this, I always refer to this as my desert season. It's this time where, and from an outward sense, you're like, I'm with this top speaker, I'm doing this, I'm making all these moves, I'm traveling. Internally, like there's so much fear and regret and shame and just discomfort because I'm like, I can't eat.

Shana ([09:20](#)):

And, but I can't tell people that I can't eat because I'm portraying this image that looks like things are moving forward. And then where does that onus go? So when you're lacking in that confidence in yourself and you're trying so hard to get somewhere, you feel like it must be you, it must be me. Who's not doing something right, because I'm not in a better position. And it took me a really long time to realize that that just wasn't the case. So in that season, I packed up my apartment. I, you know, it was one of the most humbling experiences of like I felt like I had made it and then lost it all all within 12 months. And to this day, that apartment is still in storage, but there were so many blessings that came out of that desert season. You know, I remember this was back when we were producing \$5,000 brands. I had no idea what, what a profit margin was.

Shana ([10:22](#)):

I still wasn't eating.

Rai ([10:26](#)):

You were paying your whole team, but you still weren't eating.

Shana ([10:30](#)):

Girl, I was not even paying the team. If we can be real, if we can be real, I was just trying to keep the lights on and try. And I was house poor, right. I was paying for my apartment when I could pay for it. And I was so grateful to have this team who was riding with me, but just like anything that tapers out because other people have their own things to take care of. And so the team fell apart and that brought me to, I have to have something that I can do by myself and that it was amazing because one of the projects that we did finish as a team actually got the attention of this lady who was doing a shoot out in Paris. And she wanted to, you know, have me come on set for her and I had never done on set. So I was like obviously, so literally imagine

Rai ([11:24](#)):

Like, free trip to parents. Yes, please. Right?

Shana ([11:26](#)):

Yeah! Imagine your family and friends are cleaning up and packing up your apartment. You're sitting on one of those big Tupperware, like bins, your laptops on another one. And you're sitting conducting meetings this way. That was it. And getting that call going out there, styling on set was amazing. I fell in love instantly and went to Miami from there. Because that's where my partner was stationed at the time and just had this new lease on life. And within a couple months, my mentor passed the mentor from the coaching program. Like I always used to joke with him that he was a very expensive lesson for me because that program ran me over 20 K. But the best thing I got out of that was my mentor. And I'll never forget my clients flying in. I have to pick her up at the airport and I get the news that breakfast that he didn't wake up. And so here you are with all this renewed energy and excitement and direction, and you're literally about to go do the first shoot that you've ever like enjoyed doing your way. And you get this bombshell of a news. And I remember just being like, I have to get through today. I have to compartmentalize. Oh. And the thing is, she knew him as well. That's how we got connected. So I had to tell her, and we both had to sit there and mourn what that, what that was.

Rai ([13:08](#)):

Right before. She's about to go onsite. And you're about to style someone in person for the first time in Paris.

Shana ([13:15](#)):

Right! And it's like, what in the world? So, so there's just all of these things that you go through on your journey to CEO on your journey in entrepreneurship that you can't see, but are building you. And I fell in love from that point as a creative director, and as an image consultant by really just, you know, from afar, being able to style my clients and learn about the woman and build their confidence and help them see who they were, because that's something that a lot of us struggle with. We struggle with our bodies. We struggle with our own image, how we show up, how we present ourselves. It's so much more than the clothes, the hair, the makeup it's what are you embodying? Um

Rai ([14:01](#)):

Especially when we're surrounded by the Instagrams and the YouTube beauties and like, oh, just so much standards so much in terms of the society standards that we're told, oh, this is how you look good. This is what you're supposed to do. This is how you're supposed to mark it. You're supposed to do all the things.

Shana ([14:21](#)):

Yeah, yeah. And then you're like, well, where does that leave me? Where do I fall in the midst of this? You know, I know there's debates. Like, should I comb my hair to go on zoom? Should I not? Should I, you know, you guys laying, you know, I combed my hair just for you! You know, should I have a full face of makeup? Should I be dressed? Should I, whatever. And my answer is different for every single client, you know, would you be embarrassed pitch, would you be embarrassed to sell if you met somebody the way that you look?

Rai ([14:56](#)):

It comes down to who is she? Not for you. And what are your standards? What are Shana's standards? Who is the woman? What are her standards for herself?

Shana ([15:05](#)):

Absolutely. And if you haven't established those or checked in with those in awhile, or you set them based on a lower version of your standards, then it's time to reevaluate that. But my Miami coming from Paris, going to Miami, Miami just gave me this amazing, like lease on life, new energy. And I felt at home there, and it was really the birthplace of the Branding Boutique, even though technically the Boutique started in Winnipeg three years prior with those 5k packages. It was my second stab at it. And, you know, we got connected very shortly after we started putting the words and the voice and the personality to the brand. And we did a lot of work.

Shana ([15:55](#)):

It's crazy how much time it's been almost two years now since you and I met and so much has happened and I've been able to see you in Miami. And we did one of my photo shoots there, and I got to see you in your element. And so to me, just being in your life for the last two years, it seems like you have really found your thing. Like this is it. This is Shana. She is the Creative Director. She is the Stylist. She is the woman who can hold the big picture vision for the other woman. And so I'm wondering, there were a few times in your story where you mentioned that you felt like you had made it, those were your words. He said, I felt like I made it. So how do you know when, to me it feels like this is you making it. This is where you're meant to be. You're doing what you're meant to be doing. You have this amazing team around you, you found your soulmate, right-hand woman in your business, who you struggled for a long time to find that person. And so how do you know that this is it? And one of those other turning points weren't right.

Shana ([17:02](#)):

I think the beauty of it fitting here six years later is that every single part of what I did in those previous six years still lives in this version. I coach my clients all the time. We have real life woman to woman conversations every day where we're talking about those insecurities, those fears, those doubts, the shame, the regrets, the mental barriers that are holding them back. So I coach all the time, you know, when I'm image consulting, it's yes, I'm doing that in conjunction with your brand shoot, but I'm also helping you see and realize this different version of yourself that you've either been too afraid to tap into, didn't feel you could command, or you have never been exposed to it yet. And there's something powerful about when another woman can stand in front of you and say, this is what I see. You do it with me, for me all the time with your words, Brittany does it for me all the time when with her affirmations and, you know, just confirmation of where the business is going, you know, with our designs, with everything, it's essential to have that around you. And I feel like we don't have that enough.

Rai ([18:21](#)):

Yeah. So talk more about that. What, what do you feel like is missing in the entrepreneurial world? Where, to me, you know, I work with freelancers. One-On-One who they're, they're going it alone. They don't have an assistant, they don't have a bookkeeper. They don't have a coach. They don't have anyone they're going it alone. And what you've just said was the power really comes from when you can reflect a woman back to herself. And when we, as your team reflect the Branding Boutique back to you, so you, as the CEO can go, yep. That's right. I want to go in that direction or, Nope. That's not what I want to create. We need to go a different direction.

Shana ([18:58](#)):

Right. So what I think is missing, honestly, it's honesty. It's honesty. It's if we look at networking, which we're not doing in person these days due to COVID, but if we look at networking, but if we look at it and we think back to back in the day, when we could see each other, what was happening was that everybody was just on the hunt for themselves, right? How can I get business into my business? How can I tell you that you have a gap that I can fill for you? How can I get you to swipe my card? Which part of sales, if we can be honest, is finding an insecurity in another person and finding a weakness in another person and capitalizing on that with a solution. Now, there's a lot of people out here who have solutions that don't work. And then there's a lot of people out here who are like, I'm committed to you.

Shana ([19:58](#)):

And I think that's a big difference just in our culture is that we're committed to the women that we work with as committed and probably more committed than they are to themselves. It's not about the solution, because we understand that this is an evolution, right? So I think, honesty, I think we don't tell each other the good, the bad and the ugly enough. We don't call each other out and say, you're not ready for that. Don't spend your money here. This is what she needed to do. No. Are you sure? Like really, let me test you. Are you sure that that's what you want?

Rai ([20:36](#)):

I just did this to you just a couple of weeks ago. You were like, Nope, these are our offers. This is what we're doing. This is what report I'm like I feel like, where does it go there? And what happened a week later, you were like, we need to change this, this, this, this, and this. And now we're solid.

Shana ([20:51](#)):

Yeah. And it's again, having those mirrors that you trust. Right? And I, I remember that conversation vividly and you know, one of the most beautiful things about our team is our autonomy. Right? We all have that freedom of speech. We all can have our emotions and our feelings. But the core of that is that each and every person on this team wants to see this become something and understands not just the role, but the benefit of the seat that they hold. And so when you're doing this by yourself: one it's difficult because you're your own worst critic. And then you wear so many hats. So even if it's not about expanding a team, because let me tell you, I had a team three years ago and I did it. I wasn't ready to be a leader. I wasn't ready to be the CEO. I wasn't ready to make the decision.

Shana ([21:47](#)):

I was not clear fully on the vision there's, I wasn't ready, but when you're in it, you don't know that. And I had some maturing in some growing up to do, right. Where I can sit and say, no, this is it. Or push back or say, you know what? You're right. And not feel threatened that somebody else might see something in a better way than I might. I don't have to have all the answers. And that's been the beauty of being surrounded just with other powerful women. The other side of it outside of honesty is surround yourself with other people who are actually powerhouses. There's a lot of women out there that are entrepreneurs. There's a lot of men out there that are entrepreneurs. Not everybody is in the same class. Sorry. And I'm. Yeah. And I might step on some toes. You guys will get used to it in this episode. Right? Like there's some people who are just starting out and that's okay. We've all been there, but you can't be in that middle stage and take advice from somebody who's just starting out. Yeah. And you can't be in the starting out stages and even look at somebody in the middle stage and think that they know what you need. They forgotten what they had to do at that stage. Yeah. And what they did to succeed at that stage and push them forward.

Rai ([23:13](#)):

That's such a huge point. And I want to spend a little bit more time on that because I think what a lot of freelancers today see is this overnight success. They see these ads on Facebook for, you know, here's the last funnel you're ever going to need, or here's the secret to \$500,000 overnight while you sleep. It's all. Bullshit! I mean, all of those overnight success tricks come from people who've been doing this for 10, 15, 20 years. I mean, I'm in my 14th year of business. I don't have that figured out yet. It just, it doesn't happen overnight to think that you have to go it alone. And yet you also have to be this huge success at the same time. Those two things can't exist at the same time.

Shana ([24:04](#)):

No, and it's a lot of pressure to put on yourself. Right? We all start our businesses for different reasons. Some people are like, I need to start a business because we need more income in my household. Some are replacing that income. Some are making transitions personally in their life. I'm getting ready to have a child. I need to, you know, I want to be able to be home with the kid. But what you don't understand is that no two businesses are alike. Right. We both have agencies. They're very different. You have a massive team. How you do it. I don't know. Like I have the utmost respect, but before, before you had help, you did it.

Rai ([24:47](#)):

Oh, that's true. Alyssa has only been with me for a year. Yeah.

Shana ([24:49](#)):

You know, and she does a outstanding job, you know? And I'm so happy that you have her, but in the same breath, like that was all birthed from you. And a lot of times we don't want to go through the levels. And this is where a lot of us are going to end up getting caught in this freelance entrepreneurial journey is that we are, I'm willing to commit to the level that we're at. And so when you fail to do that, you end up with gaps and holes and breakthrough and not the good break through

Rai ([25:25](#)):

Right. Yeah. And I think it's a, it's a bit of a double-edged sword because it, in one breath, you want to be levels upon levels higher than where we currently are. We think, oh, I'm ready for that overnight success. But then on the flip side of that, exactly what you said just a few minutes ago, sometimes you believe in your clients more than they believe in themselves. That lack of self confidence, that self doubt, that imposter syndrome is by far, hands down. The most common thing that I hear from the freelancers I work with who say, I feel like I'm just making this up as I go, I'm just totally pulling this whole business thing out of my. I don't know what I'm doing.

Shana ([26:11](#)):

But let's unpack that. What is that? Right? Like what is an imposter syndrome? What is a lack of confidence? It honestly is just clarity on your next step. So to me, when, whenever I personally I'll use myself, so whenever I personally am scared, afraid, unsure, hesitant. It's because I don't know what my next step is. And so then I lie to myself and tell myself, I don't know what the next step is. And I don't know what I need to do. And then I attach that to stories in my past that confirm that I don't know, and that I won't amount to it.

Rai ([26:56](#)):

It's a self validating barrier.

Shana ([27:01](#)):

Absolutely. And so there's the exercise that I used to do with my clients when I would life coach. And I would literally have them. I started out in my house, so I'd have them stand in my hallway mirror and I would take a white board marker. And I would be like, tell me what you see. Tell me what you're thinking. And I would write all the that they had in their minds that we would never tell somebody else, around their frame. And then I would be like, now, what do you think about this? And the biggest defeat or disservice, sorry that we do to ourselves is that we're not honest with ourselves. If you have a personal gap, what do you do need to do to fix it?

Shana ([27:47](#)):

I have a personal gap that I've been running away from for two and a half years. Life is saying, if you want to advance, you need to close this gap. For two years, it didn't really affect me. But now at this stage, I'm like, oh, I have to close it. And so there's, there's some people who perform better when their back is against the wall. There's some people who are just committed to seeing themselves as a failure. There's some people who are committed to like, not being self-sufficient. There's some people who really don't know and don't know that next step and that's okay. But then you have to become good at asking questions and asking for help. And then there's some people who are just gonna stay in the middle and they're going to watch life happen.

Rai ([28:46](#)):

And they're complain about not being further ahead.

Shana ([28:50](#)):

But most times those people just like the idea of entrepreneurship. Right? This is a lifestyle. This is an embodiment. This is a wake up every single day. And what am I going to leave on the court? And I just finished watching Last Chance You on Netflix, cause I'm a basketball head. And it, it really took me back to, to sports. And I had to ask myself some questions in relation to business. Like nobody pushes you in business.

Rai ([29:27](#)):

Not when you're your own boss, not when you're running your own business. Not when you're doing it by yourself.

Shana ([29:32](#)):

No. And it was amazing because in these episodes, in the series, the coach was like, he just wants to get them to their scholarships. And he's like, you're mad at me because I'm pushing you for what you want to get out of here. We gotta dig deep and find that for ourselves. And so imposter syndrome comes from whether you want to call it your why, your whatever, whatever. Okay. Simon Sinek. K cool. Right.

Rai ([30:00](#)):

Yeah, everybody watch the Sinusnik video of defining your why Defining your why. Yeah.

Shana ([30:05](#)):

For me it's what is that core thing inside of you that says I can do this regardless of what I come up against expect adversity. Some people have had it just too damn easy in their lives. And so you don't know what it's like to have to show up and show out for yourself. Yeah. And even if you have in other areas, you feel like you're above that in this? Oh, your bank accounts going to stay nice and low. You're not going to have any clients, any exposure you have to fight for you every day. So I don't believe in imposter syndrome. I believe it's a choice. I don't believe in confidence. Confidence is a decision. Every single moment. You might not feel like you can do it right now. And you might say, well, I'm going to have to believe I can. And you can flip that switch and you can do it. So I think we give too much energy to that. And it's, it's really a massive excuse.

Rai ([31:09](#)):

I think that's the hallmark of the entrepreneur, knowing that something has to be done, but doing it anyway, even when you don't feel like it, even when you're tired, even when you feel like your confidence is through the floor, even when you feel like I just would rather be doing anything else, but this right now. And there are those times when we have to do that in our businesses. But at the same time, it's important to recognize the pattern. If that's all you do, even all you're doing is forcing yourself to do the next thing that you don't want to do. Well, you might as well go be an employee and take orders from someone above you. That's not the point of entrepreneurship. If you are feeling that pattern. And if this imposter syndrome, if this lack of confidence keeps happening, that's a lesson that you're just going to get continuously beat over the head with until you learn something needs to change.

Shana ([32:02](#)):

Something needs to get into alignment. You need to be doing what you're meant to be doing. And what I love about what you do within the Branding Boutique. One of the many things that I love about what you do in the Branding Boutique, is you really take the time to dig in deep to what are you meant to be doing? What are you here for? What is to use your language? What is your lived legacy? Why are you here? And you really help women find that confidence within themselves, which really just comes down to going back to who you are and embracing who you are.

Shana ([32:38](#)):

And your lived experiences. So I say your lived experiences become your live legacy. All of those things that you went through, all of those things that you felt like were there to break, you were there to stop you to bring new shame, to cause you harm. They actually weren't. The universe, God, astrology, whatever you believe in gives you experiences to build character and to see what you're going to do with them. And what comes out of that because you've come out on the other side is now you have this lesson and you have this thing that you can teach. And every single person in the world has something that they can teach and monetize, should they choose. And so some people that's how to jump. Some people, that's how to, you know, you often hear with athletes. There's a lot of people who could never make it to the NBA, but they were amazing coaches. If we look at Venus and Serena's dad, he's never played professional tennis ever in his life, but he's the best tennis coach that there ever has been. And so we have to tap into those lived experiences, go back to them and challenge them. Why did they happen? What did I learn? What did I gain from them? What is unresolved that I need to go back and heal or spend some more time on? And then what do I want to do with it?

Shana ([34:02](#)):

And that is the foundation of what we do in the Boutique. Because if I can't talk to you as a woman, if I can't get to your heart, I don't want to deal with your business. There's other people who are willing to take your money for that. I'm not.

Rai ([34:18](#)):

Sure. So let's talk about that a little bit because your Boutique, your, your branding agency is unlike any that anyone else will find on the internet. People hit you up all the time on Instagram for – Hey, can you do this logo for me? Hey, can you create a brand identity for me? And you say, no, tell me why. Tell me what is your philosophy? Cause I think, especially because you work with independent female business owners, solo, preneurs, freelancers, whatever you want to call them. Yeah. That is your audience. And you have a very unique way of approaching branding and serving your clients. So tell me a bit about that. So

Shana ([34:57](#)):

The core reason to why I say no is because I've been there. I've easily spent over six figures. Oh God, by now it's a lot more than that. Figuring out my own business and brand. And not once until our core team, working with you, working with Brittany and working with our designers. Did anybody really sit down and help me unpack. Who's Shana, what does she want to do? What really is the vision? You know, I'm so fortunate to have women around me who constantly bring me back to my vision, constantly check in with me, is this really in alignment with you? And previously I've had stunning brands. I've always had stunning brands. I've always been aesthetically inclined. And my brands have always been powerful, but they were never rooted. And so what ends up happening when you go and get a great color palette and you do a photo shoot and you throw some words together, what happens is you're telling a story.

Shana ([36:00](#)):

But remember, this is always your first impression. And then as you grow and evolve into more of who you are, whether that's in your business or as an individual, that changes. And then that's when people, normally six months later go, I need to change my brand. And so what ends up happening and you know, this much better than anybody, you know, having a marketing agency is that now people are confused. You're confused. Your audience is confused. People who just finished working with you are confused. Everybody is confused. It makes it hard for people to refer business to you. Oh, she used to do this. I think she does that. She's great at that. And depending on stages of life, some people will still call me a life coach. I even personal trained in there for five seconds. Some people will say that, you know, depending on when you know me from.

Shana ([36:58](#)):

And so you have to look to build some consistency. Let's look at some of the big brands out here. You know, if we look at Nike, Nike has always been athletic apparel. They have never, you know, become home goods, right? They've never said, well, style your house like a gym. They never said that. That's not their thing. So, you know, when you are looking for athletic apparel that you can go to a store like Nike, and we have to do that with our businesses. One of the disservices that we do as small business owners is that we feel like we can pivot every five seconds. And so what that does is it disrupts what you're trying to carve out for yourself. And I just am really, really committed to that woman. Being able to understand themselves. It goes back to, you know, my mom who came over from the Caribbean in February was 50 years ago.

Shana (37:58):

Yeah, 50 years ago. And you know, she was brilliant. She was a teacher back home in Trinidad and that's a big deal back there. And you know, she came over to Canada, they started a family. She worked odd jobs, you know, she, they don't recognize your education when you're here, so went back, got her GED. And to this day, she's 70 years old to this day, she works in housekeeping. And while that's a very noble and respectable job, and that job gave me so many opportunities, there's a part of my heart that has always ached for my mom, because I feel like she didn't become the woman she was supposed to. Yeah. She could have done so much more with her life.

Rai (38:50):

And this is what you referred to a few minutes ago as coming full circle. You know, I refer to this with my clients as what is the golden thread, since you were a child, what are the themes that have shown up in your life? If you think of your life in chapters, in every chapter, there's some little hidden Easter egg in there that is that golden thread that's common throughout your entire life. And that's where you really find your true purpose when you're here, what you're meant to do. And that's what you do with your clients. You go far deeper than your typical branding expert designer, branding agencies, that'll say, okay, what do you like? Do you want to be a masculine or feminine brand? Do you like blues? Or do you like reds? Do you like flowers? Or do you like contemporary? What do you like? You're like, that's all bullshit. And you're like, we have to go deeper. Who are you? What is the legacy you're trying to create? Who are you in the future? And have you resolved all your stories from the past and let's tie all that together. So you have a brand that's timeless.

Shana (39:50):

Absolutely. And who do you need to become in order to authentically embody that brand? Because too often we see brand shoots that like are so extravagant and listen, we do some top notch brand shootd.

Rai (40:05):

Oh, you do. You can't, you can't knock the extravagance because that's your bread and butter.

Shana (40:12):

I'm like, is it so far off of who these women are? No. Not for them, not for them. And so, you know, you don't want, I want my clients to be able to, you know, have meetings with their clients and then feel like I saw your website and I saw your copy. And I felt like I was already talking to you because we tapped in. And you're just so good at doing that. Rai. You know, I want them to be able to look at our client experience and feel like I want to give my clients an experience like that because I really felt nurtured this whole time. I want them to be able to look at their images and feel like an inspiration to themselves. And you know, when they're having an off day to go back and be like, you know what, I'm tripping.

Shana (40:59):

I'm a bad bitch and I can do this. I was sleeping on myself for a minute. I was wrong. Look at all the things I've accomplished, you know? And so for me, it, it's so important. I just can't even begin to fathom doing this work without getting to know the woman. And it allows me to be able to better guide them and say, you're not ready to build a brand. Yet you have to emerge into the CEO. First. I remember that stage. It took me two years. Right. Okay. You don't even know your offer yet. Like we can't even talk about colors because you don't even know what you're putting out into the world. Your colors are not important right now. You know, learning how to show up, learning how to talk about what you do,

learning how to even have an opinion on what you do and how to share that and how to pull it together and the message. There's stages. And there's those levels. And I really want to help make our CEO's a lot more well-rounded in this process because you are going to run into walls. I can't prevent you from that. You're going to have upsets. You can't run away from it. You're going to be disappointed. You're going to have droughts in your bank account. That's part of this. And so if I can't prepare you for that, I don't want to do this work.

Rai ([42:26](#)):

And I think that's a perfect final thought is the freelancing life. It's not easy being your own boss, being a business owner. It's not easy. And if you get to that stage where you do decide that you want to be a leader and you want to have a team, you're going to have far more than yourself to take care of that's it. And you cannot skip the levels. You have to progress at the rate that you need to progress for your own personal growth. You need to meet yourself where you are and you need people around you to tell you...

Shana ([42:59](#)):

I've been there, hold up, calm down, dig deep. And let's sort this out before you jump into something that I don't want. I don't want you to just fall flat on your face. I don't want you to fail. And so let's spend some more time here before you go rushing into this thing. It's been tons of money. Tons of time. Tons of energy. Ultimately frigid not workout.

Shana ([43:23](#)):

Yeah. Yeah. And like, we also, you know, you wrote this so beautifully in our brand essence, but like our litmus test is fun. Yeah. And like, so if you're not having fun doing this, if you're not enjoying it, if it's bringing you more stress than happiness, if it's bringing you, you know, not to be confused with growing cause growing is uncomfortable, but you can still have a lot of fun in that process. You know, there's all these self checks that you have to do constantly, probably every day, at least once I think we all, you know, ask ourselves, like, why am I doing this?

Rai ([44:03](#)):

Yep. Oh yeah. Multiple times a day. Yeah. And that's important. You have to ask yourself and you have to answer yourself, why am I doing this? Is it to get to this goal that I actually really want? Where am I doing this? Because I think I should, so-and-so said, I need to have an Instagram feed. So-And-So said I needed to have an email list. So-And-So said, I need to do a webinar. I saw someone else who's successful apparently on the surface doing it. So I must do it. But no. Why are you really doing it?

Shana ([44:33](#)):

Girl, I know, I know we gotta wrap up soon, but I think we have to talk about something that you just said, which is, you know, on the surface, like, what is success and what does the sex look like? And Instagram and social media have given us this beautiful picture of what success is supposed to look like. You're supposed to be gorgeous. You're supposed to have all the money you're supposed to have wear high-end clothing. You're supposed to have all of these clients that just can't get enough of. You know, like, and the husband and the children and the, like, life is perfection and you travel and you have the great house and the cars, and that's some people's idea of success. And that's great. But, and you said this, you know, in the Chiron Community, like define success for yourself, you know, and I'm really boring.

Shana ([45:36](#)):

And you guys, if you are not in this Chiron Community, you really need to be because

Rai ([45:41](#)):

Join the free Slack group!

Shana ([45:44](#)):

Yes, please! It's, life-changing, it really is. And you're going to have a lot of good times in there, but you know, it asks you that question. And I think that we don't spend enough time defining for ourselves what success looks like. And so then we hold ourselves against this, like unrealistic, unattainable photo-shopped life. You have no idea what's in somebody's bank account. One of my favorite themes of this year is do, are you a six-figure business or has your business process six figures?

Rai ([46:19](#)):

Because those are two different, very different things.

Shana ([46:23](#)):

I don't have six figures in the bank, but we've processed over six figures easily. We're still working. We're still growing. And I think that if more people would just be honest about where they're really at, and then honest about the gaps that they could help you close without exploiting you. I think that we would do a lot better in the freelance world.

Rai ([46:47](#)):

Absolutely. Yeah. And I love that idea of define your own success. You know, I shared this in the Chiron Community the other day. I am a notorious workaholic. I have a really hard time shutting it down. I'm a generator. I can go, go, go, go, go all day long. And one of my markers of successes did I get to play board games with my husband two times this week? Did I step away from my phone, my desktop, my laptop, and just go be with him. Did I do that? Then? Yes, I was successful this week. It has nothing to do with the money. It has nothing to do with the clients has nothing to do with how many likes or impressions you got on Instagram. It's what's important for you.

Shana ([47:27](#)):

And everybody's success is important. Yeah. You know, everybody's definition of it. It's so, so, so important. And it's going to change with you as you grow in emerge as a CEO, as a freelancer.

Rai ([47:40](#)):

And that's the whole reason why we're doing this right. To define our own success. Our own success is not making \$15 an hour working for some corporation where you have a manager, a general manager, a district manager, a regional manager, and then CEO on top of that, it's what is your definition of success? And you get to build that. There are no rules. You get to build the business that supports your definition of success. Not everybody else's.

Shana ([48:05](#)):

Yeah, exactly. Could have said it better.

Rai ([48:08](#)):

So Shannon, where can people check you and the Branding Boutique out?

Shana ([48:12](#)):

So we have something that's called the CEO Branding Suite, and it's an amazing community where, you know, women can come together and we talk everything from real life to, you know, working out, to discipline, to how to run your day. It's just a real space for real women and real business owners where we get to engage with each other.

Rai ([48:39](#)):

That honesty. I'm not going to bullshit you. I'm going to tell you how it is. That's the thing that I really love about your community.

Shana ([48:44](#)):

Yes, yes. And, you know, I appreciate that. And it's, it really is the cornerstone of everything that we do from our team to our clients, to people that we're just coming into contact with, you know, so if you're ready for a little uncut truth, then definitely come our way.

Rai ([49:04](#)):

Yep. Excellent. Well, we will put the link to the suite in our show notes. Thank you so much for being here with me, Shana.

Shana ([49:10](#)):

Yeah. I appreciate it. This was amazing. Thank you!

Rai ([49:13](#)):

Bye-bye.