

Redefining Health & Wellness

#62

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Tiffany Roe

Shohreh Davoodi: Y'all—this is episode number 62 of the Redefining Health & Wellness podcast, and I have been trying to pin down today's guest since the podcast first started. She is a busy lady, but the stars finally aligned, and today you get to hear from Tiffany Roe. Tiffany is a licensed clinical mental health counselor who is changing the mental health game by breaking the stigma and making mental health support and education more accessible. She is a total boss. We talked about why she thinks therapy is so cool, what it means to “feel, deal, heal,” inner child work, affirmations, and so much more. To access the show notes and a full transcript of this episode, head to shohrehdavoodi.com/62. That's shohrehdavoodi.com/62.

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[Music plays]

Welcome to the Redefining Health & Wellness podcast. I'm your host and resident rainbow glitter bomb, Shohreh Davoodi. I started this project because I saw how black-and-white messaging about health harms

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everyone, and I wanted to paint a more honest and vibrant picture. This podcast is a space where we can reimagine health together by confronting limiting misconceptions, delving into aspects of well-being that are often ignored, and prioritizing conversations with marginalized individuals. I encourage you to take what you need and leave behind what you don't. Are you ready for this? Let's fucking go!

Tiffany Roe is in the house!

Tiffany Roe:

Heyyy!

Shohreh:

Thank you so much for being here. People are gonna be so stoked to hear from the "therapy is cool" queen herself. How are you holding up in these strange times, Tiffany?

Tiffany:

Well, hanging in there, just like one coffee at a time, I feel like [laughs]. Just one moment at a time.

Shohreh:

That's really the best that any of us can ask for at this point, I feel like.

Tiffany:

[Laughs] Yeah, it's wild times, and I think we're all barely getting by, right?

Shohreh:

Yeah, well, I'm excited that in the wild times you've made time to be here. You obviously have a poppin' social media presence, so many of my listeners will be very familiar with you. But for those whose lives haven't yet been graced by your presence, tell us who you are, what you do and what you're all about.

Tiffany:

Okay, so my name's Tiffany Roe. I'm a therapist in Utah. And...I mean, that's my day job, like a licensed therapist. I work with women dealing with disordered eating, body image concerns, self-worth issues, eating disorders, just trying to help folx recover and love themselves more. But then I do all kinds of other stuff, like kind of rogue stuff in the therapy

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world. I do dance parties, and like you said, Therapy is Cool merch. I have a podcast called Therapy Thoughts. We have like a subscription pack. Just all kinds of things. I would say, if I had to tell you what I do and who I am, I'm just trying to change the mental health game, y'all.

Shohreh: And you are changing the mental health game, and you have all these fun avenues that you're doing it in. So there's a little something for everyone with you.

Tiffany: I hope so! I mean, the goal is to reach as many people as we can and like, be the generation who stops the stigma and progresses through this outdated idea that mental health makes you weak or something.

Shohreh: Yes! Oh my gosh, that is such a frustrating myth about therapy. And I've had so many conversations with people who have said that, you know, "Oh, well, people only go to therapy if they're really messed up, right?" I'm like no, no, no! No, no, no!

Tiffany: Yeah, it's just very reflective of our internalized stigma. In fact, I went to therapy this morning with my partner, Mr Roe. We went to couple's therapy. We cried it out. And then I had a friend texting me saying, "Man, I have internalized shame about meds," so I sent her a picture of my two daily medications that I take. I think we have to just be open and talk about the fact that it's normal to struggle. It's normal to have variations in health, both physical and mental. And so, I'm just trying to be open about that. I'm trying to open the discussions, 'cause that's what it's gonna take, dude.

Shohreh: Yeah, and you're a woman of many catchphrases and mantras, which I adore, and your catchphrases tend to have a deeper meaning than I think the average one. So I want to talk about some of them, starting with "therapy is cool," of course. So why is therapy so dang cool?

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Tiffany: Therapy is hella cool, yeah. In 2017, I hopped on Instagram, and I was like, what am I doing here? And I made a post that said, “therapy is cool,” and I was shocked at like, the love it got. And what it means for folx, what it means for me, is it’s okay to get help. That your feelings matter, your thoughts matter. That it’s not weak to have normal human emotions, and struggles, and experiences. That thoughts, and feelings, and behaviors are the common experience of all of us, and having a professional sit with you to help you improve your mental health, valuing mental health is cool.

And so the message is just super validating, and it connects to those of us who do value it, have all experienced that shame, and just gives us permission to embrace this really important piece of mental health. So that’s what “therapy is cool” is all about.

Shohreh: I’m really lucky to have a close circle of people who also think that therapy is cool, and where we can openly talk about our therapy experiences and our mental health experiences without there being any shame. To a point where like when I step outside of that circle and I’m just blabbing on about therapy and other people are giving me looks, I’m like, oh yeah, this isn’t the norm yet for the whole rest of the world.

Tiffany: Oh my gosh, like I’m so glad you said that! I have that experience all the time. I’m so drenched in thinking therapy is cool, I really don’t have any stigma around it internalized anymore. But it shocks me, I’ll be like talking to a neighbor, I’m like, “Yeah, we went to couple’s therapy today,” or like, “Oh, I had therapy, I had to fill my meds,” and they’re like, “Oh? So, like, are you guys getting a divorce?” [Laughs] I’m like, wait, what?

Shohreh: Uh, nope!

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Tiffany: I'm like, "No." They're like, "Well, I want to do therapy, but it's not like we have a bad marriage, or it's not like anything serious." And I think it's still just really interesting that people feel like you have to qualify for, or justify, or there's some like hierarchy to getting help. Like, we don't say that if you're going to a chiropractor or getting a physical. So, I'm with you. It's still the general stigma is completely embraced, but we out here changing that, right?

Shohreh: Yeah. You know, the couple's therapy thing is so interesting too, 'cause I've also been very open on the podcast about couple's therapy, and I think of couple's therapy as like relationship maintenance, you know? Like this is a tool that helps my relationship stay the best that it can be. And I've even heard my couple's therapist say that a lot of times people go to couple's therapy when it's too late, right, because there is this idea that you shouldn't go unless you're on the verge of divorce. And often then the issues are so deep that it's gonna be really hard to come back out of that. If more people would go sooner and learn how to communicate, so many relationships would be better off.

Tiffany: Oh my gosh, preach, dude. Like when we go to college there's prereqs, right? Like we take pre-requisites, getting deeper into our majors or the things that we want to focus on. I'm like, what if we all went to couple's counseling, relationship counseling as a normal part of the courting process or as you're getting more serious?

Shohreh: Yeah!

Tiffany: We would be so much better off. Like why isn't there mental health education? Why do we have to freestyle this human thing? We could all use some support, I'm just saying.

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Shohreh: Right, it's not like we're taught how to human very well [laughter], you know?

Tiffany: Dude, who is gonna make the human workbook? We need more support!

Shohreh: We absolutely do. Yeah, that goes for both individual therapy, couple's therapy. I mean, we're out here, we're open about it that we think that therapy is great. And you're also known for taking therapy in some arguably unconventional directions with your dance therapy and your karaoke therapy, or at least in pre-COVID times. Tell me about that, 'cause I'm all about that.

Tiffany: Oh man, I don't even know why my brain has these ideas. You know what it is, is I've been a therapist for 10 years and I've seen it not work so much, and I see people get stuck. And then the more I learned, it's like, you have to integrate body, otherwise we're not gonna heal. So I'd go to these trauma conferences and stuff, and it's like, you have to be drumming and singing, and dancing, and doing yoga. This is how we heal. And I'm like, why are we not doing this

Like, talk therapy alone just isn't as effective. So I'm like, I love talk therapy, therapy is cool, I do it all the time myself, obviously. But what if we also have other things to support folk? And so, I'm like, let's have dance parties, let's do "theraoke," let's make this accessible and hit different notes and fight stigma simultaneously.

Plus, I'm not gonna lie, there's some selfish intentions [laughter]. That's just like the stuff I love doing. I'm like, if I can work and dance at the same time, like if I wasn't a therapist, obviously I'd be a cruise director. So it's like, let's combine my passions, and turns out I'm not the only one, right? A lot of us want to integrate and have overlap in these worlds.

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So that's where dance therapy, my dance parties came from. Plus, I mean yeah, it's just science. It's research-based. We're gonna get a novel experience through dancing. It's gonna be unexpected and potent, and that gives us a dopamine rush and helps us change behaviors. So this isn't me just being like, woo-woo over here. There's actual science backing up these supplemental avenues.

Shohreh: Right, and there is science, and yet, there's still stigma against this, right? You know, there's still this stuffy idea of therapy has to be this, and if it isn't, like, you're gonna hurt your clients or whatever. We're all different people. Of course there are gonna be different ways to come around this and different tools that people need. There's no way that one method works for every single person on this planet to deal with their feelings.

Tiffany: Why do we have to even say that? Like that's so frustrating. Why do we have to justify that? Like I am with you. It's just this culture, this stigmatized culture, and this stuffy, honestly, patriarchal counseling culture. Like all of our theories and our training, like, we're up against grad school training programs and theories that are still perpetuating what we're trying to fight actively. Saying like, yeah, just be this blank slate, don't have a personality, be stuffy, don't be a human. And so we're fighting an upstream battle here, but I think, yeah, billions of people, we need different things.

Shohreh: I just had Evelyn on the podcast talking about intuitive eating, and she was talking about how when they first started intuitive eating, it was research-inspired, but now of course, there's been over 120 studies, it's very research-based. But we were talking about the fact that it's sad that she even has to say that to get cred for intuitive eating. The fact that it has worked for people and makes them feel awesome isn't enough for people. You have to have this backing, and that's just unfortunate. And like you

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said, it's a reflection of the society that we're living in where it can't just be enough that it feels good for you. Like we also need to be able to say, "Oh no, the research backs it up, don't worry."

Tiffany: Yeah, I mean lived experience, we've gotta give that more credit, I'm with you.

Shohreh: Yeah, we definitely do. Well, I love that you are doing things like dance therapy and karaoke therapy, because I am definitely one of those people who can get very much in my head, and certainly there are parts of talk therapy and methods in the room that can help you get out of there. But like, I'm someone who will happily intellectualize my feelings and be like, oh no, no, I don't really care where I feel that in my body, like let's talk about how I feel it in my brain. And so I need things like that to have that release and to be able to be like, no, no, let's get the body involved here, this is important.

Tiffany: Oh, I love that. I'm with you, and it's so powerful. It's really cool to see how it affects group, and connection, and social support, and being vulnerable, and facing fears. It hits so many notes.

Shohreh: Mm. Yeah, it really does. So another recent catch phrase of yours is "feel, deal, heal," which I love! Tell us what that means and why it's important?

Tiffany: Can I just thank you for knowing my work? it's really cool to sit here and talk with you and be like, "Oh, here's things you say," and I'm so honored to talk about them, thanks.

Shohreh: Yeah, you're welcome!

Tiffany: Yeah, so "feel, deal, heal" just kinda came to my brain sitting with people and trying to conceptualize the healing process. I mean, I'm a teacher first

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and foremost, and so I'm always trying to break down complex ideas into easy-to-understand, digestible tidbits. And I'm like, how do I simplify this? And that's what "feel, deal, heal" is. If I had to just say what everyone needs to do, it's feel our feelings, deal with them, cope with them, take them on, and then that's the ongoing healing process—the constant learning and unlearning, the constant growth and evolution, and progress that we all go through.

And we could apply that to most things, probably. You know, it rhymes, it's got four letters each, it's a great catchphrase, it's easy to remember, and it's a good mantra. Like if you're struggling, or you're resisting emotion, or you're grieving, or depressed, or in panic, or triggered, you can sit there, put your hands on your cheeks, and say, "Okay. Feel, deal, heal. I can do this." And it's just a good little face tattoo moment.

Shohreh: Can you maybe walk through an example of what that would look like if you were applying it to a situation?

Tiffany: Yeah, for sure. I'm just gonna with the first example that comes to my mind, something that I do on the regular with grief. So grief for me is a feeling that I resist more than any other emotional experience. So if I apply feel, deal, heal to that, what that would look like is I would feel grief rising in my body, and anyone who's felt grief, which is probably all of us, it's like this lump rising up in your throat. And my gut instinctive reaction is to shove it down and say, "I don't want to deal with this."

Shohreh: Yep. Yep, yep, yep.

Tiffany: I mean, even if all day, every day, I preach feel, feel, feel, feel, feel your feelings, feel, deal, heal, we are biologically hardwired to not want to be in pain, and grief is literal, physiological pain. So I know when I feel that ball

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in my throat and you kind of like feel the tears welling, I'm like, no! So step one, feel. I say, "Feel it." And I drop my shoulders and I say, "Feel it. It's okay to feel this." And I let those sensations in my body take their course and I imagine it like waves rolling over me. And I honor the emotions.

So feel first is a combination of mindfulness—I'm aware this is happening to me, and I'm not gonna shove it down. Instead, I'm gonna lean into it with curiosity, non-judgment, non-resistance, and all you really got to say is, "Feel it. It's okay to feel this. It's okay." So that's "feel" example for me.

And then deal—how do I deal with that? Guess what? Crying is dealing. Crying is coping. Crying is literal energy leaving your body, stress hormones are being released. It's a way to process and move through the emotion. So instead of turning to drugs, alcohol, sex, compulsive behaviors, distraction, dieting, restriction, I'm gonna say, "No, I'm actually gonna deal with this." I'm gonna cry, I'm gonna journal, I'm gonna breathe, I'm gonna relax my muscles, I'm gonna regulate my emotions. What can I do to honor this really important freaking human experience? And that's the dealing component. Maybe that's self-validation, maybe that's self-compassion, maybe that's talking to someone or hugging yourself. I mean, we could go on and on.

And then the healing point is, guess what? This wasn't a check list, I'm not done. Grief is gonna resurface, and I'm committed to getting my own back. I'm gonna keep feeling and dealing, 'cause that's how I have a good relationship with myself. That's how I heal. That's how I honor this experience, and you keep going. That's feeling, dealing, healing.

Shohreh:

Yeah, you can't get to the heal unless you deal with the feeling and the dealing first.

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Tiffany: No, and we wanna skip it, dude. We just wanna be over it. With any emotion, like, we're so socialized to shove it down and avoid, and we just wanna get over it.

Shohreh: That not resisting is such a useful tool in so many areas of life. I was thinking of recently—I'm a very tattooed person, as most people who listen to my podcast know, [laughs] and my tattoo artist is wonderful—and I recently had a really rough session. I've been working on a half sleeve, and the inner arm is a very painful place to get tattooed, that inner bicep. And she could tell that I was in pain and I was struggling, and she was saying, you know, "Something that really helps me when I'm getting tattooed is that instead of resisting the pain, I lean into it—"

Tiffany: Yes!

Shohreh: "—and I really, I feel it." And I started doing that, and it's amazing how different it feels in the body to instead of try to be like, oh my god, this is pain, I hate it, make it go away, to just be like, this is pain, and I'm coming to meet you. Like it changes the whole experience!

Tiffany: Yes! Yes, yes, yes! And imagine if we learned that in elementary school when we're figuring out how to be humans. That whether it's a tattoo, or grief, or sadness, or rejection, or a migraine, or whatever pain, the secret, the magic pill is you feel it. You lean in without resistance. I mean, that's the magic moment.

Shohreh: See, it's that human handbook again, Tiffany. You gotta start authoring that [laughs].

Tiffany: I think we should co-author. I think we got a good idea here!

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Shohreh: We do! We really do! Let's get that going! [Laughter] And you just had said, you know, it would be great if we had this when we were kids, and I know that inner child work has especially been your jam lately. You just released a podcast episode on it and a course. Yes, you have amazing courses.

Tiffany: Thank you.

Shohreh: So tell me about inner child work, because this is something that I love and has really been healing for me that I think a lot of people don't know. I think this is an area people resist, right? They try to ignore that little inner child a lot.

Tiffany: Yeah, dude. I bet if I could call out the emotion folk listening to this are feeling thinking about doing inner child work, it's probably fear. I think a lot of my friends or clients are like, ooh, I'm kinda scared of that, what's gonna happen? What am I gonna feel? What am I gonna remember? What's gonna happen in my life? So inner child work, yeah, it's tender, sensitive, cool work, but it's kind of my jam just because it's a pillar of my own mental health, that's what I always say.

So in my own healing, in my own journey with an anxiety disorder, with an eating disorder, overcoming my stuff, inner child work just served to be such a powerful medium and process to make peace. So I just super believe in it, and my mentors taught me about that over a decade ago. And now it's just like the most powerful work I can do with my clients. I see the transformative impact it has, and it fits into kind of my idea of feeling, dealing healing. Let's feel, deal, heal through the whole life span, and go back and do that for ages of us that didn't have the tools we have now. And meet our needs where they weren't met, and offer support, validation and tools where they're missing.

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And so that's why I preach it all the time and created a course, like you said, because it's work that's really in depth and needs a lot of time and care. And I find I only get so far in therapy, 'cause therapy is like a winding road, you go all over the place. And so I thought, if I could create a course that's self-paced and self-guided and folks could kind of get all the tools in one place, then they can just take on that work while working with their therapist, right, and bringing the stuff that they learn in my course into the therapy room. That would be ideal. I just want everyone to have this work! It's so powerful, it's so healing, it's so game-changing.

Shohreh:

Yeah, because we all have this inner child within us, we really do, that is just the hurt, scared part of us that we didn't know how to deal with when we were kids. 'Cause again, we didn't have that handbook, we didn't have someone to teach us how to deal with feelings. Everyone had different caregiver experiences and life experiences. And there's just something so wonderful about going back, delving into that, and seeing, yeah, what is happening in here? What does this inner child need from me?

Like that alone, I feel like you talk about a lot, is such a powerful question, is like, what does my inner child need from me today? And I feel like that's something that people can really struggle to answer and be like, how am I supposed to know the answer to that question? How would you suggest that people can do that exploration?

Tiffany:

Yeah, I love that question. And it's no shame in your inner child game. Like, if you don't know the answer to that, you're not a failure. Think of this as like building a relationship. How do you know that just off the top of your head? So think of it as two pieces of you. You have this adult, cognitive, present day self that's like, well, here's what this kid needed, right? But then there's this younger version of you who might have a different idea.

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So my best suggestion is to make some gentle attempts to connect with them to see if they have a different opinion than adult you. Like grab a picture of little you, like right here, right now, listening to this podcast, what's your gut say? What age you needs attention first? And I'm not saying they don't all need attention, all ages of you, but which age comes to mind?

For me, I can think of age seven. So go find a picture of you at that age, and if you don't have a picture of you at that age, see if you can channel them in your mind. And then if you want to go even deeper, and it feels safe to do so, and you have a good support system and the ability to regulate your emotions, see if you can visualize them and kind of meet and greet them in your mind's eye. What does that age you look like? And I would go deep and use your senses. Where are they? Are they indoors/outdoors? Are they wearing shoes or not? What's their hair like? What's their surroundings like? What's their facial expressions like? What are they feeling in this visualization? And connect to that moment and see if you can have a conversation with this piece of you.

And I'm telling you, this is where the transformation happens. This is where little you gets to communicate, and talk, and say, "Hey, what's up? Here's what I need." And guess what you get to say to them in that moment? You get to say, "Hey, I'm you, and we make it. I'm gonna hold your hand through this, and I'm here to listen to your needs now. And if you don't know what those are, let's keep meeting, let's keep talking, let's keep connecting, 'cause I'm committed to you." That's the way to do it.

Shohreh:

Mm. "I'm you, and we make it." That is such a powerful sentence just by itself. Just that assurance that you didn't have at that age. You don't know. You don't know what's coming at that age, but now you do. Adult you gets

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to be the reassurer, to say, “We are gonna get through these hard things, and we are gonna be okay.”

Tiffany:

Yeah, I mean isn't that the end all be all? Like, you have to be there for yourself. It's gotta be you who gets your back. Self-worth is through this type of commitment to self. You've gotta be the one validating you. You've gotta be the one offering compassion. You've gotta be the one committed, because that external influence, that external approval, those external achievements, that external validation doesn't have the staying power that you have for yourself. So this work is laying that foundation of you saying, “I believe I'm enough. I believe I'm worthy. I believe my needs matter.” It's powerful.

Shohreh:

I went home this past week, one for a change of scenery, and two, because my parents are about to move, and so they're downsizing and they're going through all of the stuff in the house. You know, the old report cards, and the awards, and all kinds of things. And so, they had this huge stack of stuff for me of pictures, assignments. And that alone was its own inner child work, because I literally got to see what I was thinking, and going through, and feeling at the time.

I even found a letter I wrote to my parents when I was 13 that I was like, oh my god, I can't believe a 13-year-old wrote this. And, you know, it kind of transported me back to 13-year-old me and being in that moment. And so, like you said, there's powerful tools like pictures, or letters, or any of those things can really take you back into that moment and be like, this is what it was like. And now to be able to see that through new eyes is, yeah, it's very powerful.

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So I agree—love the inner child work, highly recommend it, like you said, if you have the supports and the tools in place to do that, ‘cause it can be scary, but it is definitely worth it.

Tiffany: Oh my gosh, you just triggered like a thought I've never had about my inner child, so I'm just gonna say it live right now.

Shohreh: Ooh!

Tiffany: You said, “report card,” and I don’t think I've ever realized this, but I can envision my report card from 8th grade, and I remember there was an A-, and I wrote a plus. I put up and down line next to it to reassure myself or to be like no, I’m more achieved than I think I am. And anyone who knows me is probably like, well yeah, you’re a perfectionist, like, that makes a lot of sense [laughs]. Like, it kind of plays into your whole game.

These are the moments. It’s this ongoing work, and in this moment, I get to be like, oh wow, I can put my arm around this junior high me who felt like this was her worth, and allow space for growth, or imperfection, or an A- for the love of god. Like, what would that be like to hold space?

So just like you said, these in-the-moment moments where you were like, seeing stuff at your folx house or you had these memories, it’s connecting to those emotions. It’s validating. It’s compassion. Thanks for triggering that for me! That’s a good one.

Shohreh: You are so welcome! See, the inner child work, it just comes up when you least expect it [laughter].

Tiffany: Hey podcast, we’re gonna give myself some self-therapy really quick!
[Laughter]

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Shohreh: You know what? It's good for people to see that happening in the moment, 'cause that's what it's really like.

Tiffany: For sure!

Shohreh: I love that! Well, we get to shift to one of your favorite topics, which is affirmations, and—

Tiffany: Ooh!

Shohreh: —I am a big fan of affirmations. So I wanna talk about the power of affirmations, and maybe you can start by sharing one or two of your current favorite affirmations for yourself?

Tiffany: Mm, I like that. Today in therapy we were talking about how I'm not broken, and when it comes to affirmation, the ideal is to turn it into an affirming positive statement, something that you want to be true for you. So instead of saying, "I'm not broken," an affirmation I would use today would be, "I am whole. I am enough. I'm enough right now. I'm imperfect and enough." That would be a powerful affirmation for me today after therapy. But I also really like the affirmation for myself "my personality is good." And I also really like the affirmation, "I am worthy."

Shohreh: I like those. Those are amazing. Is there a difference between affirmations and mantras?

Tiffany: Yeah, probably. I mean, affirmations are affirming, self-statements. You wanna like reinforce positive beliefs about yourself. So I would say that's maybe a specific type of mantra. I could be wrong, this is me freestyling. Whereas a mantra could be more general, like, one of my favorite mantras I do is, "peace and presence in all circumstances," or, "this too shall pass." It's more something to focus on, and repeat, and hold onto as a grounding,

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anchoring focus, whereas affirmation is maybe more personal and self-affirming.

Shohreh: That's my understanding as well, and that's how I've tended to use them.

Tiffany: Okay cool.

Shohreh: And how do you respond to people who say that they feel really silly saying affirmations, or maybe that they feel like they're faking it when they try to use them?

Tiffany: Yeah dude, that's the barrier we all have to get over, right? One, we have to get over the stigma of like, oh, affirmations are dumb, they don't work, this is woo-woo, this is fluffy. Which I think is weird. Like, why can't we acknowledge how we talk to ourselves has impact? That shouldn't be an argument or a hurdle to overcome, but it is. Again, just this feeling-phobic society we live in, this weakness obsessed society. So one, we have to get over that and just be like, yes, how you talk to yourself matters.

Now, to your point, what if I feel silly? Or this is so dumb, or I don't believe it? I'm gonna say, that's okay. Because you have deeply embedded beliefs and neuropathways that have told you the opposite your whole life. So this means you need it. If this is uncomfortable, or you're a skeptic, or you're too cool for school, that tells me there's shame there, and that tells me you don't believe the good things we're trying to introduce, therefore you're a great candidate.

And I'm gonna say, test it out. Use your critic's mind. Use your skeptical mind. Ask questions, and see if there's evidence to the contrary of what you believe. If you are so dedicated to hating on yourself, speaking negatively, holding to your negative beliefs, there's a chance that this kind of positive self-talk would be transformational for you. And I would say it's

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worth trying to disprove, right? If you don't believe in it, you feel silly, give it a shot. Because it's gonna take that for you to feel the evidence and to feel the outcomes.

And dude, if you've been talking crap to yourself for 30 years, decades? Yeah, it's gonna feel weird to say something really validating and nice to yourself. And so you have to repeat, commit, keep showing up for it to start making sense to your brain.

Shohreh:

I think that's really the crux of it, because one way that I have framed this for clients who are like, "Eh, affirmations, that feels kind of woo-woo, I'm not really into it"—and I'm like the least woo-woo person ever, so I'm like, trust me, if I'm into it, it's probably not that woo-woo [laughter]—but I always tell them, I say, here's the thing though, you already have affirmations, you're just affirming the negative parts of you.

It is an affirmation to constantly say to yourself, "I suck. I'm terrible. I hate everything, like, I can't measure up." You're already affirming that over and over to your brain. That's why it is so easy for your brain to go down that route. And so, if you already have them, wouldn't you like to have some that are more positive, and kind, and compassionate towards yourself? Wouldn't that be a great shift to try and make? Because you're already affirming yourself, it's just a question of if you're affirming yourself in a way that feels good or not.

Tiffany:

I love that! And, to that point, affirming something that feels good is gonna feel bad at first because it's gonna be cognitive dissonance. If you think you're a piece of shit and I'm sitting here telling you to say, "I am enough," that's not gonna feel good 'cause you don't believe that. It's gonna cause a sense of incongruence. It's not gonna feel true, and that's uncomfortable.

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But that's the feel, deal, heal part. Lean into that discomfort because we understand the impact of that negative self-belief. It's interfering your relationships, it's preventing you from living authentically, like all these things. So I would also dive into like, so what about saying this positive affirmation feels incongruent? Why are you resistant to that? Where does that come from? And trying to bridge that gap between why you're resistant and understanding it.

Shohreh: Yes, 'cause that's such a good way to start breaking down thoughts as well. And being like, okay, so you really believe you're a piece of shit, why is that? Right?

Tiffany: Yeah.

Shohreh: What is it that feels true about that? And kind of get into some of that deeper stuff and not just taking it as, oh, well, it popped into my head so it must be true.

Tiffany: Yeah, I think we just kind of simplify affirmations. Like, just say these things and you're gonna feel better! Which yes, how you speak impacts your feelings, but I love this idea of if you're resistant and you're so dedicated to shit talk, imagine if you were dedicated to positive talk, but why is that so hard? And resolving those deeper issues is part of that affirmation work. And I think, let's dive into those resistance moments and understand the impact.

Shohreh: Yeah, language is very powerful. And speaking on that topic, so you and I actually first met because we were in the same supervision group for our intuitive eating counselor training.

Tiffany: Yes!

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- Shohreh:** So, I can't possibly get through this episode without talking about intuitive eating and the Mr. Roe method, obviously [laughter].
- Tiffany:** Awesome!
- Shohreh:** And I wanna tell you that I run an intuitive eating group coaching program—it's called The Snack Pack. It's delightful. And in The Snack Pack, there's a week where we actually use the Mr. Roe Method—
- Tiffany:** Ohhh...
- Shohreh:** —and I always try to get people to do it together at least once while we're on a coaching call, because everyone just ends up giggling uncontrollably. And like, that's what it's about. For me, I'm like, yes, let's bring some joy and some fun to food, right?
- Tiffany:** Yes.
- Shohreh:** This does not have to be so obsessive and painful all the time. Like food can have fun and joy, So that's something that I've always liked. I love the videos where the two of you are both describing [laughter] your various meals. So for those who don't know about this, can you tell us about these shenanigans?
- Tiffany:** It is straight up shenanigans. And it can only come from Mr. Roe. Like, my partner is just in touch with his inner child. So one day we were eating and he was eating chips and an orange, and I was like, "Why are you eating that?" And he looked at me and he's like, "cause it sounds good." And my mind was blown, [laughter] right, because I'm like recovered from a few eating disorders. And I'm like, "Wait, what do you mean?" [Laughter] And so I got out my camera, And I'm like, so he's a natural intuitive eater, I'm like, "So yeah, you're naturally, you've never had a bad relationship with

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food, you're not all influenced by diet culture, how do you decide what to eat?" He's like, "I just eat what sounds good." I'm like, "Well how do you know what sounds good?" He's like, "Well, you just describe the taste, texture, and temperature. Like, I want some Gooby fruit. I want some cold, squishy globs." And I'm like, "Oh, you want some gummy bears and an orange? Okay, that makes sense," and it kind of became this thing. And we called it the Mr. Roe Method.

And just like you said, now dietitians and therapists across the country are like, "I use this with my clients," and it's just a fun way to get past food shame, conditional relationships with food. It helps make peace with food, right, 'cause what do you want, instead of the labels. It's like, I want something that's like cold and sweet and slimy. I want a Popsicle. Okay. Like, it helps you decide what to eat, it helps you know what sounds good without all the judgment, and labels, and shame.

Shohreh: Yes, exactly. There's just something that is so powerful about that question. And of course it actually makes perfect sense that this would have to come from outside of the community of dietitians and intuitive eating counselors [laughter] 'cause we're all up in our head in our methods. We need someone who just was like completely outside of this to be like, no, here's how I decide what I want to eat [laughter]. This is how you do it when you don't think about food 24/7.

Tiffany: Yeah, we're far too in depth to simplify it, and I say this lightheartedly, but he's just kind of like a normal, healthy person who has never been affected by diet culture, which I literally don't understand, right? And it was just so simple and so profound, and I think we all need that permission, and simplicity, and like you said, the fun aspect of it.

Shohreh: Yeah, that's like a unicorn in the wild, Mr. Roe, [laughter]

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- Tiffany:** Mr. Roe!
- Shohreh:** Just like, where did you even come from? How did this happen? [Laughter]
- Tiffany:** So funny.
- Shohreh:** But yes, you can tell him that his work is just around the globe, helping all the people have a more fun and lighthearted relationship with food.
- Tiffany:** Yeah, give it a try next time you're like, what do I wanna eat? All the time we'll be in the car and be like, what sounds good? It's like, I want something that's warm and brothy and salty and slurpy, and we're like, okay, let's get soup, and we go with that. And it's a fun way to bond and get out of your head.
- Shohreh:** It is, and it really helps in relationships where you have that constant back and forth of like, well what do you wanna eat? What do you wanna eat? [laughter] Blah, blah, blah. You know, that recurring fight that thankfully does not in my relationship, but I've seen happen in a lot of other relationships. Maybe if people would just get in touch and try to describe it, it could be a lot more fun for everyone.
- Tiffany:** Taste, temperature, texture, y'all! What sounds good!
- Shohreh:** Mmhmm. Alright, well, we are coming towards the end here, and as we're moving to wrap up, I would like to know if there's any one thing that you really wanna share with people about mental health or just steps they can take to improve their mental health. If there's one piece of advice or nugget that you wanna make sure is out in the world, what would that be?
- Tiffany:** The first thing that comes to my mind is all emotions matter. Your emotions matter, your experience matters, you're not broken. And you feel what you feel for a reason, and it deserves time, and attention, and space. And your

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emotions deserve validation. And the big paradox of emotion is by feeling it, it can then pass.

So if you get one takeaway from our discussion today, my best nugget about mental health is leaning into your feelings is where the magic happens. It's so counterintuitive, but that's the paradox—by feeling it, it will pass. So if you're hopeless, if you're depressed, if you're suicidal, know you're not alone. If you're anxious and panicked, and scared, know you're not alone. And it's in feeling, in leaning into this stuff, and moving forward with dealing that it passes. And we can heal. And we can have wholeness, and relief, and peace again. I see it all the time. So that's my hope and thought nugget for y'all.

Shohreh: Yeah, and I think conversations like this really help with that aim, because so much of it is about the loneliness. About feeling like I am the only person in the world who has possibly ever felt this way. And the more that we can be open about talking about mental health, and about therapy, and all these different things, the more that people will realize, oh, wait—I'm not the only one who has ever felt this way. Like, this is a relatively common experience.

Tiffany: It's so important. I mean, is there one person we can all text today? Like hey, your feelings matter to me, how are you doing? I want you to know you're not alone. These moments of connecting, feeling feelings, supporting our own, supporting others, I think that's how we're gonna change the game.

Shohreh: I like that. Alright, that's your official challenge from Tiffany y'all, from Tiffany and me, is to text someone and let them know that they're not alone and you're thinking of 'em, because we could all use that in our lives.

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- Tiffany:** Yes.
- Shohreh:** It's always the best feeling in the world when someone reaches out when you weren't expecting them to and you're like, wow, someone's thinking about me.
- Tiffany:** Yes.
- Shohreh:** Alright, so our final question, which I ask to all of my guests is, how do you define health and wellness for yourself at this moment in your life?
- Tiffany:** Health and wellness for myself at this moment in my life is asking myself what I need every day and approaching the answer to that question with grace and compassion.
- Shohreh:** So short and sweet, but it's exactly like the essence of, I feel like the work that both you and I do, so I love that.
- Tiffany:** I mean, we both know I could go on and on, I can say a lot more, but that, I mean really boils down [laughter] to okay, what do I need, but don't be a butthole to myself if I don't perfectly get it. [Laughter]
- Shohreh:** Ah yes, that's a phrase we missed—don't be a butthole [laughter] to myself.
- Tiffany:** Don't be a butthole to yourself for not asking me about that catchphrase, 'cause it's, you know [laughter], it's very profound!
- Shohreh:** So truly profound. Yes, you can buy t-shirts that say that, for those who are wondering.
- Tiffany:** Please buy those t-shirts 'cause I definitely overshot in my inventory how many people would actually wear that t-shirt, so they're just in my store, waiting for you [laughter].

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- Shohreh:** Waiting for you to put it on and show the world.
- Tiffany:** I don't know why people don't want the word "butthole" on their shirt. I'm confused, personally, but whatever. [Laughter]
- Shohreh:** It is what it is, you know. Well, thank you so much for being here, Tiffany. How can people find you, and can you also share with my listeners what they can do to support your work and your passions?
- Tiffany:** Sure. I would love to hang out with y'all. Come check me out on Instagram at @heyttiffanyroe, and that is kind of the hub of where I do a lot of work, just Instagram therapizing. And then you can check out links to all my stuff, my online school, www.tiffanyroeschool.com, and I have courses ranging from mindfulness to self-care to body image, perfectionism, inner child work, affirmations. I even have a course for professionals who want to learn how to build their business and presence. So the school.
- I have merch at www.tiffanyroemerch.com with, "Don't be a butthole to yourself" shirts, which are only \$5.99 [laughter]. Therapy is Cool swag. Like, we have beanies, and bags, and shirts. My podcast is the Therapy Thoughts podcast. You can hang out with me there where I break down therapy topics. Any events that pop up in the future when our world adjusts to this new normal, I guess?
- Shohreh:** Something.
- Tiffany:** Come to my dance parties, or my retreats, or my workshops. So just come to @heyttiffanyroe, I'd love to hang out with you, and support you, and hear about your mental health.
- Shohreh:** And also we have to talk about your fun pack because, amazing.
- Tiffany:** Oh! Dude, I need a list of the things I do. I forget [laughter].

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Shohreh: It's just so many. It's not your fault if you forget.

Tiffany: It's a lot, dude. So, yeah, a couple months ago I just wanted to make mental health more accessible, that's always my core value, and COVID hit, and I'm like, people need something else, what do they need? They need fun mail. They need fake tattoos, they need postcards, they need stickers. And so we made the FEEL DEAL HEAL subscription pack.

And so you get a cool mailer every month. So this in-person mental health mailer, plus all this virtual support. You get two webinars with me on a specific topic. Last month was inner child work, this month's gonna be on boundaries, and around the holidays we'll be talking about navigating family relationships. So it comes with a lot of other things—meditations, and a playlist, obviously, 'cause dance therapy, a Facebook group. And it's affordable, you can buy it once, you can subscribe and save some cash. But it's just another way to value your mental health and take care of you. That's the FEEL DEEL HEAL pack. You can find all my stuff at www.tiffanyroe.com.

Shohreh: Perfect, I will get all of that in the show notes as well so it's very easy for people to find. Thank you again for taking the time out of your very busy schedule to do this. It means the world to me, and I can't wait to share this with everybody out there.

Tiffany: It was such a pleasure. Thank you.

Shohreh: And that's our show for today! If this podcast has taught you anything or helped you in any way, I hope you'll consider supporting me in my effort to keep it going. You can join my Patreon community and receive members-only perks by going to shohrehdavoodi.com/Patreon, or you can tip me for my work through the payment links located at the bottom of the show

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