Episode 52 Transcript

# Bake Your Way to a Better World with Shirley Quarmby

**SUMMARY KEYWORDS**

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**SPEAKERS**

Janelle Anderson, Shirley Quarmby

**Janelle Anderson**

Hello ladies, you are listening to Women Emerging Fearlessly. Did you know that four out of five women struggle with confidence and knowing who they are? This show is dedicated to helping women lead their lives with fearless confidence and to know how amazing they truly are. In this show, you will hear from women who are emerging fearlessly who have overcome many obstacles to pursue their dreams and passions. And they will inspire you and encourage you to stand up, step out and speak up. Be your authentic self and bring your true gifts to the world. My name is Janelle Anderson, and I am your host. If you enjoy this podcast, please leave a great review, and subscribe and share it with your friends. Enjoy the show!

Hello, everybody. Welcome to this episode of Women Emerging Fearlessly. And I have a guest with me today that's going to be talking about baking and something that I don't do very often anymore. But I used to love, love, love to bake. So, and I think she's going to teach us some things that maybe you haven't ever heard of because she's professional. So, I want to introduce you today to Shirley Quarmby. She's a home baker extraordinaire, and qualified pastry chef. She was born in Zimbabwe, but she now lives in the UK. Shirley has had a lifelong passion for baking, and I forgot to ask how to say this patisserie.

**Shirley Quarmby**

Patisserie

**Janelle Anderson**

Sorry, I was close, patisserie, and she's gonna tell us what that is. After 30 plus years of working at a business as a business analyst in the IT industry surely took a career break and trained as a professional pastry chef at the prestigious Le Cordon Bleu Cookery School. As a result, she has the unique ability of bringing professional skills to the home baker, through her online baking school called Sharing Deliciousness. Shirley is working on developing new course content for her baking school, and her first cookbook of recipes with the human story behind them. For more information, she can be reached at info@sharingdeliciousness.com, and we'll be putting this information in the show notes. So, we'll talk about that later. But welcome to the show, Shirley.

**Shirley Quarmby**

Thank you. Thank you for having me. I'm delighted to be here.

**Janelle Anderson**

It's great to have you on and talking on this topic. As I was saying in the intro, you know, I used to love to bake when I was, I still remember as a freshman in high school and I was taking my Home Ec class and we were learning how to bake pies and to make a pie crust from scratch. And so, I practiced and practiced on that and I got really good at it. And the first one I made turned out beautiful as a pumpkin pie. And it just turned out perfect. We took a picture I was just so proud of myself. And so, I went on this kick for you know, a while baking pies and homemade crust which I don't do anymore, but that was something I used to really love to do. So, tell us about your love of baking and sharing food and just where did that all come from? Because you were in IT first. So that's kind of a leap.

**Shirley Quarmby**

Yeah, well I still am in IT, I'm still in my day job and I am trying to grow my business Sharing Deliciousness in parallel to that. And but my love of baking and food goes right way back to when I grew up. I mean, as I said in the introduction I'd been brought up in Zimbabwe and at the time we had economic sanctions in that country and so you know, I didn't know any better, but you know, I grew up watching my mom making everything from scratch, so it was the norm for me and sort of society and network of friends that we had was very normal to have people around for dinner parties and there's prices, things like that. So, say all of that sort of entertainment and friendship going around food around the tables for breaking bread together effectively. You know goes right back to my childhood and something that stayed with me and I suppose I've got more into the baking side of things rather than you know, doing sort of savory dishes. I mean I still do that, but you know my love and passion has gone into the baking side of things and I suppose you know ultimately, it's my friend. It's like an old friend for me is that whenever I'm you know just might have had that bad day at the office or whatever it is, you know the place I gravitate to is my kitchen and I don't have to turn out anything fancy. It can just be, you know, a tray of brownies or whatever. And it's just something that I find hugely leveling. And it's very, very visceral about just being very creative at a fundamental level. Yeah. And then obviously sharing it.

**Janelle Anderson**

Yes. Yes. I mean, people love baked goods. I yeah, I used to love to bake brownies. And I don't know where my love of baking went, maybe just getting busy with life.

**Shirley Quarmby**

And also, priorities change. And you know, yeah, for sure. You know, I know a lot of people are the same with that. For sure.

**Janelle Anderson**

Yeah, I love that picture of just being around the table breaking bread, and just that community that comes with you know, doing that, and, you know, feeling the sense of calm or peace or creativity or whatever you feel when you're baking and then having something beautiful to share. And I also love the fact that you are pursuing what you love, your passion, while working a job. So just for my audience, because I know a lot of ladies listening to this podcast are probably in the same boat, or maybe they're still working their job, but they wish they could pursue a passion and especially one like this, baking, because I've heard a lot of women say, Well, I love to bake, or I love to sew, or I love to paint or I love to whatever, but I don't see how that could create an income for me. So, you are the perfect person to talk to about that. So, can you kind of walk us through like what you maybe, you had to overcome fears maybe or thinking, you know, this will never work. Or, you know, what kinds of things did you have to overcome to say, okay, yes, I'm going to do this school.

**Shirley Quarmby**

Yeah. Yes, I'm still in the infancy of my business, I would say I launched it in January this year, Sharing Deliciousness. But it came to a point where I realized that I had something of value to give to people, you know, that I've had to overcome that massive impostor syndrome. And I think a lot of people relate to, and I am, I just ended up realizing I had to trust myself, but I had a message to give to the world. And I'm still iterating my way towards that, but I got to the point where I just felt so compelled that I had to do something about it. And the thing that has helped me the most is somebody sort of said to me just take lots of imperfect action. Because I think when I first started out, I wasn't quite sure exactly what I was aiming for, you know, I know that, for me, baking is not just about the food. So that's the food is the front door for me. For me, baking is much bigger than that, in terms of what it's given me, for my sense of wellbeing, the community, it's grown my confidence just by how I've seen my skills improve. And a lot of that's, you know, just through practice, and watching other people and being encouraged by the people.

And I think there's a message in that, that I can give to people because I've particularly when I look back at how my skill has improved, I look back to where I started. And when I am to what I can do now. And I remember the point to which I started discovering, you know, high end patisserie and the more refined elements of the baking world. Therein saying to myself, Oh, my goodness, how on earth can I make something like that, I've just got to learn how to do that. And when, I there are some things that are complicated, but there are a lot of things that when you break down individual components, those in themselves are not complicated. And it's just being shown how to do it. And the sense of achievement, like how you alluded to your pumpkin pie, that sense of achievement, when you've done it doesn't even have to be perfect, but the fact that you've, you know, created something that in yourself is beautiful to you and a sense of achievement for yourself. Forget the calories and all that, you know, because people I think dumb down baking a lot in this, you know, healthy kind of world that we're all supposed to be striving towards is that the mental health benefits that it's given me far outweigh the calories, you know, everything in moderation, for sure. But those sort of positive side door benefits have been huge for me. And I think that's part of what I wanted to give out to the world in terms of my message. Yeah, the baking skills, but it's also what it can give you as a person. Yeah. Whether you're just baking for yourself, whether you're baking for community and for all those kinds of purposes. Yeah.

**Janelle Anderson**

You know, it's just reminding me of how it's so important to know your why. And I think this is really key for women to hear is that it isn't just baking, or it isn't just sewing or knitting or whatever it is that you really love to do. It's the why behind it. And you just shared that beautifully. Like, your why and your passion goes much deeper than just the baking. And the baking is like a great expression of something deeper, that expresses itself through your baking. And that was just really, really powerful.

**Shirley Quarmby**

Thank you, yeah, it kind of relates a little bit to the book that I'm trying to work on at the moment, the recipe or cookbook, I think you took my color as well and is it's all about the nostalgia behind recipes. And I've done a lot of fundraising for local charity right here on my doorstep. One of my heartfelt passions very close to my heart is the loneliness and isolation in this world. And this charity, they are involved in a number of projects, particularly they ran a befriending service where they recruit volunteers to visit lonely, isolated old people in their homes, you know, once a week, or call them up on the phone or whatever. And I've asked my funds to be, you know, put towards that. And I had an idea that I would write a recipe book of all the recipes that I've used to as a behind all the money I've raised for them, that I've sold on for that is to have to see what I can get to interview those people where ultimately my fundraising, but you know, that one step forward, and my baking has supported those people and what it means to them, but then also perhaps what their favorite baking recipes are, you know, going and it's that kind of element of human story. That brings the power of baking alive. For me.

**Janelle Anderson**

That is fantastic! What better way to help people that are lonely than to go see them but bring them something that you baked. Yeah, and so many people are lonely. That's a big thing. I mean, even when you're in the middle of a crowd of people, you can feel lonely, you know, but I know there's a lot of people right now with the pandemic that are feeling the loneliness, so much more people that are alone anyway, living alone, and how much worse it is for them. Yeah, so that's a cool thing. A befriending service. I never heard of that before.

**Shirley Quarmby**

Yeah, it is. It's, it's great. And I, so I've been partnered up with the lady and I ring her once a week, you know, we're now COVID. Here, we've got distancing and stuff. So, but I give her a call every week, and we have a little laughter. So, I really appreciate that, because she's very isolated. And particularly now with COVID there's a lot of, you know, you're not allowed to visit people on that. So, yeah.

**Janelle Anderson**

Yeah definitely, oh my gosh, my heart goes out to people like that, because my dad, he lives with my brother, but he does, my brother lives upstairs. And for long, large parts of the day, he's downstairs by himself, and oh, just breaks my heart. I go over there as much as I can. But I hate to think of anybody just being alone.

**Shirley Quarmby**

I do a lot of baking recipe testing stuff, and there's only so much I can eat. So, I actually also donate a lot to my local food bank. So, you know, there's always that element of giving for me and my, you know, my baking, it's really important to me, and that's kind of where the ethos of Sharing Deliciousness comes from, I suppose.

**Janelle Anderson**

Yeah, that's really beautiful. So, I know you had this, these pop-up tea rooms or tell me about that.

**Shirley Quarmby**

I naively dreamt, I don't know if naively is the right word, but dreamt of having my own tea shop or coffee shop commercially, and just never made that commercial step. For whatever reason, I think, partly, it's probably too scared or couldn't see the commercial in a business case for it. But there was a movement here in the UK, it was called like a supper club movement where people were cooking in their own homes, but through social media advertising it, you know, getting people to come and eat their food, you know, in their homes around the dinner table. You pay for it, but it was really sort of advertised on a need-to-know basis and all sort of on a social media kind of setup. So, you know, some people were doing evening meals and that, but some people were doing afternoon teas and I got you know when I heard about that, but that's just the perfect sort of in between step for me because I still have my day job, but it meant that I could still be creative, I still have that community kind of idea. So yeah, it was advertised on a need-to-know basis or you know, through social media and that I could only have six people around my table. So, I've got quite a small house, but I would bet once a month I would have an event where 6 people didn't know each other. I mean generally people came in pairs, but six people didn't know each other will come and I would serve them high tea, afternoon tea.

And it was great fun. It was very sort of cozy, intimate kind of setting and lots of laughter and chatter and you know for two or three hours and I would put on you know, a selection of sandwiches and some savory dishes and then some sweet elements in cakes and things and then bottom is tea and coffee and scones, clotted cream, and that kind of thing. And it was a lot of work for me because I you know I didn't have anybody helping me and that. And that was okay. You know, but I loved it. And I met so many nice people. And you know, when people say, oh, weren't you frightened of having strangers in your house, and it was never like that, because they were just the kind of people that were, they knew where they were coming to, so that we just that kind of mindset of people, that I knew would be respectful and that kind of thing. And also, because it was a daytime thing, it was all very safe, really. And I never had any issues. So, so yeah, I did that for about eight years and kind of stopped doing them. For now, anyway, and December 2018, when I started to want to, you know, launch my online cookery course, I couldn't do both. It was just too much work for me. So. But yeah, I'd have to go back to it because it really ticked all the boxes for me about being able to be creative. And I was very brave. I often used to test recipes on them, you know, and we make things for the first time and that, but I had so much fun putting the menus together, and then obviously meeting these people it was great fun. Yeah.

**Janelle Anderson**

You really have a gift of hospitality, I think. Yeah, that is so cool. Tell us a little bit more about your baking school, Sharing Deliciousness.

**Shirley Quarmby**

Sharing Deliciousness. Yes. So, my sort of idea and vision is to create a full baking school. So, at the moment, I've got one course out there, which is my pastry course and pastry master class, perfect pastry master class. And I'm currently working on a Macaron course at the moment. It does take me quite a while to develop the material because I'm, you know, still in the day job. But I'm now just doing a little bit every day and working my way towards that. What I did with my pastry course was, I did a bit of market research and asking people what they might want out of a pastry course, because then it's a huge topic. And in the end, I decided, based on what I got some feedback from was I chose just pie crust, typically what we would call short crust. And I went into it in a very sort of deep, deep way and going behind, you know, but at the science, understanding that and the various modules that I've got teach people that progressively slightly more and more complicated aspects of that pastry. So, I do like a savory kind of application. But that same recipe can be applied to both a sweet and savory environmental decent, greasy, plain, definitely sweet pastries. And then I also do a module where I'm teaching people how to adapt some of the recipes that I've already taught them to make it a bit more confident with that. And the final module is, is a called the perfect tea party where sort of to reach mission accomplished students have to bake two or more products of what they've learned in the previous modules.

And it's over a 10-week period of time, which in some ways might seem a lot. But there's two break weeks in there but also why I wanted it to be that long is because I wanted to differentiate myself from a bricks and mortar cookery school. So, for example, you go to one day course at a bricks and mortar cookery school, and it could be great fun, but they, their sort of idea of value might be that they cram in as many recipes in that day for you. And that's been my experience, I get to the end of the day, and I feel a bit overwhelmed. And I've done a lot, but I'm not quite sure exactly what I've learned. And then I get home. And I try and recreate it in my own oven. But the oven's different from the cookery school, and it doesn't work. And I've got no one to ask that. So, you know, it just kind of compounded the issues I was having. So, for my pastry course, what I've done is created a support network over the 10-week period, you've got lots of time to practice and I kind of alluded to, things at the beginning of the interview about, some things aren't as difficult as they seem. And that's what I try and teach in my pastry courses that it's just about practice. I show very key techniques. And then you get lots of time to repeat that with the support from me. I do some midweek live webinar calls. And then there's also a closed Facebook group where people are posting what they're baking. And I give feedback in that. So, and at the end of the day, you know, students have come out said how much their pastry skills have improved. So that's kind of you know, the idea of what I'm aiming for is providing that ongoing support and accountability that I think is missing from a bricks and mortar cookery schools because yeah, therefore, typically one day, yeah.

**Janelle Anderson**

Right, right. That sounds really fun. Are they recorded where they watch you bake it?

**Shirley Quarmby**

The demos or pre-recorded. You can watch them as many times as you want. And they are all in the membership platform area. So, you've got access to that as long as well as by all the recipes as well. Yeah.

**Janelle Anderson**

Yeah, that sounds like fun. What is your favorite pastry?

**Shirley Quarmby**

That's a hard question. You mean do you mean like as in a full recipe or just the natural pastry crust itself?

**Janelle Anderson**

The full recipe.

**Shirley Quarmby**

So, for a savory, I would say, I've got what I teach in my course. It's a caramelized onion tart. It's just to die for! But it's really easy to make and, but it's just delicious. And then I think for a sweet pastry, I'll probably go with my apple pie. Yeah.

**Janelle Anderson**

I would love to taste some of your baking.

**Shirley Quarmby**

Well, actually, my apple pie recipe is actually up on my blog website. I know, you said you'd post my website in thing. But yeah, but the apple pie recipe's out there for every inch.

**Janelle Anderson**

Well, there you go. All right, what’s your vision for your school and for just what you want to do going forward?

**Shirley Quarmby**

Out of my school, I'm aiming to have I suppose modules of areas of skill that I would like to teach people. So, at the moment, I've got one thing on pastry, kind of imagine macarons, maybe bread, cakes, that kind of thing. And that ultimately, I might want to each of those, I think students could take individually in their own right. But I probably would like to build it up to maybe an overall patisserie program. So maybe it would be a three- or six-month program, say something like that, that you could, that you could take that would look at, you know, my support, and things like that. But alongside of that, you know, I know some of my students who've been through my course, have really enjoyed the community aspect of baking together, you know, in the Facebook group, and getting that feedback. So, there's, there's that element of it, that I'm wanting to make sure I meet people at their needs, I'm wanting to also create a Facebook group that’s separate to my school that I've called it Baking a Better World, I'm still working through exactly what the objectives of that group will be.

But I kind of see the two working together that there's going to be certainly transferring of skills and sharing recipes and things like that. But there might be themes running through it about you know, what's everybody baking for charity this week, or maybe aiming to host the world's biggest online tea party or something like that. So it's really fostering community and giving back to the world, you know, that kind of thing, even if it's in a small way, that's kind of how I sort of see the two working together to one is my school, transferring skills and having students that feel confident and happy with themselves so that you know, how they're being in themselves, where they're baking, and what it can do for them in their own right, and their families and people that they're sharing with. But then also, as I say, having a community in a Facebook group where we're are all making a contribution to the world around us in other ways.

**Janelle Anderson**

That's a great vision. It sounds like so much fun. You know, the biggest Tea Party online, I think that would be great, great fun, and just to have that community around, you know, baking for someone, baking for a nonprofit or a charity, and then sharing ideas and tips. And yeah. Do they share pictures? Would they be sharing pictures of what they created or doing demos?

**Shirley Quarmby**

Yeah, yeah. All of that. Yeah. So, I would, I would want to be doing my own demos in that group as well. So yeah, it's in its infancy, I've kind of just bagged the name of it in terms of the Facebook group as and I'm just wanting to think through strategy and objectives of that before I fully launch it, right, yeah.

**Janelle Anderson**

Have you ever thought about doing demos on YouTube and getting a following?

**Shirley Quarmby**

I have, I do have a YouTube channel, but nothing is sort of officially live yet. And that's certainly on the to do list at the moment. I really would love to be able to do that. I've taken lots of footage of pre-recorded stuff. And it's just editing it and getting it out there for sure.

**Janelle Anderson**

Yeah, yeah. You could do a tip of the day or week or something. Yeah.

**Shirley Quarmby**

Absolutely. Yeah.

**Janelle Anderson**

So, lots of potential there.

**Shirley Quarmby**

Absolutely.

**Janelle Anderson**

So, what's next in your patisserie journey?

**Shirley Quarmby**

For me, I'm always wanting to keep learning and refining my skills and being able to transfer that to other people. So, as I said, I'm working on a Macaron course at the moment and wanting to just refine that a bit before I launch it. I think I'm thinking of doing something that's going to be maybe quite short. So, I think at the moment, I'm thinking about something called Macarons by Monday or something. So, it's something that people can do over a weekend and then building up some of the other material that I think people would be interested in. I think that there's such a broad range of skill sets that people might want to be interested in. So, whether it's basic cakes, whereas some people might want to be a bit more sophisticated, where you're doing something called like an enteme, which is basically caught up, it's a layered dessert kind of cake and you've got Mira glazes and things like that, that are saying in themselves are very complicated, but, but really, they're not, that each of the components are quite simple. And they were just to be able to give people confidence to do them, because they're great fun. Yeah. And you can have so much fun with the flavors and all that kind of thing. Yeah.

**Janelle Anderson**

Yeah. And then everybody would be impressed.

**Shirley Quarmby**

Yeah, it's very easy to wow people with some things that look massively complicated, but actually, are not.

**Janelle Anderson**

What does patisserie mean?

**Shirley Quarmby**

It's the art of pastry, I think and but it kind of encompasses the whole thing of more, you're sort of refined elements of what I would call baking. It's something that's perhaps not as rustic as perhaps your farmhouse apple pie, shall we say, if you can imagine what that might be? So, it's kind of describing the art of pastry and sort of includes chocolate and things like that, where you are sculpting things and making really, really fine decorations and that kind of thing. Yeah.

**Janelle Anderson**

So, kind of like the art, more of an art form.

**Shirley Quarmby**

It is Yeah, it's more like describing it as an art. At the art of baking, I suppose, but at a refined level. Yeah.

**Janelle Anderson**

Yeah, because I know, when you go in, you know, fancier restaurants and their desserts are just so beautiful and so creative, and you almost don't want to eat them.

**Shirley Quarmby**

Exactly. Yeah. I mean, that the hours that it's taken to make them so beautiful, and that those kinds of displays are exactly what patisserie is.

**Janelle Anderson**

Okay, gotcha. Very cool. Well, I'm sure that many women in my audience love to bake and cook and would love to participate in your school and maybe even take your course. You have something you want to offer them. You want to tell us what that is?

**Shirley Quarmby**

Yeah, I've got a free download that people are welcome to. It's my 10 Secrets of Pastry Success. And also, my recipe for Bakewell Tarts. I'm not quite sure if, I don't know where your audiences is, mostly in the US, but Bakewell Tart is a quintessential English dessert. It's a tart. So, a pie crust base with traditionally it's a bit of raspberry jam, little bit of raspberry jam, and then an almond cake kind of filling. So, a bit like, I don't know if you're familiar with frangipani perhaps that's something a bit more familiar people, but it's an almond base thing. And it's delicious. All the instructions for that are in that download. So.

**Janelle Anderson**

Wow, fun. That sounds delicious. Really.

**Shirley Quarmby**

If anybody's got any questions, I'll say that please email me I'd be delighted to help if I can.

**Janelle Anderson**

Absolutely. And when do you think your school will be up?

**Shirley Quarmby**

So, my summer pastry course is up, I've launched it twice already. I'm not planning at the moment and running again till probably January, February next year. But if people go to my website, and they're interested in they can always just sign up to the waiting list. And they'll be informed, you know, whenever I get that intact, and also that'll put them onto the list when I do my macaron course and things like that. So that's probably the best way to be kept informed.

**Janelle Anderson**

Okay, sounds wonderful. Well, thank you so much for coming today and sharing about your passion and teaching us a little bit.

**Shirley Quarmby**

Yeah. Well, thank you very much. I've been delighted to be here. Thank you for your invite.

**Janelle Anderson**

Good luck to you and everything that you're doing out there in the world and how you're contributing. I hope that the charity that you help promote that that really does well. That sounds amazing.

**Shirley Quarmby**

Thank you. Thank you very much.

**Janelle Anderson**

Yeah,

**Shirley Quarmby**

Thank you keep safe and well.

**Janelle Anderson**

So that's it, everybody. If you want to know more about Shirley and her cooking school, or you want to get a hold of her recipes, and some of her courses, just look at the show notes and all her information will be there as well as this free download and have fun baking. So, until next time, everybody, be confident, be real and be you.

I hope you enjoyed that episode and got a lot out of it that will help you on your journey to becoming fearlessly confident. If you would like to know how to work with me, to help you to become fearlessly confident. Just email me: janelle@emerginglifecoaching.com. You can also go to my website, there's lots of great resources on there, including a free mini course called: Be Confident. Be Real. Be You. It's a three-video course with downloadable action guides that will definitely help you to get on this journey to becoming fearlessly confident. My website is emerginglifecoaching.com Thanks for listening, and until next time, be fearless, be confident and be you