



## TRANSCRIPT – SHARING TALES PODCAST SERIES 1 TEASER

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(RnB intro music)

**Rebekah Clark:** Hello, and thank you for listening in! My name is Rebekah Clark and I am the host of this new podcast, Sharing Tales.

Before our first proper episode goes live next week, I wanted to take the opportunity to introduce myself, and give a little background to why I decided to launch this podcast.

At the start of 2020 hosting a podcast was not on my to-do list at all, but looking back I can see that my dear friend Kate inadvertently planted a seed. Last year, she and her husband made a special Christmas podcast for family and friends which went down a storm. While I was encouraging her to make it a more regular thing to do, it didn't occur to me that I might like to explore the world of pods aswell. So giving lots of credit and love to Kate for inspiring me without me realising.

What I did want to start at the beginning on this year was an event series called A Place at the Table. The idea was pretty simple. A small but perfectly formed local restaurant in Crouch End, where I live, posted on insta that they were making their space available for private dinners on Sunday evenings. Through my work as a communications consultant I have put on lots of events over the years, and those who know me know I love an event! But work projects like that weren't landing at my door just then, so I saw the chance to create something new.

My idea was to invite a group of women to come along to Nickel, the restaurant, for what I called 'a convivial evening of delicious food and sparkling conversation'. The chef and I collaborated on a special menu, and the evening would provide a setting for people to come together in a warm space for meeting, sharing stories, and

communion. At each event my plan was for a special guest to come and share something inspiring and important to them, and I was absolutely delighted when my friend Jessica Huie MBE, agreed to come and speak at this first gathering, about Purpose. She has an brilliant book by the same name, published by Hay House, which I highly recommend.

That first event was such a lovely evening, and the energy in the room that night in late February was something I shall never forget. Particularly, as it turned out to be one of the last times any of us would be able to meet in such a way for months to come. Just a few weeks later we found ourselves in national lockdown.

Needless to say, that was the first and last in-real-life A Place at the Table, at least for now. Like many others, we switched to meeting online. The format was the same but without Chef Michael's delicious food and wine. Which I really miss! Going digital also meant that the audience widened and suddenly guests weren't just limited to being in London, but joined from as far away as New York, South Africa, Dubai, and New Zealand! I couldn't believe it, and this was such a silver lining.

Meeting so many different people (speakers and guests) during this time, and hearing all the different stories that people have to tell, led me to this. Sharing Tales is a podcast creating space for everyday people to share their own personal stories.

I have always loved stories – hearing them, and telling them. When I was a teenager I was often the one that friends would come to to tell me what was happening in their lives. I always remember my mum asking – why do they always come to you? And I don't know. But I do know that it hasn't really changed, and I feel privileged that people feel they can speak to me openly and candidly about the things they care about, what they might be struggling with, their hopes, secrets and dreams. I like to think I'm a pretty good cheerleader, with perhaps some strong opinions thrown in now and then too.

Sharing Tales embraces and celebrates the rollercoaster of life. By the time we reach our 30s and 40s, we have experienced more than a few highs and lows, and yet, there is always hope. After all, we lived to tell the tale.

During this first series, I will be exploring the theme of 'changing direction' and 'transformation'. The pivots or periods of growth we face in our life, either through choice or necessity. In each episode I ask my interesting and inspiring guests to speak to me about three significant chapters in their lives, which have marked a shift in how

they were living previously, whilst discussing the ways these events have changed or impacted their lives.

Oh, and I also love a mantra, an affirmation, or an inspiring quote or two! So each guest also shares their 'mantra for modern living', the words, beliefs and values that they turn to, to help navigate whatever life throws at them.

Hopefully handled with warmth, empathy and sensitivity, my aim is to provide a safe and supportive space for those who have generously offered to share their stories, often with vulnerability and candour. We have also had the opportunity to explore the joy, happiness and fun that life can bring.

Often, we have no idea who we are inspiring or encouraging with our words, and the mission for Sharing Tales is to remind those who listen, that we are never truly alone on our life journeys, or in our experiences. I also feel that while it is great to hear from famous people, or those with a public profile, those individuals can sometimes feel removed from us. We can't always relate to them directly. There's a real power in hearing from people 'like us' and I can certainly feel really inspired by someone who is 'within reach' to me and my circumstances. That's why I think it's important to create platforms for these voices to be heard.

I think it was when I was at university, so still relatively young, when I realised that pretty much everyone has a story. I looked at my friends and heard stories of childhood bereavement, abusive families, eating disorders, parental affairs, and we weren't yet 21! On the happier side I saw people already bursting with adventure, international travel, leaving home for the first time, volunteering, and seeking ways to make a difference or an impact. I truly believe its how we respond to or handle the cards that life has dealt us, which matters in the end.

My own story is one of seeking identity, wanting to fit in but never feeling able to, overcoming insecurity and doubt, and finally in recent years truly coming home to myself.

I didn't exactly have the best start in life. Now this is no sob story, it's just what happened. Born in London in 1978, to a White British young mother and father unknown (let's agree he was Black Jamaican), a mixed-race baby with a single mother wasn't exactly UK society's favoured expression of a 'family' at that time. Add to the mix that this young woman was wholly incapable of looking after her infant, and within a year her child (that's me!) was taken into foster care.

From that point I was cared for, and later adopted by the Clark family.

Kind, loving people, but they didn't necessarily know how to support a mixed-race child as she grew in the world, and I felt a strong lack of personal identity or a sense of 'roots'. I dreaded the frequent question of 'where are you from?' knowing people really meant where is my father from? And at that point I didn't know. It felt embarrassing and shameful, and other, to not have this most fundamental of information.

The sort of help and resources my parents needed wasn't readily available then, nor perhaps even acknowledged. Simply a case of, get the child with a family who will cover her basic needs, and love her, and we'll gloss over the fact that everyone around her is White. Good luck!

This sense of not fitting in, and being 'other' followed me like a shadow. An irritating twin who never quite left me alone despite my best efforts to hide it with bravado and humour. By the time I got to high school, the bullies at my school could sense it, and I was easy prey. It wasn't racially motivated bullying, but those kids just knew that I was one of the weak ones in the pack, so my early adolescence was marred with further 'proof' that I wasn't good enough for this world.

However, resilience!! I didn't know it then, but I had a superpower. Even in the darkest times I somehow knew that if I just kept going, if I could grow up and out of these circumstances, that life was mine for the taking. Somewhere in my DNA I had been blessed with a belief and a quiet understanding that this, was just a moment in time. And that has proven to be true.

So that is a little of my story. It seemed rude for me to be asking others to share, without doing so myself!

And what a wonderful group of guests we have coming up over the next seven weeks. As this idea was sparked by A Place at the Table, this first series focuses on women's voices. From series 2, that will change and Sharing Tales will have a mix of gender experiences going forward.

Coming up we will hear adventures of relocating to foreign countries to start new lives, unexpected multiple sets of twins, a cancer diagnosis and hospital birthday parties, facing time in prison before healing and redemption, and so much more....

We'll be kicking off on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> November, with our first guest episode, where I'll be joined by Corinne Shields. We'll be talking about her music career after training at the Brit School, a pivot into

hairdressing, and her newly found passion for health and wellness. I would love it if you listened.

New episodes will be released each Monday, and this first series will take us up to Christmas. I'll be back with more stories and series 2 in early 2021.

But for now, if you have weathered a few storms, and still believe the best is yet to come, Sharing Tales is the podcast for you!

You'll find us at all the usual podcast place. Please head over and subscribe for all future episodes and if you like what you hear I'd be very grateful for a review, as that helps more people find out about the show.

Until next time! Bye for now.