Holly Marsh: Coping mechanisms and dumpster fires

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SPEAKERS
Katy Weber, Holly Marsh

Katy Weber  00:00
All right, so you're my first interview. And I'm super excited because I feel like my daughter and I like it took us like five minutes to fall in love with you when we saw your website. And so I really want to talk about your business and all of the amazing stuff you're doing. But I also First of all, I want to talk about your ADHD diagnosis, because you were also very recently diagnosed. Correct?

Holly Marsh  00:28
Correct. It is the summer.

Katy Weber  00:31
Wow. Okay, so walk me through what what? First of all, what made you think you might have it? Did somebody tell you or like, you know, what made you think that you wanted to get the diagnosis? What, what led up to getting that diagnosis for you?

Holly Marsh  00:45
Well, um, what led me to getting my diagnosis was my youngest child, we, excuse me, had him assessed for autism, because our oldest is on the spectrum. And I know a lot of autistics don't like to identify themselves, as, you know, if they're high functioning or low functioning, just because there's a whole gamut of problems with that. But he is, you know, fairly high functioning, but he is autistic. And we've noticed similar traits in our youngest, and we really wanted to set him up for success when entering school, because we found that early intervention was just huge for my oldest. And so we got him screened. And we knew that, you know, a sibling with autism, you know, has a higher percentage of also being autistic as well. So we got him screened, and they said at the time, they were said, Now, he's not necessarily autistic. But he does have ADHD tendencies. And I was like, Oh, okay. So then, you know, not necessarily seeking a diagnosis for my child, we just kind of let it be, give it some time, listened to a lot of his educators on, you
know, the things that he's doing that seem neurotypical, the things that he's doing, that aren't neurotypical. And, you know, I did a lot of research. And after a while, it was actually a Reddit thread that I came across. That was I think it's our slash ADHD. Yep, I'm there. Yeah. And I read I

Katy Weber 02:20

could I just say, What I love about that subreddit is there are a million followers on that subreddit, and yet not a lot of activity. And when I first joined it, I was like, Huh, that's interesting that it's not as active and I was like, Oh, right, of course, because ADHD.

Holly Marsh 02:36

I keep forgetting that I'm on that subreddit as well, which is exciting. So yeah, I went on to the I went on to there. And there was one thread in particular, and I can't remember, I can't even remember if I saved it, but I was like, Oh, my goodness. It's like they took a crowbar to my brain looked inside and wrote everything down. What was happening? It was like migraine. And so then I kind of went down this rabbit hole I started you know, finding, you know, the the YouTube channel how to ADHD. I love her. And, and, yeah, it's so funny. I felt all of my life that I was different. But then I was like, oh, everyone probably thinks that about themselves. Everyone, you know, everyone is different. But I always felt like I was still different. And finding out more and more about ADHD, and talking to the people who have ADHD, regardless of when they've been diagnosed, or if they've been diagnosed at all. I was like, I found my, my brains, my people. You don't

Katy Weber 03:36

I think there is, I think, I don't know if it's just always growing up feeling like, you know, I know I'm intelligent, but I think there's something different there's, you know, I just feel like I think I heard it on a podcast once somebody say like, it felt like everybody else got the manual and I didn't you know, yes. And so I think there is something really just like necessary to that feeling recognized, you know, like, I think it becomes part of you isn't your essential being, you know, like, needing to feel recognized and needing to feel like you are okay. And so what do you find your people like when you find out that oh my god, this is the explanation for everything. For as long as I can remember it, you know, I think it is super important to us. And I you know what I've noticed since also, you know, having that same similar experience being diagnosed joining a lot of these Facebook groups following all these efforts, doing like hyper focus deep dive, yes, but at the same time, like it's so meta because now I'm like, Oh, right. This is what I do. I hyper focus.

Holly Marsh 04:48

Hyper focus, what did you find?

Katy Weber 04:51

It's like the most meta deep dive ever deep dive into ADHD, but like, yeah, I think there is something so I guess you know, next This area for lack of a better word of just needing to feel like, Oh, this is I finally figured this out. And this is where I belong.
Holly Marsh 05:06
Right? Well, and I think that the majority of people on this planet are, you know, have good intentions, try to be a good person, and try to improve themselves. And if you kind of don’t know how to improve yourself, or you know, why you do something you just kind of always did, this is just who you are. But there are some things that, you know, through life, that you’ve actually developed as a coping a coping mechanism. And that’s exactly what I have done all of my life was I have coping mechanisms that I’ve developed, and kind of coming to terms with those of like, okay, are those actually, you know, good coping mechanisms that, you know, are in a healthy way that helped me be productive, you know, keep keep me at my mental Wits? And, or is it like a more destructive, you know, coping mechanism that I could probably, you know, explore a more healthier option?

Katy Weber 06:01
Or, or at least you could, you can explain to yourself why you use that coping mechanism for so long.

Holly Marsh 06:08
Yes. Exactly.

Katy Weber 06:12
So now, okay, so you’re having this like, awareness of kind of looking, as I as I like to put it, just like looking over my whole life, really, from middle school on with this new lens and feeling like I was just turning over stone after stone, or stone thinking like, Oh, yeah, like, what are some things that really stick out to you? about your past about growing up, where you look back and say, Oh, my God, of course, that was the ADHD and I’d had I’d never knew,

Holly Marsh 06:39
right, yeah. So um, I, it’s so funny that you mentioned that like, kind of, you know, snippets of time, especially in school of like, looking back, and you’re like, oh, man, that was totally ADHD. Well, so, side note, I grew up as a Jehovah’s Witness. So already, I was kind of different in school. Anyway, I’m not now, but I was. And so I feel like that also was an additional masking layer of this, because I think that if had I not been in that religion at the time, I don’t know, maybe we would have explored it. But so I was already kind of an outcast. However, I use that creativity and that thinking out of the box, and that kind of strive to not conform to my advantage. Like, if we had a holiday crafting class, instead of excusing myself and going to the library, I use those same materials to make an alien instead of a Santa Claus. And that way, I was still able to participate. But I didn’t have to do it that way. And so having that creative freedom was really great. Because I know that in the school setting, sometimes that isn’t always the case. And another example was, well, it was actually every year, my mom would remind me that after the first day of school, I would come home in tears, and absolute tears. And it wasn’t because school was bad, or I had people being mean, to me, it was just because it was all so new and so overwhelming, that I just couldn’t handle it. And it happened to every year. And so knowing that I kind of became, I developed a coping mechanism for that knowing if I’m going into something new, like new job, or, you know, something, we’re in a, in a single sitting or a day, I’m going to be having, you know, a ton of information thrown at me that I yes, I’m going to have a period after that, where I’m just going to need to not do anything and just to rest and just sit with it.

Katy Weber 08:32
Transitioning is difficult for someone with ADHD, right. And I'm

Holly Marsh 08:39
in autistics, too, so we in our house, and especially with my youngest two is probably pre ADHD, and then they re evaluated him and he might be also autistic. But, you know, transitions, especially for him right now are really hard, especially with remote learning. It's been challenging.

Katy Weber 08:58
Yes, we'll get to that. How old are your children? You have two boys?

Holly Marsh 09:03
I do they have two boys. One is nine and one is five.

Katy Weber 09:06
Oh, okay. Wow. Okay. So that is really young for an ADHD diagnosis. Right. But

Holly Marsh 09:15
yet, well, that's the thing is they said that he's kind of pre ADHD and that they don't typically, you know, diagnose diagnose until they're about six or older. So they just said, you know, keep an eye on it. And so I was like, Okay, I'll use this time to start researching and oh my god, it's my brain to

Katy Weber 09:33
Yeah, yeah, I know, the, my son is nine. And I also have a 13 year old daughter, and I definitely, I mean, it's, you know, it's funny, my daughter says, since since my diagnosis, she rolls her eyes because she's like, when mom has ADHD, everyone has ADHD. Because, you know, I feel like I'm not only evaluating my own life, but I'm also evaluating the life of my partner. And my children and everything they do and trying to label it as whether or not these are tendencies. But so much of my own research, or at least some, you know, my own awareness of pursuing a diagnosis for myself was because my son and remote learning and he and I both just imploded, no. And, you know, but in ways in which we just really had to like, Okay, this is what works this is what does it me sort of realizing that I didn't know a lot about how he operated and how he processed information because he was in school all day, you know, so I wasn't really paying much attention to what he was struggling with. And I think

Holly Marsh 10:42
he probably had educators who are used to it and able to kind of roll with the punches instead of kind of pulling you aside and being like, Hey, you might get him screened for this, which we that's what happened with our with my oldest is our preschool was like, Hey, you should get him screened for this. And I was really grateful for that. Because,
you know, the teachers see a whole lot more kids than we do. And, again, with your son, he might have had, like, develop some coping mechanisms to kind of mask it and just to manage to like, you know, get through just fine.

Katy Weber 11:11
Absolutely. Yeah. I think one of his major motivating factors is to please his teacher and to really kind of fit in, I can, yeah, right. Exactly. And so I think without having his teacher there, and only having me and this kind of like looming specter of the teacher somewhere in the back. Yeah, you know, I wasn’t enough of, you know, structure or accountability for him. And I think that was where it all kind of like his handwriting, you know, the sums, basic, basic organizational skills, all this sort of really fell apart. I mean, he was only in the third grade. So he’s in right now. And

Holly Marsh 11:49
we’re doing Yeah, that’s my oldest is in fourth, too. And then yeah, I noticed some tendencies in him to almost to the point where I’m like, oh, should I have him looked at two for this, just because I noticed so many tendencies. And I’ve noticed more of a kind of a scatterbrained tendency, actually, among everyone, and I don’t know if that’s a side effect of the pandemic, and just being home all the time, or, you know, something else. But I know that you mentioned something about, you know, trying to label it. And I think that that’s really important, because, and I know that, you know, autism is a little different, but sometimes it can be a comorbidity, you know, we debated on whether we wanted to, you know, label my oldest as autistic of Oh, what’s gonna happen if we do that, but basically, what it came down to was, if we didn’t label it, then we weren’t going to get assistance as in services for him. Yeah. So we just said, All right, we’re gonna label it, we’re gonna move on. And honestly, it’s been really great. We haven’t really noticed much of, you know, the community being like, oh, there’s that autistic kid. So thankfully, everyone’s been really supportive, really accommodating. And it’s just been great.

Katy Weber 12:56
Yeah, you know, that’s something, my husband and I have sort of been having these ongoing conversations as I as I learn more and more about ADHD, but again, sort of talk about how important it is to have my son diagnostic, if necessary. And, you know, he sort of falls in that category of like, oh, there’s the stigma, I don’t know if this is going to help or hinder having this diagnosis. And, and I come from the side of like, Oh, my God, it would change everything. Like, I could go back and relive my life knowing that I had this, you know, and that I could label it and that I could figure out okay, so now these are, what these hacks are, and not just sort of feel like you’re always kind of fumbling around in the dark. Yeah. And but I also look at ADHD as something so incredibly powerful. And, you know, I also credit it with so many of my achievements, you know,

Holly Marsh 13:49
that absolutely.

Katy Weber 13:52
Wonderful. I think a lot of the stigma comes from outside with, I guess, with any diagnosis, so much of the stigma comes from people who have no idea what it is. And so I imagine it’s the same with autism as well.
Holly Marsh 14:04
Well, you know, I mean, everyone imagines, and again, if their brain imagines things in pictures like mine does, and I didn't realize that not everyone is like that, and it blew my, like, blew my mind a while back. But I imagine, you know, that the stereotype of ADHD is, you know, grade school boy bouncing off the walls and not being able to kind of like, sit still. And that's so not the case. I mean, this is a What am I? What am I trying to say? Your brain is just wired a little differently. And there's so many facets to that. That don't mean you know, everyone is cookie cutter about how they express that.

Katy Weber 14:38
Oh, absolutely. I think that was one thing. I mean, my therapist, my therapist has ADHD, and she's been telling me for years that I should get it checked out. But I, you know, my biggest my biggest hindrance, I was thinking about the fact that I was like, well, I've never been hyperactive. My issue is that I have this kind of pinch I'm where I'm really, really super interested, super motivated. And then I will spend weeks literally lying on the couch staring out the window.

Holly Marsh 15:07
And then like, growing and then getting stressed about it and then not doing anything. Yeah,

Katy Weber 15:11
exactly. So, you know, I was like, that doesn't sound like hyperactivity to me. And yeah, so I think that's one of the biggest misconceptions for sure, kind of why

Holly Marsh 15:21
I'm glad you're therapists, like sought it out. I saw a therapist early last year. And then this is when I was thinking I had possible ADHD. And she was like, No, I think you have OCD. And just like, would not and then every time I tried to bring the subject backup, she just would kind of shut it back down. And I didn't really feel supported to be like, Can we explore this? And so I eventually left that therapist and I still haven't managed to find another one. Just because at the time, I was like, the cost it was my insurance was awful about it. And so yeah, this year was a different story. But yeah, it's, it's great to have a really supportive therapist that can kind of help nudge you in that direction for you to kind of self do some self discovery.

Katy Weber 16:06
Oh, absolutely. Yeah. I mean, I think I think we struggle a lot with people saying, oh, everybody has that trait, you know, or, you know, everybody struggles with these things. And on some to some degree, and writing and again, it sort of reinforces this feeling of like being misunderstood or feeling like you're crazy. And maybe you're making this all up. And maybe this is not you, you know, like always feeling like everybody else understand something and you don't
Holly Marsh 16:33
write your Well, I think that also, it’s, it’s really easy to go down that mentality of Oh, well, they’re just downplaying it. They’re minimizing it. And in some cases, some people might be doing that, where they’re like, hey, you’re fine. But in other cases, they may be just trying to relate in some way, even though they’re not, even though they’re neurotypical, you know, they might be like, hey, oh, I have that trait, too. If they’re saying it that way, that it might be a little bit different, that they’re just trying to relate, and they don’t know what else to say. But yeah, sometimes people say it, and it’s just, you tend to really take it to heart of like, oh, they’re just downplaying what I’m going through? And they have no idea.

Katy Weber 17:12
Yeah, absolutely. That’s a much more gracious way of looking at it. I will try that on.

Holly Marsh 17:19
I’ve had that. We’ve had a lot of people, when we’re talking about my oldest diagnosis that they’ll talk about, you know, little things here and there. And I, and I just have to refrain it. And that’s it. That’s been a big, recent coping mechanism for me, that I didn’t realize was ADHD related, is just kind of trying to reframe my thinking about things of, you know, instead of really taking it personally, I’m trying to, you know, be like, Okay, well, where do you think that they’re coming from? Like, recently, I had a friend to, you know, offered some unsolicited advice, which a, I don’t like unsolicited advice, even though I tend to also do that. And so I’m trying to be mindful of doing that. But, and then she was, you know, she tried to push further, and I wasn’t ready for it. And I took it really personally. And I stood with it for like the rest of the night of just like, Why did she do that? So then I actually posted about it in one of the ADHD groups I’m in. And I was like, I would, would you guys react the same way? And a lot of them were like, yeah, and then someone popped in and said, Hey, you know, you could reframe thinking about this in the fact that, you know, she’s coming from a place of support, and she’s just excited to share, you know, this nugget with you, because she’s learned from you and added to that. So. And when she mentioned that, I was like, Oh, I could reframe it that way. And I am and knowing this friend, she probably is coming from a really good spot. And I appreciated it more. And I was kind of, you know, stood down and kind of chilled out a little more.

Katy Weber 18:53
That’s awesome. I love that. I think it’s really difficult for us to really slow down, especially when it comes to thoughts, snowballs.

Holly Marsh 19:01
Right, and then you bring the emotion into it. And then yeah, you just have to, it takes a lot of practice.

Katy Weber 19:06
So now, are you on any kind of medication for ADHD? Have you dabbled in that yet? How is that?

Holly Marsh 19:13
Yep, that's what I'm going through right now. And I am currently on Adderall. Although when I got my first bottle, it said amphetamine salts and I was like, What is this? And so I had to do some googling and realize that no, it's okay. It's not mess. I know that. That's a common misconception for people. It's not met. And we're still, I don't know, we're still toying with the dosage. I keep increasing it. And I don't know. And now I'm kind of rethinking. Well, maybe we should try a different medication. Just because I've had some I've actually had other friends get recently diagnosed. I think this pandemic has really pushed a lot of folks over the edge of, alright, my brain cannot handle all of this. What is going on?

Katy Weber  19:59

I have you heard that somewhere and I can't remember where it must. I mean, I've just been doing so much research so many different places over the last month or two and so it's like, I can't even remember where I'm hearing it, but I am hearing it. Right. I think the tick tock video somebody's talking about the fact that the pandemic has brought has like, brought out a lot of diagnoses, especially in middle aged women and mothers, you know, who had you know, we're barely just keeping it together.

Holly Marsh  20:28

beforehand. Yeah, now, like

Katy Weber  20:31

everything else. Yeah. Which doesn't surprise me at all

Holly Marsh  20:35

right? That that friend who talked about you know, getting on medication, she noticed and a few other people to have have just expressed this like, whoa. experience from being on medication and I'm just like, I kind of haven't had that yet. And I don't know if it's just because my situation in life and Dale and you know, daily life is a little more chaotic no matter what medication I'm on, or if I'm just on the wrong meds. But yeah, it's I think a lot of a lot of people might be like, Oh, well, now everyone's getting diagnosed with ADHD, but I don't think that's really the case. It's kind of like when autism was really getting diagnosed a lot more often people are like, it's an epidemic. And it's like, No, I think we're just getting better at spotting it and screening people. And, and like you said, with middle aged women, you know, we are the I mean, in our, you know, our mothers in the women before us, you know, all of us were under the radar for so long.

Katy Weber  21:30

Yeah, the I know, I haven't really pursued medication yet. I'm just my reasoning is mostly because I spent so many years on and off of various cocktails of antidepressants because of depression and anxiety. And I weaned myself off of them in January and suddenly be like, finally, after a decade, I really myself I'm ready. I'm gonna do 2020 is my year and march came along, but I really like I didn't, I felt Okay, you know, like, there's been no point during this year where I felt like things were so bad that I wanted to go back on them. And that's good, right? And so I almost now with this new lens of ADHD, I'm sort of feeling like Okay, so what I was on Wellbutrin, which was dopamine, so I was like, that was one I was on that. And then I was also on select an SSRI, so I was like, well, maybe, you know, I should
try going back on to something but also feeling like, I can't like I have to kind of understand what the medications are doing for people, you know, because I'm hearing a lot of people saying their life changing, but I'm not able to kind of like internalize for myself, what that's gonna look like for me. And yeah, and again, I feel like I've also spent the last 45 years coming up with hacks for my own life, you know, in terms of like, I, you know, I hear about, like, exercise in the morning. I'm like, yep, check, you know, be outside in nature. Yeah, I've got that, you know, like, a lot of the things that I realized I just sort of intuitively came to,

Holly Marsh  23:10

yeah, I was, I did a lot of running, and I was doing a lot of walking, and I was getting back into running in the spring, and then all of a sudden, the kids are at home. 24 seven, and it's really hard to duck out when your husband works full time. Just be like, I'm going to go on a run. I already have a gazillion doctor's appointments.

Katy Weber  23:29

And I want to talk about that as well. Yeah, so actually,

Holly Marsh  23:32

I mean, you know, pursuing a diagnosis this particular year, how very 2020 of me, but in the fall of last year, I was diagnosed with breast cancer. And I went through all sorts of treatments. I had really a chemo cocktail of four different drugs. And it made me lose my hair. It made me really sick. I'm really thankful we we weren't in a pandemic at that point. Because my parents, my step parents, and my in laws all did three week rotations, where they would come in slightly after I had my infusion and came home helped my husband take care of the kids. It was they were it was a godsend having that help. And I can't imagine going through that kind of a hefty treatment right now. And so, but yeah, we got through it, hairs growing back. And I ended up having to stop short because my heart was having some problems with the medication. So then we took a break and then I had surgery in January. And then I was in I was almost done with radiation when everything kind of started pausing because of the pandemic. But I was still having to go to the cancer center every day to get my zaps for for radiation. And I was going for walks every day like I was, I would spend, you know, 30 minutes to an hour with a great podcast and do a really brisk walk and I felt like I was really gaining a lot of, you know, on the right path to get my strength back from You know, going from being a runner to like a slug over the fall? And yeah, it was a, it was hard and, and you know, I was like, Okay, well, this summer, I managed to get a referral for my general practitioner, we actually have an adult ADHD clinic in Portland and they were able to do a hotel health appointment. And I was like, well, I hit my out of pocket maximum in January because of surgery and everything, so let's just do it. And I'm really a fan of, you know, some sort of better, you know, insurance or Medicare for all, or whatever we end up rolling out with, just because I know that's a barrier for so many people of, Oh, well, I really want to get a diagnosis, but going to this clinic, you know, they don't take my insurance or they're out of network, and it's going to be a gazillion dollars. So it's not worth it. And then there's a whole other facet with medication. So yeah, short story. You know, in a nutshell, I think everyone shouldn’t be able to, you know, have access to that and not have it, you know, have the loser shirt for it. Preach. And it's silly. I mean, I'm still in treatment, like I still have chemo every three weeks, but it's not the hefty chemo, it just kind of makes me tired and kind of feel blocked, just for a few days, but then I bounced back up, and my energy levels are like so much higher. And having that huge dip made me it did, I don't know, I did too, it did two things. One of them was made me realize just how much energy I do have. And it's great. But then it's also like, Okay, I have to do something with it. And then the other facet is kind of remembering how I was when I wasn't working, because I took a break even for my business too. And, you know, when the kids were at school, I had a lot of downtime to just kind of be with myself and just sit with it and heal and rest. And I am taking that as a life lesson in that I need to continue, you know, scheduling in that rest throughout my day.
Katy Weber 26:59
Yeah, I think that’s a that’s quite a delicate dance for with ADHD too, which is like downtime can be really self destructive. But rest is important. And and I think it’s it’s really about structuring formalizing your sense of rest, so that it doesn’t feel chaotic, and it doesn’t feel you know, I tend to spiral into, you know, when I have not enough to do I tend to spiral into a sense of like worthlessness. But at the same time, you know, realizing that burnout is also really quick, and easy. Oh,

Holly Marsh 27:36
and, and yeah, and I was at burnout stage for a few years before my diagnosis. And, you know, I’m always looking for the silver linings. And that was definitely a silver lining of this was, I was burned out and a mama needed a break. And I was kind of forced into it. And because you know, I wasn’t in a good health to do all of the crashes I do during the holidays, or do all this crazy selling that I normally do. And all this making I do, I usually do tons of sewing around this time of year. And I just I didn’t have to do it. And it was really kind of nice. And so But yeah, I have to, I always have to kind of hack my own relaxation just because me sitting in front of the TV equals I’m like editing photos or updating product listings, like kind of mindless things. And I can’t or so I have to figure out other things I can do. Like if I’m sitting in front of a TV, doing some embroidery really helps. Because then I’m still working with my hands, but I’m still able to pay attention to the show and putting on closed captions helps because then I’m forced to kind of watch it and read, read the captions, and plus my hearing is shot. So that helps or taking a bath because I don’t like bringing my phone into the bath. So I’m forced to bring like a bonafide book and maybe a cider. And I’m kind of like forced to do that relaxation. So I think that it’s about kind of figuring out how you can regenerate. You know how you can rest and regenerate some of that energy, and kind of like figure out hacks to where you can’t cheat. Otherwise, I’d be sitting in a bath like scrolling on Instagram, which isn’t relaxing.

Katy Weber 29:13
Oh, I know. So you were talking about about your craft shows, which I feel like is a beautiful segue into Marsh Mueller and what you do as a business and you’re doing it sounds like you’re doing all sorts of wonderful things, helping others with mentoring and freelancing. So tell me about what you do. Well, so

Holly Marsh 29:35
my business is called Marsh Mueller. And it’s actually a mashup between my married and my maiden names. It sounds like marshmallow. And my husband and I didn’t realize the gloriousness of that name until you’re already two years married and too cheap to spend the money to change the name. It ended up because you know, my main my actual married name is just marsh. But it became the business name because it was just kind of funny. And it was is different and I felt like it wasn’t something like such and such designs or I wasn’t pitching pigeonholing myself into a business name to where I knew down the road, it would probably morph into something else. And that’s kind of exactly what it did. I mean, I started out, making exclusively baby items sewing them, because I had a really colicky baby. And when I was on maternity leave from being a buyer for a national retailer, I channeled all of that frustration and that sleep deprivation into crap like creating a really good tight fitting Bobby cover, which is a nursing pillow for folks who don’t know.
Katy Weber  30:39
Oh, yeah. Okay, I was like, I was so excited when I saw those. I’d also sad because my nursing days are long gone. But like I would I love the bobby covers. I think that’s

Holly Marsh  30:49
a nice,

Katy Weber  30:50
I haven’t seen those around. And they’re so I mean, your fabric choices are just phenomenal. Thank you. Okay, do you do any of your own fabric making like to screen print?

Holly Marsh  31:01
No, I don’t do any of that I curate. So most of the products are curated by me. And I used to be a fabric buyer for one of the like a really huge fabric store in Portland called fabric depot and the rest in peace. But it was so great. And I really kind of helped hone my my skills as a fabric buyer, but also, you know, I got to know, folks in the industry and different manufacturers. And so yeah, I’m really, really picky. I really like a lot of bright kind of quirky fabrics. Because I don’t want everything to be all like pastel and baby because it’s just not my style. And I know that that’s not you know, everyone’s style. But yeah, with the bobby it was crazy. Like I was determined to make a cover. That works because all of the patterns out there had the zipper like running halfway through the pillow. And I was like, I was like that’s not even reversible. What is happening? And I wouldn’t piping around the edges, because I was like, that’s fancy. And so yeah, it took me a while to get it out at three in the morning. Yep, exactly. So yeah, I’m actually kind of pivoting away from bobby covers just because, you know, selling them has been it’s been kind of a slow selling item recently. And I think it’s just because the market for at least on Etsy, I’m not on Etsy anymore, I might bring it back, I don’t know, is a really, really saturated. And so with the price that I’ve set for it based on you know, my time and materials and everything. It’s just it’s hard to compete. But so yeah, I’ve continued to pivot based on my own needs as a parent. You know, I then I developed like bibs, and I wanted them to have snaps because Velcro is terrible in the washer and dryer. And you know, once kids realize they can just pull their bib off with the Velcro. It’s all over. And yeah, and then, you know, I started to kind of morph my product line into more like kid and grown up items like zipper pouches, and I make reusable snack bags. And that came about when my son started kindergarten, and I was like, I am going through so many Ziploc baggies I it was just insane when I would go make his lunch, so many baggies so much plastic. So I developed a snack bag that you can not only hand wash it, but you can also throw it in the washer and the dryer. And I’ve even had customers throw those in the dishwasher. And it’s been fine.

Katy Weber  33:24
Really. Yeah, that’s always been that was always my my issue. I have so many reusable bags, and then they just like end up in a pile to be laundered. And then, and then you know, there’s another week or two of you actually into the laundry.

Holly Marsh  33:42
Yeah, so and we’ve used ours, we’ve used ours for years. And I just most of the time I’ll hand wash it just because it’s really quick to turn it inside out and just give it a good scrub and rinse and just let it dry. But then, you know, over
time in that kid's lunchbox over and over, it starts to get kind of grody on the outside. So then that's why I just pop it in with my towels. Because if I again, if I had to separate pile for them, they'd never get washed. Because just because I'd be like there's not enough of them to make a load. So maybe I am a little OCD about that. But no, I just started with with the towels, and then they're fine.

Katy Weber  34:18
Also, I know I'm very excited. I've already ordered so

Holly Marsh  34:20
I know. They're on their way.

Katy Weber  34:25
But I have to say the dumpster fire DIY plushie is like the ultimate 2020 gift. That's a wonderful illustration. It is.

Holly Marsh  34:34
Yeah. So um, I used to illustrate a lot in high school. In fact, I was the editorial illustrator for my school newspaper. There, sometimes they were fine. And other times I had controversy like there was one time where we had some and I grew up in a real small rural rural town. And we actually had some kids who thought they were cool by having Confederate flags on their truck and keep them. This is the Pacific Northwest. So there's that. So my editor at the time wrote a piece about him in a really tongue in cheek kind of way. And I drew up illustration of a Grinch wearing the Confederate flag as a as a shirt. And it went crazy. Like the majority of the school was like, Yes, I'm fine. I'm so glad you guys are talking about this and bringing them down. And then of course, there's a small portion of people that were like, how dare you? But yeah, so my illustration styles were cartoony. And I've done it since high school, but I've taken a really long break. And, you know, a few years ago, I got an iPad Pro and an Apple Pencil. And for some reason, having that portability, and instead of having a zillion notebooks, which is, you know, my forte is having a gazillion notebooks, this kind of kept everything all together. And I that was just automatic organization. I didn't have to think about and, you know, I just kept working at it over and over the years. And, you know, with, you know, being in cancer treatment, I had a lot of downtime. So I really honed my skills. And this year, spoonflower had a third company that prints custom fabric, they have a design challenge. In fact, they have one every week that you can go vote on or enter. And the challenge that time was for a cut and sew fat quarter. And for those at home listening who don't know what a fat quarter is, it's basically like a half of yard, but cut the other direction, so that you get kind of more real estate to work with, versus like a half yard. So they wanted a cut and sew panel made out of a fat quarter. And I thought, you know, this is the time to do it, I'm gonna make myself a dumpster fire plushie because I thought it was hilarious, and very 2020. And even, you know, not even just beyond 2020 like, you know, like, I keep telling people, this is an even worse worst year, like, last year was definitely it. But um, you know, I didn't want to put 2020 on it. Because, you know, it's not like, we're gonna wave a magic wand in 2021. And it's going to magically go away. As of right? Yeah, this is gonna be timeless. So I made it as a fat quarter. And I entered it into the competition. And it went crazy. I won fifth place, which was just huge for me, just because, I mean, I've never, I've always wanted to enter into their contests. And I never did until now. And now I have it on my site as a DIY kit, where I have added some embroidery floss. And you don't even need to have a sewing machine, you can just do it with a hand needle. And I filmed a YouTube video for it, but I need to stitch it all together. And I got hung up again, a very ADHD thing. I got hung up on the music, I was like, I have to pick the right music. So now that I've, you know, gone through them and made a list, I need to do that further. But you know, you know, my kids
Katy Weber  37:56
deided they wanted to write a book as a gift for my husband and myself for Christmas. Of course, they decide before they're even writing the book, they decide they want to design the cover. And they set up a Canva account. And I was like, Oh my god, that's so ADHD.

Holly Marsh  38:11
Right? Oh, my goodness. I love that so much. That's so cute.

Katy Weber  38:15
I know. They're adorable. Yeah.

Holly Marsh  38:17
I'm currently making among us plushies for my kids, because yeah, we don't sell them or your these are that Well, I mean, I might do my own. I actually haven't played the game, I'd probably I'm a weird like that I really like to be really involved in it before I do anything. So I probably have to play it. I've downloaded it. I haven't played it yet, but my kids played all the time. And so they drew a bunch of among us guys. And what I did what I've been doing, and this is my project, my hyper focus for today is I took a picture of all of them, because I made them draw front and back. Because I was like, that's how I did it with the dumpster fire, you're gonna draw it front and back. And so I've taken photos of all of those, and then I'm just kind of tracing over them in my iPad. And then I'm just going to arrange them on a yard of you know, a file about the size of a yard of minkee. And then I'm just going to get them printed at spoonflower. And then we'll make them

Katy Weber  39:10
so now I mean, one thing I love about your site was like your lightbox and your newsletter and everything just has such a lovely sense of humor to it. It's just I feel like you've just added such a nice touch to everything. There's nothing feels boring or corporate. So

Holly Marsh  39:27
thank you very much. That means a lot. I've worked really hard on my own brand. I rebranded about three years ago, and I did it myself, which most of the time I don't recommend. I actually freelance for an agency that does branding and Shopify websites, and they're phenomenal. Their name is Al Lydia, and it's woman owned. And we work with a lot of people of color and black women and we have a couple of guys and they're great. But yeah, it's a really great agency and I've learned a ton from And so I think after working there for a year as a project manager, I ended up stepping away from my health, but I kind of knew enough to be like, Alright, I'm going to try this. I'm going to rebrand my, my brand. And I did that. And I wanted it to have a lot of personality. And I've worked really hard on my voice and tone. And, in fact, I'm running an A B test on my website pop up, that, again, I have it on a delay, because I hate it when website pop ups happen immediately, especially if it's a, you know, a site you haven't been to before.
And I'm doing an ad test on the pop up. One of them says, you know, like, join, you know, join the club for, you know, blah, blah, blah, typical marketing language. And then the second one is, it's annoying email pop up. And not surprisingly, that is the one that's having the most success. You know, I think poking fun at all of these, you know, optimization things that a lot of people do. Sometimes I think it's, it's fine to poke fun at it, especially if your brand is it, you know, it fits it, you know?

Katy Weber 41:00
Oh, absolutely. And that's the one thing that I think with since diagnose being diagnosed, I've really been able to kind of reevaluate my own history with my career, you know, just thinking like, you know, you've used the word pivot a couple times, and like, I look at pivot as a positive thing, now, you're realizing like, I can't do anything for more than two years, I really need to like rebrand to like, go in a new direction. And that's okay. Like, that's exciting for me. And that's a strength, whereas I used to always look at that as like, I can't hold a job for longer than two years, because usually I'll have some sort of explosive moment where I quit. Or I just, you know, I'm no longer interested and right and need to move on. And I always looked at that as such a failure. And now we really look at that as, as one of my strengths and something I can lead into, you know,

Holly Marsh 41:51
he reframed it, I love it.

Katy Weber 41:52
It's funny, because I sort of was talking about this the other day, you know, rather than looking at, you know, I look at my life now as really being able to kind of lean into these strengths, as opposed to looking at the things I had done, quote, unquote, right, as momentary lapses in, in failure. Like always sort of feeling like the overarching narrative was failure, but I would have these momentary, you know, I'd be like, oh, but then I wrote a book, or, you know, like, I do these things that seem like an anomaly in a larger narrative of failure. And now I'm like, everything has changed, and everything is different. And it's not at all like, you know, it does

Holly Marsh 42:31
wonders for your self confidence, doesn't it? Yes, absolutely. Yeah. Cuz I mean, when I was a buyer, like when I was a buyer, like, okay, I was an associate buyer. I hadn't quite made it to buyer yet. And I struggled, like I had a really hard time in the corporate world. I mean, I was late all the time. And of course, for some reason, having kids may be way more punctual. It's bizarre. I don't know what happened. And I don't know, maybe it's that skill of a buyer of having to work backward from like, Okay, well, if I need this in the store, by Christmas, I have to buy this at this time, it has to be in the where, you know, you have to work backward. And so maybe just developing that backward, you know, calculation skill, maybe better about being punctual. Or maybe it was kids, or a combination of both, I don't know, but I was late all the time. And they didn't like it. Well, some people did. Other people were like, no, she's fine. Because when she gets up and running, she can run circles around all, you know, all these people. And I felt like I could do my job in less than 40 hours. And I just didn't need I felt like I didn't need to be there. 40 hours, I thought it was a stupid game. And I didn't appreciate it. And I thought that it was just me, and I didn't realize there was an ADHD thing that like, you know, that, you know, authority, you know, brushing up against authority and rules and stuff like that. And, and even when I worked as a product as a project manager at the agency, like, I had a really hard time, especially with the more and more projects that I got. And I ended up, like having to have conversations with the higher ups. And it was really hard because I'd never had to deal with that before. of, hey, you're not meeting our
expectations. And it was jarring for me because I had never like I again, like your son, I’m a people pleaser. And having that happen, I was like, devastated. I was like, What is wrong with me? But little did I know Oh, yeah, let’s give an ADHD person, a whole bunch of projects to switch between and a bunch of clients and other things to hyper focus on per project. And it’s like a recipe for disaster. So they’ve since hired a bonafide project manager, and she is amazing. And now I’m back as a freelancer helping with Shopify and email marketing, and it’s just perfect for me because I can, you know, work as many hours as I can, per week. So I have that flexibility especially among remote learning, you know, that we’re all in and you know, the each client is different. So it’s something new every time so it’s still kind ofiques my interest, which is really great. So I was Really excited to find out that hey, you freelancing actually, isn’t that bad of a gig for me?

Katy Weber 45:04
So before I want you to talk about just how people can find you and and what, how they can work with you, but I’m just curious, are you still is ADHD still your current deep dive? Or are you? Have you moved on to some other? Deep? What's your most recent deep dive?

Holly Marsh 45:24
Oh, that’s a really good question. Um, I think I mean, ADHD is one of those, like, long term hyper focuses for me, where I subscribe to anything. It’s add attitude mag, and I subscribed to you know, how to ADHD YouTube channel, and, you know, just kind of dabbling here and there, because I feel like I have some books. I’m reading fast minds right now. But yeah, books are great for me. There’s Reddit, there’s YouTube and Facebook groups, facebook, facebook groups have been really great with really figuring out, hey, these people are like me, and they run into similar issues. And, you know, it’s been very supportive and empowering. Yes, that’s my friend who recently got diagnosed, you know, she recently posted a list of things that she’s discovered about, you know, being able to stay focused, and things that that don’t work for her, like, for example, apps that kind of like, shut down your activity on your phone. Like that was kind of like shameful. So she was like, oh, then that’s and that just doesn’t help me at all. So she’s just do it, she figures out other ways to help keep her productive. And again, it’s, you know, it’s we’re not all cookie cutter, same, you know, struggles or, you know, same superpowers, we all have to kind of work together to figure out, you know, what everyone’s coping mechanisms are?

Katy Weber 46:38
Yeah, absolutely. And I think that the, you know, I think there is a lot of nuance between stimulation, which is what we’re seeking, and distraction, which is what often ends up happening. Right? Like, what are ways in which we can find the stimulation? Yeah, you know, for me, specifically, with my health coaching, like I do, you know, I offer non diet related health coaching. And I work a lot with intuitive eating. But intuitive eating can also be really chaotic. When there’s so much freedom, and now I think that like, yeah, the ADHD brain does not do well with a lot of non structured eating. So how can you bring structure back into it, but also have variety and freedom. And so it’s the same way with when thinking about, like, you know, what we’re really looking for is stimulation that helps us focus like a Fidget Cube, you know, like, there are things that we do that help us actually focus at the task at hand like music. But then there are other things that just take our focus completely away.

Holly Marsh 47:40
Right, when I think that’s also kind of one of the reasons why I’ve held on to, you know, quote, unquote, another job for this long while I’ve had my business, I’ve always had either a full time or a part time or a freelance job, not only
just because of the consistent paycheck, but I think, and this is I this is just what something I realized this last week, that I do better when faced with a smaller chunk of time to run my business. Because there have been times where I've had all day the kids are at school to get stuff done. And I find that I am not nearly as productive. I can't force myself to do it. But for some reason, if I'm like, Oh, I'm going to work at the agency from you know, eight to 10. For some reason, truncating my day for my business makes me far more productive. And I can focus on it instead of having you know, this whole smorgasbord of time. Or in your case, like when you're coaching people Oh, you have a whole smorgasbord of food. And it's Yeah, the ADHD brain does it better in my little compartments, especially with especially with remote learning going on. Good lord.

Katy Weber 48:47
compartment, I call them containers. Like, yeah, you know, everything needs its place.

Holly Marsh 48:52
It kind of reminds me Did you ever watch 30 rock when, when it was on, there was an episode where Liz lemon. I think she her and her boyfriend are trying to have a baby. And so she for some reason, she's able to color code, her schedule, just perfect and fit everything into all of those little cubes. And then it was like her it broke her brain and the best way and she was like, so productive and happy. And I was like, that's what I see is the all of the buckets to align. And so sometimes they do and sometimes they don't. So

Katy Weber 49:25
well, thank you so much for talking to me. I'm super excited about this podcast just because for me, I mean, I think I learned so much about myself and the world from interviewing and talking to other people. And I think that's also an ADHD quality. It's like one on one conversations are so just mentally stimulating and productive.

Holly Marsh 49:49
Oh, absolutely. And, you know, I didn't realize that interrupting, I've been really trying really hard not to interrupt during this interview. I tend to do that I tend to interrupt and it's not a rude thing. I didn't realize it was an ADHD thing. I always felt like I was just this weirdo who just can't keep her mouth shut. And I would get in trouble at work for that. But no, it's an ADHD thing. And it's just because you want to jump in and you want to interject. And it's a way of relating to that person, and you're not trying to step over them. It's just like, oh, me, too. Oh, that means you need to

Katy Weber 50:20
know. Absolutely. I know I have. That's funny that you say that, because I've actually been like, really trying to, like, allow you to finish your sentence before I start. Because I feel like you know, with two ADHD women talking about ADHD, like how are we going to keep up not constantly be interrupted going? Oh, my God. Oh, my God. And like, yeah, miles a minute.

Holly Marsh 50:41
Exactly. Yeah, exactly. Or like, you know, oh, what were we talking about? Oh, my goodness. Well, I think and one of those things, I think I did forget to talk about, I think I started about how, where people can find me, and then I didn’t finish it. I think we were talking about something else. Oh, my goodness.

**Katy Weber** 50:58

Well, it’s we’re almost at the hour. So I want to I want to keep them within a time container as well. So before we finish, tell my listeners where they can find you how they can work with you and anything else you want to let them know about anything you’re currently promoted.

**Holly Marsh** 51:16

Okay, thanks, Katie. So yeah, people can find me at Marsh Mueller calm that is m a r sh, m u e, ll e r.com. Think Marsh like the swamp and Bueller, but with an M for spieler. And I have a Patreon where people can get a monthly playlist, and they can support me while I could still go through treatment. And I have a very small YouTube channel. And I also do consulting for email marketing and Shopify or just creative businesses. Overall, I have sessions where people can kind of pick my brain or I can help them with kind of getting unstuck or help with productivity. So that’s where you can find me and I’m on Facebook a lot. So you might see me in a group with ADHD or online friends are real friends. Don’t forget that. Yeah, I’m on Instagram. Yeah, I actually have three Instagram accounts. One is personal. One is for illustration, and one is my business, Marche Mueller. And then I’m also on Twitter. And that’s where I tend to tweet a lot about timbers Portland Timbers soccer, cuz that’s where a lot of my friends are in the timbers army, which is the supporter group. And I only do Pinterest just for like r&d for like sourcing fabrics, because I kind of hate that platform. And I used to dabble in Tick tock, but then realized it became way too much of a time suck. So I only go there occasionally. Yeah, I

**Katy Weber** 52:44

have an all or nothing relationship with Tick Tock nine. I put it on my phone, and then I delete it off. Like,

**Holly Marsh** 52:52

I’m so glad I’m not the only one who does that. Oh, my goodness.

**Katy Weber** 52:55

Well, actually, I have it back on my phone right now. Because I had heard that there were so many great ADHD videos. And so I started following the ADHD women hashtag. And I was like, spending hours down that rabbit hole and was like,

**Holly Marsh** 53:10

that hashtag to pocket like, that’s, that’s, that’s another productive thing is pocket. It’s an app. And you can save things for later. I actually do and there’s a Chrome extension. And then also you can install it on your phone to where if like, you’re on Twitter or Facebook and you see an article where you’re like, ooh, that’d be really interesting
to read. But I don’t really have time right now. Like I say the tend to pocket and I actually go back and refer to it and read it.

Katy Weber  53.37
That’s, that’s my problem with all my saved costs.

Holly Marsh  53.40
Yeah, so I use pocket as like, Oh, I’m sitting You know, I’m at a doctor’s appointment. I’m just kind of sitting here. Let’s Let’s, you know, dive into an article I’ve saved on pocket. And you can do different tags, if they’re like business related or ADHD related or kid related or what have you. It’s, uh, I resonate so much more with that app with saving things than I do with apps like Pinterest.

Katy Weber  54.00
Alright, well, thanks again, Holly. This has been so much. It’s been really great chatting with you and getting to know you