

marie claire

Brooke Shields on Reinventing Yourself, Making Friends in Your 40s, and More

The actress and CEO shared inspiring advice during a panel at *Marie Claire's* "Power Trip: Off the Grid" conference.



By [Rachel Epstein](#) Nov 10, 2021



On November 9, Brooke Shields joined *Marie Claire* Editor in Chief Sally Holmes for an empowering conversation at *MC's* 2021 "Power Trip: Off the Grid" conference, where some of the country's most powerful women business leaders and executives came together for 36 hours to inspire, create, and collaborate.

During the panel, which took place at the [Miraval Berkshires Resort & Spa](#), the [A Castle for Christmas](#) actress discussed everything from her new wellbeing brand, [Beginning Is Now](#), to making friends later in life to ageism in Hollywood.

"I get rejected more than I get accepted. I get said no to so many more times than I get said yes to," says Shields, referring to society's need for women to have it all "figured out" by a certain age. "When I was younger, I looked too European or I never fit in sample sizes, therefore I couldn't do runway because I wasn't skinny enough. All of these things build up in your life and you're being told this whole time there's a standard and you're not good enough for it. We need to start [a new] dialogue."

Read on for more tidbits from Shields's inspiring conversation with Holmes, below, and catch her Netflix rom-com out on November 26.

On pushing herself forward during challenging times throughout her life:

"All my life, everybody has been trying to cut me off at the knees and knock me down or declare me as something that somehow isn't good enough because of X, Y, and Z. What I used to do is self-deprecate and then I wouldn't be threatening to women. Then they wouldn't worry about me with their husbands. And then, *Oh, look, who's the class clown? She's sort of dopey, so she's not a threat really.* And it worked for a little bit. Like in college, when people thought I was going to be stuck up, I would point out my foibles to cut the energy in the room.

Then I realized that I started to believe my self-deprecation and I started to say, 'Oh, I am this.' Or 'I'm not that.' And it was really detrimental. Over the years, I have decided that I'm not going to be done in. I may fail miserably and fall and lose and make mistakes, but it won't be because I didn't try or it won't be because I gave up. It doesn't mean you're going to find success. It doesn't mean whatever you thought was going to happen is going to happen because you worked hard. Sometimes you work your ass off and still don't get the thing. But you've worked your ass off. And you've really given yourself the best shot. To me, good things always somehow come out of that or are born from that."



Marie Claire Editor in Chief Sally Holmes in conversation with Brooke Shields at MC's 2021 "Power Trip: Off the Grid" conference.

Allie Holloway

On the inspiration behind her new project, "Beginning Is Now":

"Beginning Is Now" is a 360-degree wellbeing brand. Right before COVID, I was walking on the beach with a very close friend of mine and I was lamenting about the lack of representation I felt my demographic had in marketing out there. I remember saying, 'I'm fitter. I'm stronger. I kind of don't give a sh*t in the same way. I know who I want to have around me as people. I've raised children. I've had a whole career multiple times. I've done all these things, and now I'm being told 'Oh, well, you're over. Your ovaries don't work anymore, so you're good. Or you've done all that, so why don't you just take a break and relax?' I feel as if I'm just beginning."

She continues, "We are not represented because we don't fit into a box...There is this world where women over a certain age get discounted and overlooked, and these are the most fabulous women that I've ever met. They've all pivoted multiple times and they have so much more to offer. And that was where it started...I'm the conduit. I'm not the guru. I'm the ring leader, the connector. And I'm just the face that gets people to talk to each other. This is less about me and more about us. The response has been extraordinary, and now we're going into different categories. We're going into beauty and we'll be going into other categories as well."

On how her personal community has shaped who she is today:

"I would be nothing without the wonderful women in my life. I lean on them and I try to give up myself to them as much as I can. My mom was a single mom. My parents got divorced when I was five months old. My dad remarried my stepmom and they had three daughters and I'm very close to them and the whole family. But my mom was a scrappy, street smart [woman] from Newark. She was like, 'You know, you don't need anybody. You're born into this world alone.' It was an interesting form of survival, but I almost had to teach *her* the importance of being able to be vulnerable with your friends, with the women in your life because that vulnerability to me is a sign of strength."

Shields continues, "I remember growing up thinking, I need the sisterhood. I need the friendships. I need the laughter. I need the honesty. I need to be told the truth. I need to be needed by my friends. These weren't things that I was taught by my mom because my mom taught me survival. And I had to learn that through my friendships. And I hope I taught her a little bit...I think we are stronger together."

On making friends later in life:

"You have to ferret them out and you have to be really honest with yourself as to why you're attracted to somebody. You have to give the time to get to know the person, but you have to let them get to know you and then have that grow because we think, *oh, everybody else has a really good friend and I don't. Or oh, they're in a clique.* We're not in high school anymore. We have to be willing to show who we really are if we want real friends. And that means being vulnerable. And that means asking for help. And that means really just being an honest friend or sometimes just shutting up and listening.



Shields speaking at *Marie Claire's* 2021 "Power Trip: Off the Grid" conference.

Allie Holloway

It's a bit of an effort. Sometimes I say to my daughter, 'You'll have a little group of friends there, a little group of friends here. It's okay that you're not in the same little huddle.' You find different friends who nurture different parts of your personality, but you have to be willing to put yourself out there. It's that waiting to be picked thing. I don't want to wait anymore. My industry is based on that. I don't want to wait to be picked anymore. I want to pick myself and see who wants to come along."

On her advice for reinventing yourself:

"Start by asking questions. Ask for help. Look around you. Start putting it out there so that you demystify whatever it is that you're insecure about learning about. Ask for advice. Don't be afraid to say you don't understand something. Don't be afraid to make mistakes because those are the things that you then learn from. You make a mistake and you're like, *oh, I'm not going to do that again*. You constantly are shaping your growth and your future and your pivot. Start it. Be scrappy. Take the first step and see what happens. Don't wait for it to all look like you've got your ducks in a row."

On "finding her forward":

"Finding my forward really has been this company [Beginning Is Now] that I'm putting all of my effort and all of my energy into. It's the belief that I would like to be at the forefront of providing an environment for all of the incredible women that are out there that want to pivot that don't know how to take that first step. It's about continuing the conversation and creating it.

I'm an actress first and foremost...doing a rom-com is my happy place. I'm going to be doing another one for Netflix. I will do those forever as long as they have me, but this is the next whole chapter. Creating a wellbeing brand. It's not wellness. It's wellbeing. It's looking at the wellbeing and looking at movement and looking at how it's important to move our bodies. And looking at what self-care looks like.

I want Beginning Is Now to be that destination for people and to learn from them because I really believe women should be living in their biggest selves. No more apologizing and no more making these excuses for what we're not. We're all not a lot of things. We also are a lot of things. That's the beauty of it."